

The Story of RULE, TEXAS

E. J. Cloud

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH CONTINUED FROM LAST INSTALMENT

The various buildings, furniture and fixture of the church are probably worth \$100,000

Some of the early members of the church, other than they who were listed as charter members, were: The John A. Lees, the R. M. Smiths, the Will Taylors, the J. E. Clouds, the Wm. Turners, Mrs. Hayes, Mrs. Gilcrease, Mrs. Turkencoff, The J. E. Welches, the G. E. Davises, the A. C. Fosters, the R. K. McCleskeys, Uncle Jesse Finley, the J. C. Reddells, the J. L. Jones, the W. H. Berrys, J. R. Capt and his daughters, S. M. Davis and his wife, the John F. Odors, Miss Lucy Roberts, the J. B. Wilkes family, The T. J. Coles and some of their children John Chesser and his sisters, Miss Mattie and Miss Daisy, and their nephew and niece Ernest and Ruth Eiland, the N. E. Finleys and their granddaughters, Misses Mary and Jessie Haralson, (now Mrs. C. O. Davis); the John F. Joneses, the A. C. Jobs, Miss Vera Johnson (later Mrs. M. W. Rogers); the A. J. Warrens; Mrs. J. J. Payne (Douthett's mother) and her sons, Ross and Henry, and their wives; the B. L. Jacks, the L. P. Kings; Mrs. L. R. Rose and her daughter, Miss Fannie; R. J. Norman and son, F. O. Norman, who afterwards affiliated themselves with the First Christian Church; other sons of the R. J. Norman's who were early day members were: the R. E. Norman family and the Lee Norman family; Allen Hutto and his wife (they were the grandparents of Mrs. Della Hutto Tankersley; the W. H. Wrights who will long be remembered as sponsoring the "B. Y. P. U." now called Training Union.

PASTORS OF THE FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH

Below is a list of the pastors, though the dates of the tenure of some of them may not be exactly correct:

Rev. I. N. Alvis
Rev. Harvey
Rev. Powell

Total tenure of the first 3 pastors totaled three years: Rev. R. E. Smith 1908-1910; Rev. Jeff Davis 1910 (a few months only); Rev. I. E. Reynolds 1910-1913; Rev. W. R. Underwood 1914-1916; Rev. L. O. Cox 1916; Rev. J. H. Edmonds 1917-1919; Rev. C. A. Powell 1919-1923; Rev. S. E. Stephenson 1923-1924; Rev. J. H. Edmonds 1924-1925; Rev. Neil Greer 1926-1927; Rev. C. E. Ball 1927-1929; Rev. J. Perry King 1929-1934; Rev. J. W. Ware 1934-1935; Rev. Roy Shahan 1935-1938; Rev. J. W. Partin 1938-1940; Rev. C. A. Powell 1940-1948; Rev. Houston Walker 1948-1953; Rev. Wayland Boyd 1954-1955; Rev. Riley Fugitt 1955-1956; Rev. Rodney Dowdy 1957-1964; Rev. Mike Herrington 1964.

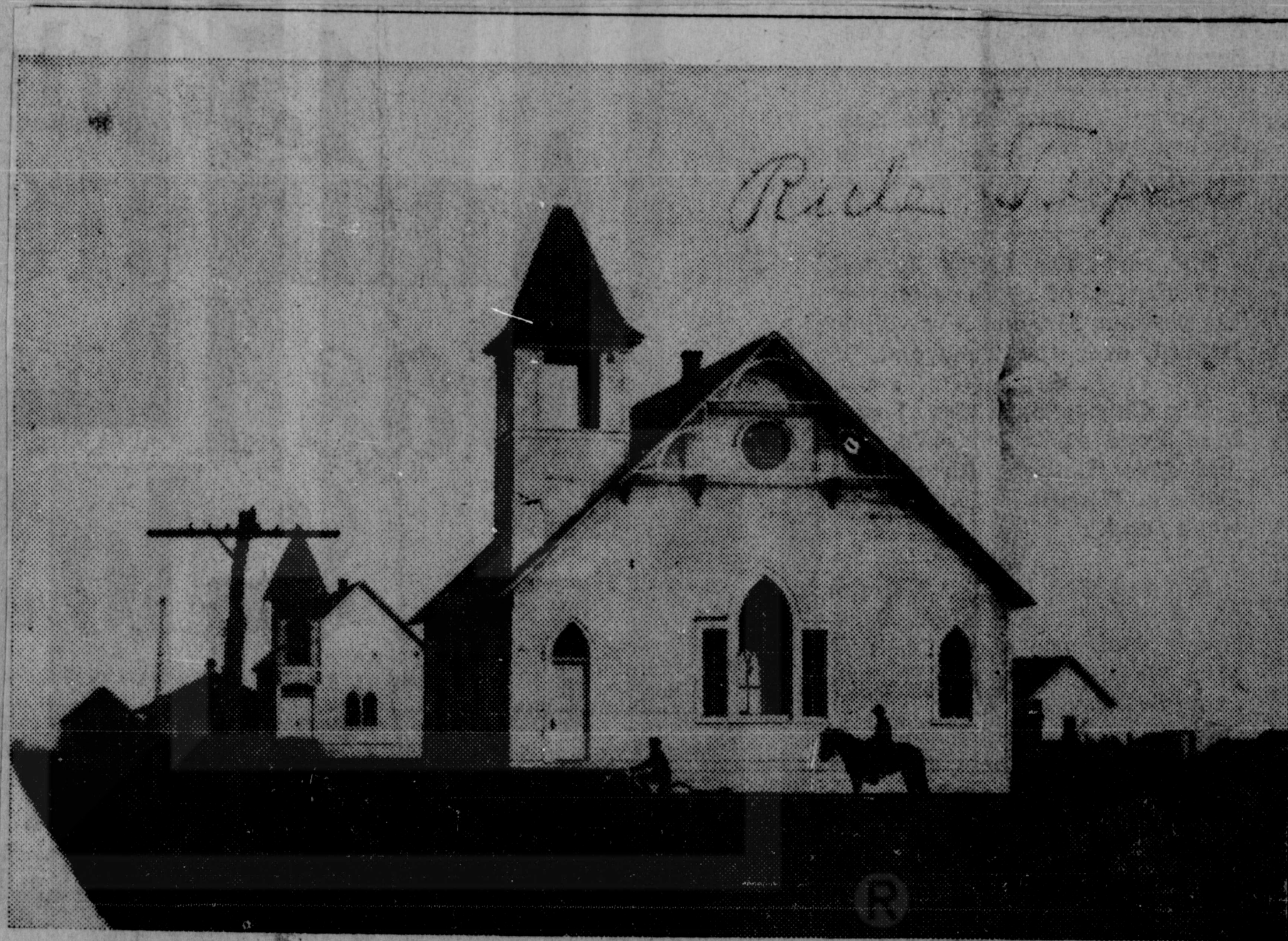
It will be observed that there have been twenty four pastorate, but there were twenty two different pastors as C. A. Powell and J. H. Edmonds each had two different tenures.

