

Historic Burnet



On the surface, Burnet is a modern, thriving town. But there is more here than meets the eye! We hope this self-guided walking tour will open a door to the past and give you a glimpse into the lives and circumstances that helped shape a genuine “Wild West” town more than a century ago.

Burnet's earliest historic buildings date back to the 1850's. Soon after, Burnet began as a cluster of cabins in the shadow of Fort Croghan. But it was the arrival of the railroad in 1882 that made Burnet a frontier boomtown and it was in the 1880s that the historic square took shape. (Burnet was officially incorporated in 1883.) It's on the square that we will begin our tour. If you are standing in front of the Chamber of Commerce building, begin the tour by looking to the south (left if your back is to the Chamber office) and follow this booklet around the square. Don't forget to see the historic structures adjacent to the square, while you are at it (pages 12-15.) **Welcome to the historic district.**

Jackson Street

South Side of the Square, East to West



1 Maurice A. Kopperl built this structure in 1886 on the site of the former Slaton Hotel, which was owned by H.F. Prince until it burned on May 17, 1884. This building housed the First State Bank of Burnet from the bank's founding in 1908 until 1964, when the "new" bank was built on the north side of the square. The second floor was divided into several offices, including that of the famous blind general, Adam R. Johnson, who could recognize almost anyone in the county by the sound of their footsteps in the long hallway.



2 Formerly two separate buildings, this structure housed in its eastern half a drugstore established by pharmacist Robert J. Knox around 1900. His store was purchased and operated as Guthrie Drugstore by James H. Guthrie in 1911, then the Kuykendall Drugstore by Raymond Kuykendall. The western half housed the Burnet Post Office in the 1920's then served as Baily-Rodgers Furniture Company and Ambulance Service. Later, Ellis Zimmerman operated a cleaners here for many years.

The Last Shootout! - On May 18, 1911, J.K. Jamison was killed by J.A. Hall in a gunfight in front of the drug store. (2)



3 Built around 1883, this building housed the Galloway Saloon, Carroll's General Merchandise Grocery, Lindsey Fisher Grocery, Leonard Wimpy Grocery and Burnet's City Hall.



4 This building was constructed in 1883 by D.L. Emmett who operated a store. F.W. King purchased the structure, which became King and Badger in 1906. Mrs. Ollie Guthrie, then Mrs. Nora Craddock, each ran a ladies' ready-to-wear store here. Seidensticker's clothing store opened in 1938 and remained in business for 68 years. (See page 17)

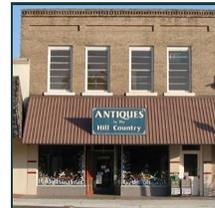
5 This building has housed several stores through the years, including Mrs. Tucker’s Millinery Shop, C.C. Rush Grocery, and Joe Evans Grocery.



6 Joe Wright’s Livery Stable was later divided into two businesses; Charlie Craddock’s Barber Shop on the east and Will LaForge’s Hardware on the west. Later, it housed Galloway Insurance and Seidensticker’s Ladies Shop.



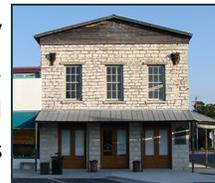
7 This building served as the First National Bank in the 1890’s, then housed the county treasurer, surveyor and attorney in the 1920’s. Martin Telephone had its office upstairs. Yarborough’s Variety Store was downstairs for many years.



8 Churchill Brothers operated Burnet’s first hardware store here in 1883. W. H. Smith used the building later as a ready-to-wear clothing store; Jerome Felps, then Joy and Paul Taylor, ran White’s Auto Store here for many years.



9 The “Burnet Bulletin” building was used first as a dry goods store (Hansford & Co.) in the 1880s. Later, Dr. Stuart Watson ran a furniture store and J.H. Stapp sold furniture and funeral supplies. The building later served as Hansford Stapp Plumbing, Neuman’s Ready-to-Wear, Adams Food Store and Hullum’s Barber Shop before the Burnet Bulletin moved in.



