

Green Valley Schools
Denton County, Texas
District 20
Historical Information

Community:

Green Valley; Denton County, Texas was founded in about 1870, five to ten years after the Civil War. At first Green Valley was known as Toll Town. It was known as Toll Town because of two trails or roads intersected at this point. One went from Sherman (Texas) to Fort Worth (Texas). And the other went from McKinney (Texas) through Decatur (Texas) to Fort. Jacksboro (Texas). Mail came to Green Valley using the trails or roads by stagecoach. So a Post Office was founded, three stores, and a blacksmith shop. The population of about 50 people helped make this valley into a small community.¹ Green Valley really is a valley between two big creeks in Denton County (Texas) one called Elm Creek and the other Clear Creek. This valley was full of trees, which would protect the people of Green Valley from Indians, and provide them with wood and lumber. The big creeks provided them with water and their live stock. It was one of the schoolteachers Mr. Henry Clay Wilmoth who suggested the name of Toll Town to be changed to Green Valley in 1878.² Green Valley was sure to grow larger, or that is what the community thought. But something happened that changed all of this. The Texas and Pacific Rail Road planned to come through Denton County (Texas). And

¹ History of Green Valley Community 1870-1900 By Maude (Smith) Grace, Herald Printing Company, Shawnee Oklahoma; February 1944, page 3

² First Green Valley Settlers started on Culp Creek Bank, Denton Record Chronicle, 1963

if it would come through Green Valley, it would make this community into a town and bring people to Green Valley in a much faster and more modern way. They would have had to build a depot. But when the surveyors picked another route, it missed Green Valley by about 5 miles. Then the town of Aubrey was founded, and nearly everyone moved to Aubrey to be near the railroad.³ Still Green Valley might have become famous if the Gold Mr. C.A. Hankins found had been real. One day in (1880) Mr. Hankins was blasting through some limestone when out of blew big chunks of bright yellow metal. He took a piece to Denton and when he returned the community was in an uproar. It seemed that everyone was waiting to stake off claims. However the “get rich quick” idea was soon over. Mr. Hankins learned it was only “fools gold” (mostly sulfur).⁴ Today Green Valley has very few of the old farm homes, one of the old school houses, a small Methodist Church, and a cemetery. This is just a little bit about the community of Green Valley.

Schools:

Now for information regarding the subject for my historical application regarding District 20 of the DISD (Denton Independent School District). Green Valley was slow in developing, so it took a number of years before enough people moved in to Green Valley to support and take care of a school. So there was a subscription school in a vacant farmhouse in Toll Town as early as 1878.⁵ There had been some subscription schools before that. In the summer of 1883, a man by the name of Riddle who lived near Aubrey,

³ “Green Valley Texas” The handbook of Texas Online.
<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles/view/GG/hvg46.html> [Accessed Sun Oct 1 20:52:32 US/Central 2000].

⁴ Mr. & Mrs. Ezrum Massey, Narrative, 1950's

taught a subscription school in a vacant residence about one hundred yards from where the first school house was later built. The subscription school had no equipment of any kind, no black board, no desks, maps charts et.

Parents were to furnish their children with such equipment as they could afford. Mr. M. L. Hankins relates "I sat on a stool made by my father out of a barbed wire spool, the first barbed wire I had ever saw".⁶ Miss Lillie Marlow taught a summer school in 1891 in a vacant house on the old Jesse McKinney place.

Miss Doll Klutts taught a summer school one summer in the new schoolhouse in about 1886 or 1887.⁷ At that time the requirements of a teacher in the way of preparation were not exacting. Just so the person was of good moral character and could teach the three R's namely- "Readin, "Ritin, and "Rithmetic" was all that was necessary.

Conditions were so different in those days schools were not put on a scale, there were no uniform books, nor texts; and no books were furnished by the state. Every parent was forced to furnish the books their children used. Children moving from one district to another would have an entirely different set of books to those used in the school. But because the parents couldn't afford to buy different books the kids had to use what they had. Children at this time would be more advanced in some subjects and far behind in others. How teachers taught anything and how children learned is amazing. But when it is observed the wonderful men and women the boys and girls grew up to be and the things they did, you are forced to stop, consider, and wonder if they were shrewder and more alert than the present generation with all its opportunities.

