

OMAHA 100

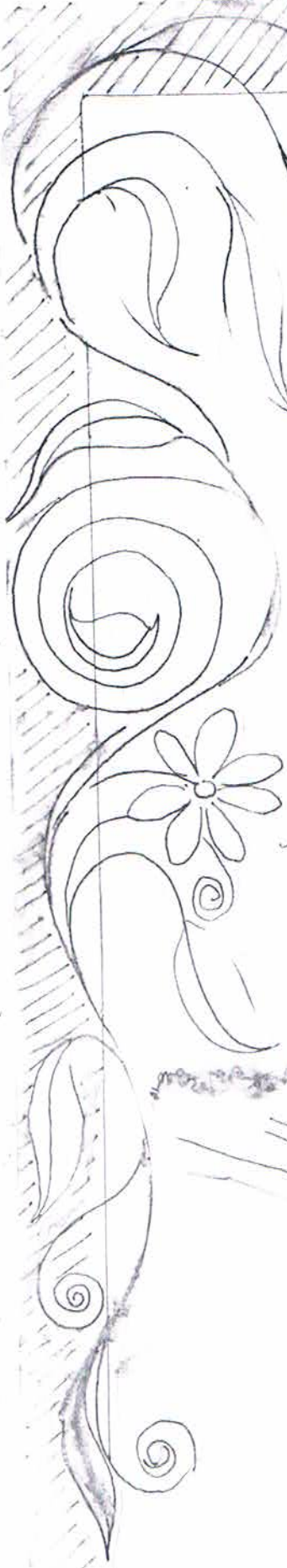
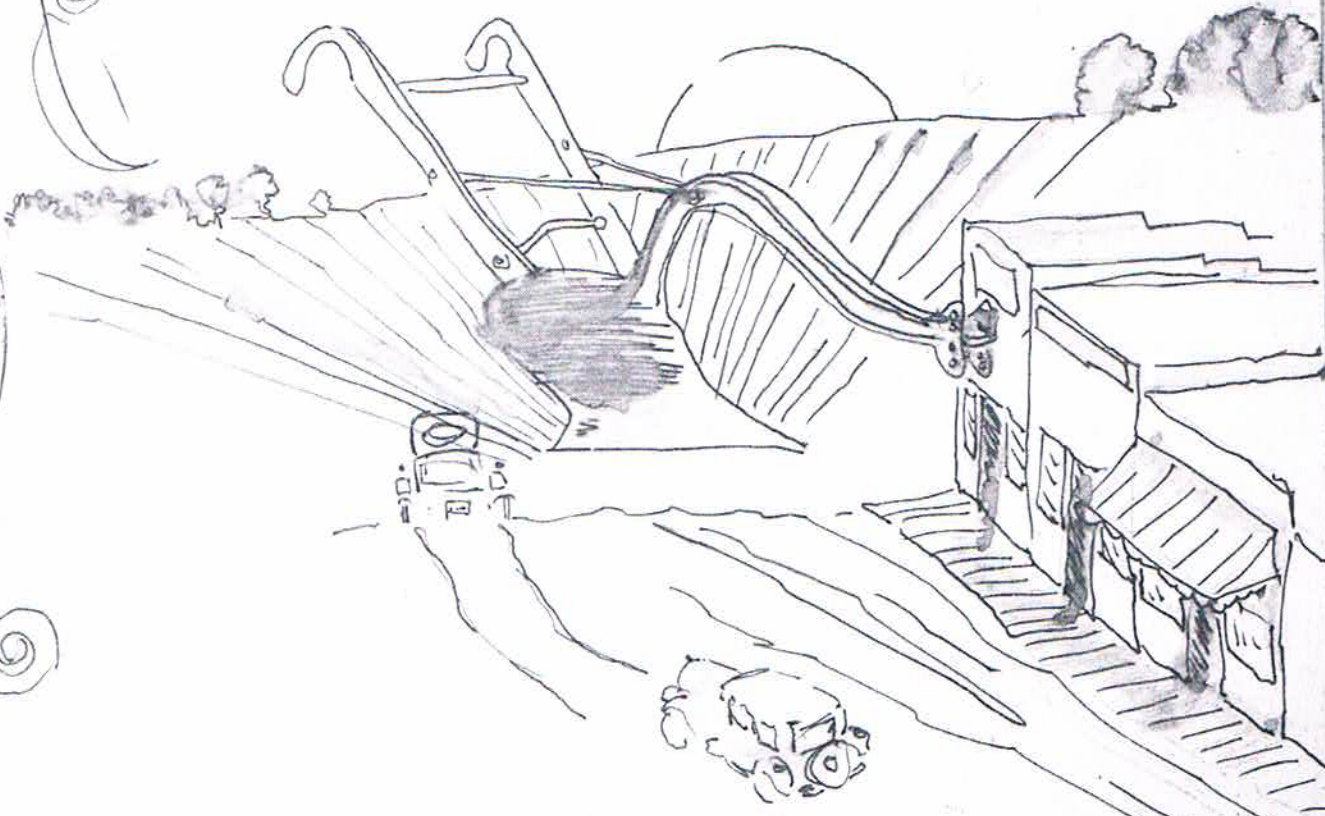


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A Special Thanks to: Eva Henderson, Lessie Lee Hobbs, Amaleen Bartunek, Virginia Shaver, Josephine Harwell and Grace Towles without whose old photographs this book would not have been made possible.

Omaha chamber event "just like an old-time homecoming"

Large crowd enjoys 1981 festival

"It was just like an old-time homecoming," the man said of Omaha's Fall Festival Saturday. People crowded the streets of the town from early morning until late that night to enjoy the activities sponsored by the Omaha Chamber of Commerce. Contests, games, garage sales and displays drew participants and spectators throughout the day and a street dance completed the event that night.

An early morning 3.1 mile run on a course near the new Omaha bank drew 41 contestants ranging in age from the 0-15 bracket up to the 46-51-year old division. David Jones of Bloomburg and Phillip Rice of Atlanta completed the race in a time of 17:01 to take the race's top trophies. Martha McGuire of Hughes Springs was the first female finisher in the race, completing the course in 26:20.

Following the marathon run, two bicycle races were conducted on the same course. In the bike race for the 21 and over group, Ronny Foster of Daingerfield was the winner in a time of 11:14. Jerry Foster was second in a time of 11:20 and Gib Johnson was third with a clocking of 11:42. Ten racers took part in the event. Eighteen others entered a bike race for a 20-years old and under division. Kevin Knight of Daingerfield won that bracket in a time of 12:27. Richard Brown of Naples had a 14:01 time for second place and Tina Foster of Daingerfield placed third in 14:27.

Complete results, places and times, will be printed next week in The Monitor.

Filling the air in the downtown area most of the day was the aroma of fresh chili as cooks prepared for the chili-cookoff contest that afternoon. Judged by Larry Cowan of Daingerfield, Ken Falls of Naples and Don Milam of Mt. Pleasant, the best "pot" of chili was cooked-up by Pete Green of Marshall. The chili entry of Bill Atteberry of Omaha earned only a sixth place in the contest, but earned two other awards. His "Wild Bill's Forkelberry II Delux Chili" was termed "the worst", and he won an award for the most unusual pot -- a commode, properly sanitized and sterilized, and using a can of 'sterno' for heat.

Green won \$50 for his efforts and then donated the money back to the chamber of commerce for its use. Ribbons were given to all contestants. In the order of placement, by the judges, contestants included Pete Green of Marshall, John Kirk of Omaha, Scotty Lanier of Omaha, Lanny Peek of Omaha, Ercell Duncan of Mt. Pleasant, Bill Atteberry of Omaha, Jerrol Davis of Omaha, Bernie Edwards of Omaha, Mountie Kidwell of Omaha and Ike Carruth of Omaha. A chili supper, later in the day at the civic center, drew a large crowd to enjoy the fixin's of the chili cooks.

An afternoon drawing for prize money was conducted with Dora Watson winning a prize of \$100. Mary Nance, Janice Bufford, Sheila Belyeu and Norris Roach each won \$50. A silk flower arrangement was won by Teresa Pople and Lee Nicewander won a door. Those two prizes were donated by the Unique Shoppe and J&L Construction.

Milton Dailey's Dailey Double" armadillo races drew a standing-room-only crowd during the afternoon with the top prize going to Munky Mars of Mt. Pleasant. Second place was won by the fleeing animal of Kevin Dailey and third place went to the entry of Rex Allen Hawkins.

Joe Mac Duncan kept things moving, mostly his broom, at the cow-chip throwing contest during the afternoon. Cow-chips were located and donated by David Harrod and the contest had a number of entries. In the men's bracket, the best throw was made by Milton Dailey. His winning throw was for a distance of 130-feet, six inches. Ricky Joyner was second and Butch Wittkohl was third. In the Women's division, Teresa Homer placed first with a chunk of 97-feet, 6-inches. Cindy Tyler was second and Brenda Wittkohl placed third. J.C. Anderson's 82-feet, 6-inch effort earned him first place in the 11 to 15-year old grouping. Taking second place was Tony Osmon. Bret Hart was third. The 10-and-under bracket was won by Keith Dailey with a throw of 39-feet. Harry James Vissering placed second and Kevin Dailey was third.

A country fair, with displays and contests, was staged at the civic center during the day. Dora Watson won the sweepstakes award for her bread entry and Dorothy Betts won a blue ribbon. Winning the prize for the best cake was Genelle Jones. Blue Ribbons were awarded Era Jane Ellis, Debbie Mize and Dorothy Betts. Mary Ann Joyner won a red ribbon and Nancy Carter and Barbara Meadows received white ribbons. Mary Jane Joyner's pie won a blue ribbon and prize in the cookie contest included a sweepstakes award for Many Jane Joyner and a red ribbon for Mrs. Edwin Mize.

Rowene Beasley won the top award in the embroidery contest. Red ribbons were won by Mrs. Debbie Mize and Judy Derrick. White ribbons went to Mrs. James Dunn and Virginia Shaver. In the knitting division, Irene Smith won sweepstakes and Dovie Wall Tuck received a white ribbon.

Sweepstakes for crewel was won by Era Ellis. Blue ribbons were given to Irene Smith and Ann Brumfield. Marie Beasley won a red ribbon and white ribbons were presented to Idora Thompson and Mrs. E.J. Leeves.

In the quilting contest, Era Jane Eillis took the sweepstake prize. Blue ribbons were given to Mrs. E.J. Leeves, Vera Hall and Mary Nance. Kittie Williams and Thelma Tucker won red ribbons and white ribbons went to Rebecca Fields, Sally Morris, Mrs. M.N. Johnston and Debbie Mize.

Genelle Jones took top honors in a miscellaneous grouping of the contest. Winning blue ribbons were Lura Smith, Marie Beasley, Ike Carruth, Thelma Tucker and Almaleen Bartunek. Red ribbons were awarded to Buddy Johnson, Inez Carruth and Irene Smith.

