

SURVEY OF HISTORIC RESOURCES  
North Side of City

GRANBURY, TEXAS

Corrections and Revisions  
April 2009

Items Underscored have Been Corrected

## Chapter 3

# HISTORY

Hood County's special "sense of place" grew from several distinct historical and cultural contexts: Native residents and initial explorers, early Anglo settlement, creation of a small Texas county and its seat, development of a railroad boomtown, and movement from an agrarian way of life to a more urban-industrial society. Each one of these historic periods created cultural resources and vernacular architecture that should be preserved to keep Hood County as peaceful and scenic as it was when Thomas T. Ewell described it as a "picturesque landscape which nature seems to have laid out and planned as the most healthful and appropriate home . . ." <sup>i</sup>

### **Prehistory, Natural History, Native Residents, and Early Explorers**

During the early Cretaceous period of the Mesozoic era, some 110 million to 115 million years ago, the Hood County area was alternately underwater or a coastal plain. These natural prehistoric processes created the marine geologic deposit known as the Glen Rose formation, which features distinctive limestone outcroppings. Dinosaurs, which were prolific in the area during the same period, left their footprints to harden with the limestone, and they sometimes left their bones.

The earliest residents in the Hood County area during recorded historic times were native Americans, specifically Caddos and Tonkawas. During the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> centuries, these tribes were joined by Eastern Apaches, most notably the Lipan Apaches. And by the 18<sup>th</sup> century, Wichitas, Kiowas, and Comanches traversed through and lived in North Central Texas.

Early French and Spanish explorers traveled through the Hood County area. In 1846, representatives of the United States met with members of several Indian tribes on Comanche Peak to announce that Texas had become a state in the Union. Today, dinosaur tracks, fossils, and archeological treasures remain throughout the Hood County and Granbury landscape to remind residents of the area's lush prehistory and early history.

### **Early Anglo Settlement**

Citizens of the Upland South, an area described mostly as encompassing Tennessee, Kentucky, Missouri and Arkansas, surged into Texas after its War for Independence from Mexico and annexation as a state in 1845. According to cultural geographer Terry G. Jordan, Tennessee was the leading state of citizenship of the settlers who arrived in North Central Texas from 1850 through 1880, so much so that this area of Texas is now also considered part of the Upland South, or "Tennessee Extended." <sup>ii</sup>

Charles Barnard, an Indian trader who was born in Connecticut, preceded these hardy yeoman farmers in the area that is now Hood County. In 1849, Barnard and his brother, George, opened a trading post near Comanche Peak, a location selected earlier by the Republic of Texas. The Barnard brothers built their Comanche Peak Trading House in southeastern Hood County along the Brazos River. Other stalwart pioneers soon followed the Barnards, including David Crockett's widow, Elizabeth, and her sons, Robert Crockett and George Patton, who settled in the northeastern region of Hood County. They claimed David Crockett's land bounty of 1,280 acres, which he was awarded by the Republic of Texas for "having served faithfully and honorably" during the Texas War for Independence.

Pioneers ventured across the Brazos River or "dead line" into Comancheria or Comanche territory during the early 1850s. Among the first in the Hood County area to settle on the west banks of the river was Thomas Lambert, who claimed the land where Granbury now stands. Amon Bond settled his family in an area on the west bank of the river known as Stockton. His colony, along with Lambert's homestead, formed the nucleus of the settlement that later influenced the selection of Lambert's land for the Hood County seat.

### **Creation Of A Small Texas County And Its Seat**

After the Civil War ended, in 1866, the Texas legislature created Hood County, and named it for Confederate Gen. John Bell Hood. The legislature also decreed that the new county's seat would be named Granbury, for Confederate Brigadier Gen. Hiram B. Granbury. The land for the new county came out of Johnson and Erath counties, which are located just east and west of Hood County.

The Nutt brothers and early settler Thomas Lambert donated forty acres of land for the location of Granbury. This parcel, which eventually became the county seat, was located between a spring creek known as Lambert Branch and the Brazos River. The selection process for the location of the county seat was hotly contested. In his 1895 *Hood County History*, Thomas T. Ewell wrote that it was not only "animated, but in some measure became acrimonious, engendering bitter feelings between some good citizens." Three elections were held before the forty-acre site along the Brazos River was selected because of its proximity to water.<sup>iii</sup>

In Texas, a county seat was typically designed as a central plaza containing the courthouse, with businesses built around the plaza in a square. In the late 1860s, lots on the Granbury courthouse square were platted, surveyed, and sold. The new courthouse square was laid out in the "Shelbyville" or "central" or "block" configuration, brought to Texas from Middle Tennessee, and named for a town there. It features streets entering only at the four corners of the square. The Granbury courthouse square was surveyed and laid out by a surveyor named A.S. McCamant, and was located very close to the river's edge. A small sixteen-foot by sixteen-foot log cabin was built in the center of the courthouse square as Hood County's first courthouse. The remainder of the forty-acre

donation of land was surveyed and platted into twenty blocks by McCamant, with each block containing two acres and measuring three hundred square feet. Streets were platted as forty- to fifty-foot wide. The new city was planned in a classical gridiron pattern, like the majority of cities built in the United States in the 19th century. The most extensive sale of lots in the new county seat was held in March 1871, and proceeds went toward a fund to build a courthouse and jail.

Businesses began opening in Granbury, including a small sawmill operated by Holland and Anderson. They produced “rawhide lumber” hewed from the post oak, pecan, and cottonwood trees growing along the riverbanks for Granbury’s first buildings. During the early 1870s, Granbury had five saloons and adjacent ten-pin alleys, which were frequented by cowboys, who kept “the little town well painted a lively red,” wrote Ewell. This era of Granbury’s history featured a “lawless spirit,” according to Ewell, when crimes like cattle rustling and land fraud were common, along with shootings.<sup>iv</sup>

The yeomen farmers of the Upland South brought with them a diverse heritage that is evident today in the material culture found throughout North Central Texas, including its folk architecture. Examples include V-notched logs, the 16-foot square pen or room used in many houses, and the central hall or dogtrot house, which Terry Jordan called a “regional icon.”<sup>v</sup>



*Figure 9. Austin Yeats, an Early Settler from Tennessee, Built a Log Cabin Along Lambert Branch in 1858 that Features V-Notching. As Granbury Grew, the House Developed into a Dogtrot House with a Shed Addition in the Rear. Photos by Author.*

During the early 1880s, Granbury merchants began to replace their wooden structures with masonry buildings, constructed of native Hood County limestone, all quarried within five miles of the courthouse square. In 1882, dry goods merchant J.D. Baker and pharmacist E.A. Hannaford built two limestone commercial buildings featuring a distinctive continuously arched façade with a six-bay storefront. Hannaford was so proud of their arcaded Italianate-style buildings that he advertised his pharmacy’s location as the “Arch Block.”<sup>vi</sup> The trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church South

built a small frame church in Granbury on the southeast corner of the courthouse square in 1883; it was the first church building in the county seat.

### **Post-Railroad Boom**

The prospect of bringing a railroad to Hood County brought great excitement to citizens of the community. In 1886, business leaders and merchants began working to raise money to entice a railroad to Granbury. The merchants of Granbury joined together and paid the Fort Worth and Rio Grande Railroad a twenty-five thousand dollar bonus to build a rail line to Granbury from Fort Worth.

