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### **SATTLER**

GERMAN IMMIGRANTS WERE THE FIRST TO COLONIZE PERMANENTLY THIS AREA ALONG THE GUADALUPE RIVER IN THE 1850s. THE DISPERSED RURAL COMMUNITY WAS KNOWN AT TIMES AS MARIENTHAL, WALHALLA AND MOUNTAIN VALLEY, WITH THE NAME SATTLER ASSIGNED WHEN THE POST OFFICE, FIRST OPENED IN 1856 AT THE WILHELM SATTLER HOME, WAS MORE CENTRALLY LOCATED IN 1880. THE WEIL-NOWOTNY-GUENTHER STORE, WITH ITS COMPLEX OF BUILDINGS—POST OFFICE, DANCE HALL, COTTON GIN AND BOWLING ALLEY—SERVED AS A GATHERING PLACE FOR FARM AND RANCH FAMILIES WHO LIVED IN THE AREA. CONSTRUCTION OF CANYON DAM IN THE 1960s HASTENED THE DISPERSAL OF THE GERMAN COMMUNITY, BUT THE HERITAGE OF SATTLER REMAINS SIGNIFICANT IN THE HISTORY OF COMAL COUNTY.

(2002)

HISTORY OF SATTLER  
AND  
MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL  
IN  
COMAL COUNTY, TEXAS  
1846-1964

(WITH PERSONAL REFLECTIONS)

BY  
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## CHAPTER 1

# BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SATTLER REGION, PLUS EARLY LIFE

### MAP

A current map of Comal County, Texas is shown on previous page to help better understand the geographical setting on which this book is based. Boundaries are drawn on the map to show more specifically the region of interest which stretches along the Guadalupe River northward from New Braunfels. The drawn lines roughly follow the Mountain Valley School District boundary. The boundary gives a larger area than what is generally considered Sattler.

### WATER— THE SOURCE OF LIFE

The reality is that the region would have never been settled if the Guadalupe River and its tributaries had not been there. As we all know, life is totally dependent on water, and good quality water is the first consideration when settling in any region. Of course, water was not only used for consumption, but also as a source of power.

It is of interest to note that the Guadalupe River was named by Alonzo De Leon on 14 April 1689, his fourth expedition to Texas. De Leon named the river in honor of the patron saint of the expedition, Nuestra Senora De Guadalupe. The river was named over 150 years before the founders of New Braunfels arrived.

Some of the creeks contributing to the Guadalupe River were: Turkey, Mountain, Bear<sup>1</sup>, Tausch, Elm, and Jacobs. Of course, the Buffalo Springs and Waco Springs also contributed to the Guadalupe River.

<sup>1</sup> Actually there are three creeks - Bear, Little Bear and Dry Bear which eventually combined and were known as the Bear Creek.

### DESCRIPTION OF LAND

The following quote perhaps best describes the land and its changes of this region:

*The appearance of this country has changed drastically in the past century. A hundred years ago, the hills and valleys were sparsely covered with scattered oak motts, and the cypress and cottonwood trees formed a green corridor along the river. Tall grasses carpeted the land which teemed with wildlife. The Indians, and many of the early white settlers, kept the terrain free of brush by setting fire to the range in the spring. Looks were deceiving, however, because the layer of top soil in these valleys was very thin, and in many places the limestone substratum was exposed on the earth's surface. The thin top soil could not support the introduction of excessive numbers of the cattle, sheep, and goats that eliminated much of the grass cover and permitted the establishment of a rather dense forest.*

*Today, the rugged hills and low mountains are covered with several varieties of oak, mesquite, mountain laurel, and numerous elms, sumac, bois d'arc and hackberry. Cedar has spread considerably over the hill country... Less than 10 percent of this area is cultivated, and most of the cultivation is found along the creeks and rivers. The bottomlands are shaded by cypress, cottonwood, and pecan trees with an*

occasional sycamore, willow, or black walnut.<sup>2</sup>

### INDIANS (NATIVE AMERICANS)

Long before Alonzo De Leon named the Guadalupe River, various tribes of Indians roamed the Texas area as evidenced by numerous arrowheads and other artifacts. Of course, the water supply was also vital to their survival.

Primarily the Lipan, Waco, and Tonkawa tribes were found in this region. These tribes were generally peaceful and were usually satisfied when given food. They were wandering hunters and gatherers with no permanent villages. Since these tribes were peaceful, less organized, and smaller in number, they were often overlooked by the early settlers. It was the larger and belligerent tribes whom the historians carried forward in history.

This is what Ruby Rust's grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Eduard Kanz, and parents, Mr. and Mrs. Alfred Rust, had to say about the Indians in the Sattler area:

*At that time there were not many Indians anymore and most of them were civilized. They lived mostly in the Mountain Creek area. They went to the people's houses and begged for something to eat. The whites were always*

*glad to give them something so they would go away, or else they would stay around the place and steal something anyway. They lived mostly from eating fish, oysters, berries, deer, and turkeys. They stole many cattle and horses.<sup>3</sup>*



A 1925 GEOLOGICAL SURVEY MAP OF THE SATTLER AREA. THE LAND IS GENERALLY VERY MOUNTAINOUS AS SHOWN BY THE CLOSE CONTOUR LINES AND ONLY ALONG THE GUADALUPE RIVER IS THE LAND SUITABLE FOR FARMING. (U.S. GEOLOGICAL SURVEY)

<sup>2</sup> G. P. Kiel A History of Canyon Dam, Guadalupe County Historical Commission, 1992, pp. 16-17.

<sup>3</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grade student at Mountain Valley School, in 1929, "History of Mountain Valley". Published by Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas", New Braunfels Herald, 17 August 1948.

<sup>4</sup> Later in the book, this road will be referred to as the Marienthal-Fischer Road which crossed the river on a low-water bridge about one-half mile upstream from the current upper FM 306 crossing.

The following written evidence helps to further explain that Indians did live in the community at one time. In 1918, Joe and Albert Meckel found an Indian grave while excavating for a new road to the low water bridge on the west side of the Guadalupe River on the Ernst Pape land.<sup>4</sup> Four skeletons were found about three feet under the surface. They were

somewhat disjointed but sufficiently preserved to show that the corpses were placed in sitting positions. As usual, the braves were buried with the necessary equipment for use in their "Happy hunting grounds" beyond. The article concluded as follows, "Commissioner August Schulze and Albert Nowotny went to the place Tuesday and brought to town some of the human relics. Others probably carried away parts of them."<sup>5</sup>

Mention is made of a discovery of a spear point in Hidden Valley in a five-part series of articles in the *New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung* on the "Ancient Man in Comal County" by Marjorie Cook, May through August of 1961. Most of the information comes from three archaeological diggings in the Sattler and Hancock area before Canyon Dam was built.

#### SPANISH OWNERSHIP

The Spanish influence was around for many years before the German settlers came; however, there is no evidence of any Spanish settlers in this area. Apparently ownership was important to them since many of the abstract titles were to Spanish surnames, such as: Erinerio Veles, J. A. Perez, Felipe Valverde, Juan Jose Ximenes, Juan Jose Perales and Francisco Uron.

#### EARLY GERMAN SETTLERS

The German settlers were the first to come to this area and truly "settled in" or "dug in" by clearing, cultivating and fencing the land. By doing this, they became committed to being a part of the region rather than simply being involved by claiming ownership.

Seele states that by 1847 the Waco Springs area was settled by the families of Spiess<sup>6</sup>, Wetzell, Krueger, Groos, Lohl, Meine and Pape.<sup>7</sup> This occurred only two years after New Braunfels was founded.<sup>8</sup>

About three miles upstream from Waco Springs, was the Buffalo Springs area. The Buffalo Springs area stretched from the Guadalupe River westward to the Bear Creek Road. This included the Tausch Creek which was named after Friedrich Tausch. One explanation for the name "Buffalo Springs" is that the early settlers saw buffaloes drinking water at these springs. Another possible explanation for the name is that the Indians used the bluffs

of the Guadalupe river for herding the buffaloes to their doom.<sup>9</sup>

Bieseles goes on to say that the first settlers in the Buffalo Springs area were: C. Bremer, F. Tausch, John Startz, G. F. Kunz, Johann Alsens, Julius Bose, H. Coers, Gustav Artzt, H. Startz, Friedrich Sattler<sup>10 11</sup>, Charles Esser, Carl Elmendorf, Gabriel Remmler, Sebastian Schertz, Johann Kleinhaus, Hermann Heffter, and Johann Jost Haas.<sup>12</sup> The Waco Springs and Buffalo Springs settlements along the river did not develop into communities since very little farm land existed for the raising of crops, etc. It was not until the settlers came to the Sattler area where there was a large amount of land for the support of many families that a community was formed.

Of course, not all settlement movement towards Sattler came along the Guadalupe River. By 1852, Wilhelm Sattler resigned as alderman in Hortontown and reestablished about seventeen miles north of New Braunfels. Several of Joachim Pantermuehl's sons had come to the community from the Rebecca Creek area by the 1870s.

Seele also wrote that the New Braunfels merchants, Ferguson and Hessler established a farm in *Marienthal* in 1849. Little is known about its general operation under their ownership since they never lived on the farm.<sup>13</sup> More will be said about this farm in Chapter 2.

<sup>5</sup> "Indian Skeletons Found at Sattler." *New Braunfels Herald*, 17 May 1918. Special thanks to Edgar Nolte.

<sup>6</sup> Brother-in-law of John Meusebach.

<sup>7</sup> It was in the 1940s when the owner of the springs used the spelling, Hueco.

<sup>8</sup> Hermann Seele, (translated by Edward C. Breitenkamp). *The Cypress and Other Writings of a German Pioneer in Texas*. University of Texas Press. Austin, 1979, p. 41.

<sup>9</sup> G. P. Kiel. *A History of Canyon Dam*. Guadalupe County Historical Commission, 1992. p. 19. "The bluffs of the river were used for herding buffalo to their doom, as evidenced by the many buffalo bones which were found prior to the construction of the dam at Lake McQueeney."

<sup>10</sup> R. L. Bieseles. *The History of the German Settlements in Texas*. German-Texan Heritage Society, 1987, p. 168.

<sup>11</sup> The Friedrich Sattler family came to Texas in 1850 from Blankenburg, Braunschweig, Germany. This family has no immediate ties with Wilhelm Sattler for whom the community was later named.

<sup>12</sup> This list parallels rather closely the list given on page 42 by Seele in Reference No. 8. While the author agrees with Breitenkamp on the spelling of Kleinhaus, not Kleinhaus, his spelling of many family names does not agree with other references.

<sup>13</sup> Hermann Seele, (translated by Edward C. Breitenkamp). *The Cypress and Other Writings of a German Pioneer in Texas*. University of Texas Press. Austin, 1979, p. 42.

## CHAPTER 2

# NAMES ASSOCIATED WITH THE SATTLER COMMUNITY

For the last 75 years there has been general agreement on the name of Sattler for the community. However, when reading about the history of the community one sees reference to *Walhalla*, *Sattler*, *Marienthal*, *Hidden Valley*, and *Mountain Valley*.

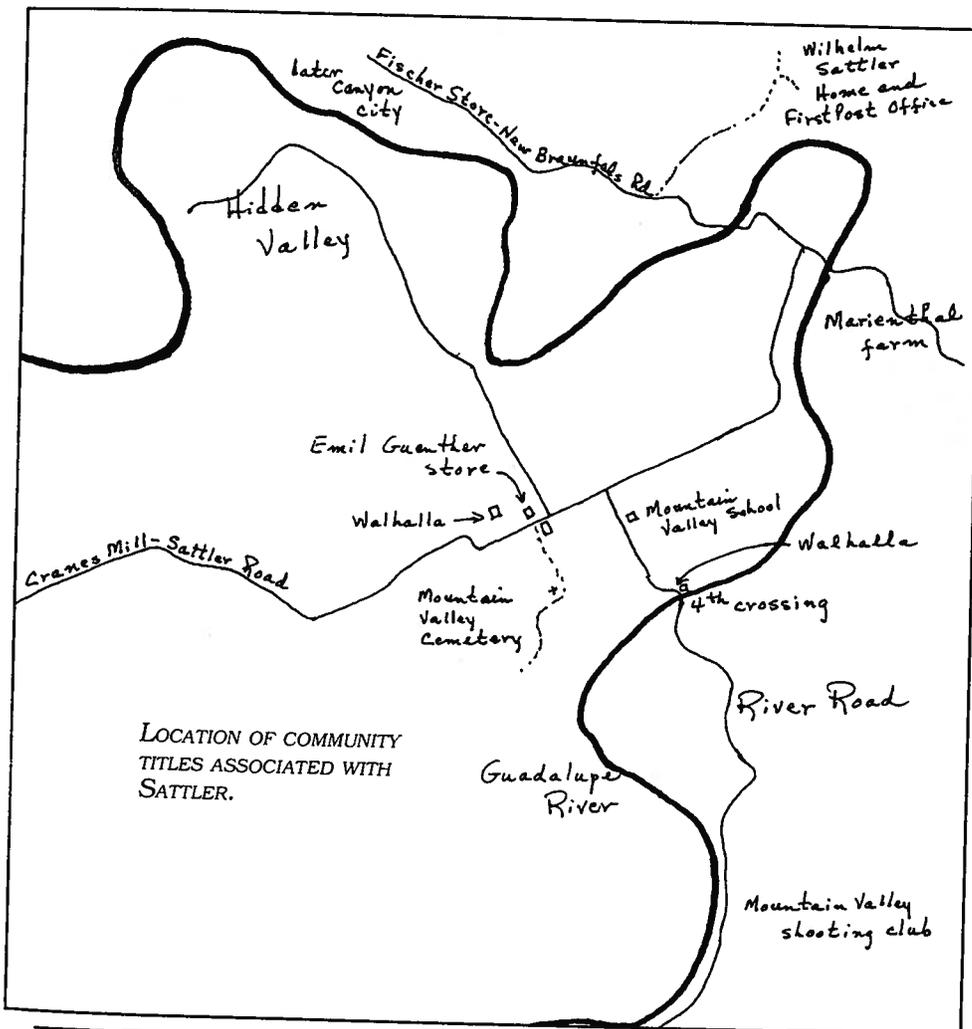
Where is Mountain Valley? Where is Sattler, *Walhalla*, *Marienthal*, or *Hidden Valley*? Apparently, in the past others had difficulty in identifying the community. Robinson stated that Julius Preusser was trustee of the Mountain Valley School, *Sattler-Walhalla* area.<sup>1</sup> In

a letter to the editor, Walter Faust encouraged the name *Walhalla* be restored to the community of Sattler.<sup>2</sup> To further show the uncertainty of the identification of the community, an article in the *New Braunfels Herald* in 1905, states that 75 people took a Sunday outing to *Walhalla-Sattler* P.O. Later the article talked about driving through the well-tilled farms at Mountain Valley (*Walhalla*).<sup>3</sup>

Each of the community names will be discussed separately.

### MARIENTHAL

Hermann Seele wrote that Ferguson and Hessler, New Braunfels merchants, established a farm in *Marienthal* in 1849, four years after New Braunfels was settled. James Ferguson was married to Marie Hessler<sup>4</sup> and decided to name the farm *Marienthal* (Marie's Valley).<sup>5</sup>



<sup>1</sup> Robert R. Robinson, Jr., *Die Bremerverwandschaft in Deutschland und in Texas*. 1979, Nortex Press, Vol. II, p. 964.

<sup>2</sup> Walter Faust, "Return of Name, 'Valhalla,' to Village of Sattler Urged," *New Braunfels Herald and Zeitung*, 7 Oct. 1971.

<sup>3</sup> "Sunday Outing to Walhalla," *New Braunfels Herald*, 23 June 1905

<sup>4</sup> Daughter of his business partner, Henry Hessler.

<sup>5</sup> Hermann Seele, translated by Edward C. Breitenkamp, *The Cypress and Other Writings of a German Pioneer in Texas*, University of Texas Press, Austin and London, 1979.

According to Roland Baetge, this 305.5 acre farm was located on the eastern side of the Guadalupe River where at present FM 306 crosses the river.<sup>6</sup> It was Roland's great-grandfather, Carl Baetge, who bought the *Marienthal* farm from the Ferguson estate with the help of Dr. Koester in 1858.<sup>7</sup> More will be said about the Baetge family in Chapter 18. The FM 306 county road running through the farm was at one time referred to as the *Marienthal-Fischer Store Road*.

Roland Baetge generally referred to the farm as the *Marienthal* Farm. The name was not used much in later years; however, it perhaps gave the geographic location some identification in earlier years.<sup>8 9</sup>

The *Marienthal* name did linger for years after the initial naming. In 1909, sixty years later, the fraternal organization of the Sons of Hermann was named *Marienthal* Lodge in the community. More will be said about the lodge in Chapter 13.

### WALHALLA

The dictionary says that *Walhalla* or *Valhalla* is "in Norse mythology the hall of Odin into which he receives the souls of heroes slain in battle"- a place of honor or glorification. It was this title that the early settlers decided to give their meeting room or hall.

Ruby Rust gave the following account of the first dance hall owned by the *Walhalla* Singing Association:

*The first dance hall was where Emil Guenther's Store is now. The hall was*

<sup>6</sup> Roland Baetge. *The Baetge Family History and Descendant Charts*, 1975. Unpublished manuscript.

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Theodor Koester immigrated to Texas in 1844 and was appointed colony physician in 1845. He was also a pharmacist and a baker.

<sup>8</sup> "Two pregnant sows belonging to C. Baetge were killed on land between Andreas Pape and William Sattler places above *Marienthal*", *Neu Braunfels Zeitung*, 19 July 1878. This would be the location of the *Marienthal* Farm.

<sup>9</sup> The author does not recall any reference to *Marienthal* when living in Sattler in the 1930s and 1940s.

<sup>10</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grader at Mountain Valley School in 1929, "History of Mountain Valley". Published by Mr. Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas", *New Braunfels Herald*, part of six installments, August 1948.

<sup>11</sup> "Walhalla, Now Village of Sattler, Once Had Busy Singing Society", *New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung*, 1971, by Mr. Oscar Haas.

<sup>12</sup> Currently, the Eagles Hall at 257 E. South Street. Originally it was called, *Matzdorf Halle*.

<sup>13</sup> *Pioneers in God's Hills, Vol. II*, Gillespie County Historical Society, Eakin Publications, Inc.

<sup>14</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book 26, pp. 397-398.

<sup>15</sup> Conversation with Roland Baetge in 1994.

*owned by a choir consisting of men. After that it was moved to Mr. Marschall's place on the river side. There many a good old time celebration was held. After that it was torn down and a new one was built by Peter Nowotny (Jr.) where it is still standing.*<sup>10</sup>

It should be mentioned that Emil Guenther bought the store and dance hall four years after Peter Nowotny, Jr. owned it and that the society's third hall was on the same location as the first hall.

The *Walhalla* Singing Club was organized in about 1873<sup>11</sup> and existed until about 1905, a total of 32 years. The two locations of the club were about one mile apart. So the club was always located in the general area of Sattler. All three of the halls were named "Walhalla". The name "Walhalla" appeared on the front of the building, which was built around 1899. More will be said about the hall in Chapter 5.

The *Walhalla* halls were used for *saengerfests*, singing practice, dances, school festivals, etc. Nowhere do we find evidence that the community was ever named "Walhalla" although it sounds reasonable to hear someone say "Let's go to the *Walhalla* dance." In a similar manner, people used to say "Let's go to Echo Hall" in New Braunfels with no implication that it was the name of the community.<sup>12</sup> The activities of the *Walhalla* Singing Association will be addressed in Chapter 10.

In the second volume of *Pioneers in God's Hills*, reference is made to the *Walhalla* Singers as coming from "Walhalla Club of Sattler".<sup>13</sup> Also in 1903, it was stated in the warranty deed from Gustav Preusser to Peter Nowotny, Jr. that the land was next to "the place being known as *Walhalla*."<sup>14</sup> Thus they thought of *Walhalla* as a place in the community rather than as the name of the community.

### MOUNTAIN VALLEY

No record was found as to when the name Mountain Valley originated. Mr. Baetge said that the general area along the Guadalupe River from FM 306 to the 3rd crossing and, of course, westward, was referred to as "Gebirgsthal" or Mountain Valley.<sup>15</sup> School records consistently refer to Mountain Valley School, not *Gebirgsthal Schule*. The school was

✓ founded in 1874 and closed in 1957. Other references to Mountain Valley were a cemetery, shooting club and road, all named around the turn of the 20th century. It is interesting that Mrs. Ruby Rust's history of the community in 1929 was entitled "Mountain Valley."<sup>16</sup>

The community certainly is a large fertile valley among the mountains as can be experienced in a scene from any mountain top. Thus the spirit of Mountain Valley remains with us since the title is so descriptive.<sup>17</sup>

### HIDDEN VALLEY

The name Hidden Valley came into usage in the 1930s. Originally the area of about 900 acres of farm land in a bend of the Guadalupe River was called "Boehm land," the land of the Bohemians. It was in this region that the Nowotny brothers, Franz, Peter, John, and

Wenzel, from Bohemia, bought land from John Hancock in 1878. However, as the Nowotny families gradually moved out, the title lost its meaning.

As seen on the map, initially there was only one dead-end road (entrance) to Hidden Valley and the title was very descriptive for this hidden farming valley. However, the title lost its meaning when Canyon Dam was constructed in the upper end of the valley. The present road, referred to as South Access Road, runs below the dam, and connects with FM 306 on the north side. Thus, the area is now far from being hidden.

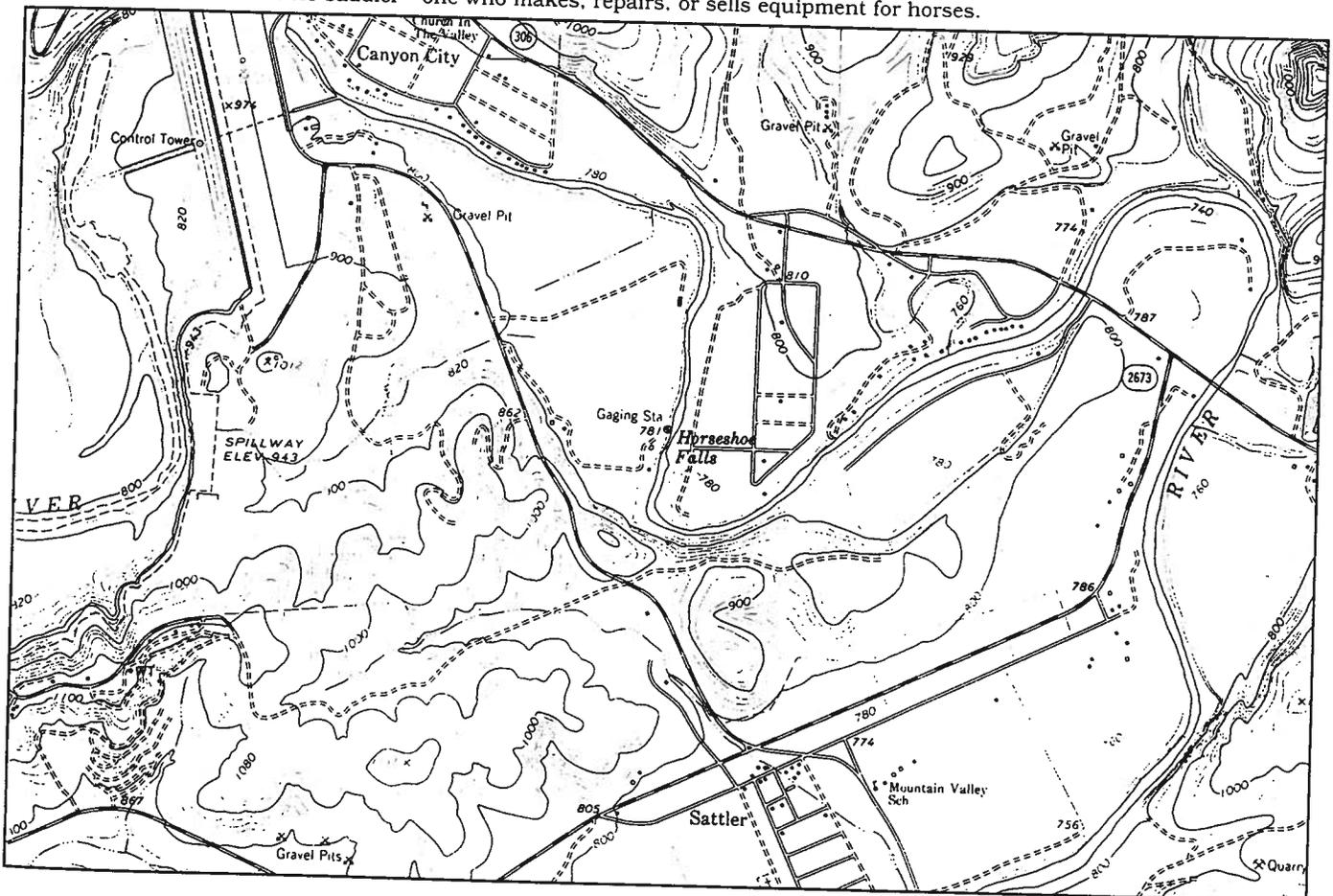
### SATTLER<sup>18</sup>

William (Wilhelm) Sattler was a contractor for the United States mail service from 1856

<sup>16</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grade student at Mountain Valley School in 1929, "History of Mountain Valley". Published by Mr. Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas". *New Braunfels Herald*, 10 and 17 August 1948.

<sup>17</sup> Mountain Valley was also the name of a settlement in Medina County before the Medina Lake Dam was built. The settlement was established in 1854 by 16 families of Mormons under the leadership of Lyman Wight (1796-1858). They abandoned their homes and mills in 1858 as of the result of Indian depredations. Betty Dooley Aubrey and Claude Dooley, *Why Stop? - A Guide to Texas Historical Roadside Markers*, Third Edition, Gulf Publishing Co., Houston, Texas 77252-2608, 1992.-

<sup>18</sup> Sattler - German name for saddler - one who makes, repairs, or sells equipment for horses.



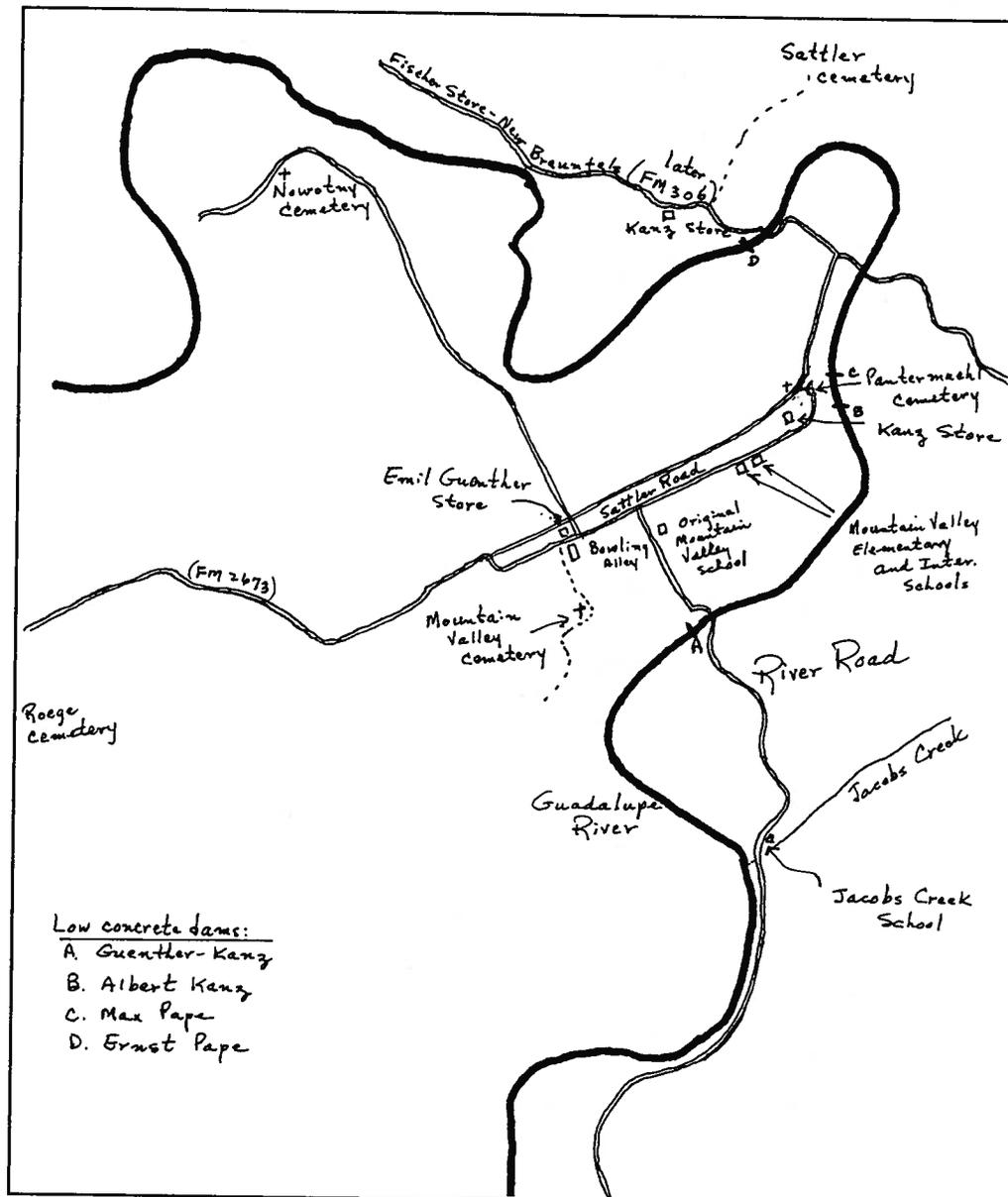
1960s MAP TO SHOW CURRENT CONDITIONS OF SATTLER-CANYON LAKE AREA.

until his death in 1880.<sup>19</sup> The first post office was located on his property about three miles north of the Emil Guenther Store.<sup>20</sup> After Mr. Sattler's death, other members of the community held the office of postmaster while maintaining the name of Sattler Post Office. After 1880, the post office was moved to the Mountain Valley area in order to be more centrally located for the people. The Sattler Post Office was closed in 1942, and then the mail was postmarked Fischer Store, Texas.<sup>21</sup>

In summary, the names of *Walhalla* (name of the hall) and *Marienthal* (name of the farm) were perhaps used for general regional identification in the early years. The name Mountain Valley appears to have been used for community identification since the dates associated with the establishment of the original Mountain Valley school (1874) and the Mountain Valley cemetery (1905) were after the establishment of the first post office (1856) several miles away. After many years the residents called the entire community by the name of Sattler, because their mail was delivered to that address.<sup>22</sup> No other part of the community had ever applied for a post office.

### CANYON LAKE

Of course, the community identification problem has still not been completely resolved. At present, the general region is generally referred as Canyon Lake.<sup>23</sup> This includes the new Mountain Valley Schools, Sattler and Canyon City. According to the road signs, there is an



LOCATION OF SCHOOLS, CEMETERIES, AND LOW CONCRETE DAMS IN THE COMMUNITY FOR LATER REFERENCE.

area on FM 306 between Sattler and Canyon City which appears to be unnamed. Many of the business titles include the names of Canyon Lake, Sattler and Mountain Valley. Ironically, the present location of the commu-

<sup>19</sup> More will be said later about the occupation and life style of William Sattler in Chapter 18.

<sup>20</sup> Mr. Roland Baetge said that originally the creek near the Sattler's home was known as the Sattler Creek and that the associated valley running toward the present Canyon Dam from the Sattler home was known as the *Sattler Thal* or Sattler Valley.

<sup>21</sup> On 1 October 1950, the name was changed to Fischer, Texas.

<sup>22</sup> Similarly, Startzville became the name of the community several years after Curt and Alice Startz bought the land and store from Bruno and Viola Elbel in 1946.

<sup>23</sup> Not to be confused with Canyon, Texas located in the Texas panhandle.

nity named Sattler does not include the property where the Sattler family originally settled and the first post office was established. At present, there is a post office in Sattler, and all letters mailed from this post office are post-marked as Canyon Lake, Texas. There is no actual town called Canyon Lake.

#### EMIL GUENTHER STORE

In writing about the community or village of Sattler or Mountain Valley, reference needs to be made to the rather central location where the people went to the general merchandise store, dance hall, post office, saloon, bowling alley, blacksmith shop and cotton gin. Most readers familiar with the community between 1910 and 1954 will refer to the location as the "Emil Guenther Store." This label will be used throughout the book although we must remem-

ber that it could also be known as the "Weil-Nowotny-Guenther Store", and that the complex contained more than only a store. This central location had more social and business activities than any other place in the community. More will be said about this store in Chapter 5. At present, the Canteen Lounge, VFW Post 8573, is located on the site of the Emil Guenther Store on Sattler Road.

Finally, it was decided to show the locations of the pioneer families in the Sattler community. Hopefully, this will help the reader understand the relationships among the families of the community in the remaining chapters.

Chapters 18 and 20 give more detailed information on the selected families and the reasons for their selection.

## CHAPTER 3

# THE WAY OF LIFE

The first part of this chapter briefly describes the general way of life for people in this rural community. The second part talks about some of the special skills and trades used for the good of the whole community.

### RURAL COMMUNITY LIFE

Most settlers in this community were diversified farmers and ranchers. They raised almost everything they ate. With no refrigeration, everything had to be either eaten immediately, preserved by storing in a cool place, canned or dried. Very little went to waste.

Kerosene oil burning lamps and lanterns were the primary source of light in the evenings. In the 1920s a few families had electric lights when Delco and Westinghouse manufactured light plants. Electricity did not come to the community until in the early 1950s.

Vegetables were grown in the spring and fall gardens. The potatoes and onions were placed in the cool, dry cellar for winter usage. Berries were picked when in season. Orchards with peach, plum, and fig trees were very common.

Animals were essential on the farm. Horses were used for transportation and working the land.<sup>1</sup> The cows were milked twice daily. The cream was used to make butter and the curds were used to make cheese. Chickens were raised for their eggs and fresh meat. Hogs were fattened with the household leftovers (slop). In fall, they butchered perhaps a hog and a calf<sup>2</sup> for their winter bacon, pork and beef sausage, liver sausage (*Leberwurst*), blood sausage (*Blutwurst*) and scrapple (*Pannas*). When the sausage was reasonably dry, it was placed in

a big crock and covered with lard to keep it from getting too dry.<sup>3</sup>

There were only a few essentials that the farmer needed from the store.<sup>4</sup> These items were sugar, flour, salt, pepper, vinegar, and gasoline for the car (usually a quarters worth at five cents per gallon). In exchange for the essentials, the farmer would sell eggs and butter to the grocer.

Washing clothes was an all day affair. This included carrying the water to the black pot, building the fire under the pot, putting out the tubs, wash boards, plunger, lye soap, and bluing. Then the hard work began. The ironing of the clothes with stove-heated irons was done on another day.

