

3/30/66

Conversation with Mrs. Catherine Bannister

1907 - Houston - Brownsville R.R. bought Sweeney town site from William Sweeney

1837 - John Sweeney, Jr., Mrs. Bannister's grandfather bought the north  $\frac{1}{3}$  of the Pelly & Chance league. (Pelly & Chance were surveyors for Austin and took land as pay) His commissary served as local post office and was known as Chances Prairie. Mail was delivered by rider from East Columbia who spent night at the Sweeney Plantation. He went on to Matamoros. Spent night there and came back in 1943 DPC plant built and a post-office was needed. Established in 1949. Moved to present location in 1949. (his gin is where our club house is)

1833 - John Sweeney, Sr. with 5 sons & 2 daughters moved from Tenn. He and first come in 1831 to look over situation. Settled just across from present cemetery. One daughter died just after arrival and was buried in present cemetery.

He came to Texas with 250 slaves

Came in at night to avoid the 50¢ head  
tax charged by Spaniards

1837- McGrew Bend Methodist church McGrew  
Bend road post cemetery past Mrs. John Danner  
house. Church in that vicinity. On to E  
Columbia. Ferry just down stream of  
present bridge. Present bridge is 3rd at  
about that site

#### MRS BANNISTER AGE 14 (ABOUT 1912) RIDES HER HORSE OLD OCEAN TO SWEENEY TO GET THE MAIL

"When I was about fourteen and still  
having boy-friends, I had them write me  
care of the Sweeney post-office. My uncle  
(William Sweeney) was post master and the po  
office was in a corner of the Smith sto

"One day I rode my horse into Sweeney,  
stopped off at the store and asked Mr.  
Travis Smith if there was any mail  
for me. Mr. Smith was an awful sour  
puss who never smiled except for business  
reasons. As he was sorting through the  
letters, I thought I saw one addressed to  
me. I put my hand on it to make sure.  
Mr. Smith slapped my hand and exclaimed

"Got your hands off the United States  
mail?"

"That made me so mad that I hit him across the face with my riding crop so hard he couldn't see.

"'I'm going to report you!'" he cried

"'All right' I said, 'My uncle's the post master.'

"I remember my father was so ashamed of what I did, but at the time I didn't

#### HOMLIEST WOMAN IN BRAZORIA COUNTY JILTS WILLIAM SWEENEY 1855-1923

He (William Sweeney) was not a moral man. But maybe he had a reason. He was engaged to the homeliest woman in Brazoria County; her name was Lanna Black. William was always a handsome figure of a man, dressed fit to kill, and drove a high-wheeled buggy with a matched pair. I remember him looking like a typical southern plantation owner; high stiff collar, white suit, broad brimmed hat and smoking a cigar stuck in a pipe.

Well, anyway, just three days before the marriage, she threw him over and married his cousin George Sweeney. He was absolutely crushed. He swore he would never have anything to do with a white woman as long as he lived. They were not to be trusted.

When Mamma heard about this, she swore she would never speak to him again if it was true. And she almost never did. It was thirty years before she ever said 'hello' to him.

But he adored Mamma. For that matter

everybody did, even if she was as mean as  
hell. He died intestate so she would be  
included as his heir. After he died, I  
went to his house at Black's Ferry. Most  
of the stuff had already been carried away.  
In his little office, back of his bedroom,  
I found every newspaper clipping that even  
mentioned Mamma.

Conversation with Mrs. Hemmister  
7/29/66

Mrs. J. R. Smith  
10/2/66

I don't want this to get back to Katherine Bannister because she is so proud of her ancestors. She has a right to know. Most of the Sweeneys were good solid citizens. But Ed Sweeney was the dirtiest old drunk you ever did see.

One day he rode his old gray horse into town and right at the turnaround, he pulled out his gun and began shooting and yelling.

Mr. Smith, Randolph and I were standing on the porch of the store and Mr. Smith said "Randolph, go take Ed's gun away from him."

I had just been married a short while and thought Randolph was kind of precious, so I said "If you want his gun, why don't you go get it yourself?"

But Randolph walked over to him and said "Give me your gun, Ed."

Old Ed climbed down off his horse, drunk he could hardly stand up, and threw his arms around Randolph and said "Randolph, you know I'd give you anything you asked for." So, he

took off his gun belt and gave it to Randolph.

