

PENN FARM

CEDAR HILL STATE PARK

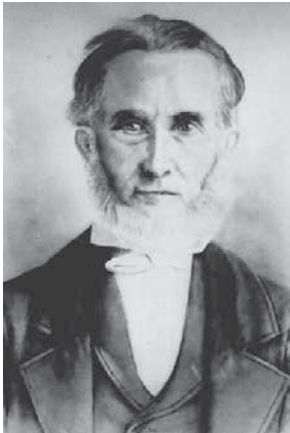


SELF-GUIDED TOUR



ORIGIN OF PENN FARM

Historically, Blackland Prairie covered the land of Cedar Hill. Pioneer settlers moved to the Blackland Prairies in the early 1820s when news spread about the fertile soil and pastureland. This led to a dramatic increase in agricultural development in north Texas.



Major John Anderson Penn

On October 24, 1854, the Penn family left Sangamon County, Illinois to move to Cedar Hill, Texas in a covered wagon. Their wagon train included Major John Penn, his wife Nancy, their six children, and several neighboring families. They arrived in Cedar Hill on December 8, 1854. The Penns created a homestead near Wheatland (several miles northeast of Cedar Hill) and grew wheat, corn, oats, and barley and raised horses, sheep, and cattle.

Throughout the next decade, Major Penn acquired over 2,200 acres of land and gave 800 acres to his son, John Wesley, to raise cattle. John Wesley's parcel expanded to 1,200 acres and became Penn Farm.



*Has your family ever moved
to a brand new place?*

***At the first trail split, turn left
towards the 1859 FARMHOUSE.***

A WORKING FARM

In 1859, John Wesley married Lucinda Moore and built the first **FARMHOUSE** on the property, originally a single room with front and back porches. The Penns and their five children lived in this small one-room house. In 1911, the right addition was constructed for tenant farmers—farmers who worked for the Penns and were provided a room and land to grow crops.

The Penns primarily raised beef cattle, milk cows, chickens, and pigs for food. They also had horses and mules for farm work. The men's responsibilities included land cultivation, the animals, equipment repair, and farm buildings. The women's responsibilities included raising the children, canning food, chopping wood, laundry, growing a heritage garden, and cooking. Farming was predominantly completed by tenant families and the two slaves who lived on the property. Tenant farmers grew oats and grains and sold half their crops for profit and gave the other half to the Penn family for rent payment.



John Wesley Penn



Lucinda Penn

The building across from the Farmhouse is the **SOUTH GRANARY**. This granary is the earliest intact example of a 19th century granary found in north Texas. Granaries were used to store grain and fodder (animal feed) on farms.

Continue down the path to find the SOUTH CHICKEN COOP.

This coop was built in the 1930-40s. The children collected eggs every morning.



What type of chores do/did you do as a child?

Walk around the Farmhouse to find the SMOKEHOUSE.

This building was built in 1920 and despite being called a Smokehouse, there is no indication that it was used as one. It was named because of its location behind the house. It was used for food storage and appears to have later been used as a chicken coop or rabbit hutch for winter food.

Continue down the path towards the WATER TANK.

This water cistern was constructed in the early 20th century to store drinking water for cattle.

Walk down the path to find the NORTH GRANARY on the left.

This is another fodder storage building. Notice that there is an addition to this structure with rain gutters. This extension was added in 1917 as a garage for the family's automobile, a Ford Model T.

Proceed down the path towards the DOUBLE CRIB BARN on the left.

The Double Crib Barn is the oldest Penn-built structure on the site, built before 1859. It was common practice for farmers to build farm buildings prior to domestic buildings to house and feed their livestock. Originally, the Double Crib Barn housed livestock and fodder, then was used to store grain after the new barn was built.

In front of the Double Crib Barn is another cement **WATER TANK** which was built in the late 1880s.

