

all the duties required of her as such administratrix; and the said Martha Wyman also took the oath prescribed by law: Said bond is approved by the Court and ordered to be filed,—which was done accordingly. Whereupon letters of administration were issued to the [said] Martha Wyman in pursuance of the statute in such case made and provided; and it is further ordered that Esquire Richardson, William J. Cummins and James Chapman be and they are hereby appointed appraisers of the said estate of E. S. Wyman.

“It being made known that William J. Cummins was not willing to act as one of the appraisers, whereupon J. R. Davis was appointed in his stead.

“At the July term of the Honorable Court of Hill County. The Court met at the house of James H. Dyer. There being no business in Court, the same was adjourned until the 29th day of August, 1853.

“August term of the Honorable Probate Court. The Honorable Probate Court of Hill County met at the house of James H. Dyer, on Monday the 29th day of August, 1853. Present, the Honorable James H. Dyer, Chief Justice, and C. N. Brooks, Clerk, for said Court.

“Now, on the 29th day of August, 1853, is filed in Court the inventory and appraisement of the property of the estate of E. S. Wyman, deceased, which inventory and list is ordered by the Court to be spread upon the record, which is in the words and figures following, to wit:

“A list of the property belonging to the estate of E. S. Wyman, deceased.”

Here follows a short list of farming and household chattels, amounting to about \$1,500, and then the minutes concerning that estate, covering several pages. Failing to execute a new bond within the time prescribed, Mrs. Wyman was supplanted by the appointment of William C. Megee *pro tem.*, under whose administration a portion of the property was sold and accounted for. At the January (1854) term the court ordered that the chief justice and Mrs. Wyman partition among the minor heirs the residue of property exempt from forced sale, which amounted to \$170.

The next case recorded in the probate minutes is that of Dorothy Newby, at the October (1853) term, praying for letters of administration upon the estate of her deceased husband, Jonathan Newby. This was a large estate, valued at many thousand dollars, four slaves being a part of the property. William C. Megee was appointed guardian *ad litem* to represent the heirs in the partition of said estate.

At the same term letters of guardianship were granted to William E. Anderson for the persons and the property of the minors Nancy Anderson, James Anderson, Margaret Lee Anderson and Matilda A. Anderson. It does not clearly appear from the record what kinship these minors had to their guardian, but they were probably his brother's children, as their parents were James and Lovina Anderson. The amount divided between these children was \$1,421.

Also, at this term, letters of administration were granted to Martha A. Tilley, upon the

estate of her deceased husband, Dennis H. Tilley.

And thus the record proceeds, the court sitting almost monthly, with greatly increasing business, in pace with the growth of population. During the first year and a half the following estates, besides those already mentioned, were administered upon: Wesley Carroll, Preston Hartgravea, Benjamin W. Pryor, James E. Foller, J. D. Allen, Samuel Craft, James O. Overstreet, John Hart, Mary Rock, M. J. L. Allen, a minor, etc.

DISTRICT COURT.

The first term of district court held in the county was presided over by the Hon. John H. Reagan, at present United States Senator, who had exchanged with Judge Jewett, the regular judge of the district. An amusing incident is related of the judge in connection with his arrival in the town, which was composed of two or three board and log cabins. The judges and lawyers in those days traveled on horseback, and carried their libraries and wardrobes in a "pair of saddle-bags." When the judge had got within about five miles of town he was overtaken by a stranger, who was riding a splendid horse, and was fully equipped according to the custom of the times. He engaged the judge in conversation, soon becoming quite confidential, and among other things related that he had the day before killed a man in Navarro county, and that he thought it best to take a "little trip" out west until "things blew over." Imagine the surprise and consternation when, as they alighted from their horses at the little

hotel, he heard the judge direct the sheriff to arrest him and hold him subject to orders from the Navarro county authorities.

