



THE CYCLONE



WTHA Conference in Abilene Recalls its Founding in 1924



WTHA Presidents Kevin Sweeney and Becky Matthews.

As the West Texas Historical Association approaches its 100th anniversary, the organization will hold this year's annual conference in the city where it was founded, Abilene, Texas. The meeting will take place at the MCM Elegante in Abilene on April 14-15, 2023. The 98th annual conference will offer over fifty papers and presentations in eighteen

sessions on Friday and Saturday, providing an opportunity for fellowship and scholarship for those interested in West Texas history and culture.

On Friday evening there will be a reception honoring association president Becky Matthews followed by a banquet at the National Center for Children's Illustrated Literature. Keynote speaker for the banquet is John Erickson, author of 75 books including the very popular "Hank the Cowdog" series.

The WTHA annual business meeting and luncheon will be held on Saturday in the banquet room at the MCM Elegante. This will include presentation of awards and election of officers for the coming year. President Matthews will give her address to the association, "Looking Forward, Looking Back: 100 Years of Collecting West Texas History."

MURDER WITHOUT CAUSE AND THE OUTCOME IN BREWSTER COUNTY, TEXAS – 1922-23

by Travis Roberts

This information was assembled by J. Travis Roberts Jr., Chair, Brewster County Historical Commission for a presentation at the 91st Annual Meeting of the West Texas Historical Association in Odessa, Texas in 2014.

"Harvey Hughes Must Hang for Murder", said the jury in Court Case 1052, Brewster County, Texas, This story commences at a small restaurant located in Marathon, Texas operated by Mrs. Clay Roberts, who on the evening of January 24, 1922, served two young men who that had just got off of a westbound freight train parked on the rail siding at Marathon. The train stopped to fill the



water car used to furnish water to make the steam that powered the freight train engine. The livestock cars were empty and accessible to hobo travelers moving across the region during that period of time. Work was hard to find, money was scarce and people were entering into a period of depression that lasted through the

1930s. Hobo was a common description of those traveled along the rail lines in years past. They often departed the rail cars long enough to get a meal in the local towns and then returned to the next passing freight train. Up until the mid 1950's, the freight trains were a common method for a person with little or no money to travel. The empty freight cars were usually left with doors open. Some trains were reported to have had large numbers of hoboes riding. The Southern Pacific reported that 20,634 hobos were caught in one month. The event described in this case concerns a westbound pair of hobos traveling to California in 1922. (cont. page 2)

Murder Without Cause

The Roberts's restaurant, and café was located on the north side of Main Street in Marathon facing south to the GH & SA Railroad. The café was in an adobe building constructed for the home of Clay and Annie Roberts. This building still exists today, now remodeled and called the "White Buffalo Bar and Twelve Gage Restaurants."

The two young men entered the café and Rogers ordered the supper for himself and the other boy. Hughes would say that he had fifteen cents when he got to Marathon so Rogers paid for the meal. The two men left the restaurant and were observed re-boarding the freight train in a livestock car at about 6:30 pm.

The freight train departed westbound toward Alpine, located a distance of 30 miles. The two men got into an argument, over a comment made by Rogers about the mother of Hughes. The exact location of the shooting was never established in the trial. A gunshot and a fight occurred. Hughes had a cheap pistol he used to fire one shot into Rogers' back and then continued to use the gun as a club to beat Rogers over the head. Hughes would later claim self-defense. Several parts of a pistol were later located in the sand bedding in the car. Hughes pulled Rogers from near the center of the car to the west end near the open window, the only access to the car at that time.

Brakeman, Mr. C. L. Serat walked along the train when it reached Alpine to inspect the wheels and bearings. Upon approaching one of the empty livestock cars, later identified as being twelve or fifteen cars from the caboose, he heard a sound like a "groan or hollering". The car doors were both closed and pinned. The end window to the car was open where access had been made into the car by the two men. Mr. Serat unpinned one of the doors on the north side and observed a man near the west end of the car. The man was semiconscious, gagged with a handkerchief and was lying on the sand bedding. The sand was used for bedding in the stockcars to aid in livestock transportation. From the looks of the sand on the floor, the man had been dragged to the west end of the car near the window. The injured man was later identified as Clifford L. Rogers, about 21 years in age. Mr. Serat then went to the Depot office to

