

Inez Ballard
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THE HISTORY OF BRITTON

A deed recorded in the Ellis County Courthouse shows that on June 1, 1894 George W. McGee and his wife, Amanda, deeded to the Fort Worth and New Orleans Railway Company a railroad Rite-A-Way with the stipulation that a Flag Station be established with a passenger depot. The flag station was to be known as Helland. It is unknown when the railroad and the depot were completed or when the depot was removed. Mr. Marshall one of the depot agents. Mr. Charley Jordan was the agent at the time the depot was closed.

In the late 1890's and early 1900's Britton was a thriving town in Northwest Ellis County. It's earliest name was Helland but in 1896 it was called Hellandville. The name was changed to Britton in 1898 in honor of H. C. Britton, a conductor on the railroad that ran through Britton. A map of Britton was filed for record on December 15, 1905 in Vol . 158, p. 45 of the Plat Book in Ellis County Courthouse in Waxahachie.

In those days Britton was a thriving town with businesses on both sides of Main St. (now Britton Rd.). With the help of some other Britton natives we remembered that in the early years a Mr. Spencer had a store that sold groceries, hardware, and furniture. He also had a lumber yard. There was a bank and a drug store. Will Henry Speck had a dry goods store and later there was also a Phillips Bros. Drug Store and Soda Fountain.

The Williams brothers had the Britton Merchantile which they sold to Will Cook. It was a combination grocery store, dry goods and feed store. Mr. Cook owned and operated the store until he retired. On the second floor of the merchantile building was a lodge hall. Bill Brown owned a theatre that showed silent films. One building contained the Post Office and a barber shop. Mrs. Henderson was the Postmistress, and her husband was the barber in the barber shop on the other side. The hotel was owned and operated by the Allmon Family.

There were two physicians who practiced at different times in Britton, Dr. Nifong and Dr. Brown. Boss Cope and Fred Fisher both had early garages. A dry goods store was owned by A. Bliss and a variety store operated

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by Mrs. Sanders. Ben and Lucinda Kimberly had a cafe and later another cafe was operated for a short time by Mrs. Noah. There were also two cotton gins and a grain elevator down by the railroad tracks.

A school was built on land given by Mr. and Mrs. G. W. McGee. They also gave land for the Britton Cemetery.

A popular pastime for the young people in Britton on a Sunday afternoon was to go down to the depot and wait for the train to arrive and see who was coming into town.

Both the Methodist and Baptist Churches were represented. The Methodist Church was organized about 1880 and the members met in the school house until the church was built. G. W. McGee and his wife gave the land for the church building. The deed was filed and recorded on January 24, 1905 in the Ellis County Deed Records.

The First Methodist Episcopal Church South was filed for record January 26, 1906 and recorded February 5 of the same year. The Trustees for the church were B. C. Davenport, F. S. Windle and G. W. McGee. The land for the Baptist Church was given by Mr. and Mrs. Maynard. After the church was abandoned Mr. and Mrs. Maynard's daughter, Arlene Walker, sold the property and donated the monies received to the Britton Cemetery Fund. No other information on the Baptist Church is known by your writer.

In the 1930's Charley Jordan operated a garage and Mr. Tom Tipps had an ice house. Mr. Arnold Rawdon owned a building that contained his three businesses: in the front was his barber shop, a back room had a pool table that was often busy and also in the back was a washing machine which he used to do washing for other people.

The growth of Britton declined after Highway 34 by-passed Britton in 1935. Lots of young people left the farms and moved away in order to make a better living for themselves and their families. Those of us who grew up there enjoyed our time there and the hard but carefree days of our youth. Now Britton has been annexed by

