

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT EARLY ABILENE?

Questions from Robert W. Sledge's *A People, A Place: The Story of Abilene*, vol. 1, 1881-1940.

1. The first parachute jump in Taylor County occurred at the West Texas Fair in (a) 1898 (b) 1912 (c) 1926 (d) 1942.
2. The first water supply for the town of Abilene came from (a) Lake Abilene (b) Lytle Lake (c) Lake Cameron (d) Kirby Lake.
3. Clinton Street is named for John J. Clinton, a longtime Abilene (a) mayor (b) grocer (c) physician (d) police chief.
4. The land for the new Baptist college in Abilene (Simmons) was donated by (a) a Methodist (b) an atheist (c) a Catholic (d) a Baptist.
5. The oldest institution in Abilene was organized in a boxcar on a railroad siding a month before the town lot sale. It is (a) First Baptist Church (b) First United Methodist Church (c) Heavenly Rest Episcopal Church (d) First Central Presbyterian Church.
6. The "Gallopig Goose" was (a) a float in a Fourth of July parade (b) a runaway streetcar (c) the first automobile in Abilene (d) a sideshow freak at the 1912 West Texas Fair.
7. The oldest continuously-operating business in town is (a) the Wagstaff Law Firm (b) the Abilene Reporter-News (c) Abilene Printing and Stationery (d) First Financial Bank.
8. The Abilene State School was originally called (a) the Home for Unfortunate Girls (b) the State Tuberculosis Sanitarium (c) the Epileptic Colony (d) the Abilene Mental Asylum.
9. Abilene was built around the tracks of the (a) Atchison, Topeka, and Santa Fe Railroad (b) the Texas and Pacific Railway (c) The Abilene and Northern Railroad (d) the Union Pacific Rail Company.
10. Of the first group of over 100 businessmen in Abilene in 1881, the largest contingent came from (a) Kentucky (b) Louisiana (c) Texas (d) New York.

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT EARLY ABILENE? (2)

1. The Lake Abilene State Park facilities were built during the depression by a racially-integrated team from (a) the WPA – Works Progress Administration (b) the CCC – Civilian Conservation Corps (c) the NYA – National Youth Administration (d) the PWA – Public Works Administration.
2. The maximum temperature ever recorded in Abilene was (a) 109 (b) 112 (c) 114 (d) 116 in 1947.
3. The Abilene High School mascot, the Eagle, apparently came from (a) the old Eagle Colony on Lytle Creek (b) the visit of the “Lone Eagle” Charles Lindbergh in 1927 (c) the Abilene Eagles professional baseball team that ceased operations in 1923 (d) a pair of eagles who nested in a tall tree near Simmons College.
4. According to one story, a dance band was stuck in Abilene for several weeks during the depression, playing at the Hilton Hotel nightly for room and board. The band was led by (a) Benny Goodman (b) Lionel Hampton (c) Tommy Dorsey (d) Lawrence Welk.
5. Cooper High School is named for Oscar H. Cooper, who was (a) president of Simmons College (b) the Texas State Superintendent of Education (c) the founder of a private high school in north Abilene (d) Professor of Education at Simmons.
6. The Abilene airport, Kinsolving Field, was nearly closed down in 1931 because of (a) lack of funds during the depression (b) bad weather that caused three major crashes (c) a fire that destroyed the hangars and control tower (d) muddy runways.
7. Simmons College suspended football competition for several years after 1909 because (a) a player was killed in a game (b) gamblers had fixed several of the games by bribing the players (c) the school could no longer afford the program (d) the stadium was destroyed by a tornado.
8. Abilene, like much of the nation, was nearly shut down in the fall of 1918 by an epidemic of (a) cholera (b) influenza (c) poliomyelitis (d) smallpox.
9. During the 1920's Abilene became nationally famous for its city ordinance against (a) speeding over ten miles per hour (b) mashing (c) dancing (d) beer sales.
10. The Ku Klux Klan was a very popular organization in Abilene in the 1920s, supported by many of the prominent people in the community. Eventually, it was brought down by the courageous opposition of (a) the mayor and city council (b) the *Abilene Daily Reporter* (c) the legal community (d) the churches.

HOW MUCH DO YOU KNOW ABOUT EARLY ABILENE? (3)

1. "The Beer and Ice Seminary" was an early nickname for the school became (a) Simmons College (b) Abilene Christian College (c) Abilene High School (d) Taylor County Junior College.
2. In the 1912 presidential election, Democrat Woodrow Wilson won Taylor County easily. Which party finished second? (a) Socialist Party (b) Prohibition Party (c) "Bull Moose" Party (d) Republican Party.
3. One evidence of the rough-and-tumble nature of early Abilene was a shootout at high noon on Pine Street in 1885 between two (a) preachers, (b) editors (c) lawyers (d) dentists.
4. One of the most eccentric town characters was restaurateur Plennie Wingo, who (a) was married to seven women at one time (b) published a Communist newspaper in the 1930s (c) walked halfway around the world backwards (d) gave away ten thousand dollars by running down Cypress Street throwing bills to the winds.
5. In 1919, a fire so damaged the electric generating plant that Abilene was for several days without any (a) ice (b) water (c) streetcar service (d) telephone service.
6. "Sheep Republicans" were Taylor County citizens who bolted the Democratic party because the Democratic president, Grover Cleveland, (a) ordered slaughter of the flocks to stop an epidemic (b) lowered tariffs on cheap foreign wool (c) removed price supports on Texas mutton (d) closed the open range where free flocks could graze.
7. The first oil find in Taylor County was developed in Cedar Gap in 1919 by a group of Abilene wildcatters calling themselves (a) the "Hunch Oil and Gas Company" (b) the "Oily Birds" (c) "Humble Oil Company" (d) the "Dirty Dozen Plus One."
8. Abilene women's clubs promoted the first public library in the town, but it did not get a building of its own until 1909, thanks to a grant from the philanthropist (a) John D. Rockefeller (b) J. Pierpont Morgan (c) Cornelius Vanderbilt (d) Andrew Carnegie.
9. "The Father of Abilene" is the title bestowed upon the man who was one its founders, who gave it its name, and who lived as a leading citizen in Abilene for over forty years. He was (a) Willie Gray Swenson (b) Tom Hendrick (c) David Castle (d) Claiborne Merchant.
10. For many years, all saloons had to close at midnight on New Year's Eve. The tradition continued even after Abilene went dry. The signal was (a) six shots from Chief Clinton's pistol (b) three sharp blasts of the whistle at the Central Fire Station (c) a one-minute interruption in all the city's electric current (d) a red skyrocket fired the corner of North First and Cypress.



Looking for the answer key? There isn't one — you have to read the book!