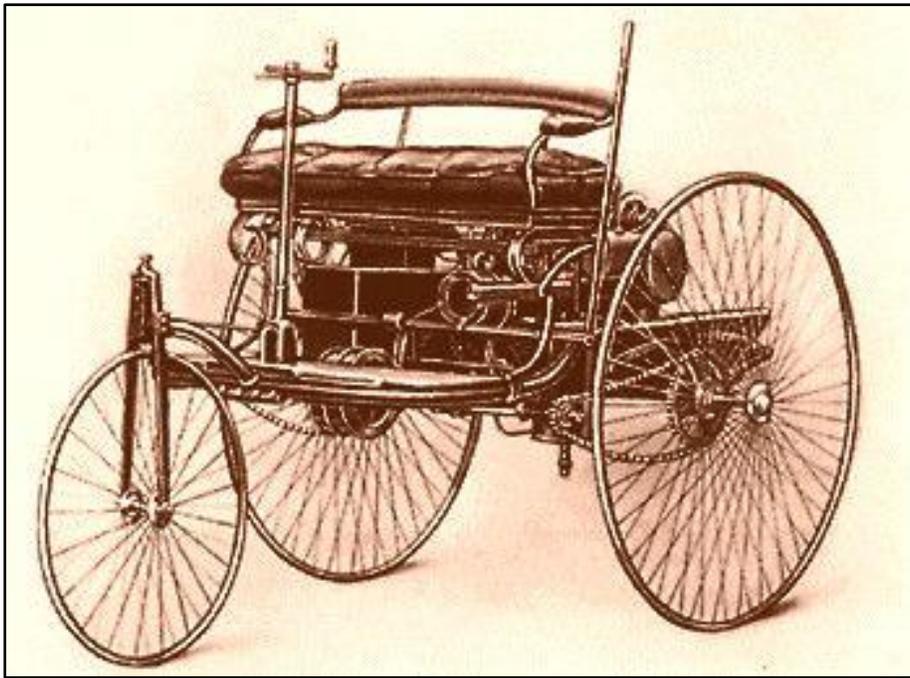


# History of Automobiles And Highways In Brown County



By Frank T. Hilton



**1910 Model T**

Forward

This is a chronological date listing of the history of the automobiles and highways in Brown County from the first car to reach Brownwood until the present time. It is an evolving timeline in that dates will be added, information corrected, photos added, as additional data is discovered. The information on the front page will give you the date this timeline was last updated. This document is provided in a searchable pdf format.

Please send any corrections or additions to: [hilton17@web-access.net](mailto:hilton17@web-access.net)

Information for this timeline was taken from many different sources. That includes the Brownwood Bulletin, The Daily Bulletin, The Brownwood Banner, The Lorene Bishop Collection, various historical books published by the Brown County Historical Society, individual published documents, pamphlets, the Internet, Brownwood Area Chamber of Commerce, Early Chamber of Commerce, and other places, too numerous to mention here. We especially want to thank Anne L. Cook, Photo Librarian, CMD-Media Production, Texas Department of Transportation, for her help with photos and the History of TxDOT.

All rights are reserved by the author. Profits from this book will go to the Pecan Valley Genealogy Society to further the research for the history of Brown County and its people.

Updated  
March 31, 2014

## Early Days of Transportation

Before 1870, the main way of going from one place to another out of Brown County was by horse, buggy, wagon or Stage.

1870 – Chidester Stage Company established a stage coach line between Brownwood and Fort Worth. It left Ft. Worth daily at 9 a.m. and reached Brownwood the following morning at 7 am. From Ft. Worth to Coleman they had a four –horse stage. They pick up new horses about every 15 miles, at Bluff Dale, Stephenville, Dublin, Hasse, Comanche and Blanket on their way to Brownwood. This stage line went from St. Louis through North Texas to El Paso and on to San Francisco. Ceased in 1881



From the pages of the *Fort Worth Gazette* February 19, 1884

November 15, 1883 – There were several stage lines in operation to and from Brown County, according to the *Austin Weekly Statesman*.

### **Brownwood and Cisco Line**

The Brownwood and Cisco Line ran daily (except Sunday) between Cisco, on the Texas and Pacific railroad and Brownwood. It carried the mail and express matter, and easy riding coaches, and frequent changes of horses. Left Brownwood at 6 a.m., and Cisco at 6 a.m., connecting with the east and west bound passenger trains. Chanler, Harryman & Hall are the proprietors.

### **Brownwood and Comanche Line**

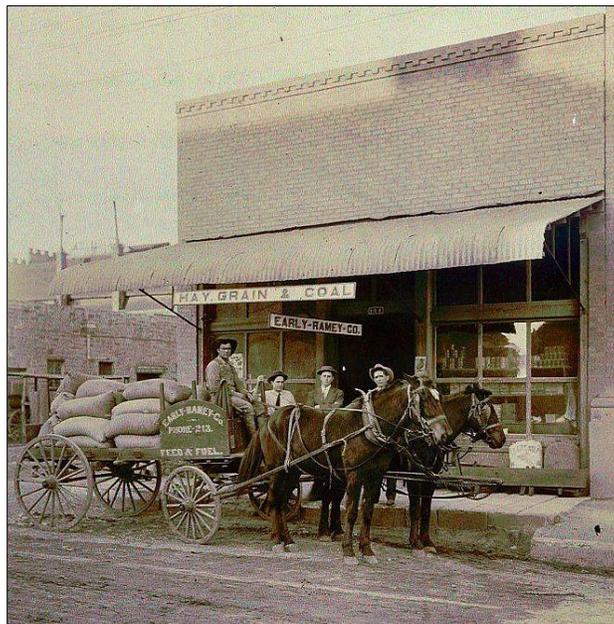
Connected with daily stage from DeLeon, on the Houston and Texas Central railroad, at Comanche, sixteen miles from the railroad. Travelers coming to Brownwood on this line could stop over night at Comanche and start for Brownwood the following morning. Commodious hacks are run and quick time is made. W. B. Carlock is the proprietor and manager.

### **Brownwood and Coleman Line**

It was a tri-weekly stage line and left Brownwood via Thrifty and Camp Colorado on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 7 a.m. returning alternate days, through fair, \$2.50. Comfortable hacks, fast time and a jolly good driver are descriptive of this route. Owner and manager was John Hunter.

December 31, 1885 - Railroad line from Goldthwaite to Brownwood placed in operation by the Gulf, Colorado & Santa Fe Railway. First locomotive that pulled into Brownwood was Engine 37. Passenger service to Brownwood came with the first train into Brownwood on December 31, 1885 by the Gulf Colorado & Santa Fe Railway. The first passenger was Dr. James Johnson. There was daily service between Brownwood and Lampasas. The Fort Worth & Rio Grande completed its tracks from Fort Worth to Brownwood on July 1, 1891. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

January 11, 1886 - The Santa Fe Road commenced running regular trains to Brownwood on a Sunday. There would be but one passenger train each way daily. Two freight trains would run daily each way and carry passengers. The passenger train left Brownwood at 6:30 a.m. and arrived at Temple at 11:15 p.m. The passenger train from Brownwood connected with the main line train for Galveston at Temple. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



**1890 - Early Ramsey Company**

Little did the public know, in that day and time, that a new invention would make all former means of transportation a thing of the past. The automobile would eventually come of its own and the primary means of transportation in Brownwood in just 30 years. And with the automobile, came the improvement of the highways.

The first automobiles to be built in the United States were in the 1890s. Charles and Frank Duryea brought out their horseless carriage in 1894. Alexander Winton produced his in 1896. Henry Ford's first car, an experimental model appeared in 1907.



Courtesy of TxDOT

Before the turn of the century, Texas roads remained dirt wagon tracks without so much as gravel or grading, no better than they had been in the Spanish era. By 1895, the Office of Road Inquiry (part of the U. S. Department of Agriculture) commission's report stated, among other conclusions, that Texas had made less progress toward good roads than any other state. The Texas legislature was spurred to action, funding the first use of tax dollars to improve Texas roads, including the first maps, drainage ditches, and mile markers.

August 15, 1895 - "Brownwood should make an extra effort to secure a large cotton trade this fall. This can only be done by keeping the roads leading to our city in good condition. Report are coming in that a number of Brownwood roads are in very bad shape, and the proper authorities should see that they are remended." (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

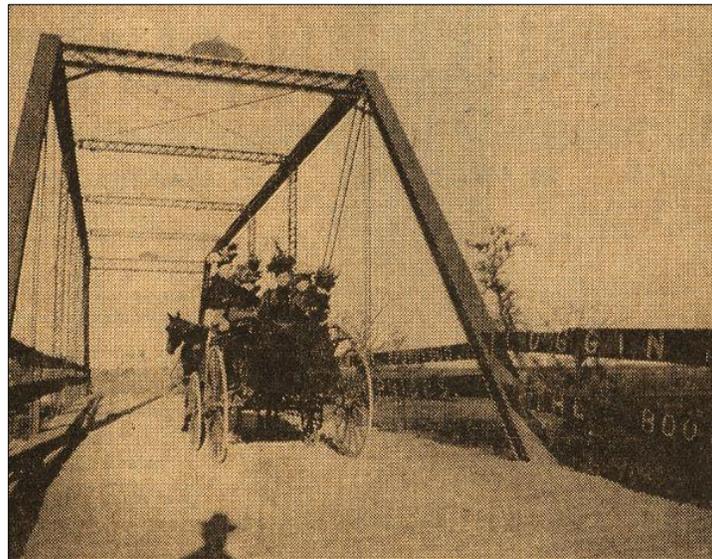
August 16, 1895 - "Mr. John T. Creech, who has been out of the country a great deal lately, comments on the projections at places in the roads leading in almost every direction (out of Brownwood) and suggests that the business men of the town get together and have these places improved by moving the rocks." (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

October 17, 1895 - "How does Brownwood ever hope to gain trade when the roads leading into the town are in such bad condition? There was a mud hole on the Cisco road near the railroad crossing in which six wagons are stalled Monday week at one time. There was no way to pass this hole and to get to town from that part of the country people had to go through it. It is a shame that Brown County can't keep decent roads on which her people are to travel." (*Subscriber The Bulletin*)



**Highways outside Brownwood were mostly just dirt roads.  
(Courtesy of TxDOT)**

December 5, 1895 – “Complaints are heard every day about the condition of the roads leading to Brownwood. Our commissioners are too busy to heed the calls made on them.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



**Pecan Bayou Bridge**

1898 - A wagon loaded with pretty girls crosses the old Pecan Bayou Bridge on the Comanche highway near Brownwood in this 1898 photo. The bridge was on the road extending from South Broadway via the pecan station to the Fort Worth highway in Early. (Photo by Jack Bell)

In 1899, Colonel Ned Green, son of the wealthy heiress Hetty Green, imported the first car to Texas. Green raced the car through the streets of Terrell at a terrifying 15 miles per hour, but outside of the town he wasn't so lucky: the 30-mile trip from Terrell to Dallas took five hours.

“Colonel Ned Green was formerly president and principal owner of the Texas Midland railroad. Mr. Green purchased the auto at the world’s fair in St. Louis and had it freighted to Terrell. An expert came with the car to operate it.

“After the car had been about Terrell for a time Col. Green decided on a trip to Dallas. Of course the car scared many teams and caused many runaways. Suits for damages aggregating \$85, 000 were filed against Col. Green by owners of teams and vehicles. Mr. Green actually paid \$5,000 damages.”  
(January 1927 – *Frontier Times Magazine*)

It would be another three years before the second car arrived in Texas, purchased as a company vehicle for the Texas & Pacific Railroad. By 1903, there were enough cars in Texas to stage the first road race, in which enthusiasts raced the 45 miles from Fort Worth to Dallas with a rather impressive winning time of one hour and 35 minutes.

The early vehicles required patience, tinkering, and a high level of mechanical skill. Automobile buffs were regarded by most Texans as wealthy eccentrics, or as one official in Grayson County put it, “road hogs and speed cranks.” (*Good Roads for Texas, Texas Highway Department*)

1901 - An automobile was a curiosity in most the big cites of Texas. Even in 1905 the people in many Texas counties had never seen what was know as the horseless carriage. The car was considered a rich man’s toy and too expensive for most people but men enjoyed looking and watching the car in operation. Some thought them to be a nuisance on the roads and street because their noise, while in operation, would scare the horses. Men said that the women would never be able to drive a car.  
(*Scrapbook Column, Brownwood Bulletin May 7, 2000*)



**1903 Cadillac**

William Nelson Adams was reputed to have owned one of the first automobile in Brownwood, a 1903 Cadillac Touring Car. He served as Sheriff of Brown County and later was elected as a Texas State Senator in 1908. (*Hank LaRowe*)

### Henry Ford's First Attempt

Henry Ford's first attempt at a car company under his own name was the Henry Ford Company on November 3, 1901, which became the Cadillac Motor Company on August 22, 1902, after Ford left with the rights to his name. *(From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)*



Albert S. Stephenson straddles his motorcycle in this 1905 photograph to carry mail along two rural mail routes plus three routes within Brownwood each day. *(Brownwood Bulletin, As We Were)*



1906 REO sold my Lee and Ed Hall

The Klaxon Company put the first motor driven automobile horn on the market in 1903.



“The first type of hand-operated automobile horn was a kind of reed and bulb instrument, working somewhat on the principle of the organ. The vibration was produced by means of a nickel strip. The sound lacked penetration and had no continuous volume. This was before the days of the lead storage battery.

“The second type of horn was of the buzzer variety—electrical—operated by a dry cell much after the principle

of the door bell.

“Then came the motor driven horn tied in great measure to the development of the starting, lighting and ignition systems for automobiles which depended upon the storage battery.

“The general widespread use of the automobile horn today, which is made compulsory in most States, is due to its great usefulness in preventing accidents and to accelerate the flow of traffic on our congested highways.

“The safety first movement, which started because of the mutilation of hands and fingers and loss of eyes in our great industrial factories and loss of life at steam railway crossings, gave impetus to the use of the automobile horn.

Today human life is safeguarded as never before in the history of the world. The motor driven automobile horn has taken its place among the great warning devices of the world due to the increasing traffic on our highways and byways.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*, May 19, 1923)

The *Brownwood Daily Bulletin* stated that on January 16, 1907, that “Brownwood only had two automobiles. She now had four and the indications are that many new ones will be brought here in the near future.