get help. The night watchman on duty called Mr. Murray, who was in the Alpine Drug Store located north of the depot along with Mr. S. J. English, a railroad employee. The wounded man was taken out of the livestock car and placed on a cot in the bunk car. Dr. Turney was soon located. Mr. Morgan, the Chief Deputy Sherriff and a Texas Ranger, Bob Sumrall also were summoned. Dr. Turney's examination of the man revealed he had very little chance to live. The doctors' findings were a gunshot wound in the back that had traveled through his liver into the lungs. The arms were both bruised with one hand mashed and two broken fingers. The head also had been beaten. Rogers did regain consciousness long enough to provide a description of the person that had inflicted his injuries and a list of several personal items that had been taken. The items included two ten dollar bills, some change, a railroad watch, some papers, a small book and a coat. Rogers stated "It is hell to feed a man and then have him shoot you in the back for \$20". Around 2:30 a.m. on January 25, 1922, Clifford Rogers died. He had been discharged from the Army in February 1919. He married January 1, 1922 and was on his way to California when he was killed.



Old train depot in Marathon.

Prior to the stop in Marathon, the two men were observed in Sanderson by railroad crews. Mr. Serat, the train brakeman, said he had had seen the boys at Warwick, a rail siding about ten miles east of Marathon, on the side track waiting for an east bound freight. While at Marathon, he saw two boys going toward Mrs. Roberts's café. Mr. M. R. Edmiston, the railroad locomotive fireman stated he had seen the two boys in the Sanderson rail yards and then again at the Warwick stop. The man, later identified as Harvey Hughes, had upon shooting Rogers and stealing several of his personal items, changed cars on the freight train. On

arrival in Alpine, Hughes had left the train and was observed by Gregorio Maruffa, near his house located adjacent to the south side of the railroad. Maruffa saw Hughes tear up and throw on the ground a piece of paper, or telegram.

With the description of the shooter, Brewster County Sherriff, E. E. Townsend, and Texas Ranger Bob Sumrall began a search. Several rail maintenance workers lived in a small community called Toronto six miles west of Alpine where there was a rock quarry for ballast used on the rails. It was also the source of the foundation stone used for the Brewster County Courthouse.

Deputy Sheriff T. I. Morgan of Alpine caught a ride on the freight train, going west from Alpine to Toronto, to investigate whether there were any strangers in the area. His travels followed the rails west and reportedly he did find a person hiding in one of the structures that fit the description provided by Rogers prior to his death. Bob Sumrall, a Texas Ranger was also with Deputy Morgan at Toronto. Sumrall located the stock car where the murder had occurred and examined it. He found the handle of a broken pistol buried in the sand and one of the train men found another part of the gun. The gun held five shots and had been discharged once.

An arrest was made by Deputy Morgan. He had to call Alpine for a car to come and transport his prisoner, later identified as Harvey L. Hughes. Hughes was identified as being from Delphos, Ohio. When he was arrested, Hughes had in his possession a railroad watch, a fountain pen and some money that had been listed by Rogers prior to his death. It was established that Hughes was 21 years old with his last home being in Detroit, Michigan. He had started on the trip west by rail on January 7, 1922. He met C. H. Rogers in the Houston rail yards. He had started to California because he heard he could get a job real easy. He and Rogers traveled from Houston west to Marathon in about three or four days time period. He claimed to have become best friends with Rogers. The first time they had any trouble was west of Marathon when Rogers asked Hughes about his people. When Hughes told him, his mother had been married three or four times Rogers replied "Why she is nothing but a whore." This is alleged to have started the fight.

A murder case was filed against Harvey Hughes and presented to the Grange Jury which returned an indictment on February 13, 1922. Hughes was officially charged for the murder of Clifford Rogers. The District Attorney listed for this case was N. H. Graham, assisted by Brian Montague. The case was set for trial in the 83rd District Court, with a visiting judge, Joseph Jones of the 63rd Judicial District of Texas, from Del Rio, Texas. Hughes had no attorney, so Judge Jones appointed local defense council, A. M. Turney and Walter M. Haynes. The criminal case was set for trial on February 10, 1922 in the District Court Room of the 1887 Brewster County Courthouse. Due to delays, the actual trial did not start until February 17. After only two days of hearings and testimony of the various witnesses, on February 19, 1922, the jury returned a verdict of guilty. A. F. Thrift, Foreman of the jury presented the verdict: "We the jury find the defendant guilty as charged in the indictment and assess the punishment of death."

