

CONCORD CHRONICLES

**THE LAND
THE PEOPLE
THE MEETING HOUSE**

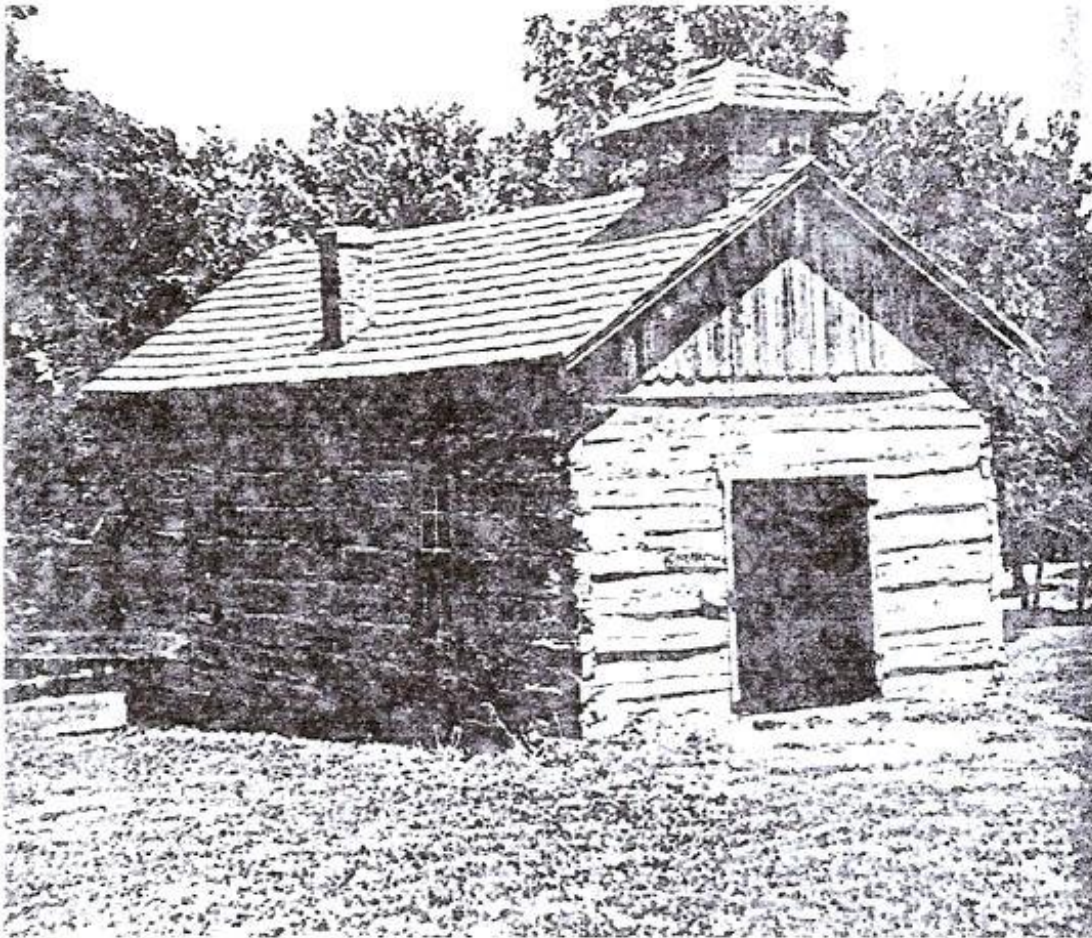
**THE CHURCH
1857 - 2007**

**“A BEACON FOR CHRIST FOR 150 YEARS YET IT
HAS ONLY JUST BEGUN.”**

Janette Tigert Cook

Vicki Tigert Davis

Reggie Talley



Courtesy of Reggie Talley

**A building thought to be similar to the original
Concord Meeting House and Church.**

CONCORD CHRONICLES. Copyright © 2007 by Janette Tigert Cook.
All rights reserved.

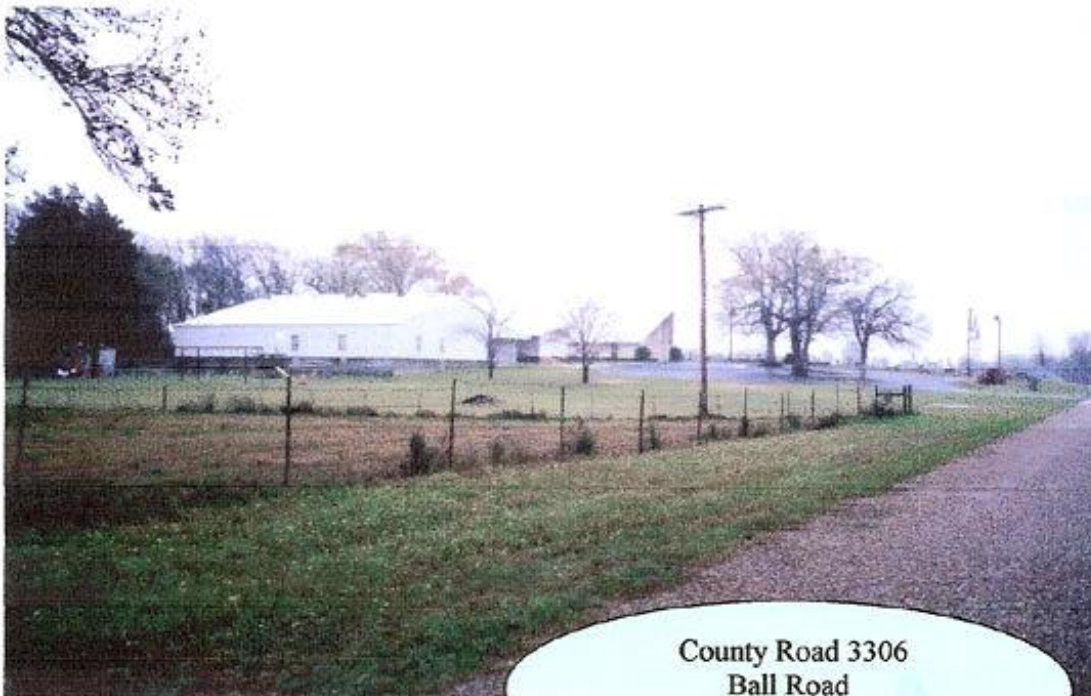
Cover photo by Janette Tigert Cook.
Layout by Vicki Tigert Davis.

Printed in the United States of America by Latson's Printing, Commerce, Texas.

The events described in this document are compiled from a variety of sources and the tireless efforts of many. Credit has been given to those contributors where possible. No errors of omission or commission are purposeful and an apology is offered if needed. Friendly and helpful suggestions are welcome at janettecook@yahoo.com. Thank you for your interest in this project.

CONCORD CHRONICLES

THE LAND
THE PEOPLE
THE MEETING HOUSE
THE CHURCH



County Road 3306
Ball Road
Omaha, Texas 75571

CONCORD CHRONICLES

THE LAND AND PEOPLE, THE MEETING HOUSE AND THE CHURCH

Prologue

The Land and People

Sometime after God expelled Adam and Eve from the Garden of Eden, their descendants made their way into the evolving lands we now know as the Americas. Some of these people migrated across the Asian Continent and overland on the land formation that covered the Bering Strait. Slowly they made their way south throughout what are now the Americas. They called themselves The People or The Real People. (Epic) After crossing a large red river and another with sulphur tasting water, the wanderers stopped between two small creeks that we call Little Boggy Creek and Boggy Creek (A.D. 800) (TSHA). They fished in the streams and hunted game on land overlapping a post oak belt and piney woods. They explored their environs of rolling hills and grassy plains.

The seasons were relatively mild yet distinct. Life was tough and The People "sought a higher meaning to their lives." The use of fire and the invention of the bow made life somewhat easier. They hunted with hand hewn arrows, leaving artifacts that many generations later Jesse Lee Ball, an Anglo American, would find as he plowed his fields less than a mile west of where the children now play at the Concord Missionary Baptist Church.

"Jeff Talley found the remains of fire pits from camps just across from the spring, opposite the supposed church site. This could be from Indians (probably used for many generations) or by troops camping there, or just travelers camping there when passing through (springs are natural camping sites). He also found lots of arrowheads; wish I had kept the box he showed us as kids." (Rogge Talley)

Eventually these Real People formed family and tribal groups with recognizable lifestyles. Unlike their nomadic peers who built portable tepees of hides and strong poles, they built dwellings covered by grass and cane thatch. They lived together in small communities and became excellent farmers, harvesting crops from the sandy to loamy soil and benefiting from a good water supply. As they dug in the soil, they noticed the reddish subsoil and clay that they used to produce pottery for cooking and storing their food. They ate deer from the surrounding woodlands and corn (lots of it), squash, and beans grown in hand-cultivated patches.

The People between the Boggies were large, strong, quiet, and friendly. They had a highly developed culture with a system of social authority and ceremony. Both men and women participated in their governing councils. Descent was through the mother. They were a peaceful group; there is no evidence of a war chief.

And these Real People danced and sang. Their music of drum beats and melodious chants reflected their appreciation and admiration of nature. They met around a common fire and

with musical lyrics, they told of the Creator singing life into being. (Epic)

So these people lived in concord demonstrating a unity of feeling or interest, agreement, accord, peace, and friendly relations.

European Contributions: Concord During the Development of Texas

Spanish Texas: 1492-1821

Long after the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, Europeans including Amerigo Vespucci explored the seas. And in 1492, Christopher Columbus got lost on his way to India. He met the inhabitants where he disembarked and named them Indians thinking that he had found the land of the spices.

During the following approximate 300 years (1500 to 1800 A.D.), the Spanish continued to come to the land of the Indians, entering their land primarily through gulf ports. When the Spaniards asked the People how they called themselves, they replied, "Tayshas" meaning friend. (Epic) The Spanish pronounced this Tejas. At some point, the Real People who settled between the Boggies within the great bend of the Red River were Kadohadachoes (meaning real chief or real Caddo) or Caddoes.

The Tejas were part of the Hasinat Confederacy, in East Texas, and one of the large subdivisions of the Caddo tribes. They lived in the area of the Trinity River and the Angelina River south of the Caddoes of Northeast Texas. It is the Tejas who gave the state its name. Although they were hunters, they were not fierce and warlike as were the Indians of the plains. (Our Texas 27) There were three groups of the friendly Caddoes; those called the Tejas who settled near the Neches and Angelina Rivers, those within the bend of the Red River, and the Natchitoches on the Red River near the French post of Natchitoches, established in 1714. (TSHA: Caddo)

The Spaniards led by Coronado and Cortez claimed extensive lands north of the Rio Grande River for the King of Spain. They were aggressive and came looking for riches but they also came with religious fervor to bring Christianity to the natives. They brought priests and established missions to educate the natives with European skills and ways of life. Few colonists were willing to join them in the rough land and the natives did not thrive under their control.

Most of the Spanish efforts were concentrated outside the northeast Texas area. In fact no Spanish missions or forts were established within the lands bounded on the north by the Red River and on the south by the Sabine River. The missions were the first public schools in Texas; yet none were established in northeast Texas. The religion, education, architecture and culture brought by the Spanish to Texas were seldom found in northeast Texas.

The only Spanish explorer to enter northeast Texas was Moscoso, who led DeSoto's army after his death. In 1542 Moscoso headed for Mexico through the Arkansas Territory, crossed the Red River just north of present-day Texarkana. His route brought him close by and probably to the south of the area we know as Concord. (Our Texas) Teran

de los Rios is also said to have visited Caddo settlements in 1691, following the trail of DeSoto within northeast Texas. (Tarpley) Whether either came through the Boggies is supposition but most likely they met the friendly Caddoes.

The French Influence: ca. 1700 -1803

The French came closest to northeast Texas from Louisiana on the east. They did not venture far and made little attempt to colonize in Texas. (TX History Movies 18) However, they may have explored the Concord area during the time they held a fort at Le Poste des Cadodaquious in the territory of present-day Bowie County. (TSHA: Red River County) It is possible that small groups of French soldiers, hunters, trappers, and traders drank from a spring near the Concord Church.

