

Plainview Cemetery

Historical Narrative researched and written by Eagle Scout Candidate Matthew Myers for Texas Historical Commission Historic Texas Cemetery marker application, Denton County

I. CONTEXT

The Plainview Cemetery is located 5.2 miles west of the intersection of FM 156 and FM 1173 in Krum, Texas, one of several small towns in western Denton County. The cemetery began as part of the rural community of Plainview and served as a burial ground for early settlers in the area. It continues today to serve the families and residents of Plainview, Krum, Stony and Denton. Many are descendants of the early settlers.

The cemetery sits behind the Plainview Baptist Church and on the south side of the Farm to Market Road 1173, between Barnett and Plainview Roads. It is half a mile south of North Hickory Creek, a creek that was spanned by the Plainview Road steel bridge built in 1903. Located near Krum, it provided farmers, ranchers and families' safe passage across North Hickory Creek, connecting them with Krum and the Gulf, Colorado and Santa Fe Railway. The bridge is one of 17 historic bridges in Denton County that have been moved from their original site and adopted by other cities and towns. Plainview Road Bridge was adopted by the city of Krum and will be permanently located in Krum.¹

Plainview community began about 1878, when the families of Gideon Kimbrough (1833-1923) and William Kimbrough (1824-1912) and their families arrived from Bellville, Tennessee². Dr. Wallace Kimbrough, son of Gideon Kimbrough, was a pioneer physician in the Denton area, who donated 22 acres of land in 1948 that would become the home of the North Texas State Fair and Rodeo.³ In the early 1880s, Elisha Cowan Bishop migrated from Tennessee and bought a tract of farm land northwest of the

cemetery. Other early settlers to the area included J.T. Bratcher, Henry Riek, W.Y. Barnett, J.B. Baxter and Irby Collier⁴. The Barnett Ranch has been recognized by the Texas Agricultural Department as a Family Land Heritage Ranch, operating continuously for 100 years. The Barnett Ranch was purchased in 1887, with 441 acres of the original land still being farmed today. After purchasing the original acreage, Barnett married Parolee Moreman, whom he met in Plano, Texas after relocating from Tennessee. Descendants of W.Y. Barnett still live on the original property today.⁵

As the community grew, the need for a school was recognized and a one-room school building was erected. After the school was built, a Baptist Sunday School began meeting in the school building in 1894.

A church was formed in 1896 and S.G. Christal (1848-1918) of Decatur was the founding pastor. Christal suggested the community be named Plainview because the settlement could be seen from a long distance.⁶ (Christal was the son of Silas and Mary Elizabeth [Burnett] Christal, who settled in the Denton Creek area near Ponder in 1855, and the cousin of Burk Burnett of the Four Sixes (6666) Ranch, who was the son of Captain Amos Jeremiah and Nancy Burnett, who also settled in the Ponder area and are buried in Sams-Burnett-Mennerly Cemetery.⁷ Eventually, a church was built on land donated by C.R. Moreman and wife, parents of Parolee Moreman Barnett.

In 1898, a plot of land adjoining the church on the south side was purchased from the estate of James B. Walker (1848-1898) to be used as a cemetery⁸. Mr. Walker was the first person to be buried in the cemetery. Today, the Plainview Baptist Church and the Plainview Cemetery are the only remnants of this once flourishing farming community.

II. OVERVIEW

In 1878, the families of Gideon and William Kimbrough arrived in the Plainview area from Tennessee. These families were the first to settle in the area. In 1881, Elisha Cowan Bishop (1854-1934) bought a tract of land northwest of where the Plainview Baptist Church and Cemetery are located. Bishop was also from Tennessee. In 1888, W. Y. Barnett (1857-1929) of Plano, Texas, purchased a large tract of land, known as the Barnett Place west of Krum. Other early settlers to the Plainview community would include J.T. Bratcher, Henry Riek (1844-1918), J.B. Baxter (1856-1932), Irby Collier, and E.E. Dean.

