

“We trust no man”

Newspaper, First named “Coke County Rustler”, Invites Settlers, Gives a good Description of Country in 1895

The Coke County Rustler of Saturday, March 9, carries the slogan under its title – “We trust in God, but trust no man.”

The outside pages were ready print, carrying news from over the state, one of the articles telling of miracles performed by Dr. Williams’ Pink Pills for Pale People.

A two column advertisement full length of the second page began with the following wording:

“COKE COUNTY EXTENDS A CORDIAL WELCOME TO HOME SEEKERS WHO COME TO MAKE A HOME FOR THEMSELVES AND CULTIVATE HER LANDS, which are rich, cheap, easily cultivated and produce well when properly tilled.

“Live, energetic and enterprising business men and farmers can do well in this county by the right kinds of efforts.”

Then follows a description of the county: “The Colorado river, one of the most important streams of the state, flows through the center of the county from northwest to southeast. The valleys of which are several miles in width in undulating and traversed by numerous streams, affording more or less good water. The valleys are covered with scattering growth of mesquites, the streams are skirted by a growth of hackberry, wild china, pecan, live oak, and red oak.

“The soils of this county are rich, sandy loam, carrying to a dark sandy with an underlying strata of red clay impervious to water and from 1 to 4 feet from the top of the soil. The soil in the county is easy tillage, the depth of the soil varying from one to four feet. A test of the various soils proves that they are

rich in phosphates and peculiarly adapted to the successful culture in dry years of Johnson grass, millet, sorghum cane, native grass, and in seasonable years when the ground is thoroughly wet from fall and winter rains, corn, wheat, oats, barley, cotton, alfalfa, clover, vegetables, melons and fruits of all kinds and in boundless profusion can be produced with less labor than in almost any state. The character of our soil is adapted to the culture of peaches, pears, plums, apricots, grapes, and some varieties of apples.

“WATER SUPPLY of this country is good. The depth of the water varies from 10 to 100 feet, owing to the elevation or depression of the country, though water can be procured at the heads of the valleys, near the mountains as shallow as it can be found in the river valley proper. The CHEAP LANDS of this county are a great inducement to home weeks and on terms that will enable all to secure homes. There are several large pastures in this county which the owners are cutting up and selling in small tracts and on easy terms to actual settlers who came to stay with us.

“ROBERT LEE. The county town, Robert Lee is beautifully situated in one of the many lovely valleys on the Colorado River and within about one mile of the center of the county. The city was located by a vote of the people on the 6th day of January, 1891. At that time not a single house dotted the plot designated for the town and at this writing there are about 150 houses in the town and a population of 350-400 people. There are about twenty businesses houses in Robert Lee, as follows: 2 dry goods and grocery houses, 3 grocery and grain houses, 1 saddle and harness and grocery house, 1 drug store, 1 livery, 3 hotels, 1 hardware and furniture house, 1 saloon, 1 blacksmith shop, 1 meat market, 1 soda fountain, 1 printing office, and one law office.



Chuckwagon! This photograph is of cowboys having dinner on a ranch in Coke County. The lid for a skillet in the foreground was used for baking bread. On the lid of the chuck box, lowered to serve as a cook table, can be seen an old time coffee grinder and leg of roasted beef. An oil lantern hangs on the bow above the chuck box and the harness is hanging over the front wheel. The men are Henry Russell (from left), unidentified, Jack Montath, Ned Richards, Jake Stubblefield, and John Dodd. The picture is from the *Where the West Begins: Capturing Fort Worth’s Historic Treasures* collection in the University of Texas at Arlington Library.

There is a good opening here for several first call mercantile houses. We have a beautiful little court house built of magnesium limestone, the inside being lined with a brick of fine quality burned on the town site. A fine steel bridge 160 feet spans the Colorado river at Robert Lee.”

Pioneers recall cattle ranges in 1889

[Editor’s Note: The following was taken from the September 22, 1939 Centennial edition of the Robert Lee Observer.]

The Odom called ranged on the site of the present city of Bronte, and from there through the Ft. Chadbourne country when

“Uncle Joe” McCutchen came to the county in 1889. South of the Colorado was the range of the Wylie Brothers, R.K. Henry, and Tom. South of Wylie’s was the Cramer outfit, Mule Creek to Tennyson. South of Cramer, Sam Saner and Skinner had fenced ranges.

E.C. Rawlings was first a cowboy, then later owner of the HXW Ranch north of Sanco. Bill Glass owned the present Whiteside land. It was he who sold out to Will and Rife Whiteside. The Weathers ranch was north of Hayrick.

The Old O.B. line fence went close to Sanco on to Silver Peak. South of that the O.B. or Snyder outfit extended to the

river, and the headquarters were near the mouth of Yellow Wolf Creek, not very far from the present Harris Saul headquarters.

The Harris 7F outfit covered its present range south of the river and extended in an L into the mountains north of Robert Lee. Some of the wire on their line fence is still in a fence on the L.S. Bird pasture, east of Sanco – has been in that fence since 1887, and still scarcely any rust on it – a kind of galvanized wire with large twisted barbs.

The above named ranges just about covered the county when it was organized, with the exception of land occupied by settlers, and fenced by them.

Main Street Market

Bronte, Texas ~ Est. 1994

K. Gothard ~ Proprietor

Invites you to their 20th Anniversary

1/2 Price Sale

Everything Inside & Out!

Saturday, July 5

10 am to 2 pm

Cash and Checks Accepted

Credit Cards accepted at one register

We will be closed July 4th

HAPPY BIRTHDAY COKE COUNTY!

**Congratulations
Coke County!**

The Secret Place Inn LLC

Debbie Childers & Beverly Hawkins
Proprietors

317 Summit Road ☯ PO Box 122
Robert Lee, Texas 76945
Main (817) 312-6149
Fax (325) 453-2537
thesecretplaceinn@gmail.com
www.thesecretplaceinn.com

Chapel
Available
on Property

**Packages
Available**

He who dwells in the secret place
of the Most High shall abide under
the shadow of the Almighty.
Psalm 91:1