



W. D. PAYNE



W. R. CAROTHERS



7-20-74

(EDITOR'S NOTE: Shackelford County rancher Bob Green, by tradition one of the guest columnists when Page One writer Katharyn Duff is on vacation, serves in that capacity today. Green is known to many as narrator of the Fort Griffin Fandangle and as the musician who presides over the Fandangle's steam calliope.)



## PAGE ONE

BY KATHARYN DUFF

By BOB GREEN

An old editor of the Albany News editorialized years ago about how it didn't rain often in Shackelford County, but when it did, it rained like a damn fool.

I think we are about ready for one of those "damn fool" rains.

Anyone living out here in this semi-arid country must

accept the harsh reality that every now and then it is going to get dry, but it is always hard to remember that when it happens. We so like to fool

ourselves into believing that the nice, green, rainy years are the norm and the dry spells are freaks that have been phased out, but unhappily, deep down we really know better.

And now, once again, we are in the grip of a real scary dry spell, one that covers a huge area, south into Old Mexico, west to Arizona, and northwest over New Mexico and across the Colorado line. Memories of the 50's, the last really bad drouth, creep in to haunt us. Most ranchers, due to that unpleasant period, have since built many fine ponds or tanks with the assistance of the SCS, so are not yet in as completely dire straits as they would otherwise be, but tanks depend on runoff and that is something we have had precious little of the past 3 years.

What really shakes a drouth-scary hombre such as me, though, is to remember what some of the old timers have actually experienced.



GREEN

1874 by the name of Tonkawa White, who claimed to be over 100 years old then, told him that a dry spell once drove the Indians as far down the main Brazos as the site of Waco before they could find game and water. Old Tonkawa White could furnish no better information as to the time except that it happened "way back." Doesn't THAT make you thirsty!

There was also a terrible drouth that began in 1878 and lasted until 1881 but in 1886 began a drouth that completely devastated the dry land

Phin W. Reynolds, whose family first came to this area in 1857, told in his memoirs how he remembered the bad drouth in 1862-1864. They lived on the Clear Fork of the Brazos above Eliasville and the bed of the river would be bone dry between holes of water for a distance of over 1/2 mile. Now this was before there was any usage of water by cities, and no dams, ponds or tanks on the water shed, but before you blow up your water-wings, to go for a swim—listen to this—Uncle Phin goes on to say that an old Tonkawa Indian he knew at Fort Griffin in

farmers and ranchers of this area. Their distress was so acute that Clara Barton came to Albany to lend assistance to the needy. Cattle died by the thousands around dried up streams and creeks, as there just simply was no other livestock water as Shackelford County, both then and now, has practically no underground water for wells. That memory should make us all appreciate our fine stock tanks, and the big equipment that makes it possible to build them, for without well water,

our tanks are the number one thing that keep the rural areas productive.

Then in 1917, another drouth, a bad one. My dad used to tell how he had gone with Mr. Jim Nail in his Model T out on the stricken Nail Ranch north of Albany to consider buying some of Mr. Nail's fine cattle, which were going to have to be sold due to lack of water. It was an overcast day, and everyone was thinking the same thought: it might rain. As the little car chugged up one of the steep limestone escarpments, drops of water suddenly began appearing on the windshield. "My God, Henry," exclaimed Mr. Nail excitedly, "I believe it's raining!" Hastily stopping the car, both ranchers leapt out, palms and eyes turned up expectantly, but alas, no rain. Then a hissing noise drew their attention to the little car's radiator cap, which was spewing water and steam out lustily. Dejectedly, without a word, they gloomily got back in and resumed their journey.

It was that same drouth of '17 that caused Merrick Davis, a young rancher west of Albany, to tell Judge Matthews, an old native of the country, his drouth woes. The judge, an unflappable veteran of several drouths, market failures, and all the other vicissitudes of ranch life, listened quietly to the young man's recital of low water, short grass, etc. until he ran out of laments and looked questioningly for sympathy from the judge. Judge Matthews' answer did little to improve Merrick's ability to rest well at night. Placing his hand on Merrick's shoulder, and looking him squarely in the eye, he said "You're right, Merrick, it is dry, but let me tell you something, Son, it can still get a whole lot drier!" And the worst part of it is, that it did — and even worse than that, it might again.

I have considered taking up a plan my inventive brother Tom, who lives on a ranch west of Amarillo, thought up to try to enable him to survive the last bad drouth. He put a tape deck in his pickup and somewhere found a tape of a thunderstorm in action. He claimed that once a day he put on dark glasses, turned the windshield wipers on, and played this tape at high volume while driving over his parched range, and that it had a remarkable therapeutic ef-

fect on him until the dust ruined his tape deck.

As if all these terrible but true tales didn't make anyone but a dyed-in-the-wool masochist looking for a garage sale to unload all the water skis, sail boats, lawn sprinklers and irrigation equipment that many of us have optimistically invested in, along comes Jack Pate, a descendant of the famous Shackelford County family that in years past drove trail herds of cattle anywhere they could walk. After years of ranching in the rugged country north of Las Vegas, New Mexico, Jack returned to Albany last year to retire and in deference to his age, has now cut the cowboying, at which he is the very best, down to 18 hours a day on week days and merely helps his labor-short friends on the weekend. He admits to it being a little dry here now but the said out at Ocate, New Mexico one time it was getting a little dry there (which meant it hadn't rained in 6 or 7 years). He asked this old, old native Mexican what was the driest spell he could ever remember. The old man sat in deep thought for a long time and then finally answered, "Well, Jack, there was one time, it just never did rain!"

Now THAT was a DROUTH and could be a record we really don't care to compete with.



# Entering a dust cycle? Couldn't be bad as '30s

The prospect of a prolonged drought in Randall County and the Panhandle and South Plains area has local agriculture officials worried about the potential for dust storms and the resulting loss of valuable top soil.

Bill Casteel, district conservationist for the Soil Conservation Service, said Randall County farmers lost an estimated 8800 acres of soil from October 1 through April 1 to winds whistling

across the dry Plains.