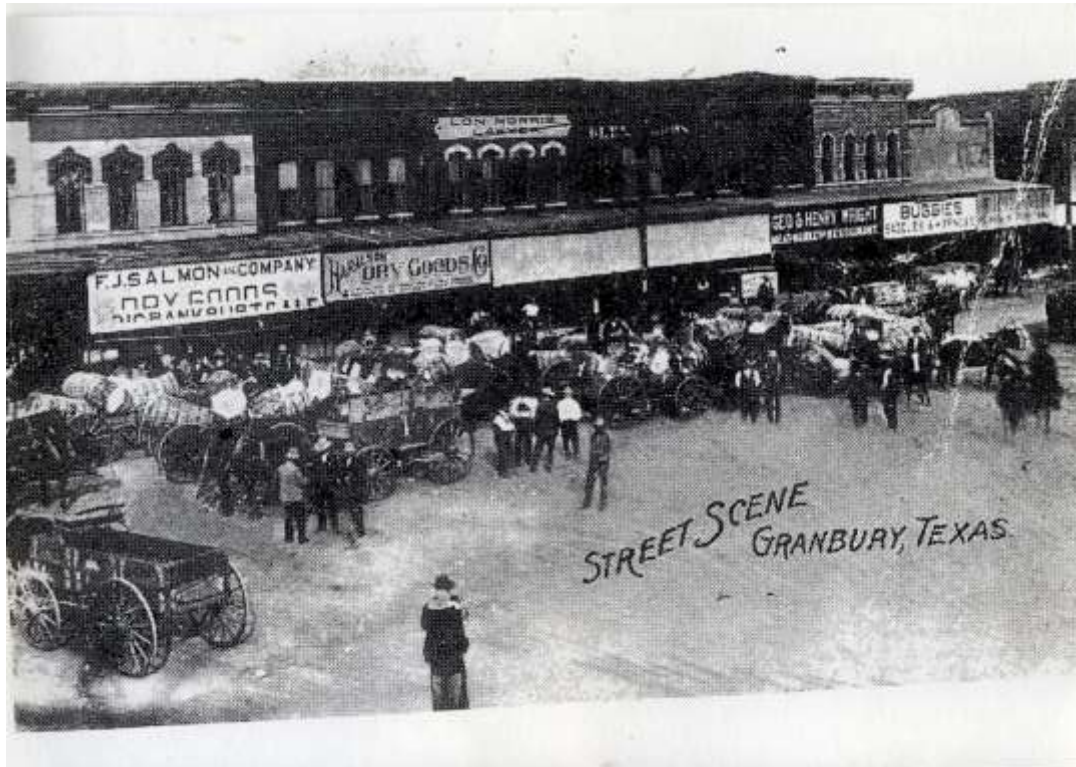
In early June 1887, Granbury's first train blew its whistle and rolled into town along new tracks laid two blocks north of the courthouse square. Hood County's rail lines were built during the years when railroad track miles quadrupled in the United States and during the decade that saw railroad expansion throughout much of Texas. Between 1880 and 1890, 5,466 miles of railroad track were laid in Texas. Most of this mileage was into undeveloped counties to the west, like Hood County, which did not already have railroad transportation. The thirty-nine counties that received new railroad lines during the 1880s increased their population 200 percent.<sup>vii</sup>

The arrival of the railroad had a tremendous impact on Granbury's economic growth, just as it did in other cities and towns across the country, most especially in the West. In 1887, the *Granbury Graphic* reported that its hometown was, "on the boom and real estate on the rise. 'All aboard for Granbury' will be soon be cried from the Union Station. Granbury will probably be the terminus of the road for some time and will be a 'hummer' and no mistake." The paper also reported that property values increased at least 300 percent after work started on the railroad.<sup>viii</sup>

Granbury developed as the natural agricultural trading center for home markets and shipping center for larger markets in other cities. Cotton production thrived after the first local harvest in the early 1860s, and it became Hood County's leading agricultural crop. In 1898, the county's yield was 7,413 bales, and by 1912, the cotton yield was 17,875 bales. Old photos show the Granbury courthouse square full of wagons piled high with bales of cotton on their way to the railroad depot for shipping. North of the railroad tracks in Granbury there were long wooden platforms where cotton bales were loaded into freight cars. In 1984, longtime resident Marie Williams recalled that in Granbury, "every vacant lot was covered with cotton waiting to be shipped."<sup>ix</sup>

On Saturdays, cotton farmers and cattle ranchers from throughout the county boarded their buggies and rode to Granbury. On the courthouse square, they tied their horses to hitching posts or left them at one of the city's wagon yards. Granbury acquired the charm of early eighteenth-century American walking cities as neighborhoods developed around the courthouse square in the grid pattern that was originally platted. In fact, Granbury continued to grow closely around the courthouse square until automobiles became commonplace in the early twentieth century. Like the business people of America's early walking cities, most of the merchants who had shops in downtown Granbury built homes adjacent to the courthouse square and walked to work each day.

Among them were community leaders like Jess and D.O. Baker, who owned Baker Hardware and Implement Co.; Andy Aston, who owned Aston-Landers Saloon; E.A. Hannaford, the local pharmacist; and J.D. Brown, who owned Brown's Dry Goods. In 1881, Hannaford built a Greek Revival house surrounded by a carriage house, barn, stable, well house, vegetable garden, rose garden, greenhouse and tennis court, which reflected his wealth and status.



*Figure 10. Wagons Loaded With Cotton Bales on the Courthouse Square.  
Photo Courtesy First National Bank Collection.*

In contrast to Anglo merchants, African-Americans in Granbury lived in small frame houses north of the courthouse square near the railroad tracks, but they were within easy walking distance of more affluent neighborhoods. Industrial businesses were all built within walking distance; Granbury's earliest gristmill, which is still standing, is located one block north of the courthouse square. In Granbury, as in other walking cities, rich and poor lived closely together and land was not zoned or specialized, so houses, businesses, industry, and the train station were all located together in the city center.

In 1889, commissioners called for the building of a new courthouse for Hood County "owing to the exposure of the Public Records and papers of this county." Built in 1891, the elegant Second Empire-style Hood County Courthouse was constructed of hand-hewn native limestone blocks. Architect W.C. Dodson designed the three-story courthouse, which features a central clock tower. County commissioners purchased the Seth Thomas clock in 1891 for fourteen hundred dollars. This clock has been hand-

wound for more than a century, and chimes the hour daily for residents and visitors alike in Granbury.



*Figure 11. Hood County Courthouse. Photo Courtesy Jake Caraway.*

By 1910, Hood County achieved a population high of 10,008<sup>x</sup> and Granbury had 2,250 residents.<sup>xi</sup> The county seat bustled with industry in 1905. Five cotton gins, a three-story cottonseed oil mill, and a planing mill hummed with activity. The planing mill, opened by craftsman and builder E.J. Holderness, employed workers who did planing, joining, turning, and all kinds of cabinetry and woodwork. These local products allowed Granbury merchants to exuberantly express their newfound prosperity through the construction of high-style houses.

