The Meteor
October 31, 1929
Madisonville Newspaper of 41 Years Ago Speaks of Pioneer Citizens Who Were the Business Men (transcribed as written)

Mr. Lew Morgan of some 3 miles east of Madisonville brought to the Meteor office the other day a newspaper that was printed in Madisonville in the year 1888 and dated April 19th of that year. This is over 41 years ago, and is a relic of the earlier days. J. P. Nall was editor and Henry E. Nall was publisher. The paper is yellow with age and considerably worn along the folding creases. The name of the paper was "The Texas Watchman."

The leading article was the W. H. Roe trial at Anderson with Judge Kittrell's court passing the death penalty for Roe poisoning his wife. This article is about two columns in length an was taken from the Galveston News, and dated from Anderson, Texas, April 9th, 1888.

In the announcement column we find that Hon. E. L. Byers was a candidate for County Judge; and Mr. F. M. Black was a candidate for Sheriff. Mr. James B. Lee was a candidate for re-election to the office of District and County Clerk.

The Farmers Alliance was strong in the county and we find the name of J. T. Carter and J. A. Jones as President and Secretary respectively of the Union Alliance. A. S. Wilson and S. H. Lindsey were officers of the Hight Prairie Alliance. At Greenbriar the president and secretary were J. R. Hightower and L. T. Hawks. At Elwood, Robert L. Walker was president and A. A. Collier secretary. S. M. Casey and W. H. May were the officers of the Willowhole Alliance; while at Cottonwood, A. J. Burnet was president and J. J. Hooper was secretary. There were several other Alliances which are indistinct, all of which said they met twice a month.

County Judge E. L. Byers had in this issue and Election Proclamation calling for an election to be held at which the voters of Madison County were to vote on the issue of whether or not hogs, sheep or goats should run at large over a certain precinct.

A call for the County Republican Convention appears in this old paper. It was to be held at the Madisonville Courthouse and is signed by J. W. Green as Chairman and E. J. Green as Secretary.

In Cottonwood news we read: Mr. J. M. McMillain has opened up another new stock of goods. And the first item says: Corn is beautiful. The second items reads: The train ain't come yet.

Among the advertisers we find: Parten Brothers, One Price General Store; J. R. Burtis Drugs; T. & A Viser, groceries and hardware; Viser & Westmoreland, Drugs; B. Smither & Company, groceries and hardware; Frank Perry, plantation supplies; R. G. Johnson, tin shop; J. Shapira, dry goods, and Mr. Shapira had the largest ad in the paper, two full columns. Frank Y. Nixon had a Buggy Shop; W. T. McAfee was proprietor of the McAfee Hotel; Doctor J. T. Hill had a professional card stating that he was a Physician and Surgeon at Willowhole, Texas. Among the attorneys who had ads in the paper were: J. F. Randolph, W. C. Gibbs, M. Y. Randolph, John Gordon Scott, and W. M. Imboden.

Mrs. Bolling had a millinery store; John T. Wyse was a Jeweler and had a Jewelry store; J. R. McIver as proprietor of the City Saloon, all of them having ads in the paper, the last two having their ads on the front page.

The paper is interesting as a relic or souvenir of those early days and we are glad to have had the opportunity of looking this copy over. Local news seems to be scare. There is no personal column, but a local said they were crowded out. There was a report of the Rogers Prairie Alliance singed by A. M. Bledsoe as secretary. J. G. Gillespie was Justice of Precinct 2 and was advertising the fact that he was going to west Texas and desired to resign and asked the citizens to select a suitable man in his place.

R.R. Boyd was advertising his farm for sale; 200 acres in the northeast part of Madison County; well watered and finely timbered. For particulars see S. W. Dean and N. J. Williams, Elwood, and William Harbuck, Midway.

A short mention says the Madison County Institute was called to order by President J. H. Allen. The applications of Jr. Jordon and R. O. Allen were received. A motion for R. R. Boyd to write an article for the Watchman urging teachers to attend promptly the meetings of the Institute was unanimously carried. A program for the next meeting was arranged with W. S. Bryan on Algebra; R. R. Boyd on English Grammar; J. J. Allen on Arithmetic.

Mr. Morgan has two issues of the Watchman, the other is dated May 17, 1888. In this issue the entire first page, with the exception of the ads appearing thereon, is devoted to Judge Norman G. Kittrell's charge to the Grand Jury of Madison County. It appears that there was plenty of court work in those days, and the papers were decidedly political, in fact political articles predominate instead of news matter. Evidently news was very scare in those days and nothing much really happened except court troubles and political doings.

The two papers are copies mailed to Mr. A. J. Morgan, father of Mr. Lew Morgan, and considering their age, the papers have been well preserved and taken care of.