A. M. Turney, counsel for the defendant entered a motion for a retrial. This motion was refused by the court. The defense counsel then gave notice of appeal to the Texas Court of Appeals, which was accepted by the trial district court. On February 19, 1922, counsel for the defense presented an affidavit of insanity to the Court for Hughes and asked for a jury trial to determine the sanity of Harvey Hughes. The sanity trial was conducted in the Brewster County Courthouse in the 83rd Judicial District of Texas with Judge C.R. Sutton, presiding over a selected jury panel. The jury returned a verdict of: sanity.

Following this date, the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals acting under W. C. Morrow, Presiding Judge of the Court of Criminal Appeals conducted a hearing on October 25, 1922, and issued a refusal for a new trial. Between February 19, 1922 and March 3, 1923, a number of events further related to this case occurred. Hughes had been an ideal prisoner, lodged in the local county jail. He had had many interviews with several of the local ministers and had discussed freely the crime that he had committed. In an open letter to the people of Alpine and the area that had befriended him he said, "I have been what you might call a habitual criminal, and I thought I was getting happiness and everything that goes with it, but was very badly mistaken. I have

known about every type of crook on the face of the earth, and I am sorry to say it... I cannot begin to say how sorry I am, for taking a human life, a very much valued treasure. I am more than willing to give my life in atonement, for that great crime... Even if my sentence were commuted I would feel the same way. But I would ask that at least nobody have a bad thought that I am still a murderer. Because now I can tell that it is wrong." Hughes made the statement: "This was the first time he had ever written anything of any substance". Some thought it was a good article on the problems. Some of the local citizens became concerned for Harvey Hughes and his future.



Travis Roberts at the 2014 WTHA conference.

In October 1922, a jail break occurred during the time when Sheriff E. E. Townsend and his Chief Deputy Morgan were in San Antonio attending the hearing on the appeal case for Hughes. The jailer's wife was alone when Hughes made his escape. Reports, of the case that have been located, indicate that about 9:00 p.m. on October 15, 1922, Mrs. Morgan went into the hallway to check on the two prisoners lodged in the jail. It was reported that Hughes had gotten out of his cell by cutting the padlock on the cell door. As Mrs. Morgan moved down the hallway, the prisoner managed to get by her and escape into the night. A search party was called to action but failed to locate Hughes. He apparently hopped a freight train. to the Toronto area located six miles west of Alpine. He had located an abandoned house. A week later he was located by the sheriff's department, based on a report from a railroad employee at Toronto. This notice led to his capture once again and his return to the county jail. Hughes remarked: "he was ready to return to jail out of the weather and to have a good place to eat".

This event raised a feeling by some of the local citizens that there may have been

some collusion on the part of the authorities to allow for Hughes to escape. In March 1923, a group of citizens from Alpine circulated a petition to Texas Governor Pat M. Neff, seeking to get the death sentence commuted to life imprisonment. Less than a week prior to the execution, the authorities in Alpine received the following telegram from Governor Neff: "It is not my intention to interfere in any way with the verdict of the jury and the judgment of the court in Harvey Hughes case".

To carry out the orders of the court, Sheriff Townsend ordered a scaffold to be erected on the north side of the Brewster County Courthouse. The structure was to be screened from the public view. On the morning of April 7, 1923, several hours earlier than the original time set by the sheriff a request was submitted by Hughes to get it over with. The designated parties had all assembled and made their march from the jail building to the gallows. The noose was adjusted about Hughes' neck. Reverend J. A. McMillian, offered a prayer, and while he was praying, the trap was sprung on the gallows. Hughes' neck was broken in the fall. This then ended the one and only legal hanging that ever occurred in Brewster County. The laws were changed in Texas to require that any execution would be at the Huntsville site conducted by the state and not in the local counties. Hughes claimed he had found God during the year in jail and had been baptized. A funeral service was held for him at the Alpine Christian Church and he was buried in the Alpine cemetery.

