

Coker Cemetery History #18 - November 2007

by Bob Battaglia

The old San Antonio newspapers hold many little tidbits of the Coker Settlement activities in the early years. The Coker settlement was very active and respected in San Antonio proper. I would like to thank Michael Ann Coker for doing a lot of research and finding some of these stories. She is also compiling obits for later use on our Coker Cemetery website. The following bits of history are being paraphrased to save space in the Newsletter.

San Antonio Daily Light – December 11, 1887:

Two young men from the Salado, **Wm Jones** and **Bob Pipes**, began “funning” around with old Mr. Beekman Saturday afternoon in Moke’s Camp Yard (located in downtown San Antonio) and took his hat off and hid it. A fight resulted and the old man was given a black eye by the young sparks. He called the police who finally arrested the two men after a chase and firing off his pistol twice. **Jim Coker**, a friend of the young men, interfered with the officer after they were arrested and he was also arrested.

*My Notes- The Wm Jones is not part of the Amos Dickens Jones family, he may be from the Samuel C. Jones family. Bob Pipes is evidently **Robert Farrar Pipes** who was married to **Mahala Jane Capps**. The Jim Coker is probably James Marion Coker, married to **Olive K. Capps**. These were youngsters in the early 20’s having fun. Mr. Beekman does not appear to have been a Coker settlement resident.*

The San Antonio Gazette – August 8, 1908:

The petition for widening Lockhill and Selma Rd was granted. The following “jury of view” was appointed: **James Kelley, N.B. Coker, W.M. Maltsberger, John Coker and L.B. Jones.**

The San Antonio Express – January 7, 1919:

For \$5 and other considerations, **Caroline and L.T. Coker** deeded to **C.T. Coker** January 4, 1919 lot 13, block 4, now city block number 2017, Sandoval Street.

My Notes – I presume this is Clinton Coker, their son.

The San Antonio Daily Express – November 24, 1886:

My Notes -This short article describes the beauty of Bexar County and mentions the Coker settlement. It is rather flowery, but describes the Coker settlement as a wonderful place to live because of the people and the country-side.

Bexar County is said to yield better crops than the counties adjacent. Under the pure invigorating climate, the picturesque and the rolling hills and genial friendships and purity of rural life, Bexar County offers means and enterprise. The city is unrivaled for offering milk, butter, poultry, eggs and other such things. This writer is well-acquainted with a particular neighborhood (Coker) some 10 miles from the city. It is remarkable for its “salubrity” of atmosphere, picturesque and romantic landscape, the sociability of the people and the elevated tone of society. The names **Gullick, Cokers, Jeffers, Capps, Tomasini** and others are a guarantee for whatever is praiseworthy and “upward” in

effort and influence. Mr. **A.P. Gullick's** house is a magnificent two-story structure of stone built by a previous owner as a retreat for invalids. It is in contemplation to establish an institution of learning of high order, for young ladies, of which the neighborhood furnishes many models most worthy of imitation and association.

The San Antonio Express – October 19, 1924:

The Kirby School won first place among the twelve schools with educational exhibits at the Coker Community Fair on the North Loop, which opened at noon Saturday. The Fair will be held all day Sunday. The Olmos Community School was declared second and the school at Culebra third. Fires were started in the pits late Saturday for the cooking of 10 beeves, several goats and some sheep for the thousands expected for the barbeque dinner to be served Sunday. This Fair represents every activity of country life. Five tents and the school house were used to house the exhibits. The judges for livestock, vegetables, grain and canned goods were very enthusiastic about the quality of exhibits. The Coker School is near the Joske Home for girls on the North Loop.

My Notes – a lot more detail in the article but this is enough to show how the Coker Settlement participated in many functions.

The San Antonio Light – November 25, 1908:

My Notes – This is another example of the industrious Coker Settlement. They were always active in getting things done. This is a shortened version of the article.

“Barbeque Celebrates Completion of Road”. “People of Coker-Jones Settlement, who contributed to cost of Splendid New Highway entertain County Officials”

County Judge Shook and Commissioner Frank Sommers were the guests of the people of the Coker-Jones Settlement Monday night at a barbeque and general “jollification” in celebration of completion of a new road from Bulverde or old Nacogdoches Road, via the Jones, Maltzberger, Coker-Jones, Rock Hill and Selma roads to the Blanco Road, a distance of almost 6 miles and supplying the last link in a loop that gives a 21 mile drive. The new road is probably the finest in the county.....Commissioner Sommers was supported by the people of the neighborhood who contributed money, water, fuel and material. The work was done by the convict camp force under Superintendent Applewhite. The road traverses beautiful farming country, well-settled. On the road is situated the largest country schoolhouse in Bexar County, situated between Blanco and Bulverde Roads. It is a substantial two-story structure; the upper story is used as a meeting place for fraternal and social organizations of the community. About 250 residents were present and the barbeque was a great success. The menu was mutton, beans and coffee. After the meal Messrs. Maltzberger and Kelly, residents of the community, congratulated Judge Shook and other officials on the building of the road. The Coker-Jones Settlement is the oldest in Bexar County, having been founded by Coker and Amos D. Jones. The scenery cannot be surpassed on this 21 mile road.