With the potential great that the area could be entering a drought cycle, he's worried the figures will go higher this summer and next year as farmers begin losing crops and the consequent ground cover necessary to thwart blowing.

He's flatly afraid "that we ain't seen nothing yet — unless we get some rain and get stuff growing."

Crop residue is the key to holding down blowing dust, Casteel said, and he

said Randall County farmers are doing a good job of soil conservation.

Even if a predicted prolonged drought occurs in the Panhandle, modern practices to conserve soil will probably assure local residents they won't have to live through another Dust Bowl era.

The massive dust storms of the 1930s, according to research in the files at the Panhandle-Plains Historical Museum, were another turn in the cycles

of storms which are first recorded on the Plains in 1859-60.

According to a research report written in 1940 by Mary Lou Hawkins, dust storms coincide with periods of drought.

The Hawkins report states that from June 1859 to the fall of 1860 not one good rain fell in the Plains region. During that time, 30,000 Kansans left the state while 40,000 remained.

The next drought-dust storm cycle occurred in 1885-86, a period associated according to the Hawkins report with opening of large areas to the cattle industry and with "overgrazing."

Another cycle followed in 1892, this one with massive dust storms.

Miss Hawkins quotes a pioneer West Texan concerning the drought and dust in the Panhandle that year:

"Drought began in 1892 and lasted three years. During this many people, especially women, left our Silverton community ... Talk about dust storms. Well, we had a real dust storm that day, followed by a cool Norther the next day ... While we were eating lunch, Mr. Hanna asked about the buttermilk. The jug was produced, and when he tried to pour the milk, the butter stopped the opening in the jug. Mr. Hanna forked it out, but of course it was covered with dust meantime."

The most notorious drought-dust cycle in the Panhandle and Great Plains was that of 1934-35.

"The 'dusters,' 'black blizzards,' or just plain 'dust storms,' whatever their name, held the limelight in the American public for approximately a two-year period," Miss Hawkins reports. The dusters made banner headline news in Amarillo papers for 12 straight days.

Miss Hawkins collected the following quotations from various sources concerning the dust bowl days:

"On April 14, 1935, one Nebraska farmer lost 10,000 cubic yards of rich soil to his neighbor. It was deposited over the neighbor's meadow to a depth of six inches. To haul it back would take 500 days at twenty wagons per day. Besides, whose soil is it now anyway."

"Lights were turned on in Amarillo stores yesterday at 2:30 p.m. There was nearly complete darkness for more than one hour."

"John L. McCarthy reports that he went outside his home during the storm and could not see the lights inside. He approached his window to a distance of less than three feet before he could tell there was any light."

"A woman called our office from Stinnett to warn of the dust storm. She reported that she could not see the telephone into which she was speaking."

"'Guymon Minister in Bed After Seven Days Prayer for Rain.'"

Miss Hawkins reports that the dust storms of 1934-35 "occasioned the greatest turnover of soil known in recorded history ... Authorities estimated that 300,000,000 tons of soil were moved by one duster only, namely that of May 11, 1934, and one Nebraska farmer, it is claimed, lost on one day 10,000 cubic yards of soil to his neighbor."

Effects of the great dust storms of the 1930s spurred government action to begin conservation programs, programs still carried on by such entities as the Soil Conservation Service.

But, there were other effects, too, effects on the people themselves.

Miss Hawkins quotes Canyon Historian J. Evetts Haley's April 17, 1935 article in the Dallas Morning News on the psychological effects of the storms.

"Faced with destructive, terrific dusters at frequent intervals and daily with dull, depressing condition of a sun partially obscured by dust, the Plainsman's nerves were taxed to the breaking point in the spring of 1935," she writes. "Thousands finally adopted the spirit of defeatism and left the area. Those who remained adopted, of necessity, an air of cheerfulness about the situation. An example of this attitude is the story told by a Kansas farmer that, during the famous duster of May 11, 1934, he saw prairie dogs sixty feet up in the air digging holes."

Miss Hawkins said it was estimated that 40,000 families left the dust bowl between 1930 and 1937.

The dusters held physical harm for Plains residents, too, she notes.

And, she presents the following quotes:

"The dust storms will continue to undermine human health for months to come, because the very particles have been breathed into respiratory tract of the victims. The worst measles epidemic in the history of Kansas can be traced in part to dust storms. Acute lung infec-

tion rates have increased 100 per cent. Increase in eye and throat diseases are attributable to dust storms."

Another dust-drought cycle, according to local officials, occurred in the early 1950s.

And, some are predicting that Plains residents are just seeing the front edge of another drought-dust period.



# Letter To The Editor

## What About A Small Town?

By Callie Ann Combs, Munday Chamber Of Commerce

Has the small town become outmoded, or of little importance in today's complex world? Certainly many of the small towns of Texas have been deserted or engulfed in the urbanization of recent years.

Yet many thousands of small town people enthusiastically defend their way of life and assert that the advantages of such a way of life heavily outweigh the disadvantages.

Their viewpoint is based not only on sentiment, but also on a few basic, undeniable facts. Let us examine some facets of the question - What is the future of the small town?

The migration of young people to larger cities for educational purposes is necessary, since state support of schools is delegated to already established systems of higher learning.

When the student has completed his training, he feels he must live in the city to find employment worthy of his talents.

He may, however, find that he has sacrificed, in order to make a good living, the best kind of life. Does he not have to pay higher taxes, reside in crowded neighborhoods, drive many miles to and from work, have less time with his family and himself, and live in fear of riots, crime and unrest?

The young family seeking a healthier and happier environment may find it in Smalltown, U. S. A.

It may not have the best-lighted thoroughfare, or a whirlwind of night-time entertainment to choose from, but air is clean and water is pure.

Friendliness is here, and elbow room, and concern for one's neighbor. Strong churches provide a base for community life and worship and promote the family's spiritual and physical welfare.

An integral part of any town, community schools, reflect care for the total child, as parents are welcomed to work with teachers in helping their child make the necessary adjustments to our fast-moving world.