In addition to the regular pastors there have been at least three interim pastors; namely, Ed Gregory during the time just preceding the 1920's, Dr. Tillman Johnson (an uncle of Mrs. Frank Campbell) during the middle 1930's and Dr. W. O. Beasley during 1964. The church has been most fortunate in securing some of the best talent for Baptist Churches of the same categories.

This church was organized in April, 1906 The reverend I. N. Alvis who was missionary at that time for the Stonewall Association (which included Haskell, Stonewall and Jones counties) assisted in the organization. The reverend Mr. Alvis secured the names of fourteen Baptist who agreed to go into the formation of a local church. Of this number there were six of the Smith family. They were Mr. George W. Smith, his wife, aunt Jane; their daughter, Mrs. Bennett and her husband, Mr. E. G. Bennett and their daughter, Mrs. Mittie Bailey and her husband, Mr. Luther Bailey; Mr. and Mrs. G. W. May and their daughter, Miss Ora May who later married O. L. McCullough; Mr. and Mrs. John W. Driskill; Mr. Fayette Harris and Dr. M. W. Rogers. Of this number there were three deacons: G. W. May, G. W. Smith and Dr. M. W. Rogers, they were recognized as such in the new organization. Mr. Harris was elected church clerk. Of the charter members only two are living now (1966) Mrs. McCullough and Mrs. Luther Bailey of Plainview, Texas. Of the twenty two pastors who have served the church two were named Powell, but they were not related; two of the pastors served at two different times--Rev. Charles A. Powell and Rev. J. H. Edmonds. A complete list of the

pastors will be given a few paragraphs below. During the early days of the church, it had a woman Sunday School Superintendent, the former Miss Lucy Roberts.

The Reverend Mr. Alvis, mentioned above, was the first pastor, but at that time the church did not have a full time pastor. After Mr. Harris resigned as church clerk, Mr. John A. Lee was elected clerk and he continued to serve for many years in this capacity. During the early years of the church Mr. Lee headed a committee which was instrumental in the securing of a church bell. A reed organ was installed and Miss Ora May became the organist. The first piano was purchased during 1908. The Reverend R. E. Smith became the first full time pastor in 1908. It should have been mentioned in the first paragraph that the church was organized in a school house, the old F. M. Jackson lots, in the south west part of town. The congregation secured permission from the First Christian Church to use their building in which to worship until a building of their own could be constructed. This was done during 1907 and the location was on the present site of the church building. E. L. Carr, the father of Mrs. Audie Verner, donated the first money for the structure. It was a wooden frame rectangular arrangement which faced the west. A few years



Early Picture of Rule First Baptist Church Building
First Christian Church Building In background

The Abilene Reporter-News

PAGE ONE

ABILENE, TEXAS, TUES. MORNING, OCT. 19, 1965

SECTION D

Stamford Outdates Mill But Both Expand Together

By **TEX ROGERS**
Reporter-News Correspondent

STAMFORD — Communities and industries have something in common. Both may grow and expand with time, or they may shrink into oblivion.

Stamford and the Stamford Cotton Oil Mill also share something in common. Each has grown with the other for more than a half century and each has established itself in the test of time.

The Stamford Cotton Oil Mill, located northwest of town, was constructed in 1902 by the Swenson Land and Cattle Co., just two years after Stamford was founded.

According to R. R. Kelley, manager of the mill, the Swensons used the mill to process feed for their own cattle on their enormous ranch. There was a narrow gauge railroad running from the mill to the Swenson cattle feed pens.

Started Small

The Mill, which is now owned by Stamford Cotton Oil Co., was not very big when first constructed. But by 1925 it had six presses, 20 oil stands and 10 linters. It was powered by steam.

Kelley said now the oil mill is equipped entirely with modern machinery and powered by electricity. The operation has expanded to the point where it can process 1,200 tons of seed per week.

Proof that the Mill has withstood the test is verified by the fact that it is one of only 48 active oil mills in Texas. There were more than 200 in 1925, Kelley said.