### **Industrial Progress and Change**

The beginning of the twentieth century brought industrial progress and revolutionary change to the lives of Hood County's families. The decades ahead would continue these trends. Conquering the Texas wilderness and cultivating the family farm gave way to living in town, driving to work, and experiencing the countryside during a Sunday drive.

Like the rest of the country, the early 1900s were a remarkable transition period for transportation in Hood County, where the reliable horse was replaced by the Model T.

Granbury's first auto arrived in 1907, purchased by bank president D.C. Cogdell's son, Earl. By the early 1920s, Granbury had its first auto dealership, which sold Fords; it was located just a half-block west of the courthouse square. In 1929, a Victorian building on the south corner of the east side of the courthouse square was cut in half to create a drive-through for Granbury's first service station.

In Granbury, as in the rest of Texas, autos made the vast reaches of the state closer, and soon, everyone wanted one. "Just as every poor farmer had owned a horse, every poor tenant living in a tarpaper shack in Texas owned some kind of car . . .," wrote T.R. Fehrenbach in his book, *Lone Star, A History of Texas and the Texans*.<sup>xiii</sup> By 1929, there was one auto for every 4.3 Texans.<sup>xiii</sup>



*Figure 12. Transportation Change Comes to Granbury.  
Photo Courtesy First National Bank Collection.*

The cycle of change brought on by industrialization sped up during the 1920s in Hood County, while the exuberant prosperity residents enjoyed since the arrival of the railroad began to taper. From its height of a little more than 10,000 in 1910, the county's population fell to 8,759 in 1920, and dropped again to 6,779 by 1930. The biggest harbinger of lifestyle transformation was the loss of family farms in Hood County, which significantly dropped from 1,786 in 1910 to 1,234 in 1920.<sup>xiv</sup>

By the 1930s and '40s, Hood County's young people were leaving home for greater economic opportunities in bigger cities like Dallas and Fort Worth. Texas was beginning to develop larger urban industrial centers that offered new alternatives to the



children of hungry cotton farmers and cattle ranchers.

Most rural Texans who moved went to big cities, but many abandoned their farms for homes in small towns and county seats. While rural counties lost overall residents, many of their towns grew. And so was the case in Granbury, where the population rose. In 1940, Granbury had forty-eight businesses and a population of 1,166. By 1950, sixty-five businesses were in operation and population had increased to 1,679.<sup>xv</sup>

During World War II, the population of Texas made its historic change from predominantly rural to 60 percent urban.<sup>xvi</sup> This major shift in population and lifestyle in Texas was caused by several factors: mechanization of farming, decline in cotton acreage, development of big industries during World War II, and the expansion of oil and gas industries after the war. In nearby Fort Worth, Consolidated Aircraft opened a manufacturing plant where workers built three thousand B-24 Liberator bombers within two years during the war. The plant attracted residents to Fort Worth as well as commuting workers from Hood County.<sup>xvii</sup>

By 1950, the effects of the depression and the development of booming urban industrial centers in Texas caused rural Hood County's population to drop to 5,287, almost half of what it had been in 1910. The number of farms dropped down to 830, from a high of 1,786 in 1910. By the 1960s, many of the buildings on Granbury's town square were empty and deteriorated.

## Cultural Diversity

Although very early Spanish and French explorers traveled through the Hood County area, they never established settlements in the region. After Anglo-American settlers drove Native Americans from North Central Texas, hardy yeoman farm families from the Upland South exerted the major cultural influences in the Hood County area.

Because most of these early Anglo American settlers in Hood County did not own slaves, African Americans have historically comprised a small minority of the community's population. In 1870, Hood County's population was 96 percent Anglo American.<sup>xviii</sup>

There were some settlers who came to Hood County from the Deep South, however, who brought slaves with them when they migrated. Traditionally, slaves took the last names of the Anglo families who brought them to Texas. Freed slaves in Hood County established a settlement between Granbury and Tolar known as The Colony. Led by former slave Simon Hightower and his wife, Hettie, they built a church and established a small cemetery.

Other freed slaves settled in Granbury, where they lived, went to school, and worshipped in an area north of the courthouse square adjacent to where railroad tracks would be laid through the city. Many of Granbury's African-American residents worked

in the town's mills and cotton gins.

In Hood County, as in the rest of the South, racial segregation was the norm. Granbury's railroad depot, which was built in 1914, and restored in the mid-1980s, was found to have a separate waiting room door in the back. Under layers of old paint, a hand-lettered sign on the door was discovered that read "Colored Waiting Room." Black moviegoers at Granbury's indoor theater traditionally sat in the balcony. "There were so few black people here, and we all knew each other; we were all friends," said local historian Mary Kate Durham, who grew up in Granbury.

In his book, *Goodbye to A River*, John Graves quoted the *Texas Almanac* and reported that Hood County's population during the late 1950s was 99.3 percent Anglo American, 0.2 percent Latin American, and 0.5 percent African American.<sup>xix</sup> This lack of diversity continued to reflect the culture brought to North Central Texas by the farmers who settled there, but it also told the story of the flight of African Americans from rural communities in Texas during the twentieth century after two droughts and a depression.

Today, the county's traditional lack of cultural diversity is changing. The U.S. Census Bureau estimates that the population of Hood County and Granbury are both 75.1 percent white, 12.3 percent African American, .9 percent Native American, and 12.5 percent Hispanic or Latino.

### **Preservation Brings Revitalization and Rebirth**

In 1970, Texas Governor Preston Smith dedicated the DeCordova Bend Dam that dammed the Brazos River to create Lake Granbury. The same year, county commissioners repaired the clock tower on the Hood County Courthouse in response to a deluge of mail they received from local residents. Local newspaper publisher Norma Crawford had alerted readers that the county commissioners planned to remove the tower after it was damaged by a storm.

Mary Lou Watkins, Joe Nutt, Mary Kate and R.E. Durham, Randle Rash, Jimmy and Mary Dixon, and Jeannine Macon began restoring old buildings and documenting and preserving local history. Their leadership built enthusiasm for the preservation of Granbury's architectural heritage and led to the passage of the city's first preservation ordinance. During the early 1970s, the community joined together and rehabilitated the 1886 Granbury Opera House. In 1975, the Opera House re-opened and began showing community theater once again.

At the beginning of Granbury's preservation movement in 1970, all the property on the courthouse square was appraised for \$519,975. City sales tax revenue was \$19,942. Within just six years, assessed valuations on town square properties had risen to \$1.25 million and sales tax revenue to \$100,187.<sup>xx</sup>

In 1986, The Texas Historical Commission saluted Granbury's preservation and revitalization as a model for the state's Main Street Program. In *The Texas Main Street Handbook, a Practical Guide to Small Town Revitalization*, the historical commission called Granbury "Texas' original Main Street city." According to the handbook, "Granbury is renowned across the state as a shining example of a dying town that made a comeback."<sup>xxi</sup>

During the 1970s, Americans began reversing the trend toward urbanization by moving back to rural areas and small towns for the first time since 1940. This interest in country living, combined with the appeal of Granbury's pristine historic buildings nestled along the banks of a sparkling lake, brought booming growth to Hood County. Between 1970 and 1980, Hood County had the sixth highest growth rate of all counties in the country. According to *USA Today*, Hood County was also the fastest growing county in Texas from 1980 to 1985. The county's population grew from 6,368 in 1970 to 17,714 in 1980, and to 28,981 in 1990. The population of Granbury also increased from 2,473 in 1970 to 3,332 in 1980, and then to 4,045 in 1990.<sup>xxii</sup>

### **History of Granbury's North Side Survey Area**

One of the Granbury area's first Anglo settlements occurred northeast of today's courthouse square, along a curve in the Brazos River that became known as Stockton Bend. Many of the pioneers who first crossed the river into Comanche Indian territory chose the small settlement for their home.