LaSalle, a Jesuit school teacher, thought the Ohio River went to China, but from Montreal, Canada, he got no further than Louisville, Kentucky. He and his company then floated in canoes down the Mississippi River to its mouth. In 1682 he claimed the lands called the Louisiana Territory west of the Mississippi for the King of France Louis XIV. (TX History Movies) Two years later while seeking the mouth of the Mississippi River, LaSalle and his contingency of soldiers and settlers got lost and landed at Matagorda Bay along the coast of Texas. LaSalle was killed by his own people and buried in Texas. Many of the French returned to France. Those who stayed traded with the Indians, accepted their customs peacefully and frequently lived with them. (Epic) Being lost was more than a common occurrence for men.

The claims by both Spain and France for the lands in Texas, particularly the land in the northeast corner, led to conflicts and confusion for the inhabitants especially the Caddoes. But it was the ownership of the Louisiana territory that impacted northeast Texas greatly. For most of the 1700s, few Europeans ventured into the northeast Texas area and the Indians existed peacefully. However, at the end of the Seven Years, War (aka French and Indian War) in 1762, France ceded all of Louisiana west of the Mississippi to Spain. (Our Texas 38) Fourteen years later in 1776, the thirteen English colonies declared their independence and began to look westward. In 1800 Napoleon re-took Louisiana for France with the understanding that he would not sell Louisiana to the United States. A few years later in 1803, the US bought the Louisiana Purchase for fifteen million dollars. Spain was furious! The Spanish refused to allow the Americans to enter Texas.

The Spanish government could not enforce this law. Some Americans thought that Texas should have been part of the Louisiana Purchase. At times, residents in northeast Texas were taxed twice! The boundary between Texas and Louisiana remained in dispute until 1841 when the present boundary was set. (Tarpley)

Mexican Texas: 1821-1836

In 1821 the Spanish Texas era ended as Mexico gained its independence from Spain and Texas became a province of Mexico. Legal colonization under the Spanish and Mexican colonization laws was in the central and southern parts. The best public lands were quickly taken.

Throughout the early 1800s, Americans attempted to colonize Texas, legally and illegally. Though it was against the laws of Spain, some Americans moved into Texas and began farming. Some entered the northeast Texas area.

In 1820, the area that is now Morris County was organized as Miller County, Arkansas. (TSHA: Morris County) It was part of Paschal County in 1841 and in 1842, part of it became Red River County and the rest was part of Bowie County. In 1846 it was part of Titus County and was demarked from Titus County on March 13, 1875. (TSHA: Titus County)

There were soon more Americans than Mexicans. Mexico decided to tax the Americans and that meant serious trouble for democratic loving Americans. In 1833 Santa Anna made himself a dictator. Texans wanted to get rid of the dictator and return to local and the more democratic rule they had enjoyed previously. Volunteers came to Texas to take a stand and to assist their fellow Americans. Some including Sam Houston and Jim Bowie crossed through northeast Texas. Many had relatives living here. Some wanted free land and some were just hankering for a good fight!

But the majority of the new settlers were good Christian folks looking for a way out of poverty and a better life for their families. These folks impacted the way of life in northeast Texas tremendously. Their influence and that of their descendants developed the Christian community at Concord.

Though Stephen F. Austin was the only person granted a contract for colonization under the Mexican colonization law of 1823, the terms of the new law of 1824 were similar. Settlers who came under this act were to receive one league of land for each family instead of the league and labor that had been given the families of the Old Three Hundred. The colonist was required to pay \$30 for the league of land, but it could be paid in three annual installments. The grant of a league of land was for a family. A single man received only one fourth of a league but received the remaining three fourths when he married. In case he married a Mexican woman, he received a bonus of an additional one-fourth league. The colonists were to be exempt from all taxes for a period of ten years. Since the government did not wish Texas to become a haven for outlaws, the law required that all settlers be followers of the Christian religion and persons of good moral character. (Our Texas 89-90)

American Settlers in Texas

John V. and Nancy Cherry

Among those early American settlers who came to this area of northeast Texas in the 1830's were John V. Cherry and Nancy Precious Seats. Precious (her name as given on the list of Morris County surveys) was born in 1811 and in 1834, at the age of twenty-three, she received a league and labor (4605 acres) of land. (See Abstract #254 on file at the county courthouse and at the Texas General Land Office in Austin for Morris County holdings.) (Rootsweb) A survey in her name is located west and south of the A. S. Young Survey where Concord is now and includes the lands once belonging to a Cook, Belyeu, Talley, Davis, et al. Nancy was quite wealthy. In later years many stories were told about her loans of gold to various people. The date of John and Nancy's marriage to each other is unknown but wills and deed records indicate that both were married previously.

John was a merchant in San Augustine, Texas. He and his brother, Smith R. Cherry, also an area settler (Abstract #52), furnished supplies for the Texas Army before enlisting for active duty in the Texas War for Independence, 1836. John achieved the rank of Colonel.

At the time of the Cherrys estimated arrival, Stephen F Austin was being held without charge in a Mexico City prison. Texas did not have its own state government but was aligned with Coahuila to form one state of Mexico. The northeast corner of Texas was disputed territory. Almost all of what is now the counties of Bowie, Red River, Franklin, Titus, Morris, Cass, and Marion was organized in 1835 as Red River County. Clarksville was established in 1833 and was the most important trading center in Northeast Texas. (TSHA Clarksville)

The Republic: 1836-1846

One of the first acts at Washington-on-the-Brazos was to offer settlers land. Texas had lots of it. The new Texas Constitution established the General Land Office to administer the public lands. John V. Cherry received a league and a labor or a total of 4605 acres of land. A league of land was for grazing and a labor was for farming and you did not have to live in the county where your land was. John's land was in what was then called Red River County and authorized with 1st Class Cert #66. He also patented or was granted land in Lamar and Cass Counties. (See also Abstract #51 at the county courthouse and at the Texas General Land Office in Austin for Morris County holdings.) There is also a Joel Cherry Survey, Abstract #59. (Rootsweb)

When the Republic of Texas emerged following the defeat of Gen. Santa Anna at San Jacinto on Apr. 21, 1836, the United States proceeded on the assumption that the Neches River rather than the Sabine or Red River was the northeastern boundary of the new republic. If such were the case, the territory north of the *thirty-third parallel* and extending from the eastern boundary of Texas above the Sabine, to the western boundary of Arkansas would have belonged to Arkansas. Within this contested territory was the Red River land district, which was organized on Dec. 18, 1837, as Red River County to encompass almost all of the present counties of Bowie, Red River, Franklin, Titus, Morris, Cass, and Marion. The US initially claimed that Red River County was part of Miller County, Arkansas, until such time in 1841 when Ferry Lake (Caddo Lake) was surveyed and the division line of Arkansas and Louisiana marked north to Red River. At that point the disputed western boundary of the Louisiana Purchase as an international issue ended abruptly, and lines were established that have been honored to the present. (Tarpley 16-17)

When Texas won its independence from Mexico and became an independent republic in 1836, about fifteen thousand Indians lived in Texas. The republic had some difficulty in deciding upon an Indian policy. The Indians had remained quiet during the Revolution. The Indians who could have proved most dangerous at this time were the Cherokees who lived near Nacogdoches. (Our Texas) In 1838, John Cherry traveled from his home to Nacogdoches where he served the Republic of Texas as an interpreter for the Indians, probably appointed by President Sam Houston. It may be surmised that John, who was a merchant in San Augustine prior to coming north, had previously dealt with the displaced Cherokees who had been forced out of their native lands to the east. Additionally, his Christian philosophy and values may have contributed to his desire to help these unfortunate souls.

The Cherokees had been in Texas for about fifteen years, and the Texans thought they would remain quiet if promised titles to their lands. A resolution was passed telling all friendly Indians that their rights would be respected. The Indians remained quiet during the revolution and the Texans promised the Indians titles to their lands. However, the treaty was never ratified. The Indians were angry because white settlers were moving into Indian Territory. Houston did not resolve the problem and in spite of all the words that were spoken, the Indians were not given titles to their lands and they remained unhappy. Later Lamar declared that the Cherokees had no just claim to lands in Texas and ordered them to leave. They went on the warpath, were defeated and driven across Red River into present-day Oklahoma. Similar conflicts with the Comanches and Kiowas erupted. The problem outlived the republic and continued until the Indians were finally removed from the state. (Our Texas)

The area of northeast Texas where John had settled was part of the Caddo Indian Confederacy. Earlier in 1835 the Caddoes had ceded their rights to all their territory within the limits of the United States and had agreed to move beyond its boundaries within a year at their own expense. (Tarpley) The boundaries were unclear. Was this part of northeast Texas a part of the Louisiana Purchase, the Arkansas Territory, or did it belong to Spain or Mexico?

In 1838 some few members of the remaining Caddo tribe sought protection and refuge in Shreveport from the Texian Army that followed them into United States territory to deprive them of their guns. Per an agreement with General Rusk of the Texian Army, they were permitted to remain on the Texian side and allowed guns for the purpose of hunting.

The Caddoes who had originally lived here in Concord, where John Cherry is thought to have settled, were beleaguered by the encroachment of colonists, raided by warring tribes and exposed to terminal disease. By the early 1840s, all Caddo groups were removed from their original lands (TSHA: Caddoes) including those around Concord.

John Cherry was also a surveyor. He assisted Richard Tankersley, Allen Urquhart, who was a Jefferson druggist and grandson of the town founder (Abstract #296), and Joseph Hart with surveys in what is now Morris County. They also completed the Proctor Survey (Abstract #220) in April 1838.

Between 1841 and 1842, John Cherry's land was part of a much larger entity created for judicial purposes and known as Paschal County. The county seat was Daingerfield and John V. Cherry was a justice of peace for Paschal County. (Tarpley)

John V. Cherry was also a preacher.

In March 1834, Texans were given religious freedom. Up until that time, it was illegal to conduct Protestant services. Did he dare violate this law? Was this one of the reasons he chose to come to the Concord area to settle?

In the fall of 1835, Davy Crockett guided an entire church congregation, led by Mansell W. Matthews, from Kentucky across the Mississippi River. From the western shores of the Mississippi, Crockett gave them directions for reaching Texas, and made his way to the Alamo after leaving this group. (Morris County Centennial 1875 - 1975, Jean Conner, Daingerfield Bicentennial Commission, pg. 4)

"The brethren agreed to meet on the 18 of March 1845 and was constituted a church by J. V. Cherry, ordained minister of the gospel . . . the brethren agreed to call the church Bethlehem . . ." thus read the minutes of the first church known to have been organized in Morris County.

The first churches in this area were Baptist, Methodist and Cumberland Presbyterian. During the past few decades other denominations have organized congregations and have erected houses of worship. Now there are approximately fifty churches located in the county.

Each church has had, and continues to have, a definite effect on spiritual, moral and cultural growth of the county. (Morris County Centennial 1875 - 1975, Jean Connor, Daingerfield Bicentennial Commission, pg. 20.)

By foot, horseback, oxcart and covered wagon, the early settlers came to East Texas. From 1844 tax rolls, deed records and records of the Primitive Baptist church of Bethlehem (near Concord), a nearly complete list of the family heads before 1846 has been compiled. Some stayed in this area, and their descendants are living among us, justly proud of their heritage and the contribution their ancestors made to the development of Morris County. (Morris County Centennial 1875 - 1975, Jean Connor, Daingerfield Bicentennial Commission, pg. 31)

Later the Primitive Bethlehem Baptist Church joined the Spring Hill Church. There is a historical Marker in Morris County for "Spring Hill Primitive Baptist Church of Christ - Daingerfield." (Rootsweb)

The first Baptist preacher may have arrived in Texas in 1820. During the 1830s and 1840s, other Baptist preachers began to arrive in Texas. A bitter controversy erupted between the antimissionary Baptists who were those who objected to organized mission societies, Sunday schools, Bible societies, and seminaries (TSHA) and other Baptists who approved the cooperative ventures of locally autonomous congregations. Texas Baptists have always been intensely evangelistic.

