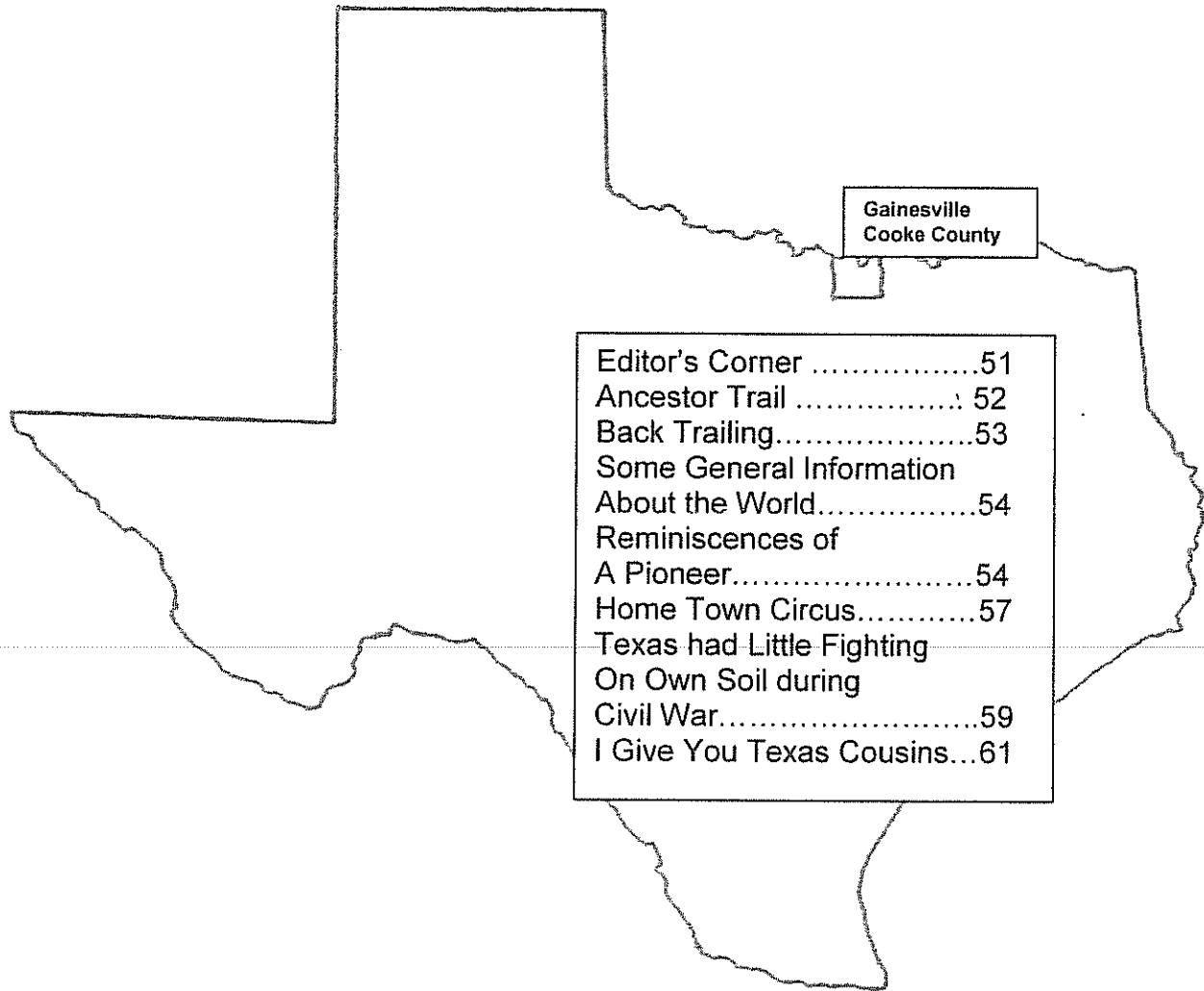


# CROSS TIMBERS POST

Editor: Dick Sparkman



Editor's Corner .....	51
Ancestor Trail .....	52
Back Trailing.....	53
Some General Information	
About the World.....	54
Reminiscences of	
A Pioneer.....	54
Home Town Circus.....	57
Texas had Little Fighting	
On Own Soil during	
Civil War.....	59
I Give You Texas Cousins...	61

Cooke County Website: [www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txcooke/](http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~txcooke/)

## SEPTEMBER 2011

CROSS TIMBERS GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF COOKE COUNTY TEXAS

## EDITORS' CORNER

**Cross Timbers Genealogical Society** was organized in 1977 to provide a forum for those interested in genealogical research and preserving records for the future generations.