When someone in the family got sick, a host of home remedies were tried before the doctor was consulted.<sup>5</sup>

Cooking meals, baking bread, washing dishes, and cleaning were daily activities of the housewife. The women sewed dresses from the colorful flour sack material. The families cooked molasses<sup>6</sup> from the sweet sorghum cane grown in the field. They also made their

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<sup>1</sup> Erwin Pantermuehl recalls working from sunup to sundown with three different teams of horses or mules to cultivate or plant five acres of land. Unpublished history of Sattler by Erwin Pantermuehl, 1996.

<sup>2</sup> According to Vera Preusser Pantermuehl, butchers came from New Braunfels to butcher calves on site to be carried to their shops to sell. Reflections Tape # 245, 7-7-81.

<sup>3</sup> Erwin Pantermuehl, unpublished Sattler history, 1996, recalled that his family sold dried sausage links.

<sup>4</sup> Alzada Helmkamp, granddaughter of Emil Guenther, Reflections Tape # 532, 10-24-88.

<sup>5</sup> See chapter on home remedies in *Guten Appetit* by Sophienburg Memorial Association, Taylor Publishing Co., 1978.

<sup>6</sup> Erwin Pantermuehl recalls the presence of six cane presses in the community.

own soap by cooking lard, water, and lye in a big black pot for three or four hours. The soap was cut into bars after it had cooled. It was used mainly for washing clothes.<sup>7</sup>

The grain crops grown in the field were primarily used to feed the cows, horses, pigs, chickens, sheep and goats. Of course, the cotton crops were turned into cash with the sale of cotton and cottonseed. Sometimes the cottonseed was kept and fed to the animals. Corn was also a cash crop for many families. The animal manure was hauled from the barn and spread over the fields as fertilizer for the next crops.

A number of the community members hunted deer.<sup>8</sup> Although there was an element of sport involved, in most cases it was a matter of survival. The venison was usually mixed with pork for sausage. Sometimes the two-day fall butchering was delayed until during hunting season so that venison could be processed with the rest of the meat, if the hunter was lucky enough to kill one in time. Fur-bearing animals were trapped mainly for the sale of the furs.

In the winter, wood was cut with an axe and stacked for use during the following year. This was the fuel for their heating in the winter and cooking on the wood-burning stoves.

There was never a question whether the children should help with the work in the field or at home. Vera Pantermuehl was allowed to do every type of farm work except ride the corn-stalk cutter.<sup>9</sup>

The children were also included in all social activities. The entire family went to the dance or to the bowling alley. The young slept in the children's room (*Kinder Zimmer*) at *Walhalla* while the older children played with their friends.

All the people of the community believed in helping each other. Most of the time, help was only a phone call away. They lived conservatively for they expected a crop failure every three or four years.

When these people celebrated, they celebrated! Their social life revolved around dances, birthday parties, bowling, singing feasts, *skat* tournaments and target shooting. They worked hard and played hard.



SITE OF ORIGINAL ROCK FENCE BUILT STRAIGHT UP A STEEP HILL. THIS FENCE WAS LOCATED ON THE WEST SIDE OF SOUTH ACCESS ROAD ABOUT ONE-HALF MILE FROM FM 2673.

Rock fences have always represented a way of life that is hard for us to understand. How did the old-timers haul, handle, and stack those odd shaped heavy chunks of native material? Perhaps the most interesting rock fence was built straight up the steep hill located on the west side of the South Access road about one-half mile from FM 2673. It is very possible that Germans built this 150-foot long fence before wire fencing came into being in the 1870s. How did they haul these big rocks up this hill? What was the cost?<sup>10</sup> Recently, additional rock fencing has been constructed at this site with the use of modern equipment. The reconstructed fence is not of the triangular self-supporting style as was originally used by the Germans.

In summary, life for the settlers was relatively simple but physically demanding. They lived in close harmony with each other and were in constant touch with nature.

<sup>7</sup> Recipe for Homemade Soap from *Guten Appetit* by Sophienburg Memorial Association. Taylor Publishing Co., 1978: 2 gallons of lard, 7.5 pints of water, and 3 cans of lye.

<sup>8</sup> Every one of the six available annual issues of *Mountain Valley Star* (school paper) had a story on who shot a deer that season. In 1931 "Egon Pantermuehl shot an 8-point buck weighing 120 pound dressed."

<sup>9</sup> Vera Preusser Pantermuehl, Reflections Tape # 245, 7-7-81.

<sup>10</sup> Herbert Kreuzler, from the Schoenthal Road area, recalls that the old-timers said it cost ten cents a foot have a rock fence built. The cost went to fifteen cents a foot if the rock had to be hauled to the site.

## SPECIAL TRADES AND SKILLS

As in many communities, there were a variety of needs for which it would not have been efficient for everyone to invest, i. e. saw mills, shingle mills, lime kilns, and threshing machines. The cotton gin could fall under this category as well, although it will be considered separately in Chapter 6. Each special trade will be discussed separately.

### THRESHING MACHINE

A threshing machine is a machine that simply separates the oats or wheat grain from the straw (*Stroh*). The straw was blown on a big stack (*Stroh Haufen*) for animal feed in the winter. Before the threshing, a binder was used to cut the growth and tie it into bundles. These bundles were stacked in the field for the grain to dry before threshing. Before the invention of the threshing machine all the oats or wheat had to be cut by hand with a scythe.

Ruby Rust mentioned that her great-grandfather, Anton Kanz, owned the first threshing machine in the community.<sup>11</sup> This would have been in the late 1800s. Perhaps, the last threshing machine owner was Emil Kraft in the 1930s and 1940s, although others carried that community responsibility in the early 1900s.

The combine machine was first used in the 1940s. This machine combined the cutting, stacking, and threshing into one operation. Gone were the days of farmers helping each other during threshing season, waiting for the threshers to come to your place, the wives preparing big meals for the threshers and the children playing in the hay stack (*Stroh Haufen*).

### SAW MILLS

Mr. Baetge mentioned that a saw and shingle cutting mill was located in the area of the third crossing of the River Road on the Guadalupe River.<sup>12</sup> No other reference to a sawmill was found in the Sattler Community. Mr. William Sattler recorded in his ledger that he paid his son, Henry, ten dollars for "lumber sawing";<sup>13</sup> however, this does not mean that Henry did the work himself or that he had it done by someone in the local community.

### SHINGLE MILLS

Ruby Rust wrote, "As there are many giant cypress trees on the Guadalupe River, a shingle mill was also operated in Mountain Valley. It stood on what is now Alfred Pantermuehl's place. It was owned by my great-grandfather, Gottfried Rohde." Ruby also mentioned that most of the houses in those days had shingle roofs instead of the tin roofs.<sup>14</sup>

In December of 1854, Wilhelm Sattler recorded in his ledger that he sold to his son-in-law, William Greebon, a shingle machine for 8000 shingles delivered to New Braunfels. His writing continued by saying that in New Braunfels, 1000 shingles were worth \$5.00; so he effectively sold the machine for \$40.00.<sup>15</sup>

### LIME KILNS

Lime had a variety of uses for the rural people. It was used primarily in cement construction. Of course, another use was controlling the odor and hastening the decay of human waste in the outhouses (*Haeuschen*). Since the hill country rock contained a considerable amount of calcium carbonate, it was convenient for the people to build kilns (furnaces) to reduce the calcium to lime. Ruby Rust stated that Mr. Adolph Otto<sup>16</sup> had a "lime and cement factory" in the community, close to where the Eduard Kanz (her grandparents) lived. Mr. Baetge also talked about the old kiln at this location. He mentioned that the rock-lined channel that let to a well type hole in the river bank, most likely for a water wheel, was visible for a long time, but was finally filled in with mud. There were two lime kilns located

<sup>11</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grade student at Mountain Valley School in 1929, "History of Mountain Valley " Part of six installments published by Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas". *New Braunfels Herald*. August 1948.

<sup>12</sup> Roland Baetge, unpublished history of Baetge Family. 1975.

<sup>13</sup> William Sattler Ledger, Smith (D. E. Collection 1855-1932). Texas State Archives, Austin, Texas.

<sup>14</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grade student at Mountain Valley School in 1929, "History of Mountain Valley " Part of six installments published by Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas". *New Braunfels Herald*, August 1948.

<sup>15</sup> William Sattler Ledger, Smith (D. E. Collection 1855-1932). Texas State Archives, Austin, Texas.

<sup>16</sup> *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung*, For Sale Item: "Adolph Otto wants to sell his cement factory. He is lacking necessary money to build a better cement furnace to produce cement", 15 November 1878.

on the Bear Creek.<sup>17</sup> The first was located close to where the original Bear Creek Road crossed a branch of the Bear Creek, and the second was about two or three hundred yards down stream. Both were within 30 feet of the creek.

### STONE MASON

In the early years, Theodor Heise operated a stone quarry. He was a stone mason and made gravestones.<sup>18</sup> No other references were found to Mr. Heise's work. The Heise family lived a

little north of the *Marienthal* Farm along the Guadalupe River. Heise Hollow was named after him.<sup>19</sup>

It should be understood that many special community needs were served on a seasonal or time available basis. For example, when crops needed to be gathered, there was no time for making shingles, nor did anybody have time to apply them.

### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

I remember when the Rahe family members stacked the oats bundles for later threshing at the Max Preusser farm in Hidden Valley. Emil Kraft used his binder to do the cutting on the large field to the immediate right as one approached the valley. Of course, it was readily noticed when a bundle contained a few stinging or burning thistle. We called them "*Brennessel*" or "*Bullnettle*."

I also recall helping Hilmar Kanz combine oats for a day or two. He drove the tractor while I rode on the combine tying the sacks of grain and dropping them off at the end of the field.

I can still see the gallon jug, with wet burlap sack material around it, standing in the shade at the end of the field. The jug was filled in the morning with the coolest water available and the burlap sack was soaked with water to keep the water in the container as cool as possible.

I have always been intrigued with the word "*Pannas*" or scrapple.<sup>20</sup> The present form of the word is not in the German dictionary. Gilbert Jordon states that the word is related to Pennsylvania-Dutch *Ponhaws*, the anglicized form of the word derived from the Low German *Pannhas*.<sup>21</sup> However, he says in High German, the word is *Pfannhase*, which means "pan rabbit". Perhaps many years ago, rabbit meat was used instead of pork or beef. For many years, I accepted this explanation. However, later I became confused when Lida Pyles<sup>22</sup> stated that "pon-hoss", a very delectable dish, seemed to be restricted to the Ozarks alone and that the word came from the Indians who once lived in the area. Her description of how to make "pon-hoss" reads very much the same as how we make *pannas*. Oh well, call it what you may, I like it.

<sup>17</sup> Correspondence from Rev. Samuel Heitkamp, grandson of Paul Henk. Paul was a stockholder in Bear Creek Game Reserve.

<sup>18</sup> Oscar Haas, "History of Sattler", *New Braunfels Herald*, 7 Sept. 1948

<sup>19</sup> Frequently mislabeled as Heiser Hollow.

<sup>20</sup> Recipe for scrapple from *Guten Appetit* by Sophienburg Memorial Association, Taylor Publishing Co., 1978: Made at hog slaughtering time by adding garlic, salt, pepper, and corn meal to bits of pork and broth left in the pot.

<sup>21</sup> Gilbert J. Jordan, *Yesterday in the Texas Hill Country*, Texas A&M University Press, College Station and London, 1979, p. 53.

<sup>22</sup> Lida Wilson Pyles, *It Happened in the Ozarks*, Fidelity Publishing, Joplin, Missouri, 1982, p. 87.

## CHAPTER 5

# MERCHANTS AND DANCE HALLS IN THE COMMUNITY OF SATTLER

When searching through material on the history of a community, an effort is usually made to verify or double check oral/written information. In working with available hall, store, and postmaster information, the material for one topic often supports, complements, or contradicts the findings for another. Therefore, it is felt that merchants, halls, and occasionally postmasters in the community of Sattler should be discussed under the same heading since the information for the three topics is often found in the same references. As you shall see the picture is not always very clear when trying to piece it all together.

### MERCHANTS

#### PREUSSER STORE

In 1929, Ruby Rust wrote, "The first store in the Sattler Community was located where Alvin Tausch lives. It was owned by Joseph Preusser, Jr. ." <sup>1</sup> No further details on date of establishment or length of service to the community are available on this store. The location of this store was close to the site where the Mountain Valley Elementary School was built in 1976. While Roland Baetge generally agrees with the location of the first store, he states that the store was owned and operated by Henry Weil. <sup>2</sup>

#### WEIL-NOWOTNY-GUENTHER STORE

First, a little background information on the location and date of the Weil-Nowotny-Guenther Store in the community.

1. On 15 October 1868, Anna Tausch <sup>3</sup> purchased 117 acres out of a tract of land known as Survey 322 that was originally granted to

John C. Daniels and wife from the State of Texas. <sup>4</sup>

2. On 4 October 1892, Henry and Wilhelmina Weil purchased one acre out of the 117 acre tract from Anna Tausch for the sum of fifty dollars ... "being the same premise on which said Henry Weil has herefore erected a hall, store-room and residence". <sup>5</sup>

3. Also on 4 October 1892, Peter Nowotny, Jr. purchased the one acre out of the 117 acre tract from Henry and Wilhelmina Weil for the sum of eleven hundred and fifty dollars... "It is understood that we also convey all improvements now situated on said acre of land, such as hall, store-room and dwelling house, and also all stock of dry goods and groceries now contained in said building." <sup>6</sup>

When was the original store built by Henry Weil on the "Emil Guenther Store" site? From the background information on Henry Weil in Chapter 18, one can conclude that he built it in about 1880 and operated it for the next twelve years; however, Anna Tausch owned the land upon which the store was built. It appears that Mrs. Tausch and Mr. Weil had an informal agreement for all these years. Of course, on 4 October 1892, the agreement had to be

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<sup>1</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grade student at Mountain Valley School in 1929. "The History of Mountain Valley" part of six installments printed in *New Braunfels Herald* by Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas", August 1948.

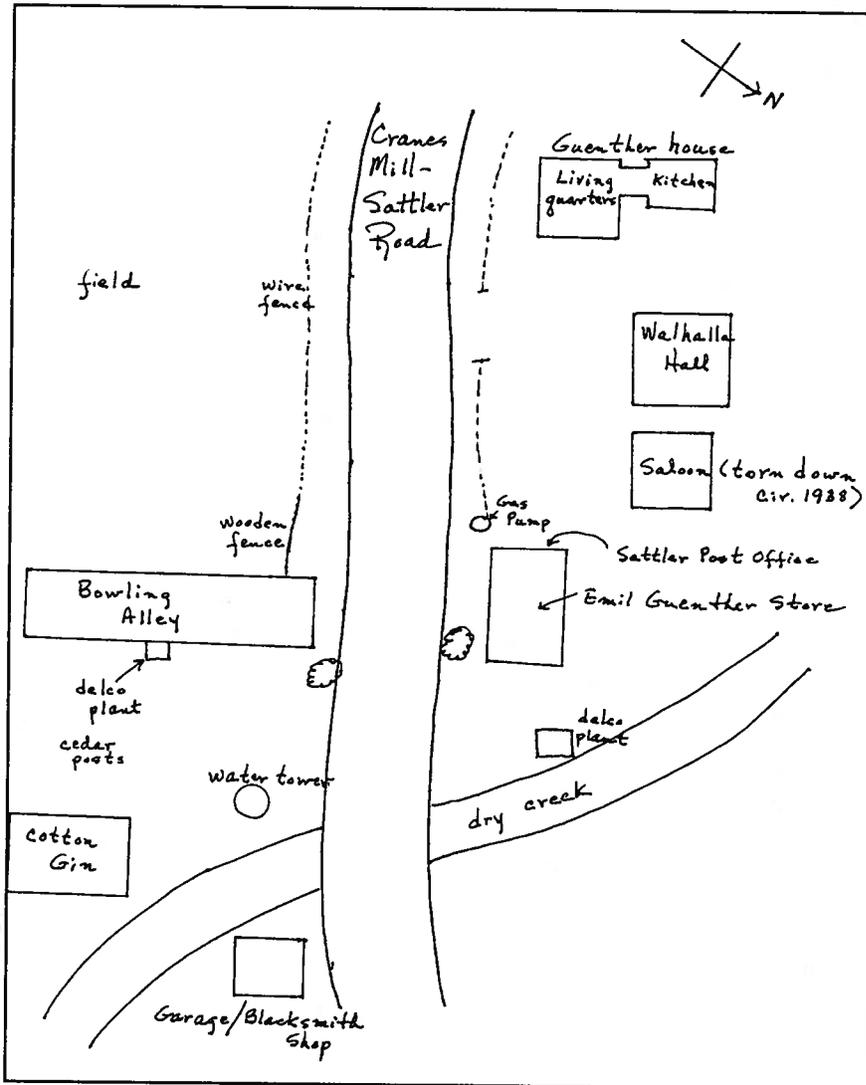
<sup>2</sup> Roland Baetge, *The Baetge Family History and Descendant Charts* by Oscar Haas, 1975. Unpublished manuscript.

<sup>3</sup> Husband Friedrich Tausch is never mentioned.

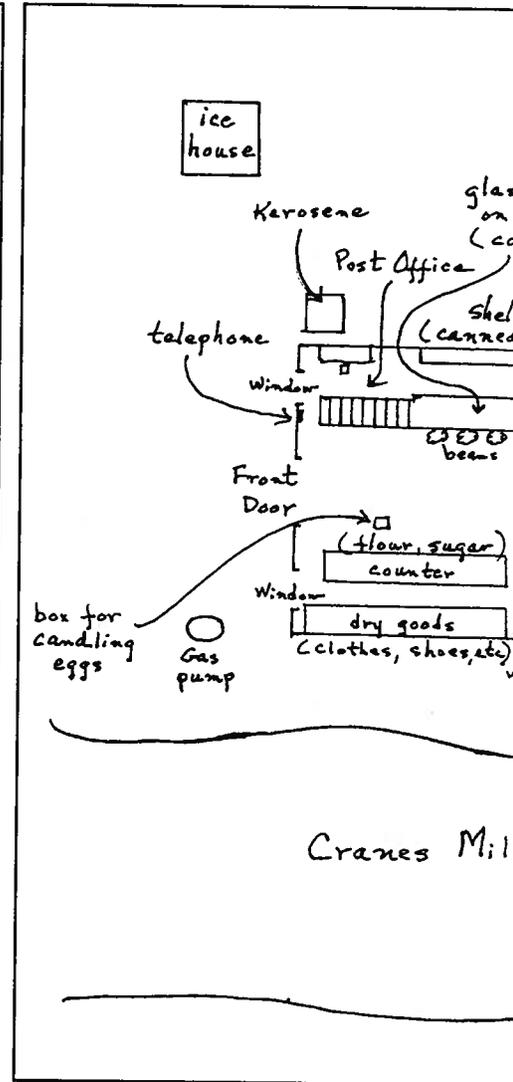
<sup>4</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book I, pp. 467-468.

<sup>5</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book V, pp. 450-451.

<sup>6</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book V, pp. 451-452.



OVERVIEW SKETCH OF EMIL GUENTHER STORE, HALL, SALOON, BOWLING ALLEY, COTTON GIN, ETC.



SKETCH OF THE EMIL GUENTHER STORE CIR. 1940.

formalized before Mr. Weil could sell to Mr. Nowotny.

Assuming that the postmaster was the merchant as well, Peter Nowotny, Jr. was the merchant for the community from 1892 until 1906 when Bruno and Hugo Pape took over.<sup>7</sup> Eighteen months later, William Posey became the community merchant for fifteen months<sup>8</sup> and then Hugo Liesmann for another twenty months.<sup>9</sup>

In December of 1910, Mr. and Mrs. Emil Guenther bought the establishment from Hugo Liesmann and wife, Emma,<sup>10</sup> and operated the store, saloon, and dance hall until 1954, a total of 44 years. From 1954 until 1958, the business was operated by Roland and Lillian Haas and also Ann Smith. In January of 1959,

Egon Preusser bought the establishment from Mrs. Guenther and operated the store<sup>11</sup> until 1960, when he sold everything to Marion W. Lee and Tom J. Sheridan.<sup>12 13</sup> The Emil Guenther Store essentially closed at this time. By the late 1960s, Mr. Sheridan had purchased most of the land in the area around the Emil

<sup>7</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Vol. 28, pp. 240-242.

<sup>8</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Vol. 29, p. 472.

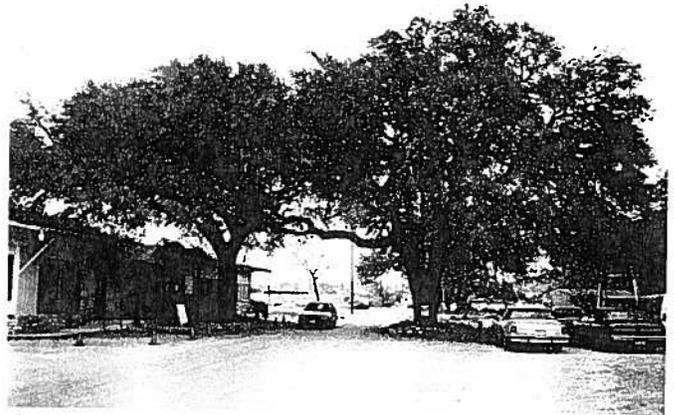
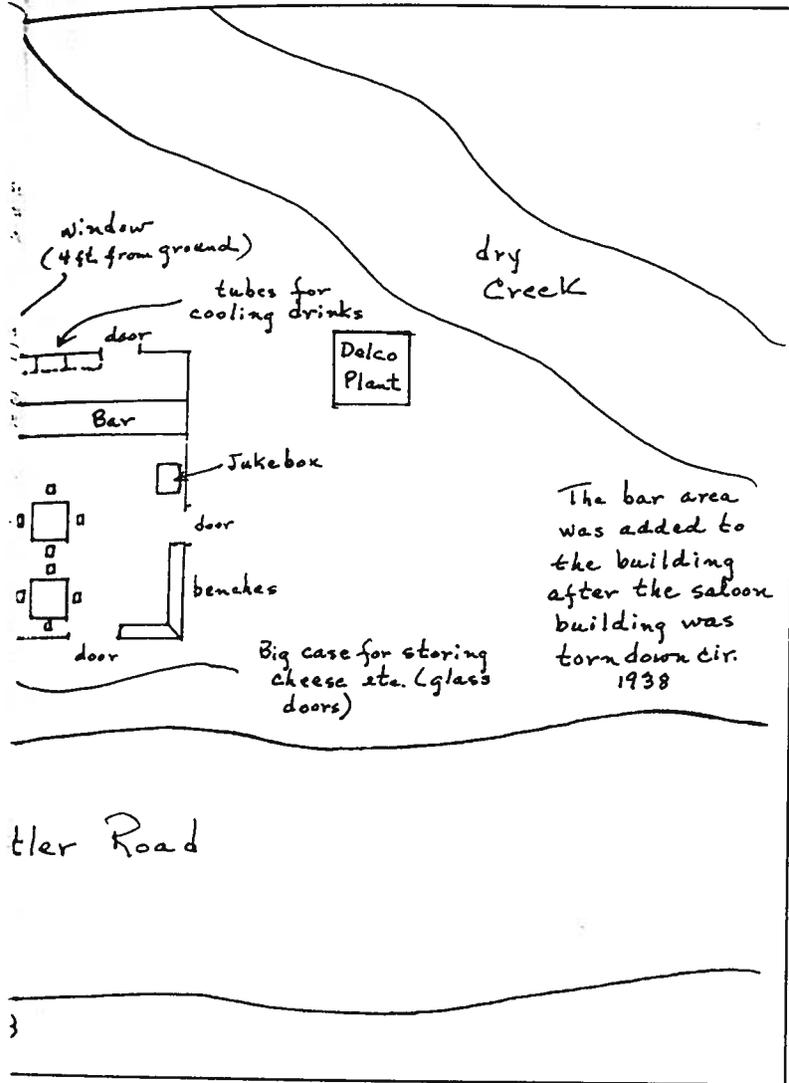
<sup>9</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Vol. 30, pp. 431-433.

<sup>10</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Vol. 32, pp. 349-350.

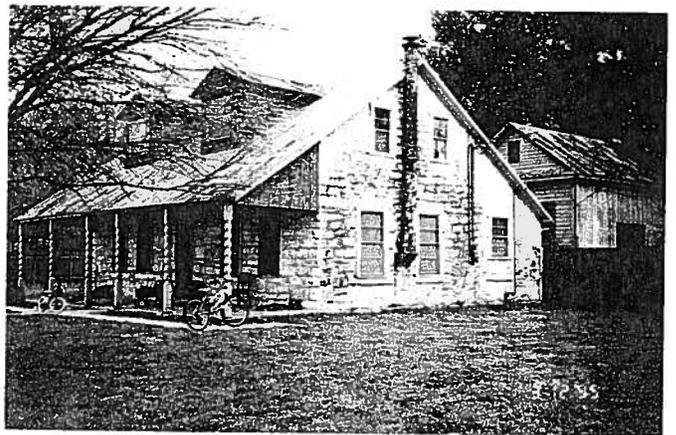
<sup>11</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Vol. 115, pp. 545-546.

<sup>12</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Vol. 120, pp. 491-496 (2<sup>nd</sup> tract).

<sup>13</sup> Both Egon and Joseph Preusser, Jr. (owner of the first store) were descendents of Gottfried and Louise (Busch) Preusser.



ON THE LEFT, SITE OF EMIL GUENTHER STORE (CURRENTLY CANTENEN LOUNGE), REMAINING OAK TREES ON THE SIDES OF SATTLER ROAD (CENTER) AND ON THE FAR RIGHT REMAINING WATER TOWER STAND USED WHEN GINNING COTTON.



EMIL GUENTHER HOUSE - LIVING QUARTERS IN THE FRONT AND KITCHEN IN THE BACK - (PICTURE TAKEN IN 1995).

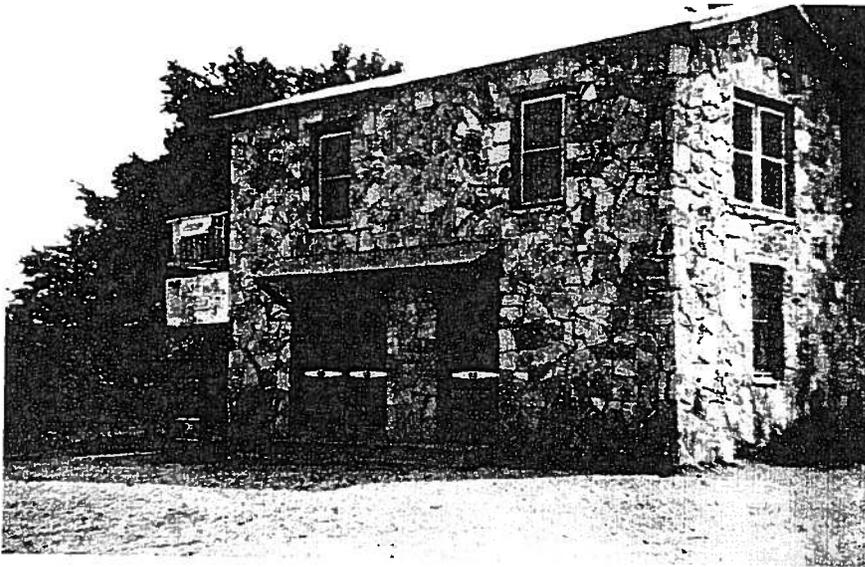
Guenther Store and along FM 2673. He referred to the area as the Miracle Mile in his advertisements. The Hungry Farmer Steak House was located on the site of the Emil Guenther Store at this time. The building was renovated considerably throughout the years. At the present time, the Canteen Lounge (VFW Post 8573) is located at this site and the building bears no resemblance to the original Emil Guenther Store building.

Currently only two oak trees (one on each side of the Sattler Road) and the water tower stand (used for the cotton gin) serve as a reminder of the landmark which served its community for half a century.

### KANZ STORES

In 1941, Albert and Cora Pape Kanz built a store and saloon on the original *Marienthal-Fischer Road*. This business was located about a mile north from the upper crossing over the river. At that time, the road crossed the river on a low-water bridge about one-fourth mile upstream from the present upper crossing of FM 306.<sup>14</sup> This was the only store between the community of Gruene and Hancock on FM 306. By this time the community had grown enough to support two stores. Many community celebrations were held on the out-door patio next to the two-story rock building. The rock struc-

<sup>14</sup> The *Marienthal-Fischer* and the present FM 306 road cross the Guadalupe River at two sites within a half-mile stretch. The reference is to the upper or most northerly crossing.



ALBERT KANZ STORES – THE ROCK STRUCTURE WAS LOCATED ON FM 306 AND THE OTHER ON THE CURRENT SATTLER ROAD. (PHOTOS COURTESY OF CORA KANZ)



ture was converted into a home after making a few modifications and is still standing on the site.

Albert and Cora operated the store at the FM 306 location until 1948 when they built another store next to their home on the Mountain Valley-Cranes Mill Road.<sup>15</sup> (See map.) They operated the store until 1970 at which time Albert Kanz, Jr. took over and ran it until 1981. Hence, the Albert Kanz family owned and operated a general merchandise store and saloon

<sup>15</sup> Currently referred to as Sattler Road.

for 40 years in the community of Sattler. They spent many hours at the store to accommodate the people who needed their essentials during the day and those who came to relax in the evenings for a drink or two.

#### DANCE HALLS

As mentioned when talking about the name, *Walhalla*, in Chapter 2, the first dance hall in the community was located where the Emil Guenther Store was located. Mr. Haas supports these statements by writing that it was the *Walhalla* Singing Association (the choir) that built the *Walhalla* Hall on an acre of land that the association purchased on 9 April 1880, for one dollar from Mrs. Anna Tausch. The conveyance of the one acre of land is recorded in book "O", page 653, in the Comal County Clerk's Office and in part reads as follows:

*Know all men by these presents that I, Anna Tausch ..for and in consideration of the sum of one Dollar, to me in hand paid by Theodor Bose, Joachim Pantermuehl and Carl Pantermuehl as directors and in behalf of the singing Association*

*"Walhalla" ... have granted to the above directors ... all the rights to one acre of land ... being a parcel of a part of a survey on the west side of the Guadalupe River and known as Survey No. 322 granted to Parish Smith, assignee of D. C. Hoover, and sold to me by John Daniels ... for the sole purpose of erecting a building on it as a meeting place for the above named association...*

Mrs. Tausch's signature was witnessed by J. Marschall and H. Erxleben, before William

Sattler, Justice of the Peace and Ex officio Notary Public of Comal County.<sup>16</sup>

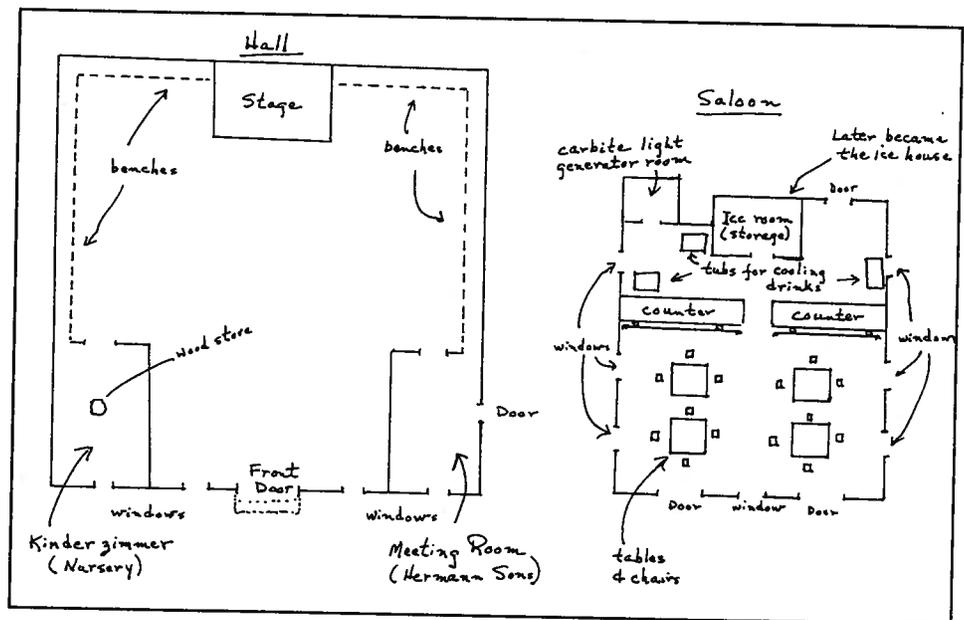
From the above information, one can conclude that the hall was built by the choir in 1880 when they purchased the land. When would Henry Weil have "erected a hall, store-room and residence", stated earlier? There appears to be a contradiction as to who built the hall — Mr. Weil or "the choir". According to Ruby Rust, the hall "was later moved to Mr. Marschall's place on the river side".<sup>17</sup> It is not known exactly how much later or why the choir decided to relocate.<sup>18</sup> One can only assume that the original hall was too small for dances since the record states "for the sole purpose of erecting a building on it as a meeting place for the above named association". No dance advertisements were found in the *New Braunfels Herald*. The original hall and property must have reverted to Mrs. Tausch after the choir decided to move. It is assumed that it was the same hall that the "choir built" that was sold to Mr. Weil by Mrs. Tausch on the 4th of October in 1892.

The hall on Mr. Marschall's property was located several hundred yards upstream from the presently located "fourth crossing" bridge. There was no bridge in those days and the hall was built near a natural rock bed in the river, which made for easier crossing.

Ruby Rust wrote that many a good time was had at this hall (near the river). She continued by saying, "the hall was torn down and that a new hall was built by Peter Nowotny, Jr. near the location of Emil Guenther's store".<sup>19</sup> It is not known

when Mr. Nowotny built the new hall; however, the earliest dance advertisement at *Walhalla* by Mr. Nowotny found in the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* was dated 10 September 1893. The fact that Mr. Nowotny's name appeared in the advertisement makes one think that it was the "new" *Walhalla* hall. Both halls apparently were called *Walhalla*.<sup>20</sup> A harvest celebration (*Erntefest*) was held at *Walhalla* on 19 October 1890, as advertised in the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung*. This advertisement was signed by "Das Comitee" (the Committee). Thus it appears that the 1890 celebration took place at the river location. One can conclude that the river hall was torn down in early 1890's, after not too many years of use.

Hanno Kanz recalled being told by several old-timers that the decision to relocate the hall was made after it was partially damaged during a flood. Apparently the damage could have



SKETCH OF WALHALLA HALL AND SALOON CIRCA 1934

been repaired; however, they feared that flooding could happen again at any time. So they agreed to move when Peter Nowotny, Jr. of-

<sup>16</sup> Mr. Sattler held court in a little log house on his property. This log house was separate from the post office log house.

<sup>17</sup> Ruby Rust, as a seventh grade student at Mountain Valley School in 1929. "History of Mountain Valley". Part of publication by Mr. Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas", in six installments, *New Braunfels Herald*, August 1948.

<sup>18</sup> The hall was located at the original location in 1883 according to a map of the region drawn by Julius Bose, surveyor, dated 15 May 1883.