Across from the Double Crib Barn is the **JACK BARN**. This barn was built between 1890-1900. The Penns kept donkeys (a male donkey is called a “Jack” and a female donkey is called a “Jenny”). The interior portion of the barn was used to store hay. The concrete was added later during farm restoration.

*Continue down the path
towards the MAIN BARN.*

JOHN WESLEY'S LEGACY

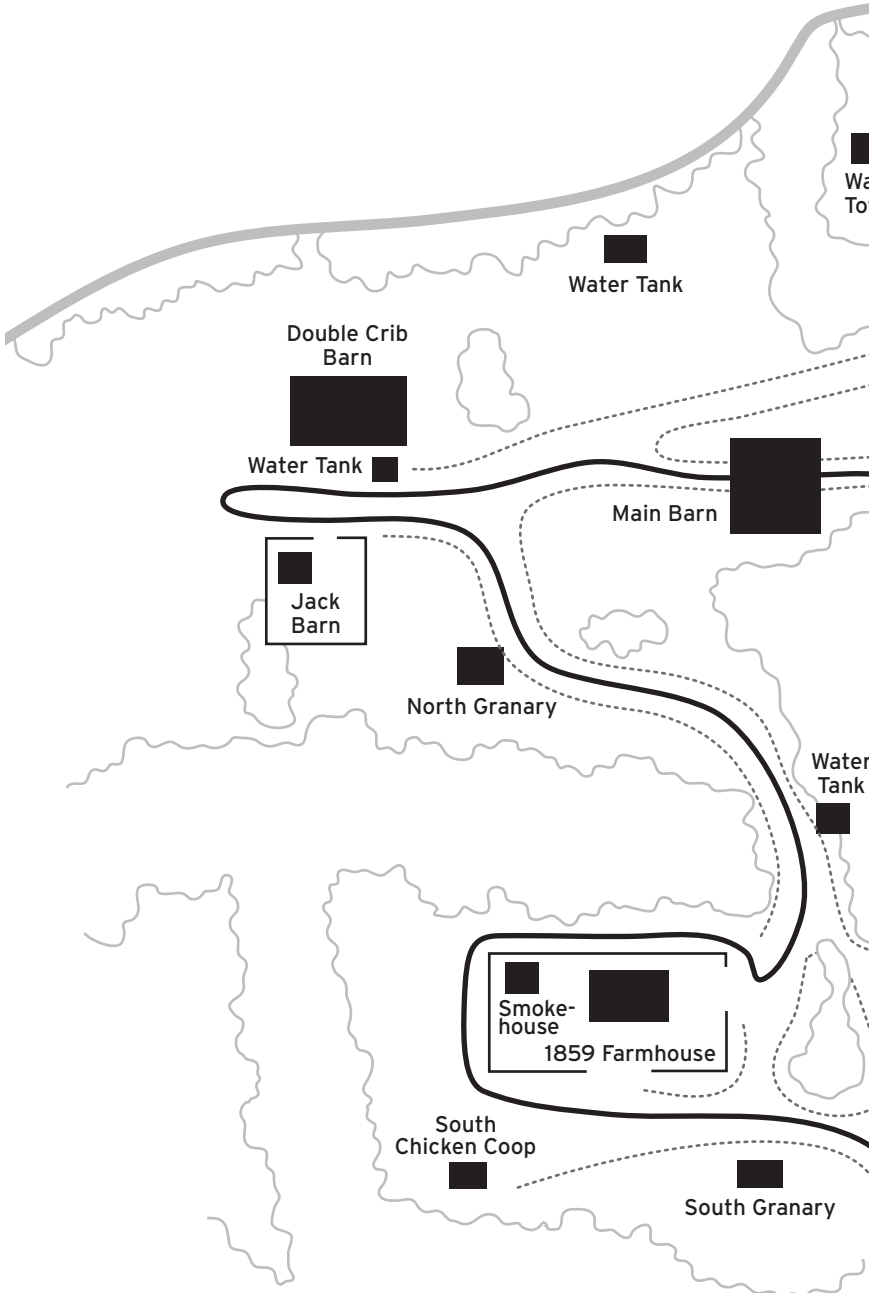
In 1888, a western diamondback rattlesnake bit and killed John Wesley at age 55. Lucinda inherited controlling interest of the farm until their children, Andy and Sidney, were old enough to manage it. Andy inherited Lucinda's portion of the farm after she passed away in 1928 (she was 87 years old). Andy managed the farm through the hardships of the Great Depression and, by WWII, had reduced the number of cattle and maintained fewer acres of cultivated land.