Legend Has It that Mr. Stapp took his afternoon naps in one of the coffins. (9)



Southwest corner of the square; Logan Vandevier’s 1854 store (33) is in

Main Street

West Side of the Square, South to North



10 A.I. Haber built this two-story corner building in 1883. Firms housed here included: General Merchandise, Southern Mercantile Co., Hudson & Watson, Badger-Johnson, Guthrie-Howell, Anderson's Ready-to-Wear and Dilbeck's.



11 Businesses using this building included; King & Holman Drugs, Vert Gibbs Grocery, Fuzzy Walkers Café and the Western Auto Store.

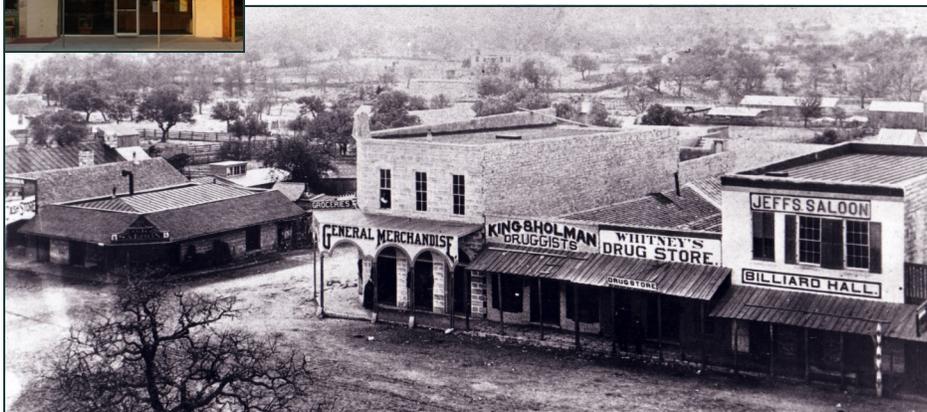


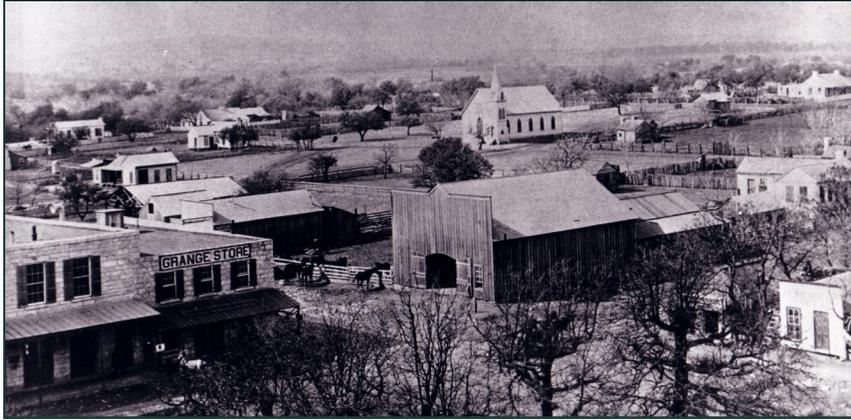
12 A succession of businesses in this building included; Heston Whitney's drugstore, Warner's Drugs, Howell & Warner, Howell & Altman, Roy Fry's drugstore, Allbritton's Drugs, Allbritton & Oakley Drug Store (A&O), and Seidensticker's Men's Store.



13 Jeff Breazeale's Saloon & Billiard Hall became a pool & domino hall, then Andy Miller's Furniture and White's Auto Store.

South end of the West side of the square.

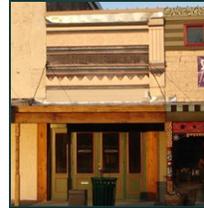




To the northwest, the old Methodist Church is visible.

14 This building housed O.A. Riggs Barber Shop.

Mr. Riggs offered hot baths in a back room tub for cowboys and WPA workers during the 1930s. (14)



15 This building housed Bouchard's Confectionery and Clen Shilling's Cafe



Although there is some question as to which interior this is, it probably is the interior of the dry goods store (10) on the southwest



Main Street cont'd.