Question ?

Research of the records developed on this case identified an interesting event that may relate to the Harvey Hughes case. There was a Mr. A. F. Robinson, a local businessman in Alpine; who was murdered on March 24, 1943 in his home. Robinson had served as a member of the jury that judged Hughes sane and he was later one of the witnesses to the hanging. His murder was committed by an unknown intruder, who demanded money. As he reached for Robinson's billfold, he allegedly said, "I think you are the right man; I'll know in a minute." After looking at the billfold and taking a small amount of money, he shot Robinson who died almost immediately. The intruder was then attacked by Mrs. Robinson, but made his escape never to be found. This case has remained unsolved. Was or is this case related to the Hughes case?

Using the Testimony of S. E. Stilwell in the United States vs. the State of Texas to Scout the Life of “Jack” Stilwell

By Clint E. Chambers

[Article reprinted from the 1991 Year Book. This is the first of Dr. Chambers' articles concerning his ancestor, Jack Stilwell, which later resulted in a published biography. I was privileged to help with his research while working at the Southwest Collection – JM]

A story told to me by my grandfather, Daniel Clinton Cooley, about his uncle, Jack Stilwell, has haunted me since childhood. As a boy, Jack Stilwell was sent to the well for water. When he failed to return home, family members sent to look for him found only empty buckets by the well. This story of Jack's mysterious disappearance prompted my quest for information about the life of this interesting though elusive frontiersman.

An important window into the life of Simpson Everett Stilwell, a.k.a. “Comanche Jack,” found in our national archives is his testimony in the Supreme Court case of “The United States vs. The State of Texas.” On March 30, 1894, it took a full day for Judge Stilwell to give his deposition regarding the boundary dispute between the United States and Texas, at Kerfoot Hotel, El Reno, Oklahoma Territory. (Cited in the April 5, 1894 edition of the *El Reno Democrat*.)

The last witness who testified in behalf of the United States was S. E. Stilwell at present Police Judge of the city of El Reno. His deposition was taken last Friday and covered more than twenty type written pages. . . . he proved to be one of the very best witnesses the United States has yet placed upon the stand. He was thoroughly familiar with all the rivers, creeks, mountains and old trails in the entire section of controversy.”



Jack Stilwell in 1868

The case of The United States vs. The State of Texas decided the fate of approximately one and a half million acres of land between the north and south forks of the Red River and the 100th Meridian, designated as Greer County.

According to Dan W. Perry, staff reporter for the *El Reno Democrat* and friend of Jack Stilwell, “The Judge’s testimony strengthened every material allegation made by the United States in this case,” Stilwell’s testimony for the United States was taken by Assistant U.S. Attorney General Edgar Allan. The cross examination was conducted by George R. Freeman, attorney for the State of Texas. Freeman challenged Stilwell’s testimony because Texas claimed Greer County.

In October 1894, Allan composed a brief utilizing some of Stilwell’s testimony. On March 16, 1896, Supreme Court Justice Harlan ruled that Greer County constituted no part of Texas but was subject the jurisdiction of the United States. With this decision, the South fork of the Red River was declared the boundary line, and Greer county became part of Oklahoma territory. Stilwell responding to initial questions by Mr. Allan stated:

I am 43 years old, residing in El Reno, Oklahoma Territory and

Police Judge of this city. I was born on the frontier of Missouri and Kansas, right on the line. I think about 50 yards in Kansas, but it was before the lines were well defined. I was born in the unorganized territory of Kansas. In 1863, I went to New Mexico from Kansas City over the Arkansas route to a point above Fort Dodge, there crossed and took what was known as the Cimarron Route which went in past wagon mounts into Las Vegas, Las Vegas being the first town we struck.

In 1862, Jack’s father purchased land just north of Palmyra (Baldwin City) Kansas. Palmyra had a well which was famous as a watering place for the Santa Fe caravans. This may have been the well where Jack left the empty water buckets and started his life on the Santa Fe Trail in 1863. Jack continues:

I made several trips from New Mexico to Kansas City and Leavenworth in 1864, 1865, 1866, wintering in New Mexico. In the wintertime we used to come down on buffalo hunts, down on the Canadian River and in on the head of Wolf River and through that country, over the Beaver north of there, so I became pretty familiar with that country.”