<sup>19</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grade student at Mountain Valley School in 1929. "History of Mountain Valley" Part of six installments published by Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas", *New Braunfels Herald*, August 1948.

<sup>20</sup> Mr. Nowotny's dance advertisements in the *New Braunfels Herald* usually read as "Walhalla Saal". Saal means hall or large room in German. Perhaps he did this to keep from saying "Walhalla Halle."



HELMS LUMBER COMPANY LOCATED IN THE WALHALLA HALL IN SATTLER IN THE LATE 1960s. GENERALLY THE ORIGINAL STRUCTURE WAS MAINTAINED WHILE SOME LIBERTIES WERE TAKEN ON THE FRONT ENTRANCE AND WINDOWS. SEE THE 1895-1900 MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL PICTURE TAKEN AT WALHALLA HALL IN CHAPTER 8. (PHOTO COURTESY OF MELBA ROTH)

ferred to build a hall for their usage close to his store.<sup>21</sup> According to Roland Baetge, Gustav Preusser bought the lumber from the hall near the river to build his home located about one-half mile from the Emil Guenther Store on the left side of the Hidden Valley Road.<sup>22</sup>

Mr. Haas wrote that Peter Nowotny, Jr., merchant and postmaster at Sattler, offered his **new** hall for school festivals in 1899. This, of course, contradicts the above date of 1893 as the time of the construction of the new hall. Of course, the word **new** is a relative term.

The *Walhalla* Hall near the Emil Guenther Store was used for many social functions until about 1935 when it fell in disrepair and was used for storage. It was restored in the late 1940s by Emil Guenther and dances were again held. Dances and parties were held at the hall until 1958<sup>23</sup>. Later the building was used by Helms Lumber Company<sup>24</sup> and finally torn down in the late 1960s.

During the time that Sattler did not have a dance hall, the people went to dances at Hancock and Fischer Store. Occasionally a band was hired to play German polkas and waltzes for dances at these halls. They usually danced to western music.

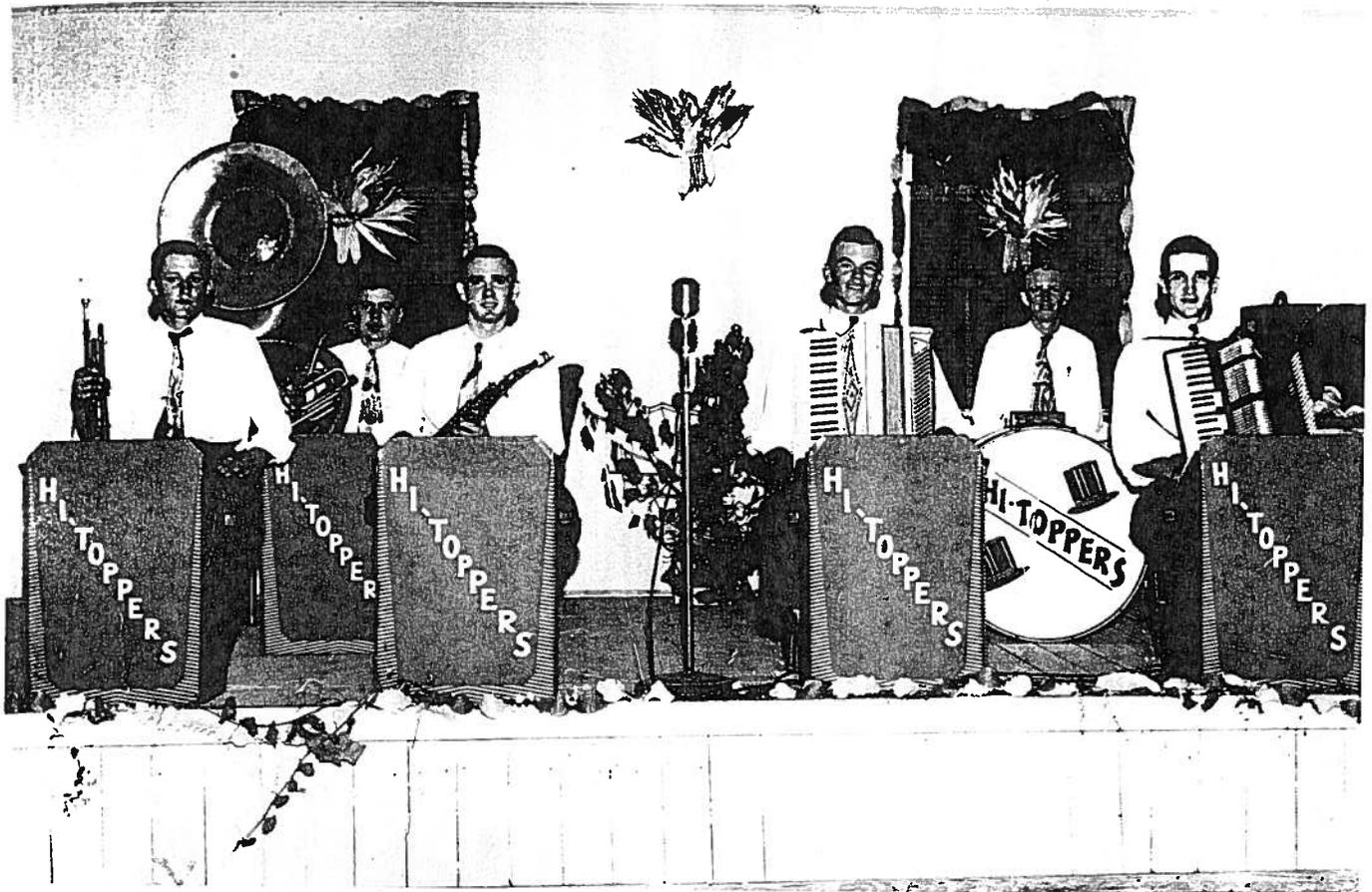
In the "From Sattler" section of the 6 October 1905 issue of the *New Braunfels Herald* was the statement that "by early cock crow 30 kegs and two casks of bottle beer, both Lone Star and City, and two loads of soda water were gone ...". Yes, Lone Star beer had been around that long. The Alamo Girl Lone Star beer was first brewed in 1904 by the Muehlbach Brew-

<sup>21</sup> Private conversation in 1995.

<sup>22</sup> Private conversation in 1994.

<sup>23</sup> Thanks to Arlene Cobb Tice for the use of Mr. Emil Guenther's ledger of business activities from 1953 until 1958. In July of 1956, Mr. Guenther paid H. Wagenfuehr \$135.60 for dance hall insurance.

<sup>24</sup> Sheridan sold to Helms in 1961. Comal County Clerk's Office, Vol. 123, pp. 517-519.



THE HI-TOPPERS ORCHESTRA PLAYED AT WALHALLA IN THE FALL OF 1949 FOR THE OCCASION OF A FARM BUREAU FUND RAISER DANCE. LEFT TO RIGHT: GORDON ZUNKER, DARVIN DIETERT, ALTON RAHE, ALLEN MOEHRIG, KENNETH RHEINLANDER AND MELFORD HAAG. PAY WAS TEN DOLLARS PER BAND MEMBER.

cry on Jones Avenue in San Antonio. During prohibition the operation went under but was started up again in 1940.

The City beer mentioned above could have been brewed in New Braunfels. However, it was later that a strong New Braunfels beer was brewed from 1914 until prohibition in 1920 at the site of the current New Braunfels Smokehouse Plant on Guenther Street. During prohibition they brewed a "non-alcoholic" beverage called Busto. Their slogan was "there is no beer near here but we have near beer here". Unfortunately there was too much alcohol in Busto and the brewery was closed by the Federal agents in mid 1920s.<sup>25</sup>

<sup>25</sup> Information was obtained from a picture located at the New Braunfels Smokehouse Restaurant and Retail Store.

### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

When talking to friends who remember visiting the Emil Guenther Store, the conversation soon includes the statement that the beer was usually "Keller Kuehl" (cellar cool). The store did not have a cellar; however, if the beer felt "Keller Kuehl" to Mr. Guenther, in his mind, it was fit for drinking. The only way to ice down any bottled drink was in a vat with chipped ice. Remember the ice had to be brought in from New Braunfels. So "Keller Kuehl" was a very practical approach. I remember that all the beer and soda water caps were thrown out the back door of the saloon, and that these caps kept the ground from getting too muddy to walk on.

I also remember that the best beer I probably ever drank was the bottle Albert Meckel sold me through the back door of Emil Guenther's saloon in 1946. After a hard day's

## CHAPTER 6

### IN THE DAYS OF COTTON AND COTTON GINS

In the late 1800s and early 1900s almost everybody's life in one form or another revolved around cotton. Today, no farmer in the community of Sattler raises cotton. In the earlier years, a cotton farmer soon had the whole family involved in the process. Before the cotton could be picked, the land had to be prepared, seeds had to be planted and then the young plants were "chopped" or should we say thinned and weeded. Both chopping and picking meant much hand work for every member of the family. Vera Pantermuehl remembered picking cotton in the morning before going to school.<sup>1</sup> While Arlon Pape remembered picking cotton all day on Saturdays, just so his older brother, Erhardt, would take him along to the dance in his car.<sup>2</sup> Erwin Pantermuehl recalled his cotton crop producing five bales from ten acres.<sup>3</sup>

The cotton industry grew considerably during the earlier years of the German settlements in Comal County, and so did the number of cotton gins. The first gin was built in the mid 1850s, and by 1885 there were 20 in the county.<sup>4</sup> In the Sattler and immediate surrounding communities several gins were mentioned in the literature.

Roland Baetge had the following to say about the first cotton gin:

*The first cotton gin at Sattler was owned and operated by John Junker, Sr. Later John Junker, Jr. took over his father's interests and operated the gin with the aid of a bachelor named Fritz Behnken.*

*The gin was located on the property of John Junker, Sr. originally part of the*

*Weil farm, close to a rock ledge overlooking the Guadalupe River across from the present day (1975) Kanz Store. Water was pumped to the top of the hill with a pump that was powered by a horse walking on a treadmill type affair that rotated the pump (strictly one horse-power).<sup>5</sup>*

Ruby Rust wrote that her grandparents remembered the cotton gin located on the place where Charles (Carl) Junker lived and that it was owned by Henry Erxleben and Joseph Preusser, Sr.<sup>6</sup> Mr. Baetge and Ruby Rust agree on the location and are most likely talking about the same cotton gin with ownership having changed during the years.

Walter Krause remembered working in his grandfather's cotton gin. His grandfather was Gustav Krause, Sr.. This gin was located near the Guadalupe River in the Hancock Community, now under Canyon Lake. Walter also recalled helping his grandfather sharpen the circular saws during rainy days in readiness for the late summer ginning season.<sup>8</sup>

As an added thought on the above circular saws, according to the encyclopedia, the teeth on these saws would pull the cotton from the

<sup>1</sup> Reflections Tape #245, 7-7-81.

<sup>2</sup> Reflections Tape # 176, 4-8-80.

<sup>3</sup> Unpublished history of the Sattler Community by Erwin Pantermuehl, 1996.

<sup>4</sup> Terry G. Jordan, *German Seed in Texas Soil. Immigrant Farmers in Nineteenth-Century Texas*, University of Texas Press, Austin, Texas, 1966, p. 133.

<sup>5</sup> Roland Baetge, *The Baetge Family History and Descendants Charts*, 1975. Unpublished manuscript.

<sup>6</sup> Charles (Carl) was a younger brother of John Junker, Jr.

<sup>7</sup> "Ruby Rust, seventh grade student at Mountain Valley School in 1929, " History of Mountain Valley ". Published by Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas", first and second installments, *New Braunfels Herald*, 10 and 17 August 1948.

<sup>8</sup> Reflections Tape # 525, 8-12-88.

seeds as the saws revolved at 400 rpm about 5/8th of an inch apart. Articles in the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* make reference to 50-saw (Gulley's Patent) and 50-saw (Pratt's Patent) cotton gins.

Mrs. Ida Guenther Meckel recalled that her husband, Willie, worked in Frank Guenther's cotton gin at Hancock during their earlier years of marriage (mid 1920s).<sup>9</sup>

The last operational cotton gin in the community was owned by Emil Guenther and was located across the road a few hundred yards east of his store.<sup>10</sup> No written records were found as to when the gin was built. According to E. P. "Pete" Nowotny, his father, Peter Nowotny, Jr., had the cotton gin built.<sup>11</sup> This must have been between the years of 1902, when Mr. Nowotny bought from Fritz Pantermuehl the 90 acres on which the gin was located on Survey 321<sup>12</sup>, and 1906, when Mr. Nowotny sold the land to the Pape brothers<sup>13</sup>. As mentioned in Chapter 5, it was in 1892 that Mr. Nowotny bought the store, etc., located across the road from the gin in Survey 322.

The gin was powered with a steam engine. We see in Mr. Haas's book that Mr. F.B. Hoffmann was the first to put in a horse-powered cotton gin at Solms in 1857 and that in 1870, Mr. Hoffmann was the first to power a cotton gin by steam engine.<sup>14</sup> One can only assume that the Sattler Community used the horse-powered gin described by Mr. Baetge until they built the steam engine power.

Melba Roth remembers her dad, Albert Meckel, operating the Emil Guenther cotton gin. He would rise early in the morning to build a fire for the steam engines and then blow the gin whistle to alert the community when they were ready to gin cotton.<sup>15</sup> In the *New Braunfels Herald* of 28 April 1950, the obituary of Joe Meckel, Sr. mentioned that he was a manager of a cotton gin in Sattler from 1906 until 1911. Most likely he worked in the same gin as did his son, Albert.

Erwin Pantermuehl recalls working in Mr. Guenther's gin as a packer and compressor for \$2.50 to \$3.00 a day, plus lunch. He also recalls the main beam breaking and one end of it going through the roof while compacting the cotton into a bale. After three days, they



TWENTY-FIVE FOOT CONCRETE STAND FOR WATER TANK NEAR THE SITE OF THE SATTLER GIN, ACROSS THE STREET FROM THE PRESENT CANTEEN LOUNGE. VFW Post 8573.

had repaired all damage as well as the replacement of the weakened eighteen inch square, sixteen foot long beam.<sup>16</sup>

The only remaining evidence of a cotton gin in the Sattler Community is a 20 foot concrete stand upon which the water tank rested. This water was used in the generation of the steam. The water in the tank came from the river about three-fourth of a mile away. Chapter 14, on

<sup>9</sup> Reflections Tape #169. 2-21-80.

<sup>10</sup> Mr. Haas wrote in his book that gins in the county included one owned by Herman Guenther in Sattler. Descendants of Herman Guenther do not recall him owning a cotton gin. Hence, we assume that it should have read Emil Guenther instead of Herman Guenther.

<sup>11</sup> Reflections Tape # 59 1-17-78.

<sup>12</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office. Book 26, pp. 343-345.

<sup>13</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book 29, pp. 472-473. In October of 1909, Peter Nowotny, Jr. sold the land and gin to Emil Guenther.

<sup>14</sup> Oscar Haas. *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946*. The Steck Company. Austin, Texas. 1968. p. 150.

<sup>15</sup> Reflections Tape #335. 9-15-83.

<sup>16</sup> Unpublished history of Sattler by Erwin Pantermuehl, 1996.

low concrete dams with water-wheels on the river, will further explain the process of getting the water to the gin.

There is one unresolved piece to this puzzle. As we will see later, there is good evidence that the low concrete dams and water wheels were constructed in 1925, or a few years before. In this chapter, the information is rather solid that the cotton gin was constructed in the 1902 to 1906 time frame. If the gin was steam powered, where did the water come from before 1925? Perhaps, there was another source of power before 1925.

Of course there was also the social side of cotton ginning. Melba Roth remembers the farmers soon coming to the gin after her dad blew the gin whistle to signal the readiness of the operation. Many times it would happen that they were still around or still waiting at dinner time. Mrs. Guenther knew this and she would always prepare a big dinner for the group.<sup>17</sup> Melba recalls her grandmother setting the sugar in the area where Elias Espinosa would sit so that this modest man would not have to ask for it (for he probably would not have).<sup>18</sup> Another hard working man at the gin was Teofilo Lerma.

Mr. Guenther usually bought the baled cotton and the cotton seed from the farmers.<sup>19</sup> This gave them a chance to "straighten out" their accounts with Mr. Guenther for all the daily needs (groceries, etc.) they charged throughout the year. So in a broad sense, Mr. Guenther also served as the banker for the community. It was unheard of to charge interest for the groceries bought almost a year earlier. Mr. Guenther was a vital link for the community, he benefited when the cotton and other crops were good and he suffered with the rest when the crops were bad.

Planters Merchant Mill in New Braunfels usually bought the cotton from Mr. Guenther. Melba Roth also recalls that Mr. Guenther's truck with six bales would usually not make it

all the way up "Baetge's Berg" (Baetge's Hill) without stopping and letting it cool and, of course, adding water. While in town, Mr. Guenther would buy coffee from Zipp Coffee Company, groceries from Moore Grocers (Ernst Stein salesman), and flour from Dittlinger's Flour Mill.

The operation of the only cotton gin in the entire area of Sattler gradually became more infrequent until it was no longer used in the late 1940s. As with much old machinery, the upkeep and operating expense soon made it very inefficient to continue operating the gin. Also, by this time roads and equipment had been improved so that it was relatively easy to haul the cotton to New Braunfels for ginning. After standing idle for many years, the Sattler gin was finally torn down in the early 1960s soon after Tom Sheridan and Marion W. Lee bought the property from Mrs. Guenther.

So why and when did the cotton crops dwindle to nothing? The small grayish boll weevil was the cause of the decline of the cotton industry. The destructive larvae of this beetle hatched in and damaged the cotton bolls extensively. Although the boll weevil moved into United States from Mexico in the 1890s, it was not until the late 1920s that it hurt the farmers considerably. Thus with the threat of a total cotton crop loss, the farmers soon diversified by planting less cotton and more corn, oats, wheat, etc. If one crop did not make, hopefully another would. Emil Guenther's records show that he raised enough cotton

in 1953 to be able to sell 13 bales of cotton.<sup>20</sup> In the late 1940s the farmers could only plant cotton according to the allotment they were given by the government.



IDENTIFICATION TAG FOR A COTTON BALE FROM THE EMIL GUENTHER GIN. THIS TAG WAS SLIPPED ON ONE OF THE STEEL BANDS AROUND THE BALE. THANKS TO MELBA ROTH FOR THIS TAG.

<sup>17</sup> Remember in those days the people ate dinner at noon and supper in the evening.

<sup>18</sup> Reflections Tape #335, 9-15-83.

<sup>19</sup> It took about 1400 pounds of raw cotton to make a 500 pound bale.

<sup>20</sup> Thanks to Arlene Cobb Tice for Emil Guenther's ledger of business activities from 1953 till 1957.

The thought that often comes to mind is "How much did it cost to build a cotton gin in the late 1800s?" What is the name of the company that made them? Did the manufacturer install the plant as well? Why did we need so many gins? When asking around for answers, it was Henry Schmidt, from Bulverde, who recalled that the Specht Gin cost \$2400 in 1924 when it was rebuilt after the old gin burned down. The replaced gin had an 80 horsepower steam engine.

We perhaps get an answer to the question "Why so many gins?" from Mr. Haas writing that

Mr. Hoffmann's first cotton gin powered by a steam engine could easily gin six bales a day. This tells us that a horsepowered gin may have baled only two or three bales a day. Thus, one or two gins for the community usually could not keep up with the demand. Usually a farm needed his wagon for storing the cotton for the next bale, and he could not afford to have his loaded wagon standing around for days waiting for the cotton to be ginned.

#### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

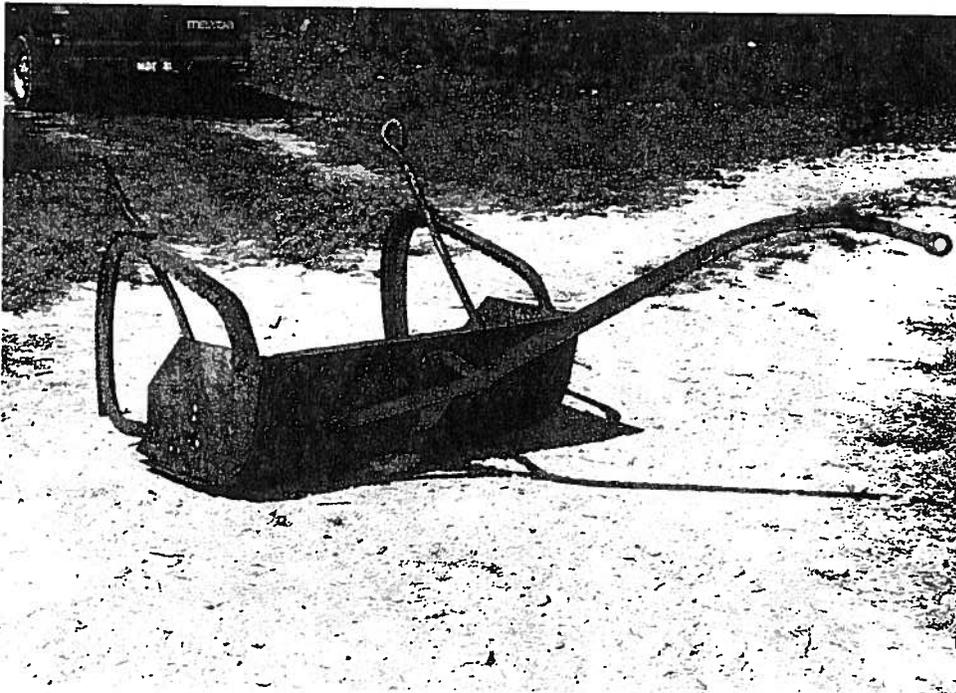
I remember hearing the dinner whistle from the Guenther cotton gin while attending school only a quarter of a mile away. I do not remember whether dad set the school clock to the gin whistle or whether the gin whistle timing was set to dad's clock.

My dad once took us to see the gin while in operation. Now I wish I had paid more attention. I do remember that it was very noisy.

I also remember Stanley Meckel and I playing hide-and-seek in the gin in the 1940s. Stanley's parents, Mr and Mrs. Fritz Meckel, lived in the Albert Meckel house next to the gin. Another opportunity I passed up by not paying more attention to the design and construction of the old cotton gin.

I recall the four Rahe family members picking cotton with Edwin and Clara on the Henry Pantermuehl place as well as picking cotton with Max and Ruby Pape. I recall only four things that might have added a little pleasure to the chore of cotton picking: Will the next dark cloud produce enough rain so we quit for today? Will the next cloud at least bring us shade for a few minutes? I think I see an apple melon growing on a bush down the cotton row. These peach-sized yellow melons may have been warm, but they tasted good. When we get to the end of the row, we can have a drink of cool (unflavored) water.





A "FRESNA" SCRAPER FOR CLEANING STOCK TANKS.

skids on the sides and a single long lever in the center of the back. The long lever was used in uprighting the "Fresna" after it was dumped. It was used for cleaning stock tanks. Both scrapers were horse-drawn.

A worker was paid extra for the use of his team of horses and wagon or plow. The selected workers were expected to bring their hand tools such as pick-ax, shovel, and ax.

So how did these people build roads with this minimal equipment? If road material was to be hauled to an area of the road, did they shovel it by hand onto the four-foot high wagon and then unload it the same way? No. The road material was loosened with a plow and a four-foot incline was constructed on the edge of the pit. The empty wagon was backed to the incline. Then a hand-guided scoop of loosened road material was dragged up the incline by a team of horses and dumped on the wagon. Usually five or six scoops filled the wagon. The road material was later unloaded by manually turning the loose boards in the wagon bed to let the material fall on the road. First a board on the side of the wagon bed was turned and then one by one the others were turned.<sup>3</sup>

What kind of roads did the community have for the automobiles to travel on in the early 1900s? Erwin Pantermuehl recalls that the

early roads were more like lanes about 20 feet wide with just enough room to meet another wagon or car. Everybody drove in the middle of the lane. He remembers that the lanes were simply black dirt and that when it rained the ruts were so deep that the differential would make its own rut in the middle of the lane. Of course, these deep ruts would remain when the road was dry again.<sup>4</sup>

It was only the light-weight Model-T automobile, built extremely durable with a high center of gravity, that could be driven on such roads. This

helps to explain the popularity of the early Fords. The user could easily repair these cars. There were very few service stations or auto mechanics.<sup>5</sup>

Erwin Pantermuehl also recalls that only a few cars were around in his earlier years since only a few people could afford to pay \$600 to \$700 for a car. His dad bought his first car in 1927, and it was one of the first cars to come with a split rim and balloon tires. This was a big improvement over the hard narrow 21-inch tire with a solid rim where a break could easily occur with a fist-sized rock.

### PRAIRIE ROAD (FM 306)

This road was referred to as the Fischers Store-New Braunfels Road on a 1925 map. Roland Baetge, whose family lived on the *Marienthal* Farm, remembered when this road was simply a flint-rock road. In an 1860 regular session, H. W. Sattler and Carl Baetge petitioned the Comal County Commissioners Court for the continuation of the county road

<sup>3</sup> Thanks to Alfred Jentsch for sharing this.

<sup>4</sup> Unpublished history of the Sattler Community by Erwin Pantermuehl, 1996.

<sup>5</sup> "Henry Ford's Big Flaw" *American Heritage of Inventions and Technology*, Vol. 10, No. 2 p. 34. General Motors Sponsor.

from *Marienthal* to intersect the Austin Road near the Guadalupe River crossing opposite the Orphan Farm (near Gruene).<sup>6</sup>

Erwin Pantermuehl<sup>7</sup> said that the road contained only about three shovels of dirt to every wheelbarrow of flint rock. Of course, these flint rocks were not easy on the tires. In the first part of 1900s, the people started to call it the Prairie Road. It was paved in the 1940s. In the early 1960s, the road was improved considerably and became known as FM 306.

The highest hill on the Prairie Road was located about two miles before reaching the Guadalupe River when traveling from New Braunfels. This hill was (and is still) known as the "Baetge's Berg" or Baetge's Hill. The road used to go over the top of Baetge's Hill. Later the road was cut into the hill so as to have much less grade. A portion of the old road can still be seen where the new road does not follow the path of the old one.

### RIVER ROAD

Perhaps the River Road had its beginning in 1868 when Oscar Friedrich agreed to "... let free road through his land and fences on the Guadalupe River to Friedrich Pantermuehl, Adolph Otto and Gottfried Rohde".<sup>8</sup> Of course, the three parties also agreed to let Oscar Friedrich pass through their land under the same conditions. Please remember that the Jacobs Creek School was started in 1867, only a year before this agreement.

The following is what Mr. Haas had to say about the River Road:

*The River Road as such was not immediately established as settlers spread out of New Braunfels. At spots were only trails for horseback travelers. One day Franz Nowotny, ... with pick, shovel, crow-bar and ax, widened the narrow places so that wagons too could travel the road.*<sup>9</sup>

This is what they had to say about the River Road in 1905 when a group of 75 people from New Braunfels had an all-day party at *Walhalla*:

*Somewhat detained through the hospitality of Mr. Nowotny, the kindness of the mountain people and the romantic*

*lay of the country, the town people started on their home trip later than they had intended to: for, a drive down the **River Road** after dark is somewhat dangerous. All mishaps, however such as a broken hack wheel, a broken buggy shaft and few other less disagreeable incidents, occurred before nightfall.*

*The last of the party reached the end of the dangerous canyon road before complete darkness set in and all reached home safe although more or less tired out by the day's trip.*<sup>10</sup>

In the 1925 Comal County Commissioners Court records, reference was made to the Mountain Valley Road. It appeared to have started at the Erxleben ranch (fourth crossing) and extended to the *Marienthal* Road,<sup>11</sup> the upper end of the River Road. The lower end of the River Road, near the first crossing, was also referred to as the Waco Springs Road.

Vera Pantermuehl remembered that it took all day to go to New Braunfels and return home. She recalled opening and closing 12 or 14 gates when traveling the River Road with her parents.<sup>12</sup>

Initially the settlers depended on rock-bed crossings in the river where the water was shallow and the flow was evenly distributed. However, increasing number of automobiles created demand for the improvement of the road conditions, especially the four crossings of the Guadalupe. On 12 March 1918, the Comal County Commissioners Court entered into contract with Joseph and Albert Meckel to construct low-water bridges at crossings on the River Road.<sup>13</sup>

These bridges could perhaps handle a four to five foot rise in the river and were considered to be a great improvement. However, they

<sup>6</sup> Roland Baetge, Reflections Tape # 213, 12-10-80.

<sup>7</sup> Unpublished history of the Sattler Community, 1996.

<sup>8</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Volume I, pp. 573-574.

<sup>9</sup> Oscar Haas, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946*, The Steck Company, Austin, Texas, 1968, p. 216.

<sup>10</sup> "Sunday Outing to Walhalla" *New Braunfels Herald*, June 23, 1905.

<sup>11</sup> Later referred to as the Cranes Mill - Sattler Road.

<sup>12</sup> Vera Pantermuehl, Reflections Tape #245, 7-7-81.

<sup>13</sup> Oscar Haas, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946*, The Steck Company, Austin, Texas, 1968, p. 216.

did not always solve high water problems. When "the river was up" and the water was over the bridges, many families living along the River Road had no way of getting to school or town. In case of an emergency, their only way to town was to ride or drive along a trail over "Pauly's Hill"<sup>14</sup> to reach the Prairie Road near Baetge's Hill.

As automobiles became more common, cattle guards were constructed beside the gates between the properties. Of course, the main purpose of the cattle guards was to allow the cars to easily pass over the pipes placed over a dug-out while the animals could not. Horse-drawn wagons and horseback riders used the gates. As the mode of transportation became increasingly more dependent on rubber tires and fencing along the roadway became more common, both gates and cattle guards were removed.

### CRANES MILL-SATTLER ROAD (FM 2673)

The Cranes Mill-Sattler Road was the road to drive when the "river was up". Of course, after five or six miles on this road, one would have to turn left on the Bear Creek Road (currently FM 2722). The Bear Creek might also be overflowing its low-water bridge, but that was the chance one had to take. The Cranes Mill-Sattler Road was paved in the 1940s.

In 1925, the Cranes Mill-Sattler Road was referred as the *Marienthal* Road in the Comal County Commissioners Court Records. It was at that time that Robert Pantermuehl and others asked that the *Marienthal* Road become a 2<sup>nd</sup> class road, 40 foot in width, and run from

### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

To my knowledge, Melbourne "Pepper" Doerr was the first person to daily drive from Sattler to New Braunfels and back while working at the Textile Mill. He started this in about 1945.

During the 1947-48 school year, my sister, Nell Rose, Ora Mae Pape and I drove to New Braunfels every weekday. Nell Rose was a book-keeper at Firestone and Ora Mae and I were sophomores in high school. We always drove the center-paved Prairie Road. On one cold and icy morning, as I was driving, we reached about three-fourth way up Baetge's Hill and the wheels started to spin with no progress. The two girls got out of the car to push. After considerable effort on their part, we finally reached the top and were on our way again. My sister still has not forgiven the "gentleman" for not offering to push and letting either of the girls drive. I do not know if Ora Mae has forgiven me, but I am not going to bring it up again.

I recall hearing the story about John Pape, who one day came to Emil Guenther's store in his Model A after having overturned it a few miles down the road. The car was boiling hot when he arrived at the store since no water was put in the radiator after uprighting it. Mr. Guenther said, "John, you must put water in the radiator." Upon which John replied, "I'm going to show that beast who's boss, if it insists on turning over, I'm not going to give it any water." Apparently John thought of his car as more of a horse than a machine.

I remember helping Edwin Pantermuehl haul hay with a wagon and a team of horses. Before we approached the northern river crossing on the original *Marienthal*-Fischer road we stopped to put chains in front of the back wheels. These chains kept the back wheels from turning and helped the horses hold back the load while rolling down the hill to the water crossing.

about 200 yards N. E. of Sattler, at or near Marschall's Place, along the Hoover and Smith survey lines and across the land of Leopold and Ernst Pape to the Fischer Store Road, a distance of about one and one-half miles.

Nearly all roads and bridges were rebuilt in the 1960s. The Bear Creek Road was straightened significantly by cutting the road through a mountain near the Bear Creek. The Corps of Engineers built new bridges to a height of sixteen feet above the water after the dam was constructed. Thus, with modern power-driven equipment, the construction engineers widened and straightened the nostalgic pathways to handle the heavier stream of traffic.

<sup>14</sup> The hill was located on the southeastern side of the fourth crossing and stretched to Baetge's Hill on the Prairie Road. Heinrich Erxleben bought this property after the heirs of Ferdinand Pauly; hence, the name of the hill. In German, it sounded like the people were saying, "Paulus Berg".

## CHAPTER 8

# HISTORY OF SCHOOLS IN THE COMMUNITY

### EARLY SCHOOLING

Robinson mentioned that Heinrich Bremer, who settled his family in the Buffalo Springs area in the summer of 1846, decided that he and his wife, Judith, would have to impart to their children the schooling that they had received in Germany. Most likely the burden rested mostly with Judith to teach the older children while Heinrich cleared the land for farming. Of course, the responsibility of teaching the younger children rested with the older children. Robinson concluded by saying, "Such was the system practiced in many early German-Texan homes located on the outer fringes of civilization."<sup>1</sup>

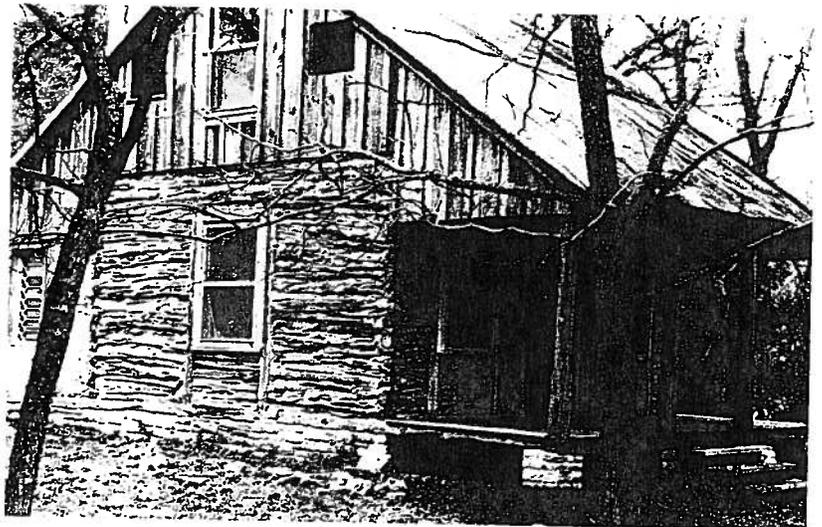
Mr. Haas writes that in November of 1857, the Comal County Commissioners Court in regular session apportioned "school fund monies to Comal County from the State among the schools and teachers who had made the annual report according to law." The two schools of interest among those receiving school fund money were the W. H. Henck School at Waco Spring and the Julius Bose School on Turkey Creek.<sup>2</sup> While it was not stated, it appears that both of these schools were essentially home schools.

See the map on page 8 in Chapter 2 for the location of the schools in the community.

