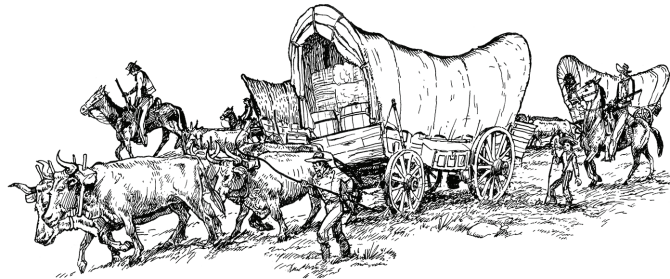


A LOOK BACK AT HUTCHINSON COUNTY HISTORY



The Beale Wagon Road

Lieutenant Edward Fitzgerald "Ned" Beale was born in Washington, D.C. His father, George Beale, earned a Congressional Medal for Valor in the War of 1812. His mother, Emily, was the daughter of Commodore Thomas Truxtun of the U.S. Navy. Ned was a student at Georgetown University when, at the request of his widowed mother, President Jackson appointed him to the Naval School in Philadelphia.

Navy Lieutenant Edward Beale was appointed by the next President, James Buchanan to survey and build a wagon road from Ft. Smith, Arkansas to California. Jefferson Davis, Secretary of War under former President Franklin Pierce, had commissioned Beale to survey a southern route to Los Angeles, California. Buchanan, acting upon Davis' earlier choice, agreed and chose Beale as the expedition's leader. Beale had many years' experience in the west, first with the U.S. Navy in California, then with Kit Carson and John C. Fremont and other early explorers of the West. Beale was the right man for the job.

Beale surveyed and built the wagon road that many settlers used to move west, and which later became Route 66 and the route for the Transcontinental Railroad. The Beale Wagon Road passes through Hutchinson across the Frank Phillips College campus. Remnants of the road can still be seen in satellite photos. ■

618 North Main Street
Borger, Texas 79007
806-272-0130

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