

HASKELL COUNTY AS IT APPEARED 40 YEARS AGO
(Continued from first page)

like a Diadapper, someone is always throwing stones at it, but it just dives under the water, but pops up again in due time after the billows caused by the stone has subsided, and floats with majestic defiance, confident of its ability to steer clear of all obstruction, and stem any ordinary storm in the journalistic field without fear of straining a beam.

PIONEER STORIES OF EARLY LIFE

According to Frank C. Wilfong who is not the oldest man in the county but is by several years the oldest living inhabitant. Little was known of Haskell county prior to 1879 when he first landed here. He was preceded by his brother Bob Wilfong by a year or more who had secured work at one of the ranches west of Haskell and had gone back to North Carolina his old home for a visit and on his return Frank Wilfong his brother came with him.

They arrived at Rice Springs which is a few hundred feet below the old city well October 18, 1879, and ate their noon meal on the banks of the Spring. There were no houses in Haskell at that time according to Mr. Wilfong and Rice Springs as it was then called was a watering and camping place for both whites and Indians. They proceeded on to the ranch where his brother Bob had been employed and he has been a citizen of this section continuously since that date except a part of one year he spent in Kaufman County. In stating how they arrived here Mr. Wilfong said they came from North Carolina to Hot Springs Arkansas by rail and there they bought a team and wagon for a little money and made the journey by wagon the remainder of the way coming through the Indian Territory which according to Mr. Wilfong was wild and woolly. They had to remain on guard with their guns several nights to keep their team from being stolen.

Only Three Ranches Recalled
Mr. Wilfong could only recall three ranches in operation at that time, the Horse Shoe Ranch on Flat Top Mountain, the Cal-Bar Ranch of Salt Fork and the LIL Ranch near Double Mountain and very few if any houses were known in any section of Haskell county by Mr. Wilfong.

First Woman Buried.
The first woman buried in the county took place soon after the arrival of Mr. Wilfong and sleeps in an unmarked grave on the west side of Tonk Creek above the crossing near the Tonk Creek School. Her death was caused by the relaps of the measles. During her illness a doctor was called from Ft. Griffin which was 60 miles from the ranch where the woman was sick. There was only one other woman known to Mr.

Wilfong at that time and she was brought there from more than ten miles to prepare the body for burial.

First School House Built Here
According to Mr. Wilfong the first school house was built in the city some time in 1885 near where the south ward building now stands. He is not positive that this date is correct but the location he can vouch for.

Tells of First Horse Owned
Mr. Wilfong stated that the first horse he ever owned in the county he paid for in meat at old Fort Griffin giving \$100 worth of meat for the horse. Some fellow from the north plains put 1,200 hogs on the range near Tonk Creek west of Rule and gave he and his brother Bob half the hogs to look after them. It was some of the proceeds of these hogs that he traded for his horse and he had no saddle and rode the prairies looking after the hogs on an old piece of quilt. He says he remembers marking more than 700 pigs one spring.

Rice Springs Changed to Haskell City
According to the old timers Rice Springs was changed to Haskell City on the information that a man named Haskell had camped here long before a fellow by the name of Rice had reported finding the spring. When the citizens met to name the city and the county when the information was made known that the man Haskell had been here in advance of Rice the name of Haskell City and County was formulated. This information was given by F. C. Wilfong, who was first to marry, voted first ticket, sat on the first jury and is the oldest living inhabitant of the county today.

F. G. Alexander Tells of Early Days
Mr. F. G. Alexander came here in 1884. At that time Haskell county was attached to Throckmorton County for judicial purposes. Very few houses had been built in the city when he came here. He remembers that the largest house was a two story structure near where the oil mill now stands and W. R. Standifer lived in this building. From that time on one building after another went up until the city began to put on the appearance of real progressiveness and continued to grow steadily, business houses soon were installed. It was thought that W. F. Draper and J. L. Baldwin opened the first business house in the city. Mr. Alexander reports A. C. Foster who now lives in Dallas as the first county clerk of the county in 1885 and it was he who transcribed the records from Throckmorton County to Haskell and was a great factor in the organization of the county and the development.

Oldest Commercial Institution
F. G. Alexander & Sons is the oldest commercial institution in the city doing business under the same name. Mr. Alexander was in the cattle business when he first came to Haskell but later closed out his cattle business and entered the mercantile field and has continued incessantly since his first opening.

Mail Service Was From Albany
According to Mr. Alexander and the reports in the Free Press the mail service was from Albany once to twice a

week in the early days and was just a little uncertain on delivery at any given time.

Some Buildings Standing that were Built before the County's Organization
One building is standing near the Holiness church which was erected by Mr. Alexander before 1885 and some other buildings are still intact that can be pointed out by the old timers that have weathered the long period of years and are still inhabited.

Court House and Jail Built After Organization of County
A man by the name of Miller was the contractor for the court house which was built soon after the organization of the county. According to old timers. This building is used as the Haskell Hotel today and the old jail down on the branch which was often referred to as the most secure jail in the west is still standing. The County Clerk's office was the little Stone building north of the Square occupied by R. F. Pitman's Garage which was moved from the square to the present site.

1886 a Dry Year.
The worst drouth in the history of West Texas prevailed during the year of 1886 according to reports in the Free Press and the old timers who lived here at that time and the following article from Anson in the Free Press of June the 12, 1886 describes the situation in Jones county at that time, but conditions in parts of Haskell county never became so grave.