Andy Penn

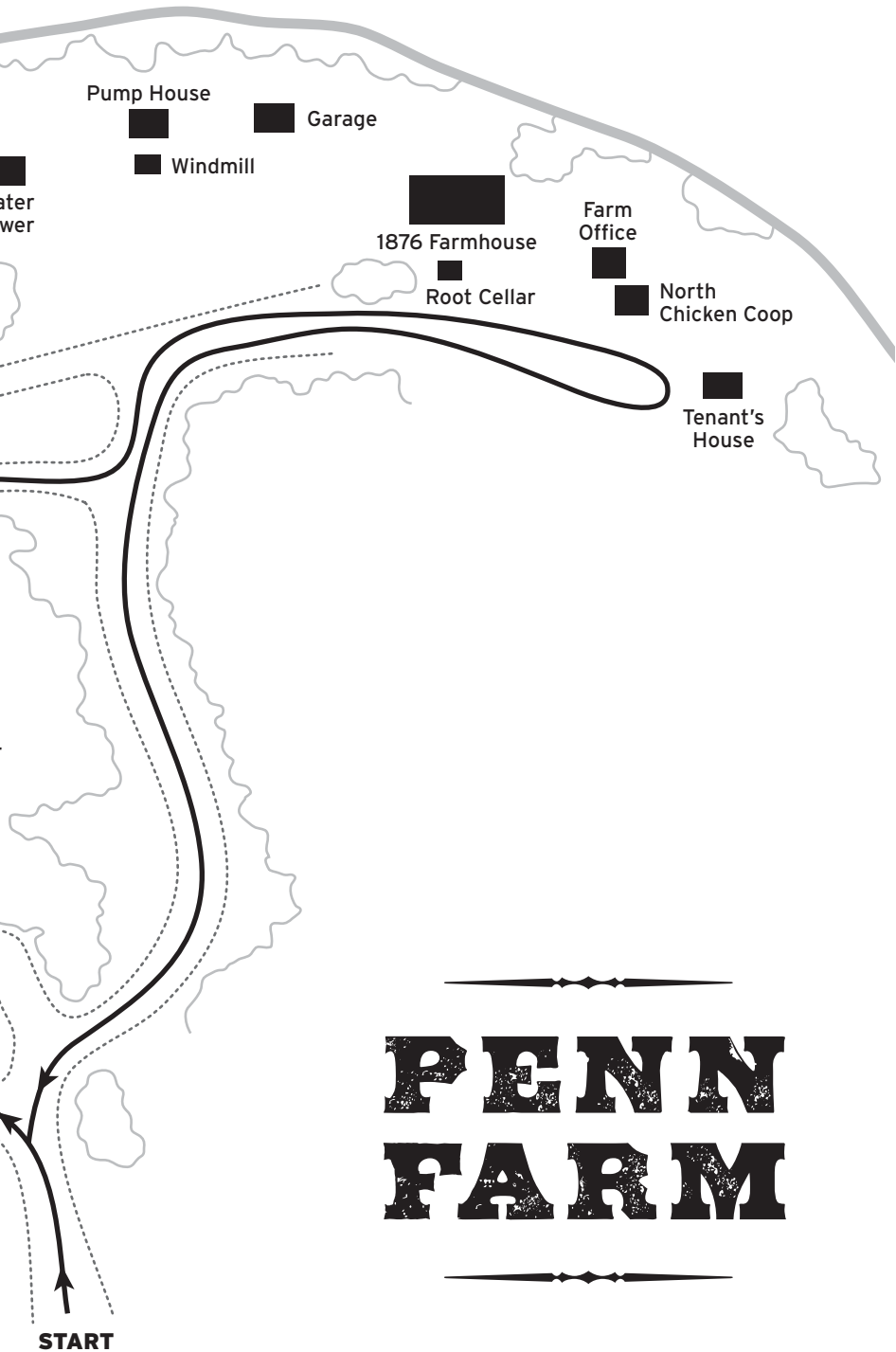


Sidney Penn



Parking Lot
& Restroom





Pump House

Garage

Windmill

Water tower

1876 Farmhouse

Root Cellar

Farm Office

North Chicken Coop

Tenant's House

**PENN
FARM**

START

THE 20TH CENTURY

Andy Penn built the **MAIN BARN** between 1915 and 1918, during WWI. He utilized two buildings from the farm to stabilize the barn supports. The building on the left is the schoolhouse, which held eight students. The Penn children and neighboring children attended school through eighth grade and then worked on their family farms. After school, children were responsible for farm work: collecting eggs, milking cows, chopping wood, and hauling water.

The building on the right is a cabin built in the 1830s on a neighboring farm for tenant farmers. After the buildings were installed inside the barn, they were both used for hay storage.

Across the field from the Main Barn are four structures. The **WOODEN WATER TOWER** is a reconstruction of the original which was 6 feet tall and 7 feet in diameter. It weighed approximately six tons and held 15,000 gallons of water.

The **PUMP HOUSE** and **WINDMILL** were built in the early 20th century and once housed a generator for running the farm's water system.

The **GARAGE** was built in the mid-20th century to store the Model T automobile. Originally, there was a gas pump in front of the garage.

*Continue down the field
towards the 1876 FARMHOUSE.*



Andy Penn

A NEW HOME

After living in the small house for 16 years, the Penn family built the **1876 FARMHOUSE**. In 1982, vandals burned the original house down and Texas Parks and Wildlife built a replica. The structure is called a closed dogtrot house—it has three rooms: one in front, middle, and back. There are doors on both sides of the middle room to create a breeze, providing relief from the Texas heat. The family added a fourth room and porch several years later.



*Could you live in Texas
without air conditioning?*

In front of the porch is the **ROOT CELLAR**. Originally, the shelter was covered by a wooden dome that was destroyed in the 1982 fire. The replica dome covers the cellar and the metal sheet covers the steps leading down to the storage area.

Across from the Root Cellar is the **FARM OFFICE**. This structure was built in the early 20th century. Heating in the building was provided by a wood stove and brick chimney and the building has a small built-in closet in the northeast corner, which was an unusual luxury for the time.

Next to the Farm Office is the **NORTH CHICKEN COOP**. This coop was built in the late 1950s.

*Continue down the path
towards the **TENANT'S HOUSE**.*

The **TENANT'S HOUSE** is a red two-room building that is believed to have housed sharecroppers and/or potentially slaves at Penn Farm.



