

## ROUND TOP'S FOURTH OF JULY

When did the Fourth of July celebration begin in Round Top? When did the parade begin?

In 1995 it was being called the 145th. Generations of Round Top citizens must have been numbering the years as they clicked by. If 1995 were the 145th continuous year for celebrating the Fourth of July in Round Top, it must mean that the very first year was 1851. There is written proof that Round Top did celebrate the Fourth of July in 1851.

An account of it was written in the July 16, 1851, edition of the "Texas Monument," Fayette County's third and most successful of the early newspapers. This is a reproduction of that article.

### Celebration of the 4th of July, at Round Top.

The 4th of July was celebrated at this place with that spirit and good feeling that should characterize every meeting that assembles to pay honor to the birthday of American independence.

At 11 o'clock a Procession was formed by Mr. H. H. Holbeater, Marshal of the day, and marched to the place erected for an oration; when Mr. L. L. Hill was introduced as the orator of the day.

Mr. Hill's address was chaste and eloquent; he depicted the many difficulties through which our forefathers had passed, to rescue our country from the iron grasp of Great Britain; he alluded to our present condition, and to our future glorious destiny.

At the conclusion of Mr. Hill's address, Mr. McMillin made a few very appropriate remarks.

The Marshal of the day having announced dinner, the Procession was again formed, and marched to the table, where each and every one partook of the "good things" that had been prepared for the occasion. After which, the following toasts were drank:

1st. The day we celebrate—the birthday of America in freedom. Five cheers.

2d. The Constitution of the United States.—It must be preserved. Four cheers.

3d. The American Union.—May we live to see its preservation; and that its dissolution may be as distant as the end of time. Six cheers.

4th. Henry Clay.—The Union's friend—the Union's statesman—the pride of the American people. Five cheers.

5th. General Andrew Jackson.—His name will ever live in the hearts of American freemen. In silence.

6th. The Americans.—The friends of the oppressed, and the dread of tyrants. Three cheers.

7th. The Lone Star State.—May she ever be found on the side of truth and justice, and battling for the interest of mankind. Four cheers.

8th. The 4th of July, 1776.—Generous sons and daughters will chaunt with proud delight our national song; and ego after ego, distant posterity, with profound gratitude to the God of Liberty, will joyfully welcome back the anniversary of our nation's birthday. Five cheers.

At 3 o'clock, the merry dance commenced; and soon the young and gay were tripping on the light fantastic toe; which closed the celebration of the 75th anniversary of American independence, at Round Top.

If anyone knows of any other information such as old family letters, postcards or diaries that give differing dates for Round Top's first Fourth of July, the historical society wants to hear from you.

To better understand why 1851 could very well have been the first celebration of the Fourth it is necessary to review a little of Round Top's early history.

Texas was admitted to the Union on 12-29-1845 when President Polk signed the act that made it one of the United States of America.

Deed records establish the fact that 254 acres of land, of which the majority is in Round Top's town limits today, were sold by John Shultz to Melvina A.E.T. White on 5-23-1851. She and her husband, Hugh, must have been influential in having the village of Round Top surveyed into blocks and lots to establish a town because on 7-22-1851 they sold lots 1 and 4 in block 14 to Charles Bower with the deed stating, "in the town of Round Top."

All of Round Top's early history stresses how very patriotic her citizens were. From all of this information, it is possible to believe an earlier celebration of the Declaration of Independence could have occurred in Round Top, but, unfortunately, there has been no written confirmation of it uncovered to date.