



THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Diocese of Amarillo



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She Stood Strong for 127 Years...

The “mother” church of the Amarillo diocese stood as a monument to the early-day Catholics and missionaries who overcame obstacles of nature, great distance and prejudice to establish firmly the faith in the sprawling Panhandle cow country. She stood strong for 127 years until an unfortunate accident brought about her demise.



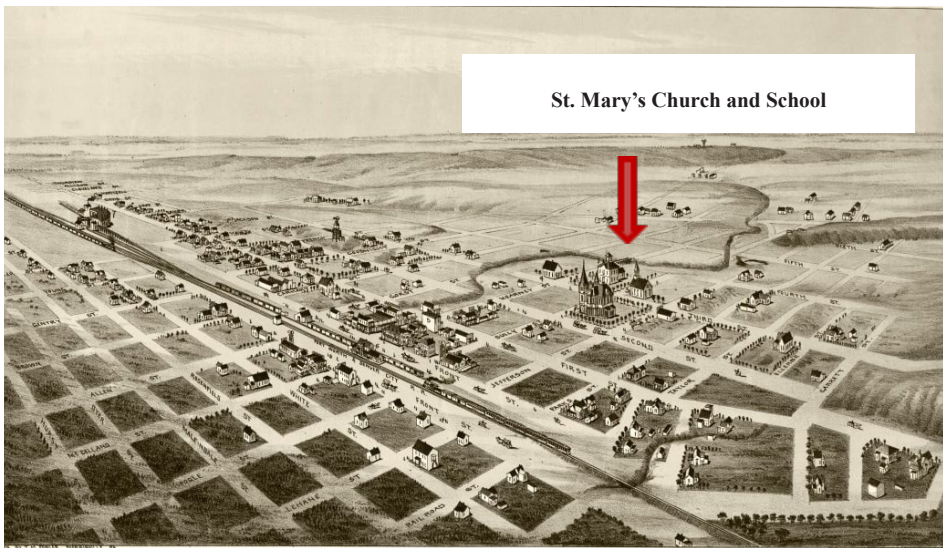
The High Plains region, at the eastern foot of the Rocky Mountain chain, was the last frontier to be settled by the people of the United States. It was the home of the Plains Indians, including the Kiowa and Comanche in the Texas Panhandle, and home of the vast herds of buffalo from which the Indians gained the necessities of life. It was not until 1875, when Col. Ranald S. McKenzie defeated the Indians at the juncture of Tule and Palo Duro Canyons, that the Texas Panhandle was open to white settlement. The buffalo were soon slaughtered, leaving the grasslands free for cattle. Cattlemen moved in and carved out extensive ranches.

The Texas legislature in 1876 divided the Panhandle and South Plains into rectangular counties, one of which was Donley County, at the eastern edge of the High Plains. Two years later a Methodist minister, Lewis Henry Carhart, established a Protestant Christian community almost at the center of Donley County, calling his little town Clarendon. This was

to be a model of Christian life and it became a cultural and educational center in the area, although the cowboys amusedly called it Saints’ Roost.

It seemed unlikely that the first Catholic Church in the Panhandle would be built in the Protestant “Christian Colony,” as Carhart described his settlement. There were originally only a very few Catholic people around Clarendon, not enough to form a congregation with a church. Dennis Murphy, in ranching and in the business of supplying meat for the Federal Forts in West Texas, came to the Panhandle with his wife and two sons, Charles and Will. Dennis and his two sons worked at FA Ranch with their friend Charles Goodnight. The Murphys built a home southwest of Clarendon. Later, when there was a Catholic church in Clarendon, Mrs. Murphy was one of the faithful members, but her husband and sons, having been so long without the ministrations of a church, had lost their interest in the Catholic religion.

Catholics were always a minority in the Panhandle Plains, and there were many of them who gradually turned to other religions. Families, finding themselves in towns where there was no Catholic church, and wanting to



worship God, joined other churches.

The construction of the railroads brought a new element to Catholicity in the Panhandle. Many of the railroad employees were Irish, others German. There was a heavy Irish immigration in the second part of the nineteenth century, following the devastating potato famine in Ireland in midcentury. Most of the immigrants were poor. Railroads were being built at a fast pace and the skills could be learned quickly. Railroading became somewhat of a tradition among the Irish. German immigration was also heavy. Many of the newcomers were Catholic.

All the northern half of Texas at that time was under the jurisdiction of the Diocese of Galveston, far down on the Gulf of Mexico. The Panhandle was far away and relatively unknown. The Catholic Church closest to the Panhandle was St. Mary's in Gainesville, in Cook County, and anything west of that would be its mission territory. The passage of the railroad through Gainesville, and the construction of towns along the line, made it possible for priests to visit the scattered Catholics to the northwest.

In 1890 another era began for the Catholic Church in north Texas. The Diocese of Dallas was established by breaking off the northern portion of the Diocese of Galveston.

On April 5 1891, the Rev. Thomas Francis Brennan, D.D., of the Diocese of Erie, was consecrated first Bishop of Dallas. The energetic Bishop set to work immediately to give attention to the northwest portion of his territory. He formed a parish at Henrietta in May, 1891, which includes in its mission everything west and north of Cooke County.

The first pastor of Henrietta was the Rev. J. J. O'Riordan, who came to the area to become editor of the diocesan paper Bishop Brennan was founding, *The Texas Catholic*. However, when Father O'Riordan arrived, an editor already had been obtained and he was assigned to Henrietta and the sprawling mission territory to the northwest.

Father O'Riordan first visited Clarendon, according to the parish records he kept, on June 21, 1891. He found a number of Catholics in the area, enough to induce Bishop Brennan to build the first church of his northwestern missions at this point.

Besides the railroaders, there were other people connected with the little Catholic congregation. John Cooke was a newspaper man.

William Norris and John Mann were ranchers. James Walsh operated the town bakery. One man was described as a gambler. William Cain ran the Cain Hotel. Connected with it was a saloon. The hotel was at one time the best hotel in town, so described by the Episcopalians when they conducted an activity there. It was in the Cain home, not the hotel, where Mass was offered before the church was built.

The coming of a saloon was not looked upon with favor by the original townspeople, nor were the people who frequented it. Virginia Browder tells us that with the coming of the railroad, a less desirable element came to Clarendon. She also tells us one or two tales of the Irish people. William Cain, it was said, every Saturday night served his patrons in the saloon with liquor until they were happy, and then passed the hat to get money for the church. The Irish, she says, lived on First Street or on Kirby Row. The engineers had special whistles that they blew to announce to their wives that they were coming home, at the sound of which the wives scurried home from chatting with their neighbors to prepare for the husbands' coming. Clarendon had become the principal town in the Panhandle. It had a population of one thousand persons. The issue of the *Clarendon Weekly Traveler*, February 27, 1891, contains an article headed "What Clarendon Has Got," which lists their stores, churches, etc. On the list is the item, "One thousand people, according to the national census recently taken." Since the files of that census were largely destroyed by fire that is a rare bit of information. The list also says, "One bakery", and the issue contains an advertisement for the Walsh bakery. The list includes "Two church buildings", which

The first building erected in Old Clarendon was a frame church-school structure. And that priority explains the difference between Clarendon and the other two pre-railroad towns of the Panhandle where saloons, brothels, and mercantile buildings came first.. In Old Mobeetie a church was a long time coming and in Old Tascosa a Protestant church never came.

Saloons and brothels never came to Old Clarendon. All town property was sold with the provision that no intoxicating liquors of any kind would ever be sold on the premises. Among old-timers the town was known as "Saints' Roost."

In 1878 the saints came marching in at the bidding of Rev. L. H. Carhart, founder of the settlement at the mouth of Carroll creek on the Salt Fork of red River in Donley County. Carhart name his town Clarendon in honor of his wife Clara. For eight years the oasis of refinement . and hospitality flourished in its little valley off the Caprock, but in 1887 it pulled up stakes and moved 5 1/2 miles south to be on the new railroad.

