

SILVER SPUR SALOON

ROANOKE, TX

Historical Narrative researched and written by Kate Singleton for Texas Historical Commission (THC)
Recorded Texas Historic Landmark Marker Application, Denton County. 2009

**Rock Building, 114 N. Oak Street Roanoke, Denton County, Texas
(The application to the Texas Historical Commission was named “Rock Building.”
Later during the marker inscription process it was renamed “Silver Spur Saloon.”)**

I. Context

The “Rock Building” located at 114 N. Oak Street in Roanoke, Denton County, is the oldest extant commercial building in the community. Constructed in 1886, five years after Roanoke was established, it was one of the first permanent buildings in this newly platted railroad town. The building is associated with prominent local citizens including local rancher and businessman R.M. Snead, his brother B. S. Snead and the town’s first mayor, Hugh W. Jenkins.

The community of Roanoke is located in North Central Texas in Denton County at the intersection of U. S. Highway 377 and State Highway 114. Roanoke replaced two earlier settlements, Elizabethtown and Garden Valley. The town of Roanoke was the center of community life and a commercial hub for this prosperous ranching region between Fort Worth and Denton, The town served as a major shipping point for the large cattle ranches of southern Denton County.¹ It was platted in 1881 as part of the expansion of the Texas and Pacific Railway through North Central Texas out of the D.O. Hoover Survey. The orientation is southwest to northeast along Oak Street, the main street through the community. The Rock Building housed a variety of local businesses over the years including the Silver Spur Saloon and Hugh Jenkins Hardware Store. This

¹ Ron Emrich, *National Register of Historic Places Continental Bank Building , Roanoke, Texas* (1986), p.3

building is a contributing structure to the Central Roanoke National Register Historic District.²

II. Overview

The area was first settled around 1847 by Charles (1807-1864) and Lewis (Louis) Medlin and their families. Charles Medlin, his wife Matilda (Allen), his brother Lewis and their widowed mother had migrated from Missouri with 20 other families.³ Charles Medlin brought his 14 children with him. The 1860 U.S. Census shows Charles with 7 children at this time and Lewis (or Louis) with 7 children.⁴ Their settlement was located northeast of present day Roanoke on Denton Creek and called Medlin Center. The community's name was later changed to Garden Valley. The town was moved closer to what is now Roanoke due to the continual flooding of Denton Creek.

Although the area was settled in 1847, the town of Roanoke was not established until 1881 when the Texas and Pacific Railroad came through and founded the community to serve as a major shipping point for the cattle ranches in the vicinity. Local historians believe the town was named by one of the railroad surveyors who came from Roanoke, Virginia. The railroads had a profound effect on the establishment of new towns and the economic growth of existing communities and these new towns.

² Kate Singleton. *National Register of Historic Places Central Roanoke Historic District, Roanoke, Texas.* (2007)

³ Texas Historical Commission Subject Marker for the Medlin Cemetery, Denton County, 1977.

⁴ U.S. Census, 1860, p.85 and p.87.

The two story rock building located at 114 N. Oak Street was constructed in 1886 by Lawrence Olson for R.M. and B.S. “Ned” (or “Med”) Snead five years after the town had been established by the railroad. The brothers, Robert M. and Burrell S. (also seen as Burwell or Buriel with a nickname of Ned or Med), saw the economic impact of the railroad on the town and surrounding area. The property had been purchased by G.H. Dashwood from the Texas and Pacific Railroad in 1882.⁵ Dashwood then sold the property to the Snead brothers in 1883.⁶ Apparently, the stone came from local ranches, the Medlin Ranch and John Toland’s ranch. R.M. Snead (1859-1911) owned almost 300 acres in Tarrant County near Henrietta Creek. According to the 1880 U.S. Census, Snead was born in Texas and lived in Denton County with brothers Burrell (also shown as Burwell, Buriel, Ned or Med) and George and his mother, Mary.⁷ She was a Medlin, an early pioneer ranching family. Snead was on the executive committee of the Denton County Immigration Association.⁸ He was also on the committee, along with J.W. Medlin, to negotiate with the Gulf and Pacific Railroad to have their route pass through Roanoke.⁹ Snead also served as a delegate from Denton County to the State Democratic Convention.¹⁰ Locally, he was a property owner, rancher and notary.

Mr. Snead’s building was constructed as a saloon, the Silver Spur. Local legend indicates that it was also a brothel. The building next door (112 N. Oak) was two stories and housed a bank at this time. Upstairs there was a door between the two buildings. This

⁵ Denton County Deed Records, Warranty Deed Vol. 66 p.344, April 12, 1882.