Among the first residents of Stockton Bend were the families of Amon Bond, who crossed the Brazos with his family in 1854; Logan Landers, who settled there in 1855; and Abe Landers, who followed his brother in 1858. Abe Landers became the first Hood County Judge, and Stockton temporarily served as the first seat of Hood County. The first district court hearing was held there during the fall of 1867, and Judge Landers treated all of the jurors to a drink at the Stockton saloon.

Many of Granbury's early merchants set up shop first in Stockton Bend, including William Kingsbury and Jesse and Jacob Nutt. The Nutt brothers came with Abe Landers from Tennessee to Missouri to Hood County. Jesse Nutt's wife was a daughter of Abe Landers. Jesse and Jacob Nutt's father, David, and brothers, Abe and David L., also settled in Hood County. The Nutt family acquired much land in the area, including land that is now located within the north side of downtown Granbury.

Today, the area that was once home to Stockton Bend is a housing development known as The Peninsula. The houses there were built at the turn of the 21<sup>st</sup> century east of Stockton Bend Road, just outside the city limits of Granbury.

### Patterns of Development

In 1869, Abe Nutt sold 80 acres to his brother, Jesse, from the original John Mallory survey north of Granbury. By 1873, as the new City of Granbury was laid out, the northeast quarter of the Mallory survey was platted as “the Nutt Addition to the North side of the original plan of the town of Granbury, Hood County, Texas.”<sup>xxiii</sup>



*Figure 13. The Nutt Addition Within the North Side Survey Area. This is a section of an 1897 Map of Granbury drawn by Surveyor C.F. Rodgers. Courtesy City of Granbury and the J.C. and Sylvia Campbell Collection.*

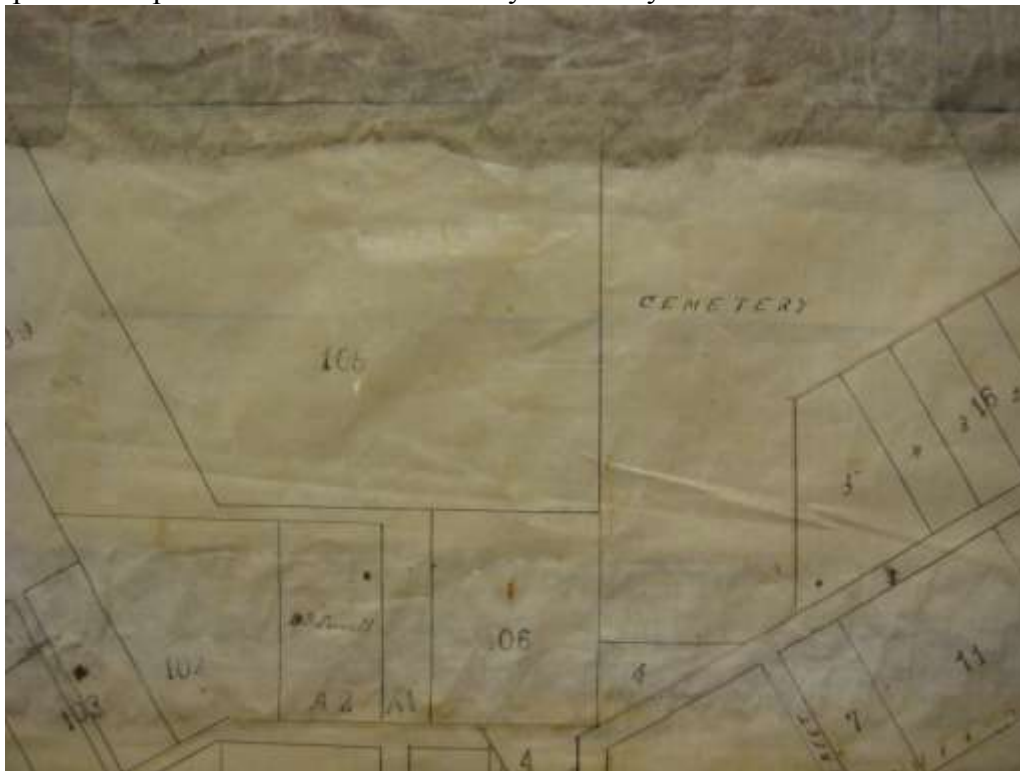
The most prominent physical feature of the north side survey area is the hill that overlooks Granbury. This hill became home to the community’s first high school and college by 1875. The district conference of the Methodist church met in the Hood County community of Acton in 1873, and leaders voted to locate a new district high school in Granbury.

The Granbury Methodist Episcopal Church South was organized in Granbury in 1871 by Reverend J.R. Hill with seven members who met monthly on the third Sunday in the building used for a school. Leaders in the Granbury community attended the conference in Acton in 1873 and offered financial inducements to church directors to bring the school to their community.

The Methodist High School first opened in a rock building on the southeast corner of the courthouse square in September of that year. The Methodist conference appointed a building committee to choose a suitable location for their school.

Granbury’s first mayor, P.H. Thrash, was a member of the committee that chose the prominent hilltop north of the courthouse square as the location for the high school.

Granbury's founding fathers and early developers of the north side, Jesse and Jacob Nutt, donated the "College Block," or Block 106, as shown on the 1897 map of Granbury drawn by Hood County Surveyor C.F. Rodgers (see Figure 14). To this day, "College Hill" provides a panoramic view of Granbury framed by Comanche Peak.



*Figure 14. Block 106 Became Known as the "College Block," after Granbury High School and College was Constructed There. Courtesy City of Granbury and the J.C. and Sylvia Campbell Collection.*

The school's first building high atop the hill north of the courthouse square was a small frame structure, but the citizens of Granbury raised money to build a three-story limestone school building that measured 42 feet by 62 feet. This was the first large building constructed in Granbury of native limestone. By 1875, the Methodist high school had flourished so quickly that it also became a chartered college known as Granbury College.