Kay Forrest was the sweepstakes winner in the needlepoint bracket. Inez Smith won the blue ribbon and red ribbons were won by Ercell Duncan and Idora Thompson. Dubie Vaughn took top honors in the crochet division. Winning blue ribbons were Mrs. Jane Dunn, Lois Jones, Scotty Lanier, Ercell Duncan, Irene Smith, Thelma Tucker, Lillian Joyner and Mary Nance. Red ribbons were presented to Sally Morris, Mrs. David Dunn, Eve Loffer, Mrs. Larry Jones and Loyd Vaughan, Dovie Wall Tuck and Mrs. M. W. Johnson each received a white ribbon.

The final event of the festival was the well-attended street dance where music and entertainment was furnished by a group consisting of Marty Munkers, Keith Munn, Rex Hawkins, George Caraway and Milton Dailey.

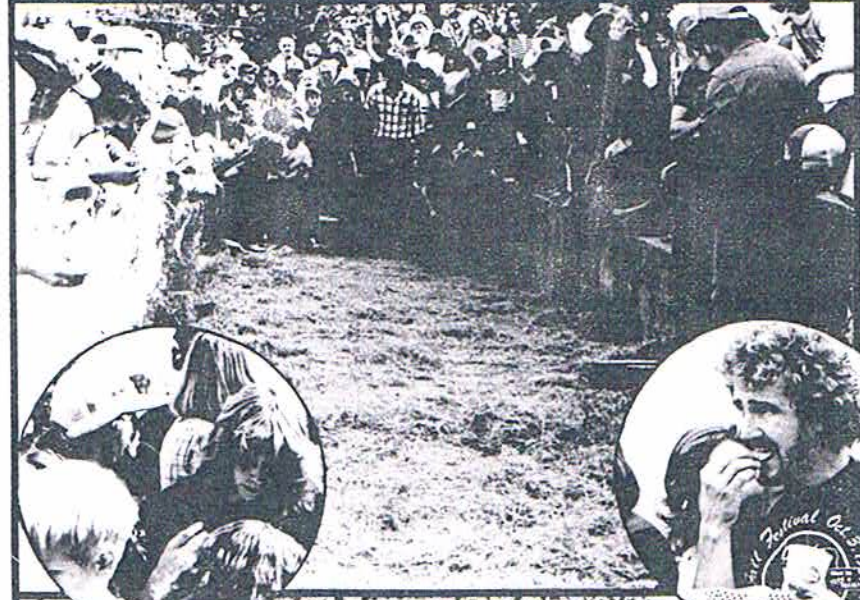


the **MONITOR**

photos by
Morris Craig

Naples, Texas

Thursday, October 8, 1981





The name Omaha that was drawn from the hat was suggested by William Noah Ellis, at left.



REMEMBRANCES OF OMAHA by Allie Smith

Introduction: Our local historian, Mrs. Allie Smith, has researched material gathered over the years, and provided the Omaha Centennial publication with an inclusive history of our town up to the present date. In turning the material over to me, Mrs. Smith offered a thought that encapsulated the effect of the twentieth century race into the future on rural East Texas: She said "The spot where the sun first shone down on Omaha 100 years ago is now completely surrounded by concrete".

110 years ago, the conception of a town where Omaha now stand was being talked about.

The St. Louis, Arkansas, and Texas Railroad was beginning a survey from Gatesville, Texas to Decatur, Illinois.

Thompson Morris, who owned a large tract of wilderness land around Omaha's present site, was instrumental in bringing the survey curving through this area. After it was established that the railroad would pass through the Omaha area, lots were surveyed for the town, and a railroad depot was built.

Later, the woods were cleared, and a sawmill, and a grist mill for corn and wheat were built.

The lumber from the sawmill was used to build homes and businesses. Twelve small frame buildings were raised, and the woods were cleared back to where people could grow crops.

The railroad was named the Cotton Belt, after the king crop of the area.

Thompson Morris was the son of Samuel Morris, who owned 1100 acres of land north of Naples. At the time there was a town there called Wheatville which he helped build.

After calling the infant community Morris town in honor of its founder, the name was later changed to Gavett when a post office was built.

For awhile, because a town further east had the same name, the mailing got mixed up. Then people got together and renamed it Omaha. Each one selected a name that was dropped in a hat. Mr. William Noah Ellis' name (Omaha) was drawn from the hat.

Many people came here to live from Alabama, Georgia, Arkansas and Mississippi. The families that settled here were industrious in preparing their business houses and homes.

One mile west of Omaha, David Elliott owned land where Omaha cemetery now is. He donated the land for the cemetery. There is a marker in honor of him near the center. He also built Union Church north of the cemetery road. The masons had chapel there. Three denominations held services there one Sunday of each month until they had built their own churches. There was also an early school house where something like 250 students attended.

Later, Thompson Morris gave more lots north of the depot. In 1893, the early frame business buildings were destroyed by fire. New brick businesses were built from brick made at the Wheatville kiln. Eighteen were built in all.

In the early 1900's, land was still being cleared. People were growing crops of corn and wheat, cut cotton was the main crop.

Some buildings in Omaha in 1912 were: Hugh Ellis Lumber Yard, The David Elliott Chapel (a brick structure) is now remodeled and still in use.

Morris gave the lots where the Baptist Church and the Methodist Church now stand. These churches were originally frame but were rebuilt in brick in the early 1920's.

George Heard owned a cotton gin west of town. In 1920, he ginned 3000 bales.

There was a cottonseed oil mill located where the plant warehouse is now that did a thriving business during those boom years.

There were two grist mills. One was located at Heard's gin, and the other was owned by a Mr. Goins.

Train car loads of Irish potatoes bagged up by the hundred weight were shipped from Omaha.

Bushel baskets filled to the brim with local peached departed by the train load also.

David James Talley shipped over a thousand bushels in an early season.

Later, Grady Farrier, son of F.W. Farrier, one of the first settlers of Omaha, had acres of peach orchards.

Also, Grady Farrier owned large plant farms where different varieties of plants were grown and shipped out by rail.

All over the United States, watermelons were a big industry. They were shipped away on the train cars also.

Sweet potatoes were also grown in big fields. They had a kiln in Omaha, and kept hundreds of bushels through the winter.

Omaha had Trades Day the first Saturday of each month. The event drew hundreds of people to shop in town. This event was in town several years (1925-1940's) while business was on the boom.

One of the pioneer families who came here early was the F.W. Farrier's. They had a large family of boys and one girl.

Jeff Talley, in 1885, lived south east of the railroad in Omaha in a nice home which he later sold to the Heard family. Milton Farrier later erected a brick home on the spot in 1920. Jeff Talley also owned a blacksmith shop in 1900.

The May brothers, Joe and Gus were in business on Main Street.

A saloon owned by Bill Coffey called the Ruby Saloon stood near the present furniture store.

John Riddle and wife, Mary owned a dry good store right next door. They were pioneers from Alabama who came to Omaha early.

H. B. Stevens owned a hardware store east of Main Street.

Dr. Strickland and Dur Dungean were the first doctors in town. They made their calls in covered buggies or on horseback. Later in 1915, more doctors came. Dr. Anthony who married Ella Witt, daughter of a local pioneer farmer, was one of the doctors. Also, there was Dr. May, father of Gus and Joe May. There were also Dr. Meadows who married Myrtle Connor and Dr. Hawkins who married Ada Witt. Then there was Dr. Moore who married Jesse Thigpen and were early pioneers of the town.

The Pate Drug Store on the west side of Main Street was where the medicine was issued. There was also a drug store owned by Joshua Johnson. Later, Bill Bullington bought the Pate Drug Store and stayed in business for years. The Coleman Grocery Store was later established near it.

The Beasley Hotel was built south of the railroad by the parents of Harry Beasley, who still lives at the same location. There was another hotel north of Main Street, the Odie Curry Hotel.

The Hitchens Dry Goods Store on east Main Street did good business.

Dick Wood, of a pioneer family, operated a grocery store on Main Street north of the bank.

The Robinson's Hardware was near the H.B. Stevens store.

For many years, a weekly paper, The Omaha Breeze, was published by the W. C. Williams family. On the death of its founder, the work of getting the paper out fell to Vida Farrier. The paper changed hands in the fifties and is no longer in business.

In 1900, two barber shops, one owned by Les Robinson and the other by Walter Jolly, operated in town.

John Hanes owned the first lumber yard.

Polk and Vella Beasley owned the first insurance business. She also sold women's ready to wear.

Dock Witt owned a grist mill and cotton gin.

The Pinkard Cafe was across the street from where the old bank is. Also, later, Van Taylor had a cafe east of Main Street.

Charlie Barrier owned the shoe store north of the bank.

Also, Leo Hopkins operated a grocery store north of the bank.

Other businesses I remember during the 30's and 40's were the Willard Hayes and Buck Ramage Hardware downtown. The Van Taylor's Grocery Store, also downtown. The Hayes Johnson Chevrolet business on north Main Street, Canant's Grocery Store on East Street and Chaddick's and Curry Hardware.

The town made big changes in the last fifty years. There are now 3 service stations, two coin laundries, a post office, grocery store, photography studio, variety and hardware, flower shop, tire repair service, insurance agency, furniture store, refrigeration and electrical repair shop, gift shop and catalogue store, realtor, game room, fire department and City Hall complete with offices for city employees including a newly hired police force.

Doctors Tenbrook and Balletti now practice here.

There is a nursing home, Elmwood, that cares for over 50.

There is one reatuarant, the local Dairy Queen.

The State Bank of Omaha has a new building east of downtown. There are two government housing projects. One is east of town and one is north west of town. 50 units.

Omaha has three beauty shops. Also, there is Brown's Plant Farms still shipping plants all over the country.

Two other business now operating in Omaha are Omaha Mechanical Contractors and the Omaha Radiator Shop.

OMAHA GRADUATES - 1914 -
 Front row: Pearl Wilkinson, Willie Mae Copellar, Ima Daniels, Nora Riddle, Ida Russell, Kate Jamerson, Dollie Peek.

Back Row: Willie Smith, Ada Wright, Josie Chaddick, Bessie Coats, Mr. J.H. Wilkinson.

Photo, Property of V.Shaver



Left to right - 1st row - Verna Cherry, Josephine Ramage, Thelma West, Kate Jamieson, Supt. J.H.Wilkenson, Annie McCollum, Ada McCollum, Thelma Giles, Pauline Glass. 2nd Row; Cora Davis, Clara Cason, Nora Riddle, Annie Russel, Luna Floyd, Ida Russell, Willie Mae Copellar, Eva Cherry, Aileen Floyd, Ima Daniel, Ermadeen Henderson. 3rd row; Marshall Farrier, Jim Williams, Tella Mae Gauntt, Mildred Hartgroves, Nora Currey, Horace Apperson, Mary Russell, Lucille Floyd, Jimmy Russell, Henry Barrier, Paul Wallace. Top row; Marion Moore, Johnny Beasley, Bernie Russell, George Wright, Roy Boozer, Lee Spru, Chester Robertson, Oscar Hall, Frank Wilkenson, John Curtiss, Zemery Woods, Willie Henderson.