⁶ Denton County Deed Records, Warranty Deed Vol. Y, P.264, December 12, 1883.

⁷ U.S. Census 1860 Denton County, p.84, 1870 Denton County, p. 14; 1880, Denton County p. 20.

⁸ “Immigration Matters”. *Dallas Morning News*, January 21, 1888, p. 6.

⁹ “Great Railway World”, *Dallas Morning News*, October 12, 1886, p. 2.

¹⁰ “Denton County Democrats”. *Dallas Morning News*, April 27, 1902, p.23.

allowed patrons to come into the bank, go upstairs and pass through to the brothel without detection. The door is still in evidence. In later years, the building was used as a grocery, the site of Hugh Jenkins' hardware store, and a café.

The building was constructed in 1886 by Lawrence Olson, a stone mason and Mr. Allison. Olson arrived in the area from Stockholm in 1870. He became a naturalized citizen in 1895. The saloon was owned by the Snead brothers.¹¹

III. Significance

One of the most prominent buildings in the community, it is representative of the growth and development of this small community. The building is associated with R.M. Snead, local businessman and rancher, and Hugh W. Jenkins (1883-1972), businessman and first mayor of Roanoke. Additionally, this structure is the oldest extant commercial building in the community, and is made of locally quarried rock. Constructed in 1886, it is the only remaining commercial structure from the early development of Roanoke. The other commercial structures date from the early 20th century. The building is an excellent example of 19th century commercial architecture.

The building was owned by the Snead brothers, prominent local businessmen and ranchers. Their mother was a member of the Medlin family who had extensive land holdings in the area. After R.M. Snead died in 1911, J.W. Medlin sold the property to P.C. Withers.¹²

¹¹ Petersen, Conway. Peterson Family History 1810-1997. Self-published, September 12, 1997, p.50.

¹² Denton County Deed Records, Warranty Deed Vol. 41, p.440, May 25, 1911.

The building was the first location of Hugh Jenkins' Hardware. Hugh W. Jenkins (1883-1972), who came to Roanoke from Tennessee in 1905, became an active citizen and prominent businessman in the community. In 1912, Jenkins and several other local businessmen started a "Board of Trade" (precursor to a Chamber of Commerce) for Roanoke. Jenkins was elected the first president of the organization and W.P. Davis, J.M. Medlin and J.R. Norton were also involved.¹³ In 1915, he bought the hardware part of the Hise and J.H. Seagraves dry goods and hardware business. Jenkins' first location was the rock building at 114 N. Oak Street. He also served as a vice-president of the Northwest Highway Association.¹⁴ Jenkins served as the city's first mayor after the town was incorporated in 1933. Mr. Jenkins proceeded to apply to the Public Works Administration for a loan to build a new water system in the community.¹⁵ He is credited with developing the well and water system in Roanoke.¹⁶ Jenkins also had another hardware store located in Keller and was an investor in the Roanoke Creamery.¹⁷

The building was sold in 1929 to J. H. Jones.¹⁸ In 1945, the building was sold to Ross Brown and then to Jess Brock in 1948.¹⁹ J.C. Craig purchased the building in 1953 and did not sell it until 1971.²⁰ The building sold again in 1980 and eventually passed to the banks soon after. The city of Roanoke was given the building by Mr. and Mrs. John

¹³ "Board of Trade". *Dallas Morning News*, October 24, 1912, p.15.

¹⁴ "Governor Scheduled Speaker". *Dallas Morning News*, May 8, 1932, Section III, p. 7.

¹⁵ City of Roanoke Ordinance 34-103 August 28, 1934.

¹⁶ Information provided from notes of H.W. Jenkins and Mrs. Alberta Lincecum

¹⁷ "Keller Fire Does \$25,000 Damage". *Dallas Morning News*, December 14, 1942, Section 1, p.2.

¹⁸ Denton County Deed Records Warranty Deed, Vol. 238, p.443, November 27, 1929.

¹⁹ Denton County Deed Records Warranty Deed, Vol. 343, p.285, March 13, 1948.

²⁰ Denton County Warranty Deed, Vo. 391, p.43, September 30, 1953; Warranty Deed Vol. 633, p.574, October 20, 1971.

Moore. The building has now been rehabilitated by the city for use as a Visitor's Center and local history museum.