### JACOBS CREEK SCHOOL (1867-1874)

The Jacobs Creek School was started in 1867 after Oscar Friedrich gave land for a school

and teacherage. This school was located where Jacobs Creek emptied into the Guadalupe River.<sup>3</sup> The teacherage, which was located near the school, was built out of log timbers, and can currently be seen on the east side of the



THE RESTORED LOG TEACHERAGE LOCATED CLOSE TO THE JACOBS CREEK SCHOOL.

road. The establishment of this school was about ten years earlier than the schools in the Bulverde area.<sup>4</sup>

According to an article on rural schools in the *New Braunfels Herald*, the Jacobs Creek School appeared as remaining "mortar and

<sup>1</sup>Robert R. Robinson, Jr., *Die Bremervorwandtschaft in Deutschland und in Texas* 1979, Nortex Press, Vol. 1 p. 52.

<sup>2</sup>Oscar Haas, *History of New Braunfels and Comal County, Texas 1844-1946* 1968, Steck Company, Austin, Texas, p. 113.

<sup>3</sup>The current Jacobs Creek Park at Canyon Lake is not located where the original Jacobs Creek emptied into the Guadalupe River. Originally, the Pohl Creek was located in the area where now Jacobs Creek Park is located. Apparently, the result of a mapmaker's mistake.

<sup>4</sup>Carole LaSchomb and the fifth grade SAGE students of Bulverde Elementary School. *Schoolhouses in the Hills*, p. 4.

logs" in 1954.<sup>5</sup> It was located about 200 yards off the county road near an oak tree on the same side of the road as the teacherage. Of course, since then the road has been widened and straightened.

Mr. Haas had the following to say about the school in the 6 July 1954 article:

*On page 223 , Volume I of Comal County Deed Record is recorded a lease on the 11th day of October, 1867 between Oscar Friedrich and the Trustees of the School Community of Jacobs Creek, out of Survey Number 13 Asa Surey, in the corner of the so-called Jacobs Creek and the Guadalupe for a school place. The consideration is \$1.00 and the lease is for as long as a school will exist there and lessons are given to the children.*

*The statutes for the school community are recorded on pages 227 and 228 in the same volume and under the same date:*

*Paragraph No. 1 reads as follows:*

*The farmer Oscar Friedrich living on the Guadalupe River, Precinct No. 10 of Comal County, Texas, binds himself to lease, grant and demise a place containing 6.800 square varas on his own land for building a school house to the school trustees and successors for the sum of one dollar. And binds himself to transfer and give over 3 or 4 acres of land next to the school house for a garden and field for the schoolmaster for his own use as long as the school will exist there and lessons given to the children.*

*Paragraph No. 2 obliges and binds the members of the community to build commonly the school house and indispensable improvements for its use and to bear all disbursements in equal parts.*

*Another paragraph reads: The present school master, Mr. Heinrich Horne, approved by the school board in New Braunfels, shall have \$25.00 species monthly standing wages and begin the lessons in the rented house of Friedrich's farm in October till the new*

*school house is finished (Volume I, page 228).*

*The lease was signed by Gottfried Rohde, president, and Carl Baetge, Adolf Otto, Anton Kanz Trustees, W. Schlather. Oscar Friedrich, J. Pantermuehl, John Marschall, F. Pantermuehl, F. Krause, Witnesses were Otto Friedrich and Henry O. Horne.*

No record was found as to how long it took to complete the construction of the school.

Of course, the school was named after its location on the Jacobs Creek. At one time, as for other communities, it was most likely written as Jacob's Creek School. The creek got its name from Jacob de Cordova, a land agent for the State of Texas, although originally it was named after the Friedrich family as *Friedrichsthal*, or Friedrich's valley.<sup>6</sup>

Who were the teachers at Jacobs Creek School? As mentioned above, the deed records show Heinrich Horne to have been the first teacher. Mr. Haas<sup>7</sup> writes that Carl Pantermuehl was one of the first teachers at Jacobs Creek, probably the third teacher. Ruby Rust<sup>8</sup> wrote that her grandparents remembered Charles (Carl) Pantermuehl as the first teacher of the community and that the teachers to follow were Mr. Stufe<sup>9</sup> and Julius Bose. Mr. Haas also wrote that Julius Bose probably taught at Jacobs Creek the year it was moved in 1874.<sup>10</sup> It is not clear in what order they taught; however, with four teachers in seven years, no one could have taught very long.

Alfred Pantermuehl recalled the following students at Jacobs Creek:

K. Louis, Gustav, and Fritz Krause; Fritz, Fred, Otto, Frank, and Carl Tausch; Oscar and Edward Baetge; Lena, Bertha, "Hanntken",

<sup>5</sup> Oscar Haas, "Logs, Mortar All That Remains of Historic Jacobs Creek School". *New Braunfels Herald*, 6 July 1954.

<sup>6</sup> Roland Baetge, unpublished history of Baetge family. 1975.

<sup>7</sup> Oscar Haas, "Logs, Mortar All That Remains of Historic Jacobs Creek School". *New Braunfels Herald*, 6 July 1954

<sup>8</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grader at Mountain Valley School in 1929. "History of Mountain Valley". Published by Oscar Haas as "The Story of Sattler, Texas", *New Braunfels Herald*, first and second installments, 10 and 17 August 1948.

<sup>9</sup> The name was "Stube" in the article in reference Number 5.

<sup>10</sup> Oscar Haas, "The Story of Sattler, Texas", Fifth installment. *New Braunfels Herald*, 7 September 1954.

Anna, and Pauline Tausch; Carl<sup>11</sup> and Robert Pantermuehl<sup>12</sup>

Carl Pantermuehl, who previously taught at Danville School (Eight-Mile Creek), was paid \$25.00 per month at Jacobs Creek School. This pay is in agreement with the pay Mr. Horne received.

### MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOLS (1874-1957)

On the 2nd of March, 1874, seven years after the founding of Jacobs Creek School, Carl Marschall and his wife, Matilda, deeded for the consideration of five dollars "one acre of land more or less situated, lying and being in the aforesaid county (Comal) and the state about twelve miles north of New Braunfels on the right bank of the Guadalupe River and known as part of Survey 321 in the name of Charles A. Smith and sold to me by Alphonse Kinsley".<sup>13</sup>

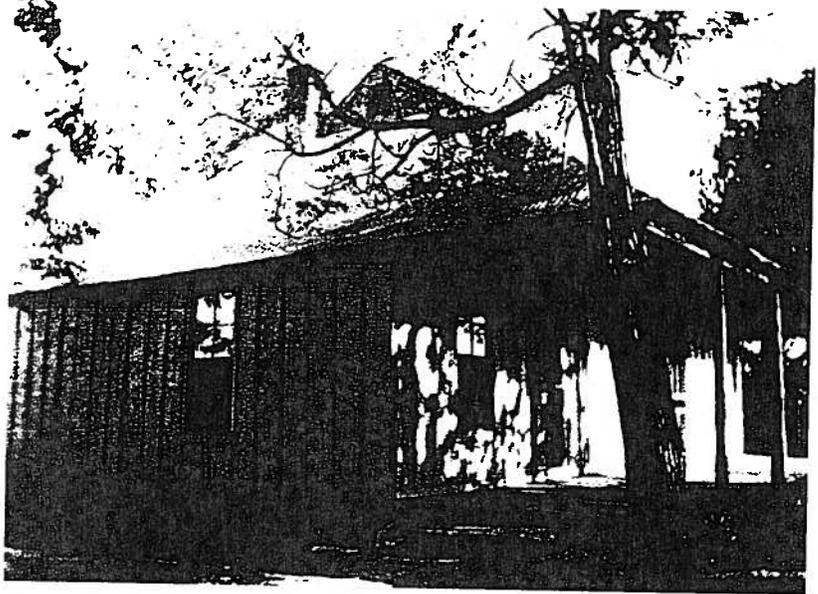
It would have been interesting to see the document pertaining to the origin of the school. Mr. Haas wrote that the origin of the Mountain Valley School was recorded "in an old deed written in the fine penmanship of German Scholar now in pieces from folding and re-folding during the past 80 years." He goes on to say, "The document is now in possession of Oscar Haas, county historian."<sup>14</sup> <sup>15</sup> Unhappily, after several years of looking and asking, the old deed never was located.

### FIRST SCHOOL BUILDING (1874-1883)

Ruby Rust wrote, "The school was moved to Mr. Marschall's farm." From this we take that in 1874 the first Mountain Valley school building was constructed on the one acre tract near Marschall's farm. She also wrote, "From there it was moved a little piece up where I am still going to school." From the school statutes we learned that Ruby is referring to a new school house which was built in 1883.<sup>16</sup> Hence, the building that today we commonly refer to as

the original Mountain Valley School was built in 1883 and that for the first nine years another building was used for schooling. Where was the first building located on this acre conveyed by the Marschalls? From all indications, the first one-room school building became part of the teacherage when the original school was constructed in 1883. The school minutes also state that the residence for the school teacher was enlarged in 1892. All exterior walls of the residence were covered with board and batten with none of the old school walls showing.

The teacherage was torn down in the early 1960s under Tom Sheridan's supervision. In a conversation with Melba Roth in September of 1998, Mr. Sheridan recalled that one room



THE TEACHERAGE WAS LOCATED ABOUT 20 YARDS EAST FROM ORIGINAL MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL. THE PORCH FACED THE ROAD.

of the teacherage was constructed from wooden logs and that they numbered the logs and gave them to a society in New Braunfels. Edward Dedeker, member of the Conservation Society in New Braunfels, feels that it is very possible

<sup>11</sup> Nephew of the teacher. Carl Pantermuehl.

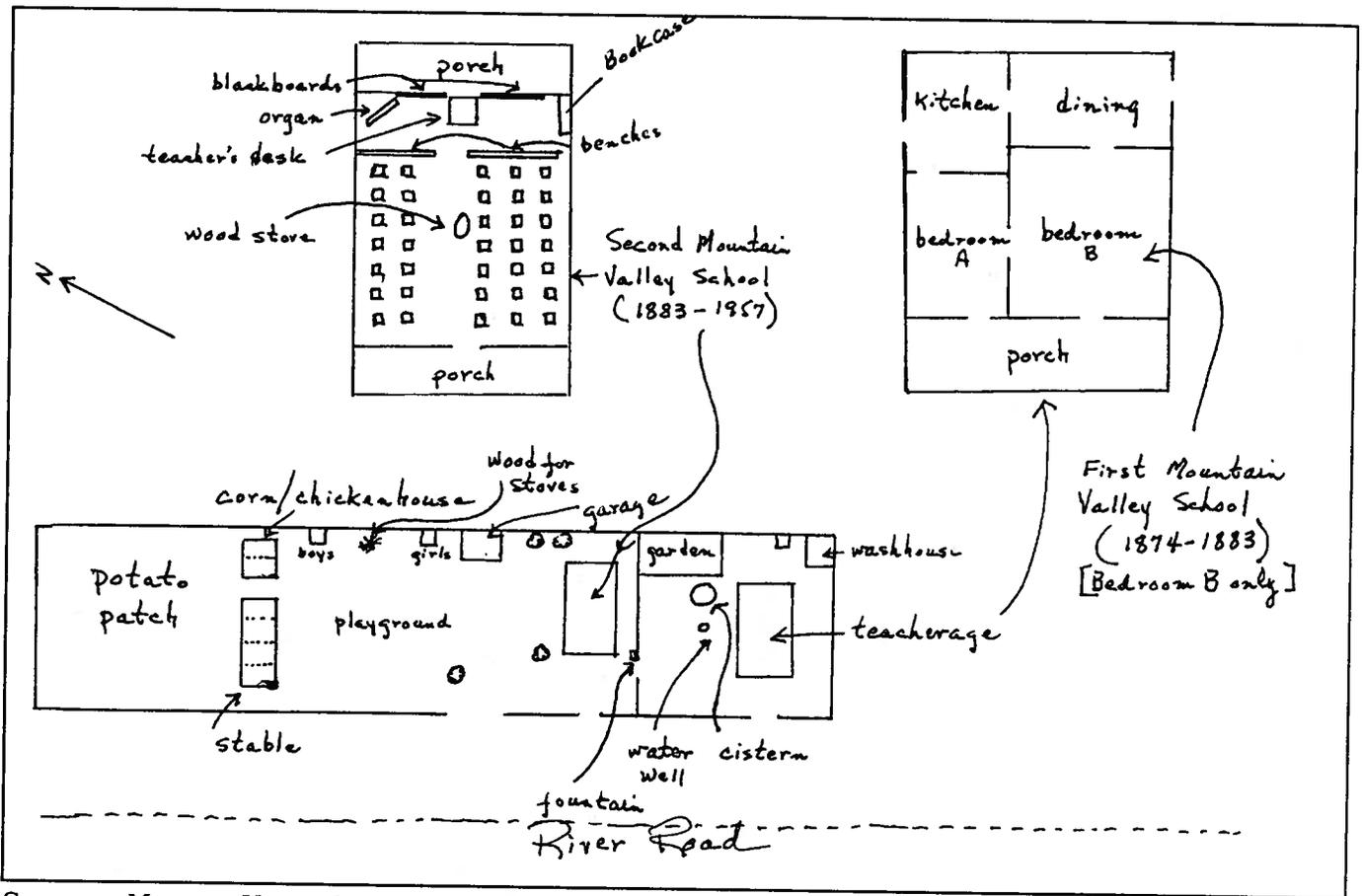
<sup>12</sup> See reference Number 5 above. Interview with Mr. Haas.

<sup>13</sup> Matilda's maiden name was Matilda Kanz, a sister to Anton Kanz. Some sources list her as Matilda Theis, which is a mistake.

<sup>14</sup> Oscar Haas, "Old Deed In Fine Penmanship. Origin of Mountain Valley School", *New Braunfels Herald*, 6 July 1954.

<sup>15</sup> Cora Kanz recalled in a phone conversation that her husband, Albert, gave Mr. Haas some "old papers" pertaining to the school.

<sup>16</sup> See reference Number 14.



SKETCH OF MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL GROUNDS, WITH DETAIL OF SECOND SCHOOL (1883-1957), AND TEACHERAGE, WHICH INCLUDED THE FIRST SCHOOL (1874-1883).

that these logs became a part of the Bill Dillen Collection, and that they were used in the reconstruction of the log homes in the Conservation Plaza.<sup>17</sup> Walter Halm and Juan Espinosa, both remember seeing the logs when the teacherage was being torn down. **Little did the community members realize when the teacherage was demolished that the hand-hewn logs in the walls of the largest room of the structure were the same logs that sheltered the children of the community for their first nine years of schooling at Mountain Valley School.**

### SECOND SCHOOL BUILDING (1883-1957)

This second school building will be referred to as the original Mountain Valley School to distinguish it from the current Mountain Valley Schools.

Detailed records of the school trustee minutes for the first nine years of school at Mountain Valley were either not kept or were not located. According to Mr. Haas, when Carl Pantermuehl was secretary and Emil Bose became teacher of the school in 1883, it was decided to keep minutes of the meetings and to enter the statutes of the school community into the minute book.<sup>18</sup> Hence, from this time forward one finds accurate record of who the teachers were and how many years they taught.

The statutes for the Mountain Valley School Community, Sattler, Texas, September 1883, were as follows:

*Paragraph one provided that each member of the school community cooperatively provides material and labor for the building of the school house. After*

<sup>17</sup> Private conversation in 1998.

<sup>18</sup> Oscar Haas, "The Story of Sattler, Texas", *New Braunfels Herald*, Third and fourth Installments, 24 and 31 August 1948

The following teachers taught at Mountain Valley School :

Julius Bose <sup>19</sup>	1874-?
Mr. Reffie	?-1882
Emil Bose	1883-1895 (12 years)
J. P. Juergens	1896-1897 (1 year)
L. X. Barron	1898-1899 (1 year)
Mr. Schuette <sup>20</sup>	1900
Ernst Lutze	1901
A. M. Charpier <sup>21</sup>	1901-1904 (3 years)
Robert M. Boerner <sup>22</sup>	1905-1921 (16 years)
Roland Boerner	1922 <sup>23</sup> -1923 (1 year)
O. J. Crabill	1924-1925 (1 year)
Albert J. Rahe	1926-1948 (22 years)
Elizabeth Richter	1948-1953 (5 years)
Bonnie G. Goard	1953 1954 (1 year)
Ralph F. Jennings <sup>24</sup>	1954-1957 (3 years)

*the school house was built and a person living within the school district wanted to become a member of the school community he was to pay the sum of \$20.00 according to paragraph two.*

*Paragraph three provided that property owners living in the district who were not members, but sending their children to the school, were required to pay an extra fee of 25 cents per month. This extra fee was to be used only for repairs on the building. Non-permanent*

<sup>19</sup> Mr. Haas was not too clear as to who the first teacher was at Mountain Valley School. In Reference 7, he states that Mr. Carl Pantermuehl was the first teacher while in Reference 11 he states that probably Captain Julius Bose was the first teacher.

<sup>20</sup> In a caption for a Mountain Valley School picture it was stated that John Schmidt was the teacher from 1895 until 1900. The author was not able to find any supporting information. It could be that the Schuette and Schmidt names were being confused.

<sup>21</sup> "When he arrived in Sattler, in a shiny, new horse-drawn carriage, to take over the one-room school, Elfrieda Nowotny, was one of his students. A romance developed between the school-teacher and pupil and at age seventeen, Elfrieda became the bride of Allen Miller Charpier". Taken from *The Descendants of Wencelous and Agnes Solek Nowotny* by Vera Jean Patton Nowotny and Agnes Nowotny, 1974.

<sup>22</sup> *New Braunfels Herald*, 6 October 1905, Notes: "Mr. R. M. Boerner came to teach at Mountain Valley School while Mr. Charpier went to Mission Valley School."

<sup>23</sup> In 1922 there were 22 teachers in Comal County, including Lone Star District No. 11, but no New Braunfels Independent School District. Source: *New Braunfels Herald* "Seventy-five Years Ago", September 1997.

<sup>24</sup> Known by his middle name, Freeman, to many people.

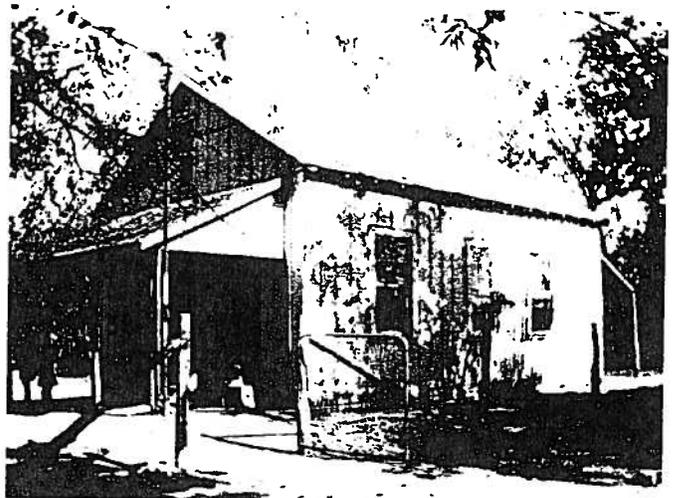
<sup>25</sup> Ida Meckel, Reflections Tape #169, 2-21-80.

*residents, sending their children to the school would have to pay the usual school fee. Paragraph four permitted a member to transfer his membership to any person living within the district.*

Emil Bose was elected teacher for the school year, October 1883 to October 1884, at a salary of \$300.00 payable in equal monthly installments. F. Nowotny, Theodor Heise and C. Pantermuehl were trustees at the time.

According to the minutes of 1886, the school term began on Monday the 13th of September and closed on the 31st of August 1887. Minutes of 1889 stated that the school could operate for seven months on the funds received from the state and to keep the school going for the full year, patrons paid monthly fees of fifty cents per child. The school teacher's salary was set at \$400.

As for many schools in the late 1800s, half of the instructions were given in German and



ORIGINAL MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL CIRCA 1935

the other half in English to the children of this predominantly German community. By the early 1900s, the instructions were primarily in English with some German.<sup>25</sup> After the mid-20's, all teaching was done in the English language.

The patrons who in 1897 did not furnish wood for heating the school and teacherage were asked to pay 25 cents instead.

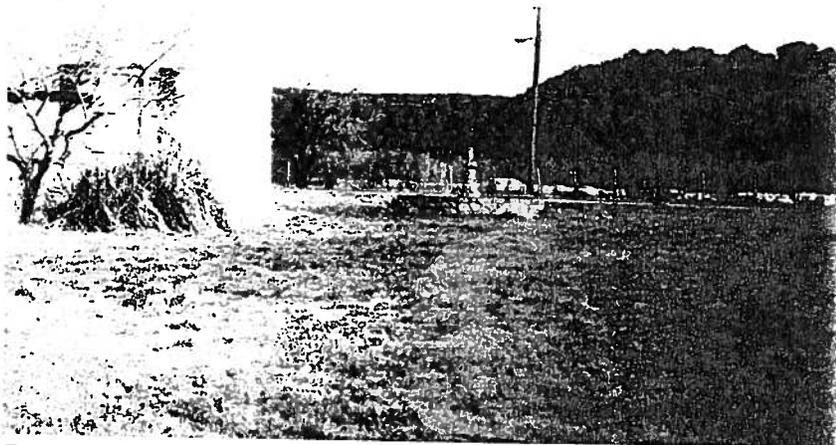
The all corrugated-tin one-car garage (*Auto Haus*) on the school grounds was built in 1922 by Joe (Joseph) Meckel for \$40.00.<sup>26</sup> According to the statutes, the porch was added to the original school-house in 1897.

The one-room rural school at Sattler was closed at the end of the 1956-57 school year, as were many other rural schools in the county, after the Comal County Rural High School was formed on 12 November 1956. The students were bussed to either the Sherwood School at Smithsons Valley or New Braunfels Schools.

It was not until 1976 that a new Mountain Valley Elementary School was completed about one-half mile from the original school on the old Cranes Mill-Sattler Road (currently called Sattler Road). The Mountain Valley Intermediate School was dedicated on 2 March 1997.

In March of 1962, the Comal County Rural High School District sold the one acre of land, plus the school and teacherage buildings, to Emil Weilbacher for 4,000 dollars.<sup>27</sup> Mr. Weilbacher at the time owned the land from which the original one acre was bought and they were anxious to have a more attractive road frontage. The only identifiable item remaining on the property today is the pressure tank at the well located about 20 yards off River Road about 300 yards from Sattler Road. The rock house about 60 yards from the road in back of the pressure tank was constructed by the Weilbachers in 1945. The well was located between the teacherage and the school.

In late 1962, Mr. Weilbacher sold the eighty-year old original Mountain Valley School house and teacherage to Mr. Sheridan and Mr. Lee for 350 dollars.<sup>28</sup> They moved the school to its present location, about 300 yards southwest of the Emil Guenther Store, for a weekend cottage. Later it was sold to Mrs. Merle Moore. She added cedar siding to the 20 by 30 foot school house, a concrete patio and a carport.<sup>29</sup> She moved into the home in 1968 and lived there until 1996 when she moved back to San Antonio. As mentioned earlier, the teacherage,



*PRESENT SITE OF THE ORIGINAL MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL ON RIVER ROAD LOCATED ABOUT 300 YARDS SOUTH OF SATTLER ROAD. THE WELL WAS LOCATED BETWEEN THE TEACHERAGE ON THE RIGHT AND THE SCHOOL ON THE LEFT. ROLAND ERBEN RESIDENCE AND RIVER VALLEY ESTATES IN THE BACKGROUND.*

which included the original log school, was not moved but torn down instead.

Apparently there was some consideration by the community descendants of converting the original Mountain Valley School into a community center. However, after considerable discussion, the idea was deemed impractical.

### STUDENT ENROLLMENT LISTS

The goal of this section is to show the student enrollment at Mountain Valley School for as many years as possible from 1874 until 1957. Lists of enrollees were obtained from as many sources as possible:

1. Pictures
2. Recall Lists—names recalled from memory
3. Several school records
4. Newspaper articles
5. One recorded list of students for 1890
6. Parental contribution lists

An overall student enrollment list was compiled for each of 31 years from the first five sources. See Table 1 in this chapter.

The parental contribution lists came from the Mountain Valley School treasurer's ledger

<sup>26</sup> Treasurer's Ledger of Mountain Valley School, 1882-1941.

<sup>27</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Vol 127, pp. 642-645.

<sup>28</sup> From Mr. Sheridan's conversation with Melba Roth in September, 1998.

<sup>29</sup> "First Mountain Valley School Serves as Home", *New Braunfels Herald*, April 29, 1976.

<sup>30</sup> Conversation with Walter Halm.

In the earlier years of schooling, before full state funding, each parent contributed money according to the number of students for whom they were responsible. The contributions were converted to number of children in school for each family and year. So for a total of 23 earlier years, we have a record of the number of children attending school from the different families. See Table 2 in this chapter.

For two years, 1914 and 1929, both a picture of the students and a parental contribution list were available. For 1914 there was good agreement in the total number of students although the families did not always match from the two sources. There was good agreement between the student names from the different families and the number of students from the same contributing families for 1929.

Almost every source had its limitation in obtaining accurate school enrollment data for a given year. Not all the students may have been present on the day when the picture was taken from which the student names were recalled. There was some doubt as to exactly which school year some pictures were taken. The "1870" and "1884" school enrollments were obtained from a 6 July 1954, *New Braunfels Herald* article by Mr. Haas on one-room schools in Comal County. The names for "1870" were recalled by Alfred Pantermuehl, born in 1872, as "among the early students" in the Jacobs Creek School, while the names for "1884" were remembered as "some of the early students" at Mountain Valley. The families and names recalled by Mr. Pantermuehl match quite well with the information found in the descendants charts.

The 1890-91 student listing comes from a hand-written copy, which Mrs. Tonie Preusser Heise had in her possession since she attended school at Mountain Valley.<sup>31</sup> This listing shows Benjamin Smith as a student and his listed guardian was Johann Phillip Preusser. Likewise, Albert Eikenroth is listed with Franz

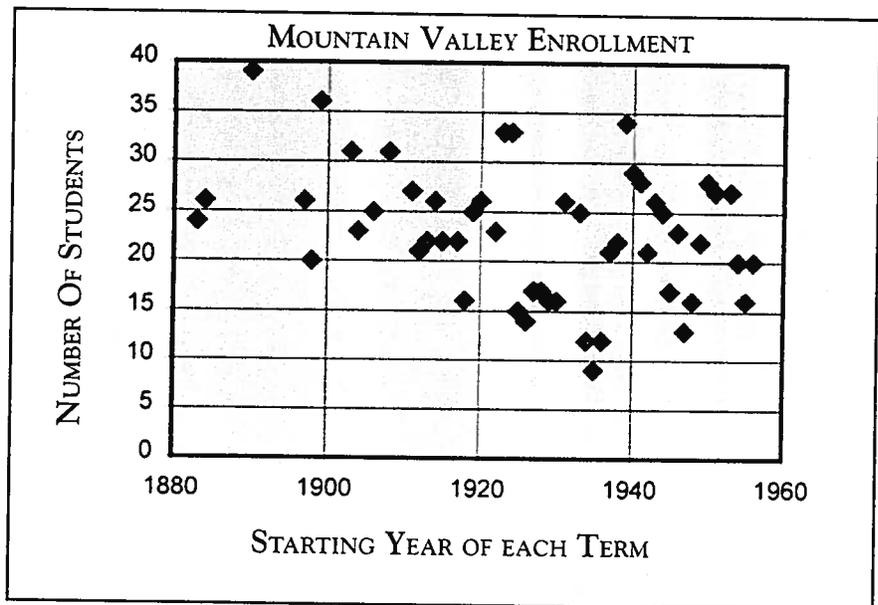
Nowotny as the guardian. This falls in line with Roland Baetge saying that he stayed with the Gustav Preusser family during the week to attend school after his parents moved to Hugo, Texas, a community with no school.

The fact that children from outside the community attended Mountain Valley School adds an interesting point to the enrollment of the school; however, it also detracts from the assumption that money contributed by a parent was for their own children. Most likely this will not alter the overall attendance picture too much. The enrollment total of 9 for 1935 appears low. While the source gave accurate information on the students who were there, it may not have accounted for all the students.

MOUNTAIN VALLEY ENROLLMENT

COMPARED TO OTHER COMAL COUNTY SCHOOLS

The following school information is included to show the reader how Mountain Valley School compared to the schools in the rest of Comal County. In 1878, County Judge George Pfeuffer, also the school superintendent, pub-



lished in the October 25 issue of the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung* that \$1.64 was appropriated by the state legislature for the education of each child between the ages of 6 and 18.

<sup>31</sup> Special thanks to Theodor and Wilma Heise for sharing his mother's listing.

The number of students on census roll for the various schools were as follows:

School Name	Students
New Braunfels Academy .....	340
Comaltown (Comal Union) .....	56
4 Mile Creek .....	66
Danville .....	71
Vogel Valley .....	32
Ufnau .....	43
Mission Valley .....	55
Mountain Valley .....	62
Spring Branch .....	25
Schoenthal .....	44
Guadalupe Valley .....	41
Smithson Valley .....	42
Potters Creek .....	45
Yorks Creek .....	30
Austin Hill (colored) .....	46
Bonita (Alligator Creek) .....	63
Schuenemanns (San Geronimo) .....	39
Church Hill .....	47
Thornhill .....	45
Honey Creek .....	24
Outside Counties-Selma .....	11
Total .....	1227

The following gives the Comal County school names and the names of the teachers for the school year 1922-23:

School Name	Teacher
Danville	William Rahe
Mountain Valley	Roland Boerner
Smithsons Valley	Emily Wright
Goodwin	H.F. Meyer
	F. A. Burkett
	M. Fiedler
	Jos. Bertschler
	Ellen Young
	Elsie Wood
Ufnau	Minnie Weiterer
Herrera	Alma Hierholzer
Honey Creek	Ben Sitz
Spring Branch	Selma Kessler
Mission Valley	Gus. Jahns
Lone Star	Kola Albrecht
Solms	Mary Stanley
	Selma Wuest
Schoenthal	— — —
Fischer Store	Esther Rice
Sorrel Creek	Ella Jonas
Cranes Mill	Mrs. J. Reinicke
Guadalupe Valley	Albert Rahe
Mustang Hill	Oscar Sitz

The state contributed money according to the number of students on the census roll. This does not mean that the named schools necessarily had that many students in attendance.

**EDUCATION — THEN AND NOW**

Now for a comparison between the formal education the children received in yesteryears versus the formal learning of today. Was the training adequate in fulfilling the educational needs of the youngsters in those days? On the other hand, how do we know that the approaches of today will not be criticized in years to come? In this section we will attempt to explain the educational needs of the rural communities, how these needs were met, and then make comparisons with today's practices.

Many of the immigrants from Europe came to this country with a good education. The von Sattler, von Bose and Baetge families serve as good examples. They received their education before they pursued their religious, social and economic freedoms. As they settled on the brink of civilization, they soon learned to resort to the very basics of life in order to survive. This required the full attention of the father and mother as well as the children.

From an early age, children saw what needed to be done and when old enough, were given the responsibility. There was little cash. If they wanted something, they either had to make it, improvise or barter for it. The family members observed and tried to understand as much about nature and animals as they could, for life directly depended on it. Discipline came

from the older family members and the community. The children were sheltered in the sense that communication and transportation denied them continuous contact with the outside world.

The pioneers believed in good education for they saw the benefits in their homeland. So it was no wonder that they wanted to establish schools for the education of the future generations. Formal education was difficult to accomplish for the scattered families in the rural areas. In many cases it was secondary to the basic survival responsibilities the children learned at home. For a youngster to catch a chicken and cut its head off for the evening meal was simply the way of life. When the crops needed to be harvested, every member of the family went to work and the children were too busy for book learning. While the teacher was highly respected, school attendance was in many cases impractical. Some could not attend when the river was on the rise and over-flowing the bridges. The students either walked to school or rode a mule. On cold or rainy days, the health of the child was more important than formal education, and the attendance at school was low. The children in the rural areas grew up as hard-working responsible individuals with years of on-the-job training in farming and ranching; however, they had limited formal education and exposure to the outside world.

Now a word about the teachers of yester-years. They had some formal education and a complete understanding of the needs of the community members. Each teacher was approved by the three trustees

who represented the community of perhaps 30-50 families. The one-room teacher was like a one-person business. This teacher was the fire-starter in the morning; teacher, librarian, counselor, and administrator during the day; coach at recess; and public relations representative in the evenings and on weekends. During the summer months the teacher often helped the community members harvest their crops to help make financial ends meet.

In today's world, life is based on ever changing technical activities and most jobs generally require less physical activity. Also, life is faster paced, more competitive and more interactive with people. Communication and transportation are no longer a hindrance to gaining knowledge on any topic; however, the children are not given the opportunity to experience life's responsibilities from an early age. They can not always comprehend the professional activities in which the family is involved. It takes a lot of special effort to teach responsibility in today's world where the children grow up in homes with all of life's conveniences.

#### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

I had always been told that I was born in the teacherage at Sattler. The bedroom was the largest room in the house which once was the old log school. So after 67 years I finally realize that I was born in a log "cabin" — move over Abe Lincoln. Not even my parents realized that every night we slept in the old log school, for they never said anything about it. I do remember that the largest room in the house had clay and straw plastered over the walls and that my mother always warned us not to move the beds too close to the walls else pieces of light yellow plaster would fall off.

My parents also shared with me that Dr. Hinmann from New Braunfels made the house call when I was to be born. After examination, he decided to take a nap in the adjoining room until "I decided to make my appearance." So the doctor cannot say that he slept in the log house — at least not that time.

The community honored the Albert Rahe family by giving us a farewell party on August 29th, 1948.<sup>32</sup> A short program was arranged, during which many familiar old-time songs were sung. My father was presented a gold wristwatch as a token of appreciation "for the many years of faithful service as a teacher, for his patience, understanding and guidance in our childhood days."

<sup>32</sup> "Mountain Valley Says Farewell to Albert Rahes", *New Braunfels Herald*, August, 1948.

## CHAPTER 9

# MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL ACTIVITIES IN THE 1930s AND 1940s

This chapter is based on the program and activities of Mountain Valley School in the 1930s and 1940s, a period in which all of the author's experiences are based. Many of these experiences in a one-room school are similar to the experiences in other rural schools in Comal<sup>1</sup> and other counties.<sup>2</sup> With this in mind, emphasis is placed on the unique aspects of Mountain Valley School.

### BRIEF DESCRIPTION

The school had 33 student desks,<sup>3</sup> a teacher's desk, a big wood stove, two blackboards, a 50-volume library, one set of encyclopedias, wall maps,<sup>4</sup> a world globe and two long benches. The flagpole was located on the front right side of the school building. The water well was located between the school and the teacherage. Initially all water had to be withdrawn with a hand pump.<sup>5</sup> A barrel was located on the front porch, which the boys had to keep filled with water from the well. The wall on the front porch was lined with personal tin cups. In the early 1940s, a windmill was erected, with an elevated water storage tank nearby. A water fountain was built near the school and for the first time the teacherage had running water. Next to the playgrounds were the girls and boys restrooms (outhouses). See the sketch of the playground, school, and teacherage in Chapter 8.