“The price of the machines is getting reasonable enough to allow a man of ordinary means to enjoy one and Lee and Ed Hall think that before many months are passed there will be no less than twenty of the cars in use in Brownwood.

“At least three merchants are considering the question of installing automobile delivery service and as soon as figures can be obtained the matter will be decided.”

1907 – “The automobile industry was first introduced in Brownwood in 1907. Ira W. Hall, owner of a Cadillac, recorded registry number one. The dates of the first registers made in the brown County are not given on the books of the county clerk, nor is the name and value of the cars. The record show, however, that Cadillacs were the leaders in the field here when the business was first opened up in this county. Some of the Cadillacs first bought here are still in service, notably among them being No. 4. bought by Guy T. Hutcheson; this car is still in splendid condition, and owing to the good care given it, still looks like a new one and pulls the grades on high. ‘True Love,’ another ‘one-lung,’ registered by M. J. Hall is No. 6, is well known to everybody in town.

“In the early days of the industry here the leading cars sold were Cadillacs, Maxwells, Overlands, Buicks and Auburns. Several of the old-time cars are still running, attesting the sturdy strength manufactured into the first machines places on the market.

“Fords began selling here rapidly in 1912, and since that time have led the local field, as well as elsewhere.

“There were several automobiles in use in this county before the registration of motor vehicles became compulsory. The records of the first cars bought here are therefore not complete. It is remembered that among the first machines, however, was a big red White steamer, bought by C. H. Bencinl, who was mayor of Brownwood at that time. The first machines were viewed with great curiosity by the natives, who were almost afraid to accept and invitation to take a joy ride. There has been a remarkable recovery from this condition, however, the streets of the city now being lined with cars every day. As one farmer sized up the situation, ‘there are so many automobiles along the sidewalks now that there is no place to tie a horse.’” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*, February 13, 1916)

#### **Ada’s First Ride**

In the Life and Lives of Brown County People, Pioneer Women in Brown County 1856-1976, Book 22, written by Tessica Martin, page 21:

“Ada’s first ride in an automobile was in Brownwood, and it ended, as she wrote, ‘By walking home.’ The Hall brothers had the community’s first automobile, which operated as a taxi. One afternoon, her husband sent the taxi so she and her daughter, Marjorie (now Mrs. James O. Cate of Brownwood), and visitor could have their first ride. ‘We drove around town in the open car and many people stopping to look at the automobile. Finally, the car sputtered, died completely, and was dragged in for repairs.’”

February 4, 1907 – An automobile frightened a horse belonging to Lev Baugh turned the buggy completely over at noon near the public square. No one was in the buggy at the time and the only damage done was the breaking of some of the parts of the buggy.

February 12, 1907 – Jay Adams, who took Dr. Fowler to May in his automobile yesterday, says the run from the Clio well on the return was made in thirty-five minutes. This is a record breaker for fast automobile time in Brown County.

February 13, 1907 – Dr. Allison was called by phone to Richland Springs this morning to operate in an appendicitis case, and to make the trip as quickly as possible he went in an automobile with Jay Adams. To avoid delays they provided an extra tire or two.

March 4, 1907 – Jay W. Hall will leave tomorrow in his automobile for a week's trip over West Texas selling gasoline engines. He will visit Waldrip, Paint Rock, Menardville, and other points and will join his wife who is visiting at San Angelo and they will return here next Monday.

### **1906 Brownwood Cadillac**

The happy group had driven all the way from Brownwood to Brooksmith when this picture was made in 1907 at the Brooksmith rail crossing. Driver of the 1906 model Cadillac is Claud Eddleman, and son of the car's owner, Elden Eddleman of Brownwood. Mrs. Mertie Bryd Johnson sits in the front seat. In the back seat are Ira L. Olden and Miss Lucy Hemingan. The single cylinder Cadillac had 22 horsepower, and could make 23 m.p.h. speed when road conditions permitted. It was cranked from the side; had door in center of back seat, and body was hinged on one side so it could be lifted for repairs. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



March 14, 1907 – The promoters of the Brooke Smith addition, beyond Highland Park, have inaugurated an auto line between the addition and the Highland Park car line, which makes regular trips and carries passengers free. The auto meets every car and is quite a convenience to the people who live in the new addition, as well as those who wish to make a visit to the place. (*Daily Bulletin*)

May 3, 1907 – Governor Campbell last week signed a bill regulating the state of Texas. The bill fixes eighteen miles an hour as the maximum rate of speed at which automobiles may run in the country, and eight miles in town. Every owner of an automobile shall register with the clerk of the county in which he resides, and the automobile must be numbered, the figures to be six inches tall. A

registration fee of 50 cents is to be charged. Racing is prohibited on a highway. The bill requires every driver of an automobile to stop when the driver of a horse vehicle signals for him to do so. The penalty for any violation of the law is a fine of from \$5 to \$100. (Daily Bulletin)

### 1907 REO Runabout



June 17, 1907 – A big tourist automobile arrived this morning for the auto establishment of Lew Hall and Elgie Green. The car is a beauty and will carry five passengers. It is of the Reo Manufacture and has sufficient power to climb any hill around here. The owners will put it into service this week and have several other cars ordered which will arrive within the next few days. They will run a messenger service and carry passengers to inland towns.

June 19, 1907 – Elgie Green and Lee Hall have equipped their automobiles with miniature telephones and can tap any line when necessary. In cross country trips this will be a great convenience in case of a break down they can phone to the nearest town for assistance. The little phones are fixed so as to hook onto the wires and have a receiver and a transmitter of small design. (Daily Bulletin)

June 22, 1907 – For quick messenger, delivery and transfer service call the Automobile at the stand in front of the Favorite on Baker Street. Makes hurry-up trips, quick deliveries and takes parties out for pleasure riding. New five passenger machine awaits your pleasure. El Green (Daily Bulletin)

June 22, 1907 – It may be that automobiles will not prove to be simply a fad, as bicycles were, but even if they should be put to practical use, both in the city and on the farm, we predict that the horse will be used to draw the hearse in which the automobile is taken to its last resting place. – Journal of Agriculture

July 6, 1907 – Elgie Green and Lee Hall who are agents for the Reo Automobiles here today sold T. C. Yantis a five passenger Reo Touring car. The machine arrived yesterday and the sale was made this morning. The car is a beauty and is similar to the one which the boys have in operation here. They plan to have a car load of machines here in the near future. (Daily Bulletin)

July 16, 1907 – The city council had decided that Brownwood, to be a city, must have some paved streets and the crushed rock street is the only practical solution to the problem. The city has now established a grade by which all streets are to be built and have agreed that the paving in the fire limits must be a depth of eight inches and outside the fire limits to a uniform depth of six inches. The city

has also decided that one-third of the expense of such paving shall be paid by the city and the property owners along either side of the street to pay each one-third. The property owners are to be charged \$1.50 per cubic yard for the crushed rock and the city will do the work. All streets are to be built under the instruction of the street committee and the city engineer. (*Daily Bulletin*)

July 23, 1907 - "To The Banner Bulletin: I see an article in a late issue of your paper where it states that Mr. B. E. Hurlbut is arranging to open another road to the fair grounds. I want to say this will be much appreciated by the country people. Many women and children will have to stay away rather than run the risk of meeting an automobile where the roads are full of wagons and people. A Farmer's Wife" (*Daily Bulletin*)

July 24, 1907 – Elgie Green, who left here Monday in his big automobile to do a transfer business at San Saba during the four days reunion returned last night. He says that the people there act as if they had never seen an automobile before and he would have had all sorts of trouble trying to run his machine in the crowd. He carried a full car of passengers going and returning and made the trip down there in three and one quarter hours over the roughest road in the country. (*Daily Bulletin*)

August 15, 1907 – Irv W. Hall has ordered another automobile to be used in making long trips over the country. The new machine will be a runabout, of the Cadillac make like the one now used by Mr. Hall. (*Daily Bulletin*)

August 23, 1907 – "Traveling in an automobile one sees some funny things. For instance the machine was spinning along a wide road and chanced to meet a buggy in which was traveling a couple of gentlemen. They saw the car coming fully a quarter of a mile away. When it was first sighted the two men jumped for the buggy and grabbed hold of the horse, which was as docile as any city-broke horse. "Another time a man saw the thing coming and hurriedly unhitched a team that did not anymore care for a car passing than if it had been another wagon. Some teams took fright at the horrible looking critter and some people were badly scared but no damage was done. People who are not familiar with autos usually stop their teams when they meet one and get out.

"This is entirely the wrong way to manage a team. The experience of auto driver is that the fellow who will keep his team going has less trouble. The car is here to stay and the people and horses might as well get used to them." (*Daily Bulletin*)

July 24, 1907 – "A rather serious runaway occurred yesterday morning when R. B. Allman's horse, used to carry the mail on rural route took fright at a passing automobile and ran down Baker street from the post office to Greenleaf street, then turned to Lee street and around the Spangenberg block and back

to Baker, colliding with the fence near the home of Will McKinney. In the wreck the vehicle was torn to pieces and a shaft stuck through the horse's leg several inches.

"The shaft is believed to have gone between the bones in the horse's leg, and notwithstanding the fact that it stuck out several inches it is believed the horse will get well as it could bear some weight on the leg after the accident." (*Daily Bulletin*)

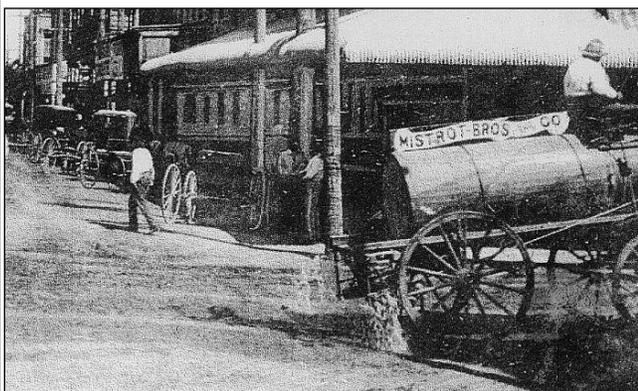
### Seven Cars In Brownwood in 1907

According to T. R. Havins in his book, "Something About Brown" there was about seven cars in Brown County in 1907 with Ed Hall and Guy Hutcherson being one of the seven to own a car.

Touring, as it was called in the early days of the automobile was rough and dusty. The roads were still wagon roads, which followed the streams. They were rough and filled with sandbeds and stumps. It was easy to get hung on a high center and almost impossible to go anywhere in wet weather. ("Memories of Men" by T. C. Smith, Jr.)

Brown County Clerk's register of motor vehicles was kept in the Brown County Court House from 1907 - 1917. It showed the date bought, name of owner, license number, address of owner, make and value of vehicle, and registration date. A search of the Clerk's office and basement did not find this book, which apparently had been destroyed sometime in previous years.

January 28, 1908 – An ad in the Brownwood Bulletin stated: TO SELL –My bicycle and sporting good business. Reason for selling – intend to go into exclusive automobile business. Ed. G. Hall. Note: The business became the Hall Machinery Company, leasing the old skating rink building on Center Avenue. Hall Brothers did a wholesale and retail business in the machinery line and maintained an automobile garage. Mr. Hall was the general agency for fifty-four counties in Texas on the Foos gas engine goods and the Dayton Electrical Company's goods.



### Water Wagon

"Before the year 1908 the streets of the business district of Brownwood were all by impassable during periods of rain, while in dry seasons they became dusty. So great was the dust that the merchants contributed to the cost of operating a street sprinkler that was a water wagon equipped with a sprinkler device at the rear and

was drawn by a team of horses. A bond election in 1908 furnished funds (\$10,000) for paving the business district. The paving included the streets around the square, Fisk Avenue to depot Street, Center Avenue to Depot Street, and Main Avenue to West Anderson Street. Intervening streets between those mentioned were not paved until later.

“Hall brothers furnished the crushed stone to the city, and, since power machinery had not come into use, the huge roller for smoothing out the crushed stone used horse power, as many as twelve horses or mules being used to pull the roller.”

“With the paving the city council passed a compulsory sidewalk ordinance that extended throughout the business district and along the streets that intersected the Santa Fe Railroad. The paving of the business district brought a demand for the extension of pavements to residence streets.

“The increase in automobile ownership (There were only five car owners in the city in 1908) probably was the greatest force exerted for the extension. Beginning in 1910 and continuing from year to year, pavement spread to the entire residence district.” (*Something About Brown* by T. R. Havins, 1958)

May 15, 1908 – The buggy horse of H. Hennerdorf became frightened at an automobile this afternoon on Hand street near the Yantis residence and ran away throwing out Mr. Hennerdorf who was driving and who was unable to manage the animal. The horse ran to the ice factory and stopped. Mr. Hennerdorf was considerably bruised but not seriously injured. (Daily Bulletin)

### U. S. Mail

Albert Stephenson in his mail cart with his horse “Sam” circa 1908. It was said that “Sam” knew the route so well that he would stop at every mail box without being told to. (*Brownwood Bulletin, As We Were*)



November 26, 1908 – “Grand Racing Event For Thanksgiving Day. Today’s Racing Program embraces the very best races this portion of the state can afford. Auto Races begins promptly at 2 p.m. today at the Gun Club Park. No long waits and plenty of amusement in the racing line. The admission price is only 25 cents. A special feature in the Racing Program is the five-mile Auto Race and Jim J...the riderless horse. Either one is worth the price of admission.” (Ad in *The Daily Bulletin*)



**1909 – West Redner & Mr. Pruitt, City Workers in front of the Methodist Episcopal South Church on Fisk Avenue.**

April 24, 1909 – “John Sawyer a few weeks ago conceived the idea of fixing up an old automobile that had been discarded in his shed, finished the work and took a ride one day this week. Mrs. Sawyer accompanied him on the initial ride and upon their return they were looking the machine over and discovered an old white hen on top of the machine, contentedly sitting upon thirteen eggs. On the initial trip the machine went over some pretty rough ground and there was considerable noise, but her henship refused to be disturbed. She is sitting there yet.” (*The Daily Bulletin*)

“All across the country, roads did not keep pace. The first edition of the American Automobile Association’s ‘blue book’ of auto routes, published in 1910, recommended that members setting out on a road trip take along a shovel, crowbar, and axe; rope, chains, and mud hooks; cement; a flash light and compass; spare part; and a gun. Texas members were advised to add a pick and a barbed-wire cutter to the kit.” (*Good Roads for Texas, Texas Highway Department*)

May 29, 1909 – A road district was created including Brownwood and extending some six or eight miles in all directions therefrom; and the district voted \$100,000 of road bonds. In spending this bond money no attention was paid toward relocating the roads or building permanent drainage structures, and practically all of the money was spent in grading up the roads from Brownwood to the limits of the district. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

### Mr. Early's First Car Ride

"In 1910, C. Y. Early, who was traveling out of Brownwood (for Walker-Smith Company) had the audacity to ask for a car. His request was granted. Mr. Walker's personal car, a Cadillac, was turned over to him. Ed Hall took him on a trip to Byrd's Store, showed him where to put the gas, water and 'lube.' Also how to start and stop. Mr. Early insisted on further instructions. He took on his first trip Johnnie Sawyer, engineer at the candy factory. Johnnie was loomed upon as an expert on machinery. The trip was made with the usual car troubles and tire troubles. After this trip Mr. Early was left to his fate.

