

CLYDE PHONE  
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# CALLAHAN COUNTY STAR

BAIRD PHONE  
854-1008

Callahan County Clarendon, Established November 15, 1879

SERVING ENTIRE AREA—FROM CLYDE—BAIRD

The Baird Weekly Star, Established December 8, 1887

VOLUME 92

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 1, 1977

12 PAGES

NUMBER 47

## Yester' - Years In Callahan County

-as told by-  
Mrs. John Berry

Each man holds within his heart-the dreams of a land all his own no other land will do, no other land is home. -Robert Nail

Those who came to this part of Texas were looking for a land all his own-they were land lovers and home makers.

Briefly, this is the time of sequence in 1854 a series of forts were built along the wagon trails running west and a few settlers staked claims in unorganized and unprotected land which later became Callahan County. By 1860's the Hittsons had a large cow camp in the area. By 1870's a number of families came west by military roads leading to Camp Pecan, Camp Cooper, Fort Belknap and Fort Phantom. Robert and Lee Parker traveled these roads and Cynthia Ann Parker was brought over later.

Probably the first men to reside in the the Callahan County area

was James Dulan of Georgia, 1839. Besides, the Hittson's in the east part of this area were: the Eubanks, Whittens, Clayton Brothers, the Harts, the Merchants (who helped established Abilene, Texas) the McCoys, McFarlane, Cutbirths, Gilliards, J. Trent, Flores, Snyders, Williams, Hatchetts, Matleys, Jacksons, Scotts, Foy, McWhorites and many others.

Callahan County was organized July 3, 1877 at Callahan City.

Between 1879-1881 the T & P Railroad pushed west and in December 1880 a station opened what is now Clyde.

Repeatedly the first residence in Clyde was a log cabin owned by Mr. Shephard. It was located just south of the present depot.

The first depot was located south of the tracks and almost 100 yards west of the present depot. It was a small boxed house 10x20 feet. A Mr. Looley was the was the first operation. The second station was a

boxcar set on the north side of the tracks. (Note: the depot maintain has moved to the Clyde school grounds and is a scout hut. It was evidently the 3rd depot)

The first Postoffice was located southeast of the town in the south part of the Tabor's pasture. The second Postoffice was on the north side of the railroad tracks. Before there was a depot the mail was thrown from the train and picked up by the postmaster. He received no monthly salary but was paid according to the number of letters that he mailed.

Texas came in the Union in 1845. We were such a new land. We are only 100 years old as a county. We were organized July 3, 1877. Clyde wasn't a hundred years old and won't be until 1980. Clyde's first postmaster was appointed June 27, 1881, but only served three months.

We are so new-- Texas got it's first

air conditioning in public buildings in 1924-two theaters in Dallas and one in Houston installed 'new fan-gled cooling systems.'

Willa Carther said, "The history of every county begins in the heart of

a man or a woman." I was born and lived on the tales of Texas. My mother, Frances Collier-McCorley, and her mother, Nancy Whitley Lindsay-Collier were both born in Smith, County, Texas, near Troup.

And John's people have run cattle in Texas under a "76" brand for over a hundred years.

Now back to the beginnings. Our area was

(Continued on Page two)

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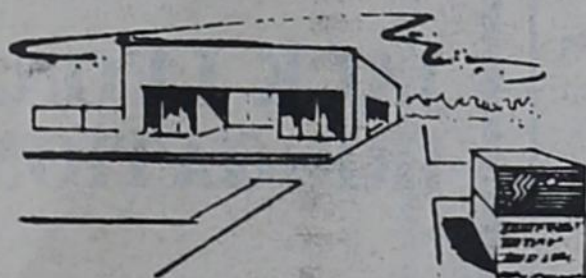
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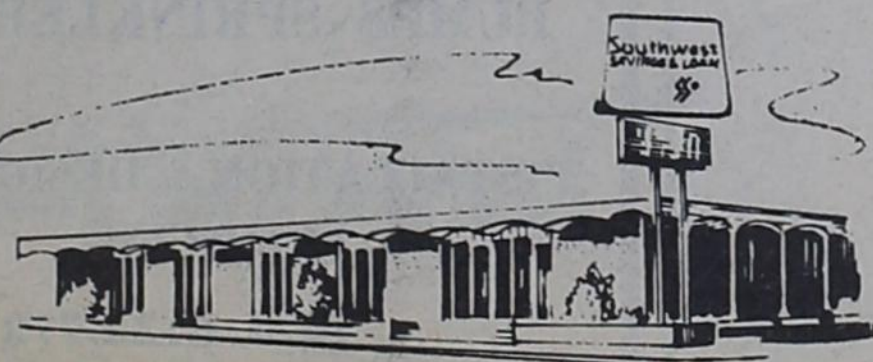
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So if you want to bring your herd through this winter in good condition, stop by your ACCO dealer's today. He'll help you round-out your range with a quality research-proven supplement from ours.



P.O. Box 521 Abilene, Texas 79604 (915) 672-3271

# Yester'-Years In Callahan County

(Continued from page one)  
 created from a portion of Bexar, Bosque and Travis counties. It's affairs were under Eastland county for administrative purposes.

The first petition was circulated November 1876 and presented to Eastland on November 17, 1876. There were 190 names attached. John R. Brown and B.L.



and skipped the country with it leaving the Germans without anything. They endured and Mr. Gardener at Eula stated that his family lived for 7 months on 10 bushels of hand ground corn.