### DAILY SCHOOL SCHEDULE

Shown below is a daily school schedule for the Mountain Valley School for a given year when there were no pupils in the second or eighth grades. Albert Rahe was the teacher.<sup>6</sup>

9:00- 9:10 Opening exercises - sing patriotic, religious or current hit songs, or rhythm<sup>7</sup> band practice - Mr. Rahe usually played the organ.  
9:10- 9:30 First Grade Reading  
9:30- 9:45 Third Grade Reading  
9:45-10:00 Sixth Grade Agriculture  
10:00-10:15 Fourth Grade Reading  
10:15-10:20 Fifth Grade Reading  
10:20-10:30 Seventh Grade Grammar  
10:30-10:45 Recess  
10:45-11:00 Fourth Grade Geography  
11:00-11:20 Sixth Grade English  
11:20-11:40 Seventh Grade US History  
11:40-12:00 Sixth Grade Texas History  
12:00-1:00 Noon Recess  
1:00-1:20 Fourth Grade English  
1:20-1:40 Third through Seventh Grade Spelling  
1:40-1:55 First Grade Reading  
1:55-2:15 Seventh Grade Health or Agriculture

<sup>1</sup> Carol LaSchomb and 5th grade SAGE students of Bulverde Elementary. *Schoolhouses in the Hills*, May 1991.

<sup>2</sup> Gillespie County Program Building Committee. *Gillespie County School Histories*, . Dietel and Son Printing, Fredericksburg, Texas, December 1983

<sup>3</sup> Comal Independent School District records. Each desk had a seat in front with a writing top attached to the backrest for another student to use.

<sup>4</sup> *Mountain Valley Star* (annual school paper), 1931. "Set of maps were purchased for \$39.00. two benches, and a blackboard ."

<sup>5</sup> Erwin Pantermuehl remembers that the pump system was home-made with a five-foot cedar post as the pump handle - Unpublished Sattler history by Erwin Pantermuehl, 1994.

<sup>6</sup> The schedule was copied from Mr. Rahe's handwriting. Unfortunately no date was written on the paper.

<sup>7</sup> *New Braunfels Herald*, "Sattler News", December 1933. ... the instruments for the rhythm band consisted of xylophone, triangles, cymbals, dumbbell rattles, chime bell rattles, wooden blocks, sleigh bells, harmonica, cornet, drum, and organ.

2:15-2:30 First Grade Arithmetic  
 2:30-2:45 Recess  
 2:45-3:00 First Grade Arithmetic  
 3:00-3:15 Third Grade Arithmetic  
 3:15-3:25 Fourth Grade Arithmetic  
 3:25-3:35 Fifth Grade Arithmetic  
 3:25-3:50 Sixth Grade Arithmetic  
 3:50-4:00 Seventh Grade Arithmetic

This schedule shows the formal classes that were being held by having the students sit on the right bench in the front of the room. Informal learning took place all day long when listening to what the other classes were taught. Thus, good opportunity for reviewing the material covered previously or previewing the next year's material. It must be remembered that discipline was maintained for all grades during the entire day.

Penmanship was usually practiced after the noon recess. Each letter of the alphabet was practiced on a separate day. See the enclosed table for a summary of the quotations Mr. Rahe incorporated in the penmanship exercises. Tips on good health, first aid, good manners and letter writing were also recorded during penmanship exercises.

All assembling and dismissal instructions were given with the school bell. There were no oral instructions given by Mr. Rahe. The first ring meant, "get ready". After a minute or so, the second ringing was the signal to "Line up and be quiet". In the morning, "The Pledge of Allegiance" was usually recited after the flag was raised. The students formed two lines in the same order in which they sat, with the smaller children in the front. The left line was for the girls and the right line for the boys. The students marched in after the third ring and sat down after the fourth. At recess and at the end of the day, the bell was rung

three times — stand-up, march out and dismissal.

When the first few warm days of summer appeared, all the students would go barefoot. Many children did not wear any shoes in the summer except for going to church and other more formal occasions. At noon, the students would grab their homemade-bread sandwiches (homemade butter, sausage and molasses) and eat them under a shade tree. Occasionally someone would walk to the store and buy something for lunch besides candy.

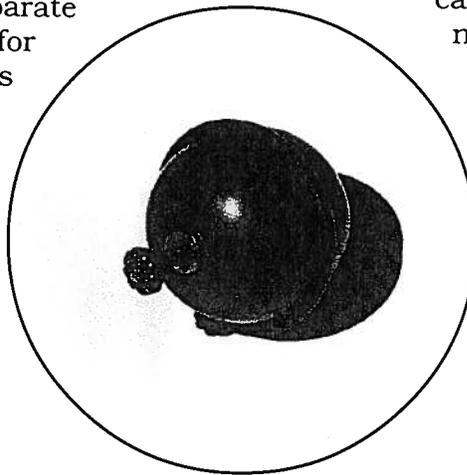
The school had no separate dress codes from the community dress code, the women wore dresses and the men wore pants. The same was true for the boys and girls.

### *MOUNTAIN VALLEY STAR* (ANNUAL SCHOOL PAPER)

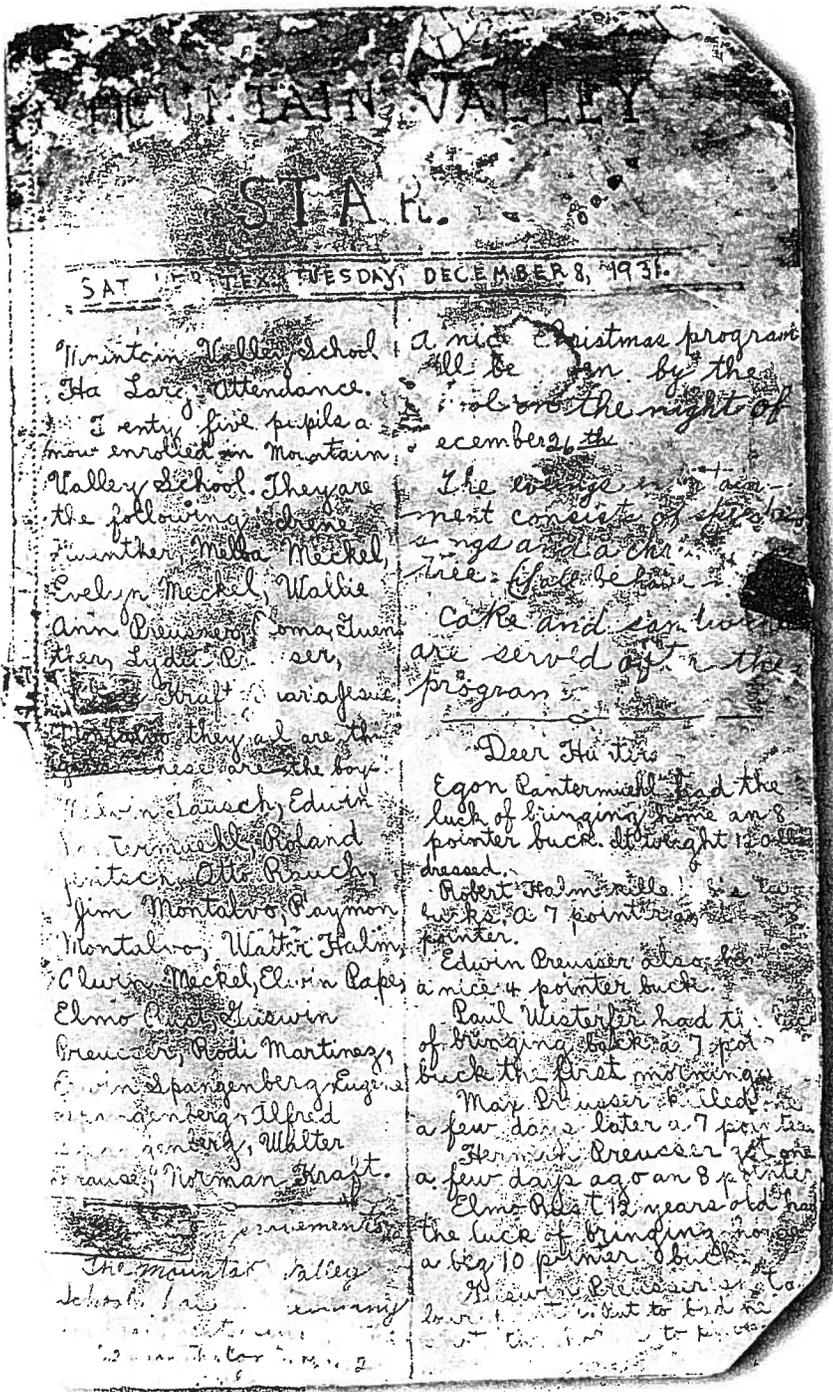
Each year the eighth grade students were asked to be the editors of a school newspaper called "*Mountain Valley Star*". This newspaper had school and community news, fictional stories, recipes, lost and found items, etc. This single annual issue was usually prepared in the Spring.

To the author's knowledge, the only remaining issues of "*The Star*" are from the years: 1931, 1934, 1937, 1945, 1946 and 1948. All of the information from the school newspaper comes from these issues. Some of the articles are incomplete since the issues have gotten a little rough around the edges from being shared with Mother Nature's elements.

On what paper were these articles hand-written? The most sturdy paper to be found in those days were book covers. These free beige-colored covers usually contained advertisements and came in two sizes—regular for the usual books and large for geography books, etc. The newspaper usually consisted of two large book covers pasted together on the advertisement sides. Thus, there were four pages to write on after folding the covers. When the issue was



*SCHOOL BELL USED FOR ASSEMBLY AND  
DISMISSAL INSTRUCTIONS BY MR. RAHE*



FRONT PAGE OF THE 1931 MOUNTAIN VALLEY STAR—AN ANNUAL SCHOOL PAPER PREPARED BY THE EIGHTH GRADE STUDENTS.

completed, the students took turns in bringing it home for the parents to read. There were no copy machines so that a copy could be sent to each home, as might be the case today.

These school papers gave detailed information on many items of interest that would not

have been available otherwise. Many articles reflected the concerns of the community. The extracted information was used in the appropriate sections of this book.

### GAMES PLAYED DURING RECESS

Listed below are games played during recess at school:

1. Softball - Home-made bat and a ball someone brought from home. In later years, we played regulation softball in Mr. Guenther's field located across the road from the school.

2. Drive the Can - Someone would bring a can and the drive sticks were made from the sticks at the wood-pile.

3. Prisoner's Base

4. Red Line

5. Red Rover

6. Marbles (rainy days)

7. Jacks (rainy days)

8. Hop-Scotch

9. Ante-Over (Played over the chicken house)

10. May I?

11. Drop the Handkerchief

12. Red Light

13. Kick the Can

14. Ring Around the Rosy

15. Hide and Seek

16. After a rain, build bridges over the water pond near the school. (Step in the water and sit in class with wet shoes and feet).

17. Roll tires—one person would double up inside the tire and the other would roll it.

18. Leap Frog

19. London Bridge

20. Jump Rope

Please notice that the games required very little special equipment. There were two see-saws on the grounds.

Usually on a chosen Friday in Spring there would be a County Meet in Landa Park where

## CHAPTER 10

### WALHALLA SINGING ASSOCIATION

The *Walhalla* Singing Association (*Gesangverein*) was organized in about 1873 according to John Pehl, who gave most of the following information to Oscar Haas on 21 August 1948.<sup>1</sup> The organizers were Captain Julius Bose, John Carl Marschall, Anton Kanz, Fritz Pantermuehl and Gustav Preusser.

Two pictures of the *Walhalla* Singing Association were located. The first picture, with thirteen members of the association, Mrs. Wallie Kanz shared with us. The names of the individuals were given to Mr. Haas in the above mentioned 1971 article and verified by descendants. Mr. Haas wrote that Theodor Preusser and his brother-in-law, John Pehl, remembered that the picture was taken on a gravel bank on the Guadalupe River just below the *Walhalla* Hall with the limestone bank of the river for a background. They also remember that their father-in-law, Carl John Marschall, was present the day the picture was taken, but was not on the picture.

The second picture came from Theodor and Wilma Heise, and is shown on previous page. It consists of the same thirteen members as above, plus four more. From all indications it was taken in front of the *Walhalla* Hall on a different day from the picture mentioned above.

The *Walhalla* Singing Association was a charter member of the West Texas Hills Singers League (*Westexanischer Gebirgs Saengerbund*). This league met for the first time in Boerne, Texas, in 1881, with the following societies participating:

Boerne Singing Society  
Comfort *Liedertafel*  
Fredericksburg Concordia

Kerrville Concordia  
*Walhalla* Singing Society  
Smithson Valley Echo

Later, the societies from Ufnau, Twin Sisters, and Honey Creek joined.

The reason for the organization for the West Texas Hills Singers League was as follows:

*Because of the great distance to the state festivals and because these were chiefly in the spring when the hill communities of Kendall, Gillespie, Blanco, Kerr and northern Comal Counties were busy with their Spring plowing and planting, attendance at the state festivals was not practical for them.*<sup>2</sup>

The "state festivals" mentioned above were held by the State Singers League that was founded in New Braunfels in 1853. By then it included societies in Dallas, Austin, Galveston, and Houston. In 1883, two mixed voice societies, one from Comfort, and one from Fredericksburg, were voted as members of the league. There is no written or oral information on a mixed voice society from *Walhalla*.

Mr Haas wrote that the fourth *fest* of the league was hosted by the *Walhalla* Singers on September 13, and 14, 1884. He goes on to say, "In spite of a severe drought that year, the *Walhalla* people declined aid offered by the league and successfully carried through." The Hortontown Singing Society became a member of the league at this time.

<sup>1</sup> Oscar Haas "Walhalla, Now Village of Sattler, Once Had Busy Singing Society." *New Braunfels Herald*, 1971.

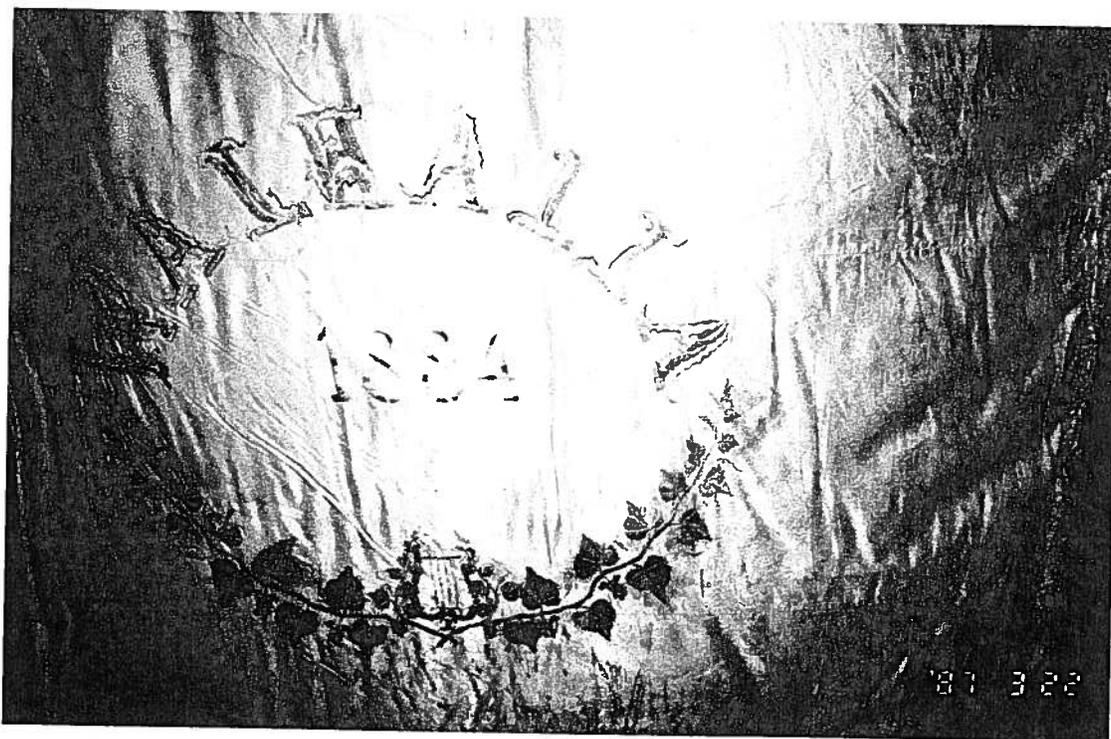
<sup>2</sup> "A Chronological History of the Singers of German Songs in Texas", *Neu Braunfelsler Zeitung*, 1948.

It appears that the *Walhalla* singers had three musical directors. Captain Julius Bose was the director when the club was organized in 1873. In 1881, reference is still made to Julius Bose as director; however the enclosed picture shows Emil, Julius's son, as the director in 1896. Theodore Bose, another son of Julius, was named as an organizational director when the association was formed. The third mentioned director of the *Walhalla* Club was Robert Pantermuehl in 1905, as seen in the following excerpt:

*The Guadalupe Brass Band furnished the instrumental numbers, while the vocal parts were rendered by The Frohsinn Club of Crane's Mill, with E. Bose as director; the Walhalla Club of Sattler, with Robert Pantermuehl as director; and the New Braunfels Echo, with Herman Dietel as director. Three grand choruses were rendered with remarkable precision, considering the fact that there had been no rehearsals beforehand.*<sup>3</sup>

It would be interesting to see an old minute book of the *Walhalla* Singing Society or some printed programs of *Saengerfests* with names of all members.

It is not known exactly when the *Walhalla* Singing Society ceased to exist. The society did not participate in the *Saengerfest* held in New Braunfels in 1903, where most of the other societies in the West Texas Hills Singers League participated; however, they did participate in the local community event in 1905, mentioned before. This is perhaps an indication that the society was no longer strong enough to participate in *Saengerfests*, but did gather for local events over the next few years. Mostly likely, by 1908, the society had folded after uniting its community members in song and related social activities for approximately thirty-five years.



WALHALLA SINGING SOCIETY'S BANNER AS DISPLAYED ON THE CEILING OF THE SOPHIENBURG MUSEUM IN 1998.

<sup>3</sup> "Sunday Outing to Walhalla," *New Braunfels Herald*, June 23, 1905.

## CHAPTER 11

# SATTLER SINGING CLUB<sup>1</sup> (NOVEMBER 1926-JULY 1930)

According to the club minutes, in November of 1926, the young people of Sattler gathered at the one-room Mountain Valley School building to sing. At this first meeting they decided to gather in song once a week and that the monthly dues should be five cents. Albert Rahe was elected director by the following twenty-four individuals:<sup>2</sup>

Albert and Erna Meckel  
Hilmar and Emma Kanz  
Alfred and Elfrieda Rust  
Ottmar Kanz  
Albert Kanz  
Egon Kanz  
Gustav R. Kanz  
Andrew Pape  
Max Pape  
Egon and Vera Pantermuehl  
Erna Halm (Mrs. Erwin Tausch)  
Mrs. Walter Jentsch  
Norma Jentsch (Mrs. James Pape and later  
Mrs. James Thompson)  
Erwin Tausch  
Arthur Tausch  
Walter Preusser  
Linda Preusser (Mrs. Erhardt Pape)  
Arno Guenther  
Irwin Guenther  
Louis Meckel

On the 29th of May 1927, only seven months after their initial meeting, the Sattler Singing

<sup>1</sup> Special thanks Mrs. Wallie Meckel Kanz for sharing the minutes from the Sattler Singing Club (written in German). This chapter is based on these minutes. She and her husband Gustav (who passed away in 1989) had the minutes in their possession for 65 years.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Rahe started teaching at the Mountain Valley School in September of 1926.

**PROGRAM**  
— FOR —  
**ENTERTAINMENT**  
— AT —  
**WALHALLA SUNDAY,**  
**MAY 29, 1927**  
CONCERT MUSIC FURNISHED  
THROUGHOUT PROGRAM

1. Song—"Little White School in the Vale"..... Singing Club  
2. Dialogue: "KLEIDER MACHEN LEUTE"  
Characters  
Dr. Bittersalz, Medizinalrat ..... Albert Meckel  
Johann, sein Bedienter ..... Eugene Preusser  
Michel, Johann's Freund ..... Egon Kanz  
Ein Bauer ..... Albert Kanz  
Schreinermeister Holzmann ..... Alfred Rust  
Ein Bote ..... Egon Preusser  
Ein Schusterlehrling ..... Louis Meckel  
Ein Amtsdienner ..... Walter Preusser  
3. Song—"The Bull Dog" ..... Male Voices  
4. Dialogue: "THE WAY TO A MAN'S HEART"  
Characters  
Noel Davidson (A Woman Hater) ..... Arno Guenther  
Dr. Brown (The Negro Servant) ..... Albert Meckel  
Jasper, (The Negro Servant) ..... Erwin Tausch  
Mrs. Allison ..... Ruby Preusser  
Miss Arnold ..... Erna Halm  
Mrs. Dorsey ..... Linda Preusser  
Mrs. Morrison ..... Norma Jentsch  
Mrs. Goodman ..... Mrs. Albert Meckel  
5. Song—"Juanita" ..... Ladies  
6. Dialogue: "ANTON SOLL RUHE HABEN"  
Personen  
Anton, der Kranke ..... Ottmar Kanz  
Anton's Frau ..... Mrs. Alfred Rust  
und Kinder  
Soppl ..... Albert Kanz  
Veitl ..... Alfred Rust  
Bastl, (Nachbar) ..... Louis Meckel  
Jackl ..... Walter Preusser  
Jacob ..... Egon Kanz  
Hiesl ..... Gus. Kanz  
Frau Buttermund ..... Mrs. Hilmar Kanz  
Drei Kinder  
Doktor ..... Albert Rahe  
7. Song—"Polly Wally Doodle" ..... Male Voices  
8. Song—"Im Mai" .....  
DANCING FREE AFTER PROGRAM.

"PROGRAM FOR ENTERTAINMENT" BY THE SATTLER SINGING CLUB IN 1927 AT WALHALLA

Club gave their first program of songs, plays, and dancing (*Abend Unterhaltung*) at the *Walhalla Halle* in Sattler. Their total income from the program was \$66.55 with expenses amounting to \$54.30. The expenses included \$30.00 for a band (no band name mentioned), a \$10.00 gift to the school (probably for the use of the school building for practice), \$6.50 for advertising and program printing and \$2.50 to Emil Guenther for light (electricity).<sup>3</sup>

As shown in the program (previous page), Ottmar Kanz played the part of Anton in the play "*Anton Soll Ruhe Haben*". Edwin Pantermuehl remembers that soon after this, Ottmar Kanz's nickname was "Anton", in honor of his deserving performance in the play. Translated, the title means "Anton Should Have Rest", which the doctor ordered, but Anton never was able to take because of all visitation by the family and friends.

On the 24th of July the members had a barbecue picnic. The total expenses were \$13.90, which included \$7.30 for two goats. Edward Kanz also donated a goat for the picnic.

The following officers were elected at a business meeting on the 29th of July:

Director— Albert Rahe  
 President— Albert Meckel  
 Vice President— Hilmar Kanz  
 Secretary Treasurer— Albert Kanz

The following by-laws were adopted at this meeting:

1. All new members must pay an initial fee of 25 cents.
2. Every member must pay dues of 5 cents per month.
3. Any person who has not paid dues for three months, and has not expressed an interest in continuing their membership, will be dropped from the club.
4. Every applicant will be voted on by the membership.
5. Anyone can become a member even if the person does not care to sing, as long as the initial fee and monthly dues are paid.
6. The director will be paid 50 cents a month and will no longer be required to

pay the monthly fee.

7. An officers meeting is to be held every three months.
8. Officers were to be elected annually.

They decided to order eight song books at the November meeting. It was also decided to ask each member for an extra ten cents to be used toward the purchase of wood for heating. A total of \$2.60 was collected and Alfred Rust volunteered to bring a small load of wood for this amount.

The following officers were elected at the April 1928 business meeting:

President— Andrew Pape  
 Vice President— Max Preusser  
 Secretary Treasurer— Gustav R. Kanz

At this same meeting it was decided to have another "Theater Program" and Arlon Pape was accepted as a new member.

The theater program evening of singing, plays, and dancing was held at Sattler (*Walhalla*) on Saturday, May 19, 1928, and again at Solms, Texas, on August 25, 1928. Two dialogues were in German while the third was a "Darkey Skit" in English.

The following names appear on the program that had not been mentioned before in the minutes:

Mrs. Albert Rahe (Albert married Linda, nee Klar, on November 16, 1927)

Viola Preusser (later married Louis Meckel)

Ruby Preusser (later married Max Pape)

Eugene Preusser and Erhardt Kraft.

The total income for the May 19 evening of entertainment was \$58.85. The expenses of \$41.17 included \$24.00 to the Jolly Timer Orchestra, \$3.15 for advertisement, \$5.00 gift to the school and \$9.02 for a variety of small items. The income from the entertainment at Solms was \$61.80, while the expenses amounted to \$60.75. The expenses included \$24.50 to the Kanz Dance Orchestra,<sup>4</sup> \$6.00

<sup>3</sup> Mr Guenther had a Delco Plant to generate electricity for the store, home, and hall.

<sup>4</sup> The names of the musicians are mentioned in Chapter 12.

**PROGRAM**  
FOR  
**ENTERTAINMENT**  
AT  
**SATTLER**  
**Saturday, May 19, 1928**  
CONCERT MUSIC THROUGHOUT PROGRAM

1. Song — "A Home by the Deep Heaving Sea" ..... Singing Club
2. Dialogue: "Heute wird nicht geklopft!"

PERSONEN

Knoblich (der Vizewirt) .....	Walter Preusser
Anna, Dienstmädchen .....	Mrs. Albert Rahe
Hulda, Dienstmädchen .....	Norma Juentch
Mine, Dienstmädchen .....	Linda Preusser
Richter .....	Ottmar Kanz
Polizeidiener .....	Louis Meckel

3. Song — "The City Band" ..... Singing Club
4. Dialogue: "Erna Will Heiraten"

PERSONEN

Graf von Adlerhorst .....	Alfred Rust
Graefin von Adlerhorst .....	Mrs. Alfred Rust
Komtesse Erna von Adlerhorst .....	Viola Preusser
Baronesse Adelheid von Stolzenfels .....	Ruby Preusser
Johann Schultz, der Kutcher .....	Albert Kanz
Friedrich Schmidt, der Portier .....	Ottmar Kanz
August Meier, der Diener .....	Egon Kanz

5. Song — "Heimweh" ..... Singing Club
6. Dialogue: "Axin' Her Father"

CHARACTERS

Pendleton Peppercorn (A Deaf Old Darkey) .....	Eugene Preusser
Priscilla Ann, his daughter .....	Egon Preusser
Pamela Jane, his daughter .....	Louis Meckel
Polly Lucretia, his daughter .....	Erhard Kraft
Augustus Tyler .....	Gustav Kanz

7. Song — "Beautiful Days" ..... Singing Club

**FREE DANCE AFTER THE PROGRAM**

TWO "PROGRAMS FOR ENTERTAINMENT" BY THE SATTLER SINGING CLUB IN 1928.

**PROGRAM**  
FOR  
**ENTERTAINMENT**  
AT  
**SOLMS**  
GIVEN BY THE SATTLER SINGING CLUB  
**SATURDAY, AUGUST 25, 1928**  
CONCERT MUSIC THROUGHOUT PROGRAM

1. Song — "The City Band" ..... Singing Club
2. Dialogue: "Heute wird nicht geklopft!"

PERSONEN

Knoblich (der Vizewirt) .....	Egon Kanz
Anna (Dienstmädchen) .....	Frau Albert Rahe
Hulda (Dienstmädchen) .....	Norma Jentsch
Mine (Dienstmädchen) .....	Linda Preusser
Richter .....	Ottmar Kanz
Polizeidiener .....	Louis Meckel

3. Dialogue: "Anton soll Ruhe haben"

PERSONEN

Anton (der Kranke) .....	Ottmar Kanz
Anton's Frau .....	Frau Alfred Rust
(und Kinder)	
Sepp'l Nachbar .....	Albert Kanz
Veit'l, Nachbar .....	Alfred Rust
Jock'l, Nachbar .....	Walter Preusser
Bast'l, Nachbar .....	Louis Meckel
Jacob, Nachbar .....	Egon Kanz
Hies'l, Nachbar .....	Gus. Kanz Jr.
Frau Bultermund .....	Frau Walter Jentsch
Drei Kinder .....	
Doktor .....	Erhard Kraft

4. Dialogue: "Erna Will Heiraten."

PERSONEN

Graf von Adlerhorst .....	Alfred Rust
Graefin von Adlerhorst .....	Frau Alfred Rust
Komtesse Erna von Adlerhorst .....	Viola Preusser
Baronesse Adelheid von Stolzenfels .....	Frau Albert Rahe
Johann Schultz (der Kutcher) .....	Albert Kanz
Friedrich Schmidt (der Portier) .....	Egon Preusser
August Meier (der Diener) .....	Egon Kanz

5. Song — Sleighing Song ..... Singing Club

**FREE DANCE AFTER THE PROGRAM**  
Music by  
**"KANZ'S DANCE ORCHESTRA"**

to O. Reinarz (owner of Solms Hall), \$6.00 to Mountain Valley School, \$5.00 to programs and advertising, and \$17.00 to theater players.

In their July meeting the members decided to do the program one more time in a hall, and to buy new song books. It was also decided that the club should have three directors in addition to the officers. The new directors were Alfred Rust, Ottmar Kanz, and Albert Rahe.

At the February 1929 meeting, Mrs. Max (Flora) Preusser was accepted as a member of the club.

All officers were re-elected at the meeting on the 5th of April. A general membership meeting was held the same day:

1. A motion was made, seconded, and approved that better lights should be bought. (Up to this time some of the

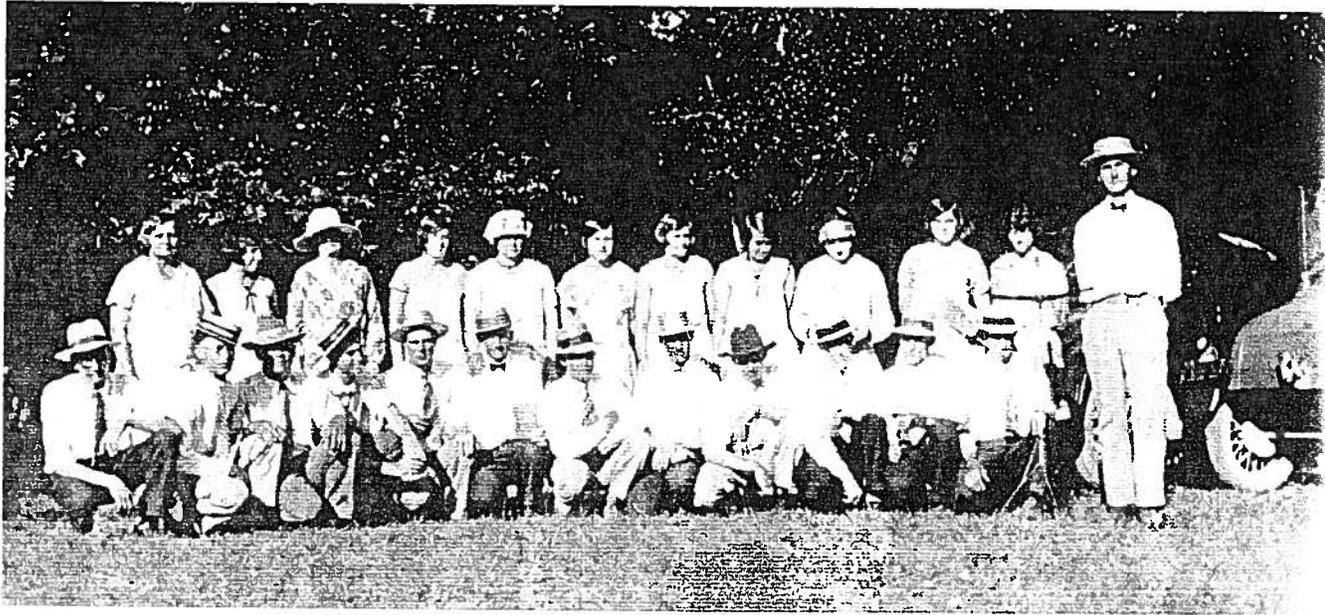
expenses were toward mantles, wick, generator, kerosene oil, etc.)

2. It was agreed that anybody who wishes to join the club must be at least 14 years of age, but nobody over 105<sup>5</sup>
3. Three persons were admitted to membership:

Mrs. Walter (Edna) Preusser  
Leonie Preusser (later married Herbert Mueller)  
Cora Pape (later married Albert Kanz)

At the July 26th meeting, it was decided to have a picnic for the membership. The picnic was held on the 11th of August with goat bar-

<sup>5</sup> Little humor suspected.



SATTLER SINGING CLUB

**BACK ROW (L-R):** ELFRIEDA KANZ RUST, LONIE PREUSSER MUELLER, TONIE DISCHINGER JENTSCH, VIOLA PREUSSER MECKEL, FLORA WESTERFER PREUSSER, LINDA PREUSSER PAPE, EDDA KANZ PREUSSER, RUBY PREUSSER PAPE, LINDA KLAR RAHE, VERA PREUSSER PANTERMUEHL AND EDNA HAAS PREUSSER. **FRONT ROW (L-R):** EGON KANZ, ANDREW PAPE, EUGENE PREUSSER, EGON PREUSSER, LOUIS MECKEL, ALBERT KANZ, MAX PAPE, OTTMAR KANZ, EGON PANTERMUEHL, WALTER PREUSSER, GUSTAV KANZ, ALFRED RUST AND ALBERT RAHE (DIRECTOR). (THANKS TO WALTER AND VERDE LEE HALM FOR THE PICTURE AND IDENTIFICATION OF THE INDIVIDUALS)

becue (four of them) and small prizes for the winners of a variety of contests and games.

Erhardt Kraft was approved as a new member at the business meeting on the 4th of October and it was decided to buy 12 song books.

In checking the list of members who paid their monthly 5 cent dues, three names were found who had not been previously mentioned: Tonie Jentsch, Egon Preusser, and Edda Kanz Preusser (her husband Eugene was mentioned earlier).

On the 21st of July in 1930, Alfred Rust, one of the original members, died very unexpectedly at the age of 41 years 3 months and

28 days. As stated in the obituary enclosed in the book of minutes, Mr. Rust underwent an appendicitis operation, but "his ailment apparently had progressed too far to get relief".

The last entry in the Sattler Singing Club ledger was made on July 30, 1930, for a flower wreath. The receipt for \$7.00 written by Howard Locke from the Locke Nursery and Floral Co. (West Landa St. in New Braunfels) was also enclosed.

From all indications it was this sudden loss of an esteemed and beloved relative and friend that caused the close-knit community to give up its desire to sing as a group for the hurt that missing voice would never be forgotten.

## CHAPTER 12

# MUSICIANS, BANDS AND DANCES

The Sattler Community had a number of bands throughout the years, consisting mostly of local musicians. There were also a number of musicians in the community who played with bands in the surrounding areas.