⁵ History of Green Valley Community 1870-1900 By Maude (Smith) Grace, Herald Printing Company, Shawnee Oklahoma; February 1944, page 8&9

⁶ Mr. M.H. Hankins, Green Valley Memories, August 25, 1942, page 3

The Green Valley School District Number 20 was too large for just one district, and the way the community settled caused it to be in the shape of a capital letter "L". One long arm extended north and south along the west bank of Big Elm Creek and the other east and west following Clear Creek.⁸

In the spring of 1884 the school district was organized as District Number 20, that same summer a schoolhouse was built by Mr. Sam Gross, and the elder Mr. James W. Mays, local carpenters, at the right angle of the letter "L", which made the location of the schoolhouse near the center of the community. The schoolhouse was erected one hundred and fifty yards west of Culp Creek and near the house where Mr. Riddle taught the first subscription school. But there was a difference in opinion that the schoolhouse was in the center of the district. There were families that lived further north that wanted the school to be closer to them. While the people to the south wanted it more in their direction. This later lead to two crowds the Northern or upper crowd and a Southern or lower crowd. So the children divided themselves in school, and recognized what crowd they belonged to.⁹

Miss. Lutie Whyne was employed to teach the first free school to begin in the fall of 1884 and run through the winter months.¹⁰ The following year she moved and taught in Gribble Spring (Texas). Miss Mary Lanham, who lived four miles south of Green Valley on the South side of Clear Creek, taught a subscription school in the new schoolhouse during the summer of 1885.¹¹ But these were just a few teachers. (List of teachers from 1884- 1949 attached.)

⁷ History of Green Valley Community 1870-1900 By Maude (Smith) Grace, Herald Printing Company, Shawnee, Oklahoma; February 1944, page 9

⁸ I bid, page 9

⁹ I bid, page 9

¹⁰ Mr. M.H. Hankins, Green Valley Memories, August 25, 2000, page 3

¹¹ History of Green Valley Community 1870-1900 By Maude (Smith) Grace, Herald Printing Company, Shawnee Oklahoma; February 1944, page 10

The schoolhouse built in 1884 was just a one room building about thirty-five feet long and twenty feet wide, with two windows to the south, and two to the north, and one door to the east. There was neither doors nor windows in the west-end of the building. This schoolhouse was weather-boarded but no ceiled on the sides. It was ceiled overhead and at the west-end, but the others were not. A strip of about three feet wide across the west-end of the building was painted black. This served as a blackboard. This school was built about eighteen inches off the ground on rocks, but there was no solid foundation.¹² Dogs would follow the children to school and chase the rabbits. These rabbits would run up between the ceiling on the west-end of the building and make a “heck” of a noise. This made it hard for children to learn with such commotion, between the rabbits, and the dogs barking, the teacher would have to send a few boys out to get the rabbits out of the wall and chase the dogs off.¹³

There was no furniture in this building, except a large box stove that burned wood about thirty inches long, called CHARTER OAK, and some improvised rough benches made by a local carpenter or workman, Mr. Sam Gross. Such things as desk, maps, charts, and globes were unknown in this school. In the winter when it was cold the big box stove was kept red hot in the center of the room and the children would sit near it, the closest to it were roasting, while others far away would be freezing.¹⁴ Most of the kids would walk to school threw the fields and along the muddy lanes or roads. Kids that lived pretty far in distance would ride horses.¹⁵ The schoolhouse would at most times accommodate about fifty or sixty pupils, regardless of how close you might pack them.

¹² I bid, page 10

¹³ I bid, page 10&11

¹⁴ I bid, page 11

¹⁵ James Mays, Written Questioner, October 3, 1999

At a later time the school was extended ten feet to the east or front end. This ten-foot extension was built of boxing plank and stripped, and had an extra window put on each side. This provided room for about ten to twenty more children.¹⁶

Early one morning in March 1894, the children assembled for their lessons, when to the consternation of many and the delight of a few there was no schoolhouse on the spot where such a house had stood the day before. That night the building had burnt to the ground. The pupils knew no such fact and had no information of what happened until they arrived the following morning. There was real rejoicing among a number of small boys for that day they were to receive a thrashing which they never did get.¹⁷

