Guadalupe State Fair Edition

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Guadalupe County Has Wonderful Climate, Rich Soil, No Paupers, Good Schools, Progressive Citizens

By Frank N. Page

GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Guadalupe county is situated in the central-eastern part of the state and is known as one of the counties of the famous Pecos valley. The Pecos river enters the county at Anton Chico on the northwest and runs in a southeastern direction through the county to the southeastern corner at Fort Sumner.

The county is sixty miles north and south, and sixty-six miles east and west and is as will be seen, nearly a square. By the geological survey of the United States, Guadalupe county is classed as a grazing-agricultural county, the surface being a rolling prairie, except the canon of the Pecos river and the beautiful Gallinas canon.

The railroad systems cross the county from east to west, the Santa Fe and Rock Island. Most of the principal towns are located on these railways, which are so located as to be very convenient to the people and travelers, and in all the county there is no great distance to be traversed to reach a railway station.

LANDS.

On July 1st, 1916, according to the official report of the United States general land office, there were in Guadalupe county 684,128 acres of Uncle Sam's government land subject to entry under the homestead laws of the United States. Of this land all but 51,648 acres was classed as "grazing-agricultural" and the balance, or fifty per cent of the whole, was classed as "timber-grazing land."

All of this land is subject to the section grazing homestead law recently passed by the United States congress and with wheat, as in Dakota, and all the other homestead laws of the United States. This is all to be seen that Guadalupe county offers to the homeseeker an exceedingly attractive proposition for a free home. Three hundred and ninety-five thousand acres of this government land is located in the Santa Fe land district, 305,280 acres in the Fort Sumner district and only 21,088 acres which is classed as "timber-grazing, some farming land" in the Roswell district.

The soil is peculiar all over the county, a rich sandy loam and is very productive, and under irrigation the yield is astonishing to the rain-belt farmer.

DRY-FARMING

Sooner or later, and oldtimers have never known a failure, our rains come in June, July or August each year and even if not until September, the scientific farmer—so-called "dry farmer"—can be sure of a crop of milo maize, kafir corn, feterita or sorghum, and beans and always the native grasses. This has been demonstrated this year, which has been obviously dry, by the scientific farmers in the southeastern part of the county, who have good crops of the above-mentioned products and samples will be duly shown at the Albuquerque fair to convince the incredulous.

However, all our permanent homesteaders have found that to be successful all should have livestock and also utilize the rich native grasses and feed the product of their cultivated land to their animals and thus market the results of their labor. Irrigated farming will be mentioned in the description of the county's towns and villages.

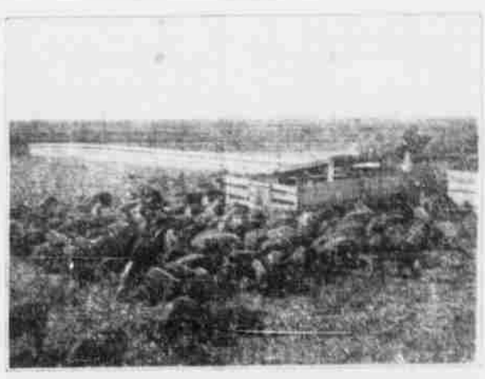
TAXES

About the first question asked by the capitalist seeking investment is "how's your taxes?" Guadalupe county's assessed valuation of taxable property for the year 1915 was $12,487,797 on a basis of a cash valuation. Taxes assessed $146,764, 92 per cent of which had been collected up to September 15th of this year, thus showing that on a cash valuation of property the taxes are a shade over ONE per cent. But this does not include taxes of the incorporated cities, towns and villages.

The assessed valuation of 1916 is $13,270,169, showing an increase of $782,372, which, considering the fact that there are no large cities in the county, and the increase in the healthy growth of the increasing land values, is a very good showing. Our state tax commission is doing exceedingly good work and each year as the land and property is properly assessed will show an increased valuation and a reduction of our tax levies.

SCHOOLS.