The Mexican government required that only Catholics be brought to Texas, but few real Catholics came. Not many of the colonists were called upon to take the oath that pledged them to support the Catholic Church. Not only did the Anglo-Americans fail to become good Catholics, but some of them also set up Protestant organizations. At least thirty Protestant ministers (Was John V. Cherry one of these?) are known to have conducted services in Texas before the Revolution. Their activities were contrary to Mexican law, and it was not until just prior to the Revolution (March 1834) that religious freedom was granted and Protestant churches could be established legally in Texas. As a natural result, religion was neglected during the colonial period. The (Texas) Declaration of Independence placed all churches on an equal footing, and, within a short time, the Protestant churches were active in most Texas communities. For several years it was customary to hold church services in the home of some member, but in time church buildings were erected. For example, buildings were erected in 1838 at San Augustine, Washington, and McMahon's campground. By 1845 there were several beautiful churches in Texas, and practically every town had one church, or more. The Catholic Church grew rapidly after the Revolution, becoming one of the most active churches in the Republic of Texas. (Our Texas, 228)

In the northeast Texas area, it was the protestant churches that emerged in most communities. It should be kept in mind that the Spanish and Mexican governments paid little attention to this area of northeast Texas except when the French entered the area and when Americans claimed it as their own. The attitude was often that "unless worshippers were stealing horses or killing people," they should be left alone. (TSHA) It should also be noted that many protestant ministers were self-taught. Education in this rural and

unsettled part of Texas was limited to home study, private schools and tutors for the wealthy, and three to four months yearly of education in one-room school houses for others. The teachers were paid by the parents and often with food, lodging or other in-kind necessities. Churches and schools frequently met in the same facility because of the educational purpose of each.

There were no public schools and no colleges of any kind in Mexican Texas. (Ober Texas 229) The Texas system of public schools is a product of the years since reconstruction. (Ober Texas 254)

The oldest Baptist church in Texas was actually organized in Illinois and brought to Texas and its first church meeting in Texas was in a home in Austin's colony on January 25, 1834. The church voted to meet on the Saturday before the first Sunday of each month and on that Sunday. Elders of the church were granted authority to organize Primitive Baptist churches and ordain ministers and deacons. (TSHA: Baptist) Except for the Disciples, all the Protestant bodies operated Sunday Schools by 1860. (TSHA: Religion) These schools generally contributed to the broader intellectual development of communities.

Early Statehood: 1846-1856

On February 19, 1846, the Republic of Texas was no more. Texas became the 28th state of the United States. At this time, Titus County, including what is now Morris County, was established. A dispute arose over the Rio Grande River as the southern boundary of Texas and on May 13, 1846, the US declared war on Mexico. Texans including Major William H. Moore who is buried in the Concord Cemetery, joined the US Army in great numbers to fight their old enemy. Major John Pollard Gaines of the 1st Regiment, Kentucky Volunteer Cavalry marched through this area and recorded in his diary "traveled 18 miles and camped at Cherry's, apparently a clever man and a Baptist preacher, the first divine I have seen in Texas and the second since I left Memphis...." The camp of Major Gaines was located in the vicinity of the present Concord Community.

A year later in 1847, John V. Cherry died. He is buried in the Cherry Cemetery about a mile southwest of Concord. Nancy Cherry died in 1882 at the age of 71 and is buried in the Concord Cemetery. James T. Cherry, son of John V. and Nancy, and Brinton Coffey executed her will in 1882.

During early statehood, Boston, Daingerfield (ca. 1840) and Clarksville (1833) were the closest towns. Mt. Pleasant (ca. 1847) and Gilmer were being laid out as the county seats of Titus and Upshur Counties. Only occasionally was an Indian seen in the forests along Boggy, Swanano, Sulphur and Cypress. The Real People had been removed to territories. There were few cleared fields in cultivation and the homes of the pioneers were very scattered.

During the next ten years (approximately 1846-1856), settlers from east of the Mississippi moved into the area and the forests began to disappear into orderly cultivated fields of cotton, corn, wheat and oats. A college, a boarding school, and a factory for the production of corn mills and cotton gins were located in Daingerfield. A stagecoach line began regular runs from Jefferson to Clarksville through Daingerfield and Mt. Pleasant. The distance traveled necessitated many intermediate stops and the town of Snow Hill,

Titus County, was designated one of these stops.

In 1846, Morris and Franklin Counties were a part of Titus County. The population was less than 10,000 people. Preachers were scarce and often "rode the circuit" traveling from one community to another. Their services were often unavailable. Laity and family members performed funeral services or buried the dead with limited ritual. Common law and civil marriages were common. Families recorded births, deaths and marriages in the Family Bible and if possible at the county seat. Couples would await the circuit preacher to have their marriage blessed by a man of God. Often government records of these events were based on the preacher's memory so data were approximate and sometimes omitted. Communities built meetinghouses to serve religious, educational and civic purposes. When used by all denominations, they were called Union Churches. But the Concord Community did not have a meetinghouse.

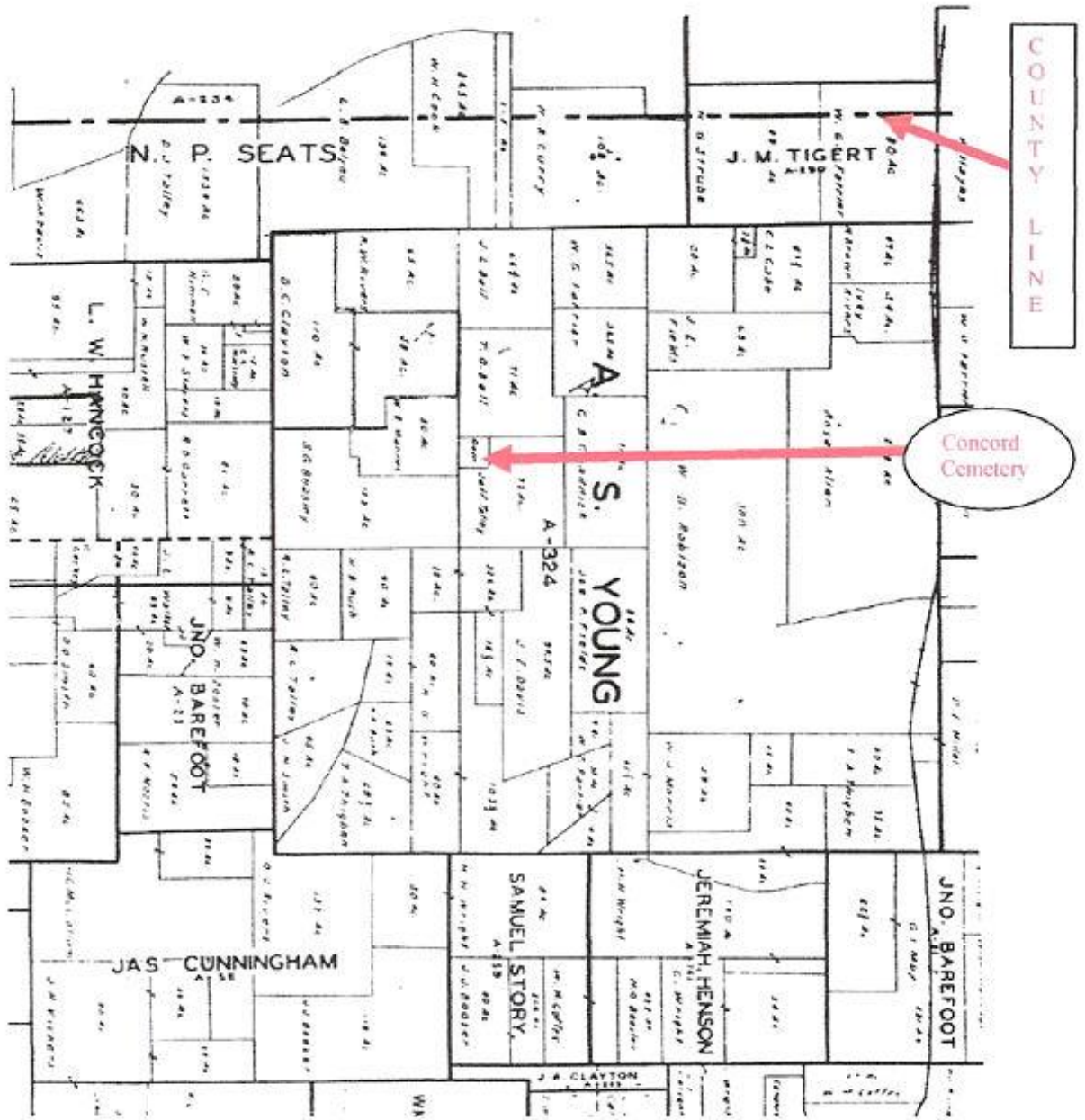
An early settler in the Concord Community, Mrs. Mary Ann (Brinton) Coffey, great-grandmother of Weldon "Shorty" Chaddick, owned land and a log cabin just north of the present site of the Concord Church. It is believed that the log cabin was used for slaves. Early settlers coming into Texas from slave states brought slaves with them. The cabins for the slaves were usually crude structures with dirt floors. Evidence suggests that this one had large native rocks for corner support. Reggie Talley and his son, Jamey, found two cornerstones about a month after Reggie's father, James (Jim) Talley passed away. Previous attempts had been made to try to pinpoint the location of the first church. They also dug up a chain, a knife blade and lots of square nails. See illustration at front of this document.

Seeing the need for the Concord Community, Mrs. Coffey loaned the cabin as the first meetinghouse. Who sold them this land? John V. and Nancy Cherry? A. S. Young? We are searching for the answer to this question and enlist your help.

Subsequently, Brinton Coffey, Mrs. Coffey's husband, deeded "to the surrounding community" the land on which the Concord Church and original cemetery is now located. The deed for 2.5 acres of land for use by a Christian Church and graveyard bears the date of April 13, 1872, and is recorded in Deed Book S, pages 327-328. The property is part of the A. S. Young Survey (Abstract #324 at the county courthouse and at the Texas General Land Office in Austin for Morris County holdings) that includes the Ball farms to the west, the railroad to the north, and Hwy 144 to the south. See the survey map on the following page.

In doing research for this history, Reggie Talley found records of a deed made on December 24, 1904, from G. M. Chaddick, guardian for George O. Chaddick, for an additional two acres of land that joined the first donation of 2.5 acres made by Brinton Coffey. The Concord Community paid the sum of \$30 for the two additional acres. Now the community had 4.5 acres dedicated for church and cemetery. Later, additional land was given to the cemetery and church by the family of Jeff and Virgie Talley. See photos page 36.

TITUS COUNTY



MORRIS COUNTY

Layout showing the location of the Concord Cemetery in the A. S. Young Survey

Brinton Coffey (1809-1884) was born in Adair County, Kentucky, and is buried in the Concord Cemetery. His wife, Mary Ann (1816-1898), is also. Their home place was north and west of the old Concord Spring and on the old Harrison Road that ran east and west.

It is believed that the old Harrison Road ran between the Ball farms and the farm currently owned by the children of Louis and Mary Blair Tigert. On the west, it exited onto CR 3321 and on the east, it exited onto CR 3333, the Concord Road, between Brint and Dora Chaddick's farm and the land currently owned by the L. W. and Melba Rees James family. Traces of the road can be faintly seen on the current fence lines. (2007 Vicki Davis and Janette Cook)

The Coffey family was among the first settlers of Morris County. They are identified with churches at New Hope near the Hospital in the Pines in Lone Star, Texas, and with Spring Hill as well as Concord. Brinton's tombstone inscription reads: "Come living man as you pass by, as you are now so once was I, as I am now soon you must be. Prepare for death and follow me." The tombstone inscription for his wife, Mary Ann, reads: "She was a kind and affectionate wife; a fond mother and friend to all."

On April 8, 1957, the deed for the land on which the Concord Church and Cemetery is located was filed with Audrey Mae Childress, Morris County Clerk. Dee W. Tigert found the deed made by Brinton Coffey among old papers filed in the State Bank of Omaha. Vesti (Mrs. Joe) Richey, who worked in Daingerfield at the time, had previously looked through the old records and had found no record of the deed. The deed was made in 1872, two years before Morris County became a separate county from Titus County. Many records had been transferred from Titus County to Morris County but the deed from Brinton Coffey was not registered among them.

