

Pioneers Settled at Rice's Crossing

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(a special thanks to Margaret Ann Crislip for saving this piece of history for us to read)

Rice's Crossing, still a thriving community in the county, was one of the very earliest places the pioneers; chose to make their homes.

In 1845, Willis Avery came to Rice's Crossing, along with William McCutcheon (a half-brother), and his two nephews, Calvin and E. B. Barker. They were among the earliest settlers. Lieutenant James O. Rice, for whom the spot was named, had been in the county first with his rangers, overtaking a Mexican officer and secret Indian agent named Manuel Flores, and his band, in the year 1839, and he settled later at Rice's Crossing.

The second post office in the county was at this place, with James O. Rice as postmaster; the post office was then called Blue Hill Post Office and was established before 1858. Mr. Rice had served on the commission which had designated Georgetown as the county seat back in the summer of 1848.

The first general merchandise store in the county, according to Makemson, was opened by Nelson Morey on North Brushy, although he does not locate the spot any more definitely, and in 1848, Josiah Taylor had his store at Shiloh, which is not very far from Rice's Crossing.

William McCutcheon left Rice's Crossing, after living there a while, and did not return until after the Civil War. His son, J. A., came back with him, and they engaged in the cattle business. Noble McCutcheon, the grandson of the original settler, and son of J. A. McCutcheon, says that he was born while his father was out on the trail, and his father, had taken his mother back to her home. Therefore, Noble was not born in Williamson County, but came back here with his family as a very small youngster. Noble McCutcheon still makes his home at Rice's Crossing, as does his brother, W. C. Torn and Joe Hyde McCutcheon were brothers of J. A. who also settled in Williamson County. The children of J. A. McCutcheon are listed as Pickens Noble, Elizabeth Jane, Jesse A., William C., Sarah Margaret and John Willis.

Mr. McCutcheon recalls the camp, meetings which were held in that community, many of them in a church on the McCutcheon place.

Noble McCutcheon remembers that the earliest store at Rice's Crossing after Civil War days was on the Hairston place, down in a little slough. The Hargis Brothers ran the store, which was blown down. In 1885, and another was built nearer the present settlement of Rice's Crossing.