Only a few stone foundations and depressions pointing to half-dugouts or cellars remained at the old town site when it was inundated by Greenbelt Lake, formed by a 10-million dollar dam in the late 1960s.

During its brief but lively existence Saints' Roost added a new dimension to the development of the Texas Panhandle.

would have been the Methodist and Baptist, according to the records. That would make St. Mary's Catholic Church, built in the spring of 1892, the third church building erected in Clarendon. The Catholic people took up a subscription for the building of the church, and a meeting of interested citizens, both Catholic and Protestant, was held at the courthouse, at which the sum of eight hundred dollars was raised for the construction of the church

Returning from a trip to Tascosa in April 1892, Bishop Brennan stopped at Clarendon. He was shown the plans for the new church by two parishioners, Jeremiah Keating and William Cain. The Bishop planned to assign a resident priest to Clarendon as soon as the church building was completed.

Frank Jupe, an engine hostler for the railroad, was placed in charge of the building operations. He enlisted the aid of some of his fellow workers, among them F. E. Caraway, a non-Catholic, who tells us that he shingled the east side of the roof. The finished structure was a one-story wooden frame building, 30 feet by 50 feet, with a small room at the back to serve as living quarters for the priest, and a small cupola on the roof, at the front. It was built very quickly and very well, completed by July 1892, at the cost of \$1700. A priest did not take residence there until 1898.

Father O'Riordan was succeeded at Henrietta by the Rev. Thomas J. E. Blakeney on July 11, 1892. On August 8, 1897, the Rev. John Lenert took charge of the Mission. Father Lenert began development of the Panhandle area of his mission territory, and items began to appear from Clarendon in the South Messenger of San Antonio, which was the only Catholic paper published in English in Texas for many years. Father Lenert sent the paper a long article, inviting settlers to the Panhandle.

Father Lenert became St. Mary's first resident priest when he moved his headquarters here in December, 1898. A big step forward for the people of St. Mary's, for now they had a resident pastor. The next July Bishop Dunne divided the territory of the northwest mission, giving the Rev. J. E. Burns charge of the lower end, with headquarters at Henrietta, and leaving the upper end to Father Lenert at Clarendon. Plans were already advanced for the Catholic school at Clarendon. In November 1898 Bishop Dunne purchased from the Panhandle Town-site Company the north one-half of Block II, across



the street west from the church, and also the south half of the same block, the entire block to be used for the school. The prospect of a Catholic school, where they could send their children for education in their faith, was, in such a pioneer situation, almost unbelievable, but the school materialized within a year, to be taught by the Sisters of Charity of the Incarnate Word from San Antonio.



Two sisters of the governing body of the sisters, Mother Madeleine and Sister Athanasius, visited Clarendon in December 1898, and found the school building nearing completion. They state that the people of Clarendon, both Catholic and Protestant, had contributed liberally to the building. The sisters themselves, in succeeding years, gave a thousand dollars toward the building.

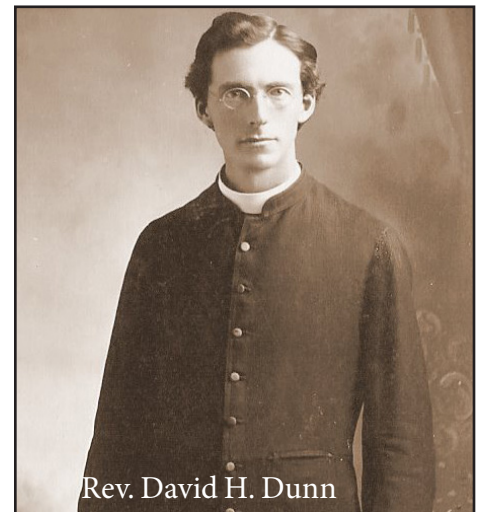
The Southern Messenger of December 29, 1898, announces that St. Mary's Academy, a boarding and day school at Clarendon, Texas, will open sometime after the holidays. The building, of two stories, had been completed. The issue of January 5, 1899, contains a letter from "subscriber, Clarendon, Texas giving more information. The new school building was about completed and would be opened about January 15. The building was a two-story frame structure, 40 x 50 feet, on a brick foundation, with a 22 foot flag pole, the only one in that part of Texas, 65 feet above the ground. The American flag, made by the sisters at St. Joseph's infirmary in Fort Worth, was raised on Christmas morning. This was the only school of its kind on the Fort Worth and Denver Railway between Fort Worth and Trinidad, Colorado. The school, St. Mary's Academy, opened January 16, 1899, with an enrollment of eighty-five students.

Day students included both boys and girls, but the boarding department was for girls only.

The citizens of Clarendon were proud of the building. Clarendon now had, according to the writer, two thousand people, and was the end of the passenger and freight division of the railroad, having roundhouse, shops and bridge yards in the city. The country round about was being cut up into farms and small pastures.

In 1899, the pastor at Clarendon had charge of the entire Panhandle, and of several counties to the southeast. In the whole territory, he had the

church at Clarendon and 33 stations without churches.



In July, 1900, the Rev. David H. Dunn was placed in charge of Clarendon and its missions. The young priest, frail in health, but full of determination and drive, became a leader in the development of the Catholic Church in the Panhandle, until his death in 1916. He tried to have sermons in Clarendon twice a week, on Sundays if possible, and rest of the time he was out on the missions. Father Dunn was a genial, pure-hearted young priest, with an Irish Sense of Humor, greatly loved by his people, and a favorite with the students at the academy. "He would be fooling you up to your ears, and you wouldn't know it," said one.

For a man of failing health, he had a big job. His parish, he noted, was the largest – geographically – in the United States. His mission field covered 40 counties, more than half of the entire area of the then Dallas Diocese. Although he only had one church, another one was ready for use 100 miles west of the railroad line. This was at colorful Tascosa, once the stomping grounds of Billy-the Kid and others of his ilk – plus many honest, hardworking citizens. The Catholics in Tascosa had converted the former school building, a small adobe structure, in to a

chapel. The old school building was purchased by the Catholics in 1899. By the following year it was completely furnished as a chapel. Father Dunn dedicated it to St. Barnabas and offered the first Mass in it.

By the time Father Dunn came to Clarendon in 1900, it was evident that Amarillo would become the crossroads of the railroad lines in the Panhandle, and hence the leading city. For a decade after it was built in 1892, the little Catholic community in Clarendon enjoyed their church and supported it well. The parishioners, however, were almost entirely employees of the Fort Worth-Denver Railway; their presence in Clarendon depended upon the presence of the division point and the shops and roundhouse that had been established there when the railroad was built in 1887-8. Conditions changed as the country developed.

Amarillo was becoming important, and Clarendon was possibly too close to Amarillo. When in 1901 a fire destroyed the roundhouse in Clarendon, the railroad decided to move its division point down to Childress, about sixty miles farther down the line. New shops and a new roundhouse were built in Childress and the move was effected in 1902.

Since the parish at Clarendon had been made up mostly of railroad workers, their departure left St. Mary's church almost deserted. Father Dunn, with his congregation departing for Childress, moved his headquarters in 1902 to St. Anthony's Sanitarium in Amarillo, and the next year he built Sacred Heart Church in Amarillo. From there he served a wide territory. Clarendon he visited once or twice a month, on a weekday, but not for Sunday services. Whereas the sisters at St. Anthony's Sanitarium in Amarillo had up to then, traveled to Clarendon



for Sunday Mass, now the sisters at Clarendon went, each week, to Amarillo for Mass on Sunday.

With most of the Catholic people gone, the academy served as a focus for Catholic life in Clarendon. The education went on as usual.

