

GRAPEVINE HISTORICAL SOCIETY

On The Vine

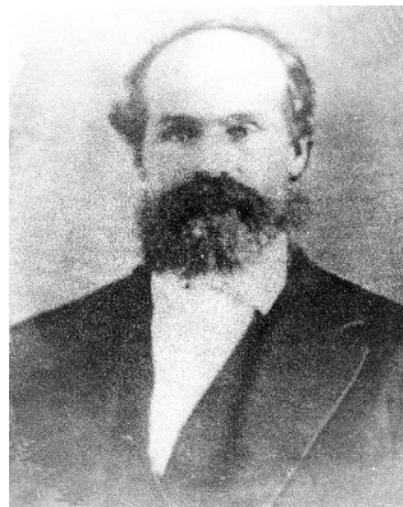
DEDICATED TO PRESERVING GRAPEVINE HISTORY

Third Time Was a Charm: Our General Store Merchants

We can all admit it – we have to shop. From the get-go, Grapevine needed a general store and from our earliest days we have had one. The first recorded general store was founded in 1844-45 by John H. Hallford, one of the Peters Colonists. However, it was not exactly “in” Grapevine since it was located north of Denton Creek “where the Cross Timbers and Prairie began.” But you could get there if you had to. The second recorded store was “in” Grapevine and belonged to Archibald F. Leonard, according to a 1924 Grapevine history written by Zeb Jenkins and a 1935 article written by Mary Ruth Starr. Before 1850, Leonard’s store was on his survey which included today’s Wall Street and North Main Street. By 1856 he had moved on. The third entrepreneur opened his general store in 1857 and, through his descendants, stayed on Main Street for 129 years. That man was Eli Mathis Jenkins.

Eli Mathis Jenkins, born in 1813, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, married his sweetheart, Charlotte Dunn, in 1845 and moved to Marshall then on to Jefferson, Texas. By 1859, the Jenkins were ready to make their final move, west to Grapevine, following Charlotte’s parents who had come here three years earlier. The Jenkins family, with their 10 children (7 girls and 3 boys), shaped the town.

Jenkins made several trips to Grapevine between 1856 and 1859, and he liked the area that was sometimes called “Dunnville” in honor of his father-in-law, John Cartwright Dunn, and his brother-in-law, I. P. Solon Dunn. Seeing that the Archibald Leonard store had closed in 1856, Jenkins sent plans and lumber to Grapevine for the construction of a 26 ½ ft. by 75 ft. store, and a stock of general merchandise. He employed his brother-in-law, Solon Dunn, to manage it. When completed, the post office moved into the new store, and Dunn was appointed as postmaster.



I.P.S. Dunn

This remained the only general store in Grapevine until after the Civil War. Iranius Plato Solon Dunn was a man who lived up to his big name. Born in 1834 in Lawrence County, Alabama, he married Nancy P. Van Zandt in 1858. Besides being a pioneer builder, merchant and postmaster, Dunn was a brick mason, cattleman, botanist, musician, father of 11 children, and one of the founding members of the Grapevine Masonic Lodge and the board of trustees of the Grapevine Masonic Institute. Dunn operated the new store until Jenkins moved to Grapevine in 1859.

Other family members joined the Jenkins business through the years. After Jenkins’ death in 1878, the store was known as “*Yates and Bushong*” (for two of Jenkins’ sons-in-law, J.E.M. Yates and George E. Bushong), followed by “*Jenkins and Yates*” (for son and son-in-law Zeb Jenkins and J.E.M. Yates), then “*Yates Dry Goods*” (for J. E. M. Yates, Earl Yates, Sr., and Earl Yates, Jr.).

Eli Jenkins’ instincts were on target. Grapevine was an excellent location for a store. The general store was the most frequented establishment of any frontier town and this single

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Dallas - Fort Worth

Grapevine may be the true center of DFW but we do have these two significant “bookends” - Dallas and Fort Worth. Unlike Grapevine, Dallas and Fort Worth both started out as one-man towns. This month we are taking a look at the lives of these two remarkable characters.



John Neely Bryan was born on December 10, 1810, in Lincoln County, Tennessee. The eldest son of a successful farmer, he was afforded the best education of the day. He contracted Cholera as a young lawyer, and followed the medical advice of the day, and crossed over into Arkansas to live amongst the Native American Indians, adopting their foods and customs of living. Upon his return to civilization four years later, Bryan took a partner and planned the frontier town of Van Buren, Arkansas. It was here passing Indian scouts and fur trappers first told Bryan of the rich land grants in a region known as the “Three Forks of the Trinity” in the Republic of Texas. At the age of 29, he wandered into Texas and briefly worked as a clerk at “Coffee’s Trading Post” on the Red River where Lake Texoma now lies.