They were the Dugans. They established the Catholic church after the arrival of James and Edward in 1883. Later, James and Charlie Crowley came. The church that had been established by the Irish was taken by a tornado and the St Joachins Catho-

The Irish came to the county from Pennsylvania.

Continued on Page 3

## Centennial Greetings

FROM

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1908 T.P. DEPOT LOCATED IN BAIRD—The onset of the railroad made Baird grow and become prosperous.

Patterson had ridden horseback for all of this. But, there was an error in the date. For five months later these men, Brown and Patterson again made over the area and got 157 petitioners which they presented at Eastland on the "morning of June 4, 1877"

The last big bunch of steers moved out of Callahan County was from Iley McWarters Ranch (Bulah Dyer's father) south of Baird. Ed Graham drove 700 head of steers to market in the Oklahoma Territory.

In 1874 when Col. Randall S. McKinsey routed the Comanches and Kiowas in the Palodora Canyon a large number of settlers began streaming into the Callahan County area. People settled on the Pecan Boyou and around Hubbard Creek, Deep Creek, Battle Creek and Dead Man Creek, also they settled near Caddo peaks and Tecumesh peak. Homes spring up everywhere and that is when people thought that we should be a separate county, which we became as described above, on July 3, 1877.

### HIGHLIGHTED FACTS

Three years after the county was organized the population became 3,453.

Baird was first called Gould then Vickery and later became known as Baird.

In 1881, the T.P. Railroad moved in and the Portugese settled south of Clyde and were excellent farmers. They grew Irish potatoes and had a winery. They later went to California and grew vinyards.

Mr. Shepard had the first log cabin in Clyde in 1879-1881.

The native grasses in this county were stirrup high to a man on horseback.

Clyde developed farther south in 1880.

The Germans from the Stutabaker Wagon Factory in Fort Worth, had 35 families who gave \$100 per family to the treasure to begin homes in Clyde. The man who acted as treasure took the money

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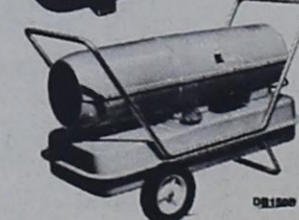
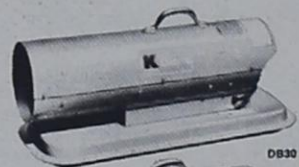
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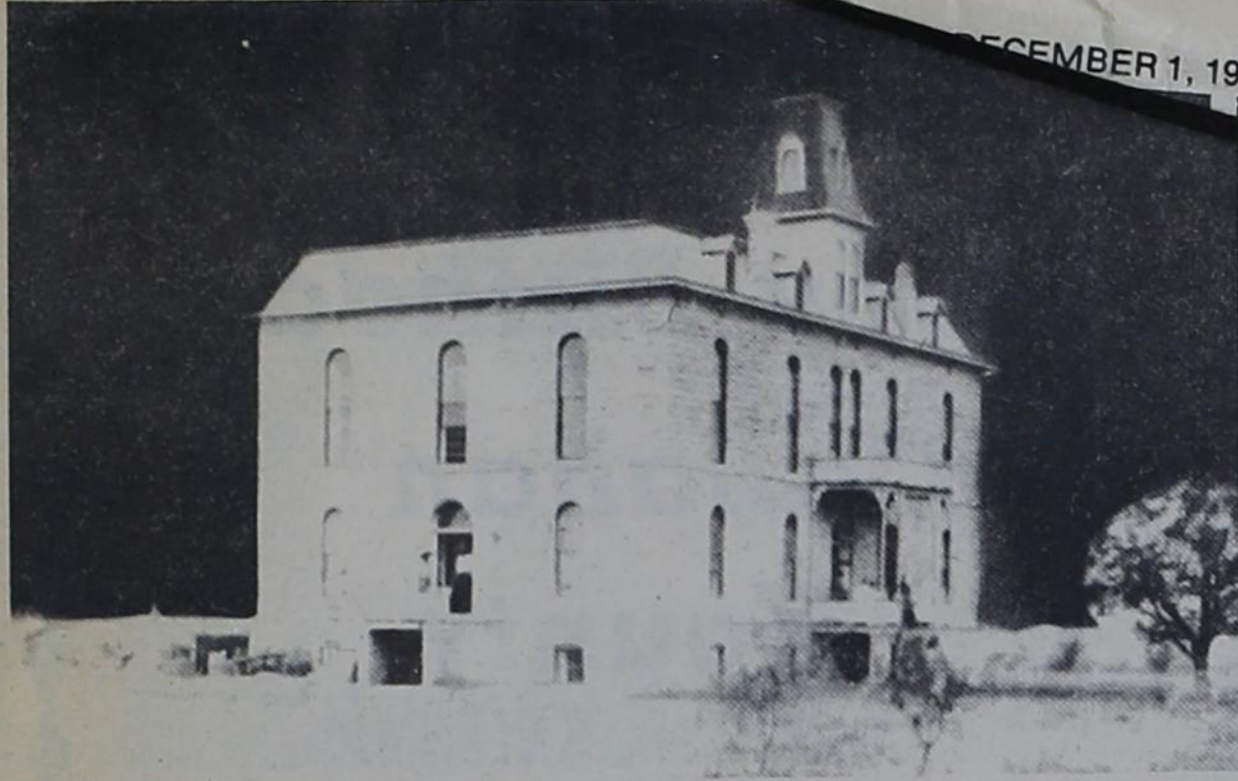
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**MILITARY COLLEGE**—The Belle Plains College was converted into a military college, along with the regular college curriculum, shortly after its beginning. The college grew so fast with enrollment that within its first years a ladies dormitory was added to the present building.