After 1902, with most of the congregation gone to Childress and Father Dunn in Amarillo, there was never a large Catholic congregation in Clarendon, but there were always a few devoted souls, faithful to St. Mary's church, who did their best to keep it up. These devoted souls gave continuity to the life of the tiny parish, as missionary priests came and went through the years. Father Dunn served St. Mary's Church from Amarillo until in 1907 he received an assistant, Rev. Charles Gregory Lindeman. Father Lindeman was one of the

several priests who came to the Texas Panhandle in the early days in search of better health. He had been a member of the Capuchin Franciscan order in Detroit, but left that group to find alleviation for throat trouble in a drier climate.

These early days in the Panhandle were recorded vividly by Father Charles G. Lindeman, who came to Clarendon April 5, 1907. He was placed in charge of the missions east of Amarillo, with headquarters in Clarendon. The Church of those days is best recalled by Father Lindeman's own words, as he wrote for Extension Magazine:

"Little did I realize what the charge of a 'sparsely settled country' meant, when my Bishop assigned a territory to me that extended over 150 miles east to west along the railroad and included the counties north and south."

Describing his initial trip into the Panhandle, Father Lindeman wrote: "Heavy rains had softened the roadbeds, which would not allow a greater speed than 10 miles an hour, and snakelike, our train crept along through a country where the absence of trees, the dugouts and sod-house told the sad tale of poverty and tornadoes, and our exhausted supplies made us long for our noted destination. We arrived



at Amarillo, the metropolis of the Panhandle, 16 hours late, the frequent record of southern railroads.”

After arriving in Amarillo, Father Lindeman reported: “Sixty miles more by railroad and the only rectory in northern Texas west of Wichita Falls was in sight, a single room furnished with the necessities for shelter and rest after, or in preparation for, missionary trips.

“There had been no Sunday service for three months previous to my arrival, so it was quite natural that my ‘congregation’ appeared in full numbers, nine women and two men besides the nuns and the children attending the academy.”

Father Lindeman obviously was shaken by what he found in the Panhandle. He wrote:

“The story of boxes for altars, has been told too often in Extension Magazine to require repetition, but I fear the fact has not been sufficiently emphasized that absence from religious services and continuous contact with prejudiced non-Catholics invariably show their baneful effects in a shocking indifference and an inconceivably ignorance in religious matters, and a shameful cowardice about acting the Catholic. A superficial observer will not fail to notice that the brainless chase for the dollar is the prime factor in the lives of very many, and nothing, religion not excepted, dare interfere with this.”

“I felt guilty and would willingly have done more had it been in my power to make a duplicate of myself,” Father Lindeman wrote. “At Clarendon, too, help was needed and will be needed for years to come.”

Father Lindeman returned to Clarendon at the end of 1910. The following year was to the closing of St. Mary’s Academy in Clarendon.

The sisters began the fall term of 1911 with an enrollment of 135 stu-



dents, including 20 boarders and 26 in high school, and the year seemed promising. They had hardly completed a month of school, however, when an epidemic of typhoid fever broke out in the boarding department. Nine of the boarders came down with the disease in less than twenty-four hours. Dr. Carroll advised the sisters to close the school at once. The boarders were sent home, where some of them contracted light forms of the disease. Mr. Turner of Tascosa asked the sisters to keep his two daughters there, and the sisters cared for them. One of the boarders, a critical case, was sent to the hospital in Clarendon, and died there. Her parents came to take her home for burial, and the father told the sisters that he had given up his Catholic faith because he had no way to practice it. The sisters at first considered reopening the school in Clarendon, but father Dunn had for several years been asking them to transfer St. Mary’s Academy to Amarillo, where he had fifty families in his congregation. Consequently, even before the sisters departed from Clarendon, their governing board in San Antonio had determined to reopen St. Mary’s Academy, with the same staff, in Amarillo. The school

opened there in the fall of 1913. The parish in Clarendon had lost the staunch support of its Catholic school. The next year it was to lose its resident pastor.

In 1912, Father Lindeman was appointed pastor of the parish in Groom, which had been growing with the accession of a number of farming families from the North. The numbers of Catholics in Clarendon was just too small to warrant the placement there of much church personnel. But still, with depleted resources, the parish went on. It was made a mission parish, under the care of Holy Angels’ Parish at Childress.

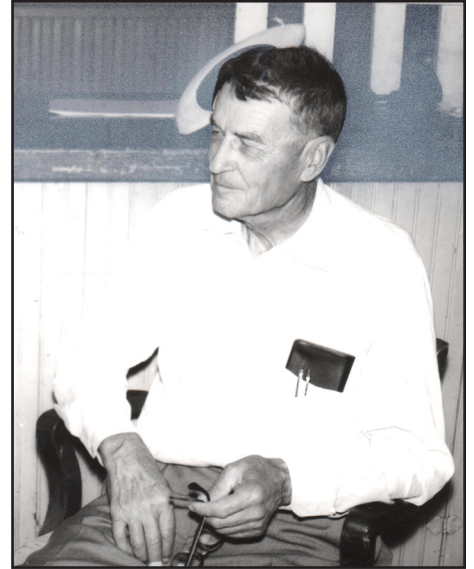
St. Mary’s church began its long history as a mission church, small but never to be forgotten. For some years the parish at Clarendon had been composed of eight to twelve families, but by the time that Father Dvorak took charge in 1922, the number had dwindled to three or four. Father Dvorak commented that he visited Clarendon for Mass once a month “if the four families were at home.”

In 1927 the newly-established Diocese of Amarillo took charge of Childress and its mission of St. Marty’s at Clarendon. Henceforth the annual mission church reports were

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sent to Amarillo. Father Dvorak was still there, and appointed Mrs. Odos Caraway to the church committee. Father French was back in 1928. He was saying Mass in Clarendon every first Sunday of the month. Catechism was being taught by him and Mrs. Kate Carol. Father Raphael Kramert took charge in 1929.

In 1934, St. Mary's was placed under the care of Immaculate Heart of Mary Parish in Groom, within whose geographical boundaries it was included. The pastor at Groom, Rev. Rupert M. Schindler, reported in 1934 that there were four families at St. Mary's in Clarendon. He was providing Mass for them on Saturday morning and on every fifth Sunday when there was a fifth Sunday in the month.



John Semrad

In 1941, another family joined the group who loved the little church, Mr. and Mrs. John Semrad and their family of eight children, partially grown at that time. Their home was diagonally across the street from the church. On May 9, 1946, a wind-storm badly damaged the roof of the church. At one point the small belfry that had been originally on the church was blown off. A new roof was put on the church, and Semrad had some correspondence with Bishop Laurence J. FitzSimon of Amarillo on the regrettable state of the little church structure. Bishop FitzSimon, who had a lifelong interest in the history of the southwest, including church history, though not limited to that, recognized the historical value of this first Catholic Church building of the Texas Panhandle. Things took a turn for the better for St. Mary's Church. In 1949, the Bishop appointed Father Richard F. Vaughan, a young priest who was then chaplain of St. Francis convent in Amarillo, to replace Father Schindler in his charge of St. Mary's, and gave Father Vaughan the task of restoring the church.



Mrs. Odos Caraway of Clarendon looks over some old parish records with Father Clifton Corcoran, priest in charge of the Shrine of Our Lady of the Panhandle, Clarendon. Mrs. Caraway has been a resident of Clarendon for 50 years and remembers well the early days of St. Mary's Parish of which the small town of Amarillo was a mission.

A new parishioner coming to St. Mary's in 1931 was Beatrice Meyer of New Orleans, who took a position at Adair Hospital in Clarendon and later served as a public health nurse in the city. She married Jerome Stocking, who operated the Stocking Drug Store, established by his father, the pioneer doctor of the Clarendon colony. Bea, and her husband in 1982, after Jerome had died and she had married Fred B. Butler, Bea reminisced about her years at St. Mary's. She and Mrs. W. H. Martin and Mrs. Odos Caraway cleaned the little church together. The thirties and forties were a period of decline in the fortunes of the church. The railroad ties that formed the piers under the walls of the church had rotted and sunk, so that floor buckled, pushing the middle of the floor up higher than the sides. Broken windows were stuffed with pillows. Only an open gas stove heated the building. Brush had grown up over the grounds and in front of the doors. In bad weather, Mass was offered in the home of Mrs. Caraway, where she had a basement room set up for service.