"This was a big touring car with thirty-eight inch wheels. The tires looked something like the present day truck tires. It was equipped with a small hand pump, wholly undependable, and an old-time jack and other aggravations unmentionable. Traveling salesmen in those days, when not selling merchandise, were reading a catalogue of automobile parts. This big car finally accumulated an electric lantern and an engine pump for tires, along with tire tools, jacks, and everything a reputable automobile house recommended, including an auto coat, goggles and cap for the motorist. The old car was a nightmare. It caused 'sweat, blood and tears,' and some profanity. It is said all is well that ends well, so let it rest on that. Anyway, the chauffeur of this car was happy when it was turned over to his successor after about a year of patience-trying experiences." (*Fiftieth Anniversary Walker-Smith Company*)

1910 – "By 1910, over 14,000 vehicles were registered in Texas, prompting the establishment of the Texas Good Roads Association in 1911 that lobbied for better roads and a statewide road system. During World War I, shipping by truck became common due to the need to use railroads for supplies and munitions which took precedence over consumer goods. Trucks loaded with goods, however, caused extensive damage to existing roads. As a result, the need for adequate roads and bridges became even more essential." (*A Guide to the Research and Documentation of Historic Bridges in Texas*)

August 1, 1910 – Reports from 180 counties in Texas show a total of 14,276 automobiles. The average value of each was \$1,500. Dallas County had the most automobiles at 1,390 with Harris County close behind with 1,031 automobiles registered. Tom Green County had 190. In the cities it is taking the place of the hack and the carriage and in many instances of the truck and the delivery wagon. In the plains country the automobile is used to carry the mail and to cover long distances not traversed by railroads. Commercial travelers use them in making towns in their district or territory, saving time thereby, and in many other ways has the machine been adapted to commercial purposes. (*1911 Texas Almanac*)

1911 – “There were more cars by 1911 and better roads and streets were needed. The Commercial Club, known as the Brownwood (Area) Chamber of Commerce today, chose improving the city’s streets as a project. They believed the car would be our best way of transportation in the future. In 1912, a new Studebaker was priced at \$920.00. Whether the car was a success or not, the roads and streets in Brownwood needed to be improved and a better way to get across the railroad tracks.” (*Scrapbook Column Brownwood Bulletin May 7, 2000*)

### Sidewalks Required

“With the paving of the downtown streets, the city council passed a compulsory sidewalk ordinance that extended through the business district and along the streets that intersected the Santa Fe Railroad. The paving of the business district brought a demand for the extension of pavements to residence streets. The increase in automobile ownership (There were only five car owners in the city in 1908) probably was the greatest force exerted for extension. Beginning in 1910 and continuing from year to year, pavement spread to the entire residence district.” (*Something About Brown*, by T. R. Havins, 1958)

1912 – Ford franchise was issued to John Norman Weatherby that included Brown and Mills Counties. A minimum quota of 45 cars were to be sold at a list price plus a service charge of \$45 and could not be sold out of the two counties. Then the bodies and fenders were stacked in one end of a railroad box car and the chassis were stacked on the other. At that time the dealer was expected to maintain a minimum stock of \$250 worth of parts. (*Brownwood Bulletin Horizons, 1990*)



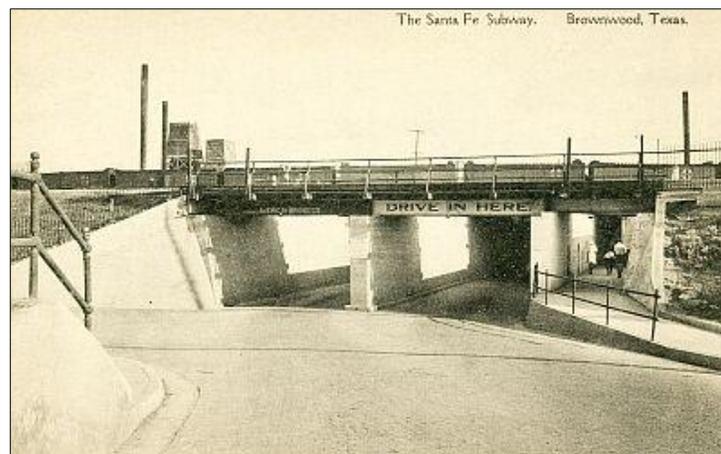
### Walker-Smith Company first truck 1913

February 3, 1913 – “The first truck by Walker-Smith Company we bought for Brownwood at a cost of \$1,990.00. It was a Wichita with chain-drive, red in color and a thing of beauty. Jimmy Preston was the driver. This truck was put in service in the Brownwood city trade. It caused many of the old buggy horses in the city to

“shy” and frightened some of the citizens more that it did Old Dobbin. It took long and tedious work on the part of the truck salesmen to close this deal. Most of the Brownwood force had to ride in this vehicle, several tried the steering wheel, and all tried the horn. The truck was taken out to climb Chapel Hill as a test. It took the hill, though with puffs and sputters. The test was satisfactory and the truck was purchased. Mr. J. Blackwell negotiated this important deal.” (*Fiftieth Anniversary Walker-Smith Company*)

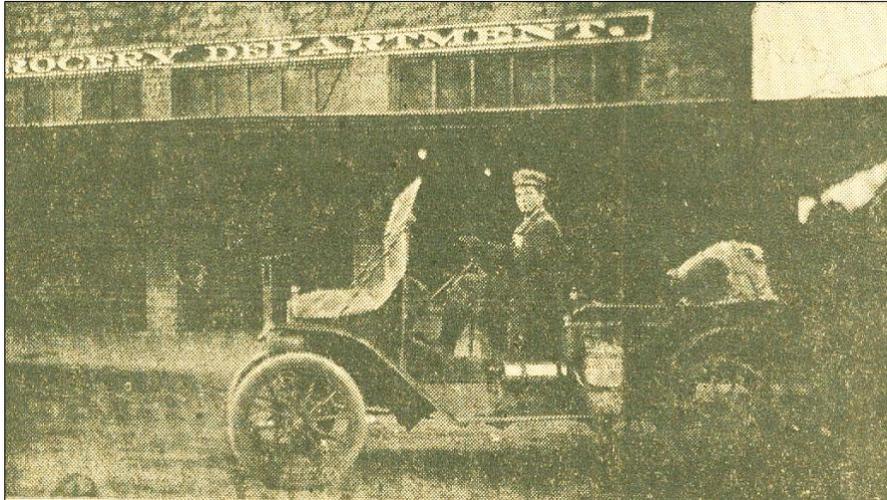
September 4, 1913 – At 7:30 o'clock this morning fifteen automobiles containing eighty Brownwood boosters started on a three days' trade excursion. The first stop was at Winchell, then to Trickham, Rockwood, Mercury and Indian Creek. The trip was made in the interest of Brownwood's big Free Fall Fair. At each stop good crowds greeted the boosters. Dinner was served at Rockwood, and at Indian Creek, the last stop for the day, a big fish fry was enjoyed. The trip today included the southern portion of the county. Tomorrow Thrifty, Grosvenor, Cross Cut, Cross Plains, Burkett, Santa Anna and Bangs will be visited. The Brownwood Band accompanied the excursion. (*Dallas Morning News*)

### **The Santa Fe Subway (underpass) on Vine Street**

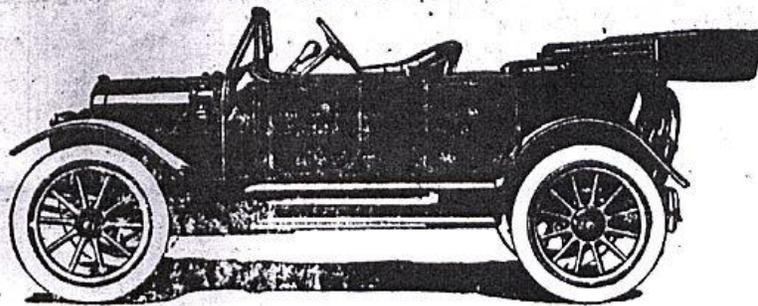


December 17, 1913 – “The City Attorney, as previously instructed, presented an ordinance regulating travel in and through the Santa Fe subways, and prohibiting the defacement of the walls and abutments at the subways. The ordinance provides that all buggies, wagons, motorcycles, bicycles and all other vehicles passing through either subway at the Vine Street or Austin avenue crossing under the Santa Fe right of way, shall not travel at a greater rate of speed that six miles per hour, from the top of the decline to the top of the incline of said subway. That all persons riding, driving or travelling in any of the vehicles named through either subway, shall ride or travel to their right-hand side of the subway.” (*The Daily Bulletin*)

December 24, 1913 – “That the people of the city are using the recently opened Vine Street subway freely is attested by the statement of Warren Lockett, Santa Fe engineer, that between the house of 3:00 and 3:30 yesterday afternoon he counted 103 vehicles as they passed through the subway. Those vehicles included bicycles, motorcycles, buggies, wagons and other varieties, and each carried its quota of the population of the ‘Cleanest Town in Texas,’ the number ranging from one to ten persons per vehicle.” (*The Daily Bulletin*)



Delivery Truck – The late Roy Gilliam is pictured in his Model T delivery truck in this photo above taken about 1914 in front of Looney Mercantile, corner south Broadway and North Fisk.



## **'ALL THE AUTOMOBILE ANY MAN NEEDS'** **Maxwell 25-4 5-Passenger Touring Car, \$790**

A car that will perform; but also a car that looks the part; a car for the man who considers his automobile an everyday necessity and who counts the cost. A car that is economical in cost of upkeep—gasoline, oil and tire consumption.

You have often said you would be willing to pay a little more for a car that looked a lot better.

This is the car. It has been designed from your standpoint—for thousands of others have expressed the same desire you expressed.

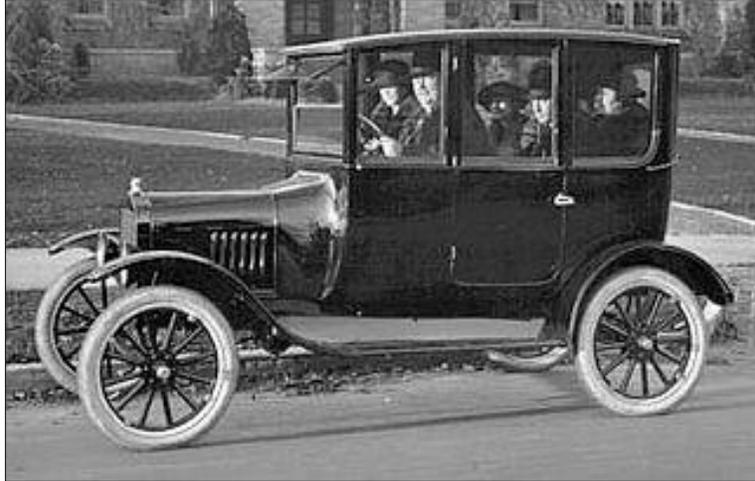
And it's made just as well as it's designed. Every ounce of metal that goes into it has been specified by our chief metallurgist, after the most exhaustive analyses and tests to determine the kind of metal, the alloy and heat treatment that would best meet the requirements and perform the functions of that particular part.

Better material does not enter into the construction of any car on earth at any price; for here is the best the science of metallurgy and automobile construction knows.

The Maxwell Motor Company offers this car without a mental reservation—and every dollar we have, and our reputation, stand back of it to guarantee every owner satisfaction.

**BOULDIN & WHEELER, Phone 166, Brownwood, Texas.**

Ad in the *The Daily Bulletin* April 18, 1914



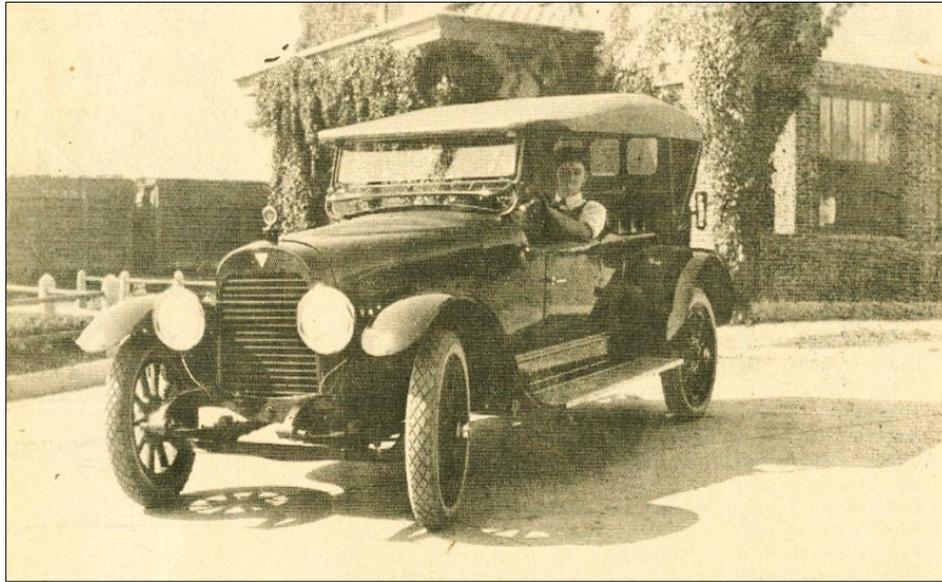
**1914 Ford Model T Runabout**

June 22, 1914 – Ford Model T Runabout, 4 passenger, 4 cylinder, 20 horsepower car. Price \$525 includes top, top cover, automatic brass windshield, speedmeter, two 6-inch gas lamps, generator, three oil lamps, horn and tools, including jack – f.o.b. Detroit. Price delivered \$595.00. (*Ad in The Daily Bulletin*)

August 1, 1915 – Every automobile owner in Brownwood should carefully read the traffic regulations. He should do more than read – he should memorize them, and keep them ever in mind as he drives over the streets of tis city. This should be done as a safety first measure, and not merely because the laws of the city require it. No auto drive should welcome a serious accident, yet any driver who disregards traffic regulations is inviting catastrophe. The city has ordered that sign posts be placed in the center of the principal street intersections. Every person, turning a corner is expected to keep to the right and if making the long turn, must go completely around the guiding post. Only in this manner can accidents be avoided. If every vehicle driver will observe the traffic regulations there will be no inconvenience to any one, and there will be a minimum of accidents. (*The Daily Bulletin*)

September 1, 1915 – “Brownwood’s new traffic law went into effect today. The city officials are being given the active support of the Brownwood Automobile Club in their effort to get the people to drive carefully and properly. Signs directing all to ‘drive to the right’ are being prepared and will be placed at the principal business street intersections.” (*Fort Worth Star-Telegram*)

“After World War I the automobile became the mode of travel, but the deep wagon ruts caused the cars to hang on the high places breaking an axle.” (*In the Life and Lives of Brown County People, Scrapbook II, Book 19, Compiled by Lorene Eastman Bishop, 1903*)



Hudson Six – Eddie Stephenson of Brownwood driving a Hudson Super Six by the Harvey House in 1917. The car was owned by Will McCulley, fire chief in Brownwood.

