

REPORT OF THE ANNUAL MEETING OF TEXAS STATE HISTORICAL
SURVEY COMMITTEE & TEXAS HISTORICAL FOUNDATION
held in Odessa, October 28-31, 1965

It was our privilege to represent the Borden County Historical group at this meeting. The program was most interesting and informative and we would like to express our appreciation to Mr. John Ben Sheppard, President of the State Survey Committee and his assistants for conducting this convention.

We visited with our neighbors, Chairman Ed Fisher of Howard County and Mattie Conway Hines of Mitchell County. Both have enthusiastic plans for 1966. Mrs. Wayne Boren from Scurry County and Mrs. V. H. Montgomery from Abilene were making the most of time and opportunity. Mrs. A. C. Surman from Garza County and Mrs. John Harvey from Crosby County received Distinguished Service Awards and were honored at a special dinner.

An interesting highlight of our weekend was meeting Sheriff and Mrs. E. A. Wright of Sierra Blanca. Mrs. Wright is a niece of Tom Love, first sheriff of Borden County; Morris Miller of Albany, uncle of Mrs. William Miller of South Dakota; Mr. and Mrs. Alex Kincaid of Uvalde; and Mr. and Mrs. Will Wilson of Beaumont, friends of Cecil Davis of Muleshoe, who told us of his collection of more than 350 branding irons.

Outstanding in the crowd of representatives from 254 counties were Mr. Richard Santos, Archivist from Bexar County, the white-robed Sister from the Catholic Archives at Austin and Dr. Rupert N. Richardson, past president of Texas Historical Survey Committee and of Hardin-Simmons University and noted Texas author.

Keeping things running smoothly were Truett Latimer, our executive director and Bill McAnerny, Ector County Chairman and a DSA winner. Always present and assisting was John Ben Sheppard, acting as Master of Ceremonies. Mr. Sheppard impressed us with his intense interest and dedication to work.

The panel discussions were most interesting and the various counties had displays and scrapbooks which could have held our interest for weeks. Of special note were: our tour of the Presidential Room at the Library in Odessa; the John Ben Sheppard Library of rare books on the lives of Presidents; the noble bronze bust of John F. Kennedy; the portraits of presidents and their wives which are to be copied for the Smithsonian. West Texas is most fortunate to have this outstanding collection.

A year's worth of fascinating experiences was ours Saturday. We had a sunrise breakfast at the Meteor Crater with coffee, steaks, beans and biscuits tasting ever so good. Jeep rides were taken over the Monahans Sand Hills Park with a stop at the Museum - then on to Pecos and their Museum in the old Orient Hotel, built about 1896. There we were met by the Colonial Dames and old time ranchmen and in true western hospitality our group was served Pecos cantaloupe, coffee and rolls. Don't miss the museum when you pass that way! Then on to McKittrick Canyon - a breathtaking experience! This private property is not open to the public. However, it is being proposed as a national park and we hope all may see it in the near future. Upon reaching the hunting lodge, we were served a real feast by Mr. J. C. Hunter, Jr., Abilene business man, who owns this 70,000 acre paradise. The day was long and included a trip to Van Horn, past the Diablo mountains, back east to Kent and the Davis Mountains and to McDonald Observatory - then to Ft. Davis, a barbecue at the Prude Ranch with slides shown by Dr. Womack, outstanding West Texas Botanist. After Sunday morning breakfast, church services were held at Ft. Davis' chapel, with a tour of the Fort following. Our wonderful weekend was over and we just wish each of you could have shared it with us.

Edna and Frank Miller

THE BORDEN COUNTY SURVEY COMMITTEE wishes to express its thanks to each of you who have sent in your dues and family histories. It is most gratifying to receive such interesting and enthusiastic letters. We hope you will continue to send us detailed information concerning any aspect of Borden County history. A school history will be included in each newsletter and we would appreciate your sending written accounts of your memories - and including pictures. If you have not ordered your 1903 Land Rush picture, please send 10¢ in stamps. Remember the \$3.00 dues are to be sent to Mrs. Bert Dennis, Gail, Texas.

SHERIFFS SERVING BORDEN COUNTY

TOM LOVE - - - - - 1891-1896
W. S. MOORE - - - - - 1897-1898
S. A. (SAM) KELLY - - - 1899-1900
W. K. CLARK - - - - - 1901-1908
JOHN R. WILLIAMS - - - 1909-1912
W. A. CLARK - - - - - 1913-1916

J. Y. EVERETT - - - - - 1917-1922
J. R. JENKINS - - - - - 1923-1934
D. R. COVEY - - - - - 1935-May 1937
MRS. D. R. COVEY - - - May 1937-1938
SID REEDER - - - - - 1939-May 1963
MRS. SID REEDER - - - May 1963-1964

Mr. Clem Smoot died August 16, 1965 in Big Spring. Interment was in San Angelo.

THE BORDEN COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY has presented the Borden County High School a subscription to the Southwestern Historical Quarterly and also one to the Junior Historian. It is our hope that the young people will become more interested in history and we will be more than happy to help any student prepare papers on local historical events.

The second year Speech class from Borden High School presents a five-minute newscast each Tuesday afternoon at 5:15 on Lamesa Radio Station, KPET. Please listen to this informative program.

DID YOU KNOW?

There are many graves scattered over Borden County and the fascinating stories concerning them could fill a book. One such story pertains to a Mrs. Nix who is buried somewhere on the old W. D. Johnson ranch - the exact spot probably erased by winds and time. Mrs. Olin Keen remembers her father, Calaway Johnson, telling about this particular incident. In about 1890, a Mr. and Mrs. Nix, along with three children, were traveling through the County - no doubt looking for a place to homestead. Mrs. Nix died in childbirth and Mr. Nix came into Gail for help. J. Wilbourn helped make a casket from pine boards and went back with Mr. Nix to bury the young mother. Afterward Mr. Nix gathered up the new baby and three other children and returned to his old home. Later on in years, Mr. Nix married Buelah Newby, a sister of Mrs. Keen's aunt.

AN EARLY TEXAS CHRISTMAS GIFT

Cooking a Christmas turkey presents something of a culinary challenge to many modern housewives, but these challenges are nothing compared to those that faced the cooks of some early Texas holiday feasts.

We ran across an old story which tells of a Christmas feast prepared by Capt. Dick Ware, a former Texas Ranger, owner of the Cross C Ranch near Big Spring and a small spread in Borden County.

Back in 1901, the story relates, Capt. Ware decided to remember his two brothers - one in Ft. Worth, the other in Amarillo - with Christmas gifts.

About two weeks before Christmas, he had his ranch hands prepare two large hogs weighing 300 lbs. each, and two "runts" of only 150 lbs. He stuffed each small hog with blue quail, plentiful on his ranch, then stuffed each large hog with one of the smaller hogs - sort of a pig within a pig.

The Christmas gifts traveled by buckboard to Big Spring, thence by express to his brothers in Amarillo and Ft. Worth. Since there was a crisp winter bite in the air, the meat arrived in fine shape.

The story does not tell us the reaction of the two brothers when they received these unusual - but welcome gifts. Nor (and perhaps with good reason) are we told the reaction of the wives. But we are given Capt. Ware's comment, which was an understatement even by Texas standards. He said, "It's just a little thing, but it shows I'm thinking of them."

A HAPPY THANKSGIVING AND A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS TO EACH OF YOU

The Borden County Historical Society
Gail, Texas 79738

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