Funds raised by the CTGS are used to research, preserve and publish records relating to Cooke County family histories. As a service to other researchers, CTGS has published several books which are for sale.

For more or additional information, please contact any of the officers listed here:

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The Cross Timbers Post is published four times a year: March, June September and December. Subscription is by membership in the Society. Annual membership dues are \$15.00 yearly per household. Memberships run from June 1<sup>st</sup> to May 30<sup>th</sup> the next year. All correspondence and material relative to the Cross Timbers Post should be directed to: The Editor, P.O. Box 197, Gainesville, Texas 76241-0197.

Note: The Editor of the Cross Timber Post will not be responsible for the accuracy of material printed herein since no proof is required.

A number of our members let other people read our newsletter (this is great). So we would like to let everyone know that CTGS has the following books for sale. This price includes shipping and handling.

Collection of Obits 1950-1988 pages 172 \$26.75  
Fairview Cemetery--- pages 191 \$20.00  
Good Times Edition---pages 27 \$10.25  
Probate Records 1848---1940 pages 70 \$19.00  
Resthaven Cemetery pages 27 \$9.00  
Ye Gainesville Towne 1850-1927 pages 121 \$16.50  
Cooke County Marriages  
Vol. I 1849-1858 pages 10 \$6.75  
Vol. II 1858-1872 pages 48 \$15.25  
Vol. IIA 1872-1877 pages 48 \$15.25  
Vol. III 1877-1882 pages 78 \$22.50  
Know Your County Pages 64 \$19.00  
Early History of Cooke County Pages 103 \$23.50

### These are non-member prices with shipping.

Should you need a complete description of these books, contact the Editor or the Treasurer.

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### Meeting Schedules

Our 2011 scheduled meeting dates are:  
**Jan N/M, Feb 7<sup>th</sup>, Mar 7<sup>th</sup>, April 4<sup>th</sup>, May 2<sup>nd</sup>,  
June 6<sup>th</sup>, July N/M, Aug 1<sup>st</sup>, Sept 6<sup>th</sup>, Oct 3<sup>rd</sup>,  
Nov 7<sup>th</sup>, Dec Party**

Go ahead and mark your calendar now so as not to miss a single one of our great meetings. Our meetings will meet in the Morton Museum, 210 South Dixon, Gainesville, Texas At 6:00 P. M. (go thru the main door)

Good Hunting

*Dick Sparkman*

## Following the Ancestor Trail:

This page covers research material and research locations in Cooke County.

**MUENSTER LIBRARY,**  
418 No. Elm, Muenster, TX  
<http://www.muensterlibrary.com>

**COOKE COUNTY LIBRARY**  
200 South Weaver St., Gainesville, Texas  
<http://cookecountylibrary.org>

**COOKE COUNTY-COUNTY CLERK**  
100 South Dixon, Gainesville, Texas  
(courthouse)  
\*Death, Birth, Marriage records available.  
\*You can look up most records yourself.  
Copies are \$1.00 per pages  
<http://www.co.cooke.tx.us/ips/cms/countyoffice>  
s/

**MORTON MUSEUM of COOKE COUNTY**  
210 South Dixon, Gainesville, Texas  
E-mail: [mortonmuseum@att.net](mailto:mortonmuseum@att.net)

**NORTH CENTRAL TEXAS COLLEGE  
LIBRARY**—1525 W. California St., Gainesville

[http://www.nctc.edu/NCTC\\_Library/library](http://www.nctc.edu/NCTC_Library/library)

**LATTER DAY SAINT CHURCH**  
Family History Center  
1703 West California St., Gainesville, Texas  
Hours: Tues. 9:00 am to -1:00 pm; Wed 7:00  
P.M.to-8:30 p.m.

## Church's in Gainesville with Libraries and Archives:

**First Christian Church**  
401 No. Dixon 940-665-2053  
Started May 10, 1874 Open Dailey  
Web site: [firstchristiangainesville.com](http://firstchristiangainesville.com)

**St. Paul's Episcopal Church**  
415 E. California St. 940-665-4705  
Started August 6, 1885 Open 9 A.M. to  
12 Noon Only Look-up's

**First United Methodist Church**  
214 So. Dixon 940-665-3926  
Started 1852  
Web site: [fumcgainesville.com](http://fumcgainesville.com)

**First Presbyterian Church**  
401 So. Dixon 940-665-5153  
Started 1878 Archives  
Web site: [firstpresbyteriangainesville.com](http://firstpresbyteriangainesville.com)

**St. Mary's Catholic Church**  
825 No. Weaver 940-665-5395  
Started 1879  
Web site: <http://stmaryscatholic.com/>

**First Baptist Church**  
308 E. Broadway 940-665-4347  
Started in 1871 Open  
Web Site: [fbegville.com](http://fbegville.com)

## BACK TRAILING

### 95 years ago

The following list shows the text books which will be used in the Gainesville public schools for the 1916 term.