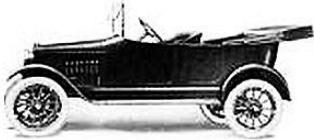
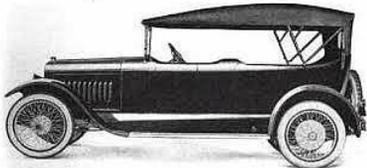
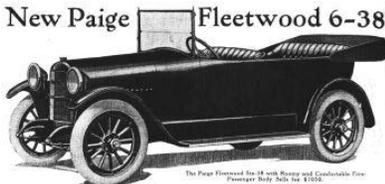
### **Walker-Smith Company Cars**

“Walker-Smith Company’s salesmen were all traveling in cars before 1915. Fords were popular with drummers. They were more economical to operate and the first cost was less. The Company owned all the cars then. City salesmen had not yet been put in cars. The old type car was a rebellious vehicle. It was hard to start, hard to keep going, and hard to stop-*refractory*, if the word could be properly applied to the ‘flivver.’ In the early days of its existence, the rough and tumble days of the automobile industry, many jokes were ‘poked’ at the Ford, but the ‘road house’ as it was called, survived all the slander and upbraiding of dissatisfied operators and their supercilious, fare-paying passengers, the specialty drummers.

“When these Fords stuck in the mud or sand and the drummer had to push, or when the car refused to exhibit mobility, or when flats or blowouts came to an irritable driver and these backseat jokesters were requested to give a hand.’ They murmured worse than the Children of Israel in the land of Goshen.

“Many and comical are the stories told by the early day autoists, stories of hardships endure – cold, snow, rain, dust – including trudges down lonely West Texas roads for help or nights spent in a car on some broad prairie or in some black mudhole.” (*Fiftieth Anniversary Walker-Smith Company*)

Some Samples of 1916 Automobiles sold in Brown County in 1916

 <p><b>1916 Saxon Six</b></p>	 <p><b>1916 Chevrolet "Forty-Ninety"</b></p>	 <p><b>1916 Reo</b></p>
 <p><b>1916 Ford</b></p>	 <p><b>1916 Dort</b></p>	 <p><b>1916 Overland</b></p>
 <p><b>1916 Cadillac</b></p>	 <p><b>1916 Dodge</b></p>	 <p><b>1916 Buick</b></p>
 <p><b>1916 Hudson</b></p>	 <p><b>1916 Haynes</b></p>	 <p><b>1916 Maxwell Touring</b></p>
 <p><b>1916 Thomas Flyer</b></p>	<p>New Paige Fleetwood 6-38</p>  <p><b>1916 Paige</b></p>	<p>Most early local dealers only had one car in stock for people to look at and drive. If they wanted a car, most times it had to be ordered and built by the manufacture. Later they were able to more cars in stock.</p>

Cars of that day had a canvas top that could be folded down, and some had side curtains. You had to be prepared to eat dust when driving on most roads.

By 1916 there were several ads and stories in The Daily Bulletin during the year promoting automobiles sold in Brownwood. This included ads and stories about a Saxon Six Touring \$785; Saxon Four Coupe \$455; Chevrolet "Four-Ninety" \$595; Chevrolet "Baby Grand" \$797; "Reo 5" \$950; "Reo 6" \$1335; Ford Runabout \$390; Ford Touring Car \$440; Ford Coupelet \$590; Ford Town Car \$640; Ford Sedan \$740; Dort \$650; Maxwell Touring Car \$595; Overland \$675 and Dodge Brothers Motor Car. Also 1916 Buick, Haynes, Paige, and Cadillac cars (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)

February 13, 1916 – "No business in Brown County has grown so rapidly during the past twelve months as has the automobile industry. A year ago there were only 390 automobiles registered in the county. Today there are 640 —an increase of 250 cars. Estimating the value of these cars at an average price of \$600 each, the total valuation of the automobiles in the county is now approximately \$384,000. In addition to this, there is approximately \$50,000 invested in the county in garages and supply stations, while the oil and gasoline stations in the county have experienced a remarkable growth in Business." (*Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)

June 25, 1916 – "Despite the protests which have been made by carriers and patrons, it seem that the automobile rural delivery mail service will be inaugurated on two routes out of Brownwood beginning July 1. On account of the protests which have been filed, the beginning of the service was postponed several times, but recently Postmaster W. D. McChristy received notice that the new service would begin July 1, and it seems additional protests would be unavailable. " (*The Daily Bulletin*)

August 4, 1916 – "Lucky 13," a number which is always omitted in numbering hotel rooms and the like, was left out when the number 12 was passed in Brown County auto licenses, but August 1, after more than 800 cars had been registered in Brownwood someone noticed it, and bought 13. Mrs. Maggie Ragsdale registered for her Saxon, valued at \$500, for this often avoided number." (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)

August 11, 1916 – "The city street department spread a thick layer of road oil on Fisk and Center Avenues and Fagg Street yesterday, and as a results Brownwood's clothes cleaning bill will be greatly increased for the month. Cars, bicycles ad horses suffered alike; nothing could withstand the skidding tendencies of the oil.

"The streets were not roped off and the accidents were more numerous and amusing than ever before. One boy who allowed his bicycle to leave him remained sitting on a puddle of oil for about ten minutes before he could muster courage to try to arise. Cars would skid whether the driver was attempting to turn a corner or whether he was traveling down the big middle. Several Fords attracted

attention by skidding around and keeping their course uninterrupted. One Overland car skidded once to many times and left the oiled street with a broken front axle.

“From all appearances, it seemed impossible for a horse to stand up at all, many of the members of the ‘Ole Reliable Transportation club’ going to the bad. Rough shoes have almost disappeared in these modern times, and the Brownwood horses got their share of the street oil.” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)

November 23, 1916 – “Automobile number 1000 has been issued in Brown County. The mark was issued this afternoon at 3 o’clock by County Clerk Homer Byrd to Howard Sullivan of the Sullivan Machine Company.

“A few minutes prior to the 1,000, Petty bros. purchased number 999, the string of nines being issued to them to ‘be placed on one of their cars.’ No price other than the customary sum of 50 cents was paid for either of the numbers, although in some counties where there is a rivalry for unusual number such as a string of digits of the same denomination the county clerk is compelled to auction the number off to the highest bidder.” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)



**Brownwood Fire Department 1910**

It should be noted that the City of Brownwood was still using two horse drawn fire wagons at the end of 1916.

December 29, 1916 – “Over one automobile per day was sold in Brown County during the year 1916, according to the records of registrations made in the office of County Clerk Homer Byrd. A total of 439 licenses during the year had been issued up to today at noon. Three or four additional registrations are expected to be made this afternoon and tomorrow.

“The number of licenses issued in 1916 is nearly double the number issued in 1915 when 240 cars were sold and registered in the county. In 1914 123 cars were licensed and in 1913 only 93 automobiles received licenses at the office of the county clerk. In other words the number has been doubling itself form year to year.” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)



**The issuing of vehicle tags.**

January 3, 1917 – “City Marshall John Champion will make war on the speeders. At a meeting of the city council last night, the aldermen expressed their opinion of fast and reckless driving on the streets of Brownwood, and requested the marshal to put a stop to the habit of some of the automobiles in the city.

“The speed limit in Brownwood is eight miles an hour and the officers plan to see that the law is observed. A close watch will be made on the streets at all hours of the day, and many hours of the night to see that the speed limit is not broken.

“Then, too, open mufflers came in for their share of consideration by the aldermen. Many autoists in the city, it is claimed, leave their mufflers wide open, causing worry if not nervousness to every person in the range of the noise of the exhaust. Mr. Champion has instructed his deputies to keep a close watch for violations on the speed ordinances.” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)

January 16, 1917 – “City Manager Dickerson this morning issued the order which provided Brownwood with an automobile fire truck. It will be put into operation at once, and is now ready for service at any fire that may occur.

“The truck did not cost eight thousand dollars, nor eight hundred dollars, but it has a speed of several miles an hour, and can carry five hundred feet of hose. Ordinarily it is the city’s water service jitney.

“The ice on the streets makes it impossible for horses to hold their footing, and in case of a fire it would be out of the question for the city horses to race away with the heavy fire wagon. In order to give some sort of protection until the weather moderates City Manger Dickerson has had the city’s Ford runabout placed at the down town fire station, and it has been loaded with about five hundreds feet of hose. In case of a fire the little car can be quickly driven over the slippery streets and will give quick and efficient service as a hose truck.” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)



**Center Avenue in 1917. Many wagons were still in use. A few cars can be seen.**

January 31, 1917 – “Violators of the traffic ordinates of Brownwood hereafter will have to be equipped with something more than a good excuse, according to City Marshal Champion, who today is advertising to all and sundry his intention of putting the lid on traffic violations.

“Hereafter auto driver will have to observe the following regulations:

- Drive to the right had side of the street.
- Display the proper numbers on their car.
- Give the proper alarms at street intersections.
- Observe the law as to speed.
- Display proper light son their cars, both fore and aft, after nightfall.

“Tail lights must be burning at night, and burning in such a way as to make the car number visible. Cutting corners at street intersections must stop, and all other features of the traffic regulations must be observed to the letter.” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)

1917 - The Federal Road Act of 1916 provided \$75 million over five years for highway construction within each state. The money was allocated using a formula based on the state's population, geographic size, and number of post roads. (To satisfy constitutional questions, the law technically applied to roads over which the mail, already a federal responsibility, was carried. Conveniently, almost every road in the country qualified.) The formula gave Texas the largest allocation of any state—if it could take advantage of it. To qualify for the money, the state had to pledge a 50% matching portion of funds for highway construction, assume responsibility for maintaining the roads once they were constructed, and create a highway department staffed with qualified road engineers.

“In order that the general public may enjoy the use of the public highways with reasonable safety, I am in favor of a law making it a jail penalty to run an automobile more than ten miles an hour [in town] or more than 24 miles an hour on a county road. There is an imperative demand that the speed maniac be dealt with in some dramatic fashion”. –Governor James E. Ferguson, 1917

The incentive was far too great to pass up. In 1917, the legislature created the Texas Highway Department and charged the new agency with the simple mandate of “getting the farmer out of the mud.” A three-member commission was empowered to hire a state engineer to be paid \$5000 a year (\$80,000 in today's dollars), along with three field engineers.

Creating a highway system from scratch was a daunting task, but the commission designated 26 routes for the first Texas projects, or about 9000 miles of road (approximately six percent of the eligible roads in Texas). The old role of counties would also be preserved. Counties had the responsibility for proposing new road projects and for maintaining the roads after they were constructed. The state engineer and field engineers would review the plans and inspect the work. (Good Roads for Texas, Texas Highway Department)

To come up with the required matching funds, the state levied the first auto registration fees, set at 35 cents per horsepower, or a minimum of \$7.50 (an expensive \$120 in today's dollars). To take the registrations, the just-born department set up temporary headquarters in the House chamber of the Texas capitol building, where they issued stickers to show an applicant had paid. License plates would come later: in the meantime, ingenious motorists were expected to make their own out of wood or leather. (Good Roads for Texas, Texas Highway Department)

April 4, 1917 - House Bill 2, creating the Texas Highway Department, is signed into law by Gov. James Ferguson. The measure vested a three-member commission with administrative control of the department. Members would be appointed to two-year terms by the governor, with consent of the Senate. (*TxDOT History*)

May 2, 1917 - The city council accepted a bid by Ed G. Hall for a used 1913 Cadillac automobile chassis to be rebuilt by him, and to be equipped with the fire fighting apparatus now carried by the horse drawn wagon. The children did not like it as they couldn't chase after the faster moving vehicle rather than the precious horse drawn fire wagons. John H. Gill drove the first 1913 Cadillac motorized fire truck. He chug-chugged rapidly to a fire on Vine Street on the second day of driving the truck,. As he arrived at the fire it looked like he was going to run into another vehicle, but he pulled up on the steering wheel and hollered "whoa" and the calamity was averted.



**LaFrance Fire Truck**

May 16, 1917 - The city purchased for \$9,000 a LaFrance engine and a second hand Cadillac chemical truck. The truck was to be paid for in five equal payments. The truck was to be delivered to Brownwood within ninety days.



