

Sartin Hotel (41DN593)

1820/1870—Jesse Sartin was born in 1820, and lived in Bolivar by 1870, where he operated a stagecoach stop.

1881—Jesse Sartin purchased Block 1, Lot 6, in Bolivar on July 13, 1881. There is unconfirmed evidence that a hotel was already on this parcel, and that Sartin expanded and improved the building.

1881 to 1899—The Sartin Hotel was in operation during the later days of the Chisholm Trail (to 1886), and for some time afterwards.

1899—When Jesse Sartin died on July 24, 1899, he was buried in the Bolivar Cemetery next to his second wife, Salle. No documentation has been found that reveals the fate of the Sartin Hotel after 1900.

The appearance of the Sartin Hotel and specifics about its operation also remain unknown, but contemporary accounts and oral history recollections provide the following details. The Sartin Hotel:

- * was as a stop on the Chisholm Trail,
- * served as the stagecoach stop for overland lines through Denton County,
- * was a two-story, L-shaped wood building and,
- * had a “flowing well in the lobby” and a “saloon nearby.”

Thomas Cook Blacksmith Shop (41DN617)

1826 (or 1840)—Thomas Cook was born enslaved in South Carolina, but records offer conflicting birth years.

1857—Thomas Cook was brought to Tarrant County, Texas, as an enslaved person, according to a voter’s registration roll.

1865—Thomas Cook became a free man on Juneteenth, June 19.

1867 to 1870—Thomas Cook first appeared as a Texas citizen in voter’s registration rolls and tax records that show he resided in Tarrant County.

1872 to 1895—Thomas Cook resided in Denton County by 1872, although he may have arrived up to a year earlier. Ad valorem tax records and the 1880 population census confirm that he lived with his family in Bolivar through at least 1895.

1898—Thomas Cook died in Denton County on January 5, 1898.



Overhead view of rock foundation of Sartin Hotel.



Archeologist operating a ground-penetrating radar at the Tom Cook Blacksmith Shop, where the “Bolivar” historical marker is located.

Bolivar, Texas

1859/1861

After New Prospect was established, citizens voted to change the town’s name to Bolivar in 1861. The town is 3 miles east of the postbellum Chisholm Trail.

1867 to 1886

The first cattle drive up the Chisholm Trail passed a few miles west of Bolivar, delivering cattle to railheads in central Kansas. During this time, the Chisholm Trail became a major economic boom for towns along its route.

1886

The Gulf, Colorado, and Santa Fe Railroad built a new track through north-central Texas, several miles east of Bolivar, causing local economic decline. At the same time, the small water stop at Sanger flourished as a railroad town.

1916

The Bolivar post office closed, and mail was forwarded to Sanger.



FM 455 Road Improvements

The Texas Department of Transportation is in the process of widening FM 455 in Denton County, and this activity will impact the historic Sartin Hotel and the Thomas Cook blacksmith shop, which are on either side of this road. In compliance with the National Historic Preservation Act (federal law) and the Antiquities Code of Texas (state law), these sites have been determined historically significant. Consequently, historical and archeological investigations are being undertaken to salvage important information about these significant places and the people associated with them. (Photo: looking east down FM 455; the Sartin Hotel site is on the left.)