After the schoolhouse burned in 1894 the southern crowd leader finally decided that he would never get the school closer to the southern people of Green Valley, so he put his foot down that the new school should be built where the old one had stood. The northern crowd saw the opportunity to fight for the movement of the schoolhouse further north. So they voted and it was up to the center crowd to decide where it went. Most of these families tried to stay out of it. Then the decision was final; it was to move ½ a mile north of the original site.¹⁸ Mr. Gollihugh donated the four acres of land to the school board on which to build the new Schoolhouse and Mr. Gollihugh's son was employed to teach from 1894-1895.¹⁹ All of this happened in the summer of 1894, but the deed to the ground was not really signed and filed until in October of that year after the schoolhouse had been erected in August and September. (Deed attached)

¹⁶ History of Green Valley Community 1870-1900 By Maude (Smith) Grace, Herald Printing Company, Shawnee, Oklahoma; February 1944, Page 11

¹⁷ Mr. M.H. Hankins, Green Valley Memories, August 25, 1942, page 4

¹⁸ History of Green Valley Community 1870-1900 By Maude (Smith) Grace, Herald Printing Company, Shawnee, Oklahoma; February 1944, Page 12

¹⁹ Mr. M.H. Hankins, Green Valley Memories, August 25, 1942, page 4

The new schoolhouse built in 1894 was an up-to-date frame schoolhouse. About sixty feet long and forty feet wide furnished with excellent desks, all new and modern! A Mr. Connaly who lived in the area, an excellent carpenter, built the schoolhouse. There was also an excellent blackboard and modern equipment. At a later date another room was built on to this schoolhouse extending to the south. Within ten or twelve years that building was demolished and the present building erected on the same plot.²⁰ In other words the schoolhouse that Mr. Gollihugh and Mr. Jessup taught was located east and behind where the present schoolhouse now stands.

The present schoolhouse is a large four-room structure with a wide hall extending the full length of the building running east and west with a cement porch in front thereof. This building was wonderful for its time and is amazing because it still stands today. This building was built in 1919.²¹ This building had four classrooms where the children were divided into grade levels. The school went from the first grade to the tenth grade until 1935. The tenth grade class of 1935 was the last tenth grade class to attend Green Valley. Children would go to the Green Valley School until their ninth grade year, then would go to Denton for the tenth and eleventh. Until 1949, Texas only had eleven grades.²² The Green Valley Schoolhouse had four classrooms until 1939; one room was made into a lunchroom. Water was piped into the school for the lunchroom. The school stayed open until 1949. The last class that attended the Green Valley School was in 1949. This school had FFA clubs, Basketball teams, and lots of other events where they would compete against other local small schools.

²⁰ Nell (Whitlock) Zackery, Written Questions, October 3, 1999

²¹ Joy (Whitlock) Hanna, Written Question 5, October 3, 1999

²² A Little More History, Green Valley Community Church, January 2000

The school after that was used for a yearly homecoming, and was used by the community for their needle club and for the elder men to play dominos or card games. A verbal agreement was made between the citizens of Green Valley and the DISD (Denton Independent School District). The agreement was that the school would not be torn down, as long as it was being used.²³ Thanks to the hard work of Nell Zackery, James Mays and their fellow classmate, including my grandfather, the school is still here today.

This school has impacted Denton County more than any one will ever know. Many students became teachers, lawyers, and lots more that kept Denton County going. Many wonderful people came from Green Valley and still are today.

Sources:

1-History of Green Valley Community

By Maude (Smith) Grace, Herald Printing Company, Shawnee, Oklahoma;
February 1944

2-Denton Record Chronicle

“ Know No Such Word As Defeat” (Denton R.C. Saturday September 17, 1932)
“ First Green Valley Settlers Started on Culp Creek Bank” (Denton R.C. 1963)

3-Student information and family history sheets.

These were information sheets filled out by the Green Valley classmates in the
October 3rd, 1999

5-County Deeds

These are attached with this information.

²³ Know No Such Word as Defeat, Denton Record Chronicle, Saturday September 17, 1932

6- Teachers List

This is the complete list of Teachers that taught for the Green Valley Schools.

7- Green Valley Community Church

This is the Green Valley Community Church's newsletter that is sent to the community every so often.

8- Green Valley Memories

This was information typed by Mr. M.H. Hankins on August 25, 1942. For the first Green Valley Reunion.