**Yester'-Years-**

Continued from Page 2  
 lic Church was established where the Portugeese worshipped.

The first highway, or paved road, was the old Highway 818. Judge Ely and Rev. J.B. McCarley persuaded Austin to build it in 1925.

A French - Canadian, Frank Prew, settled in Eagle Cove and had to change the spelling of his name because he could not get his mail delivered with the use of the spelling Prouleax.

Robert Clyde was a crew foreman that set up a tent in Callahan County to serve the crew from the railroad. The area had a good water well and this established a station that a boxcar was later put on. The crew would finish their work and say, "let's go to Clyde's", this was apparently how Clyde got the name-Clyde.

The Merchants who helped establish Abilene had the brand "74".

Mrs. John Berry states, "I have lived 52 years of my life in this county and my parents lived here before me. I have a sense of belonging and love this land and the people."

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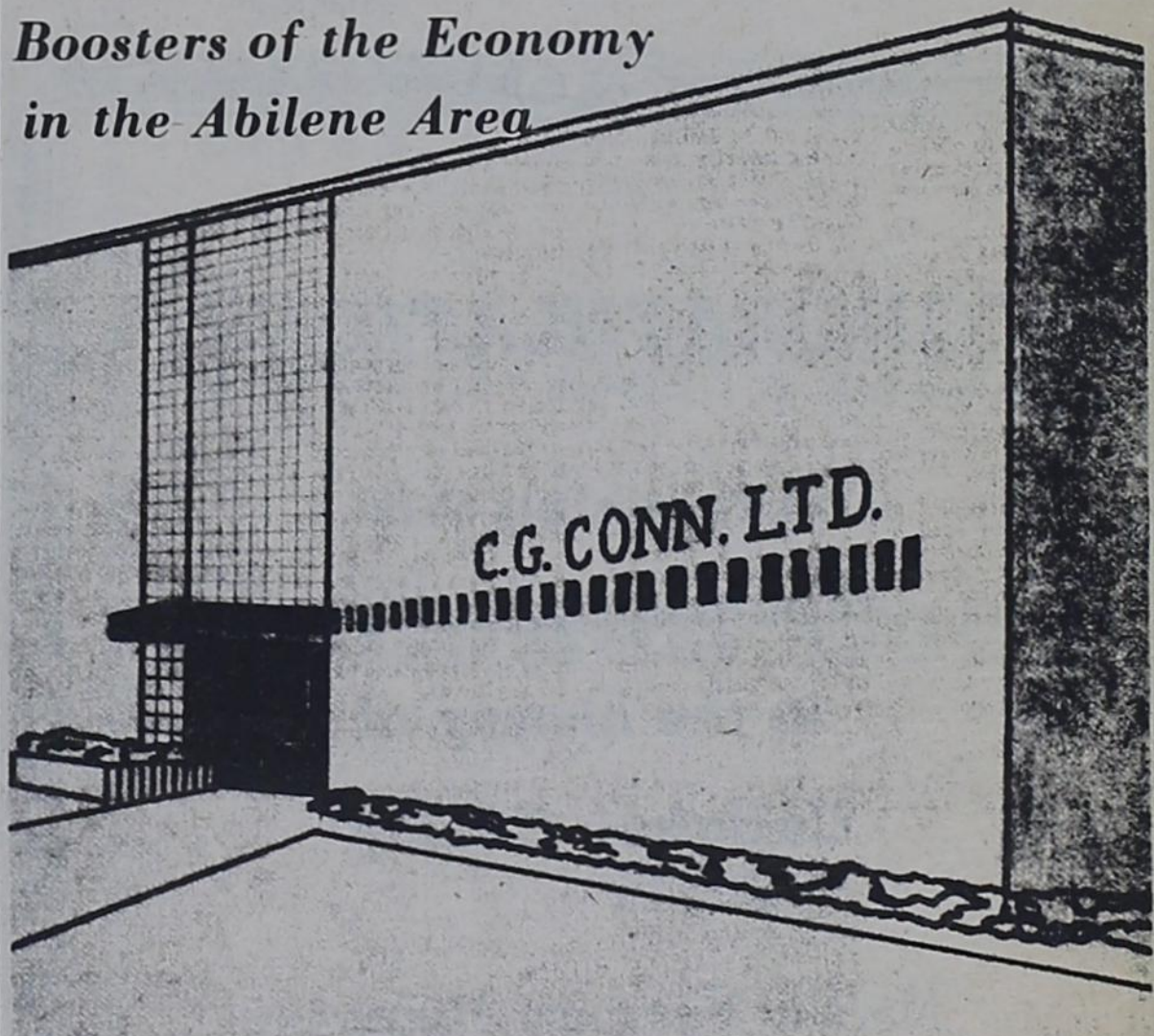
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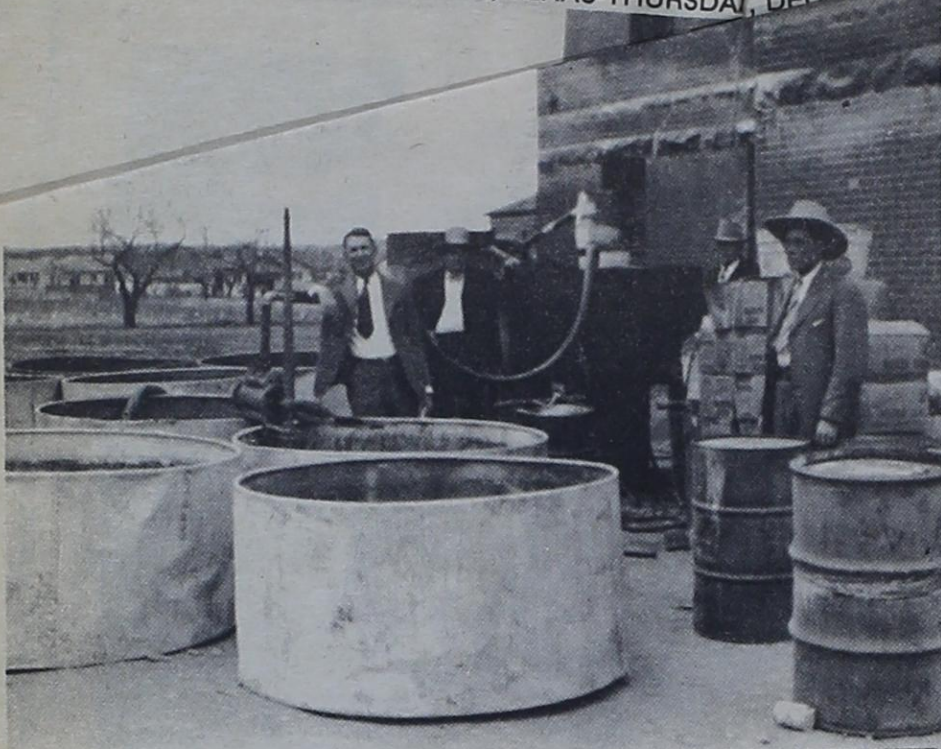
Pioneer Manufacturers  
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We congratulate  
 our neighbors  
 in Callahan County  
 on the Centennial



