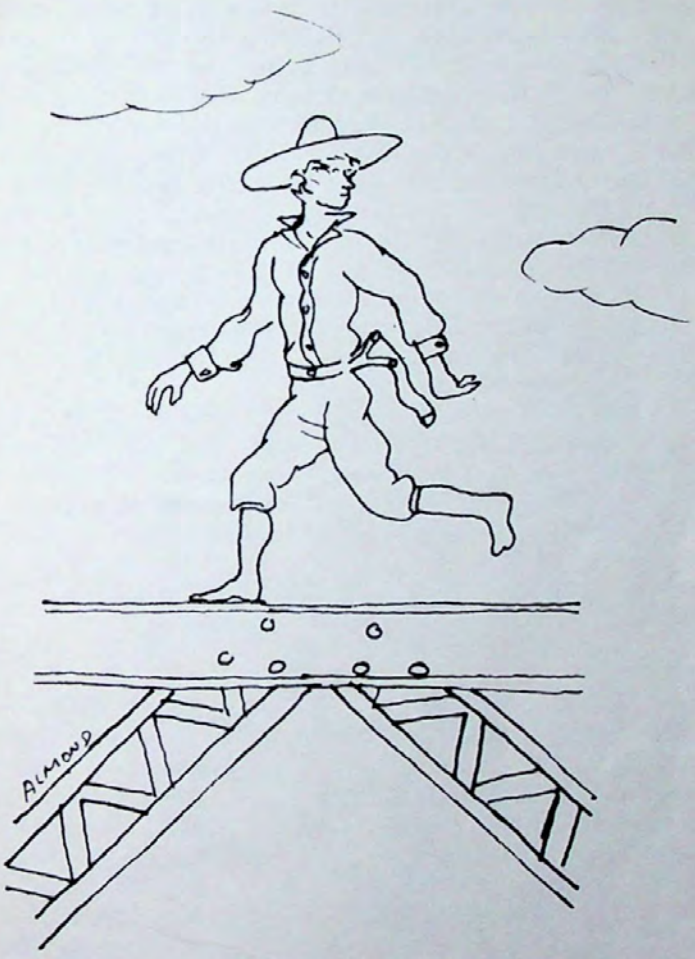
THE MEANEST KID IN TOWN

Memories of Llano, Texas 1890 - 1904

by

Allan R. Townsend



A HISTORICAL PRESERVATION PROJECT OF THE LLANO COUNTY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

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DEDICATION

The Llano County Historical Society and Llano, itself, wish to express their sincere gratitude to Allan R. Townsend, a native of Llano who was born here in 1890, for the gift of this book to the Llano County Museum. It was gifted to the museum in loving memory of Mr. Townsend's two sisters who were born in Llano, died in early childhood, and are buried here in the Llano Cemetery.

Blanche Townsend B. August 14, 1894 D. September 19, 1897
Annie Laura Townsend B. June 17, 1896 D. December 2, 1897

Through the gift of this book, it is now possible for all of us to know not only what life was like in early Llano, but what life was like for everyone, everywhere, during that era.

Mr. Townsend wrote this book about 1967-1968, when he was about 78 years old, and it is proof of his excellent memory and total recall. It is truly Llano, as it was seen through the eyes of a youngster enjoying his childhood here.

Mr. Townsend is now 88 years old and resides in Dallas, Texas. He is still a very active member of society, and is currently engaged in writing a book in Dallas as he had known it since 1904.

Again the Llano County Historical Society wishes to thank him for sharing a most important part of early Llano with all of us.

The Llano County Historical Society
Board of Directors

FORWARD

Here is a story which will make Tom Sawyer, Huckleberry Finn and Peck's Bad Boy all seem like "saints" in comparison. As you will see, later on in the story, we were like most all young boys of today, only maybe a little wilder and more adventuresome.

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★ Area around the Courthouse.

CHAPTER 1

MY INTRODUCTION INTO THIS WONDERFUL WORLD OF OURS

BANG! BANG! BOOM! I came into this world with a bang, as I was born on, November 6, 1890, election night. The place was Llano, Texas, which is located in the Edward's Plateau, also known as the Hill Country. It is just one hundred miles due west of Austin, Texas, our State Capitol.

The election was for county offices. In those days, most all men wore six shooters or a gun of some sort, and after the election they were sort of celebrating by firing off their revolvers, shooting anvils and shouting, "Hurrah", for sheriff Ben Ligon and George Townsend's baby. Now I know that there are very few people of today who know what I mean by "shooting anvils", so I will try and explain. Back in those days, there were quite a few blacksmith shops. In fact, most any town at all had at least one blacksmith shop. They had to shoe horses and fix most anything consisting of iron. The anvil was a large hunk of iron, weighing around fifty pounds, or more, and it was shaped to meet the needs of the blacksmith. One end had a rounded point, then the rest of it was sort of oblong and flat on top, except for right past the center, it had a square hole about two inches square all the way through it. It was to place the cutting chisel in when wanting to cut some hot iron. All of the iron had to be red hot before the smithy could work it with any success. A good blacksmith could make just about anything he wanted to make out of iron. Now back to shooting the anvils. It would take two of them to shoot. You would fill the square hole with black powder, then you would place the other anvil on top of the first one, then fill the square hole on it with black powder also. Then place a home made fuse in them, light the fuse — then run like hell — and then, BOOM! It sounds just about as loud as any canon you ever heard. Hence, you can see why I said that I came into this world with a boom!

Llano wasn't even incorporated then, but still it was the county seat. I don't imagine that there were over seven or eight hundred souls living in Llano then.

It was mostly cattle country then, as land was very cheap. It sold for just twenty-five and fifty cents an acre. Some didn't pay anything, they just settled on it, made some improvements and finally obtained a clear title to it. There were also quite a few farmers. The soil there is very rich, and you can grow most anything at all with very little water. The country is rather hilly and rocky, most of it, but also very rich. Even now sometimes when I go down there, it will be hot and dry, and you can't see any grass at all, but you can see some cattle grazing, and it looks like they must be eating rocks. But then, everyone of them are rolling fat, so there must be something very strengthening down there in that country. There are

also quite a bit of mesquite trees down that way. Some of the ranchers are killing it all out now, but I can't see why because the stock eat the leaves, also the mesquite beans and the mistletoe — they eat it all. Also, it is pretty good shade for them in real hot weather.

Allan R. Townsend as a baby. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 2

MY FATHER AND MOTHER

My father, George W. Townsend, was a very large and strong man. He was about six feet three inches in his stocking feet and weighed around two hundred and fifty pounds. He was not fat at all, just a big man and all muscle. He was also a college graduate. He graduated at the Add-Rand College in Thorp Springs, Texas, around 1888. The college was founded by two brothers, Addison and Randolph Clark. Hence, the name Add-Rand College. By the way, I was named after Randolph Clark, but I will tell more about that later on in my story.

A college graduate in 1888, was something to brag about because there were few of them in those days.

I don't know exactly where my father was born, but I know that it was in Mississippi, some place. I do know that Papa was one of the finest carpenters, architects and contractors in that part of the country and was recognized as such! My father was born August 1, 1861. He died March 25, 1900, in San Antonio, Texas.

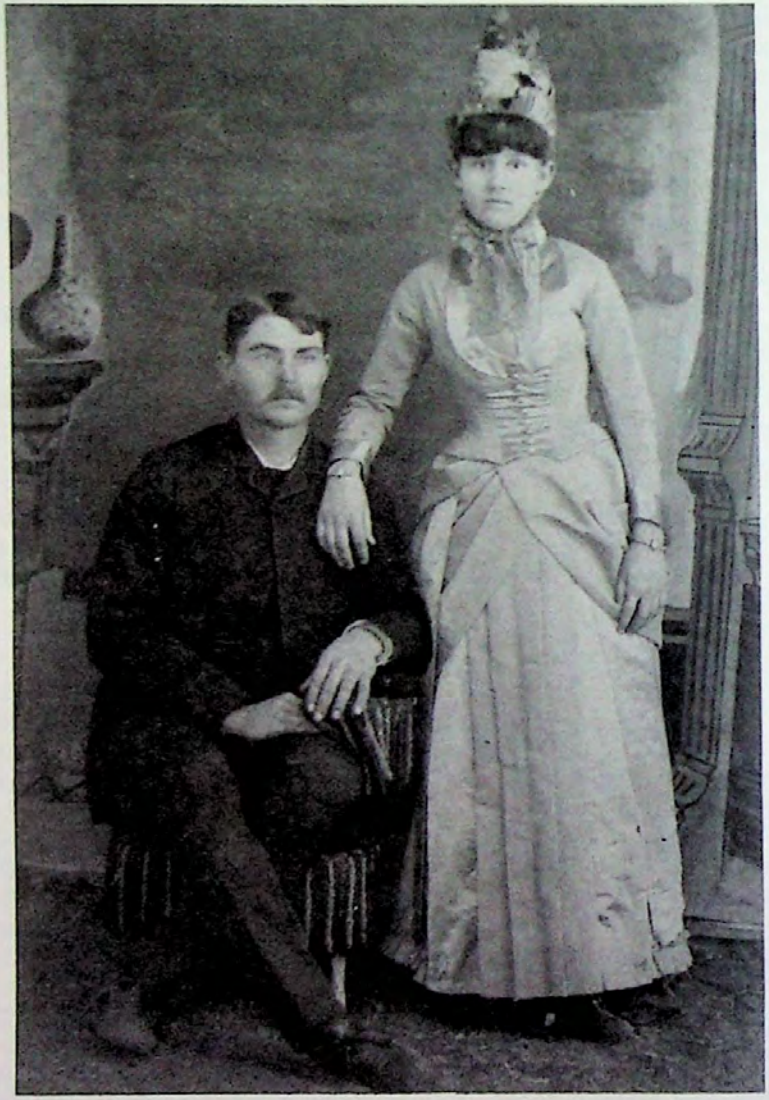
My mother, Lillie P. Watkins, was born in San Marcos, Texas, July 7, 1871, and died November 10, 1955, in Dallas, Texas. She and my father, George W. Townsend, were marrried around 1888, right after he graduated from Add-Rand College.

My mother told me that just before I was born Papa said, "No kid of mine is going to be born in a rented house." So he dug up five hundred dollars some how and built the prettiest little house you ever saw. I think it is still standing today, and it still looks good, too. It evidently has been taken well care of.

Then, when I was born in November 6, 1890, in that little house on Sandstone Street (streets were not named then), there was a lady who was related to Papa who lived across the street from us. It was a Mrs. Carrie McInnis. She washed me and dressed me right after I was born. We didn't even know what a hospital was in those days. So, all children were born at home then, and all neighbors were <u>real</u> neighbors, too. When anyone was sick, they all took turns about staying with the sick and taking care of the rest of the family during their spell of sickness. Fortunately, we were a new family, and there were no more kids to take care of. However, someone had to feed Mama and Papa for about a week though. By then, Mama was able to get up and do light work.

Times were pretty tough in those days, and no one made much money. In fact, you didn't need too much money to live on then. I know Papa was a general contractor, architect and a real good carpenter. He always took the contract to build the houses, and he only allowed himself three dollars a day for ten hours a day. His top carpenters he paid two dollars a day, and hammer and saw men only made fifty cents and a dollar a day, just owing to how good they were.

Now Llano being such a small town, there naturally wasn't enough business around there to keep him busy, so he did quite a bit of traveling around. He was getting to be pretty well known over most all of Texas.



George and Lillie P. (Watkins) Townsend, parents of Allan on their wedding day. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 3

WE MOVE TO SAN ANGELO

Finally Papa struck a pretty nice little building boom in San Angelo, Texas. He told Mama to get the kid ready, and we could come down there and live for a while, where he was working. I don't know how long we lived there because I was still too young to realize anything yet. I do just faintly remember a real big dust storm they had while we were there. Mama had to take sheets and tack them over all of the windows and then pack all of the cracks around the doors. Even then, the sand sifted in. Mama said it was so thick that you couldn't see across the street. Everything looked a dirty red color, and hot — it was plenty hot — even though it was in the winter time.

CHAPTER 4

WE MOVE TO SAN ANTONIO

Finally Papa's work played out there in San Angelo. As Papa had some friends in San Antonio, they persuaded him to come there for a while. There were no automobiles and very few trains in those days. We had to do quite a bit of traveling by stage coach. If we did happen to find a train, we were sometimes forced to go way out of our way. So, traveling was always very slow. However, Llano did have a railroad there. It was a spur line of the A&NW (Austin and NorthWestern). It ran from Austin to Llano and dead ended there. I will tell more about it later on.

Anyway, by the time we moved to San Antonio, I was getting large enough to begin to take notice of things. Mama said that I was walking and talking at nine months, and also I was old enough to eat beef steak. They used to always give me the bone out of the round steak. I would sit in my high chair and gnaw that bone and suck the marrow out of it. Mama tells this on me. She said that while we were on our way to San Antonio, we stopped one night at a hotel. That night, at the supper table it was very crowded, and they were serving family style. All hotels kept high chairs then for the youngsters to sit in. Anyway, it seems we were a little late, and several were already eating. Mama said that I set up a howl yelling, "Steak, steak, steak!" A traveling man, who was sitting next to me, cut off a piece of his steak, put it on my plate and said, "Here kid, eat your steak." Mama said I picked it up, looked at it, then threw it on the floor and yelled "Want steak with a bone in it!" Know what I needed then? I guess I was spoiled rotten.

CHAPTER 5

OUR LIFE IN SAN ANTONIO

Then, when we arrived in San Antonio, it seems like we moved into a great big old two story house. We lived upstairs, and across the back, there was a back porch all the way across. Then there was an outside stairway going up to the back porch.

It also seems that the San Antonio River ran right at our back yard, and about every block there was a little foot bridge across it. About two blocks down the river from where we lived, some man had a little sort of a shed across the river. He had it rigged up some way that he used the power of the river to turn his machinery — sort of like a mill to grind corn in. Only he used the power to run a power saw, drill, etc.. I think that he was a carpenter, also. Anyway, he and Papa were real good friends. My favorite pastime was throwing my little straw hat into the river, then running down to the little shed which spanned the river and have the man working there to fish my hat out of the water for me. I thought that great sport at the time. I can just see those little white straws hats now. The hat was white straw, except right in the center of the crown, which was of blue straw. Then, the outer edge of the brim was also blue, and it had a blue ribbon hat band around the outside of the hat. It crossed over in the rear, and six or eight inches of the ribbon hung down the back. They were very pretty. I should have had my bottom blistered for those stunts, but then I was just a little over a year old, and I suppose everyone thought it was cute.

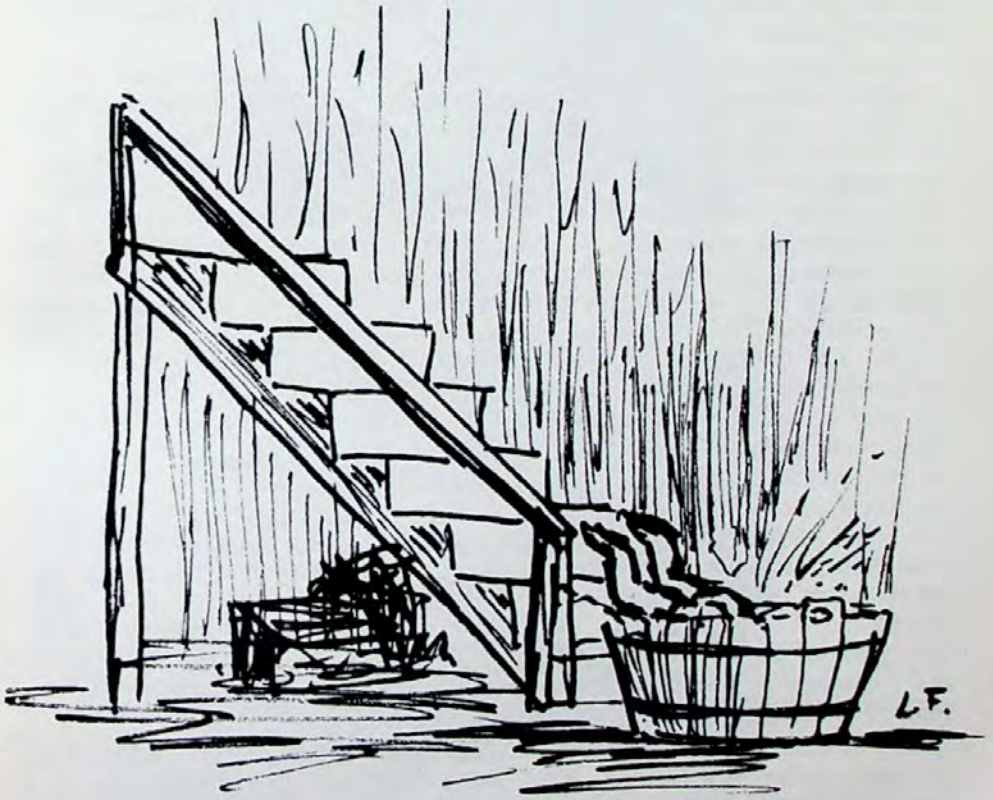
We had a neighbor living next door by the name of Massey. I remember they had a high board fence between their house and ours. I also remember the house as being painted a real dark color. It seemed almost black to me at the time. It was also a very large house. I believe it was a two and a half or three story house. Well, no matter how high the fence was, there is always a loose board or a hole somewhere, and only a dog or a small child can find it. So, one day I found that loose board and started exploring the house. It seems no one was home, so I wandered around all through the house. I must have become sleepy, and I must have laid down some place and gone to sleep. When I woke up, it was almost dark, so I crawled back through my hole in the fence and came wandering on home, all unconcerned as could be. About that time Mama whirled around and spotted me. She grabbed me up in her arms and said, "Where in the world have you been?" I said, "Massey not home, Mama." Then Mama went running down to tell Papa and the rest of the men who were looking for me that I had been found. I think they were dragging the river for me and even tearing up some of the low bridges which spanned the river, thinking I may have gotten stuck under one of them.

All my life I have been very adverturesome and impulsive. As I

stated before, we had a long outside stairway going up to our back porch. One day, I guess it must have been Monday, because that was our weekly wash day, Mama was doing our weekly wash. In those days, there were no washing machines. They always had to rub the clothes out good first on a rub board with plenty of soap. Then, the next step was to place them in a large black wash pot with a fire around the bottom of the pot. They would usually cut up about one half a bar of yellow soap (five cents a bar) then, to cut the dirt a little better, they would add about one tablespoon of coal oil. Then they would bring the clothes to a good brisk boil pounding them occasionally with the clothes stick, and let them boil for about twenty or thirty minutes, owing to how dirty they were. Then they would take them out of the pot, put them back into the tub again, and pour in just enough cool water to cool them off enough so you could rub them some more on the rub board. Then you wring them out good by hand — no wringers then. Now you rinse them out good, and and wring them out again. Then all of the white clothes, sheets, pillow slips, etc. were put through a tub of blueing water, and believe you me, they were really white then. Now they were all ready to wring out again and be put on the clothes line to dry. Now that was a whole lot of hard work; but when you brought your clothes in that

night, you were well rewarded for your days hard work. What I wanted to tell about this particular day was — Mama's tub, which she had her blueing water in, was an oblong tub, pretty narrow and two and a half feet high. That day she had it sitting on the third step of the stairway leading up to our back porch. Here I came, picking my way down the stairway, and just as I got even with the tub of blueing water, I saw my reflection there in the tub of blueing water. I leaned over to kiss the pretty baby and lost my balance, and in I went, head first. Mama said she heard a ruckus behind her and turned around, and all she could see was my feet sticking up out of the tub, just a kicking. It is a wonder I didn't drown.

I think that about that time Papa was getting caught up with his work there in San Antonio, and besides, I think Mama was getting sort of home sick, and I think that she must have been pregnant. I must have been one and a half years old by then because I am just two years older than my brother.



CHAPTER 6

OUR MOVE BACK TO LLANO

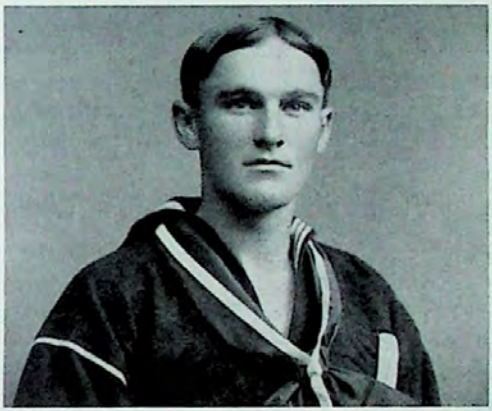
The next thing I remember, we were living in Llano again. I think Papa must have built us another house then for about two hundred dollars. It was what they called a box house, just one large room, no porch, hallway or anything. Papa did put in a couple of partitions. One was a kitchen and dining room; the other was the bedroom. They were all pretty large rooms. It was built right next door to Papa Watkin's house, only it had a fence in between. Papa Watkins was Mama's father. We were always taught to call them Papa Watkins and Mama Watkins. It seems no one liked to be called grandma and grandpa then, so that is what they were always called.

That is the house where my little brother, Floyd, was born on October 1, 1892. We must have lived there for quite a while, and I think all hands were happier that way because when Papa had to go out of town to work, he knew that Mama was right next door to her folks. She had two brothers, Arthur and Ernest, and one sister, Pearl, so one of them would most always spend the night with us when Papa was away.

It seems I omitted one little incident when I was still just a baby crawling around. We were spending the night with Mama and Papa Watkins. Also, one of Papa's brothers was there, Uncle Joe Townsend. He had been a peace officer. He had been shot through the chest a couple of times. Then there was an Uncle Cull Williams. I do not know just what relation he was to us. Back to the story about our staying all night with Mama and Papa Watkins. It was pretty cold that morning. It was winter time. The front bedroom had a large fire place in it. The only other heat in the house was a wooden stove in the kitchen. The dining room and kitchen were all just one large room. The dining room had a long home made dining table with ten or twelve chairs around it. Even then, some of the kids used to have to wait most of the time. Folks had lots of company in those days. This took place early in the morning. Mama and Mama Watkins were in the kitchen. The men were all gathered around the fireplace trying to keep warm. There I was, crawling around on the floor, trying to see what mischief I could get into, when all of a sudden, they heard something squealing. Papa stuck his finger into my mouth to see what I was poking in there, and then out came three or four little naked mice. Good thing I didn't have any teeth yet wasn't it? Uncle Joe picked me up with his one arm, sat me on his knee, and called me "Uncle Joe's little Chinaman." That is what he called me all the rest of his life — "Uncle Joe's little Chinaman".

My Uncle Arthur, Mama's brother, had a big old red dog called Ranger. After we moved next door, Arthur didn't have any dog anymore because old Ranger adopted me and moved next door with us. He was so old, I don't think he had very many teeth left. On a

real hot day, he would lie under the back steps in what little shade there was, and I would crawl under there with him. Mama said that I would lie there, with my arm stuck in old Ranger's mouth and throat, clear up to my elbow. Mama and Papa both began to worry about us, afraid maybe old Ranger would go mad or something. So one day while I was asleep, they had poor old Ranger taken away from the house and shot. They had to have him taken away because they all loved him so much, they just couldn't watch him being shot. I do not know how I found out who shot him. In fact, I never even saw the man in my whole life, but somehow, I heard his name was Ashby Williams, and boy, I hated that name all of my life.



Ernest Watkins, Mrs. Lillie Townsend's brother. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

Pearl Watkins, Mrs. Lillie Townsend's sister. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 7

ABOUT MY BABY BROTHER, FLOYD

When Floyd was born, he was a bottle baby. I had always been a breast baby.

After Floyd was large enough to be put into the cradle — they didn't have bassinets in those days, nor baby beds, nor play pens either. Papa built a cradle for me, and as I out grew it, it was passed on to Floyd. Well, as I said before, when Floyd was old enough to be put into his cradle, I nearly starved him to death, cause Mama would give him his bottle, and place him in his cradle to take a nap. All went well as long as Mama was there rocking his cradle, but then just as soon as she would turn her back, I would grab Floyd's bottle, run off and hide some place and drink it all. I thought it was the best stuff I ever tasted in all my whole life. Of course, Floyd was yelling bloody murder all the time, and Mama would come running to see what was wrong. By the time she found me, the bottle would be empty, and she would fix Floyd another one. Milk was plentiful then anyway. I think Papa Watkins milked about three cows, so we always had plenty of milk, butter and good old clabber with a little bit of cream and sugar on it. Boy, how I used to love that stuff.

We didn't have any ice in Llano then, so Papa Watkins, also being a pretty fair carpenter himself, would go down to the grocery stores and get three or four of these banana crates. In those days, bananas were shipped by the whole stalk. They built one half of the crate first, put in plenty of straw or hay so they would not bruise, then laid the whole stalk in the crate, put on more hay, then nailed the rest of the slats on, and they were ready to be shipped. They were six feet long, so Papa Watkins would take the ends from the other crates and make shelves of them just wide enough apart to hold one of those large three gallon milk crocks. He left the front end open by leaving off a couple of slats; then he would hang the whole thing on the back porch where there was plenty of breeze. He covered the whole thing with a sheet or some other light material. He wet the sheet good all over, put a large pan or a small tub underneath about half full of water, then set it on a large bar or bench so the bottom part of the sheet would hang down into it. It would draw the water up itself and keep the sheet wet all the time. Then you placed your milk crocks in, and of course, you had to fasten the sheet in front to keep it closed to flies, dust, etc.. There you had your old time milk cooler; it kept the milk almost as good as it did in the refrigerator. Milk was very cheap then. It sold for twenty cents a gallon, good whole milk, and butter sold for fifteen cents a pound or two pounds for twenty-five cents. Buttermilk sold for ten cents a gallon. If you couldn't get that for it, they would give it to you or else feed it to the hogs.

I think the way Mama finally broke me of stealing Floyd's bottle was to always fix me one. I ate other foods also, but I still loved my bottle. I must have sucked on that bottle until my brother was weaned. By that time, I was over three years old.

Left to right: Allan, Blanche and Floyd Townsend. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 8

OUR MOVE TO A NEW HOME

Times were pretty hard in those days, and Papa couldn't seem to get any building to do. So one day, he sold our little home to a man by the name of Will Beck, who drove the city water wagon. He sold water for ten cents a barrel. In those days Llano had no water tank or stand pipe, and when the river was low, we had very little water pressure, so most of the people had to buy their water. The poor water man had to drive down to the river crossing and drive out into the middle of the river, take the little lid off the top of his tank, then stand there on a little step of his wagon and then dip the water up in a bucket. He then poured it into the top hole of his tank until it was as full as his team could pull it, then he would head back up a pretty steep hill of the river bank. I think that his tank only held about six barrels of water, so you can see that he didn't get rich hauling water at ten cents a barrel. A little later on, he devised a plan where he ran a two inch pipe from the top of the river down into the river. He put a strainer on the end which went into the water to keep the sand, trash and minnows from coming into the pipe. The other end upon the river bank, he ran up a pole, and just above the hole in the top of his tank (about two feet above) he placed another pipe to form an L over his tank. Then, of course, he had to have a pump attached. First he had a hand pump which was operated by hand. Later on, when he was able, he installed a power pump. It made it easier on his mules, anyway, and I guess it was quite a bit easier on himself, also.

In those days, most everyone kept three or four barrels in their yards right up real close to the fence so the short hose attached to the water wagon could reach them. When anyone wanted water, they would hang out a little red flag on the fence post next to the barrels. Everyone who wanted water had his own red flag. Then the water man would drive up and down the street (or road, they had no streets then) and when he saw a red flag, that is where he headed. His team of mules had small bells tied around their necks so everyone could hear him coming and go out and take his hose to fill up their barrels.