The social life of a small town family may not be of national or state importance, but there is time for fellowship of family and friends in both work and play.

A home town doctor knows each patient as an individual, not a case history. The merchant willingly extends credit and keeps pace with the wide variety of goods needed and desired by today's families.

He also pays his share of state, school, and county taxes. He willingly supports his church, United Fund, donates untold hours to youth programs and organizations, Chambers of Commerce, Little League, and a thousand other activities necessary to keep his home town alive.

Yes, the larger cities offer unlimited social activities, better educational facilities, wider variety of consumer goods. But does the city dweller not pay a higher price in the long run?

He becomes a very small part of a giant machine where he may lose his identity as a person. In the anonymity of city life, one person's opinion may not seem important. His vote for expressing his democratic convictions may be of little consequence. In contrast is the vitality of political life in a small town where every issue is important and every person's efforts of value.

The small town is usually an agricultural area whose people strive to preserve a heritage our country was founded upon and blessed with - they till the soil to feed a nation.

The farmer knows no forty-hour work week. His fringe benefits are a closeness to nature and the satisfaction of seeing the fruits of his labor in tangible form - in grain, fiber, vegetable.

His challenge is to endure the vicissitudes of weather, economics, and government control, and make a profit. His products are grown each year with a little less profit than the year before, since labor and mechanization are both expensive.

They are, in fact, becoming so expensive that many farmers feel they are fighting a losing battle. What would happen if the four major food-producing areas of Texas should suddenly give up growing food products and let others have a monopoly on the food industry?

Texas can grow almost every type of foods known, yet our agricultural leaders in Texas

have not yet looked into the future or made any effective planning to preserve the food supply.

There will be larger cities built, but will there be more land created on which their residents can depend for food? And can we afford to continue to till the soil under the present conditions?

All too often, cities tend to rob the small agricultural towns of every project necessary to their own livelihood. Should our tax money be spent to help larger cities to grow by letting them grab every project possible to strengthen their own economy?

Or should we think about keeping faith in the farmer and assist him by giving every support and cooperation, thereby maintaining our present and future supply of food?

Within this Rolling Plains area of Texas, all a rich agricultural area, plans are being laid for the location of an agricultural Research Center.

Such a Center will aid the farmer to grow better quality products, so that he may secure better prices for them.

It will strengthen agriculture by teaching utilization of soil to the best advantage, increase the production on fewer acres of land, plus a thousand things necessary to the future of agriculture.

The future is ours to plan and work for. Let us not stand back and let the larger cities secure such a Center because of their short-sighted economic self-interest.

Let's point out the advantage of a centrally located Research Center in the heart of an agricultural area where the work is to be done.

Let us make the citizens of our area aware of the crucial nature of this issue. On it depends the welfare and survival not only of the farmer, the small town, but also the future well-being of all our people whether of city or country. Let us be about the task!

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bank with no obligation on their part to change their permanent business in event, as expected, the other bank would reorganize and open again for business. Also the First National Bank loaned to some of the share holders of the former bank money to recapitalize their bank and this was done without interest charges. Every penny of it was repaid upon the reopening of the bank. If memory is correct, the reorganization was speeded up and business resumed its former regular routine. The old First National Bank, its officers, directors, shareholders and customers were glad to have had a part in the assistance that it rendered during that time of distress.

The story of the reorganized bank, its officers and directors will be given in the next article.

It should have been stated in an early paragraph that the late E. W. Simpson installed the furniture and fixtures of the bank and planned the arrangements of the vaults, the directors' room, the executive officer's office and such other necessary conveniences that were to be utilized in the operation of the business.

### E. J. Cloud

The Farmers National Bank  
Rule, Texas

The present bank opened as The Farmers State Bank, Rule February 8, 1926 with a capital of \$25,000.00. Mr. G. H. Hall, better known as Hicks Hall was the cashier, Mr. W. R. Carothers, chairman of the board and president, Miss Nora Hudspeth, assistant cashier, and employees were Miss Myrtle Penick and Morris Neal. The directors were W. R. Carothers, W. D. Payne, G. H. Hall, J. D. Westbrook Sr., C. P. Neal, E. L. Lewis, Ed Hackfield and G. B. Tanner.

Mr. Hicks Hall resigned on June 1, 1927 and a Mr. Andrew A. Bradford came to the bank as vice president and cashier. The officers and directors of the bank remained the same until March of 1933, when The Farmers State Bank of Rule bought out the First National Bank of Rule on March 9, 1933. Each of the banks at that time had deposits of about sixty to seventy thousand dollars. Times were very hard, money was very scarce, and at that particular time most of the banks in the country were closed on order of Mr. Roosevelt, the new President of the United States that came into office that year. Most of the banks of the country were closed on orders of the President for five days.

Mr. W. R. Carothers, president passed away in February of 1933.

In the year 1933 the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation was organized and set up; and all banks that desired to become members were allowed to become members if they passed the test. The Farmers State Bank of Rule was admitted as a member in December of 1933, and each account was guaranteed up to an amount of \$10,000.00.

After the death of Mr. W. R. Carothers, W. D. Payne was elected president and chairman of the board, a job which he now fills; and has been very capable with the job all these years. At the same time the board of directors was cut down to five members, W. D. Payne, G. B. Tanner, C. P. Neal, S. E. Lewis and E. L. Lewis, with employees consisting of Morris Neal, Wilbur Arrington, and Miss Nora Hudspeth. Miss Nora resigned in 1935.

On July 1st 1937, Mr. L. W. Jones Sr. bought the stock of Andrew A. Bradford and he was elected vice president and cashier and operated the bank along with Wilbur Arrington as

assistant cashier, Morris Neal, assistant cashier and Newton Westmorland as bookkeeper until his resignation as of September 10, 1937, when Andrew A. Bradford bought Mr. Jones out and came back to the bank as vice president and cashier. Mr. Bradford was the managing officer until his resignation as of December 4, 1944. Wilbur Arrington resigned as of October 1944 going to Rochester, Texas as managing officer of the bank there. Morris Neal was elected at the time of Bradfords resignation.