With growth and expansion must come added employment, and the mill employs 20 persons year - around with 60 workers during the period of full operation, usually from mid - October through mid - April.

Six Main Products

Basically, there are six products taken from the cotton seed which goes through the mill.

They are crude oil, which is refined into other products; cake and meal for cattle feed; cotton seed hulls, also for cattle feed; cotton lint, used for bedding and upholstering; and chemical lint, sold as cellulose and photographic film, explosives and other products.

The actual processing of the seed begins when it is brought to the mill from the cotton gins and placed in a storage house. From there the seed is cleaned of trash by going through a series of shakers and air.

After it is cleaned the seed is moved into linters where high-speed saws cut the lint from the seed. At that point, two separate processes involving the seed and lint begin.

Fed into Presses

The lint goes from the saws into a room where it is cleaned by beaters, air and screens. It is then fed into the presses where it is packed and baled. Each bale averages about 610

pounds.

The black cotton seed, resulting from the delinting process, is blown into a 20 foot by 40 foot tank and stored until the next process gets underway.

From the storage tank, the seed is put through a hulling machine which separates the hull from the meat.

The meat is retained, but the hulls go into storage for cattle feed.

Next process is for the meat to go through a series of five 20 - inch rollers and then into a cooker and heated to about 260 degrees.

Oil Extracted

The meat, which is now in the form of a cake, is then fed into machines which extract the oil from the cake. The cake goes into storage tanks, after which it is pelleted or ground and sacked.

The extracted oil goes through a filter which removes all foreign matter under heavy pressure and is finally stored for transportation in its crude form.

The final step in the mill's operation is not performed until requested. It is the preparation of formula feeds.

Kelley said the mill is equipped to prepare custom feed on order from customers who have their own formulas.

Rule Review

"Serving the Gateway to the Cotton Fields"

The Rule Review, Rule Haskell County, Texas

The Story of Rule, Texas

Thursday August 25, 1966

E. J. Cloud

THE OIL MILL

This business establishment was founded either in 1907 or 1908 by A. C. Foster, Sr., W. A. Earnest and J. L. Jones. The contractor for the building was a Mr. Teason. He was assisted by H. V. McElreath who became the first superintendent of the mill. He was retained in that capacity until 1926 when he was transferred to Stamford as the general superintendent of at least three mills. W. A. Earnest became the first manager and he remained with the mill until 1917. It is thought that he was succeeded by I. C. Burnham. It is not known as to whom it was that succeeded Mr. Burnham. It is not known as to how long Mr. Burnham stayed with the mill nor how long a tenure his successor had, but W. S. Franklin came in somewhere and became manager and served as such until succeeded by T. P. Hornback. Hornback was with the mill for several years available information is that he was succeeded by someone whose name is not recalled or by Jack Mills. However, Jack came here during the middle 1930's and stayed for about ten years, when he was transferred to Stamford as the general manager of the area. As found elsewhere Jack served as Mayor of Rule from 1942 to 1946. He was succeeded at the mill by Henry Donalson who served in that capacity for several years. He was the last to bear the title of manager.

During 1933 the mill suffered an almost disastrous fire. The fire almost consumed the wooden walls and severely damaged the machinery. Mr. Averitt and a crew of workmen were sent to Jayton and removed the machinery from that mill and installed it in the Rule Mill.

Thus, the building and the machinery were almost completely renovated with more modern equipment and buildings.

It may be stated here that during the early operations of the mill, that it had used only a few hands and that it had only three twelve box presses; but after the fire in 1933, five fifteen box presses were installed. Following the installment of the repairs in 1933, the mill's out-put was increased from 75 tons to 85 tons per twenty four hour period---largely due to the better machinery which included a screw press. Other improvements were made from time to time. During the latter years of operations the mill used 55 or 60 hands during the peak of the season which usually was from five to seven months, though one season lasted a year (except a short time when absolute repairs were made in preparation for the next seasons).

About 1917, ownership of the mill was transferred to the Chickasha Cotton Oil Company and the name of the local mill was changed from that of the Rule Cotton Oil Mill to that of the Rule-Jayton Cotton Oil Mill. C. M. Francis became the area general manager though the local mill retained a resident manager.

W. T. Averitt came to Rule in 1915 from Fort Worth, Texas where he had been employed by Burris Milling Company. He secured a job with the mill and after various promotions became night superintendent and, upon Mr. McElreath's transfer to Stamford, Mr. Averitt became superintendent here and remained as such until the mill ceased operations. As stated above Mr. McElreath remained with the mill until 1926. Carl Cawthon served for a while under him as night superintendent---there is no information available if he had other night superintendents.

Cleave Baleman, a Mr. Parsons, F. C. Hodges and Miles Powell were among those who served as night superintendents under Mr. Averitt. J. L. Kincaid was a long-time bookkeeper-A. J. Dyches, father of Mrs. Irene Yarbrough, was a long-time repair man.

Elzie Butler had a long tenure as a laborer of the mill. There are others who are too numerous to mention.

After Mr. Donalson's severance from the mill there was no local manager for it was under the direct supervision from the Stamford Mill. The Stamford Mill issued requests and transactions to the Rule bookkeeper, Don Herttenberger, or, to the superintendent, W. T. Averitt.

The mill was a great economic aid to the Rule vicinity, and the citizenship regretted that the owners could not continue the local operations, but they were in a better condition to know what was best for the interest of the company. The whole community is glad that we had such a business with us for the many years and our people wish for the company many more prosperous years in their varied enterprises.



