

Ex-Students News

By JOSEPH HENSLEY

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(continued from last week)

"The permanent settlement of this country began with the immigration hither in about 1840 of a number of settlers from the southern states of the United States belonging to the planter class who came bringing with them wagon, train, and boat loads of household and farming equipment, their slaves, stock of cattle and horses, plantation supplies of all kinds, including seeds for planting. The annexation of Texas to the union in 1845 by giving greater guarantees of security from unsettled conditions of society as well as of government, greatly increased this, the most valuable and dependable class of immigration this country had known. From 1840 down to the beginning of the civil war the growth of Trinity county was substantial and steady. During this time, the Womack, McLendon, Franklin, Chapman, Burke, Magee and Mangum families moved to Trinity County from Mississippi and settled principally in the north eastern part of the county along the Neches River in the Centralia and Apple Springs communities. Among other early settlers in the same vicinity were the Watson, Randolph, Crow, Hood, Young, McClain, Ainsworth, Burney, Hutson and Stubblefield families. Between Centralia and Pennington in what is known as the Nogalus neighborhood settled the Kenley, Bowman, Kerr, Hamilton and Chandler families. Southeast of these in settlements along Alabama Creek lived the Stanley, Trevathan, Lovett and Deaton families. The Ashworth and Dial families were early settlers of the eastern part of the county from Louisiana. In the old town of Sumpter lived Col. Robb and Capt. J.P. Stevenson, both distinguished lawyers who came from Kentucky to Texas, as did Thomas H. Kenley, the senior of the Kenley family in this county, who also resided for a time at old Sumpter and was one time sheriff of Trinity County. At Sumpter also lived the Evans, Gates, Teagarden and Frazier families."

"At Chita and in the vicinity lived the Craddock, DeLaFosse, Adams, Butlet, Tiptons, Chessher, Parker, Hickman and Dunlap families. The town Trinity and vicinity had among her early settlers the Frisby, Harrington, Inman, Barnes, Elliot, Parker, Walker, Gibson, Martin, Dawson, Werner, Clegg and Lister families. The Ellises, Brents, Anders, Speers, Postons and Thomppson lived in the vicinity of Ellis Prairie, and the present Thomppson Community. From Alabama, there came to Pennington and vicinity about this period the Nelms, Holly, Atmar, Benton and Wartham families and among other prominent early residents of the same community were Josiah H. Dill, Judge William M. Cox, Daniel Dailey, William Bleackshear, Hill Pennington and William Holland. Later to this community came also from Alabama the Denneys, Bradleys and Dominys."

of Seibert McDonald

"The Vickrey and Wooldridge families of Groveton were also old Pennington families. This community became from its settlement a center of wealth, culture and refinement."

"Thomas H. Nelms brought with him from Alabama to Pennington in 1858 more than one hundred slaves and a complete "Old South plantation equipment". His brother W.R. Nelms, a prominent and successful physician, accompanied him. Josiah H. dill, the business associate of Mr. T.H. Nelms, came from South Carolina to Pennington in 1859. He was a nephew of a United States Senator of South Carolina and had a brother who was President of Judson Female College in Alabama."

"Mr. Wash Holley was a graduate of Howard College in Alabama and a great intellectual and moral force in the community."

"He and Mr. Thomas H. Nelms were instrumental in locating Professor W.D. Steele in Pennington and in organizing with him as its head the Steele High School which is sometimes referred to as the Pennington Academy. Dr. R.M. Atmar, Judge William Cox, Major J.R. Wartham, and William Holland, the latter a lawyer, the father of W.G. Holland of Pennington, and a former law partner of Governor O.M. Roberts at San Augustine were all men of exceptional abilities and left a permanent impression upon the county. The Collins and Stroud families may properly be claimed also pioneer citizens of Trinity County, the progenitors of both families having lived at an early day on the county line in what is now known as the English settlement."

"In 1860, Sumpter, the county site, and Sebastopol, at the head of navigation on the Trinity were the principal towns of the county, each having from six hundred to one thousand population."

"in the '70s owing to the seat of Government moving to Pennington and the building of a railroad into Trinity, those two towns became the most important in the county. The building of the M.K.&T. railroad from Trinity to Corrigan opening up

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the great timber belt of the county and resulting in the establishment of saw mills at Willard, Josserand, Groveton, Westville, Saron, Glendale and Trinity, together with the removal of the courthouse to Groveton produced a further shifting of population and Groveton is now the leading town of the county with Trinity a close second with a considerable number of small but thriving towns in the county."

"The following names are prominent people who formerly resided in Trinity County. Ed Kiam, merchant Prince of Houston, born and reared at the old town of Sumpter; Jim West; Lynch Davidson; Lewis Thompson; and W.T. Carter, millionaire limber manufacturers of Houston; J.F. Evans and J.T. Evans, known among friends in the county as "Bud" Evans, both wealthy cattlemen of West Texas who laid the basis of an ample fortune in the cattle business in Trinity County; R.H. Hill's Business Colleges at Waco and elsewhere, formerly a teacher in Pennington Academy; Martin Dies, Congressman from the Beaumont district; Rev. F.L. Young of Cleburne, Texas; Doctors F.M. Wortham and J.S. McCalvey, both prominent and wealthy citizens of Temple, Texas; John Cochran, capitalist and public-spirited citizen of Livingston; Hon. B.F. Bean, county judge of Fold County; Hon. E.J. Mantooth, attorney-at-law of Lufkin; Hon. Sam Denny, lawyer and jurist of Crockett, Texas, also his brother W.H. Denny, banker of the same city; the Craddock brothers, capitalists of Crockett and Dallas, Texas; Doctors S.M. Lister and James A. Hill of Houston; W.B. Teagarden of San Antonio, and S.T. Robb, of Houston, Attorneys; T.H. Barron, capitalist of Athens, Texas, and C.B. Granbury of Houston, President of South Texas Lumber Co."

"Mrs. Bland Beauchamp, who at one time taught in Pennington Academy and subsequently became the president of the National Women's Christian Temperance Union, died last year in Dallas, and left among other surviving sons, Dr. Beauchamp, who was one-time president of the Pennington Academy, now a prominent Presbyterian minister in the state of Arizona."

"Among men of prominence who have owned land in Trinity County are Empressarios Frost Thorn and Hayden Edwards, the Texas partiot T.J. chambers and Thomas F. McKenny; Thomas J. Rusk; Anson Jones; George F. Moore, General Albert Sidney Johnson and William M. Rice, the latter the founder of Rice Institute."