

Dickens County Celebrates Golden Anniversary

Dickens County was named in honor of John Dickens who was one of the fighters at the Alamo during the war for Texas Independence. Before its organization March 19, 1891, it had been attached to Mitchell County, Baylor County, and at the time of organization was part of Crosby County for Judicial Purposes.

The background history of Dickens County is one that reads like a romance. It is most interesting to learn of the various Indian raids, to know about the pioneer customs and habits of the people, and the methods which the early settlers used in life. Those days were anything but sunshine to the people who established the setting of civilization in this country. But we cannot relate the history of that time as our narrative must be brief.

The first commissioners court to serve Dickens County was convened April 1, 1891, at Dockum. A. J. McClain had been elected County Judge, and he and three commissioners made up the first commissioners' Court. Those present beside the judge were: J. A. Stokes for Precinct No. 1, J. G. Scott for Precinct No. 2, and W. F. Gilbert for Precinct No. 3. J. R.

Waller, who was the Commissioner for Precinct No. 4, was not in attendance for the first court. D. S. Dunwoody served as the first County Clerk, and J. D. Harkey was the first Sheriff of the the county.

The first business of the first commissioners court was to establish a county seat. The election which had been held March 14, 1891, to determine a county seat, failed to make a choice. It appears three places had been in the race for the county seat at this election: Espuela, Dickens and Frankfort, the latter named place being on Croton Creek near a place later known as Poison Mills. None of the places were voted a plurality. The first commissioners court voted to make Espuela a temporary county seat until the people should select a place.

The next election for the county seat was held May 8, 1891, and two places were contestants—Espuela and Dickens. The vote was considered by Commissioners Precinct and was as follows:

Precinct No. 1, Espuela 33 and Dickens 7.
Precinct No. 2, Espuela 8 and Dickens 47.

Precinct No. 3, Espuela 31 and Dickens 0.

Precinct No. 4, Espuela 2 votes and Dickens 4.

There were 132 votes cast in that election with Espuela receiving 74 votes and Dickens 58.

The commissioners court held a meeting May 10, 1891, to canvass the returns on the court house election and declared Espuela the legal county seat, two commissioners and the county judge voting for Espuela and two commissioners voting for Dickens.

The first salaries paid our county officials was not as remunerative as they are today. The commissioners court in session May 12, 1891, set the salaries as follows:

County Judge, \$600.00 per annum.
County Clerk, \$450.00 per annum.
Sheriff and Tax Collector, \$300.00 per annum and fees.

County Commissioners, \$3.00 per day for time actually served. Possibly if those salaries had remained until today it would have been difficult to have secured county officials at this time.

The first person to serve as District Judge for the county was Hon. W. R. McGill. The first District Attorney was W. Q. Henderson who was succeeded by the late Judge Kinder of Plainview. The late B. G. Worswick served the county as the first County Attorney and held the office almost 34 years, or until his death. To date there have been only three men who have served as County Attorney in the county by election. The other two are Judge Alton B. Chapman and Attorney L. D. Ratliff who is the present County Attorney.

J. M. Jones served as the first county treasurer but was defeated in the election in 1892 by H. T. Garner who served as County Treasurer for 16 years. Jeff D. Keeth was the first County Tax Assessor. E. B. Shaw was the first Deputy Sheriff of the county and is the only man living who first served the county as an official. S. D. Dunwoody, the first County Clerk, passed away at his home near Lubbock just a few months ago.

So far as is known the first public school in Dickens County was at Espuela in 1881 and was taught by Mrs. L. G. Garrett. Miss Lizzie Baine, a cousin to the late Governor Browning, taught a school in the county in 1884, and there was a private school at the Joe Browning place taught by Jim Lane along in the early 80's.

It is thought the first people to be married in the county were Miss Diana Browning to Millard McBride. This wedding occurred about where J. P. Goen now lives, and was about 1882. The ceremony was performed by Rev. J. H. Stegall, a Methodist minister, who also, is credited with preaching the first sermon in Dickens County. The first sermon was preached at Espuela. The first church organized in the county was a Baptist Church at Patton Springs in 1888. The first persons baptized in the county were: J. A. Askins, his daughter, Mrs. Brock and Mrs. Sarah E. Allen, at Patton Springs in the fall of 1888.

The first white person to make Dickens County his home is thought to have been W. C. Dockum, who also, built the first rock house in the county and after whom Dockum Creek was named. The first white person to move his family into Dickens County was S. T. Pepper. Dockum and Pepper both were buffalo hunters.

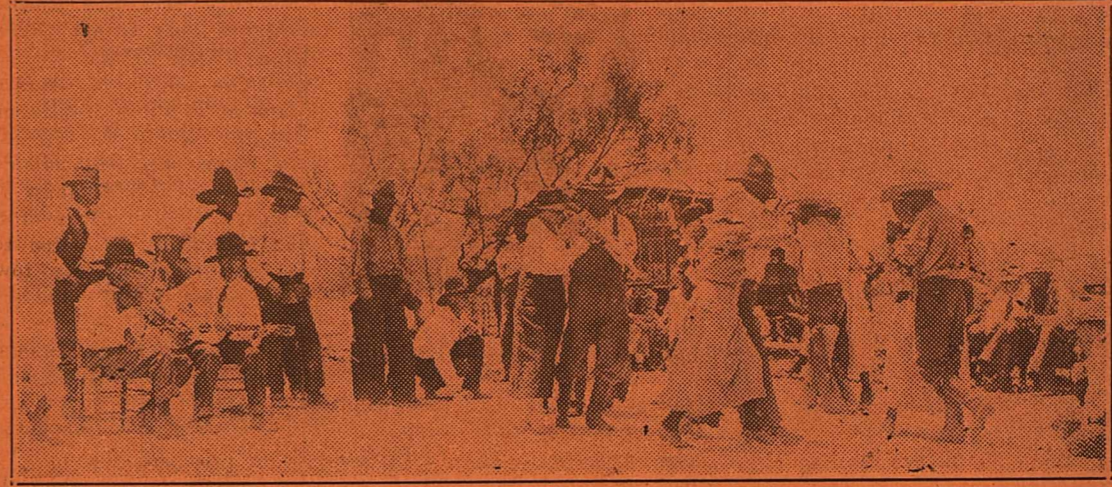
It is thought the first bank ever established in the county was a private bank operated by R. D. Shields at Dickens. The second bank was operated at Dickens by John O. Wilkerson and H. P. Cole.