**STILL OPERATION**—Pictured is the confiscated articles used in a big still operation that was located south of Baird. The confiscated material is pictured here between the courthouse and the jail with Sheriff Elve Hughes, District Judge Bob Black and Deputy Petterson. The gentleman on the far left has not been identified.

**IN APPRECIATION**

Our thanks go out to C. B. Snyder, B. P. Stephenson, Mrs. Lee Ivey, Mrs. Thelma Berry and Jim Hatchett for their time and effort in helping us prepare for this special anniversary edition.

Without their assistance and the assistance of countless others, the anniversary edition would not have been possible and I am convinced that the finest people in the world live in Callahan County.

May God's richest blessings be with you.

—Star Staff

**CONGRATULATIONS**

*on reaching this  
important milestone  
in the history of  
Callahan County*

Hardin-Simmons University



**100**

**Happy Birthday  
Callahan  
County**

*From The...*

**CALLAHAN—  
SHACKELFORD  
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**THE VOICE OF AGRICULTURE  
Since 1957**

**Happy  
Birthday  
Callahan County  
on your  
100th Year**

**MAY YOU CONTINUE  
TO GROW  
IN THE NEXT 100!!!!**

**Baird  
Chamber of Commerce  
Baird, Texas**



**STAR OFFICE**—Pictured is the Baird Star in its earliest years, operated by W. E. Gilliland. The newspaper was originally set up to advertise the goods in Mr. Gilliland's store but in 1887, Mr. Gilliland bought the first newspaper in Callahan county, The Clarendon, and established the Baird Star. Mr. Gilliland edited the Star for 41 years. The first issue of the Star was published on December 8, 1887.

**Griggs Hospital Building Still In Use**

Dr. R.L. Griggs was an early Baird physician and opened his own hospital about 1928 and operated it until the Callahan General Hospital was constructed.

He served the residents of Callahan County for over 60 years. He died in Callahan County Hospital on March 7,

1961, after an illness of several months.

Upon closing his hospital he donated much of his equipment to the Callahan County General Hospital.

The Griggs Hospital building is still standing and presently occupied by the Work's Dry Goods Store. The building still

has 'Griggs Hospital' written at the top of the building. It must have been a fine hospital years ago and if the building could speak it would tell us stories that might fascinate us and contribute much to our already known history of Dr. R.L. Griggs and the Griggs Hospital.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY**

**CALLAHAN COUNTY  
ON YOUR 100th YEAR**

**May the next 100 years**

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**HAPPY  
100th BIRTHDAY  
Callahan County**

*from*

**The Prescription  
Shop**

**Baird, Texas**



**HAPPY NEW YEAR**—The new year 1900 was to start a new century and celebration was due. The Segal Hotel in Baird is shown here in celebration of the new year and new century.

**Belle Plain's Future Dwindles in 1883**

Belle Plains was given birth by the cattle industry who used it as a supply point on their cattle drives northward.