In 1945, the capital stock of the bank was increased from \$25,000.00 to \$50,000.00 by a stock dividend of 60% and a stock sale of 40%. This was passed and approved by the board, and an application was made for a National Charter which was granted February 8, 1946; the same being twenty years to a day from the time the bank was reorganized and opened February 8, 1926.

During the year and until World War II, different people were employed in the bank, Richard M. Carothers, son of R. O. Carothers, who is now a director, Henry Townsend was in

the bank also as an employee. They both went into service and then the bank employed women. During that time Miss Doris Wright, Mrs. Uda Margaret (Smith) Barnes, Miss Virginia Hutchens, now Mrs. Virginia Jones, Dahlia Tanner, Pauline Hines Beard, Wanda Jo (Norman) Benton. Mrs. Pearl (Cox) Rinehart came to work in the fall of 1949 and has been with the bank since, having advanced to assistant cashier. Mrs. Pauline Cox has worked since 1960 as bookkeeper and teller. Mrs. Mary Anders started in 1965 as bookkeeper and teller.

Mr. G. B. Tanner passed away in May of 1952, and Mr. C. P. Neal in June of 1953 and Mr. S. E. Lewis in April of 1953, then the board was re-organized with W. D. Payne as chairman and president, Morris Neal, as executive vice president, Henry Townsend as assistant cashier, and directors were W. D. Payne, R. O. Carothers, E. L. Lewis, Jack McAdoo and Morris Neal. Jack McAdoo having purchased the stock of Mr. S. E. Lewis. The same year Miss Wanda Smith, who is now Mrs. Wanda Townsend, was elected assistant cashier, she had worked previously as an employee or bookkeeper.

LEE NORMAN came to the community when he was a young boy. He was one of the earliest, if not the first, public weighers of Rule; he was for years a member of the city council - in fact, he had one of the longest tenures as such in the history of Rule; and as a young man he became a director of the Old First National Bank of Rule and continued in this capacity until it merged with the Farmers State Bank in 1933. He was a vice president of the bank at the time of the merger.

T. B. Denison came to the community when he was a young man, as stated in a previous article; he was a partner with Dr. J. B. Ragan in the first Grocery Store of Rule - 1905. Later, he became identified actively with the Rule Merchandise Company. He also had served as one of Rule's early day public weighers. He, also, as a young man, became a director of the old First National Bank and remained as such until the merger mentioned above.

All three of the above mentioned men were active in the local Church of their choice. Denison and Cole were on the board of stewards of the First Methodist Church and Norman was on the board of deacons of the First Baptist Church.

Malcolm and Maxine Hertenberger are still with us. They have been engaged for the most of the time in civic activities. Malcolm is a mail-carrier, Maxine is at times engaged in different enterprises and she makes "a hand" at everything in which she engages.

Gene Wood, after engaging in other local businesses for a while moved to Munday where he has the Ford Agency. Before he left Rule he had served on the City Council. So you can see from the above that the successors of the Old Industrial Transportation Company had as its successors some of the ablest business people of our little town.

Dave Earnest had at a different time worked at the oil mill and at other business enterprises until his death. He was also well liked and his untimely death at an early age was mourned by his many friends as well as by his family.



# The Story of RULE, TEXAS

E. J. Cloud

## THE CHURCHES OF RULE

### The Methodist Church

Before Rule was established, there was a Methodist church in the community though it is not now known by what name it was called. Quote: "A Short History of the First Methodist Church at Rule, published in June 1946: "The First Methodist Church at Rule Texas was organized in 1902 by Rev. I. L. Mills, who was at that time pastor of the Pinkerton Methodist Church. The church was organized with twenty members who worshiped in a school house located on the lot where the old F. M. Jackson house now stands. In 1904 the present location was purchased and a small tabernacle was erected. This was used until 1908, when under the ministry of Rev. M. M. Beavers, the first church building was constructed and it served the congregation until 1935. It was during the ministry of Rev. R. T. Breedlove that a parsonage was built, which was a wooden structure.

"During the ministry of Rev. J. L. Willis the old building was razed and the present educational building was constructed. Rev. Willis died April 12, 1936, shortly after the educational building was completed. This building served the congregation until May 26, 1946 when they began to worship in the new sanctuary.

"In 1945, under the leadership of Raymond Van Zant, the plans were made, the foundation and subfloor were laid and much of the materials were bought. About \$14,000.00 was raised in pledges and cash. In November 1945, Rev. Lloyd Hamilton was sent to the Rule church as pastor. During the year 1945-1946, the church sanctuary was finished and furnished. The membership has increased from 20 to 225 active members.

"The church has been served by many pastors namely: I. L. Mills, organizer and past-

or, 1902-1903: C. H. Ledger, 1903-1904; M. M. Beavers, 1904-1909; C. D. West, 1909-1910; M. L. Story, 1910-1911; O. M. Addison, 1911-1914; J. O. Haymes, 1914-1917; H. C. Gordon, 1917-1918; G. L. McAnally, 1918-1919; T. J. Rea, 1919-1920; J. W. Brown, 1920-1922; R. T. Breedlove, 1922-1926; L. B. Smallwood, 1926-1928; C. B. Thompson, 1928-1930; Elmer Crabtree, 1930-1931; J. M. Cochran, 1931-1932; O. B. Herring, 1932-1934; J. L. Willis, 1934 until his death April 13, 1936; M. L. Boyd, May 1, 1936 to 1938; Clarence Bounds, 1938 to 1939; Ray Lea, 1939-1941; Shan M. Hull, 1941-1944; Raymond Van Zant, 1944-1945; Loyd Hamilton, 1945-1949"--- end of quotation.

Since the publication of the above, the following have served as pastors: Oscar Bruce, 1949-1950; J. P. Baker, 1950 to 1952; Homer Salley, 1952-1954; Weldon McCormick, 1954-1957; Robert Brown, 1957-1958; Thomas Nelson, 1958-1960; Henry Adair, 1960-1962; L. R. Taylor, June, 1962 to October 10, 1962, at the time of his demise. R. A. Elmore immediately followed the Rev. Taylor in 1962, and he is still serving the congregation.

