

Left, above, is a bird's-eye view of Hico, Texas, trading center for a rich and diversified Central Texas farming area. Right, above, are Hico High School and grammar school. Left, below, is a view of Hico's busy main street on Saturday afternoon; center, the attractive new plant of the Hico NEWS REVIEW; right, our company's Diesel generating station in Hico, which has recently been enlarged by the addition of two 700 h. p. units.

## HICO, TEXAS, IS BUSY TRADING CENTER FOR HIGHLY DIVERSIFIED FARMING AREA

In 1860, an enterprising young man named J. R. Alford moved a small stock of dry goods from Freestone County to a site on Honey Creek in northern Hamilton County, where he opened a store to supply the needs of farmers and ranchers who were settling on what was then virgin Texas prairie land.

This was the beginning of Hico, Texas, which today is the trading center for a rich and diversified farming area and the location of one of our company's key power plants.

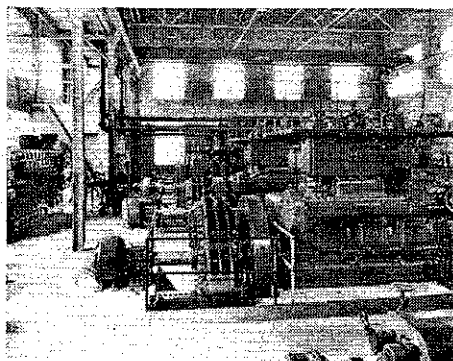
At the time J. R. Alford established his store, there were only 12 or 15 settlers living in the vicinity, the oldest having moved in about 1854. No railroad service was available and mail was carried from Meridian to Brownwood by horseback. The nearest post office was at Iredell and the inconvenience of traveling there for mail caused the settlers to petition the Post Office Department in Washington for the establishment of a post office in their little community. It was necessary to submit a name with the petition, so Alford selected Hico after his home town in Kentucky. The post office was established in 1861 and Alford was named the first postmaster.

In the spring of 1880, the Texas Central Railroad was built through the county and Hico was moved three miles north to its present location in order to enjoy the advantages of railroad service. On November 11, 1880, the first lots were sold and the first passenger train was run as an excursion for the occasion. Seven houses were moved from Old Hico to the new townsite and parts of them can

still be found in rebuilt houses around town. All that now remains of Old Hico on the banks of Honey Creek are the ruins of an old rock mill.

With the coming of railway transportation, the territory around Hico rapidly filled up with settlers and the town grew apace. It was incorporated in July, 1883, and by 1892 had over 1,000 citizens, which gave it the rank of a city with the privilege of having a mayor.

Today, Hico is a solid, substantial community of 1,600 people with a busy business district, miles of paved streets, attractive homes and churches, fine



Interior of our company's Hico plant taken after the installation of two new units had been completed. The plant now has an installed capacity of 2,600 horsepower.

schools and modern utility service. The citizenship is composed of 99.99 per cent native-born white Americans.

Hico's trade territory encompasses the northern part of Hamilton County and liberal portions of Erath and Bosque Counties, a section blessed by a delightful climate where rippling brooks and waving fields of grain attest to the adequacy of the rainfall and the fertility of the soil. Farmers in this Central Texas area are not dependent upon a single crop but practice diversified farming. Cotton, corn, oats, wheat, hay, peanuts, pecans, fruits, vegetables and watermelons are the principal field crops. Sheep, cattle, goats and mules provide a steady income from livestock production and poultry raising is being practiced on an increasing number of farms. Three-quarters of the farmers grow their own feedstuffs and home canning is highly developed.

The wide diversity of crops keeps a steady flow of cash coming in the year around and has a stabilizing effect upon Hico's business structure. To serve the needs of farm and local trade, the city has a wide variety of progressive business concerns including five grocery stores, four dry goods stores, two drug stores, a bank, two lumber yards, four cafes, two implement houses, two mill and elevator companies, three poultry houses, a hatchery, ice and cold storage plant, moving picture theatre, hotel and tourist camp. The Hico NEWS REVIEW, edited by Mr. and Mrs. Roland Holford, is one of the better weeklies of the state and is housed in a handsome new plant that is a model of efficiency.

Railroad service is provided by the Waco-Rotan branch of the Katy. Bus and truck lines operate through the city

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## Kurtz Drives 320,000 Miles Without Accident

Seventeen years of accident-free driving—that's the record of L. E. Kurtz, Hempstead-Sealy district manager.

Mr. Kurtz recently traded in two company cars which have been driven a total of approximately 320,000 miles without figuring in an accident of any kind.

Mr. Kurtz's first car was a 1922 Model T Ford, which was furnished to him by a predecessor company. He drove this car 200,000 miles in making the rounds of towns under his supervision. During its first five years of service it was driven daily between Hempstead and Matagorda; thereafter between Hempstead and Sealy. Although the highways were not paved and frequently all but impassable the Model T always came through and was seldom laid up for repairs.

In 1931, Mr. Kurtz received a Model A Ford, which served him until recently when it was traded in with the Model T on a new Dodge. The Model A had 120,000 miles recorded on the speedometer at the time it was traded.

"If the new Dodge will give me the service I got from the two Fords, I expect to have a good car for a long time," says Mr. Kurtz, who incidentally is determined to keep his driving record as spotless as his shiny new car.