After Papa sold our home and there wasn't any building going on any place near, he went into business for himself. He bought a meat market. There were always three or four markets in Llano. We moved to an old vacant house which was located about a quarter of a mile from where we used to live. It was sort of just over a small hill. It was real dilapidated, but Papa being a carpenter and all, it didn't take him long to fix it up in pretty good shape; and Mama being a pretty good house keeper, as well as a very good seamstress, soon had the floors scrubbed, windows washed, drapes for the windows all made and things began to look real homey around there. Of course, all floors were bare, and there were plenty of splinters which kept

Mama pretty busy picking the splinters out of Floyd and I. The the weeds — I never saw so many in all my life. We also had a pretty good sized barn on the back of our lot, and our privey was out near the cowpen. No one had inside toilets in those days. The weeds were so high, over my head, that we could hardly see the privey from our house. So, the first thing Papa did was to clear a path from the house out to the privey and the cow pen and barn because Papa always liked to keep a milk cow as well as a couple of hogs and a few chickens. A little later on, he found a couple of young men who came out and cut all of the weeds on the place. Labor was real cheap then, so it did not cost him much. They probably took their wages out in meat from Papa's market. Meat was also very cheap. You could buy most any cut in the beef for ten cents a pound, and beef cattle sold on foot, from six to eight dollars a piece. As there was no ice in Llano at that time, they would slaughter the beef in the evening, quarter it, bring it into the meat market and hang it in a little screened room to keep the flies away all night, then start selling it the first thing in the morning. In those days all working men and women as well, liked to have beef steak, gravy and hot biscuits for breakfast. Maybe for a change they would have ham and eggs or bacon and eggs with gravy. Then there were some times that they would make cream gravy, but always the hot biscuits or maybe sometimes batter cakes with fresh cow butter topped off with some gold "lasses". I'll tell you, we may have all been poor in those days, but we sure did know how to eat. Most everyone had their own garden, too. My grandfather Watkins always seemed to have just about the best garden and fruit orchard in town. Even though he had to buy his water by the barrel most of the time, he had a little hand sprinkling can, and he would water his leaf lettuce, his radishes, onions and mustard greens, all out of that little can. Then he would gather a bunch of it each day, wash it off good, bunch it up, tie it, place it in a couple of baskets and carry it to town to sell it at five cents a bunch. He had two lots; one he used mostly for his orchard, and the other one he used just for a garden, and believe me, he utilized every inch of it, too.

He also had a fair sized cow pen, chicken coop, and a couple of feed buildings. His wood pile was right alongside of the cow pen, so he always had plenty of fertilizer for his garden and flowers and fruit trees. He also had an ash pile alongside his wood pile where he dumped all of his ashes from the fireplace and cook stove, and he used every bit of it, too. Besides keeping all of us in fresh fruit and vegetables, he also had quite a bit to sell.

Now back to our little place over the hill. To the best of my knowledge, the house wasn't even painted, just raw borads which had turned dark with age. We were just about the fartherest house west of town, before you hit Flag Creek, one of our prominent creeks in Llano. Then along the creek, and on the other side, there were several homes. I say several, I could have counted them on my

fingers, but it was still several for Llano. East of us, just across the road, lived our nearest neighbor, Newell Porter, our County Sheriff at the time. He had three or four children, maybe more, but all I remember was a boy, Emmett and a girl, Velma. Velma was more my age. I believe she was a year or so older than I. Anyway, most all girls had play houses then, and Velma was no exception. Out under a nice shady tree, she had a place all swept nice and clean with shelves all arranged around the tree, or any other place she could stick one. On those shelves she had arranged pieces of broken glass of all different colors and anything else she thought was pretty she would stick upon a shelf. When wild flowers were in bloom, she always had several bouquets of them stuck around. She always liked to play house, and she was a great cook. She would make up a batch of mud pies, then place them on a piece of flat tin or or an old shingle or something, then set them out in the hot sun to bake. Also, after they had washed clothes at her house, and had a fire around the wash pot, and when the china berries were ripe, she would gather up about a pint of them. Then she would dig a hole in the ashes, after the fire had died down, of course, and she would place the china berries in the hole and cover them up to bake. She would tell me to come back late that afternoon and the pies and the berries would be done by then, and we could eat supper. So when I came back, she would take the supper all up, and we would sit down to the table (just an old box with a piece of paper spread over it) and she would exclaim, "My! What a wonderful supper this is!" And do you know, she had me eating that stuff! She would make out that she was eating it also, but she was tossing hers over her shoulder. I ate a couple of her mud pies all right, but when I came to the roasted china berries, I couldn't go that stuff, so I spit them out. Good thing I did, too, 'cause I think they are poison. Boy, I'll tell you, Velma was a great little house keeper. She was a pretty little blue eyed blond with real bossy ways about her, and I'll guess if she had told me to, I would have stuck my head into the fire.

Then directly behind the Porter house, south of it, lived a nigger mammy. I can't think of her first name, but I believe Mama called her Rhodie, and she had a son just about my age, named Solomon. I thought that Solomon and Rhodie were just about the grandest folks I ever knew because about that time, Mama took down sick. There was a lot of sickness in those days. The doctors called it "slow fever", but I think it is what is called Malaria today. Anyway, they were confined to the bed for a long time, and it was also very weakening. During that time, Rhodie took care of us two kids and Mama, besides cooking for us all, Papa included. So you can readily see why I liked them so well. Of course, we had other friends who would come and sit up with Mama occasionally, but then the main load fell on Rhoda. I was about three years old then, maybe a little bit older, and Floyd was one year old, and was not thoroughly weaned yet. As I said before, Rhoda was an old mammy, and she

tried to nurse Floyd, but he would not take it. He wanted his bottle. Rhoda told him that she didn't have any bottle — to nurse her or do without. She had lots of milk, much more than her youngest baby could use, so she told Floyd that he had better come on and get it or else she would give it to me. Floyd wouldn't budge, so she said, "Come on Allan and get your ninny." So Allan went on and took it. She used to tell Solomon that I and him were brothers because we had both been raised on the same ninny. I think that that is when Floyd was weaned because he never would take the breast. I do not know whether Papa ever paid Rhoda any real money or not, but I guess he gave her plenty of meat. Then after Mama was up and around for a few months Papa bought her a new Singer sewing machine. I think you could buy one for around twenty five dollars then. Mama was a good seamstress; she made all the clothes for herself, us children and Papa's shirts, etc.. I think that she made several dresses for Rhoda and shirts and pants for Solomon. He was a couple of years older than I was, and he could wear pants now. They were made out of one leg of a pair of men's pants. Then she made what were called waists. They buttoned down the front, then had about six or seven buttons around the waist band, which buttoned right into the button holes which were worked into the waist band of the pants, and that is all they wore in the summer.

In those days, most all boys were kept in dresses until they were around five or six years old, then they were considered old enough to put on pants. I never will forget the first pair of pants Mama made for me. I though that I was a real grown man then, and I proceeded to celebrate the occasion by running off and going to Mama Watkins house. But then I am getting ahead in my story because I still had a couple years to wait before I got my first pair of pants.

Eventually all of the weeds were cleared up off of our place, and all of the snakes killed. There were plenty of snakes around there, too — Rattlesnakes, chicken snakes, copperheads and coachwhips, etc.. They were all gone except maybe a few chicken snakes under the barn. We also had a milk cow, a hog, and a few chickens, turkeys and some noisy guineas. We were getting along just fine, and then Mama got pregnant again with my first little sister, Blanche.

CHAPTER 9

THE BIRTH OF MY FIRST SISTER

On August 14, 1894, Blanche, my first little sister was born. We were still living over the hill across the street from the Porters and Solomon. As Blanche was the first girl, we all spoiled her pretty badly, and besides she was as pretty as a picture. I couldn't steal her bottle because she, like myself, was a breast baby.

Papa kept on running his meat market until Blanche was just about one year old. Papa then rented a house right down the street from Papa Watkins home, just about one block down and across the street from them. We rented from George Watkins. I believe all of those Watkins boys were all nephews of Papa Watkins as they all called him Uncle Jimmy. Lets see, there was George Watkins, Sam Watkins, who lived next door to us, then there was Wallace Watkins, who is still living (1969) and is up in the ninetys, still hale and hearty. Then there was Lee Watkins, also. All of the Watkins brothers were in business of some sort. Sam Watkins, who lived next door to us had three sons and a daughter then. Later on, after I left Llano, I believe another son was born named Bill. The other boys were Owen, the oldest, then T. J. next, then the daughter, Clara Bell and the smallest son, John. I believe that he came before the girl. Anyway, Owen, T. J., John, Floyd and I used to play together quite a bit. Sam Watkins ran the Watkins Grocery Store, and Lee Watkins was the book keeper for the store. In those days, most everything you bought was on a credit. There was very little cash floating around then. Sam Watkins lived in a pretty large house compared to the one we lived in. Also, they had a real bath tub in their house, even if it did drain out into their hog pen. As there wasn't any sewerage sytem then, we all had to use priveys, or out houses, as they were called.

Sam Watkins had a large barn, horse lot and cow pen combined. Then the hog pens were way over to the side and rear of the other buildings. He kept three or four nice horses and a couple of cows most all the time and hogs. I don't know exactly how many he had because as Llano wasn't even incorporated in those days, quite a few people owned hogs. They would cut their mark on their ears and then just turn them loose to run all over town, and even under some folks houses which were pretty high up off the ground. The Watkins' barn was most always full of corn, oats, hay, cotton seed and all kinds of feed because as I stated before, Sam Watkins ran a grocery store. All of the farmers and ranchers who traded with him on a credit, couldn't always pay off. Well, Sam was a pretty sharp trader himself, and he always had to do quite a bit of "horse tradin'. in his business. Therefore, he never wanted for anything, as he always held the upper hand. The farmers had to have flour, coffee, tobacco and sugar — mostly brown sugar in those days, white sugar was too expensive for them. Well, that sort of trading is what kept the wheels

turning. A farmer would only come to town once or twice a month. He would always bring a wagon load of his wares to sell, such as watermelons, five or ten cents apiece, cantaloupes, two for a nickel, corn — or roasting ears is what we called them then, ten cents a dozen; then radishes, beets, squash, peaches, plums and apricots all in season, of course. Then the women folk would get their spending money from eggs, ten cents a dozen, fresh churned cow butter, a bit a pound or two pounds for two bits — twenty-five cents.

Then when the cotton came in, it was all picked and placed in a wagon with big high side boards on it, and they would haul it to the gin and have it ginned. I do not know what deal they made with the ginners, but I believe that the cotton seeds always fell to him. Next the farmer would haul his cotton — one bale, two bales or three bales, over to the courthouse square and park there. All of the cotton buyers would come along and grab a handful of the cotton and pull it apart, trying to find out just what "staple" it was, whatever that means. Then they would all make a bid to the farmer for his cotton. I have seen some of it sell as low as two cents a pound, but mostly it sold for around three or four cents a pound. If the price was right, the farmer would receive thirty-five or forty dollars for his bale of cotton — a full one half years work.

First he had to plow the land, and then plant the cotton. Then if it received enough moisture to make it come up good, next he would have to chop the weeds out and thin the cotton, so it would not be too thick. Next he would plow down the rows again to loosen the soil a bit, also to plow up any weeds which had accumulated since the last time he went over it. After the bolls opened, he would have to pick it and put it into his cotton sack, which was slung over his shoulder. When the sack was so heavy that he could not drag it anymore, he would take it up to the wagon, which was always at the head of the rows nearest the house, and weigh his cotton. There were always a pair of scales there. He put the weight down in the book, dumped the cotton in the wagon, then he would go back and start picking again. All of the hired hands made fifty cents and seventy five cents a hundred pounds — pretty high wages wasn't it? I picked cotton one day in my whole life when I was only eight or nine years old. I would run down and dump my sack every fifteen or twenty minutes. I thought that I must have had at least a couple of hundred pounds, but that evening when they settled up with us all, I had only picked forty five pounds all day long. That was enough cotton picking for me. I decided that I was no cotton picker at all.

Owen, T. J. and I used to play up in the cotton seed loft over in their barn. Their little brother, John, and my little brother, Floyd, would come out there looking for us, and we would hide from them. They would run all over calling us, but we would keep just as quiet as mice. Finally they would start crying, then we would come out and pacify them. In a few minutes, they would forget all about our teasing them so and would start playing hide and seek with us. We

would let them count while we would run and hide some place, only we would not hide, we would go into the house and try and beg something to eat while Floyd and Johnny were still looking for us. Finally my mother or Mrs. Clara Watkins would miss Floyd and Johnny and would ask us where they were. We would tell them they were playing down at the barn. They would send us to get them to come up to the house to get a bread and butter sandwich, what we had just had. We could put four or five different kinds of jelly or preserves on our sandwich, all home made, too, as women knew how to cook in those days. We put up large quantities of canned vegetables, too, and would store them in the storm cellar, if they had one, and that would last all winter.

In the winter time most everyone had a hog or two to kill. They would always wait for the coldest day of the whole winter to kill, and then, Oh Boy!, did we kids all have a good time! In the hog there was a pretty long strip of something which they called the "melt". I do not know exactly what it was, but we kids would take it, stick it on a green stick, mostly a mesquite stick, and hold it over the fire to cook. After the stick had burned in two a couple of times and dropped our melt into the hot ashes, we would always rake it out and place it on the stick again. When it was finally cooked to suit us, we would get a cold biscuit and sprinkle salt on it, then eat it. We all thought that was about the best stuff we ever ate in our whole life. In reality, it wasn't fit to eat — I know that I wouldn't eat it now. Another thing we would all scramble for was the bladder. We would take it and place a quill into the entrance tube and blow it up like a football. Then we would tie the tube good, so the air could not escape. Then we would try to pick as much fat from around the bladder as we could; then let it dry for a while. We would then use it as a football and have quite a time playing with it. The bladder is very tough, and it is almost impossible to burst one of them. While we kids were doing all of that, the men folks were busy doing the other duties of butchering a hog. Always two or three neighbors would help each other at hog killing time. They would cut the hog all up good and take the hams, shoulders and the sides and trim most of the fat off and throw it into the large wash pot to render it into lard. Then they would skim all of the "cracklins" off to make cracklin bread with. If you have never eaten cracklin bread, you do not know what you have missed. The men would also trim all the rest of the hog up good and salt it down good, getting it ready to be cured. They would make sausage out of all of the trimmings, and boy, that was real sausage then. There were several folks in town who were fortunate enough to have a smoke house, and they would usually, for a small fee, let a neighbor hang their meat up in their smoke house until it cured. Those of you who do not know what a smoke house is, I will try and describe one for you. First it is a large square building about twenty feet by twenty feet, and the walls were twelve or fifteen feet high. Then the roof sloped up with about a one

quarter pitch, and right at the top of the roof was the screened over vent, or smoke stack. The rest of the building was made as near air tight as it could be made. Of course, there was an entrance door into the room. The floor was usually just a dirt floor with a sort of a little pit dug in the center where they built the fire. Of course, they did not want a fire, they only wanted smoke, so they always used green wood, hickory was preferred or else any other nut tree. If they could not get that, oak was mighty good. A man always had to keep watch over it pretty closely so if it got hot enough to blaze, he would smother it down a bit with wet tow sacks, so it would just smoke. It usually took about two weeks to cure the meat thoroughly. Then they would let the fire die out, that is, if no one else wanted to use it right away. The man who owned the smoke house would usually just let his meat hang there all the time, and if he had enough room, he would let his friends do the same. Then when they wanted a ham, or a side of bacon, they would take it down and bring it home, until it was all gone. After the fire had been out for a week or so, another problem cropped up — the rats appeared. So, all of the meat was hung by wire, telephone wire mostly. They could not climb down that. Then they also set traps around, so you had to be careful where you went into the house or you might get into a trap yourself. Boy, you don't know what good eating is until you have bitten into a slice of that ham. Cured ham with hot biscuits and some of that red eye gravy — Yum, Yum, — it makes my mouth water now, just to think about it. Of course we always had a couple of fresh yard eggs, right from the barn, to go along with the ham and hot biscuits. We all may have been as poor as Jobes turkey, but then we sure did have good eats, at that time.

The smoke house which I described belonged to a neighbor to Papa Watkins. He lived right across the street from him, and his name was H. H. Hargis. I believe that he owned the bank there in Llano at the time. Anyway, he was considered "well off". They lived in a large swell house, and he had about three lots on his place which were very deep. Behind his house was a nice garden plot and peach orchard, and adjoining it was his smoke house. Then still farther on back was his privey, a very large cow pen, horse lot, and a huge barn, a red one, too, by the way. He always kept four or five horses and just a couple of cows which took care of all his needs very beautifully. In the barn, all feed, etc. were all kept up in the hay loft. Down below were the horse stalls and cow stalls which all had openings over head in to the hayloft, and the feed could be dropped down right into their feed trough. Then up at the end of the barn, on the ground floor, were a couple of buggy sheds, which would make an excellent garage today, but then they didn't even know what an automobile was — it wasn't even heard of. So, they kept the buggies and harnesses and saddles, etc., in there. Out in the cow pen, they had a huge water trough, about twenty feet long and about two feet wide and two feet deep, and the kids were made to clean it out good

at least once a month.

The Hargises had three boys; Walter, the oldest, then Ross came next, and then Roy, the youngest, who was about the age of Floyd. They also had three girls; Bessie, the oldest, then Iva, about my age and Lucille, the baby. We all played together quite a bit. Ross was two or three years older than I, but then I used to like to run around with him because he had a horse of his own, and he would let me ride behind him quite a bit, and I liked that. Mr. Hargis also owned a couple of ranches out of town a ways, and lots of times Ross and I would visit one of the ranches. We always managed to arrive there around noon, so they would always let us eat dinner with them. We thoroughly enjoyed that. Why is it that food always tastes better when you are visiting away from home?

Blanche Townsend (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 10

OUR HOUSE

I haven't told very much about our house have I? Well, I will try to describe it to the best of my ability because remember, I was just about five years old now. Our house had two large front rooms with a porch running clear across the front of the house. Then in the rear, we had a large room for the dining room and kitchen, and on the other side, instead of another room, we had a large back porch which was up fairly high. In fact, the whole house was up pretty high off the ground. From the back porch, it took about five steps to reach the ground. We had two lots on our place. One half was usually planted with a rye patch for our cow to graze on. Then at the rear of the house was a cow pen, hog pen, privey, and a sort of a small feed house to keep all feed, etc. in. Then right between the house and the feed house was a pretty good sized chicken coop, all screened in with chicken wire on two sides of it. The reason I remember it so well because that is where Mama used to lock me up when I ran away. Then right alongside of our kitchen was a clump of about four or five small live oak trees, which made a real nice shade, and there is where Mama did her weekly washing. We also had a water faucet there which just ran at a mere trickle most of the time. It was our only source of water except what we bought by the barrel. However, our neighbor, Mrs. Clara Watkins, had a nice cistern, and she would let us have a bucket of water for drinking purposes now and then. Boy, that was sure nice and cool on those real hot days. Mama also had her wash pot, or boiler, out there under those trees. Wash day was always an all day affair, and then ironing the next day. So, with all of that, taking care of three kids and cooking three meals a day, Mama was a pretty busy woman, I'll tell you. Then she did sewing and patching while she was resting.

As I stated before, I am five years old now, and I began running away all the time. To punish me, Mama would make me put on one of my old dresses again, and then she would lock me up in my prison, the chicken coop. Of course, I got all full of chicken mites, etc., but then that was punishment also.

I believe that I stated once before that Llano had a spur line of the A&NW Railroad, which ran from Austin to Llano, and it dead ended in Llano. The railroad changed hands later on. The H&TC took over — that was Houston and Texas Central. Anyway, all freight for Castell, Mason, Fredericksburg and all of those towns around Llano had to have freight wagons running between Llano and where they lived. The roads were not too good then either, and those freight wagons were huge affairs. Most of them were six horse or mule teams, and some were even eight horse teams. They could lengthen the wagons, if they wished, by making the body longer. The long "couplin" pole extended the whole length of the wagon, and

sometimes, when the wagon bed was not too long, it extended beyond the end of the wagon two or three feet. Now I used to run away from home and climb up on one of those couplin poles and lie there on my belly for miles and miles. If I got tired, I would drop down and walk for a while. I was so small I could almost stand upright under the wagons, so it was no trick at all for me to swing back upon my couplin pole whenever I liked. I would always try to hang on until noon, when they would stop, feed and water the horses and cook their own meal. They always managed to stop at the same place each time, and most all of them would have to camp out and spend at least one night on the road, as the team always traveled at a pretty slow walk, and fifteen miles a day was fast traveling. As soon as they stopped for lunch, I would always climb out from under the wagon and holler, "Boo", to make my presence known to them. They would let me eat with them, and then the first buggy, wagon or man, who came along on horseback, they would stop him and say, "Here, take George Townsend's kid back to Llano with you. He was a stow away on my wagon when I left Llano this morning." They all seemed to know me; I don't know how, but they did. Then back to home and my chicken coop I would come. I would also get my little bottom blistered, but nothing seemed to stop me from running away.

CHAPTER 11

GOING VISITING

In the meantime, Papa had sold his meat market and gone back to his trade, carpentering. Old Black Tom Moore, as he was called, (he was not a negro, only real dark complexioned) was just about the richest man in Llano County, at the time. He owned several ranches, and I don't know how much stock he owned. He and his brother, Will Moore, had bought the Llano Bank also. Anyway, he was having his home remodeled and was adding on a two story addition to the rear of the house. The upstairs was another bedroom and a bath, just to take a bath only, as all priveys were out in the back yard some place. I did not know it at the time, but later on, I was to share that bedroom with his nephew, Alex Moore, which I will explain about later on. The underneath of the new building was Mrs. Moore's new kitchen. The whole job was a pretty nice piece of work, and while they were at it, Mr. Moore decided to paint the whole house all over.

Now Papa's painter was an elderly man by the name of Fred Davis. I remember he had a gray beard and was gray headed. Papa had a wooden scaffolding built along a whole side of the house at a time. Now I always liked to paint, and I was a natural born climber, which I will tell about later on. So Mr. Davis gave me a small brush, and was teaching me how to paint — and some days I was still wearing dresses! Mama did not want me to get my pants all full of paint. I always went barefooted in those days — all kids did. We always had sore toes when we would stump them on something. It was usually both big toes and the next toe to it. Now Mr. Davis used to take white lead, which he mixed his paint with, and smear that stuff all over my sore toes. He said it was the best salve that there ever was. It is a wonder it didn't give me lead poisoning, but it didn't, and believe it or not, and it <u>was</u> healing to my sore toes.

Most all men chewed tobacco in those days. One evening after work, Papa, Mr. Frank Graham (one of Papa's carpenters), and I were walking home from work. We only lived a couple of blocks from where we were working, and Mr. Graham lived about three blocks further on. On the way home Papa said, "Give me a chaw of tobacco, Frank." He handed Papa a five cent cut of "Drummonds", the kind most men used, and I piped up and said, "Give me a chaw, too, Frank." He laughed and said, "O.K.", but, Papa didn't laugh at all. He said, "I'll give you a chaw just as soon as I get home!", and also, "Whenever you refer to a grown man, he <u>always</u> has Mr. before his name!" As soon as we got home, we entered through the back porch and then into the kitchen, where in one corner was the wood box. Papa picked up a fair sized piece of kindling, and he gave me the whipping he ever gave me in his whole life. He said, "This will teach you never to talk disrespectfully to your elders!" (and it did)

As soon as Mr. Moore's house was completed, Papa started another one for a Mr. Stephens. It was over the hill, about two blocks farther down the road from our old house we used to live in. It was a real nice house — two stories high, then a cupelo on top of it. It looked real classy. I believe that was the last house Papa ever built in Llano.

In those days people didn't know what a baby sitter was, and they all visited quite a bit also. The parents would just clean all the kids up good, wash their face and hands, neck and ears, put on clean clothes, then line them all up and start walking, which was the only transportation we had in those days unless we were rich enough to own a horse and buggy. Sometimes we would walk a couple of miles to get to the folks we were going to visit. Then as soon as we arrive, our mother would say, "Now you kids go out in the yard, barn or some place and play because us grown folks want to talk." Usually the folks we visited has kids of their own, so we were all chased out of the house to play, with instructions not to come back until we were called. In those days, "children were to be seen and not heard". So we would always find plenty to keep us occupied, such as a corn cob fight or sometimes we would go out in the peach orchard and look for yellow jackets and wasps nests which we would proceed to knock them down, then fight them with a good handful of weeds in each hand. We all got so good at it that it was pretty hard for one of them to sting us, but every once in a while one would slip through and pop it to one of us. Then we would run to the house bawling, and our mother would come out and try to pull the stinger out, then put some baking soda mixed with blueing on it. That would stop the pain pretty quickly. By then, we would make them feel so sorry for us that we could wheedle them out of a sandwich of bread and butter and preserves.

In those days, most all bread was either biscuits or corn bread. Light bread, as we called it then, was very rare. The women folks did not have the time to bake it very often because they had to go through the process of taking the yeast cake, mixing it with a little flour and letting it sit in a warm place for a day or so, usually in front of the fireplace if you had one. After it sat until it was ready, they would mix some of the yeast with the dough. My grandmother used to place hers in the churn and let it sit by the fireplace until ready, then take it out and knead it good, shape it into loaves, then put it into the bread pans to bake. When it was done — yum, yum, was it good! You could smell it cooking all over the neighborhood. Then company would start dropping in. Can you blame them?

Now back to visiting. It was owing to how far away from home we went as to whether we had dinner there or not. Anyway, even if we did not eat dinner with them, we would usually have a sandwich of some sort with a glass of milk — either sweet milk, butter milk or clabber. Oh boy! Shut my mouth wide open! Clabber was always my favorite. A nice bowl of clabber with a thin layer of cream over it, sprinkled with a little sugar over it all — Oh boy! That is really hard

to beat. Then, by that time, it would be just about time for us all to start home. So, Mama would line us all up and we would all head for home. Did you ever see a mother duck with four or five young goslings all strung out in a row following along right behind her? Well, that is what a mother with a bunch of kids going visiting reminded you of.

Mama, as I said before, was quite a seamstress, and I have seen her sew all day long for fifty cents a day. She kept quite busy, too, and all she needed was a pattern to go by. You could buy them for fifteen cents each at most any store, and as bolt goods were real cheap in those days, most women would buy the material and pattern at a store, then bring it to Mama to make for them.

We also had quite a few country friends, some of whom I spoke about before in this story when they would bring in melons, vegetables, etc.. Two of them in particular. One was a Mr. and Mrs. Risinger, who lived down the Birdtown Road some place, and a Mr. Kitchen, who developed and raised the best watermelon ever to hit that part of the country. They are still raising them even today. Ask any old timer around Llano if they ever ate any Kitchen's watermelons and see what he will tell you.

I liked the Risingers best because they had a house full of kids. Also, I believe they were mostly all girls though. The only name I can remember was Leona, who was about four years older than I. She always sort of looked after me and took my part in all of the squabbles we would get in to. Another thing I remember is that they had a bunch of geese, and one old gander found out that I was afraid of him, and everytime he would spot me, here he would come at me just a hissing. Of course, I would start yelling, "Leona, Leona!", and she would come out with a broom and drive him away. Boy, when he did catch me, he would nearly pinch the blood out of my little butt which would be black and blue for weeks to come. I was really scared of those things. They also had all kinds of other fowls there. Most any thing you could think of, they had it.

Whenever we went to visit the Risingers, we usually had to stay for two or three weeks because, as I said before, they only came to town once or twice a month. So, they took me right along with their own kids and taught me some of the chores which they had to do. I was about five and a half years old by now. Of course, Floyd and little Blanche were too young to do anything at all. At nights that was the most lonesome place I was ever in in all my life. They were right near a creek with running water in it most all the time, and in that creek were some of the largest bull frogs I ever heard in all my life. I say heard because I never saw any. At nights I would lay awake about half of the night listening to them. It sounded like there must have been a million of 'em. I was really scared. Besides that, there were four or five hoot owls around also which would sound off every so often. Some nights we would have a few coyotes around, giving their love calls. Sometimes I would start crying, and Leona would take me

into bed with her. She already had two or three of her smaller sisters in bed with her. They lived in an old fashioned log house, and the beds were all home made. There were no springs at all, just wooden slats real close together, and most of the mattresses were shuck mattresses. They would take the mattress and cram it just as full of soft shucks as they could. The inside shucks are always softer than the outside shucks and do not rattle nearly as bad as the outside ones do. After the mattress was as full as they could get it, they would then sew it up and place it on the bed. If it was to be used as a pallet, they could spread it on the floor at night. The pillows were mostly feather pillows because with all of those geese and other fowls, they always kept the feathers. The wings and tails of the turkeys they would make feather dusters out of. The wing part they would use to brush off the stove and fireplace etc., and the tails were used to dust off the furniture. They utilized most everything they could get their hands on out there on the farm.

