



THE CATHOLIC HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Diocese of Amarillo



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VOLUME TWO

SUMMER

2022

“The Beginnings of Dalhart”



Bareback Contest in Dalhart Texas Rodeo c1800s

St. Anthony's in Dalhart is the farthest parish to the northwest in the Diocese of Amarillo. The history of the parish is closely interwoven with the lives of the pioneer priests of West Texas.

St. Anthony's likewise grew with the town. The original settlement started after the Fort Worth & Denver railroad passed up through XIT ranch country in 1888. Very little happened until the Rock Island Line built southwest from Liberal, Kansas, and crossed the Denver line in 1901.



Celebration for first nail hammered in for railroad.

First called “Twist,” then the designation of a section house nearby, the community was known for a time as “Twist Junction.” Then it was called “Denrock,” combining the names of the railroads. Finally, postal authorities threw these names out and christened the place Dalhart—combining Dallam and Hartley counties.

After an election in 1903, the county seat of Dallam County was moved

to Dalhart from Texline. Dalhart has always been an active community. In 1921, for example, they opened the first county library in Texas. In the thirties, when the Dust-Bowl hit, Dalhart was right in the middle of it, but in 1943, the town became the site of the first erosion control demonstration devoted to wind erosion.



Dust cloud rolling over Dalhart in 1936

The town has served as a shipping point for cattle and grain and was once the site of Dalhart Army Airfield and Rock Island shops. The Church got started early. Two lots for a church were donated by the Dalhart Townsite Company in 1904, and in July 1905, under the direction of Father David Dunn of Amarillo, the church was completed and named in honor of St. Anthony. The Catholic church Extension Society donated \$250 to the building of this church in 1906, Father Dunn purchased an adjoining lot. Its first pastor was the Rev. Patrick Kelly, who stayed from February 1908 to August 1909. For two months, Father C. J. Bier, assistant to Father Dunn in Amarillo, attended St. Anthony's. Then came Father Patrick J. Murphy, who was to be pastor of Dalhart and most of the territory north of the Canadian River until 1923.

In the early days, before the church was built at Dalhart, Father Dunn would come occasionally on a freight train from Clarendon, a town east of Amarillo. Mass was offered in the homes of parishioners. Prominent in those days were the families of Charles Lane, Joseph S. Ames, Vail, Tausch and Caldwell.

Confirmation was first administered in the newly erected parish July 17, 1907, by the Most Rev. E. J. Dunne, late Bishop of Dallas. On August 28, 1909, at the invitation of Bishop Dunne, the Most Rev. Theophile Meersechert, administered Confirmation in Dalhart. The Most Rev. Joseph P Lynch, Bishop of Dallas, visited Dalhart July 21, 1912, on a Confirmation tour. On the same occasion, Bishop Lynch also confirmed at Perico in St. Mary's Church, which had been built and dedicated in 1910.



Dalhart became the parish church for missions at Perico, Tascosa, and Old Ochiltree. St. Barnaby's in Tascosa was an adobe building that was falling apart. After 1917, Mass was discontinued there. Old Ochiltree disappeared in 1919 when the county seat was removed to the railroad and Perryton.

At one time there was a Catholic Church in Channing. It was called St. Teresa of the Infant Jesus Church. Built in 1926 with the aid of the Extension donation, it was a mission of the Dalhart church, whose pastor at the time was the late Father F. M. Higgins.

In time the Channing church was closed, and finally dismantled. Only a few Catholic people remained in the area.

On February 6, 1930, the present church property, a block of land, was purchased by Bishop Gerken, near the new Catholic hospital. For a Quarter of a century Dalhart had a Catholic hospital—Loretto Hospital, conducted by the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth from Chicago.

Since the Coon Estate had provisions to support a memorial hospital, the sisters sold their hospital to the Coon Estate in 1954. Dalhart is not large enough to support two hospitals, and Coon Estate was prevented by

terms of the will from having the Sisters conduct Coon Memorial Hospital.



In 1948 two buildings were purchased from the east base of Dalhart Army Airfield. The one, a former officers' barracks, was to be cut in two, and the two halves placed at right angles, with center portion filled in. These plans were followed out. The church building was brick-veneered, and the school building was stuccoed. Meanwhile, the rectory was moved from the old location, and an office added to the front, thus completing the parish plant.

The new church was dedicated by Bishop FitzSimon June 13, 1949, Msgr. John Steinlage gave the dedication sermon.

St. Anthony's parochial school was not opened for another five years, due to the difficulty of securing sisters to teach. In 1954 Father Fitzgerald got the School Sisters of St. Francis, who had just recently established headquarter at Panhandle, to teach in the school. Property across from the school was purchased, and a new convent building erected. St. Anthony's School opened for the fall term of 1954.

Theater will be Church

Dalhart 1948 – A block of property bought on the southern edge of town here in the late 1920s will soon be transformed into a new parochial center for St. Anthony's parish. The block, which measures

Theater Will Be Church



A FORMER THEATER on the grounds of the East base of Dalhart army airfield will be converted in the new Church of St. Anthony

300 by 300 feet, was recently leveled. As soon as the foundations are poured, three buildings will be moved to the property.

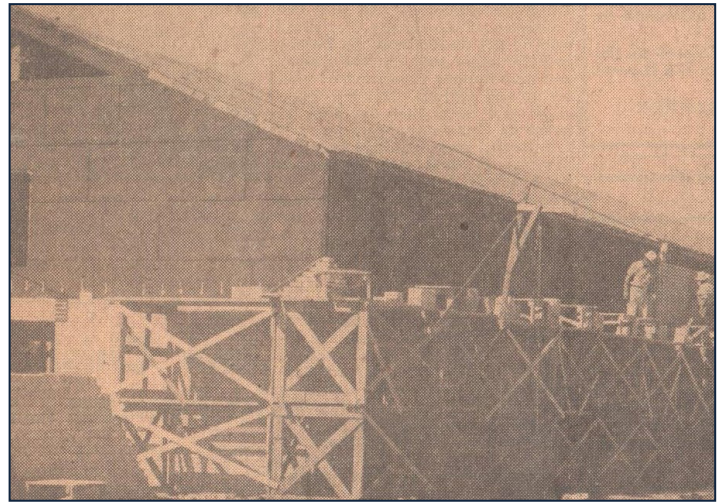
Two of the buildings, purchased from the East (auxiliary) base of Dalhart Army Airfield, will become the new Church of St. Anthony and a combination school and parish hall. The third building scheduled to be moved to the block is the present rectory, which will continue to fill that purpose at the new location.

One of the buildings purchased from the Army Air field base is a former theater building. Its seating capacity will equal that of a standard army chapel, which are capable of seating about 300 persons.

The building that is destined to become a combination school and parish hall is the former officers' barracks. As it sits at the field it is 130 feet long and 32 feet wide. It will be cut in two and the halves will then be placed at right angles. With the center portion filled in, the building will lose its appearance as a barracks and become a modern school hall.