The homeseeker with a family invariably asks about the schools and school houses of his prospective home. No man with a family will have any cause to complain of the Guadalupe county schools, or the teachers or management. Our county schools will compare favorably with the schools of any state, and while this may be doubted, our rural schools especially are way above the average in other and older states. This is of a truth. Marvelous progress has been made in the education of our children in the past five years and the figures will tell the story. In 1911 in this county there were expended on our schools the sum of $22,[illegible]. For the school term of 1914-15, $31,122. The average length of the school term was increased from about three and one-half months to seven months. In 1911 most of the teachers taught on permits or third grade certificates, now, in 1916 all have certificates. The enrollment is 2,364, out of a census of children of the ages from 5 to 20 years of 2,[illegible]. Average daily attendance is over 1,[illegible]. The high school at Santa Rosa now has an daily attendance of over fifty scholars. In 1911 only one-half the school districts owned their own school buildings, now all the districts save the school districts, of which one is a large brick building, fourteen other school houses, one cement, twenty-seven frame, and twenty-three adobe, all in fine condition and well ventilated. There are fifty-one school districts, an astonishing increase in the past four years. Now for much more money is in the hands of the homeseeker to use a slang expression "shot at." But we in this county have every reason to be proud of this great progress made in education, in the last five and one-half years, and the young homeseeker will show for themselves in every way the results of the work of the teachers and our school management. No homeseeker need be afraid of the schools. The English language is taught in all the schools of the county and each year sees more people, and there is in all the schools no pressure whatever to get settled in this county. Apparently is now one of the studies of the young generation of both sexes especially in the higher grades, and every school term the presence of the State Agricultural College cadets and their officers in all sections of a county is what brings in the money and the greater the exports the greater the wealth and prosperity. The greatest exports of Guadalupe county is the product of the grass. All fresh is grass, and it takes the grass for the animals to produce the flesh to feed the multitude." As has been said elsewhere in this article rains falls during the year the rains come and the grass grows and Guadalupe county is at the time to bloom with a fine growth of grass although the rains came late this year. But it does not take long for the livestock of the county to fatten on the rich grasses. Herds are reports are the products and increase in our grazing herds. Sheep, lambs, cattle and wool are the principal exports. Statistics are not at hand, that is actual figures, and we can only say here that the total amount of the sale of wool, lambs and cattle would be astonishing to an outsider. The principal shipping points are Puerto de Luna, Santa Rosa, Vaughn on the Rock Island system, and Vaughn, Buchanan and Fort Sumner on the Santa Fe system.



GUADALUPE RAISES SHEEP

Shearing plants are at Vaughn, Cuervo, Buchanan and Pastura. All owners of livestock, large and small, and all our merchants who trade with the pastoral gentlemen are very prosperous. Prices have never been more satisfactory and many small owners have prospered beyond their most sanguine expectations. It is the small man who looks after his herds, who prospers most. Many thousand acres are now awaiting the coming of the small stockman to our county.

Our other products for export from our irrigated farms are alfalfa and fruit, apples, pears, peaches, cherries, and plums are shipped out in season, also chili, cabbage, onions, sweet potatoes, melons, cantaloupes, tomatoes and other products of the garden. The chili and onions are of especial quality. As yet the dry-farmer has only sold for export the lowly bean, and this year will get an extra good price. But I do not be deceived in thinking the dry-farmer so-called needs your sympathy, very and exceedingly few farmers of Guadalupe county but are owners of animals, and with the high prices prevailing at present, it does not take many yearling steers to relieve the simple wants of the poor farmer.

Of course some years and in 1915 many farmers exported and sold milo maize and feterita in quantities, but as a general thing all farmers of the so-called dry districts feed the products of their land to livestock. One item of the farmer's usual expense is seed in Guadalupe county and that is doctor's bills. Of course humanity has its ills in this world but there are less ills of the flesh in our county than in many sections. Here malaria is practically unknown, and the hookworm gets not in his work. There is, in to be brief, no healthier country. Read carefully what is said under the heading of climate.