I used to enjoy running up and down those rows in the cotton patch and the corn field. In the corn field they used to plant quite a few watermelons and cantaloupes. We kids would always pick out a couple of them, and each day we would go by and see how much they had grown, all the time hoping Mr. Risinger would pull it and bring it home for us to eat ourselves. I think that he used to enjoy teasing us, just to make us want it more. Then one day, he would come in with the melon on his shoulder. He would take it, put a wet tow sack over it, and leave it all night so the wind would blow over it to keep it cool and nice. Then about the middle of the morning, we would eat it. It always had to be a pretty large one to have enough to go around. I think there were seven or eight of us kids besides the grown folks, but we all managed to be about full by the time we finished.

We were all getting sort of excited now because in just two more days, Mr. and Mrs. Risinger were going to make another trip into town, and that was a great event for us all. I think they lived only seven or eight miles from town, but that was a long ways then, almost one half a days drive. All hands were gathering up all the butter, eggs, melons, corn and every vegetable which they had; also peaches, plums — if they were in season — also wild mustang grapes and berries, just anything at all which they could sell. We all had a wonderful time, except Papa, who had to take his meals with Papa and Mama Watkins while we were gone. Papa Watkins also worked as one of Papa's carpenters. Even though we did have a good time, we were all glad to get home again.

CHAPTER 12

THE BIRTH OF ANNIE LAURA — MY SECOND SISTER

By that time Papa had just about finished Mr. Stevens house. Then he was to build a school house in Cherokee, a little town about fifteen miles north of Llano, on the San Saba road. The only transportation he had was to ride the hack. Instead of using the old stagecoaches like you see in the movies, most folks traveled by hack. It consisted of three or four seats across the body and it could carry about ten people. The luggage was strapped on the back, then covered with an old wagon sheet. The hack also had curtains on it which you could pull down if it rained. They still had road stops where you could buy a meal and feed and water the horses. Most of those freighters and hacks carried nose bags (feed bags) which they would put the horse's feed in and then just hang it over his nose with a strap running over his ears — like a bridle hangs. You had to be careful and not get it too tight because if you did, the horse would not be able to eat. Anyway Papa had to go to Cherokee by hack and then get a boarding house while there. My Aunt Pearl (Mama's sister) stayed with us while Papa was away. He was gone about a month, and by the time he got home, Mama was just about ready to have her fourth baby — Annie Laura. So on June 17, 1896, Annie was born. As soon as I could tell what she looked like, I saw that she was a pretty little dark haired brown eyed little girl. She and Floyd were brunetts after Mama, and Blanch and I were fair with blue eyes and blonde hair like Papa.

About then Papa and Papa Watkins decided to go into the restaurant business. Papa Watkins was a wonderful cook, Papa was not bad himself, and Mama could bake the best light bread you ever tasted in your life. Papa bought her a brand new "Buck" cook stove to bake her bread in, and was Mama proud of that range! It had a large buck head on the door of the oven and was considered to be just about the best in those days. She would bake off a batch of that bread every day, and everyone who ate it bragged on her bread. Everything was so cheap then, I don't see how they managed to stay in business. Every week they would get a bucket of oysters from the coast (a five gallon wooden bucket). I don't know how much it cost, but it must have been pretty cheap because they would sell fried oysters for 25¢ a dozen and furnish the catsup, crackers etc. — all for 25¢. The oysters were not very large but really good. People seemed to know just what day they would arrive, and it seemed everyone in town would come in for an oyster fry. Lots of those old ranchers would eat them raw. They seemed to think that it would build up their "ego", so they would eat two or three dozen of them. They seemed to sell quite a bit of chili, also. Papa could really make it good. I believe that you could also get fresh ham and eggs for 25¢. Do you see how they managed to stay in business at those prices?

However, you could buy most any cut of meat in the whole beef for ten cents a pound, and the tongue, heart and brains — they would not even bring into the market unless they had a special order for them.

Mrs. Lillie Townsend with Annie Laura (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 13

THE BUSINESS SECTION OF LLANO

Llano, itself, was built around the courthouse square (that is, the business section was); then the residential section spread out in all directions for three or four miles. The streets are all named now, but when I was a kid they were all just roads. East of the courthouse the San Saba and Fredericksburg road ran and crossed the Llano River over to the north side, or North Llano.

The store buildings on that side of the square (the east side) were first, the Llano Hotel. It was located on the eastern corner and it was a large wooden building. As it was built on the side of a hill there, the rear of the hotel (mostly the kitchen and dining room) was built up pretty high off the ground. I remember very well the kitchen was up every bit of ten feet high. There was a meat market right next to the hotel, and the barbeque pits were in the rear of the market. We used to holler up to one of the girls working in the kitchen and get her to throw us biscuits out of the window of the kitchen. Then later she would come over and we would give her a large hunk of barbeque. That deal always worked fine for all of us concerned. The first lady who owned the hotel (that is that I remember) was a Mrs. Barber. There was always something about that woman which had the whole town puzzled. First she had a son whose name was Albert Strahle, and a sister whose name was Susie-something. I never knew whether her name was Strahle or not. They were the eldest; then there was another sister whose name was Birdie Henry. Next came the two boys, Clarence and Winston Gosh, who were just a couple of years older than I. Then the mother's name was Mrs. Barber when I knew her. They were German people.

Then right across the road south from the hotel was a large two story house which belonged to a Jew named Lauterstein, who owned a grocery store right next to the meat market. I am going down the street from the hotel now. All of the sidewalks were wooden then, and most of the buildings (the store buildings) all the rest of the way down to the corner were brick. Some were even two stories. I believe that the first brick two story building north of Lauterstein's Grocery was Wachtman's Saddle and Harness Shop. Upstairs, his saddle maker was a German whom we all called Herman. He made all of those saddles and harnesses by hand, and believe you me, he really did fine, neat work, too. Just think! Those fine hand made saddles sold for forty dollars in those days. When any of those cowboys got one of Herman's saddles, they thought they were rich.

Next to the saddle shop, I believe, was the Klondike Saloon. Saloons were one thing which Llano had plenty of. Next to the saloon, or rather in the back end, was a restaurant, and the first man I knew to run it was "Chick" Dunaway. He specialized in chili. Llano always was a chili and barbeque town.

The east side of the courthouse square in the early 1890's.

The east side of the courthouse square about 1903.

The next store was a dry goods store. Two brothers, Forman and Forman, ran it, and the way they advertised, they liked to have run all of the Jews out of Llano. George Forman had three children; Ebby, the oldest; then Herbert, then Bonnie, a girl. They were all friends and neighbors of ours.

Then on down the street, on the corner, was another Jew, David Smalensky. He ran a sort of a "racket store", and a confectionary down stairs, and he and his family lived upstairs. He had a real pretty wife and two kids.

Now I am turning the corner and going east on that block. The first little store, I cannot recall just what that was. Then, next to the alley was Watkins Brothers Grocery Store. Sam and Lee ran that.

Then right across the alley was another little brick building which was run by another Jew, Fitchenbaum. He ran a store which sold almost everything you could think of. He had three kids: a girl, Annie, and two boys, Morris and Max.

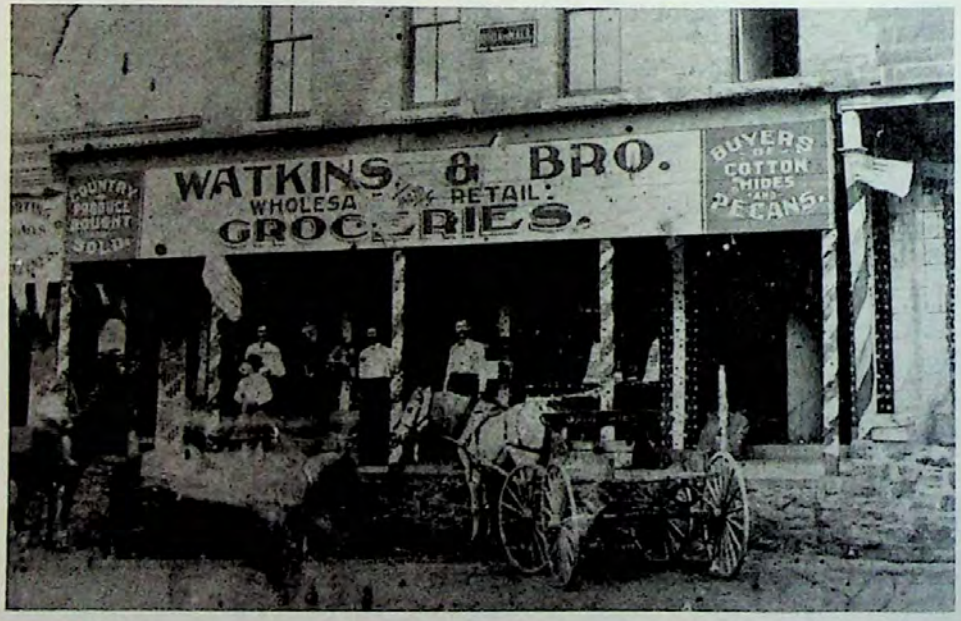
On down the street was our first bakery shop. A man and his wife ran it, and their name was Calhoun. The bread was five cents a loaf and he also made some nickel pies. They would buy old unsold newspapers and just wrap the bread in a single sheet of newspaper. That bread sure smelled good when they were baking.

The next place of business was a livery stable run by two men by the name of Davis and Stoudenmeir. They also had a large "bus" which met the train from Austin each day at noon to try and drum up trade for the hotels. This particular bus always tried to drum up trade for the Southern Hotel. As there were several hotels in Llano, there were several buses (2) and a couple of hacks which met the train each day. They would also take a person most any other place he wanted to go — his home or to visit a friend etc. for twenty-five cents extra.

Now back of all these buildings which I have described was the cotton yard, where the cotton buyers would keep their cotton until it was shipped out. All of the livery stables had long "drays" which they would haul this cotton on. I'll tell more about this cotton yard later on. Now this was the end of the business section on this side of the street, so we will cross the street now.

Right at the end of the cotton yard was a pretty fair sized creek. Now on the north side of the street was a blacksmith shop. A German man by the name of Bogusch ran it. He had a son about my age, Alfred. Then up the road about one block west and one block north was the Llano County Jail, and it was a good one, too. It was practically new when I was first old enough to notice it. Now back to the street we were on, going west. I believe the first building we came to was another saloon. Oh Yes! Almost right in front of the jail was a wagon yard, and boy, was it crowded all the time! Then the saloon. I believe that I said once before that Llano wasn't even incorporated yet, and there were "hog wallows" all up and down the streets, especially in front of saloons where they would throw water out.

Owen and T. J. Watkins on horse; their father Sam Watkins standing behind horse. In background, their grandfather, Milton Watkins. Picture taken about 1900. (Photo courtesy of T. J. Watkins)



The store was decorated for the 1905 fair. Store owned by Sam Watkins (on right) and Lee Watkins (center). T. J. Watkins holding ponies. Steve Peacock on extreme left. (Photo courtesy of T. J. Watkins)

Stock, dogs, etc. just wandered around at random. There was a vacant lot or two before we got to the first store building which was another saloon. However, very vaguely it seems there was a small wooden boarding house then the saloon. Next was the old post office, which later moved directly across the street. Will and Alice Lawrence operated it, but I believe that Alice was the postmaster. They were related to my father in some way, but I do not know just how. They only had three children then: Kate, the eldest; then Clark, "Boots"; and next was Edith who is living now, (1969). After they left Llano, they had another girl, Marie, who is also living now. The next building adjoining the post office was a cafe which later added a soda fountain. On the other side was a candy and cigar counter. The cafe was just on farther back in the building.

The next store was the Watkins Brothers' Hardware Store. They handled guns, ammunition and everything in the hardware line. It was a pretty nice sized store. All of the Watkins boys there were brothers. I believe there were five of them.

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Then the next store was the Corner Drug Store owned and operated by John A. Weeks. His prescription clerk was Oscar Porter, and the other young fellow who waited on the customers up front was Clint Holden. Then right up front, on the right side of the store, Fritz Bastian ran a watch repair shop and also sold a little jewelry on the side. The Corner Drug Store, ever since I can remember had always been a sort of hang out for most of the whole town.

Now we will turn the corner and go north towards the river. I believe they call that street now, Bridge Street. Just as you turn the corner, right alongside of the dirt sidewalks, was the city scales, which was operated by my grandfather. It was used to weigh in all cotton wagons, produce, slaughter cattle, horses or anything else which was too large to weigh on ordinary scales.

Now on down the street was a small double building made of wood. The first side was the Wells Fargo Express Company. The agent was Jack Carter, and everyone called him, "Uncle Jack". He had one eye shot out and always wore a patch over it. The other side of the building was a millinery shop owned by Mrs. Wilkes. A Mrs. Heard worked for her. Mrs. Wilkes had one son, Milton. He was three or four years older than I. I do not remember just what happened, but he died soon after. I think Mrs. Wilkes was related to the Watkins Brothers some way, but I do not know just what kin they were.

The next building was a small wooden affair with a high front porch in front of it. It was a photography gallery. I can't recall the owner's name just now, but he married Willie Ross. Then, later, when they went out of business, a Mr. Higdon, an old prescription clerk, opened a confectionery store there. I do not know if he still filled prescriptions or not.

All the rest of the land on down to the bridge was vacant. So now we will cross the street and go back south again. Before I do that, there was a road running along the river bank down by the water

Picture shows a view of the courthouse and the city scales which are just to the side of the Corner Drug Store. Oscar Porter is shown using scales. Other men are Clarence Sweeney and Clint Holden.

Hubert Forman and Ford Rogers in one of the fair parades. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Fritz Otto, Sr.)

works which, later on, built up quite a bit. I will tell about that later on. Now I am going south up Bridge Street. I believe the first place of business was Goben's Blacksmith Shop. He always did quite a business because he was in a much better location than the other blacksmith shop was. He had several boys. They lived over on Flag Creek some place. I can't recall exactly where they lived over there, but later on, we all went to school and fought together. The next store up the street was John Frazier's Shoe Shop. He repaired shoes and made hand made fancy boots for the richer class of stockmen and cowboys. I believe twenty dollars was his top price on them, and to put a half sole on a pair of shoes was fifty cents. Most of us kids wore high top button shoes in those days, and our greatest problem was keeping the buttons bradded on. Every so often we would have to go by and have the buttons bradded on again. We had to use a button hook to button them while they were new. Then later we could use a large stiff hair pin or sometimes even button them up with our fingers. Mr. Frazier was the tobacco chewing champion of Llano. He would take about a half a plug of tobacco, lay it on his last and hammer it down to a size which he could get into his mouth; then he would chew and spit. He always boasted that he could knock a tom cat's eye out at twenty paces or hit a knot hole either. He would ask a customer who would come into the shop for a chaw of tobacco. They would hand him their plug and he would take his sharp knife (which he used to cut leather with) and cut off a good sized chaw. Then he would hand the customer back the piece which he had cut off, take the other part and hammer it down to his usual size and place it in his mouth. He only did it to the same person once, because after that, they were all wise to him and wouldn't give him a chaw anymore. When they would refuse him, he would just laugh and say, "Oh well, guess I will have to chew my own then." And he would reach in his pocket and pull out his own, because he <u>always</u> had some. He did his bumming mostly for a joke more than anything else. He had two or three children. The eldest was a boy, Roy, and he could chew tobacco almost as good as his dad could. The girl's name was May. They also lived over on Flag Creek and would walk to school each day which I will tell about later. Mr. Frazier was quite a kidder. He built up quite a business selling Ribbon Cane Molasses. He would send to some place down in Louisiana and order a barrel of that molasses and a large bundle of the Ribbon Cane itself, which he would sell to us kids for five cents a stalk. Boy, was it good! He would sell out of the cane in a couple of weeks and the syrup, itself, didn't last too long. Then after the barrel would get empty, he would take the head out, and all up and down the sides of the barrel and on the bottom would be all that sugar, which syrup turns to if it is kept long enough. We used to all fight to get some of it. It was more like syrup candy than anything else. He started another fad there in Llano. He would take his own shoes, as well as both of his kid's and fill the soles and the heels with hob nails which would make them

last almost indefinitely. Now, Llano was a real rocky country. There were rocks everywhere, especially in our school yard, and without the hob nails, shoes didn't last very long.. So it wasn't long before most every kid in town had hob nails — that is in the winter time. We most all went barefooted in summer. The only one I ever heard complain about them was the school teacher. She said we sounded like a herd of horses coming down the hall. When I was a kid, I only got one pair of shoes a year. We were told to make them last because shoes once a year was all we could afford. They cost one dollar a pair and that was a lot of money in those days.

The next building up the street was a barber shop for a while. Later on, he moved out and a meat market occupied the building — Campbell's Meat Market.

Then, next, came the McInnis Undertaking Store. It seems to me that he also handled some furniture there on the ground floor, then upstairs, he made coffins. He had several children. The oldest was Arthur, I believe, then came Miles. His nickname was "Rat" — I do not know just how it originated. Then came Joe, and then Mary Miller. I can't remember if there was an older daughter or not. They were kin to Papa in some way. I do not exactly know how. In fact, I believe that I stated in the first part of this story that their mother, Carrie McInnis, was with Mama when I was born; and she dressed me and took care of me for a while.

Then after the undertaking parlor, there was a small alley, then came a large two story brick building which covered all the rest of the space up that street and ony store around the corner. It was called the Bank Building; owned and operated by two brothers, Tom (Black Tom as he was called) and Will Moore. It was called the Moore State Bank. All the upstairs were offices for doctors, lawyers, dentists, etc. Then in the rear of all those offices there was a long back porch running the entire length of the building. Now on the ground floor, the first business was a jewelry store and watch repair shop. Later on they installed the first soda fountain in Llano, and also, upstairs over their store, they had the first telephone office in Llano, but then that was about five years later on. The store was owned and operated by A. L. Jones and Albert Strahle. (I spoke of him before as one of Mrs. Barber's sons.) Then right on up the street a few yards was a large wide stairway leading up to all of those office on the second floor. All the rest of the space on ground floor was taken up by the bank. Oh yes, I believe that at the time that was the only place of business in town which had paved sidewalks; the rest were all wooden. It was not paved with concrete. It seems like it was asphalt or tar of some kind, and it was just full of those smooth river rocks. It looked real nice and wore like everything. Coming up that street was sort of an uphill grade, and the farther up you came, the higher the walks would get.

Now the bank was the corner, so we will now turn west and go down a small incline again. The first business after we turn the corner

was P. G. Sheppard's Dry Goods Store. It changed hands several times later on.

Then next came Townsend's Durg Store. (No relation of mine that I know of.) There were two brothers and their father — both brothers were doctors, Dr. Billy and Dr. Ed. Dr. Ed ran the drugstore with the assistance of Ed Simmons as the prescription clerk, and Dr. Billy was kept busy both day and night practicing medicine and making house calls. Folks didn't know what a hospital was in those days so everything was house calls. I have known Dr. Billy to go as far in the country as fifteen miles. I know for I drove for him later on, which I will talk about later on.

The next store was the Buttery Hardware Store, then next came the Ben Pessels' Dry Goods Store (another Jew). Then came the J. N. Newsom Grocery Store. That building was two story also, and upstairs they had a vacant room. The women of Llano finally erected the W.C.T.U. up there. They placed tables for games like checkers, dominoes, etc. (no cards) and they also bought a water cooler and placed it upstairs. It was the only place in town you could get free ice water. I don't know where they got the ice unless they got it from some saloon because the saloons were the only people in town who had ice. They had it shipped in from Austin each day on the noon passenger train. I will tell a story about it later on. I believe the G. Pessels Dry Goods Store came before Newsoms Grocery then there was Lowenstein's Dry Goods Store. We had quite a few Jews in Llano then and all but one or two were in dry goods.

Next came a cafe. That was where Papa and Papa Watkins were. Then next was the Robert's Saloon which later on sold to Charlie Wallace. It was then called the Wallace Saloon. Right next door was a small grocery store — Chism's Grocery, I believe it was; there another saloon — Breazeale's Saloon. We had plenty of saloons there in Llano. Then next there was a two story wooden building. I can't recall exactly what was in it, but later on the upstairs was used for the Martin Telephone Company. Then that was quite a while later on. Then next to that was another wooden building occupied by the City Meat Market owned by Monroe Hadden. The head meat cutter was Bob Peacock. All down the line we were going sort of down hill and now we were just about at the bottom of the hill. Behind the market, they had a large barbeque pit. In the rear of the market, itself, they made their own sausage, both pork sausage, which they sold in bulk and beef sausage, which they smoked then over the barbeque pit. We had a couple of large live oak trees out back by the pits. The farmers and cow hands would come in and buy a hunk of barbeque or a link of sausage and then "rush the duck", get a pail of beer from one of the saloons and sit there under those trees and eat lunch. They mostly had to get ten cents worth of crackers because bread was hard to come by then.

Then right back of the saloon they had a large pen of hound dogs. They kept them about half starved all of the time — said if they fed

them too much they wouldn't hunt good. They had a regular club of ten or twelve men who would like to ride the hounds, (like they do in England.) So every so often they would plan a fox hunt. They would all be out in front of the Wallace Saloon all mounted on their horses. The captain of the team had a large black snake whip which he would pop ever so often. He also, had one of those hound dog calling horns (made from a cow horn), and he knew how to use it, too. Those hound dogs would nearly go wild they would be so excited. Finally when the men got "likkered up" to the proper amount, they would take off. Sometimes if they had pretty good luck they would be gone all night. Then they would give the dogs all they could eat and throw a bunch of bones into their pens also. Those poor dogs would be so sore and stiff they could hardly walk for three or four days.

The meat market was the last place of business in that block, then there was a road running north and south right along side of the market. Going north it would run down to the river where the mill pond was. You could turn right then and go in front of the water plant. I think they ground corn meal there, too. The road going south ran between the courthouse and the business section on the west side of the square.

Now right across that road from the meat market was the Southern Hotel — the most popular hotel in Llano at that time. I believe that my mother said that was where they spent their honey-moon after she and Papa were married.

On up the road from the hotel the next building was a long brick building which was occupied by a Quaker, Ben Franklin, who ran a grocery store. He had two children, Hazel, a real pretty little girl, and a boy, Lynn.

I forgot to mention that the Southern Hotel was owned and operated by the Hill Logan family. They had a house full of girls — all pretty, too. Tillie was the oldest, I believe, then came Betty, Sally and then Ellen, about my age. Old man Hill Logan, all he did was lay around drunk all the time. He finally drank himself to death. I heard he was drinking a gallon of whiskey a day when he died. After he passed on, I think the girls moved to Burnet, Texas, and opened up a hotel there. Then there was a widow woman by the name of Mrs. Cage who took over the Southern Hotel. She had quite a few children herself — Bailus, the oldest, then DeWitt, and next, I believe, was Eula, then a smaller girl. I can't recall her name at present, but she married a cousin of mine, Joe McInnis. They own a book store at Five Point in Corpus Christi right now. I also think DeWitt is still living at the present time, in Kerrville, I believe.

Then on up the hill, just about where the fire station is located now, was a big old long building where Miss Bessie Buttery was running a kindergarten school. I will tell about my experience there in a few minutes from now.

Now we will cross the Castell Road and go back east on the south side of the road. Right on a corner there some road, coming north form south, dead ended there, and on the corner was the Walker Wagon Yard. It was a huge affair. I think that it just about covered a whole city block, and he did quite a business, also. There were several families with their wagon teams who would come by and just camp out for a while; some of them maybe for months. They could sleep in their wagons and cook on their campfires. He also sold feed and maybe a few groceries — I don't exactly remember. He had three sons which I remember. The older was Silas, then Grover, and next, was Charlie. Charlie and I were in the same class at school.

Then right across the road from him, going back east towards the courthouse square, was the Methodist Church. George Watkins, after his wife's death, had it all remodeled and fixed up real nice in memory of her. Then on down the street were about three vacant lots up to the corner.

Now we turn south. On the west side of the square, I believe there were a few residences along there before we come to the first brick building. I remember Ora Cross, her brother, Lee Cross (who was a sign painter), and their step-mother, a Mrs. McInnis, lived in one of those houses. Then just south of her house was just a small one room house which my mother and I lived in for a while.

Then the brick building was the Bon-Ton Barber Shop — haircut twenty-five cents and a shave was fifteen cents. He also had three or four bathtubs in the rear, each in a small separate room. Right in the far rear end was a large wood burning hot water heater. That was the only place in town (outside of the river) where you could take a bath. The place was owned and operated by T. P. Justus. He had three barber chairs and a shoe shining chair later on. He had two other barbers working with him. One was a cork-legged man by the name of Lon Carroll. The other was a local boy by the name of Rufe Deats. Later on when I lived next door to him, I worked there cleaning out the tubs. Saturday nights we always did a "land office business". He would let me shine shoes in his shop if I kept the place swept out (about three times a day), and also wash the bath tubs clean after each bath. Lon Carroll was also trying to make a barber out of me. I got hold of a razor some place and they gave me a hone and a razor strap to practice on. Then, of course, I had a mug and brush with soap in it. They would have me lather up a beer bottle and shave it — just to get a perfect stroke, they said; and after I got pretty good, they would let me shave one of them. Mr. Justus had three children, two girls and a boy; Ruth, Winnie and little Tom.

Right south of the barber shop were a couple of vacant spaces, then there was another brick building. It was occupied by the Llano News, which is still right along there now. The news was owned by a fellow by the name of Boynton. His head man was Will Collins. He had several other fellows who worked for him off and on. I believe that my Uncle Arthur worked for him a little while, and even I

learned to set type. It was all set by hand then. My first lesson was when they showed me the "type-lice". Then I wasn't satisfied until I brought most every kid in town around to see the "type-lice". In those days even the press was turned by hand, and it took a pretty strong man to stay with it, too. Mr. Boynton only had two children, a boy and a girl — Walker and Bernice. The boy, Walker, and another boy in town by the name of Eddie Beeson were always running foot races. Both claimed they were the fastest runners in Llano County, and they were both as fast as greased lightning. I don't think they ever settled the arguement because one would win one time and the other the next time. I kept in touch with Ed right up to the time he was killed in an auto accident; and Walker, the last I heard of him, he was in El Paso, Texas, running a newspaper. Now that was all of the businesses there were there on the west side, but I see they have built several since then. All of those little live oak trees just south of the postoffice now were there then when I was a little boy.

Now on the south side of the square about all there was then was a large boarding house owned and operated by the T. O. Riley family. He, himself, had a shoe shop on the ground floor. He had three or four grown daughters and two boys around my age, Jeff and Frank. I do not remember the names of the girls as they were all older than I. Mr. and Mrs. Riley were always thinking up ways to make money. I remember they would roast peanuts and pop pop-corn and put it in small bags, then into baskets and have us kids sell peanuts and pop-corn. Sometimes they would make candy, also. I think most of the time we always took our pay out in peanuts or popcorn.

Next door to Riley's place was Tom Simpson's Livery Stable and horse lot. Part of it stood on the ground where the Llano Hotel is situated now. He also drove a bus over to meet the twelve o'clock noon train. He always drummed customers for the Llano House, which was the hotel diagonally across the street from the corner of the square.

