

## **Charles L. Adams**

It was the year 1910 when Charles L. Adams moved from Dimmitt to Lubbock and started making land title abstracts for Cochran County land. At that time, neither Hockley or Cochran County had a town or courthouse. There was not a graded road, railroad or public school house between the Lubbock County line and New Mexico.

Cochran County was attached to Lubbock County for judicial purposes; meaning that was where the court was held and where one went to file deeds and mortgages. Two abstract companies kept books on Cochran County land and made abstracts. One was the lawyer, W. D. Benson, and the other Charlie Adams' Guarantee Abstract & Title Co.

They year was about 1919 when Charlie Adams drove his new touring car from Roswell to Lubbock. The purpose was to find a route for a highway. He left the Roswell-Portales highway and drove east across ranches, along the south side of Railroad Mountain and crossed into Texas at the R. T. Campbell Ranch. He then drove along ranch roads across the Slaughter ranch about the present location of Morton, then across the Littlefield ranch at Yellowhouse Lakes, across the Spades onto the county road just west of Shallowater. He was accompanied on this trip by his wife, Ollie, and son Charles. His report to the Good Road Committee was a part of the request for a highway to Roswell. The proposal for such a highway was still alive when the State Highway Department created Highway Number 114 from Dallas to Morton, but it was never improved across New Mexico.

When Cochran County was organized, Morton J. Smith laid out the town of Morton. A frame building, with a wooden sidewalk was built on the west side of the square and used to temporarily house the land records. The building did not have a vault and Charlie Adams noticed that everytime he came to make copies from the land record books there was a cowboy sitting in a cane bottom chair on the front porch with a rifle across his lap.

C. C. Slaughter, Jr. and Charlie A. Pierce started selling farm land. Charlie Adams had a contract to make the abstracts of title for each sale, and he spend much time in Morton during those years. He was born in Bosque County, the son of Will C. Adams and Laura Bell Cutbirth Adams. He learned to trace land records while working for his uncle, Daniel Boone Cutbirth, in the County Clerk's office in Meridian. Charlie married Ollie Scott of Navarro County and they came to west Texas in 1908. His oldest son, Charles W. Adams, they called him Jr., worked with him spending much time in Levelland and Morton. After the death of his wife, Ollie, Charlie married Ann Knight and their son, Larry Clay Adams, is now an electrical engineer in Crested Butte, Colorado. His grandson, J. Collier Adams, operates the land title office in Lubbock and the great-grandson, J. Collier Adams, Jr., came to Morton with his wife Cheryl, and daughter Elizabeth. Their son, John William, was born after they moved to Morton. J. Collier Adams, Jr., practices law and is the County Attorney for Cochran County, Texas.

*Submitted by Charles W. Adams*

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