IRRIGATED LANDS

Land under irrigation and in the irrigation districts is not cheap, neither is it priced high. The principal product of all our irrigated lands is alfalfa and fruit. So much has been written about the good qualities and the enormous crops of alfalfa that here we can only say as to that grown in Guadalupe county. Our alfalfa is of extra good quality. The largest shipping point is Fort Sumner. The per irrigation our county seems to be the natural home of the plant and many of irrigation farmers never feed any grain to their horses, and work them just as hard as the corn-fed farmers. As many as four and five cuttings are usual during the season and many pasture animals on the fields all winter. Lately many hogs are being raised at Fort Sumner on the alfalfa alone as a breeding ration.

As to a panegyric on this plant we refer our readers to the great man who was once the present at the board of agriculture of the state of Kansas. He said it put Kansas on the map just as much as corn. There are some locations in our county where water can be had at a shallow depth and the irrigation of our lands from wells is in its infancy. And there is no reason why great tracts can not be in time placed under a system of irrigation similar to that now in the Portales district of Roosevelt county, where once there was a desert and now blooms the rose, or rather alfalfa grows, and wherever water can be used in moderate quantity for the irrigation of this great forage plant prosperity follows the land owner.

RAILROADS

Guadalupe county is crossed by two railway systems which give good service to the whole community, and very little complaint is ever heard of the service rendered. On the Rock Island-El Paso & Southwestern system there are stock pens at Vaughn, Pastura, Santa Rosa and Cuervo, and on the Santa Fe system at East Vaughn, Buchanan and Fort Sumner, thus it will be seen the stock-owner has but a short drive from anywhere in the county to reach a shipping station. Cars have always been promptly furnished. Entrance and outlet to the stockyards is free. The passenger service is good. Our railroads pay the principal taxes of the county and of late years the equation and reduction of the tax on the two lines has been a source of gratification to the railway management.

The coming of the gas-wagon has reduced the passenger traffic to a large extent and this is being felt by the railways not only in our county but all over the state and will be more felt as the state highways now under construction are completed across our county and state. The automobile has come to stay and it is probable that in a short time passenger rates will be reduced on all railway lines.

COUNTY ROADS AND BRIDGES

A great change for the good has been made in our county roads in the past four years, and the good work is still going on. At present the state engineer has a gang of road workers on the state highway near Fort Sumner. The county road board will soon begin the work of repairing and placing in order all the county roads, this work being postponed until after the rainy season. Good roads are all over the county and an especially good road is now a close sixty miles from Clovis to Santa Rosa, thence to Vaughn on to Albuquerque or Santa Fe or north to Las Vegas, and the mountains.

In time, and it takes time to get all the people educated to the idea that we must have first class highways, our county being for the most part level, except in the canons of the river, will have the very best of roads everywhere in the county.

In the last four years our county commissioners have built three substantial bridges across the Pecos river, at Anton Chico, Puerta de Luna and Fort Sumner, and the Agua Negra at Santa Rosa is now crossed on a stone bridge, the others being of steel. Also under the construction of the state engineer a bridge will be built at Dela in the Pecos river below Anton Chico. Many arroyos all over the county have been in the past year, been bridged by substantial rock and cement, and the good work still goes on.

To the comer from the old states we can truly say that our county roads are very seldom muddy. In some sections mud is unknown, this on account of the sail, and the great evaporation. It will rain hard one day and the next day road will be dry. Hence we have no trouble with mud as is for months so on roads of the rain belt states.

TOWNS, VILLAGES, IRRIGATION ORCHARDS

ANTON CHICO. One of the oldest towns in the state is a quaint little hamlet, typical old style village of the native people and is situated on both sides of the Pecos river in the northwestern part of the county. The population is about 1,000 picturesque people, who nearly all have irrigated farms and orchards under the community ditch and many have ranches on the Anton Chico grant. Here they graze their stocks. Here is the head of the Catholic church of Anton Chico and one of the oldest churches in the state. A fine bridge connects the towns and also here the Las Vegas-Santa Rosa-Clovis-Roswell state highway passes over this bridge.