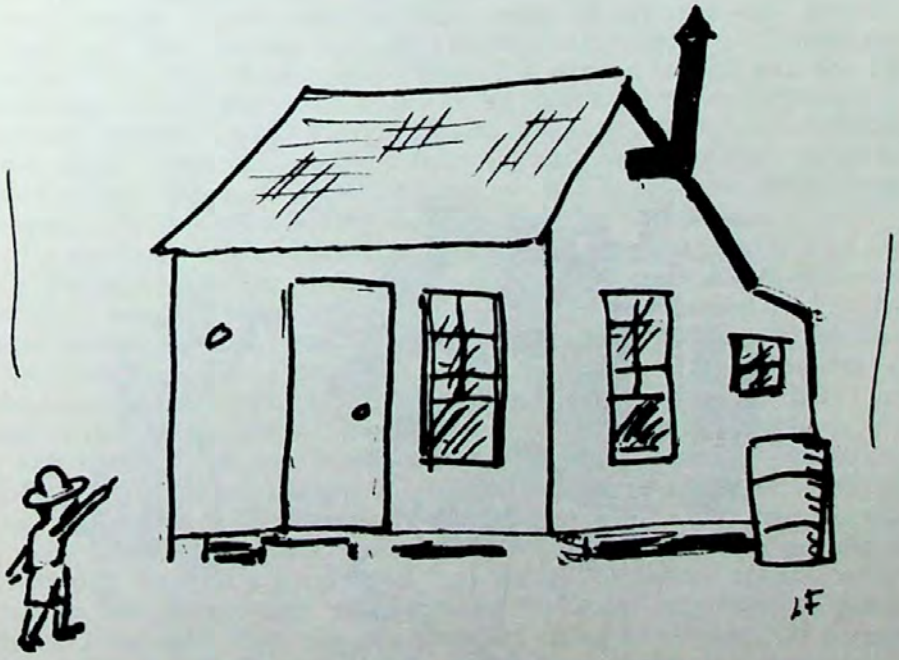
Now right on the corner was a photography gallery run by a fellow by the name of Epps. I still have a few pictures which he took of us kids as we were growing up.

Now that completes the business section of Llano on the south side of the river. I'll tell about the north side later on. The residential section of Llano was a bit scattered, and it extended in all directions.

CHAPTER 14

WHEN I FIRST STARTED TO SCHOOL

As I was six years old now, my parents decided to start me in that little kindergarten school up on the hill (on the Castell Road) which I spoke of before. Miss Bessie Buttery was our teacher. Of course, all our teaching consisted of was just mostly playing with blocks, paper dolls and cardboard pictures with colored crayons. I soon tired of that — guess maybe I was old for my age. Anyway, I asked to be excused. She let me go outside for a while and play around, but I soon tired of that also. So I picked up rocks and began throwing them upon the roof just to watch them roll down. The roof was pretty steep, almost a one-half pitch. All of that disturbed those inside, so Miss Buttery came out and said, "Alright Allan, come on inside now. You have been out long enough". I replied, "No, I do not want to come inside". She returned to the room and came back with a long switch which she shook at me and said, "Now you come



inside immediately,, or else I will come after you". So I lit out down the road towards town. I looked back over my shoulder, and here she came right after me. I didn't think that she could catch me, her wearing those long skirts which women wore in those days, but boy, was I fooled! Here she came, right at my heels! She didn't try to really catch me, she just kept close enough so she could reach me with that switch. By now we were pretty well into town, and in front of those two saloons which were right along side each other. They had chairs sitting out in front of the saloons on the sidewalks which were always occupied by a bunch of "loungers". Of course, when they saw the chase, they all began to laugh and wanting to bet with each other on the outcome of the race. Miss Bessie just bit her lips and decided that enough was enough, so she sprinted up a bit and reached down and caught me by the hand and led me back to school again. Then that afternoon she took me home herself and told Mama of my capers. Then I got a real licking. Then when the Llano News came out that week, there was nearly a full column about Miss Bessie Buttery, our kindergarten school teacher, chasing Allan Townsend right down Main Street with a switch, and how she had won the bout. How was that; a six year old boy getting his name in the newspaper so early!

CHAPTER 15

EARLY MEMORIES

All of the kids now days, just as soon as they can walk and talk, they have to have an allowance. Now we kids didn't know the meaning of such a thing. We had to make our own nickels, selling whiskey bottles mostly, five for a nickel. There were quite a few laying around in those days. I can't remember of my Daddy giving me over three nickels in my whole life, and I wouldn't have gotten those, only I got hold of a bottle of Listerine. I liked the smell of it, also the taste, so I proceeded to drink the whole contents. Of course, I became pretty sick. It was pretty late in the afternoon and Papa was home from work. After I told them what I had done, they rushed me to town and got Dr. Townsend (no relation to us). Right away he prescribed warm salt water to make me vomit it all up. I tasted the salt water and would spit it out. Then Papa reached in his pocket and fished out a nickel and said, "Go ahead and drink the whole cup of salt water and the nickel is yours". So I drank it all but only vomited a little. So Dr. Townsend said, "Give him another cup of it". But I wouldn't drink it without another nickel. Papa dug up another nickel, and I downed it all, but I still hadn't vomited it all up. Dr. Townsend said, "Just one more cup, Allan"; but I had to have another nickel first. So Papa gave me another one, and Dr. Townsend gave me one also. So I downed my third cup of warm salt water. This time it seemed to have the desired effect, and the Dr. told Papa and Mama that I would be all right now — But for me to be careful hereafter what I drank. Papa laughingly told Dr. Townsend that now I had more money than he had; so he thought that he would take the money out of my pocket that night while I was asleep, then give me a licking the next morning for losing it.

In our back yard, between the house and cowpen, right in front of the chicken coop, (my prison) was a pretty good sized mesquite tree which I used to climb all the time. I always was a climber. Up this tree, about six feet, was a limb running almost horizontal which I would sit on quite a bit, with my feet hanging down. One day, (I always thought I went to sleep) I fell off backwards off of that limb and struck on the back of my head. I do not remember just how long I was unconcious, but it must have been quite a while because my folks were quite concerned about me. But, as you will see — all my life I have had a mighty good "Guardian Angel" watching over me.

The first Easter which I remember was just after I had passed six years old. We had a good sized "rye patch" on the vacant lot, which was on our place where we lived; and theEaster eggs were all hid in there. I thought that was the grandest thing I ever saw. Of course, they told us that the rabbits had layed them there. We were always looking for the rabbits! (There were quite a few of them around there, too.)

Right in front of our house ran a pretty good sized ditch. Everytime it would rain real hard, the ditch would get up and the wash would make the ditch wider and wider. In other words, it was a regular "wash" there. I believe they have all filled it up now; I never notice it any more when I am in Llano. The Brooks family who lived joining us to the east, lived almost in that creek because it flattened out on a bend towards the north, right at their place. When the water got pretty high in the creek, it would run all over their yard. Mr. and Mrs. Brooks had one boy, Watkins, and three daughters; Bessie, Mabel, and I forget the youngest one's name. Mrs. Brooks was considered a real fine cook. She cooked at the best hotels. I guess, at one time or another, she worked at them all, and she was bringing up her two eldest daughters to work right along side with her, mostly as waitresses. Now Mr. Brooks worked mostly as a gardener, or trimming rose bushes, pruning fruit trees, etc; and his son, Watkins, all I ever saw him do was chew tobacco and go dove hunting with his nigger shooter. He always had about the best nigger shooter of any boy in town. He could really make good ones, too. He used to take me dove hunting with him. We would go out and "shoot" "setting doves" off the nests; and what's more, we would pick and dress and eat'em. We would eat most anything we could kill. I used to like to go with him because when his nigger-shooter would be getting old, he would trade it to me for most anything I had or could get ahold of. He was about four years older than I — Maybe that is one reason I liked to run around with him.

Right across the ditch from Watkins Brooks' house, going sort of uphill, Allen Newsom lived. He was the son of the Newsom that ran Newsom's Grocery Store. They were English people. Allen had two sisters; Bessie and Fanny. He also had a cane patch between the creek and his cow pen and stable. We kids used to get right in the middle of it, and sit down and chew the cane. Most all of his kids liked to chew sugar cane. We would break it in the middle of a joint, chew all of the juice out of it, then move on to the next joint until we finished the whole stalk. We would discard it then and start on a fresh stalk. When Allen got ready to cut his cane, he found a thirty or forty foot circle of just stumps of where the cane used to be. He said that he knew we were eating his cane, but he never dreamed that it was so much.

The Newsom house was right on the corner. The road running north and south is now known as Bridge Street, I believe. Now across the street (not bridge Street, I believe it is now College Street) lived Mrs. Alexander and her family. I believe she had a couple of girls and a couple of boys. At one time, Miss Ethel Alexander taught my Sunday School class in the Methodist Church. I still have a Bible which she gave me. Mrs. Alexander was noted for her fine turnip patch each year. You could go out in the patch and pull a big mess, all any family could eat, for five or ten cents; and if you didn't have the money, she would give them to you. I remember we kids would

go into her patch, in winter, when snow was on the ground, and pull up a big old turnip and just eat it raw. Boy, that really tasted good then! I expect that there was many a belly ache from over eating raw turnips, too, but it was so sweet and tasted so good, we just never knew when to stop.

Now after you cross Bridge Street (or the Fredericksburg Road), on the right were a couple of residences. The first was Mrs. Jenkins. Right back of her lived Mr. Graham, one of Papa's carpenters which I spoke about before, and still farther down that road, on the right, was a large wooden building with a cow pen, barn etc., which belonged to Monroe Hadden. He was a stock man, and later on, moved into this house. In town, he bought out a meat market — The City Meat Market. He had four or five boys. I will tell about them later. Then down a side road going south which ran alongside of Hadden's place, and just in the rear of the school, down a small hill and up another, was the Llano cemetary, which is still located in the same place now.

Now we will go back to Bridge Street and start down the left side of the road. There were a couple of pretty good sized houses up on that little hill. In one lived old Capt. Davis, and I believe that Captain Opp, who was a lawyer, lived in the same house. Then the Higdon family were neighbors to them. The Higdon's had a bunch of girls. Most of them turned out to be school teachers. Now the continuation of that road was called the Bird Town Road. I believe that is the road we went to Sandstone Mountain, or big hill, on. I had never been any further that way. Then sort of northeast of there, just before you reached Oatman Creek, was a community called The Barler Flats, Where several families lived. At one time, just across Oatman Creek, Llano County established the Llano County Fair, and we really did have a good fair. I never could understand why they discontinued it. All of the horse racers were local boys and horses. Oh, there were a few entries from counties all around Llano. Then the steer roping and calf roping were mostly local. I believe they outlawed the steer roping — said it was too cruel. Well, it was pretty cruel because there would be several broken legs and plenty of horns would be flying around when they hit the ground.

Llano had a good grand-stand and plenty of concessions all around it, also. The Ferris Wheel and the Hobby Horses were pulled around by a horse, and there were no floors or platforms on them. Of course they had the "brass ring" (good for a free ride) which we all tried to grab as we came around. The man who drove the horse always rode on the same wooden horse on which was hung a small sled. The sled was tied up some place about even with the horse, and when he wanted to stop, he would drop the sled, and that was all the brakes which he had. The horse soon learned to stop pulling and it would slow down. The sled would soon stop the Hobby Horse, and then reload with new passengers and be off again. You would be surprised at how busy it was kept.

The doll racks did quite a thriving business also. You would get three balls for a nickel to throw at the dolls. If you knocked down one doll, you got one cigar. (Old Virginia Cheroots, three for a nickel.) If you knocked down two in a row, you got two cigars; and three in a row, you got a half a dollar — which was pretty hard to do. However, I always was pretty good at throwing. I could hit most anything I threw at. I knocked down three in a row two or three times; then the man wouldn't let me throw anymore. He hired me to work for him. We would get a "sucker" on the deal, and he would make side bets with him that I could beat him. We would most always get him to throw first, then I would just manage to beat him by just one ball. I got so good that I could knock down three in a row most anytime I wanted to. When he would see that the "suckers" was just about ready to quit, he would give me the "nod", and I would let him win one, and that got him all fired up again.

The "Hamburgers" were just coming into vogue about that time. They were not very large, but they sold for only five cents. The man who was cooking them sure knew his business because there isn't anything in the world that will make a man more hungry than to smell some hamburgers cooking. Ever so often, he would throw a handful of those chopped onions on the griddle, and as soon as that aroma started floating around, here they would come! A real hungry man could eat four or five of them so he did fairly well, also.

CHAPTER 16

THE DIFFERENT PARTS OF LLANO

On down the Birdtown Road, there at Sandstone Mountain and to the right, I believe, is where the Risingers and the Kitchens had their farms. Also, there were a few more over that way. On the left, a road turned off to the Oscar Golson ranch. He had two children, a boy, Oscar Jr., and a girl, Alice, and they both rode horseback to the Llano school daily (about six or seven miles). Later on, all us kids thought it a great treat to spend the weekend at the Golson ranch. Later on Ed Beeson and I practically lived down there during the summer vacation, when school was out. Our hobby was climbing all over Sandstone Mountain killing rattlesnakes. That place was just full of them. Some days we would swim and fish as the Llano River ran almost right through their cow pen.

Back up towards town, across Oatman Creek again, in the Barler Flats — that was a pretty nice part of town then, and still is for that matter. Mr. Oatman lived there. I believe he was called Judge Oatman then. However, I have heard him preach several times in the Christian Church there. He had one daughter that I remember. Sweet Oatman was the only name I ever heard her called. I think Oatman Creek must have been named after him. There was another Oatman in Llano, Wilburn, who was a lawyer and had an office up over the bank building there in Llano. I do not know if they were brothers or not. I know that he has one son now, Wilburn Jr..

Then there was the Barler family there in the flats, whom the flats were named after. Both of those men were old settlers, and I have heard that Granpa Barler was an old Indian fighter. He had two sons, Lee and Eugene. Lee, in his time, was pretty cocky himself. He would fight a buzz saw if the occasion ever arose. They later on opened up a book store there in town.

Then there was another family living down there real close. I am not sure but I believe it was the McDermotts. We used to visit them quite often. They had two daughters, Bessie and Lulu. There may have been another, also. The boys were Lawrence, Martin and Willie. Our pastime was having "cob fights" with corn cobs. Then we would also fight yellow jackets. All of us kids did that.

Then all the way back into town, there were quite a few residences. I will try and name a few of them. There were the Murrays, who had a lumber yard on the north side, I believe. He had a daughter, Lillian, and a boy, J. W.. They were both red-headed. Then there were the McRaes, and he had a girl and a boy. Harry was the boy's name and the girl I believe was Fanny. Then George Rogers lived down that way. He had two boys, Joe and George Jr., and two girls, Ray and Mary.

Now down by the river, Oscar Pierce lived. He had one sister, Maggie, and a brother named Bud. Poor Bud was afflicted in some

way, and the whole town teased him and also humored him. His big brother, Oscar, worked in the livery stable. Also, he drove the large float to do heavy hauling with around town. Almost directly behind the Pierce place was "Old Bailey", one of our favorite swimming hole. We used to have some mighty good times in Old Bailey. It was also the nearest one to town.

Back on the other side of the road, (from Pierces) a couple of blocks, Will Rogers lived — a brother to George. He had three sons; Willie, Ford, and Raymond and three daughters, Pearl, Mattie and Tibby. We used to visit them quite often, also. People did an awful lot of visiting back and forth in those days. Ford was about my age and we ran in the same gang. There seemed to be two or three different gangs then. I was in the middle gang. We played together and were mostly in the same room at school.

Now coming on west, towards town, there were several residences. Over south from the Rogers place, the Dunaways lived. There was Jim, Ernest, Dolly, and Ruby, all boys. Then I believe there were two girls. I don't know the name of the oldest, but May was about my age.

Now down towards town Bob Davis had a large two story house. He was a rancher, and also had half interest in the livery stable. He only had one son, Robert. Right along there some place, T. P. Justus lived. He owned the Bon-Ton Shop. His daughters were Ruth and Winnie. I don't think he had any sons. John Cumming lived around in that part of town also. He ran the Cummings Saloon there in town. Further on west lived Mr. and Mrs. McInnis, Papa's relatives whom I spoke about before. Now back on Sandstone Street, P. G. Sheppard lived. He owned a dry goods store there on the north side of the square, next to the bank. He was also an Indian fighter.

Now back on the street by the river, next from the Pierce's going west, Will Moore lived. He was a brother and partner to Tom Moore, the banker. I believe he only had one son, Tom Moore, who is still (1969) president of the Moore State Bank, only in a different location. I believe that Eddie Phillips lived along there also. He got drowned in "Red Rock Hole" when he was quite young. Now right across the street, on the southwest corner lived the Moore's, my school teacher. (No relation to the banker Moores) I believe she was a widow then. The boys were Link, Dick and Prentice, and the girls were Viola Lula, Julia and Emily. Emily was in my class at school, and I went to both Miss Viola's and Miss Julia's school also, to Miss Bessie Buttery's kindergarten.

The Moores lived on a corner lot. Most lots were fairly large in those days. Right back of the Moores, on Sandstone Street, lived a widow by the name of Matthers. She had two daughters, one by the name of DeeDee; the other was Willie. Next door to them lived the Lawrence family. Will and Alice Lawrence were kin to Papa, and at the time Alice was the postmaster of Llano County. They had Kate and Edith, as daughters, and Clark, "Boots", was the son. Later on,

after they left Llano, another daughter, Marie was born. Next door to them we lived — the house I was born in. At that time, I believe we were the last residence on that street. Just beyond us was a pretty good sized creek. The same creek I have been speaking of before, only it got larger as it proceeded on towards the river. Then just across the creek was the cotton yard where all of the cotton buyers kept their cotton until the market got right. Then they would ship it out. Now on Sandstone Street there was a small bridge across that creek. It was large enough that a bunch of us boys would play under the bridge occasionally. That is where I smoked my first "tailor made" cigarette. Winston Gosh and I bought a pack of "Bicycle Cigarettes" — ten cents a pack. We got under that bridge and smoked them all — one right after another. We were also playing hookey from school, and boy were we sick. We both got down and could not get up. We were just laying there in the sand moaning and groaning. We could not get up on our feet. We were just as dizzy as if we were drunk. I do not remember who it was, but I believe it was Mr. Will Rogers who came along on horseback. He must have heard us moaning or something. Anyway, he got off his horse and came down to investigate. He saw us there and said we looked as if we were drunk, but he couldn't smell anything on our breath except cigarette smoke. Then he spied the empty cigarette package, and he knew what was wrong. So he put both of us on his horse and took us home and explained to our parents what was wrong. Of course we both got a licking, but even that didn't stop us from smoking. However we did stick to Bull Durham, cedar bark, coffee and grape vine after that.

Beyond the cotton yard was the town itself. So that ended the residential section on the east side of town. Oh, I know that I have left out more families than the ones which I included because each year there would be quite a few new families moving in and some would be moving out. For instance, the Scott family (Allie Scott) moved in that section of town and some of the boys still live there. It was a pretty large family. Lets see — The boys were Abner, Procter, Cliff, and one they call "Babe", even today. Then there were a couple of girls also. I cannot recall their names just now. Then just the other side of the school house, there was a large, two story, white building. The Yetts lived there. They had a boy by the name of Howell Yett. That is about all I know about them because they moved away soon. Then there was a family of Jacksons. I remember a son, Fred Jackson. I believe he drove a delivery wagon for someone. He had some very pretty sisters; one was named Velma, and the other was Bernice I believe. I don't know if there were any more or not. Fred, I believe he went into the army during the Spanish-American war. Quite a few of the Llano boys went to that war.

CHAPTER 17

RESIDENCES AND BUSINESSES OF NORTH LLANO

I will now try to tell about the north side of Llano. Across the river, just as you cross the bridge, on the right side of the road, was the Dabbs Grocery Store. On the left side of the road there wasn't anything much except a few "squatters" who lived in tents. One family of Duncans and a family by the name of Thorp. Poor old man Thorp, his nose and all the front of his face was eaten up by cancer. They didn't know much about cancer in those days, and I believe that it finally just ate him up. The doctor said there was no cure for cancer in those days. He always just wore a greasy-looking rag hanging over his face. I couldn't stand to look at the poor fellow.

The railroad tracks ran across the San Saba Highway about here, and a few hundred yards farther on was the end of the track. There was a larger "bumper" there which was supposed to stop the train if it did not stop in time. However, I remember one night the bumper didn't do much good. Llano usually had two trains a day; the twelve o'clock or noon passenger train, then around six or eight in the evening the "local" carrying freight was supposed to arrive. On this particular night the train was three or four hours late, and I believe they had a new crew also. Anyway, the engineer must have gone to sleep or something because the train came roaring right on through Llano, hit that bumper and just kept on going — running on the ground — no tracks. Of course the wheels sank into the ground and the engine finally ran into a ditch. It and about half of the box-cars loaded with freight overturned and were smashed up pretty badly. It just so happened that those two forward box-cars were loaded with molasses, and boy, that whole creek was flowing with molasses! I don't remember if anyone was killed or not, but that was one wreck which the old Llanoans will never forget.

Then on north for a few hundred yards, the Mason Road going west turned off. There are no more buildings on the San Saba Road on the left until you come to a nice two story building where Professor Badu lived. He was a Geologist, and I believe, and also an assayer. He always had a bunch of rocks laying around. I believe that he was English. He only had two pretty daughters. The eldest was Tilly and the younger was Kitty. Tilly married one of the Moss boys.

Now back to the Dabbs Grocery and Wagon Yard. Up the road a couple of hundred yards was a stone shed where they made headstones and markers for graves. The railroad track ran right past the shed. I believe a man by the name of Blodgett (another Englishman) owned it. Just at the west end of his shed, a large "derrick" was erected. It was used mostly to unload the rock wagons which hauled the granite rocks from the quarries to the derrick. It was operated by turning a large crank attached to the cable drum which rolled the cable up on the drum to hoist the rock up. The

Note in extreme upper right hand corner is the brand new Algona Hotel. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Patsy Parker)

Getting ready for one of Llano's County Fairs. Owen and T. J. Watkins on larger horses. A doll is on the pony. (Photo courtesy of T. J. Watkins)

drum was fitted with dogs and the catches on the drum to hold the cable so it would not unwind. Then when they wanted to lower the rock, they would swing the boom out to the place they wanted to place it. Then the drum had a hand break on it which they used to control the lowering of the rock. Sometimes it took two men to turn that crank to hoist the rock — just according to how large it was. The derrick had three guy cables on it, and some had four. That was to hold the derrick in place. We kids used to practice walking up those guy-wires just for kicks. I finally got so good at wire walking that I would walk half way up that cable and kneel down on it and even lie down on my back on it and get up on my feet again, just as easy as if I was sitting on the ground.

Now going on east on the railroad track, we come to the Freight Depot. That is where they unloaded all freight from the box-cars, and then reloaded it onto those large freight wagons. I spoke about those at the beginning of this story going to all of those surrounding towns in all directions because Llano was just a one hundred mile spur line running west from Austin.

About those rock wagons, I was talking about a few minutes ago, they all had to be very heavy wagons, much heavier than the freighters. They had wider wheels also, and it always took six or eight mule teams to haul them, and even then they had an extra team behind the wagon, just in case they got stuck some place.

Now back to the freight depot. Ed Tarrance was station agent for both the freight and the passenger depot, which was just down the track about a block and a half. He was also ticket agent for the passenger service. Will Mason was the telegraph operator there in the freight office. The Western Union was there in the office, and later on I was to be messenger boy for him. Arthur Holden was the freight handler there. He was the guy with the strong back. (I will not say and a weak mind because he was really pretty smart — he just did most of the work around there.) I'll tell you what I've seen him do, I have seen him stack bales of cotton on top of each other while loading them on a box-car. There is just a trick to the way you handle them. Arthur was a large man and young also, and as strong as an ox. He was also first baseman of the Llano ball team. At the time Llano was beating all counties around here. Just a few years ago, I ran across Arthur out in the Masonic Home in Arlington, Texas. I would tell that tale about him stacking bales of cotton by himself, and it nearly tickled him to death because then he was all crippled up and had to walk with a cane. He would tell the other men who were living there with him; "See, I told you that I used to be very much of a man. Now here is a fellow who worked with me there in Llano".

Between the freight depot and the passenger depot was a loading platform. It had a ramp running up one end of it where the "floats" hauling cotton etc. could drive right up it and dump their load, and then drive down the platforms in the freight depot. Also the loading platforms were just up even with the floor of a box-car when you slid

the door open. Then they had some iron "aprons" made which one end would lay on the platform and you drop the other end into the box-car. Then they could push their loaded "hand trucks" right into the cars. Of course they would always set the brakes on the box-cars before starting to load or unload them. Now right on down the track, on the other side of the track, was the passenger depot. The passenger trains unloaded the passengers on the north side of the track. They would be facing north and the depot when they stepped off the train. The loading platform and the freight depot loaded and unloaded from the south side of the train.
turn off right there at the Dabb's Grocery and Wagon Yard and come east on a road which would curve north. Just between the freight depot and the loading platform, they would cross the railroad track and come north again until they came almost to the Eaves Hotel. Then they would start on a large circle.

Right up to the rear and to the left of the Eaves Hotel was a block of two story brick buildings. On the first corner was Bruhl's Drug Store. Then there were a couple of more stores. I forget now just what was in them, but all the rest of the block was occupied by Shook and Shook Grocery Store. Then all upstairs was rented out to families. I only know the name of one family; it was Mahan. They had one child, a very pretty girl, just about my age. Guess that is the reason I remembered so well. Shook had one small boy; everyone called him Shooky. He was only about five years old. His daddy bought him a two wheel bicycle, and I taught him to ride it in about two days. He got some pretty nasty falls, but then he was a game little fellow, he could get right up and mount 'er again. In a couple of weeks, he could ride as well as I could.

Now we will come back to the passenger depot again. Just across the railroad track and east a little ways Barker's Cotton Gin was located. I can't exactly recall, but it seems he may of had some other business there also. Just east of his gin was a pretty large creek. He had built a very high and long foot bridge across this creek because on the east side of the creek is where he built his home. I think that it was also a rooming house. It was a huge affair. It was almost square and two stories high and had a wide porch running almost completely around the house. Yes, I know that he kept roomers because my Uncle Dave Collie and my Aunt Pearl lived there for a while. In fact, my cousin, Margaret Collie, was born there.

Now on down the railroad track a little further east was the Shipping Pens. They shipped quite a few cattle out of Llano in those days. I can remember of seeing large herds of cattle coming into Llano. Sometimes there were so many, that it would take all day long for them to pass our house. There was a river crossing right below Old Bailey, our swimming hole. They could not take them across the bridge because they would get the bridge to swaying so badly that it just might fall down. Anyway, the river crossing was out just about even with the shipping pens, so it came in pretty handy.

Now the pens would not begin to hold them all; so they had to turn them into a large pasture right there close and then they had to feed them all until they would be shipped out. Most were shipped up to the "Indian Territory". That was before Oklahoma took the territory in. They would ship them up there to fatten them. They had more grass there than we had in Texas then. Sometimes they would "cut" and brand them right there in the stock-pen, and when they did, after we were all finished, we would all have a "Rocky Mountain Oyster" supper. I say we — because every time they were shipping cattle out of Llano, and we were not in school, all of us kids would be right down there helping them to brand and then help to load them into the cattle-cars, also. Sometimes we would ride them right up the chutes into the car. They would be packed so close together that they could not pitch very hard. Some days they would have such a large bunch of cattle there, they would ship out three and four train loads of them in one day, and sometimes they would work far into the night.

Right across the track from the shipping pens lived a family by the name of Elroy. Two or three of the boys went to school with me, and they walked back and forth. Then further on down the track was Teich's Stone Shed. He came to Llano from San Antonio, and he did an enormous business. I guess he worked over fifty men. My Uncle Dave worked for him. He was a tool sharpener. They had a regular little village down there. Also a bunch of kids from there went to school in town, but I believe that Teich had a large hack which he would haul some of them back and forth in. Still, quite a few of them walked.

Now still further on down the track was the Section House. A man by the name of Anglin was the section boss, and he had a couple of daughters who walked back and forth to school each day. That was about six miles one way, which made twelve miles a day, and I can't see that it hurt them. Florence is still living there in town now, I believe.

