

Honey Creek: The Story of Thompson and Abigail Helms, Peters' Colonists of Texas

By Sue Parks Patterson

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Summers in North Texas were hot and the winds only fanned the heated air as they blew across the gently flowing prairie. The jangle of the harnesses could be heard that summer day, as the horses pulling the wagon slowly made their way across the rolling land and through tall grasses. Small animals, rabbits and squirrels, scurried away from the unusual sounds made by the travelers, while startled field larks and quail flew away in a flurry of wings. The long trip from Missouri was nearly over as the small group approached the trees marking the course of the creek. The creek would become known over the years as Honey Creek. And by its banks the young family would make its home. The dogs, which had trotted alongside the wagon all the way from Missouri, with occasional side trips to chase small animals, now drew closer to the man guiding the horses, as they sensed that soon the wagon would stop. From back in the wagon, a cat stretched lazily in the heat. Pulling the wagon to a halt by the east bank of the creek, Thompson Helms, 23, looked toward the land, which sloped downward to the creek. The kettle, hanging under the wagon, slowed its swinging, as Abby, 21, lifted her toddler, John, onto her lap. Over her shoulder, slightly older Axie Ann looked out over the heated landscape. In the next few months, in the midst of settling in and preparing for winter, Abby would give birth to her third child, the first of their family to be born in the new home. The promise of 640 acres had drawn the young family to North Texas, but their story had started many years before.

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