Mr. Allan continues, “Are you familiar with the country around Santa Fe?”

“I have been to Santa Fe several times.”

“Do you speak the Mexican language?”

“Yes, sir.”

“Describe the extent of your personal knowledge of the different routes of travel from Santa Fe to the east and north”

The first route that I shall describe is what we call the "Southern Route" (Crooked Creek Trail). Leaving Santa Fe, coming in through Apache Canyon, pass the old ruins of the church; pass San Jose, San Miguel to Tocalotel (sic) just west of Las Vegas about eighteen miles; then to Anton Chico; then to Gallenas Springs; then to Old Fort Bascom on the Canadian, or what is in that country called Red River- Rio Colorado, down the river on the south side to a place called Atascosa; there crossing to the north side and traveling almost parallel (sic) to the river bearing a little to the north to the creek on which Adobe Walls is situated to the north and a little east to the heads of Wolf River; the same direction over to Beaver; from there to the Cimarron; then Crooked Creek; the Mulberry and the Arkansas, crossing the Arkansas and connecting with the main trail from Kansas City and Leavenworth west.

What we call the "Middle Route" goes over the same road to Tocalotel (sic), in place of turning south to Anton Chico comes straight on to Las Vegas; from there to La Junta; from there to the Wagon Mound known by the Mexicans as Santa Clara; from there over to the Canadian or what is called Rio Colorado by the Mexicans' cross it, travel east—to Cienaga Del Curro; Carrizo; Cimarron sixty mile dry road or Jornada Seco to the Arkansas, crossing the same thirty five miles above Ft. Dodge and connecting there with the Missouri and Denver southern route.

The "North Route" leaves the roads spoken of as La Junta goes up through Ft. Union over to Riado (sic), Cimarron to Raton;

over the Dick Houston (Wooton) Pass to Trinidad and down the Arkansas; meeting in the middle route what is known as Cimarron Crossing above Ft. Dodge near the mouth of Mulberry, thence east to Westport, Kansas City or Leavenworth, whichever one you want. My acquaintance and knowledge of these different routes was gained from traveling them; also it was perfectly natural we discussed every route as to which was better, shorter, more convenient, and above all, the safest from Indians.



Judge Simpson E. Stilwell

An interesting fact from Stilwell's testimony here is that he describes a third route to Santa Fe. His description of the southern route (Crooked Creek Trail) through the Texas Panhandle is unique since most maps display only the Cimarron and mountain branches of the Santa Fe Trail.

In 1867 I was first employed as a guide for troops at Ft. Dodge, Kansas and in 1868, I came south with General Custer's expedition to what is now Ft. Sill. From 1871 until 1876, I was employed at Fort Sill as post guide.

Between 1868 and 1876 I was employed almost continually between the Red River and I might change that a little and say between the Brazos River and the Canadian River, embracing the Red River Country, in the

capacity of scout and guide and in that way became familiar with that country.

Where have you lived since 1876?

I have lived in the territory almost all the time; made one or two trips to Mexico. About the Comanche country and at the opening up of the Oklahoma Territory here, I lived here . . . about 1887, I was transferred from Anadarko in the Marshal's service up here to Darlington, but then, I was down there as much as up here; between Anadarko, Darlington and Ft. Sill you might say has been my headquarters.

From 1877. . . until 1879 I was not in the . . . Comanche Territory. I made a trip from Anadarko through to Prescott, Arizona up the Washita, over on the Canadian up the Canadian to Ft. Bascom and from there on west. I was employed as a scout in West Texas at Ft. Davis and Ft. Stockton and (was) there during the Apache war.

On the trip to Prescott, Arizona Jack Stilwell was probably accompanied by his younger brother, Frank, since both men showed up in Prescott, Arizona in 1877.