Perhaps the first band in the community was the *Walhalla* Band. This band was associated with the *Walhalla* Singing Association (*Gesangverein*) which was organized in 1873. The group consisted of five Guenther brothers: Herman, Carl, Frank, Emil and Ernst; three Kanz brothers: Eduard, Hugo and Gustav; two Preusser brothers: Emil and Theodore; Henry Heise, Gustav Krause, Sr., Robert Bose (Director), his father Emil Bose, Albert Erler, Henry Meckel, and Adolph Stein.<sup>1 2</sup> Mr Haas writes, "Two grandsons of Captain Julius Bose, Robert Bose and Ivo Bose, living in New Braunfels, recall the band being organized around 1880 by the late Hermann Dietel and his brother, Ernst, of which their fathers, Theodore Bose and Emil Bose, were members".<sup>3</sup>

The band remembered by many descendants of the Sattler Community was known as the Guenther or Sattler Band. This band consisted of the first twelve musicians named in the *Walhalla* Band above. It could be that the Guenther descendants called it the Guenther Band while the rest of the community called it the Sattler Band. No information was found as to how long the band continued to play. It might be that after several years the same group was referred to as the Sattler band since none of the children of the five Guenther brothers played in the band. In time, the five brothers were replaced with other musicians from the community. According to Edna Voigt<sup>4</sup>, daughter of Hermann Guenther, most of the

members in the band received music instructions from Emil Bose, son of Julius Bose.

Musician expenses were mentioned in the treasurer's report book for the Mountain Valley School.<sup>5</sup> A \$3.00 expense to Louis Becker was recorded for music on November 19, 1927. In today's terms one might think that the \$3.00 was for only Mr. Becker; however, the report also shows a \$3.00 expense for a band (no band name given) on a June 12, 1904 picnic.<sup>6</sup> On May 19, 1928 the treasurer's report also shows a \$2.00 expense to Louis Becker for music. In May of 1940, the school did pay \$18.00 for a band to play for dancing after the school closing exercises.

In 1948, Mr. Haas wrote that Theodor Preusser and his brother-in-law, John Pehl both remembered the "Old Kanz Band." The members of this group were: Eduard Kanz, director, Gustav Kanz, John Pehl, Theodor Preusser, Henry Meckel, Gustav Krause, Sr., Henry Heise, and Emil Bose. Mrs. Eduard (Anna Preusser) Kanz told the story about the Kanz Band playing a New Year's Dance (*Sylvester Ball*) at the Twin Sisters Dance Hall, and not returning home in their wagon until the 2nd of January.<sup>7</sup>

The "Kanz Dance Orchestra" played for a free dance following the program given by the Sattler Singing Club on the 25th of August in

<sup>1</sup> Son-in-law of Julius Bose.

<sup>2</sup> Oscar Haas. "Walhalla. Now Village of Sattler. Once Had Busy Singing Society". *New Braunfels Herald*. October 1971.

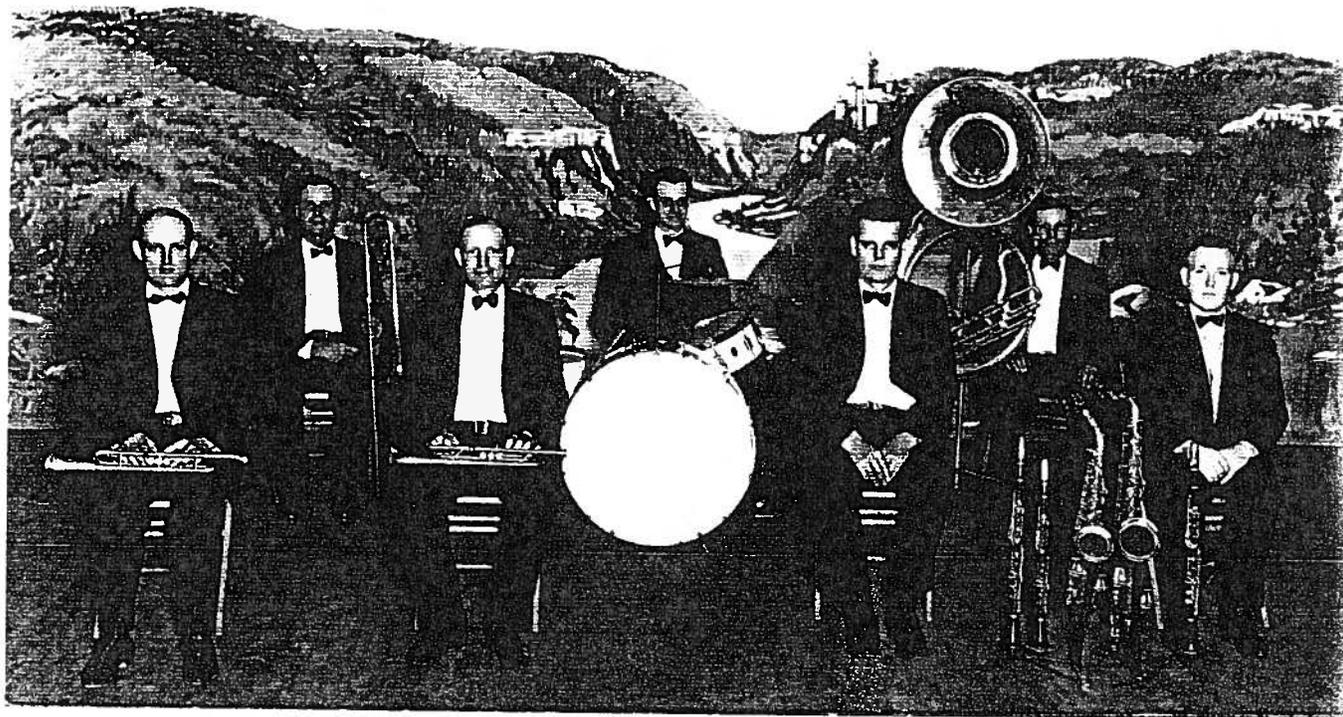
<sup>3</sup> Oscar Haas. "The Story of Sattler, Texas". *New Braunfels Herald*. Sixth Installment, August 1948.

<sup>4</sup> Reflections Tape #237, 5-12-81.

<sup>5</sup> This ledger is in the author's possession.

<sup>6</sup> The same picnic shows a school expense of \$10.00 for four kegs of beer.

<sup>7</sup> Conversation with Wallie Kanz in 1995.



NEW BRAUNFELS VILLAGE BAND  
(CIRCA 1940):

**FRONT ROW: L-R: GUSTAV KANZ, ALBERT KANZ, HILMAR VOGES, CLARENCE HOLZMANN.**  
**BACK ROW: L-R: ADOLPH RICHTER, EDMUND SCHIEVELBEIN, EUGENE RICHTER**

1928. By this time Eduard and Anna Kanz had three sons who regularly played music: Albert, Gustav and Erwin. Another son, Ottmar, played bass horn for a while and might have also been playing at this time.<sup>8</sup>

The Jolly Timers Band was listed in the May, 1928 program by the Sattler Singing Club. Not much is known about this band. There is a good chance that the Kanz musicians were among them.

In March of 1931, Gustav R. Kanz and Albert Meckel were co-founders of another "Sattler Band."<sup>9</sup> Apparently Albert Meckel did not play with this band very long. In its last years, the Sattler band consisted of the following musicians: Albert and Gustav R. Kanz on trumpet, Max Preusser on bass horn, Emil Kanz played the drums and Hilmar Voges and Clarence Holzmann played clarinet<sup>10</sup>. By this time, half of the musicians were from Sattler and the others from New Braunfels.

It was around 1933 that some of the musicians felt that the Sattler Band had reached its limitation since some musicians could not read music. Thus, a new band was formed under the leadership of Leonard Heimer from New Braunfels. The group was called "Leonard and His Buddies." Leonard played the trombone, with Gustav R. Kanz at bass horn, Albert Kanz and Bernard Scheel<sup>11</sup> on trumpet, Erwin Meckel on drums, and Hilmar Voges and Clarence Holzmann played clarinet.

The "Leonard and His Buddies" band played for a few years until Leonard dropped out after taking a job in San Antonio. Soon after this, the name of the group was changed to "The

<sup>8</sup> Conversation in 1994 with Reginald Ludwig, former member of the New Braunfels Village Band.

<sup>9</sup> This band played at the Mountain Valley and Sorrel Creek School closing programs in May of 1933, as advertised in the *New Braunfels Herald*.

<sup>10</sup> Conversation with Clarence Holzmann in 1997.

<sup>11</sup> Later moved to San Antonio and formed the "Herr Louie" Band. This band played for dances from 1936 until the mid 1950s.

New Braunfels Village Band." All the band members were from New Braunfels except for Albert and Gustav R. Kanz who were from Sattler. Albert stopped playing lead trumpet in 1941 after which time Gustav switched to lead trumpet. Gustav continued playing with the band until it was discontinued in the 1950s.

Hilmar Voges gave a purported history of the musical organization at the celebration of the band's 18th anniversary. The purported history was printed in the *New Braunfels Herald* in March of 1949, and is interesting reading; however, it is very questionable as to its historic accuracy.

A few band names were learned when checking the public dance advertisements for the Sattler Community in the early issues of the *New Braunfels Herald* and the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung*. The *Zeitung* mentions a Mountain Valley Brass Band playing for a 4th of July dance at Gruene Hall in Thornhill<sup>12</sup> in 1886. In 1905, a Rust Band and a Guadalupe Brass Band furnished music at *Walhalla Halle*. Most of

the time the band name was not mentioned as seen below:

Most likely, in the earlier days it did not make much difference what band or orchestra played at the local community dance. The important thing was that there was a dance. The people in the local vicinity would have come regardless which band was furnishing the music. The adjoining communities usually had gentlemen's agreement as to which Saturday of the month each hall had a dance. Most likely, Hancock or Fischer Store would not have had a dance when there was a dance at *Walhalla*.

Finally it should be mentioned that the Sattler Community Band should not be confused with the Hugo Sattler<sup>13</sup> Band that played in the New Braunfels area from about 1900 to 1920.

The question that often comes to mind is, how good did the rural community bands sound in those days? How often did their daily schedules allow them to practice? How much musical training did they receive? The real question is, how good did the music have to be? For most folks, it really did not make much difference how good the music sounded. They came to celebrate — dance and socialize. For these physically active people, it was routine to dance every tune (set) until early in the morning. Why did the dances occasionally last all night? They usually had a dance only once a month, and when there was a dance they had to make the best of it. Vera Pantermuehl<sup>14</sup> talked about her dance book being filled before the dance even started.

A gentleman may ask a lady, "May I dance this set with you"? Why did he say set? Why not tune or song? In those days, the bands playing polkas and waltzes usually played each tune twice. Hence, the term set. It is not known where or when the idea of sets was started, but for years it was customary to play each song twice.<sup>15</sup> Generally, the song was shortened when played the second time. Perhaps,

PETER NOWOTNY, JR.  
MASQUERADE BALL AT WALHALLA  
THREE PRIZES WILL BE AWARDED  
GRAND FREE BARBECUE AT WALHALLA  
SEPTEMBER 23 1905  
BEGINNING AT 12 O'CLOCK  
BALL AT NIGHT

GRAND CHILDREN'S FEST AT  
WALLHALLA  
SUNDAY, 18 JUNE 1922  
GRAND BALL AT NIGHT  
BEGINNING AT 2 O'CLOCK  
GOOD MUSIC WILL BE FURNISHED  
EVERYBODY IS CORDIALLY INVITED  
EMIL GUENTHER

<sup>12</sup> Currently Gruene, Texas.

<sup>13</sup> Hugo was a grandson of Friedrich Sattler, one of the early settlers in the Buffalo Springs area. Friedrich and Wilhelm Sattler were not closely related, if at all.

<sup>14</sup> Reflections Tape #245, 7-7-81.

<sup>15</sup> The Hi-Toppers Orchestra from New Braunfels, which played polkas and waltzes from 1949 until 1987, ceased playing encores (the second half of the set) in the late 1950s.

## CHAPTER 13

# MORE COMMUNITY ACTIVITIES

Besides attending dances, community members enjoyed a variety of other activities. A few of these, along with their histories, are discussed in this chapter.

### SATTLER BOWLING CLUB

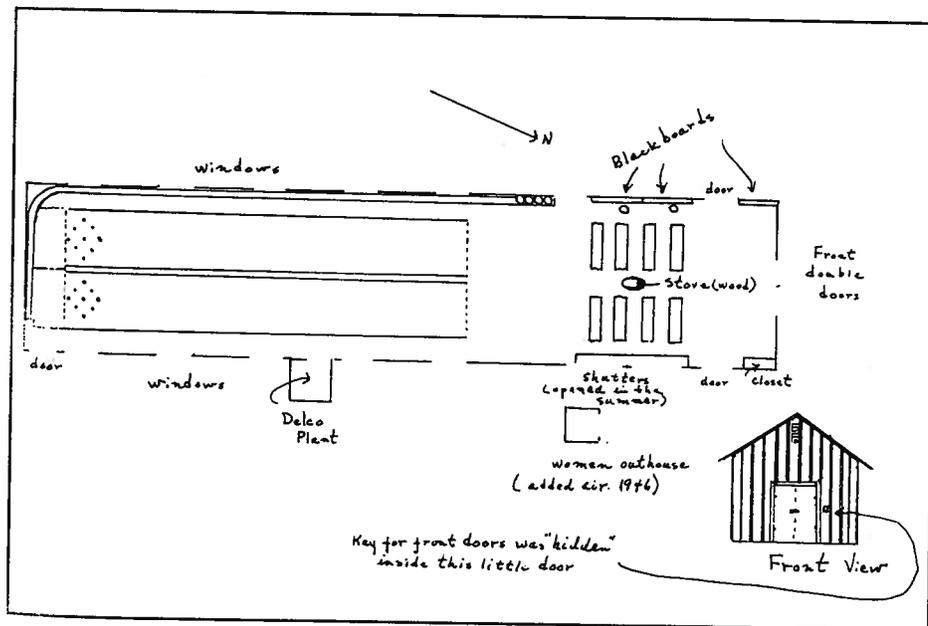
The primary community activity or sport was bowling. It was at the Sattler Bowling Club that relatives and friends gathered for nearly half a century. Bowling gave the people a sense of belonging to the community, a chance to show their bowling skills, and an opportunity to socialize and celebrate.

Very few records are available on the Sattler Bowling Club that was operated under club ownership. Club ownership was very common in those days. Officers were elected annually.

No record was found as to when the two alleys were constructed or when the club was organized. Based on the fact that the Fischer Store Alleys were built in 1919<sup>1</sup>, the Sattler alleys were most likely built between 1910 and 1920. From all indications, the club was named the Sattler Bowling Club since by that time the entire community was generally referred to as Sattler. It appears that there was no other bowling club on another location in Sattler.

The club was located across the road from the Emil Guenther Store. As one can see in the sketch, the club had no facilities for selling beer, soft drinks or food. All of the refreshments had to be acquired from the store across the road.

It should be explained at this point that nine-pin bowling usually took place at the Sattler club, although ten-pin bowling could also be enjoyed. All subsequent discussion is centered on nine-pin bowling. Curt Schmidt gave an interesting history of nine and ten-pin bowling. He also explained the team approach to nine-pin bowling that helps to understand why *Opa* (Grandfather) and *Oma* (Grandmother) usually said, "Wir muessen kegeln" (We have to bowl) instead of "We would like to go bowling".<sup>2</sup>



SKETCH OF THE SATTLER BOWLING CLUB CIRCA 1940.

<sup>1</sup> Reflections Tape # 365 by Morris Schwab, 7-25-84.

<sup>2</sup> Curt Schmidt, *Oma and Opa. German-Texan Pioneers*, Accurate Litho and Printing Co., San Antonio, Texas, 1975.

It is not clear when the women started bowling at Sattler; however, Solms had women's prize bowling in October of 1908, with prizes awarded to twenty-seven women from five clubs in the area.<sup>3</sup> Sattler was not mentioned. This would fit since the club was probably not in existence then. It would appear from this, that both sexes bowled at Sattler when the club was organized.

Edwin Pantermuehl remembers setting up pins when the Sattler club had an old-timers bowling evening. He recalls the old-timers standing at the foul-line and delivering the ball instead of taking the usual three or five steps before the delivery. He referred to the bowling as "*Kegel schieben*" which literally translates to "ball pushing." Edwin went on to say that initially the old-timers bowled with a handball with no finger holes. This ball was light enough for the bowler to knock down the head pin and the two corner pins in one shot. The old-timers specifically mentioned were Theodor Preusser, Alfred Pantermuehl, and Robert Pantermuehl.

Many bowlers did not have their own bowling balls. Consequently, when the members competed at other clubs, they would borrow the club balls for the evening. At times this left few balls to use when there was membership bowling at the club on the same evening.

Listed below are some of the bowling activities that were enjoyed by the membership:

#### 1. Winter Series or League Bowling

Usually six-member teams would compete three or four evenings per week until every team has competed against every other team.

#### 2. Family Bowling on Thursday Evenings

Two teams were chosen for competition from the members who decided to bowl that evening.

#### 3. *Medallion Kegeln* (Metal of Honor Bowling)

Every six months on a Sunday afternoon the male members would compete. Each member bowled ten times at the full setup. The man with the highest total would get to keep the Metal-of-Honor until the next roll-off. The same was done for the women.

#### 4. Individual Prize Bowling

This was usually held for the general public. Each bowling club in the county would usually have this competition once a year. In later years, cash prizes were given to the individuals with the higher scores. In earlier years, the prize might have been a turkey, etc. The women competed separately from the men.

The following is the result of the prize turkey bowling at Sattler on December 17, 1933:<sup>4</sup>

Arthur Tausch, Sattler .....	73
Albert Meckel, Sattler .....	72
Herman Ludwig, Freiheit .....	71
Erhardt Pape, Sattler .....	67
Erwin Guenther, Sattler .....	66
Hilmar Kanz, Sattler .....	66
George Rust, Fischers Store .....	65
Ottmar Kanz, Sattler .....	64
Arno Guenther, Sattler .....	63
Walter Preusser, Sattler .....	63
Butch Ulbrecht, Solms .....	62
Arlon Pape, Sattler .....	60
Willie Kraft, Valley View .....	60
Albert Rahe, Sattler .....	59
Robert Halm, Sattler .....	58
Emil Kraft, Sattler .....	58
Herbert Dietel, Social .....	58
Henry Rust, Freiheit .....	58
Alwin Schleicher, Freiheit .....	57
Hugo Heimer, Cranes Mill .....	57

The nine-pin prize bowling usually consisted of a practice and five tries for score, each at a full setup, on each of the two alleys, for a possible score of 90.

The individuals could also bowl "specials", where two balls were rolled on each alley. The prize money was distributed in groups of ten to the bowlers with the higher scores.

#### 5. Prize Team Bowling — Men or Mixed

In the earlier years, ten male-member teams from the different clubs in the region, competed on a given Sunday or weekend. Soon after that, the teams consisted of either eight men

<sup>3</sup> *New Braunfels Herald* October 23, 1908.

<sup>4</sup> *New Braunfels Herald*, 21 December 1933. Only two bowling clubs in Comal County are not mentioned in the article; namely, Bulverde and Twin Sisters.

SCORE CARD FROM MIXED  
PRIZE TEAM BOWLING AT  
SATTLER IN 1945

or four men and four women.<sup>5</sup> Later, each team consisted of either six men or three women and three men. The men's bowling competition was held at a separate time from the mixed team competition. Usually cash prizes were awarded to the top teams.

#### 6. Trophy Bowling — Men or Mixed

Two teams from each participating club in Comal and immediate surrounding counties would compete. The team with the highest score would keep the trophy until the next round of competition a year later. If a team had the highest score for three consecutive competitions, the trophy would become permanent possession of the club the team represented. The men and mixed team competition was always held separately. Each event had a judge sitting at the foul-line during the competition. If the bowler stepped or slipped over the line at the end of the "runway," the judge would rule the score ineligible for that ball. Another judge sat close to the pin box to see that the pin-setters were spotting the bowling pins correctly.

Why did the Sattler Bowling Club eventually cease to exist? First, a little background. For years the bowling club was very dependent on the existence of the Emil Guenther Store and the Guenther family.

The lanes were located on the Guenther property and, as mentioned before, the club had no facilities for the participants to buy drinks, etc. The club members must have been concerned over the fact that they did not own the property. In 1952, the club (R. V. Fischer,

president) signed a 10-year lease agreement for one-half acre with Emil Guenther for a yearly sum of \$1.00.<sup>6</sup>

The Sattler club would have had to completely rebuild and enlarge to compete with the other clubs who by the early fifties had expanded to four or six lanes and were air-conditioned.<sup>7</sup> According to Jackie Kraft,<sup>8</sup> the Sattler club did buy two extra alleys in consideration of enlarging the facility. According to Kraft, the membership was very evenly divided on the decision since the president had to cast the tie-breaker vote to buy the two alleys. This reflected a division among the membership in deciding to rebuild the bowling facilities. There was also a consideration of moving the club to another location on FM 306. The land would have been donated had the club moved. This also did not help the membership in coming to a decision to rebuild on the same location. The bowling activities continued to decline.

As mentioned earlier in the book, the Guenther Store was closed in 1958. On 10 April 1959 the Sattler Bowling Club bought one acre of land for \$500 from Anna Guenther, Emil's widow, where the bowling lanes were already located. The club officers were Willie Meckel, Freeman Jennings, and Harold Snider when the deal was made.<sup>9</sup>

In late December of 1962, all Sattler Bowling Club members were notified of a general membership meeting to be held on 13 January 1963, to consider selling the real estate and all personal property of the association to Hanno Guenther.<sup>10</sup> The meeting was called to order by secretary, Richard V. Fischer since both the president and the vice president were not present. Roland Erben made the motion and Willie Hansmann seconded the motion that the real estate of the association be sold to Hanno Guenther for \$4,000.<sup>11</sup> Milton Scheel made the motion and Egon Pantermuehl seconded the motion that all personal property also be sold to Hanno Guenther for \$1,000. On 19 April 1963, Hanno sold the one acre to

<sup>5</sup> Private conversation with Walter and Verde Lee Halm in 1999.

<sup>6</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book 98, p. 535.

<sup>7</sup> Fischer Store Bowling Club added two lanes in 1963.

<sup>8</sup> Private Conversation, 1996.

<sup>9</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book 116, pp. 467-468

<sup>10</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book 132, pp. 185-188.

<sup>11</sup> Apparently the land and the building.

Many of the bowlers were quite vocal in harassing the opponents. They did not simply silently wish that the opponent would miss the "right corner pin" (or any other setup for that matter), they let their feelings be known. I remember seeing opponents at trophy bowling rub beer bottles across the outside corrugated tin wall in order to distract the bowler getting ready to deliver the ball

Bowling and dancing were occasionally combined as shown in the following 1920 *New Braunfels Herald* advertisement:

GRAND PRIZE BOWLING  
OF THE  
SATTLER BOWLING CLUB  
SUNDAY MAY 2, FROM 9 AM TO 6 PM.  
GRAND BALL AT NIGHT.  
EVERYBODY INVITED,  
SATTLER BOWLING CLUB

Looks like a long day of activities. When did they milk the cows?

Finally, I remember my sister and I getting one nickel for spending money when our parents went to the bowling alley. However, we each got a nickel when they went to a dance. Of course, we bought five pieces of candy with the single nickel. The fifth piece was split evenly. We were not going to waste our nickel on soda water, which did not last very long. Remember in those days, eggs sold for fifteen cents a dozen and gasoline was about the same per gallon.

Marion W. Lee.<sup>12</sup> The building and alleys were sold to a contractor in San Marcos for lumber.

Finally, a note on the lighter side. As the reader may have noticed or experienced, the bowling club building did not have any restroom facilities. In the mid-forties, Willie Meckel built a separate little building (outhouse) for the women next to the club building. The men continued to use the restroom located behind the Guenther Store.

### BIRTHDAY PARTIES

Another source of entertainment was birthday parties. For in this community, as in other small communities, each person, whether young or old received his or her special recognition for having achieved another 365 days of life on earth. While the gathering was usually sizable, not every family came to every birthday.

Most likely the men would play card games such as "Sechs-un-Sechzig" (sixty-six) or *Skat* and the women would catch up on the latest (gossip) while watching the children. Of course, the children would most likely have some activity going on as well. Presents were usually given only when a child had a birthday.

Each lady would bring a cake (*Kuchen*), pie or sandwiches.<sup>13</sup> All of these goodies were homemade or should we say "made from scratch". A lady would rather not bring anything than to bring something "out of the can."

All the food was placed on a table as the women brought the "covered dishes". The children would circle by the table occasionally to see if their favorite item was among the collection. The coffee aroma would fill the house and this generally gave the signal that the eating festivities were about to begin, the climatic event of the evening.

Generally there was no beer or soda water to drink at the birthday parties. The primary reason was that nobody could afford to supply everyone gathered with commercial drinks. Perhaps some home-brew was served.

<sup>12</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book 133, pp. 54-55.

<sup>13</sup> Most everybody simply said "pie" and "sandwich" instead of *Pastete* or *Belegtes Brot*, respectively.

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

I remember the "hit" Margaret Guenther made when she initially brought a *Blitz-kuchen* (lightning cake) to a birthday party. I should explain that Margaret became a member of the community when she married Edwin Guenther in 1940. Apparently the *Blitz-Kuchen* was not in the community collection of recipes until Margaret came. The recipe is still in our family.

One year Easter fell on my birthday, the 25th of March. I tried to convince my sister that *all* the Easter presents were mine as well, but she would not buy that idea.

but most of the families did not have that much available to drink nor did they want to openly display it.<sup>14</sup> As mentioned, coffee was the primary drink for the adults while maybe some "A&P Kool-Aid"(5 cents a package) was mixed up for the children (no ice).

MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHUETZEN VEREIN  
(MARKSMEN CLUB)

Mrs. Vera Pantermuehl mentioned the existence of two shooting clubs in the area. According to her, the members for one club did their shooting against the bluff on the Heinrich Meckel place on the left side of the road about one-fourth mile downstream from the Jacobs Creek School. Mrs. Pantermuehl's dad, Julius Preusser, belonged to the club and as a youngster she would spot the "arrows" or sticks to show where the bullets hit the target. The club would meet two or three times a year.<sup>15</sup> This club was known as the Mountain Valley Shooting Club.

The following information was found in the *New Braunfels Herald* on the Mountain Valley Shooting Club:<sup>16</sup>

At this prize shoot, apparently five shots were fired at a target where the "bull's eye counted 25 rings or point. Thus, a perfect score would have been 125 rings. It would be interesting to know how many members attended from each participating club.

<sup>14</sup> Reflections Tape # 176 by Arlon and Thelma Pape. 8 April 1980.

<sup>15</sup> Reflections Tape #245. 7 July 1981.

<sup>16</sup> Thanks to David and Betty Meckel for sharing this article.

<sup>17</sup> Note that Sattler and Mountain Valley names are both being used in this article.

Mrs. Pantermuehl mentioned that the other club was located near FM 306 close to where the Canyon Dam was built. Knowing that Theodor Kraft lived in that area, the list of prize winners shows that the initials of the club were P. R.; however, none of my contacts were able to recall the name of the club. Elmo Jonas remembers the road to the club being called the "Schuetzen" road.

One might think of the initials standing for Prairie Road, which is not what this stretch of the road was called.

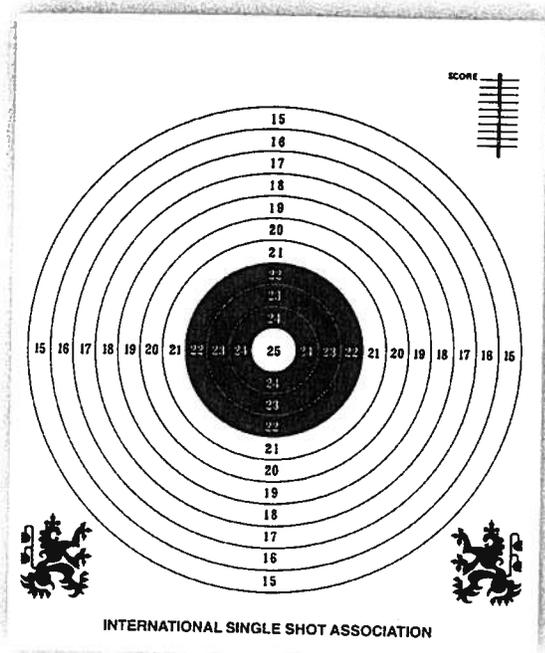
Unfortunately, no club records were found on either of the shooting clubs in the commu-

SATTLER PRIZE SHOOT<sup>17</sup>

Following is a list of prize winners at the Mountain Valley Shooting Club on 4 October, 1908:

Prize Winner	Rings
1. Fritz Eickenrodt N. B.	116
2. Albert Kraft Mission V.	115
3. Albert Eickenrodt N. B.	114
4. Theodor Kraft P. R.	112
5. Otto Meckel Mountain V.	110
6. Fritz Markwardt Mountain V.	109
7. Adolph Henne N. B.	109
8. Julius Pantermuehl Mountain V.	108
9. Ed. Kirmse N. B.	108
10. Hugo Meckel Mountain V.	108
11. Robert Schulze N. B.	106
12. Henry Meckel Mountain V.	106
13. Carl Pantermuehl P. R.	105
14. Hermann Mittendorf A. H.	104
15. Peter Nowotny Mountain V.	103
16. Robert Pantermuehl Mountain V.	103
17. Alfred Pantermuehl Mountain V.	101
18. Gus Kanz Mountain V.	100
19. Albert Jentsch Mission V.	100
21. August Schulze A. H.	100

Gus Kanz, Secretary



SHOWN IS THE TYPE OF TARGET USED AT 200 YARDS FOR COMPETITION AT SCHUETZENFESTS— THE DIAMETER OF THE BULL'S EYE IS THREE-FOURTH OF AN INCH WHILE THE DISTANCE BETWEEN THE CONCENTRIC CIRCLES IS ONE-HALF INCH. (THANKS TO MRS. GAY WIMBERLEY)

nity of Sattler. Minutes and record books of the New Braunfels *Schuetzen Verein* and the San Antonio *Schuetzen Gesellschaft*<sup>18</sup> were examined in hopes of finding more information on the two clubs at Sattler. Essentially no information was gained on the two clubs of interest<sup>19</sup>. Several references were found to a *Gebirgs Schuetzen Bund* (Hill Country Marksman League) in the 1870 to 1880 issues of the *Neu Braunfelser Zeitung*. It is very likely that the Sattler clubs belonged to the hill country league of shooters and that this is the reason why no references were found to the Sattler clubs in the above records.<sup>20</sup> One can only assume that the Sattler shooting clubs folded between 1910 and 1920.

The following information is printed to give the reader an appreciation of the tremendous impact that the shooting clubs had in the earlier years of the German settlements. It should be remembered that the shooting clubs were very popular in Germany and it was only quite natural that the sport would be continued in Texas. The New Braunfels *Schuetzen Verein* was organized on the fourth of July in 1849, only four years after the town was settled. The purpose of the organization was to promote brotherhood of all shooters and friends of

shooting, train members in handling of weapons and establish friendly competition in shooting. Harold Adams prepared a history of the club at their 100th anniversary in 1949.<sup>21</sup> In their search through all available literature they recorded the names of 62 different "*Schuetzen Verein*" and rifle clubs organized within a 20 to 25 mile radius of New Braunfels during the last 75 years or more.<sup>22</sup> The names of the clubs were:

Ackermann's	Johannesberger-Jaeger
Alamo	Jonas Ranch
Alamo #2	Kuhn's Helle
Austin Hill	Leon Springs
Belmont	Live Oak
Bexar	Lone Star
Bismark	Look-Out
Bracken	Marion
Bulverde	Miller's Branch
Cibolo	Mission Valley
Clear Ford (Converse)	Mountain Hill
Clear Spring	Neches Creek
Comal Creek	Pantermuehl's Ranch
Comal Springs	Riverside
Concord	Salado
Cordova	San Geronimo
Cranes Mill	Sandy Elm
Cut-Off (Schertz)	Sattler
Davenport	Schiller
<i>Deutscher-Gebirg's</i>	Schumannsville
Echo	Selma
Elm Valley	Smithson Valley
Fischer Store	Sorrel Creek
Frankfurt	Spring Branch
Germania	Swift Spring
Goodwin	Tell (Tom Creek)
Goodwin Jr. ?	Twin Sisters
Green Valley	Vogel's Valley
Guadalupe Valley	Waco Springs
Helotes	<i>Waldschuetzen Verein</i>
Herrera	Zorn

<sup>18</sup> Special thanks to Mrs. Gay Wimberley for lending the books.

<sup>19</sup> In February of 1891, Mr. A. Forcke from the Waco Springs Club was recognized as having shot 107 rings at a "*Jaehrlichen Preis-Schiessens*" (Annual Prize Shooting) of the San Antonio club.

<sup>20</sup> See chapter 10 for information on the *Walhalla* Singing Association from Sattler being a charter member of the *Westexanischer Gebirgs Saengerbund* (West Texas Hill Country Singing League).

<sup>21</sup> A History of the New Braunfels *Schuetzen Verein*, organized 4 July 1849, incorporated 14 June 1948. Harold Adams, secretary. Sincere thanks to Mrs. Gay Wimberley for sharing this history.

<sup>22</sup> The New Braunfels *Schuetzen Verein* itself is not in their list.

Perhaps Mountain Hill should be Mountain Valley since Mountain and Hill are redundant and Mountain Valley was not mentioned. It is not clear which club the word "Sattler" represented. It was suggested that the initials P. R., mentioned above, stood for Pantermuehl's Ranch. None of the sources could verify the connection.

At the present time, there are four active clubs in Comal County: New Braunfels *Schuetzen Verein* in the Mission Valley Community, the Alamo Club in the Comal community, Vogel's Valley, and Guadalupe Valley.

According to three members of the New Braunfels *Schuetzen Verein*, the emphasis was on fun and fellowship at the various shooting clubs in the county. The following quote from their Reflections Tape perhaps summarizes it the best:

*...the typical American rifleman of the past, was a grim and a quiet chap who shot close and said nothing. He had deadly concentration and that made him unrivaled in war but he didn't know how to play. The Schuetzenmann loved the sport for its own sake. He took his family with him to the Schuetzen park, he ate much, he drank some, he talked aplenty, he laughed loud and long and shoot a heap, whether he hit it or not. Of the two classes one was a better shoot, the other was the better sportsman.*<sup>23</sup>

Why the decrease in membership among the shooting clubs? Initially the pioneer settlers often struggled for their very existence and perhaps there was a necessity for a "*Schuetzen*<sup>24</sup> *Verein*" for learning to become proficient in the use of firearms to protect themselves against Native American Indian attacks. Hunting for survival and sport also required a person to be a good shot. Of course, in time, the necessities became less and less until, finally, only the social and friendly rivalry of contest marksmanship remained. Just as with the singing organizations honored by our ancestors, the younger generations did not find the same interest and necessity in the art of shooting as did their forefathers, and the membership decreased.