Photo: Courtesy of Mrs. Allie Wright

Students in the Omaha School in 1906:
 Front row: Girls; Nora Frances Ellis, Cuba Guess, May Wright, Dainie Beasley, Ethel McCollum, Allie Anthony, Mary Glass, Johnny Cherry, Norris Stevens, Margaret Hart, Boys; Robert Ramage, Homer Hanson, Sam Taylor, John Welch, Jim Walker, John Cherry, Earl Pate, Clifton Wright, Second Row: Nora Coffey, Willie Wallace, Alice Riddle, Myrtle Cone, Ruby Coffey, Obad Giles, Meddis Riddle, Gwendolynn Skipper (Teacher), Emma Butler, Effie Wright, Boys; Ross Rivers, Tom Hawkins, Jim Witt, Marvin Clark, Corry Wright, Homer Guess, Jim Wright, Sam Robinson, Fitz Coleman, Third Row: Nora Towlies, unknown..., Henderson, unknown, Liza Heard, Vilda Williams, Sybil Meadow. Standing alone on the ground, John Stevens.

Photo: Courtesy of Mrs. Allie Wright





THE OMAHA SCHOOL IN 1921

Superintendent, Richard G. Law

Take a good look, you may be in this picture!

Photo: Courtesy of Miss Grace Towles



Omaha High School Basketball Team in 1921-22

Left to right: Dixie Davis, Milton Henderson, Holt (Skimp) Russell, Clyde Davis, Corry Henderson, J. B. Stringer. Note the chalked "O" on the coach's sweater.



On February 11, 1950, a severe tornado caused extensive damage to the Omaha Schools. Classes could not be held in the ruins, so the local church basements were pressed into service as classrooms. This tragedy had a happy ending when the new Paul H. Pewitt School was completed.

The photograph was taken February 5, 1951.



Front row: Marshall Barrier, Hiram Joyner, Travis Witt, Crowder Bolin, Cluron Wright, Clarence Stevens, Lola Barnard, Gladys McCollum. Second row: Alice Gauntt, Lillian Russell, Syble Carson, Ailine May, Eula Ramage, Opal Smith, Mildred Williams, Velma Carson. Back row: Luke Cason, Reavis Hall, Lem Cason, Ada Salomon, Holt Russell, Howard Hall, Joe Parkam, Pete Bolin, Lottie Knight and Grace Towles.



OUR STORY — HIS STORY

It was late in the 1870's when the St. Louis, Arkansas, and Texas railroad determined to build a line from Gatesville, Texas to Decatur, Illinois, and for some unknown cause decided to use a deer trail leading through the big woods of Northeast Texas with a right-of-way for a very crooked, narrow gauge railroad.

The trail passed through land owned by Thompson Morris of Mt. Pleasant and traveled by sawmills and grain mills owned by David Elliott. Thompson agreed to give the railway passage through his land as well as alternate lots in a townsite to be built near Elliott's mills, if the railroad would agree to build a depot at the proposed site. Contracts were signed and the first sparks of life for a new town began to glow. Within a few short years the town boasted not only the original mill, gin, and depot, but also three stores, one saloon, and a small Baptist Church.

David Elliott donated land on the south side of the railroad to be used as a cemetery and church site. A small frame building called Elliott's Chapel was erected on the northwest corner of the cemetery lot and a Baptist church was organized with five charter members: Eli Gauntt, Bud Gauntt, Fronie Gauntt, Wright Causey, and Judson Arnett. The little congregation called J. M. Archer as its first pastor. The small building was later moved into town and used as a store. The congregations of the Methodist and Baptist churches began to meet jointly in a building known as Union Church. The building was also used as a Masonic Lodge. The Baptist Church was organized in 1884.

Any self-respecting town needs a name and the railroad chose the name of Morristoryn in honor of Thompson Morris, who gave land for the railway and townsite. The name was changed to Gavett in 1882. Though there was no other post office in Texas with that name, the "v" in Gavett often was taken for two "r's" and freight and mail intended for Gavett, Texas, often ended up in Garrett.

When a large portion of the town burned, it seemed like a good time to end the confusion by renaming the town. The men met together and each put his suggestion for a name on a small piece of paper. Someone volunteered a hat, and after they mixed the folded papers thoroughly, Omaha was the first name they drew. That name had been suggested by William Noah Ellis.

The building called Union Church was one of the best buildings in town. Located hard by the south side of the tracks, just to the south of Senter Street, it had two stories with stairs going up the outside of the building. Inside, plank benches lined the walls all around. A wood stove provided heat during the cold winter months, and coal oil lamps hung on the walls in racks. One night while the Baptists were holding a meeting upstairs, a lamp burst into flame and was in danger of exploding. People rushed for the door and confusion reigned. Polk Beasley grabbed the lamp and threw it out the window, averting a disaster. Mrs. Michael was the only one hurt in the excitement, but she soon recovered and the building went back to full time use.

The Methodists and Baptists showed excellent cooperation during the years they shared the same church building. Each denomination used the building on alternate Sundays. In the little Union Church people came to know the Savior Jesus as their own; marriage vows were exchanged; funeral services were conducted; and for some people, both marriage and funeral services took place in the little country church, among whom were Polk Beasley and his wife, Vella Parham Beasley.

In 1892 Thompson Morris gave one city block of land to the growing congregations. The land had originally been reserved for the county courthouse when Omaha was being considered for the county seat of Morris County. Mr. Morris gave the Methodists the north half and the Baptists the south half, where each congregation was to build a church and a parsonage.

By 1896 the Baptists had a building all their own. It was a white frame building, rectangular in shape, complete with a small foyer and steeple. Clear glass windows caught cool breezes in the summer and a wood stove up front provided winter heating. The benches were of wooden slats, and Sunday School classes met in groups scattered in the one large room. A raised platform in the center front supported the pulpit, a pump organ on the right and benches for the choir on the left. There was no baptistry but baptism was practiced, as it always had been, in local ponds, and after World War I, in Glass Club Lake.

By 1923 the need for a new and larger church was being discussed among the membership. The wooden church which had served faithfully for twenty-seven years was beginning to show signs of age and the congregation needed a larger building with rooms for Sunday School classes. A building committee was elected and the project got underway.

The church was torn apart board by board and each piece inspected. Usable lumber was laid aside and later put to work again in the floor of the new church where they can still be seen to the date of this writing. While the new church was in the building process, the congregation met in Woodman Hall over the bank.

When the need for a new church building began to show, the Ladies' Aid was the first to accept the challenge. Using a variety of schemes, the women earned a large part of the building's down payment. Jimmie Beasley Wright volunteered her hotel, Beasley House, and turkey dinners were cooked by the church women. Customers were charged fifty cents for one of the best meals in East Texas. Many lovely quilts were made also by the Ladies' Aid, and when Omaha had its "Trades Day" each Saturday, these were displayed on the streets and raffled off with the profit going to the building fund.

Contract for the actual construction of the new building was given to a local firm, Denman Lumber Company. Although some of the work; such as, intricate stained glass windows, needed professional help, most of the labor on the building was volunteer. The men of the church loaned their muscle to the work of the Lord. Farmers and business men, construction workers and unskilled laborers, men of wealth and men of meager fare, all worked together day after day to build something solid and lovely that stood in the name of the Lord.

However, as the men were all free-wheeling Americans and most of them Baptist as well, it was only natural that differences of opinion should occur. One such occasion resulted in a fist fight on the roof.

When the building was finished in the summer of 1924, it was something in which the people could take justifiable pride. For the first time in its history, the church had Sunday School rooms. There was a large furnished parlor with carpet on the floor and a large open basement that could be used as a dining hall. There was a fully equipped kitchen and the ultimate luxury of two indoor toilets. The main auditorium boasted beautiful stained glass windows in solid oak frames and large oak beams in the ceiling. There was a concealed baptistry where new converts could be baptised regardless of the weather. The slat benches were replaced by solid wooden pews which remain in service to this writing, and bare wooden floors were always kept waxed to a soft luster. There was a raised platform at the front with room for the choir and pulpit. The musical instrument stood to the right just as it had in the old church. The windows could be opened in the hot summer and winter heat was provided by a wood burning furnace in the basement. Heat was blown into the church through large open lattice work located in the front wall. One heat outlet was directly over the choir resulting in roasting the singers while the back pews shivered, but no one really minded. There was no janitor, but the building was lovingly cared for by the women of the Ladies' Aid.

After the end of World War II, the interest of the people turned once again to building, and in 1948 they constructed a five room brick parsonage on what was once a parking lot for buggies and horses due east of the church.

In 1951 the parsonage was enlarged by adding a breezeway and garage with a storage room. New work was also done on the church building as the auditorium was redecorated, an organ bought, and new carpets installed. Railings were added in front of the choir and an organ platform.

The year 1955 saw the church planning for a much needed educational building. In 1957 Reverend Clifford H. Longino became pastor, and in 1958 the educational building became a reality. The building was well equipped and air conditioned.

When Reverend Longino became pastor, he accepted without complaint the two bedroom parsonage, but having a girl fifteen and a boy fourteen, sleeping arrangements soon became difficult. As a result Jim Pat was moved out into the small storage room behind the garage. His "room" was barely large enough to hold a three-quarter bed. When the members of the church became aware of the uncomfortable arrangement, they bricked up the open archways in the parsonage's side porch, creating an additional room.

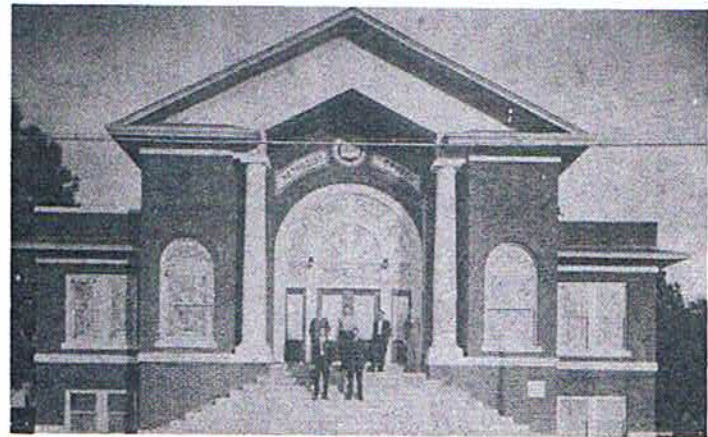
In 1960 the water fans in the auditorium were replaced by all weather air conditioning and the church entered an Achievement Program sponsored by the Southern Baptist Convention. Many projects were sponsored during this period, among them the adoption of certain children by the W.M.U. Darlene Edwards from the Beeville Home was one of these. The women of the W.M.U. provided clothes, school supplies, and money for meals. Following the true tradition of Christian hospitality, they opened their homes to her in August of 1961. Darlene was one of many such children given help and encouragement through the years by the W.M.U.