**Early Vehicle Tags**

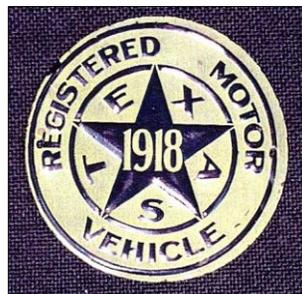
1917 - Highway Commission increases the speed limit to 25 mph. By the end of the year, the department registers 194,720 motor vehicles. Texas' first license plates were manufactured by the Adams Stamp and Stationery Co. in St. Louis, MO. The plates, made of sheet iron, had white numbers on a blue background with the letters "TEX" stacked on the right edge. Stamped metal validation seals reading "Registered Motor Vehicle, Texas" had to be obtained each year and placed on a vehicle's radiator. (*TxDOT History*)



**A wrecked car**

January 29, 1918 – “The deplorable accident of Sunday night when three women were fun down and seriously injured by an unidentified automobile on Austin Avenue caused the city police department to tightly clamp down the lid last night and as a result twenty-three automobiles owner and drivers were cited to appear in police court to answer to charges of traffic law violations.

“The charges filed this morning as a result of last night’s traffic law enforcement included all manner of violations of the traffic ordnances. Careless driving, speeding, non-observance of regulations as to lights and other charges were filed against lawyers, doctors, merchants, service car drivers and others who have been order to appear before City Recorder I. B. Smith to adjust the cases.” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)



**1918 Registered Motor Vehicle Sticker**

Summer 1918 – A road district was created in Blanket area, extending from the Brownwood district to the Comanche County ling, and on September 12, 1918, this district voted \$50,000 of bonds. The idea of road building had advanced somewhat in that the district undertook to build more permanent all-weather roads. The road was graded and then covered with a rock surface, and this rock surface was covered with caliche; but no attention was made to the location, and very little attention to the drainage structures. After a few years the caliche blew off this road, leaving a rough and rocky road to travel. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



**Brownwood Courthouse – 1918**

December 16, 1918 – “The Brownwood to Fort Worth paved highway, which was projected last summer, is now practically assured as a result of the carrying of a bond issue election in Erath County Saturday by a vote of seven to one. Bonds for \$120,000 were authorized by the Erath county voters, and there now remains only Hood County to authorize bonds for completing the road.

“The highway will lead from Fort Worth through Hood and Erath Counties to Comanche, where it will join the Oil Belt Highway and proceed to Brownwood. It is to be a paved highway over its entire route, and will give this section of the state an immense traffic that has been diverted to other sections on account of the poor conditions of the roads along the Fort Worth-Brownwood route.” (*The Brownwood Daily Bulletin*)



**1918 – Saint Mary's Catholic Church**

**The 1918 Reo owner's manual describes how to hand crank the automobile:**



**First:** Make sure the gear shifting lever is in neutral position.

**Second:** The clutch pedal is unlatched and the clutch engaged. The brake pedal is pushed forward as far as possible setting brakes on the rear wheel.

**Third:** See that spark control lever, which is the short lever located on top of the steering wheel on the right side, is back as far as possible toward the driver and the long lever, on top of the steering column controlling the carburetor, is pushed forward about one inch from its retarded position.

**Fourth:** Turn ignition switch to point marked "B" or "M"

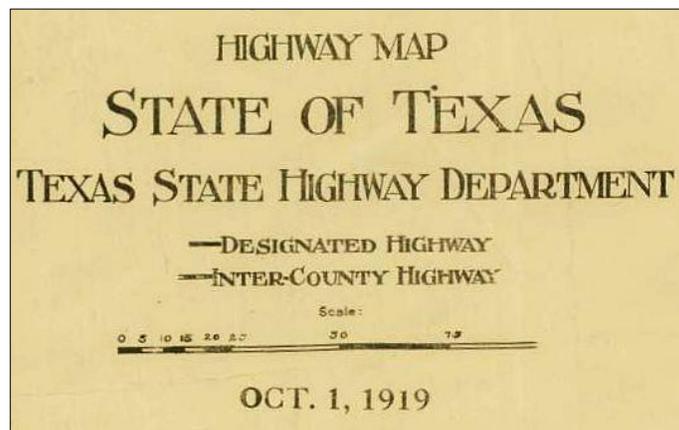
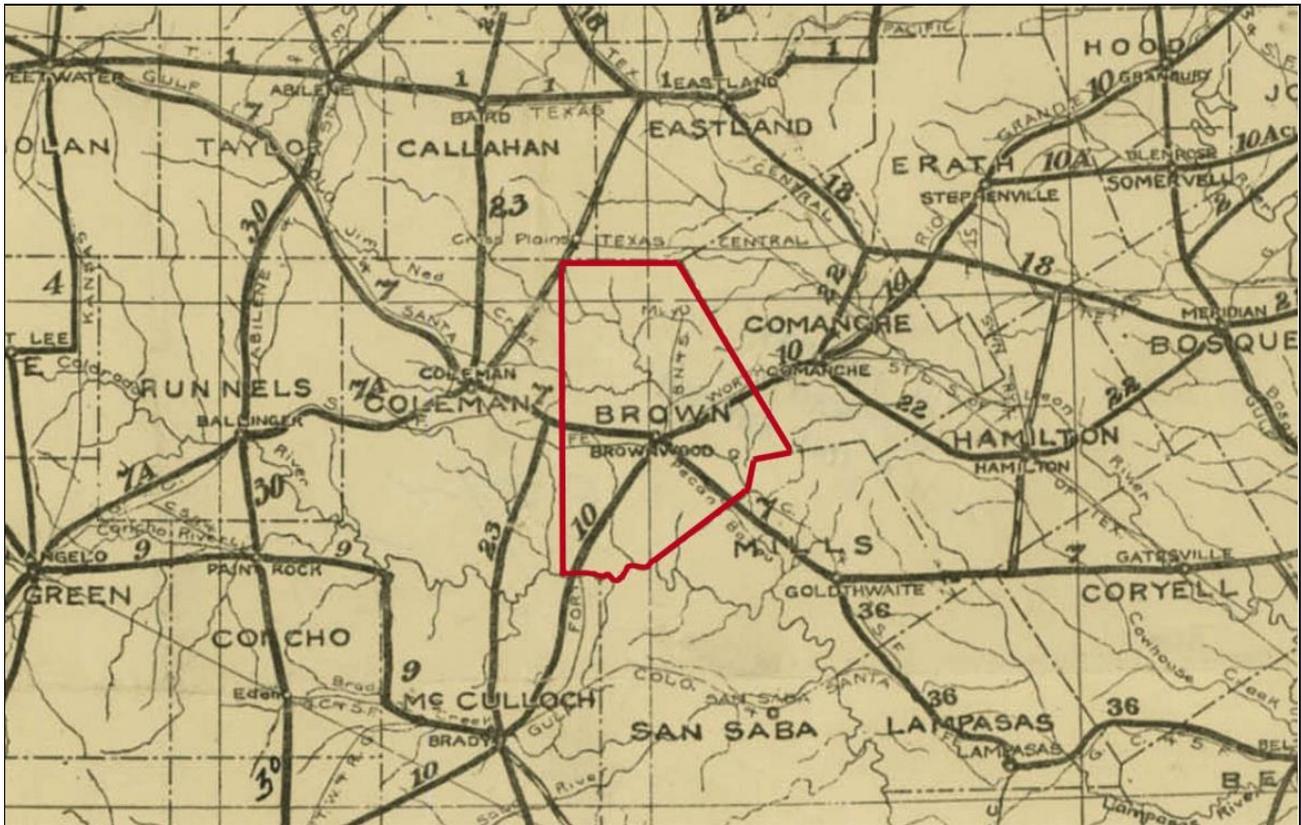
**Fifth:** Set the carburetor control on the steering column to the point marked "START." Be sure there is gasoline in the carburetor. Test for this by pressing down on the small pin projecting from the front of the bowl

until the carburetor floods. If it fails to flood it shows that the fuel is not being delivered to the carburetor properly and the motor cannot be expected to start. See instructions on page 56 for filling the vacuum tank.

**Sixth:** When it is certain the carburetor has a supply of fuel, grasp the handle of starting crank, push in endwise to engage ratchet with crank shaft pin and turn over the motor by giving a quick upward pull. Never push down, because if for any reason the motor should kick back, it would endanger the operator. (Wikipedia)



**Center Avenue in 1920**



**Map showing Highways 7 & 10 through Brownwood**

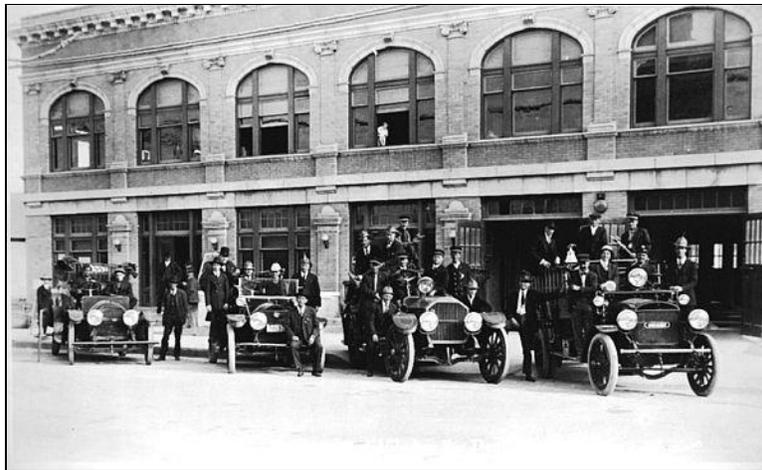
1919- Highway #7, from New Mexico State Line at Farwell, via Lubbock, Abilene, Brownwood Waco to point near Palestine. Surfaced or surfacing under construction throughout – Length 493.56 miles (Now designated as U. S. Highway 84) (From *TxDOT Photo Library*)

1919- Highway #10, from Highway #5 at Whitesboro, via Fort Worth, Brownwood, San Angelo to Highway #27 near Fort Stockton. Surfaced or surfacing under construction through. – Length 436 miles (Now designated as U. S. Highways 377 & 67) (From *TxDOT Photo Library*)



**Leaving Brownwood - From TxDOT Photo Library**

July 21, 1920 – The sale of the E. W. Boon Ford automobile agency and garage to J. N. Weatherby of Goldthwaite has been consummated. The deal includes the entire business hereto conducted by Mr. Boon, except the two large buildings which are occupied by the sales agency and the garage, which will be retained by Mr. Boon. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



In 1920 the Fire Department purchased a Brockway fire truck. Above is pictured a: 1913 Cadillac – Another used Cadillac – LaFrance Fire Truck – Brockway Fire Truck

1921 - Congress amends Federal Aid to Roads Act of 1916 requiring states to take over exclusive control of road design, construction and maintenance after 1925. (*TxDOT History*)

1921 – Arrow Coach Lines opened up a station in Brownwood. As of 1985 Arrow Trailways continued to link Brownwood and other cities in Texas and the nation. (*Brownwood Bulletin*, April 10, 1985)

July 20, 1921 - Highway markers have been finished from Comanche to Brownwood of the Central Texas Highway, and will continued to be marked toward Bangs, Santa Anna and Coleman. “The highway enters Brownwood on the Comanche road coming into the city on East Broadway which it

follows to the courthouse square, where it turns on South Broadway and follows this thoroughfare to West Baker Street at Hemphill-Fain's store where it turns on West Baker and follows it to Center and thence down Center out of the city towards the west. The route through the city is marked by telephone poles being painted black and yellow. In this connection it is proper to state that the locating and logging of the Central Texas Highway, is being fostered and boosted by the Lions Club of Brownwood, for this immediate action." (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



**Brown County Courthouse**

### **One Cent Gasoline Tax**

"In 1923 a gasoline tax was approved by the Texas legislature to build highways (one cent a gallon). Two paved highways #377 and #183, were built across Texas in the last 20's and early 30's. The highways ran east to west and north to south and crossed in Brownwood." (*In the Life and Lives of Brown County People, Scrapbook II, Book 19, Compiled by Lorene Eastman Bishop, 1903*)



**Old Underpass (TxDOT Photo)**

December 1, 1923 – “Two used cars were damaged and minor damage was done to the supplies stored in a wall case at the Abney & Bohannon garage this afternoon when a quantity of gasoline was ignited, causing a fire that filled the big building with smoke and made it difficult to control. Mr. Abney stated that a quantity of gasoline was being drained from the tank of a car, and it was ignited in some way, probably by a short circuit from the battery. The two used cars damaged were the property of the garage; one a Ford roadster and the other a Reo touring car. There was the usual rush of cars and people to the scene of the fire as soon as the alarm was sounded.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