ANCIENT ART PRESERVED — These Lutheran women of Winters are practicing the ancient art of soap making, a skill vanishing in our era of industrialization. Getting a batch of cleanliness ready for shipment to Vietnam are, from left, Mrs. W. E. Bredemeyer, Mrs. Olga Minzenmeyer, Mrs. John Hiller and Mrs. Robert Spill. (Photo by Eddie Little)

Winters Women Stir Up Soap For U. S. Soldiers

WINTERS (SP) — Bacon drippings and grease from West Texas are helping clean faces and clothes halfway around the world in Vietnam — thanks to a unique project of a group of Lutheran church women in Winters.

The "lost art" of soap-making is being preserved by the women, who currently are preparing soap to be sent to Vietnam through the Lutheran Aid Project.

Their soap-making technique, passed down from pioneer families of West Texas, calls for using bacon drippings and grease as ingredients.

And the women who are keeping alive the soap-making art once stood by as children to watch their own mothers make soap in earlier days in West Texas.

Most of the women's families came to this area 50 years or so ago.

THE IDEA for the project came from Mrs. Robert Spill, who had read of people sending soap to Vietnam, and suggested that the women, who regularly

make their own soap in preference to commercial varieties, adopt the idea as a project.

The group, members of the Women of the Church in the Winters Lutheran Church, includes Mrs. John Hiller as

chairman, Mrs. Spill, Mrs. Olga Minzenmeyer and Mrs. W. E. Bredemeyer. Other women at the church are also involved in making bandages, clothing for small children, night gowns and pajamas, all for Vietnam through the Lutheran Aid Project.

THEIR NEXT shipment is to leave Wednesday. This winter they sent 500 pounds of soap to Vietnam.

Boxes of soap already prepared for their second shipment are presently stored in Mrs. Minzenmeyer's garage.

The women get together in the mornings in the yard at Mrs. Minzenmeyer's home to make soap.

Soap-making, as they practice it now, is not quite the same project as it was when they watched it as children.

Their formula is: mix water and lye, cool that for 30 minutes, add eight cups of grease slowly, stirring while they add it, then add four and one-fourth cups of ammonia, three or four tablespoons of borax, stir this mixture for five minutes, then pour it into a pasteboard carton, allow it to cool and cut it into squares.

THE WOMEN, who have been making their own soap all along, use it both for washing and laundry. For automatic machines, they grate the bars and use the grated soap, saying it is much better to get clothes clean than commercially prepared soap. Some shred the soap into fine pieces and then pour boiling water on it, making a form of jelly.

But soap-making is getting to be a "lost art."

Mrs. Bredemeyer related that she had stopped making her own soap about two years ago since it was simpler to buy soap. Others, however, have continued to make their own soap and use it, even at laundries downtown. The soap washes best of all in rainwater, they point

GREASE FOR their soap making must be bacon drippings or meat grease, as vegetable oils will not suffice. At present, their soap-making is slowed somewhat by lack of enough grease.

The difference in their soap preparation and that used in their mothers' time is in that in the earlier years cracklins and skin were used when hogs were killed.

These were placed in a sack of water and boiled, stirred constantly, then the sacks were drained and the grease cooked with water and lye, stirring with a board. The mixture was cooked until it looked milky, they relate.

Jesse, who gives the newspaper plant a "dressing down" with soap and water frequently, announced when he reported to work last Friday that we were "out of soap."

He litreally was, but how many times have all of us heard that expression to connote many things? It set us to wondering where that expression originated. You reckon it was back in the pure-D lye days when they threw in the leavin's, bacon drippin's, and most all matter into the black pot, stirred lye with it, let harden, cut in squares, and served up as soap?

Seems like the only way one would be "out of soap" with that recipe, though, would be when he quit eatin'. As long as they ate, the ingredients for the soap were there. And do you remember the "recipe" for making lye from ashes, or boiling yucca roots to manufacture shampoo to be used as a luxury for the hair in lieu of lye soap? If you do, you don't have to worry about the draft?

The Winter It Really Got Cold



by John P. Roche

The other day one of our Christmas cards came back stamped "undeliverable," and, below, handwritten, "Deceased." It is always hard to take the death of a friend, but normally there are certain rituals that ease the way, which at least superficially lessen the shock. But here, with no cushioning, was the bad news, bluntly conveyed by the postmaster in Lisle, N.Y., that Olive B. Walker was dead.

Olive Walker was not famous. She was the librarian in Lisle, a village on the road between Binghamton and Syracuse, who was crazy enough to provide a home for two newly married waifs in 1947. I was taking graduate work at Cornell on the G.I. Bill and my bride had found a job teaching English and social studies in the Whitney Point Central School, down the road a few miles from Lisle. Somehow we managed to acquire a second-hand Ford and every morning at 7 Connie would catch the school bus and I would drive the 30-odd miles to Ithaca.

Mrs. Walker had an old house with unique — for us city kids — heating arrangements. The big coal stove in the kitchen doubled its function by heating an uncertain amount of hot water which was stored in a tank in the bathroom. The tank had the double function of holding the water and heating the bathroom! The rest of the small house was heated by two pot-bellied coal stoves and the two upstairs bedrooms got whatever heat they could catch from the stovepipes which emerged from the floor like black pillars and went on up through the roof.

That was the winter to end all winters. For ten days the tem-

perature at 6 a.m. ranged around 30 degrees below zero: the windows were encrusted with crystals from the moisture inside. And it snowed; full chains were standard equipment on cars. (Actually a number of the roads were better in the winter than in the summer: the snow and ice leveled off the pot-holes.) But for a city boy the real problem that winter was not the courses I was taking at Cornell. It was the care and

feeding of pot-bellied coal stoves.

