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Groendyke Success Story

— by Della Barnwell Whisenhunt

LANDMARKS

The Groendyke Ranch, subject of this article, is fifteen miles from Weatherford as the crow flies but about forty miles by highway and country road.

It was my privilege to tour the Groendyke Ranch near Watonga, Oklahoma in November, 1982. Harold C. Groendyke, the owner, had been a classmate and fellow-football player with my husband at Panhandle A. and M. College (now Panhandle State University) in the late twenties.

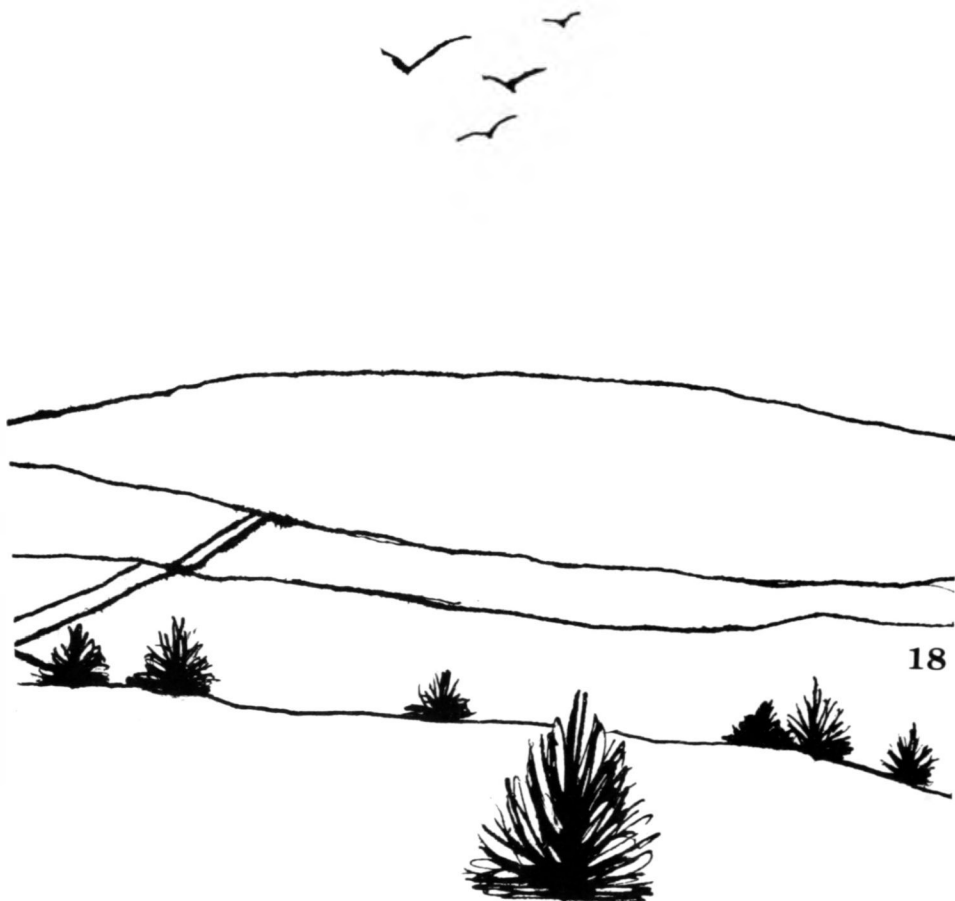
Groendyke had invited a group of his former classmates and their spouses to visit him at his ranch during a reunion the group was having at Roman Nose State Lodge near Watonga. All of us graciously accepted his invitation and drove out to the ranch where Groendyke's beautiful and friendly dogs assisted their owner in welcoming us.

The ranch is a spread of 10,000 acres on which graze 1500 head of cattle including breeds of Angus, Brahma, and Hereford.

The land of the ranch is rolling and picturesque Oklahoma prairie with clumps of trees here and there. The trees were in autumn colors when we were there.

The ranch house is imposing; in every room there are Oklahoma memorabilia comparable to those found in museums. All are tastefully displayed, and all have a story which the owner is glad to supply. He is proud of his heritage; his selection of artifacts shows that he searched long and hard and was extremely fastidious. His favorites are those used by his own forebears.

Other buildings on the Groendyke Ranch are seven houses occupied by the families of the men who carry on the ranch work, two guest houses, and several barns, sheds, and shops. A missile from Vance Air Force Base at Enid serves as an identifying marker near the entrance.