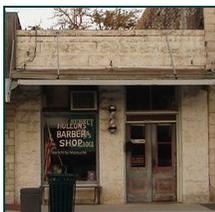
West Side of the Square, South to North



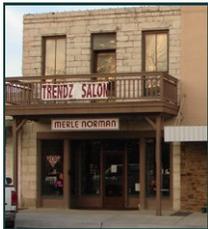
16 This building housed Carson's Ford Agency, Dickens & Elliott Garage, Earl Sawyer's and Guy Zimmerman's Feed Store, and Blankenship's Variety Store.



17 This building housed John Olney's Tailor & Cleaners Shop and Haines Boot & Shoe Repair.



18 R. B. Dennis' Barber Shop and then Hullum's Barber Shop were located in this building. Thomas Hullum moved his barber shop here in 1969 and is still going strong after 59 years of cutting hair on the Burnet square. He was located in the "Burnet Bulletin" building (9) for over 20 years.

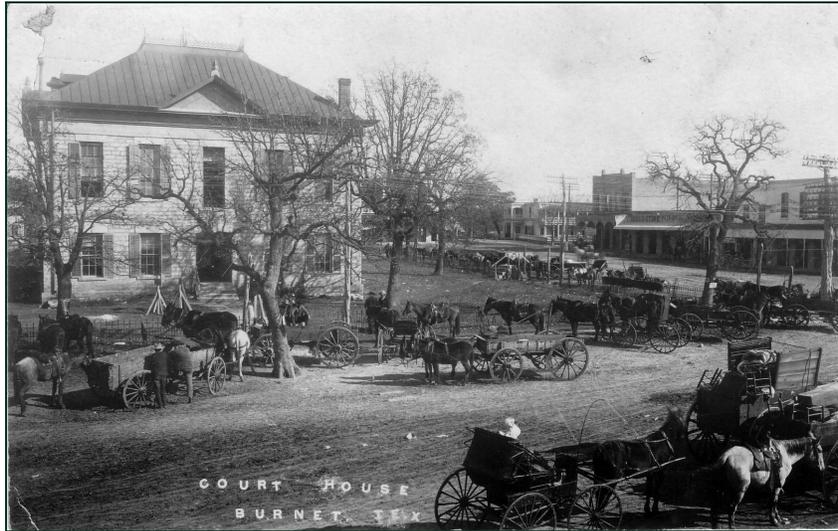


19 Wingren's Jewelry and then Wofford's Jewelry were located in this building. The jewelry vault is still there.



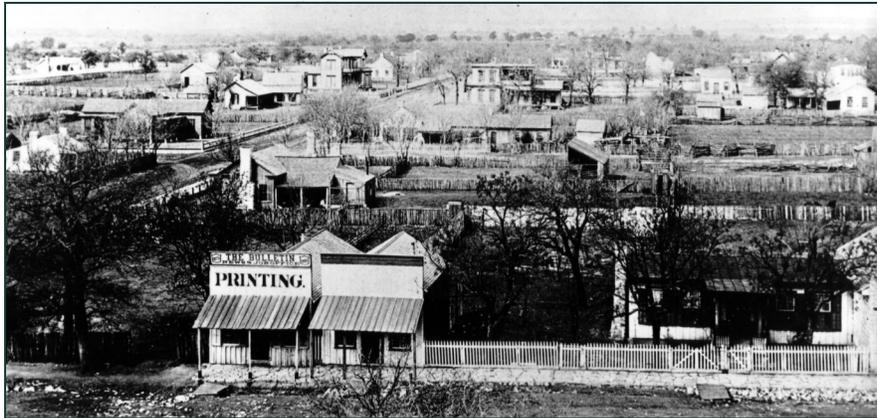
20 This building was formerly two separate buildings. The south side was the Grange Store in the 1880s and 1890s. Later it was occupied by A.J. Root Grocery, W.B. Carroll Grocery, Northington Furniture and Scoggins Furniture. The north side was Harris Service Station, then C.C. Rush Grocery, and then a restaurant.