Most likely, the facilities of many of the clubs, including the *Schuetzen Vereins* at Sattler, were simple outdoor facilities that required very little capital to establish. It appears that the shooting club at Sattler folded around the same time that the bowling club was started. Now both sexes could compete in friendly competition in year-round comfort.<sup>25</sup>

#### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS:

Based on information learned from other clubs, the activities at a typical *Schuetzenfest* might be described as follows. The activities would start with a parade with one member of each participating club carrying its colors bearing an original design. A ribbon would be hung on each design to reflect their participation at the event. After the parade, a short business meeting would take place and then the competition would begin. At the end of the day they crowned the king (*Schuetzen Koenig*) and most likely all would sing "*Er Lebe Hoch*" (may he live long) as they gathered around the keg of beer. Of course, prizes such as turkeys, rocking chairs, china, etc. would be awarded to the individuals and teams with the better scores. Most likely the women and the children were there, even if they were not allowed to participate in the earlier days.

#### MARIENTHAL LODGE, SONS OF HERMANN

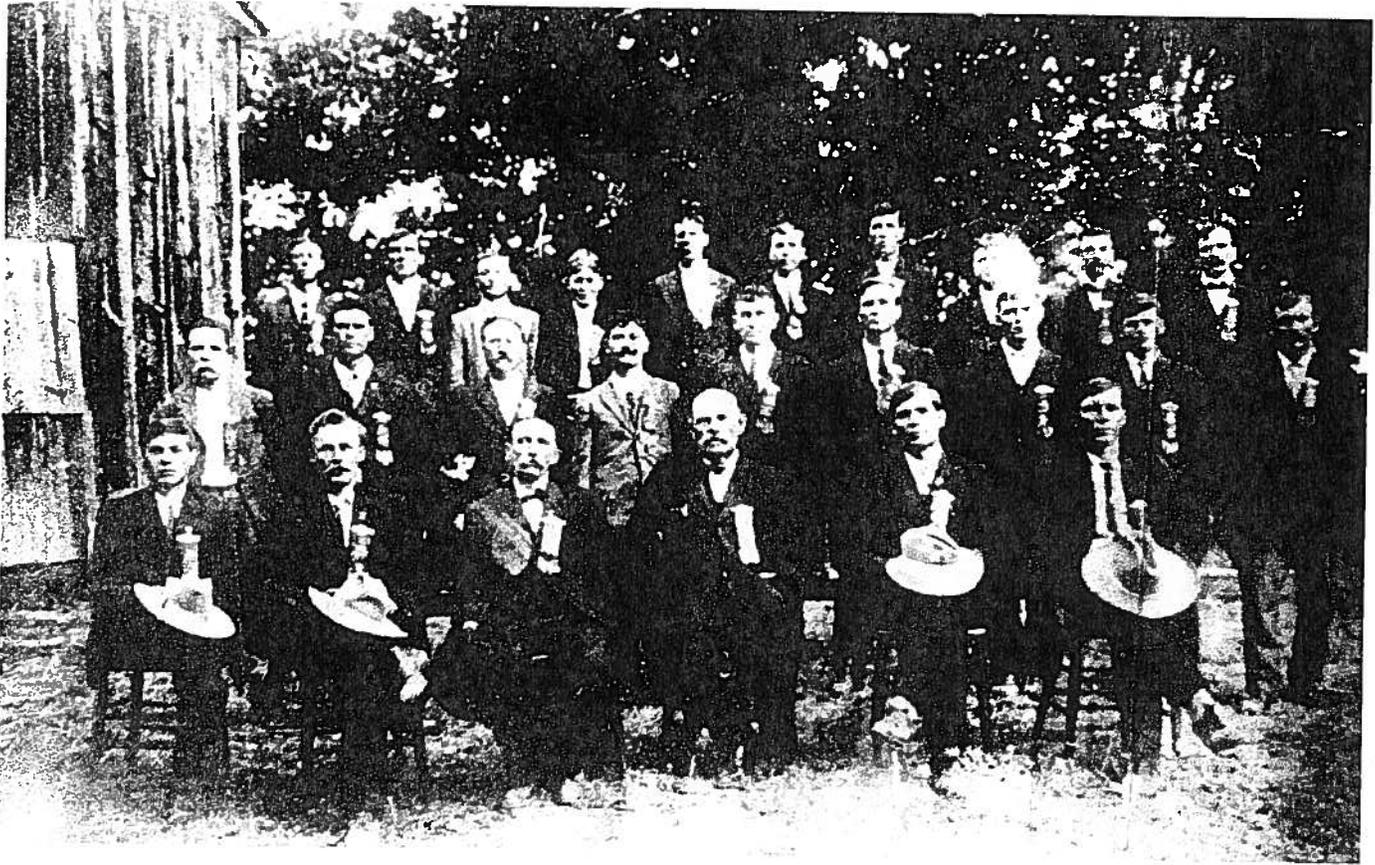
The *Marienthal* Sons of Hermann Lodge Number 248 was organized on 13 June 1909. On 1 June 1947, the *Marienthal* Lodge was merged with the Fischer Store Lodge Number 219 and on 31 December 1959, this lodge was also discontinued.<sup>26</sup> Thus the two local Sons

<sup>23</sup> Reflections Tape #294, 30 September 1982, Donald Rahe, Kermit Greebon, and August Schulze.

<sup>24</sup> *Schuetzen* - to protect, to defend, to guard.

<sup>25</sup> The women did not participate in the shooting competition until 1949.

<sup>26</sup> Thanks to Carl W. Steiger, Grand Lodge of the Order of the Sons of Hermann, San Antonio, Texas, 25 May 1993.



SONS OF HERMANN MARIENTHAL LODGE.

**BACK ROW (L-R):** WALTER JENTSCH, JULIUS PREUSSER, WALTER NOWOTNY, ALBERT TAUSCH, WILLIE KUHN, ALVIN HEINEMEYER, MAX PREUSSER, HARRY SCHLATHER, HEINRICH PANTERMUEHL AND HUGO HALM. **MIDDLE ROW (L-R):** CONRAD TAUSCH, JOSEPH MECKEL, FRANK SCHLATHER, EMIL GUENTHER, LOUIS BECKER, RICHARD KUHLE, HERMANN PREUSSER, WALTER HOLDERMANN AND PETER JONAS. **SEATED (L-R):** RUDOLPH MECKEL, EDMOND TAUSCH, EDUARD KANZ, GUSTAV PREUSSER, EUGENE PREUSSER AND ALVIN TAUSCH.

of Hermann Lodges served the needs of its membership for a little over half a century. The Order of the Sons of Hermann is a fraternal benefit society founded in the state of Texas in 1890. They are still serving their membership with primarily life insurance and youth programs.

Most likely the picture of the membership was taken when the lodge was organized in 1909. According to Mr. Haas, the picture was taken "at the old *Walhalla* Hall above the fourth crossing on the Guadalupe River". The year of 1909 and the location of the hall are in conflict since all other available information indicates that the old hall at the river was no longer in existence in 1909. It was around 1892 when Peter Nowotny, Jr. rebuilt the hall at the original location for the use of the *Walhalla* Singing Society. Mr. Robinson states that the picture was taken in 1901, which would bet-

ter fit the location of the picture but not when the lodge was organized.<sup>27</sup>

Melba Roth remembers being told that the Sons of Hermann members had their "*Loge Versammlungen*" (lodge meetings) in the *Walhalla* Hall meeting room located immediately to the right as one entered the hall.

It would have been nice if old original minutes of the lodge meeting could have been located.

#### TELEPHONE

One could argue that the telephone was more of a means of doing business and should not be included in the social activities chapter. One could also argue that the telephone was used more for communication or gossip and that it should be in this chapter.

<sup>27</sup> Robert R. Robinson, Jr., *Die Bermverwandschaft* Vol. II., Nortex Press 1979, p. 956.

## CHAPTER 16

# RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES AND CEMETERIES

Religion is a difficult topic to discuss for one can only report on religious activities, but it is much more difficult to know the true internal convictions of the members of any community. The individuals of the Sattler community were good, honest, hard working people who, especially in the early years, did not maintain or have strong church affiliations. Most individuals were baptized whenever the situation presented itself.

The fact that the community lacked church buildings during its initial hundred years does not mean that the people of the community were without faith. Roland Pantermuehl, who was born in Sattler, served for many years as a minister in the Evangelical and Reformed Protestant Church.<sup>1</sup> Christian Guenther and his wife, Theresa, nee Schlather, had all of their six children baptized on 9 November 1884, by Methodist minister, Gustavus Mueller. Five children from the Heinrich and Phillip Meckel families were also baptized on the same day.<sup>2</sup> Many times when a minister was asked to perform at a wedding in the community, the folks would bring their children to be baptized.<sup>3</sup>

Mrs. Venora Salge wrote that Dinky Smith himself conducted the first church services of

the community in his home, and that every man took his gun to church with him, lest they be attacked by Indians.<sup>4</sup> His home was located

### PERSONAL REFLECTIONS

Although I do not remember the church services in the school, I do remember Dad talking about playing the organ for the services.

It appears that Sunday Houses were not as popular in New Braunfels as they were in Fredericksburg. A Sunday House was a small home in town in which the rural family spent the night after conducting their town business on Saturday. On Sunday morning, the family would attend church services and then they would return to their rural home. Please recall that even groceries had to be bought on Saturdays for all businesses were closed on Sundays. I never heard that any of the Sattler families, or families from other outlying communities had Sunday Houses in New Braunfels. The Sunday house was also used when a member of the family was sick and needed to stay close to the doctor.

I sometimes think of the old house on my parent's 116-acre ranch in the Mission Valley community as a Sunday House. This house was located only four miles from New Braunfels. Usually on Friday afternoon, we would drive to the ranch to spend the night. On Saturday, Dad would take care of school business at the county superintendent's office and the family would do their necessary shopping. After going to church on Sunday, we would drive back to Sattler in the afternoon.

<sup>1</sup> Roland served in Seguin, Texas, as well as in Clayton, Missouri and New Orleans, Louisiana.

<sup>2</sup> "Baptismal Records (from First United Methodist Church)", *Family Footsteps*, Volume V, Number 3, 1988, pp. 138-139. Each of the six children had four different sponsors, a total of twenty-four sponsors from the Sattler Community.

<sup>3</sup> Vera Pantermuehl, Reflections Tape # 245, 7-7-81

<sup>4</sup> Venora E. Salge, "The Story of Sattler, Texas", *New Braunfels Herald*, 9 September 1948.

at the site of the Andreas Pape Ranch established in 1874.

Oscar Haas assumed that Pastor Engel called upon the people of Sattler in the early days. In the 1930s, Protestant church services were held in the Mountain Valley School building on Sunday afternoons approximately once a month. Mr. Haas wrote that according to the church records, Pastor Schuchard of the First Protestant Church in New Braunfels administered to the people of Sattler. Later, Pastors Mornhinweg, Bassler, Borne, and Berger served them.<sup>5</sup> Melba Roth remembers a hat being passed around for the money collection and that food was served after the services.<sup>6</sup> In later years when transportation had improved, many families drove to church in New Braunfels or Blanco.

The predominately Protestant community of Sattler had no churches until the late 1950s.<sup>7</sup> At the time of this writing, there are eight churches of different denominations in the community.

#### MOUNTAIN VALLEY CEMETERY<sup>8</sup>

The Mountain Valley Cemetery was organized on 15 March 1905 by "several people from the settlement." Among the men who surveyed the cemetery on 20 March were Henry Meckel, Gustav Preusser, Joseph Meckel and Robert Pantermuehl. These individuals paid Mrs. Freidrich Pantermuehl the sum of \$20.00 for the one and one-half acre cemetery located about one-half mile from the Emil Guenther store in Sattler. Currently, Walter and Verde Lee Halm own the property around the cemetery.

Friedrich Pantermuehl died on 4 July 1904 and was buried on this site. It was the following year that it was decided that this would be a suitable site for a community cemetery.

At another meeting in March of 1905, nine members decided to fence in the cemetery with

five rolls of "flat wire." Each member was to bring five or six posts. A member was to pay 75 cents if he could not take part in constructing the fence.

The following officers were elected on the 5 April 1905, meeting of the Mountain Valley Cemetery Society:

President — Otto Baetge  
Vice President — Gustav Preusser  
Secretary — Robert Pantermuehl  
Treasurer — Gustav Kanz

The purpose of the cemetery society was to bury the dead with respect and dignity. The obligations of the members were to engage in all work, including the digging of the graves. If a member failed to carry out his duties, he would have only his lot, but no rights to any other benefits.

It was decided to sell a single gravesite for \$1.00 and that Hispanics would be allowed to be buried in the cemetery. The first Hispanic buried was a child on 25 October 1907. Entries were made for at least 25 more Hispanic burials during the next 19 years (until 1926).

New memberships and transfers were also entered in the minutes:

New members:

John Pehl, November 1910  
Fritz Behnken, February 1911  
Mrs Max Tausch, January 1912  
Emil Guenther, January 1912  
Walter Strickland, January 1912 (later withdrew)  
Carl Guenther, April 1918  
Conrad Tausch, September 1919  
Henry Luehlfing, December 1920  
Robert Pape, February 1921  
Peter Jonas, April 1921

Transfers:

Mrs. Friedrich Pantermuehl to Hugo Halm  
Carl Jentsch to Walter Jentsch  
Mrs. Max Tausch to Alwin Tausch  
Otto Baetge to Robert Linnartz

Leopold Pape became a member of the society later, his name was not mentioned

<sup>5</sup> Oscar Haas, "The Story of Sattler," *New Braunfels Herald*, sixth installment, 14 September 1948.

<sup>6</sup> Melba Roth, Reflections Tape #335, 9-15-83.

<sup>7</sup> The ancestors of the Rohde, Bose, Nowotny and Halm families were Catholic.

<sup>8</sup> Taken from minutes of Mountain Valley Cemetery Protocol transcribed by Alfred Brueckner for Walter Halm - Thanks to Walter for a copy.

previously. A dollar was also received from Charles Kratzenbehr for a single grave. Charles was a retired military man who lived with the Gustav Preussers.

The above information is based on minutes recorded through 1926. Burials are still taking place at the Mountain Valley Cemetery. According to Walter Halm, sexton for the cemetery, at the present time about 190 souls have been buried at this cemetery.<sup>9</sup> This number includes only five Civil War Veterans of which he is aware.

### FAMILY CEMETERIES

Where were the bodies of the departed souls buried during the 50 years before the Mountain Valley Cemetery was established? Three family cemeteries are currently registered in the community of Sattler:<sup>10</sup>

Sattler Cemetery (off FM 306) — 8 graves with burial dates ranging from 1880 to 1956

Pantermuehl Cemetery (FM 2673) — 5 graves — few dates available

Nowotny Cemetery (South Access Road, near St. Thomas Chapel) — 8 graves — few dates available

Roeger Cemetery (Bert Estes Ranch, part of Bear Creek Reserve) — used to be 3 graves — No markers — currently a cow pasture<sup>11</sup>

See page 8 in Chapter 2 for the location of the cemeteries in the community.

### INDIVIDUAL BURIAL SITES

Many individuals were buried on the family farm or ranch. According to Roland Baetge, Carl Baetge was buried on *Marienthal* Farm in 1883. In about 1903, Carl's remains were moved to Comal Cemetery after Paula, his wife, decided that she did not want to be buried in Sattler. Mr. Baetge also mentions that Judge F. Herman Heffter was first buried at Mountain Valley in 1894, and that later the remains were moved to Comal Cemetery.

In 1888, Johann F. Krause, Sr. was initially buried on the homestead at the current Horseshoe Falls site.<sup>12</sup> Later, the graves of Johann F. Krause, Sr. and Johann F. Krause, Jr. were moved to the Hancock Cemetery. In 1958, be-

fore Canyon Dam was built, these graves, along with others, were moved to the Comal Cemetery in New Braunfels. Evylen Hastings recalls seeing the grave marker of H. Junker on the old Junker farm. This was also supposed to be the site of Laura Junker's grave, although no marker was ever set up for her.<sup>13</sup>

A single tombstone, erected for a woman and a child, was located on the Bear Creek Reserve about a mile down stream from where the original Bear Creek Road crossed a branch of the Bear Creek.<sup>14</sup>

According to Wallie Meckel Kanz, Oscar Friedrich's wife, Augusta, nee Rudolph, and her new born child are buried on their farm on a rocky knoll next to the River Road between the third and fourth crossings, currently the Ingram Ranch.<sup>15</sup> No marker.

Walter and Verde Lee Halm remember hearing that a young son of Heinrich and Dorothea, nee Preusser, Erxleben was buried on their farm. The name of the son was Herman. No marker.

Of course, finances were not always such that the family could afford permanent stone markers for the graves. Wooden crosses deteriorated and the graves were forgotten after a few generations, especially if the farm was sold in the meantime.

<sup>9</sup> Names of individuals buried at Mountain Valley Cemetery can be found in Brenda Anderson-Lindemann's book: *Spring Branch & Western Comal County, Texas, 1858-1998*, Omni Publishers, Inc. 1998, San Antonio, Texas, pp. 132-135.

<sup>10</sup> *Lest We Forget*, Cemeteries of Comal County, Texas and Surrounding Areas, Excluding New Braunfels, Comal County Genealogy Society, New Braunfels, Texas, 1989.

<sup>11</sup> *Family Footsteps*, Comal County Genealogy Society, Vol. VIII, No. 3, 1991, p 155.

<sup>12</sup> The Krause-Jonas Family Tree, Clarence E. Sahm, Revised October, 1987.

<sup>13</sup> Personal correspondence in March of 1994.

<sup>14</sup> Correspondence from Rev. Samuel Heitkamp, grandson of Paul Henk. Paul was a shareholder in the Bear Creek Game Reserve.

<sup>15</sup> Private Conversation in 1999.

## CHAPTER 19

# CANYON DAM AND ITS INFLUENCE ON THE GERMAN COMMUNITY

The plans for Canyon Dam began in a preliminary report dated 5 August 1929.<sup>1</sup> This report by the U. S. Army Corps of Engineers indicated that conditions were favorable for the improvement of the Guadalupe River watershed concerning navigation, flood control, irrigation, and power development. On 13 July 1935, a survey was made and the results were published in the "308" report. The Guadalupe River site was selected as a reservoir to control flooding and regulating stream flow in the interest of conservation. However, the Board of Engineers for Rivers and Harbors turned down the "308" report on 7 July 1938. On 24 February 1939, the Canyon Dam Reservoir Project was re-examined because of tremendous public interest. This report was found favorable. So after ten years, the foundation was laid for congressional authorization for the construction of Canyon Dam with the site yet to be chosen and the funding to be obtained.<sup>2</sup>

The first location for the dam was about five miles from New Braunfels in the Waco Springs area. See Site A on map. After considerable testing, studies indicated the possibility of major water leakage in the honey-combed limestone formation at this site. So the Corps moved upstream to select new sites.

Walter Halm recalls two other sites that the Corps considered for the location of the dam. The second site (Site B) was about a mile upstream from where the Bear Creek flows into the Guadalupe.<sup>3</sup> The third location (Site C) was about one-half mile down the River Road from the fourth crossing.<sup>4</sup> Walter and Verde possess a picture of a 36-inch core taken at the third site. Roland Erben recalled that the Corps de-

cidated not to continue drilling when at eighty feet a 36-inch core bit dropped ten feet at one of the test holes.<sup>5</sup> Both of these locations were also not considered adequate for the location of the dam.

In 1951, the Corps recommended that the location of the dam be moved about twenty-one miles upstream from New Braunfels to the fourth or present site (Site D).<sup>6</sup> Here the Corps determined that leakage could be as high as 25% at total capacity, which was acceptable for flood control and conservation. The power generation could be added later if everything was deemed acceptable.

Construction of the dam began in 1960. Three different companies bid on the construction of the dam, and the Tecon and Green Company won the bid. Roland Erben was awarded the contract for supplying the rock material for the dam while Servtex Materials got the contract for hauling the rock from the Erben quarry to the dam.<sup>7</sup> About 500,000 cubic yards of material were hauled to the dam site out of the 35-acre rock quarry.<sup>8</sup>

At the quarry, air hammers were used to drill holes about 56 feet deep. The holes were filled with ammonium nitrate and set off with a small

<sup>1</sup> G. P. Kiel, *A History of Canyon Dam*. Guadalupe County Historical Commission, Seguin, Texas, 1992, Chapter Four.

<sup>2</sup> It appears that the engineers chose the name Canyon in the beginning stages.

<sup>3</sup> Downstream from the Ponderosa subdivision.

<sup>4</sup> The map shows the right side of the dam touching the Summit subdivision

<sup>5</sup> Taken from the Reflections Tape by Roland and Gladys Erben, #382, 11-29-1984.

<sup>6</sup> G. P. Kiel, *A History of Canyon Dam*. Guadalupe County Historical Commission, Seguin, Texas, 1992, Chapter Four.

<sup>7</sup> Reflections Tape by Roland and Gladys Erben, #382, 11-29-1984.

<sup>8</sup> Including "Blanket A, blanket B and rirraff".

dynamite charge. About 5,000 pounds of rocks were blasted at a time. These large broken rocks were dumped into three or four jaw crushers and then moved by conveyer belt to roller crushers and a hammer mill. The rock was washed with water from the Guadalupe using a 10-inch water line before it could be hauled to the dam site. The waste water was pumped to settling basins and later returned to the river. For the first two years, Servtex used ten to fifteen trucks to haul the material to the dam site on a twenty-four-hour-a-day basis. Thirty-five to forty people were employed at this all-electric quarry. About 200,000 of the 500,000 cubic yards was waste material not suitable for construction of the dam. This waste material was used by the Crey Brothers Construction Company to build the extension of FM 306 around the lake area.<sup>9</sup>

On 7 June 1964, the construction of the earthen Canyon Dam was completed and only the water in the lake was lacking. It did not take many years for the lake to fill. The total cost of the project was about \$20.2 million as contrasted with the projected cost of \$13.3 million in 1955. Construction of the north and south access roads to the dam began as early as 1958 and by early 1960s nearly all the old roads were straightened and widened at a cost of about three million dollars.

What impact did the construction of a dam have on the community of Sattler? Plenty. From 1937 until 1951 there was the feeling of uncertainty. Will our beloved community be under water or not? When will this happen? Remember, had the dam been built at any one of the first three chosen sites, the entire community of Sattler would now be under water. It is easy for the water users downstream from the dam to be highly in favor of flood control and constant flow for they had everything to gain and nothing to lose. It was during this period that some of the pioneers of the community decided not to be buried in the Mountain Valley Cemetery because their remains would have to be relocated after the dam was built.<sup>10</sup>

More unhappy feelings about the construction of the dam were found in an article on Mrs. Walter Jonas (nee Olga Kanz) in the 6 November 1975 issue of the *New Braunfels*

*Herald*.<sup>11</sup> Walter and Olga lived in the Hance Valley across the Guadalupe River from Henden Valley. They lived on 150 acres which one time belonged to his grandparents. The article said, "When the activity of the lake started and holes were being drilled to determine the condition for the building of the lake Mr. Jonas was sickened by it all and in time suffered a heart attack. After working the lake for 45 years, the government kicked us out and the family had to move only four days before Christmas."

Was the community concerned about the prospects of a dam being constructed? Yes, this is what was written in the 1937 issue of the "Mountain Valley Star," the annual school paper:

WHAT WILL BECOME OF SATTLER  
AND WHAT WILL THE PEOPLE DO

*It is pretty sure that the dam in Sattler will be built and every one will have to move. It was approved in Washington and a bill is before the legislature of Texas to levy taxes for its construction. Eight counties should pay most of the money, so they want to make the counties pay so much per year so that in twenty years it will be paid off. All the people will have to move to other places and some might go on top of some mountains and live on ranching. But others might not have such a good pasture and too rocky, so they will have to go somewhere else. Many old people would like to stay at their old home, no matter how poor the farm is and how broken the house is. When the dam is built, all of Sattler will be under water and if it is going to be built as high as it once was said, Sattler will be a great lake. It will be a nice place for the city people.*

The students would not have written this had this not been the thinking of the community.

<sup>9</sup> Reflections Tape by Roland and Gladys Erben. #382. 11-2-1984.

<sup>10</sup> Conversation with Walter and Verde Halm in 1995.

<sup>11</sup> "Green Thumb Evident in Mrs. Jonas' Yard" *New Braunfels Herald-Zeitung*, 6 November 1975

Was there any organized opposition to the construction of the dam? Yes, there was, according to the following article taken from the 1946 issue of "Mountain Valley Star":<sup>12</sup>

*The surveyors have been measuring at Sattler for a long time. They want to build a dam at Waco Springs. A few months ago the community had a meeting here at Sattler. All the property owners were there. They also had a petition. All of the property owners had to sign their name and put some money with it. There are over 100 property owners in this area.*

No further information was found on the effectiveness of the petition in the *New Braunfels Herald*. Perhaps this petition helped them in considering the present site above Sattler. It is interesting to see the dam mentioned in two of the only six issues available of the "Mountain Valley Star", spanning a period of twelve years.

It should be said that the community was aware of changes taking place in Sattler even before the dam was built. In the 1945 issue of the "Mountain Valley Star" appeared an article on how conditions had changed in Sattler. The article goes on to say that many of the old permanent residents of Sattler have moved out and rich people from the cities have bought their places. More specifically:

1. The Theodor Preussers sold their property to Mr. and Mrs. Emil Weilbacher from San Antonio.
2. Mrs. Anna Kanz sold her property to Mr. and Mrs. Fred Loth from San Antonio.
3. Edgar Schroeder from Houston bought the Carl Jentsch and the Carl Junker properties.
4. Otto Koehler, owner of Pearl Brewery in San Antonio, bought the Max Preusser property.

Most likely other land sales in the community could be added to the list.

In the 1950s, other changes took place which left their permanent scars on the German community. As mentioned earlier, Emil Guenther passed away in 1957, the store and hall were closed and the property was sold to develop-

ers in 1960. The post office was closed in 1942 and the cotton gin had not been used since the 1940s. The bowling club members were not united in keeping the club going at its original site; consequently, the club functions dwindled, and it was sold in the early 1960s. The original Mountain Valley School was closed in 1957, the school building was sold to developers and the teacherage was demolished. Without any of these activities, the community no longer had a central hub by which it could be identified. Did the oncoming construction of Canyon Dam have its influence on the above situations? Perhaps. It appears that some things would have happened anyway; however, the community might have handled it better had it not been threatened with Canyon Dam changes. In the past, changes had always been rather slow.

Once the location of the dam was determined, the community members could make more definite plans. The building of Canyon Dam certainly had a big influence on the community, of which many of the changes were for the better. The negative impact was that it hastened the transition from the dear predominately German community of a little over one hundred years to another era. We say "hastened," for change would have come anyway as can be witnessed in many other communities and cities as well.

In closing, let us quote the last paragraph from Ruby Rust's story of Sattler in 1929:<sup>13</sup>

*In the future this country may be one large park along the river, where city people can spend their summer vacation and where sportsmen can go hunting throughout the season.*

Little did they know about the construction of a dam at that time; however, they did not miss the overall mark too much by recognizing that transition was inevitable, with more emphasis on recreation and sports.

Perhaps the picture of change or transition can be summarized as follows. The Indians

<sup>12</sup> See Chapter 9 for more information on the Mountain Valley school paper.

<sup>13</sup> Ruby Rust, seventh grade student at Mountain Valley, "History of Mountain Valley," part of six installments entitled, "The Story of Sattler, Texas", *New Braunfels Herald*, August 1948, by Oscar Haas.



TEXAS  
HISTORICAL  
COMMISSION

*The State Agency for Historic Preservation*

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June 15, 2001

Michelle Oatman, Vice Chair  
Comal County Historical Commission  
200 N. Seguin Ave.  
New Braunfels TX 78130

Re: historical marker applications for:  
Sattler (Job #09201)  
Site of Mountain Valley School (Job #09101)

Dear Michelle:

Thank you for your letter of March 16 and the maps for the Sattler and Mountain Valley Schools marker applications. I've read over the applications and think they'll both make interesting historical markers.

The main question I have at this point concerns documentation. Other than brief references to deed records, both applications' narrative histories seem to rely heavily on one source, *History of Sattler and Mountain Valley School in Comal County, Texas 1846-1964* by Alton J. Rahe. It's generally not a good idea to rely so completely on one source, especially a secondary source. I imagine Mr. Rahe's book is well documented with references to primary sources, so probably the easiest solution to better documentation (with primary sources) for these two applications would be for you to provide a copy of that book. Would that be possible? If not, we'll need for the narrative histories to be rewritten to include references to primary source materials.

Please let me know if you have any questions concerning the documentation requirements. We look forward to working with you to complete these two markers.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cynthia J. Beeman".

Cynthia J. Beeman

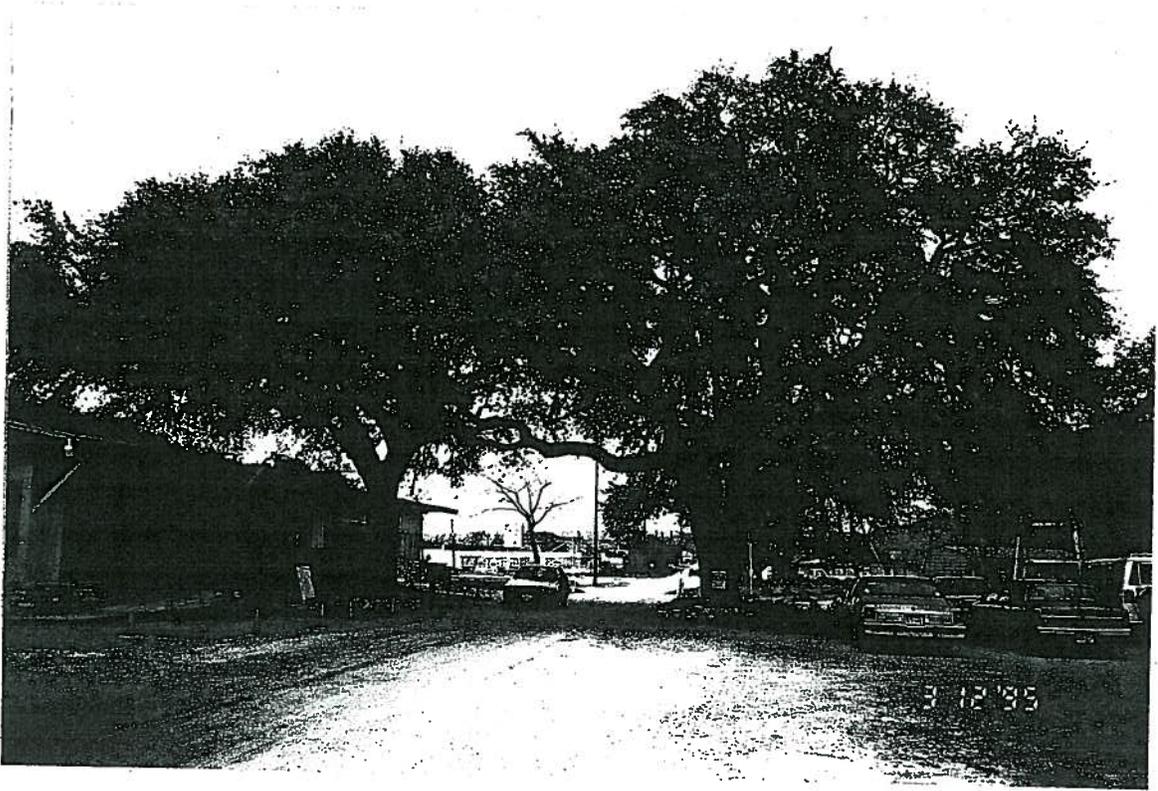
Division Director

History Programs Division

[cynthia.beeman@thc.state.tx.us](mailto:cynthia.beeman@thc.state.tx.us)

c: John & Delitha Guenzel  
Casey Hevener

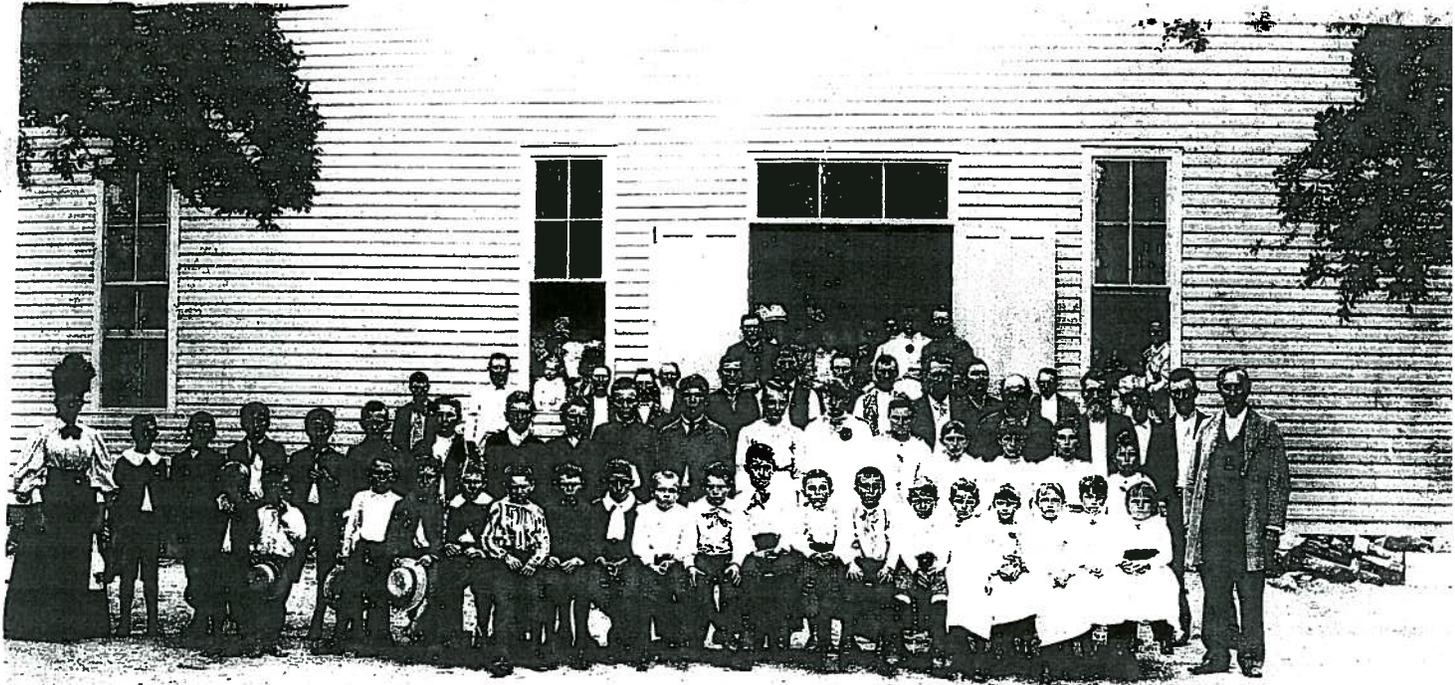
09201



Current look of the site of the Emil Guenther Store  
in Sattler

The VFW Post 8573 is located on the left of  
the photo. The historical marker will be placed  
at the foot of one of the two oak trees