Quoting J. O. Haymes, a

former pastor, in his History of the Northwest Texas Conference, copyright 1962: "I. L. Mills is believed to have organized the church at Rule. Mills was on the Haskell Mission in 1904 and may have begun the work at Rule at about that time. Rule was made head of pastoral charge first in 1907 with M. M. Beavers as pastor.

The first church was built in 1908 (Beavers); the second in 1936 (Willis) and the present building completed in 1945 (Hamilton) is worth \$30,000.00; the brick parsonage built in 1956 (McCormick) is worth \$16,000" end of quotation. (You will note an apparent discrepancy in the two quotation.)

There are no known charter members who are living today.

Special mention should be made of at least one member Mrs. Marie Van Davis Laughlin, who so faithfully served the church as pianist or organist for a period of forty years except when she was in college, or when her children were very young.

Though we do not have a complete list of the charter members, the early members included: the J. E. Coxes and the Jim Davises (both families were probably charter members) the F. M. Jacksons, the T. B. Denisons, Mrs. W. T. Hines (she probably has been a member longer than any other) the Flowers family, the W. A. Earnest, Dr. and Mrs. S. T. Friend, the J. M. Steeles, the R. P. Coles, the J. M. Belts family, the J. H. Ellises, The J. W. Masons, the H. J. Leons, Dr. and Mrs. H. F. Weaver, the D. E. Verners, the R. W. Coles, The N. V. Speers, L. P. Browning and his wife (nee Ella Capt who went over to the Methodist from the Baptist), Mr. and Mrs. Joe A. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. George S. Link, the J. B. Laves, "Uncle" Hayes Smith, a retired minister and his wife Mrs. M. E. Hines and her children, the F. F. Hineses, the W. H. McCandless family, T. L. Hiner, the E. S. McGuire family, Mr. and Mrs. C. H. Spurlin and A. C. Waits, the T. W. K. Heads, Mrs. T. A. Teague, Mrs. Joe Todd, the Fletcher Golden family, the J. D. Halls, the S. B. Warrens, Mrs. W. B. Waller and probably Mrs. Brooks (initials not known) but she was Mrs. David Crockett's Mother.

### THE FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The above mentioned church was organized during 1905 at the school house in the southwestern part of town. The First Christian was the first denomination to construct their own place of worship. The building, a frame wooden structure, was erected during 1906. It was located a block or so east of where the First Baptist Church Building is now located. The Rev. George H. Morrison was the first pastor and R. W. (Uncle Bob) Williams was the first Sunday School superintendent.

The church was very liberal toward the other denominational congregations of the town by permitting them to use their sanctuary. Too, the members permitted the community to use it for school purposes for the 1906-1907 public school term. It is regrettable

that, the author has been unable to secure the names of the charter members of the congregation, nor has he been able to get a complete list of the Ministers who have served the church. However, it is almost certain that early members, in addition to Uncle Bob Williams and his daughter, Miss Mollie, included the following: W. H. Wilson and Mrs. Wilson--the latter having come over from the Methodist; Mr. and Mrs. R. J. Norman, Mr. and Mrs. F. O. Norman, the R. H. Penicks; Mr. and Mrs. W. R. Carothers and daughter, Audie; Mr. and Mrs. M. C. Dyer, Mr. and Mrs. S. O. Cochran, Dr. and Mrs. Grace, Mrs. W. L. Hills, Mrs. T. L. Hiner, Mr. and Mrs. J. R. Miller, Mr. and Mrs. Stephens, Mr. and Mrs. R. L. Vick, Mrs. W. W. Kittlev, G. W. Tanner, The Charlie Tarbets, and Mrs. Henry Townsend. Probably some of the younger children (other than those mentioned above) were members along with their parents.

Among the Ministers or Pastors, other than Mr. Morrison mentioned above, included: O. Banks King, W. C. Wright, John D. White, J. L. McKissick, J. Jones, A. G. Abbott, Granville Walker, Bedford Smith, McGeehee, Herman Pittman, George Cheery Holmes, H. M. Gilmore, Charlie Donovan, Jimmie Critz, J. W. Carter, David Earnest and Thurmar Morgan, the present pastor.

The congregation continued to worship in the first structure until 1929 when a beautiful gray brick building was completed on Avenue E about two blocks south of the main-district of town. The structure was erected while the Rev. J. L. McKissick was pastor.

There were many loyal members of the church who served later than the members mentioned; these are too many to enumerate here.



# The Story of RULE, TEXAS

E. J. Cloud

## THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

One of the early organizations of Rule was that of the Church of Christ, though they did not have a church building until about 1915 when they erected a frame structure on the present location. A few years ago a new modern light beige brick structure was erected.

Though we do not know for certain who the charter members were, we have a partial list of the earliest members, some of whom were charter members. This list includes:

S. T. Miller, Sr. (A minister) and his wife and their son S. T. Miller, Jr. and his wife; Mrs. M. M. McCully and probably some of her children. Mr. McCully came into the church later, the Jerry Frenches, the Charlie Beils, the J. W. Tarbets and several children (John, Tom, George, Misses Mary, Bessie, and Josephine, Mrs. J. I. Frazier and son, Bert, and his wife, Mrs. B. F. Ash, Mrs. Joe Rock, Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Weaver, the parents of Mrs. Rock and Mrs. Ash. Others included: Steve Lewis, the Ed Davises, the B. G. Hunts, the E. L. McCandlesses, Mrs. Florence Cook, Mrs. Tucker, Mrs. Linnie Coleman, Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Kendall and probably their daughter, Stella, the Garland Hamiltons, the Luther Johnsons, the Jim Finley's family, Otto Johnson and his wife, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Pippins, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Lewis, also among the list were the D. L. Hamiltons and Sam Johnston and the J. C. Westmorelands.