Christmas Time, before electricity, saw the merchants put up Christmas trees along the sidewalks. The boys of the town would shoot fireworks from the tops of the buildings and often, roman candles along the sidewalks and streets to the great dismay of horses and riders alike.



Burnet has had three courthouses. The first was a small wooden structure which burned to the ground in 1874. The one shown here was the second courthouse which was torn down in 1936 to make room for the present larger and more “modern” courthouse. (see page 13.) Several buildings on the south side of the square can be seen in this courthouse photo. Circa 1880.

Holding Court— Legend has it that the first courthouse was set ablaze by some unscrupulous person to avoid being tried for crimes he had apparently committed. Despite his efforts, court was held under a tree on the courthouse lawn and justice was served.



One hundred years ago, the Burnet Bulletin was printed in a small office on the north side of the square, where the library sits today.

Washington Street

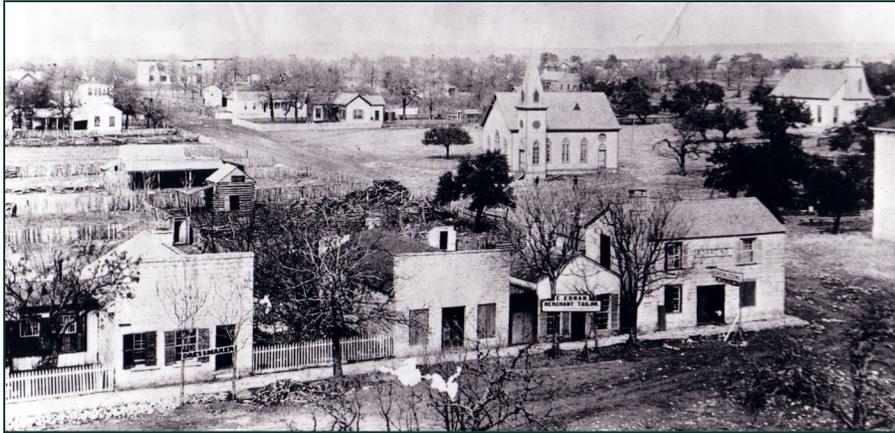
North Side of the Square—West to East



21 The lots now occupied by the Herman Brown Free Library formerly accommodated several businesses. The Ernest Craddock's Texaco station was on the corner for the early decades of the 20th century. Other businesses here included a café run by Ruth McPhaul Barnett and Connie McPhaul Wilson, an auto parts store run by J.C. Strahan, Malcolm Phillips' tailor shop and Haines' Men's Shop. A little farther east were the offices of Hammond & Hammond, Attorneys and the private home of the Crawford family. In 1945, Charlie Withers opened the Burnet County Supply hardware store which remained in business for sixty years.



22 On the east side of the block, now occupied by First State Bank of Burnet, were the Laymond Parks Red & White Grocery and the Texas Theater. Farther east were the office of Judge Cook (1890's), Texas Power & Light, Kenneth Williamson's Appliances, Lucile Eanes Frazier's Photography studio and Hale's State Farm office. On the corner were the Jones Hotel and the Garrett Hotel.

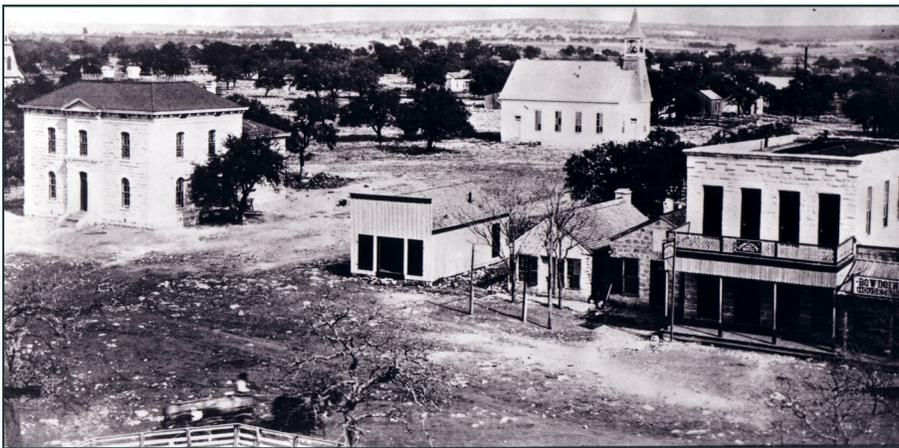


Looking north and east from the roof of the courthouse, the old hotel is visible on the corner.