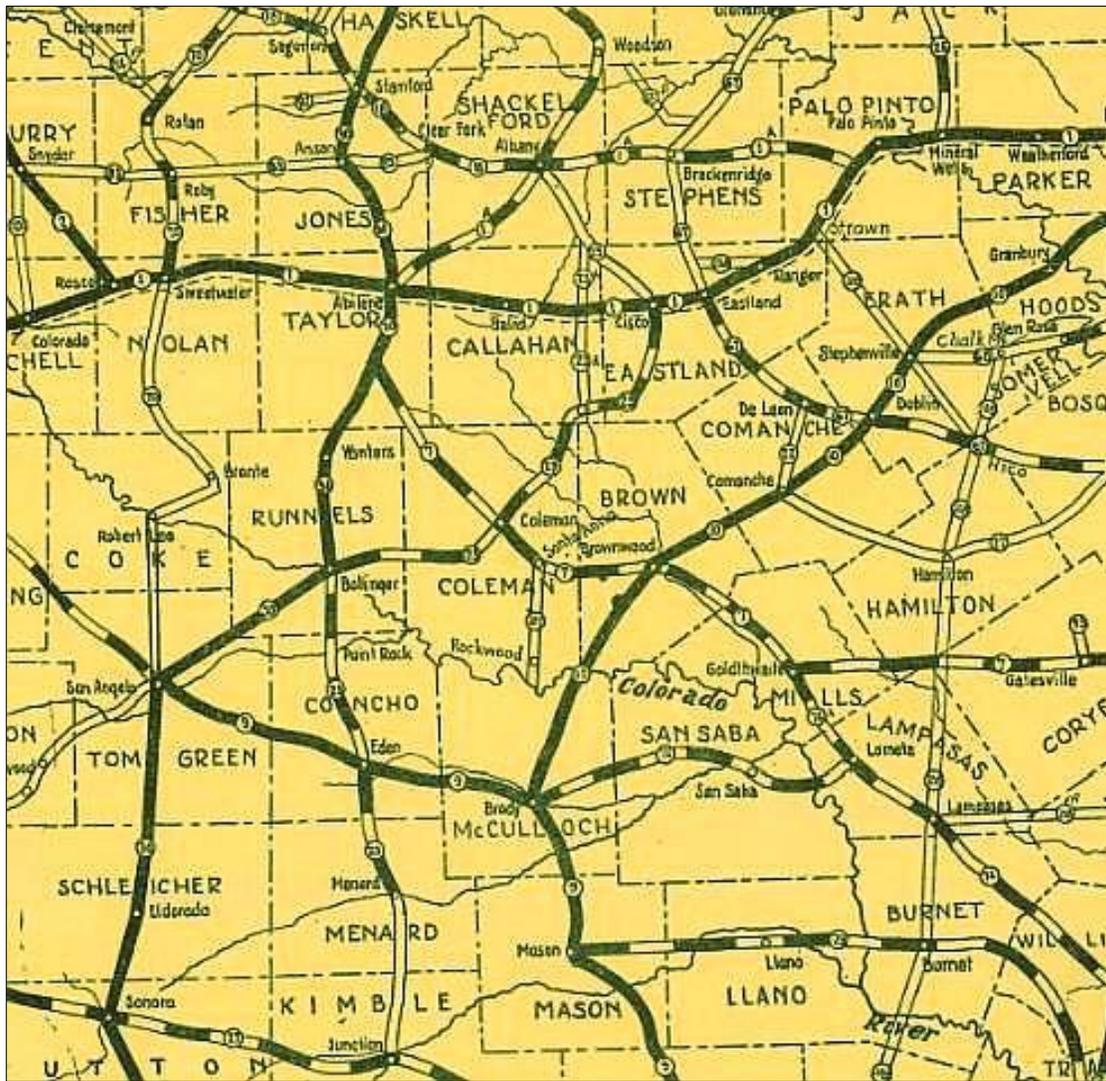


**Washing Car**

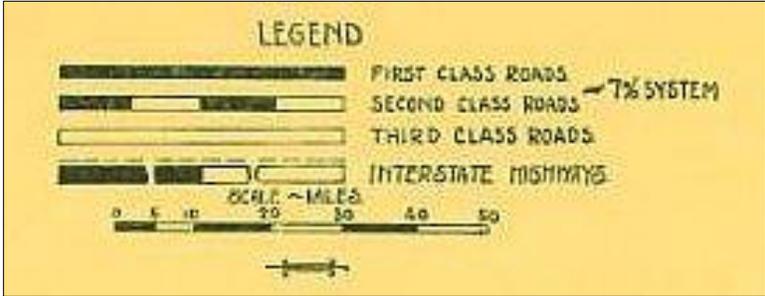
January 1, 1924 - Highway Department assumes responsibility for maintenance of all state highways. Prior to this time, roadway maintenance rests with the counties.



**1924 photo of the Eoff and Franklin Garage in Blanket**



**OFFICIAL  
 HIGHWAY MAP  
 OF  
 TEXAS  
 1926**



1928 - Highway Commission sets the maximum speed limit at 45 mph. (*TxDOT History*)

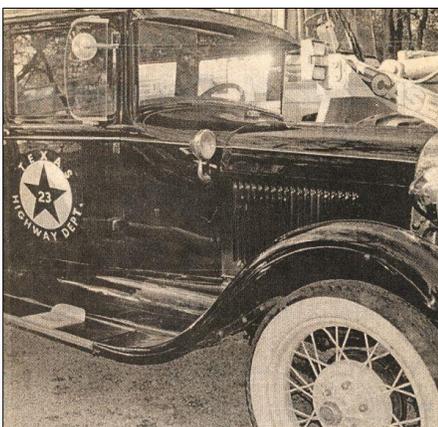
October 1928 – “Brown County voted bonds in the sum of \$1,650.00 for roads. This amount was supplemented by the State with \$1,242,000, or approximately \$3,000,000 to be spent on roads in Brown County.

“Contracts of all the highways in the County have been let for grading and drainage structures. About 300 miles of lateral roads have been built or will be finished this year (1931). The lateral roads will all have concrete or corrugated iron culverts with concrete head walls. There will have been about 100 miles of gravel roads in this program, and the remaining roads are well graded with the low places graveled or caliche.

“During 1930 we obtained a U. S. designation on Highway 67 from Dallas to Presidio. We have an agreement with the Sate Highway Commission to give us a U. S. Designation from Red River to Brady as soon as the bridge across the Red River just north of Vernon is contracted (Became Highway 377)

“We are planning to present Highway No. 10, from Fort Worth to Del Rio for a U. S. designation next month (Became Highway 377). We feel sure this designation will be given us, making three U. S. Highways through Brownwood. (Highways 67, 183 and 377)

“Our right-of-way on all highways is 100 feet wide; and the Ladies’ and Civic organizations are now planning to plant shade trees, shrubs and flowers on all the highways in the county.” (Unknown story, 1931)



**1929 Model A Ford Truck used by local Highway Department  
(TxDOT Photo)**

1929- “Until January 1929, Brown county roads were ‘terrible,’ the State highways were dirt. They had numerous right angled turns and lateral roads were worse. They were narrow, poorly graded and had very few drainage structures.” (*Brownwood Bulletin* April 28, 1937)

January 4, 1929 - Approximately 4,300,000 automobiles were produced in 1928 while 3,401,326 were shipped from their factories in 1927. The 1928 production figures may pass the 4,400,000 mark when all reports have been made. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

April 1931 – Cross Cut road started April 1931 and 20 miles completed in December, 1932, at a cost of \$123,848.44; 20 miles completed from Callahan county line to Rocky Creek cemetery, balance of 7.33 miles into Brownwood incomplete because of demoralized bond market, county unable to sell bonds for completion. (*Brownwood Bulletin, June 28, 1933*)

### Construction of Highway No. 129 to Eastland County

#### Highway No. 129 toward Rising Star from Brownwood (Shown here a Highway 283)



November 1929 – “In November of 1929 the construction work on the first section of Highway No. 129 from Brownwood toward Rising Star was started with grading and drainage structures being built rapidly. This part of the highway construction was continued until the spring of 1930 before it was completed.

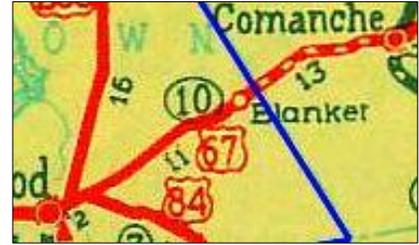
“In April of that year the work on the second 10 miles of this new highway was started and it continued through the summer of that year. The road was then opened for travel and continued open until the letting of a paving contract.

“In August of 1931 the contract for the first paving was let for a total of \$92,213 for a strip 10.3 miles long beginning at Brownwood and continuing to a point near Owens. In October of that year the contract for the remainder of the road, a distance of 14.7 miles was let for a total of \$109,827 and work was started shortly after.

“In November two miles of the gravel base was opened to traffic and after delays caused by defaulting by contractors the road was completed in December of 1932.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

### Construction of Highway No. 10 East of Brownwood

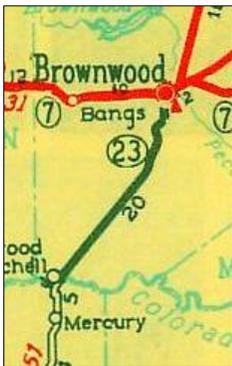
June 28, 1933 – “Highway No. 10 east was the first highway in this county upon which actual work was started. The dirt and drainage structure work on the road was started in November of 1929 when Word & Word contractors of Itasca began their work by moving their equipment to Brown County and starting work on the east end of the road.



“The highway was opened in sections for traffic during the winter months of 1929 and 1930. All dirt and drainage work was completed on that section of the road in June of 1930. After that it was opened to public travel for nearly a year before the concrete work was started. In March of 1931 The Dexter Construction Company, successful contractors started their work.

“For about four months of record concrete work the road was opened to public travel and a big highway celebration was held here in Julye of 1931 that included people from Comanche and many other places as far off as Fort Worth on Highway No. 10. Since that time this road has been placed on the highway listings of all map companies and at present is considered one of the best roads in the state.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

### Highway No. 10 South of Brownwood (Shown here as Highway 23)



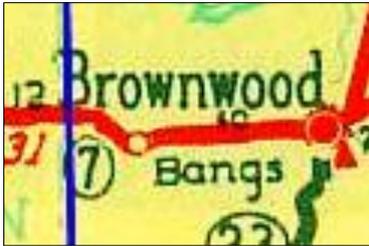
“Bids were accepted for the drainage and grading of Highway No. 10 south to the McCulloch County line in October of 1930. The McClung Construction Company received the contract for the nearly 20 miles of work for a total of \$124,504.

“The actually grading work started only a short time later when representatives of the company came to Brownwood to open offices for the work. This part of the contact was continued until it was completed in the spring of 1931 and shortly after accepted by the state.

“Bucy & Childs were awarded the contract of the paving of 19 Miles of Highway No. 10 from Brownwood to McCulloch county line. The contract was awarded in April of 1932. The work on this paving project continued through the remainder of that year and was delayed because of inclement weather. It was completed several months later.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

June 20, 1931 - Colorado river bridge; started June 20, 1931, and completed February 27, 1932, for a cost of \$126,039.29. (*Brownwood Bulletin, June 28, 1933*)

## Construction of Highway 7 West and East of Brownwood



### Highway No. 7 West of Brownwood

June 1930 – “After letting a contract for the grading and drainage structures of Highway No. 7 from Brownwood to the Coleman County line, work was started on that project during the middle of July of that year. In September of that year, a section of road from the city limits towards Bangs was opened to the public and many Brownwood people drove over the new route to the top of the hill shortly west of Brownwood to view the city and surrounding valley.

“Grading and drainage structure on this route was completed during the latter part of February in 1931 and the road accepted from Bucy & Childs, contractors on the 12 mile strip.

“In February 1932 the McCollum Construction Company was awarded the paving contract for this road for a total of \$115,612 and work was started shortly after that. The paving was a triple top asphalt and work was started a Bangs.”

“After difficulties with the contractor the road was finally completed and opened for traffic during the early part of this year.” (*Brownwood Bulletin* June 28, 1933)



### Highway No. 7 East of Brownwood

June 28, 1933 – “Actual construction work on Highway No. 7 east toward the Mills county line was started shortly after the awarding of the contract for the 12 miles of grading and drainage structures to L. D. Parks of Fort Worth and Bucy & Childs of Rising Star. The two contracts were for \$26,054 and \$46, 187 respectively and included large structures and drainage work. The contracts were awarded in February of 1931.

“The work on this part of the construction continued until August of the same year when it was completed and accepted by the state and opened to traffic.

“In September 1931 Bucy & Childs of Rising Star was awarded the contract for triple bituminous surfacing of Highway No. 7 for a total of \$101, 660.23. A work order was received in October of last year and the paving has been going forward since that time. The road is almost completed at present with the surfacing of a part of the route the only remaining part of the project to be completed.” (*Brownwood Bulletin* June 28, 1933)

Highway construction continued to be accomplished funded by the bond issue approved by the Brown County voters. This was the first time that the citizens agreed to spend big money to fix the roads within the county. There were some citizens who were opposed to the bond issue and felt that it was something that the county could not afford. But, the majority of the citizens saw the need to get their roads fixed.



**Center Strips painted on curves, hills and bridges divided the pavement into two lanes for safety.**

1930 - Recognizing center stripes as an important safety feature, the department begins painting white lines down the middle of all its highways. (*TxDOT History*)



**1930 County Courthouse – Note Street light in center of intersection.**

May 6, 1930 – “During and since our campaign for good roads in Brown County, I have repeatedly heard it said that the country people did not want roads, and I herewith give you the returns of the bond election in the country from the precincts other than the four voting boxes in Brownwood:

For the Bonds ----- 1,232

Against the Bonds -----1,258

Making only 26 votes difference in the rural district of Brown County. This vote in our own county only proves that the great masses of the people favor good roads and rapid building of roads in Texas is as it should be.” (Brownwood Bulletin)



Texas Highway Department Building in Brownwood, 1932, closed in 1966. Later used as the Brownwood Police Department.  
(TxDOT & Brownwood Bulletin)

February 1932 – “A reorganization of the highway department placed Brownwood as the home office for a new nine-county group that was composed of all the counties in this section. Leo Ehlinger was made head of the new group. The counties included in the new group are Brown, Coleman, McCulloch, Comanche, Erath, Eastland, Stevens, Mills, and San Saba.

“At that time Park Huntington was made resident engineer and Bob Milligan was made assistant district engineer.” (Brownwood Bulletin)

During World War II ration cards were issued to all motorists limited the amount of gasoline they could purchase at any give time. Also tires and other accessories were limited. Most car owners ended up having their tires recapped in order to make them last. Those owners that lived on the coast had to drive at night with only their parking lights on. No new cars were available during the war and all car manufactures converted to making jeeps, tanks, trucks and other equipment for the military.