The ministers who served the church included Mr. Star-nes, Mr. Vernon, Mr. Harvey, Mr. Brutes Hanks, Mr. Otto Johnston, Mr. Alfred Waller, Mr. Harvey Payne, Mr. Mallary, D. L. Ashley, J. D. Thomas, Mr. River, Paul McClung, T. H. Tarbet, Jr., Travis Boyd, Doyle Maynard, R. C. Bell, Owen Akin, Cleo Scott, Arles Vandiver, and the present minister, John Greeson.

It will be observed that given names or initials are not mentioned in the names of some of the above ministers because of the fact they were not given to us. Also, we do not know if the names of the ministers are given in the order of their

## THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

It is little indefinite as to the year the local congregation was organized; but there is a record of a Ladies Aid Society as early as 1906; and that the name was changed during 1908 to that of the Presbyterian Ladies Aid Society. Also, there is information of a session that was held November 7, 1907.

Until their church building was completed, the congregation met for a while in the Methodist Church building. A long about 1908, they built a structure on the site of the present location. This was a wood frame building about 34 feet by 34 feet. This structure continued to be used both as a sanctuary and as an educational building until the present structure, a beautiful gray brick was erected during 1950. It was dedicated June 24, 1951. In 1930 a five room Manse was built on an adjoining lot.

The names of the charter members are not known for sure; but it is thought that they included those of the following: J. W. Kelley and H. H. Kelly, who were brothers and their families and their father, who was a retired Presbyterian Minister, their sister, Mrs. Lizzie Steele. Probably Dr. J. B. Ragon and his wife were early members and Dr. Ragon's father, a retired Presbyterian Minister, was among the group. The T. A. Mayes family was also probably members of the early congregation—this family, if our memory is correct, consisted of the father and mother, their son, Howard, and daughters, Misses Mattie Mamie and Pearl; Mrs. Hudspeth and daughters, Misses Sarah and Nora; the Joe Paynes, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Ellis; and later the J. B. Pumphries, the F. E. Gaunts the Gumlocks, Mrs. T. B. McMeans, the Joe A. Joneses, Mrs. W. T. Averitt, the J. D. Westbrooks.

The pastors of the church include the names of James F. Hardee, S. B. Hoyt, M. L. Baker, Winston Bryant, W. A. Cockrill, Charles A. Tucker, J. F. Loyd, James McLean, R. E. Hooke, Frank L. Crown, C. C. Dooly, David L. Parsons, Jr., Dan H. Barfield, and the present pastor, Douglas B. Finch.

The above pastors may not be listed in chronological order.

## SPIRIT OF RULE CHURCH NOTED BY ABILENE NEWS COLUMNIST

Kathryn Duff, widely read Abilene Reporter-News columnist and assistant editor of the Key City newspaper, had praise recently for the personnel and spirit of the Presbyterian Church at Rule. Her comments which follow are felt most worthy of inclusion in this newspaper.

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"Floyd Gaunt, retired Rule furniture man and funeral home director, lives now in Abilene. He is a member and elder in Central Presbyterian Church of Abilene but he attends, rather regularly, services at Rule First Presbyterian.

Jay Pumphrey, rancher whose family has long been associated with the Rule area, lives in Fort Worth and is a member of Fort Worth's First Presbyterian. But he helps support, and attends when he can, the Rule church.

Elders of the Haskell First Presbyterian can be found on official occasions serving as elders at Rule.

These and others reflect "the most wonderful spirit" of a church which is determined on being a church.

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The Rule Presbyterian Church dates back to the founding of the town in the first part of this century. The church flourished. When the town lost population, as many small towns have, the congregation dwindled.

The church now "claims" 24 members, but some of these have moved away and some others are unable to attend. Active membership is around 15.

Size does not, however, dictate spirit.

In 1952 the congregation built a lovely, well-equipped building.

It has a pastor, the Rev. Douglas B. Finch, of Haskell. And it has services each Sun-

day. (The Rev. Mr. Finch commutes. He drives over from Haskell for 9 a. m. Sunday worship services at Rule, returns to Haskell for 11 a. m. services there. Church school for each flock is at 10.)

The church's spirit makes up for its size. But there is another problem which "outside" help has had to solve.

The Rule church is short of men to hold church posts. It has one deacon, C. H. Vargas, and some young fellows and the rest are women. There is no resident elder.

"We had one, Dr. Donald Watt, a physician who moved to Rule," the Rev. Mr. Finch says. "But about the time he was ready to become an elder he moved away."

The deficiency of elders is overcome by volunteers.

An arrangement was worked out whereby the Presbytery named Mr. Finch "evangelist" to keep the Rule church intact.

When elders are needed, Haskell elders serve.

Exes help support the work, too.

And Rule Presbyterians have kept their church.

"It is a wonderful church," the Rev. Mr. Finch says. "It has a most wonderful spirit."

It is perhaps a bit more wonderful because Rule Presbyterians, past and present, want the church. And where one or two are gathered together...



## The Story of RULE, TEXAS

E. J. Cloud

### THE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

The above mentioned church was organized June 28, 1904 at a school house south of Rule. The charter members were M. F. Scott, A. J. Thomson and his wife, and W. J. Evans. The first pastor was elder J. A. Goodwin.

The present building was constructed in 1907. The land was donated by Mr. J. L. Jones, and the lumber was hauled from Anson by wagon. The building has been remodeled several times. New light fixtures and new seats were installed, a new roof was put on, and new wall paneling placed on the inside. Rest rooms and a 12 x 34 foot kitchen has been added. The building is, indeed, one of the landmarks of Rule. Many people from Rule and the surrounding territory have been members of this church, which by the way, is located in the mid-eastern section of the town.

The members have kept it in a good state of preservation.

Pastors, other than the one first mentioned, Elder J. A. Goodwin, include Elder W. H. Richards, the grandfather of our editor, Alton Richards, Elder Richards was a silver haired, wonderful speaker and preacher, and he was a diligent student of the word. It seems as though he could quote scriptures by the chapters. He was pastor here for more than 20 years and under his leadership the church grew to near 200 members. Then there were Elder S. L. Rives, Elder V. J. Lorraine, Elder S. L. Pointer, Elder T. A. Dunn, Elder Jimmie Bass, and the present pastor, Elder G. H. Crain of Arlington. Alton Richards, grandson of W. H. Richards, is the church clerk. The deacons are W. F. Waldrip, Earl Sorrells and Alton Richards.

