

From J. C. Johnson

Charlie Brady (1857-1919)
Georgetown City Marshal, 1st Georgetown Police Chief

TALKING POINTS

1. First appointed Georgetown City Marshal in 1887 when current city marshal - G. W. Clark - ran afoul of Judge Glasscock and was fired by the Georgetown city council.
2. Responsibilities of city marshal: enforcing city ordinances, keeping the peace within the city limits, keeping stray livestock from grazing on courthouse lawn, arresting drunks, inspecting out houses and wells/cisterns within the city limits (very important).
3. Got into argument with Williamson County Deputy Sheriff James Burrell Gunn in August 1892, a gun fight ensued and Gunn was shot and killed by Brady. The grand jury "no billed" Brady.
4. After serving as city marshal for almost 20 years, Brady was appointed first Georgetown police chief and charged with organizing the city's police force. He served as police chief for another 20 years.
5. Brady was well respected in the community and thought of very highly as a man of principle and honor as reflected in his obituary.

OVERVIEW

Charley Brady was a Georgetown lawman for over 40 years, serving as the town's city marshal and, eventually, the city's first police chief. Although his jurisdiction stopped at Georgetown's city limits, Brady worked closely with Sheriff John T. Olive, serving warrants and bringing in lawbreakers from throughout the state. He also accompanied Sheriff W. S. Brookshire in October 1892 in a roundup of men accused of murdering Sheriff Olive.

Charlie Brady was appointed city marshal by the Georgetown City Council in 1884 when City Marshal G. W. Clark arrested Judge G. W. Glasscock for public intoxication. Charges against Judge Glasscock were dismissed by Georgetown's city council and Clark was forced to resign over the editorial objection of T. E. Cooper of the Williamson County Sun. The young Charlie Brady took Clark's place beginning his 42-year law enforcement career.

The responsibilities of city marshal were wide-ranging and often distasteful. In addition to patrolling the city's business district at night checking for un-locked doors, the city marshal was charged with controlling livestock roaming through town - the city of Georgetown had a problem with loose cattle roaming the city at will and a big problem of pigs eating the bushes around the courthouse and jail in the 1880s - and checking the city's hundreds of out houses to make sure they were clean and sanitary in an effort to prevent disease.

While Charley Brady's career was detailed in a glowing tribute in the Williamson County Sun, one incident which was not contained in his obituary was an argument and shoot-out he had with Williamson County Deputy Sheriff James Burrell Gunn on Georgetown's square in August 1892.

As reported in the Austin Daily Statesman, Brady and Gunn had been making the rounds of the drinking establishments on Georgetown's Square throughout the day and late into the evening. As the two lawmen met in the doorway of Mankin's Saloon, the former location of Cenfrani's Coffee Shop, an argument ensued as to which officer had arrested a certain drunk first.

According to the Statesman, Gunn called Brady a liar and Brady punched Gunn. Gunn pulled his six-shooter and fired, at point blank range, at Brady, striking him in the hand. Brady then pulled his pistol and returned fire, striking Gunn in the chest, killing him instantly. Brady was later "no billed" by a Williamson County grand jury.

In his tribute to Charlie Brady, Dr. Edmund Heinshon stated that Charlie was ... The embodiment of devotion to duty, his town and his family, fearless in the discharge of that duty, kind, gentle thoughtful and chivalrous at all time. He lived within the law and was ever alert in the enforcement and defense of the law; he loved his town and his people, his family and his friends and they reciprocated in kind.

Visitors and travelers have come to know Georgetown by contact with him, a Chesterfield in manner, courteous, polite and friendly in disposition in his walk with men. Fearless, dominating, commanding in the enforcement of the law. He knew no favorites, he feared no foe, the millionaire looked just like the friendless man in rags to him when law enforcement was the consideration.

Charlie Brady is buried in Georgetown's I.O.O.F. Cemetery.

OBITUARY FROM WILLIAMSON COUNTY SUN

C. J. Brady, Widely Known Peace Officer, Is Called by Death Great Gathering Pays Tribute to Fine Character

Man Who Had Built Reputation for Law Enforcement and Fearlessness Through 42 Years of Service Will Be Missed

Charles J. Brady, the man who has through his 42 years of service to the city of Georgetown as its chief of police, and who has become the embodiment of law enforcement in this region, is dead. The passing of this unique and splendid character was marked at 9:40 Monday morning at the home of his son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Sam Harris, after an illness of some months during which he had spent considerable time at a hospital in Marline where he was benefited for a time, returned to his duties and later was compelled to again visit the health center for treatment three months ago and finally returned three weeks ago to spend his remaining days in the city he has served and loved so well.

The tribute paid the deceased by Dr. Edmund Heinsohn was indeed a fitting one, the minister building around the memory of deceased the house of honor he had erected for himself, declaring him the embodiment of devotion to duty, his town and his family, fearless in the discharge of that duty, kind, gentle thoughtful and chivalrous at all time. "He lived within the law and was ever alert in the enforcement and defense of the law; he loved his town and his people, his family and his friends and they reciprocated in kind. He has through the years become a part of us, our homes and our firesides, for as we sat in those homes and by those firesides we knew that 'out there' on the streets Charley Brady was looking after our safety and our welfare and that in his hand and under his watch no harm would come – we were safe and always we knew without the asking, 'Watchman what of the night!' 'He was the watchman, and what a watchman he was, the embodiment of honor, the peer of all in fearlessness, a man with a power of sensing when things were not as they should be, the like of which we have never known."

Visitors and travelers have come to know Georgetown by contact with him, a Chesterfield in manner, courteous, polite and friendly in disposition in his walk with men. Fearless, dominating, commanding in the enforcement of the law. He knew no favorites, he feared no foe, the millionaire looked just like the friendless man in rags to him when law enforcement was the consideration, and it was this characteristic that enabled him for fifty years to hold this favor and respect and esteem and confidence of the city that he had picked from the prairies when as a boy he journeyed from South Carolina to make his home in the West. He made mistakes, yes; he was not a superman in that regard, no, but ninety-nine times out of one hundred when he acted he was right when his act was viewed from the position of justice to all. He admitted his frailties and his faults and fought always to correct them. No one was quicker than he to apologize for a wrong, an error in judgment or quicker to rectify them. On many occasions he has single handed and alone dominated situation that would have tried the steel of numbers.

Industrious, courageous, ambitions to achieve for his city, not for himself, Charley Brady gave his life to his people and his like will never be known again. We say it with respect and admiration for all serious minded men who enforce the law, he was the greatest enforcement officer, the keenest detective and the most courageous heart we have ever known and all Texas has lost an example toward who any might look for improving their record of service.

His wife died 28 years ago and in devotion he became father and mother to the large family of children, maintaining the parental roof through all the years.

Born of hardy Irish parents at Woodruff, S. C., in 1861, Mr. Brady came to Texas and settled in Georgetown Dec. 24, 1881.