

## A LOOK BACK AT HUTCHINSON COUNTY HISTORY



### Moonshining in Early Hutchinson County

During the early days of the oil boom in Hutchinson County, the town profited from the oil fields in neighboring communities, as well as from the newly-arrived railroad.

During the Prohibition era many restaurants, rooming houses, and drugstores in the county sold illegal whiskey and beer in "the back room." Most moonshine stills were under 100 gallons in capacity. The "Big Producer" pictured here gives us an idea of the demand for "shine" that was present during this era.

Early Borger's town government fell under the control of a crime syndicate led by Mayor John Miller's shady associate, Richard "Two-Gun Dick" Herwig. Herwig was named the town's chief law officer by his buddy, the Mayor. Herwig's boys supervised saloons in open defiance of Prohibition and supplied illegal barrooms their own lines of bootlegged alcohol, beer and narcotics. They also collected weekly fees from prostitutes. Their criminal behavior and the murder of District Attorney John A. Holmes by an unknown assassin on September 13, 1929 resulted in Martial Law in the City of Borger. When the Texas Rangers and the National Guard arrived on September 30th, 1929, a court of inquiry was convened and soon, "Two-Gun Dick Herwig", his henchmen and other "shiners" were where their actions had led them, not in bars but behind them. ■

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