The church has done a wonderful job in the feeding of the sheep. Their big associations are enjoyed by many people other than the membership.

Some of the early day members other than the ones mentioned above were:



An early day picture taken at an Association in 1908 on the same grounds that the church is now located. The house in the background is the J. L. Jones home where A. R. Eaton's residence is now located.

Several who came over from the Jud community in wagons, Uncle Joe Allen and wife, Albert Allen and wife, Crawford Allen and wife, the Uncle Jake Flournoys, The A. J. Letz The John Cogburns, .

A family who lived north of town by the name of Hicks also the Nathan Bingham family from north of town.

Uncle Jack Morgan and wife and daughter Carrie, who is Mrs. Elihu Weaver, and is a present member of the church. The S. O. Fraziers, Mrs. Emma Thames, The Lige Hattoxs, The S. O. Clarks, The uncle Tom Watson family. Mrs. Lummie Westmoreland, The J. T. Wright family, The J. H. M. Barrons, Mrs. Elida Hughes, Tommie Hicks The J. L. Caudles, a deacon, The Whisenants, The Wash McCartys. The Alvin McCarty's, The W. T. Hudson family, who came from Haskell was a deacon. The Sego family. Mrs. Ed Heller, The W. A. Shorts, a deacon, The Will Beauchamps, The W. S. Franklin family. Mrs. Gustava (Richards) Miller and many others whom we have forgotten.

Elder Richards, baptized many in the Hill Lake in the south part of town. After one Association, there were 40 baptized in the lake.

### CHURCH TO HOLD HOMECOMING MEETING

The church will hold a Homecoming meeting this week end for former members of the church. The meeting will begin Friday night and continue through Sunday.

5-26-1966



### THE SWEET HOME BAPTIST CHURCH

The above congregation was first formed in the Hooker Community about ten miles west of the present day Rule on July 5, 1896 with the Rev. C. B. Featherston acting as moderator and N. U. Guest as clerk. Among the charter members were the names of O. B. Smith, S. M. Smith, Alice Turbyfield, Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Carr and A. Harris. Probably there were others for the wives of some of the men are not mentioned.

The congregation moved to the Tonk Creek community, a few miles east of Hooker, in 1915. It remained in the Stonewall Association until 1925 when it joined the Haskell Association. During 1955 the congregation moved to a new site in the northeastern part of Rule. They erected a new, comfortable building. The church since its organization in 1896 has administered the spiritual needs of three different neighborhoods under the name of Sweet Home Baptist Church.

Several Ministers, though not pastors of the church, had their membership in the church. The list included Rev. W. B. Arnold who did evangelistic work in Oklahoma, in counties adjacent to the Sweet Home Church and at the local church. The Reverends Freddie Cole, and Allen Bristow had their early training there; Rev. Sam Hester, and Rev. Millard Smith held membership there as well as Rev. Clemer (initials not given) and Rev. A. H. Pierson.

Some of the faithful deacons included O. B. Smith, Bert Hatch, Dee Bristow, Frank Cole, Alvin Bristow, Tobie Hatch, Tom Cogburn, Floyd Dugan, Jim Pierce, Howard Tribbey, "Slim" Sorrells and Leon Pike and W. D. Anderson.

The pastors, other than the Rev. Featherston, included: the Rev's Mansell, Reed, Ford, Bateman, North, Funderberry, James, Spurlock, N. E. McGuire, G. C. Cole, George Hutto, A. D. Olechleam, L. B. Jenkins, W. L. Priddy, O. L. Dennis, Ed Dunlap, J. F. Curry, Lowell Ponder, W. P. Kirk, C. E. Wainscott, Rea Marshell, Jim Noles, McGarry, Hurst, C. W. Johnston, C. B. Baker, Sego, Harry Martin, R. N. Tucker, Tommy Reiff, and Jack Key, the present pastor.

Some of the above pastors served the church two or three different times. It is not known if all the pastors are named above, nor is it known if their names are given in the order of their tenures. It is regrettable that the initials or given names of all are not available.

### THE CALVARY BAPTIST CHURCH

The above is the most recently organized church in Rule. It was organized September 25, 1959. The Central Baptist Church at Haskell had previously voted to extend an arm of that church to Rule and to receive into the local fellowship such members as wished to go into the organization of an independent Missionary Baptist Church. There were twelve charter members which included the names of Mr. and Mrs. Robert Greene; Mr. and Mrs. Herman Coker, Jack, Charlotte, and Lynn; Mrs. Ovada Webb, Miss Gladys Richards, Miss Aletha Scifres, Mrs. Lucy Bishop and Miss Gladys

Knight.

At the present, Mr. W. C. Parsons is the deacon of the church; Mrs. Sam Jennings is church clerk; Mrs. Rose Coker is treasurer; Herman Coker is Sunday School superintendent. The pastors include Robert Greene of Stamford, and Danny Johnson, who has just accepted the call of the church as pastor effective at an early date. The Rev. Mr. Johnson is also from Stamford, Texas.

The church structure is a white concrete block building, is thirty feet wide and sixty feet long and it is valued at eight thousand dollars.

### THE WEST BETHEL BAPTIST CHURCH

The first colored Baptist Church was organized in the southeast part of town about 1914 by Reverend W. R. Underwood, a Pastor of the First Baptist and by the Reverend J. F. Curry, who was the Associational Missionary. The church functioned for a few years; but while it was an organization a building was built across the railroad in the southwest part of town. Evidently the church became dormant or disorganized.

The West Bethel Church seems to have been organized during 1926; and it appears to have had a period of inactivity. However, it was reorganized during 1942. This church has a nice, gray brick siding building which is about 20 feet wide and 60 feet long. It is located in the colored section in the northwest part of town. It has served well the people of that locality as well as the other parts of town.

