



Photo by Payton McCormick

The following is a history of the Shivers family as reported in the March 3, 1960 edition of The Vernon Times.

Mrs. Lou Shivers came to Wilbarger County with her husband, the late Frederick Shivers in 1914 from East Texas to "get away from chills, bollweevils and cockleburrs." Her husband had come to this section as a cotton picker and deciding that he would like to live here, sent word to Van Zandt County for his family to get ready to move. Mrs. Shivers said her husband had been overenthusiastic about Vernon and she was a bit disappointed in the town when she first arrived. However, she admitted that she found fewer bollweevils, fewer cockleburrs, and better health.

Actually, they were more interested in how beautiful the county would be, since they did not immediately farm after moving to Vernon.

Mrs. Shivers was born Nov. 3, 1873, in Van Zandt County. She attended a rural school that was absorbed later by the Ben Wheeler school. In passing, she mentioned that the town, Ben Wheeler, was named from a beloved mail carrier that had served his patrons many years, using a horse and buggy.

Mrs. Shivers used to love to tease her husband by telling him that father, the late Tom Cooper, sold her for a quar-

ter. Once, when her husband was a boy, he happened to be visiting in Tyler with her father and his father. Mr. Cooper dropped a quarter that rolled and fell through a crack in the porch, Young Frederick Cooper retrieved the quarter and, when he handed it to Mr. Cooper, the latter remarked: "Young man, I have a daughter at home that I am going to give to you."

Miss Lou Cooper and Frederick Shivers were married in Ben Wheeler on Sept. 20, 1891. He was a native of Alabama but moved to Texas with his family when he was two years old. Mr. Shivers was living in Fort Worth when he came to Van Zandt County to visit relatives and met his bride-to-be.

As bride and groom, they lived on a farm about 14 miles from Fort Worth. Later they moved to Fort Worth where Mr. Shivers had a partnership in a grocery store while, at the same time, he operated a wagon yard. After a few years in Fort Worth, they returned to Ben Wheeler to farm. They remained there until the family moved to Vernon Dec. 6, 1914.

Soon after their arrival here, Mr. and Mrs. Shivers took over the management of the old Frisco Hotel, near the

depots, and ran the hotel until it was destroyed by fire. Mrs. Shivers couldn't remember the date of the fire. Mrs. Shivers recalled that they had all of the business they could handle.

"There was a great deal of travel by rail those days and our hotel was close to both the Frisco and the Fort Worth and Denver depots," she said.

During later years, Mr. Shivers farmed for a while and was in the hauling business about two years. He was employed at Vernon Oil Mill 13 years before he died in 1947.

There are few who can boast more descendants in Wilbarger County than Mrs. Shivers. To Mr. and Mrs. Shivers were born four sons and a daughter. Only one son, Arthur, is dead, the other four, Jim Shivers, Bill Shivers, Worth Shivers, and Mrs. Flora (D. E.) Arnold, all live in Wilbarger County. Mrs. Shivers lives with her daughter.

Also counted among Mrs. Shivers descendants are 16 grandchildren and 18 great-grandchildren.

Reaching back into her memory, Mrs. Shivers recalled the days before electric refrigerators, She mentioned when housewives had to resort to various methods of keeping dairy products cooled. "We lowered our butter into a well or, at one place we lived, we put it in flowing spring water nearby," she said.

She told of the severe sandstorms that plagued this country during the first years of their life here but, she declares, sand storms are not nearly so severe as they used to be.

Mrs. Shivers also maintains that winters in Wilbarger County used to be much colder than they are now.

Mrs. Shivers is a charter member of Texas Street Methodist Church but ill health has prevented her attending services for several years.



Photos by Payton McCormick

Rebecca and Rachel Aydelott are the daughters of Don and Rhonda Aydelott. Rachel graduated from the University of Texas in Arlington with a degree in accounting and came back to Vernon to find her career. She has worked with an accounting firm as well as Santa Rosa Telephone Co. Rebecca is a senior at Vernon High School this year. Both are great examples of Vernon's next generation.

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