

Coker Cemetery History #30 – November 2013

by Bob Battaglia

Below is an article that Butch Gerfers came across in the Golden Anniversary publication that **North East ISD** published in 2005 to commemorate the district's 50th anniversary.

Coker School was in operation prior to the Civil War

Early settlers and past records indicate that school was taught in the Coker Community prior to 1861.

In the early days, school was taught in different parts of the community in order to equalize the distance children had to travel to get to school. Students used slates and bought their own books. Parents paid a two dollar tuition to cover the teacher's salary, and when a child was absent, a certain amount was deducted from his/her tuition.

Between 1861 and 1904, Mr. J. Coker donated the land to build the old red Coker School located on San Pedro Avenue. Between 1904 and 1905, a two-story school was built and the old red Coker School became the teacher's residence. When both buildings burned to the ground in 1924, a tent was erected so the children could finish the term.

In 1925, a two-room brick and hollow tile school was built and later expanded to include the library and indoor plumbing. Gradually, as more and more families moved into the Coker community, additions were made and expansions undertaken to accommodate the growing population. In 1954, the New Coker School was completed at its present site, and since that time, it has undergone many important changes.

After all these years, Coker's student population continues to grow as young families take advantage of the excellent educational opportunities offered through its educational programs.



Two-story school built 1904/1905



Two-room brick and hollow tile school built in 1925

If you have interesting stories, newspaper articles or photographs about our early Coker ancestors, please send them in. My email address is: bob@cokercemetery.com.