#### First Grade

Playmates Primer.....	\$ .18
Drawing Book No. 1.....	.20
Red Cross Tablet.....	—
Tube Paste.....	.85
Box Paints.....	--
Foot Ruler.....	—
Construction Paper.....	— .15
Colored Crayons.....	.05
	1.03

#### Seven Grade

Reading The Sketch Book.....	.52
New Century Speller.....	.18
World Geography, Second Book.....	.88
The student's History of our Country.....	.70
Our Language Grammar.....	.40
Arithmetic, Sutton & Bruce's Higher Bk..	.42
Civics, Texas and Federal.....	.75
Mental Arithmetic, Hopkins & Un-Wood..	.22
Spelling Blank.....	.05
Copy Book No. 7.....	.05
Drawing Book No. 7.....	.25
	4.42

### Cotton Brings Very Good Price

John Kammerdiemer a prosperous farmer residing 9 miles northeast of this city, on Red River was in town today and sold a bale of cotton to Mr. Walter Timmis for \$14.60. The bale weighed 590 pounds and the seed therefrom brought him \$24.05, making the bale bring a total of \$110.19

#### Local Markets

Eggs, candled, per doz.....	20c
Geese, per lb. ....	04c
Ducks, per lb. ....	08c
Butter, per lb. ....	15c
Hens, per lb. ....	10c
Oats, per bushel.....	45c
Alfalfa Hay, per ton.....	\$10.00

### 50 years ago

#### Commissioners Okay 1962 County Budget

Cooke County commissioners have put their stamp of approval on a \$656,504 budget for the 1962 year. Valuations for 1961 were placed at \$43,729,680, about \$966,000 lower than previous year. The new tax rate will be 74 cents per \$100 valuation on homesteads and 84 cents on other property.

#### State sales tax born today

The Texas sales tax was born today, healthy and destined to live a long productive. Texas, rich in natural resources, had gone 125 years without a sales tax, but today it joined 36 sister states which have had a levy 20 years and more. In general the tax will hit the individual like this: Items costing less than 24 cents, no tax. Articles costing between 25 and 75 cents, one cent tax, and an additional 1 cent for every additional 50 cents.

#### The Day's Records

Building Permits.....	\$191,950
Fire Losses (est).....	\$1,425
Bank Deposits, (quarter) .	\$26,907,420,
Births.....	41
Deaths.....	20
Telephones.....	7,406
Water Meters.....	4,835
Gas Meters.....	5,010
Light Meters.....	5,094
Postal Receipts.....	\$12,600
City Population.....	13,031

#### Volunteer Task Force

The great need in Cooke County today is for a task force of 50 men to receive training in radioactive monitoring, decontamination procedures, emergency first aid and fire and recue work. These volunteers must be between the ages of 25 to 45 and have no military commitments. Contact Ken Blanton, head of personnel for the Cooke County OCDM.

## Some General Information About the World.

### Epidemics

1. What: Smallpox, When: first recorded epidemic 1350 BC, Body Count: 300+ million in 20<sup>th</sup> century, Where: worldwide, Modus operandi: viral infection.

In terms of killers, smallpox probably ranks about number one. Smallpox was among the diseases that decimated native populations in the New World, but it also has the distinction of being the first—and to date only—disease to be eradicated by human beings (about 1979) after an intensive vaccination program.

2. What: Plague, When: 1347—51, Body Count: 25+ million, where: Europe, Modus operandi: viral infection.

The most famous epidemic in Western culture is the Black Death, in Western Europe. The plague caused by viral infection transmitted via fleas, followed trade routes out of China, through the middle east, and up to into Russia.

Estimated deaths range from 75 to 200 million victims.

3. What: Typhus; When 1489, Body Count: 18,000, Where Granada:, Modus operandi: bacterial infection, via body lice feces.

Typhus, which in one month decimated a Spanish army laying siege to the Moors in Granada in 1489, has changed the tides of history. Tens of thousands died from typhus during Irelands Great Famine.

4. What: Yellow Fever, When August-October 1793, Body Count: 5,000, Where: Philadelphia, PA, Modus operandi: viral infection via mosquito.