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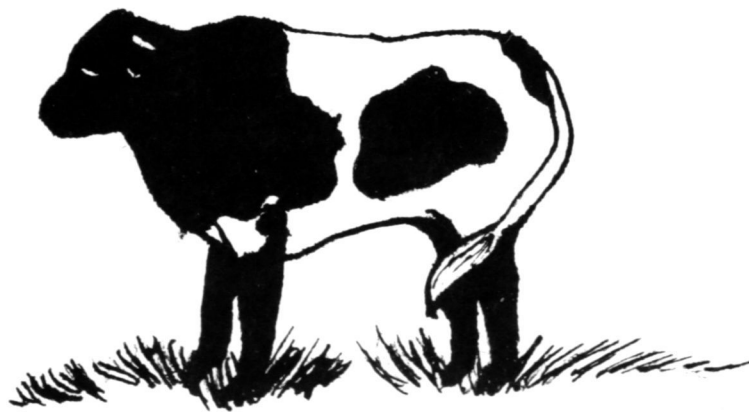


ILLUSTRATION BY JUDITH BOLLINGER



LANDMARKS

Groendyke is the creator of the Groendyke Transport Co. It was on July 12, 1932, that he delivered a load of bulk fuel to Beaver, Oklahoma from Borger, Texas. From that one-truck operation his business grew to be what is now one of the largest tank-truck common carriers in the United States. According to statistics listed on the inside front cover of the 1982 Rand McNally Atlas published by the Groendyke Transport Inc., his present operation is made up of 950 employees operating a fleet of 750 tractors and 950 trailers some 60 million miles annually from a network of 42 terminals, not only in the United States but also in Canada and Mexico.

Fifty years later, Groendyke's innovations and personal involvement continue to contribute to the future of the transportation industry. It is easy to identify his trucks as the name "Groendyke" appears in large letters on either side of the tanks and also the cab doors.

Groendyke is now semi-retired; thus, he spends much of his time at his ranch, which is his hobby. The headquarters of his company are in Enid, where his son John Groendyke manages the business.

Before the group left the Groendyke Ranch on that morning of November 20, 1982, their host gave to each couple one of his 1982 Atlases, which he autographed, and to each person a gold ballpoint pen.

In summation, my husband and I put our lists of adjectives together and came up with the following attributes of Harold C. Groendyke:

He is innovative, aggressive, kind, generous, jovial, friendly, unselfish, and unaffected. In addition, we think he is surely a person who has made a great contribution to his age. His Alma Mater must be proud of him.

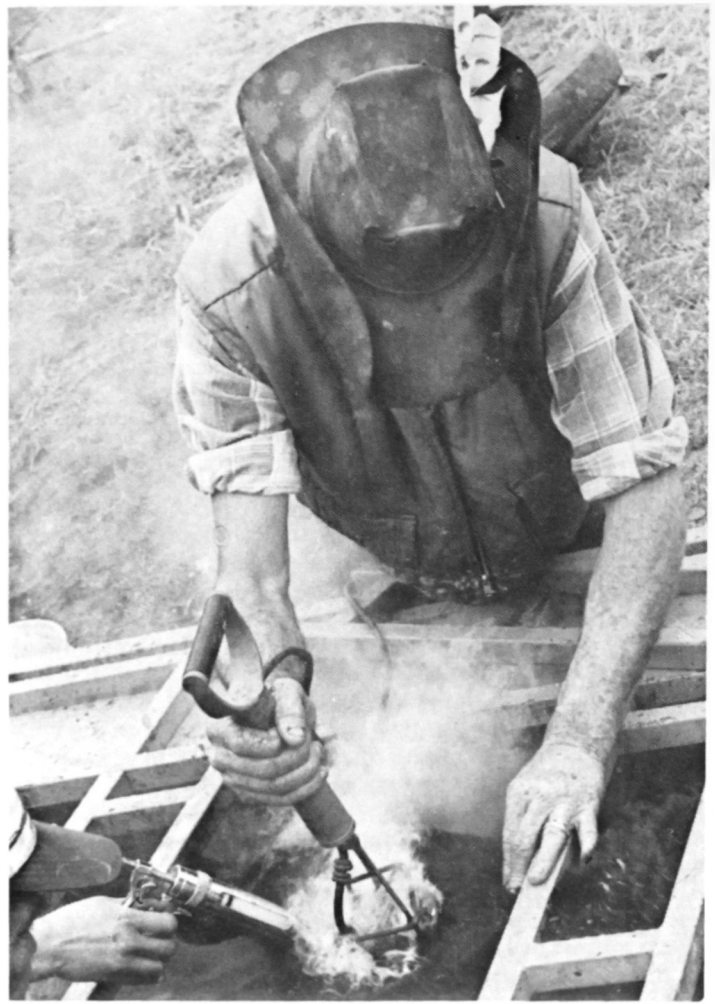


PHOTO BY KATHERINE DICKEY

on the Groendyke Ranch —



Harold Groendyke

PHOTO BY KATHERINE DICKEY