From Coffee’s, he first explored the Three Forks on his horse, Neshoba, in late 1839. Impressed with this promised land, Bryan returned to Arkansas and sold his interests in Van Buren. Accompanied by a Cherokee guide named Ned and his dog, Tubby, he returned to his chosen bluff on the Trinity River to stake his claim in November of 1841. He erected his first temporary shelter at the present site of the Elm-Main-Commerce

underpass in west downtown Dallas - a site which later became the infamous “grassy knoll.”

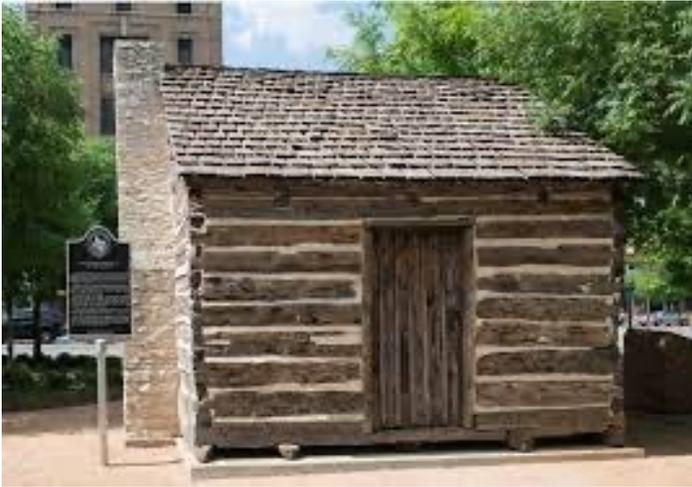
Historians often wonder why Bryan choose an unnavigable river in the isolated north Texas wilderness to start a new town. While falling far short of creating a river port, it was indeed the Trinity River that made Bryan’s choice a wise one. His land had the best crossing point on the Trinity River for miles - eventually bringing a continuous stream of pioneers literally to his front door.

Bryan lived a lonely life off of the land those first few months. The nearest settlement was a handful of pioneers at Bird’s Fort (where 157 now crosses the Trinity.) In the Spring of 1842, Bryan convinced two of these discouraged families to join him at his “new town.” Captain and Mrs. Mabel Gilbert arrived by canoe. John Beeman, his wife and ten children followed by land and staked a claim of 640 acres along White Rock Creek, seven miles east of Bryan’s cabin. The following February, Bryan married Beeman’s 18-year-old daughter, Margaret. The ceremony required an 80-mile horseback trip to the nearest Justice of Peace at Fort Inghish. Upon their return to Dallas, Bryan built his new bride the now-famous cabin on his bluff overlooking the Trinity. The preserved cabin on the “Old Red Dallas Courthouse” lawn is probably at best a heavily restored cabin reminiscent of early frontier cabins. The historical marker declaring it to be Bryan’s cabin was removed long ago.

For the next six years, Bryan put Dallas on the map and ran the town. He served as the town planner, promoter, lawyer, an aide to President Sam Houston and postmaster - a job that made him 16 cents in two years. He was the driving force that created a county, secured the county seat and attracted the roads and rails to his town. The first two major Texas roads, the Preston Trail and the National Central Highway, literally came to Bryan’s front door to cross the Trinity River on his ferry.

Bryan’s promotional efforts in early Dallas are humorously recorded by its first pioneers. He offered free whiskey, bear meat and honey to anyone who would stop and hear his sales speech - and free town lots to any families that decided to stay. Peters Colony agents, anxious to put any town on their maps in the early 1840s were also drawn in by Bryan’s feverish promotions of Dallas. Those agents told prospective pioneers of a new frontier town bustling with opportunity.

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The Dallas cabin once thought to be Bryan's

John B. Billingsley best summarizes these greatly exaggerated reports of Dallas in his 1842 memoirs: *"We heard a great deal about the Three Forks of the Trinity and the town of Dallas. This was the center of attraction . . . but the town, where was it? Two small cabins, the logs just as nature found them. This was the town of Dallas and two families, ten or twelve souls were its population. After taking in the town the next thing was to see the river - a few yards away we were on the banks. One deep, narrow and crooked channel was all we could see of the far-famed Trinity."*

Dallas was one of several small towns, and by no means the largest, vying for the county seat in 1846 when Bryan offered a town lot for the courthouse and free ferry service to Dallas residents for five years if Dallas was chosen. On August 31, 1850, Dallas narrowly edged out Cedar Springs and Hord's Ridge (now Oak Cliff) in a runoff election and a corner of Bryan's donated cornfield was cleared for the first courthouse. Although some street names have changed and the Trinity nows lays tame in a new channel, the original plans hand-drawn by Bryan in 1844 still define the heart of modern Dallas.

