

Alton Ainsworth

Alton Collins Ainsworth was born in Andrews, Texas, February 21, 1913 to Joe and Exa Brumley Ainsworth. He moved with his family to a homestead between Milensand, New Mexico and Bledsoe, Texas in 1916. There were four children: J. C. Jr., Alton, Nelson and Exalee. They were first taught at home by their mother. Later they attended Eagle Hill School near Milensand. For a few years the teacher lived with the Ainsworth Family. They drove a horse and buggy to school. Once the horse ran away and injured the teacher. The school had a vacation for several days while the teacher recovered.

In the late 1920's, the children drove to Bledsoe to school in a Model T Ford. There were many sand beds, and sometimes they were late to school. Alton graduated from Bledsoe High School in 1929. He attended New Mexico Military Institute in Roswell in 1930 and 1931. Then came the depression years, so Alton went home to work for his father.

In the seventh grade, Alton won first prize of \$25.00 in the Roosevelt County Spelling Bee. With this money he bought his first heifer calf, and started his herd. After this, with all the money he could save he bought heifers. In time he had a fair sized herd, and in 1937 he leased some grassland just south and west of Bledsoe. This was part of the early Alexander Ranch. To pay his expenses, he worked with Alvie Harris repairing windmills.

In 1938 Ouida Faye Odom was teaching at Neeley Ward School. She was the daughter of Mordecai and Nora Griffin Odom. She and Alton met in August, 1938, and were married in June 1939. They made their home in Bledsoe, where they lived until 1962, when they moved to a new home located one mile west of Bledsoe.

In 1939 Alton bought the Jake McClure cattle, and they drove them home from the McClure ranch west of Lovington, to Bledsoe. This purchase doubled the numbers of his cattle herd.

They ranched and farmed through the years to the present time. They started buying land in the 1940's, buying a little more from time to time when it was available.

Two daughters were born to Alton and Faye: Exa Kaye in 1940 and Evelyn Marie in 1943. They went to school in Bledsoe most of their school years. Exa Kaye graduated from Morton High School in 1958. Evelyn graduated from Radford School for Girls in El Paso in 1961.

Exa Kaye attended Texas Tech, receiving a bachelor's in marketing. In 1962 she married Dwight Gober. After finishing school in 1963 they made their home in Bledsoe. Three children were born to them. Exa Rene was born in 1963, Fronye Caroline in 1966 and Eric Alton in 1970. Exa Rene married Andrew Franks in 1984. They graduated from Rice University in 1985. She is presently a civil engineer for Donnebaum Engineering Corporation. Andrew is an electrical engineer for N. A. S. A. They live in Houston. Fronye is a second year student at Southwestern University in Georgetown, Texas. Eric is a freshman at Levelland High School. With her divorce in 1980, Exa Kaye resumed her maiden name of Ainsworth. She worked and continued her education. She is presently teaching computer science at South Plains College in Levelland.

Evelyn Marie has one daughter, Angela Ainsworth Forrest, who was born in 1965. Evelyn Marie was married in 1963 and divorced in 1966, and has resumed her maiden name. She graduated from the University of Texas at Austin with a B. A. in sociology, she received her M. A. in Ibero-American Civilization from Southern Methodist University, and has completed some work on a doctorate at Tulane University. She is presently living at home in Bledsoe.

In 1968 Alton passed away. Since that time Faye has continued to manage the ranch, with the help of her children and grandchildren. In addition to her home and ranch duties, Faye has spent much time in community service. She has served as Democratic Precinct Chairman for the past sixteen years, and has taken an active part in community activities.

Submitted by Faye Ainsworth

Source: Cochran County Legacy Published 1986 by the Cochran County Historical Commission.

[Family Histories](#) | [Home](#)