## Hico, Texas

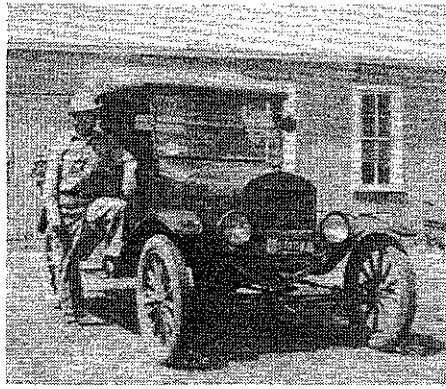
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over Highway 66, from Canada to Mexico, and Highway 67, Waco to Eastland—two important arteries of travel. Blair Field, Inc., one-half mile west of Hico, is a private landing field equipped with a spacious hangar.

Hico's school system consists of a high school, grammar school, a \$30,000 native rock gymnasium now under construction and a \$6,000 stone home economics building also under construction. The schools are staffed with 19 teachers and have a total enrollment of 428 pupils. The high school football field is lighted for night games and is also used in summer for night softball games.

The natural attractiveness of the city is enhanced by 18 blocks of paving in the downtown district and 16 blocks of paving in the residential section. Numerous fine old homes and not a few new ones line the wide, tree-shaded streets. Six nicely-appointed churches provide places of worship for members of leading denominations. A public library, one of the few in towns of similar size in Texas, is well patronized by those who like to read for pleasure or profit.

Hico enjoys the advantage of every type of utility service. The water and sewer systems are municipally owned, the water coming from deep wells that assure an adequate supply for many years to come. The city maintains a well-organized volunteer fire department in connection with the water system and enjoys a low fire insurance key rate. Gas service is supplied by the Southern Union Utilities Company, the gas coming from



L. E. Kurtz, manager of the Sealy-Hempstead water properties, is standing with one foot on the running board of a 1922 Model T Ford which he drove 200,000 miles without accident before it was traded in with another Ford on a new Dodge. The second Ford, a 1931 Model A, had been driven 120,000 miles without accident.

a field seven miles from town. Local and long distance telephone service is provided by the Gulf States Telephone Company.

Community Public Service Company maintains a modern Diesel generating station in Hico, which is used to supplement highline service in supplying the Central Division loop transmission line system. The plant was recently enlarged by the addition of two 700 h. p. Fairbanks-Morse engines, which doubled its former capacity. Cecil Coston is local manager; O. L. Davis, lineman; Florence Chenault, cashier; and Marvin Ford, plant engineer. The Hico office also serves the neighboring communities of Iredell, Carlton, Gustine and Lamkin.

Active in promoting the interests of Hico are two progressive business men's organizations—the Hico Chamber of Commerce and the Young Business Men's Association. Two women's organizations active in the social and cultural life of the city are the P. T. A. and the Ladies' Study Club. The Hico Country Club, with its club house and sporty nine-hole golf course is a popular recreation center. City Park is a popular picnic spot.

One of the big events that every resident of Hico looks forward to is the Annual Reunion held in August of each year for the past 54 summers. Throngs of former citizens attend this big celebration and mingle with hordes of local people who turn out for the program of entertainment offered.

Although not large as cities go, Hico nevertheless occupies an important place in the commercial life of the state. Built on the firm bedrock of trade from a large and diversified farming area, it is a solid, substantial community of friendly people who are deservedly proud of their town. It admirably fits that time-worn but meaningful phrase "a good place in which to live."

1st Salesman: "I just got a bunch of orders over the phone."

2nd Salesman: "You must have been talking with your wife."

## FIVE YEARS AGO IN THE COMPANY MAGAZINE

Excerpts from Issue of May, 1934

A 22,000-volt transmission line, connecting Strawn with Texas Electric Service Company's Leon plant near Eastland, is to be constructed soon by our company. The line will be 21 miles long.

Cecil Coston, Hico district manager, foiled an attempted robbery, April 20, when he entered the Iredell State Bank at Iredell, Texas, as a lone, unmasked bandit was in the act of demanding money from the cashier. The bandit turned his gun on Mr. Coston and commanded him to come inside with his hands up. Instead of doing so, Mr. Coston dodged out of the doorway and gave the alarm, causing the bandit to flee. A quickly organized posse gave chase but the robber escaped.

Knob knockers attempted to open the safe of the Detroit office of our company, the night of May 4 but were unsuccessful. They smashed the knob but were unable to open the door.

Mr. and Mrs. A. L. Schnell are the proud parents of a baby girl, born April 12. She has been christened Betty Jean.

Rumors have been rampant concerning the romances of several young men in the General Office. While we've given up hopes for Henry Lee, Jack Bass has begun his hope chest and now Leslie Cooke comes right out and announces that he will become a married man in the near future. The young lady of his heart is Miss Edwina Petty of Fort Worth.

## COMPLETE SURVEY OF OUR COMPANY'S OPERATIONS

Mr. L. N. Boisen and Mr. J. E. Murray, of Stone & Webster Service Corporation, have returned to New York after inspecting our company's properties and making a study of operating procedure with a view to effecting economies.

## SUGGESTION COMMITTEE MEETING POSTPONED

Absence of several committee members made it necessary to postpone the May meeting of the Suggestion Committee. All suggestions turned in since the last meeting of the Committee will be held over until June and the Committee's action on same will be reported in the June issue of the COMMUNICATOR.

Scandalized Judge (to enraged attorney): "Silence! I fine you five dollars for contempt of court."

Enraged Attorney (planking down \$20 bill): "Five dollars doesn't begin to express my contempt for this court!"

Question: What does a bride think when she walks into the church.

Answer: Aisle, altar, hymn.