The once prosperous city of Belle Plains is now deserted. After the selection of Belle Plains as the permanent county seat it grew rapidly and soon merchants were opening for business: Merchant and McCoy, General Merchandise; W.T. Berry, General Store; McMinn and Seay, Dry Goods; Wilson L. Henry, Blacksmith and Gunsmith; West and Allen; W.J. and Mrs. Powers, Hotel; S.J. McMasters, B.L. Bellany, Drugs; S.E. Chittums Sallon; Thomas Russell, contractor; with the upper story of the Merchant and McCoy used as the courtroom. And, in 1882 the Belle Plains College came into being. The college and the public school was ran as a unit in the first year.

The college received its charter and a president was appointed for the college. Students from Abilene, Cisco, Burkburnett, Cross Plains and numerous other places in the frontier, attended one of the finest colleges in Texas-Belle Plains College.

Belle Plains College maintained one of the finest music departments in the south-west. Some say that there were 15 grand pianos; there was a band and even a symphony orchestra.

After Baird was appointed the county seat in 1883, Belle Plains soon became a ghost town with all its residents moving into Baird where the Railroad was and the water wells had given out in Belle Plains followed by a three year drought.

Eventhough, the town had died the college remained probably due to the Professor and Mrs. I.M. Onins who headed the fabulous music department. But, when the professor died, the college seemed to die with hi.

The land where the town

...used by the Stephensons in Baird where many trespassers use a lack of principal and rummage through the rattlesnake infested area.

The Stephensons use the land for their livestock and hunting and say that the area is dangerous.

...cisterns, built to hold the lack of water in Belle Plains, were covered with planks when the town was abandoned and now they are traps for an unsuspecting footstep.

Now, the town of Belle Plains has a sad and erie air for the once lively cowtown is so empty and lonely appearing.

You can almost imagine the bright, laviou Dry Goods Store display window and the blacksmith hammering furiously—they have all left Belle Plain in a sad silence that the wind moans mournfully through... except when the orchestra can be heard tuning their instruments.

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**CENTENNIAL GREETINGS--**

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**BLACKSMITH SHOP**—Pictured is the C.L. Dickey Blacksmith Shop. It was located where the Baird postoffice is now located. Mr. C.L. Dickey is the gentleman in the photo.

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**Chisolm Trail, Cattle Drives and Cowboys Died With The Onset of the Rail Road**

The Chisolm Trail had to expand in the late 1870's to accommodate the cattle drives due to the fact that farmers and fences were being constructed in the counties to the east. It was the means of solving the economic problems of the cattlemen immediately after the Civil War. Texas had a great amount of cattle following the war.

As the settlers increased the eastern counties, the chisolm trail changed and went through Bexar, Kerr, McCulloch, Kendall, Coleman, Shackelford, Baylor, Throckmorton and Willbarger counties to the Doan's Store on the Red River, which was a trading post and the last supply point until Dodge City, Kansas.

For years, Baird Cowboys herded their cattle on these trails in a effort to reach Dodge City or Nebraska.

In 1881, 211 thousand head of cattle passed through Belle Plains on the Chisolm Trail to reach market from April 1 to August, cattle drive season.

The last recorded drive from this section of the country was made in 1892 by the Reynolds Cattle Company with 4,500 dead.

In the era of the trail drive being a cowboy was a trade and trained skill. The average amount of employed cowboys was 10-18, varying on the size of the herd.

Cowboys were educated and drilled in the signaling used to communicate on the trail. The cowboys had to signal for they were to far apart to communicate. Usually, the two most skillful "cowpokes" would be assigned as "pointers". Their duties were to handle the front of the herd and keep it in line of course that the foreman had ordered. The pointers were never changed although they occasionally changed sides to avoid the dust that the cattle stirred.

The cattle were grazed during meals, which were at noon and just before bedding down for the night. There was usually a steer leader used and their animal wore a bell to lead the herd. These steer leaders were well trained and as a general rule brought back after the trail drive and used the following year.

These hard working cowboys seemed to de-

pend mainly on the cook, who drove a chuck wagon behind the herd. The cook cooked everything in the open and was a master at his trade. He would generally serve beans, potatoes, beef and dried fruits with biscuits and of course, black coffee. This meal was served buffet style with each cowboy filling his tin plate from a long row of pots and pans.

The invention of the rail-

road was probably what killed the trail drives and Belle Plain.

Cattle was and is a great industry in Callahan County but the life on the trail is gone with it's cowboy yarns around the campfire, songs, the chuckwagon and the interesting life.

This was truly unemployment of skilled laborers.