THE PENN FAMILY LEGACY

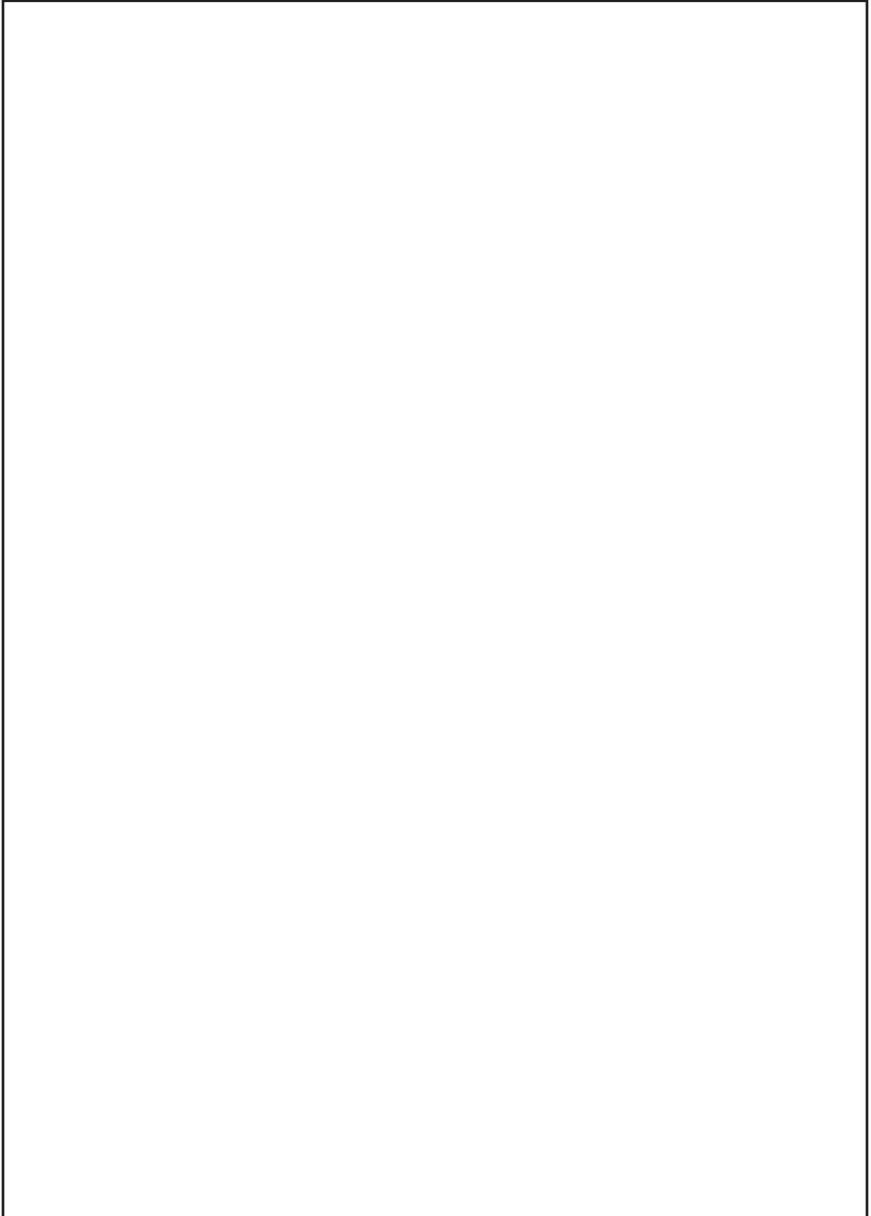
Andy's wife, Dee Etta Hofford Penn, inherited the farm after Andy's death in 1964. She moved off the property in 1970, after 110 years of family farm operations.

In 1975, the property was sold to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for the construction of Joe Pool Lake. In 1977, Texas Parks and Wildlife began documenting the historic resources of the farm through field notes, oral interviews, and photographs.

Penn Farm's current historic and architectural resources maintain it as one of the most significant and unaltered farmsteads in north-central Texas.

HOW WILL YOU LEAVE A LEGACY?

Use the space below to write or draw your answer.

A large, empty rectangular box with a thin black border, occupying the majority of the page below the text. It is intended for the user to write or draw their answer to the question above.



To learn more about the park's natural resources and history, attend one of our many scheduled programs with a Park Ranger.

To set up a private tour for a scout troop, school group, or other organization, please call the park directly.

Cedar Hill State Park

(972) 291-3900

1570 W FM 1382 • Cedar Hill, TX 75104

www.texasstateparks.org

Created by:

Danielle Hatch, TPWD 2019 Park Interpreter for Cedar Hill State Park



4200 Smith School Road
Austin, Texas 78744
www.tpwd.texas.gov

Texas State Parks is a division of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department.

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