The new parish center lies only a block and a half from Loretto hospital, run by the Sisters of the Holy Family of Nazareth. The area around the hospital and the new center is rapidly developing into a first-class residential district. Brakes to the west of the town and the railroad tracks to the north and northeast are forcing expansion around the parish area.

Building of the new church will alleviate crowded conditions in the present church, which is capable of seating only about 120 people.



BRICK VENEERING of the new Church was progressing rapidly as the picture shown above was taken



THE NEW CHURCH of St. Anthony in Dalhart was dedicated June 13 by His Excellency, Bishop Laurence J. FitzSimon. The new church, a former air base theater is shown above. The building was being inspected by Fathers Bartholomew O'Brien, James Sonderman and John F. A. Cavanagh Donnelly.



The parish hall is made of a former officers' barracks, halved and joined at right angles. Stuccoed on the outside, the hall is finished on the interior in knotty pine. At present time the hall is being used for catechetical instructions.



Behind the altar, standing at the left, is Rev. Gerard Lynch



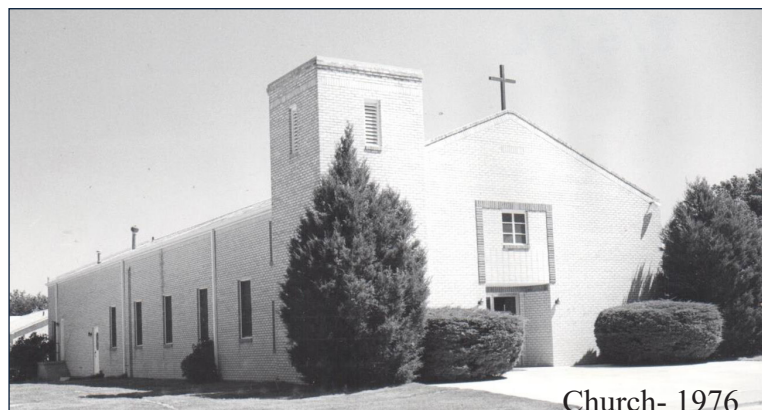
Mrs. Lanny Bezner presented a spiritual bouquet and gifts, on behalf of St. Anthony' Parishioners, to the faculty of St. Anthony's School, following a special Mass and appreciation dinner. Pictured, left to right are Mrs. Bezner, Father Kevin Hand, Sister Lucia, Sister Amata, Sister Timothy, Sister Bartholomew, and Mrs. Oscar Przilas. June 22, 1975



School - 1976



Rectory - 1976



Church- 1976



Sometime in the late 1800's a lonely man had a photograph taken of himself on his homestead on the Texas Panhandle. Then he turned it into a postcard and advertised for a wife to join him on his farm near Texline Texas. Wanted: A Kind and Loving Wife. Must be good Housekeeper. Have Good Homestead and Excellent Prospects ...

Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor

In the wake of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the Dalhart Texan newspaper began asking its readers what they could do to support America's war effort. Three prominent men in Dalhart, Herman Steele, manager of the Dalhart Chamber of Commerce, along with Mayor Herbert Peeples and Elmer Elliot, manager of the DeSoto Hotel announced plans to petition the Army Air Corps to build a training base near the town.

On Wednesday, 20 May 1942, The Dalhart Texan reported they had been successful in bringing to Dalhart a new glider school. The official announcement came from Representative Eugene Worley's office. Land for the airfield was purchased as a result of Dallam and Hartley County issuing a bond in 1942 for the purchase of more than 3,000 acres of land southwest of Dalhart for an Army Air Corps training airfield.

Construction proceeded on the new army airfield and Dalhart Army Airfield opened in May 1942. While under construction the command's temporary headquarters operated from a tent city in Amarillo. During the summer of 1942 three runways were laid down along with a large parking ramp and taxiway system. Four large hangars along with support buildings, barracks a street network, electric, sewer and water lines were constructed. On 1 July 1942, the still uncompleted airfield was assigned to the Central Flying Training Command, being under the jurisdiction of the Army Air Forces Glider School. In September 1942, Cadets began arriving for training at the school.

Glider training was performed by the 14th Troop Carrier Squadron, which arrived on 9 October 1942 with C-47 Skytrains being used for tow planes.

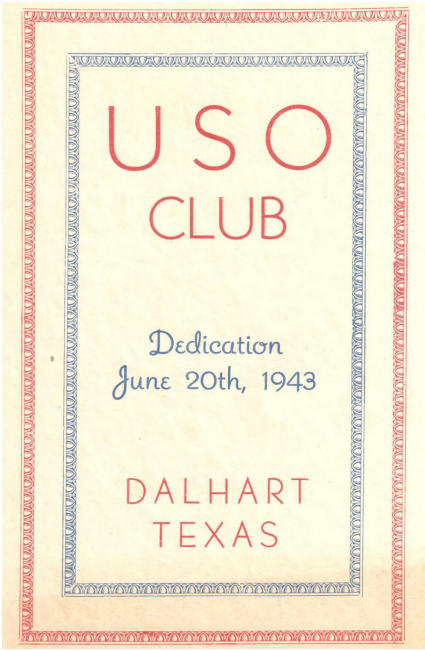
The 333rd Bombardment Group became the Replacement Training Unit (RTU). Cadets flew training missions over practice target areas in the Texas Panhandle. Along with the 333rd, the Third Air Force 415th Bombardment Group trained medium bomber pilots in A-20 Havoc, A-26 Invader and B-25 Mitchell medium Bombers. Fighter cadets were also trained in P-39

Airacobras and A-24 Banshee Dive Bombers. The 415th utilized the Hartley (#1) and Dallum (#2) satellite airfields for training leaving the main base to the heavy four-engine bomber training.

In March 1944, the mission of Dalhart was again changed to B-29 Superfortress training as crews were needed in the Pacific Theater for the strategic bombardment of Japan. Second Air Force took over control of the base directly, with the 16th Bombardment Training Wing taking over training from the 46th on 1 March 1944. Along with the B-29 training, Second Air Force also organized the 72nd Fighter Wing at Dalhart, with the 347th Fighter Group and 507th Fighter Groups taking over the Hartley and Dallam airfields. The 347th trained P-38 Lightning pilots and the 507th P-47N Thunderbolt pilots in very long range escort missions to support XX Bomber Command B-29 Superfortresses on strategic bombardment missions to the Japanese Home Islands.

Graduating B-24 Liberator aircrew, 1944. Several groups trained in B-29s, one of which, the 393rd Bomb Squadron, 504th. Bombardment Group, was later selected by Colonel Paul W. Tibbets, Jr., to serve as the core of an experimental unit. The 393rd was the first and only squadron to fly missions with Atomic Bombs and attack Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan in August 1945.

