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Family Traces History In County to Pioneers By ELAINE MYERS Eagle Family Editor  
Standing as two proud reminders of farming life in Brazos County over a hundred years ago are a small cedar- shaded family cemetery and the leaning, weather-beaten remains of an old farmhouse all that's left of the Bond and Beal family homestead begun in the mid-1800's. The landmarks are located about five miles northeast of Bryan on Highway 21 East where the two families owned land on both sides of the road, which was dirt then, traveled by horse and buggy or wagons. JOE MONROE BOND, now the oldest living member of the family, was born and reared there. At 82, he looks as though FAMILY CEMETERY AT PROSPECT MARKS OLD HOMESTEAD ' he's half-amused at the world around him. He says he doesn't remember much about life back then—"All people did in them days was work, sit around the house and go to town one'st a month"—and the rest of what he remembers he won't tell. Still insisting he didn't remember much, as he reclined in a comfortable backyard chair at his home overlooking the rolling meadows and thick woods of Steep Hollow, the family patriarch was able to provide over 300 names, most of whom still live in Brazos County, for the immediate family tree to link the Bonds, Beals and Closses, in addition to much of the history attached to the old homestead area. Bond, Mrs. Bond (former Emma Hartsfield) and his sister, Mrs. Jack Jones (Jess), discussed the three families and their history. JAMES MONROE BOND (1835-1887) and his wife, Sarah Bowman, (1843-1918), came to Brazos County from Alabama sometime before the Civil War ended. Bond's sister, Pency, and her husband, Benjamin P. Kizer, also came. It was their infant son, Benjamin, for whom the family cemetery was begun. He died May 1, 1869 according to an old granite tombstone there. The Kizers donated the land for the cemetery. The

cemetery lies in what is now called "Sugar Hill," formerly called Prospect, and is one of the few family cemeteries left in the area. Members of the annual Bond, Beal, Closs family reunion visit the plot of ground each summer. Joe Bond is responsible for the upkeep of the cemetery, a task he willingly accepts. His one complaint is that more of the family don't attend the reunion. "If more of them would come, we'd know who they are," he said flatly. ..RETURNING to the settlement of the area, Bond said the Beals came from Tennessee. The first Beal-Bond match came with the marriage of Mary Kizer (daughter of Pency and Benjamin) to Lafayette Beal, Their children were Bertha, REMAINS OF BEAL HOMESTEAD BETWEEN BRYAN AND KURTEN OVER CENTURY OLD Family Numbering More Than 300 Persons in Brazos County Began Here Engle Photos by Boh Stump Sunday, August 1, 1911 CHARLENE CARROLL, DESCENDENT Great-Great Granddaughter of Settler CATHY CARROLL, FIFTH GENERATION Great-Great Granddaughter of Brazos Pioneer Eula, Brooks, Homer and Clem. Later two children of James Monroe and Sarah Bond married Beals to further unite the two families. Benjamin Bond( 1862-1945), the father of Joe Bond married Milbry Beal, and Elizabeth (Lisa) Bond married Joe Beal (Lafayette's brother). Ben and Milbry were the parents of eight children. They were Joe Monroe, Bessie, Blanche, Lucille, Sadie, Jessie, Eulala (Lala) and Cavitt, who died at age three or four. The couple settled across the road from the original homestead, and it is there Joe Bond spent his boyhood. THE WIRY Bond recalled the old school at Prospect taught by Dolores Thibideaux. She taught grades 1-10 all in one room, he said, as he recalled his boyish pranks of those days with a grin. The old schoolhouse was also used for Methodist church services once a month, he said. His father farmed something over 100 acres in cotton and corn. "All that bunch from Madisonville hauled their groceries from Bryan, and it would take four mules the road was so bad when it rained," he recalled. "Lots of times they'd have to stop and unload part of that stuff at our house so they could go on. Then they'd come back and get it. Sometimes it'd be a week or maybe longer before they could get it. "We didn't even know 'em," he explained. "They'd want to know if they could leave it. We didn't hardly have room for it, but we did it anyhow." MR. AND MRS. JOE MONROE BOND AT HOME IN STEEP HOLLOW Bond, at 82, Is Oldest Living Member of Brazos County Family Resides at Steep Hollow Granddaughter of Settler Lives in Bryan FAMILY, Page 2D Banker Is Third-Generation County Resident REUBEN BOND, GRANDSON OF SETTLER MRS. MARTIN, GRANDDAUGHTER OF PIONEER MRS. LUCILLE CARROLL. THIRD GENERATION BOND RECALLED the June Flood of '99. "It rained three days and three nights. Wixon Creek flooded and soured all the corn. It caught all the horses. They stood in all that water until all their hair come off. The flood washed the crops all away. There wasn't nothing left—just ditches across the fields. The elder Bond and his wife also described the "August Storm of 1915. "It blowed the kitchen off the blocks, filled the stove with water and blowed a tree down across the front porch." The couple recalled eating cold cornbread and chicken until the stove was emptied of the water. Bond's mother had died when her family was still young. In addition to his own family, Ben Bond helped care for a sister's family of nine children, Bond's sister, Lucille Carroll recalled. Later he lived with his daughter, Bessie, and her husband, John Barnett, a teacher from Cook's Point, in Steep Hollow. BESIDE BEN, there were eight other children born to James and Sarah Bond. They were Ira, Lela, Elizabeth, Jess, Mary, Ellen, Ashley and Tom.