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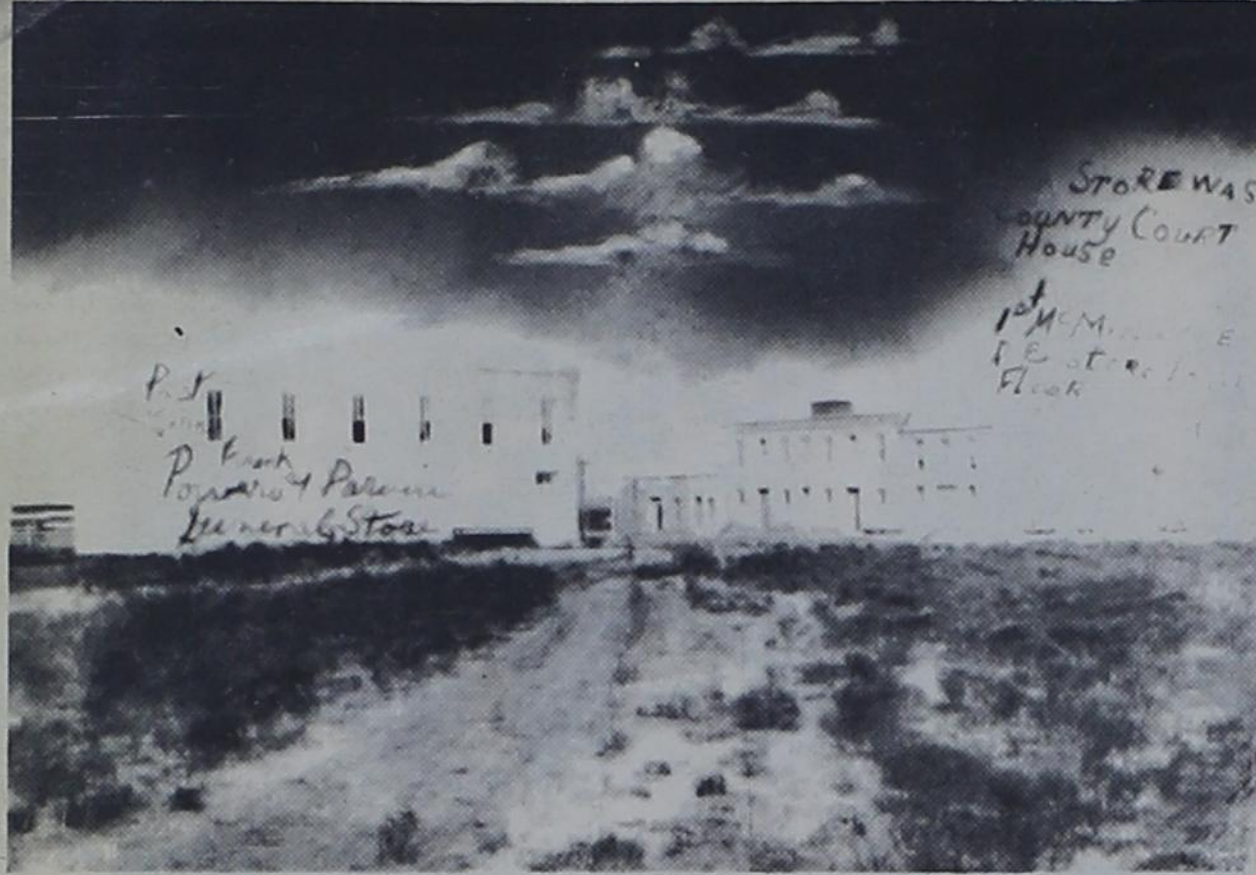
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**BELLE PLAINS COUNTY'S FIRST GOVERNMENT**—Pictured is the city of Belle Plains, our first county seat. These buildings contained all the necessary business establishments for a thriving cowtown.

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**BAIRD WED CLUB FOUNDED LIBRARY—MUSEUM**

By Mrs. Lee Ivey

The Callahan County Library has been the permanent project of the Baird Wednesday Club since the founding date of 1937. At that time the first library board was headed by the late Mrs. L.L. Blackburn, a charter member of the Wednesday club and a leader in many civic projects. Others who assisted her were Mrs. J.F. Boren, now of Abilene, Mrs. W.P. Brightwell, Mrs. Lee Ivey, Miss Isadore Grimes, Mrs. Sam Gilliland, and the late Mmes. Ace Hickman, J. Rupert Jackson, Sr., W. Clyde White, R.L. Alexander and C.W. Coats.

From a nucleus of 300 books donated by Baird citizens, the number of volumes has increased to 15,068. Books are purchased through donations from the Wednesday Club, from other organizations & interested friends. Aid also has been received from the Baird Lions Club & the United Fund.

At first, members of the Wednesday Club served as volunteer librarians one afternoon each week. Then in 1939 Mrs. Rosa Ryan became librarian and served as such until she retired because of ill health in 1977. Miss Sonia Walker succeeded her.

Of special interest to readers are the Memorial Shelf containing many valuable history and other reference books given in memory of Callahan County residents; the Texas Shelf, with books by Texas writers of about Texas; and the Garden Shelf, helpful to gardeners.

In 1940 a Pioneer Museum was added to the Library, featuring many articles of historic interest which have been donated by relatives of the early day settlers of this area.

The Library-Museum is housed in the basement of the courthouse in Baird. It has had a steady growth and has been of inestimable value to both adults and

young people. It has been named by the club as a Community Improvement Project, and received a prize as such from the Mesquite District Texas Federation of Women's Clubs in 1976, when it also was a Bicentennial project.

Visitors have registered not only from Texas, but

from many other states who are especially interested in historical background of this part of the state.

At present the Library Board consists of Miss Isadore Grimes, president of the Wednesday Club; Mrs. Lee Ivey, Secretary; Mrs. C.C. Billingsly, Treasurer; and Mrs. ...

W.P. Brightwell, Mrs. A.E. Dyer, Sr., and Mrs. R.Q. Evans.

The Library-Museum is open to the public from Monday through Friday, nine to five.

Each year an open house is held in observance of Children's Book Week during the month of November.

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USED CAR LOT 1920'S—Harry Berry's Used Car exchange also sold parts and tires-located in Baird. The building with the arches left standing was the theatre.