In 1970 the pastor's office was refurbished and in 1973 the parsonage garage was converted into a guest bedroom and bath for visiting preachers, giving the parsonage a total of eight rooms. In December 1974, an open lot west of the church was purchased with the possibility of new building projects in the future. At this writing the church has property valued at \$150,000 but the greatest value of all is not the property, but the people - God's people.

They came to a deer trail and put down roots in the East Texas woodland. They built homes, raised children, and formed an organized church. Business men and farmers, children and aged, rich and not-so-rich -- they all worked together with a common goal. The buildings have changed; the horses have been replaced by automobiles; wood burning stoves by central heat and air. All the original members have gone on to live with our Lord. The children who once scampered up the stairs to Sunday School have become parents and grown on into old age. Through years of time and testing, this living organism has survived. She has reached out her hands to the needs of community, a state, a world. She has given of her money, her talent, her people. Her members have struggled against the darkness of a dying world, and, yes, at times they have struggled against one another. People - God's people - working till their Master comes.



On the left is the old Omaha Methodist Church. To the right is the old Omaha Baptist Church. (Pre-1923)



OMAHA METHODIST CHURCH

Elliott's Chapel scene of first meeting for Omaha Methodists

Pioneered by forefathers of some of the present day members, and many other loyal christian men and women, the first services of the Methodist Church at Omaha were held in Elliott's Chapel, a building erected to be used for worship services for all religious denominations of the town. This building was on the present site of the Omaha Cemetery.

Mrs. Georgia Scott Henderson joined this church in 1870. She was the mother of Mrs. Zephyr Henderson Hall, who joined the Omaha Methodist Church in 1892, at the age of 12 years.

Mrs. Hattie Moore Heard, member of another pioneer Methodist family, also became a member of this church in 1892, at the age of 14 years. Mrs. Hall and Mrs. Heard are still actively interested in the work of the church.

The second building in which services were held by the Methodist congregation was a two story frame building located just south of the Cotton Belt railroad. This building was also used by other denominations.

The land on which the present Methodist Church is located was deeded to the church in 1894. This land which is on half of block nine (9) of the city of Omaha, was deeded to the church in October 1894, by T. C. Morris, E. P. Becton, J. M. Waller and Josie Waller. Trustees of the church at the time this property was received were the late J. W. Glass, R. J. Hart and J. J. Thigpen.

In 1895, a nice frame building was erected by the Methodist church. This one room building was used for Sunday School classes, sanctuary and other worship services until 1923.

In 1923, the present brick church was erected under the leadership of pastor, the late Rev. H. I. Robinson.

For many years preaching services were held at the Omaha Methodist Church only two Sundays each month. The pastor served both Omaha and Naples churches and for several years, his parsonage home was Naples.

The Omaha church bought the home of the late J. C. Robinson for a parsonage in 1920, and for several years the Omaha pastor also served the Cason and Green Hill churches. In 1946, the old parsonage was sold and a new one erected on the church property.

The following preachers have served as pastors of the Omaha Methodist Church.

Reverends Coppedge, Lively, Hardy, Whitehead, J. Woodson, Owens, Bowman, J. C. Smith, McNally, Melougen, W. H. Vance, J. T. Morgan, J. W. Treadwell, George Collins, B. C. Anderson, A. A. Tharp, A. J. McCary, W. M. Bass, H. I. Robinson, E. H. McKenzie, P. R. White, W. W. Hardt, W. N. Bass, Wm. J. Briant, R. E. Beard, E. J. Davis, Sr., I. J. Waldon, Sr., K. K. Rushing, G. G. Cecil, R. A. Gates, Ben Anderson, J. F. Everett, J. D. Weaver, T. L. Cox, Leslie T. Griffin, Dr. Frank C. Richardson.

Other pastors included, Smith, Comer, Wheeler, Bean (Interim Lay Minister), Bell, Crawford, Hebert, Dawson, Crosby, Jenkins and Weston. The present pastor is Jack Henderson.

Brown's Temple C.M.E. - History 1946-1980

In 1942, the dream of building or finding a Methodist Church in Omaha, Texas began. A search began for prospective members. It was found there were about 6 C.M.E.'s in Omaha without a church home.

The idea of having one here was conveyed to Rev. Grady Brown, presiding Elder of the Pittsburg District of the East Texas Annual Conference 8th Episcopal District. Being a methodist from Miles Chapel C.M.E. of Tyler, Texas, pastor, Rev. M. L. Darnell, Mrs. Rubye A. Parker expressed the desire to have a C.M.E. in Omaha. Mrs. Parker worked with the Omaha First Baptist Church here, but was not satisfied, since she was born of methodist parents and had been raised up in the C.M.E. church. She and Rev. Brown looked into the situation and came up with the idea that we could build a church in Omaha.

Previous years back, Mrs. Sam Wafford wanted to furnish land for a church, but she deceased. So, Mr. Sam Wafford let the church have some of their land for \$90.00. The money to pay for the land was furnished by Rev. Brown and Mrs. Parker, but was refunded after funds had been raised.

In March of 1946, Rev. Brown called a meeting of all the C.M.E. members that were interested in having a C.M.E. church home in Omaha. Three persons met along with Rev. and Mrs. Brown. Those persons were Mrs. Parker, Mrs. Thelma Hall and Miss Hazel Kelly. The church was organized in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Willie Parker. Because the idea came from Mrs. Parker, the church during the building period was called Parker's Chapel and Mrs. Parker was named the founder.

A program was organized for raising funds. We went to the First Baptist Church and asked for use of their church during the Sundays that they did not have service. They willingly let us use it.

We put on a financial drive, and with eight persons, we raised \$800.00.

During this time, the Hickory Hill School in Pittsburg was up for bids. We placed our bid and won. The men went to Pittsburg, tore the building down, and brought it to Omaha. The lumber was used to build the church, as far as it would go. At that time, Mr. Joe Taylor, owner of the lumber yard in Omaha furnished us with the remaining materials.

Mr. Willie Parker was hired to do the building. The foundation was laid, the building was on. With the help of Eric Johnson, Boney Daughtery and others, the church was finished and in October, the 3rd Sunday, 1949, we had our first meeting.

The church's name was changed to Brown's Temple in honor of Rev. G.A. Brown, who had rendered untiring service.

Many ministers have come and gone, but credit must be given to the late Rev. Pery Stigers, who worked getting the church bricked & remodeled.

Under the pastorage of Rev. Reuben King the church was paid for and the mortgage was burned. During his pastorage, the church installed central air, heat and remodeled the sanctuary.

In 1977, six members were honored for 31 years of faithful service to the church and its cause. Rev. G. A. Brown - organizer, Rev. Rubye A. Parker - founder, Mr. Willie Parker - builder, Mrs. Thelma Hall, Mr. Leroy Hall, Mrs. Augusta Talton (deceased).

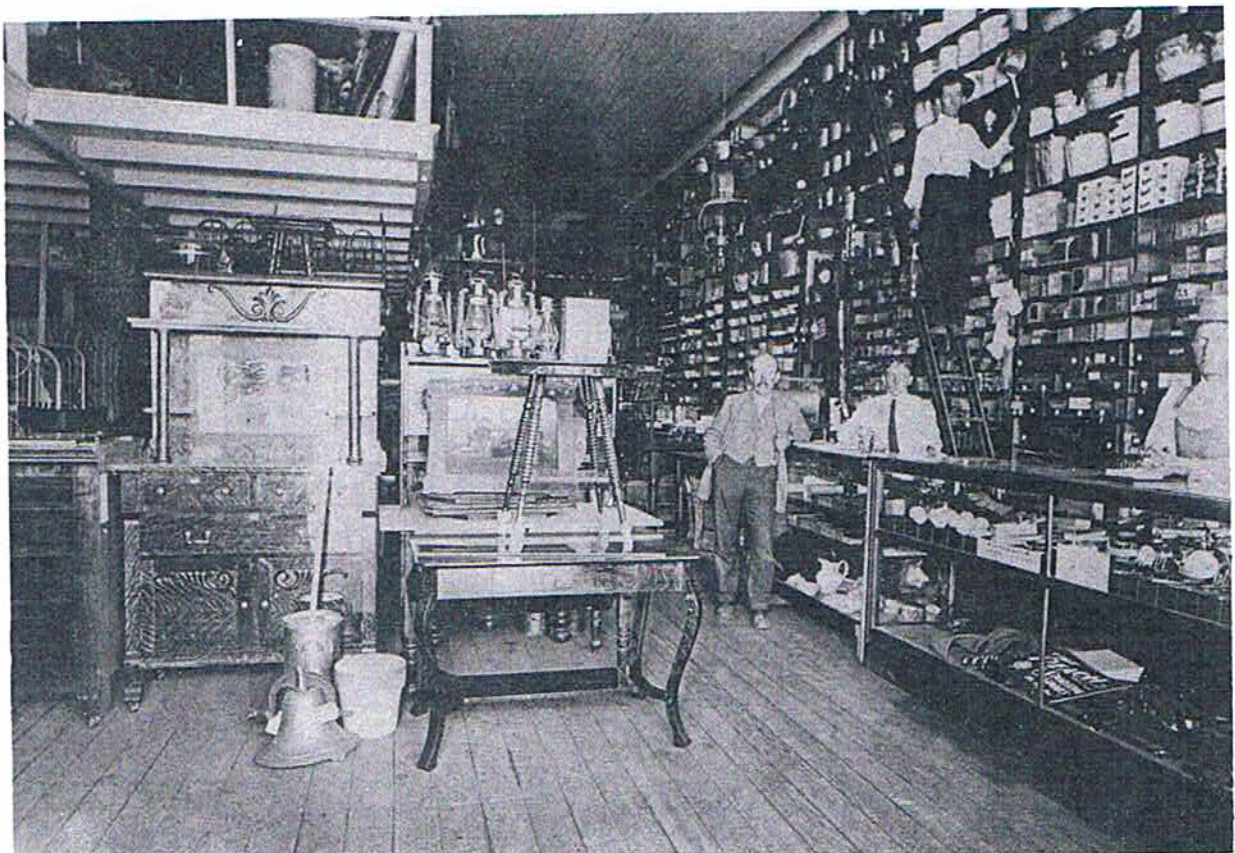
In 1978, Mr. Douglas Young (deceased) was honored by his children and the church and presented a christian trophy for dedicated service.

Brown's Temple has weathered the storm, for certainly ours has been a stormy life. We praise God for those living and dead who have stood by the church. I think that we carried all the words of this song in our hearts. "I love Thy church O God, Her wall before Thee stand, Dear as the apple of Thine eye, Engraven on Thy Hand. For her my tears shall fall, For her my prayers ascend, To her my toils and cares be given, Till toils and cares shall end."