23 The Burnet County Jail was built in 1884. It was the home of Burnet County's legendary sheriff, Wallace Riddell (who served from 1939 until 1978, the longest tenure of any American sheriff) and his family. A statue of Sheriff Riddell stands on the courthouse lawn.



It is reported that the prisoners used to say that the only good thing about being in jail was getting to eat Mrs. Riddell's cooking. (23)



The 1884 jail and three churches are visible in the block northeast of the square.

Pierce Street

East Side of the Square, North to South



24 The northern half of this building was once the Bunk Gibbs feed store and mill, then the Lohman Jennings feed store. The other side was the Vert Gibbs Grocery Store, then B. Pogue Grocery.



25 This building had its beginning in the 1880s as the Grand Central Hotel, then served as Mitzger's Auto Agency and S.H. (Pete) Elliott's Garage. The Brad Warden family lived upstairs.



26 Among many tenants of this building were; Debo's Coffee Shop, Edgar's Florist, Joe Edwards' Market and Leslie Norris' shoe repair shop.



27 This is the longtime site of the Burntex Theater, followed by Jordan Everett's Western Auto store. Oldsters tell us admission to the theatre was five cents or ten cents depending upon your height.



Burnet's First Baptist Church and east side of the square.

The Badger Building is visible in both this photo and the one at the bottom of the page. The picture at right is from the late 1800's.



28 Hubert Dickens built his auto showroom and garage here. It later became the A&P Grocery, then Bill's Dollar Store before recent renovations.



29 This building was Smith & Robinson's Hardware in the 1880s. It later was used by Louis Wagner as a grocery store then as Laymond Parks Red & White Grocery. It also served briefly as the Burnet Bulletin office.



30 The "Badger Building" has served in many capacities since it's construction in the early 1880s including; Smith & Robinson, L.L. Shipp's, Burnet National Bank and Burnet Post Office. Upstairs was the home for the telephone company and Dr. Asa Howell's office.



In the photo at right residents packed the courthouse square for "Trade Days," when a car was raffled off to some lucky Burnet resident.

It's said, that one winning resident, Harry Yoe, who didn't drive, promptly re-auctioned the vehicle at a nice profit.



Pierce Street - One Block South

One Block South of the Square on Pierce Street— West Side



31 The H.H. Calvert home. The first community well sat behind this structure. The well stone was moved to the grounds at the Fort Croghan Museum.



32 This 1854 stage stop, later the Calvert Hotel, was renovated and expanded by First State Bank president W.C. Galloway in the late 1800s and served as the family home.



33 The oldest stone commercial building in Burnet, this store and Masonic Lodge was built in 1854 by Logan Vandevveer, a hero of the Texas Revolution, Burnet's first postmaster and organizer of the County.



Judging by the team of oxen pulling the wagon, this photo in front of Logan Vandevveer's store was probably taken before the railroad was extended to Granite Mountain in 1884. Pink Granite for the state capitol was hauled to Burnet for finishing before shipment to Austin.

Main Street - One Block South

One Block South of the Square on Main Street—East Side

34 J.A. Kinkead built his Tin Shop in 1922. His will specifies that his name will never be removed from the front of the building.



35 This building housed Clyde Debo's bookkeeping tax service for many years and more recently, Ida Zula Faris' Antiques. Unfortunately, the building suffered extensive termite damage and was replaced in 2006. The footprint is the same as the original building.



36 The building located here was the former Burnet Post Office and also housed (at different times) Gene Russell's law office, and Leslie Schilling's Paint and Paper Shop.



