

Austin History Center

AF - H4700(7) Walnut Creek Possum Hunt 15

Annual 'Possum Hunt on Walnut Creek Is Wonderful Feast; Hundreds Participate in the Festive Affair

It was a large party, the one pulled last night by the Walnut Creek 'Possum Hunting Association. It was large in numbers, but it was huge in spirit and immense in the amount of food placed on the 100-yard table—and consumed.

They were all there, the old settlers of the Walnut Creek country. They came from Sprinkle, from Fiskville, from Dessau, from Manor, and even Austin sent a number of her citizens back to the place of their youth. For the annual reunion and picnic of the Walnut Creek country. The Jarmons were there, the Sandersons, the Crisswells, the Krugers, the Giles, the Maxwells, the Kings, the Yeagers, the Smiths, the Hennings, the Boyeses, and all of the rest of them—almost 400 in all. Even old Uncle Jack Black, who moved onto Walnut Creek when the Maxwells brought him with them to Texas back in '59, when he was just 6 years old, and who has lived there ever since. Uncle Jack was a slave back in those days, and he still looks upon the "Maxwell boys" as his leaders.

And they all enjoyed it, from the little tots who chased the dogs around the grounds, down on Walnut Creek, between drumsticks, through the young couples who wandered off down to the creek for a drink, or to wash their hands, and then forgot to come back, to the oldtimers who stood around the two huge campfires, their feet wide apart, their hands to the blaze behind them, and swapped yarns of the "good old days." But perhaps those who enjoyed it most were those from the city, who had moved away from the farm years ago and were there again. In the old country they still love with their old friends and neighbors for one more night.

Officially, it was known as the eleventh annual Hunt of the Walnut Creek 'Possum Hunting Association; at least, that is what Judge Lattimore called it when he arose at the end of the meal to make a speech; but what it really was was a most successful community frolic and picnic that brought over 300 neighbors together for a good time, giving them a chance to know each other better and come to like each other better.

Not that the 'possum hunting was a fake. Far from it. In fact, the night was just well begun when Shirley Gregg came in with the first 'possum hung over the end of a pole. And it was not much longer until a bobbed haired flapper came in with another. The 'possums were there, all right.

The picnickers began to arrive about dusk, picking their way from the road down through a cedar forest to the banks of the creek, where they found two huge campfires waiting for them. They came in all manner of conveyances, from the horse and buggy to modern high powered cars, alternately snorting and purring as they picked their way along the road. By the time supper was announced at 9 o'clock, there were as many cars parked as there are, at many countyairs.

few songs, and the day was finished. The crowds dispersed, declaring they had had the best time in history and planning already for the next 'possum hunt.

But this story would not be complete if it did not convey in some manner the informal spirit of the occasion. Nobody present had a last name. And nobody had initials. It was "Charley" and "Fritz" and "John" and "Harry" and the like, down the line. Everybody knew everybody else, or if the few strangers who had been invited did not know the others, no one seemed to know it from the way they were treated. It was more like a family reunion than a community affair.

And this story must also mention the dishes prepared by the wives of the community, from "Ma" Jarmon's and Mrs. Jim King's cream pies down through the list. But that would take two long, and besides, one man can not hold enough food, even in samples, to tell about all of them. Those who were there know; and for the others, they are just out of luck.

Then they fell to at a word from E. R. Jarmon and following an invocation by W. B. Bowman, from over Manor way. Fell to is right. The food was spread along the ground on papers for a distance of over a hundred yards. And there was plenty of it. Fried chicken, home made sausages, barbecue, roasts, ham, sandwiches of all sorts, pies and cakes in seemingly endless array—everything that a small boy could dream of. But it melted away in a hurry. In fact, one farmer began to wonder how many of the guests would have to be stowed in water tomorrow to recover from "foundering." After the dinner was out of sight, the crowd gathered around Judge Lattimore and listened to the supply of jokes that flowed from his mind for an hour or more. That is, most of them gathered around the judge. Others gathered around the fires and in little knots here and there and just talked. After the talk by Judge Lattimore, Miss Lois Ervin led the crowd in a

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Possum Hunt Due Saturday

One of the oldest get-togethers in Travis County will be staged next Saturday.

It will be the 37th annual Walnut Creek possum hunt.

Herman Kruger, president of the Walnut Creek Possum Hunters Association, says the hunt will be held in his pasture. All residents of the section, and elsewhere in the county, are invited to attend.