OMAHA BUSINESSES OF THE PAST

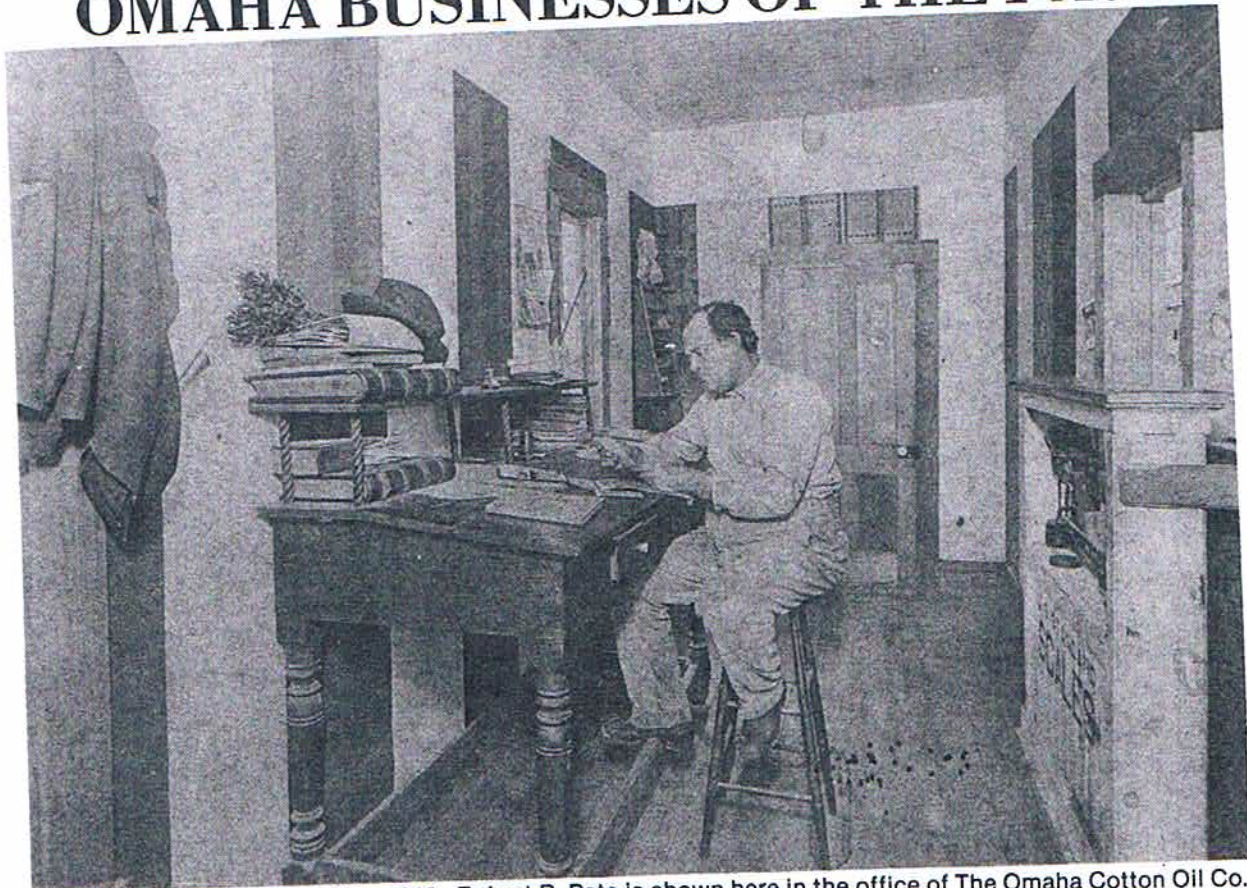


PHOTOGRAPH OF G. G. KERR STORE TAKEN MARCH 7, 1904



INTERIOR OF EARLY GENERAL MERCHANDISE STORE

OMAHA BUSINESSES OF THE PAST



OMAHA COTTON OIL MILL - 1916 - Robert R. Pate is shown here in the office of The Omaha Cotton Oil Co. The plant was in operation through the year of 1916, and Mr. Pate was manager of the business. It was located in the 400 block of East Main Street. Thigpen Service Station and D. D. Tuck Garage are on this property today. Courtesy of Mrs. Lessie Lee Hobbs.



STREET SCENE IN OMAHA - 1911 - 116 North Senter Avenue. Front Row: from left to right; Tom Welch, William P. Witt, H. G. Wallace, W. L. Parham, Zack Collins, Sam Taylor, John Brown Farrier, Bernie Russel, Dr. Wylie Hawkins, Walter Witt, Uncle Joe Robinson and Luther Gauntt. Photo property of Grace Towles

OMAHA BUSINESSES OF THE PAST

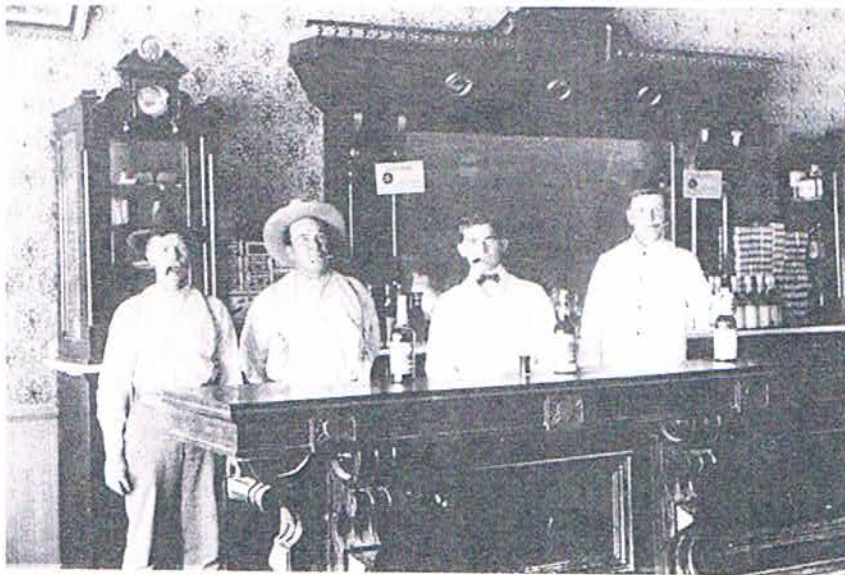


OMAHA GROCERY STORE IN THE TWENTIES...This grocery store was owned and operated by the late W. B. (Dick) Wood of Omaha shown above. This store was destroyed by fire during the thirties. Endsley's Grocery is in the same location today. Photo property of Grace Towles.



OMAHA BLACKSMITH SHOP IN THE TWENTIES. . .Shown here was Giles Wallace and John Davis owners of the blacksmith shop above. This business was located where The Omaha Community Center Building is today; across the street from the First Baptist Church. Photo property of Grace Towles.

OMAHA BUSINESSES OF THE PAST

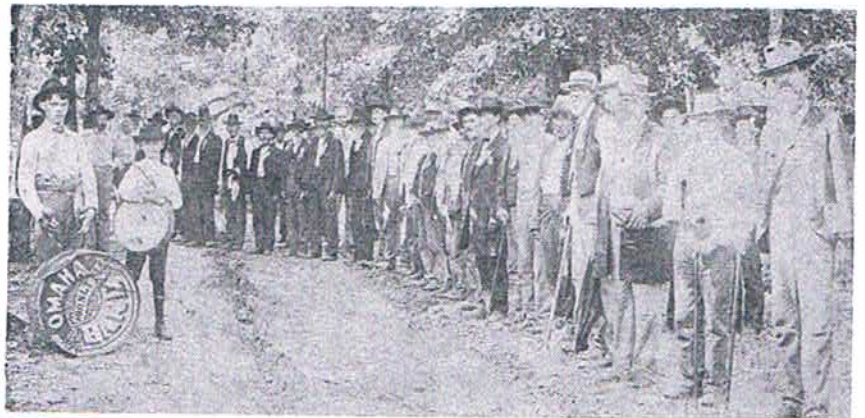


RECALLING THE PAST... The picture to the left was made at Omaha in 1902 in The Palace Saloon. The premises were maintained at the present location of Boozer Food Store. There is a native of Omaha who has a picture of The Palace Saloon that will substantiate this fact. Those shown in the picture have been tentatively indentified as: left to right; Charlie Carroll - customer, Ed Smith - Sheriff of Morris County, Hough Coffey - barkeeper and W. Luther Coffey - owner and proprietor. Property of L. L. Hobbs

SOME OF THE BOYS around Pate's Drug Store in the 1900's. Left to right: Robert C. Farrier, Unknown, Brent Chaddick, H. G. Wallace, Willie Wright, Ross Wright, Grover Pate and Noah Ellis. Photo property of Grace Towles



A turn of the century photograph of the Omaha Cornet Band and onlookers. Photo contributed by Josephine Harwell.



This firm was in business at 204 North Main Street on the left side are: Mrs. Emma Hitchens, H. Milton Farrier and W. B. Coffey. On the right behind the counter are: W. Grady Farrier and Willie Wallace. Property of Grace Towles

OMAHA BUSINESSES OF THE PAST

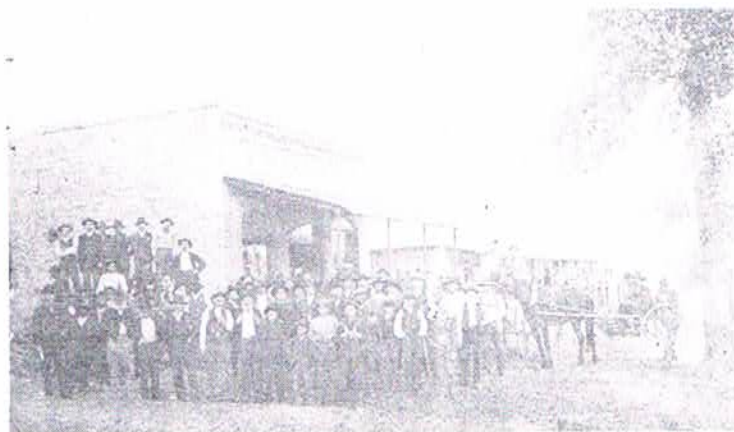


Ground breaking ceremony for Methodist Church in Omaha in 1922. . .Some of the people are: left to right; Wilkes Taylor, Jim Hartgroves, George Chaddick, (Center) Rev. H. I. Robinson, Pastor; Man with shovel in hands, W. C. Williams; (Publisher of Omaha Breeze), G. W. Heard and R. Horn. You may identify others. Photo Courtesy of Jerry Williams

Omaha, Texas
February 25, 1919
Mr. R. L. Talley,

Dear Uncle Bob - I went with Doctor Anthony the other day down in your settlement to see Uncle George Boozer, who was sick at the home of Henry Boozer. I had not been down in there for some time, and when we reached Boggy Bottom, I never saw so many people along the road with their teams, wagons, scrapers, plows, hoes, etc. Mr. Vickers, Bart Cason, John Morris, Shep Beasley, Han Walker and his boys, Billy Stevens, George Kimmel, Oscar Rivers, Elbert Clark, Bailey Parker, Joe Christlan, and in fact, every man in the community, both land owners and tenants, graveling and working the road, and in the spirit of neighbors and friends, showing the progressive nature of your people and the aims you have to promote and uplift the community in which you live. Your roads are ideal, your farms are well kept, each of you take a very great interest in your school, and in fact we must hand you people a bouquet for the very progressive spirit you show, and they tell me down there where you people live that, when a thing needs doing, you get yourselves together and accomplish the desired purpose. I remember years ago my good father would say regarding his business that the most business he received was from the country north of town. I don't think Omaha can boast of that now, from the fact that, if a man should travel north and south of Omaha, he can readily see a felling of optimism exists in the Concord Country where every fellow is pulling the same string to promote and advance the welfare of his neighbor.