The Bishop and Father Vaughan drove down to see the church. It could hardly be found because of the brush and trees that had grown up around it. They went down to see Semrad where he was working an implement concern and he took them to the building. They entered through the back door, because the front doors were unusable, partly fallen down and propped shut by a pew. The buckling of the floor was observed, and the broken windows. At the back of the church were two rooms, one of which contained a bed, where the priest might sleep when he stayed overnight.

The Bishop suggested that an appeal for funds for the restoration of the church be made through the pages of the diocesan weekly newspaper, the West Texas Register, and that the little church might be designated as a shrine entitled Our Lady of the Panhandle. He obtained a grant of five hundred dollars from the long-time benefactor of the diocese, the Catholic Church Extension Society.

The appeal for funds for the restoration was quite successful. Many persons responded from within the diocese and outside of it, the later including Rev. C. J. Bier of Jefferson, Wisconsin, who had worked in the area when Father Dunn sent Father Lindeman as pastor to St. Mary's in 1910. A construction company was hired to lift the church and put a concrete foundation under it. The contractor warned that the building might crack in the process, but when it was set back down on the concrete, there was no crack in it, so well had it been made. A new floor covering was laid and the boards settled down to eliminate most of the buckling. The wall between the body of the church and the back rooms was taken out to lengthen the sanctuary. Two sacristies were added, each extending fifteen feet from the side line of the church, at the altar end of the structure. The original-gothic window frames had at some time been changed to tall rectangular ones. These were restored to the original gothic shape. Electric lights replaced gas, and a floor furnace was installed. Eighteen new oak pews were

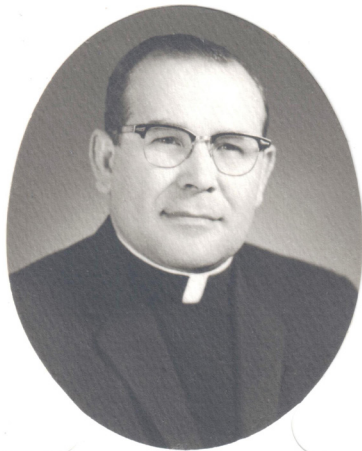
added and the interior of the church was stuccoed. The restoring of a belfry would wait until a later date. Items of historical interest were preserved. Two of the original hand-made pews were placed in the vesting sacristy. The old altar was restored. Homer Taylor, an expert in gold leaf, carefully followed the tracery of the fifty-year-old design. The old holy water font, the vigil light, and the candlesticks were preserved. The original church bell had been taken to Amarillo in 1936, where it hangs in the belfry of old St. Lucien's Chapel. The little congregation of St. Mary's worked diligently for the restoration.

People scrubbed, painted, and laid carpet. The parish spent five thousand dollars on the restoration. The restored St. Mary's church, under its new title of Our Lady of the Panhandle, was rededicated by Bishop FitzSimon on September 24, 1951. A solemn Mass was celebrated, with Monsignor John A. Steinlage as celebrant, Father Andrew Quante of Groom as deacon, and Father Rupert Schindler of Childress as subdeacon. Father Vaughn acted as master of ceremonies. The Bishop in his sermon traced the history of the church. Friends and parishioners numbered over 200.

Bishop John L. Morkovskys succeeded Bishop FitzSimon at the latter's death in 1958. Bishop Morkovsky determined upon some further development in the eastern part of the diocese. There was no Catholic Church in Hall County, where hundreds of Mexican migrant workers were coming every year to work in the cotton fields. The Bishop decided to use St. Mary's church in Clarendon as a base of operations to carry out his project. In 1959 he raised St. Mary's to the status of parish,

first pastor, whose instructions were to develop a mission parish at Memphis, in Hall County. This was the first resident pastor since Father Lindeman's time, a half century earlier. The parishioners were delighted. St. Mary's purchased a house formerly on the grounds of St. Anthony's Hospital in Amarillo, moved it to Clarendon and placed it behind the church to serve as a home for the pastor. On January 5, 1959, Bishop John L. Morkovsky said Mass in St. Mary's and blessed the rectory.

When Father Besterici left Clarendon in 1961, he was followed for a year and a half by Rev. Daniel O'Sullivan. In 1963, Rev. John J. Magana, a priest from Spain, came as administrator at St. Mary's and its mission, Memphis. Father Magana, knowing Spanish very well, was able to develop the mission much further. Immaculate Heart of Mary Church in Groom donated their old church to Memphis.



REV. J. J. MAGANA

When Father Magana left Memphis and St. Mary's in the spring of 1967 the mission was becoming larger than St. Mary's at Clarendon. Semrad tells us that he had seen as many as a thousand Mexican people in the Memphis area in a harvest season, and Mrs. Semrad gave it as her opinion that as soon as the rectory



UNDER SKIES OF PURE BLUE, traditional color honoring the Blessed Virgin Mary, historic St. Mary's church in Clarendon was redicted as the Shrine of Our Lady of the Panhandle Sept. 24, 1951 by Bishop Laurenc J. FitzSimon. Pictured above (left to right) Father Andrew Quante, Father Richard Vaughan, Father G. A. Boeckman, Bishop FitzSimon, Father Bart O'Brien and Father Rupert M. Schindler.



MORE THAN 200 PERSONS gathered in Clarendon Sept 24, to watch Bishop Laurence J. FitzSimon rededicate St. Mary's church, believed to be the first Catholic church in the Panhandle, as the shrine of Our Lady of the Panhandle. The group included priests from all over the area, the Christian Brothers of Price College, Sisters from St. Mary's Academy, Blessed Martin Mission, and St. Francis' convent and people from Clarendon.

was finished at Memphis, Clarendon would lose its pastor. That is what happened, for Father Magana moved to Memphis in early 1966. St. Mary's did not lose its status as a parish, but it was served from Memphis.

The ladies of St. Mary's organized a combined Christian Mothers' and Altar Society in the late 1980's. In 1994 a parish council was formed and a constitution written. In 2000 St. Mary's had approximately 30 families.. The ladies of St. Mary's organized a combined Christian Mothers' and Altar Society in the late 1980's. In 1994 a parish council was formed and constitution written. In 2000 St. Mary's had approximately 30 families.



Fund Raiser

Annual St. Mary's Day celebrations have been held in 1998, 1999, and 2000. These are old-fashioned Sunday afternoon BBQ dinners with music and comraderie. The funds raised from these celebrations, held the second Sunday in September' will be used to build a parish hall. They did it...in 2015 they built their parish hall and were able to pay it off in 2019, four years early. For the first time since 1899, a building was dedicated at St. Mary's Parish. On November 20, 2016



Bishop Patrick J. Zurek celebrated the noon Mass followed by the dedication of the new St. Mary's Parish Hall. The new parish hall is a 6,750 square-foot structure, which will house Faith Formation class rooms, offices, a library, kitchen and seating for up to 208 for meals.

Well, you know the saying about the best laid plans of mice and men... they often go astray. In 2017 the little church suffered structural damage which, unfortunately, was to bring about her demise. The experts met and met again debating if the 127-year-old church could be saved. When all the talking, meeting, wondering, and praying was done, the answer was a heart breaking "No". At least they had a parish hall, but the plans for it had definitely changed. The parish hall would have to serve as the church until the 50 families could raise enough money to build a new church.

Why did we pick Clarendon to feature in this newsletter and to exhibit in the museum?

