

QUANAH TOWN HISTORY

Hardeman County was originally a part of Red River County. The records show that when Red River County was divided, Fannin County and Bowie County were created. Fannin fell heir to the great stretch of territory extending as far north as and including Collingsworth County. Later by Legislative Enactment, eleven counties were carved out of this territory and given definite boundaries with a name. Hardeman County was one of the eleven created in 1858, but it was not organized until 1884, a quarter of a century later.

The history of Hardeman County since then has been in great measure, also the history of Quanah. Quanah was founded in 1885 when the Ft. Worth and Denver RR was surveyed through the county. On December 1, 1886 the first sale of town lots was begun in Quanah. Title to lots was given by R. E. Montgomery, town site agent and a son-in-law of General R.M. Dodge, builder of the railroad. On March 1, 1887 the first passenger train on the FWD steamed in to Quanah and the steady growth of the town was on. Settlers began to arrive, and merchants set up in business, and a school was already running. General Dodge had deeded two lots for that purpose to Miss McCann (Mrs. J. A. Pardue). In the two room frame school house erected on these lots, Sunday School and church services were also held for some time.

Pretty soon the first newspaper was published in Quanah. "The Eagle" was being issued from a dugout on the "Northside" by the editor W. W. West. The paper became "The Advance", then in September, 1889, the "Quanah Squirt" was launched, edited by J. D. Ballard. On April 1890 the "Squirt" was taken over by D. E. Decker a newly arrived young lawyer who changed its name to the "The Quanah Tribune". In the same year 1890, "The Chief" began publication by B.F. ----- . These two news sheets for years voiced the ideas and ambitions of the Quanah pioneer days. Both still live in "The Quanah Tribune Chief" published by Harry Koch who became the owner and editor of "The Chief" in 1894. He consolidated the two papers three years later.

The Quanah people have always been proud of the historic interest of their town. Quanah is an Indian word meaning "bed of flowers". The name was decided upon from the fact that twenty five years earlier Capt. Sul Ross with a company of Texas Rangers had surprised a marauding band of Comanche Indians on Pease River near the mouth of Mule Creek. A battle which ensued had completely routed the Indians killing their chief Pete Nocona, and capturing Cynthia Ann Parker, his captive wife with her infant daughter Prairie Flower. Her son Quanah Parker escaped and later became chief of the whole Comanche tribe. At the time the town was founded Quanah Parker had become a well known and influential figure among the Indians and a loyal friend of the whites. Thus it seemed fitting the historical significance of the locality be perpetuated by giving the new town the name of Quanah. The chief was greatly pleased with the honor and ten years later July 3-4, 1896, he paid a state visit to the town. With him came a number of his wives, his mighty warriors and their families-three hundred strong for a two day celebration.

The population of Quanah had passed the fifteen hundred mark by 1890. The volume of business done by the Quanah merchants however was much greater than these figures would indicate. The Quanah trade territory extended far to the west as well as across the Red River, immediately north of which, lay Greer County which at that time was claimed by both Texas and the United States.

1890 was a notable year for Quanah: the county seat at that time was at Margaret some twenty miles to the south and across the Pease River. This was not as it should be since Quanah was a railroad town and a healthy lusty youngster. So the Quanah commissioners were petitioned and an election ordered to determine the people's preference between the two towns. Now there were not many males of voting age in Quanah. But the law as construed along the new railroad was that if a man had his washing done in a town for six successive weeks, he thereby became a citizen with all the rights and privileges appertaining thereto. It is said that the laundry business became the most important industry in Quanah for the six weeks immediately preceding the election and that every employee of the FWD from Fort Worth to Texline qualified as a citizen. Quanah on Election Day kept the saloons open with free drinks, etc and on February 7, 1890 election day, a landslide victory for Quanah. The vote was six hundred eighty for Quanah and one hundred sixty four for Margaret. The next day the records and furniture were removed to Quanah and another milestone of development was passed.

In August 1890 work was begun on the Quanah Hotel and the building was completed and ready for occupancy in the spring of 1891. Various new industries sprang up which brought outside capital to the town. One of these, the Lone State Cement plaster Mill, later the Acme Cement Plaster Mill located five miles west of Quanah, was begun in the summer of 1891. This was followed by the Agatite Cement Plaster Mill. These great industrial plants have expanded until they are now among the largest in the United States and perhaps the world. The Lone Star Mills is owned and operated by the Certain-Teed products Company and the Agatite Mill by the Beaver Production Company.

During the year 1891, Quanah suffered a disastrous fire with the business section being practically destroyed. Rebuilding began immediately however, and the new buildings were of a much more substantial type with most of them being of native stone. June 4, 1891 the "June Flood" occurred. This cloud burst lasting for hours with 14 inches falling in the first four hours. 1893 was recalled as the year of the wheat crop failure. Some cotton was raised, but mostly cattle was raised. Even with cattle selling at a low price, the pioneers were undaunted and Quanah grew steadily on.

