

Sulphur Springs on the Navasota River

compiled by Bill Page

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Sulphur Springs, also known as Boiling Springs, was located east of College Station on the Navasota River. These springs were near the mouth of Carter Creek and Lick Creek. The spring water was highly charged with sulphurated hydrogen and was considered medicinal. Sulphur Springs long served as a popular meeting and camping area.

In 1841, a book described these springs in this way: “Near the mouth of the Navasoto is a spring which affords a large stream of water highly impregnated with sulphur.” (Kennedy, William, Texas: The Rise, Progress, and Prospects of the Republic of Texas, London, 1841, page 119)

We have received a specimen of a mineral found near the residence of the Hon. Millican, on the Navisoto, which so closely resembles chalk, that it would readily be mistaken for that mineral. It makes a plain, even mark like chalk, and is so soft that it soils the fingers. Large beds of it are found on the Navisoto. We mentioned some weeks since that a large bed of this mineral had been found near the sulphur spring on that stream. We understand that thousands of tons of it can be procured. It can be readily levigated so as to form a fine white powder like Spanish whiting, and like that article would probably answer to form putty or a coarse paint. Democratic Telegraph and Texas Register (Houston), 20 September 1849, page 2

In 1874, Sulphur Springs on the Navasota River was the proposed terminus of a road from Millican. (Brazos County Commissioners Minutes, Book B, page 79).

Bryan ... A farmers camp meeting is to begin at the Sulphur Springs, near Millican, this county, on the 26th inst., to continue a month. Exercises will consist of lectures by prominent visitors from different portions of the state on the subject of agriculture and other interesting topics, with appropriate entertainment. The committee on arrangements have done everything to insure a good programme. Galveston Daily News, 8 July 1880, page 1

Navasota ... Miss Terry, one of a party of visitors at the sulphur springs, four miles from Millican, was yesterday about daylight, attacked by a rabid polecat. It fastened its teeth in her cheek and could not be made to turn loose its hold until its throat was cut. Doubts are entertained about her recovery. Galveston Daily News, 18 July 1880, page 1

On 12 February 1883, Brazos County commissioners approved \$500 to build a bridge at or near Sulphur Springs. (Brazos County Commissioners Minutes, Book C, page 293).

On 25 June 1883, Brazos County commissioners approved an additional \$150 to build a bridge at or near Sulphur Springs. (Brazos County Commissioners Minutes, Book C, page 308).

On 30 June 1884, Brazos County commissioners paid A.L. McLeon for removing bridge timber from the Navasota River at Sulphur Springs. (Brazos County Commissioners Minutes, Book C, page 382).

Sulphur Springs at Millican, Brazos County – 8 springs, resort. [Lists and Analysis of the Mineral Springs of the United States (1886), U.S. Geological Survey Bulletin no.32, page 126].

Millican, Tex., Aug. 12 – News reached here to-day of a killing that occurred near Sulphur Springs yesterday. The name of only one of the parties has as yet been learned. It seems one Jones, from near Navasota, was visiting his brother-in-law near Sulphur Springs. Only a few hours after Jones arrival at his relative's house their children commenced fighting, their parents taking their parts, ending in Jones killing the other. Fort Worth Daily Gazette, 13 August 1887, page 5

Brazos County ... Only two mineral springs or wells are known to exist. Manganic wells are a series of shallow wells about three miles northwest of Bryan, and the other, Boiling or Sulphur spring, occurs on the west bank of the Navasota River on the J. Gray headright. This last is a sulphur water, highly charged with sulphuretted hydrogen. Both of these localities are used as pleasure or health resorts, and have local reputations. (From: Kennedy, W., "Report on Grimes, Brazos and Robertson Counties," page 59, in Fourth Annual Report of the Geological Survey of Texas, 1892]

Rock Prairie ... A good many old and young people enjoyed a picnic at Sulphur Springs last Friday. Bryan Weekly Eagle, 4 July 1898, page 3

Rock Prairie ... A grand time was spent at Sulphur Springs last Thursday by a number of young people from this place. Bryan Weekly Eagle, 21 July 1898, page 3

In a book published in 1899, Sulphur Springs, at Millican, Brazos County, was said to be "somewhat used" as a resort. (Crook, James King, The Mineral Waters of the United States and Their Therapeutic Uses, 1899, page 456).

Green Prairie ... Mr. J.D. Combest and family spent the day at Sulphur Springs last Sunday. (weekly) Bryan Eagle, 5 July 1900, page 3

Bryan, Tex., Aug. 13 – Congressman Rufus Hardy of Corsicana and Messrs. Campbell and Quicksall, experts from the Department of Agriculture, addressed the farmers of Brazos County on diversified and improved farming methods today. Congressman Hardy made an address at a barbecue at the Sulphur Springs on the Navasota River, and the latter gentlemen spoke at the courthouse in this city at 2 o'clock this afternoon. Both meetings were well attended and the farmers were well pleased with the addresses of the speakers. They will all speak at a barbecue at Edge, in the northern end of the county, tomorrow. Galveston Daily News, 14 August 1909, page 6

We took a trip the other day down to Sulphur Springs and got all the fish and squirrel we could eat for once at least. These fish fries have a strange effect on a fellow. He gets a hankering after another one for some reason or other not explained in psychology. There were several families camped down there enjoying the good things that nature has provided, among whom were Mr. Turner Crenshaw and family, Uncle Steve Greer and family, Mr. George and Avery Greer and family, and others whose names we did not learn. Everybody felt as wild and free as Gypsies and had such a good time that they forgot all about crops, high taxation, low taxation, the coming election, toe corns or family fusses. While some of the boys were in the river bathing and cooling off they got to fooling with a big log on the bottom that was in the way. They lifted one end up and some fellow on the bank roped it and with much puffing by those who had their clothes on, and pushing by those who had their clothes off it was finally walloped over to the Brazos County side and one of the gentlemen who had an enquiring turn of mind found out that the log was hollow, and to his amazement, discovered a large catfish all hunkered up in it. Then the question arose who would be bold enough to tackle the monster, and it seemed there was only one, Mr. Avery Greer, who dared to risk the experience that Jonah had. So, taking the rope he went after it and got a fierce bite, but the rest of the mighty hunters and fishermen came to the rescue with the result that old Mr. Catfish bid farewell to his river home and his elegant den in the hollow log. He was taken to the camp, where he was hacked and hewn into big chunks and devoured by the enemies he had so long eluded. One of them. Bryan Daily Eagle, 1 July 1910, page 3.

The following party of Brazos County people were camped last week at Sulphur Springs on the Navasota River and report a most delightful time: Mr. and Mrs. I.B. Todd and children, Mr. and Mrs. Amon Williams and children; Mr. and Mrs. Fred Cargill ... (illegible) ... and Luther Johnson. Every moment of the encampment was enjoyed and the men of the party provided plenty of fish and squirrels. It was reported to the *Eagle* that 160 pounds of fish were caught, and all the squirrels killed that the whole party could use. A regular feast was enjoyed every day. (weekly) Bryan Eagle, 18 July 1912, page 1

“Two Negroes Killed,” Bryan Daily Eagle, 22 June 1916, p.1. At Sulphur Springs.

“Grace Family Reunion Held Sulphur Springs First In Twelve Years,” Bryan Weekly Eagle, 30 August 1923, page 4