First Grave: When was the first burial at the graveyard now known as the Concord Cemetery? Lenora Palestine Riddle's marker has only one date: March 15, 1869 (Row 13 NW) A natural rock for M. L. Price is in the southwest corner and marked 8/21/1809 - 3/16/1872. Others close to this time include: Judith Elizabeth Reynolds (4/10/1843 - 2/3/1873); John S. Beasley (1/29/1857 - 9/18/1875 SW); John Edmon Beasley (11/4/1874 - 5/18/1876 SW); Andrew J. Beasley (2/12/1874 - 7/6/1876); Emma Wright (7/17/1875 - 8/19/1876 SW); and William Hall (3/31/1875 - 8/12/1876). However, native rocks mark many graves in the oldest sections of the cemetery and may be older. John V. Cherry died in 1847 yet he was buried at the nearby Cherry Cemetery. That cemetery has stones dated 1847 through 1868.

Unfortunately most of the early records of the organization of the church at Concord burned in the George Henderson house when Mr. Henderson was church clerk, according to Bentley Wright. Therefore, we must depend upon recollections and other documents. The first sermon was most likely given at the Concord Meetinghouse in 1857. Are there records of the Coffey's land as early as 1847? It could be surmised that sometime between 1847 and 1857 the Coffeys generously gave permission for the graveyard, most likely when the need arose. Since we know they offered the slave cabin for the first meetinghouse, perhaps a larger space was needed to accommodate the growing group of worshippers, and they again offered their land to build a more functional meetinghouse.

Perhaps the Civil War activities interfered with recording the deed, written for whites only, or perhaps it was just inconvenient to get the paperwork attended and filed. Who knows? But we do know that the deed was not on file at the time the first grave was dug or the local residents began to build the original structure in the 1860s. Mr. Brinton Coffey transferred the property by deed on April 13, 1872. Most records of Titus County were lost in 1895 when the courthouse burned. If these records had been filed in Titus County, they, too, would have been lost!

When was the land surveyed and who held ownership after the Real People? The survey is named for the person or concern bearing the land certificate at time the survey was filed. To help us get a perspective on the land given to Concord, we turn to Richard Tankersley, a prominent surveyor in Early Morris County history and a chainman on some of the first recorded surveys. (Morris County Deed Book #1) *Note: A "chain man" carried the distance measuring device used by surveyors, consisting of a chain of 100 links of equal length, thought to be 100 or 66 feet.* One of these early surveys in Morris County was the Hancock Survey. In 1843, Richard "was bound to" or owed John Barefoot by \$100. (John Barefoot Survey: Abstracts #21 & 23.) Richard sold John 50 acres of land for \$50 on December 16, 1843. This was his residence that he had purchased from John V. Cherry. Ten years later on July 26, 1853, Richard and his wife, Sarah, sold land to Charles Neal Barrier. At that time Richard was listed as a citizen of Williamson County where Georgetown is now the county seat. Earlier on December 5, 1839, Richard had received a 3rd Class Certificate in Red River County for 640 acres, #456. He patented 320 acres in what is now Morris County on August 22, 1860. See Abstract 288, Patent #371, Vol. 30.

It is possible that the A. S. Young Survey was a part of the Richard Tankersley land. A number of the later deeds refer to Richard Tankersley and to trees marked RT. Richard also was involved in deeding land to Nancy Precious Cherry, wife of John V. Cherry.

One of the earliest graves in the Concord Cemetery is that of William H. Moore, major in the Texan and Mexican War. He was mustered in as a lieutenant in Captain W. E. Harrod's Company, Colonel Feliz Houston's Regiment of Cavalry, on May 26, 1836. He also served in Major W. H. Smith's Battalion and during the Moorehouse Expedition of 1841. Nothing is known of Mr. Moore's family or early life. His marker tells us that he was a Mason, was born in Virginia, and died at 80 years of age.

It is thought that residents of the area built the original Concord Meeting House of local materials prior to 1857 (ca. 1850) though the deed for the land was not dated until 1872. The logs were probably cut on site and hauled by oxen to the nearest sawmill at Snow Hill where they were sawed into rough lumber and planed by hand. The finished lumber was then hauled back to the site of the meetinghouse and a building was erected. Others believe the workers brought lumber by wagon from Jefferson. Benches and tables were also built so the meetinghouse could serve as a school as well as a church. The building was a large one-room auditorium. The open concept allowed the facility to be used for multiple groups simultaneously. For example, on Sunday, classes were held in each corner of the room. The congregants adhered to the practice of baptism by immersion. Since the building had no baptistery, natural streams were used and later ponds owned by S. I. Beasley, Jesse Ball, B. C. Vickers, Marshall Wright, Dee Tigert, and James Talley.

“The old church main entrance faced the road west. The pulpit was on the south (with the main entrance and the pulpit in the center and a door on each side. There were two or three pillars down the center to help hold the roof up. There were two or three kerosene lamps on each wall and on the poles (pillars) with reflectors for lights....The school children went to the spring south down by the new cemetery (donated by the family of James “Jim” Talley) for water....” recalled Bentley Wright, long-time community resident and church member.

The official name for the cemetery addition across the road from the original cemetery is the “South Cemetery” according to Connie Caldwell, secretary for the Concord Cemetery Association.

It is not known how long there was a school at Concord but there is a picture of the Concord School (all grades) made in 1897 and a picture of the Concord High School made in 1912. The teachers in the 1912 photo included Howard Hart, L. L. Truitt, and Oma Brown (Vickers) who was the mother of J. L. Vickers and Beulah Lee Vickers Wright. The trustees were P. H. Garret and Lee Brown who was the father of Oma Brown (Mrs. Buck) Vickers.

Morris County

In the spring of 1875, Morris County was created from the County of Titus. This newly created county was divided into voting precincts and the several voting places of the county were designated. The voting places designated were: “East of the Sedicum Line--at C. P. Forsythe’s store and West of the Sedicum Line--Concord Meeting House...”

Throughout the years, the Concord Meeting House has also served the area as music school, community center, and place of worship. The doors were also open to other groups including the Woodman of the World, a fraternal organization popular with Concord youth in the 1920s and other generations; Rural Electrification Association meetings (Bowie Cass Electric) in 1939. Bentley Wright led meetings of the Tri-County Water Coop that brought the community a rural water system late 1970s. The tower for the water system is located on two acres of the Ball farm just west of the church.

When did the church at Concord cease to be used by all religions and become known as a Missionary Baptist Church? The earliest recorded recollection may be in a copy of an interview of Cyrus Wright (Bentley Wright’s Great Grandfather) that belonged to Bentley Wright. Cyrus stated that “my wife joined the Missionary Baptist Church in 1863 and I joined in 1872.” *Note: There is a photo of the Cyrus and Belinda Wright home in Reflections of Mount Pleasant and Titus County, Texas, page 32. The “dogtrot” house ca. 1910 is located on Hwy 67 between Cookville and Omaha. The east room is located in Morris County and the west room in Titus County and is believed to be one of the oldest homes in the community. Austin Martin Embree who is also in the photo is buried in the Concord Cemetery as are Cyrus and Belinda Wright.*

It is thought that the first sermon preached in the Concord Meeting House was by the Rev C. D. Myers in 1857. (T. W. Connor, Jr.) The name “Concord” was chosen for the meeting house because of the peace and harmony it brought to the community.” (Willie Carl Beasley)

The War Between the States and Reconstruction

Then came the War Between the States (1861-1865) and Reconstruction. Ten per cent or more of the total population of Titus County enlisted in the army of the Confederate States of America. The entire county was desolate of young men; farming operations began to change from cotton to food crops of corn, wheat and oats, which were shared with families fleeing from the war torn states east of the Mississippi River. The Confederacy enacted tax-in-kind laws where a tithe of all farm produce, cattle and livestock was collected for the war effort; prices soared and excess food, cloth and transportation were not to be found in the county. Each mail brought news of war casualties to the community. News was sometimes slow but it is anticipated that in April 1865 or soon thereafter, news of the surrender at Appomattox reached families in northeast Texas. Many of the original families of the community moved west to begin a new life and from the Eastern States came another generation of pioneers into the area.

The woody areas of northeast Texas were a favorite hideout for draft dodgers in the Civil War and with scalawags who robbed trains and banks well into the early 1900s. With Reconstruction also came military occupation. Local elected officials were deposed from office. In 1868 first a Sergeant and then a Corporal of the US Army was appointed Sheriff of Titus County. With military occupation came lawlessness and corruption but still the Meeting House at Concord stood—a landmark for that which is good and right.

In the Snow Hill community an ex-soldier of the Confederacy, Solomon Hayes Price, was converted from a fighting, drinking man to a militant soldier of the cross. Four years later, in 1874, the Concord Church ordained Sol Price a minister (preacher of the gospel). From all that has been said and written about Solomon Hayes Price, he must have been a remarkable man. At the time of his conversion he could neither read nor write, but with the help of his wife and with the Bible as a tool, he became one of the best known and well liked preachers of the area. (PIONEERS AND HEROES OF TITUS COUNTY by Traylor Russell, 1974) He served the Concord Church as pastor from 1874 until 1913. During his 47 years in the pulpit he served as pastor of 15 other churches. A few days before his 82nd birthday and six weeks prior to his death in November 1921, Price preached the Introductory Sermon for the Hopewell Association (American Baptist Association) in session at Nevill's Chapel, in Mt. Pleasant. His lengthy tenure may be attributable to his remarkable skill as well as to the tendency of Baptists to choose pastors locally and often with less regard for formal education and training than, for example, other Protestant groups such as the Methodists who used circuit preachers.

Remodeling the Concord Meeting House and Beyond

The original ca. 1857 structure for the Concord Meeting House was replaced in October 1919. The new facility was built on the same spot as the old building using original materials where possible. According to Bentley Wright, when the building was finished and the bills were paid, only 50 cents was left. "*Concord has never owed much money.*"

Rev. J. W. Brewer of Paris, assisted by Rev. Pender of Greenville, held dedicatory services for the remodeled building in January 1920. At least 30 men have preached or served as a pastor at Concord since the beginning.

Bentley Wright said: *“They only had church twice a month and paid the pastor as low as \$15.00 a month for 2 sermons and would get behind sometimes with that. There were no cars. Wagons, buggies, horse back and on foot they walked from as far away as Dock James’.* (The home of L. W. “Dock” and Melba James is about two miles to the northeast toward Omaha on CR 3333, the Concord Road.)

During the 1930s, Concord had church services (preaching) once a month, and then in the 1940s and 1950s services were held two Sundays a month. The fifth Sunday of the month was without preaching but sometimes was used for Fifth Sunday Singings. During the 1950s when church “let out” early, members could make the short trip to Beavers’ Bend State Park in Oklahoma for a picnic, swimming and visiting. Sometimes they attended First Baptist Church, Omaha, especially during the tenure of Rev. Clifford H. Longino.



Concord Sunday School Class – June 1936

Left to right: Charline Welborn, Ted Talley, Geraldine Strube (Teacher), J.B. Boozer, Christine Fields, J. P. Fields, Mae Dorothy Ball (Teacher), Mary Gray, J. C. Welborn, Reva Clayton, Faye Galloway, Reba Clayton

Sunday School was held every Sunday for a long time before church (preaching) became an every Sunday affair. Sunday School has been a long-held tradition for most Baptist churches and the women have frequently taken the lead in offering educational classes to the young groups. Some of the early Sunday School teachers were: Mary (Mrs. Hubbard) Talley, Mae (Mrs. Jesse) Ball, Annie (Mrs. Dewey) Gray, Lela (Mrs. Ross) Rivers, Pat Fields, Tarrant Vickers, and Mrs. Geraldine (Roy) Strube. Others have been: Vesti (Mrs. Joe) Richey, Beulah Lee (Mrs. Marshall) Wright, Birdie (Mrs. Roy) Boozer, Ovie (Mrs. Allen) Boozer, Willie Carl Beasley, Rowene (Mrs. Willie Carl) Beasley, Ross Rivers, Dewey Gray, and the list could go on.

Sunday School was started...in the latter 20s and failed once...but a few church members...on the creek fishing...talked up Sunday School again. Ovie Boozer and her husband (Allen Boozer), my sister and her husband (Mary and Ned Walker) and Mrs. Hubbard Talley and I don't know (who) else...decided to try it and it has been going ever since. (Bentley Wright) In the 1950s, Sunday School pins were given for faithful attendance. After the first year, a bar was added for each year of perfect attendance.

Brother A. J. Findley led the first Bible Study in the church at night, per Beulah Lee Wright. He taught through the book of Genesis. She said she learned a lot that winter, probably 1935-1937.