The first judge of this district was — Frazier, appointed from Marshall. Jewett was the first regularly elected judge, and he presided a number of years. He was a resident of Freestone county. The next man elected was John Gregg, who afterward went to the war and was killed before Richmond. Judge Nat. M. Burford, of Dallas, was upon this bench for a time; subsequently John G. Goode, since the war, and conspicuously Hon. Jo Abbott, the present congressman.

AGRICULTURAL.

RESOURCES.

The resources of this county are mainly agricultural and pastoral. It is, however, so especially adapted to agriculture that the pastoral interest is being rapidly succeeded by the agricultural, and the time not remote when live-stock of all kinds will be confined to farms.

Three-fourths of the area of the county is superior farming land, while the remainder, with very little exception, is not unproductive. The staple agricultural productions are, corn, cotton, wheat, oats and millet. Rye, barley and many of the best hay and pasture grasses can be successfully grown. Of corn, there is produced from twenty-five to fifty bushels per acre; of cotton, from one-third to one bale; wheat, from ten to twenty-five bushels; oats, from fifty to seventy-five bushels. The production of rye and barley is about equal to that of oats, and the yield of

millet and some of the grasses is enormous. Nearly all the vegetables common to this latitude are produced in abundance. Peaches, pears, grapes, plums and some other fruits are successfully grown. The soil appears not to be adapted to the growth of apples, an inferior quality only being produced, at considerable expense and labor.

The facility with which the lands are cultivated is unexcelled, it only being necessary to properly prepare and seed them, and afterward to combat the weeds by surface plowing, there being no pestiferous grasses to contend with. It is a well established fact that by the use of improved agricultural implements—sulky or "riding plows" and cultivators, which are now being extensively used, that a farm hand can produce, with comparative ease, of the leading products, from one-third to one-half more than he can successfully harvest and market.

In the sparsely settled portions of the county, the stock range is but little impaired, and horses, cattle and sheep are well sustained during the whole year by the native grasses on the open range, except during excessively cold winters, when much stock die from exposure and want of proper nourishment.

PRODUCTIONS.

It may justly be claimed for Hill county that there are few others in which such a diversity of production is practicable. Already our people have in a considerable measure availed themselves of this advantage and the tendency is very properly in the direction of a much greater diversity. There are sections

of the State adapted only to the cereals; others only to cotton and sugar cane; others only to stock-raising. Here the soil and climate are adapted to all the great agricultural staples and nearly every variety of products, including those suited to higher northern latitudes as well as to semi-tropical climes. While cotton is still to some extent king, wheat, oats, corn, sorghum, broom-corn, millet and various kinds of grasses also grow to great perfection in the same fields alongside of the great fleecy staple. Almost every neighborhood has its mill for the manufacture of sorghum syrup. Vegetables of every description grow to great perfection and nearly all kinds of fruit are produced. These all find a ready market in Hillsboro and the smaller towns, and the larger cities which are in easy reach. The average yield per acre of the various products is as follows: Cotton between a third of a bale and a bale; corn, thirty bushels; wheat, ten bushels; oats, fifty bushels; rye, twenty bushels; sweet potatoes, 100 bushels; Irish potatoes, 100 bushels. The average yield of millet is two tons per acre; prairie hay, one ton. Sorghum hay, which is destined to become an important product in this section, will with little work yield an average of eight tons. A careful estimate shows the average value of the products named to be as follows: Cotton, \$42 per bale; corn, fifty cents per bushel; wheat, sixty cents per bushel; oats, thirty cents per bushel; rye, \$1 per bushel; millet, \$8 per ton; hay, \$5 per ton. Of sorghum, which yields an average of two barrels per acre, the value per barrel is \$20. During a portion of this year,