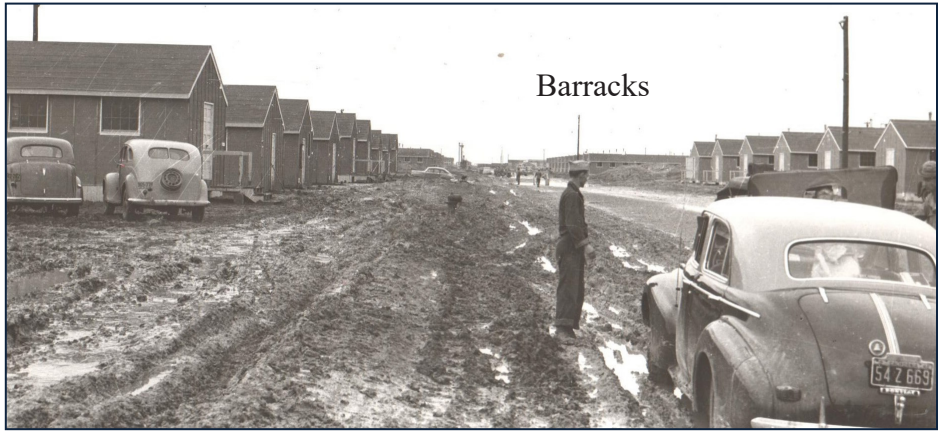


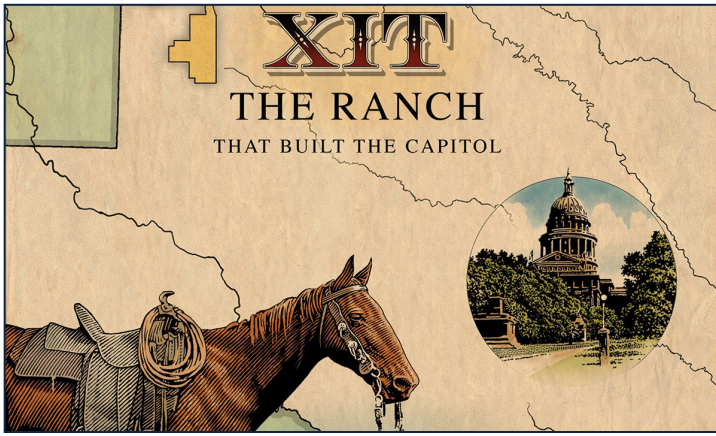


**Tribute to
Dalhart and Its Citizens**

Due to the gracious reception, the whole-hearted cooperation and the splendid assistance of Dalhart people, the local USO is today recognized as outstanding among the 1,473 such organizations operating in the United States and foreign countries.

The deep and sincere thanks of State, National and Local Officials of the United Service Organizations are extended to the women, girls, men and boys of "The XIT City," whose hard work, faithful service and loyalty has made possible the Dalhart USO.





XIT RANCH. In 1879 the Sixteenth Texas Legislature appropriated three million acres of land to finance a new state Capitol building and appointed a Capitol Board composed of the governor, comptroller, treasurer, attorney general, and land commissioner to sell the land and contract for the building. The destruction of the old capitol building by fire on November 9, 1881, made construction of the new building urgent, and early in 1882 Mathias Schnell of Rock Island, Illinois, accepted the contract in return for the land. In turn, Schnell transferred three-fourths interest to Taylor, Babcock, and Company of Chicago, which organized the Capitol Syndicate, in which Charles B. Farwell, John V. Farwell, Col. Amos C. Babcock, and Col. Abner Taylor of Illinois were leading investors. Several months later Schnell assigned the rest of his contract to the syndicate after rumors surfaced that he had bribed one of the capitol commissioners and had tried to bribe designing architect Elijah E. Myers. Since the land that the syndicate was to receive as payment was in the unsettled Panhandle area, the syndicate established the XIT Ranch to utilize the land until it could be sold. Total cost of erecting the state capitol, which was completed in April 1888, was \$3,744,630.60. Of this amount, the Capitol Syndicate's expenditures were \$3,224,593.45; about \$500,000 was assumed by the state.

Babcock went to Texas to conduct a survey of the property. He recommended that it be immediately stocked with cattle and fenced. From the first, the Capitol Syndicate had intended to run cattle only until the land could be utilized for agriculture; long-range goals were to promote settlement, eventually subdivide the acreage, and gradually sell it off piecemeal. On the strength of Babcock's suggestions, it was decided to fence the entire range and erect windmills. B. H. (Barbecue) Campbell of Wichita, Kansas, was chosen by Farwell to be the XIT's first general manager. An experienced rancher and breeder and longtime friend of Taylor and the Farwells, Campbell received his nickname from the Bar BQ brand he used at his ranch on Medicine Lodge Creek in the Indian Territory. Under his direction, Mabry surveyed a fence line for a horse pasture at Buffalo Springs, the ranch's first designated headquarters, and late in the spring of 1885 the first pasture fence was completed. Campbell, in the meantime, set about contracting for long-horn cattle in Central and South Texas. On July 1, 1885, the first herd of 2,500 head arrived at Buffalo Springs. They had been driven from the Fort Concho area by Abner P. Blocker, who reportedly devised the XIT brand with his boot in the dust when Campbell sought a design that could not be changed easily. Although legend persists that the brand signified "ten in Texas" since the land covered all or portions of Dallam, Hartley, Oldham, Deaf Smith, Parmer, Castro, Bailey, Lamb, Cochran, and Hockley counties, that theory is doubtful; some speculate that it really meant "biggest in Texas." At any rate, Joe Collins, who brought in the second herd, served briefly as range foreman but was shortly afterward replaced by Berry Nations. Within the next year 781 miles of XIT range was fenced, and by November 1886 some 110,721 cattle valued at \$1,322,587 had been purchased.

After 1887 large-scale buying ceased, and the herd as carried averaged 150,000 head. During Campbell's tenure as general manager, contracts for water wells were made with drillers, fencing projects were continued, and the first ranch house was built in 1886. For convenience the ranch was cut into the southern areas reserved for cattle and steer raising, which gradually transition northward until the cattle are two years old and ready to be driven. The northern and southern regions consists of eight pastures or divisions known as Buffalo Springs, Middle Water, Ojo Bravo, Alamasitas, Rita Blanca, Escarbada, Spring Lake, and Yellow House.



COWBOYS AT ES CABADA BUNK HOUSE. X I T RANCH 1891



Buffalo Springs, near the Oklahoma border in Dallam County, was used as a steer pasture; Middlewater, in Hartley County twenty-one miles southwest of present Dalhart, was reserved for culls and undesirables; Ojo Bravo (Bold Spring), in Hartley County south of the Romero community and considered the prettiest part of the ranch, grazed high-grade cattle; and Rita Blanca, west and south of Channing, was utilized as a beef ranch. Escarbada, in the southwest corner of Deaf Smith County, ran graded cattle. Spring Lake, in northern Lamb County, was a breeding pasture, while Casas Amarillas (YELLOW HOUSE RANCH), was a general pasture in southern Lamb County. Each division had a section headquarters, a foreman, its quota of employees and horses, and its specific characteristics. When the Fort Worth and Denver City Railway built through the Panhandle in 1887, the new town of Channing emerged as a major shipping point. As a result it became the center of ranch activities, and the main XIT headquarters, containing twenty-two rooms, was established there. The eighth division, Alamasitas, which came about with the building of the Pecos and North Texas line in 1898, was centered at Bovina. Another railroad shipping point was Perico, near the Farwell Park line camp in the Buffalo Springs division.