The kitchen stove was a cinch: you just banked it down at night and shook it in the morning. But the regular stove in what was our downstairs room was my nemesis (recall that on nights when the temperature was wandering off the bottom of the thermometer, our bedroom above was heated by the pipe). It simply would not last the night without encour-

agement. So I would set the alarm for 3, wrap up in my old Army greatcoat, and go down to make sure that fire would make it till dawn.

Mrs. Walker, who had grown up in northern Maine, looked on all this with friendly amusement. But what wasn't amusing was the freezing of the water pipes. Here we had a regular drill. First you always left a faucet running so the water in the intake pipe wouldn't get a chance to set. But at 35 below zero emergency measures were called for. I can close my eyes and visualize Mrs. Walker knocking on our bedroom door at some ungodly hour and saying "We've got to wrap the pipes." Up I would get, reach for that greatcoat (one of the finest all-purpose garments ever designed), and off we would go to the basement armed with rags and buckets of hot water. The hot wet rags would be wrapped around the pipe and, with luck, the water would keep coming.

Olive Walker was a sweet and generous woman who, having no children, had taken in and raised a number of orphans — one of whom fortunately turned out to be the deputy sheriff of Broome County who nailed me for speeding, but forgot about it when he learned that I lived with Mrs. Walker. She lived a long and full life and for us she will always be an unforgettable companion in our first year of marriage. Besides, how many Ph.Ds are experts on coal stoves or wrapping pipes or getting the ice out of gutters so the water won't back up under the shingles? May God rest her. — (Distributed by King Features Syndicate)

THE ABILENE REPORTER NEWS
Abilene, Texas, Thursday Evening, Sept. 12, 1974

9-12-68

J. O. Tanners Purchase Y & T Gro.

Mr. and Mrs. J. O. Tanner now own and operate the Yarborough and Tanner Grocery and Market having purchased the interest belonging to Mrs. Linnie Yarborough Monday, Sept. 1. The business will be operated as the J. O. Tanner Grocery and Market.

Life long residents of Rule, the Tanners entered the grocery business in June, 1965. They will strive to continue a courteous service to all.

Watch for their ad in each week's issue of this newspaper.



Rule Oil Mill & Feed Pens, Rule 1st.

THURSDAY SEPT. 8 1908

The Rule Review

"Serving the Gateway to the Cotton Fields"

The Rule Review, Rule, Haskell County, Texas

The Story of Rule, Texas

E. J. Cloud

THE HISTORY OF THE LISLE GIN

(Told by Mrs. Lisle in her own words.)

In about 1907 or 1908 there was a gin built on the present site of the Lisle Gin. The gin was built by Swift Gins. Some of the first men who ran the gin were Mr. Swift and his sons, a Mr. Williams, and John Ferguson, who later moved to Jones County.

In 1914 the gin had not been operated for a year or more and it was in poor condition. (Mr. Carl Lee said that Mr. W. A. Earnest had asked him to hire some men and repair the gin and to run it that year. Mr. Earnest had moved here from Munday in 1908 to be partners in the oil mill with Mr. J. L. Jones, who had several gins along with the mill business in adjoining towns.) That year was a good crop year and they ginned all winter.

The next year, 1915, Miss Pearl Earnest was the bookkeeper. In 1916 she married Mr. C. A. Murray, formerly superintendent of our high school.

The driest year has been reported as 1918.

Mr. Spurlock was manager of the gin in 1920. That same year the gin had burned down before they had finished the season.

In 1919 Ola Mae Pike and James A. Lisle were married on September 1, at Memphis, Texas. Jim Lisle had worked at Shamrock and Memphis for Chickasha Gin Company as a bookkeeper for several years before he had gone to the army in World War I. In the spring of 1919, after a period of about three years, he returned. He was given the job of managing the gin at Benjamin, where the Lisles lived for two years, op-

erating the Benjamin and Truscott gins. Both the Benjamin and Truscott gins were Swift Gins.

After the gin burned the Lisles were asked to rebuild it on the same location. In 1921 Mr. Lisle went back and forth each week throughout the summer to work. He stayed with the B. G. Hunts, who ran a boarding house in the west part of town. In 1921 the Lisles chartered two railroad cars and moved to Rule. They bought the house one block west and one block north of the railroad depot. It was on the southeast corner of the second block where Mrs. Lisle lives at the present time. The house had been built by the Bohanans in 1907 or 1908. Mr. Spurlock had lived there and managed the gin in 1920. It was a well built house made of lumber and painted white.

In the spring of 1926, the Lisles moved across the street and lived, while the old house was torn down and rebuilt. This time it was built of stucco.

Frank McCulley and the Cannon brothers were the contractors and Jess Smith was the cement man. (These men built many Rule homes in the 20's.)

The Gin that the Lisles built in 1921 was an up-to-date gin those days. Six, seventy-sawed Fratt gin stands, a frost steam engine and a large boiler fired with coals and burrs, and burr machine, all made up the new gin.

The gin crew was made up of Mr. Jim Gibbins, the fireman and engineer; Mr. D. P. Fuller the ginner; Dee Cannon, the pressman and a suction feeder, and the bookkeeper. (Many times the farmers suctioned their own cotton from the wagons.)

The gin was managed for 4 years for Chickasha Cotton Oil Company under the name of

Swift Gins. There were good crops and lots of cotton was ginned and in 1925 Mr. Lisles bought an interest in the gin business and the name was change to Lisle Gin Company. At this time Mr. C. M. Francis was general manager over the oil mills at Rule, Jayton and Stamford and 28 gins. He lived in Stamford and several years later he was killed in a car accident.