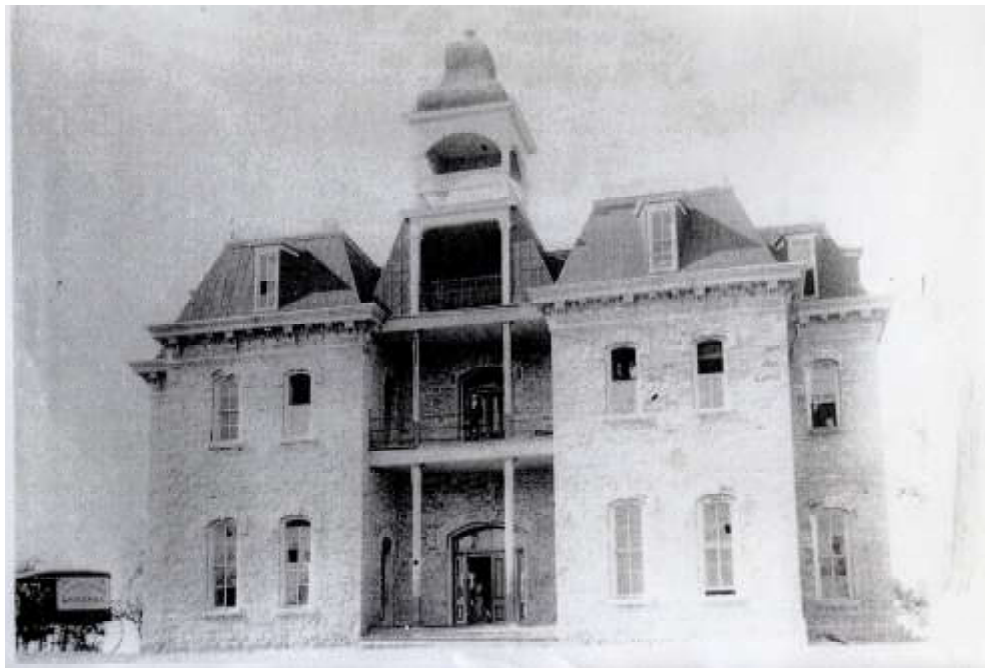
In January 1887, a fire destroyed the interior of the Granbury College building. When the college incurred considerable debt constructing a new three-story building, citizens of Granbury raised funds to pay for the new college hall. At some point, a two-story frame dormitory was built adjacent to the school building.

The next year, Granbury College advertised its "commodious buildings," along with "Discipline, mild and firm; . . . competent faculty in every department; good society; healthful location; daily stage (except Sunday) from Cleburne and Weatherford." Semester tuition rates were \$8 for primary students, \$10 for intermediate, \$12.50 for preparatory, and \$17 for collegiate. Board in the college dormitory was \$2.50 to \$3 per

week, including lights and heat, and washing and ironing was \$1 per month.<sup>xxiv</sup>



*Figure 15. Granbury High School and College, Constructed during 1870s.  
Photo Courtesy Jake Caraway.*



*Figure 16. Second Granbury College Building, Constructed in 1887, Before the Existing Hood County Courthouse was Built. Photo Courtesy Jane Craddock.*

At the end of January 1887, an editor from the *Stephenville Empire* in neighboring Erath County visited Granbury. He later described how builders hauled native limestone from quarries east of the Brazos River to the Hood County Courthouse Square and vicinity for use in construction. “The river is spanned by a kind of rude trestle work, with stringers on either side for the wheels of a hand car. Great stones are carried over on a hand car on this bridge,” he wrote.<sup>xxv</sup>

Hood County native Albert Porter attended Granbury College. In 1992, he told Tommye Hiler that the school buildings were located where the city water tower was once located. Today, there is a communications tower there, at the highest point of the hill, just northeast of the northeast corner of North Houston Street and Moore Street, inside the boundaries of Granbury Cemetery.

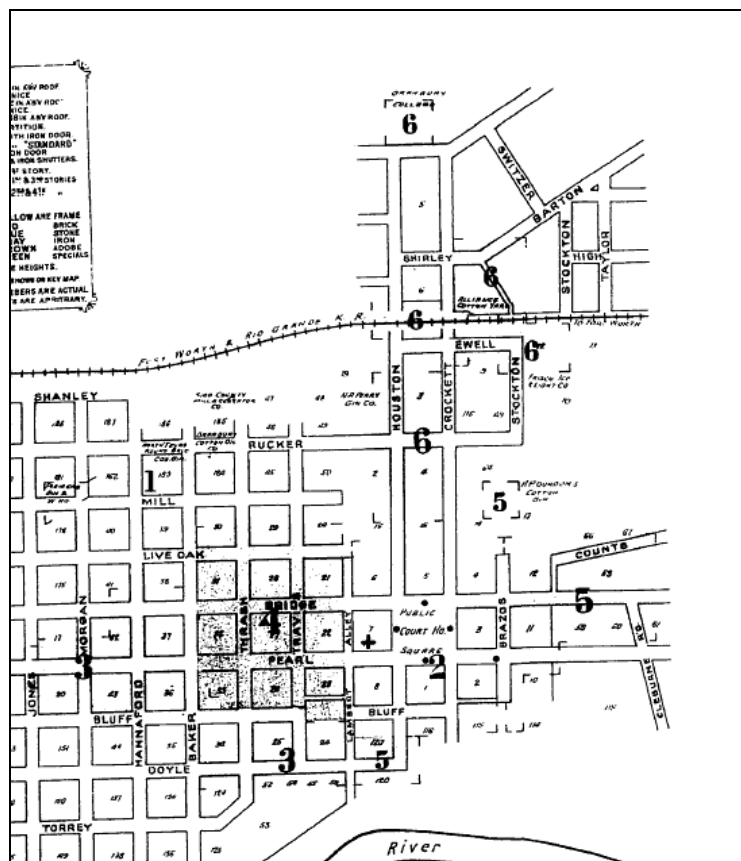


Figure 17. Portion of a Granbury Sanborn Insurance Map Showing the Location of Granbury College and Its Proximity to the Courthouse Square.

Granbury Cemetery was originally located east and north of College Block 106. Today, the cemetery has grown to encompass the original College Block, as well as some of Block 105 (see Figure 14). According to cultural geographer Terry Jordan, the

selection of the highest spot in the community for a cemetery is a tradition brought to North Central Texas by Anglo settlers from the Upland South.

The earliest known burial in Granbury Cemetery is the grave of John Edwards, who was born in 1790 and died in September 1853. Lot 66, where the cemetery was originally located (see Figure 14), was deeded to the Trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church South by the Commissioners Court of Milam County. The original deed may have burned in the Hood County Courthouse fire of 1875, when all of the county's land records were destroyed. In July 1885, a deed granting the land to the church was filed, which could have been a re-filing of that document.

By then, Lot 66 was commonly known as the "Cemetery Lot," and was referred to by that name in the warranty deed.<sup>xxvi</sup> Oral tradition in Granbury says that graves were moved from Methodist Church property on the courthouse square to the cemetery at some point when the church needed to expand its buildings. Granbury's Methodist Church acquired its first property on the courthouse square until 1883, when the congregation constructed their original chapel on the southeast corner.



*Figure 18. View of Hood County Courthouse Square and Comanche Peak from College Hill in the North Side. Photo by Author.*

Granbury College closed and the school moved to nearby Weatherford in 1912, where it eventually became Weatherford Junior College. The college building was demolished, and its stones were used to build a new Methodist Church on the courthouse square. In 1914, the trustees of the Methodist Episcopal Church South in Granbury sold College Block 106; part of Block 105, or the southwest corner of the Cemetery Lot containing one acre of land; lot No. 1A of the Barton Addition; and lot No. 4 to the City



of Granbury (see Figure 14). In 1915, the same church trustees signed a Quit Claim Deed to lot No. 66, or the original Cemetery Lot, to the City of Granbury.<sup>xxvii</sup>

The North Side of Granbury has traditionally been home to middle-to-low income residents. This tradition continues today with the construction of several houses by Hood County Habitat for Humanity within North Side neighborhoods. Most of the lower income residents lived in North Side neighborhoods east of Houston Street. These residents included many of the city's African American residents, who built small frame houses.