By the late 1890s the clamorings of British creditors were rising, and the Capitol Syndicate began the gradual process of selling out. While the state capitol had cost more than \$3,000,000 instead of the original projection of \$1,500,000, the cost of the land being sold was increased, and the corporation fulfilled its contract. The last of the XIT cattle were sold on November 1, 1912, and land sales subsequently increased through the Capitol Reservation Lands, the new trust formed by the Farwell Estate in 1915. R. L. (Bob) Duke, who had served as foreman for the Buffalo Springs division and then as assistant general manager under Boice, became the last XIT cowboy to actually work for the estate when he was retained to oversee that portion of the range leased to the Shelton-Trigg partnership. By 1929 some 450,000 acres were still owned by XIT Ranch; by 1943 that acreage had been reduced to around 350,000. The last parcel of XIT land was sold in 1963 by Hamlin Y. Overstreet, who had succeeded his late uncle as a company representative in Farwell.

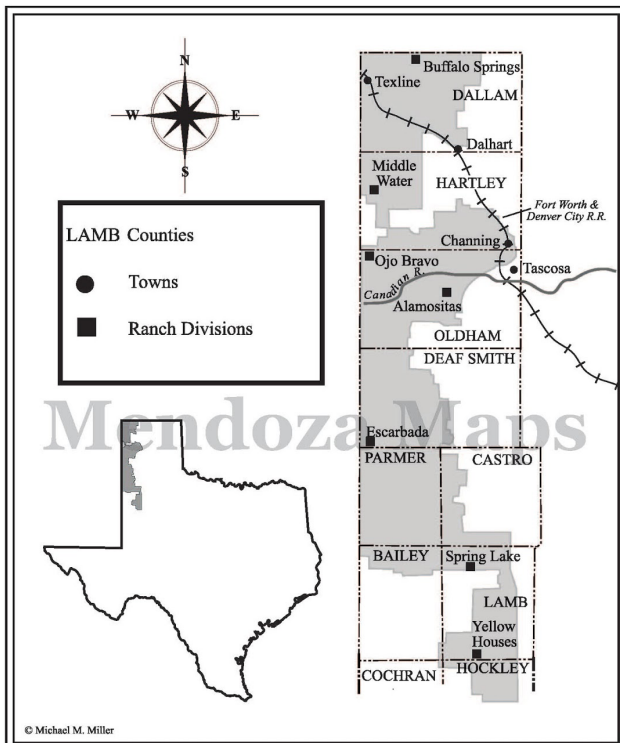
The romance of the XIT Ranch, enhanced by the spread's sheer size, lives on in western lore. In the late 1920s, the Farwell Estate commissioned J. Evetts Haley to write its colorful history, *The XIT Ranch of Texas* (1929).

If you ever wanted to explore the panhandle, a free bbq is a dang good reason to go.

Every year since 1936 the XIT Rodeo & Reunion in Dalhart, TX has taken place roughly tripling the size of the panhandle town temporarily. Along with the standard rodeo events like roping and bull riding you would find at most any Texas rodeo, there's something that makes the XIT stand out above the herd – it's home to the world's largest Free BBQ.

The free BBQ hasn't been around the entire time as the XIT Rodeo & Reunion which was a tradition that originated among the cowboys of the famed XIT Ranch and later after the ranch was split up grew into the major public event that is held to this day. The bbq started sometime in the 1980's, roughly around 1983 according to BBQ Director Kyle Burk.

Today the World's Largest Free BBQ event feeds between 15,000 and 20,000 people each year with 10,000 lbs of smoked beef shoulder clod, 1,000 pounds of cooked beans, homemade bbq sauce, and enough fixins like onions and pickles for everyone. It all starts with digging out a massive bbq pit which is then prepped and volunteers help fill it up with the beef 10,000 pounds of beef to cook and then help remove it and serve it to their community.



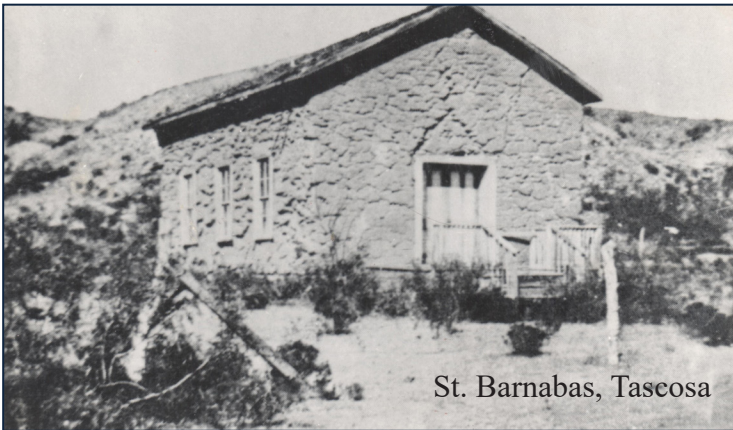
The XIT Ranch of Texas

Father Patrick J. Murphy

Pastor of Dalhart from 1909 to 1923

by **Dulcie T. Sullivan**

The first time I met Father Murphy I walked three miles from our ranch to Tascosa to hear Mass. Looking back now, I wonder at my strange behavior in walking three miles! There were certainly plenty of horses on the ranch, and I am sure my own saddle horse was in the corral. Although it often required effort in those days to attend Mass, walking for ranch people was not one of the exertions required. I was not even a Catholic but walk I did. It was the first trip to Tascosa for Father Murphy in January 1910. Tascosa was one of the Missions attached to Dalhart, and at that time the Dalhart Missions were indeed far apart.



St. Barnabas, Tascosa

On this first trip, Father Murphy celebrated Mass at the home of my cousin, Mrs. Mike Cavanaugh. There was no way to heat the Tascosa Church, St Barnabas, in the winter, making it necessary to have Mass said in a home. There were some fifteen or twenty persons at Mass that morning. Mrs. Cavanaugh's living room was crowded but all of us squeezed in.

The Reverend Patrick J Murphy was born in Peterborough, Ontario, Canada, October 24, 1869. He began his ecclesiastical studies in St. Thomas College, Canada. Later, with his parents, one brother and a sister, he came to the United States where the family settled in Dalhart. Young Patrick then entered the Catholic University of America, Washington, D.C. He was ordained a priest in the Order of the Paulist Fathers, on September 21, 1896.