They had to use the kerosene lamps and reflectors until about 1924. They got some gas lamps that gave good light, but had to be pumped up. Sometime one would run out of air in the middle of the sermon. The new (1919) building that we are in now had windows across the east and west which made it cooler than the old one. The only air conditioner we had was put out by merchants with their advertisement and ran by elbow grease. I only remember one brush arbor after they built the new building. The extra windows made the difference. The only musical instrument we had was the old organ that you had to pump continuously. (Bentley Wright) When did the church get its first piano and cease to use the old organ? Did this change in musical instruments arouse any consternation?

The first funeral to be held in the new building was for the eighteen-year-old son of Mr. and Mrs. John Boozer, Dikes, who died January 21, 1919. Some lumber was still stacked on the west side at the time of the funeral. (Bentley Wright)

They would go to the spring and get a bucket of water and set (it) between the north door and the choir. Kids (would) eat dry salt meat and they would get thirsty and the bucket would go dry about the middle of the sermon. Some kids would slip up there and get the dipper and rattle that bucket and disturb the preacher. Mother (Mrs. Raymond Wright, nee Emma Johnson) did not allow us to go to that water bucket. She told us to get a drink of water before we left home and that was it. (Bentley Wright)

Willie Carl Beasley remembers that a potbelly wood stove was used for heat in the 1919 building. Wood was stored under the north side of the church so it would stay dry during the rainy seasons. The building, on pier and beam construction, was very high off the ground on the north end. Church members would drink water from a spring on the Jeff Talley farm just north of the church. A fence separated the church from the spring and the church had one set of wooden steps to get over the fence. By the natural spring was a wooden stake and on that stake was one drinking cup. Most everyone thirsty would use the same drinking cup. The church owned an old bell that members would ring before church every Sunday morning calling the community to worship and Bible study. For many years it would also ring to call the local farmers to dig graves. Jeff Talley, Charley Galloway, Jesse Ball, and others helped dig scores of graves. In 1984 the Curtis McCollum family donated a new bell to the church.

"We got electricity in 1939 and we did not need any more "elbow grease". But it was tough a few years to get the application we made (approved)," recalled Bentley Wright. Electrification meant new church lights and the traditional schoolhouse globe hanging on a long iron chain was chosen. This traditional lighting still exists today though new fluorescent lights have been added. Electrical lights illuminated the beaded board ceilings that are stained a dark wood color.

Jesse Lee Ball served as unofficial sexton for many years: ca. 1909 until the mid 1950s. He arose early, walked from his farm just west of the church to build the fire in the potbelly stove so the auditorium would be cozy for the worshipers. The potbelly stove, with its round stack exiting through the ceiling, was located on the northwest side of the

auditorium. His granddaughter, Rebecca Tigert Whatley, recalls that sometimes, his dog, Wags, followed him to church, curled up under the back pew, and slept throughout the service. During those days, the church was never locked; in fact, there probably was no key. During services in the 1940s and 50s, Jesse and J. J. Boozer sat in the "Amen" corner, just north of the stove. Jesse kept a mental log of the burials and plots in the cemetery. He and other community members were frequently called upon to dig graves using shovels and picks. No charges were levied and none were expected as friends helped each other. Obituaries were reported in the local newspaper: *The Omaha Breeze*. Note: Omaha (incorporated 1914) was first called Morrystown (1880), then Gavett, and finally Omaha (1886) based on a drawing of names of Alabama hometowns. Several citizens put their Alabama hometown in the hat and the one that was drawn, stuck! No post office was ever established at Concord but there was one in Gavett in the 1880s.

Beulah Lee Vickers Wright was once quoted saying that she and her husband-to-be, Marshall, or Foch as he was affectionately called, were kids together in the 1920s in Concord Church. She recalled the church having slated benches and gasoline lights. Note: Slated pews, perhaps the same benches Beulah Lee talked about, lasted into the 1950s. We called them benches; however, they had backs so it is possible that they were not the same seats. Early photos of other meetinghouses show benches (no backs) being used as the facility doubled as a schoolhouse and place of worship. Regardless, you could pinch your bottom on either and get a splinter if you scooted just right! Ask Maydell (Mrs. Jim) Talley about this possibility! There was a wood-burning heater in the large open auditorium and up to six Sunday School classes in one room. The church held services once a month with services every Sunday starting about 1949.

Revivals

In those years the August revivals were the highlight of the year.

Texas Baptists traditionally held revivals in August and Concord was no exception. *Camp revivals in Texas could last two to four weeks and served both religious and social needs. It is unknown if Concord participated in these lengthy services, however, it is quite likely. The revivals brought a reprieve from the loneliness and tedium of rural and small town Texas life. This was particularly the case for women, for whom the daily routine was monotonous and exacting. Methodists and Presbyterians used itinerant preachers or circuit riders for their revivals; however, Baptists were more likely to choose local pastors and a local financial arrangement with each. (TSHA) Many times, this meant "passing the hat for a love offering." And, literally, it was passing the hat. Sometimes the hat had to be passed multiple times in order to get an amount acceptable to the preacher.*

The preacher would expound loudly and pound the table with raised fists so as to get his point across without the use of loud speakers. (Beulah Lee Wright) Marshall Wright remembered a time during a revival when he was allowed to stay home and could hear the preacher at his house about a mile east of the church.



Concord Revival Baptism – August 15, 1946--B. C. Vickers' Pond
 Dee Tigert, Dorothy Jean McCollum, Leonard Belyeu, Emma Jean Morris, Marvin McCollum, Maudine Gray, Woodrow Branch, Josephine Richey, Allen Boozer, Vesti Richey, Joe Richey, Brother Raymond Campbell

The revival of August 15, 1946, was a very significant time in the life of Concord. Bro. Raymond P. Campbell of Sulphur Springs, Texas, was the evangelist for the week and at the end of the week, 11 adults were baptized in B. C. Vickers' pond and added to the church. These and their descendants may be called the later leaders in the church at Concord and throughout Texas. Revivals during this time included a morning session and an evening session. Women and children made up much of the congregation during the day while the men were usually farming. There was no air conditioning in the building but the windows were raised and sometimes there was a nice cross breeze.



Another Concord Revival Baptism – August 19, 1956 – Marshall Wright's Pond
 Audie and Cleora Stevens, Judge Smith by Rev. James Wommack

Testimony of Vesti Richey

THE GREATEST EVENT IN THE LIVES OF JOE AND VESTI RICHEY:

Joe and I had talked during our married life about needing God's help in our home, and especially in the rearing of our son. But neither of us had fully trusted the Lord as our Savior.

In 1946, on the last day of a glorious revival here at the church, where many souls had already, that day, been saved, Joe and I were sitting about four pews from the back of the church. We were both under deep conviction, and knew, beyond a shadow of a doubt, that we needed a savior.

When the invitation song started, I began saying in my mind that I could not make the step forward unless Joe did, although I actually wanted to. Joe was deeply frowning, seemed very miserable, twisting around first one way and then the other, and I would not have been surprised if he had bolted for the door back of us. I kept thinking that I was too bashful to go alone, but if Joe would lead the way I might follow. Somehow, I could not put my entire trust in the Lord unless I was bold enough to step out and walk down that aisle.

While I was still hesitating and pondering what would happen next, Joe said, "I have just got to go". We went together, and the minute I took one step forward I felt the most wonderful peace and wellbeing in my heart that I have ever felt, so I practically ran the rest of the way. And I am sure that Joe had this same feeling, for now he was smiling even though tears were streaming down his cheeks. To shake the hand of the evangelist became an easy task now, because we were not even aware of the invitational song, nor of the people seated about in the church. Of course, we did not, at this time, exactly understand the real depth or the fullness of our salvation, but we did know that something great had happened to us.

At this particular time, Joe was farming and I was working six days a week. But we determined to attend church and Sunday School each Sunday, although we had been using Sunday as housecleaning and chore day. We believed that God would make a way possible for us if we asked Him. And He did. Very shortly I was notified that my office would be closed on Saturdays.

If YOU have not received the Gift (salvation through Jesus Christ) that God has for you, we invite you, in fact, we urge you, to do so at once, so that you, too, may share the love, joys and blessings that the Lord has in store for you.

Faithful sharing of the word by Sunday School teachers like Vesti Richey and Beulah Lee Wright, preaching by Concord's pastors, faithful practices of parents, and sharing of others led to the professions of faith and then baptism by Pastor O. L. Kennedy of Wendell Boozer, Jerry Kennedy (pastor's son), Larry Richey, Ray Richey, Rodney Richey, Janette Tigert, and Vicki Tigert on February 13, 1955, at the Grace Temple Baptist Church in Mt. Pleasant! It was too cold to baptize in a pond! However, the practice was not discontinued. Rebecca Tigert Whatley recalls that a few years later she was baptized in Marshall and Beulah Lee Wright's new pond.

Historical Landmark

The Concord Meeting House was recognized as a historical landmark for more than a hundred years and was awarded the Texas Historical Medallion on October 23, 1966. At that time, services were being held each Sunday in the month with 153 members on the church records, six Sunday School classes and 62 members enrolled in Sunday School.

Over the 150 years the Concord Church has licensed and/or ordained to preach: Solomon Hayes Price, George Henderson, D. W. (Dock) Talley, W. D. Lackey, W. L. Calloway, Rodney Richey, Nolan Richey and Tim Anderson.

The preachers of the Church at Concord, as taken from the church minutes, are listed below. A question mark indicates that years of service are not certain since some of the church records are missing. Concord Church was built in 1857. C. D. Myers preached the first sermon.

C. D. Myers	1857	H. L. McNish	1951-1952
Sol H. Price	1874-1913	J. C. Askew	1953-1954
J. L. Spence	1887-?	O. L. Kennedy	1954-1955
T. R. Bolin	1914-1916	James Wommack	1955-1958
A. J. Findley	1916-1934	Curtis Hall	1958-1959
J. S. Caldwell	1923-1925	Wilmer Bidy	1959-1962
G. F. Lee	1925-1957?	James Wommack	1962-1964
T. R. Bolin	1927-1930?	Charles Swilling	1964-1968
A. J. Findley	1935-1937	M. G. McNeil	1968-1970
T. P. Lee	1937-1939	Dale Reed	1970-1972
Eugene McClung	1940-1942	Glen R. Griffith	1972-1975
C. W. Gilbreath	1943-1944	Caroll Jones	1975-1979
T. P. Lee	1944-1946	Glen R. Griffith	1979-1986
C. W. Gilbreath	1946-1947	Michael D. Thompson	1986-1989
C. O. Rhyne	1947-1949	Glen Moore	1989-1993
Garland Walker	1950-1951	Nolan V. Richey	1993-Present

Each October during the 1950s, a vote was taken by the Concord membership on whether or not the preacher should continue for another year. This practice is no longer exercised.

Some of the deacons through the years at Concord Church have been: S. I. Beasley; Erb Davis; Dewey Gray and Ross Rivers ordained in 1943; Joe Richey, Marshall Wright, Dee Tigert and Allen Boozer in 1951. Other deacons since then have been or continue to be: Kenneth Patton, Frank Ellington, L. W. James, Jesse Wright, James Peace, Larry Gaskin, Odis Cline, J. B. Boozer, Robert Harvey, Frank Caldwell, Lynn Freeman, Wayne Cason, Steve Anderson and Michael Jarvis.

John Massey was a preacher and was so afflicted with arthritis that he had to walk with crutches. Among the places where he preached was an old log house that was located on the grounds of the Hayes Cemetery. No trace of this house now remains. The Massey family had an old Negro woman living with them who had been their slave, and who would not leave the family after the Emancipation. She was a very religious woman and was acquainted with Solomon Hayes Price and his family. The story is told that in 1870, Solomon Hayes Price took his family to the Hayes Cemetery where John Massey was preaching. His family went into the house, but he stayed outside. After the sermon, it is said that he was sitting on a log and this old Negro woman came up to him, and said: "Sol, you fought through the war and didn't get hurt; you done whipped everybody in this community; you done drunk all the whiskey that you can get; but if you don't change all that, the Devil is sho' gonna' get you." It is further said that this old woman asked him if he would pray with her, and he said he would. They began praying, and he was there converted from a fighting and drinking man to one who would spend the balance of his days working for the Lord. He was ordained as a minister by the Concord church in 1874. He could neither read nor write, but through the teachings of his wife he overcame this handicap.