Anson, Texas, June 12, 1886.
This whole section of country is assuming a very serious outlook. No rain has fallen for weeks, and unless there is a fall of water with in a few days all sorts of crops will be a complete failure. The grass is all dead and the stock watering places are as dry as a bone.

Married In 1886
A. C. Foster and Miss Dora Lee of Belknap, Texas were married May the 4th 1886. Judge and Mrs. Foster now live in Dallas, but he lived in Haskell county a number of years and served in many public capacities.

RESOLUTIONS FROM THE VISITING TEACHERS

We the members of the Consolidated Teachers Institute, assembled in Haskell, realizing that we are closing a profitable and enjoyable week, wish to express appreciation to the success of our meeting.

Therefore be it resolved:
That we consider the County Superintendents worthy of commendation for planning and carrying out a well-arranged program.

That we thank the Haskell Superintendent and his faculty and the Haskell School Board for the use of a well-heated building and for their numer-

ous effective efforts for our conference. That we remember the musicians and all those who have entertained us in general assembly.

That we voice our gratitude to the citizens of Haskell, who in the reception of Tuesday evening and in their homes have given us hearty welcome. That we praise the Special Lecturers and the Faculty of the week for their earnest work which has resulted in giving us knowledge and inspiration to return to our schools as better teachers.

Respectfully Submitted,
Committee on Resolutions.

Baby Dies

The funeral of Geraldine, the little three year old daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Roy Wallace of Munday was held at the Haskell cemetery at 2 o'clock Wednesday afternoon by Elder W. W. Starnes of this city after which her little form was laid to rest. The little one passed away Tuesday night at 8 p. m. after a brief illness at the home of its grandparents Mr. and Mrs. G. W. Daniels east of town.
The sympathy of the people of Haskell go out to the bereaved loved ones in their dark hour of sorrow.

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FELICITATIONS, FREE PRESS

FORTY years is a long time for a business institution to continue its operations and we are pleased at this time to congratulate The Haskell Free Press on having reached its Fortieth birthday. It is indeed an enviable record and we are happy to extend our very best wishes on this Anniversary occasion and wish for you continued success and many returns of the occasion.

IT would seem that a great pleasure were taken from us if we were not permitted to express our appreciation for the earnest work The Haskell Free Press has done in these forty years. It has taken a stand in all matters of right and for the advancement of Haskell and contributed much toward making Haskell a better place in which to live.

WE remember well the first issue of The Haskell Free Press. It was not such a wonderful sheet at the time, and it contained little news, if any, that was not already known to the few people of Haskell, however, it was welcomed as a new institution for Haskell and eagerly read. Few at that time thought it could survive and grow for forty years, for it surely was a frail little printing plant, but it has grown steadily during these forty years until now, few, if any, weekly newspapers in Texas rival it.

LEST we forget, it seems fitting to pay a tribute to the former editors of The Haskell Free Press, Oscar Martin and J. E. Poole, who have long passed to the reward awaiting honorable, upright Christian Citizens. These former Editors worked faithfully in Haskell and had a part in all the undertakings of this community and did much toward shaping the good will and esteem accorded The Haskell Free Press today.

SPECIAL

Saturday we will have on sale two lots of Boy's Velvet, Wool and Felt Hats to close out at Special Prices.

1 Lot Boys Hats, \$1.00 to \$2.50 value **39c**

1 Lot Boys Hats 75c to \$1.50 Value **10c**

F. G. ALEXANDER & SON

KANSAS CITY LIFE DOES 16 MILLION BUSINESS IN TEXAS DURING 1925

We take this opportunity to thank our more than 40,000 Texas policy holders for their patronage and wish them and all our Texas friends a Happy and Prosperous New Year.

We direct your attention to the following statement of business in force in Texas and the amount written during 1925, which we feel is ample evidence of the confidence which Texas citizens have in the Kansas City Life Insurance Company. Many of our old policy holders have applied for additional insurance during the past year; in fact, over 10 per cent of new business written during 1925 was placed on the lives of old policy holders.

Total New Business Written in 1925 in **TEXAS OVER 16 MILLIONS**

Total Insurance In Force Jan. 1, 1926 In **TEXAS OVER 81 MILLIONS**

It is interesting to note that of the 256 legal reserve life insurance companies in the United States, 198 of them, including many of the oldest companies doing business in the United States, have less insurance in force than our Agency, which covers only the State of Texas.

A LIVE AGENT WANTED

Our Agency has recently adopted a new Uniform Renewal Contract, paying very liberal first-year commissions and non-forfeitable renewals. This contract should especially appeal to any live wire salesman seeking a permanent and profitable connection. It offers an opportunity to provide a big current income and at the same time build up a permanent old age or rainy day fund.

We are desirous of making contracts with high grade salesmen in your community. Previous life insurance experience unnecessary. A free training course is offered as one of the lines of special service available to Kansas City Life representatives. For full particulars address:

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CONGRATULATE YOU!

It is with every degree of sincere delight we join with Haskell and Haskell County readers of the Haskell Free Press, in extending birthday greetings, on this, its Fortieth Birthday.

While but a little more than one-third of The Free Press' age we feel sure that the Free Press has been happy to serve the community as it has, these 40 years, and alike, we have been very happy, indeed, to have been of service to our patrons these fifteen years in Haskell and Haskell trade territory.

Like the Free Press we are going to continue to serve and try to deserve a continuation of that patronage and pleasant association accorded us in the past.

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