

### SOME LEE COUNTY HISTORY

(Continued)

Evergreen was located at the junction of the Austin-Brenham and the Old San Antonio roads, one of the most noted intersections in early Texas. The Austin-Brenham Road was opened when Austin was designated as the state capital. The Old San Antonio Road had been traveled more than one hundred years as the connection of the silver mines at Chihuahua, Mexico, which have been operated for 300 hundred years and the cotton and sugar of Louisiana and states east of the Mississippi.

J. A. Dean, now living in Giddings carried the mail horseback to Lexington and stop at the Evergreen postoffice to leave and pick up bags of mail.

Mrs. Amella Stockton, late of Giddings, ran a hotel at Evergreen and Gen. Sam Houston ate many a meal there while he was living at Independence (Washington County).

The father of the late C. C. Rutherford of Giddings ran the drug store at Evergreen.

There is yet a cemetery at Evergreen.

A gin was put up near the middle of the prairie and Evergreen was moved to a spot near the present St. John's Lutheran church and the postoffice was continued for some years after the railroad established Lincoln.

The large live oak and other landmarks besides many memories of other years are all that now remain of Evergreen, known as one of the prettiest and most noted spots in Texas.

Another Baptist church was on San Antonio Prairie what is now the Kieschnick property. It is possibly the present First Baptist Church of Giddings, being moved after the Red Hollow community ceased after the railroad reached Giddings.

The railroad reached Giddings.

George Washington West went to his sister at Hallettsville, married Miss Kitty Searcey of that place, acquired much land and established Sweet Home which he named long before a railroad reached that section. He and his brother Ike West married two Searcey sisters of Hallettsville and a brother W. W. (Buck) Searcey moved to Brenham and was for years a leading attorney of the state and an outstanding citizen of Brenham for years until his death only a few ears ago. His first wife was a sister of Congressman Seth Sheppard and his son is Seth Sheppard Searcey, prominent attorney now in San Antonio. A daughter Miss Katherine has been assistant librarian of the University of Texas library since the days when it was located under the old auditorium. We of that day can hardly call it now "our university" because since bringing in oil on the University lands none of the dear old buildings except B. Hall is left and we almost have to put a bell around our neck to keep from getting lost when strolling about the University campus.

George Washington West's sons, Geo. W. West and Ike West continued the spirit of moving westward and acquired pastures between San Antonio and Corpus Christi.

Geo. W. West took a long chance which his friends said would make him either a cattle and land baron or break him flatly. He bought one strip of land in Live Oak County 65 miles long.

He built an unpretentious two-story brick home on a corner lot in the heart of San Antonio years ago. It was

from Travis Par  
street as the Gunter Hotel, He

amassed a fortune. Since there was no railroad near his property and to facilitate getting to market, he helped promote the old San Antonio, Uvalde and Gulf Railroad between San Antonio and Corpus Christi through his Live Oak County lands. This caused the moving of the county court house from Oakville to Three Rivers, which caused much disension among the natives. The present town of George West was located on his property and he gave heavily toward school and public improvements. Another town was named after his wife Kitty West.

The old bitterness in the county about the removal of the county site prevailed up to a few years ago. This editor was invited to George West as a judge in an annual county meet. The old spirit of the natives had passed on to the school children as school children in Ireland would line up at recess for a pitched battle between the Orangeburgs and the Ulsterites. The old spirit is yet present in the heart of every born-Irishman today.

Now that some good farmers of Lee County have moved to Three Rivers, including Christian Friedle and family of Lexington, and have shown the natives that good land is good for something other than grass, there is much farming now.

As the years came on, Mr. Geo. W. West was continually pestered by people wanting his residence property in San Antonio. All kinds of schemes were concocted to get him out of the small house among the skyscrapers. He refused to sell with the answer: "This is my home, it suits me and I will live here until I want to change." The last contestant for the property was the City of San Antonio whose Council stated that the street was too narrow

that the street was too narrow and they wanted to widen the street. He told them that the street was as wide as it was when he built there, it was his home, it suited him and he would not only live there until he wanted to change, but he would fight them through the U. S. Supreme Court. The City knew the size of his bank roll and never contested the case.

The last attack in the location of the Geo. W. West home was the placing of a garage across the narrow street (as streets in San Antonio) only a few feet wide. Mr. West suspected by the old Texas grapevine route that the garage was put there for a different purpose than for repairing automobiles. Soon after the opening of the garage, a rantankerous noise broke out in the backshop.

Mr. West raised a window of his dwelling next to the garage, poked a shot gun at the workman and said: "Stop that noise. This is my home, it suits me and I will live here until I get ready to move." Queer to say, there was no more noise. Some people know that a shotgun loaded with buckshot in the hands of an old Texan has but one end.

Mr. West died in 1938 and the property was sold soon thereafter. He had no children and the three sons of his brother Ike inherited his property. When this editor was entertained in George West, he was in the home of Buck West, who was manager of the Geo. W. West properties. His home was a small one-story, modest home with all appointments of wealth but not extravagant in a day before electric refrigeration in homes. They were quiet, un-

Geo. W. and Ike West and

the Hon. W. W. Searcey were strict teetotalers and at the banquets would invariably refuse the drinks.

Seth Searcey, after graduation, became attorney for his uncle Geo. W. West.