The little church is very important to history of the Amarillo Diocese. She is the first Catholic church of the Amarillo Diocese.

The original building stood for 127 years and it was the final pre-20th century building in the Diocese of Amarillo.

She is the Shrine of our Lady of the Panhandle.

She used all of the original elements of the church, the altar, stands, communion rail, etc. all of the 127 years and then these were moved to the parish hall to use for Mass until the new church is built and they will be placed there.

To honor the little church that is no more, the Board of the Catholic Historical Society elected to build a diorama. The model of the church is 1/12 (one inch per each foot) and she looks, on the outside, just as she did in 1882 when the last nail was hammered in.

Our carpenter, Manrique Alvarez of Manrique's Custom Cabinets, matched the detail of the little church perfectly. Chriss Clifford is the artist who restored the murals and other artifacts of the prisoners of war in St. Mary's Church, Umbarger. Chriss is duplicating the altar, communion rail, baptismal font, statue stands and the candle stand. Fr. Richard Zanetti is carving out and painting the three statues that have always stood in St. Mary's. Natalie Barret, of St. Thomas and CHS board member, graciously offered to make the priests vestments, the nun's habit and hats for our stylish ladies The rest, the furniture, the lights, the people, etc., Ann Weld and I muddled through.

I mentioned that the outside of the *The Shrine of the Panhandle* would be just as it was in 1892 and it will be. The inside of the little church will not.

We have elected to go with the 1950's inside the church because there were so few pictures of it earlier. It will have the updates done in the 1950s, but all of the furnishings will be from the early days except the pews.

The result will be amazing! We invite you to come and see for yourself.

Exhibit in Progress



Bishop Patrick Zurek said it might be possible for the museum to have an open house after Easter. That of course depends on the pandemic. We will have an unveiling of our latest project, “The Little Church that is no More” and we will also have an introduction of our artists and as always, wine, good food and good company. We will have more information in the spring issue of the newsletter.



This is where we are at the closing of this newsletter. Our carpenter Manrique Alvarez, did a perfect rendition of the little St. Mary's Chapel as she looked on the day she was built in 1892, he had only a picture to go by. There are still things missing on the outside of the diorama which we are working on. The opposite side of the Chapel does not have a wall and you can see into the church which also has a lot to be done. It will look like it did in 1950. You will have to come to the museum to see the inside... no peaking in the windows please.

Two Horrible Murders in One Night!

G. R. Miller, an Exconvict, Murders Floyd Autrey of Fort Worth and an Unknown Man and Attempts to Kill Two Others

ROBBERY HIS ONLY MOTIVE

One of the most cold blooded double murders ever perpetrated in the Panhandle was done early Saturday morning by an ex-convict, G.R. Miller, of near Acme, Tex., when he killed two men on a north bound freight train for the purpose of robbery, when there could have been no hope of obtaining more than a very small amount of money.

First, three men entered a box car at Childress in the train being sent north. A few cars ahead of this two other young men, unaware of the first three, also entered a box car to ride to Amarillo. The first time the train crew knew of anything being wrong was when the train reached Giles, 20 miles south of Clarendon and 40 miles north of Childress, where the train stopped for water and where Fred Garrett, a young man of North Ft. Worth, approached the crew and told them his companion, a cousin, had been murdered and he himself had a narrow escape. It developed that Garrett and his cousin, Floyd Autrey, also of Ft. Worth, were riding in the empty freight car with the door open, and at Memphis a third man climbed into the car and entered into conversation with them, nothing seemed unusual with the man, only he said he was broke and asked Garrett and Autrey if they had anything to satisfy the trainman with. They told him they had a



G. R. Miller - The Murderer

a little money and could see that he got through to Amarillo. They lighted and smoked cigarettes and Garrett seated himself in the car door.

Just as the train was entering Giles, eight miles from Memphis, the stranger without warning or provocation opened fire on them. At the first shot, Garrett looked around to see Autrey fall and the murderer turning upon him. He made a leap from the car door just as the second shot was fired, the ball and flame burning the side of his neck. He caught onto the train a few car lengths back, riding on to the tank, where he told the crew of what had happened. The assassin was seen to jump from the car and make off down the creek. When they reached the car, Autrey was found on the floor with a terrible wound in the back of the head from which the blood poured and he was unconscious. There was no doctor or officer at Giles, so the

train was brought to Clarendon, with Garrett in charge of his wounded cousin Autrey.

On reaching here, the wounded man, still breathing but unconscious, was taken into the depot office and City Marshal Phillips and a doctor were called, the latter pronouncing the wound fatal. About daylight, Sheriff Patman was called and he notified officers down the road of the crime and to look out for the criminal, which Garrett described, the sheriff himself going south on the first train. Early Saturday morning, a man walked into Rowe from the south and went to a boarding car and asked for breakfast. He suited the description so completely that Deputy Gammon at that place arrested him and with Sheriff Patman brought him up to Clarendon on the ten o'clock train and placed him in jail. Garrett was then taken to the jail and identified him fully. In the meantime, Autrey had been taken to the hotel, where he died before ten o'clock. While all this was going on, another chapter unfolded, bringing to light a heinous murder just before this one. Further up the road, the train crew found another car, blood-bespattered, in which there was a man's hat and necktie. Word was telegraphed along down the line to look out for evidences of another crime. In response to this a section crew found a dead man on a drift pile under Red River bridge near Estelline, twelve miles south of Memphis. Next day, a man, worn out and weary

with a bullet wound in the lobe of his ear, walked into Childress and told officers that one of the two men with whom he had been riding north had shot him and thrown him from the train. Miller then killed the first victim, rifled his pockets of fifty cents and a metal trade check and threw him out as they crossed Red River.

Unawares to Clarendon people, Sheriff Patman took Miller to Claude Saturday night and placed him in jail, as there was some pretty bitter talk Sunday the man first assaulted who walked back to Childress was brought back to Estelline, where he identified the dead man there as one of the two to leave Childress in the car with him. He was then taken on to Claude, where he readily identified Miller as the man he had put off the train twice after leaving Childress.

This makes the proof against Miller complete, together with the fact that the deputy relieved him of a long barreled Smith & Wesson 5-shot pistol with four chambers empty and showing they were freshly fired. The evidence was so strong in fact that Miller finally broke down and confessed, saying he was broke and killed them for what money they might have. He also, upon being charged with being an ex-convict by Sheriff Patman, acknowledged that he had served a two-year term for forgery in Hardeman county. He is evidently a hardened criminal, his past punishment in no wise changing his evil intentions. He told the officers that he had worked some since his release from the pen in December, but had lost his wages gambling and he set in to stake himself by robbery, that he did not mean to kill these men, but wanted to hurt them bad enough so that he could easily get their money. He had besides the pistol and

its load, one piece of dynamite fuse and cap, and a letter to a city firm, written supposedly by himself, ordering a wig, false whiskers, etc., to be sent to Dalhart, showing that he was starting out on a career of dark deeds.

He is about 5½ feet tall, 33 years old, light or medium complexion, wide between the eyes, eyes light blue or almost gray and droop at the outside corners, weight about 110 pounds, wide between the ears, and is a constant cigarette smoker. He says his mother is a widow and lives near Acme, Tex.

Fifty cents and the metal trade check was the only fruit of these crimes. Autrey and Garrett had a few dollars, but the latter jumped from the car and escaped and Autrey's money was in a hip pocket of an under pair of pants where Miller did not find it.