Randolph got him back on his horse and had old Ezi Grims, a colored man with one leg shorter than the other who used to run errands for us, to take him home.

There were seven bridges between Sweeney and Old Ocean. They were made out of live oak and had railings. Every time Ed went home, he managed to knock the railing off one bridge.

Another time we were going to West Columbia. When we got to the river, there were cars lined up on both sides. Randolph just pulled around them to see what was the matter. There was old Ed Sweeney in the middle of the bridge. Every time a car would start to cross, he would make his horse rear up and stop it. Randolph said "What in the world are you doing, Ed?"

And Ed said, "Why Randolph, if you want across, go right ahead."

But after we had crossed, I looked back, and there was Ed still blocking traffic.

ROSCOE

Maxey Brooke

Cathy Lewis, girl reporter extraordinaire, called me one morning.

"You're supposed to be an authority on Sweeny. I want to test you."

"Shoot."

"A friend of mine has written a book about her father, Roscoe Cade, who is supposed to live in Sweeny. Do you know him?"

"The name is familiar, but I don't know anything about him. But I could ask around, if you like."

"Would you? And call me back?"

"A pleasure."

"Thank you. G'bye."

That afternoon, I made a short safari around town. My first stop was the Post Office. Mrs. Alexander was at the desk.

"Do you know Roscoe Cade?" I asked.

"Do I know Roscoe Cade. I should think I do!"

"Tell me about him."

"Well, let me see. He's kinda tall and skinny. He doesn't have a tooth in his head and he's deaf as a post. He reminds me of my grandfather, always telling stories, and he's pretty plain spoken. I mean, he uses a lot of very crude words. He lives over on Pecan Street and has a hog farm out at Hasima. It's one of the more fragrant places in Braxoria County.

Roscoe 2

"He comes in here two or three times a week. Since his wife died, about a year ago, he spends most of his time at Milt's Minimart. You need to talk with Britten Sewell."

I went on to the garage and asked Leo Findley,

"What do you know about Roscoe Cade?"

"Oh, he's about eighty-five and lives a couple blocks from here. He spends most of his time over at Milt's Minimart. Before his wife died, last year, he spent a lot of his time at his hog farm.

"He's got a boy, Lee, who used to work for Phillips and lives over in Brazoria now. I think the old man used to be in the trucking business.

"He wears a hearing aid and pretends to be deaf. But I think he hears everything he wants to hear. He's always telling some story or other. If you want to know about Roscoe Cade, talk to Brittan Sewell."

And so it went. Everyone I talked to agreed that he was always telling a story. But, when asked about them, not one person could remember a single story that Roscoe Cade told.

## WHILE HIS STORIES ARE FORGOTTEN, HIS STORY IS NOT. RIP



Birth: Aug. 26, 1896  
Brownsboro  
Henderson County  
Texas, USA

Death: Nov. 13, 1993  
Sweeny  
Brazoria County  
Texas, USA

Graveside services for Roscoe Cade, 98, of Sweeney were held Monday 2 p.m. at the Sweeny Cemetery with Doyle W. McCarney officiating.

Mr. Cade died Saturday, November 13, 1993 at the Sweeny House.

Burial was in the Sweeny Cemetery.

Survivors include a son, Lee and Irene Cade of Cold Springs; a daughter, Bonnie and John McLaren of Trinity; a brother Roy Cade of Houston and eleven grandchildren.

Maxey Brooks wrote articles about many ole time people of Sweeny, one of which was Roscoe Cade in his later years.

Maxey reminded us that Roscoe lived on an extension of Staggs Road that followed the railroad toward Hasema and had a hog farm there where he took the left-over food from all three school cafeterias and fed it to his hogs.

If you saw Roscoe in Sweeny he remaindered you of Jeb Clampett on the TV Series "Hollywood Hillbillies".

According to his obituary Roscoe was born on the 26<sup>th</sup> of August of 1896 in Brownsboro, Henderson County, Texas, the son of John Wesley Cade and Mittie Holiman. Roscoe died in Sweeny, at the Sweeny House on the 13<sup>th</sup> of November 1993 and is buried in the Sweeny Cemetery next to his wife Gladys who passed away 6 years earlier.

Survivors include a son, Lee and Irene Cade who had two children that attended Sweeny High School. A daughter, Bonnie and husband John McLaren who were living in Trinity during the time of Roscoe's death.