Architectural Description

The Rock Building is earliest extant commercial structure in Roanoke and is an excellent example of late 19th century commercial architecture. The building is situated on block 11, lot 18 of Old Town Roanoke. The land was in of the D.O. Hoover Survey and was part of the original Texas and Pacific town site that was platted in 1881. The lot measures approximately 25 feet by 140 feet and faces northwest on to Oak Street. The building measures 25 feet by 60 feet of this lot. The Rock Building is a two-part Commercial structure. Richard Longstreth in his book, *The Buildings of Main Street*, defines this building type as two to four stories, characterized by a horizontal division into two distinct areas. This division denotes the different uses inside the structure. This building type was ubiquitous from the 1850's to the 1950's.²¹ The stone used to construct this building was quarried from local ranches, the Medlin and Toland ranches. The rock was moved to the site by Frank Stump, Mr. Allison and Lawrence Olson. The building was constructed by Lawrence Olson who had emigrated from Stockholm, Sweden in 1870.²² A complete rehabilitation of the building was completed in 2008.

The building is a handsome stone structure with arched windows and keystones on the front facade. The stone used on the front (northwest) façade is cut stone and the stone on the side and rear facades are rubble. The foundation of the building extends three feet

²¹ Longstreth, Richard. *Buildings of Main Street*. Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation p.24.

²² Petersen, p.50.

below grade and is approximately three feet wide. The base of the walls is three feet wide. The walls were built to curve slightly to give them more strength. At the top of the building the walls are twelve inches thick. The parapet is corbelled with white stones evenly spaced across the front. There is a stone belt course below the second story windows. The first floor has three arched openings with a white stone belt course between the openings. At the bases of the colonnade are also white stones. The keystones in the arches above the door transom are natural stone. The threshold plates at the doors were inscribed with R.M. and B.S. Snead; four of the five original plates are still there. The doors are single light two panel with arched single pane transoms. These doors are replacements but historically accurate. The second floor of the front façade has three arched windows with white keystones. The windows are one over one wood windows with a single pane arched transoms. These windows, as are all the windows on the building, are replacements but are historically accurate. The east façade has three arched windows with stone sills and stone arches. They are one over one wood windows. There is a door on the second floor with a stair leading to the first floor. This exterior stair is the only access to the upper floor. It is a single door with an arched single pane transom above it. The door is original but the stairs descend in the opposite direction due to code requirements. On the west façade is a door on the second floor that was once access from the building next door (112 Oak Street was once two story). It is rumored that a brothel was on the second floor of the Rock Building and that this door provided “unseen” access to it. The door has been replaced but is still evident and accurate. The rear (south) façade has a door and one window on the first floor. The door is a single wood door with a rock arch and a rectangular transom. The window has a rock arch and

is one over one wood window with a stone sill. On the second floor are three windows with rock arches. They are one over one wood windows with stone sills. There is a new stone wall approximately three feet tall. It screens the mechanical equipment. The roof material is flat membrane.

The building had several uses over the years from saloon to hardware store and grocery. Now owned by the city of Roanoke, it serves as a Visitors' Center and museum. The interior has been rehabilitated and retains what would have been its original open configuration and materials. The floor was originally long leaf yellow pine but deteriorated over time and was replaced with a similar wood floor. At the rear of the first floor, located on the east side wall are the restrooms. Across from these is a partial wall approximately ten feet tall that creates an office space. The west wall of the building has been covered with sheet rock and painted; the east wall was left exposed to show the rubble rock and the original construction method. The first floor is open to the upper floor. The second floor has new large wood trusses that replaced the original ones that had deteriorated. These exposed trusses give an excellent representation of the original building system. A portion of the second floor is usable space, which extends along the east and south walls as a balcony. This area is accessed from a metal stair of the exterior of the east faced. The staircase replaces one at the original site that did not meet code. Again, this is the only access to the second floor. The second story space is a storage area that extends across the rear of the building and is accessed from this walkway. The mechanical duct work is suspended from the ceiling. A metal awning, shown in historic photographs, has been added to the front of the building. The awning is supported by

metal rods that are anchored on the front façade. The City of Roanoke has done a painstaking rehabilitation of this structure, the oldest extant commercial building in Roanoke, Texas.

IV. Documentation

Much of the information for this marker application came from the National Register Nomination for Downtown Roanoke and the Subject Marker for Downtown Roanoke, both written by Kate Singleton. Additional bibliographic and research information is contained in those documents.