It is not known when Solomon Hayes Price was called as a minister at the Concord church, but he began preaching there and preached for 25 consecutive years. During all of that time he never missed a single meeting at the church. He was a minister at the Glade Springs church in Titus County for 13 years; and it is said that during all of such time, he never missed a single meeting and he rode the same mule to every service. Someone has said, "That mule really heard lots of sermons and was no doubt the best Baptist mule that ever lived in the State of Texas." Price was also the pastor at fifteen other churches in this area at one time or another; and was one of the organizers and charter members of the Pleasant Grove Baptist Church in Titus County. There is no record of any discussion of his salary or compensation with any of these churches; and so far as is known, he never mentioned such to the church. If a church wanted to take up a collection for him, he permitted it to be done; but usually he would turn it back to the church to be used for some needy family in the community. He quite often said that he made his living by farming; that he worked for himself from Monday morning through Friday afternoon and worked for the Lord from Saturday morning through Sunday night. He would usually pastor four churches at a time; preaching at each church on one Saturday and Sunday in each month. Certainly in his day there was no great remuneration from preaching; and his accumulation of property would testify to the fact that he was indeed a successful farmer. It is said that in 1910, a tenant farmer on his place made the statement that "Oh' Man Price had some money buried around his house and I am going to try to find it." Price was gone from home, and his wife knew where the money was buried. She had some of her grandsons to dig up four fruit jars totalling about \$4300.00 and take it to the State Bank of Omaha for deposit.

Price began to slow down on his preaching about 1912 (73 years of age), and after that time he did not regularly pastor any church. It has been truthfully said of this man that neither the weather nor anything else prevented him from performing his services as a minister. Many people have related stories of how he, on Sunday afternoon after he had finished his services, would get in his buggy or on his horse or mule, and start for home in rainy, freezing weather. PIONEERS AND HEROES OF TITUS COUNTY by Traylor Russell, 1974, pp. 242-244.

Common family names on the 1850 census and among the membership at Concord have been: Ball, Barefoot, Barrier, Belyeu, Boozer, Brown, Butler, Bush, Bynum, Carpenter, Cason, Chaddick, Cherry, Clayton, Coffey, Davis, Dooley, Embree, Galloway, Hayes, Moore, Pool, Price, Rivers, Russell, Southerland, Stevens, Talley, Tankersley, Vaught, Vickers, Walker, and Wright. New names will be found on other censuses as the community and church welcome newcomers.

The Music

Beginning in the 1930s and until her death in 1976, Jesse Ball's daughter, Mae Dorothy, gratuitously played the piano for many funeral services, revivals and regular services at Concord. She lived nearby and often had her three small daughters in tow. Janette, Vicki and Rebecca Tigert sat quietly on the front row for many services. Beulah Lee Wright told that she and Mae Dorothy led the music for a revival one year. A love offering was taken for their pay and they each received \$1.50 for their week of service. Other long-term pianists for services have included: Mrs. Annie Gray, Mrs. Vivian Talley, Mrs. Marilyn Williams and Mrs. Patricia Richey.

They held a Sacred Harp Singing Convention in the 1920s or old folks singing---the Fa--So---La singing: it was held once a year in the summertime all day Saturday, Saturday night and Sunday on the week that they did not have services. People...came from several counties and brought lunch and spent the night with friends. They sang until about 4 o'clock Sunday evening then started home. More came from Cass County than anywhere else. Beulah Lee Wright's Grand Ma Vickers sang alto. We could sit on the front porch at home and hear her cutting down.... (Bentley Wright)

Grammy Vickers - All Vickers grandchildren and descendants called Beulah Vickers "GRANNY VICKERS". She did not sing alto. She was a very special singer in her time - not many of them. She sang TREBLE which is a man's tenor part an octave higher. She had a very high, strong and beautiful voice that could be heard all over the church house and outside the windows. Wilburn Martin, April 12, 2007

"Southern Americans have always had their celebrations and joyous gatherings in spite of the extreme hardships of pioneer days. They made the best of what they had out of good or bad times. This was still true for all the years that I spent at Concord." (Wilburn Martin)

"I saw my parents deal with the depression of the 1930's with a wonderful time at home every night regardless of having nothing else. My dad, Arthur Martin, practiced the guitar, mandolin and harmonica every night like Nero fiddled while Rome burned. All he had for tomorrow and the future was faith for a better day. He also read the Bible every night," recalled Wilburn Martin.

"Sacred Harp singing and Gospel singing and their supporting singing schools were an important development that provided singers from all age levels for worship participation throughout the pioneer days. Gospel singing was the lifeblood of the Protestant movement and brought the church to where it is today," according to Wilburn. Much of what we learn about our faith is told in song. The lyrics are the message and what we recall years later more so than the fiery sermons preached. "In the last hundred and fifty years, Concord has done its part in being a proving ground for the success and acceptance of many a gospel song like *In the Garden* written in 1913, *Victory in Jesus* in 1939, etc.," Wilburn noted.

Gospel singings as an organized activity, later known as conventions, surely must have started at Concord as early as 1900, but maybe as early as 1880 along with Sacred Harp.

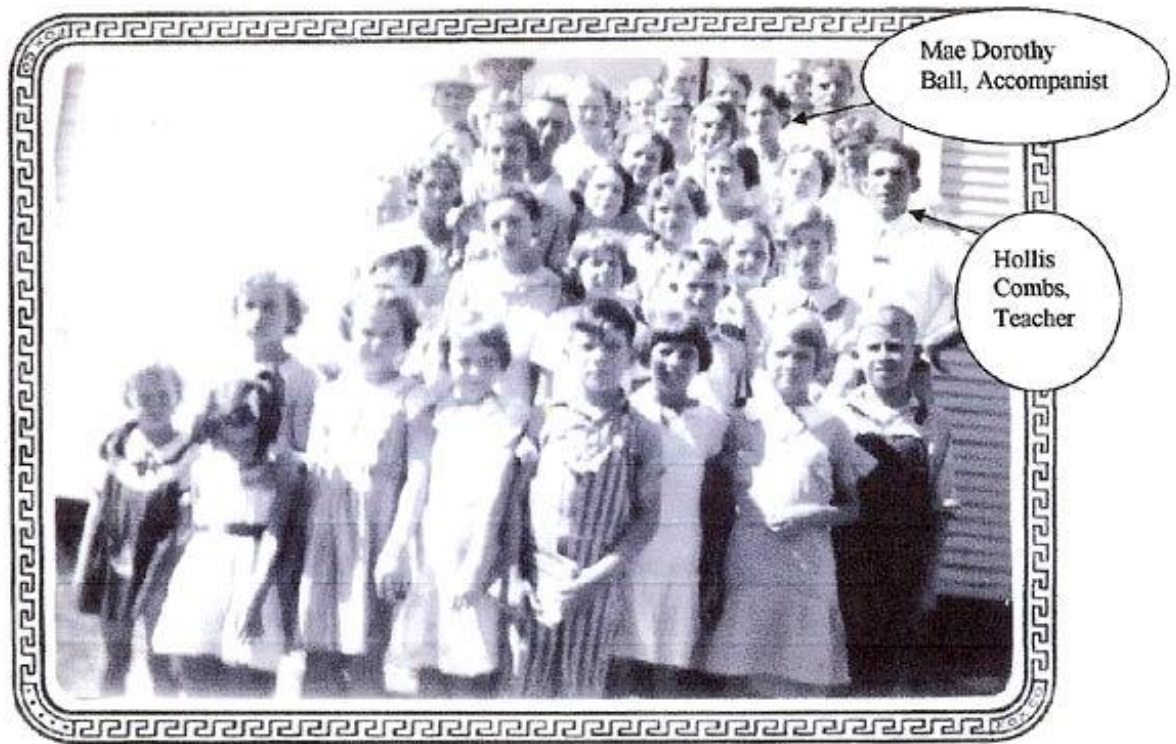
Sacred Harp is a non-denominational community musical event emphasizing participation, not performance. Singers sit facing inward in a hollow square. Each individual is invited to take a turn "leading," i.e. standing in the center, selecting a song, and beating time with the hand. The singing is not accompanied by harps or any other instrument. D. Warren Stebbins

All the generations of singers that were being born about 1890 in the Concord Community went to singing schools at Concord. . . . All denominations came to these singing schools at Concord from church communities several miles away. Concord was the largest established rural church community in what later became Morris County. Singing schools ended in that area in the late 1950s. . . . I acquired most all of his early childhood music background within the four walls and under the ceiling of the large auditorium in the 1920-remodeled Concord Church building. (Wilburn Martin)

Hollis Combs taught singing schools at Concord in 1934 and 1935. His home was in the Mt. Pleasant area and he was a member of the Nevill's Chapel Missionary Baptist Church. Hand signs for each note on the musical scale were part of his curriculum according to Maudine Gray Ellington. Wilburn Martin had this to say: "Hollis Combs was from a greater musical family. W. W. Combs, the famous voice teacher for the Stamps-Baxter School of Music in Dallas, Texas, during the 1920s, 30s, and 40s was a relative – uncle or a cousin. Hollis was basically self-taught like most all gospel singers and pianists of the period. He was just a fantastic teacher, so very talented with such a brilliant mind. He had one of the most beautiful high tenor natural sounding voices I have ever heard. It truly vibrated in your ears with a reverberating effect that made the use of a microphone needless. His voice was more colorful in quality than Pavarotti's and was more powerful. He made a lifetime impression on me that nobody else has ever topped," Wilburn emphasized.



Wilburn Martin, A Master Musician
December 23, 1941



Concord Singing School of 1934 or 1935
 Hollis Combs, Teacher Mae Dorothy Ball, Accompanist



Cousins, Brothers, Sisters (CBS), October 14, 2006 -- Ouida Martin Henson, accompanist (not pictured)
 Nolan Richey, Roger Martin, Rodney Richey, Larry Richey, Tommy Richey

*In 1959, Junette, Vicki and Rebecca Tigert attended a singing school at Rocky Branch. Mr. Leo Chastain from Hubbard's Chapel near De Kalb was the teacher. We sang from the Worldwide Songbook and later the Broadman Hymnal during the 1950s-60s. Favorites were *Nothing but the Blood of Jesus; He Keeps Me Singing; Stand Up, Stand Up for Jesus; and Just as I Am*, the invitation hymn. The youth enjoyed adding original lyrics for the alto while the long notes of the melody were held.*

Decoration Day

It seems unnatural to read, write or think about Concord without recalling the events of Decoration Day, a day for remembering the dead, for homecoming visits with friends and relatives, and a day for eating "dinner on the ground." These days were also used to take care of cemetery business. This was a fascinating process as the hat was passed and the group was never dismissed for the noon meal until a sufficient amount of money was collected to cover anticipated costs for the cemetery care. The congregation had to continue singing until this goal was met! At least one young child, Reggie Talley, recalls that Mr. Arthur Morris, or Deacon as he was nicknamed...though he was not an ordained deacon of the church...actually locked the doors until the collection was acceptable. However, the doors did not lock and this thinking is probably attributable to the impressionable young child's longing to be released from the lengthy service!

Once the money was collected, everyone was invited to spread lunch outside. Lots of home fried chicken, homegrown vegetables, and home baked desserts were shared. Rebecca Tigert Whatley recalls that during the 1950s and perhaps earlier, Mr. Arthur brought a large wooden barrel filled with blocks of ice and fresh water. Everyone was welcome to a cool drink from the common aluminum dipper that hung on the side.

Decoration Day started about 1900 according to Beulah Lee Wright. *At first decoration was on Saturday. The people would bring their food, hoes, rakes and shovels, in fact it was referred to as a "graveyard working" for they would "hoe off" the graves, it was a working day. Decoration Day was changed to Sunday in the early 1920s and was designated a community affair---not a day for the church. There have been controversies several times through the years over this fact.* The first Sunday in May was designated as Decoration Day at Concord.

For Dee and Mae Dorothy Tigert's children, it meant a day with new (usually homemade) dresses, new shoes, sometimes gloves, and at times new hats. "We seldom had new dresses on Easter but always had new dresses on Decoration Day. It was a big event and a day when we were likely to see many folks that we did not see regularly," recalls Vicki Tigert Davis.