In the early days, this growing farming community produced mostly cotton. At one time Denton County had more than 25 cotton gins and processed over 50,000 bales in one season. By 1900, the Krum area was called the wheat capital of the world. The Chicago Mercantile Exchange would telephone the local gins in the area to get production numbers and prices for the exchange.⁹ By the early 1950s, the production of livestock had replaced agriculture. More and more farm families sought employment in Denton and other larger cities. "Plainview was a promising community with a good school, church, cotton gin and a store or two. Today it has a church and a cemetery."¹⁰

With the growth of the community, a one-room school was built in 1894 called the Plainview School. Miss Egan was the first teacher of the school. She was the first teacher and her salary was \$25.00 per month, \$5.00 of which was paid to the Riek family for board.¹¹ In 1921, a new two-story brick school was completed to serve the growing community. The new school cost \$8000.00. The school course of study included the primary department – grades first through third, the intermediate department – grades

fourth through seventh, and the high school department which had two academic years. In 1934, the Krum School Board unanimously accepted a motion from the County School Board to cut the Plainview school to seven grades and move the high school grades to Krum High School. On December 16, 1946, the trustees of the Plainview, Stony, and Hawkeye schools met with the Krum School Board to discuss consolidation. During this meeting, the Plainview and Hawkeye schools were consolidated into the Krum Rural High School District. The brick school building is no longer in existence, but the original storm cellar for the school still remains on the parcel northwest of the Church location, near the intersection of FM 1173 and Barnett Road.¹²

In April, 1894, the Plainview Baptist Church was organized and began meeting in the Plainview School. Reverend S.G. Christal was the first pastor and served until 1902. Several founders of Plainview were charter members of the church including the Baxter, Dean, Barnett, Collier and Reik families. The first Sunday School Superintendent was J.B. Baxter (1856-1932) who served until 1898 followed by W.Y. Barnett. In 1914, the Plainview Baptist Church reported having a Women's Missionary Union organization which served for many years. In 1927, the church reported an active Young People's Organization. The church joined the Denton County Baptist Association in 1896 and has been regarded as a model country Baptist Church.¹³ In 1896, C.R. Moreman and his wife sold the land for the church for the sum of one dollar.¹⁴

Not without controversy, in about 1905, Reverend E. J. Thompson baptized an African-American man, Jerry Sherman, who worked on Deacon W.Y. Barnett's farm in Hickory Creek. Several members of the church were present, Sherman was told, "I baptize thee, my brother in black, in the name of the Father, the Son and Holy Ghost."¹⁵

Plainview Baptist Church has maintained full time services since it was founded in 1894 and still has an active congregation today.

In a deed dated December 13, 1899, Mrs. N.C. Walker sold two acres to W.F.P. Bishop, listed as a trustee of the Plainview Cemetery for permanent use as a cemetery. She sold the original land for \$60.00. Her husband was already buried on the property¹⁶. This became the only cemetery for the Plainview Community. At least five people from the community were buried in the cemetery prior to 1900. A large increase in burials took place in the early 1900s because of national influenza epidemic¹⁷.

The cemetery has a main drive going north to south that divides the property into two sections west and east. Most of the early graves are located in the northeast corner of the cemetery. The cemetery is fenced in with wrought iron across the north end and wire fencing on the east, west and south sides.

The cemetery has a variety of marble and cement headstones. Many headstones are marked with biblical scripture, Masonic Markings, Woodsman Seals, and military headstones. Veterans from the Civil War, World War I, World War II, Korea, and Vietnam Conflict are buried in the cemetery. George McCormick served as a Private in Company A, 29th Texas Cavalry (DeMorses's). The 29th Cavalry was assembled in Clarksville, Texas and consisted of men who were raised at Denton, San Antonio, Paris, Livingston, and Pilot Point. The regiment served in the Indian Territory, fought in Louisiana and Arkansas, then returned to the Indian Territory. Here it reported 11 casualties in the conflict at Cabin Creek. Later the 29th moved back to Texas and disbanded at Hempstead during May, 1865.¹⁸ Daniel Mitchell Reeves served as a Private in Company I, 10th Alabama Infantry. The 10th Infantry Regiment was formed in

June, 1861, at Montgomery, Alabama. , and moved to Virginia a month later. The 10th was prominent in many battles of the Army of Northern Virginia from Williamsburg to Cold Harbor, then was active in the Petersburg siege south of the James River and the Appomattox Campaign. Of the 311 men engaged in the Battle of Gettysburg, thirty-four percent were killed, wounded, or missing. ¹⁹