Roscoe's family goes back nine generations to Robert Cade when he arrived in Virginia in 1647. "The Cade Chronicles" by Robert Talley, describe the family in great detail including the American Revolution in Georgia.<sup>a</sup>

Unanswered question....Where is the book the friend wrote about Roscoe?

"A friend of mine has written a book about her father, Roscoe Cade, who is supposed to live in Sweeny. Do you know him?"

## ROVER THE RACCOON FUNNY STORY

Roy Payne  
18 Dec 87

### Rover

Bernie and Betty Calhoun, Betty & R.C. Culpepper, Wayne & Davis Cunningham, Warren & Francis Hightower, Geneva and I had been invited by Bill and Katherine Massey for a little pre-Christmas get-together.

While the girls were in one room discussing grandchildren, us guys were in another room talking old times. This is Warren's tale.

I was working on one of Jim Abercrombie's rigs. Bobby Nairn was just a kid but he used to prow the woods with a twenty-two hunting coons and bullfrogs. One night he came out to the rig to show us a coon he had caught and named. This gave some of the guys an idea.

We had a pet coon named Rover, which we kept in a cage. Every time they came off tour, the drillers and roughnecks would stop and pet Rover.

One evening, we decided to play a prank. We took Rover out of the cage and substituted a wild coon. Everybody knew except Roy Payne.

When Roy passed the cage and reached in to pet Rover, the wild coon bit him on the thumb.

"What's the matter with you, Rover?" Roy exclaimed, jerking back his hands.

The coon said nothing.

Roy reached in again to pet him. This

time the coon clamped down on his thumb and wouldn't let go. When Ray jerked his hand out, he brought the coon with it.

"Rever, cut it out? Rever, let go?"

Ray yelled. He said other things less printable,

The coon wouldn't let go until Ray put his foot on him, grabbed him by the jaws, and forced them open.

While Ray was sucking his thumb and cussing, the coon took off for the woods. That was the last we saw of him.

## ME AND BUCKSHOT LANE

During his tenure, T.W. Buckshot Lane of Wharton County, was the most famous sheriff in Texas. His exploits have been chronicled in the Saturday Evening Post, Time, and Readers Digest. He wrote a column for the Houston Post and was in demand as a public speaker. (When he finished his political career, he went on the professional public speaking circuit.)

I had been told that he was called "Buckshot" because of his bumpy little eyes. But Leon Hale says it was his real name.

The Sweeney P.T.A. invited him to debate the subject, "Juvenile Delinquency; Heredity or Environment". I don't remember who was to be his opponent. But whoever it was, he or she backed out. I was drafted at the last minute.

Buckshot took the heredity side. He told of many instances of criminals being raised in good Christian homes by good Christian parents. Since they were raised in a Christian environment, the trouble must be heredity.

I said many of these good Christian parents were hypocrites, disobeying speed laws, cheating on income tax, lying when it was profitable. If children saw their parents disobeying the law, how could they be expected to respect it.

On rebuttal, Buckshot told more stories and implied that, as a lawman, he knew more about the subject than a mere chemist.

Just then, a deputy stuck his head in the door.  
"Sheriff," he said, "there's a call for you on  
the radio."  
"Excuse me," said Buckshot, and rushed out  
to the car. In a couple of minutes he was back.  
"Sorry, folks. I just had an emergency  
call and I've got to leave. Thanks for inviting  
me." And he was gone.  
Immediately, the audience began to talk and  
trickle out.  
I never did get to make my rebuttal.



**James Brooke** Thanks for posting....I hadn't seen most of that particular text before, but my dad had so many notebooks around. Did this come from the library in Sweeny? I know that when my folks moved to Dallas, they really cleaned house on a lot of things, including those notebooks. The ones he kept, I got after he passed in 1995. This group of notebooks he titled "But Liars Figure", turning the phrase "Figures never lie", and they are pretty dry reading unless you happen to be interested in Crypt Arithmetic, Fibanoci numbers, odd sequencing, pyramidic equations, etc. I'm sure his book "Problems in Crypt Arithmetic" was sourced from these notebooks.

12 hrs · Unlike ·  3



**Basil Shannon** James Brooke, this was found in records of the long since disbanded Sweeny Historical Society by Bill Long. Hope we find more of your dad's work around town.

Just now · Like