By: Justin Reeves (September 27th, 2000 AD)

Green Valley School Teachers

1884-85 Miss Lutie Whyne
1885-86 Prof. S.P. Glover
1886-87 Prof. Johnson
1887-88 Miss Ella M. Snyder
1888-89 Prof. J.W. Koons
1889-90 Prof. J.W. Koons
1890-91 Prof. J.A. McAlister
1891-92 Prof. J.W. Wood
1892-93 Prof. David Hinkson
1893-94 Prof. W.J. Wilson
1894-95 Prof. W.W. Gollihugh
1895-96 Prof. George T. Jessup
1896-97 Prof. Roland D. Green
1897-98 Prof. J.M. Deaver
1898-00 Prof. George T. Jessup
1900-01 Prof. George T. Jessup
1901-02 Prof. George T. Jessup
1902-03 Prof. George T. Jessup
1903-04 Prof. George T. Jessup
1904-05 Prof. Whitfield
1905-06 Prof. Whitfield
1906-07 Miss Lillean Walker
 Miss Jennie Irving
1907-08 Miss Lillean Walker
 Miss Jennie Irving
1908-09 Miss Lillean Walker
 Miss Charollote Gambell
1909-10 Miss Lillean Walker
 Miss Sybil Campbell
1910-11 Miss Nell Musgraves
 Miss Sybil Campbell
1911-12 Prof. Roland McNeal
 Miss Jesse Garason
1912-13 Prof. Roland McNeal
 Miss Jesse Garason
1913-14 Miss Mary Ballard
 Miss Ethel Ross
1914-15 Prof. Chapman
 Miss Alpha Lynn
1915-16 Miss Zuela Johnson
 Miss Mae Nance
1916-17 Miss Zuela Johnson
 Miss Ima Tincture
 Miss Pree Turpin
1917-18 Miss Lucile Smith

Miss Mineola Morris
1918-19 Miss Ora Huffhince
Miss Willa Mae Nowlin
Miss Tressie Nowlin
1919-20 Miss Ora Huffhince
Miss Willa Mae Nowlin
Miss Tressie Nowlin
1920-21 Miss Ora Huffhince
Miss Golda Young
Miss Lila Hollingsworth
Miss Zella Binton
1921-22 Mrs. J.L. Wilkerson
Miss Elizabeth Wright
Miss Luna Moore
Miss Golda Young
1922-23 Mrs. J.L. Wilkerson
Miss Faye Cokenhour
Miss Lillan Thomas
Miss Lola Lynch
1923-24 Prof. Gross
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. Garner Payne
Miss Lola Lynch
1924-25 Prof. Gross
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. Garner Payne
Mrs. "Ma" Holcomh
1925-26 Prof. Ben Witt
Mrs. Carl Hollman
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. Margie Stafford
1926-27 Prof. R.F. Christian
Mrs. R.F. Christian
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. Margie Stafford
1927-28 Prof. R.F. Christian
Mrs. R.F. Christian
Miss Thelma Ferguson
Miss Mildred Lynch
Mrs. Charley Young
1928-29 Prof. R.F. Christian
Mrs. R.F. Christian
Mrs. Charley Young
Miss Mildred Lynch
1929-30 Prof. R.F. Christian
Mrs. R.F. Christian

Miss Thelma Fergerson
Mrs. C.E. Cockrell
Mrs. Charley Young
1930-31 ?
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1931-32 Prof. Earl Wheeler
Miss Mildred Lynch
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. C.E. Cockrell
1932-33 Prof. Earl Wheeler
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. C.E. Cockrell
Mrs. Cecil Meredrith
Miss Winefred Whecker
1933-34 Prof. Earl Wheeler
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. C.E. Cockrell
Mrs. Cecil Meredrith
Miss Winefred Whecker
1934-35 Prof. Winston Connors
Mrs. Cecil Meredrith
Mrs. Charley Young
Miss. Ruth Maxwell
1935-36 Prof. Winston Connors
Miss. Pat Chapman
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. Castleberry
Miss Vindetta Klinglesmith
1936-37 Prof. Winston Connors
Miss. Pat Chapman
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. Castleberry
Miss Vindetta Klinglesmith
1937-38 Prof. Winston Connors
Miss. Pat Chapman
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. C. Castleberry
Miss Vindetta Klinglesmith
1938-39 Prof. Wilson Mckenney
Mrs. Wilson Mckenney
Mrs. Charley Young
Mrs. C. Castleberry
1939-40 Prof. Wilson Mckenney
Mrs. Wilson Mckenney