

THE SNYDER SIGNAL

"Let all The Ends Thou Aim'st at Be Thy Country's, Thy God's and Truth's."

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SCURRY COUNTY THE LEADING COUNTY IN WESTERN TEXAS

IN FERTILITY OF SOIL AND AREA OF TILLABLE AGRICULTURAL LANDS, OPULENT IN OPPORTUNITIES, ESPECIALLY TO DECIDUOUS FRUIT GROWERS OF MODEST MEANS, THERE BEING AN ABUNDANCE OF CHEAP LANDS OF PROVEN ADAPTABILITY FOR PROFITABLE FRUIT CULTURE WITH AMPLE WATER EASILY AVAILABLE FOR IRRIGATION PURPOSES. A TEN ACRE ORCHARD AND GARDEN HOME PREFERABLE TO A LARGE FARM HOWEVER FERTILE. LESS TOIL AND TROUBLE, GREATER REVENUE, AN EASIER LIVING AND AN ASSURED COMPETENCE AND OFTIMES FORTUNE, IN SCURRY COUNTY ORCHARD HOMES, THAT ARE EASILY OBTAINABLE. SNYDER, THE COUNTY SEAT A PROSPEROUS CITY PLETHORIC WITH FUTURE PROMISE.

An Appreciation—By Frank McDonald, Editor Lone Star Lexion.

The east has become overpopulated and has ceased to expand. The middle western agricultural states of Iowa, Missouri, Kansas and Nebraska and the western divide states of Ohio and Indiana have become congested, their soils in many portions, at least, exhausted, their lands barren, sterile and unprofitable. The tide star of immigration which for half a century past has chiefly pointed to the far west, has well-nigh, forever set. There remains but one last, best, west, the great southwest of Texas, but its giant possibilities dwarf into insignificance, centuries of development on either side the "Father of Waters." Texas, the empire State of the glorious galaxy of the Union, is a great and giant commonwealth and contains within its well-nigh countless confines illimitable resources in deposits of the precious metals, in vast oil fields to feed the furnaces of industrial enterprises and the other worlds of wealth that the ages have matured in the womb of mother earth, whilst the white winged sails of all the nations of the world seek her gulf coast harbors and will become numerous as the trees of the State's mighty forests when our great sea level canal spans the Isthmus of Panama and opens the gateway of commerce between the world's giant oceans.

But with all its redundant and varied resources, the greatest asset of Texas in her vast area of 262,290 square miles is its amplitude of fertile acreage upon which is raised a goodly portion of the world's supply of the great fleecy staple, the alighting of a worm upon the little green boll which causes greater consternation on both hemispheres than the mobilization of serried armies or the massing of numerous naval fleets, and which is capable of producing cotton, cereals and other products sufficient to clothe, nourish and sustain the entire population of these great United States.

And, assuredly the last and not least, but best portion of this empirical domain, as yet opulent in opportunity in an agricultural, horticultural, industrial and investment regard, is that part of this peerless state, commonly topographically designated as West Texas and meant to refer to the fertile agricultural lands lying west of Lampasas and Palo Pinto counties, and extending to the center of Culberson county, and from the plains country, so-called, north to the Southern confines of Tom Green county toward the Rio Grande.

Scurry county, situated almost in

Scurry county taking a pronounced pre-eminence in these particulars because of having a much greater area of tillable, fertile soil and an advantage that can be suitably described by the superlative priceless in its abundance of shallow, easily available water supply for irrigating purposes, the entire county being underlaid with a seemingly inexhaustible lake of absolutely pure water at depths varying from 20 to 130 feet, the shallowest being encountered close to the county seat.

A large portion of the lands that comprise the 821 square miles of Scurry county are level as a carpeted floor and the rest of its tillable soil lies between long rolling hills, affording excellent natural drainage.

The soils of Scurry county vary from light sandy loam on the higher ridges to heavy black land in the valleys and all are wonderfully productive of fruits, cotton and forage crops which have been proven to be respectively indigenous.