The current courthouse was built in 1936. This structure was renovated in 2002 and the grounds were enlarged during the downtown renovation of 2005. *Listed on the National Register of Historic Places. Photo circa 1936.*

Main Street - One Block South Cont'd.

One Block South of the Square on Main Street — West Side



37 For 68 years, this 1882 building was Schnabel's Bakery and Grocery. Later it served as Castellaw's Bakery.



38 Formerly two separate buildings, the south side once housed Hern's Meat Market; the north side was Lindsey Fisher's Café, then L. Debo's Cowboy Café. The Triple K Printing and Office Supply was here during the 1970's.



39 The corner building has served as the H.C. Whitney Drugstore, O.O. Corker's Saloon, the office of the Burnet Bulletin and the Burnet Citizen office. The Kincheloe family had Burnet's only exercise center here for many years.

The Craddock House is rumored to be haunted by Mrs. Craddock's ghost. (42)



Southeast corner of the square (Circa 1890s)

Jackson Street - One Block East

One Block East of the Square on Jackson Street

Much of Jackson Street's history is lost, but it once was lined with thriving businesses (including several saloons and a grand opera house) from the train station to the square. The railroad depot currently welcomes the Hill Country Flyer, a vintage steam train that brings riders from Cedar Park to Burnet.

40 The vacant lot immediately to the south of the Badger Building formerly housed the Boyd Hotel, Burnet Hotel and then the David G. Burnet Hotel, this building also housed Jaehne's Café and a chiropractic office.



41 The "Castle House" was home to the Crawford and Simpson families before being converted to a gift shop and ice cream parlor and then an attorney's office.



42 The vacant lot at the corner of Vandevener and Jackson Street formerly housed a home built by A.R. Johnson around 1902, that was the Charlie Craddock home and chiropractic office. This home was relocated in 2015 to Airy Mount on Highway 29 East.



43 This small building (just south of the historical district) housed W.C. Galloway's electric plant, which powered lights on the Burnet square in 1917. It was purchased by Texas Power & Light in 1927 and provided electricity for Burnet until 1945.



The History Plaza

As a final part of the downtown renovation project, the City of Burnet developed the “History Plaza,” adjacent to the Burnet County Courthouse. The plaza, which features the town clock, offers a chronological story of the history of Burnet County. Visitors to the plaza can walk a pathway beginning at the entrance of the plaza,

through a winding labyrinth of history which completes at the front of the clock. Begin at the “START” brick and follow the path, staying on the red and pink bricks. (Don’t cross a grey brick or you will be off track.) The pink bricks have information regarding significant events in the county’s history. Visitors can also view the many commemorative bricks that were purchased to support the project which tell a tale all their own. The History Plaza is located on the south side of the Burnet County Courthouse.

The Life and Times

These accounts were reproduced from the [Jackson Street Mercantile: A History Illustrated](#), Texas Paper Moon Press, 1996.

Building 4: "...For over one hundred years this name [F.W. King] has beckoned from the high pediment atop the building ... on the south side of the square. Mr. King ... was a prominent merchant in the early days of our little township. With business booming, Mrs. Leta S. King worked alongside her husband and added a millenary shop in the same store building. ...Just as everything appeared rosy for the Kings, a clatter arouse concerning one of Mr. King's enterprises, a cedar yard on the outskirts of town. The town fathers thought it unwise to have stores of dry cedar so close to the town proper. These charges seemed unfounded to Mr. King, and the matter lay unresolved until..... FIRE! A fire raged through the cedar yard. After the incident, Mr. King thought it best to leave Burnet and seek his destiny anew. He chose to start a new cedar yard, which became a thriving concern, some miles north of Austin in what is now known as Cedar Park".