It was always a very rushing time at the gin when there was cotton on the yard. (Mr. Fuller said that he can remember one day when he ginned 76 bales in 12 hours and 20 minutes and Dee Cannon tied them by himself.)

Mr. Frank McCulley began working as an engineer in 1924 and worked for 16 years. He later moved to San Antonio where he died in 1965.

The first seed cotton storage house was built for the fall's use in 1923. Cotton was still picked in those days and great quantities of cotton could be stored in a cotton house. This cotton house was divided into stalls and, if a farmer was in a hurry, he could blow several bales of cotton into one of the stalls. Also he could store 20 or 30 bales of cotton in a stall and gin them out at one time, to catch planting seed this way his seed would stay truer to type. They would gin out of the house when they had caught up, or on rainy days. There was one difficulty with the cotton houses. There was never an easy way to feed the cotton out. When it was time to gin the cotton out of the house, extra hands were needed and it was very hard work. After farmers began to have more and better trailers the cotton house was used less and less, until it was torn down in 1950.

In 1925 extra equipment had been added on until the Frost engine had been overloaded. A Murray Corles steam engine was put in and it ran so easy and light that there was no load when more machinery was added years later.

At this time the gin building was built of lumber and painted yellow.

On Thanksgiving Day of 1926 the worst sandstorm that anyone in Rule has ever seen occurred. (Now 40 years later people are still talking about it.)

The year of 1926 was a big year for crops and they were not through ginning on February 12, 1927, when Mr. Lisle was killed by Mr. Favors who had not lived in Rule very long and was a day laborer at the oil mill.

The men who were working finished that season. Virgil Hunt was the bookkeeper. He had worked several years and he knew a great deal about the business.

Mrs. Lisle took over that fall of 1927. My only experience was some office work at Benjamin Gin the first two years I was married. I had some good men working and they all tried to help me.

My associates in the business were Mr. Sam Williams, a good friend of the family for many years, who lived in Eld City, Oklahoma; Mr. C. M. Francis; the general office force of Rule-Jayton Cotton Oil Company at Stamford (now changed to Stamford Oil Company); Mr. J. L. Pugh, machinery consultant and Mr. R. R. Killoey. A. J. Mills took the place of Mr. C. M. Francis. Mr. Mills and his family lived in Rule before moving to Stamford. All of these men have had encouraging words for my efforts.

The farmers who ginned with me were wonderful, overlooking my mistakes and encouraging me. And I needed it. Having four small children, I had no other choice than to continue what my husband had started; although at times I felt insufficient. I loved the work from the start and welcomed the long hours and hard work and lots of times, baffling decisions. I went to cotton school in Abilene the summer of 1927, but I felt that I still did not know enough about classing a bale of cotton to buy one. So, I hired Virgil Cassle to buy the cotton that first year. I continued to go to cotton school every summer for several years. The following year I classed and bought all the cotton.

By this time, the gins were buying most all we ginned. For 10 or 12 years we bought on grade and staple. Gins then began buying "hog round," which means paying the same for all grades. This practice was not fair to the farmers or to the buyers. If a farmer takes good care of his cotton and it is a

better bale, he is due more money. But cotton was pretty cheap and the cheaper cotton gets the less margin there is between grades. The "hog round" price was changed when the government started to class all samples free for staple and grade for the government loan. The gin cut the samples and mailed them to Abilene along with the grade card to be classed and returned to the farmer. The gin either bought the bale on the card as classed or prepared the loan contact for the farmer to draw his money from the Government Commodity Credit Corporation.

Mr. W. S. Franklin was manager at the oil mill when I first began to sell seed to the Rule mill. After his retirement, Mr. Tom Hornback moved to Rule and was there for several years.

We had some short gin seasons through 1928 and 1929. Some of the men that worked for me in those early years were Noble Glover, A. B. Arnett, Ed Hackfield, C. V. Ashley, G. B. Bishop, Frank Forsythe, Jake Taylor, R. N. Wilson, and Joe Holcomb. In the office were W. E. Baugh, Elsie Kittley, Homer Turner, Faye

Yarbrough and Floyd White.

In 1929 cotton prices started rising in the earlier part of the fall. It then went down and stayed down for several years. In 1931 cotton was 5 and 6 cents a pound. In 1932 there was a big crop but no one had any money because cotton was so cheap; In 1933 and 1934 the farmer planted all the cotton he wanted to; 1934 was a very dry year; 1935 was almost a miss; 260 bales were ginned that year. In 1936 many acres were plowed up. There were fair crops from 1938 through 1941. In 1928 the office was rebuilt and the gin was painted gray. At the same time, the new gin stands, 5 eighty-sawed continental brush gins, 2 new burr machines, a tower dryer with agas burner, and a new steel press were put in. The gin changed from coal for firing to natural gas and they also used burrs.

In 1938 and 1939 the gin changed the way they had handled the cotton bale. For years they had public cotton yards and voted on a public weigher. The farmer hauled his bale after it was ginned to the public cotton yard. (One bale or may be several.) Here it was weighed and the farmer received his weight ticket and his sample. He would then sell his cotton to the gin or as in the 1920's or earlier he sold it to street buy-

ers, bankers, or mercantile stores.

Ernest Hunt was the last elected public weigher in Rule. He was elected in 1936 and weighed through 1938. His cotton yard was north of the Co-op Gin. He was bookkeeper for Lisle Gin from 1939 to 1941 when he had to give up his work because of asthma that was caused from the gin dust.