"Machine-Gun" George  
& Kathryn Kelly

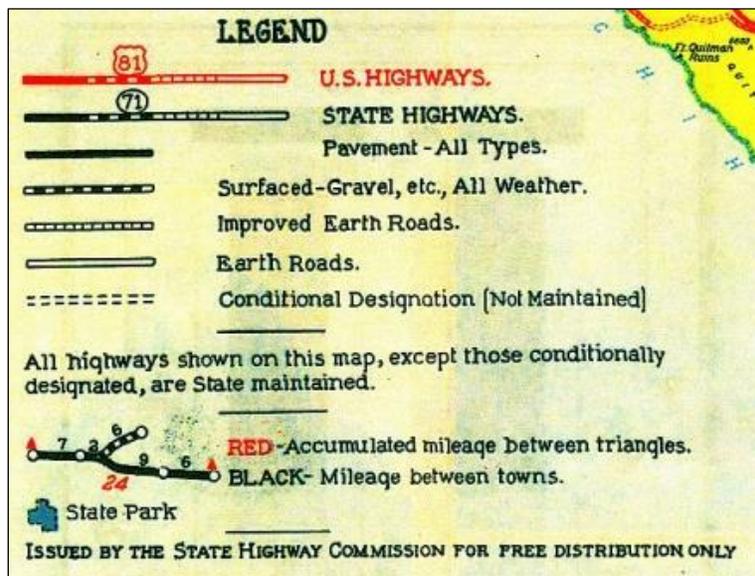
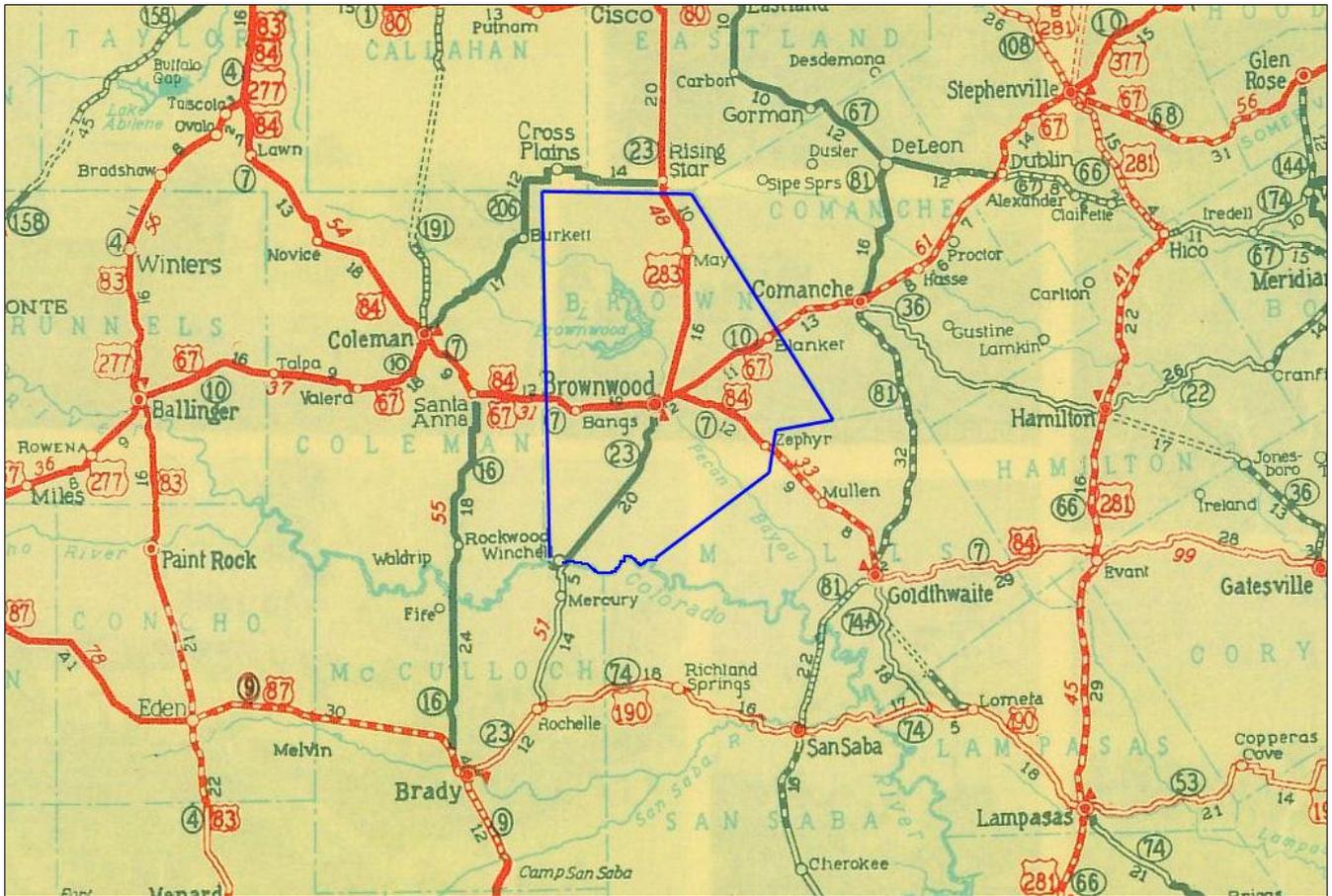
### **Machine Gun Kelly's Benefactress Charged**

April 4, 1934 – "A capias for the arrest of Louis Seaton, alias Magness, and a copy of the indictment returned against her by a Federal grand jury in February charging her with harboring George (Machine Gun) Kelly, was forwarded Tuesday by Assistant United States Attorney Jones of the Northern District of Texas to the Federal attorney a Muskogee, OK.

"Trial of the woman, who has been under Federal surveillance in a tuberculosis hospital at Talihina, OK., is set for April 23 at San Angelo, where she will be removed.

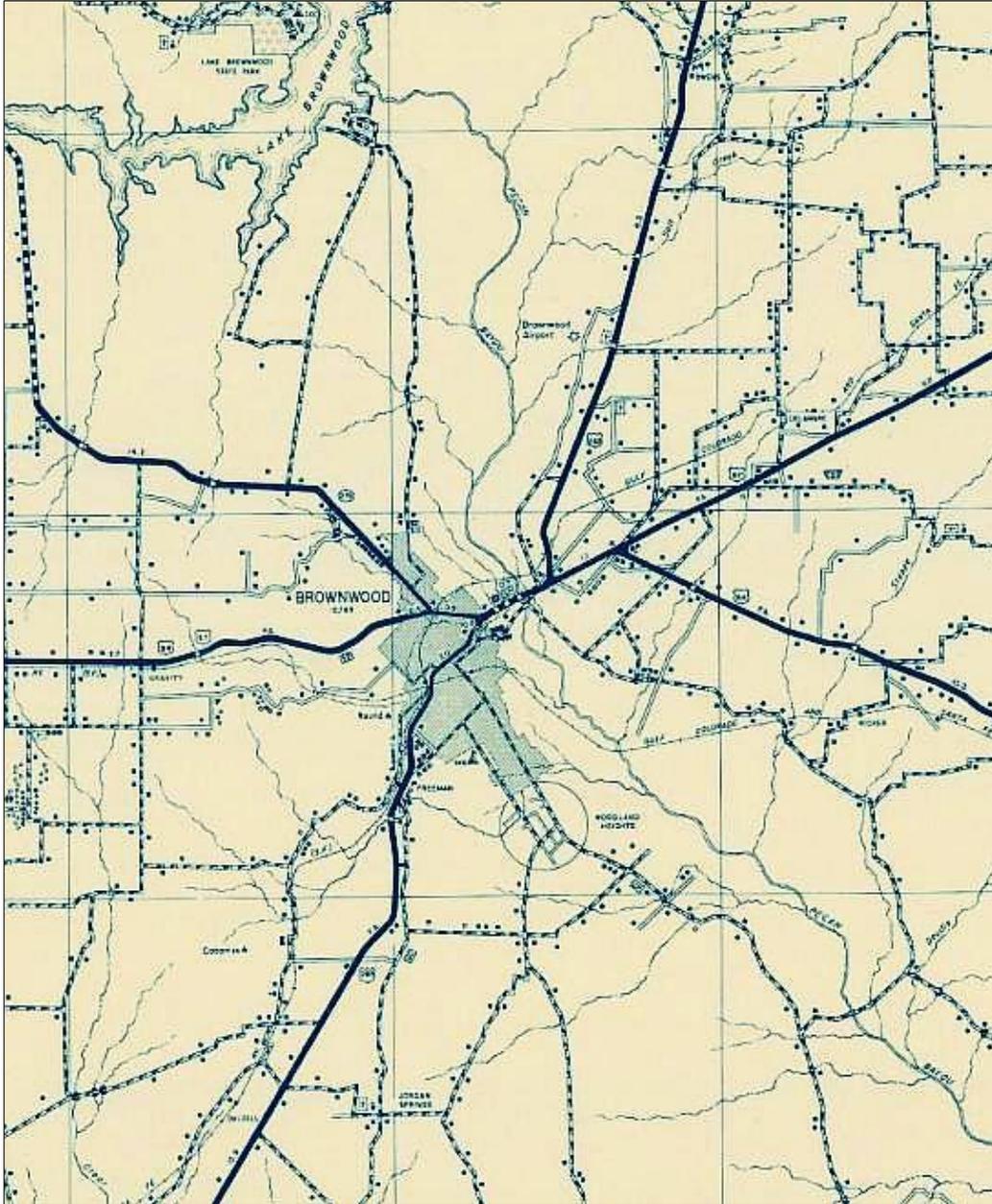
"The indictment sets out that this woman **bought an automobile at Brownwood** and delivered it to Kelly and his wife on the Brownwood-Coleman highway during their flight from justice after the kidnaped Charles Urschel and been exchanged for ransom." (Dallas Morning News)

October, 1948 - Weatherby Motor Company pioneered the driver training program at Brownwood High School. To start the program, the company furnished one car free of charge for use of the students and teachers. Later Weatherly Motors furnished as many as four cars per school year free until the school adopted a policy in 1981 paying a small fee for the use of the cars in the program.



1936 Map showing condition of roads.

1936 Brown County Map



GENERAL HIGHWAY MAP  
**BROWN COUNTY**  
**TEXAS**  
PREPARED BY THE  
TEXAS STATE HIGHWAY DEPARTMENT  
IN COOPERATION WITH THE  
U. S. DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE  
BUREAU OF PUBLIC ROADS  
DATA OBTAINED FROM  
STATE-WIDE HIGHWAY PLANNING SURVEY

1936



**Super Taxi Company**

During World War II, when Camp Bowie was crowded with soldiers while their families lived in the city, several taxi companies began springing up. Yellow Cab Co. began in business in 1940. Other cab companies that operated during World War II were Checker, Southern, White, Congress, Yellow, Brownwood and Crogan. (Brownwood Bulletin, April 10, 1985)



**Center Avenue - 1940**



**1948 Sinclair Service Station on Austin Avenue (Now a bicycle shop)**

1949 – Colson –Briscoe Act is passed allowing farm and ranch to market roads to be constructed.

1949 - In the state of Texas, the terms Farm to Market Road and Ranch to Market Road indicate roadways that are part of the state's system of secondary and connecting routes, built and maintained by the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT). Texas established this system in 1949 to provide access to rural areas. The system consists primarily of paved, two-lane roads. Generally, roads west of US 281 (or Interstate 35 in some locations) are designated Ranch to Market Roads, while those east of US 281 are designated Farm to Market Roads—though there are exceptions to this naming system, such as RM 2588 in Henderson County in East Texas or FM 1215 in Reeves County West Texas. Oddly, Erath, Comanche, Brown and several other counties along and west of US 281 also appear to be exceptions to this rule, using Farm to Market designations primarily, if not exclusively. (*Wikipedia*)



**1953 Road Signs at Brownwood Traffic Circle (TxDOT Photo)**

1954 – Construction of the interstate highway system began in 1954. Texas was allocated almost 3000 miles of the system. The Texas interstates include Interstate 35, which runs from the Mexican to the Canadian borders, and four east-west routes (I-10, I-20, I-30, and I-40). Eventually the system would expand to include loops around Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, and San Antonio, and four intrastate routes (I-37, I-45, I-27, and I-44) that were upgraded to national standards. (*Texas Highway Department*)

1955 - Legislature increases gasoline tax to five cents, the first hike since 1929. (*TxDOT History: 1970 – 1951*)

1956 – The building of the interstate highway network began. These highways did not come through Brownwood, but the good roads already built connected the county to the Interstate Highway 20 in Abilene and Cisco.



**Texas Highway Department (TxDOT Photo)**

1966 – A new modern office building was built on land bordering US 183 North on the Cisco highway.

**City Directories**

1909 – Under Auto Livery it listed Crume G. W. Brownwood Hotel –First Listing in a Directory

1911 – Under Auto Livery it listed Wilson Transfer Co., 404-406 Center  
Under Automobiles it listed Anderson, J. W. 109 S. Broadway and Hall, E. G., 404-406 Center Ave.

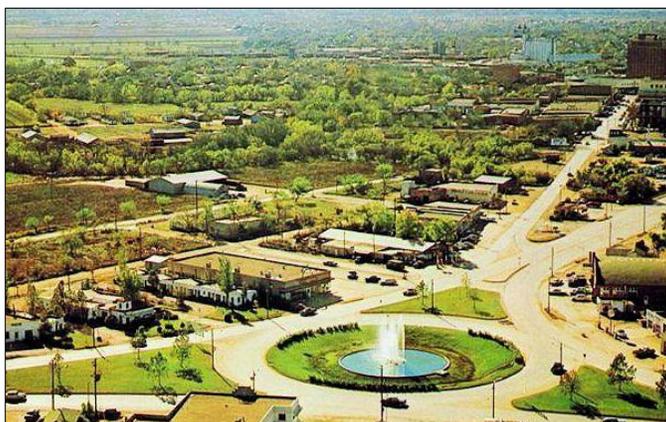
1914 – Automobiles: Bouldin & Wheeler, 121 W. Baker; Ford Motor Company, Fisk; Opera House Garage, 410-412 Fisk.  
Automotive Supplies: City Garage The, 119 W. Baker; Hall Joe, 120 E. Lee; Opera House Garage, 410-412 Fisk

1919 – By 1919 there were listing for Automobile Garages, Automobile Livery, Automobile Painters, Automobile Repairers, Automobile Supplies, Automobile Tires, Automobile Top Manufacturers, Automobile Wheel Manufactures, Automobiles, and Automobiles – For Rent

August 23, 1963 - Maximum speed limit for two-thirds of the state highway system increases to 70 mph during the day, 65 mph at night. (TxDOT History: 1970 – 1951)



September 1, 1965 - First Texas specialty license plate is issued. (TxDOT History: 1970 – 1951)



**Brownwood Traffic Circle – 1970s**



January 20, 1974 - With the nation struggling through a gasoline shortage caused by the 1973 Arab-Israeli War, the maximum speed limit is reduced to 55 mph to conserve fuel. (TxDOT History: 2000 – 1971)

1975 – The Texas Highway Department changed its name to the State Department of Highways and Public Transportation.