Granbury's historic African American neighborhood was home to two churches. Town fathers Jesse and Jacob Nutt deeded the land to residents who built the Pleasant Chapel Colored Methodist Episcopal Church in 1904 along the banks of Lambert Branch just south of the railroad tracks. The church, which remained standing until the 1990s, was accessible only by a narrow dirt road. African American residents also built a Baptist Church along the east side of Keith Street north of the railroad tracks. Their Baptist Church was torn down by 1985.

The late Mary Kate Durham, who was a local historian, remembered going to Pleasant Chapel for various services and special occasions. "It was a big treat to go to that church," Durham said. "Once I went to see a magician there. They also had a big barbecue on Juneteenth (the celebration of emancipation of slaves) and they always invited the white community," Durham said.<sup>xxviii</sup>

African American children in Granbury attended a separate public school, which was also located along the east side of Keith Street in the North Side near the Baptist Church. In 1913, The *Granbury Graphic-Democrat* ran a small article about the "Commencement Exercises of the Colored Public School, Friday and Saturday, May 23-24, 1913. An old fashioned Chicken Pie will be served each night. Admission 10 cents."<sup>xxix</sup>

Smallpox broke out in Granbury's African American neighborhood in 1912. The local newspaper and public health officer, who was a Granbury physician, worked hard to quell rampant fear of the disease. In an article entitled "Smallpox Cases Among Granbury Negroes is Well Under Control," the *Granbury News* wrote that "all who have been exposed would be kept in quarantine. . . those in charge have kept a close guard and no Negro who is suspected of having been with disease is allowed at large . . ."<sup>xxx</sup>

But the disease did spread, and in all, 29 residents came down with smallpox and two residents died. "There has never been any danger to any person coming here on business; because the cases have been isolated and guarded. Some people have been scared and others have indulged in wild reports about the situation, but there has not been any danger of an epidemic any time," wrote the newspaper editor two months after the outbreak was first reported.<sup>xxxi</sup> After the smallpox outbreak, Granbury, like larger American cities, remained concerned about public health and sanitary conditions. In April 1914, the sanitary committee reported to the city council that the "sanitary condition of the town is in bad condition. There was some discussion on this subject but

no action was taken.<sup>»xxxii</sup>



*Figure 19. Pleasant Chapel, Built in 1904 and Demolished in the 1990s.  
Photos Courtesy Jo Ann Randle Massey.*

Kay Lee, Mary Kate Durham's daughter, remembered that her mother told her that some of the African Americans who lived in the North Side budded and grafted the first pecan orchard in Hood County along Stockton Bend Road. "My mom remembered them walking down the road past her house carrying their tools and singing on their way to work in their orchard," Lee said.<sup>xxxiii</sup>

Mary Kate Durham and her sister, Jo Ann Massey, are descendants of early settler A.E. Keith. When Keith came to the Hood County area in 1859, he brought slaves with him. His slaves took his last name, and when they were freed, they settled in Granbury's North Side. Keith Street is named for the African Americans who lived there.

Jo Ann Massey remembers the eastern half of the North Side as a rough part of town or "the wrong side of the railroad tracks," where fascinating characters lived, like a man who walked around with a pet raccoon on his shoulder. Jake Caraway remembers growing up in the 1950s in Granbury. As a child, he was told to stay away from Grove Street, which is located within the eastern half of the North Side of town.<sup>xxxiv</sup>

The eastern half of the North Side is also home to Granbury's historic Reunion Grounds. In 1899, the residents of Hood County organized an annual picnic known as the "Old Soldiers and Settlers Reunion." This community-wide celebration became a tradition that continued for many years, up through 1956. It originated as a reunion of ex-Confederate soldiers and old Hood County families, and took place over a three-day period each summer at the Reunion Grounds. Located atop a hill near the cemetery, Granbury's Reunion Grounds offers a panoramic view of the town nestled on the banks of the Brazos River with Comanche Peak rising in the background.

Along the south side of the eastern end of Reunion Street as it heads toward Lake Granbury is a rural area that was once home to the community farm. During the drought and depression of the 1930s, residents of Granbury shared this rural farmland, each cultivating their own small plot of fresh vegetables. Jo Ann Massey remembers Granbury residents walking to their vegetable plots with their gardening tools.

### Railroad Changes North Side

The arrival of the railroad in the late 1880s changed much of the landscape of the North Side of the city. The block between North Houston and North Crockett Streets and much of the property west of Houston Street were platted as the Barton Addition. When the Fort Worth and Rio Grande Railroad constructed its rail line through Granbury, many local residents sold their land in the Barton Addition to the company. Existing roads and alleys near the railroad tracks were closed, and new industrial buildings constructed.

During this time period, the North Side of the city became home to industries that included cotton yards and gins. By 1932, after the advent of gas-powered engines, a Gulf Refining Co. warehouse and storage tanks were located just north of the railroad tracks

near Stockton Street. It is shown in the 1932 and 1945 Sanborn Fire Insurance Maps.



*Figure 20. Map Dated 1897 Showing Railroad Tracks Constructed Through the Barton Addition. Courtesy City of Granbury and the J.C. and Sylvia Campbell Collection.*



*Figure 21. Cotton Yard North of the Railroad Tracks in Granbury.*

Photo Courtesy Jo Ann Massey.