1. Ron Emrich, *National Register of Historic Places Continental Bank Building , Roanoke, Texas* (1986).
2. Kate Singleton, *National Register of Historic Places Central Roanoke Historic District, Roanoke, Texas* (2008).
3. Texas Historical Commission Subject Marker for the Medlin Cemetery, Denton County, 1977.
4. U.S. Census, 1860 Denton County, p.85 and p.87.
5. Denton County Deed Records, Warranty Deed Vol. 66 p.344, April 12, 1882.
6. Denton County Deed Records, Warranty Deed Vol. Y, P.264, December 12, 1883.
7. U.S. Census 1860 Denton County, p.84, 1870 Denton County, p. 14; 1880, Denton County p. 20.
8. "Immigration Matters". *Dallas Morning News*, January 21, 1888, p. 6.
9. "Great Railway World", *Dallas Morning News*, October 12, 1886, p. 2.
10. "Denton County Democrats". *Dallas Morning News*, April 27, 1902, p.23.
11. Petersen, Conway. Peterson Family History 1810-1997. Self-published, September 12, 1997, p.50..
12. Denton County Deed Records, Warranty Deed Vol. 41, p.440, May 25, 1911.
13. "Board of Trade". *Dallas Morning News*, October 24, 1912, p.15.
14. "Governor Scheduled Speaker". *Dallas Morning News*, May 8, 1932, Section III, p. 7.
15. City of Roanoke Ordinance 34-103 August 28, 1934.
16. Information provided from notes of H.W. Jenkins and Mrs. Alberta Lincecum
17. "Keller Fire Does \$25,000 Damage". *Dallas Morning News*, December 14, 1942, Section 1, p.2.
18. Denton County Deed Records Warranty Deed, Vol. 238, p.443, November 27, 1929.
19. Denton County Deed Records Warranty Deed, Vol. 343, p.285, March 13, 1948.
20. Denton County Warranty Deed, Vo. 391, p.43, September 30, 1953; Warranty Deed Vol. 633, p.574, October 20, 1971.
21. Longstreth, Richard. Buildings of Main Street. Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation p.24.
22. Petersen, p.50.

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- Richard Longstreth, *Buildings of Main Street* (Washington, D.C.: National Trust for Historic Preservation, 1987).
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Dallas Morning News, "Conference with Railroad Promoters", March 15, 1906, p.9.

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Dallas Morning News, *Texas Charters*, May 31, 1913, p.7.

Dallas Morning News, *Texas Charters*, October 11, 1912, p.11.

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"Seagraves came to Texas from Lafayette, Tennessee", as told by Hise Seagraves, on October 8, 1963. Author unknown. From the papers of Hise Seagraves Sr. and Jr., loaned by Gary Alexander, Fort Worth, Texas, Denton County Historical Commission Files (City of Roanoke files).

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Kate Singleton, National Register Nomination Downtown Roanoke, Texas, 2007

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Denton County's Jansey Chisum, Almeadia Chisum Jones, Eugie Jones Thomas and Family. Paper by Yvonne A. Jenkins, 1996. In the files of the Denton County Historical Commission.

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Ordinance 37-100A, July 27, 1937

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Denton County Deed Records

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Denton County Deed Records, Warranty Deed Vol. 41, p.440, May 25, 1911.

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Denton County Deed Records Warranty Deed, Vol. 343, p.285, March 13, 1948.

Denton County Warranty Deed, Vo. 391, p.43, September 30, 1953; Warranty Deed Vol. 633, p.574, October 20, 1971.

U.S. Census Records

U. S. Census Denton County, Texas, 1860, 1870, 1880.

Photo Log

1. East and North Facades, City of Roanoke, October 2008
2. North Façade, City of Roanoke, October 2008
3. East and South Facades, Tony Eeds, September 2008
4. West and South Facades, Tony Eeds, September 2008
5. East Façade, Window detail, Tony Eeds, September 2008
6. Interior, looking Southwest, Tony Eeds, September 2008
7. Interior looking North, Tony Eeds, September 2008
8. Interior looking South, interior trusses, balcony, and “private” door from bank to saloon on second floor, west façade (See arrow), Tony Eeds, September 2008
9. Interior, looking South, rock wall on East façade, trusses and balcony, Tony Eeds, September 2008
10. Historic Photograph, Trade Days, ca. 1946, City of Roanoke
11. Historic Photograph, 1953, City of Roanoke
12. Historic Photograph, 1953, City of Roanoke

Site and Floor Plans Drawn by Tony Eeds

1. First Floor Plan
2. Second Floor Plan
3. Site Plan