The average depth of the soil is five feet, universally underlaid with a clay subsoil and the conformation of the country, peculiar soil consistency, absence of noxious vegetation, cool nights, extremely rapid growing periods, much farming methods and other conditions diverse from other states, all combine to give it great moisture retaining properties. Scurry county, indeed, frequently presents a pleasing picture, glowing with the green verdure, when other less favored, though nearby sections are suffering from severe drouths and semi-arid conditions.

Here, as elsewhere in the southland, cotton is the great staple and money crop and the freedom of this section from boll weevil and other destructive insects that work such woeful injury in the gulf territory and other lower altitude regions make it an ideal place for the cultivation of the fleecy plant.

In normal years of natural precipitation a half a bale to the acre is an average yield in rightly cultivated cotton ground, three quarters of a bale is not uncommon and in favored spots those model farmers who plow deep in the fall and break up their land with a harrow until a dust mulch is formed on the top and harrow after each rain until ready to plant, frequently make in excess of a bale.

It is a sine qua non with successful farmers that the soil must be gone over after every rainfall as otherwise it cakes and does not properly absorb the moisture.

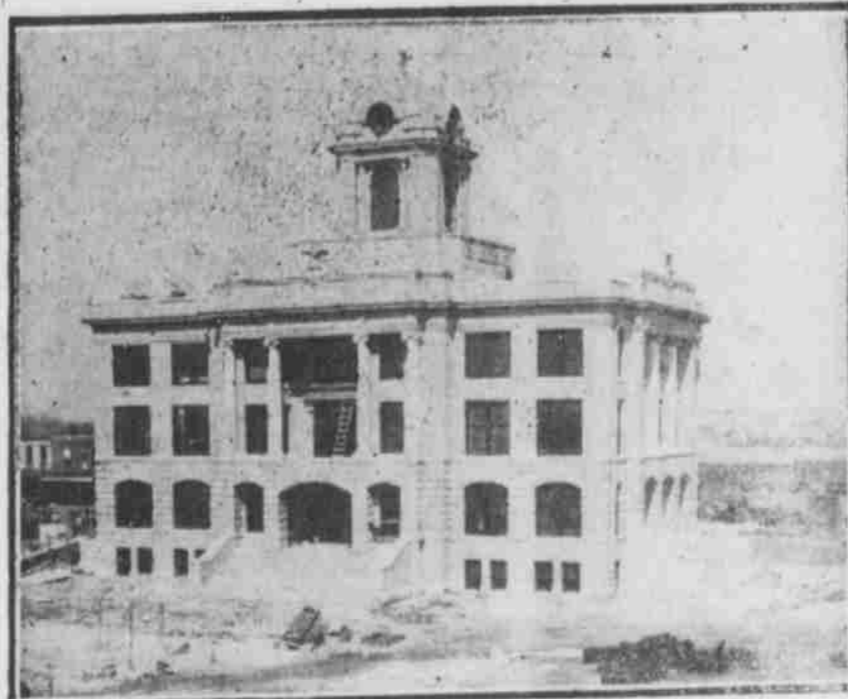
There has been a scarcity of rain-

ed have made a quarter of a bale or more and this will be exceeded the present year in certain favored spots in the southern end of the county. Last year, one of the droust in recent times, the average production was one third of a bale to the acre.

There has never been a failure in Scurry county in the fodder crops of milo maize and kafir corn, which with cotton are the principal staples of this section. Both find a natural growing ground and indigenous home in this soil and local climatic conditions, produce wonderfully prolifically and are exceedingly profitable crops; in fact, are indispensable to the farmer who follows the wise plan of running some cattle and raising a few litters of hogs with the soil tilling vocation.

Cattle, work stock and swine take to this feed as does a duck to water, thrive and wax fat and hardy upon it.

A reliable and experienced authority, writing upon the growth of these products in Scurry county says: "Kafir corn and milo, the two great grain and forage crops of Scurry county, are the same in



Scurry County Court House.

value to us as corn to the north and east, often maturing one hundred bushels per acre.