In three months, almost one tenth of the population of Philadelphia and its suburbs died of a fever the city's physicians were powerless to treat. The 1853 yellow fever outbreak in New Orleans killed more than 8,000, an 1878 epidemic left more 5,000 dead

in Memphis and bankrupted the city. An 1800—03 epidemic in Spain took 60,000 lives.

5. What: Cholera, When: 7 pandemics between 1817—1970: Body Count: 25+ million: Where: from India to the world:, Modus operandi: Bacterial infection—via water systems.

Cholera started in India, Cholera can kill in hours. The 1832 pandemic in New York City left 3,500 of the city's 250,000 residents dead. In Paris, 18,000—25,000 perished in a matter of months.

6. What: influenza, When: 1918—19, Body count: 20-50 million, Where: Worldwide pandemic, Modus operandi: viral infection. This flu gets the top spot for sheer efficiency. It was not there previously. It hit, killed a lot of people, and then disappeared over time. Scientists still don't know exactly what made this virus so deadly. Other flu pandemics occurred in 1957, Asian flu and 1968, Hong Kong flu.

If you can find some of the mortality schedules from the 1850—1900 census, you may find the cause of death. As you read this and think of all the people that passed away in these epidemics, you should feel every lucky that you are here today.

### **Reminiscences of A Pioneer.**

By Judge J. M. Lindsey

The first settlements were made in Cooke County about the year 1845. In 1847 Marcus L. Webster, J. and R. Dye and others settled on the Cross Timber Creek near Woodbine, and other settlements, about that time and later, were made along up and down Elm Creek East of Gainesville through the edges of the Cross Timbers. In '47 and '48 the State located a company of Rangers at Dixon Station, East of Pecan Creek, about three miles south-east of Gainesville, for the protection of this frontier. Cooke County was organized about '47 or '48, and Gainesville was located as the county seat in 1851. My

advent to Gainesville was on the last day of December, 1857, which was my twenty-second birthday, after coming out from Middle Tennessee on horseback in the fall of '57. At that time Gainesville had a population supposed to be about two hundred people. They were the class of people to under go the hardships and dangers of a frontier life, in fact, they were typical pioneers, with the nerve, energy and ability to convert what was then a wilderness infested with ferocious savages into a prosperous country of happy homes, as we find it today. We had then a two-story building located where Mosley's machine shops are now, the upper story a Mason's Hall,, the lower used for school room and by all religious denominations for worship, and for political and public gatherings. The court house was a frame building made of hewn blackjacks and post oaks frame, and weather boarded with oak boards, located in the middle of the square. There were three frame store buildings on the West side of the square, one occupied by Col. **Bean** and another by **Tom Richards**, and a few small buildings on the northeast. **W. L. Fletcher** occupied a two story hotel on the Northeast corner of the square and **J. B. Davenport** a hotel on the southeast corner. There was a small ten by twelve frame building on the south side, which I occupied for an office for a year or two after I came here. Judge **Reyburn** was justice of the peace and **Steve Brown** was constable; he died near Gainesville only a few months ago at the advanced age of eighty-five years. **Reyburn** lived across Elm on the prairie about a mile from town, and, in April '58, he undertook to cross the creek, going home, when it was bank full, and he and his horse were both drowned. His body was laid out in the court house when found, and an old man by the name of **Boling** came along intoxicated and rifled the pockets of the corpse of a few silver dollars and a watch. A number of our young men felt it incumbent upon them to take him to brush and give him a lashing and the

ghost of old **Boling** sent those fellows across Red River at each convening of the grand jury until the civil war broke out, teaching those engaged in it the value of the law to take its course. Of those that were here then, in fact up to the beginning of the civil war, that survive now, I remember only **T. R. Gossett**, **W. R. Strang**, **Ed Spences**, **Wm. Harvey Howeth**, **Mrs. J. M. Dosier**, **W. W. Howeth**, **Bob Bean**, **J. B. Davenport**, **Mrs. Twitty**, **Mrs. J. M. Perry** and **Mrs. Robertson**, **Dr. G. L. Scott**, who was living here then, is now at Dexter and **Capt. Rowland** at Nocona,. There may be others that I don't recall at this moment, doubtless there are. I am gratified to testify that many of their descendants are now important factors in the business and social circles of this and other communities. The members of the bar of Gainesville at that time were **W. T. O. Weaver**, **Stiles Carpenter**, and **Judge G. A. Evarts**. **Weaver** was one of the most versatile and gifted men I have ever known, **Judge Evarts** was a highly educated man and a good lawyer, and **Mr. Carpenter** a man of high character and good attainments. **Nat M. Buford** of Dallas was district judge at that time, and the district was composed of all the territory west, and north of Dallas. Courts were held twice a year, and the lawyers of all the counties in the district attended the district court of each of the counties, and you may be sure they made a jolly crowd on these occasions. I am proud to say that the bar of North Texas of that time was an able body of lawyers of high moral and intellectual attainments.

