

Traveling the Roads of West Texas

By Missy Cox Jones

My mother and father, Minnie Steward Cox and William Cornelius Cox moved from Comanche County, Texas to West Texas, near Big Spring, Knott, Ackerly and Stanton in the early 1920's. My dad's brother and his family, Joe and Linnie Barker Cox had moved from Comanche County several years earlier and were farming and doing really well. So, my parents and my brother, Wilburn Cox, born in 1915 and my sister, Geneva Cox, born in 1919, moved there also.

They all talked a lot about living in West Texas. They had good neighbors, and made friends. They had a Ford Touring Car, maybe 1927 or 1928, and made many trips from West Texas back to Comanche to visit family. One thing they talked a lot about, many of the roads in West Texas were not paved. They remembered one stretch of road in particular. This was known as the "Iatan Flat". Now, it didn't rain very much out in West Texas, but when it did, this road was almost impassable. It was not paved, and was about 12 or 14 miles long. They talked a lot about this. Everybody who lived out West at that time knew about this stretch of road.

They lived near Knott, Ackerly and Stanton, and in 1930, when I was born; they were living 24 miles from Big Spring, Texas. This was getting into the depression years and the years of the bad dust storms. All of a sudden, the good times were gone. They talked about being unable to give away crops that they had harvested.

One time Mama and Daddy talked about was when they were dressed up and going to town. Sometimes they went shopping in Big Spring, and sometimes they went to shop in Midland. Anyway, they were going down the highway and my Daddy was driving the car. There was a woman hitchhiking on the side of the road. Daddy stopped and picked this lady up. She set in the back seat with Wilburn and Geneva. Daddy said he could see her in his rear view mirror, and she was getting a "five o'clock shadow". Now, daddy didn't know what was going on, but he knew this was bad news. Mama said he managed to knock his hat off, and he asked this "lady" to get it for him. When she got out of the car, Daddy speeded up and they left her behind. Mama said he lost a brand new John B Stetson hat, but they considered they got out of this just fine. No telling what this "person" was up to, probably to rob them and take the car.