I had just heard the other day of the land deal Mr. Vickers and Shep Beasley made, if the trade was like I heard, I think they both made a very good deal. You people down there have the only land in this country that will sell from \$60 to \$75, why? Because you make it that way and when a people want to do a thing they can do it. It has been our pleasure to come in contact with men of great business ability and I take great pride in pointing to the high class of people and good citizens we have in and around Omaha. We own quite a lot of land north of Omaha and we want to see a rivalry of progressive spirit between people here, not one however of jealousy and hate but one where Bud Sosbee or Tom Pate is trying to raise better livestock and better crops per acre than Ransom Snodgrass or Mat Davis. I have just returned from a cotton conference at New Orleans. It was a fine meeting and I weighed the evidence and arguments very close and we are up against a very serious situation from this fact, we can only consume of the cotton crop we make about one half and we have on hand in the south about eight million bales of cotton and we are beginning another crop. Suppose with the present outlook, we raised fifteen million bales of cotton and the eight million we already have would make 23 million bales. In our opinion we will sell cotton awful cheap next fall, and we are facing a crop where the actual necessities of the farmer have advanced from last year 25 to 30 per cent, and cotton, the money crop of the south, has declined \$50 per bale since January 1. We want to give you a little comparison, 30 days ago the spinner figured his cotton at 32 cents per pound and we will take the "fruit of the loom" domestic, which is a staple brand of domestic. One pound of cotton will make 4 3/4 yards of this domestic and the jobber is asking the merchant today 21 cents per yard for these goods at the mill, and he is getting about \$1.05 for the pound of cotton he bought at 32 cents, and today good grades of cotton are about 25 cents per pound, so the spinners profit is larger. There is something wrong about this kind of business, don't you think so? Our opinion is that the corporation or syndicate that spins your cotton should at least be made to make one crop on the half shares and then he would have to see the hardships and toils the poor farmer has to undergo, and it looks a little bit to us like the men that represent us in Congress from the



Early Day Street Scene in Front of F. W. Farrier Store, The First Brick Store Building in Omaha. Photo property of H. V. Shaver

south would at least protect us from the gamblers of New York. Now back to the progressive spirit of a town and country. It is our pleasure to always stand up and fight for our own home people, no matter where we are nor the head of a crowd we are in always point to this part of Morris County as the best, and the cooperation of the farmer and the merchant must be mutual. We have builded us a store in Omaha and we have often had people tell us it is the finest in North East Texas, and we are indeed proud of our store because the progressive spirit of the town must be the progressive spirit of the country. We are going to build an up-to-date potato plant if you farmers will assure us that you will raise the potatoes. It's a fine thing and you people ought to look into the matter at once, and if the farmers had rather build we will help. We stand ready and willing to help in any movement for the betterment of our town and country. To all that read this letter we want to say that our heart and soul are with you and will at any time day or night help you share your troubles. We have a fire-proof vault in our store and you are welcome to bring your valuable papers here and put them away without one cent of cost.

How about you farmers planting a few potatoes, we have a car of very fine Minnesota potatoes at \$2 per bushel. Every man try a sack, we think they will be a dollar more per bushel.

Now Mr. Talley when you and all the people come to town make our store your headquarters for we are always glad to see you and stand ready to meet any price of a competitor and handle your cotton next fall. We wish for you and your family and all the people we know happiness, prosperity and good health.

Your Friends,
Farrier Bros.

P.S. We forgot to say, bring us your chicken eggs, always pay top price.

Copied from: The Omaha Breeze (Entire front page) Wednesday, February 25, 1919, Vol. XXII, No. 38, W. C. Williams, Publisher, Original copy owned by: Reggie Tally, Omaha

OMAHA BUSINESSES OF THE PAST



THE CITY DRUG STORE in Omaha, 1911 - The Drug Store was located on the west side of North Senter Street. The picture was made before electrical service in Omaha. Note the kerosene lamps that hung from the ceiling. The store was decorated for Christmas, and the doll in the box to the extreme left of the picture has been restored and is owned by Mrs. Thelma Tucker of Omaha. Photo property of T. Tucker.



These twenty Canadian Geese were taken from The Glass Club Lake in the fall of 1922, by some of those in the above photo, Rev. H. I. Robinson, (local Methodist minister); Lewis Parham, (caretaker of lake); Marshall Farrier; Jim Towles; Annie Farrier, Dr. T. T. Towles and Don Beasley. This photograph was made at the Beasley Hotel, 203 South Main Street, Omaha in 1922. Photo courtesy of Miss Grace Towles.



IRISH POTATO SHIPPING in Omaha in 1904. Scene: Main at Hubbard Ave., today. First wagon at left, J. L. Cherry on the ground, H. L. Hitchings (sitting in wagon in white shirt). Next, B. A. Ragland, second wagon at right: in wagon, sitting on side board, C. C. Butler, standing with arm on side board, Joe D. May, next, J. E. Parham. Photo courtesy of Lessie Lee Hobbs.

OMAHA BUSINESSES OF THE PAST

A History of Post Offices and Communities First Congressional District of Texas

MORRIS COUNTY

Compliments of Wright Patman, Texarkana, Texas

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**JAMES ERBY DAVIS,
AN EARLY DAY MAIL CARRIER**

OMAHA
(Pop. 1,050)

In north central Morris County four and one-half miles southwest of Naples. Named for the former home of early settlers from Omaha, Alabama. Settled in 1881 and incorporated in 1914.

Office established under name of Gavett.

<i>Postmaster</i>	<i>Appointed</i>
<i>James R. Pinckard</i>	<i>Feb 15, 1881</i>
<i>John M. Witt</i>	<i>Aug. 19, 1885</i>

Name of office changed to Omaha. April 20, 1886.

<i>Bennett B. Coffey</i>	<i>Aug. 2, 1888</i>
<i>William Wood</i>	<i>Aug. 10, 1889</i>
<i>Robert J. Hart</i>	<i>Aug. 10, 1893</i>
<i>Houston Holt</i>	<i>Sep. 11, 1897</i>
<i>Emma L. Holt</i>	<i>Apr. 14, 1900</i>
<i>William W. McCollum</i>	<i>Nov. 15, 1901</i>
<i>G. H. Riddle</i>	<i>May 22, 1913</i>
<i>Walter C. Vickers</i>	<i>May 12, 1922</i>
<i>Jesse R. Thigpen</i>	<i>Dec. 20, 1930</i>
<i>Joseph Earl Page (A)</i>	<i>Mar. 1, 1943</i>
<i>Cluron E. Wright (A)</i>	<i>Jan. 31, 1962</i>
<i>H. C. Ragland (A)</i>	<i>Feb. 17, 1964</i>
<i>Bobby G. Brock (A)</i>	<i>Jul. 31, 1964</i>

Copyright 1968 by Wright Patman



AN EARLY OMAHA POST OFFICE...The Omaha Post Office of this date was on the east side of North Senter Street in a frame building. The lighting was by kerosene lamps and the heat came from a boxed wood stove. Shown left to right: John Clark, carrier; James F. Hill, carrier; W. W. McCollum, Postmaster; J. E. (Erb) Davis, carrier; W. C. (Will) Allen, carrier. Mr. McCollum served under the McKinley, Roosevelt and Taft presidential administrations. Photo courtesy of Joe E. Hill, 2914 Marx, San Angelo, Texas.

Early Omaha settler - Indian fighter - Soldier - Preacher

LIFE SKETCH OF J. E. KNIGHTON

Elder J. E. Knighton of Omaha, Texas, was born in Edgefield District on the P.D. river in South Carolina November 23, 1832. When he was about three years old his father moved to Montgomery County, Alabama and settled six miles from the county seat, now the capital of the State of Alabama. When he was about sixteen years old his mother died and a year or more after her death he went with his brother-in-law to Texas on the Brazos river, near a place then called Chapel Hill.

There he accepted a position as manager of a large plantation for Mrs. Mary McDade. He was with her about one year, when there was a call for volunteers in the Ranger Service, to go in pursuit of Sitting Bull who was making a raid down the Rio Grande river thru Texas, committing considerable depredation on the colonies. This was late in the year 1853 or early in 1854.

The ranger mobilized at old Fort Concho where San Angelo is now situated, after being pursued the Indians retreated to Fort Lauerworth, Kansas and had made a treaty with the Rangers when they got there.

Later he enlisted with some others in the Government Service for two years, served his full time and was honorably discharged early in 1857. He then returned to Alabama and joined his father in Concho County six miles from Evergreen, the county Seat; here he was employed to take charge of another plantation.

He was married to Hunter Marsella Mosley daughter of Rev. J. I. Mosley February 25, 1858. They lived together more than 54 years, until she died in Omaha, Texas at the age of 72 years. They had eleven (11) children born to them, seven boys and four girls of whom three sons and two daughters survived them. J. I. Knighton the oldest child lives at Tishomingo, Oklahoma. E. B. Knighton lives at Buck, Texas. W. L. Knighton the youngest of the family lives at Maud, Texas, Mrs. Ida Russell lives at Omaha, Texas and Mrs. Mollie Bedell lives at Naples, Texas

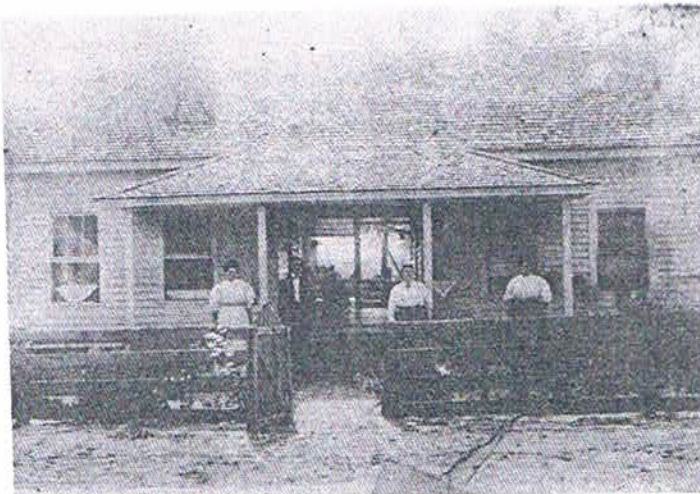
Early in the war between the states, the North and South, he assisted in raising a Company and was mustered in as 1st Lt. of the 23rd. Ala. regiment. He was in Atlanta, Ga. when Johnson was removed and was with Hood and took part in the famous battle at Franklin, but came out without a scratch. He was wounded at Bentonville, N.C. after he had surrendered, was shot through the right wrist after which he with the remainder of his company surrendered at or near Bentonville, N.C. and he with three of his comrades walked back to their homes at Evergreen, Alabama late in 1865.