The weather was unpredictable. Sometimes it was very cool and our new spring frocks were a bit chilly. Sometimes it rained and we had to eat inside. Once the church added the first annex, that space was used for some meals in inclement weather. Currently, the church continues to accommodate the all day meeting; however, the noon meal is an outdoor event.

The following Decoration Day program was printed in *The Omaha Breeze*, in 1936.

From Mae Dorothy Ball's Scrapbook 1936 – Copied as printed

Decoration Program.

Following is the Decoration day program to be held at Concord on Sunday May 3rd, beginning at 9:30 a m:

Song---Buck Vickers.
Pray---Rev. J. S. Caldwell.
Welcome Song---Faye Gallo way.
Reading---Emma Lois Fields.
Piano solo---Mae Dorothy Ball.
Song---G. H. Riddle.
Talk---W. E. Coffey.
Duet---Josephine and Montine Booser.
Reading---Elva Vaught.
Music---Harry Baird and orchestra.
Report of cemetery committee at 11:30 o'clock.
Dinner---Everybody invited to come and bring well-filled baskets.
The entire afternoon will be devoted to singing.

Decoration Days in Texas began as graveyard workings after the Civil War, doubled as Memorial Day observances after World War I. Many children growing up in the Concord Community participated in Decoration Day activities. Sunday School activities and regular church preaching services were suspended to allow the community to use the meetinghouse. Actually, the community's use of the original facility was probably intended to dominate with permission given for Christian groups to also use the facility as a church.

Once graveyard workings were contracted, families had less responsibility to maintain their plots. Throughout the year, though, some families still check on their family plots and work them to assure their standards are met and, probably, just to spend some time at the cemetery. Families will also go to the cemetery on Saturday evening prior to Decoration Day. Placing flowers (artificial have virtually replaced real) on the graves is traditional and visiting with friends is very satisfying as "you might not be able to visit with your friends during the service." Singing still goes on into the afternoon after the planned program of songs and sermon in the morning. A visiting preacher or spokesperson is frequently asked to "bring the message." Vicki Tigert can remember how confining the long day was and how she and her cousin Ula Tigert worked feverishly during the afternoon to lay flowers on the many graves that had gone unnoticed. Wild honeysuckle vines grew profusely along the outer edges of the cemetery and she and Ula picked the fragrant blossoms to place on each undecorated grave. Rebecca Tigert recalls

that she and several others including Vicki, Ula and Cynthia Smith were fully entertained during the afternoon. They enjoyed picking and eating the abundant dewberries that grew in the briar patches along the fences around the cemetery!

Graveyard Workers

In the late 1950s, Dee Tigert was one of many employees on strike at Lone Star Steel Company. Though Dee was also a cattle farmer, hourly (\$1.25) worker at Paul Pewitt Ranch, and substitute rural mail carrier, he and his family elected additional employment. They contracted to work or hoe the Concord Cemetery for a nominal fee (probably no more than \$500 for three workings: May---so it was clean for Decoration Day, August---so it was clean for the revival, and October). At that time, the cemetery had no "intended" grass and became infested with random weeds. In the 1950s, the community was coming out of an era when it was fashionable, especially in the rural areas, to sweep the home yard. Hoes were used in the fields and were more readily available and portable than mowers. It was also very easy to dull the hoes as the soil was rocky and Dee had to frequently sharpen the hoes by hand. To get an idea about how rocky the land was, consider that just up the hillside on the west, Jesse Lee Ball owned a gravel pit and sold gravel to the county and other consumers. All the family members helped clean the cemetery, round the mounded graves and prior to Decoration Day in May, it was spotless! Though Mae Dorothy and Dee did most of the work, Janette, Vicki and Rebecca viewed the chore reluctantly, mostly from a social perspective, but today each can list graveyard worker on her resume! This activity is also one that stumps others during an iccbreaker that asks for something about oneself that no one else knows or expects! For their work, the three girls were paid in-kind. (Janette Cook, Vicki Davis and Rebecca Whatley) The Whatley children continue to tend the plots of their grandparents and five sets of great-grandparents and other relatives in the Concord Cemetery.



Grave of Victoria Mae
Embree Ball

Wife of Jesse Lee Ball

Mother of
Francis Lee
Mae Dorothy
Eva Lorene

5-3-1895
8-26-1940

Northeast Section
Of Cemetery

Note rounded grave and
hoed cemetery.

Christmas Programs

Christmas time at Concord has been both a church and community event with an excellent Christmas program as far back as Willie Carl Beasley remembers. The tree would usually be a tall, live cedar. Santa Claus would turn up for the program. In the 1950s, Vicki Davis recalls that the tree seemed to grow once it was inside the church building! It was always bigger than it looked in the field.

Mr. Arthur Morris delighted in playing the part of Santa for many years. He always asked for assistance in reading the names on each gift. This was fascinating to the young children who believed his story that he "was blinded by the snow" on his trip in from the North Pole. The real reason was that Mr. Arthur, like many others in his time, could not read.

On one occasion when W. H. Atkinson served as Santa, his little daughter saw the hand with one finger missing and exclaimed, "My dad's hand looks just like that one!" True it did, for her dad's finger had been shot off in the war. (Willie Carl Beasley) In the 1940's Dee Tigert played Santa Claus at least one time. Mae Dorothy thought that Janette recognized him and she refused to allow him to play Santa thereafter. End of a promising career!



Christmas Play -- 1957

Ray Richey, Wendell Boozer, Rodney Richey, Larry Bill Richey,
Beulah Lee Wright, Janette Tigert, Cynthia Smith and Vicki Tigert

Note the dark beaded ceiling, schoolhouse light globes, painted glass panes in the windows, the post that held the modesty curtains that have been removed for the play, the wooden floor, the piano, and the hymnals on the open piano. As of this date 2007, not one of the above has been recognized with an Oscar!

Pranks and Programs

Mr. and Mrs. Tom Gray traveled to church by buggy. One night during a revival, some kids interchanged Mr. Gray's buggy wheels---they put the back wheels up front and the front wheels on the back. It took almost a half-acre to turn the buggy around. They would half watermelons and put them under the back wheels of cars. Young people dating could get nowhere until the wheels wore through the melons. Lots of foolish pranks were played on people back in those days. (Willie Carl Beasley)

A program from the 1934-39 Scrapbook of Mae Dorothy Ball shows the humorous nature of events at the Concord Meeting House. The copy below is as near the original as possible, with all its idiosyncrasies! Vicki Davis has the original that is printed on a bright pink paper. The outline was a string of diamonds instead of the rope shown here. The event was most likely, Friday night, December 4, 1936.

-----SEE-----

“Hillbilly Courtship”

-----AT-----

CONCORD CHURCH

Friday Night, Dec., 4th.

Adults 20c. - Children 10c.

--CHARACTERS--

Luke Stilsby---In love with the	
mountain flower-----	Andrew Morris
Emma Peppin---A flower of the Ozarks-----	Hazel Welborn
Ma Peppin---Mother of the flower-----	Lucille Galloway
Lulu Triffet Radio Hillbillies }-----	Aline Walker
Seddie Triffet }	Beulah Lee Vickers
Wash Jeddo---The mountain nitwit-----	R. D. Morris
Sol Silverstein---A Hebrew manager-----	Frances Ball
Louis Cattaro---A tempermental Italian-----	Arvin Wellborn
Pappy Stilsby---A feudist of the old school-----	Clyde Walker
Bridget O'Flannigan---A wild Irish rose-----	Clemonteen Vaught
Reverend Boswell---The preacher man-----	Marshall Wright

TIME---A day in June

PLACE---A cabin in Ozark mountains

Time of playing---Two and one half hours

---SYNOPSIS---

ACT I---The living room of Ma Peppin's cabin in Ozark mountains. Late afternoon of a fine day in June. The feud assumes proportions.

ACT II---Same as Act I. A few minutes later. The wild bills grow wilder and wilder.

ACT III---Same as previous acts. A minute or two later, Enny brings order out of chaos.

Plenty Of Fun.-----Lots of Laughter.

Epilogue

We had our ups and downs, but we got our water and the kids don't have to rattle the old water bucket no more. (Bentley Wright)

Quite a few changes have occurred through the years since electricity replaced the kerosene lamps. Water comes from a refrigerated unit, springing through a mechanical pipe not from the bubbling spring you lean down to touch. Cell phones are more apt to distract the preacher than the rattle from the water bucket.

Today Concord Missionary Baptist Church is affiliated with the American Baptist Association. Its membership of about 310 persons continues to worship in the remodeled-remodeled-remodeled auditorium. Sunday School averages 110 in attendance, morning worship averages 175 in attendance, evening worship averages 75 in attendance, and Wednesday evening activities are attended by about 80 people. An addition to the auditorium was completed in October 2005 and now has a seating capacity for 250 and is complete with new carpet, new pews, new communion table and a new pulpit.

The red roses planted along the cyclone fence for the cemetery have come and gone. A concrete bench outdoors is used by the weary. Outdoor lighting gives security to the premises at night. The youth seldom find walking to the cemetery in the moonlight the wholesome adventure once enjoyed in the cool, clean, country air.

The new pews are padded. The wooden slats from the original benches were recycled in tables for Decoration Day "dinners." Concrete tables have now replaced the slatted tables. The individual folding chairs attached to plank runners and recycled from the Woodman of the World Hall above the Omaha State Bank building are gone from the Amen corner.

The old maroon velvet hangings on the pipe railings and the more recent beige hemp-like modesty cloths, made by Mae Dorothy Tigert, have been removed from the stage. How many times did the preacher place his Bible on the square waist high wooden posts so his hands could be freed to help him make a point? Making their way to the choir, how many times did members gently touch the post for added support and balance?

Four classrooms and two restrooms were annexed in 1961. The multi-hole toilet is no longer needed. Air conditioning replaced the opened windows and the cardboard funeral home furnished handheld fans were retired. The gifted and special Sunday School teachers in the 1940s and 1950s---Beulah Lee Wright, Vesti Richey, Birdie Boozer, Mae Dorothy Tigert, Lela Rivers, Ross Rivers---their bodies rest in the cemetery awaiting the resurrection day. The young people who participated in Association Youth Meetings are telling their stories to new generations and recalling memories held in abeyance for many years.

A modern baptistry has replaced the use of local ponds so baptisms can now occur in any weather. Children cannot see through the windows. Translucent colored glass panes now hide the outdoors during church services. Sorry, Reggie, no more counting of grave

stones! More services, staff and educational programs have been added. A new children's playground has been constructed. Additional land from Reggie Talley accommodates the children's playground and new educational facility. Several editions of a new cookbook have been published, smudged, and enjoyed by the community.

Through the generosity of Maydell and Reggie Talley and in memory of James (Jim) Talley, new cemetery space has been added south of the road that is now paved, not graveled nor graded. The new outside steps are now inside. The front of the church has been remodeled with additional classrooms and office space. The familiar, simple lines of the church and meetinghouse are covered by an angled design and a spire used in contemporary architecture. White brick veneer, white siding, and metal materials are visible and the wood from the local timberlands has been covered. The new annex is overwhelmed by the newer, bigger, and better educational facility. There is a newer sign, piano, and songbook. There is an organ. There are new singers, new worshippers, and new preachers using new technology. There are community meetings to address current medical issues. There is a website and a Memorial Prayer Garden. The King James Bible has been replaced with the New International Version or the New American Standard Bible and maybe other translations, but the Word of God endures forever!

“For if their purpose or activity is of human origin, it will fail. But if it is from God, you will not be able to stop these men; you will only find yourselves fighting against God.” Acts 5:38b – 39 NIV

The list of newness goes on and onnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnnn but the message for the people living in concord remains the same, a message of love about the same Christ, the same Lord, the same Savior.