Irrigation extends for miles miles along both sides of the river and there are also many fine orchards. The irrigation ditches extend to the town of Delia—formerly Vado de Anton Chico, where there is now a fine work being done in the Pecos river. Anton Chico and Vado have good schools and extra good roads to Santa Rosa and Las Vegas.

LAS COLONIAS. In another typical Mexican town situated on the west side of the Pecos river. Population about 400. Here there is a community irrigation ditch and many acres of fine land in alfalfa and orchards. In all these old towns the native people live on their irrigated lands and have small ranches located on the adjacent government and grant lands.

Anton Chico and Las Colonias are on the Anton Chico land grant which was surveyed to be a grant to the inhabitants of Anton Chico and the title is in dispute. Meanwhile the people pasture their flocks on the grazing lands of the grant.

SANTA ROSA. The county seat is located on the east side of the Pecos river at the connection of the Rock Island and E. P. and S. W. railway systems. It is a well built modern town, population about 1,[illegible], has a fine court house, high school and graded school, a national bank with resources of half a million dollars, a great mercantile establishment of the C. Hertel company, wholesalers. The firm is now building a large concrete warehouse on the south side of the railway, also one of the largest retail stores in the state—that of the Shoe Bros. Co. and also the Geo. H. Smith Mercantile Co. and others, good hotels, water works in the course of construction and also electric lights. Santa Rosa, being on the state highway and a junction of many roads, a continual procession of automobiles are passing through the town, and there are several garages and repair shops where the tourists can be sure of good service.

A few years past there was not an automobile owned in this county, now it is estimated that there are over 250 of all makes in use and more are being sold daily. Here is there are fine roads leading in all directions to and from our county seat, and good bridges span the Pecos and Agua Negra rivers.

The scenery in the vicinity of Santa Rosa is beautiful. The famous lakes are adjacent to the town and fishing is fine in the Twin Lakes in season.

Many private irrigation ditches are in Santa Rosa on the south and extend down the valley. The town is supplied by the famous springs, one of which is located at the crossing of the Agua Negra, is a noted curiosity.

Santa Rosa has two weekly newspapers, The La Voz Publica, Spanish and English, and the Sun, Spanish. The past year was long one of great progress and improvement in Santa Rosa and its future is exceedingly bright. The town is incorporated and the officials progressive citizens.

PUERTO DE LUNA. This town is located twelve miles south of Santa Rosa and is a quaint old-style village, scattered on both sides of the Pecos river, connected by the finest bridge in the county. Here on both sides of the river there is a community ditch, fine orchards and alfalfa fields. The fruit, melons and chili of Puerto de Luna are famous all over the state. Population about 600. Has good schools and fine rock school houses. In the head of a parish and has a large Roman Catholic church and parsonage. Most of the inhabitants own ranches near by and nearly all own livestock and are a prosperous community. Puerto de Luna alternate Tuesdays. That is one of the Lucas brands of the late Alexander Lucas, born cattleman and the Pecos river with his descendants the leading cattle of the Pecos. Hence the name has nothing to do with the money. The town was formerly the county seat, but on the coming in of the Rock Island railway a change was made to Santa Rosa. The old court house, adobe, now abandoned, was destroyed by fire last winter. The scenery in the vicinity is beautiful and a view from the top of the bluffs, 300 to 400 feet high above the town, repays any one for the climb. The town being surrounded by the cliffs of the Pecos river, the climate is delightful.

FORT SUMNER. Just south of Puerto de Luna the Pecos river runs into a narrow canyon for about thirty miles and opens out a few miles above the present town of Fort Sumner. The old fort is in ruins seven miles below. The coming of the Santa Fe railway, known as the Belen cut-off, changed the old historic village and put in the present location, and a modern small city has been built up and has a great future. The town was first named Sumnerside and changed to Fort Sumner in deference to tradition and historical fact.