### Callahan County Records Only One Attempted Bank Robbery

Callahan County has amount of trouble with not had a tremendous bank robberies, as a mat-

ter of fact, the only bank robbery attempt turned out to be be disastrous for ex-convict, H.L. Meyer, who tried to rob the Baird Bank on September 25, 1936.

H.L. Meyer was apprehended only 30 minutes after his unsuccessful attempt, which is one of the quickest arrests of a bank robber on record.

Legend says that Meyer age 38, of San Antonio, commented on the events by saying, "This is a funny country; when you point a gun at people and tell them to throw up their hands, they start shooting at you."

Clifford V. Jones, assistant cashier at the time of the attempted robbery, later received a Medal of Valor by R.M. Harvey of Dallas, representing the National Surety Corporation. This was awarded for extraordinary bravery and for risking his life to frustrate the would-be-robber.

This was the first and only attempt of a robbery in Callahan County with a bank as the target.

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pester the cotton crop—  
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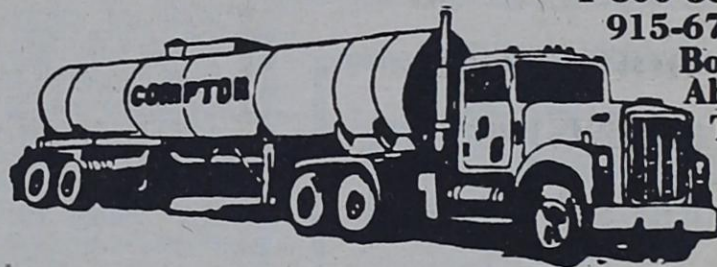
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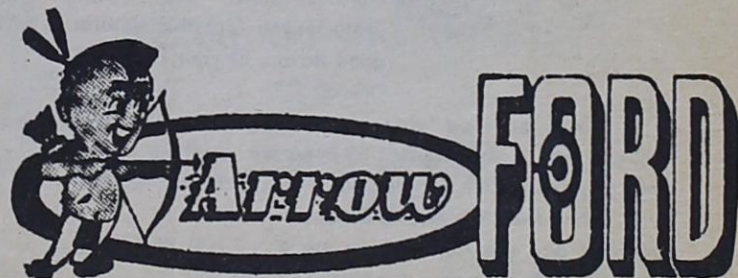
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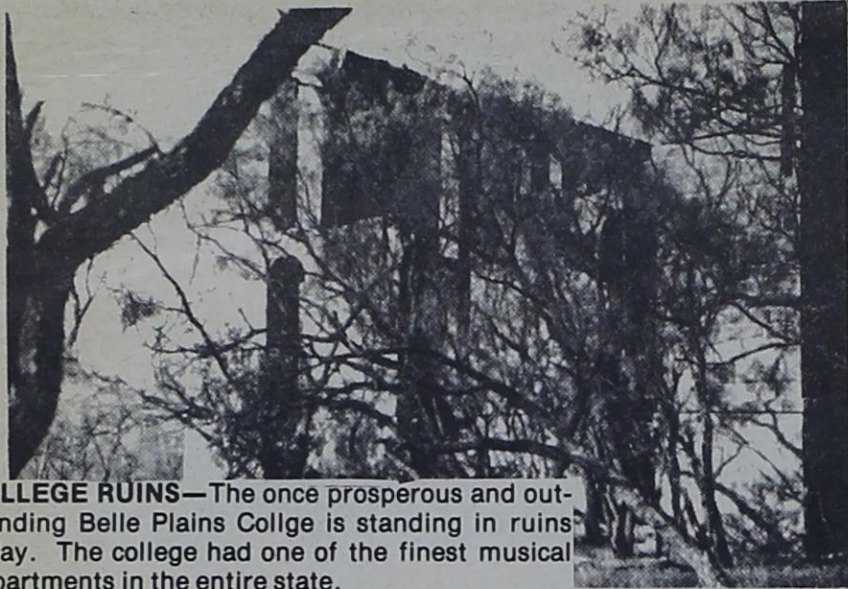
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**COLLEGE RUINS**—The once prosperous and outstanding Belle Plains Collge is standing in ruins today. The college had one of the finest musical departments in the entire state.

### Early Officials & Tensions Can't Compare With Today

Callahan County was organized in 1877, with it's first officials. They were county judge, J.R. Brown; County Clerk, Issac Shaw; Sheriff and Tax Collector, T.J. Norell; County Attorney, J.L. Porter; County Treasurer, John Mac-

Donald; Tax Assessor, W.N. Blair; County Supervisor, S.R. Dunigan; and the inspector of Hides and Animals was H.B.(Ky) Eubank. J.L. Porter resigned in the latter part of the year as the county attorney with G.W. Perry-

man taking his place in January 1978.

The officials jobs were very different compared to the duties of these officials now. For instance, I wonder, how Sheriff Shaw would handle a speeding horse or how many cases of possession of marijuana did county judge J.R. Brown hear? AND, as you can very well apprehend we no longer have a Inspector of Hides and Animals on the county payroll.

However, I am certain that these officials had difficult tasks and some very interesting life threatening tales to tell.

Callahan County was a typical western movie type town with the cow-boys and cattle drives going through and let us not leave out the thieving cattle rustlers.

The pioneers of Callahan County apparantly had the usual early troubles with the "savage red-skins" as well as the other everyday worries a family faced in those early days.

These violent days could have kept the officials plenty busy and plenty nervous. These early tensions added to being the first officials must have been difficult for these brave and memorable men of Callahan County's history.