Building 42: "In 1919, upon the nearing of half century in existence, the grand old house at Jackson and Boundary received a young and lively noise in the form of the quick witted couple, Charles and Nora Craddock. ...The Craddocks had ...for some time, rented the upstairs rooms to boarders, often young school teachers, who were treated with the same jocularly as was commonly produced by the couple. On one particular evening, not long after the war, the Craddocks were entertaining as was their habit. Miss Arlee, a young school teacher, departed her room upstairs to attend an engagement with her young man to whom she would later be married. The young couple were having such a delightful time that it was well into the evening when she returned home. She crept upstairs as quietly as she was able so as not to disturb the slumbering guests. Upon attempting to open her door, she discovered that it seemed to be stuck. Utterly perplexed, she gave the door a not so gentle shove in order to dislodge it. As this was done, a thunderous crash, emanated from her room, shattering the dark silence! In dismay, she pushed past the now ajar door and flicked on the light in order to see what could have made such a racket. It appeared that all of her possessions, saving those terribly fragile, had been carefully piled against her door. Now knowing that Charly Craddock was a devoted practical joker, she was certain this was his doing. Just then, a call of mock concern from the culprit himself, "Miss Arlee, you alright?" "Yes, Mr. Craddock, I'm fine", she answered, determined to sound completely composed. As she lay in bed that night, she marveled at the steps taken to pull off this little trick. After the trap was set it would have been necessary to leave the room through a window. She vowed not to be outdone, she would be as clever as her foe. But how? In a flash it came to her. The next morning saw the usual goings on of the Craddock household. ...Soon, the clapping of Charley Craddock's footsteps cross the foyer's wood floor could be heard along with the opening of the little closet door where his lab coats were stored. A slight grumble was followed by louder growls of consternation as he tried on each of this lab coats in turn. Nora assured him that neither she nor the cleaners were responsible for fact that the right sleeve on each of his lab coats had been sewn shut at the cuff.

...Much to her delight, Miss Arlee heard the bemused bellow, "Miss Arlee, come down here and fix my coats!" ...Special thanks to Mrs. Arlee Barton whose personal accounts were instrumental in the telling of this story".



The First Power Plant in Burnet, Texas

On July 3rd, 1916, the City Council of the City of Burnet moved to allow W. C. Galloway to commence the work of erecting an electric plant, giving him twelve months to get the system in place. Galloway was the Fire Marshal at the time at a monthly rate of \$2.50. Ordinance Number 105 helped bring Burnet into the 20th century by granting W.C. Galloway a fifty year exclusive franchise for the purpose of installing the system in the City.

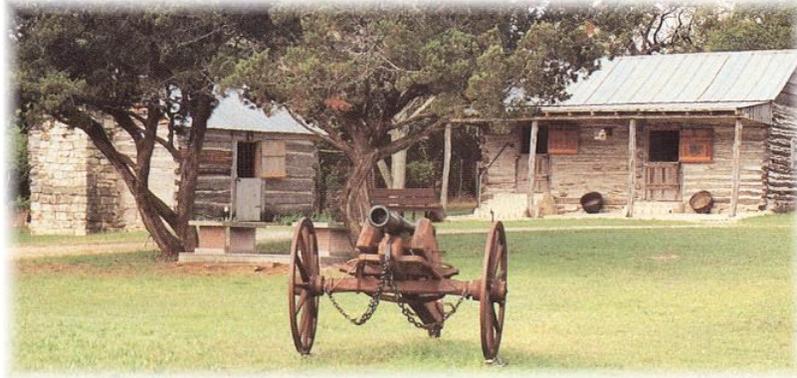
According to Mrs. Box ...

The following was relayed by Mrs. Lou Helen McFarland Box (born 7/22/1905) to Perry Goble (Electric Superintendent for the city at the time), on February 14, 2001.

Mr. W. C. Galloway and Mr. Oscar Meeks had the idea of a little light plant. Mrs. Box's father, Samuel McFarland, and Mr. Galloway were good friends. They were talking about starting the light plant and her father bought a book from a bookstore on South Congress. The book showed how to wire buildings among other things. Oscar Marek borrowed the book to see how to wire the light plant. They bought two dynamo engines. One was the lead dynamo and one was for back up. The backup sat outside the building. Mr. Marek was responsible for keeping the plant going. He had a helper. Mr. Galloway was the financial backer on the project.

