

# THE TOWN

by Annie Phinney

O.B. Hoover bought eighty acres of land from W.B. Williams in 1904. He marked it off into streets, blocks and alleys and a picnic was held and everyone came from far and near. After a dinner on the ground, the lots (numbered) were put in a hat and everyone who wanted a lot bought one that day. At first the town was called "Signal," from the mountain to the south. Grandma Shive moved the post office from a trading post about a mile east. The town had to have a new name so Mrs. Echols who was born in Coahoma County, Mississippi suggested "Coahoma" for the new name. All agreed and "Coahoma" was born. The name is an Indian word for Red Panther.

Most of the town was south of the tracks, but it grew and prospered for a long time. The loading pens located where "Little Sooper" is today was a busy place. The ranchers could now drive their cattle into the loading pens and ship them out without long trail drives. There were boarding houses and hotels for overnight guests, a General store which carried almost everything that the settlers needed, a shoe shop, a Ford dealership, restaurants, dress and hat shops, and furniture stores. One welcome business to Coahoma in the early days was the "Guitar Gin." The cotton was ginned and the bales were put back on the wagon and the farmer had to sell it himself. Prior to the Guitar Gin, cotton had to be hauled to Colorado City which was a two or three day trip.

The Masons built a Masonic Hall which is the tallest building in Coahoma. The Masons held their meetings upstairs and the low part of the building was the doctor's office and the drug store. There was a barber shop and cleaning establishment there, also.

Finally, the bank came which was a great help for the early settlers. Otherwise, they would have to go by train to Big Spring to conduct their business. When Highway 80 came through the town and cars were available, the people did more and more of their shopping in Big Spring.

During the Depression most of the businesses failed and the town began to dry up. The *people* are still here and they work, play and cry together. It's a great place to live.