Many family sections have been curbed. Many founding families of the community have gravesites in the cemetery as well as many generations of their descendants. The Shifflett Family has four generations of family buried in the cemetery. The Barnett and Briscoe families have three generations buried in the cemetery. Clara Lou Briscoe, wife of Oscar Lee “Jack” Briscoe is a direct descendant of Lord Baltimore.²⁰

In 1992, Donald and Gayle Shifflett, descendants of the community and church founders sold an additional 2 acres of land to the Plainview Cemetery Association for \$10 to expand the cemetery. The 2 acre expansion was added to the south section of the cemetery.²¹

The cemetery is still in operation today and is managed by the Plainview Cemetery Association and is no longer part of the Plainview Baptist Church. In 2012, a park kiosk was erected to preserve the community history and provide a directory of grave and military grave designation for visitors. Cement headstones were also added to graves with aged funeral home markers. This project was completed by Matthew Myers, an Eagle Scout Candidate from Troop 555, Boy Scouts of America in honor of his family that is buried in the cemetery. Matthew is a 4th generation descendent of William Clifford Briscoe, buried in the northeast corner of the cemetery.

III. SIGNIFICANCE

The Plainview Cemetery is significant because it the primary remaining vestige of the Plainview Community. The graves provide a record of the settlers' families, and descendents, including teachers, preachers and military veterans who lived and worked in the community. Still in use today, the cemetery provides a history of the families in the area. The landscape is well maintain and provides examples of the funeral practice of many generations through the unique markers and engravings. The land surrounding the cemetery is still used in active farming today. The only remaining building structure for this community is the Plainview Baptist church on the north side of the cemetery. An Official Texas Marker for the Plainview Cemetery would provide and important historical reference to the pioneering farming community and would forever preserve it to educate further generations.

IV. DOCUMENTATION

¹ "Bridging Yesterday to Tomorrow." Denton County historic iron/steel bridge brochure, Denton County Historical Commission.

² "Krum and Plainview" Community Research by Betty Copeland, Denton County Museum. 2003. Denton County Historical Commission Resource Library, 110 W. Hickory Street, Denton.

³ North Texas State Fair and Rodeo, Texas Historical Commission Marker, 2011. 2217 N. Carroll Blvd, Denton, Texas

⁴ Davis, Della Isbell. *Krum, Texas. The Story of a Small Town*. Krum Public Library Building Committee, 2003.

⁵ Skip Barnett: Interview with Patricia Myers, September 18, 2012. Transcript available at Denton County Historic Commission Resource Library, 110 W. Hickory Street, Denton.

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- ⁶ “Plainview Community (Home Demonstration Club Collection).” *www.dentonhistory.net* Mike Cochran 2011
- ⁷ Ponder Texas Historical Commission Subject Marker, 2011; HTC designation Sams-Burnett-Mennerly Cemetery.
- ⁸ Denton County Deeds Records, Volume 00079, p. 77; January 1, 1900.
- ⁹ Barnett, 1991.
- ¹⁰ Bridges, C.A., *History of Denton, Texas From Its Beginning to 1960*. (Waco, Texas: Copyright 1978 by C.A. Bridges.)
- ¹¹ Plainview Community (Home Demonstration Club Collection).
- ¹² Barnett, 1991.
- ¹³ Rayzor, James Newton. *History of the Denton County Baptist Association and the Sixty Churches Organized Within its Jurisdiction.*, (Wm. H McNitzy, 1936), pp. 75-78
- ¹⁴ Denton County Deed Records, Volume 67, p. 351; September 22, 1897.
- ¹⁵ History of the Denton County Baptist Association and the Sixty Churches Organized Within its Jurisdiction.
- ¹⁶ Deed Record, Denton County, Texas, Volume 79, Page 77 Dated January 1, 1900.
- ¹⁷ Bolivar Cemetery, Texas Historical Commission Marker, 1998. FM 445 3.7 miles west of IH-35
- ¹⁸ 29th Regiment, Texas Calvary (DeMorse’s). October 10, 2012 October 27, 2012 <http://www.nps.gov>
- ¹⁹ 10th Regiment, Alabama Infantry. October 10, 2012 October 27, 2012 <http://www.nps.gov>
- ²⁰ Briscoe- Myers Family Tree. October 27, 2012 <http://trees.ancestry.com/tree/17099547/family>
- ²¹ Denton County Deed Records, Warranty Deed, Volume 3417, p. 0757; December 18, 1992