They divided the town into four sections, North, South, East and West, and ran the wiring. During the daytime, they had current for each section of the town to run one day of the week in that section. For example, the North had current on Monday, and the West had current on Tuesday. If you were lucky enough to have an electric iron, you could iron only on your designated day. In the evenings the electricity would be turned on at dark and remain on until 10:00 p.m. They would let the town know that it was time to turn off the lights by flashing them three times. After the third flash the lights would go out. You had to burn an oil lamp if you wanted to stay up later than that. Over time, people began to get electric iceboxes but they were very small. Mrs. Box related that her family did not have an electric icebox. They bought ice that had been shipped in from Lampasas to a little icehouse in Burnet.

Mrs. Box noted that the advent of electricity changed her family's life considerably. They didn't have to fill the lamps and clean the lamp chimneys to start with. The light was much brighter than the oil lamps. At first they had just a single bulb in one room of the house but eventually got a fixture for the dining room. It was "wonderful" she reported.



Origins of a county: Fort Croghan

After the annexation of Texas to the United States in the 1840's, the federal government became responsible for the protection of the frontier settlers from Indian raids. Several companies of Texas Rangers were stationed along the frontier. In December of 1847 a company commanded by Henry E. McCulloch established what became known as McCulloch's Station. The station was chosen as a fort on March 13, 1849. Company A of the Second Dragoons took over their new assignment on March 18th when the site officially became a federal fort and was named Fort Croghan, in honor of Col. George Croghan, a hero at the battle of Fort Stephenson in the War of 1812. In 1852 the fort became the headquarters of the Second Dragoons.

Today, Fort Croghan is representative of those early days of what was to become Burnet, Texas featuring a series of authentic buildings including a blacksmith's shop, a one room school house, a powder house, a stage coach stop, lookout tower, and several homestead cabins. The museum is adjacent to the grounds and offers over 1200 historic artifacts from in and around the Burnet County area. The museum is located on Highway 29 West about 1.5 miles west of the intersection of Hwy. 281. The Fort Croghan Museum and Grounds are open April through August, Thursday through Saturday, from 10 a.m. until 5 p.m. Visit www.fortcroghan.org for info.

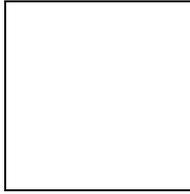
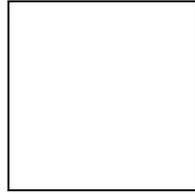




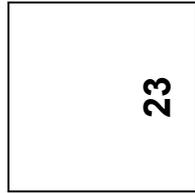
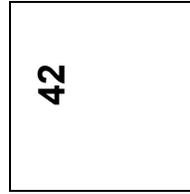
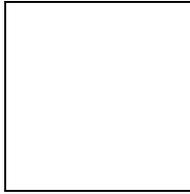
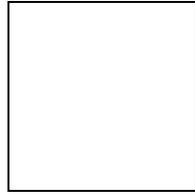
Burnet Historic District

Highway 29

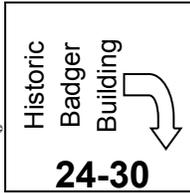
Highway 281



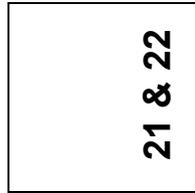
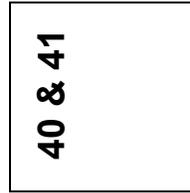
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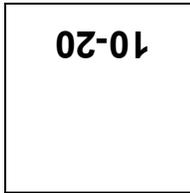
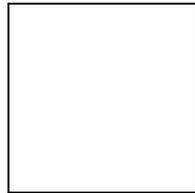
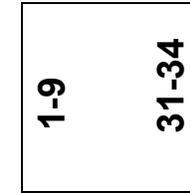
Washington Street



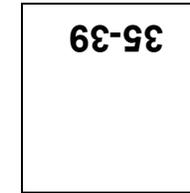
Jackson Street



Pierce Street



Main Street



*Prepared by the City of Burnet Historical Board.
Our deepest appreciation to Mr. Darrell Debo for
all his assistance in this endeavor.*