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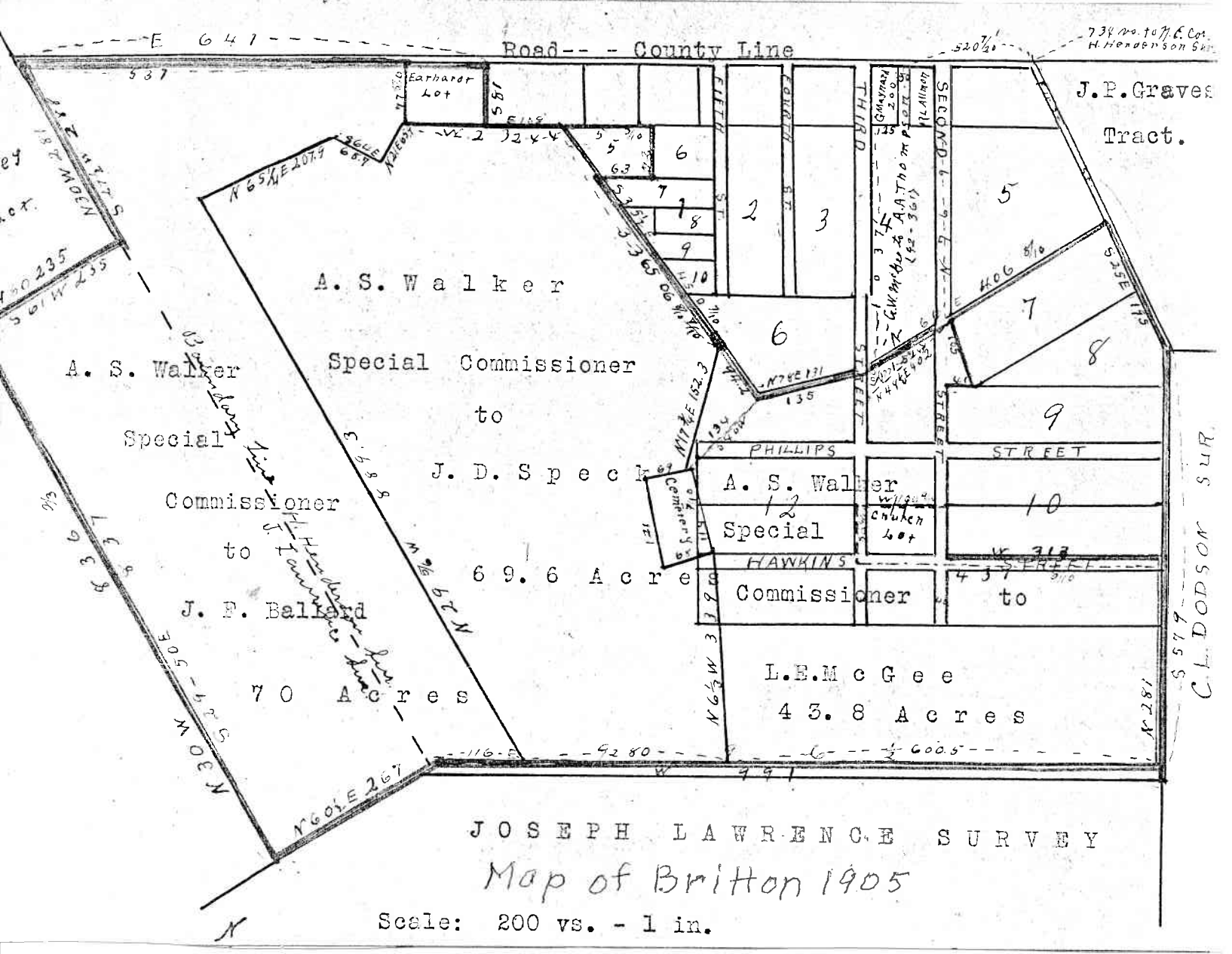
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Mansfield and Joe Pool Lake is at the edge of town. The Britton area is beginning to grow again, but it will never be as it was in its heyday! Times change and so must we!

Road--- County Line

734 No. 107 & Co. H. Henderson Sur.

J. P. Graves Tract.



A. S. Walker
Special Commissioner

to
J. D. Speck
69.6 Acres

J. P. Bell
70 Acres

PHILLIPS
A. S. Walker
12
Special
HAWKINS
Commissioner

L. E. McGee
43.8 Acres

JOSEPH LAWRENCE SURVEY
Map of Britton 1905

Scale: 200 vs. - 1 in.