On Thursday night of the first week of the district court in 1858, the people of the town were aroused by the report that five hundred Indians were making their way toward the town and would be here about daylight, that they had killed and scalped , all of **Jim Perry's** family and **Gen. Hudson's**. **Mart Hudson** and **Ed Fletcher** on Fish Creek and all others in their path. You may depend we were up in quick time, double quick. Thirty or forty men were organized, all we could get together, and

went out to meet the Indians on their way from Fish Creek, under Col Jas. **Bourland**. Dr. **Stone**, Bob **Stone**, his brother, John

**Davenport**, myself and a few others got together and armed and mounted ourselves as well as we could and went on the run to Sivals Bend where the doctor then lived and only a few miles from where the people had been reported killed on Fish Creek. When we got about fifteen miles from town, we discovered on the prairie a mile or so away some men loading hay in ox wagons. We galloped out to them and found Ed **Fletcher** and Mart **Hudson**, the men reported scalped, loading the hay. They had decoyed a young fellow named Clay **Dildy** into the brush, fired their guns and cried out, "Indians!" and frightened him so that he ran to town with the above report. Dr. **Stone** gave those young chaps a good and well-deserved "blessing" and those of us that were present enjoyed it very much. Now, in all of the years that have been experienced on this frontier, this is the only false alarm of Indians that I ever heard of and I think that it was the only one that was ever made.

These raids were made during the light of the moon at some point in Cooke, Denton, Wise and Montague Counties as late as 1874. We have no definite record of people killed and women and children taken into captivity, but I have no doubt there were fifty or seventy-five men murdered and as many women and children taken captive and thousands of horses stolen and driven from the country. It certainly seems strange to you that people with their families would have gone out into the wilderness in the path of those savages, subject to their monthly raids and murderous assaults, and have remained on this border at all, but, notwithstanding these things and this great danger, new people continued to come into the frontier and settle on the border to go to work to build up homes and overcome these difficulties. The town and the country continued to improve, perhaps doubled in

population in the three years that intervened between '57 and '61, the beginning of the late war. The war called for volunteers and a large number of our able-bodied young men and some of the old ones enlisted and remained three or four years until the war closed in 1865. During that period, of course, you understand, the country could make no progress, but lost in population and a good many of the country people were forced to come to the town temporarily, having no protection at all, indeed, during the war, Indians had been supplied in a large part with the best guns and all the equipments for war that the United States army had.

In one raid, 1864, there were thirteen people killed in the northwest part of the county, and a good many of the people in that part of the county abandoned their homes at that time temporarily. Those that remained built stockades and provided for protecting themselves against the Indians when they came in. It will be a surprise to many to know that even in Gainesville at the site of the First Presbyterian Church on Lindsay Street, there was a large picket fence enclosing the grounds in that immediate neighborhood, to protect the town against Indian raids, which remained there for a considerable time after the war, closed. On January 5, 1868, some three Indians came down through the eastern part of Montague County, entering Cooke on the Clear Creek, murdered a number of people before reaching Cooke and near Rosston killing an old man named **Menaso**, taking captive his daughter, Mrs. **Shegog**, her infant child and his son's two little girls, eight and ten years old and made their way to the east through the prairie near where Era now stands. During the night the infant was taken from Mrs. **Shegog**, murdered and left on the prairie, and the two girls were never heard of. They extend their raid as far east as due south of Gainesville on the Denton road, turning north across Elm Creek near the iron bridge south of town, and came through southwest part of town, recrossing the creek southwest,

near Mr. **Doss**' residence, a mile southeast of town, where they stopped for a time to wait for daylight. The chickens at Mr. **Doss**' beginning to crow just before day, excited them very

greatly, and they got up and rushed off in great confusion. Mrs. **Shegog** had presence enough of mind to lie quite and they went away and left her, and she went up to Mr. **Doss**' and reported the raid, and he reported to the people of the town. Ten or twelve young men assembled and followed the Indians, as soon as they could get together, but after going out about twelve or fifteen miles, they became satisfied that the Indians were so far away that it was impossible for them to accomplish anything and returned. A year or so before this one Mr. **Box** was going to St. Jo with his family, a wife and six little girls, and when near where Muenster now is, the Indians ran across him, murdered him, took his wife and six little girls into captivity, and took them to Kansas.