These wonderful plants produce a grain, which in the South and West are destined to supplant the ancestral Indian corn crop, furnishing a feed as high in nutriment and food value as corn, but without the liability of "burning out" stock. Planted like Indian corn it grows luxuriantly, producing a fodder very much like sorghum and is perhaps the best all round feed in a silo grown. The grain in head or threshed fattens cattle, hogs or work stock as rapidly as corn and gives to the edible flesh of animals a distinctly pleasing flavor which is so liable to rancidity in corn fed animals. With improved farming utensils, many farmers are handling two hundred acres of these grains individually and netting from \$10.00 to \$32.00 an acre.

The demand for this grain exceed its production and it finds a ready market in all the grain centers of the United States. The meal from this grain stands in a class by itself between corn flour and wheat flour and makes a far more palatable bread than the former.

Scurry county produces more cotton, kafir corn and milo than any other county in west Texas; has more land in cultivation to these and other products and it is also perhaps well to here mention, owns

more cattle, horses and mules and hogs and has more money per capita on deposit in its banks than any of its sister counties in this bountiful belt.

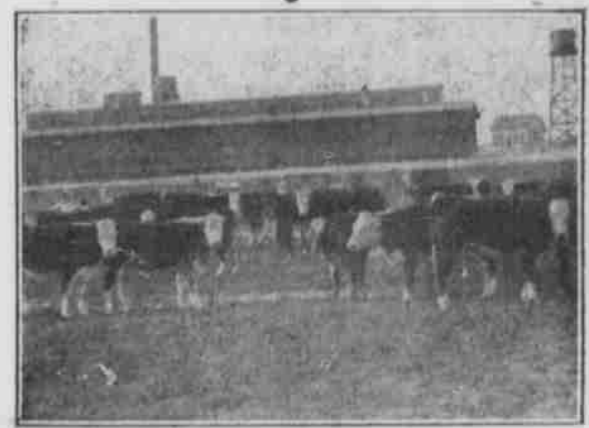
All that has been above said relative to the present standard, staple crops of Scurry county are carefully considered conservative statements, the exact truth of which is susceptible of easy verification and indubitably a good living, an assured competence and, in many instances an ample fortune awaits the tiller of this fertile soil, who confines his activities to the crops and callings mentioned. But it is also the opinion of the most careful observer and most thoughtful persons of all classes, from farmers to financiers, that Scurry county is brightest with most brilliant promise for the future in the assured responsibility of its fertile soil to deciduous fruit growing, vineyard and vine plant culture. Fabulous is scarcely an exaggerated term in which to refer to the returns that will come as certain as the night the day, from horticulture and vineyarding under the propitious soil, climate and water conditions that here exist, with which should be coupled fruit grower's associations to see to the proper marketing of an extensive production, a subject that will later be referred to.

All orchards attempted, all grape, berry, or vine plant culture essayed, under anything approximating proper conditions have here thrived and prospered beyond the most sanguine expectations. It has been proven beyond peradventure by demonstration extending over an ample period of time to be conclusive that nowhere in all of Uncle Sam's domain, and this statement is made with due consideration for the conservatism with which it is the writer's intent and hope to clamp and fortify everything said in these columns, do peaches, pears, plums, almonds, poaches, pears plums, dewberries, strawberries, water melons,

\$10,000.00 worth of machinery and stock on hand and has a fat bank account and unimpeachable credit, all acquired within thirty-six short months in the field of industry which the writer feels called upon to bring to the attention of readers as forcibly as he is capable of doing. Mr. Easton contends, in another article in this paper which it will pay one to read, that the returns from ten acres of orchard, vine yard and truck patch, confined chiefly to the products here named will almost from the first, yield as much value as a large farm, cultivated to the usual sta-

make feasible and easy the conservation of the vast bodies of water which it offlines contains and their utilization to irrigate and moisten the adjoining soil.