Now we will come back to the depot again. As the trains were always headed west when they came into Llano, they had to be turned around again before they could head east again, going back to Austin. They did that by going through the "Y" process. They would sometimes let us news boys ride around the "Y" with them.

Now across the track from the freight depot, looking north, was the John Orr Wholesale Grocery Company. Next to him, in the same large brick building, was John D. Ranier, who bought and sold all kinds of hides, bones, scrap metal, pecans, and most anything you had to sell. They had a spur railroad track running right in front of their places of business so they could load and unload just like they do at the freight depot.

The track ran on down a little farther to the rear end of the H. E. Hedeman Saloon. He had the only soda factory in town there in the back end of his saloon. The man who operated the soda water plant was a Frenchman, I believe, by the name of LaFrentz. He had a son

by the name of Huntsley. Mr. Hedeman had two beautiful daughters, Lee and Ethel, and one son, Harry, whom I saved from drowning one time when a bunch of us were swimming in "Little Hole". That was another one of our swimming holes which was just about even with the old picnic ground. Then on up the river about a quarter of a mile from Little Hole was the best one of all. It was "Blue Hole". It was pretty deep in some places. Also it was right against the bank of the river where there were several large pecan trees hanging out over the hole so we were in the shade most of the time. Then on one of those limbs which was hanging out over the hole someone had tied a long rope. We would catch hold of that rope and keep swinging out over the hole, going higher and higher all the time. When we thought we were about high enough up, we would point our feet straight up and just as we would reach the end, we would manipulate our bodies so we could let go the rope and turn a one half somersault so we would make a real pretty dive into the hole. I'll admit that we had quite a few "belly busters" before we mastered the art, but after we finally got it, it was as simple as could be.

Now we will go out the front door of Hedeman's Saloon. There was a sort of a street running along in front there, and John Orr's and Ranier's stores ran all the way through. Now just across the street from John Orr's store was a large square building. It was immense in size, and at the time, the Stockton Dry Goods Store occupied it. Mr. Stockton had two daughters, Hattie, the oldest, and I believe Myrtle was the youngest. They both went to school over in town. Hattie was in my room. She was trying to get sort of "sweet" on me, but then she was sort of on the fat side, and I never cared much for fat girls.

Now almost in front of the saloon was the old Algona Hotel. It was on the corner of the San Saba Road and the little street we were talking about. Now across the San Saba Road was where Professor Badue lived. Then all back of the hotel was all a pretty flat, if you kept the mesquite bushes chopped down all the time. Anyway, back there was where the Llano Baseball Diamond was located, and we did have a good ball team then. Now that Algona Hotel later changed to the name of the "Don Carlos" Hotel. It was a very beautiful building, and it was well built, too. The first I ever heard of it, it was called the T.M.I. — Texas Military Institute. Now I do not know if it was built for that purpose or not, but I believe that it was. Anyway, at first, it was just filled with boys. They all wore a military uniform, and in those days, all of the girls just went wild over those uniforms. I think that they got a bunch of Llano girls in trouble, too. Our school professor, a big fat man by the name of Professor Woodson — Boy, how he hated those boys in uniform. He called them a bunch of "scovey ducks". I don't know what he meant, but that is the name he called them. A bunch of the Llano boys signed up to go to that school. One was my neighbor and playmate, Albert Sidney Johnson, and I'll have to admit that a bunch of us were jealous of him. His father was Judge Johnson (County Judge), and he had quite a pull

Albert Sidney Johnson, Sr. when he was a student at the T.M.I. located in the Algona Hotel. (Photo courtesy of Sid Johnson)

Allan Townsend as a youngster. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

then. The school did not seem to last very long and after it closed quite a few boys stayed on in Llano. One I know pretty well, as we were later close together. He was a cripple. His name was Mack Heard. I will tell more about him later.

Now over there on the north side were quite a few residences. On the highway going east to Burnet, Lone Grove, Bluffton etc., there were a few families living on both sides of the road. On the right hand side of the road was the H. E. Hedeman home. Also, the Stockton home, and I believe Mrs. Matthews moved there later. There was a rocky road branching off to the right which ran to the Teich's stone shed and his little village located down there. Then right off that road to the right a bit and on top of a small hill, Will Moore, the banker, built a large two story home. He sold his home on the south side down on the river bank to Charlie Schultz, a stockman, who had moved to town. That large house of Mr. Moore's could be seen from most all parts of town. Then right across the road a ways (the Burnet road I mean) was a large unfurnished brick building which we called the Malone Mansion. It looked like they started the place and went broke, died, or just maybe changed their mind. Anyway, the building was never completed then. Later on it was completed and turned into a T. B. Sanatarium. Anyway, the place was considered quite a ways out from town, and most of the young lovers would go out there Sundays and do a little "necking". All who didn't have a horse and buggy would walk. They would write their names and the date they were out there on the walls, if they could find an empty space to write on. I don't think it had any doors, windows or floor in it, just the dirt floors. It was considered quite a feat, then, to walk all the way from town out there.

Now on the road back to town there were quite a number of families living all scattered around on both sides of the road. One family was the Atchisons. Jimmy was about my age, and Johnny was older. He had his own delivery wagon, and he did all kinds of light hauling. Then there was the Krauss family. They had two or three boys, but Herbert who was about my age, I knew best. He could squeal like a rabbit, so that was the nickname which we gave him, "Rabbit". He was in my class at school. The Parish family lived out there in the flats also. Then there were a couple of lumber yards over there, too. They had a spur railroad track running up to their yards to unload their lumber and building supplies.

Now back to the crossing of the San Saba and Mason Roads. There were quite a number of residences. We are going west now. The Ben Johnson family lived out that way. There was Mike, the oldest, then Margaret and Lucy, girls, then little Jimmy came next. Mike worked in the bank, and Mr. Johnson was a stockman; the others did nothing. Margaret and Lucy were in my room at school. Little Jimmy had both arms sort of deformed. It looked sort of like he had

two extra elbows right above his wrist, but even with his crooked arms, he didn't let that bother him a bit. He always rode a horse ever since he was able to walk. He also learned to throw a rope just as well as the next one. Everyone liked him and none of us natives ever noticed his arms at all. The Holden family lived right around there also. There was Clint, who worked in the drug store, Mollie, who later on was a telephone operator, then Arthur, whom I have told about before. I have heard my mother say that they lived over there when they first came to Llano.

The Robinson family lived up the river a bit. I think it was just after you crossed Pecan Creek. They were on the river bank almost even with Little Hole, our swimming hole. We kids would play games to see which ones would go up to Robinsons watermelon patch and steal one of his watermelons and bring it back to our swimming hole. We'd play with it for a while, then we would burst it open and eat it in the water with our fingers. We didn't have to worry if some of the juice ran down our chins or not, for we were naked anyway. Henry Robinson, (Ribbon, as he was called) always had a nice watermelon patch. I do not know which one was the best, his or old man Fitzgerald's out south of town, on Oatman Creek on the Fredericksburg Road. We used to steal from them both. Henry would watch us swipe one of his melons. Then he would come down and go swimming with us, and if there were many of us in, he would bring along an extra melon.

Off to the right of the Mason Road was another road which ran out to a small beautifully shaped hill which they called "Town Peak". At one time they had a dance hall right on top of the peak. All it consisted of was a floor and a roof. They used to have some mighty good times out there I hear. I never did go there as I was too small then, and after I got larger, it was too far to walk. At the present time that is about all I can think of there on the north side. There were pastures and farms all up the river. Later on, a family by the name of Marschall took over the old T.M.I. School and made it into the Algona Hotel. It was then about the best hotel in Llano. His children were Irene, Willie and Cornelia, but we all called her "Baby", it was easier to pronounce; then Pat was the youngest. I will come back later and tell about the hotel.

CHAPTER 18

MORE RESIDENCES AND EVENTS

Back on the south side again, on the street running between the City Meat Market and the Southern Hotel, going north towards the river. On the right side of the road directly behind the market, my daddy had his workshop, where he made window frames, doors and frames, etc.. Then on down the street were a couple of white cottages. In the first one the Schuwirth family lived. In the next one I do not remember who lived there. The Schuwirths had two children, Willie, the boy, and Anita, the girl. Later on Bill, Sid Johnson, myself and a few other boys erected a regular gymnasium in Bill's back yard. We went up on the square to see a Mexican Carnival, and they had all sorts of acting bars, trapezes, slack wire walking, and a thing they called the "slide for life". Then we came home to Bill's house and tried to duplicate everything we saw them do. It is a wonder some of us didn't break our necks, but then with all of our bumps, none were very serious. Herbert Forman got to be pretty good on the acting bar, or horizontal bar I believe they called it. Bill was also pretty good on it. I took to the wire walking myself. We all got pretty good at it all. Then the slide for life was a tall tower built on top of a barn or shed. We would buy 1x12 inch boards, three or four of them, and we would start at the top and come down at a sixty degree slant. But then first we would get some "banana strips". When they shipped bananas in those days they came in long crates. The bananas were packed in hay and were placed in the crate, and the strips were nailed over the crate to hold the bananas in place. Anyway, those strips were about one inch wide and one-eighth inch thick and about six or seven feet long. We would nail the strips on each side of the 1x12 boards. When we would nail those boards together we would always nail strips to hold them together from the bottom. Then we would bend the nails always pointing downward. That would make it slide better. Then after the slide was all finished and braced good we proceeded to make our sleds. They were boards about three and one half feet long. A strip would be nailed across the board at the foot about two inches from the end. Then at the upper end of the board, about two inches from the top, another strip would be nailed across the board. About ten inches farther down, another strip, and that would form the seat of the sled. Then on down another strip was nailed across the sled. That was for our hands to hold on to while we were sliding down the boards. Of course all of the nails through the sled were bent all pointing back upwards towards the seat. After that we could drive in as many nails as we could without splitting the board. Next we would get a couple of wax candles and rub it onto the 1x12 boards and make it as slick as we possibly could. We would repeat that process ever so often to keep it nice and slick at all times. Then we would carry our sleds up

to the top of the slide, place them on the slide and slide down. Now as that began to get tame to us, we would try something new. We would come down head first. I always was pretty venturesome, so I would always try it first, and if I didn't break my neck, then the others would follow suit. Well about now we decided to try something new. We decided to "jump the gap". We elevated the bottom of the slide just enough to make the slide come up enough to give us jumping speed. Then we would have the bottom board of the gap about three feet away and a few inches lower down so we would be pretty sure to make a perfect landing. Well, we all got that down pretty easy, so we made the gap just a little bit wider. We were all doing pretty well, then along came Emmett Kuykendall. He was sort of chubby, and I don't think that he had ever slid down before, but he insisted on trying. So here he came sliding down fine, but he must have wobbled a bit, or something, because he missed the gap and the bottom board of the slide caught him right in the pit of the stomach, and knocked the wind out of him for a while. There was never any more slide for Emmett. His brother, Louis, would come down sometimes. Louis and Frank Wallace would pal around together, and Emmett and Howard Wallace were pals. I can't remember all of the boys who would come by and play with us, but we had quite a few. Along at the last, after they were all able to come down the slide any way I could, I said, "I'll bet that I will stump you on this one." So I carried my sled up and had a couple of the boys to hold it good and tight for me until I stood up on it. Then I sort of leaned forward a bit to get my balance, and then I shouted, "Let her go!" They turned me loose and here I came on down just as easy as pie. However, no one else would try it for over a month. Then finally Mack Heard and I built a slide in his back yard, and he got up enough courage to try it standing up. When he made it he said, "Why that is just as easy as the other way isn't it?" I got a little ahead of my story here because all of this happened when I was eight or nine years old.

The two little white cottages were just about the end of the street there for just over the hill, or down the river bank, I should say, was the "Mill Pond". They had a "mill race" there also which turned the large wheel to generate power. Now we will cross the road and go back up the street to the Southern Hotel. Right across the road, about one-fourth of a mile was a nigger shack. A nigger family lived there who were mighty good to me one time. I will tell about it later. Then just across from Will Schuwirth lived old man Peeler and his two sons. He was a widower, but he was a worker, and he taught both of his sons to work also. They, having no mother, made folks sort of partial to them. I can just see the old man and Johnny now out on the streets selling the "San 'Tone" Express. I sold the Austin Statesman, but the San Antonio Express outsold the Statesman, two to one. Old man Peeler raised a nice garden each year, and he sold lots of fresh vegetables. They also liked to fish and nearly always had good luck, so they also sold a few fish. In those days you could buy a

whole string fish for twenty-five or thirty cents. Freddie Peeler, the oldest boy, worked in the Southern Hotel. He waited on the tables and shined shoes in the lobby on the side.

Now we will turn west out the Castell Road. On the first cross road running north and south, we will turn north, going towards the river. Now down that road on the left lived the Buttery family. The first boy was Franklin, then Henry, and, Roy, the youngest. Poor Roy, he had some trouble with his teeth. I hope that he finally outgrew it. The girls I believe were Miss Bessie and Miss Nellie. Both were my school teachers at one time or another. I am not sure, but I believe there was another girl. I can't recall her name just now. The Deats family lived down that way also. At the end of that road, on the bank of the river, the road sort of curved back towards Goodmans, Breazeales, Roberts, and there may have been a couple more.

Now on the south side of the Castell road going south were all kinds of homes, for that road then was the Fredericksburg Road. As I stated before, Walker's Wagon Yard was on the west side of that corner, and the Methodist Church was on the east corner. All the way on south was pretty densly populated on both sides of the road. I will try and name a few of them: the Breazeales, Pessels, Mr. Sam Spears, the mayor, and John A. Weeks who owned the Corner Drug Store at the time. There were several little side streets which crossed this road, and people also lived all along those streets. Also, the W. C. Wallace family lived right along there. As most of the children were playmates of mine, I will try and name some of them. There were only two girls, I believe, Kittie, the oldest, and Ida Maude was the baby. The boys were Billy, Claude, Frank, Howard and Charlie. We all had some pretty good times together. Then came the Tom Moore residence on the right side and Pritchard Brown's on the left. Percy Brown later on married and built a home just south of Tom Moore's home. Then on the left side it was vacant all the way up to Sam Watkin's home and on the right side up to the Hargis place.

Now I will come back to the Castell Road and head west. Just over the hill Dr. Mabry lived in a pink two story house. He was just about on the banks of Flag Creek. There you crossed the Flag Creek bridge, and off to the right a little ways, in a mesquite thicket, John Waits was "squatting" in a sort of a tent. He kept adding on to it until the walls were boarded up, and I believe that he also added a wooden flooring. He was the janitor for the county courthouse. He was a real short little fellow, and he talked so fast you could hardly understand him. Poor fellow lost one of his legs later on when they were re-building the bridge across Flag Creek. It seems that two of the "trussels" (tressels) fell towards each other, and poor John was astride one of them, so it practically chopped his leg off. However, he recovered pretty rapidly and got himself a wooden leg, and first thing you knew, he was almost as good as new. I don't think that he ever did lose any time off because he had a couple of young boys

practically brought up there, in the courthouse, and they carried on for him. Besides, as he lost his leg in the line of duty, I do not think that the county dared to fire him.

Just up the hill from Flag Creek there was a road running off to the right which led down to our old picnic grounds and our swimming hole, "Little Rock". We really had a beautiful picnic ground then. The whole banks of the river were just lined with large pecan trees and mustang grape vines. The river along there was almost flat, and you had to walk about one-fourth mile through pretty white sand before you ever reached the water. Then the bank was most all shade. We used to have one pecan tree in particular, "Old Softie", which I believe was the largest pecan tree I ever saw in all my life. I never did hear of anyone climbing it. I was an expert climber myself, but I couldn't begin to climb her. We had some real nice picnics up there — sometimes two or three times a year. We used to have a three days reunion up there about once a year. A couple of days before it was to start some men would dig about three trenches about three feet wide, three or four feet deep, and about fifty feet long. Then they would cut green logs and lay across the trench and spread chicken wire over part of the green logs and build a fire. Then they would butcher five or six steers, quarter them up, and when the fire burned down to just coals, they would place the beef across the green logs. Then there would be three or four men watching over it for forty-eight hours. They would be armed with pitchforks to turn the meat, and a long mop to put the "dope" on the meat with. The dope was vinegar, water, (about fifty-fifty) salt, pepper and also red pepper. Now the meat had to be cooked very slowly. Whenever the fire started to blaze up, caused from the "drippings" dropping into the fire, you would have to smother the blaze with a damp rag. The meat was only supposed to be turned one time. If it cooked right for forty-eight hours, it would be as tender as chicken when you took it up and began slicing it. They had long tables there — no chairs or benches. The meat, bread, onions and pickles were all set on the long tables. You could pick up what you thought you could eat, then go buy yourself a bottle of red soda pop, or lemonade, or something else if you liked. The barbeque bread, etc. were all free, and a fellow could eat all he could hold. Besides the eating, we had all sorts of games, with prizes, such as; three legged races, potato races and sack races. Then they had a long two by four board turned edgewise. It was braced good up to the last fifteen feet, then right at the very end, they stuck an IXL knife in the board. Now the trick was to walk that shakey board all the way to the end, then reach down and pull the knife out and it was yours. I always got a knife before I quit. Then we had the climbing of the "greasy pole". Now <u>there</u> was where I shined. They would take about a thirty foot iron pole, grease it good, and stick an old brass watch on top of it. If you could climb the pole to the top and pick up the watch, it was yours. Now as I was just about the only one in Llano who ever got one of those watches,

I would always hang back and let the other boys try it first; then when they just about had all of the grease wiped off of it, I would walk up and say, "Now let me show you how to do it". So I would climb the pole and get my watch, then slide on down. The only trouble was they would only let me win one watch a year. They wouldn't let me climb anymore, so for the first two days, the watch just layed up there on the pole.

They also had quite a few concessions there on the grounds such as Hobby Horses or Carousels as they are called now. They had knife boards where you got three rings for a nickel and tried to win yourself a knife, and they had "doll racks" like they had down at the Fair Grounds. Then they had a rotten egg stand which was a large wagon sheet hung up and stretched out, with a hole cut in it so a person could stick his head through the hole. They had a large nigger who was quite a kidder and also a good dodger. He would poke his head through the hole. You got three rotten eggs for a nickel, and if you hit the nigger, you got a cigar. He paid out only a few cigars because the nigger, besides being a good dodger, would kid the fellow so much he would make him mad; and if he threw the rotten egg too hard, nine times out of ten, it would break in his own hand.

I remember one time after the reunion was all over and everyone had moved out, the rotten egg stand owners just moved out and left everything still standing — also ten or twelve cases of rotten eggs. So when we kids came up to the Little Hole to go swimming, instead of playing mumbley peg to see who went up to Henry Robinson's watermelon patch to steal a melon, we all pulled off our clothes and then played mumbley peg to see who would stand behind the sheet and let them throw rotten eggs at him. If he got hit, then he would run to the river and jump in. Later on we would decide who would go up and steal the watermelon.

That picnic ground was used until the big flood came which washed the Llano Bridge away. It not only washed the bridge away, but it washed all of those beautiful pecan trees all along the banks of the river away also. When I heard about it, I just couldn't believe that that bridge could be washed away as it was sitting on those almost solid granite piers. I was up the river fishing the day before the rise. My aunt, uncle and I were camped up at the Bauer place. It had looked real dark — clouds all up the river for about a day and a half, and finally it started to rain where we were camped. I told Pearl (my aunt) that we had better get out of there because a rise might come down most anytime. I never dreamed it would be that large though. My main concern was that the highways were not all paved then, and I knew that between Llano and San Saba there were some pretty slick hills to pull if it ever started raining hard. My aunt was living in Ft. Worth then, and I in Dallas. So I took them home first and then came on home here in Dallas. Then the first thing in the morning, she phoned me and told me about the bridge washing away. I just couldn't believe it; so I got in my car and drove back to see for

myself. Even after I saw it, it was hard to believe.

Now, back to where I left off. Lets see now — we will head on back our the Castell road. On the left side of the road was the Ed Bradley home. Then sort of to the rear of him was the Hick Russell home. He was also a carpenter and was a very good friend of Papa's and worked for him quite a bit. There was a road running along side of the Russell house which ran up alongside of Flag Creek where several families lived. One was where the Langes lived. The children which I remember were Fred and Bertha. There were others, but I do not remember them. There was a family by the name of George Goben living along there also. He was the blacksmith whose shop was down by the bridge. There were six or seven more families living along Flag Creek. I remember the houses, but I can't recall all of their names.

Now back to the Castell Road again, going up the river. First I believe we have the Duncan family. Ernest and Winn are the two boys who would ride the steer to school each day. Then right above them was the Findlay Mills. He also had his home there, but he still ground corn meal in his mill which was water powered. That sure was a good fishing place in the older days. He had several children also, but Walter is the only one I remember very plainly. Then on up the river was mostly all ranches. The Moseleys owned quite a bit of land up that way then. They were well-to-do stockmen, Bob and Frank both. Bob decided to build a beautiful home up there on the river. It was built with solid granite rocks. He called it the "Granite Cliff Ranch". Later on he got killed in a brawl there in Llano, in a saloon. Every one missed him very much because he was a good man and well liked by everyone. Later on Mr. Slator took over the ranch. He was the father of Paul, Eric and J. D. Slater. I went to school with Paul and Eric. J. D., was too young to attend school then. Now that same beautiful granite building is still there. Eric and J. D. were having it all remodeled and repaired last year (1969) when I was down there. That old house will stand there forever if it is taken care of, and I think that the boys are doing a mighty good job of it right now. Paul is living in Midland or Odessa I believe. The entrance now had a granite arch over the gate and a sign reading "The Slator Brother's Ranch". That is about all there is between there and Castell except ranches. Babe Scott has a nice ranch just above the Slator Brothers. He also has some mighty good fishing up at his place. All of those Scott boys are good friends of mine. They also have a sister up there on the river who has a nice ranch. Allie Scott had several children; Abner, Procter, on sitster, Cliff, Babe, and I am pretty sure that I omitted a couple, but then I liked all of them. I believe that Bill was the youngest. They lived over in the eastern part of town someplace. I do not remember just where. There were several other families living over in that part of town — the Jenkins, the Cummins, T. P. Justus, the Lowes, the Lannings, — I can't begin to name them all. Oh yes, I don't want to forget Dr. Selman and all of his pretty

Henry Sheets Selman

daughters. He had four or five of them. I was sort of sweet on Lacy Mae at one time. I believe the eldest was Ethel and the youngest, Marie. Mrs. Selman, herself, was a real pretty woman.

The old mill in early Llano.

The Southern Hotel.

CHAPTER 19

NOW THE SOUTHERN PART OF LLANO

There were three or four roads leading south out of town. One going south which they call Bridge Street, I believe, is now the main Fredericksburg Highway. I believe I have already named most families who lived on that road then, with exception of Mr. Landrum who lived in a nice brick home on the left going out. Then on the right, the other side of Mrs. Alexander's, lived Judge Flack and his family. He had two children, Joe and Kate. They were kinfolks to the Dalrymples who lived back towards town. Come to think of it, I believe that I have omitted quite a few families back that way, so I will go all the way back to town and start south on this road.

Fitchenbaum, a Jew merchant, and his family lived on the left. His children were Morris, Max and Annie. Next came Mrs. Roberts' home. I think she ran a sort of boarding house or something. She had a sort of slave called Rufus. I do not remember too much about them. Across the street, on the right hand side of the road, lived the Fosters. I remember two of the boys, Carlos and Wayne. There was also a young lady by the name of Jimbob. I do not know if she was a sister to Carlos and Wayne or not. By the way, Wayne developed the first case of appendicitis we ever heard of in Llano, and Dr. Selman operated on him. He got the appendix O.K., only he cut out about a foot of the gut which it was attached to, also. Of course, he died. Next door, still on the right, lived Dr. Ed. Tounsend. He owned the Townsend's Drug Store there in town. He had a boy and a girl, Ray and Bessie. Next door to him lived Dr. Billy Townsend, his brother. He was a practicing physician. He had one daughter, Fay. He drove a team of gray horses on all his calls. I will tell more about them later on for I drove for him when I got a little older. He married Gussie Dalrymple, who lived right across the street from him on the left side of the road. Next to the Dalrymple home lived Mack Heard, but I haven't told about the Dalrymple family yet have I? The oldest was Gene (Eugene). He was a grown young man and a lawyer — I believe prosecuting attorney, at one time. Then there was Dal; I suppose his name was Dallas, then Sebe, and Archie was the youngest. Sebe was my fishing buddy clear up until he died a few years ago.

Now Mack Heard was one of my playmates while going to school, and there wasn't anything much we wouldn't do. We also had four or five fights a week with each other; so we nearly always had a "shiner" on one of our eyes, and sometimes both of them would be black at the same time. Mack was crippled in one of his hips. I do not know exactly what it was, but then it didn't hinder him much in anything he wanted to do. At times he would have to use a crutch; then he would get better and discard his crutch. I will tell of some of Mack's and my capers later on. I believe I stated before that Mrs. Heard, Mack's mother, worked with Mrs. Wilkes in her millinery shop

in town. Mrs. Wilkes lived right across the street on the right from Mrs. Heard. Mrs. Wilkes had one son, Milton. She was also a widow. Milton died while I was still pretty young. I do not remember him too well. Next door to Mrs. Wilkes lived Wallace Watkins. He is alive today (July - 1970), and looking hale and hearty, which is an example of good clean living. I do not remember of him having any children then, but now he has a son, Jim. I guess he was born after I left Llano. Next door to him lived his brother, George Watkins. They had one son, Benedict. He wore long blonde curls when he was a little boy, and his parents almost worshipped him. I think maybe they loved him too much because the poor boy fell out of a pecan tree when he was quite young and killed himself. He only fell about ten feet. I could have easily jumped that distance without it hurting me. Poor Mr. George Watkins and his wife. They sure took it pretty hard. I believe that Mr. George Watkins was the best hearted boy of all of the Watkins brothers. I know he certainly was good to my father after he had his stroke. I do not know what we would have done without him. I will tell more about him later on. Mr. George Watkins lived on the corner of a small street which ran across the highway right there. Across the highway, on the left, was the rock Landrum home. Then on up the road, on the left, and east about a block was the Llano High School. Now back on the highway and just across the little street from the George Watkins, lived the Atchison family. There were two families of Atchisons living in Llano. The other ones lived on the north side of town. This family I am speaking of now—I only remember one girl, or young lady, Beula. She worked for P. G. Sheppard's Dry Goods Store. Next to them lived the Allen Newsom Family, and I believe I have named all of the rest of them out that road.

Now I will go back to town and start out a crooked, winding dirt road which eventually turns into the old Fredericksburg Road. Now just after we leave the courthouse square, on the right, was some old building, I believe that it was the Presbyterian Church. Then still on the left was the Stoudenmeir place. I believe he had four children; two girls, Allie and Johnnie, and two boys, Dallas and Sam. Johnnie was in my class at school. Mr. Stoudenmeir did a little bit of everything; running a livery stable, a grocery store and he also was a hog buyer and seller. Right across the street on the right hand side there was a small shack where Charlie Smith and Jim Miller lived. They were half brothers. Now right in the center of the road was a great big old liveoak tree. They wouldn't cut it down for it was too pretty and gave too good a shade. Still on the right, also on the same large lot where the shack was built, lived the Smith family, parents of Charlie and Jim. All the rest of the children were girls. My Uncle Dave Townsend married Tempie Smith. Then there was Emma Smith who married Jack Carter, the agent for the Wells Fargo Express Company there in Llano. Then the youngest was Bill Smith, about my age, and in my class at school. Then right in the middle of that

road, the Swanson family lived; Charlie Swanson, Gloria Swanson and Mattie Swanson. There may have been more children, but that is all I remember. Now that home kept the road from going on straight there, so it made a jog to the right, and right at the jog, Dr. Brown lived. He lived in a sort of a weird looking brick house set back off the road a bit, and then his pasture ran back quite a ways. On the left there was another sort of a tumbled down shack where a family lived. All he did was cut and haul wood. You could buy a good size load of split stove wood (to cook with) for a dollar in those days, so you can see no one got rich selling wood then. Henry Robinson also sold quite a bit of stove wood then. Now, here, this road from town sort of curved around and joined that straight road which was coming from town, by the Methodist Church, coming on by the Tom Moore place, which I have already named. Now here, where they joined, were two small ditches with wooden culverts over them. Between the ditches was a road running east and west. On the road running east a couple of families lived. The first house was a two story house where Judge Oatman moved to after he left Barler Flats. Besides his barn and lot in the rear, he had about a five acre can patch. I remember one time Watkins Brooks and I cut that cane with a small hand sickle tied it up in bundles and shocked it — all for the amount of three dollars. You can see we made big money in those days. In the next house east of the Oatman place Uncle Lewis and Aunt Sally Johnson lived. They were no relation to any of us except the Hargises. That is what they called them, so we all did the same. They were an elderly couple . Their hobby was growing things. Seems they both had a "green thumb". Everything they planted turned out fine. They had the prettiest and the best grape arbor in the whole town., and they had good fruit trees also. All of us kids loved them both because they always gave us a nice bunch of grapes or a peach, plum or apricot. We would also run errands for them etc. Just the other side of the Johnson home those two ditches ran into that large gully, which ran in front of our house and curved around at the Watkins Brooks home. Then back of Uncle Lewis and Aunt Sally's place was a sort of vacant lot. There was a house built out there beyond the lot, and the Ballinger boys moved in there. Both the older boys were grown, but Adam and his younger brother (I forget his name right now) went to school with me. Adam had been salivated at one time, and his mouth was twisted around and he could only talk out of one side of it. They both were real nice boys, and they all went to Sunday School and Church each Sunday. I never heard anything about their father or mother, so they must have been orphans.