Garrett stated that with his cousin they left Ft. Worth Friday and came to Childress on the passenger train. After being there a while, they concluded to go to Amarillo on a freight. Their home was in North Ft. Worth, moving there a few months ago from Smithfield. Autrey was 19 years old and a Woodman. Fred Garrett is 20 years old and his conduct and appearance shows that he is no hobo. The body of Floyd Autrey was prepared for burial and shipped to Smithfield in Tarrant county, in charge of Garrett and J.L. Davis of Clarendon, one of our local Woodmen. The family of the dead boy boarded the train at Ft. Worth and went on to Smithfield where they were met by over 100 Woodmen and hundreds of other people who attended the services and burial. Mr. Davis returned yesterday and says the mother and family took the death very hard and the whole affair was impressive and affecting. •

• • Such a crime certainly deserves

the fullest penalty the law provides. The Clarendon Chronicle Wednesday, March 24, 1909

THE MURDER CONFESSES

Miller Says He Did Not Intend To Kill

The Banner-Stockman was not able to get the full facts in the case of the horrible tragedies that shocked our city last Saturday. But the murderer has confessed the deed and in his own words we give below the history of two of the most shocking murders in the history of the county.

• • •

Following is a synopsis of Miller's statement:

I got on the train at Childress and two men got on after it was in motion. I do not know where they were going, either do I know their names, but we rode on in the car together to Estelline, Texas, and just after we left Estelline I asked the two men if they had "put up" to the train crew, and they said "no" but that they did not want the train crew to find them. "We had not gone far before I did the shooting. I did not want to kill the men "Plum" dead, I only wanted to wound them so I could get their money. I shot at one of them and he jumped out of the car door and as he jumped I shot the second time at him and then turned and fired at the other one, but only fired one shot at the last one. I went through his pockets and got all his money, which was fifty cents in money and a merchandise check amounting to fifty cents and then pushed him out of the door. I came on to Memphis, Texas, in the same car and then got off and changed to another car and

found two other men in that car. One of them told me he had a little money. The other man said that he did not have any at all and my only object was to get the money one of them had and I did not want to hurt the man who did not have any money but wanted to scare him away. I did not shoot the other man with the intention of killing him. I only wanted to wound him so I could get his money. I shot him and then went through his pockets but did not find anything. I got off the train and went down in the canyon and sat down until after the train left and then walked up to Rowe where I was arrested.

*The Banner-Stockman
Friday, March 26, 1909*



The crowd closes in as the noose is prepared for the neck of G.R. Miller on the morning of June 3, 1910. The scene a few moments before this of Miller, with his hands bound behind his back, has been printed many times, but this is possibly the first publication of this particular photo, which shows the hood over Miller's head. On the gallows is Rev. J.H. Stanton, Father Erasmus, Miller, and Sheriff J.T. Patman flanked by two men who may be V.R. Lane, Dep. Bugbee, or Dep. Gammon.

THE FULL STORY OF THE MILLER HANGING.

His Criminal History and His Possible Insanity

By Jean Stavenhagen,
Donley County Historical
Commission Chair

The sounds of hammers driving nails and saws slicing into planks ring out across the hills north of Clarendon in the early morning of May 31st, 1910. The field is vacant except for a tall platform taking shape from the labor of many workmen busily doing their job of building a gallows over fifteen feet high under the supervision of J.T. Patman, Sheriff of Donley County. When completed, the gallows will await the execution of G.R. Miller, the man convicted of murder on a train traveling through Donley County.

In 1906, Miller was a tall, dark, good-looking, thirty-year-old man who had become a small time thief searching for wealth without work. When money was scarce he worked

as a farm laborer in Quanah and a miner in the gypsum bed in Acme. He decided it would be easy to expand his road to riches by changing the amount of a check given to him by a Mrs. Waldrop for picking cotton. He was arrested and charged with forgery however there was some concern about his mental state. The doctors who examined Miller while he was in jail were convinced that he was, "... of unsound mind," and after his trial the jury felt, "There is little doubt as to the man being crazy..." A petition for his pardon was signed by all the members of the jury that convicted him. The pardon was denied and Miller arrived at the State Prison in Huntsville January 16, 1907, to serve his two year sentence.

The state prison system at that time operated under the belief that hard work and severe discipline bring about reform but Miller did not respond well to that logic. He refused to accept authority and according to prison records was labeled by the prison physicians as being, "...excessive and out of control," and given twenty licks for punishment.

Miller arrived back in Quanah, a convict with a criminal record and the victim of a harsh prison system. Four months later he began a violent crime spree by committing almost identical crimes as he traveled in freight train boxcars through Hall and Donley Counties. In 1909 Miller stole dynamite from the gypsum plant in Acme and blew up the dugout home of Nick Althizer as a decoy for robbing the paymaster's office. He was not successful in his robbery attempt and left Acme after he stole a .38 caliber revolver from a relative.

In Childress Miller found a north-bound freight train with a boxcar occupied by two men. Believing they had money, he pulled his gun and started shooting before they reached Estelline. He killed one of the men, but the other one jumped off the train and escaped with a wound to one of his ears.

The man began his way back to Childress in the dark to notify authorities while Miller searched the dead man for money. He found fifty cents and he callously pushed the body out of the car as it crossed over Red River. When the train stopped in Memphis, Miller found a different boxcar with two young men inside. One was playing a harmonica and the other was rolling a cigarette. They told Miller they were Floyd Autrey and Fred Garrett, cousins from Fort Worth and on their way to Amarillo. Autrey told Miller he had enough money to pay their way if caught stealing a ride and the conversation continued as all three of them lit cigarettes by the same match.

The train pulled out of Memphis, but before they reached Giles, Miller decided he would take what money they had and began shooting. Using the glow of his cigarette, Miller shot Autrey in the head. Garrett jumped from the car as a bullet grazed his cheek. Miller searched the severely wounded Autrey, but found no money. Fearing more gunfire from the car, Garrett ran alongside the slow-moving train and got the attention of the engineer who stopped at Giles. Garrett told him about the gunman who shot Autrey, and they both hurried back to the car and found the young man alone and unconscious with part of his head blown away. Deputy Gammon in Hedley was notified and given a description of the suspected killer. By that time, the body of the man Miller pushed from the train had been found by two cowboys and reported to officials in Estelline. In a frenzy of phone calls lawmen from Childress to Clarendon were alerted of the shootings and given a description of the suspect.

Miller had jumped off the train when it stopped in Giles and found a place to hide for the rest of the night. On Saturday morning, he walked to Rowe and begged breakfast from a cook's car that fed the railroad work crew. The cook was suspicious that the stranger was the killer on the loose and summoned Deputy Gammon from Hedley who arrived and took Miller into custody relieving him of his gun which had one bullet left.

Autrey and Garrett were taken to Clarendon and they were met at the depot by the railroad physician who took Autrey to a nearby hotel where he died a short time later. He was wearing two pairs of pants and seven dollars was found in the inside pockets. Miller was escorted to Clarendon by Donley County Sheriff Patman and Deputy Gammon. News of the double murders had spread like a prairie wildfire. A large dangerous crowd met them at the depot and whispers of a lynching prompted the sheriff to quickly take Miller to the jail. At the inquest, Garrett identified Miller as the assassin and testified that, "Autrey came to his death by a pistol shot wound inflicted by G.R. Miller." Sheriff Patman arrested Miller and found in his pocket a letter ordering a wig, mustache, goatee and whiskers from a place in Boston. The sheriff locked him in the county jail but later that night he and his deputy secretly moved Miller to the jail in Claude to calm the lynching crowd.

The next day, the Childress sheriff brought the first man who had escaped from Miller's bullets to Claude. He identified Miller as the man who had killed his companion. After intense questioning, Miller signed a confession, admitting both shootings on the train. Referring to the first murder he said, "I did not intend to kill the men 'plum' dead. I only wanted to wound them so I could get their money." Of Autrey's murder Miller stated, "... I only wanted to wound him so I shot him and then went thru his pockets but did not find anything."