In various places it is cut and almost crossed by huge projecting formations of rock, solid as Arctic basalt leaving only narrow apertures in the channel bed which could be dammed at an insignificant cost, but a few hundred dollars at some points and the water detained to be diverted at the proper crop growing period to the adjacent rich acreage, estimated at 10,000 acres. Bluff, Ennis, Rough and Sulphur creeks



Feeding Cattle at Oil Mill, Snyder.

And the fruit grower, vineyardist and truck gardener does not have to eagerly watch the weather reports in the papers or scan the heavens and the horizon with an anxious eye, for from his holdings all crop hazard will have been removed and his returns are well-nigh as certain as the coupons Mr. Rockefeller will clip on Standard Oil's next dividend day.

With the increased acreage which is being devoted to fruit culture and the purposes here indicated, which assuredly will be largely augmented in the near future, will be felt the need of greater marketing facilities and a fruit growers association to foster and further the interests of this industry in this and other regards, should be organized as quickly as may be.

The orange and lemon of California and the Bermuda onion of Texas, all peerless in their lines and for which there was ever a heavy demand, were raised at a loss to the grower until an organization was effected sufficiently strong to dominate both the railroads and the commission men.

Scurry County should profit by experience and take time by the forelock as regards nursing and nurturing this all important, though as yet scarcely more than embryonic industry.

The average rainfall of Scurry county is 24.82 inches per annum, which occurs at predominant seasons and which precipitation, for such a priority pointed out, is usually ample for crop production. But aside from the natural rainfall and the inexhaustible body of water which underlies the entire country, it has several other irrigated sources providing water supplies which are long will undoubtedly be preserved and conserved for the present and profitable purposes of irrigating and giving increased fertility to the soil. Reference is had in the latter regard to the numerous creeks and waterways that course through the country and confluence to which are invariably large valleys of exceptionally fertile and productive land.

Deep Creek, which in its meanderings flows directly through the city of Snyder, seems especially designed and constructed by nature to

and other streams and rivulets that traverse other portions of the county can also be dammed and their waters conserved and utilized at a comparatively small cost. Every year, the priceless value of water for generations has been allowed to go to waste is being more understood and appreciated, and it is a hopeful sign that some farmers who hitherto used to dig ditches to draw water from their lands now terrace them for the converse purpose of retaining this leavening moisture.

It is proper to mention in connection with prospective irrigation in Scurry county, a subject which is the most vitally important one, presenting itself for solution, not only in Scurry county but to all of West Texas, that sub-irrigation by use of concrete pipes has received the hearty commendation and approval of all the most intelligent, experienced, competent, conscientious, conservative persons who have thoroughly examined all systems, as the most economical and desirable in all regards. It takes but one eighth of the amount of water necessary to moisten a given quantity by the old ditch surface way, when the sub-irrigation plan is used, this latter method conforms more to the usage of nature, thoroughly seeping through and soaking the soil and it is preferable in every particular in this regard to say nothing of the fact that two acres out of every twenty are non-tilled, wholly lost to cultivation, by the primitive surface ditch plan. Taken into account the fact that there is an inexhaustible body of red clay near Snyder which makes a porous grow through the natural apertures of which the water finds easy access to the soil, propitious conditions for sub-irrigation which are not elsewhere obtainable and it would seem that this opportunity, which nature is bestirring should be quickly grasped.

Porous concrete pipe from the clay in question is in perfect, practical use in the splendid garden of Mrs. George Smith in this city, and banker H. B. Patterson is contemplating its installation on a piece of his adjacent to the city.

Scurry county is traversed from Southeast to Northwest by the Ros-



At One of the Cotton Gins Snyder

the geographical center of this splendidly rich and resourceful stretch of country and its southern sister neighboring county of Mitchell, lead all other sections of West Texas in fertility of soil and produce per acre crop production

fall in Scurry county the past three seasons, one of the dry cycles that recurrently visit all sections from the Red River to the Rio Grande, yet in this period of comparative drouth all farmers who have cultivated their cotton as above describ-



Central School Building, Snyder