Now going west on that little road, there was only one vacant house on the right hand side of it. That same road ran into another road just beyond that vacant house, which was later bought and remodeled by Jack Carter and his wife, Aunt Emma, who still (1970) live there today. By the way, that street today is named Green

Street, and the left side was the rear end of the Hargises, the Wachtmans and Judge Johnson's cow pens, barns and stables. Just to the rear of the Hargis lot was a large live oak tree which we kids used to climb all over, then the Wachtman stable and carriage shed. Henry Wachtman had an old hard shelled turtle. He said it was one hundred years old. I do not know what proof he had. He would stand on that old turtle's back, and it would carry him all over the yard. Next door to him was Judge Johnson's cow pen and horse lot. Most everyone kept a milk-cow or two.

Now at that time, Sid Johnson was my best pal. They kept three cows, and I believe, a couple of goats, five or six hives of honey bees, and a whole yard full of dogs and cats. They were all crazy about pets, the Judge included. Sid also had a pretty little black mare which he called "Black Beauty". Lets see; there was Marie, the oldest, then Albert Sidney ("Sid") — his mother used to call him "General". Then there were two more girls, Nonie and Fay, and Nonie was just about the biggest tom boy I ever saw in all my life. She could do anything we boys could do. We would go down in the cow pen and ride calves, and Nonie was right there with us. She could ride calves just as well as any of us could. She has a scar right now, today, if she is still living, on her chin where Black Beauty kicked her. I cannot remember just how it happened, but I believe she was riding the mare, and she threw Nonie off and kicked her on the chin before she hit the ground. Old Judge, and Sid also, really loved to fish, and they were good fishermen, too. They had a fine cistern also, and most all the neighbors would go over and get a cool bucket of cistern water for drinking purposes. It was much cooler than the regular tap water which we had. Most of us folks used a wooden water bucket with a piece of tow-sack or gunny sack wrapped around the outside of the bucket. They would keep the sack wet and hanging in a cool place where the air could blow over it, and that really helped, too. Several of the folks had cisterns, but we never could afford one. The only trouble with cisterns was that most all of them were full of "wiggle tails". The Judge and Sid solved that problem by dropping into the cistern three or four of the largest catfish they could bring home alive, and believe me, they kept the place clear of "wiggle tails". I do not know what else they fed to them. Maybe a bunch of minnows every so often, and maybe a few worms or hellgramites. You could never tell what Sid would do. However, it didn't kill any of us anyway. They also had a couple of large catfish in their horse trough. Now the Judge had a nigger boy, by the name of George, who was about the best cook I ever saw in all my life. We all referred to him as "Nigger George". Not any disrespect to him because we all loved him. Even, he, himself, if you asked him his name would reply that he was Judge Johnson's "Nigger George". That is the only name we knew to call them in those days, and none of them were offended at being referred to as a nigger. Now as I was saying, George was the best cook ever and the

Judge always kept a box full of camping pots, pans and dishes etc. Ever so often old George would say, "Lets have a big chili party tonight." He would spread the word to all of the gang that we needed a couple of old roosters, as many eggs as we could bring — don't forget to bring all the cold bread we could find, and just anything good to eat. So late that evening, just after dark, we would all go just over the hill from the Judge's house and build a big fire, and George would proceed to make a great big pot of rooster chili. He always kept plenty of red pepper, garlic, and comino seeds etc. himself, and boy, could he make good chili! There would most always be twelve or fifteen of us boys in the gang, and of course, Nonie. We would also put all of the eggs in a large can and hard boil them, so we would really have a feed. It wasn't very long until some of the men began to miss their roosters, as well as lots of their eggs. So they followed us one night, and just as we were eating, they came in on us. The chili smelled so good, they asked if they could have a bowl of it, and of course, George accomodated them. They ate it all, smacked their lips and said that was sure good. Sam Watkins, who had missed a couple of his roosters, said, "Well I guess I can afford to donate a couple of old roosters for such a good cause as that." After that there were always nearly as many grown men as there were boys. I remember one particular night, as I was gathering up eggs, I came upon a full nest of them, so I filled my hat full and brought them all up on the hill to the party. While they were boiling, they began to burst open and stink something awful. George poured them out on the ground, and they all had boiled little baby chickens in them. George said, "Any you fellows like boiled chicken?" No one did; and George cautioned us all, "After this when you are gathering eggs, be sure you do not rob any setting hen's nests!" We sure had lots of good parties over that hill.

That road which ran along the side of Jack Carter's place and Judge Johnson's place was known as the Six Mile Road. Just after it, past our party site, there was another road which branched off to the right, which ran by the Cantley home, that was an old rock house. It looked to be over a hundred years old. All I knew of that family was they had one girl by the name of Birdie. She went to school with me, and she loved bananas. In those days you could buy bananas, two for a nickel or twenty-five cents a dozen. One day Mama and I were watching Birdie come across the courthouse lawn, and she ate seven bananas before she crossed the square. I'll bet she had the belly ache, too, afterwards because they were pretty good sized bananas. The road, after passing the Cantley house, went on out to Flag Creek by John Frazier's house and then across the creek where a bunch of other people lived. Across the road from John Frazier's house was Bob Davis's pasture which was our favorite hunting ground. Mr. Davis never objected to us hunting in his pasture. He had all kinds of game, and at one time there was slaughter pen there. He also had a good sized stock tank. I have drunk water out of it many a time, also

swam in it.

Now the Six Mile Road I was talking about continued on out south. Just a little ways out was a pretty good sized brick house. It had a large wide porch running across the front and down both sides almost to the end of the house. At the time it was occupied by the Lowenstein family. He also ran a dry goods store in town. There was one boy, Melvin. He owned a three wheel tricycle which we used to ride on that nice front porch. After the Lowensteins left Llano, a Mr. Moss bought the place. He was a big stock man there in Llano County. He had two sons, Bill and Andrew, and a girl by the name of Mary. I do not know if he had any other children or not because there were two or three families of Mosses there in Llano County, but Bill, Andrew and Mary, I went to school with.

Almost directly south of the Moss family lived the Ed Lindsey family. He was also a stock man. They had four children I believe, Nina, a girl, and Tom and Rob, boys. They also had a baby brother I believe, but I do not know his name. Now Tom, Rob, Floyd, (my brother) and I used to play together quite a bit. Rob and Floyd were about the same age, and I was about one year older than Tom and about a year younger than Nina. We all went to school together but were in different grades. Now in the rear of their house, and on both sides of it, there were mesquite thickets. Each of us had one of those small seventy-five cent axes. They had a small red wagon, and Floyd and I would bring along a wooden wagon, one my Grandpa Watkins made himself. We would cut those mesquite trees down, trim them up good, cut the wood in three or four feet lengths, and then stack it up to dry, to use for our Christmas "bonfire" which we had every Christmas. I do not know why, but in those days there in Llano, we would always shoot our fireworks at Christmas time — and the Fourth of July — we didn't even notice hardly. Anyway, on the side of Papa Watkins' house, and just to the rear of the Coulter place, were about three vacant lots right there together. That is where we would build our bonfire each Christmas and shoot our firecrackers, skyrockets and Roman candles, etc.. We were all pretty young then, and at nine o'clock all of our parents would begin calling us in to go to bed so old Santa Claus could come around and fill up ur stockings, which we all hung up in those days. That was one night in the year which we never gave them any argument when they called us in. The Coulter place which I was talking about was later sold to a family by the name of Wyckoff. He had been a rancher and lived in the country before he moved to town and bought out a saloon down in town, across the street from the new postoffice. He had three children; one daughter, almost grown, and two boys, Monty and Damon, two more of my school mates and playmates. Monty was about my age and Damon was about Floyd's age. They had a large cow pen and barn in the rear of their house. Right outside of their cow pen and barn, on the east side, was one of the largest live oak trees there was in Llano. It stood right in the center of the old Fredericksburg Road.

It was such a pretty tree, no one wanted to cut it down; so the road just went around it on both sides. The reason I know it was such a big tree was because I fell forty feet out of the top of it later on after I got older. I was almost right in the top of it — Yep, I was robbing a bird's nest — I was astride one limb and was holding on to another smaller limb just above my head, when the limb I was sitting astride of began to break. I just locked my legs around it and held on to the one above me for dear life. When the bottom limb broke completely off, then the one I was holding on to also broke off, so I just rode both of those limbs all the way down. When I had fallen a little over halfway down, I hit on my back across a large limb. One man who saw me fall said that I just swayed on that limb for a couple of times, then I slid off, head first, onto the ground. He said that I hit the ground on the left side of my head and my left shoulder. He said that I just doubled up like a "jack knife", and he thought that every bone in my body was broken. He carried me home. I only lived about a half a block from there. I was unconscious for three days. When I came to, the Doctor said that as far as he could find, not a single bone was broken. However, I had a crooked spine, which is still

ow, today, and my back was very weak for a long wear sort of a shoulder brace; he even put me on vhile — said that would help me keep some of the / spine. Then just as I was beginning to get a little loped sixteen large boils right in the center of my r told me that each one of those boils were worth a hundred dollars to me. I told him I would sell him all sixteen of them for fifty cents.

Right beyond the Wyckoff home was where a preacher by the name of Briggs lived. He had two daughters, Regina and I forget the younger one's name. Regina was just old enough to be "boy crazy". She was quite a bit older than I. She got a crush on Sam Stoudenmeir. They would send notes to each other through me. Regina was sort of cockeyed, and I think that Sam was ashamed to go out with her.

Now on out the Fredericksburg Road, on the left, lived a family by the name of Milligan. They had one boy, Oscar. I never have been able to find anyone there in Llano who remembers them. I believe that they moved pretty soon, and one of the Boynton families moved in that house. George Boynton, I believe it was. He ran a clothing store down in town just below the bank, on Bridge Street. One of his brothers ran the Llano News, and his other brother was a red-headed preacher. George had a very beautiful daughter, Elenor, and a smaller boy; I do not remember his name.

Just beyond, to the south, up on top of a small hill, was a very beautiful home, a two story affair. We called it the McLean Mansion in those days. He was Judge McLean. He had three sons, Harold, Heber, and another one whose name I forget. He was later murdered here in Dallas over in Lake Cliff Park. After I left Llano, a daughter was born to them, Minnie Belle. Judge McLean had the show place of the town. He kept four or five pet deer in a small pasture there to the south of his house. He built the highest barbwire fence I had ever seen. I think it must have been about fifteen feet high. We would all like to go up and watch the deer. Back in those days there were very few deer in Llano County; they didn't cultivate them then like they do now. I remember Papa used to go on a deer hunt with a bunch of men and stay four or five days; sometimes they didn't even see a deer. But now days they raise them just as they do cattle. Back to Judge McLean's house now. He had three or four Shetland ponies for his boys to ride, also — about the only ones there were in Llano at the time. I used to deliver meat out to them after I got older. I always wore boots and spurs then because those poor old horses which we rode were almost always tired. One day I was up there on the hill. I had just brought them some meat. The boys had a couple of the Shetland ponies all saddled up which they had been riding. Mrs. McLean said to me, "Allan, I wonder what the little ponies would do if you would use the spurs on them?" She said they had never been ridden with spurs. I said, "I don't know, but we can soon

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crooked right now, today, and my back was very weak for a long time. I had to wear sort of a shoulder brace; he even put me on crutches for a while — said that would help me keep some of the strain off of my spine. Then just as I was beginning to get a little stronger, I developed sixteen large boils right in the center of my back. The doctor told me that each one of those boils were worth a hundred dollars to me. I told him I would sell him all sixteen of them for fifty cents.

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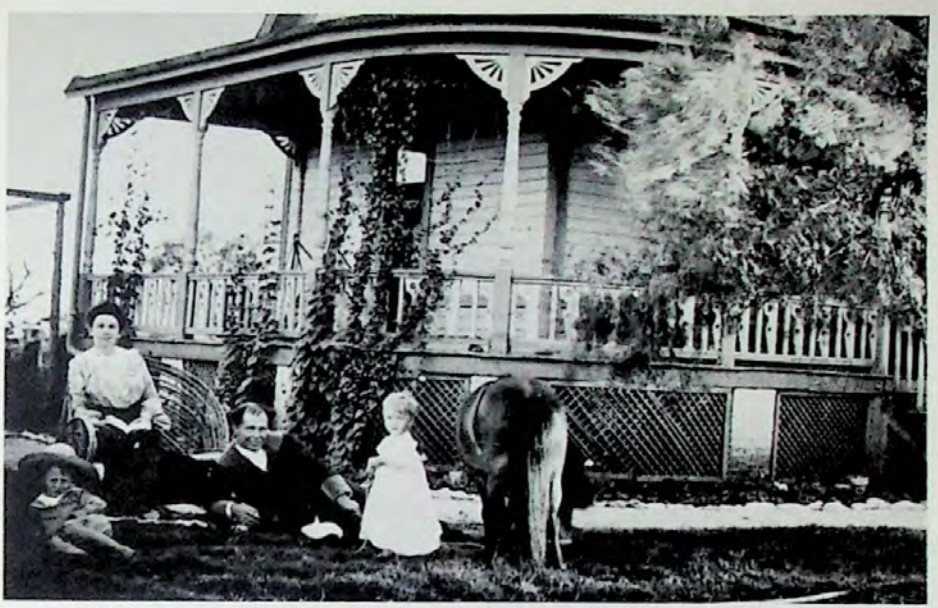
find out." So I mounted one of them and sort of touched him with the spurs; and wham! The next thing I knew, I was sailing right over his head. I hit sitting down. It nearly jarred my teeth out. After Mrs. McLean saw that I wasn't hurt, we had a good laugh. I told her that now we knew what he would do! Judge McLean's brother-in-law was mayor at the time. I believe that I told about him before though. Judge McLean also had a small pasture sort of running down a small hill, going north, from his house. Now that little pasture is where all of the Churches held their Easter Egg Hunt each year. That whole pasture would be just full of kids each year. The Judge also used to play the flute, and on a real quiet night, we could sit on our front porch and hear him playing his flute, just as if he were right next door. Papa would remark, "There goes the Judge practicing on his flute." Papa played the cornet. I think they were both in the Llano Band.

Now we will travel on out the Fredericksburg Road. About the only house I remember out that way was Fitzgerald's farm, on the left of the road, right on Oatman Creek, where we would come out and steal peaches and watermelons. He said he didn't mind us getting a melon or two, but he hated for us to just waste them. Some of the boys would just go down a row and bust them open, just dig the heart out and go on to the next one and do the same. They finally got so bad at wasting his melons that he loaded his old shotgun with bacon rind and rock salt, and he would blast away at them. One of the boys was crawling through the barbwire fence on time, and he got a load of the bacon rind and rock salt right in the seat of his britches. Boy! As he went through the fence, he left about half of his britches hanging on that fence. The next day old man Fitzgerald brought them into town and was trying to find out who owned the other part of those britches. I don't think he ever found out though. I believe he had two boys and one girl. One of the boys came into town and opened up a cafe. Sterling, the other boy learned to be an electrician and later moved to Dallas. Carrie, the girl was in my class at school, and later on she moved to Dallas also. I met her once, and she had a good job working in a bank.

Now that is about all there was in that direction until you get about fifteen miles out of town. Then you came to a small road running to the right marked, "Enchanted Rock". Now that is a sight well worth seeing. After you travel four or five miles, you come to a very large creek. I do not know for sure, but I believe that it is Big Sandy. Then just across the creek is the Enchanted Rock, which covers six hundred and forty acres of ground. In may opinion, it is the show place of Llano County. I will tell more about it later on, and about a hunting trip Grover Walker and I made out there.



The McLean Mansion. Pictured are Judge McLean, Mrs. McLean, Harold and Heber McLean. (Photo courtesy of the Museum)

The Llano Cornet Band in the early 1900's.

CHAPTER 20

I START TO SCHOOL

Now that I was seven years old, I was started to school. Our starting grade then was known as the "primer class". All we had was a little blue-back book called the "Primer". I do not remember exactly who was my teacher, but I believe that it was Miss Nellie Buttery. In those days some teachers taught three or four different classes. I do not remember too much about that first year in school — only that the whole school yard was very rocky. As most of us boys went barefooted in the summer, it seemed pretty tough on our feet at first, but then we got used to it soon.

That was also the year Papa taught me how to swim. He, Papa Watkins and I were up on the river fishing. There were plenty of fish in the Llano river then. Papa cut me a "willow pole", then made me a line of #8 black thread. It was first doubled and then twisted together, and that made a good strong line to catch perch on. After he had put the hook and sinker on, then he took just an ordinary bottle cork and cut a little slot, so my line would go in. Then he took another piece of thread and tied around the cork so it wouldn't come off. That was my first fishing trip. I think I caught about five perch that day. In the afternoon, after we had a nice mess of fish already caught, Papa and Papa Watkins decided to go in swimming. They took off their clothes and told me to do the same. It was a good ways up the river and no one was around to see us. No one else used a bathing suit then; in fact, we had never even heard of them. The water was nice and clear and had a pretty sandy bottom and just about waist deep to Papa. He kept telling me to come on and jump in, but I wouldn't do it. So he finally came out on the bank of the river and picked me up. I thought he was going to carry me into the river. Instead, he just took me to the edge, then threw me in and said, "Now come on and swim!" Of course instinct just teaches you to kick your feet and paddle with your arms. As Papa Watkins was already in there with me, he placed one hand under my stomach and told me how to kick my feet and paddle my arms. Then Papa came back also, and believe it or not, in about a half an hour, I could swim fairly well. I had lost all fear of the water, and from then on, I went regularly with the other boys.

Along about that time was when Papa got "sun stroke". Seems he was going out of town on some job, and was home waiting for the delivery wagon to come and pick up his tool box full of tools and haul them over to the train for him. Somehow, the delivery wagon was late, and Papa was afraid he would miss his train. As I have stated before, Papa was a large man and also very strong. So he picked up that heavy metal-bound tool box, weighing over two hundred pounds, placed it on his shoulder, and started walking to the depot with it. It was a very hot day. Just before he reached town,

down he came, with his tool box almost on top of him. He was lying there, unconscious when the delivery wagon came to pick him up and found him. He placed Papa and his tool box in the back of the wagon. He told a passerby to stop by and tell Dr. Townsend to hurry on over to our house where he had brought Papa, still unconscious After the doctor was there a while, Papa started to come out of it' Dr. Townsend said that Papa had had a sun stroke, and that he was very lucky to still be alive. From then on, Papa's health went from bad to worse. Then he started having Epileptic fits every so often. He would just drop down where ever he was. He would jerk all over, his eyes would roll and he would start frothing at the mouth. It would nearly scare me to death every time I would see him have one. About all you could do for him was to try and make him as comfortable as possible. He always carried a bottle of his medicine in his vest pocket. It was Bromide of Potash, or something like that. He was supposed to take a teaspoonful of that bromide in about one half a glass of water. He instructed me about that so I could tell anyone what to do in case he would drop down away from home.

In the meantime, I kept on going to school. I believe that Sam Hargon was the professor then. He was noted for the hard whippings he would give the boys. One day at the noon hour, we were all out playing in the school yard, and I did something; I don't remember just what, and Professor Hargon called me to come to him. Instead of me coming to him, I lit our for home. The school yard had big, wide steps going over the fence instead of a gate. I headed for those steps, and in the meantime, Sam Hargon yelled to one of the larger boys (Charlie Goodman) to catch me and bring me back to him. By that time, I was over the steps and headed for home. Charlie caught me and was trying to pick me up in his arms to carry me back to Professor Hargon, but I was struggling so hard that he sort of half way dropped me; and somehow I had managed to pick up a couple of fair sized rocks. When Charlie got me up in his arms, I began to peck him on the head with those rocks, one in each hand. He dropped me like a "hot potato"; then I lit out for home with old Charlie right behind me. I never knew that I could run so fast. Then I came to that large creek, which ran in front of our house. I know that it was at least ten feet wide right there. I never will know how I did it, but I just seemed to sail across that creek. Old Charlie didn't try to jump it; he went down one side and climbed out on the other side. By that time, I was almost home, and Papa was sitting out on the front porch. I ran up to him, and old Charlie tried to follow, when Papa said, "Whoa there! Just where do you think you are going?" Then Charlie said, "Professor Hargon said for me to catch him and bring him back to him." Papa said, "You tell Sam Hargon, if he wants my boy to come and get him, himself." Well, I did not go to school for a couple of days. Then Professor Hargon finally came by to see Papa and find out why I had not come back to school. Papa wanted to know just what I had done that he wanted me back so bad. The professor said that all I had done was to disobey him when

he had called me and wanted me to come to him. Papa told him that he didn't think I deserved a whipping just for that, and that he would not send me back unless he promised that he would not whip me. He promised, and Papa sent me on back to school. Just as soon as he got me back, he proceeded to get me in his office and beat the hell out of me! When I went home, I told Papa what he had done, and I showed him the stripes on my back. When Papa saw those, he said, "Why that lying so and so. He promised me that he would not whip Allan if I sent him back to school. Why I am going to go up to that school right now and just wipe the floor up with him." Then Mama began to cry, and she said,"Now George, you know that you are in no condition to go up there and start a fight. Why you may kill each other!" So Papa sort of cooled down a bit, and said, "I still think it was a dirty, lowdown trick, and also, a big lie which he told me."

My oldest little sister, Blanch, was a sweet little blue-eyed blonde, and she had the sweetest disposition I ever saw. Everything she referred to was always her pretty so and so; like "here comes my pretty Dr. Townsend" or "my pretty Allan", "my pretty Floyd" or "here comes my pretty Mr. Barler" or "I want to wear my pretty new dress to my pretty Sunday School". She was only about three years old. When I hear these people grumbling so much about poverty, it makes me wonder what they would have done if they had of lived in Llano in those days. Now we were in real poverty then after my father lost his health, because I don't care how cheap groceries were then, if you didn't have any money — what good did it do you? I remember one evening all we had for supper was corn meal mush and milk. In those days most any stock man would let you have a milk cow for her feed, and corn meal, you could get a twenty-five pound for twenty-five cents. Now that evening Mama had a pot of mush on the stove cooking. My little sister, Blanche, was so hungry. She came along and reached up on the stove and pulled that hot pot of mush right off the stove. Quite a bit of it went right into her face. It is a wonder it didn't kill her because she was burned real bad.

Papa also had a pretty fat hog in the pen he was fattening up to kill that winter. He had an old wash pot, and also, a large wooden tub full of corn which he was soaking in water with several shovels of ashes sprinkled over it. They used ashes quite a bit in place of lye then. Anyway, the ashes tended to make the corn soft, sort of like hominy. We kids soon found out that it tasted pretty good, and we came near eating all of the hog feed up. I'll tell you, I do not know what we would have done, in those days, if it had not been for Mr. George Watkins, who owned the house we were living in. I don't think that he was charging Papa any rent then, and Papa Watkins kept us supplied with vegetables. Mama milked our cow — she called her Rose. In those days a forty-eight pound bag of flour cost from ninety-eight cents to one dollar and five cents. They didn't make small bags then. So we could most always have hot biscuits with cow

butter, and some sort of home-made preserves or molasses which you could buy for thirty-five to fifty cents a gallon jug, if you brought your own jug along. All molasses was shipped in barrels at that time. Anyway, we always managed to stay just a few jumps ahead of starvation. Sometimes when Mama would get a little sewing to do, for which she would receive fifty cents a day, and she would feel real flush, we would have a real feast of chili and hot tamales. There was a Mexican man there in the edge of town who made his own chili and tamales. He had two large ten gallon lard cans which fitted real nicely into the little wagon which he had built to haul his chili and tamales in. Boy, they were the best I had ever eaten in my life. You could get the tamales for ten cents a dozen or three dozen for a quarter, and the chili was also real cheap. I could almost eat a dozen tamales myself. They were all wrapped in shucks. Papa said the reason they tasted so good was because the Mexican made them out of dogs — and I believed it for a long time.

Papa didn't seem to be getting any better at all, and his "fits" were occuring more frequently now also. I think that he was worrying himself to death. Then on September 19, 1897, my little sister, Blanche, took sick and died. And when she died, I think that Mama and Papa both came near dying themselves. Now, again. our good friend, George Watkins, came to Papa's rescue because I don't think that Papa even had the money to bury her. Mr. McInnis, the undertaker, being kin to Papa may have furnished the coffin in which she was buried, but Mr. George Watkins gave Papa the lot right along side his plot there in the cemetary. I do not know just what caused Blanche's death, but in those days most every time some one took sick, they called it "slow fever". I know soon after Blanche passed on, Mama took down with the slow fever. She was down for over a month, and when she began to recover, her hair was all matted up so bad that she had it cut off just above her shoulders. As she got better, her hair turned naturally curly, and everyone remarked how pretty she was.

Then after she had recovered, to cap it all, my other little sister, Annie, who was only about one year old, took down sick, and on December 2, 1897, she also passed on. I always will believe that the good Lord saw that Papa and Mama were not able to take care of them properly, and they also being girls, were not able to go through all of the hardships which my brother and I went through, so He just took them on for Himself. And I just <u>know</u> that it was all for the best. After all of this, Mama and Papa just couldn't take any more of it. Papa being sick, and couldn't work and worrying himself almost to death, became cross and irritable. I remember one evening we were all sitting on the front porch, and Mama and Papa got into a sort of argument. That was the first time I ever heard Papa cross to her. He said, "Shut up before I knock you in the head with a stick of stove wood!" Mama began to cry and jumped up, took Floyd by the hand, and said, "Come on, we are going up to Mama Watkins. We just

don't have to sit here and take that." Papa looked at me and said, "Aren't you going with them?" I replied, "No, I want to stay here with you." He grabbed me and hugged me and said, "That's my boy!" Pretty soon we went to bed. In the morning Papa told me to go on up to Mama Watkins, which was only one block up the street, and tell Mama that he was sorry and for her to come on back home. So I went up and told her, also ate a good breakfast, and she told me to go back and tell Papa that she was not coming back and for him to give up the house. She fixed up a nice breakfast for me to take back to Papa though. After Papa had eaten breakfast, I saw him put his head in his hands and cry for the first time in all my life. About all the furniture we had in the house was a couple of beds, a cradle, a few chairs and a dresser for Mama, a home made dining table, a small cook table in the kitchen and a brand new cook stove. I believe it was called a "Buck Range". It had the picture of a large buck deer on the oven door. Now that range was Mama's pride and joy. She had bought it with the money which she made while cooking for Papa and Papa Watkins, when they were running their cafe. Now it seems that Papa owed a grocery bill to Sam Stoudenmeir and couldn't pay it. When he heard that Papa and Mama had broken up, he came out to the house and asked Papa if he could take the cook range for the grocery bill, which Papa owed him. So Papa told him to go ahead and take it. The rest of the furniture was stowed up at Papa Watkins for a while.