After his ordination, he was sent to New York City, where most of his work was done in the slum districts. From 1901 until 1903, (possibly longer than that) he was attached to the Paulist Father's Church in New York City. Four of his sermons delivered in the Father's Paulist Church were published in a little book, entitled "Nothing New." It had the Imprimatur of Archbishop-elect John M. Farley, was printed by H. C. Clinton in New York city in 1903 and copyrighted that same year by Father Murphy. It was widely distributed and sincerely read by people that knew Father Murphy. Always an able speaker, his sermons were received with much enjoyment by his congregations. The four sermons in his little book were especially informative and beautiful.



Police Commissioner Theodore Roosevelt

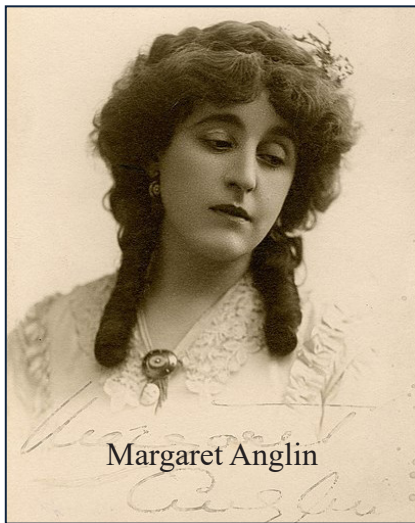
During the first year Father Murphy worked in New York City, he met Theodore Roosevelt and they became fast friends. Roosevelt was Police Commissioner of New York City, under Mayor Strong from 1895 to 1897. His friends consisted of the great and the nearly great.

In the Paulist Fathers' Church parish, he knew a family of circus acrobats and trapeze artists. I think they were Japanese people and were converts. Many years after Father Murphy had lived in Dalhart, this-same group of people came to Dalhart with a circus.



They attended Mass and recognized Father Murphy. As soon as Mass was over, they rushed around to the back of the church where Father Murphy lived, and a most enjoyable reunion took place.

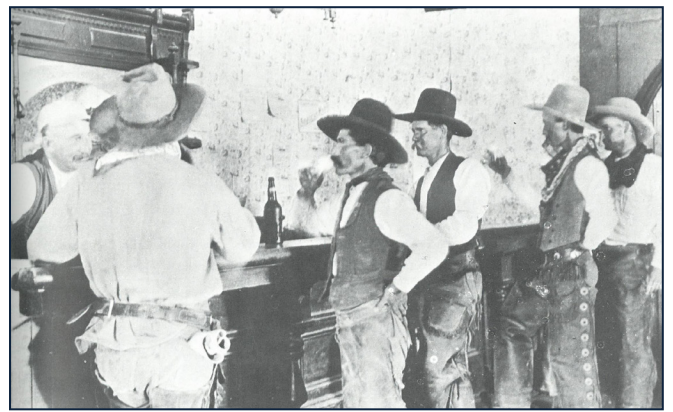
The actress, Margaret Anglin, who was very successful during the early 1900's, was a friend too. They had been childhood friends in Canada. Once, a long time after Father Murphy left New York City, he was in a city where



Miss Anglin gave a very great performance. He made a special effort to attend the theater that night, and after the show, went to her dressing room to see her. Father said that when she saw him and knew he had been in the audience that night, she burst into tears. He said fame had not changed her, she was still the simple girl he knew so many years before.

Father Murphy came to Texas for his health in 1906. He was in Amarillo for a short time. His health improved,

but he was still far from being well. About that time, he was asked to tour the State of Texas and points in the Middle-West for prohibition lectures. He accepted this offer and spent several months on this assignment. He was an eloquent speaker on this subject, and was paid as high as five hundred dollars a night for his lectures. If Father Murphy was fanatical on any one thing, it was on the subject of temperance. He was a one-man-cyclone when it came to the promotion of total abstinence from intoxicants, yet some of his best friends were saloon men, each respecting the others view point.



I think it was in Gainesville, Texas, one night after a lecture he was returning to his hotel, when a bartender waited on a dark corner and assaulted him. The man struck Father Murphy with such a hard blow on the head, he suffered concussion and had to be hospitalized for several weeks. He ever afterwards suffered from this blow. The citizens of Gainesville became very incensed over this incident and wanted to give the bartender a stiff prison term. Father Murphy refused to bring charges against the man. Before he was able to leave the hospital the man came to see him. He was conscience-stricken, and told Father Murphy he would regret his violence all the days of his life.

When Father Murphy took charge of the Dalhart parish he did so under adverse conditions. The priest before him had not made any friends among the Protestants. The Catholic people disliked him so much, some even refused to go to church in Dalhart. Father Murphy knew he had to combat an unsavory situation that had surely hurt the church very much in that vicinity.

Living quarters provided for the priest, were built on the back of the Dalhart Church. One of the first rules Father Murphy made, was that none of the women members of the parish should come to his rooms. He made that rule stick, too. For the first few years he lived in Dalhart, he lived strictly to himself, doing all his own cooking and house cleaning. He lived an austere and lonely life, but in doing, won back respect and good will for the church.

The Missions attached to Dalhart were miles apart. Father Murphy usually reached them by train. In some places he would have to stop over night to make train connections. About that time, the famous XIT Ranch lands were on the market, especially between the years 1912 to 1915. The hotels in all the small towns were crowded with land buyers. It was not uncommon to find fifteen or twenty men trying to find rooms in these hotels after all the rooms had been taken. He always had to share a room with two or three men, if he was lucky enough to get a room. In going from one mission to another, Father Murphy met scores of these settlers and land buyers. He became an ardent booster for agricultural development in the north panhandle.

One of Father Murphy's Missions, Perico, was about thirty miles north of Dalhart. A colony of German farmers had bought land from the XIT's and were farming there. Most of them spoke English badly, and let it be known they preferred a priest that spoke German. This irked Fr. Murphy no end. He said they were in the United States, and should learn and speak nothing but English. I think it was a "bone of contention" between them, all the years he served them.

Father Murphy made friends easily. He had an enormous understanding of the ineptitudes and frailties of humanity. His goodness and simplicity was so apparent, strangers fell at once under his charm.. He was sincerely interested in people, their troubles or their successes. Many people not of his faith took their troubles to him. His advice or consolation, as the case might be, must have worked well, for his protestant friends were numerous. His faith was his life. He lived it so completely, no one could doubt his sincerity. He was the most courteous person I ever knew. I think I am safe in saying no other priest if in the Panhandle, with the exception of Beloved Father Dunn, had as much influence in establishing good will and respect toward the church as Father Murphy

did. Protestant people after meeting and talking with him, had a new conception of the Catholic faith.