corn sold for as much as seventy-five cents per bushel, and other productions also sold at higher prices than are given above; but as a general average, taking year after year, these figures are correct. Both the Irish and sweet potatoes grow to great perfection; also cabbage, peas, beans, turnips, egg-plants, collards, lettuce, beets, carrots, onions, parsnips, salsify or vegetable oyster, sweet corn, cucumbers, okra, pumpkins, radish, squash, tomatoes, mustard, water-melons, cantaloupes, etc. Asparagus, cauliflowers and kale also do well, though they are not generally cultivated. Strawberries of an excellent quality can be grown where the soil is sandy, and raspberries do well, but as yet little attention has been given to the cultivation of these. Peaches, plums and other varieties of fruits are grown in great abundance and of the finest qualities. Grape culture is also becoming an important industry, and this is undoubtedly destined to be a great wine-producing section, the climate being as favorable for some of the best varieties of grapes as that of California. Apples of good quality, being of the earlier varieties, are produced in considerable quantities, while apricots and pears also thrive with proper care. The tropical fruits, such as oranges, lemons and bananas cannot be produced here. In most cases farms are rented for parts of the crops produced. Owners usually require one-fourth of the cotton and one-third of all grain as a rental share, or if a money rent is charged it amounts ordinarily to \$3 and from that to \$5 per acre. In either case the renters furnish teams and all implements for the cultivation of crops.

The average wages paid farm hands is \$15 per month. Wages for cotton picking range from fifty cents to \$1 per hundred pounds, though seventy-five cents per hundred is the average.

DOES FARMING PAY IN HILL COUNTY?

From the Hillsboro papers of different dates we extract the following instances:

Harvey Chenault, two miles north of Hillsboro, has 371 acres in his farm, of which last year 250 acres were cultivated as follows: Cotton, 140 acres; corn, 85 acres; oats, 25 acres. The yield was: Cotton, 70 bales, at \$47, \$3,290,—an average of \$23.50 per acre; corn, 3,400 bushels, at 25 cents, or \$10 per acre; oats, 40 bushels per acre, at 22 cents, total \$220. The total value of the crop on the 250 acres cultivated was \$4,460, or an average of \$17.85 per acre. Any one will see that the above figures are very moderate.

As to the amount of labor required, it may be stated that one of Mr. Chenault's tenants cultivated 15 acres of cotton, 27 of corn, 15 of oats and about 2 in millet, and did all the work himself with the exception of some little cotton he hired picked. The tenant made on his cotton \$31.40 per acre, dividing this equally with the landlord, who furnished a pair of mules and feed for them, besides the implements for working. Other land Mr. Chenault had rented brought him \$7.60 per acre as rent when he received one-fourth of the crop. He says a man can easily cultivate at least twice as much land in Hill county as he can in Tennessee, from which State he came; and as he has been a planter

in both States he is a competent judge. He says all that a farmer has to do here is to plant, sow and reap; he does not "fool" away time and money in fertilizing. A Hill county farmer does not know what fertilizers are except from what he reads or hears of them in the older States. With this matchless, inexhaustible soil, six feet deep, all that is necessary is to put the proper amount of elbow grease on the plow and hoe handles.

On the above described farm no stock is raised, except a few hogs for home use, and a few good Jersey cows for milk and butter, for home consumption. A nice young orchard supplies the family with all the fruit, such as peaches, plums, apples and a few pears. Most of the orchard consists of peach trees.

A deep well, with windmill, supplies the place, both residence and stock, with an abundance of good water.

The figures given in the above sketch are not guess work, but are taken carefully from the owners' books, and the same results can be secured almost anywhere in the county.

Z. T. Hubbard states that he got off the train at Husca in 1882, "with a family of five and just \$30 less than nothing"—that is, \$30 in debt above all assets. The family had their clothing and housekeeping outfit, and Mr. Hubbard had \$20 in cash, but was \$50 in debt. He farmed on the shares until he could purchase land; now he owns 160 acres of as good land as there is in the county, and has it all improved and well stocked, and he is entirely out of debt. He has dug it all out of the ground in eight years, with three bad crop years against him. That is what

one Hill county man has done in farming. Why not others do the same? They can if they will, barring sickness and accident that would render one a cripple.