Now there Papa was with no home and no place to go, although he was well liked in Llano. So they voted to make him a "ward" of Llano County. The County Sheriff was Hick Russell at the time. He was one of Papa's carpenters before Papa lost his health, so he gave Papa a key to the entrance to the jail. Papa did little odd jobs around there to help pay for his room and board, and then I think they gave him about five dollars a month to buy tobacco and a few personal needs.

I forgot to mention a little incident which happened before Papa took sick. Sam Watkins, who lived next door to us, had a real dark-haired brown dog. I think he was a spaniel. He would lie under the front steps and everytime anyone would pass the house, he would run out at them and bark. If you were afraid of him, he would bite you. He bit my brother Floyd several times. But me, I never saw the dog that I was afraid of. At first he ran out at me, but then with a couple of well placed rocks, I soon broke him of the habit of running out at me. He would run all right, but he would run under the steps and hide.

After a little while, Mama discovered a small one-room building down in town, right next to the Bon Ton Barber Shop on one side, and Ora and Lee Cross lived on the other side with their step mother. They called her "Ginny". Then just the other side of them, to the north, Mr. and Mrs. Luchase, an Italian shoe maker lived. Mrs. Luchase and Mama became good friends, and she taught Mama how

to cook Italian spaghetti. Boy, was it good! The little building which we lived in belonged to Judge Slator. I think he only charged Mama one dollar a month. Mama put a partition right down the center of it. In the rear we cooked and ate and also slept. In the front was Mama's sewing machine and a sort of a living room. She already had her sign out front, "Sewing", and she kept pretty busy, too. That is when I got my job in the barber shop, and I shined shoes on the side.

Back in school again. The boys and girls did not play together. The boys played in the front yard, and the girls played in the back yard. On the east side of the school house, there was a high board fence running right down the center of the yard to separate the boys from the girls. That was because the "priveys" were located right on the east side of the yard. They were on a sort of a hill, and behind each privey, the ground started down hill. The "scavanger wagon" came around twice a week, cleaned them out good and sprinkled lime all around on the ground underneath the toilet holes. In fact, each privey kept a barrel of lime sitting in one corner all the time, and that way, we never had much of an odor. The school had two cisterns. One on the east side of the school, behind the fence on the girls side, and the other one was on the west side. There was no fence on that side separating the boys from the girls, so that cistern was used more than the other one. And besides, the shed where most of us ate our lunch was on the west side. Quite a few of us went home for lunch each day, and I was one of those. I didn't like it much because I always wanted to hurry back and play. However, sometimes I could persuade my mother to pack me a small lunch in a paper bag. That way we had more time to play. Most all of the children brought their lunch in old empty lard buckets. I never see any now. Some of the children would bring along enough food to feed a hard working man; then others would have hardly anything at all. I remember one poor little girl would bring the same thing each day, a great big baked sweet potato. She was conscious of all the other children looking at her when she opened her lunch. So one day she opened her lunch bucket and brought out the usual sweet potato, and she looked all around at the other children and said, "I sure do like sweet potatoes!" Poor kid, I guess that was about all she had to bring. These kids now days hollering for free school lunches make me sick. We didn't even have a lunch room, and now they are getting ready to air condition all the school rooms. We never had any air conditioned rooms and no ice water fountain. Our only drinking water was from those two cisterns, and then after we drew a bucket of water, we would have to wait until all of the "wiggle tails" settled to the bottom before we could drink it. And this "busing", the kids all over the country! Why it was unheard of in those days! And as I stated before, all toilets were outside.

I can cite at least a dozen children who walked over five miles each way every day. If the kids had to do that today, I am afraid we wouldn't have much school would we? And another thing, the

teachers of today are always crying for higher pay; and the more pay they get, the less they teach the kids. In fact, I can't see that they teach the kids much of anything except to be sassy to their elders and say "Yeah" and "Naw". Just pick a hundred kids at random and line them up and start asking them questions and see how many will say, "Yes sir" and "No sir". I'll bet you won't find five out of the hundred. Now they are teaching them sex! That is the silliest thing I ever heard of in all my life. Didn't anyone have to teach me sex. I wonder who teaches sex to all the birds and the bees and all the other animals. And "litter bugs", I never saw so many in all my life. The kids are not by themselves in this; some of their parents are just as bad, if not worse than their children. Just a couple of weeks ago I was reading an article in the Llano News telling about the old time school teachers and the wages they received then. That was when I went to school in Llano. I believe they said the most a male teacher was ever paid was seventy dollars a month, and he was the professor; and the most a woman teacher was ever paid was sixty dollars a month, and that was Miss Bessie Buttery. By the way, I went to school under her. Then the article went on to say that most of the women teachers were only paid thirty and forty dollars a month, and one only got twenty dollars on her first year!

I am only saying this to compare the school days and customs when I went to school and the times and customs of today. I must say that I believe that we had the best teachers then. Why I can just imagine what would have happened then if we were to smoke "pot" or take any other sort of drugs. I even got my bottom blistered for just smoking cedar bark! As for a bunch of students "demonstrating", and taking over parts of the school and trying to tell the officials how to run the school — Boy! they would not have gotten very far! And if they were to burn or destroy any part of the school or fixtures — why they certainly would have been punished very severely! In those days, they were not just put in jail, fed good food, then turned loose. They would have been put on the "road gang" and made to work very hard to help pay for the corn bread and beans which they were fed while in jail. Seems like they do not have prisons any more, they have "club houses", where they just lock them up for a while, feed them good food and fatten them up good and turn them loose and soon go and do the same thing again. But then, I am getting clear off my subject, am I not?

Back to school again now. The children now days do not play anything like we played when I went to school. Our games at school consisted of baseball and one and two eyed cat. I doubt if any of the kids today even know what that is. Then we played a game called "shinny". We would choose up sides, then get a hard piece of wood or an old tin can; and each of us have our favorite stick to hit it with and try to get it to our own goal. It is just like the game they call hockey now, only we didn't have any ice to play on. The only reason I can see that they called it "shinny" is that if we got a little off side,

some one would whack us across the shins and say, "Shinny on your own side!" Then we played a little football, too. However, it was quite different from the way they play it today. In those days, the fellow running with the ball was not considered down until he hollered, "Down!" Then all the rest of the gang who were piled up on top of him would get up and let the runner up also. I remember one day, I was running with the ball, and when they tackled me, I fell on the ball. The ball was right in the pit of my stomach, and it just squashed the breath out of me. The other fellows just kept on piling on top of me. Roy Inks was saying to me, "Holler down!", but I didn't have enough breath in me to hollar anything at all. Roy finally surmised something was wrong with me, and he made them all get off of me. I was just ready to pass out. Yes, Roy Inks, the boy whom the Inks Dam was named for, was our football captain. He was a couple of years older than I and was even in a different school room. He was a very smart and bright boy. I believe that he was an orphan; at the time he was living with Lee Watkins. He later became Mayor of Llano, and came right on up in life. George Watkins also helped him quite a bit. I think that he was related to the Watkins Brothers in some way. Anyway, he was always A#1 in my book.

Back at school again. We also played marbles quite a bit — mostly "keeps" which means you got to keep the ones which you knocked out of the ring. Then we had a game we called "Purgatory". We dug three holes about fifteen feet apart, and then another hole off to the right angle from from the last hole in the line. It was also about fifteen feet away. The holes were only about two and one-half inches across the top, and about three inches deep. The idea was to see who could go all the way to Purgatory and back three times. First before we would shoot our marbles for the hole, we were allowed to take a couple of "spans". A span is as far as you can reach between your thumb and your middle finger. The other idea is to knock any other player's marble as far away from his hole as possible. Then the first one to make the circuit three times gets to stick the toe of his foot in the Purgatory hole and sprawl out as far as possible; and he gets three shots to knock his opponent as far as possible. That used to be a very good game.

Then we would have a "top spinning" fad. Each of us would get a good top, load the top of it good with lead, pull the "store bought spinner" out and put in a screw spinner. Sometimes we would notch our "taw" around the edges. Then we would draw a large ten foot circle, and each of us would place a top in the ring — then try to "plug them" out of the ring with our "taw top". All we knocked out were ours. Sometimes on a Saturday or Sunday, we would be in town, in front of the Corner Drug Store; and the men would back us and place nickels in the ring. All we knocked out was ours. Old Dr. Selman used to always back me. He always called me "Rooster". I do not know where he got that name, but that is what he called me. I remember one afternoon we were all in front of the Corner Drug

Store "plugging for nickels". There were seven or eight of us boys, and each of us had a backer, a grown man who staked us. Of course, Dr. Selman always staked me. He had been drinking a little that day when all of a sudden he said to me, "Rooster, when are you and Lacy Mae going to get married?" I didn't even know that he suspected that I was sweet on Lacy Mae, and I was just spell bound! I couldn't even answer him, but Clint Holden, a grown young man, who worked in the Corner Drug Store, spoke up and said "Why Doc., you wouldn't let her marry Allan would you? He is the meanest boy in town!" Old Doc said, "Huh! He may be mean, but I know that if she marries him, she will never starve; because if there is a loose nickel anywhere in town, Allan will get it!" He was right about that, too, because I did anything there was to make a nickel; shined shoes, swept out offices, cleaned spittoons, sold newspapers, goldeyed needles, electric porous plasters — sold fish, scrap iron, bones, pecans in season for two and three cents a pound — picked wild mustang grapes and stemed them and sold them for twenty cents a gallon. Oh, I would do most anything! I also made quite a bit by digging fishing worms and selling them for fifteen and twenty cents a can. They would cost you a couple of dollars now. What I am getting around to is, after I left Llano, in 1904, darned if Clint Holden didn't up and marry Lacy Mae himself!

Another game we played at school and after school, as well, I will try to describe to you. It was quite dangerous, too. We would melt the bottoms out of tin cans, and hammer them out good and flat, sharpen the edges good, and drive a couple of nail holes right in the center of our "zither", as we called them, about one-half an inch apart. Then we would place good strong strings (fishing line preferred) through the holes, stick our thumbs through each end of the string and sort of wind it up a bit. Then we would start pulling the strings back and forth until we got our "zithers" spinning and humming pretty good. Then we would step in and see who could cut the other's string. If you cut his string, you got to keep his "zither" and vice versa. Most times when a string was cut, the "zither" would fly most any way; maybe even up in your face, and cut you pretty badly.

Another game we played (this was off campus) was "bottle horses". We would use beer bottles and soda pop bottles for horses and mules. We would make our wagons out of cigar boxes, and we would haunt the saddle shop to pick up scraps of leather to make harnesses with. We would make double trees and single trees and put on the cigar boxes; and we would make regular harnesses for the bottles (our horses). White bottles would be gray horses, and the brown would be sorrell and bays, just owing to how dark they were. The soda pop bottles were our mules. They were different then, than what we have today. Then the bottle had a strong spring which fitted into the bottle, and the rubber washer was on the bottom of the spring on the inside of the bottle. After the bottle was full of soda

pop, a little hook was affixed to the machine which pulled the spring up into the bottle. Thus, fitting the rubber washer pretty tight, so none of the pop could leak out. Then when you wanted to open the bottle, all you had to do was strike the top of the spring, which extended about one inch out of the top of the bottle, with the heel of your hand and have it come spewing out all over everything. Mr. LaFrentz was in charge of this department. He would give us kids all the pop we could drink, and we would wash the bottles for him before they were filled. As I said before, the pop bottles were mules. They were much thicker and shorter than the beer bottles were, and mostly all clear and white, so they were called mules. We would use the beer bottle caps for money. They were also different from the ones we have today. First, there was a large cork stuck all the way into the neck of the bottle until it was flush with the top of the neck of the bottle. Then there was tin foil and a small tin cap bradded to the top. You always had to have a pretty heavy cork screw to open a bottle of beer. Of course, in the bars or saloons they always had a sort of lever which they placed the bottle under, and then pulled that lever, and it opened very easily. All of us kids were big traders and stock buyers. We would trade and buy all the time. The best trader was considered a rich stock man. Believe me, we never had a dull moment, even if we didn't have any cars, T.V.'s, radios, movies, or none of the conveniences which they have today. I truly believe that we were happier then, than the kids today are. We had our good fishing and swimming holes besides. I always did say that the Llano River was the prettiest river in the State of Texas! Along about this time, school let out for our summer vacation.

CHAPER 21

MY TRIP TO HOUSTON, TEXAS

It seems that Papa's health was not getting any better at all. He had two brothers living in Houston, Texas, and they told him to come down there for a while. They were both well known there as they had been Peace Officers for years and knew most everyone in town. So Papa took me along with him. In case he had one of his fits, I knew what to do. I remember we lived at Uncle Joe and Aunt Lela's house. I will never forget the address: 712 Capitol Avenue. If I ever got lost, I would ask a policeman how to get to 712 Capitol Avenue. That is why I remember it so well. It was almost in the heart of down town Houston, not far from the City Market. I thought that was the most wonderful place I ever saw in all my life. All of that fruit and vegetables displayed right out there on the sidewalks. They would spray it with water all the time to keep it fresh. It sure looked tempting. I remember one day a peddler came around selling cottage cheese. Seems he was hauling it around in a little wagon, and the cottage cheese was in a large tin container. He would give them all a taste of it first. Then most all bought some. I liked it so well, I followed him all around. Everytime he would give anyone else a taste, he would also give me one. It was sure good.

Uncle Joe only had one arm. The other was shot off in a gun battle. I remember how fascinated I was with his knife and fork. He had it all made in one piece. It was sort of curved, and on the curve was the knife part of it, and right on the very end was the fork. I thought that he managed it very nicely. Uncle Joe had two grown sons, Gid and Lester. I don't know what either of them did. Everytime I saw them, they were just lounging around on the front porch. They didn't pay too much attention to me. Only some evenings while I was playing on the front lawn, they would holler down and try to kid me a bit.

In the back yard they had the largest fig tree I ever saw in all my life. It seemed like a regular tree to me. I would climb up in it and pick figs and hand or drop them down to Aunt Lela. She would wash them good and put them in the ice box, get them good and cold and then eat them. I believe that Aunt Lela liked them as well as I did. She got mad at me later on. She dipped snuff; also kept a lip full of it most of the time. She was always wanting to kiss me, and I wouldn't let her. One day she slapped me and said, "Why won't you kiss me? You kiss Aunt Tempy." I said, "Cause you dip snuff and she doesn't" She didn't like that very much, and after that, she never was as friendly any more.

Then I found out how to go to Uncle Dave and Aunt Tempy's house. I had to ride a street car to some number on Buffalo Street. I forget the number now. Anyway, it was quite a way out in the suburbs. I liked it much better out there because there were quite a

few children I could play with. The girls were Audrey, Frances and Alice. The boys were George, Dee and Reginald, the baby. He hated the name of Reginald, and after he grew up, he changed it to Rex. I can't blame him much. George, Dee, Alice and I were more in the same age bracket. In the rear of where they lived was quite a grove of Sweet Gum trees near by. George and Dee showed me how to gather the sweet gum. They would take a large nail and hammer the point down good and flat so we could scoop the sweet gum out of the little holes on the tree, where it was running out. Then in our pockets, we carried a few pieces of resin. In another pocket we carried "stretch berries". We would scoop out some sweet gum, put it in our mouth, then take a bite of resin and chew it up together — also put a bunch of stretch berries in our mouth. Course we would have to spit the stretch berry seed out. Anyway, that stuff is very sticky and will stick to your teeth something awful if you don't mix it just right. The resin helps quite a bit, but it sure tastes nasty. The stretch berries made it taste a little better, and after we got it all chewed up good — Boy! It would make the "Double Bubble Gum" of today look mild! When we would climb those sweet gum trees, we would get that sticky sweet gum all over us. We would be sticky from head to foot. We would have to take off all of our clothes and Aunt Tempy would put them to soak in something. I don't know what it was, but she got them clean. And me — I didn't have a change of clothes with me, so she put one of Alice's dresses on me, and was I hacked! To make it worse, George and Dee teased me about it!

Another pastime we had was catching craw fish. All you needed was a stick and tie a string to the end of the stick — like a fishing pole. Then tie a piece of fat bacon to the other end, then drop it into one of the ditches containing water around there. In about five minutes, pull it up easy, and there would be a craw fish hanging onto the hunk of bacon. We would hold him over a bucket and rake him off into the bucket. The only thing I didn't like about craw fish fishing was that they didn't pull the line like a regular fish did. So we never knew if we had one or not until we pulled our line up. I think I spent a whole week over at Uncle Dave's house playing with all of my cousins. Audrey and Frances were almost young ladies and they helped Aunt Tempy around the house quite a bit. I enjoyed myself immensely!

When I returned to Uncle Joe's house, they all had a sad expression on their faces, and I knew something was up. Pretty soon Papa told me that he was going to have to send me home, so I would be there in time to start to school, when it opened. So we all spent a couple of days getting me ready to leave. In those days it took two days to make the trip from Houston to Llano. That was before Mr. McInnis had moved to Llano — he lived in Austin at the time. I think that Uncle Joe sent him a telegram asking him to meet me at the train, and let me spend the night with him there in Austin; then put me on the train the next morning for Llano. I think that Papa was a

whole lot sicker than I realized at the time. So, next morning I was all ready to go. I kissed them all good-bye. Papa got all choked up and could hardly tell me good-bye, he was crying so. That was the last time I ever saw my daddy. Before they put me on the train, they tied my name and address on a tag, just like I was a piece of baggage, and told the conductor to look out for me and I was off to Austin. When my train arrived, Mr. McInnis, Miles and Joe were there to meet me. It wasn't far to their house, so we just walked. It seems that they lived just across the street from the State Capitol, and that evening Miles, Joe and I ran all over that Capitol. We even went up in the cupelo. In fact, there were very few places we did not go, if the door was unlocked!

The next morning they took me down to the depot and put me on the train to Llano. They told the conductor the same thing; to keep an eye on me. I do not know why, because Llano was as far as the train went. Anyway, none of my folks in Llano knew I was coming home; so darned if I didn't get lost in my own home town! Instead of following the road on around the depot and heading south across the bridge, I just kept on going north. When I passed one of the lumber yards over there, one of the men recognized me and hollered at me. He said, "Hey boy! Where are you going?" I told him, "Home!" Then he laughed and said that I was headed for San Saba the way I was going. Then he called one of the delivery men and told them to take me home. Gee! I sure was glad because that old suit case which I was lugging was almost as big as I was! All the folks were glad, as well as surprised, to see me. All of my cousins in Houston are dead now.

CHAPTER 22

BACK IN LLANO AND STARTING TO SCHOOL AGAIN

When school started again, it was 1898, and I would be eight years old in November. Mama had taken a job in Austin, Texas, at the Deaf and Dumb Institution, as a seamstress. She had to keep the boy's pants patched and all the buttons sewed on etc. I think her salary was thirty dollars a month and her board, which was very good in those days. Floyd and I were living with Mama and Papa Watkins then. I considered myself old enough to take on a job, then so I got a job selling "The Austin Statesman". I would get out of school one half hour early and go over and meet the twelve o'clock, noon train. The baggage master on the train would throw our papers out of the door of the baggage coach before the train ever stopped. Old man Peeler and his son, Johnny, were my biggest competitors. They sold the "San Antonio Express". Their paper out sold mine about two to one. As soon as we picked our papers up, we would unwrap them and start selling them. About all we sold to were the strangers in town. All the rest were regular customers and paid by the month. I believe that it was only about thirty cents a month then. We would all hurry to make all the hotels first, and go right into the dining room and sell our papers to the "Drummers". That is what they called the traveling salesmen then. Llano, being the end of the railroad line, was almost always pretty well filled with drummers and their large sample cases. They would work Llano first, and take orders from the stores and mail the orders into the whole sale houses. In those days, that was about the only way the stores had to keep their stores well stocked.

After they covered Llano, itself, then they would take a hack to some other small towns. The hack replaced the old stage coach. Some would travel south toward Fredericksburg. Some would go west to Castell and then on to Mason, and some would go north to Cherokee and San Saba. They all had their regular routes.

Now back to delivering my paper route. I only had twelve or fifteen regular customers, and I would usually sell eight or ten. So, you can see, we didn't get rich, but it only took me a couple of hours each day and every little bit helped. As soon as my paper route was completed, I returned to school.

I believe school would be out at four P.M.. Then on the way home I would have two or three fights. We kids used to fight just for the fun of it. We never would be mad at each other. It was more like boxing with our bare fists. We would always try to give the other fellow a black eye; so quite a bunch of us went around with a "shiner" most all the time. There was one boy in particular whom I would sort of pick on because I saw that he was sort of afraid of me. However, he was always game and would fight me back. His name was Wayne Bowman. We called him "Grandma" because he wore

glasses and was sort of slow in his movements. He would always fight me, but I can't remember of him ever getting the best of me. After the fight was over, we would be playing again before very long. We never held a grudge. Then there was another boy, Mack Heard, who was with me quite a bit. We would sometimes have three or four fights a day, and he was a good fighter, too. Sometimes he would beat me, and then the next time I would beat him. I think that it is a toss up between Mack and I of just who was the "Meanest Kid in Town", because anything bad that happened, they would always come to Mack and I first. If we didn't get at least one whipping in school each day, we thought they were all mad at us. We would play hookey quite often, and we were not satisfied with playing ourselves. Sometimes we would take a whole gang with us — twelve or fifteen, both boys and girls.

One time we were out on Oatman Creek, and it was soon after a big rise in the creek. Oatman Creek was a pretty good sized creek, and there was water in it for quite a while after a rise. That day we were just wading around. Several holes had fish in them, and then we would hit some quick sand every so often. Most all of us had brought our lunch along with us. We were all sitting down eating lunch, when up rode the sheriff on his horse. I don't know how he found out where we were, but Professor Stubbs had sent him out to get us and bring us back to school. So he herded us up, like a bunch of cattle and drove us back to school. Then Professor Stubbs had his day! We all got the paddle, and of course, Mack and I got it the hardest because we were considered to blame for it all.

Every day after school, when we went home to change our clothes before we could go out to play, Papa Watkins had a small plot marked off in the garden which we had to spade up with a spading fork before we could go out to play. It was not very hard because the land was sort of sandy and loose anyway. So we would finish our work, and then we were free to go play until supper time. I think this country would be a whole better off if the children had a little responsibility around the home today. But, no, it seems they never learn obedience and to accept authority from anyone.

Along about this time, my Uncle Arthur, Mama's brother, got married. He went to Dallas and married a little woman named Geraldine Bowen. She was such a small woman, or girl, I should have said. She wasn't much larger than I was, and real pretty, too. They rented a nice little house right next door to Dr. Darnall, and just around the corner from where the Wallace boys lived — all playmates of mine. Arthur and Aunt Geraldine wanted me to come and live with them so I would be company to Aunt Geraldine and help her get acquainted better there in Llano, also to run errands for her. I liked that fine for a while. At the time, it was real hot weather. They didn't know what an electric fan was then. In fact, I don't think that Llano even had electricity then. Anyway, Arthur and Aunt Geraldine were sleeping on a pallet in the hall way then, and I used to walk in

my sleep quite a bit. They said that I woke them up one night by stepping right in their faces, and then proceeding to just walk all over them!

Arthur Watkins, Lillie Townsend's oldest brother. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

Raymond Rogers on left and Allan Townsend on right. (Photo courtesy of Mr. Patsy Parker)

George W. Townsend, after his graduation from Add-Rand College. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 23

PART TIME JOBS AND ACTIVITIES

While I was living there with my Uncle and Aunt, I got a job working for "Black Tom" Moore and his family. I stated once before when Papa was building that addition to the Tom Moore house, that I was later to live there, in that upstairs room. Well, this is the time. I roomed up there, in that room with his nephew, Alex Moore. He had come to Llano to go to school. Besides sharing the room together, Alex also helped me quite a bit with my chores, which were quite a few. Their big red barn was almost as large as their house was, and they had a real large cow pen and horse lot. We milked three cows, took care of three or four horses, and also about four buggies; one a beautiful surrey with fringe hanging all around the edges at the top. Then they had a two horse buggy and a Phaeton which was pulled by only one horse. Then they had a Gig for old "Bachelor" which was a very pretty sorrell horse, and just about the fastest trotter there was anywhere around there. Mr. John LaFrentz was the driver of him in all of the races. I can just see them now trotting around the race track there at the Fair Grounds. Mr. LaFrentz had a pretty silk Jockey Cap made with Mr. Moore's colors. It looked almost like old "Bachelor" was sitting in his lap.

Now besides feeding and milking those cows, I also had to feed and curry all of the horses, sometimes drive Mr. Moore to town and Mrs. Moore anyplace she wanted to go. I also had to wash all of those buggies and keep them clean at all times. About once every other week, I would rake out all of the stalls under the feed loft, and then rake up the whole cow pen morning and night. There was stove wood to bring in — had to fill the wood box full and cut plenty of kindling. In the winter time we used almost twice as much wood. Then while I was resting, I would work in the garden and flower beds. Oh! There was always plenty to do around there, and for all of that work, they paid me fifty cents a week.! How was <u>that</u> for the richest man in Llano? Of course, my room and board were included.

I remember then that down at Townsend's Drug Store they had home made ice cream for ten cents a dish. It was real ice cream, made with good whole milk, before all of the cream was skimmed off, and plenty of good fresh eggs and sugar and flavoring. Then they had to crank the freezer by hand to freeze it. I remember on a Saturday, when Mrs. Moore would give me my weekly wages (of fifty cents), I would go right to town and climb upon that stool at the fountain and order a dish of ice cream. I had a pretty good appetitie then, and I would sit right there and eat five dishes of ice cream, until my fifty cents was all gone. I do not know who told Mrs. Moore about it, but when I got home, she jumped all over me for spending my whole weeks wages in one afternoon, and for ice cream, too. She told me

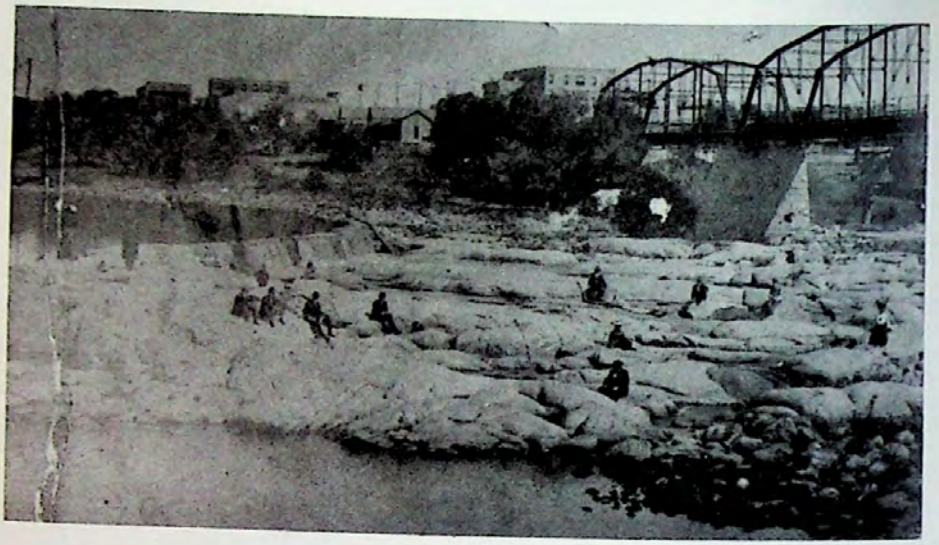
that I should have saved at least half of it. She told me that I never would amount to anything if I kept on spending my money that way. I replied, "Oh well, what the heck! Come easy — Go easy!" She just looked at me, and laughed and said, "Allan, you just won't do."

Sometimes when Mr. and Mrs. Moore would go out to visit one of his ranches, they would take me along. Miss Edna would usually come along on those trips also because we would stay two or three days. Miss Edna was their only daughter and was very pretty — a young lady now.