Too much cannot be said as to the future of Fort Sumner, it is in its infancy and it just at this time begins to grow.

Here there is an irrigation system on both sides of the Pecos. On the east side [illegible] acres of rich land can be placed under irrigation and at present some acres are in cultivation, and are mostly planted to alfalfa and orchards. The orchards are now four, five and six years old and have just come into bearing. There are in several years over 10,000 apple trees and over 1,000 other fruits so it will be seen that every year Fort Sumner will be a great fruit shipping district. The fruit trees have made remarkable growth and the young trees have shown that the fruit is of the very best quality. Alfalfa is the principal crop. Many of the farmers have lately begun the breeding of hogs and it has been a success. The valley is a beautiful evidence of what water and work will do, and it will speak volumes to the rain belt farmer as to the production of the irrigated plots. Other crops Fort Sumner produces are mostly sweet potatoes, all kinds of garden truck and of late years wheat has been a success.

Fort Sumner is an incorporated town and officered. Lights on the streets are lighted and it is now with the new administration a very town. Good schools and extra school buildings and healthy children are the boast of the citizens. A great mercantile house, Hoffmann & Co. Inc., is located at Fort Sumner and many stores and shops. There are two banks, respectively the Lincoln and the Farmers. Stockyards, shearing and dipping plants are located here. Population of Fort Sumner, about 1,[illegible]. Fort Sumner has a metropolitan hotel with sanitarium in connection, good public schools, water works and good roads. Here is located one of the five United States land offices of the south and there were in the Fort Sumner land district on Jan. 1, 1916, more than 100,000 acres of vacant government land subject to entry under the homestead laws of the United States. Population now—including the farmers of the valley—about 2,[illegible], and steadily growing. There is no reason why Fort Sumner should not be a city in a few years.

On the west side of the Pecos river, and connected with Fort Sumner by a fine steel bridge, is the pumping and irrigation plant of John S. Taylor under which there are about 4,000 acres of fine land. Here can be seen the results of irrigation under the pumping system and many are of the opinion that this system is as good if not better than the dam and gravitation systems.

All these exceedingly productive rich lands are tributary to Fort Sumner, our Guadalupe county and support a happy and prosperous community.

It will pay any prospective farmer or homeseeker to spend a few days at and in the vicinity of this beautiful valley, and learn from actual contact with the irrigated farmers the productiveness of modern methods of irrigation.

VAUGHN. There are two distinct towns at Vaughn—east and west—which is to be regretted, as this is mostly the fault of the two railway systems which refuse to join. The two railway depots are a mile apart. The citizens may also be at fault. However, both towns are prosperous. East Vaughn, the Santa Fe railway's town, is a division point and has a fine mission style depot and Harvey eating house and hotel and one of their famous reading rooms. Vaughn is the headquarters of many sheep owners and here are located dipping and shearing plants and stockyards. Population of the two towns about 1,[illegible]. Thousands of lambs and many thousand pounds of wool are shipped from Vaughn annually and at present there are 150,000 head of sheep being dipped by the state and United States sheep sanitary officials at Vaughn's dipping plant. East Vaughn is on the state highway Roswell to Santa Fe and the west, and has a good garage and repair shop.

PASTURA. On the E. P. & S. W., eighteen miles west of Santa Rosa, is a great stock and wool shipping station. Here the great Hefeld corporation has a branch general store. The country tributary to Pastura is a rich pastoral section. Stockyards, shearing and sheep dipping plants are located here and in season Pastura is a very busy station.