He joined the Primitive Baptist Church in 1859 and began preaching to the soldiers before the war cloud; when he returned home after the war he was ordained a minister and for forty five years was actively engaged in the work of his Master, throughly devoted to the cause. He baptized more applicants than any other minister of his denomination during his time.

He was a Master Mason; took his first degree in North Carolina and three or four years later took the master degree at Raliegh, Smith County, Miss.; his church, not being friendly toward secret orders, he agreed to not affiliate with the orders it was necessary. He never did but once when he was requested by a Brother Mason to preach a Mason's funeral, which he did.

He was a pensioner of the United States Government for his service in the Indian Warfare before the Civil War. He first received \$8.00 per month and a land warrant for 160 acres of land, but later while Morris Sheppard was in charge he succeeded in getting it raised to \$20.00 per month.

He moved from Alabama to Mississippi in November 1871, from Mississippi to Louisiana in January 1882; from Louisiana to Texas near Naples in 1891. In 1902 he moved to Omaha, where he remained until his death, which occurred May 2, 1916.



THE DAVIS HOME IN 1908. . .this country home was two miles southeast of Omaha. Shown here left to right: Carrie Davis, George Davis, Mrs. Orithy Davis and Mary Davis. This farm was originally purchased by Mr. Davis in 1882 and the home built later. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Louis McCoy, Omaha.



THE DAVIS HOME TODAY. . .The Davis Home was replaced by this white frame structure in 1949. The home is on the original site of the Davis farm today. Photo courtesy of Mrs. Louis McCoy, Omaha.

Davis Family Lives on Land 100 Years

On December 23, 1892, the Davis Farm located 2½ miles south of Omaha just off Highway 259, will have been owned and occupied by the Davis family for 100 years.

George Evertt Hartridge Davis came to Texas from South Carolina about 1870 at the age of fourteen. His father, Joseph Gist Davis, settled in Titus County. He was a doctor. His wife's maiden name was Mary Rippy Wood, a direct descendant of the Revolutionary War hero, Nathanail Greene.

George Davis married an Omaha girl, Orithy Ranes and he cleared the land and raised his family. His son, Howard Davis, farmed and raised his family there. The farm is now occupied by two Davis families. Howard's son, J. M. (known as Dick) and his son, Jerrol Davis. Dick's sister, Louise McCoy lives in Omaha.

Glass Club Lake Comes To Omaha

by Ruby Robison

(Great Grand-daughter of Ruby Glass)

The citizens of Omaha were given lease to a Club Lake on August 6, 1921 for a term of fifty years.

The Lessors, Ruby Glass Parham and her husband, Lewis Parham, constructed the lake with funds raised by the sale of stock to club members.

A share of stock in the lake property was sold for \$100.00 with an annual fee of five to ten dollars to maintain membership.

The Parhams borrowed money from the Omaha Bank to complete the project.

The contractor was a Mr. Wilson.

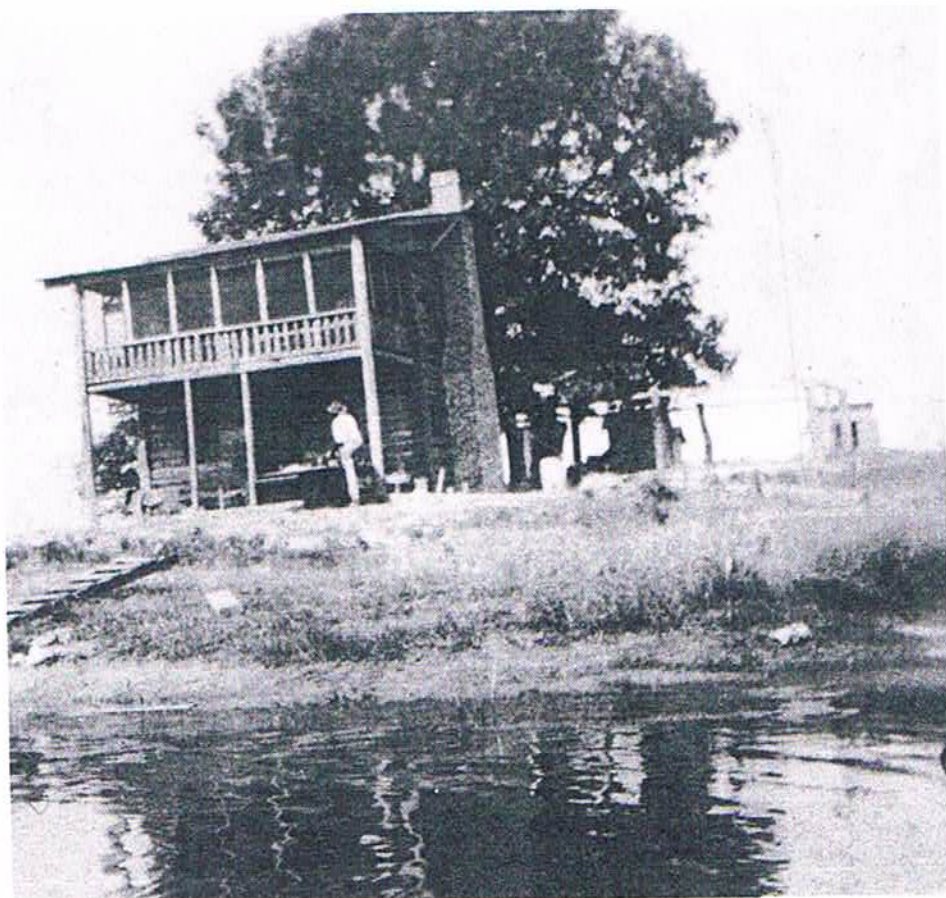
Mr. Wilson hired local labor in the construction of Glass Club Lake and using mule teams and scrapers, constructed the dam.

Two of those local laborers were Harry Beasley and the Lessor's son, late Joe Parham.

Milton Farrier built the first log cabin on the west side of the lake. He also bought the first boat.

Lewis Parham was the first care-taker of Glass Club Lake.

The original stockholders and trustees were: H. M. Farrier, A. J. Copellar, R. Horn, R. D. Moore, W. W. Bullington, T. A. Thigpen, J. D. Butler, W. D. Berry, W. F. Smith, J. P. Beasley, J. C. Robinson and O. C. Mulkey.



The first cabin built at Glass Club Lake was built by Milton Farrier in about 1924.



Mable Kathleen Sparks standing in front of Glass Club Lake in its early stages.

Howdy Folks!

On behalf of my Father, Randy E. Moore, my sons, Tres, Clint and Todd and myself, I would like to tell you how excited we are about Omaha's Centennial Celebration.

Our bank has been in business for three generations, and when my boys get involved full time, that will make the fourth.

The folks in the Omaha area have many outstanding qualities, the most common quality is civic pride. Our citizens have successfully initiated and accomplished numerous civic endeavors over the years.

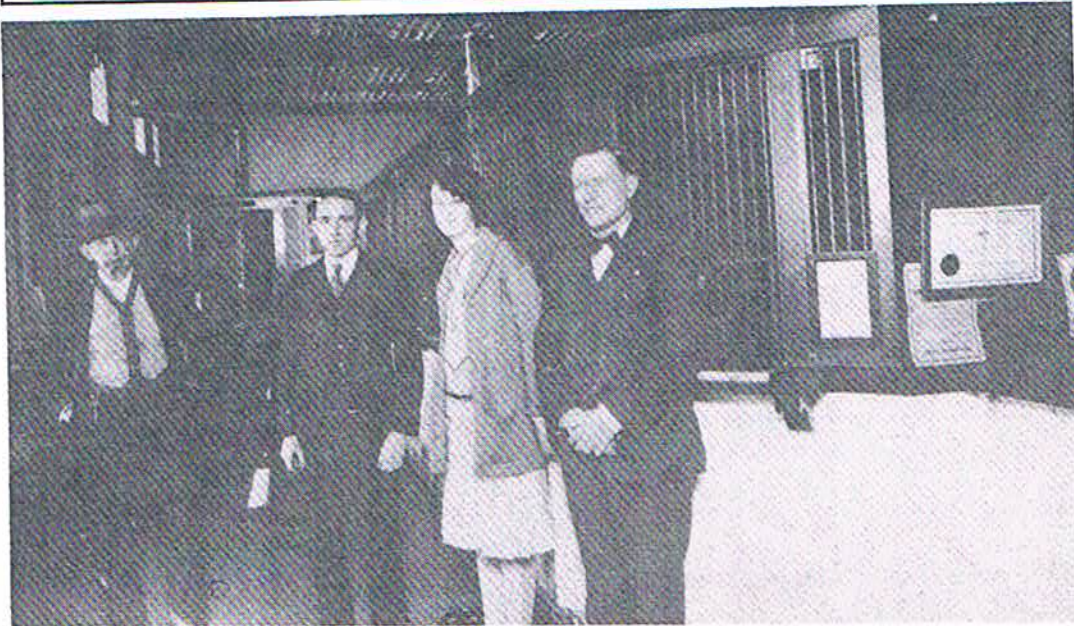
We invite you to be a part of our community. If you want to live with a bunch of winners, you need to hook up with us.

Your Pardner,

Randy Moore

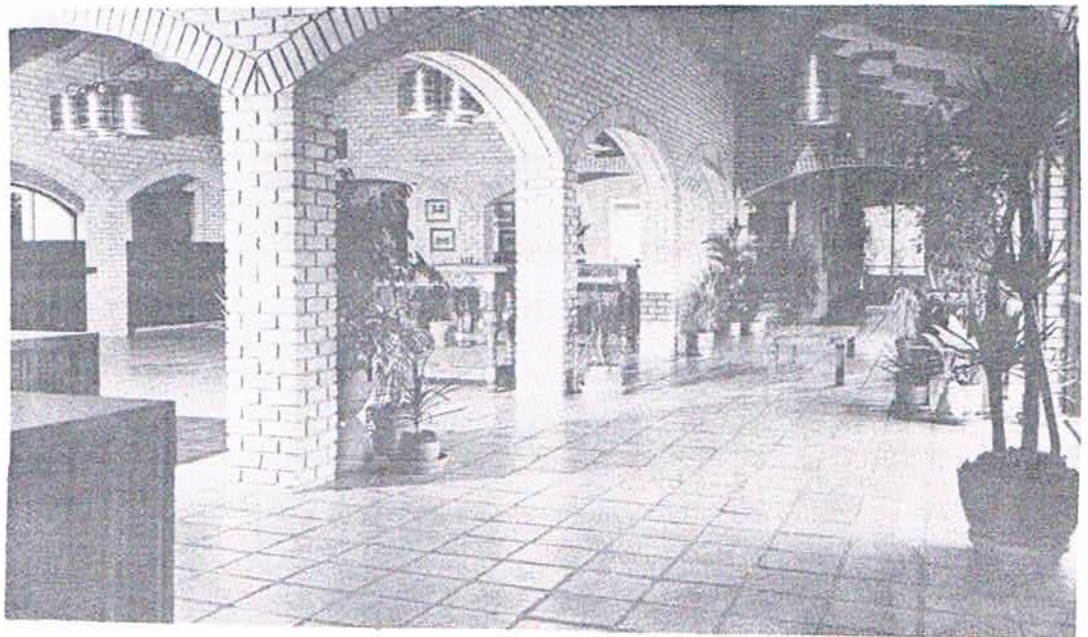
Randy G. Moore

RGM: mw



THE STATE BANK OF OMAHA IN THE 1920'S. .this picture was made inside the bank build in the 1920's. Left to right are; B. E. Ramage, David S. Giles, Miss Lessie Lee Ragland and W. O. Davis. Photo property of L. L. Hobbs.