Perhaps the following incident will explain how he made friends with people outside the church. Henry Kimball was one of the first settlers in the north Panhandle of Texas, coming to Tascosa in 1876. He was a blacksmith. He married a Spanish woman who was a Catholic. They lived in Tascosa in the early days, then moved to Channing, where the family lived until Mr. Kimball's death. Father Murphy used to stay at his home when he came to Channing to celebrate Mass, before the church was built there. Mr. Kimball never joined a church, but was respected all the days of his life for his honesty, his charity and good citizenship. He belonged to a lodge, the Knights of Pythias. (*The Order of Knights of Pythias, a great international, non-sectarian fraternity, founded in Washington, DC, by Justus H. Rathbone, in 1864*)



When Mr. Kimball died, Mrs. Kimball was frantic until she got in touch with Father Murphy, to ask him to preach Mr. Kimball's funeral. Father Murphy came to Channing at once.

He told Mrs. Kimball he would preach a sermon at the funeral, if it did not conflict with other plans, for he understood the lodge intended to hold the funeral rites.

So things were worked out for the Lodge take charge of the funeral. The Methodists in Channing offered their church for the services. Father Murphy preached the sermon. The crowd was immense at that funeral, the majority of course were Protestants.. There were more favorable remarks about the Catholic religion

among the Protestant people after that funeral than years of trying to reach them through other channels, for Father Murphy could present Catholicism to a mixed crowd so plainly, one truly felt "The words of the mouth of a wise man are grace."

Father Murphy came once a month to Channing and Tascosa to celebrate Mass. In Channing he held services in the Henry Kimball home, or in the home of Miss Annie Burns. When there were no Catholics left in Tascosa, Father Murphy began to come to our ranch, to have Mass for my family. He would come on the train to Magenta, a flag-stop on the ranch, three miles from our house and we would meet him there. He would arrive one afternoon, stay over night then take the train back to Dalhart the next afternoon. After my father bought a car, we used to drive the thirty miles from the ranch to Dalhart hear Mass on Sunday when the weather was good. Father Murphy still came to the ranch once a month.

It is difficult for me to find words to describe how we felt about having Fr. Murphy in our home. We humbly acknowledged the great privilege of having him celebrate the Holy Mass just for us. We always fixed the altar for Mass the last thing before we went to bed so everything would be ready in the morning. We had a library table that was just right for a small altar. We raised it with special blocks of wood to make it the correct height. We had a fine linen table cloth we always used for an altar cloth. Father Murphy brought everything else in his Mass kit.

Father Murphy was such good company, we enjoyed every minute of his visits. We would sit and talk for hours. I don't think there was a subject under the sun, he could not talk about. He loved to joke and tell a funny story. My father loved to joke too. He and Father Murphy resorted to just plain "kidding" one another. We always tried to have food we knew he would enjoy, for we knew he cooked for himself, except when friends invited him to dine. Our meals were usually bedlam when Father Murphy was with us, he would tell stories that kept us shouting with laughter, Father shouting as loud as any of us.

One time, some sort of mix-up happened that caused Father Murphy to get off the train at Magenta when

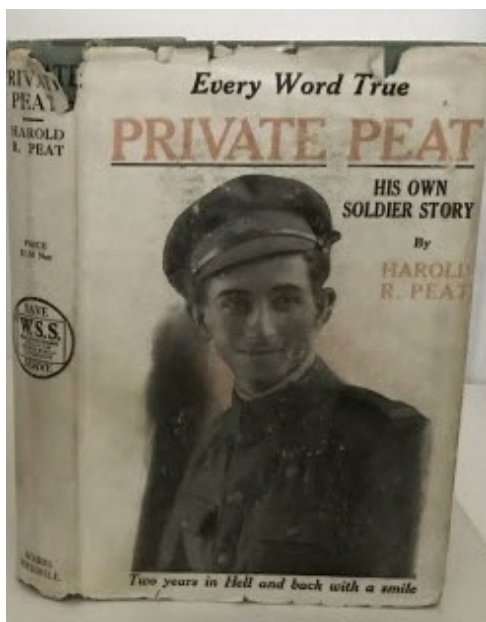


we were not expecting him. My father had gone to a camp on the ranch to bring back two dressed hogs that had been butchered that morning. He drove up in the wagon with his hogs just as the train arrived and deposited Father Murphy. Father Murphy promptly crawled up in the wagon seat with my father, and they brought the pork home in style. When they pulled up at the back gate, Father rushed into the house and exclaimed: "Well, here I am, Mr. Turner got me and the other two hogs home alright."

My stepmother was horrified; transporting Father Murphy in a wagon with two dead hogs in the back, simply was not her idea of a suitable conveyance for a priest. She never lived that disgrace down, incidentally, Father never let her forget when he found out she was embarrassed over not meeting him properly.

Father Murphy did not use a note of any kind in his sermons or lectures. He had a remarkable memory. He never forgot faces or names. He could read a page in a book, then recite it almost word for word. One time I remember a conversation regarding the location of a certain Texas county. Father knew where the county was alright, but was wrong about the county situated north of it. The next day, he took a map of Texas, and memorized all two hundred and fifty four counties in the state, their location and boundaries. If he became interested in a subject, he never let up on it until he had read and learned everything possible connected with it.

Father Murphy was very patriotic. He had a true love of country. He had very little patience with anyone who was not grateful to the United States. What a wonderful Warrior he would be today, in the struggle with



Communism; During World War One, he was naturally very interested in Canadian troops as well as our own. A Canadian soldier, Harold R. Peat, while convalescing from a wound received in the war, wrote a book, "Private Peat" on his personal experiences while serving with the First Canadian contingent. The book was published by the Bobbs-Merrill Co. of Indianapolis. It gained nation-wide publicity after we entered the war. Father Murphy got a copy and was very enthused over it. Later, Peat was accused of faking some of the scenes described. Father was keenly disappointed over that. Personally, I believed the book authentic, and still do.

Fr. Murphy's brother John Murphy lived in Detroit. He was married and had children. I cannot remember the number in the family, but think there were three children. He worked for the Henry Ford Motor Co. at the time Ford became famous for the high wages he paid his employees. Father Murphy was highly interested in these experiment. Ever so often, John was paid a bonus. He used to send these bonus checks to Father Murphy, asking him to use them for some personal need. One time he spent a Ford check visiting the Grand Canyon of Arizona. John and Mr. Ford made the dream come true. Before he left, Father read up on all the information he could find about it. Armed with facts and weeks stay, he came back able to describe it down to the last pebble. He was entranced with its grandeur. He said, "From the dying sunset of millions of yesterdays, all God's glory had been caught and held in color on the Canyon walls."

Father Murphy's only sister was a nun, Sister Mary Giovanni of Holy Cross Academy of New York City. She was a teacher. One of her classes consisted of adults, and she taught them French. Her classroom was in the Woolworth Building. This French class was made up mostly of men and women that worked in down-town offices in the city. Father Murphy spoke some French, "But not like my sister", he always said, "Her accent is pure."

If I have given the impression that Father Murphy was nothing but "sweetness and light, at all times, that is not the case. He was the most tolerant and lenient man I ever knew, but woe to the entire parish if something came up that did not fit into the scheme of God's Glory, first, last and always. It was then, as one of my brothers so aptly put it, "He could get up in the pulpit and peel the hide right off the whole bunch."