All this was during the reconstruction period when the United States Government seemed to be somewhat indifferent as to the protection needed for the people on the Texas border. I give a few of the incidents of the kind endured by our people during the twenty years or more expose to the raids of these savages to show what the pioneers of the civilization we now enjoy had to endure, and to show that not even those of '76 endured and overcame greater difficulties and hardships than did those of this immediate frontier.

### Home Town Circus

"from the Popular Mechanics Magazine."

They have their own circus right at home, with relatives and neighbors billed as stars. Any youngster with a talent has a chance to perform but he must be good, for this amateur assemblage has its own big top and can compete on even terms with professional circus groups. The Gainesville Community Circus travels thousands of miles and puts in scores of performances every season.

Watching one of the shows, you gasp when a pretty Gainesville girl makes a breath-taking "slide for life" from high in the air. You marvel at the "educated equines ridden by masterful

trainers" and chuckle over the "comic capers of irresistible clowns."

Graceful and daring queens of the air, peerless tightrope artists, Texas peace officers in displays of marksmanship and acrobats and contortionist acts—the community circus has them all.

The circus presents all the pageantry and trills of the big time and yet home-towners in the audience recognize the slack-wire performer as Johnny Young, soda fountain worker. They know that the Rou **Stamps** who appears with five ponies in intricate drills is actually manager of Gainesville ice plant. Dr. A. A. **Davenport**, the chiropractor, gets a round of applause when he appears with his trained horse, and Portis **Sims**, fireman, gets hand clasps from the stands with his horse and dog act. A couple of weeks ago some of the spectators watched Sue **Roane** and Mary Ellen **Leonard**, "feminine aerialist supreme," as they rehearsed their act in the high school gym.

Everyone in Gainesville knows that Alex **Murrell** who presents "Dexter, the smallest high-diving dog in the world" is the engineer at the light plant and that his wife is Gerry **Murrell**, the tight rope star and intrepid performer who rides a white horse through a ring of fire.

Not so easily recognized in their absurd clown costumes are J. B. **Saylors**, accountant; A. W. **Wells**, Mathematics teacher; Dr. S. M. **Yarbrough**, physician, and F. E. **Schmitz**, automobile dealer. There are 25 clowns.

The Gainesville performers attract crowds wherever they appear and have turned down high-priced offers for professional tours. They exhibited before 11,000 spectators in College Station, 7,500 in Austin, 52,000 in Fort Worth and 30,000 in Houston. In all, the circus has played to more than half a million spectators.



Some of their acts are adaptations of standard circus routines, others are their own innovations. Any resident of Gainesville can try out for the community circus. With the proper training almost anyone can perform difficult aerial feats—so the performers say.

The circus usually employs a big top expert for part of the spring training period. He advises on new stunts, makes suggestions on properties and costumes and show them how to polish up their acts.

This instruction is augmented by a special gym class at the Gainesville high school. Students who desire may spend their gym periods working on aerial ladders, Spanish Web, rolling globes, Roman rings and other pieces of circus equipment. At least 25 per cent of the students become good enough to participate in the circus. The best of them are selected at the annual spring tryout.

At the tryouts, too, the officers pick the other features and the animal acts. The group has no wild animals. Horses and dogs are the most popular four-legged performers. One of the new acts last summer for instance, was an eight-horse act performed by matched chocolate-colored equines and presented by Vern Brewer. None of the horses was even halter broken when Brewer started to train them early last spring.

Other Gainesville citizens work up specialties of their own, such as juggling or stilt walking and try out for places on the program.

Although, some of the acts remain basically the same they are all revamped each season. In a sense, the community circus "just happened." Gainesville has no traditional connection with circus life. It is a town of 12,000 population, 70 miles north of Dallas, and is the trading center for adjacent agricultural and petroleum areas.

The circus got its start back in 1930 when the Gainesville Little Theatre decided a burlesque circus performance might bolster its bank account. Some of the members of the theatre concocted odd costumes and dressed as clowns, some assembled spangled costumes

and rehearsed simple stunts in the air, while others hastily taught their pet horses and dogs a few tricks.

Spectators liked the first performance so well that extra shows were held and the performers enjoyed themselves so much they planned a bigger and better circus for the following year. That was the beginning and soon neighboring towns were demanding to see the Gainesville circus.

The performers decided they would continue to act as unpaid amateurs but would charge money for the show. The cash would go into the treasury and would be spent for more elaborate costumes, a fireproof tent and other paraphernalia.