On April 16th, Miller was taken to the jail in Memphis by Sheriff Burson and Deputy King to await trial for the murder committed on the train as it passed through Hall County. The grand jury indicted Miller on May 24th. A week later the district court met and out of the sixty-five summoned, chose a jury. The case was ready for trial shortly after noon and began with Miller's relatives, his mother Jane Miller, his sister and brother-in-law Dora and Tom Everson, all testifying that Miller's actions and mental condition were not unusual prior to the killings. He showed no emotion until he was moved to tears when his elderly mother took the stand and became so nervous she had to go to the witness room. The Sheriff testified that while he was in jail, Miller had tried to smuggle out a letter to a woman in Dalhart. He was asking her to get a diamond point drill and steel saw and get them to him some way as he would hang if he did not get out.

The trial continued the next day, June 1st. At 3:0'clock the jury announced their verdict. G.R. Miller was found guilty of murder in the first degree and given ninety-nine years or life in prison. The defendant was taken to Huntsville the next day to await trial for the murder of Floyd Autrey. The District Court met in Clarendon to impanel a jury on October 18, 1909 with District Judge J.N. Browning presiding. Only nine men appeared from the ones who were summoned. The judge ordered three of the recently chosen petit jurors to appear and qualify. R.H. Jones, F.A. Killian and Levi Angel were empanelled by Sheriff Patman with nine other jurors. After a short deliberation, the Grand Jury indicted G.R. Miller for the capital murder of Floyd Autrey.

On October 23rd the jury for the trial was chosen from seventy-two people who were summoned with many for

their belief in Miller's guilt. The jurymen were chosen from the farmers, ranchers and merchants of Donley County and consisted of: R.A. Callahan, W.T. McFarland, J.A. Barnett, W.A. Womack, Joe Penland, J.S. Spradlin, W.D. Dishroone, D.R. Skinner, G.D. Greaves and C. Risley. The court appointed lawyers for Miller were A.T. Cole and A.L. Journeay, who immediately filed a motion to quash the indictment because the Grand Jury was chosen illegally but the motion was denied by Judge Browning. Miller was brought back to Clarendon from Huntsville and the trial began on November 1st in a courthouse packed with people. When the indictment was read, Miller pleaded guilty without emotion or hesitation. After all the evidence was heard and the court determined that G.R. Miller was sane, the case was sent to the jury. Within an hour, the verdict was given, "... guilty of murder in the first degree ... and punishment by death."

Miller's lawyer proceeded to file a motion to the State Court of Criminal Appeals for the jury's judgment to be revised. The motion was denied because of Miller's guilty plea. On April 25, 1910, Miller appeared in the crowded courtroom where Judge Browning pronounced sentence, "The defendant shall be hanged by the neck until dead ... on Friday, June 3, 1910 at any time after eleven o'clock A.M. and before sunset." He was returned to the jail to await execution.

In the weeks that followed, Miller became a contributor to the local newspaper from his cell. First he sent an invitation asking everyone to meet him at the gallows so he could tell them he forgave them. Then he began to write poetry and sent a long ballad to the editor about his life of crime. Another poem, written about prison life, was especially poignant and captured the sympathy of his readers, "... What is life without liberty / I oft times have said / With a poor troubled mind / It is always in dread."

As the time drew near for the execution, the town began to prepare itself for an onslaught of curiosity seekers. As soon as the gallows were built, a crowd began to gather in the open field where it stood. Every train brought people to Clarendon and many arrived in wagons, buggies, on horseback and even on foot. The streets filled with people selling fried meats, breads and pies. People carried picnic lunches and extra bedding as the mood became boisterous and rowdy.

On the night before the hanging, campfires dotted the landscape as hundreds of people camped out near the scaffold. At the jail, Father Erasmus, priest of the Catholic Church, and Rev. J.H. Stanton of the Methodist Church, were ministering to the condemned man one last time in his cell. Three days before, the priest had baptized Miller into the Catholic Church. Mrs. Patman, the sheriff's wife, was making the black hood that would cover the head of the prisoner, a job she had been putting off for days. Extra lawmen were called in and spent the night nervously watching over the town.

At promptly 11 o'clock the next morning, June 3rd, 1910, Miller was brought through the crowd to the waiting gallows in a covered buggy escorted by lawmen, ministers and physicians. Sheriff Patman ascended the stairs to the scaffold followed by Miller, deputies Bugbee and Gammon, V.R. Lane, Father Erasmus dressed in his official robes and Rev. Stanton, who held a small cross in his hands.

Miller faced the huge crowd and read a statement thanking those who had helped him and forgiving those who were punishing him. He ended his statement by saying, "I humbly and sincerely ask forgiveness for the scandal and bad example I have given by my past wicked life and I hope that none will follow my example." He looked around at the vast crowd and his voice wavered slightly as he said, "Goodbye children and be good children." Miller then turned to Sheriff Patman and heartily shook his hand, thanked him and said he was ready.

The article that later appeared in *The Clarendon News* gave a detailed account of the last few minutes of the hanging: Father Erasmus placed the black cap over Miller's face while the sheriff and deputies pinioned his hands and feet. "At a given signal curtains were drawn and the crowd saw no more. ...all then stepped back to the edge of the platform and Sheriff Patman at 11:06 pulled the lever. The trap worked perfectly and the body shot straight downward six feet and the physicians and witnesses below say that death came without a struggle, the physicians pronounced him dead 13 minutes later and 16 minutes later the body was cut down and turned over to the undertaker." Miller's body was wrapped in a robe and taken away in a horse-drawn hearse, his feet hanging out of the wagon. The gallows were torn down as soon as possible but not before the crowd had torn out pieces of rope and wood for souvenirs.

Services were held the next day in the Catholic Church and Miller was buried in an unmarked grave in the small Catholic Cemetery south of Clarendon. Most of the town took no pleasure in dealing with criminal events that

had been thrust upon them and feared notoriety would harm their growth as a town that promoted religion and education.

But the unlikely happening became an important part of Clarendon's history as the first and last public execution in Donley County and the last legal hanging in the Panhandle.

Executions by hanging were terminated in 1923 when the State of Texas ordered all executions to be carried out by the state, in Huntsville, by means of the electric chair.

—:—
**“IT IS OVER.
THE LAW IS SUPREME.”**
—:—

“Everything good got its start at Clarendon.”

Pioneer African-American cowboy Bones Hooks once said: “Everything good got its start at Clarendon.”

Matthew Hooks, born November 3, 1867, in Robertson County , Texas , was the first of eight children born to a freed slave couple, Alex and Annie Hooks. Matthew was a scrawny boy and became known by his nickname “Bones.”

When Bones was seven he had his first job driving a meat wagon for a butcher. The next year he learned to ride a horse at his home in Henrietta , Texas . At the age of nine, he drove a camp wagon pulled by two old steers, Buck and Berry , to D. Steve McDonald's DSD ranch in Denton County .

When J.R. Morris, a cattleman from the JRE ranch on the Pecos , visited the DSD, he was intrigued to see that Bones worked harder than most of the grown men on the ranch. Norris said to the barefoot youth, “I'll buy you a pair of boots and make a real cowboy out of you if you come to work at my place on the Pecos .”

Bones eagerly accepted Norris' offer and began his career as a horse trainer on the isolated JRE ranch. He took part in many trail drives to Kansas before 1886 - his 19th year - when he helped to bring a herd to the young Texas town of Clarendon .

As the only black man in sight, Bones was very lonely in the Panhandle, but he loved the prairie country and the orderly community and was determined to remain there. He stayed in and near Clarendon for the next 23 years and made a name for himself as the top horse wrangler in that part of the country.

Religion was very important to Bones, and he was instrumental in founding and building at Clarendon the first black church in the Panhandle. Bones never used tobacco or alcohol although it was said that he bet on horses occasionally.

Bones associated with many of the early day Panhandle ranchers. J.S. Wynne, an expert horse trainer, helped Bones perfect his skill of managing horses. On the Bar CC ranch, located on Home Ranch Creek, Bones was befriended by Dave Lard who had many fights with new hands for teasing Bones. The black cowboy said that he was an “Angus” among “White Faces.”