In the Spring of 1903, the St Louis and San Francisco Railroad was completed from Oklahoma City to Quanah giving direct communications with Sf. Louis and the east. Five years later the Quanah Acme and Pacific line was begun, building from Quanah to Roaring Springs ninety miles west. Later this line extended to Floydada and Quanah's dream of a railroad straight to the heart of the South Plains was realized.

In 1905 the Rice Brothers of Houston and Cecil Lyon of Sherman conceived and built the Dam site irrigation project five miles south of Quanah. No one foresaw that the venture would in the future yield such a rich return to Quanah. The 1300 acres of water the dam across Wanderers creek impounded eventually became lake Pauline, a popular fishing and pleasure resort. The West Texas Utility in about 1928 acquired Lake Pauline and built a thirty four thousand horse power Hydro-electric power plant there. This great plant became the central power plant of the West Texas Utility Company's holdings in Northwest Texas.

The beautiful homes and the smooth green lawns in Quanah today are proof that through out the years of her existence, Quanah has kept faith with the men and women - her first citizens -- who set the standards of county life on such a high plane.

**Harry Koch:
Editor Quanah Tribune Chief:**

Born in Holland, at 21 years of age he emigrated to the United States and after three years of prospecting for a location he determined that Quanah was the best place he could find in the new and old world.

In 1891 he bought the Quanah Chief, three years later acquired the Quanah Tribune and combined the two which is now one of the leading country semi-weeklies in the state. Not to read the Tribune Chief in Hardeman County means that one does not keep up with the procession.

Hlstory-----

The last raid by the Indians was made in 1878 when Joe Earle of Georgia was murdered by them just east of the Quanah cemetery. Hardeman County harbored Comanches and Kiowas until the late 1870's when cowmen began taking advantage of the vast grazing lands here. Hardeman County has an area of 761 square miles with an altitude of 1560 feet.

First Baptist church was organized in the fall of the year 1888, building on the corner of Fourth and King. Later the main building was built on the corner of 6th and Main and dedicated July 4, 1915.

The Methodist Church was organized during the Methodist Conference at Waxahachie in 1880.

First Christian organized in 1891 with present building built in 1916.

First Presbyterian organized in 1891 with present building built in 1910.

Church of Christ organized in 1905 with new building in 1956.

Trinity Episcopal organized in 1913.

Country Club was organized May 1, 1922

The First directors were E.A. Newman, M. M. Hankins, E. B. Caskey, G. H. Browne, G. A. Simmons, J. D. Hughes, Mason Hawell, R.R. Gilliland, D. T. Haden It is said the inspiration for such organization was a desire on the part of E. S. Caskey and R R Gilliland to play golf, the two having been severely and painfully bitten by a golf bug while sojourning in Colorado during the summer of 1921. One hundred acres of land was purchased and a nine hole golf course with the present club house was opened Monday evening July 14,1924. Through the events of the Quanah Club, the Green Belt Golf Association was organized in March 1926. This association being composed of golf clubs located in ten Texas counties and five Oklahoma counties contiguous thereto. One of the Quanah Club members was elected President and another secretary-treasurer of the organization. First annual tournament of the association was April 1926 and L.S. Salker, member of the Quanah Country Club, won amateur champion show in competition with more than 80 other golfers.

Music Lovers Club organized December 18,1920 at home of Mrs. C. T. Watkins. First Officers were Mrs. A.F. Sommer, V. President; Mrs. Elvin Watkins, Secretary; Mrs. C. T. Watkins, Treasurer; Mrs. Hayden Frizzell, Critic; Mrs. Harry Dole, Pianist; Mrs. Robert Willingham, Director; Mrs. Arthur Evans.

QA&P Railroad, originally the Quanah Line, was incorporated as the Acme Red River and Northern RR dating back to 1893. From that period until 1907 it served as a top line between Acme and Quanah. In the original charter this tap line intended to construct its rail from the Northeast, connecting with the Frisco Line at the Red River and actually graded part of the line before the plant was charted.

An extension of the line to Mac Bain was under taken in 1913 -1914 and at that time the financing and general arrangements make to continue the construction with the Santa Fe. In 1925 an application was made also petitioned at the final argument in Washington in July 1925 at which time all of the West Texas lines made their final appear for a permit to extend the Quanah Line being one of the two successful applicants to permit the continuation of construction to Lubbock but the Commission was found to be without a way to grant this request in as much as the original application did not provide for construction beyond Floydada and it was too late to amend the repetition under this particular application (Progress on construction is in such shape now that is proposed to open the line to Floydada some time in May or June 1928)

Gate City Creamery?

1904 Study Club

1904 Study Club organized in 1904 and federated in 1905, is the oldest club in Quanah. They sponsor civic work, etc.

Rotary Club was organized in 1924 with Harry Koch as first president.