THE NEW STATE BANK OF OMAHA was opened in 1980 in a new location just east of downtown Omaha.



The Life Story Of Omaha, Texas

Copied in July, 1966, by Ressie Talley, from the December 7, 1911. "Booster Edition" of the "Naples Monitor", Volume XXVI, Number 30. Courtesy of Lee Naramore of Naples.

Along in the seventies or early in the eighties, the St. Louis, Arkansas and Texas Railroad was building a line from Gatesville, Texas, to Decatur, Illinois, and for some cause adopted a deer trail through the big woods of Northeast Texas as a right-of-way for a very crooked narrow-gauge railroad.

The trail passed through here, and the place being somewhat noted, as there had been a mill to grind wheat and corn and a saw mill to cut hardwood lumber, operated by the old David Elliott family "long befo' de wah", yet the country was sparsely settled and mostly in the woods when the railroad came along.

However, the big-hearted Thompson Morris, of Mt. Pleasant, owned a large tract of land here and gave the railroad each alternate lots of a town that was to be laid out and platted if the railroad would locate a permanent station in the town, all of which was to be contracted for and the town was started with a mill and a gin, two or three stores and one saloon - from which start, in twelve or fourteen years, the town had grown to embrace some ten or a dozen small frame business houses and one good brick store, and the country round about was being settled by thrifty, industrious people, busy clearing the land and making good houses and farms.

The town had built a "Union" church, having moved the old Elliott's Chapel and Masonic Lodge building into town, and also had constructed a good school building for that time.

About this time the first conflagration in the history of the town came along one night and the major portion of the business houses were destroyed, but the town and its business men were young and vigorous, and in a few weeks the houses were rebuilt and were back in business. From then until now, the town has suffered many destructive fires, but in each instance has built up larger and better, until now the town has 18 good brick business houses with one being constructed and another figured on. Only one of the pioneer business men of the town, Mr. F. W. Farrier, remains on the business calendar, the rest locating in the later days along with the growth and development of the town; very few of the surrounding country remains, they have passed out or scattered.

The town has taken on quite a material residence growth; there are a number of palatial homes in the little city; several new and quite modern in every particular.

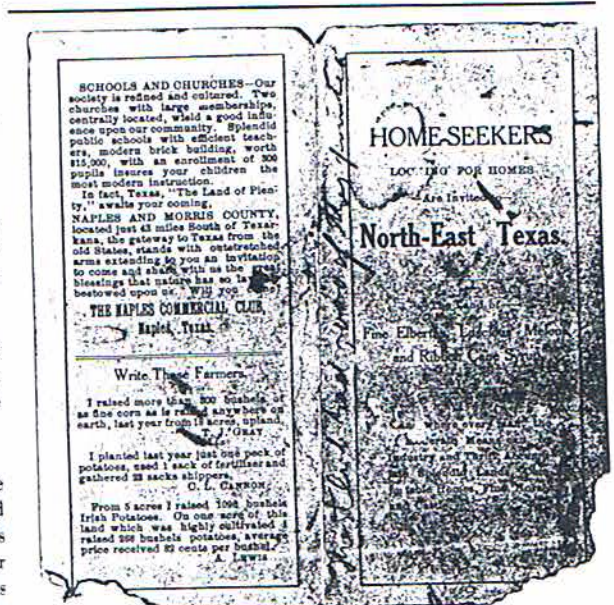
Two noble marks of growth in matters of development consists in the fact that the last few years the town has erected two good large church edifices in which the M. E. Church South and the Missionary Baptist denominations worship; also a magnificent \$7500 brick public school building, which signifies that both spiritual and educational development and growth have been good.

As to commercial equipment and advantages the town has excellent railroad facilities, a state bank, good hotel, a livery stable furnishings both horse and buggy rigs with automobile service in connection, along with good telephone and telegraph facilities; a live, energetic set of young, self-made business people, and not least of them, "The Breeze", a live little local paper that has struggled with others who have been factors in bringing the town up to where it is from its less pretentious standing twenty-five years ago.

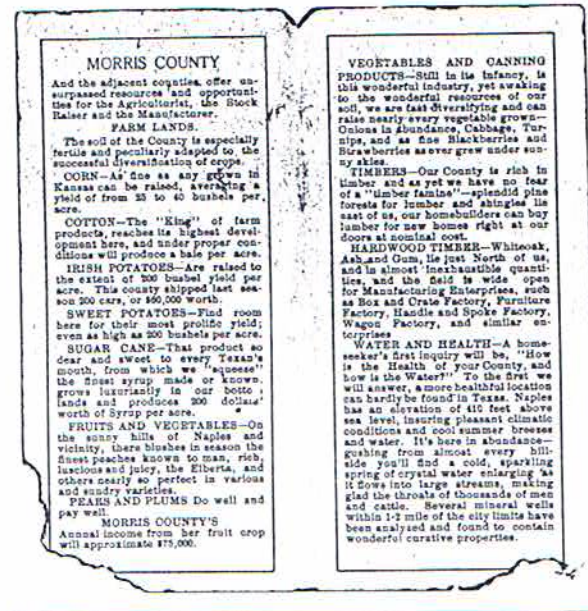
In the first of our story we overlooked mention of one of the drawbacks the town suffered during the first years of its existence. The railroad company gave the station the name of "Morris" in honor of the man who furnished the land for the site, and the post-office was named "Gavett", something different from any other known post-office, but the combination was bad because there was a railroad station somewhere in the state called "Garrett", and conflict soon arose in express and freight business, which necessitated a change, and by direct ballot the business people of the town put up "Omaha" to the post-office department and the railroad officials and it was adopted and put into use inside of twenty days.

True enough, a great deal more could be said of the growth and rise of Omaha, and perhaps then not half would be told, but no one "Booster" writeup has ever succeeded in telling it all and we'll close this little matter-of-fact story by saying that, instead of the ancient mill that first brought this section into notice, the town now boasts of a good grist mill for grinding corn - no wheat being grown in this country - two modern, well-equipped gin plants, one big cotton seed oil mill, and a modern, up-to-date canning plant that is ready to work up and take care of the surplus fruit; and extensive lumber yard to take the place of the old hardwood saw mill, and the country round about is settled up with splendid homes occupied by thrifty farmers who are producing lots of cotton, corn, potatoes, fruit and many other valuable farm products. Land is cheap and crop failure in unknown.

Prospecters are invited to visit our town. There's yet homes for thousands. Opportunity is right here, and a cordial invitation is extended everybody to come and settle adjacent Omaha.



The Naples Commercial Club printed this booklet praising the advantages of moving to Northeast Texas.



CLAY HILL

One of the landmarks regularly encountered on early Texas maps is referred to as Clay Hill. It is 5 or 6 miles west-southwest of Wheatville, in northeastern Morris County, placing it near the present Titus-Morris County line. Wheatville was the original settlement of Naples and was located about 1 mile north of the present town of Naples. Since Omaha is four miles west of Naples, the site of old Clay Hill would be 1 to 2 miles southwest of Omaha.

In an 1874 map, it is located almost exactly on the Sedicum Line, near the headwaters of Burton's Creek and east of Boggy Creek. No roads or railroads are indicated as passing through Clay Hill.

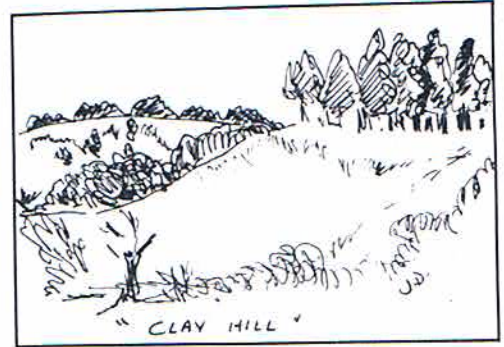
In the 1883 'Map of Texas', published for 'Burke's Texas Almanac', Clay Hill is shown slightly west of the Sedicum Line and west-southwest of Belden (now Naples) and Wheatville. It is in Morris County and about 5 or 6 miles due east of Cook's Store (in Titus County). It is on or near the Texas and St. Louis Railroad which also passes through Mt. Pleasant, Cook's Store and Belden.

The location of Clay Hill indicated on these maps places it between the present location of Omaha and the community of Concord, about 3 miles west of Omaha. Between 1880 and 1886, the present town of Omaha was called Morristoryn and was on the Sedicum Line (there is a historical marker on Highway 259). It is possible that Clay Hill was actually the present location of Omaha. However, Mr. B. C. Vickers, a long-time resident of Omaha, remembers a story of a log

schoolhouse about 2 or 3 miles southwest of Omaha that was called the Clay Hill School. The school existed well before 1900 since it was already gone when he came to the area in 1898. It was, according to the story, located on the south side of the present farm-to-market road from Omaha to Snow Hill, on a hill about a mile east of Boggy Creek. This places it about a mile west of the site of the old Cherry homesite.

According to the 1873 issue of 'The Texas Alamac', Clay Hill, located at that time in Titus County (before Morris County was divided out), had a post office with D. L. Hall as the postmaster. It is probable that, as was custom at that time, that the post office was located in the home of D. L. Hall. On July 15, 1861, a D. L. Hall was listed as a private in a reserve Confederate Army company at Wheatville. (Source: Texas State Archives - Confederate Muster Rolls File # 363).

In any event, Clay Hill was located in the vicinity of Omaha, and is one of the oldest landmarks, along with the Concord Church, Cherry homesite and Cherry Cemetery, Omaha Cemetery and Elliott's Mills.



Although the date of this photograph is unknown, we can surmise that the land which was cleared for the townsite in the 1800's looked very much like this. From left to right: C. C. Butler, W. W. McCollum, Joe Tucker, Mr. Wilbanks, Howard Hall, J. L. Cherry, and "Nig" the dog.