The October 19, 1877 edition of *The Arizona Miner* relates that F. C. (Frank) Stilwell who had been in the employ of George Young shot and fatally wounded Jesus Bega, a Mexican employed by the said Young. As the new camp cook, Bega, made tea instead of coffee for the meal. This displeased Frank Stilwell and led to harsh words, and Mr. Bega then struck Frank Stilwell over the head with a shovel. Stilwell shot Bega through the lungs. An examination was held before Justice Carter and the defendant was acquitted, Stilwell having surrendered himself for examination.

Frank Stilwell later moved to the Tombstone, Arizona area and served under Sheriff John Behan as a Deputy

Sheriff of Cochise County. Frank also joined the "Cowboy" faction in Cochise County and in March of 1882 was involved in the murder of Morgan Earp. Two nights later, Frank Stilwell was shot and killed in the Tucson rail yard by Wyatt Earp, Doc Holliday and their "Posse." Of course, Jack Stilwell had left Arizona and moved on to Ft. Davis, Texas in 1878 to work as a chief packer and then scout at both Ft. Davis and Ft. Stockton. If Frank had returned to Ft. Davis with his brother Jack, he might have avoided such bad company and averted an untimely death.

Mr. Allan continued: "Do you know of any old road which crosses the Old Red River somewhere between the Pease and Washita (actually referring to Wichita), then goes up in the northwest direction to Otter Creek?"

I know the road, at least there was such a road which I saw in the spring of 1869. It was a worn out and abandoned road, looked like it had not been traveled for several years. It was Van Dorn's trail from Camp Radziminski to Ft. Belknap.

Under cross examination Mr. Freeman, attorney for Texas, asked, "What was your first acquaintance with the country about Otter Creek and the north fork of the Red River? Stilwell answered that it had been in February or March of 1869 when he came with Custer's expedition.

"Do you know anything of the expedition of Captain Evans and the fight with the Comanche Indians somewhere near the mouth of Elk Creek, on Christmas Day, and after that passed from there toward the Washita River?"

Major Evans instead of Captain Evans was in command of an expedition in the fall and winter of 1868. General Sheridan sent me from Old Fort Cobb early in February of 1869 to ascertain what expedition there was between the Washita River and the Wichita Mountains. I found Major Evans about twenty five miles up the Washita River just as he was moving into camp on the river from the south. I learned

that they had a fight with the Comanches which in fact had been reported to us by the Comanches prior to this. According to my understanding, they had their fight on Christmas Day near the mouth of Elk Creek on the north fork of Red River. From there they moved to the Washita River, his guides mistaking the Washita for the Canadian. In other words, they were completely lost.

We figured that they must have left the Canadian and passed around the head of the Washita without knowing it. It is the only way we could account for their being in there; and not knowing the Washita River. They left Ft. Bascom and came down the Canadian to the vicinity of Adobe Walls. There they left the Canadian and made a detour south and had this fight and started back to the Canadian.

They did not know what streams they were at all; the guides told them that was bound to be the Canadian and that it had changed its nature, being lower down. At least, that is the way they tried to argue with me when I got into their camp.

Could you state if there is a dim old trail passing about 6 miles east of Ft. Elliott?"

There is a dim old trail passing about 6 miles east of Ft. Elliott. We made this in about 1869 with General Custer. In 1872, General Grierson (and I) had a wrangle over that until I showed him a part of an old wagon bed repaired by Major Henry Inman of Ft. Harker. (Quartermaster)

"Would you describe Custer's Trail?"

We left Ft. Sill where it is now and went along the south of the mountains, skirted the mountains on the south, the base of them, until we arrived at Camp Radziminski by crossing Otter Creek. We went about eight miles above the mouth of Elk Creek and from there we kept to the right and around the mountains just to

where the North Fork of the Red River enters the mountains. There we sent a portion of our played out teams up the North Fork and we crossed and went over and struck Elm Fork and then back on the North Fork, up the North Fork, up McClellan's Creek about ten miles, and turned and came back down McClellan's and crossed the North Fork, struck the Sweetwater, and from there across to the Washita where Custer's supply camp was.

As stated in the *El Reno Democrat*, Judge Stilwell was thoroughly familiar with all the creeks, mountains, camps and old trails, in the Greer County controversy. . . his testimony not only gave a clearer perspective of his life as an army scout, but shed new light on an earlier part of his life on the Santa Fe Trail.