Handling cotton through cotton yards caused double expense. The buyers had to get the city drayman to help them haul their cotton. The draymen at this time were Luther Rose and Bud Parsons. And the draymen could always get four strong young men from town, who were willing to help in loading the cotton. They could be given an order of 50 to 100 bales to haul. They would load them and take them to the compress. Here they had to be reweighed which was all extra expense to the buyer.

The farmer did not want to take the bonded warehouse man's weights and the buyer would not take the bonded public weigher's weights. This change was a touchy thing for several years. No one seemed to believe that a bale weighed just so much.

It was a big advantage for the buyer to have his cotton carried from the gin to the compress, weighed once, and put in a dry warehouse. Here he could get a bill of lading to ship it as soon as he presented his tickets.

There has not been much change in moving cotton seed and trash around gins. Always when a gin is running steady it can be a rushing job. There have been several haulers through the years but in 1938 Audie Verner contracted this job. Our daughters, Emma Jean Lisle and Jerrene Verner had just gone to Tech to school and everyone needed extra money. Audie recalls that lots of cotton seed was moved with a fork and scoop and, as the gins were moving all the cotton bales to the compress by this time, it made for a full time job. He later hired "Dad" Hager to help out with the hauling and he ran the gin stand. He continued to help until the year 1946.

The custom of hauling around the gin has gone from a wagon and team to truck, and then to big trailer trucks (when the seed had to be trucked out of town to a mill.)

After Audie retired in 1946, James Lisle Jr. returned from the Army from World War II and he has had this job ever since. James had been raised

heard of cotton micronaire reading for cotton samples. This is a test for strength and milling quality. This test had been requested by some mill buyers for several years before

they would buy cotton. Every year it becomes a stricter practice. 1965 was the first year this mike reading was put on the government classing card. Certain readings were discounted and other premiums were added on the price.

Cotton buyers of West Texas will tell you this district of the rolling plains from Vernon to San Angelo has the best record of desirable cotton for milling a more uniform mature fiber. Cotton is a hot weather plant and our long summer season is needed to mature the cotton. The only drawback is the long dry spell which occurs during August and September sometimes and causes the staple to be shorter. Cotton fiber will not mature in cold, wet weather. This is the reason why some years you have more seed and poor lint turn out. The farmers have become more concerned about good planting seed. For several years they have been having their seed culled and delinted before planting. Formerly people would catch their own seed year after year, but now it is the practice of most gins to sell planting seed. The Lisle Gin does have a seed block each year, planted from Breeders seed in blocks of 50 or more acres in one field and ginned in large groups.

These seed are checked carefully, taken good care of, stored and delinted in bulk, and put up in 50 pound bags which are made available to farmers during planting time at a cost price.

Men working for me the last several years have been R. D. Alexander who is now retired, my brother L. B. Pike who moved here from California in 1946 and bought land in the Jud community and built his home there and is the present ginner. Ennis Webb started working, in 1952 and in 1954. George and Emmitt Webb started work all three are cousins. Lonnie Martin who started working in 1933, but did not work for a few years while he was farming, J. H. Peirce, J. L. Reid Jr. A. H. Allen, Don Peirce, J. W. Rush. Roy Tribbey was the office help for a few years and Howard Tribbey worked in the office in 1964 and 1965.

THE ABILENE REPORTER-NEWS

Abilene, Texas, Friday Morning, August 13, 1965



GIN EXECUTIVES — Officers of the West Texas Ginners Assn. were elected at Thursday's session of members at Lytle Shores Auditorium. From left, they are B. J. Mikeska, Eola, director; L. T. Balkum, Lowake, president; Mrs. J. A. Lisle, Rule, vice president; and Miss LaVerne Weaver, Abilene, secretary, treasurer. (Staff Photo)

AT ANNUAL MEETING

Lowake Ginner Elected Head of Association

L. T. Balkum, manager of the Lowake Co-Op Gin, Lowake, Thursday was elected president of the West Texas Ginners Assn. He succeeds Raymond McLarren of Anson.

Mrs. J. A. Lisle, for 37 years manager of Lisle Gin at Rule and one of the few if not the only woman gin manager in the West Texas association, was named vice president. Miss LaVerne Weaver, of the gin division of Paymaster Oil Mill Co., Abilene, was re-elected secretary. B. J. Mikeska, manager of the Mikeska Gin of Eola, was elected a director, with Walter N. Baucum of Sweetwater, of the Planters Gin division of Sweetwater Cotton Oil Co., as alternate.

The election came at a business meeting of the association held in the Lytle Shores Auditorium of West Texas Utilities Co., attended by more than 60 gin managers, their wives and other guests. West Texas Chamber of Commerce provided free coffee during the informal morning session. Gin equipment suppliers were hosts to the ginners at a noon luncheon, catered by Mack Eplen.

Future Not Too Rosy

The state secretary told ginners that the future isn't too rosy but it is not all bad in the cotton industry.

The much discussed HR 9811 omnibus farm bill, which the administration apparently feels certain will pass, has been called out of committee for floor debate next Tuesday, he reported.

He said his information is that separate bills covering farm problems no longer have a chance in Congress. Most spokesmen for Texas agriculture hope, and feel, that the present bill relating to cotton will be amended. As it presently stands, he said, the bill would reduce effective cotton allotments by 35 per cent. He urged the ginners to let their congressmen know their desires.