In 1849 Bryan was among the first north Texans to set out for the California Gold Rush. Upon his goldless return a year later, a decreased mental alertness and a lack in town interest were noted. He lost favor and influence in the community, became gloomy and drank heavily according to early arrest records. The one-man-town no longer saw Bryan at the helm. He sold all his remaining town lots and his ferry service to Alexander Cockrell for \$7,000 in 1852. Bryan fled his town on horseback to avoid prosecution after an altercation and a gun battle with an intoxicated

man who allegedly insulted his wife in 1855. Despite reassurances that the sustained injuries were trivial and that no charges would be filed, Bryan would not see his family or Dallas again for six years. Infrequent letters placed him for a time living with Colorado Indians and later prospecting for gold in California. His correspondence with Cockrell expressed a sincere desire to reunite with his family, coupled with a dark overriding suspicion and delusion of persecution that heralded the decline of Dallas' town father:

"I am surprised at Col. Stone and the other attorneys in Dallas for turning against me and I shall meet them when they least expect it and will then know the reason they do so. If I have any friends in Dallas, I want you to write and let me know who they are."

Cockrell describes Bryan's homecoming in the Spring of 1861: *"It was night when he reached the Trinity River. His wife heard his loud calling and recognized his voice and awoke the ferryman. He was haggard and worn and his children did not know him."*

Bryan received a heartier reception than expected and for a time he displayed a renewed interest in Dallas - aiding flood victims, presiding over a political rally and chairing a committee to complete the Houston-Dallas Railroad. Age, however, was taking its toll on Bryan and in 1862 he moved his wife and four children from his Trinity River bluff east to White Rock Creek. While he often visited Dallas and always on horseback, his last decade was largely spent with his family, no longer involved in the affairs of Dallas. Cockrell's memoirs state, *"soon it became manifest that the once fertile mind was entering into the shadows."*

Eight months after admission, on September 14, 1877, John Neely Bryan died in the state mental hospital in Austin, Texas. There is no record of what disposition was made of his body.

John Boyd

Ripley Allen Arnold was born on January 17, 1817, in Hancock County, Mississippi. He joined the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1834, graduating 33rd in his class and becoming a second lieutenant of the First Dragoons in Florida on July 1, 1838. He was promoted to first lieutenant in February 1839, brevetted captain in April 1842 for his gallant conduct in the Seminole War, and brevetted major

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in May 1846 for his gallant conduct in the battles of Palo Alto and Resaca de la Palma. Arnold was officially promoted to captain on May 11, 1846, shortly after he had been brevetted major, and he served as assistant quartermaster until March 10, 1847.

After the Mexican War, he was given command of Company F of the Second Dragoons and ordered to northern Texas to establish a military post "at or near the confluence of the West Fork and the Clear Fork of the Trinity River." In 1843, a line had been established to separate new settlers from the Native Americans by a truce between Sam Houston and several Native American Indian Chiefs. Arnold chose to place his new military post, which he would name Camp Worth, along this line with the intention of protecting the growing north Texas settlements from the Native Americans, including our own Grapevine, and protecting them from us. This is how Fort Worth's motto, "Where the West Begins" originated. Camp Worth was established on June 6, 1849. Arnold chose to name Camp Worth after his former commander, Major General Williams Jenkins Worth. Worth won dozens of battles in the War of 1812, the Mexican-American War, and the Second Seminole War in Florida. Worth died of Cholera in San Antonio shortly before Camp Worth was founded.