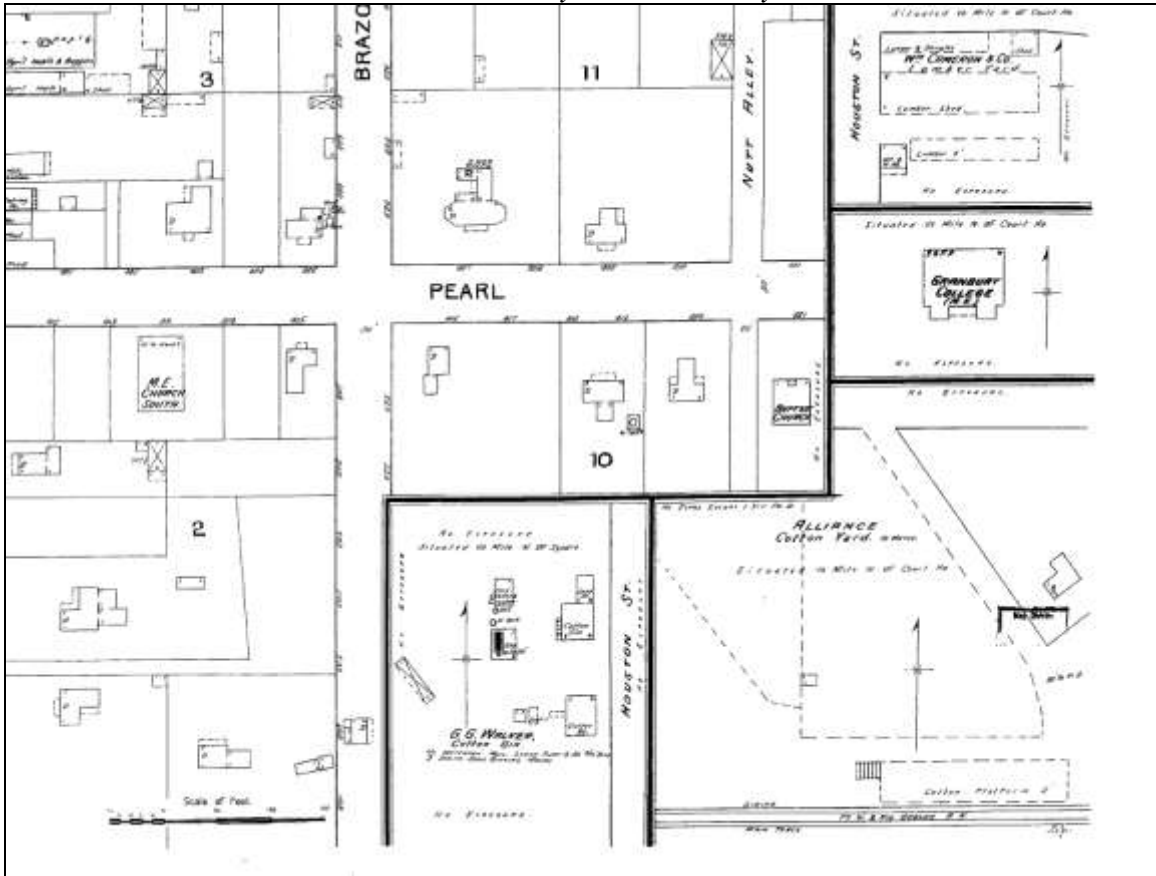


Figure 22. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1893 Showing Some of the Industries and the College that were Located North of the Courthouse Square in Granbury.



Figure 23. Goats from the Randle Family Farm Waiting to be Shipped at the Granbury Railroad Depot, Constructed in 1914. The Randle Farm is Still Located Just Outside the City Limits of Northeast Granbury Along Stockton Bend Road.

Photo Courtesy Mary Kate Durham Collection.

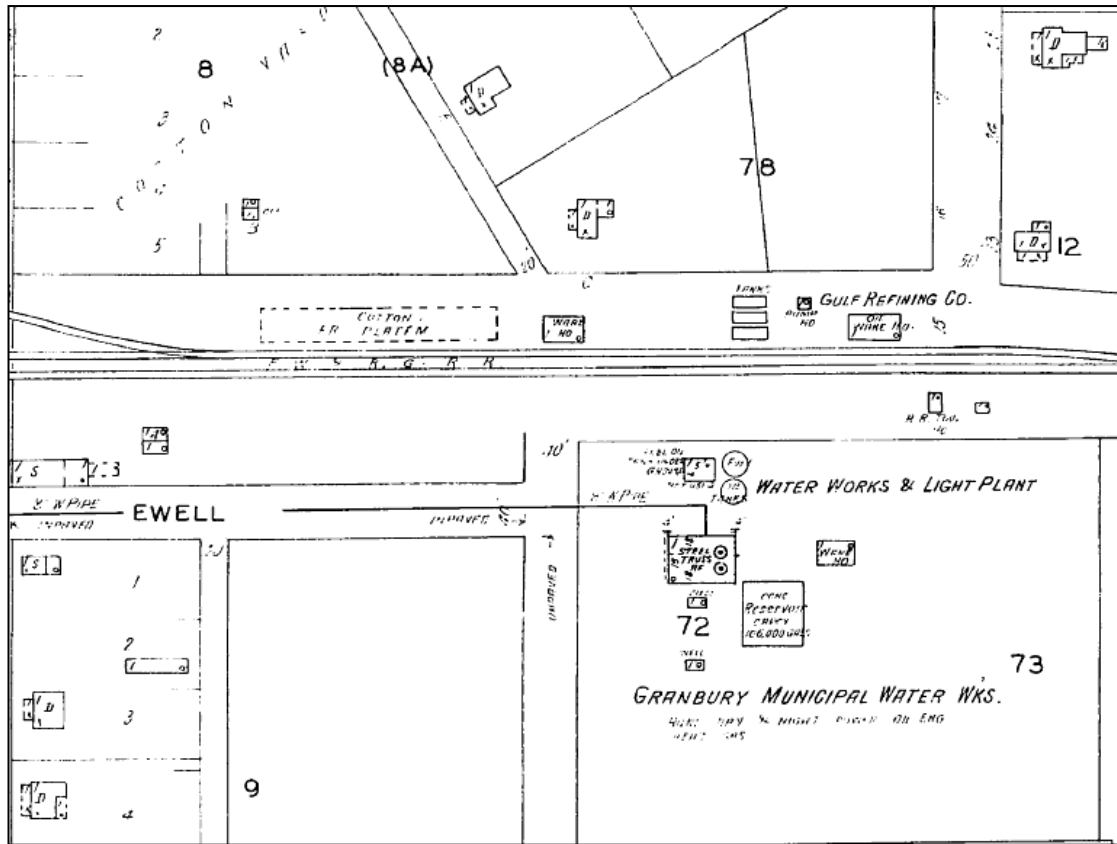


Figure 24. Sanborn Fire Insurance Map of 1932 Showing Gulf Refining Co. Warehouse and Tanks just North of the Railroad Tracks in Granbury.

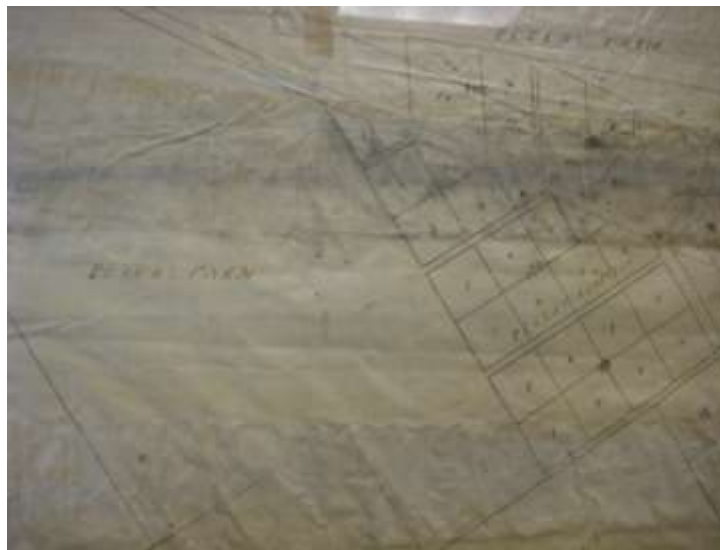
The western half of the North Side remained more rural for years. Massey remembered much of the area as “ranchland.” C.F. Rodgers’ 1897 map shows large blocks of land located there that are labeled “Peters Farm,” “J.D. Baker,” and “Dennis Farm.”

It was amidst farm and ranchland along the road leading from Granbury to nearby Thorp Spring that the affluent president of First National Bank, Dan Cogdell, built his estate. Cogdell, who was also president of Granbury’s cottonseed oil mill, chose a location just north of the railroad tracks for his home. Granbury’s cottonseed oil mill was located just southwest of his home and the railroad tracks.

Fire destroyed the Cogdell family’s first 22-room Victorian-era mansion. Just after the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Cogdell built his new home, a large Craftsman-style bungalow. This home features coppered-glass windows and a two-story sunroom along with fine interior wood paneling and built-in bookshelves. Heavy oak Arts and Crafts-era furnishings still remain in the Cogdell House.