There are four things the administration is set on, he said. They are: 1. A one - package farm bill; 2. No change in pres-

ent loan rate; 3. Direct payment to producers; 4. Some cut in acreage, but may be willing to discuss how much.

Bush advised ginners:

Not to go over - board on equipment, that there is a point where too much equipment reduces the quality of the ginned product; that operating costs will be boosted through minimum wage legislation; must work with the producer to turn out a better product; and "quit operating on 'paper profits.'"

in the gin business all his life and from time to time had helped out in every job from summer repair, office help, and every job inside of the gin house.

1940 and 1941 were short years. George Crawford started ginning in 1940. He had worked about ten years when his health caused his retirement.

Some of the other men working were Jim Holcomb, J.R. Barbee Jr., and T.J. Webb Jr. Those who worked in the office were Raliegh Conner, Shirley Lees, Sam Turner, and June (Lisle) White. My daughter worked for me for 17 years, a very dependable and efficient person. (I do not say this just because she is my daughter.) Emma Jean (Lisle) Cloud and Helen (Lisle Westbrook) Pinkard also worked at different times of the year.

Space will not permit me to name others that were good and faithful workers, but I can truthfully say that I never discharged but one employee in my years of ginning.

In 1940 we put in a longer set of wagon scales. They were all electric and 36 feet long. They were installed on the south side of the office. Before they had been on the north side and were just long enough for a wagon and team. This was all we had needed when the farmers brought in one bale at a time. Now they bring 3 or 4 to a trailer and the pick-up and trailer can be weighed at the same time.

The years of 1943 through 1947 were much better years for the gin.

In 1947 the old wooden building was torn down completely and a new foundation was put down. An all steel building was erected and all new steel machinery was added. The stands were changed from 5 eighty-sawed to 5 ninty saw ed. Everything was put on one floor level with the ground. It was an all electric plant. This called for a burner to burn the burrs which was built about 100 feet from the gin. It was always a source of worry when the yard was full of cotton for fear that the wind would blow the fire onto the bales. It came as a relief when the farmers wanted their burrs back on their land.

In 1959 Sam Turner contracted the job of moving the burrs for so much a bale and then back on the land with a charge to the farmer at so much per ton. He bought an all steel chain driven conveyor

type truckbed which hauled from 6 to 8 tons per load. The gin put up a 35 bale all steel hooper to blow the burrs in and to load from.

Every year more and more farmers are machine harvesting; therefore, increasing the supply of cotton burrs at the gin. Research and farm demonstration have proved the value of the burrs for maintaining soil productivity and soil condition.

1948 through 1951 were the best years of all the gin years

In 1949 the first lint cleaners were installed. They were made by Continental and were installed at the back of each gin stand. The lint went through the cleaners before it reached the lint flue on its way to the bale press.

The plains had a big crop in 1948 and 1949. They had not built enough gins to take care of their ginning. Much of the crop was hauled below the cap rock to be ginned. We ginned lots of their crops after we had finished with our own. They hauled it in 12-14 bale loads on stock trailer trucks. Near the end there was a big standstorm on the plains. One day a man brought an eight bale load in and when he drove on the scales the entire thing fell through. The load was jacked out of the pit and they tried to gin one of the bales. It filled all air lines full of sand and after other gins had a try at ginning it, it was run through a combine to remove the sand. It was finally ginned. But, that stopped the plains cotton.

The year of 1952 was very dry. There was no government program in 1952 or 1953. In 1954 the farmers went back to the program.

1949 was the first year the farmers began to contract Mexican bracero labor from Old Mexico to gather the cotton. The first to be brought in were by the Mathis brothers, Scott White, L. W. Jones, Jr. and Adrian Lott.

After they were brought in, the gin put in labor houses over the country as required for camps.

These men would come over under contract with only a small amount of clothing. Their housing, fuel, camping equipment, transportation and their pulling sacks and hoes had to be furnished. The contracts would call for two months to six months with a guaranteed wage of so much for 3/4 of the

working hours.

These men were needed badly during the good crop years. Five hundred or more were used through the peak season. And 50 or more were used through the hoeing and pipe-changing season. The price of their wage and, also, the contract price was being raised each year. The number of these men kept cutting down each year until December 31, 1964 when they were not allowed to come over under any condition.

The years 1955 through 1962 were all big runs. Big new trailers were being built more and more every year. These were a big investment only to be used when cotton was being gathered.

The machine harvesting causes gins to be overcrowded and there aren't enough trailers when the weather is good and everyone's cotton is ready to gather. When the farmers find it necessary to catch planting seed they line up as many bales of cotton as the amount of seed they wanted. Fifteen to twenty trailer loads of cotton could be filled in one days harvest.

In 1957 the continental lint cleaners were removed, double moss Gordon lint cleaners were installed. One large unit and another tower dryer were added. This improved the samples more than anything that had been tried. Better drying of the cotton before it is ginned improves the turn out and is not as much work on the crew during choke-up and rib fires. The Moss Gordon lint cleaner does a good job of cleaning up lint cotton after it has been separated from the seed. It improves the grade two or three grades.

In 1961 we replaced our lint condenser with a Moss-Gordon consolation. This is a single unit lint cleaner and lint condenser all in one.

In 1963 the cotton acreage was cut, and in 1962, 1963, and 1964 the boll weevil took over. So much money was spent on pesticide that when the year was over the crop was good but there was little profit from it. In the next two years the weevil and boll worm had become worse. They had left only half of a crop.

There was a good crop in 1965 and the farmers received a fair price. No one had spent very much to make it and there was pretty weather in which to gather the cotton. 1965 was the first year that farmers had