One time, four or five women formed themselves into a committee and called enmasse on Father Murphy to inform him about a certain young woman of the parish of whom they did not approve. Father listened patiently to their story. Then in no uncertain words, he told the ladies to go home and think over their own faults before bringing him tales. To merely say the committee was slightly nonplussed would be an over-statement! That ended once and for all any further attempts in the parish at minding the other fellows business.

In time, Father Murphy bought a car. Of course it was a Ford. "I'd never have the nerve to tell John, if I purchased some other make," he said. Father was as happy with his little model T. Coupe, as a child with



a new toy. The first thing he did was to sit down with the lengthy instruction book that came with Ford cars, and memorized it. I am sure if at any time that Ford had fallen apart, he could have picked up each piece, called it by name and restored it to its proper place. The car was a great help, for now he could reach his missions in a few hours, that before required three or four days. Father always said he enjoyed his missions, but having the little car, added zest to every trip. He loved to drive out from Dalhart in good weather, park on the side of the road, and spend a few hours, saying his Office, or reading in the peace of the country.

The Presbyterian Minister in Dalhart and Father Murphy were staunch friends. The minister's name was Joy. He and Father spent many evenings together. They enjoyed one another's conversations and discussed every subject under the sun, science, religion, politics and current events. In January 1923, Father Murphy became seriously ill. His rule forbidding the women to come to his home, almost cost him his life, for the whole parish had gotten into the habit of not visiting there, unless it was necessary. Mr. Joy missed seeing Father for a few days. At first he thought he was out of town. Then becoming alarmed, he went to the house, but could not get in. He was sure Father was inside. He entered by breaking a window. He found Father Murphy delirious and very ill. He called a doctor. They rushed him to St. Anthony's Hospital in Amarillo. His illness became critical. For a few weeks, he suffered a lapse of memory. He spent weeks in bed before he was well enough to return home. After wards, he was always grateful to Mr. Joy.

Soon after Father Murphy returned to Dalhart after his stay in the hospital, I received in the mail several cards with exquisitely written verses on them. One especially intrigued me with it's beauty and name "Silver Bell," yet I did not understand the thought it expressed. On the back of the card, Father Murphy wrote: "Dear Friends, Back home again and well after severe illness in Amarillo. Enclosed verses and some others were written there one day while in a semi-telepathic state bordering on sleeping sickness. Hope all are well. Patrick J. Murphy."

I knew there was sure to be a story that inspired the verse "Silver Bell." The next time Father came to the ranch, he told me the story. Although one chapter had happened only a short time before, he was very matter of fact about it, and seem to know "some mysterious Power Divine" had touched his life, as it had in times past. I will begin with the verse:

Silver Bell

They tell me now for days and nights my life was hanging by a silken thread.

The nurse would stand with watchful finger on the pulse, counting carefully, one by one, the few remaining beatings of the heart.

Delirium had ceased its strange, fantastic picturings.

There was nothing now remaining as the last few sands descended in the glass, nothing but the final passing of a tired and wounded spirit from a crushed and broken body waiting to be cast aside.

Waiting patient for the end; they little knew that in the treasured past, in childhood in a sainted home beside the distant and eternal sea, that I had made a tryst with Silver Bell that when the time should come for meeting death her consecrated soul and mine would face the great adventure fearless side by side.

And while the gentle watch for death continued through the silent night they little knew that some mysterious Power Divine and touched the current of a failing life, and I was coming back from almost at the gates of death to wain in patience till her earthly task was done for Silver Bell.

In "the sainted home beside the sea," lived a father and mother and their three children, two boys and a girl. The oldest boy, a slender studious youth was handicapped by poor health. His sister was a vivacious little moppet, radiant with health, that enhanced her charm and natural beauty. This brother and sister were unusually devoted to one another, and most sensitive to each others emotions. The boy had a pet name for his sister, he called her Silver Bell. Only the two of them knew about this name, for he never called her Silver Bell, unless they were alone.

Since the boy had been old enough to have a mind of his own, his only desire was to become a priest. His health caused him to be sent home twice from the seminary where he was beginning his ecclesiastical studies, but he would improve and return. The third time he was sent home, doctors advised him to give up all hope of the arduous life the priesthood required.

The young boy became very despondent. One day, when Silver Bell came home from school she found him sitting alone in the garden, brooding over his disappointment. Underneath her curly hair, the little sister had a very practical mind. She demanded the boy discuss his problems with her. They talked it over, but the boy could not see a way to continue, unless his physical condition improved. Undaunted, Silver Bell said to him, "We are not trusting God as we should. I know he wants you to be a priest. I think we should promise him something that will please Him, and forget ourselves. I am going to promise him now, if he will let you be a priest, I will be a nun."

The boy protested. He told Silver Bell he could not let her sacrifice her life in such a manner. "One must have a vocation for the convent the same as one must have for the priesthood," he said. Silver Bell laughed. "That will not be a sacrifice, she replied, "I made up my mind long ago to be a nun. But I am going to promise a sacrifice, if the Lord will grant our prayers and let you become a priest. After you have been a priest for thirty years, then I will know the time for my sacrifice will be at hand. I do not know now, what that sacrifice will be, but when the plan is ready, I shall know."

The boy was further startled by a second proposal from Silver Bell. "I know now," she said, "that you will finish your work, but I want you to make a tryst with me. Let us promise each other for the next thirty years, and after

wards until each of us know that our work for the Lord is finished, neither of us can die without the other. If we truly end our work here, and death comes for one, perhaps the Lord will let us both go together." The boy agreed and so the strange pact was made. The two children knelt in prayer, and asked the Lord to let them serve Him the rest of their lives.

Almost at once, the boy began to improve in health. He returned to school, and this time remained until he was ordained a priest. Silver Bell became a nun as she had promised.

Now it was Father Murphy and Sister Giovanni were so happy and busy in their selected work that they hardly realized the thirty year period was up, so swiftly did the time pass. But Sister Giovanni remembered. She wrote to Father Murphy and reminded him the time for her sacrifice was almost up. She was waiting, she said, for some plan to work out, confident she would recognize it when it came. Shortly after that letter, the Religious Order of whom Sister Giovanni was a member, asked for volunteers among their sisters, for work in a distant island, teaching native children. Sister Giovanni was the first sister to offer her services. Again she wrote Father Murphy: "I knew at once that this was the thing I had been waiting for. I am fully aware of what I am giving up, my work, friends, my family, even leaving my beloved country, but I feel the work the Lord spared you for, will more than reward me for I am doing now. "I shall be on the sea in two weeks."

Some months later, Father Murphy had a letter from Sister Giovanna, telling him about her work. She was delighted with this new experience. "Surely," she wrote, "this is not the sacrifice I thought the Lord required of me. Everything here is so beautiful, the sea, the flowers and birds. The little natives are so cunning and cute, surely there is no sacrifice attached to this!"

But Father Murphy truly thought there was.

