

## DIETRICK RICHARD VOGES

### AN EARLY WILSON COUNTY RANCHER AND A PROMINENT BUSINESS MAN OF POTH, TEXAS

Dietrick Richard Voges was born in Guadalupe County on November 7, 1869 and spent his early childhood on his father's ranch and living in Seguin. His parents were of German heritage, who had settled in Guadalupe County. His grandparents had originally emigrated from Germany to Texas. During his early teenage years, Richard, as he was generally known, was a contentious individual and would often get into arguments with his peers. On one occasion he became involved in an altercation with his cousin and friend causing physical injury to him. To avoid having any criminal action taken against his son, Richard's father met with the injured individual's father and assured him Richard would leave the county and never be permitted to return. In addition, Richard's father compensated the neighbor for his son's injuries with a horse and buggy.

Richard left home and became a cowboy. He traveled out west working on cattle drives. He also spent several years working on ranches. During his absence, His father began negotiating with Mr. F. C. Groos, a banker from San Antonio, to obtain ranch land outside Guadalupe County. Suitable ranch land was found twelve miles southeast of Floresville, Texas. The property was then known as the Superville land and was owned by Auguste Marisette Moudraw, a Frenchman. This parcel of land was above and adjacent to the A. C. Beauregard ranch. The tract was bordered on the west side by the San Antonio River, on the east side by the Alamo-la Bahia Road consisting of 4,394 acres. This property was almost equally divided by the SAAP Railroad. The portion of land between the San Antonio River and the railroad was purchased by the Voges family and the other portion between the railroad and the La Bahia Road was conveyed to J. H. McDaniel. Richard Voges executed a promissory note of \$3000.00 to Auguste Marisette Moudraw of Toulous County, France to be paid in gold at an eight-percent interest rate in two years.

After the purchase of the ranch had been consummated, Richard's mother sent his brother from Seguin to locate Richard and bring him home. He was located on a ranch in Yakima, Washington. To speed their return to Texas, the brothers traveled by train and had to leave Richard's larger possessions, such as his wagon in Washington. In 1900 Richard moved to Floresville to begin operations on the ranch. In 1901 on a trip to San Antonio, he met a girl from Germany who was visiting America with her mother. The ladies were purchasing fruit at a market for their return trip to Germany when accidentally, they dropped the fruit. Richard noticed this and stopped to help pick up the dropped fruit. He immediately became attracted to the young girl and joined them on the train to Galveston. When the train stopped in Seguin, he asked his friend to get off and tell his father that he was going to Galveston to get married. However, the girl, Mary Clara Guenther, declined the marriage offer at this time and returned to Dresden, Germany. Shortly after that, she did return to Texas and married Richard. They lived in Floresville until 1902, at which time they moved to Poth, Texas. On September 18 1902,

their first son, Walter was born. Walter was the second child to be born in Poth, Texas. A second son, Dietrick was born in 1906. He became a lawyer and served the county as County Judge from 1959 to 1974.

Throughout his lifetime a horse was Richard's preferred means of personal transportation. In later years, he did purchase a 1932 Ford pickup to travel to his ranch and the surrounding area. He never did become a good driver and never did shift the gears while the vehicle was moving. Usually, he started in second gear and remained in that gear through out the trip. Occasionally, he used the vehicle to transverse his ranch and many times he would fail to stop and open fence gaps. Instead, he would just drive through them. In the pastures he used the pickup as a small bulldozer, driving over cactus and brush with no regard to the effects on the truck. Sometimes, he even challenged trees, crashing into them. The body of the truck showed the scares of these incidents. However, it was of no concern to him as long as the vehicle remained drivable. On occasion, as he would be driving on the local highways, the highway patrolmen would stop him and advise him to please drive a bit faster for the safety of others.

Richard Voges, in addition to his lifetime of ranching activities, was very influential in the early development of Poth. In 1902, Mary Kennon Jones, the original sub divider of Poth, offered a city block of property to any individual who would build a mercantile store on the site within six months and operate it for at least one year. Mr. Stortz of Karnes County accepted this challenge, but was unable to fulfill this commitment. Richard Voges and a partner, J. V. Marr, negotiated an arrangement between Mrs. Jones and Mr. Stortz, whereby they purchased Mr. Stortz's commitment to develop a mercantile business. This offer was accepted and Vogus and Marr built and operated the first store in Poth.

Richard Voges' next venture in Poth was to create a bank. Richard and J. H. Brown from Floresville, Texas, organized "The First National Bank of Poth" in 1913. Its board of directors appointed Richard Voges as president and R. S. Wollert as cashier. Some time later, Richard became disenchanted with the policies of the board of directors and resigned his position. Then, in 1925, he organized a second bank in Poth, "Farmers and Merchants State Bond Bank". Richard served as president and W. C. Hasse was the cashier. This bank did not survive the upcoming depression, but debt holders of the bank did receive all of the funds due them.

Richard Voges died in 1955 and is buried in the St. John's Lutheran Cemetery in Poth. The cemetery site is on property he had earlier donated to the church.