

THE SUN - Georgetown, Texas
Sec. 2, Page 4 November 11, 1971

The history of the round rock was told Sunday afternoon by Postmaster Martin E. Parker at the unveiling and dedication of the historical marker at the site of the famous rock which gave Round Rock its name.

Mrs. John Cornforth, chairman of the Williamson County Historical Survey Committee, opened the ceremony and introduced the master of ceremonies, Noel Grisham. The invocation and benediction was given by Rev. Oliver Berglund and Rev. James Watson. Misses Gena Kathryn Antil and Bernice Ann Antil unveiled the marker, followed by the response and acceptance by Mayor Dale Hester.

In telling of the history of the round rock, Postmaster Parker said, "Since time began old and young alike have been interested in landmarks. This is especially true of the natural landmarks, which have been given us by nature, and have withstood the ravages of time.

A most cherished, unique, and significant natural landmark stands in the town of Round Rock in Central Texas. It is a large round table-shaped rock that is located in the middle of Brushy Creek (It has been suggested that it may have been a mark and guide for the Indians decades ago.) This rock gave the name to the Village which grew up around it; the Village of Round Rock which has grown into a very prosperous town with a population of 3000. The rock is about one mile from the business district.

The Round Rock has been popular through the years. Over fifty years ago a graduating class of Round Rock High School wrote a term paper on The Round Rock. Quoting from one of these papers written by the late John W. Ledbetter (who was born about two hundred yards from the rock and who was Postmaster at THE SUN Georgetown, Texas

Round Rock many years) we find the following :

"I received my information from my Grandfather, the Rev. J. W. Ledbetter, who purchased land from Jacob M. Harrell, who preempted the league of land on which the Round Rock is located. The first well ever dug in this vicinity was dug by Mr. Harrell and was about fifty feet from the rock. The people of this area prior to 1851 had received their mail at Georgetown and Austin. In 1851 they sent in a petition for a post office and submitted Brushy as the name. This name was accepted and it was called Brushy for a time until it was found that another town had at an earlier date been so-named. So the settlers met to choose another name. The name of Round Rock was suggested and it was accepted by the authorities at Washington, D.C. and the Post Office was established in a store building, where it remained for several years."

Many interesting stories are told of how the name Round Rock was chosen. It is said by many old timers that several of the prominent citizens were fishing on Brushy Creek when one of them exclaimed, "Look at that rock. There is not another one like it in the state. Let's call our town Round Rock.

Quoting from a copy of the Frontier Times we find the following:

"ROUND ROCK TAGGED"

"Round Rock is said to have been named because of a large round-topped boulder in the middle of Brushy Creek.

For a time after Tom C. Oatts settled on Brushy Creek, building a store which also served as Post Office; the little settlement was known as Brushy Post Office."

Later data from the archives at Washington, D.C. states, "There was a Post Office at Round Rock that was established May 27, 1851 with Thomas C. Oatts as Postmaster. It was called Brushy.

Then at Mr. Oatts' request, it was changed to Round Rock August 24, 1854."

The Round Rock still stands in the middle of Brushy Creek, a very historic and important spot. The hard rock bottom of the creek made the crossing important to the Stage Coach line which used Round Rock as a stop, and also important to the traveler by wagon or on horseback. The Round Rock is very near the Old Stage Coach Inn which was restored by Mrs. Don Davol, and also near the old St. Charles Hotel which was restored by Mrs. James B. Rutland. The Rock is said to be near one of the Crossings of The Old Chisholm Trail. Double wagon tracks cut in the rock of the river bed run parallel to Brushy Creek for about one hundred feet, and begin about twenty feet from the rock. These tracks are about 8 inches wide and 4 inches deep. The tracks are mute but definite evidence of the heavy wagon loads of building rock quarried from the bed of Brushy Creek, and of loads of hides, produce and supplies hauled by wagon to and from market by the merchants of Central Texas. One of the oldest citizens of Florence, Texas, the late Mr. Joel Wesley Preslar often visited these tracks, and told interesting stories about camping there when he was a boy, as he helped his father haul supplies for his General Store located at Florence, Texas.

Standing as sentinels around the Rock are three tremendous rock piers, left standing from the old bridge, which was torn down and given to the war effort in 1941. These piers are built of rock quarried from the bed of Brushy Creek. Some of them are as large as three feet in diameter and remain in perfect condition.

On the banks surrounding the Rock still grow the same kind of native plants which grew there one hundred and twenty years ago when the Rock gave the Village its name. There are the Willow, China, Hack-berry, Sycamore, Water Elm, Walnut, and Pecan trees. In the Fall one finds the Sunflower, Wild Daisies, Broom Weeds, and Stretch Berries adding their color to the scene.

Many interested visitors have come through the years to visit the Round Rock and the wagon wheel tracks. A replica of the rock is often used by the Chamber of Commerce in home festivals and neighboring parades.