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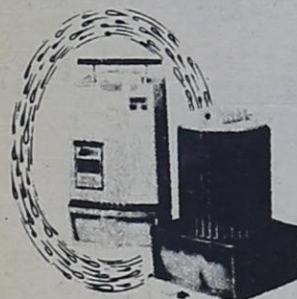
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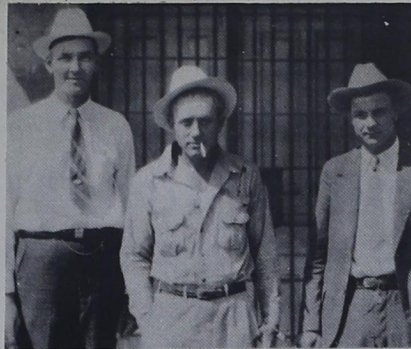
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**OIL IN COUNTY—**

**BIG INDUSTRY**

The first oil well to be drilled in Callahan County was by Eastland County Max Elser. He secured several hundred acres near Putnam and the No. 1 Short well was drilled. The roughnecks were several men from Fort Worth, Texas, headed by George Settler. The well turned out to be a non-producer. In the Moran Field, in 1914, oil was discovered and the industry began to pick up it's heels. The Ranger Pool was opened in 1917. Shortly after this the oil producers began



**BANK ROBBER**—Left to right: A Texas Ranger, ex-convict, H.L. Meyer and Deputy Clarence Nordyke. This picture was taken shortly after ex-convict H.L. Meyer was arrested after he executed and unsuccessful attempt to rob the Baird Bank on September 25, 1936.

to lease all over Callahan County.

But, the first producing well was No. 1 Joe Newman followed by the Cathey well; however, the citizens wer not yet familiar with the rigs in the County-they had not yet become a common sight thusfar.

The 1920's was when the citizens began to hear numerous producers working diligently and production was extended throughout the entire county. At one time there were more than 100 producing oil wells in the Belle Plain field alone. Six power plants were installed to care for the production.

The early oil producers employed many citizens of the county and the industry continued to grow.

The Hatchett and Beasley wells were discovered in the Admiral area shortly after the Belle Plains discovery. This led to the construction of the Pre-

mier Refining company in 1932. The original name of the company was Octane Oil but changed names right after the opening. It is located six miles east of Baird. The company still is in operation and employs several residents to this day.

The taxes paid by the oil industry are very important to this county as well as the employment of the residents. Callahan County has a tremendous annual payroll and some might say that the county could not exist without the oil industry.

The sight of numerous pumungo wells gives pride to the county residents and puts money in their pockets and this county for its futherment.

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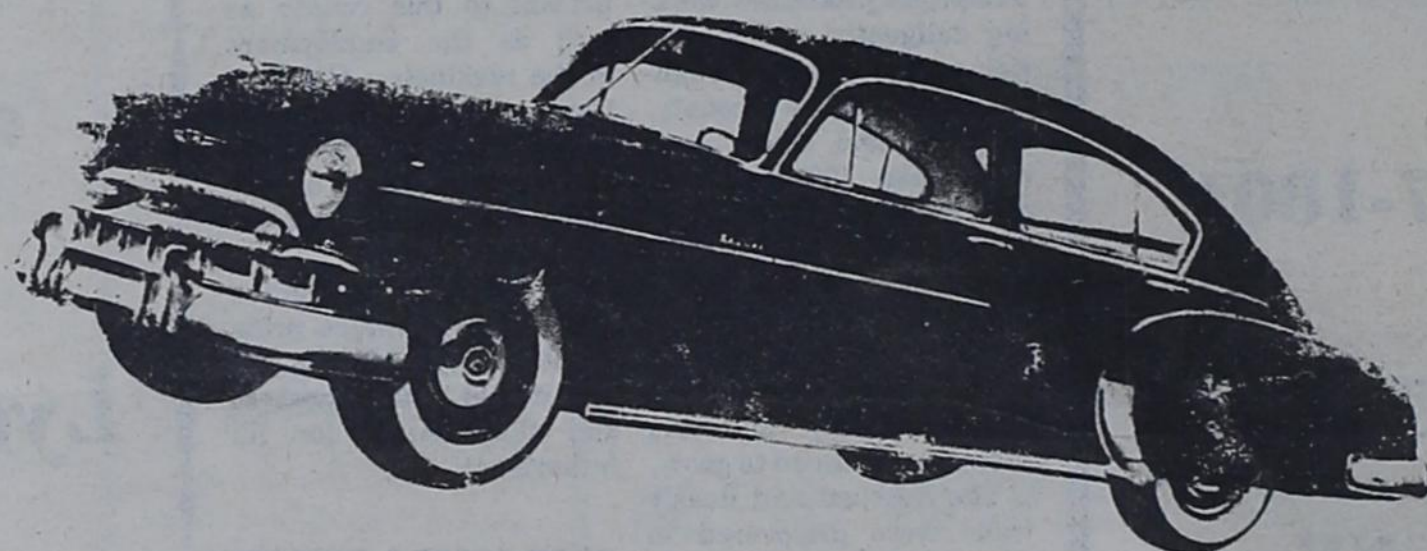
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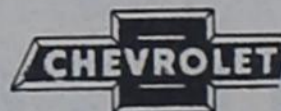
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