09201



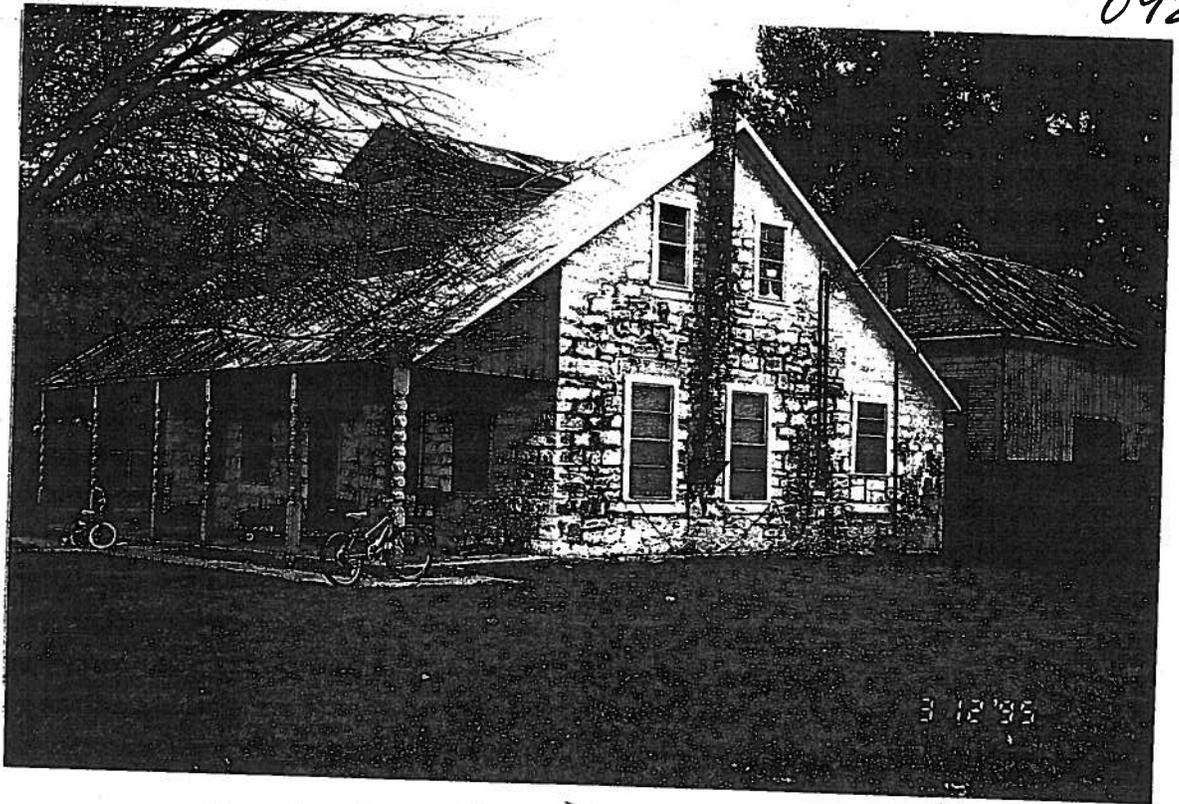
School closing picture at Walhalla hall



Front view of the Emil Guenther Store  
Post office was located on the left

09201

09201



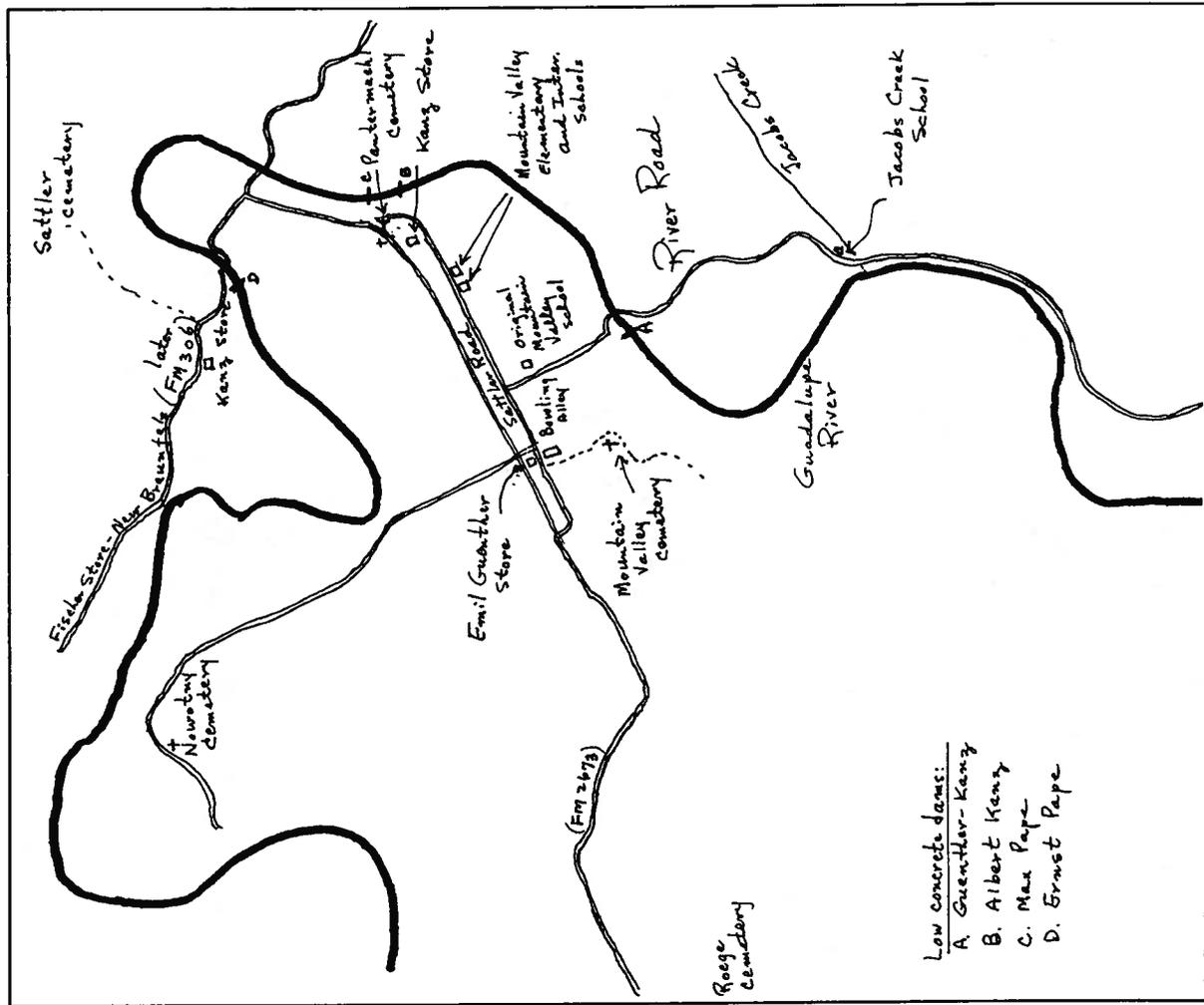
Emil Guenther Residence

## HISTORY OF SATTLER AND MOUNTAIN VALLEY SCHOOL

until his death in 1880.<sup>19</sup> The first post office was located on his property about three miles north of the Emil Guenther Store.

20 After Mr. Sattler's death, other members of the community held the office of postmaster while maintaining the name of Sattler Post Office. After 1880, the post office was moved to the Mountain Valley area in order to be more centrally located for the people. The Sattler Post Office was closed in 1942, and then the mail was postmarked Fischer Store, Texas.<sup>21</sup>

In summary, the names of *Walhalla* (name of the hall) and *Marienthal* (name of the farm) were perhaps used for general regional identification in the early years. The name Mountain Valley appears to have been used for community identification since the dates associated with the establishment of the original Mountain Valley school (1874) and the Mountain Valley cemetery (1905) were after the establishment of the first post office (1856) several miles away. After many years the residents called the entire community by the name of Sattler, because their

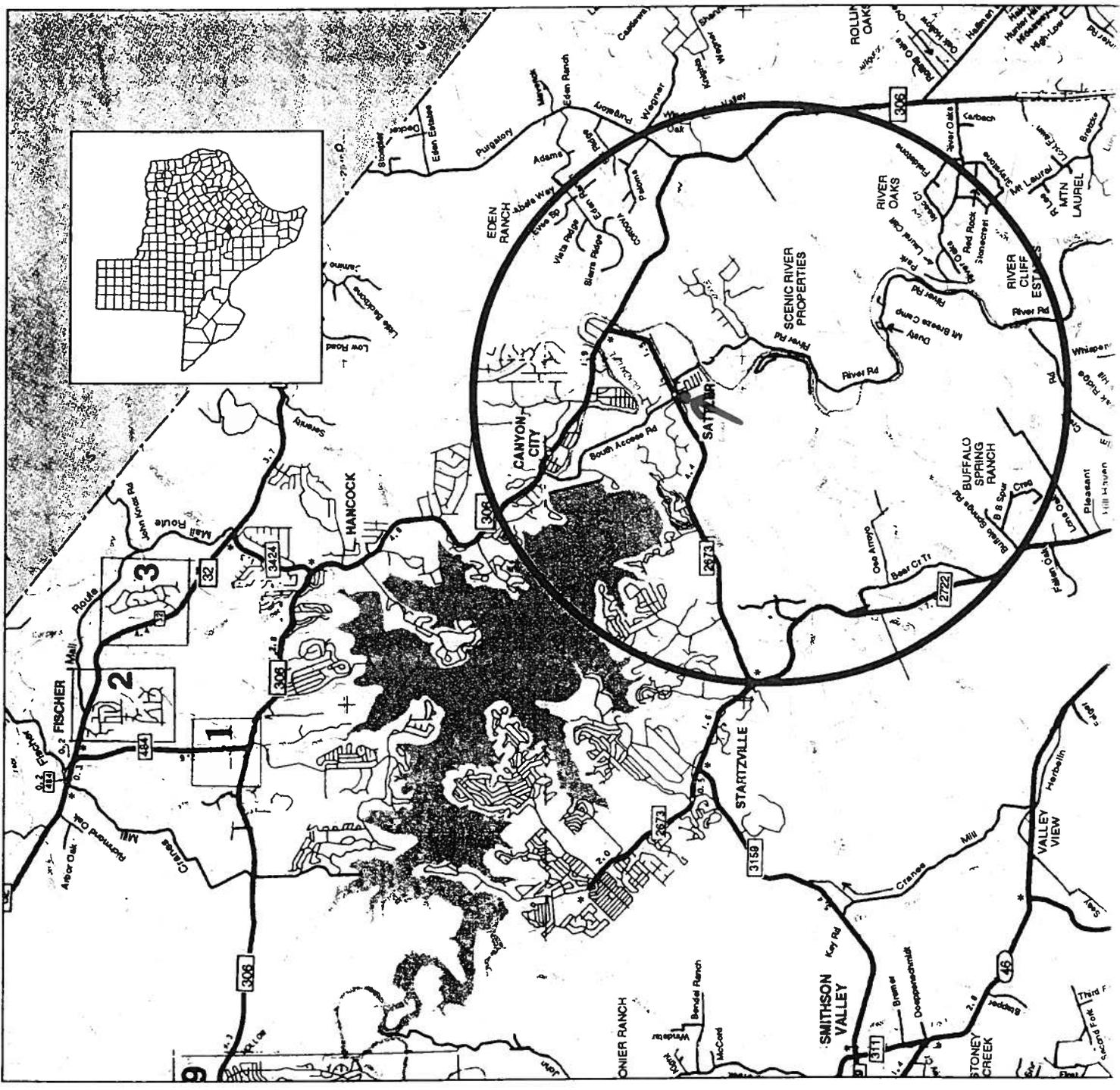


LOCATION OF SCHOOLS, CEMETERIES, AND LOW CONCRETE DAMS IN THE COMMUNITY FOR LATER REFERENCE.

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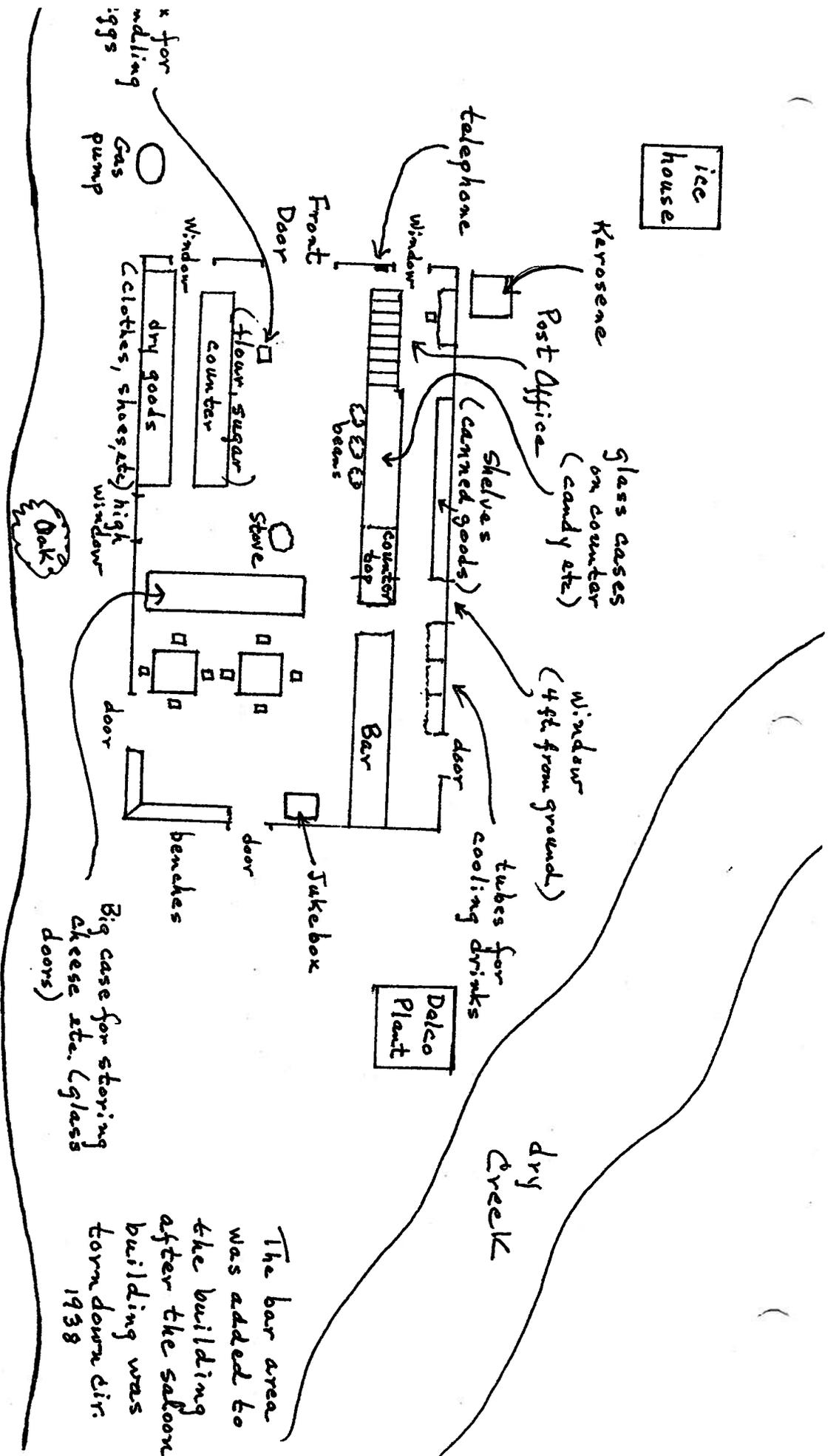
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# Cranes Mill - Sattler Road

Sketch of Emil Gruentler Store, circa 1940

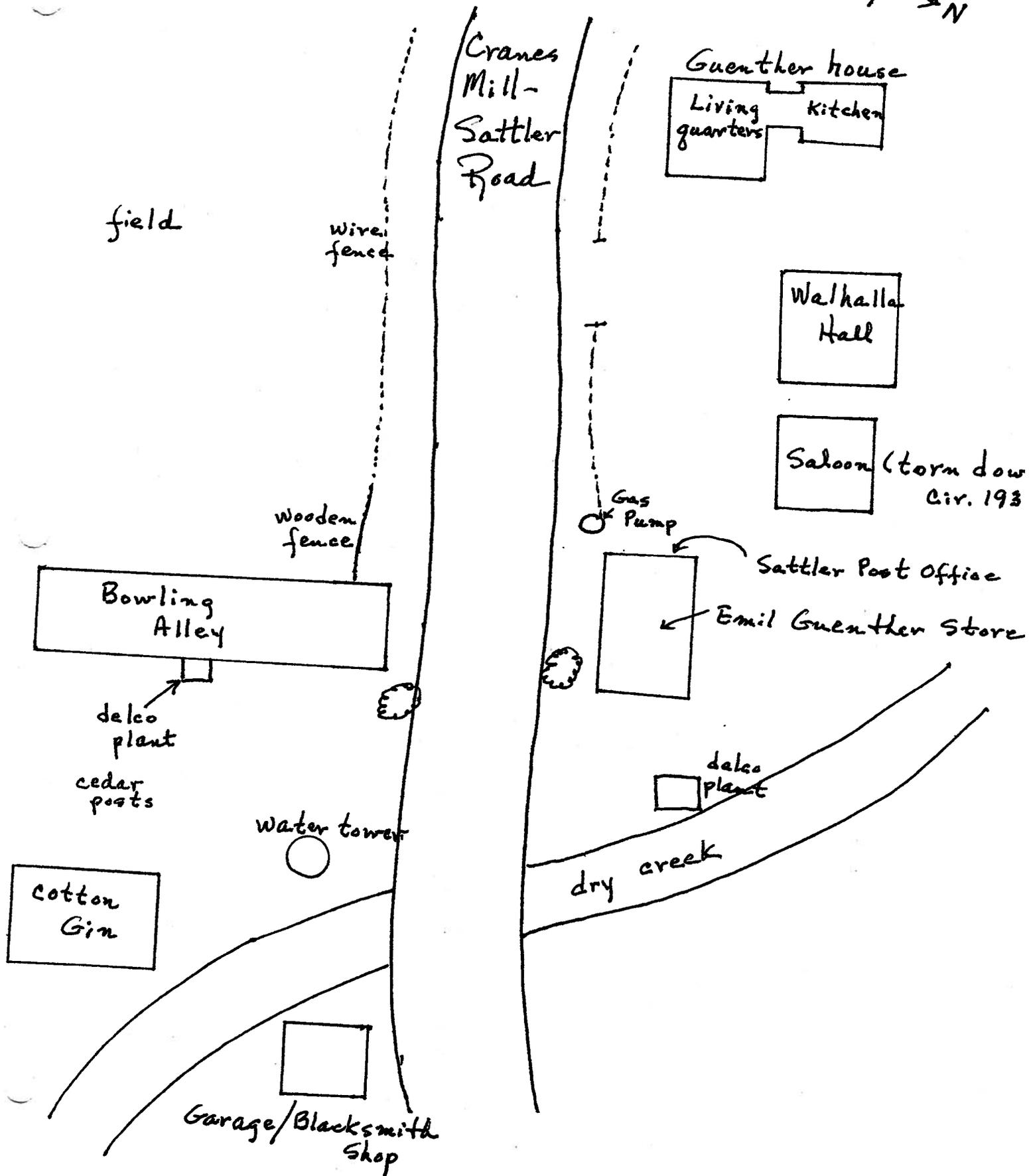
*(Oak)*



*(Oak)*

Overview sketch of Emil Guenther Store, hall, saloon, bowling alley, cotton gin, etc

1935



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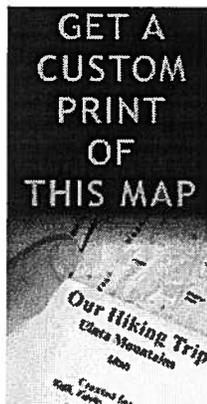
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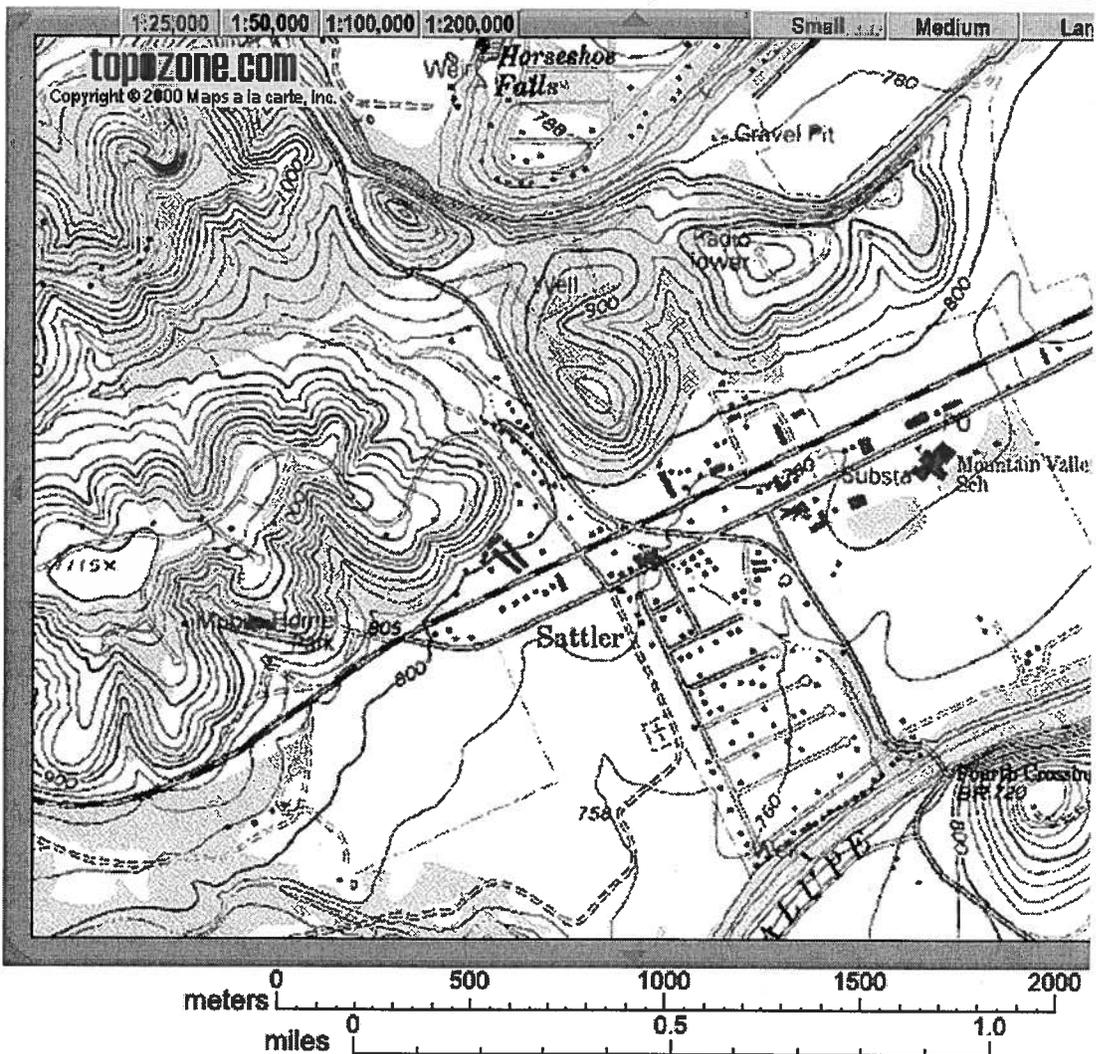
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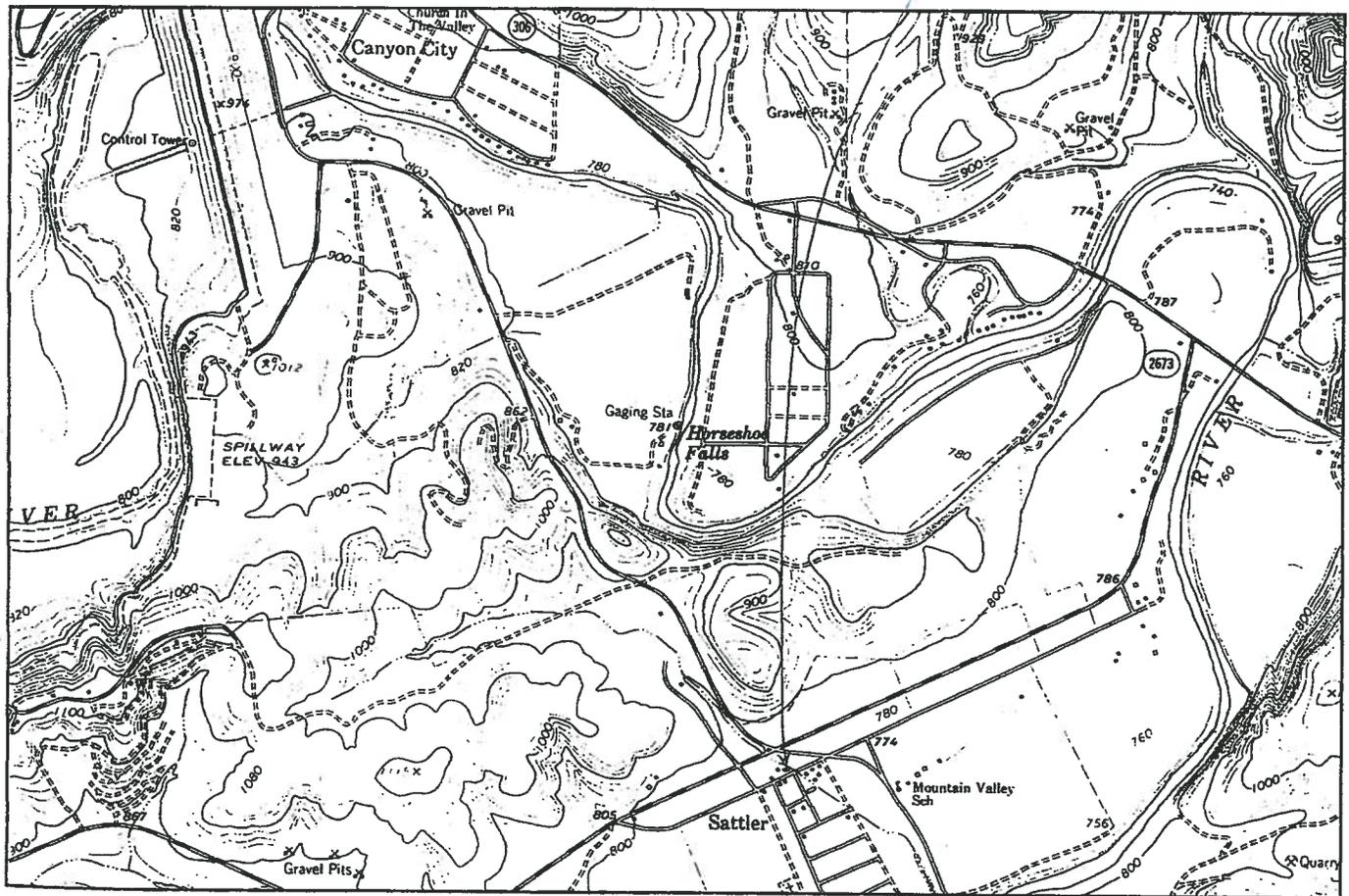


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09201

Emil Guenther -  
Walhalla hall, residence,  
bowling alley, cotton  
gin, etc



1960s MAP TO SHOW CURRENT CONDITIONS OF SATTLER-CANYON LAKE AREA.

## **Business and Social Center for Eighty Years in Sattler Community (1880-1960)**

On this two-acre site, many business and social activities took place from 1880 until 1960, a total of 80 years. Records show that in 1880 the Walhalla Singing Association purchased one acre of land at this site from Mrs. Anna Tausch for the construction of the first Walhalla Hall. During that time Henry Weil built a store and residence here. In 1892, Mr. Weil sold everything to Peter Nowotny, Jr. During the next 14 years, Mr. Nowotny constructed a new mercantile building, saloon, residence, cotton gin and a second Walhalla dance hall. The cotton gin was located on the other side of the current Sattler Road.

Mr. Nowotny also served as postmaster for the Sattler community from 1900 until 1906. From 1906 until 1910, the establishment, including the post office, was owned and operated by Bruno and Hugo Pape, William Posey, and Hugo Liesmann, respectively. In 1910, Mr. and Mrs. Emil Guenther bought the establishment, and Mr. Guenther became the postmaster.

The community experienced a decline of activities at this location starting in the 1940s. The cotton gin was closed in the late 1940s and later demolished. The Sattler community post office was closed in 1942 when Mr. Guenther retired after being the postmaster for 32 years. Until 1942, all members of the community had to pick up their mail at the post office located in the store. The Guenthers did continue to operate the store and hall until 1954. The original general merchandise store and hall were closed in 1960 after the land was sold to developers. The Helms Lumber Company was located in the Walhalla building during the 1960s. Later both store and hall buildings were changed considerably.

A member-owned two-lane bowling alley was built across the road from the store in the 1910s on Mr. Guenther's land. The bowling entertainment continued until 1962 when the membership decided to sell the lanes.

Today, the residence, the two oak trees and the water tower for the cotton gin are the only visible reminders of eighty years of service and pleasure at this general location for the members of the predominately German community.

*Suggested  
write-up*

## **Business and Social Center for Eighty Years in Sattler Community (1880-1960).**

The purpose of this document is to provide background information for a site marker to be placed in the Sattler community where business and social activities took place for eighty years (1880-1960).

See the enclosed 1960s map of the Sattler-Canyon Lake area in Comal County for the location of the business and social center being considered.

In 1880 the Walhalla Singing Association purchased one acre of land at this site from Mrs. Anna Tausch for the construction of a building as a meeting place for the association.<sup>1</sup> This building was known as the first Walhalla hall.

It was also during that time that Henry Weil built a store and residence on the same site. In 1892, Mr. Weil sold everything to Peter Nowotny, Jr.<sup>2</sup> During the next 14 years, Mr. Nowotny constructed a new mercantile building, saloon, residence, cotton gin and a second Walhalla dance hall. The cotton gin was located on the other side of the current Sattler Road.

The Walhalla hall was the center of many celebrations. In addition to dances, activities such as Skat tournaments, Saengerfests, school closing programs and Hermann Sons Lodge meetings were held. Enclosed is a photo of the occasion of the school closing of Mountain Valley School at Walhalla Hall.

The first post office was established in 1856 by Mr. William Sattler and was located near his home about two miles from the site of the business/social center being considered. Mr. Sattler was a United States Mail Contractor. His son, Henry, served as the first postmaster of the community. Later other community leaders, including William Sattler, served as postmasters at the

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<sup>1</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book "O", p 653.

<sup>2</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book V, pp 450-451.

Sattler home site or in their homes. Records show that Mr. Henry Weil was postmaster from 1880 until 1885 during the time that he operated the store. After this, Mr. Carl Marschall served as postmaster in his home from 1885 until 1900. No information was available as to whether Mr. Weil served as postmaster in his home or at his place of business.

Mr. Nowotny was the postmaster from 1900 until 1906. From all indications this was the start of the store owner also serving as the postmaster. The community soon took on the name of Sattler since this was where the post office was located. From 1906 until 1910, the establishment was owned and operated by Bruno and Hugo Pape, William Posey, and Hugo Liesmann, respectively. In 1910, Mr. and Mrs. Emil Guenther bought the establishment, and Mr. Guenther became the postmaster. Enclosed is a photo taken during the time that Mr. Guenther was postmaster for the Sattler community.

The general merchandise store sold all of the necessary items: clothing, shoes, gasoline, kerosene, sugar, flour, beer, candy, etc. The store manager was also the banker where the farmers could charge their groceries during the year and pay for them when the crops came in.

A member-owned two-lane bowling alley was built across the Sattler Road from the store in the 1910s on Mr. Guenther's land. The bowling club gave the relatives and friends of the community an opportunity to gather for nearly half a century. Bowling gave the people a sense of belonging to the community, a chance to show their bowling skills, and an opportunity to socialize and celebrate.

Enclosed is an overview sketch of the Emil Guenther Store, Walhalla hall, saloon, bowling alley, cotton gin, residence, etc. A more detailed sketch is also shown of the Emil Guenther Store. Both sketches were made from memory by Alton Rahe who lived in the community in the 1930s and 1940s. A photo of the Emil Guenther residence is also included.

The community experienced a decline of activities at this location starting in the 1940s when the cotton gin was closed and later demolished. The Sattler community post office was closed in 1942 when Mr. Guenther retired after being the postmaster for 32 years. Until 1942, all members of the community had to pick up their mail at the post office located in the store. The Guenthers did continue to operate the store and hall until 1954. The

original general merchandise store and hall were closed in the 1960s after the land was sold to developers. The Helms Lumber Company was located in the Walhalla building for a few years during this time. Later the store and the hall buildings were changed considerably.

The bowling entertainment stopped in 1962 when the membership decided to sell the lanes.<sup>3</sup>

Today, the residence, two oak trees and a water tower for the cotton gin are the only visible reminders of eighty years of service and pleasure at this general location for the members of the predominately German community. See the enclosed photo of the current look of the site of the Emil Guenther Store. Several businesses were operated at the site after the Guenther store closed. The current building on the site bears no resemblance to the original store building.

Respectfully,



Alton J. Rahe

All of the above information was taken from "*History of Sattler and Mountain Valley School, Comal County, Texas, 1846-1964*" by Alton J. Rahe, Walsworth Publishing Company, NK Associates Producer, Dallas, Texas, 1999.

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<sup>3</sup> Comal County Clerk's Office, Book 132, pp 185-188.



## SATTLER

GERMAN IMMIGRANTS WERE THE FIRST TO COLONIZE PERMANENTLY THIS AREA ALONG THE GUADALUPE RIVER IN THE 1850s. THE DISPERSED RURAL COMMUNITY WAS KNOWN AT TIMES AS MARIENTHAL, WALHALLA AND MOUNTAIN VALLEY, WITH THE NAME SATTLER ASSIGNED WHEN THE POST OFFICE, FIRST OPENED IN 1856 AT THE WILHELM SATTLER HOME, WAS MORE CENTRALLY LOCATED IN 1880. THE WEIL-NOWOTNY-GUENTHER STORE, WITH ITS COMPLEX OF BUILDINGS—POST OFFICE, DANCE HALL, COTTON GIN AND BOWLING ALLEY—SERVED AS A GATHERING PLACE FOR FARM AND RANCH FAMILIES WHO LIVED IN THE AREA. CONSTRUCTION OF CANYON DAM IN THE 1960s HASTENED THE DISPERSAL OF THE GERMAN COMMUNITY, BUT THE HERITAGE OF SATTLER REMAINS SIGNIFICANT IN THE HISTORY OF COMAL COUNTY.

(2002)