Just why Jack Stilwell did not write his life story might be explained by his letter to Mr. Franklin B. Adams, Secretary of the Kansas Historical Society dated August 20, 1895. His reference to eliminating the pronouns "I" and not being in the habit of writing for publication might indicate a reluctance to write his life story.

Colonel Homer W. Wheeler met Jack Stilwell at Reno City, Oklahoma Territory in 1890. He stated that Stilwell "afterwards studied law and grew up with the great west."

Judge Stilwell's legal education is open to question as stated in the December 15, 1893, edition of the *Norman Transcript*: "Comanche Jack Stilwell, the old Indian scout of the 60's is the City Judge of El Reno. He says he accepted the office because he didn't know any law and could therefore make an impartial Judge."

Now the family knows that the empty buckets left at the well in Kansas led Jack Stilwell to a very full and eventful life. From his birth on the Missouri-Kansas border in 1850 until his death at Cody, Wyoming in 1903, Jack Stilwell did "grow up with The Great West."

Memorial to Clint Chambers on .p 8.

NEWS AROUND WEST TEXAS



Patrick Dearen of Midland, Texas was inducted into the Texas Literary Hall of Fame. He is one of only 66 Texas authors, past and present, ever admitted. Members include Elmer Kelton, Larry McMurtry, J. Frank Dobie, and Walter Prescott Webb. Founded in 2004, the Texas Literary Hall of Fame honors "authors whose body of work, fiction or nonfiction, significantly contributes to Texas' literary heritage; is original; was first published in this country; (and) has been previously recognized for its literary significance."

In October, the **Pecos County Historical Commission** held a two-day celebration at Horsehead Crossing on the Pecos River. One of the most iconic locations in West Texas, Horsehead Crossing is best known as the place where the Goodnight-Loving cattle trail hit the Pecos. The celebration included chuck wagon meals, cannon artillery, silent auctions, re-enactors, and historical presentations. Among the organizers were WTHA members and friends, **Betty Damron, Ernest Woodward, and Tom Ashmore.**

The **Young County Historical Commission** was one of 82 county commissions recognized for service efforts in 2021 by the Texas Historical Commission who stated, "YCHC accomplished many good things; refining the details of the 1921 jail marker, applied for two additional historical markers receiving approval from THC for the John Conner subject marker, held five public programs, co-sponsored/participated in events with Fort Belknap Living History Association."

Becky Matthews has published an updated entry on WTHA in the Handbook of Texas.

"**The Bridge**" has been released on YouTube. A historical documentary on the crossings at the Salt Fork of the Red River in Collingsworth County is centered around the importance of the first truss bridge on U.S. 83 to cross the river. Through interviews with eight longtime residents, the film covers an historical perspective from the early settlers through the demolition of the truss bridge and the construction of a new bridge. Stories include Bonnie and Clyde, the wreck of 1949, construction of the highway, the Depression era, river parties, and Native American artifacts. "The Bridge" is a **Collingsworth County Museum** project produced by **Neal Odom.**

CONFERENCES:

April 7-8, 2023. The **Texas Folklore Society** held their 104th annual meeting in Waco, TX. This was the first conference of the society in several years and featured a wide variety of papers in folklore and culture and the famous HOOTenanny. For further information look at www.texasfolkloresociety.org.

April 6-8, 2023. The Annual Conference for the **Sowell Family Collection in Literature, Community and the Natural World** took place in the Formby Room, Southwest Collection/Special Collections Library at Texas Tech University. This collection contains the personal papers of some of the country's most prominent writers on the natural world. For information on the collection and the conference see <https://thesowellcollection.wordpress.com>.

November 10-11, 2023. The **Center for Big Bend Studies** will host its 29th annual conference in **Morgan University Center** on the campus of Sul Ross State University in Alpine, TX. The conference features historians, archaeologists, folklorists and

other researchers studying the past and present of the Big Bend region and northern Mexico. Visit <https://cbbs.sulross.edu/conference/>.