Cogdell employed several African American servants at his large estate on Thorp Spring Road in Granbury, including a groom known as “Big Jim.” Cogdell’s housekeeper, Aniky, was married to a “good mill hand” who worked at Cogdell’s cottonseed oil mill. Josephine Cogdell, Dan Cogdell’s youngest daughter, was born right at the turn of the twentieth century. During her early childhood, “Big Jim” took Josephine astride his horse, “trotting leisurely along the country roads” near the Cogdell home.<sup>xxxv</sup>

Sam Smith, who was a Confederate veteran, Hood County cowboy and rancher, Granbury merchant, and Hood County Treasurer, built his family house along the rural reaches of Thorp Spring Road in 1883 as a simple saltbox. In 1892, Smith enlarged his house, adding Victorian-era Eastlake-inspired details.



*Figure 25. C.F. Rodgers’ 1897 Map Showing Farms and New Additions Along Thorp Spring Road. Courtesy City of Granbury and the J.C. and Sylvia Campbell Collection.*

As Granbury grew during its post-railroad boom, more houses were built throughout the western half of the North Side. Most of these houses are Folk Victorian or post-railroad National Folk Houses as identified by Virginia and Lee McAlester in their book *A Field Guide to American Houses*.

Among these houses was a small pyramidal house along West Moore Street as it leads to the city’s baseball fields. This frame house, which was recently demolished, was home during the 1950s to Rev. Connie Mass, the minister at Pleasant Chapel.



*Figure 26. Rev. Connie Mass, Preacher at the Pleasant Chapel Methodist Episcopal Church and Jake Caraway in 1959. Photo Courtesy Jake Caraway.*

In 1964, faced with losing \$15, 366 of federal funding, the Granbury Independent School District officially desegregated all twelve grades, allowing thirteen African American students to attend district classes. Two years earlier, the federal Department of Health, Education and Welfare announced that 184 Texas school districts, including Granbury, would lose federal aid unless they integrated their classes.<sup>xxxvi</sup> By the time local schools were integrated, Granbury's African American high school students were making a 70-mile round-trip bus ride each day to attend school in Fort Worth. At some point, the North Side's African American schoolhouse was demolished.

Some of the North Side survey area's significant historic and cultural resources have been lost, but many still remain, reflecting its rich history. Loss of the college and African American churches and school makes it even more important for residents of Granbury to understand, cherish, and preserve the North Side's remaining historic resources.



## Endnotes

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- <sup>i</sup> T.T. Ewell, *Hood County History* (Fort Worth: Historical Publishers, 1895, 1978), 2.
- <sup>ii</sup> Terry G. Jordan-Bychkov, *The Upland South*, (Santa Fe: Center for American Places, 2003), 17.
- <sup>iii</sup> Ewell, *Hood County History*, 85-86.
- <sup>iv</sup> Ewell, *Hood County History*, 93.
- <sup>v</sup> Jordan-Bychov, *The Upland South*, 36
- <sup>vi</sup> *Granbury Graphic*, 30 October 1886, 4.
- <sup>vii</sup> Mary G. Saltarelli, *The Granbury Railroad Depot*. Application for a Texas Historical Marker, April 9, 1984, 11.
- <sup>viii</sup> *Granbury Graphic*, 29 January and 12 March 1887.
- <sup>ix</sup> Saltarelli, *The Granbury Railroad Depot*. appendix.
- <sup>x</sup> "Hood County," *Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/view/HH/hch17.html> (accessed March 7, 2005).
- <sup>xi</sup> Sanborn Insurance Company Map of Granbury, Hood County, Texas, 1910, available at the Barker Texas History Collection, Center for American History, University of Texas, Austin.
- <sup>xii</sup> T.R. Fehrenbach, *Lone Star, A History of Texas and the Texans* (Da Capo Press, 1968, 2000), 649.
- <sup>xiii</sup> "Texas in the 1920s," *Handbook of Texas Online*, <http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/TT/hpt1.html>, and Hilton Hagan, *An Informal History of The Texas Department of Transportation* (Texas Department of Transportation, 1991), 15.
- <sup>xiv</sup> "Hood County," *Handbook of Texas Online*.
- <sup>xv</sup> Walter Prescott Webb, editor-in-chief, *A Handbook of Texas, A Dictionary of Essential Information* (Austin: The Texas State Historical Association, 1952), 715.
- <sup>xvi</sup> Mike Kingston, Editor. *A Concise History of Texas from the Texas Almanac*, (Dallas: Dallas Morning News and Texas Monthly Press, 1988), 113.
- <sup>xvii</sup> "Air Force Plant 4, Fort Worth, Texas," Global Security.org, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/facility/afp-4.htm>, (Accessed March 31, 2008).
- <sup>xviii</sup> "Hood County," *Handbook of Texas Online*.
- <sup>xix</sup> John Graves, *Goodbye to a River* (Austin: Texas Monthly Press, 1960), 220.
- <sup>xx</sup> Mavis Bryant, "Back to a New Life: Granbury's Town Square," *Texas Historical Commission Reference Series, Number 1*, circa 1980, 13.
- <sup>xxi</sup> *The Texas Main Street Handbook, a Practical Guide to Small Town Revitalization*, (Austin: Texas Historical Commission, 1986), 1 – 2.
- <sup>xxii</sup> Mary G. Saltarelli, *Walking and Driving Tour of Historic Granbury and Hood County* (Granbury, Texas: Granbury Visitor Center, 1988), 4; "Hood County," *Handbook of Texas Online*, and "Granbury," *Handbook of Texas Online*.
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Hood County Deed Records, Volume A, page 20, and Volume B, 441. Available in the County Clerks Office in the Hood County Courthouse.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Tommye Bryan Hiler and Eloise Cramer, *A History of Granbury United Methodist Church, 1871-1992*, collection of the author, 40.
- <sup>xxv</sup> "How a Stephenville editor saw Granbury," *Granbury Graphic*, January 29, 1887.
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Hood County Deed Records, Volume P, 243-244.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Hood County Deed Records, Volume 47, 491 and Volume 48, 326-327.
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Candace Ord Manroe, "Pleasant Chapel, Saluting Hood County's Early Black Community," *Hood County News*, 7 February 1985, 8A.
- <sup>xxix</sup> *Granbury Graphic Democrat*, 29 May 1913.
- <sup>xxx</sup> *Granbury News*, 11 July 1912.
- <sup>xxxi</sup> *Granbury News*, 5 September 1912.
- <sup>xxxii</sup> Granbury, *City Council Minutes*, 27 April 1914.
- <sup>xxxiii</sup> Kay Lee, Interview by Mary G. Saltarelli in Granbury, 26 September 2008.
- <sup>xxxiv</sup> Jo Ann Massey, Interview by Mary G. Saltarelli, Diane Lock and Andra Cryer, 29 September 2008.
- <sup>xxxv</sup> Kathryn Talalay, *Composition in Black and White* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1995), 34.

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<sup>xxxvi</sup> “184 Texas School Districts Facing Loss of Federal Aid,” Dallas Morning News, Section 1, 4, 10 April 1962, and “40 School Districts Join Integrated List,” Dallas Morning News, Section 1, 4, 25 March 1964.