When cattleman Tom Clayton died in the early 1890s, Bones took a bunch of white wildflowers to the funeral. This was the beginning of a tradition with Bones, who ever afterward sent a single white flower to the funeral of every pioneer he knew.

Later Bones expanded this tradition to include living persons who he felt had accomplished something noteworthy. In addition to area citizens Bones sent white flowers to several United States presidents, world leaders and religious notables. Among these were President and Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt, Will Rogers and Sir Winston Churchill.

The written acknowledgements sent to Bones by hundreds of persons who had received his white flowers were kept together in a leather bag - his most prized possession.

In May, 1909, Bones left the range to work as a porter for the Santa Fe Railway. In the summer of 1910, he was

working in a day coach when he overheard four men talking about horses. Bones said later, "I sort of hung around, dusting the seats, because I don't like to miss any horse talk."

The men were talking about "Old Bob," a black mustang owned by Moore Davidson of Pampa. It was said that nobody could ride that horse, but Bones broke in and told the men, "I can ride that horse."

The men were amused when Bones told them to telegraph Davidson and ask him to have the horse at the depot when the train was scheduled to reach Pampa. This was arranged and it was agreed that Bones would receive \$25 if he succeeded in riding the horse.

Bones had broken horses for J. Frank Meers when Meers was the foreman on the Masterson ranch. Meers was one of the men who brought "Old Bob," the "unridable" black mustang from Davidson's place south of Pampa to the place where a large crowd had gathered south of the depot. Lewis F. Meers, son of J. Frank, played "hooky" from school to watch the event. The train arrived at the Pampa depot about 2 p.m. Bones, booted and spurred and minus his white porter's jacket, descended from the train. He is reported to have said later, "I combed that bronc from his ears to his tail, rode him to a standstill, collected my money, and was back on the train when it pulled out seven minutes later."

Bones moved to Amarillo about 1911 and remained there most of the rest of his life. He married Anna Crenshaw who died in the early 1920s. They had no children.

Bones retired from the railroad in April, 1930, and thereafter devoted his time to civic affairs. Soon he became recognized as a leader who worked unceasingly for the betterment of his people. He was the first black man to sit on the Potter County Grand Jury and the first of his race to be a member of the XIT Association, the Montana Cowpunchers Association, the Western Cowpunchers and the Pampa Old Settlers Association.

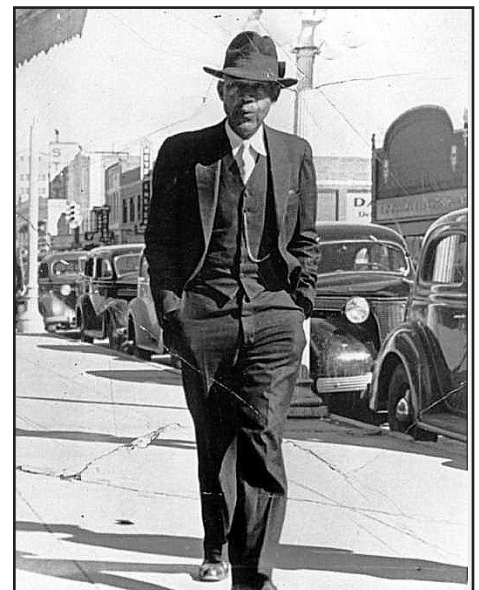
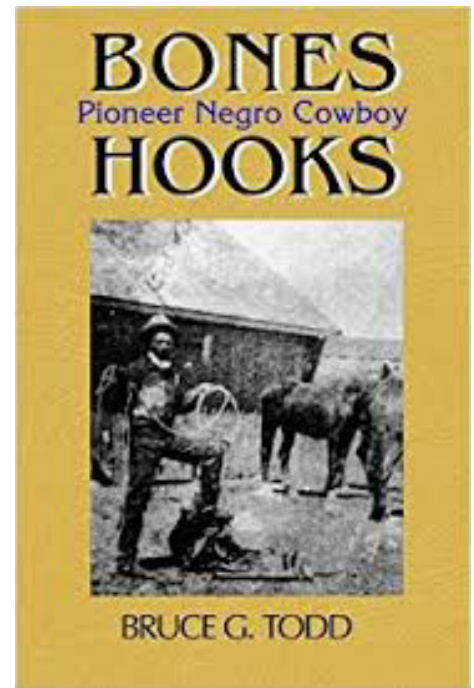
Bones helped start the North Heights addition in Amarillo, and in 1912 he created the Dogie Club for underprivileged boys. The last picture made of Bones was when he was with a group of these boys.

Bones kept mementos and newspaper clippings and could talk for hours about the Panhandle and its people without ever repeating himself. His scrapbook of mementos was displayed at the Texas Centennial in 1936. He represented Texas at the 75 Years of Negro Progress Exhibition at Detroit in 1939.

Shortly before his 83rd birthday, the old cowboy was stricken with an illness which brought to a close his long career of strong mental and physical activity. When his savings were exhausted after a lengthy stay at Wyatt Memorial Hospital, the Amarillo Globe-News collected funds to provide a housekeeper and a nurse for him.

On the evening of February 2, 1951, Bones told his housekeeper, "Of course I'm going to die, but don't you worry. I feel wonderful." Shortly afterward he died very quietly.

At the funeral service for Bones, the Mount Zion Baptist Church was crowded with his friends, white and black. One by one, each person laid on his coffin a single white flower, his longtime symbol of respect. Those who loved him were returning white flowers to the black cowboy.



A skunk took up his abode under the floor of the shrine at Clarendon and spared no effort to advertise his presence. For more than a month Father O'Sullivan carried around a perfumed spray bomb; the church had to be sprayed before each Mass to keep the faithful from being overcome by the fumes.

August 5, 2020 to Nov. 12, 2020

CONTRIBUTIONS

Donald & Judith Allen, Sr.	100
Anonymous	50
Mike Armstrong	50
Mark Banner	20
Mr. & Mrs. Jody Bezner	150
Marlene Casasanta	25
Roger & Cynthia Cross	50
M/M Danny Detten	100
Cathleen A. Dresser	100
Davlyn Duesterhaus	10
M/M Jose Garcia	20
Joan M. Gulde	50
Mike Harter	50
M/M Joseph Hochstein	50
Bill Homer	25
Msgr. Norbert Kuehler	100
Henry Ashby Lewis	10
Fran & Nora Limoges	25
Alex & Elma Martinez	30
Lori Monceballez	50
M/M Jery Poirot	25
J. C. & Jocelyn Pohlmeier	50
Dee Ramirez	30
M/M George Stanislao	50
M/M Thomas Riney	100
Don White	100
Jacque Willburn	25
Bishop John Yanta	75
Total	1520

MEMBERSHIP

M/M Thomas Riney	25
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HONORARIUM

IN MEMORY OF:

Sharon Moylan - In memory of Michelle Moylan Quinto	50
Janie & Mark Bannerin memory of Jo Ann Jesko & Tony Reinart	
Patricia Stich- in memory of Tom Stich	100
Total	170
Grand Total	1775

Prints Available



The painting on the cover of the newsletter is by Jack Sorenson and called "Answered Prayers". It is of St. May's Church, Clarendon. We have prints that are numbered and signed by Jack. The price is \$25.00. If you are interested in purchasing a print, fill out the coupon and send a check made out to the Catholic Historical Society and mail it to: Catholic Historical Society, P O Box 5644, Amarillo, Texas 79117.

I would like to purchase _____ prints. Please send to:

Name: _____

Address: _____

Town: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____



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You may stop by daily (Monday through Friday) to view the museum, for a guided tour it is recommended that you make an appointment.. The museum is open by appointment for church and school groups. This includes evenings and weekends.

Susan: 383-2243 Ext. 120 or even better: sgarner@dioama.org

Thank you for
your continued
generosity!