There are hundreds of early day events which could be given, but our space is too limited. We want to mention the first wedding in Spur which was that of Mr. and Mrs. John N. Luce and continued to make their home here. It is thought that Mr. Luce's father, E. Luce, was the first man to produce cotton in Dickens County which was on his Red Mud farm and was ginned at Colorado in 1889.

THINKS ROAD SHOULD BE REPAIRED

A. Q. Smelser and Harry Ellis of the 24-Ranch community were in town Saturday looking after business affairs, and while here reported that the highway from the Twin Wells corner south past the Merriman ranch is in rough condition. They stated this highway is in Dickens County and feel that Spur people should see that it is repaired. The Commissioners in Kent County have repaired the road to the county line and they report that part of it is in good condition. If Dickens County Commissioners can get their part of the highway in good condition it will help those people in North Kent County to get to Spur to buy their supplies.

Old Timers on The Prairie



Old Timers' Dances Friday and Saturday Nights

The Spur Round-Up Association has arranged a dance for the Old Timers of West Texas to be held in the Crouse Building formerly occupied by the Farmall House for both Friday and Saturday nights. This entertainment is for people of fifty years of age and more.

A local string band will furnish music for the occasions which will start at ten o'clock each evening and last until all want to go home. Bud Morrison and Bill McArthur will be in charge and people may ask them about any information.

It is the hope of the Round-Up Association that all Old Timers will get together, talk and dance and enjoy themselves once again. There will be plenty of seats where they may rest.

Two other dances have been scheduled for those evenings. One is the Sponsor's Dance at the Spur Inn. The other is the Young Folk Dance which will be down town.

All of these entertainments will start after the rodeo each evening.

Mr. and Mrs. W. J. Conway, of Dickens, were in our city Saturday. They were enroute to Arlington to visit in the home of J. E. Conway and family.

High School Students to Get Air Training

High school graduates who are ambitious to become pilots in the regular army air corps now have the oppor-

tunity. Even if their educational qualifications will not permit them to become commissioned officers, they still may fly Army airplanes and may look forward to careers as pilots.

**A
K
H
B
V
A**

Old Timers We Welcome You

and wish every success to the golden Anniversary and Rodeo, June 20-21.



GULF SERVICE STATION

Ralph Sherrill, Edd Williams

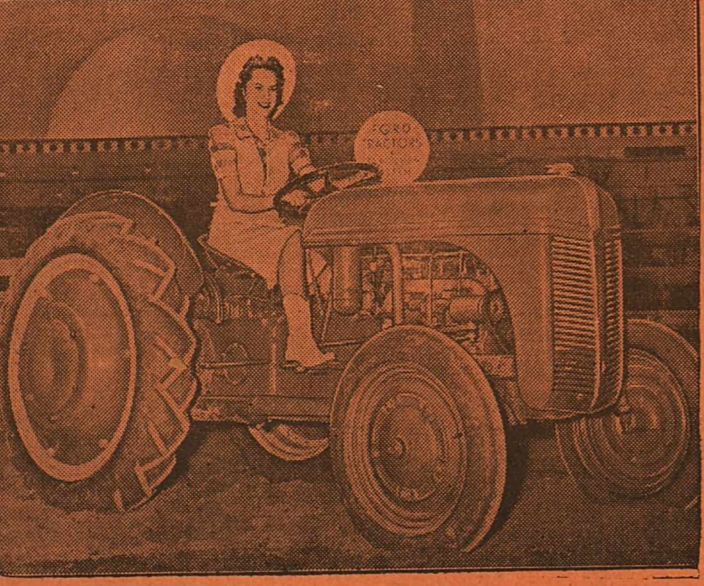
YIP-EEE



Lone Star Amusement Company of Amarillo, Texas

Will furnish amusement rides in connection with Rodeo. Come on, Let's have Fun.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday Nites



We haven't any Hitching Post at our place of business because our Hoss stays Hitched.

For Speed in Economical Farming

Drive A

FORD TRACTOR


McGee Ford Tractor Agency



Welcome Visitors to Ty Allen Texaco Service Station

When you need gasoline, oil, water or air for your car, we invite you to come to our Service Station.

Where you find **Western Hospitality.**



FIRE-CHIEF

YOUR SPUR TEXACO CONSIGNEE JACK CHRISTIAN

The following Service Stations, dealing in TEXACO PRODUCTS extend their invitation

and

Welcome to The Spur Rodeo and Dickens County Golden Anniversary

Ty Allen Station	Spur	C. E. Neal	Elton
Hill Top Service Station	Spur	M. S. Lambert	Wichita Com.
O. K. Tire & Service Sta.	Spur	Black Motor Co.	Jayton
Geo. Justice	East of Spur	Two Green Boys	Jayton
H. H. Swarengen	Dickens	J. P. Barkley	Clairemont
Sam Koonsman	Dickens	Bob Hail	Kalgary
W. J. Wilson	Glenn		