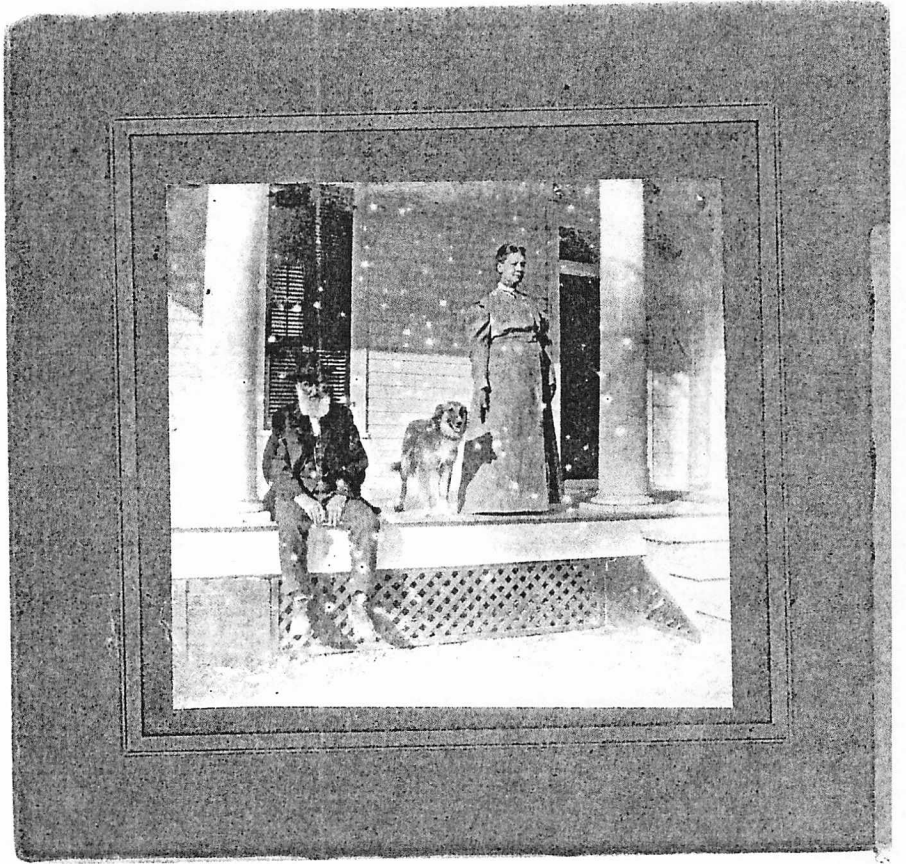
"There'll be plenty of coffee," Kruger promised, "and we'll chase the possum or sit around and talk by the fireside."

The hunt is a traditional event among the residents of the Walnut Creek section.

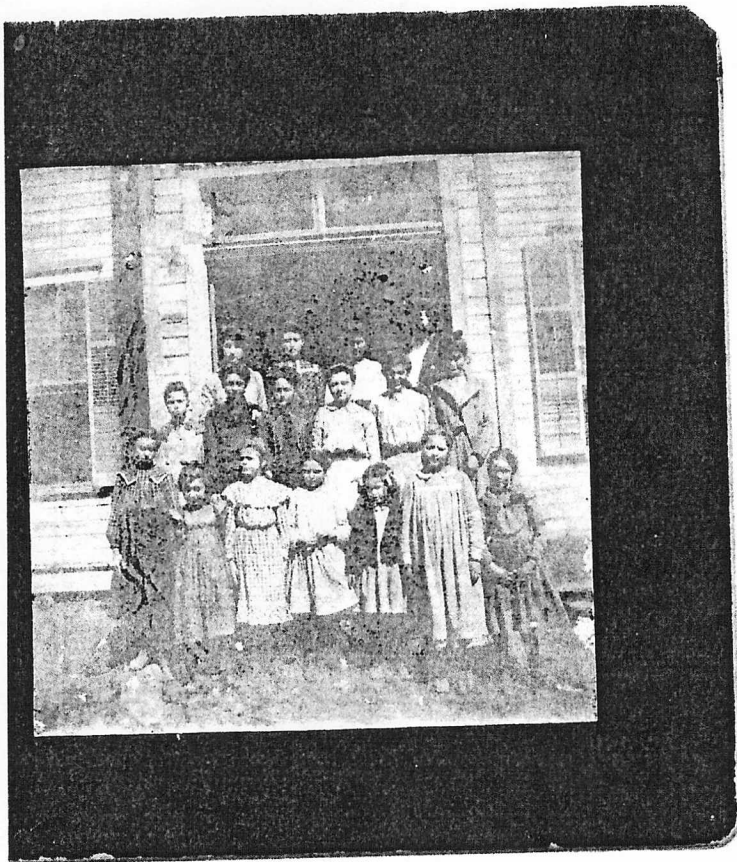
Eugene V. Giles is secretary-treasurer of the association.

Other officials are Mr. and Mrs. E. W. Smith, Mr. and Mrs. Grover Deen, Miss Laura Giles, Mrs. Kruger, Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Burris, Mr. and Mrs. Lee Melton, Mrs. C. V. Jackson and Mr. and Mrs. Bascom Giles.

No date



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1905