With only a horse-powered sawmill, Arnold and his command constructed a barracks, a mess hall, a commissary, an infirmary, stables, and a smithy. Camp Worth, which would later be called Fort Worth, was completed in the winter of 1849. His wife and five children joined him in 1850, but two daughters soon died and were buried near the fort. Arnold was known to be a strict disciplinarian and he reportedly ran the fort with an iron fist in between military deployment until his death in September 1853. Arnold was killed during an exchange of shots between him and Josephus Murray Steiner. Steiner had discovered that Arnold had been procuring United States government horses under false pretenses and selling them for his own profit, and he was planning to expose Arnold. One witness swore that Arnold had threatened, "I will put him out of the way; he shall not give evidence against me." Steiner was ultimately acquitted of all charges. Arnold was originally buried at Fort Graham, where he died, but was eventually moved to Fort Worth and buried in the Pioneer's Rest Cemetery near his two



Brevet Major Ripley Allen Arnold statue in Fort Worth, Texas at the site of the original fort

daughters. He was said to have received the first Masonic rites ever performed in Fort Worth.

In 2014, Fort Worth dedicated a 22-foot-tall monument to Brevet Major Ripley Allen Arnold. It's a period of Fort Worth history that former City Council member Jim Lane doesn't want to be lost. "I think if you went to downtown Fort Worth today and asked people where was the fort, or what's the fort, the majority of people would tell you, 'I don't know what you're talking about.'" Arnold was known to be a friend to Native American tribes. 62-year-old June Sovo of the Comanche Tribe of Oklahoma came with his family to witness the dedication of the monument. Sovo says that Arnold was a brother to the Native Americans. "In our traditional ways, when you befriend somebody, you say, from now on we're going to be brothers," Sovo said. About the darker parts of history, when Indians were pushed out of Texas or worse, he says: "What's done is done. Today's today; we look forward." On the banks of the Trinity River, a bronze Brevet Major Ripley Allen Arnold stands in his original Dragoon military uniform, looking over the city he created.

Aislyn Gaddis

Baseball Season

Spring is in the air. And in spring, a young man's fancy turns to...baseball.

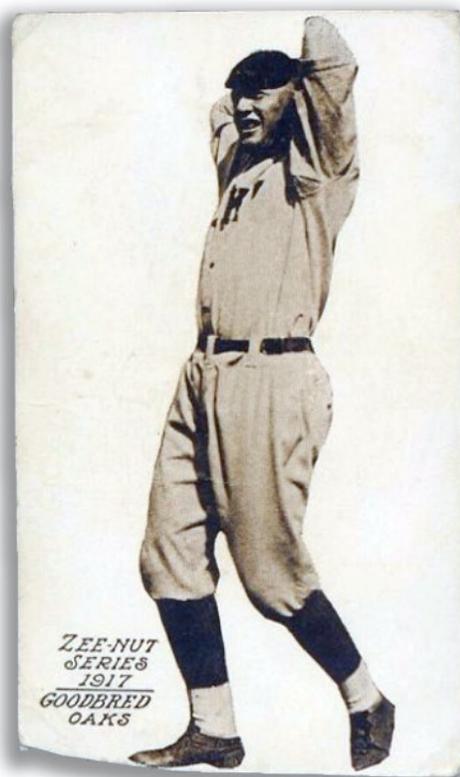
Every year, the new season brings the hope of a fresh start — maybe this year will be the year we can win it all. And it's been that way in Grapevine — a mix of fresh starts and false starts — for about 125 years. In the early years of the 20th century especially, baseball wasn't just the major leagues or even the minors, but a crazy quilt of increasingly amateur leagues, down to the kids on the corner. It became "America's Pastime" not by watching, but through active participation.

"Base Ball" had been kicking around North Texas for half a century, with Dallas and Fort Worth already exhibiting team rivalry by 1877. A Texas League of teams was established in 1888 with a formal schedule and salaried players - the opening inning of professional baseball in the state.

Baseball being simple and democratic, requiring nothing more than a bat and a ball and an empty field, it was amateurs who created the growth in the sport. The earliest mention of a game found in a Grapevine newspaper comes in June 1898, when the *Scorchers* of Pleasant Glade (where Glade Road meets present-day Highway 114) played a two-game series against Bransford (now Colleyville), losing the first but rallying for the second.

It was a rougher sport back then, even for kids. One of the Harper children got struck on the nose with a bat during a game in 1902, and a 1903 match resulted in a broken arm, a serious concussion, and a third player laid up in bed. Grapevine College tried to smooth out the rougher aspects through an organized team, but even school ball was a casual affair. Visiting teams didn't always show up. At a time when kids were needed to work the farm and transportation was still just horse and buggy, "away" games were a challenge. The early College team saw numerous defeats. "Oh well, they are used to it," opined the Sun.