Today the community circus plays eight to ten engagements per season and turns down 30 or 40 other offers. It grossed \$25,000 in its biggest year before the war, shut down all its activities for the duration and opened again 1946. Its present equipment is valued at \$50,000. This includes a combination warehouse and rehearsal building, half dozen ornamental parade wagons, public address system, "black light" electrical effects for some acts, seats for its three-ring big top and a number of horses and ponies. Its latest purchase was the second 53-whistle calliope for furnishing music during parades and performances.

In spite of a good income the circus officers and directors have to watch every dollar for quite a bit of money is required to carry the organization from season to season.

Equipment must be stored each and the horses eat up big feed bills. Occasionally, too a member gets hurt, though injuries are kept to a minimum by meticulous rehearsing of acts.

The full circus crew includes about 135 people of whom no more are performers. The performers double up during the show so 100 different bits of entertainment can be presented. There's plenty of work for the non-

performing members. Tickets must be sold, programs and refreshments must be dispensed and behind the scenes there are a dozen jobs before the show go on and after it ends. The group employs few paid hands. Sometimes the circus travels by rail to a distant point but most of its performances are scheduled within an 85-mile circle of Gainesville. Men, women and children drive to the scene by automobile after working hours, with just enough time before the performance for a light lunch and a quick change into costume. Out of town engagements are usually held under the auspices of some local organization such as a county fair or a service club. No one loses more than a week from work during the season, not as much time as the average person takes for a summer vacation.

The circus performers range in age from 50 years down to five-year-old Ronny **Davenport**, who dresses up in clown costumes and takes part in the show. Six people, including the **Murrells** and A. Morton **Smith**, newspaperman, who is program director and announcer have been with the circus since its inception.

All the performers, old troupers and new ones, adhere to the old circus slogan: "The show must go on." Usually that means arriving at rehearsals and performances in plenty of time; occasionally it means a battle against rain, wind, hail and mud to get to the scene, set up the tents and equipment and start the show at the announced time. The circus has had its share of bad weather but has cancelled only one show, that was when the big tent was destroyed by a windstorm just before the show and no other tent large enough for the circus could be found. Another time the circus was rained out. It was impossible to drain the several inches of water that collected on the lot and the same storm blocked highways. Few if any spectators could be present and show was postponed. The following week the "only show of its kind on earth" was playing to capacity crowds in a return engagement.

F. E. (Frankie) **Schmitz**, Gainesville auto dealer was one of the main clowns in the circus; his act used a 27-inch automobile, which was a tough fit.

In a glistening, green-roofed white building in Fair Park, facing U. S. superhighway 77, near the west city limits of Gainesville Texas, the Gainesville Community Circus makes its home.

In this building, originally a recreation building at Camp Howze during World War II, the circus conducts rehearsals, builds and renovates equipment, and stores its many tons of paraphernalia, consisting of tents, seats, wardrobe, parade wagons, ring curbs, trapeze riggings, acrobatic props and countless other items that go to make up a full-fledged three ring circus.

Ideal for the purpose for which it is used, the building is 88 X 112 feet in size with dirt floor for the ring practice and girders 27 feet above the ground from which to hang aerial riggings. The first year the circus went on tour back in 1931, its permanent equipment amounted to no more the two theatrical wardrobe trunks, inherited from its predecessor, the Little Theatre of Gainesville, and painted circus blue, along with a miscellaneous collection of trapeze bars and flimsy ring curbs.

### **Texas had Little Fighting on Own Soil during Civil War**

By Clayton Hickerson—Associated Press  
Texas, which has taken great pride in sending her sons to battle, had comparatively little on her own soil of the actual fighting in the Civil War, the bloodiest strife yet fought.

But even Texas, on the southwestern edge of the great internecine war, went through heart rending, soul searching days as the waves of the approaching battles lapped over her borders. Many Texas patriots who fought in Texas war

for independence. Against Mexico including the immortal Sam Houston, preferred to stay with the Union rather than cast their lot with Jefferson Davis, states rights and slavery.

But even these men and women, who already knew the sorrow and deprivation of war., were outraged at the acts in

Texas of the abolitionists, antislavery zealots who were accused of burning homes, poisoning wells from which the settlers got their drinking water, and inciting the slaves to riot.

Fort Worth, Waxahachie, Gainesville, Honey Grove, Tyler, Bonham, and scores of other communities and towns experienced simultaneous, mass fires.

The Dallas business district then in the lower part of town around the present courthouse building was burned out. The first fires caused little comment, at first, but when the stories and rumors of abolitionists setting them spread massive retaliation began. Lynch law took over in many of the communities and slaves and free Negroes, accused of the crimes, were hanged and burned at the stake. Twenty one bodies dangled from tree limbs in the neighborhood of Gainesville at one time. The corpses—coyotes crying in the back ground --- were as great a deterrent to expressions of freedom as they were insubordination. So the slaves and many of their masters lived in sheer terror, afraid to look a strange white man in the face. Some who did were branded “smart Nigger” and set down for the next lynching party.