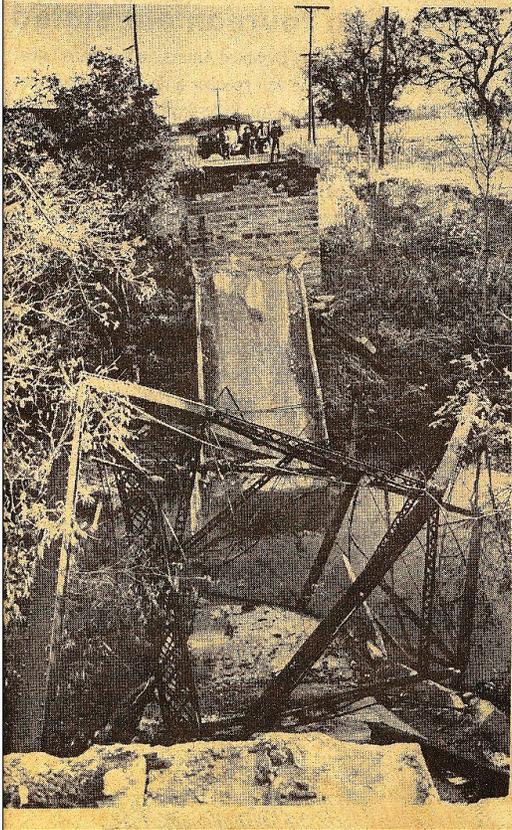
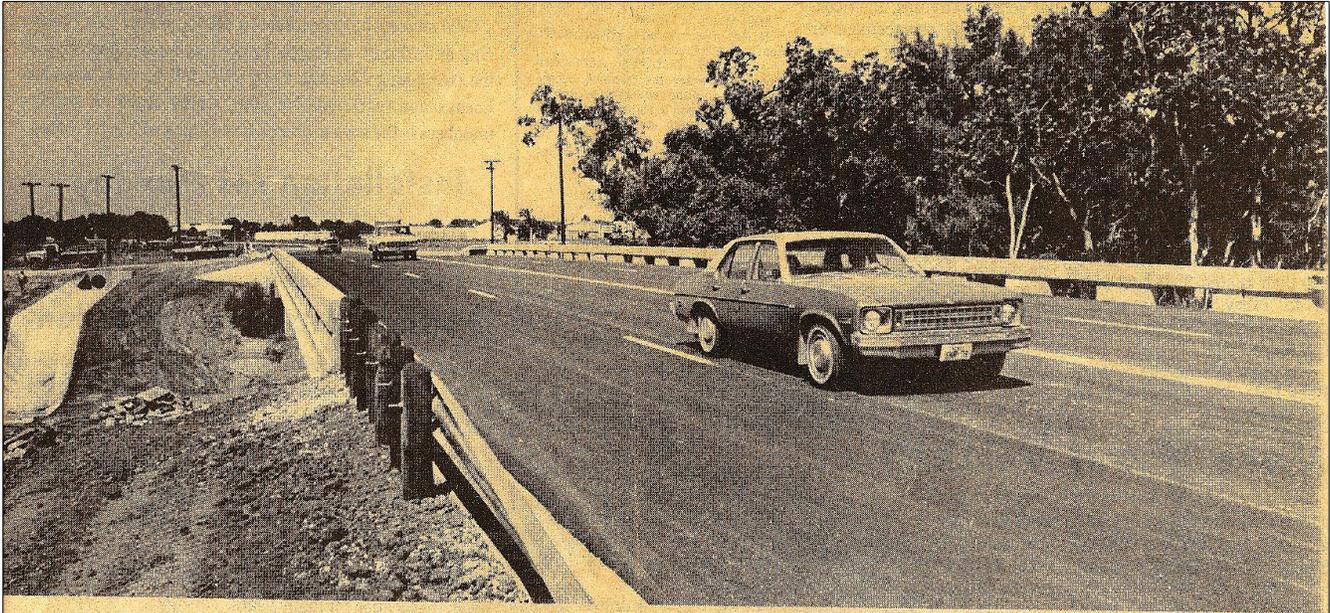
June 4, 1980 – “A new page in the transportation history of the Brownwood-Early area was written about noon today when the employees of the Texas Department of Highways and Public Transportation dropped the barricades and turned on the traffic signals officially opening the C. C. Woodson Road.

“The new, multi-lane, 1.2 mile thoroughfare connects downtown Brownwood with U. S. Highway 67/377, the Early Boulevard, near the site of Heartland Mall.

“Named in honor of the late C. C. Woodson, Brownwood civic leader and publisher of the Brownwood Bulletin, the roadway was planned to reduce the huge amount of traffic that flows through the Brownwood traffic circle, especially during peak periods in the morning, noon and the late afternoon rush hours. The circle has long been a sore spot to many motorists both local and transient.”  
(*Brownwood Bulletin*, February 27, 1994)



**An early Comfort Station (TxDOT Photo)**



**TALE OF TWO BRIDGES** — This trio of photographs tells the story of two bridges over the Pecan Bayou along the Old Fort Worth Highway and its predecessor, the new C. C. Woodson Road, which was opened last Thursday afternoon. The photo below, taken by Gary Griffin of Brownwood just after a snowfall in the winter of 1976-77, shows the old, iron bridge built by the King Bridge Co. of

Cleveland, Ohio in 1884. The Bulletin photo at left shows the same bridge after it was dropped into the bayou when an auto struck a support Nov. 10, 1977. The Bulletin photo above shows the new bridge over the bayou on the C. C. Woodson Road. The old bridge was located to the left of the new bridge where the concrete flow way can be seen.

(Bulletin Photos by Lash Lashbrook)

### **Pecan Bayou Bridge Destroyed on November 10, 1977**

Pecan Bayou Bridge was started December 13, 1930 and completed July 11, 1931; total cost of almost \$84,000. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

1984 - Gas tax raised five cents to 10 cents a gallon. ((TxDOT History: 2000 – 1971)



**Truman Harlow Overpass on Highway 377**

May 1984 – The “Truman Harlow Overpass” was completed. This was one of the first of two overpasses that were built over the Santa Fe railroad tracks. A lot of coal cars were being hauled by Santa Fe through Brownwood at the time, holding up traffic on Highway 377, and the military needed to have better access across the tracks in case of an emergency. So, TxDOT decided to build this overpass which was a major project at the time.

The overpass was named in honor of Mayor Truman Harlow who served on the Brownwood City Council for 26 years and was mayor of Brownwood for 16 years.

May 1985 - The Adopt-a-Highway program begins with the Tyler Civitan Club taking over litter collection along a two-mile section of U.S. 69. ((TxDOT History: 2000 – 1971)



1986 – The slogan “Don’t Mess With Texas” became a household word and the Adopt-a-Highway litter control program became popular.

1987 - Lawmakers increase gas tax to 15 cents a gallon. ((TxDOT History: 2000 – 1971)



**Traffic Circle BEFORE converting it to a “T”**



**“Traffic T” AFTER converting from a Traffic Circle**

May 27, 1990 – The Brownwood “Traffic Circle” was converted to a “Traffic T.” When the project was still in the planning stage, the final working day was scheduled to be August 5, 1990. Signs of the way the Brownwood traffic circle was set up should be completely eradicated. The flood of April 27, 1990 blanketed the area for several days that month, but the flooding caused very little damage and it only cost the workers on the project about a week on the construction schedule. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

1990 – The State Department of Highways and Public Transportation changed its name to the Texas Department of Transportation (TxDOT)



1991 - Legislature raises gas tax five cents to 20 cents a gallon. ((TxDOT History: 2000 – 1971)

December 8, 1995 - Speed limit returns to 70 mph. ((TxDOT History: 2000 – 1971)



### **W. C. "Bill" Monroe Overpass**

November 21, 2001 – “The W. C. ‘Bill’ Monroe overpass opened for some traffic last Tuesday afternoon. There was no ‘official’ ceremony, just a sigh of relief from the construction crew as they feverishly finished the remaining paving to open the overpass to some traffic.

“Brownwood officials named the overpass in honor of former Brownwood Mayor Bill Monroe. Bill Monroe, who died in 1976, served as Brownwood’s mayor from 1964 to 1968.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

April 5, 2002 – The dedication ceremony was held Thursday of the W. C. “Bill” Monroe Overpass. The overpass was named in honor of former Brownwood Mayor Bill Monroe.

“The broad, boulevard-like overpass, which stretches about a quarter of a mile from Coggin Avenue on the north to Avenue B on the south, takes Austin Avenue over a bed of railroad tracks.

“The original underpass, built in 1913, was 11 feet tall, flooded regularly and trucks could not fit under it. Talk of replacing it began in the 1930s, (TxDOT District Engineer Lynn) Passmore said, and continued into the modern era.

“Construction began in January 2001, creating what came to be known as the “Austin Avenue detour” as a portion of the street remained closed to traffic for nearly two years. The construction itself cost \$11.7 million, Passmore said, and the cost of the total project exceeded \$20 million.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

2002 - The first phase of widening of Austin Avenue from Fisk to Avenue K was begun in 2001 with the construction of the Monroe Overpass over Carnegie and the railroad tracks. This phase included installing a left turn lane down the center of the four-lane street. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



**Hwy. 67/84 and Austin Avenue**

June 4, 2002 – “There will be dust and detours for people traveling Hwy. 67/84 and Austin Avenue for the next several months, but a rebuilt intersection joining Austin Avenue with the highway will be safer and more easily navigated, state official said.

“The highway, which turns into Commerce Avenue in Brownwood city limits, now arches over Austin Avenue. Originally built in the 1930s over railroad tracks, the overpass area has evolved into a complicated system of roads and feeders.

“The finished intersection will have four lanes and two turn lanes in each direction. The new intersection traffic lights will be coordinated with the traffic signals of the Commerce Square and Wal-Mart intersections down the road, TxDOT Area Engineer Bryan Raschke said.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



**Coggin Avenue and U.S. Highway 377**

November 1, 2004 – “Barricades were scheduled to go up today at the south end of Coggin Avenue as contractors from the Texas Department of Transportation will begin work to erect a traffic signal at it intersection with U. S. Highway 377, the Brady Highway.

“Contract Paving of Abilene is the contractor for the Coggin Avenue and Brady Highway traffic signal project, officials with the Brownwood TxDOT office said. The signal project at the “Y” intersection is part of a multi-site contract led by TxDOT for \$1.3 million which also includes acceleration and deceleration safety lanes and/or left turn lanes at four other locations in Brown County.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

November 9, 2005 – “Early City Council members have agreed Tuesday to advertise for bids to hire a contractor for a massive street improvement project that is projected to bring repairs to 10 miles of city’s streets.

“Early City Council members said they want to open bids on Dec. 8 and take action on a bid on Dec. 13. The city issued a \$2.4 million certificate of obligation earlier this year to fund the project, which is projected to provide seal coating on 32,000 feet and repave and address drainage issues on 25,000 feet. The project will also include curb and gutter work.

“Streets projected for repaving and drainage work are Allen, East River Oaks, Nottingham Oaks, Old Comanche and a portion of Longhorn.

“Street projected for seal coating are Orchard, Eastover, Lucas, Broken Arrow, Sunrise, Mockingbird Circle, Meadow Lane, Hansen, Virginia, Sherry, Eastwind (southwest portion), Autumn, Jenkin Springs Road, McDonald, Salt Creek, Skyview, Monte Vista, Park, Crescent and Grandview.

“The project is part of the city’s Master Plan. “ (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

January 1, 2006 – “The second phase of a project to widen Austin Avenue –or FM Road 2524 – in south Brownwood is schedule to begin Monday (January 2) officials with the Brownwood District of the Texas Department of Transportation said.

“The project will widen the highway from two lanes to four lanes, update the illumination and traffic signals and install curb, gutter and sidewalks.

“Prater Equipment Company of Comanche was awarded the \$2.7 million contract to widen Austin Avenue from Avenue K to Norwood Street. (*Brownwood Bulletin*)



September 2011 – Texas State law allows TxDOT to create higher speed limit on any state highway if found to be reasonable and safe through an engineering study. Each new 75 or 80 mph speed limit must be approved by the Texas Transportation Commission.

Several highways in Brown County have posted the new 75 mph speed limit.

September 27, 2013 – “According to officials at Texas Department of Transportation, the widening of Austin Avenue/FM 2524 and the Willis Creek Bridge, from Norwood to Books in Brownwood should begin in min-October.

“The 1.026 mile project is being completed by Jay Mills Contracting, incorporated. The total cost of the project, according to TxDOT, is \$4,712,099.43.

“The project is expected to be complete by spring of 2015. Throughout construction, drivers and pedestrians are urged to use extreme caution in the work zone. The road will be open to one lane of traffic in each direction, for the duration of the project.” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

February 25, 2014 – “A unanimous vote was cast Tuesday by Brownwood City Council to approve plans and specifications and authorize the city staff to see bids for the reconstruction of Fisk Street from Austin Avenue to Main Street.

“The roadway will be excavated approximately 1 foot in places, up to 3 feet in the center and replaced by new road bed of 8 inches of black base and 1.5 inches of hot mix.

“Funding of the project is through the Certificates of Obligation sold in 2012. The engineer’s cost estimate is approximately \$1.23 (million). The time frame for completion of the project is approximately 12 months. (The replacing sidewalks and lighting will be done at a later time.)” (*Brownwood Bulletin*)

**Some Past Famous Cars**

Here is a partial list of some of the cars produced in past years that are no longer available. Date after name is when last produced. Each person has their own favorite car that their grandparents or their parents owned. Or, it might be car that they had as a youth. Some names have long been forgotten that were great sellers in the early days of Brown County.

Auburn 1937	Isuzu 2009	Plymouth 2001
Checker 2010	Kaiser-Frazer 1955	Pontiac 2010
Cord 1937	Nash 1957	Reo 1975
DeSoto 1961	Maxwell 1925	Saab 2011
Edsel 1960	Mercury 2011	Stanley Steamer 1924
Henry J 1954	Oldsmobile 2004	Studebaker 1963
Hudson 1954	Overland 1926	Suzuki 2012
Hummer 2010	Packard 1958	Tucker 1969 (Only 51 produced)

A complete list of defunct automobile manufacturers of the United States can be found on the website below. They have the dates the cars were manufactured as well as link to sites that tell more about that vehicle.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_defunct\\_automobile\\_manufacturers\\_of\\_the\\_United\\_States](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_defunct_automobile_manufacturers_of_the_United_States)

**Current Automobile Dealers in Brown County**

Big Country Ford Lincoln – Selling Ford and Lincoln vehicles

Bruner Auto Group – Selling Chevrolets, Cadillacs, Buick and GMC vehicles

Bruner Toyota – Selling Toyota vehicles

Stanley Chrysler – Selling Chrysler, Dodge, Jeep and Ram vehicles

- The End -