CALL FOR PAPERS:

The **East Texas Historical Association** invites proposals for papers and sessions for its 2023 annual fall meeting to be held in Nacogdoches, TX, at the Fredonia Hotel on October 5-7, 2023. Topics that cover all aspects of East Texas's regional heritage and history receive some preference, but any proposal that deals with Texas history, along with the people of Texas and Texas culture, is welcome. Please visit <https://www.easttexashistorical.org/> for full details. Deadline for submission: May 1, 2023. Presenters will be notified of acceptance by June 5, 2023. Please make all submissions electronically using the proposal form on the website. Send proposals to Program Chair, Dr. Bernadette Pruitt at his_bxp@shsu.edu.

The **Center for Big Bend Studies** is now accepting papers to be given at the 29th Annual Conference, November 10 and 11, 2023, in Alpine, Texas. Presentations are 30 minutes long. Please submit your paper by October 3, 2023. Please include full contact information for the primary author as well as any audio-visual equipment required. The submission form can be found at <https://cbbs.sulross.edu/conference/conference-paper-proposal/>.

Looking Back . . .

25 years ago

On September 18, 1998, formal ceremonies were held at the Southwest Collection in Lubbock to transfer the executive offices of the West Texas Historical Association to Texas Tech University from Hardin-Simmons University in Abilene. Dr B, W, Aston retired after 24 years as Executive Director of the Association.

In Memory . . .



Col. Clint Edwin Chambers M.D., passed away on March 25, 2022 at the age of 90. Clint was born in Chickasha, Oklahoma on January 15th, 1932. After graduating from high school, Clint earned a football scholarship to Baylor University where he played four years while earning a BS in

Biology. He attended the Oklahoma University School of Medicine and graduated in 1959. Clint began practicing medicine as a volunteer physician and chief medical officer for the nonprofit organization Medico in Southeast Asia. During this time, he oversaw the construction of a health clinic for the Cambodian people and laid the groundwork for future teams to serve this area. In 1960, he met Siva Vainunawin, in Bangkok, Thailand. They wed on February 28, 1961 and were married for over 61 years. They had two children, daughter Tida Chambers-Bostrom and son Clifford N. Chambers. During his 21 years as military physician and administrator, the Chambers family lived all over the world. Dr. Chambers came to Lubbock as the Hospital Commander of Reese AFB in 1981. Upon retirement in 1983, he went into private practice, also volunteering in the minor surgery clinic at the Community Health Center of Lubbock and teaching part-time at Texas Tech University Health Sciences Center. Clint was a true renaissance man. He was an adventurer, explorer, musician, athlete, builder, leader, teacher, historian, and author. He published his first book at 88 years of age, *Comanche Jack Stillwell*, about Clint's great-great-uncle. He served as President and board member of the West Texas Historical Association and was active with the Santa Fe Trail Society, and the Vietnam Archive at Texas Tech University.

Betty Sullivan Carr, age 94, passed away on May 19, 2022. Betty was born on December 21, 1927 in Amarillo, Texas. The family moved to Bristow, Oklahoma where she graduated from high school. She enrolled at Texas Tech where she met Robert L. Carr. After marrying in 1948 they moved to Dallas for Robert to earn his medical degree, then returning to Lubbock. Betty served the First United Methodist Church as church historian/archivist. She also served on many boards and organizations in the Lubbock community including the Friends of the Library where she was a life member. She frequently served as a reenactor at the Ranching Heritage Center. Betty earned her M.A. in History from Texas Tech University in 1988 and was awarded "distinguished Alumnus" by the History Department in 1992. She and her husband, Robert, were both long time, active members of WTHA. Betty was a frequent visitor to the Southwest Collection and a member of the local Westerners Corral.

Betty Rathjen, 94, a resident of Canyon for 63 years, passed away on Monday, April 11, 2022. Betty was born on July 20, 1927 in Three Rivers, Texas. She received her teaching degree at Texas Lutheran and her Bachelor of Education degree in 1951 from Sul Ross State University in Alpine. She taught Kindergarten through 5th grade. Betty married Dr. Frederick Rathjen in Corpus Christi on June 28, 1953, and in 1956 they moved to Canyon where he accepted a position at what is now WTAMU. Betty worked at the WT Learning Center for seven years and volunteered for Partners in Palo Duro Canyon Foundation for numerous years, tending the gift shop at Palo Duro Canyon well into her late 80's.

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