But by 1907 Grapevine boasted a proper amateur team, with the "G.V.s" playing opponents like the *Rounders* and the *Pick-Ups*. The success spurred dreams of a proper permanent baseball field, so in 1911 **Felix Park** was constructed just east of the Grapevine College, perched on the southeast end of town. Felix Park had a grandstand and bleachers that could seat 500 people. 1911 saw it filled with cheering fans who bought advance tickets at the Olympia Confectionary. The local boys - renamed the *Browns* - competed against Carrollton, Lewisville,



Goodbred's 1917 Baseball Card

Plano, Roanoke, Wylie and others. The Sun covered their games on the front page. Even a girls' team formed, playing a public game against the *Boston Bloomers*.

But enthusiasm waxed and waned. By 1915 Felix Park was gone and the high school was having trouble recruiting students to the team. The Major Leagues now captured fans' attention, while a World War reduced the rank of young players.

After the war, the game returned stronger than ever both nationally and locally. In the professional minor leagues, the *Fort Worth Panthers* began a stretch of strong seasons, while new amateur groups like the Jobbers' League and the Railroad League sprung up like mushrooms and often faded just as fast.

Grapevine mustered a new team - the *Tigers* - and a new place to play - Cook Park, northwest of Main Street out on West Wall Street. By 1924 the *Tigers* were at the top of their game against a variety of opponents: town teams like Lewisville, Oak Cliff, and Britton, plus regular contests against Tarrant county "Major City League" teams like *The Walker Bread Company* and the *Electricians*. By June Grapevine had amassed an admirable record of 17 and 7.

Not being part of a league, in a sense all the Tiger games were "exhibition games." Take the time "Tiny Goodbred's All-Stars" came to town.

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Baseball from page five

Richard “Tiny” Goodbred, a minor-league pro ball player for over a decade, had been a shining member of Fort Worth’s *Panther* bullpen for three years. But 1924 found him on his own, leading a casually-collected assemblage of former minor-leaguers and strong amateurs who managed to shellac the Tigers in two games.

Less than three weeks later, Tiny appeared in uniform as a Grapevine Tiger. Small-town ball could be fluid like that. Minor leaguer and self-proclaimed All-Star Richard “Tiny” Goodbred spent about a month with the Grapevine Tigers, pitching in a handful of games. Old records show he also played on three other teams in 1924. The next year he moved to Illinois and tried coaching. He retired from baseball in 1928, and passed away in Florida forty years later.

1924 turned out to be both the peak and penultimate year for organized amateur baseball in Grapevine. While the team re-formed in 1925, without a formal league they played just a few games. The “Boys of Summer” yielded the field to the boys of Grapevine High School, where the Mustangs have managed to keep the ball in play for over a century.

Alan Smithee



Grapevine High School Baseball team early 1900's

What is May Day?

May Day is also called *Workers' Day* or *International Workers' Day*. It commemorates the historic struggles and gains made by workers and the labor movement observed in many countries and is celebrated on Saturday, May 1, 2021. In the United States, a similar observance established by President Grover Cleveland in 1891 is known as Labor Day and occurs on the first Monday of September.

John Boyd

General Store from page one

store could meet community needs, stocking everything from quinine and calico to hand tools and breaking plows. It was the place where homesteaders came to purchase supplies, sell crops and perhaps get a loan.



This 1857 tintype photograph of Eli Jenkins' general store may be the oldest Main Street photo that exists

For the pioneer woman, a shopping trip to town offered a heartening change from isolation and daily chores. In the general store, shoppers would find baskets of eggs, big jars of butter, barrels of flour and coarse ground cornmeal, barrels of apples, sacks of potatoes, turnips, cabbages, pumpkins and long-neck squash. Behind these would be barrels of molasses, vinegar, a barrel of salt pork with a big stone on top to keep the pork under the brine, salt, sugar, canned fish and kegs of lard. Behind the counter would be large boxes of soda crackers, crocks of honey, coffee, tea, starch in bulk, bottles of catsup, cayenne pepper, baking soda, cream of tartar, spices, rice and big jars of striped candy. Further back in the store would be found dishes, pewter cutlery, jars, crocks, tubs, pails and brooms. For the farmers, there were hoes, rakes, spades, ropes, kegs of nails and tobacco. Grapevine was the economic hub for the many small farming communities on the Grape Vine Prairie.

Grapevine Main Street continues to be an important and exciting retail destination. The general store has given way to unique boutiques, specialty shops, restaurants and entertainment venues. Grapevine, a National Main Street City, is justifiably proud of its retailers of the past, today's Historic Downtown Grapevine Association (HDGA), and Main Street's bright future!

Sallie Andrews