Concord Missionary Baptist Church
March 21, 2005

FIND US FAITHFUL

Steve Green

We're pilgrims on the journey
Of the narrow road
And those who've gone before us line the way
Cheering on the faithful, encouraging the weary
Their lives a stirring testament to God's sustaining grace

Surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses
Let us run the race not only for the prize
But as those who've gone before us
Let us leave to those behind us
The heritage of faithfulness passed on through godly lives

After all our hopes and dreams have come and gone
And our children sift through all we've left behind
May the clues that they discover and the memories they uncover
Become the light that leads them to the road we each must find

CHORUS:

Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful
May the fire of our devotion light their way
May the footprints that we leave
Lead them to believe
And the lives we live inspire them to obey

Oh may all who come behind us find us faithful

Steve Green in writing *Find Us Faithful* expressed the challenge for every believer in Christ at Concord and wherever they live when he penned these words. Yes, Concord has been a beacon for Christ for 150 years and yet it has only just begun!

Romans 13:11 NIV reads: "And do this, understanding the present time. The hour has come for you (us) to wake up from your (our) slumber, because our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed." We must understand our age and use our time wisely! Whenever it was that you first believed on Jesus Christ as your Savior and promised to follow Him as His disciple—whether five years, fifty years ago, or just recently—you have less time to serve Him now than you did when you first believed. Your and my time is not unlimited!

***This is the day the Lord hath made, let us rejoice and be glad in it!
And the people sang in concord!***





Photo by Janette Cook

Who will write other stories?

At Concord Church...

Children learned many Bible verses at Sunday School which they repeated by memory in front of the adults. They stood in the choir where everyone went after Sunday School and were coaxed by loving teachers including Birdie Boozer and Lela Rivers as they repeated the verses. The youngest class was called the card class because the children were given small cards (baseball card size) on which were pictures and short Bible stories. Does anyone still have one? I still prefer to translate Bible verses into the King James Version because that is the translation used during my earliest years at Concord.

I have been told that I ran down the aisle at Concord church when I was very young. I can't recall the experience but it must have been fun until my daddy spanked me. It was the only spanking my father ever gave me. It was not that I did not get other spankings but my mother was the spanker, not my father. Running in church was not allowed even for the very young!

Children attended church at very young ages even though the temperature was very hot. My sister, Rebecca, was born in July. When the August revival came that year, Mother carried a feather bed pillow (made with homegrown goose down/feathers) to church so the infant Becky could sleep comfortably. Others at church may have slept but not in the comfort that Becky did!

As I recall and contrary to the idea that most Baptist congregants sat at the rear of the church, members at Concord always sat near the front during the 1940s, 50s and 60s! Sitting near the front put one closer to the stove and that was important during cold winter months. Most regular attendees had their favorite spots to sit.

A treat was to be seated by Beulah Lee Wright during church. She always had some gum in her purse that she enjoyed sharing with us during church and we enjoyed chewing the gum. This was among the least of the reasons we loved Beulah Lee!

We may have heard a lot of hell, fire and damnation sermons at Concord, but it was the love of Christ manifested in the community of believers that held us spellbound!

Vicki Tigert Davis

The Talley Family

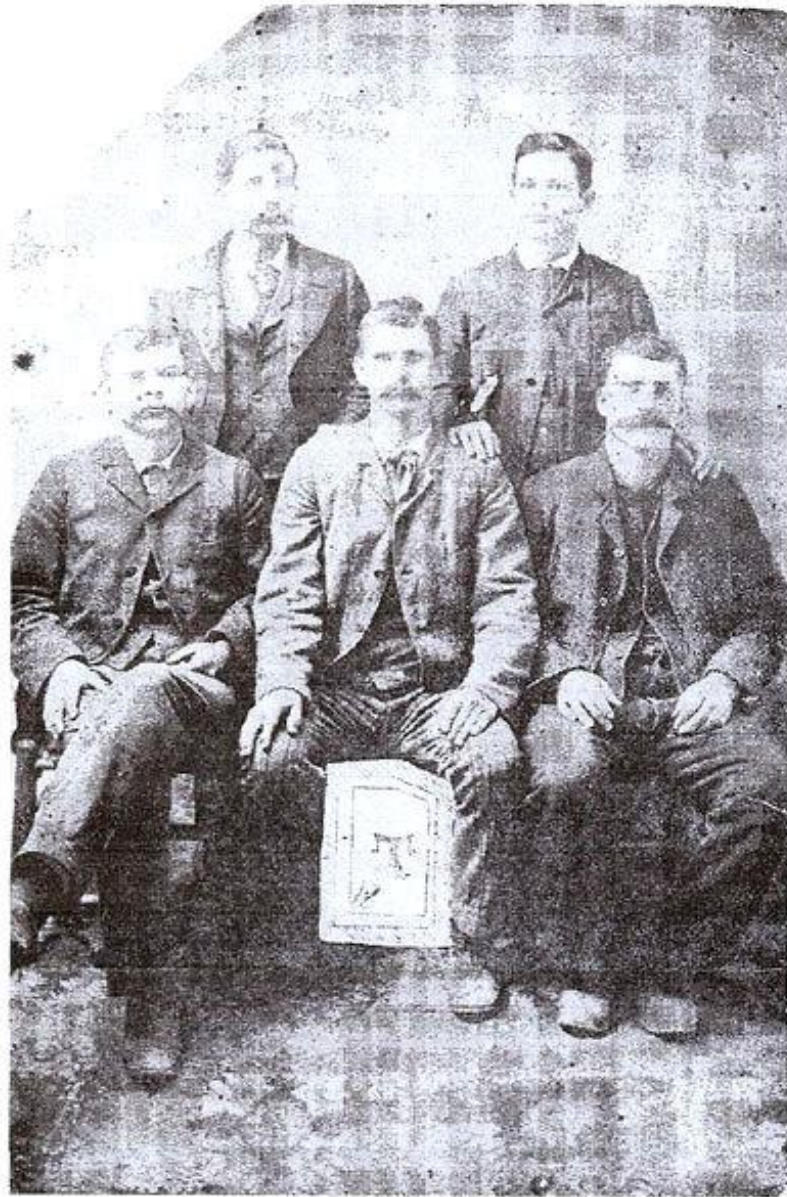


Photo: Courtesy of Mrs. Allie Smith (Now Deceased)

The above photo was made in the 1890s of the five sons of Henry Hubbard and Charley SOUTHERLAND Talley who came to Texas at the turn of the century. With their wives, they had a real impact on the community. Many current Concordians are their descendants. Bottom Row: Robert Lee Talley, husband of Florence CABANISS; Hubbard Price Talley, husband of Fannie Elizabeth CABANISS; Alexander S. Talley, husband of Sarah E. STARR. Top Row: Elder Jefferson D. Talley, husband of Martha EDWARDS, Minister, Missionary Baptist Church; Elder David James (Dock) Talley, husband of Elizabeth Palestine GALLOWAY, Minister, Primitive Baptist Church. These persons are interred in the Concord Cemetery 4 miles southwest of Omaha.

From Reggie Talley....

Traylor Russell or someone mentioned that they posted a guard in the doorway of Concord Church during church services at one time as a lookout for mischievous roaming Indians. There was also:

- 1) Dual taxation in Northeast Texas due to simultaneous claims by Arkansas and Texas.
- 2) No law enforcement. Without legal protection, many immigrants passed through this area making it one of the last areas of Texas to be settled. It was an area where desperados retreated in relative safety from the legal process. During the Civil War, many men held out in the woods here to avoid conscription. And of course, there were illegal stills – probably still are!
- 3) Jefferson was a port of entry for many of our families who came here following the Civil War. The Caddo Lake supported the stern-wheelers. There is a picture in the museum at Jefferson showing at least a dozen lined up in the turning basin at Jefferson. It was a great way to get your furniture overland to northeast Texas. That ended when the US government removed the blockage on the Red River and the lake level dropped making it impossible for the boats to travel to Jefferson.
- 4) The arrival of the trains in the 1880s made possible the economical shipping of cotton, watermelons, peaches, and other products from the area.

AERIAL VIEW OF THE CONCORD CHURCH AND CEMETERY



Provided by Reggie Talley from:

<http://maps.live.com/PrintableMap.aspx?mkt=en-us&a=true>



**Virgie and Jeff
Talley**

**Donors of
Additional
Land for the
Concord Cemetery**

**Photo Courtesy of
Bobby Martin
Grandson of the
Couple**

Concord Boys and Their Dogs About 1925



**Lester Beasley, Marshall Wright, Leslie Wright, James (Jim) Talley
Photo Courtesy of Lester Beasley**

SELECTED REFERENCES

Beasley, Willie Carl. Unpublished memoirs. Omaha, TX: Handwritten by Rowene Beasley, ca. 2000.

Concord Cemetery Association. Concord Meeting House and Cemetery: A Historical Overview. Mrs. Janette Tigert Cook, Tyler, Texas, 1980.

Connor, Jean. *Morris County Centennial 1875-1975.* Daingerfield Bicentennial Commission. 1975.

Connor, T. W., Jr. Notes from presentation at Concord Decoration Day. 1966

Hackney, Ann. *The Epic Adventure: Texas!* Jefferson, TX: Historic Jefferson Foundation, 1985.

Martin, Wilburn. Unpublished recollections of music at Concord. Longview, TX, March 28, 2000.

Reflections of Mount Pleasant and Titus County, Texas. A Pictorial History of Mount Pleasant and Titus County, Texas. Marceline, Missouri: D-Books Publishing, Inc., 1994.

Russell, Traylor. *History of Titus County, Texas: Containing Biographical Sketches of Many Noted Characters.* Waco, TX: W. M. Morrison --- Bookseller, 1965.

_____. *Pioneers and Heroes of Titus County.* Mt. Pleasant, TX: Rotary Club. Binding by Library Binding Company of Waco. 1974. Library of Congress Number: 74-28784. First Edition Limited 750.

Steel, D. Warren. Sacred Harp. Online information. April 23, 2007.

Steen, Ralph W. and Donecker, Frances. *Our Texas.* Austin, TX: The Steck Company, 1954.

Tarpley, Fred. *Jefferson: Riverport to the Southwest.* Austin, TX: Eakin Press, 1983.

Texas History Movies. Dallas, TX: Magnolia Petroleum Company, 1954.

Texas State Handbook Online. Digital gateway to Texas history: joint project of The General Libraries, University of Texas at Austin and the Texas State Historical Association. Articles included in this research are:

Baptist Church	Boggy Creek	Browntown, Texas
Caddo Indians	Clarksville, Texas	County Line, Texas
Daingerfield, Texas	Jenkins, Texas	Landmark Movement
Morrell, Z. N.	Morris County	Morris, William Wright
Naples, Texas	Old North Baptist Church	Omaha, Texas
Pilgrim Primitive Baptist Church	Red River County	Religion
Snow Hill, Texas	Robison, James Thomas	Sheppard, John Morris
	Texas Woman's Missionary Union	Titus County

Unknown Author. Unpublished copy of information about Cyrus Wright. Omaha, TX: Bentley Wright, Owner, May 1985.

Wright, Bentley. Unpublished memories. Omaha, TX: Handwritten, prior to November 14, 1999.

Wright, Beulah Lee Vickers. Unpublished memoirs. Omaha, TX. March 24, 2000.

<http://www.snowhill-tx.com>

<http://www.concordmissionarybaptistchurch.org>

<ftp://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/tx/morris//land/morris.txt>

<ftp://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/tx/morris//history/hstmkrks.txt>

<ftp://ftp.rootsweb.com/pub/usgenweb/tx/morris//military/civilwar/pens...>

http://www.rootsweb.com/~txmorris/cemetery/concord_cemetery.html

<http://www.tsha.utexas.edu/handbook/online/articles>

<http://maps.live.com/PrintableMap.aspx?mkt=en-us&a=true>



I am deeply indebted to all who have contributed their time, their memories and personal information for the compiling of this story concerning the area that I and many others have loved for so many years and the church which first gave me a hunger and thirst to know Jesus Christ as my Savior and Lord. Some of those individuals are: W. T. Connor, Jr., Reggie Talley, and Dr. Vicki Tigert Davis whose vast research has been a great source of information. Wilburn Martin, Maudine Ellington and Willie Carl Beasley have shared many memories and experiences. Notes from past sharing of Beulah Lee Wright, Ovie Boozer, Bentley Wright and others are priceless treasures.

Janette Tigert Cook
janettecook@yahoo.com
May 5, 2007

NOTE: If reading this history has brought stories to your memory or if you have additional information, pictures, and other related items that would add to these chronicles, you may email them, mail them, or hand them to Reggie Talley, Vicki Davis or Janette Cook. Thank you for your interest in this on-going project.