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GRAPE CREEK SCHOOL

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In about 1870, just after the Civil War, it was a common sight to see settlers with wagons, a milk cow tied on behind with a few head of cattle following on dusty buffalo trails, or camped at rivers and creeks. These people came from the Southern states as well as from south and east Texas. Before this time very few white people had come this far, as the Indians had occupied the area.

Some of these settlers migrated to what is now known as Borden County and as the population grew, there was a need for schools and churches. Neighbors banded together and pooled their resources, built schools and hired teachers. Such was the case of the Grape Creek School.

In about 1878, a school was built on a section of land, about 8 miles SW of Gail on land that was later bought by J. M. Rogers. The teacher, a Mr. Jackson and a bachelor, lived in a half-dugout close to the school. This school was torn down before 1900 but remains of the dugout, nails and planks, are still in evidence. There is no record of who attended this school.

In the early 1900's, the J. M. Rogers, Bill Cranfills, and W. M. Jacksons bought land joining one another. The first year, Flora Donaldson, a governess, taught their children in the Cranfill home. That summer the men decided to build the Grape Creek school on Cranfill land. After one year they decided to move it to the Rogers' section. The school had one room - about 16 by 24 ft., built of boxing planks and stripped with 1 by 4's - the stove stood in the middle of the room and a big tank that held drinking water was in the SE corner with a dipper hanging on the wall beside it.

Children were taught up to the 9th grade by one teacher. The teachers were hired by the Grape Creek School Board, the County School Board and with the approval of the County Judge or Superintendent. Some of the board members were: H. E. Bennet, Will Cranfill, J. M. Rogers, and W. M. Jackson. County School Board members were: Sam Keen, Will Hamilton, J. H. Beal, and H. E. Bennett. Judge Searcy, Dr. Hannabass, Lee Pearce and Dave Dorward served in the latter capacities.

The teachers who taught at Grape Creek throughout the years were: Lela Stagner, Marie Love, May Kent, Laura Jagers, Ellen Johnson, Irene Hutcherson, Eupha Stacey, Viola Cherry, Lorene Pearce, Tama Hollar, Katie Wilbourn, and Naomi McIver. The teachers boarded with different families in the community and one-half their salaries was paid by the County and one-half by the State.

Pupils who attended this school were children from the following families: Rogers, Cranfill, Jackson, Mitchell, Williams, Clark, Randolph, Page, Pruitt, Green, Pearson, Moore, Smith and Taylor.

The school had a beautiful location and was near a creek. Willow trees grew along its banks and about a half mile away stood a hill where Comanche Indians had camped at one time. The charred rocks of many camp fires could be found and the children delighted in digging among these ruins for arrowheads. Some of the children walked five miles to school - others came in hacks or buggies, on burros and one family had a bicycle, which was shared by all. Former pupils of Grape Creek love to reminisce about their school days. Many recall the plays they produced and remembered how hard they had to work before the final production was ready. One of the most outstanding of their efforts was called "Deacon Dubbs". At recess and lunch, they would burn rat's nests, play baseball and such games as "Annie Over" and "Picking Up Sticks". Then there were always the mud fights held down on the creek after a rain! Most of the boys had traplines that they ran on the way to and from school. Of course everyone could tell as quickly as they came into the room just what they had caught that day! But reports say that the children stayed very well and had very few colds during the trapping seasons.

Grape Creek school doubled as a church once a month. Services were held in the evenings by the Rev. J. A. Petty and Rev. Hart.

Three of the teachers married Borden County men - they were: Naomi McIver married J. K. Mitchell; Katie Wilbourn married Alvin Jackson; and Tama Pratt married Elmer Hollar. Then there was Laura Jagers, who fell madly in love with Charlie Rowell, a cowhand on the Muleshoe Ranch. Miss Jagers taught 1½ years but became ill and died the following summer of tuberculosis.

After the young people finished the 9th grade, they went on to Gail to graduate from high school. In later years, Grape Creek School ceased to exist but the memory of pleasant days linger in the hearts of the students. On the following page there are two pictures of the school and of some of the children who attended.



b.row: Ollie Page, May Rogers,
Lillie Rogers, Edna Page, Laura
Page and Attie Rogers.
f.row: Jack Rogers, Joe Rogers,
Vivian Clark, Tillman Rogers,
Aubrey Rogers and John Page.

back: Mary Mullnix (cousin to Mrs.
Jackson) and the teacher, Marie
Love.
front: Jack, Aubrey, Lillie, Till-
man and May Rogers. Alvin Jackson
stands behind May.

The following taken from
THE BORDEN CITIZEN
Gail, Borden County, Texas, Thursday, Dec. 1907

Quite a number of prospectors
passed through our town Wednes-
day bound for Post City.

To Those who are Indebted to Me.

I am now having heavy obli-
gations to meet and must rely
on those whom I have favored to
aid me. All who are indebted
to me, either by note or account
are earnestly requested to settle
at once.

Respectfully

J. W. CHANDLER.

For Sale

Four work mules, two horses and
six sets of harness. Also a new
Peter Schuttler Wagon. Price
\$875.

J. B. DITTO,
Ira, Texas.

Get my prices on cattle Dip
Paint, Wall paper (Phonographs
and records a specialty.)

W. L. Doss.
Colorado, Texas.

Mail or send your watches to
Towle & Johnson, Snyder Texas
every watch guaranteed, with
careful usage to run and keep time
one year.

A good place to spend your
cash is at J. D. McDonald's, dea-
ler in Fruits, Candies, Groceries
and Notions Crockery and Tin-
ware. One door east of A. G.
Halls store, Big Springs, Texas.

For Sale

A pair of mule colts, in the next
30 days. Cheap for cash. Apply
to N. H. Graham 20 miles north
of Gail.

Gail Blacksmith Shop

J. C. Babb, Prop.

All kinds of Blacksmithing Wheelright and Woodwork
also Horse shoeing promptly done and
satisfaction guaranteed.

West side public square

Gail Texas

R. N. Miller, Pres. J. D. Brown, Cash. D. Dorward Jr. Asst Cash

GAIL BANK

(UNINCORPORATED)

Will do a general Banking business.

Exchange drawn on the principal Commercial cities.

D. Dorward & Co.

PURE FRESH DRUGS,

Druggists Sundries

Fine Candies

J. H. HANNABASS M. D.

Special attention given to diseases of
women and children.

Office at Drug Store,

Gail, Texas.

E. R. YELLOTT

ATTORNEY & LAND AGENT
Will Practice in District and

GAIL TEXAS.