It was about a year after that, when Father Murphy became so ill and was rushed to the hospital in Amarillo. His condition became so critical, the doctors gave little or no hope for his recovery. Yet he lived on, while doctors searched for a reason, and nurses wondered what kept "life hanging by a silken thread." One night, after it seemed impossible that he could live even a few hours longer, towards morning there seemed to be a sight im-

provement. This continued for several days longer, until he began to convalesce.

The first thing Father Murphy did when he was strong enough to talk, was to arrange to have a cablegram sent to Sister Giovanni, so far away on her island. The cablegram sounded strange to the person helping with its dispatch, as if Sister Giovanni knew all about his illness, which was impossible. Even if he had been able to write her a letter it had not time to reach her. Only Father Murphy knew her address, and he was too ill to talk on reaching the hospital. Yet his cablegram read, "As you know by now, am recovering from severe illness."

Stranger still, was the message received from Sister Giovanni, for while Father Murphy's cable was winging out into space, it passed one from her: Happy you are out of danger. I spent the week in prayer. It was signed Silver Bell. Yes, they were strange messages except to Father Murphy and Sister Giovanni. They understood. Up until that time, only the two of them knew about the childhood tryst.

When Fr. Murphy told me this story, he said, "I knew I was dying. I was so ill and tired, I could not make an effort to live. It was then Silver Bell came into the room and stayed with me. "My work is not finished," she told me. "You cannot go without me. Remember our tryst?" "Then," he finished, "I had to make a supreme struggle to live. I knew it was not time for me to die. Silver Bell still had work to do."

I can add little more to this story. Sister Giovanni lived fifteen years after Father Murphy was called to his reward. Many times since Father Murphy talked to me, I have been reminded of another poet that lived years ago, who said, "God fulfills Himself in many ways. More things are wrought by prayer than this world dreams of"

After fourteen years in Dalhart, Father Murphy was sent to Dallas, Texas in the latter part of 1923. For a time he was at Dunn Memorial Home. Some few years later he went to Ennis, Texas where he was Pastor of the Church of the Holy Redeemer. When he left Dalhart, he was still not well from the illness he had earlier that year. At times he suffered terrific headaches from the old head injury received in Gainesville. It was with regret that people in Dalhart gave him up. Friends were hopeful he might be returned to them someday. They missed his smile and his wit, his goodness and charity. Above all they missed

a man of God. There was indeed sorrow in Dalhart, when news of his death came, November 23, 1933.

Dulice Turner Sullivan 1951

While Father Murphy was in the hospital, a young woman took her life with poison. Father Murphy was moved to write the following:

Just Tired

The kind word came at last, too long delayed,
and sounding like a hollow mockery within the room,
where poor, tired hands were folded white and dead
above the sanctuary of a broken mother-heart.
Great, living and eternal God!
Why do we wait and wait and let them die in utter
loneliness for decent love?
Why do we permit the sacred dreams of home and
motherhood to perish in their souls, within a cold and
heartless world,
Which seems at times bereft of God and hope
and every thing that makes life possible?

Sacedros
February 1923

Sacedros was Fr. Murphy's pen name.



Rica Ranch, about three miles from the old town of Tascosa. The Rev. Patrick J. Murphy from Dalhart, used to say Mass there about once a month.

NIGHT AT THE MUSEUM



CALL TO ARTISTS

July 14, 2022

6 TO 8:30 pm

Please join Bishop Patrick J. Zurek and honored guests on Thursday, July 14 from 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm for an evening of fun, refreshments, and your voting for one of the works of area artists, where the first-place entry will win

\$4,000.00

Diocesan Museum . 4512 N.E. 24th Ave.

Night at the Museum

The Night at the Museum is featuring a calling of area artists to participate in an ecumenical art competition.

The artists were to use a medium of their choice to create one or two religious art projects (paintings, drawings, etc.) First place will be awarded \$4,000 and a permanent home in the Diocesan Museum, second place \$750 and third \$500. The art projects will have a price attached and you may purchase the ones you favor except for the first-place winner.

At this writing, I have around 12 to 14 artists participating, I hope... some with more than one project...

YOU

This is where you come in. The artists will have their projects in place in the museum by July 5, 2022. This will give you time before the Night at the Museum to come in and vote for your favorites and visit the museum. On July 14 all those present at the open house who have not voted will have until 7:30 pm to vote. The ballots will be counted, and the 3 favorites will be presented to a panel of three judges, who will select first, second and third place.

PLEASE come and join us in this ecumenical event for some fun, good food, and vote for your favorite religious art project.

Visit the museum, you might be surprised if you do.
Museum Hours Monday – Thursday, 9 to 4



March 2, 2022 to May

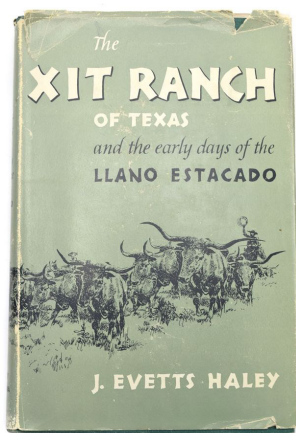
CONTRIBUTIONS

Don Allen	100
Beverly Armstrong	10
Margaret Battles	25
Mary Bednorz	50
Orville Blum	200
M/M James Brandt	20
Mary Brorman	100
Paul Engler	200
Joan Gulde	50
Billie J. Glenn	25
Joe Hochstein	25
May Hochstein	25
Bill Homer	25
James Honea Jr	100
Alice Kuehler	200
Linda McCommon	25
Kathrine Monceballez	25
Sharon Moylan	50
Jerry Newcomb	25
Albert Quinto	30
Glenn Raef	25
Roxann Schwertner	30
Anonymous	100
Paulette Thomas	50
Don White	130
Jacque Willburn	100
Audrey and Leo Wink	1000
Bishop John W. Yanta	75
Total	2820

MEMORIALS

Gladys Looten	100
by Teresa Sarzynski	
Leo and Mary Zimmermen	25
by Margaret Battles	
Total	125

Are you interested in becoming a board member?



This is a photo of Haley's book in our archives. In the late 1920s, the Farwell Estate commissioned J. Evetts Haley to write its colorful history, *The XIT Ranch of Texas* (1929).

Excerpt:

Mavericks would ride over into the XIT pastures, find large unbranded calves, cut them off from their mothers, and run them over to homesteads. Mother cows and their calves, upon becoming separated, back-track for miles to reach the spot at which each last saw the other. The old Texas Longhorns would travel farther, guided by an uncanny sense of direction and smell, than cattle of better blood. Because of this instinct, the rustler was forced to wean the calves he stole before he applied his brand, or have them so secured that they could not return to their mothers.

Did You Know?

This Newsletter and all the displays in the museum are made possible solely by your donations!

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You may stop by daily (Monday through Friday, 9-4) 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: 414-1076 or even better: sgarner@dioama.org

Thank you for your continued Generosity!