As terror spread among the Negroes, bitterness spread in almost equal measure among the white people. Any stranger in a community was suspected of being an abolitionist bent on mischief- arson, inciting to riot, or of arming the slaves.

Houston was deposed March 16, 1861, by a secession convention after he alone of the state officials refused to take an oath of allegiance to the Confederacy. Edward Clark who had been Houston’s lieutenant governor, became Texas first Confederate governor and served until Nov. 7, when he was defeated for another term by

Frank R. Lubbock. In Lubbock’s term, which ended in November 1863, much of the Texas action in the Civil War occurred.

Sibley’s expedition captured Santa Fe, N.M., for an abortive occupation --- ended quickly but overpowering numbers of United States troops---and Sibley’s own weakness. There two battles for Galveston which produced most of the Texas heroics in the war. Union forces took Galveston, blockaded since the war’s start, in October 1862. But on the following New Years Day morning, stealthy Texans fighting for the Confederacy recaptured Galveston from a Massachusetts regiment holding the island city.

Galveston Texas’ gem of the Gulf remained in Confederate hands until the war’s end. Sabine Pass was next. Here the redoubtable Dick Dowling, then a lieutenant and forever a legend in Texas history, hotly resisted and repulsed a Union invasion attempt.

The Federals, 5,000 strong and supported by heavily armed Union gun boat s, fell back with heavy losses under the inspired attack of the young lieutenant and his few ragged Texans. Nowhere did the Yankee soldiers find it easy on Texas soil. Like the abolitionist before him and carpetbaggers who were to follow the end of the war, the Texans’ cry-shouted with rifle and pistol—was “Yankee go home!” Sporadic fighting went on in the Lower Rio Grande Valley area even after Gen. Robert E. Lee surrendered the

Confederacy's remnants at Appomattox Court House. What was probably the last shot of the war, actually over at the time, was in a skirmish at Palmito ranch near Brownsville in May 1865.

At Palmito Ranch, a Confederate force under Gen. John S. Ford captured 800 United States troops. But Ford's men were as glad as their captors to learn from them that Lee had surrendered and

that the captured really were the victors. Prior to the fiasco at Plamito Ranch, however, another big effort by the United States to invade East Texas was thrown back in defeat at Mansfield, 40 miles south of Shreveport, Lathe Union threw one of its largest forces from Arkansas. Most died valiantly, but others had grown tired of the conflict and returned home.

### **I Give You Texas-Cousins Reunited By Boyce House**

A Businessman in New Orleans said to a visitor from Chicago: "I would be glad to have you as my guest tomorrow at the New Orleans Chamber of Commerce Membership Council; we have a speaker from Texas." The visitor said, Thank you, but I don't believe I'll go."

The businessman went on, "His name is Boyce House." The Chicagoan shouted, "Yes, I'll go! He's my cousin."

Which was a fact. His name was Karl Gillespie and we hadn't seen each other in over 40 years. Incidentally, when the invitation to make the speech was accepted. I assumed it was a small organization. On the train en route, I read the information and found that the editor of "Look" and Secretary of the Army Pace were among recent visitors and that, the week before, General Lawton Collins, Chief of Staff, was the speaker.

I figured that an unknown from Texas would be no attraction in the face of such "names."

The meeting was in the ballroom of the

Roosevelt Hotel and they had to crowd in extra tables to accommodate the crowd. Thing was—they had been hearing so many world figures on world problems that, for a change, they welcomed somebody—even, a Texan!, who had no message but was just trying to give a few laughs.

My cousin Karl and I had a happy reunion in charming New Orleans. We talked about boyhood events and scenes. He was my host at dinner in a famous restaurant and

because I knew a former Texas newspaper couple who lived in the French Quarter. Karl and I had the privilege of visiting the historic picturesque mansion. Though a frequent visitor to New Orleans, my cousin had never been in one of the old house before. A few months afterward, a letter came, telling me that Karl had died. Life has its splashes of sunshine and its gray shadows.

Here are some web sites you may like?

Texas State Library and Archive Commission  
[www.tsl.state.tx.us/arc/genfirst](http://www.tsl.state.tx.us/arc/genfirst)

Texas Land Grant Database  
[www.glo.state.tx/archives/landgrant](http://www.glo.state.tx/archives/landgrant)

Texas Historic Sites Atlas  
<http://atlas.thc.state.tx.us>

If you want to go to other states, I think you can change out "TX" to the other state.