CUERVO. The country tributary to Cuervo, one of the best towns in the county, is very rich in the production of sheep and cattle. Situated sixteen miles east of Santa Rosa on the Rock Island railway, it is just at the right distance to catch all the trade from the eastern part of the county, hence many thousand pounds of wool, and thousands of sheep, lambs and cattle are shipped annually from the Cuervo station. The great Mercantile-stock raising house of Bond & West Co. is located here. Cuervo has a good weekly paper, The Cuervo Clipper. It is not a "dry town." The saloons were lately voted out. Here are good roads in and out in all directions. A few miles north of the town is the great Hicks & Jones cattle ranch, located on the famous Rock land grant. This is one of the largest cattle ranches in the state. Population about 1,[illegible]. Has a good rock school house and an extra good school. Also two churches, garage, water works, stores in all directions. Many small farms in all directions. Many small stockmen have their ranches tributary to Cuervo, which accounts for its prosperity.

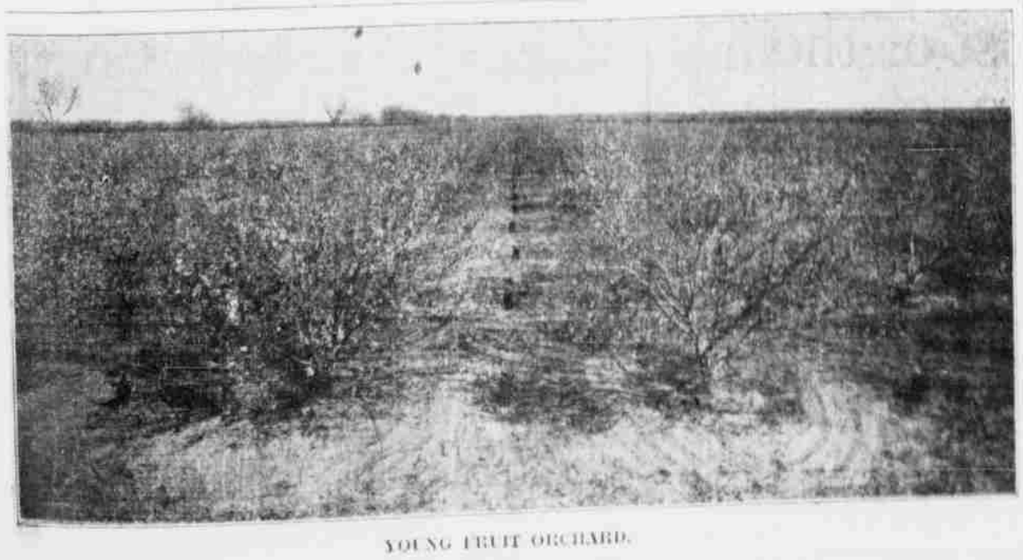
There are a few other villages, one of which, Buchanan, located between Fort Sumner and Vaughn on the Belen cut-off of the Santa Fe railway, has the only power sheep shearing plant in the county. Over 1,800,000 pounds of wool has been shipped annually from this station. Many of the large ranches of the great families are small villages and have their post-offices and stores. Such are Elvira, Guadalupe, Pinnada and others.

GAME.

We still have one herd of antelope in Guadalupe county. There are about thirty in this herd and are sometimes seen from the train of the Santa Fe railway between Buchanan and Vaughn. This small herd is all that is left of the thousands that were in the county in the past. Deer and wild turkeys are very few, if any, although many of both were here in the past. We still have a supply of coyotes, wild cats, foxes and skunks. Now and then a beaver shows his signs in the water courses of the county. Musk rats are plenty in the Agua Negra rivers.

The native or crested quail we have in the thousands all over the whole county and this year they are very plentiful. Decks are in season in numbers under the United States game law, which went into force and many are now to be seen on the farms and ranches, flying in coveys from one county and city, to one known as formerly great flocks passed up and down the Pecos river. Doves are here in hundreds. Very few were killed here the past season—reason, cartridges too expensive—good shots for the high birds. Curlews passed over the state at the commencement of the hostilities and some large flocks of ducks and water fowl have been seen—flight and due to season from southern birds.

PECOS RIVER NEAR SANTA ROSA



YOUNG FRUIT ORCHARD.