The charter members (and we do not know if it was at the time of the reorganization or an earlier date) include the

names of J. W., Henrietta, and Matt Foster; Pinell, Evelyn and Peggy Jenkins; Abra Bush and John W. Foster, long time Sunday School superintendent.

The pastors include the names of W. H. Washington; Jackson--initials or given name not known (it was under his leadership that the building was constructed and others included one named Sheppard and one named Mitchell. Their given names or initials are not available. Then there were D. L. King, John Tisdale and Robert Esedor.

As stated above the church has been and still is a very important agency in the community even though the membership has been small. As previously mentioned John W. Foster has been one of the main "props" of the church.

Some of the white people have rendered invaluable services and assistance to the church. In this particular article, the name of the late S. M. Davis should be mentioned. While manager of the compress Mr. Davis employed many of these people and he was very much interested in their moral and spiritual welfare.

### THE FIFTH STREET BAPTIST CHURCH

The building as inferred from the title, was located on the Fifth Street. It is a concrete block structure made in a rectangular form which faces the east. The church was organized in 1948 by the Rev. Jesse Jones of Haskell. He served as pastor for several years and he, with his wife, did some effective work with the people so long as he was the pastor.

Though I have made repeated efforts to secure sufficient data to give the church a fairly good "write up" it appears that I have failed. The names of the pastors who followed Mr. Jones are not available, neither are the names of the charter members; however, some of the early members, if not charter members, included: Mrs. Grady Bristow, the Ott Simokins family, the Jim Holcombs and for a while the Roy Sells and the Curtis Gibsons. Then there were several from Haskell who were affiliated with the church.

The building is now vacant. It may be stated that the church did serve a good purpose for awhile, but for some cause it has become dormant.



later a wing was added to the south part of the building

During 1924, the congregation deemed that the building was inadequate. It was demolished and a new beige brick structure was erected on the old site. It was in 1925. During the building period, the congregation had their services in the school house. The Rev. S. E. Stephenson and the Rev. J. H. Edmonds were the pastors while the building was being constructed. The following composed the personnel of the building committee: C. O. Davis, B. L. Jackson, R. M. Smith, J. A. Cassle, Dr. M. W. Rogers, W. O. Smith Sr., L. W. Jones, C. S. Howell, W. F. Turner, J.

T. May, and R. B. Hills. Did you notice the number of young men who were assigned to this committee? The Educational annex was built while the Rev. Houston Walker was pastor, and it was dedicated in March of 1951.

By way of lighting the church has advanced "From Coal Oil" to pressure gasoline, to carbide, and finally to electric lights in the order named.

The growth of the church has been reasonably steady with occasional symptoms of "growing pains." The church has been fairly evangelistic through the departments of Sunday School, Training Union, Brotherhood, the Woman's Missionary Union, the Y. W. A. the Royal Ambassadors, the Sunbeams Bands, and the Girl's Auxiliaries, each cooperating harmoniously with the others. There are over three hundred resident members. Within the past few years, the church has purchased two buildings and has equipped one for a mission among the Latin Americans. Services are held each Sunday by the pastor, Reverend Jean Martinez.

To be continued next week.

On Sunday, Sept. 13 at the morning service in the First Baptist Church of Rule, Mrs. C. O. Davis was recognized as having taught a Sunday School Class for 50 years in her church. Dr. W. O. Beasley of Hardin-Simmons, interim pastor, presented her with a lovely arrangement of white Mums and carnations on the altar table from the church. He read from Prov. 31st chapter about the virtuous woman who rendered much service in her day, complimenting Mrs. Davis for many years of teaching in her church.

Mrs. Davis says she would

like to pay tribute to those who among the years have helped her in training as a teacher. First must come the desire to teach; for it takes work to make a good teacher. Her mother was an ardent Christian, teaching a Sunday School class in the country church. Yes, even serving as Superintendent of the Sunday School at times, and leading the singing. Such was the way of the country church. Mrs. Davis claims this as the foundation of her Christian life.

Mrs. Davis has belonged to the Rule First Baptist Church for 56 years. She joined the church here in 1908 and has been a faithful member since that time.

In speaking of her long life in the church as a worker and Sunday School teacher Mrs. Davis gives the credit to some of the people in the church that have been a great influence in her life as a Christian. Mr. Sam Davis, (no relation to her husband) was a great influence in her life, as her Sunday School teacher when she was a young lady, she stated that he was a wonderful teacher, and a great influence on the young people of the church. Mrs. Davis had her first desire to teach while in this good man's class.

Other influences in her life were her pastors, who helped along the way in training teachers in the church. She recalls Brother Charles A. Powell was a wonderful tea-

cher; also Bro. J. Perry King. These pastors taught back when teachers were given diplomas and seals for their awards of study; Brother Roy Shanan was also a wonderful pastor of the church in those days, and among recent pastors who have encouraged and inspired her to continue with her teaching was Rev. Rodney C. Dowdy, now pastor at Sonora.

Mr. and Mrs. C. O. Davis were married May 3, 1914. She was elected to an intermediate Sunday School Class in September. She taught the intermediates for about 10 years, then was elected to a Young ladies Class, teaching this for several years. In the early 1930's she was elected



**-MRS. C. O. DAVIS HONORED FOR 50 YEARS OF CHURCH SERVICE**

to teach the T. E. L. Ladies class and ever since has taught in the adult department of the Sunday School, teaching the Dorcas Class of young married women and at present, teacher of the Mary Martha Class of older women.

Working right along by her side all these years has been her husband, who has served in many capacities as a leader in the church—as a deacon, Sunday School Superintendent, Sunday School teacher, Choir director and on numerous committees.

Because of such faithful workers as this couple has been during these many years, the First Baptist Church has been an influence for good in the town and community, and has touched the lives of countless people who have lived around them.

Mr. and Mrs. Davis have two sons, Dickie, and Don Davis and a daughter, Mrs. L. W. Jones, Jr., all of whom belong to the First Baptist Church of Rule.