O. E. Lee has 200 acres three miles east of Hillsboro, where he located in November, 1888. The next spring he broke his land and put in about forty-five acres in cotton and twenty-two in corn. He gathered twenty-three and a half bales of cotton, which averaged him \$50 a bale. The total yield in cotton was \$1,125,—an average of \$25 per acre for sod land. His corn made fully fifty bushels to the acre, and brought him 50 cents a bushel. He did not sell it on the market at that price, but sold it "on foot,"—in other words, he bought cattle and fed them the corn. He purchased fifty-seven two-year-old cattle, paying \$10 a head for them, and after feeding sold them for \$22.50 a head. One acre of cotton, of which a careful account was kept, yielded 609 pounds of cotton net,—that is, that much cotton was left after the toll had been paid at the gin. It sold for 10 cents per pound, or the acre yielded \$60.90. This was sod land, as all the land was that he saltivated that year.

Another acre was carefully picked and a strict account kept, and it made 575 pounds net, which sold for 9½ cents a pound, and thus the acre brought its owner the nice little sum of \$54.62½.

The above are the exact figures, as kept by Mr. Lee himself. He bought his farm for \$20 per acre, and the cotton land brought him \$5 per acre that one year more than it cost him. The corn land, at the regular

price of 25 cents per bushel, brought him an average of \$12.50, or each acre came within \$7.50 of paying for itself the first year it was cultivated. At the same time he has working for him a young man recently from North Carolina, named James Henson, who receives here \$15 to \$18 a month the year round as a farm hand, while in his native State he could get but \$8 a month! Also, on account of the absence of crab-grass and other obstacles here, he says that one can till sixty to seventy-five acres in Hill county as easy as twenty acres in North Carolina.

In the above account there was no reckoning of the expenses, but every farmer knows what they are. Mr. Lee and a "chunk of a boy" did all the work except in cotton-picking time.

After reading the above accounts, a wealthy merchant in Illinois remarked that such results were not possible in his State, even on more expensive land.

A Hill county farmer recently informed the *Mirror* that twelve years previously a young couple were in his employ, and started out in married life together with only a piano and a cow and calf. The young man rented land for six years of him, when he purchased of him 167 acres at \$6 an acre, in three annual payments. The money was all paid on or before it was due. In the course of twelve years he had, besides this good farm, eight or ten head of good horses, forty or fifty head of cattle and twenty to twenty-five hogs, a comfortable, good house, and was out of debt, —except that twenty months afterward the

last payment on ninety-eight acres should fall due.

Mr. Wallace rented of the same man sixty-seven acres of Brazos river land. He had for his help his wife and two sons, aged only eight and ten years. He planted thirty acres in cotton, thirty in corn, two in oats and five in millet. He began his crop with two poor horses and a debt of \$250. To plant the crop he had to buy his corn on credit. Soon after planting his corn his horse died and he had to buy another. When his crop was laid by he worked at odd jobs all through the hot days of summer. In harvest he paid out only \$15 for help, and had the following result: Four tons of millet, 600 bushels of corn and seventeen bales of cotton, averaging 530 pounds to the acre. He paid every dollar he owed and had \$300 left.

E. Severns, who owns 110 acres on Hackberry creek, about six miles southwest of Hillsboro, with the help of his two boys attended a crop of twenty acres of cotton and ten of corn, during the season of 1889. The cotton yielded twelve bales, and the corn forty bushels to the acre. In the fall the average price paid for cotton was \$50 a bale, and for corn 25 cents.

Another source of income is butter and eggs. Mrs. Severns makes 500 to 600 pounds of butter a year. This little farm therefore brings in about \$1,200 annually. Of poultry, cows and horses, Mr. Severns has a fair number and in good condition, besides a nice young orchard. He is a model and scientific farmer. His corn-crib is proof against mice