

Early Law Enforcement in Bryan – 1872-1874

City of Bryan. Appointments ... Dec. 4, 1871. H.T. DOWNARD, mayor; T.J. DEARING, marshal (resigned 3 July 1872); T. McCARTY, W. VAN HOOK, C.B. FOSTER, C.F. MOORE, H.A. MOORE, Geo. D. HASWELL, aldermen. (Texas Election Registers 1838-1972.)

Brazos County Deed Records, Book M, page 339: Corporation of the City of Bryan sold J.W. CODY of Hill County lot 25 in block 2 in Bryan City Cemetery, for \$12.50; signed H.T. DOWNARD, mayor, and T.J. DEARING, marshal; dated 1 January 1872

A saloon keeper named CARR killed a policeman named WIGGINS at Bryan last Friday. Galveston Daily News, 6 Jan.1872, p.3, col.4.

1872: April – “Bryan Forty-Five Years Ago as Told by an Old Paper,” (weekly) Bryan Eagle, 26 April 1917, p.4. About Weekly Bryan Appeal, 26 April 1872. “War was being made on the dogs by the city authorities, the alarm having been excited by a ‘few cases of hydrophobia’ ...”

The city [Bryan] by its mayor, H.T. DOWNARD, publishes an ordinance giving him power to appoint as many policemen as he may think necessary for the maintenance of the peace...Weekly Bryan Appeal, 26 April 1872, as cited in Bryan Daily Eagle, 25 April 1917, p.3

City of Bryan. Appointments ... Thos. McCARTY, marshal. 6 July 1872. (Texas Election Registers 1838-1972.)

Brazos County Deed Records, Book N, page 404: City of Bryan sold James B. THOMAS lot 55 in block 2 in Bryan City Cemetery for \$5; signed Jas. B. McLELLAND, mayor, and R.L. WEDDINGTON, marshal; dated 14 April 1873.

In March 1874, L. ERWIN, mayor of Bryan and W.H. BOWMAN, city marshal, sold the Freedman burying ground to Willis VAN HOOK and James RUSSELL, trustees of the A.M.E. Church; and to Edward CHESTERFIELD and Jacob ROBINSON, trustees of the A.M.E. Church; and to Abram TURNER and King ARCHER, trustees of the Baptist Church [Brazos Co. Deed Book 4, p.543]

Bryan, June 17, 1874. Last night at the hour of midnight, while three men were standing together in the railroad passenger depot, a shot was fired through the window by some unknown party, and killed a man by the name of J.P. FARMER, a policeman. The ball took affect in the forehead, causing instant death. The coroner’s jury set twice to-day, and is still in session; no verdict yet. A large number of the citizens are summoned as witnesses. At the present time this unfortunate affair is wrapped in mystery. Galveston Daily News, 18 June 1874, p.1, col.3

“From Bryan,” Galveston Daily News, 26 June 1874, p.1, col.2. Text of the coroner’s jury report; jurors were E.L. WARD, Charles DAVIS, Allen CARR, Irwin RANDLE, M.

LYNCH, and Wm. KOPPE; they concluded Henry COOK and J.A. NELSON killed J.P. FARMER

Bryan, June 26, 1874. Last night at about 12 o'clock a large crowd of men took Harry COOK, the assassin of James P. FARMER, out of the jail and shot and hung him inside of the prison yard. J.A. NELSON, his accomplice, it is said, was told to leave the state at once. The jail was guarded by 43 men, but they were powerless to prevent the hanging of COOK against the large number of about 200. Galveston Daily News, 27 June 1874, p.1, col.3.

A mysterious shooting occurred on the 17th, at the railroad station at Bryan, Tex., when some one fired a shot through the window, which struck J.P. FARMER in the forehead and killed him instantly. Brooklyn Daily Eagle, 27 June 1874, p.2.

A crazy man, whose name is Bragg, from Montgomery, Alabama, made his *entree* into Bryan on the 5th inst., and jumped from the second story of the Prima Vista Hotel on the same night, but, strange to say, received but very little injury. He has since been passed upon as a dangerous character to run at large, and placed under the charge of the marshal of the city. Galveston Daily News, 15 September 1874, page 2.

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