

Jim Nabours Obituary

Jim Nabours, Colorful Range Boss and Trail Driver, Heads for Last Round Up In Death

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Jim Nabours, Texas pioneer and old Trail Driver, whose name was immortalized in Emerson Hough's famous interpretation of moving herds from southwestern ranges by the railroad at Abilene, Kansas, died in El Paso last week. He was 87 years old.

Although a real character and a native of Milam county, he was fictionalized in the book "North of 36" and his role of ranch foreman and trail boss found its way to the screen from the same book. Emerson Hough was his friend. On his ranch in New Mexico the famous writer went for material for the book. Jim Nabours told him the story of the Del Sol Ranch at Lockhart and of the plight of Texas cattleman, who desperate for a market, turned eagerly up the wastes to Abilene with thousands of longhorn cattle.

The men who drove the herds up the trail were as wild and reckless lot as ever left their impress on the turbulent early struggle. In that county Jim Nabours held his own and more. In the more gentle role of citizen his contribution to the task of civilizing the border lands, was notable.

The Del Sol ranch was then many sections of rolling plains at Lockhart. Old man Lockhart died and left his daughter, Taisie, with millions of acres and cattle on a thousand hills but with no money with which to pay her riders. Jim Nabours was the foreman of the Del Sol. When news came that the railroad, then building across the continent reached Abilene, the range boss gathered the first herd from the broad areas of the Del Sol and moved out upon that colorful and romantic trail to somewhere North of 36.

Jim Nabours wanted Taisie to stay at home. After all it was no place for a woman, on the trail. It was Jim's problem. He felt responsible as only such men could about this girl who had sobbed in his arms when old man Lockhart died, leaving orders to his range boss. Taisie was determined and as was Jim Nabours. John lost his temper as he did a number of times on the trail up once shooting the daylights out of a damn Yankee who said something "agin the South." Parental authority was resting heavily on this rough man of the plains when he said: "My God, Miss Taisie, ain't I yer Ma?" It did not do any good and Taisie won and went along with the herd.

A mossy old Texas longhorn named "Alamo" by Jim led the herd up to Abilene. When the cattle reached the town they stampeded and old Alamo was killed by a train.

Wild Bill Hikok was city marshal at Abilene. Some of Jim's riders had a run in with Bill and got away with it. Abilene was then in the bad lands. John Wesley Hardin, Jim Taylor, and Manning and Joe Clements of Gonzales were there as were many other desperados. Wyatt Earp, the fastest man on the

draw in real fiction, along with old Bill tilghman and Hikok finally tamed the wild men of the plains and made Abilene safe for prospering Texas cow men.

Jim Nabours was born in Milam county. He left here in 1877 and went to Lincoln county, New Mexico. He got mixed up in the family Lincoln county war and was foreman of the grand jury that indicted Billy the Kid. The Kid was never brought to trial. He was killed by Pat Garrett, noted sheriff.

Several years ago Jim Nabours moved to El Paso. He was the uncle of Homer Nabours, county clerk, and Mrs. Pearl House, retiring county treasurer.

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