Charlie Thompson was Mr. Moore's foreman. He was almost as large a man as Mr. Moore was, and he was a fine, honest foreman, too. I liked him very much. I would ride around the pastures with them while they were looking at the stock. Every time I would see a little calf, I would say, "Ah, just look at that pretty little calf." Mr. Moore would say, "You like that little calf? All right go and put your brand on him! I give him to you!", and they both would have a good laugh. I have often thought if I had all of those calves which Mr. Moore had given me, that I would have had quite a herd of cattle by the time I left him. I do not rightly know just how long I did work for him.

After I left Mr. and Mrs. Moore, I went back to Mama and Papa Watkins and lived there again. By that time I was old enough to start going pecan hunting and grape hunting etc. I also went fishing quite a bit, and there were plenty of fish in the Llano River then. I discovered a natural fish trap just below the dam. The fish would always travel up stream when the river was on a rise. This natural trap was where the fish would come up to try and go over the dam. Then when they didn't make it, they would slide back down on the left side of a pointed rock and drop into another hole. All we would have to do was to pile some rocks around the edges of the over flow of the hole and then the fish could not get out. Then the first fellow to reach the trap the next morning would always bring along a toe sack, open the mouth of it, place one of the over flow rocks on the bottom edge of the mouth and hold the top edge in your left hand, then proceed to just rake the fish out of the hole into your sack with your right hand. Sometimes you could almost fill your toe sack in just a few minutes. Of course you could only do this right after, or during, a rise in the river. Another way I used to catch fish was to go down to the river when the water was running over the dam about six inches to one foot, then get behind the falls between the dam and the waterfalls. You have a couple of feet space back there. Then you just move along slowly, dragging your toesack behind you, and the fish are usually pretty thick back there. They don't seem to know how to get out, except at the ends. Now don't start grabbing! Just slide your hand along real easy, and you can brush right up against them — even rub their back, if you like. I would just slide my hand over them, until I had my hand around their neck or gills. Then I would just squeeze down on them and push them into my sack , then

start after the next one. You would be surprised at the small amount of resistance they would put up. When I closed my hand on them, they hardly even fluttered.



An old Llano River scene taken between 1895 and 1900.

Llano River Dam in 1892. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Patsy Parker)

We could almost always sell all the fish we could catch. We didn't sell them by the pound: we sold them by the "string". For a nice string of fish, we only got twenty-five or thirty cents. If a Jew bought them, they all had to be scaley fish; they would not eat catfish. I remember one time a new Jew moved to town, Mr. Fitchenbaum. When I went down to rob my fish trap, there were always a bunch of "Hickory Shad" and suckers there which usually I threw away. This time I kept all of the Shad and put them on a nice string. I guess there were about twenty shad on the string, and they looked real pretty. So I took them up town and sold them to Mr. Fitchenbaum for thirty cents. He seemed real happy with his deal The next day I stopped by his store and said, "Well, Mr. Fitchenbaum for thirty cents. He seemed real happy with his deal. The next day I stopped by his store and said, "Well, Mr. Fitchenbaum, how did you like your fish?" He replied, "Oh, not too good; too many bones." In a little while, someone told him what I more Hickory Shad in my string. Boy, I have sold a many a fish which I caught there in the river from "Holly Hole" up to the dam.

Holly used to be a real good fishing hole. It was also a good swimming hole, too, after dark, because all of the men and boys went in swimming in the "raw". I can't remember of ever seeing a bathing suit then, the whole time I lived in Llano. The women used to go in bathing then, at nights, but they wore old dresses and stockings. They would usually go in down below Holly, at the river crossing.

Another way I used to make money was to sweep out and dust the offices up over the bank building. Each office had from two to five spittoons in them which I also would have to clean out and disinfect with a few drops of carbolic acid in them. After they were all clean, running all along the back of the offices, was a long back porch, which I would sweep. It had an outside stairway running up from the ground. I suppose it was a sort of a fire escape, also, because if I remember correctly, it was made mostly of iron. Then in one corner, there was a hydrant with a sort of a down-spout running down to the sewer line. I believe that the bank building and the courthouse were the only ones in Llano then who were connected to the sewer line. The sewer line dumped into the mouth of that creek which wound all through town, down by the Bogusch Blacksmith Shop, and dumped into the Llano River. I think all of that is taken care of now. Some of those offices only had tow rooms, and I believe that Dr. Selman and Dr. Mabry had three rooms. They were in partnership. They were the first ones to bring an X-ray machine into Llano, and I

Llano River and Dam around the turn of the century.

do not think that either one of them knew exactly how to operate it. Dr. Mabry was a new, young doctor. I think he came from some large city, and so everyone thought that he was something great. So they were kept quite busy. Now all I got for cleaning all of those offices, sweeping, dusting and cleaning spittoons was fifteen cents for just one room, twenty-five cents for two rooms, and thirty cents for Dr. Selman's and Dr. Mabry's three room office. They were only cleaned twice a week. Lets see if I can remember a few more of them. There was Captain Opp. Who was a lawyer. Then there was Judge Flack, who was also a lawyer. Then there was a dentist, who wore a long black beard, and drank quite a bit. I forget his name right now. I should remember him well, for one day he was about half drunk, and I had a decayed molar toothe which I wanted pulled. I climbed up in his chair and showed him which one it was. He got his forceps, and somehow he got ahold of the wrong tooth. I let out a yell and reached up and got a hand full of those black whiskers, and then he let out a yell himself. The patrons of the other offices came running then to see what was going on. They said that I would let out a yell and pull a little harder on his whiskers, and then he would let out another yell, but he finally won the battle. He had pulled the wrong tooth. So I had to go around the corner and down the street next to the City Meat Market. There, upstairs, was Dr. Callahan's Dental Office. He pulled the right tooth for me. That other dentist was the joke of the town for quite a while.

Now down on the ground floor of the bank building, right next to the alley, was the Jones and Strahle Jewelry Store, and I think that Albert Strahle was a sort of a watch maker, also. They put in the first soda fountain Llano ever had. Also, upstairs, over the jewelry store, was a telephone switch board. I think some telephone people out of town owned it. Anyway, I went to work for them. I operated the soda fountain in the day time, and at nights, I slept on a cot up in the telephone office and was night operator. At the time, there were only about twenty telephones in Llano, so I wasn't too busy. Mr. J. W. Murray was one of our subscribers. He had two grown children, a grown daughter, Lillian, and a son about my age, J. W., Jr.. They were all red heads. My other Uncle, Ernest Watkins, was sweet on Lillian. Every night they would talk on the phone for over an hour, and me having nothing else to do, naturally listened in on them, so they had to be sort of careful what they said.

After they finished talking, I would plug in one of the two "trunk lines" going to Austin, and talk with the operator for a while. She was much busier than I was, so she could not talk too long. So I asked her if she would leave the "key" open so I could the hear the street cars when they passed by. I thought the street cars were the most wonderful thing in the world then. I had ridden one the time I came through Austin from Houston; so I would sit there and listen until I went to sleep.

The day operator was a Miss Maude Knowles I believe. Her father had something to do with the water works there in Llano.

My duty at the soda fountain was to serve the customers. Mostly they would order milk shakes or what we called, "Glass A's". It consisted of just shaved ice placed in a glass with a shot of liquid flavoring over it, then a spoonful of fruit flavoring on top of it. I believe they call them snow cones today. Our biggest problem then was, we had to shave all of that ice by hand. We had a sort of a box like contraption which had a sharp blade sticking out of the bottom, like a carpenter's plane. Each day we would receive a three hundred pound block of ice from Austin, on the noon train. It was placed in a large sliding-top ice box. Llano did not have an ice factory then. So when anyone wanted a cold drink, we had to shave that ice by hand. The reason milk shakes were so popular was that it was made in a pretty large glass. It consisted of just ice, milk and flavoring. Then we would place a tin shaker over the top of the glass and shake it up and down to mix it up good. When we finished shaking it, we would have the glass full from the shaker and still have about another half of a glass left, which we called the "strippings". So when a couple of boys came in together and only had a nickel, they would buy a milk shake, and the other boy would get the strippings. They were real bargains then, and we also made money on them because milk was bought in the bulk then for twenty cents a gallon. They had never even heard of milk bottles then. We would usually buy it in five gallon milk cans. You could also buy fresh churned butter milk for ten cents a gallon.

It was about that time that Coca Cola and Dr. Pepper came out, and they had another drink then called "Cherry Phosphate". All three of those drinks were made the same way. You would take two small glasses, pour the syrup-flavoring into one glass; the other glass was filled with cold carbonated water from the fountain. Then you would pour them back and forth, into each other, until they were thoroughly mixed, and serve them. I never cared for either very much. I thought that the Cokes tasted like "Liver Regulator" and that the Dr. Peppers tasted like peach-seed kernels, but I liked the Cherry Phosphate very well. I would still prefer just a plain strawberry soda to either of them, and an ice cream soda was my favorite.

CHAPTER 24

BACK TO SCHOOL AGAIN

By now I was about eight or nine years old, and I can't say that I was too happy about starting to school again because I never did like to study too much. I liked a few of my studies. History was my favorite, then Physiology, Geography, and next, arithmetic. It always came easy for me. So, I plugged along anyway. We still played hookey quite a bit. I remember one day, there were ten or twelve of us boys out on Flag Creek. As usual, it was after a rain and a rise in the creek. About noon, we spied a large flock of turkeys. So, we didn't do a thing, but run one of them down, kill it, cut it up, and wash it off a bit. There was plenty of water in the creek. We did not pluck it, we skinned it. Each of us cut ourselves a nice green stick, sharpened one end of it, stuck a piece of turkey on our stick, and held it over the fire to cook. After it was done, and we were all eating, here came Mr. Wooten, the farmer who owned the turkeys. He came up to us and said, "How do you like the turkey? Is it nice and tender?" We all replied, "Yes sir, it is really good!" Then he said, "I am sure glad you boys are enjoying it because it is going to cost you just fifty cents apiece!" Of course none of us had any money with us, so he took our names and said, "I will give you until the end of the week to dig up that fifty cents, and if you don't have it by then you are going to jail! Understand?" We all replied, "Yes sir!" So we each paid him, and by that time, most every man in town knew about it. They would kid Mr. Wooten saying, "I think I will go into the turkey business!", because you could buy a turkey, then, for about seventy-five cents or a dollar, and there he had collected six dollars from us, for just one turkey! So, after that, we always left Mr. Wooten's turkeys alone!

The Llano Church Ladies were very industrious. They were always raising money for some cause or another. It seems that almost every week they would have a bazaar of some sort, like ice cream and cake. I think they sold all of that for just twenty-five cents. It was all homemade, too, and boy, could some of those ladies bake cake! Some of them were three, four and even five layers high. I sure wish the women could cook like that now. Now days they just go to the store, buy a package of cake mix, whip it all up together, dump it in a pan and bake it; most of it is not fit to eat — either too dry and crumbly or else, too soggy.

I remember one occasion in particular which impressed me very much. It was called "A Trip Around the World" for fifty cents. First, they had three large floats, all full of straw, then a wagon sheet was stretched over it. Oscar Pierce drove one of them, old Jim Haynie drove one, and I believe Tom Simpson drove the other. Anyway, there were eight or ten stops on the trip around the world. One would be in England, which was decorated in English style. We

would all unload and be served a couple of English dishes. The next stop — Germany, decorated to suit the occasion, and we were served German food, next Italy, decorated Italian style and served Italian food; then Japan and were served Japanese food; Mexico and were served Mexican food; China and served Chinese food, etc. and so on until they completed the round trip. Of course, they didn't serve too much food; if they had, we would not have been able to eat it all. As soon as one float left, there was another one right behind it. I think that they timed themselves to about fifteen minutes at each stop, and that made it just about right. After the trip was completed, I don't think there was a single one who did not enjoy themselves. I know I never have forgotten it.

Llano also continued to have two or three picnics a year, and one, a three days picnic, was an annual affair, where we had the barbeque, the sack races, three legged races, and the walking of the two by four with IXL knife stuck in the end of it, and of course, the old stand by, the greasy pole. (which I was pretty sure of winning each year.)

There was quite a bit of drinking at those picnics also, and we kids were always on the look-out for the empty whiskey flasks because we could take them to the saloon and get a penny apiece for them. In those days, most of us boys, when we were dressed up, wore these "blouse waists", with a G string at the bottom which we tied around our waists and buttoned the rest of it up. Now this particular day, while we were at the picnic, three of us boys began gathering whiskey bottles to take to town and sell, and then come back and ride the Hobby Horses with our money. Some of those bottles had about a swallow of whiskey left in them, so we would turn the bottle up and drink all of it. Pretty soon I had ten whiskey bottles stuffed in my blouse, so I started to catch a ride to town to sell my bottles. Most all of the grocery stores had delivery wagons in those days. Pretty soon, a delivery wagon came by driven by a large man by the name of Brock. I asked him for a ride. He already had two men in the seat with him, so I stood up in the back of the wagon and held on to an empty apple barrel. After we got clear out of the picnic grounds, we started down that hill in front of the Bradley place. It was a pretty rocky road then, and we were coming down pretty fast. I don't know whether that whiskey I had been drinking out of those bottles was the cause or not; anyway, I lost my balance and started to fall. That empty apple barrel which I was holding on to was no help whatsoever, for as I started falling I let out a yell and Mr. Brock grabbed that hand brake and threw it on as tight as he could. I was caught between the brake-block and the wheel, right along my chest and stomach. It just crushed those ten whiskey bottles all to pieces which were inside my bosom at the time. Mr. Brock rushed me right home and then headed for Dr. Townsend and sent him out to our house. Now, believe this or not, I was not cut with glass in a single place! The only damage I had, was where the wheel had rubbed the hide off my chest and back where I was caught between the wheel

and the brake-block. Now you think I didn't have a "Guardian Angel" watching over me most all of my life? I have had too many narrow escapes for me to think otherwise. That incident only kept me in bed for a couple of days, then I was up running around again.

I believe I told about our neighbors, the Hargises, before; the oldest, Oscar, then Walter ("Possum"), then Bessie, a girl, next Ross, a boy, then Iva, a girl about my age, who was the prettiest one in the whole family, then another boy, Roy; he was about my brother, Floyd's age. Right in front of the Hargis house, and to the right of Papa Watkins lot, was that vacant lot where we built our bonfire on Christmas. All the summer time we played ball there and had a croquet court there. The older girls and boys used it mostly. About the only time we got to play was when they were short-handed. Pearl, my aunt, Bessie Hargis and Marie Johnson were the chief players, and we could only play when they said we could. Poor Iva took sick and died shortly afterwards. Most all of her schoolmates took it very hard. I found out then that most every boy in her class was sweet on her, but I never did know of her going out or even paying any attention to any of them. She and I played together most all the time, but then I only thought of her as a playmate. Girls and boys didn't go together then until they were sixteen or eighteen years old. About the only time I ever played with girls was when they were our neighbors.

About six months after Iva was buried, Mrs. Hargis gave birth to another girl, Lucille. She was a real sweet little baby, and I was very fond of her. Mrs. Hargis was very glad, also. She told everyone that she would just as soon have me take care of Lucille as she would anyone else. I remember one day Mrs. Hargis went to town and left Lucille there with me to take care of her. Pretty soon Lucille got hungry and began to cry. In those days, the women gave their babies what they called "sugar tits". It was made of soft bread crumbs, butter and sugar all mashed up good, and then just barely dipped in a little milk. Then it was placed in a clean rag and tied up good so it would not fall apart. Then it was placed in the baby's mouth, and they would suck on it until it was mostly all disolved. Well, this day Mrs. Hargis was in town, and Lucille was crying, and I proceeded to make her a sugar tit. I got the rag, the bread crumbs and the sugar, but I couldn't find any butter. So I went into the back room and found some nice sweet smelling toilet soap. It looked good enough to eat, so I substituted the soap for the butter, fixed it nice and neat, dipped it in a little milk, and gave it to Lucille; and boy, did she go for it! She was just a sucking on it, and pretty soon she began to froth at the mouth. It was running all over her face. About that time, Mrs. Hargis came in. She gave one look at Lucille, grabbed the sugar tit out of her mouth and said, "My God, Allan, What did you give her?" I told her what it was, and she unwrapped it and saw that not very much of it was gone. In the meantime, Lucille was crying for more; so she made her a good one and gave it to her, and then she

was happy again. It never did make Lucille sick, but then Mrs. Hargis never left her with me alone anymore. Years later, after they had moved to Ft. Worth and Lucille was married, and we had moved to Dallas, I went by to see them one day. I was sitting there talking to Mrs. Hargis, and she called Lucille to come on and see me, but Lucille said that she was not dressed good enough. Then Mrs. Hargis said, "Awe Shaw! Come on in here and see Allan. It doesn't make any difference how you are dressed because he has changed your diapers a many a time!" That was just the way Mrs. Hargis was. She felt like I was one of the family. Nevertheless, Lucille and I, both, were shocked!

While going to school, Mack Heard and I, both, would get a licking a least once a day, and sometimes more. Every afternoon Professor Stubbs would open our classroom door around three fifteen and say, "I would like to see Allan Townsend and Mack Heard, please." So, out we would go, up to his office, to get our daily paddling, and boy, he hit pretty hard, too. He would bend us over his desk to draw our pants good and tight. Then he would raise up on his tiptoes and come down good and hard for about three licks. That was usually enough. One afternoon he came in our room to make a special announcement of some sort. Just as soon as he opened the door, Mack and I jumped up and started toward him. He really laughed then, and said, "No, not today boys. I have another announcement to make today." Then the whole room laughed.

On April Fools Day, we would play all sorts of tricks on our teachers. The best one was to steal the clapper out of the school bell, and they were lost without that because they used the bell quite a bit. For school to start, they had a first and a second bell. Then at recess, they would ring the bell to let us out, and then again to call us all back into classes. Then at noon, they rang the bell to let us go to lunch; then they had first and a second bell to call us back. I think the first bell was to let those who went home to lunch know that it was twelve thirty and time to start back to school. Then the second bell was to bring us back into the classes. So the bell was very important. I don't know if they still use that system or not. Then we would catch frogs or lizzards and put them in our lady teacher's desk to try and scare them. If we could manage to catch a mouse, that was better yet! At the time, Miss Viola Moore was my teacher. At first it scared her, and she would squeal a little, but later on, she would just open her desk and say, "My, my, what a pretty little frog." Then she would pick it up back of the neck, and call one of us boys and tell us to take him outside and turn him loose. After that, we never bothered her anymore. One April Fools Day we even rolled the girl's privey down the hill. It was sitting right on the rim of a hill, and all we had to do was to give it a big push, and over she went! I think that it consisted of six stalls with a partition dividing them. For that stunt, about ten of us boys got a good licking.

I got acquainted with about three of the Walker brothers. Their father had a couple of big heavy rock wagons with which he hauled the granite rocks from the rock quarries over to the rock sheds on the north side. We had to load and unload the wagons ourselves. I say we, because on Saturdays, I always went with them. They lived away out south of town, near "Miller's Rock", and to pull those heavy loads, they always drove a six horse team. Also they brought along an extra team, just in case they got stuck; then they would be driving an eight horse team for a while. I used to love to stay all night with them every chance I got because we had such good times. They had three or four hunting dogs, and we would go out hunting at nights and kill polecats (skunks). We would always skin them and hang the hides all stretched out on the side of the barn. When they got pretty dry, we would take them to town and over to Mr. Ranier's hide house and sell them. I think we would get about thirty-five cents apiece for them. Later on, Mr. Ranier sold out to Mr. Porter and one of his sons. Anyway, we boys, the four of us, got to smelling so strong of polecat that our teacher told us all to go home and air ourselves out good. That suited us fine. We rushed right home and got the dogs and started to go hunting again, but Mr. Walker put a stop to us real quick. He said, "I will give you boys some work to do and you can air out better." So, he put us to work helping Mrs. Walker wash clothes. She had the first washing machine I ever saw. It had to be turned by hand, though. The agitator was a metal contraption which had five or six wooden pegs fit into it, and when you let the lid down, those pegs just mingled right into the clothes. To turn the agitator there was a large wheel with a handle on it. You would turn it like you did the old fashioned grind stones. On the top of the agitator was a bunch of gears which would make the agitator rotate back and forth all the time. Then there was a hand wringer attached to the side of the tub. Everyone thought that washing machine was something great. Goodness knows that poor woman certainly needed it, for she had about eight kids besides her husband, and they all dirtied plenty of clothes, too. Their beds had no springs on them as they were home made beds. They just had plenty of slats on them. Then they had a great big shuck mattress. The sheet was very heavy material, almost like a wagon sheet. They would cram it just as gull of shucks as they could get it, then sew the end up. The pillows were full of cotton, and as tired as we were every night, it didn't sleep too badly.

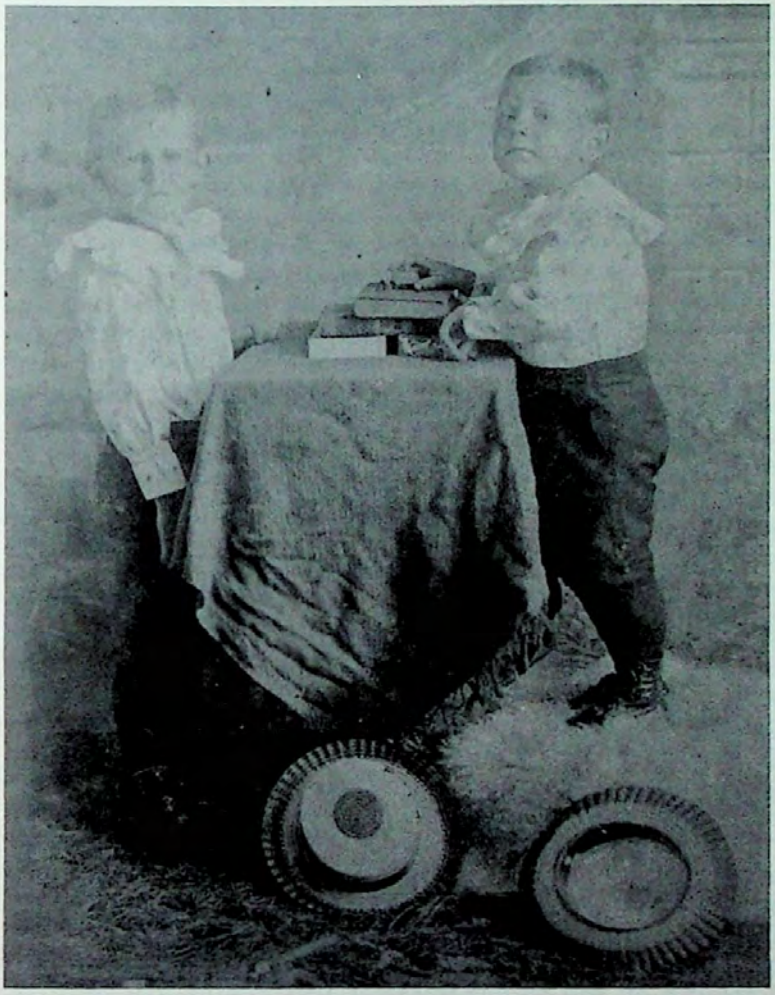
As I said before, about hauling those rocks. We had to do our own loading and unloading at the quarry. There was a large derrick there, and where we unloaded, there was another derrick. We always carried plenty of chain with us to chain the rocks good to the wagons so they would not slide around during the hauling. Well, during both the loading and unloading, we would put those rocks in sort of a sling and then hook it on to the derrick cable. Then a couple of us would get on the hand crank, which turned the cable drum which

wound the cable around the drum that hoisted the rock up. The drum had "dogs" and slots on it. So, as soon as it was high enough, we would just drop the dog down into one of those slots, which would hold it in place until we could swing the "boom" around to where we wanted to lower the rock. Then the drum also had a foot brake on it. We would turn the hoist crank just enough so we could disengage the dog from the slot, then lower it to the ground by the foot brake. Simple-huh!

By this time we had aired out enough for us to start back to school. In the meantime, my mother, who was working in Austin, had sent Floyd and I a brand new suit of clothes, bought from Scarbrough and Hicks, Austin's largest department store. They sure were pretty suits. It was the very first store-bought suit I ever had in my whole life. I believe she said that she paid seven dollars and fifty cents apiece for the suits. So, when I started to school the next morning, just to make sure that I wasn't still smelling, Mama Watkins let me wear my brand new suit to school with the admonishment that if I soiled that suit just a single bit, she would "skin me alive". Of course, I was just as careful as could be all day long. I did not even play any games or anything else. I just watched for fear that I would soil my suit. So, that evening after school on our way home a couple of dogs, which always followed kids to school and then waited for them until school let out, treed something in a crack between two rocks, which were laying almost flush with the ground. Naturally, we went to see what it was. I could just barely see a bunch of hair sticking up from between the rocks. In the meantime, the dogs were about to have a fit, they wanted to get at it so bad. I was pretty sure that it was a skunk because I faintly detected the odor; so I backed away from it and wasn't going to have anything to do with it. All the other boys kept asking me what to do. I, then, told them to pull him out of the crack so the dogs could get to him, but they were all afraid. So, I said, "Wait, let me pull off my new suit, and I will pull him out." So, I went back about twenty-five or thirty yards and proceeded to take off all of my clothes. I folded them all up nice and smoothed them out good; then said, "Let me get him, now." So I reached down and got a handful of fur and began pulling on it. Pretty soon I could see his tail, so I got hold of it, and gave a great big yank on it, and here he started slipping. So, I finally yanked him out and just slung him behind me as hard as I could. Then, guess what? Yep! He landed right in the middle of the pile of my clothes which I had taken such pains to take care of so I would not soil them. To make matters worse, as soon as he landed on my clothes, the dogs were right on top of him. Boy, did they mess things up! I was afraid to go home, and I had good reason to be afraid too, because Mama Watkins gave me the hardest whipping she had ever given me in her whole life. She even cried, and that hurt me more than the licking did because she told me how hard Mama had worked to get the money to send Floyd and I those suits. It sure made me

feel small, I'll tell you. She worked on that suit for a couple of weeks before she ever got all of the stink out of it, but I finally was able to wear it.

By this time school was just about ready to close again. We were all planning on doing a lot of fishing.



Allan, left and Floyd right. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 25

HOW WE SPENT OUR VACATION

Most any day at all you could go down to the river from Holly on up to the dam and you would find a bunch of people fishing. My Grandfather Watkins was no exception. There were always plenty of grown ups fishing. Old man Peeler and his son, Johnny, fished some most every day, and it seems most all would catch a nice string of fish. When I went fishing, about all the clothes I would wear was a shirt, with buttons around the bottom of the waist, and a pair of home made pants, which buttoned around the bottom of the waist. All of my pants were made from the leg of some grown man's pants. Of course, I wore my old straw hat. At that time, most all boys wore those very large hats. They were so large that if we took them off and turned the brims up, they would hold just about a peck. We would use them for almost anything, like picking up pecans and gathering mustang grapes. I would even use mine to carry my fishing bait in — like worms, minnows and even "hellgrammites". I would carry them in my hat because I kept it wet most all the time. I would either slip on a slick rock and fall in, or sometimes I would want on the other side of a hole, and I would just swim across to get to where I wanted to go. Those worms, etc., which I carried in my hat would <u>not</u> go down into my hair. I don't know why, but they would just crawl around on the top of my hair. So when I needed a fresh bait, I would just slip my hand under one side of my hat, get ahold of my bait and then drop my hat down again before some of the others crawled out. At first I was sort of leary about putting those helgamites under my hat because they have some pretty sharp pincers on their forward end. They can pinch the blood out of your

finger if you do not pick them up just right. I soon found out that they were just like the other bait, they did not like hair, so they crawled around on the top of my hair just like the other bait did. Those straw hats could certainly take most any bad treatment which we gave it. Water didn't harm it a bit. They did not even have a hat-band or even a sweat band on the inside of it. So to keep it from losing its shape, we would take long shoe string and sort of plat it around our hats where the hat band should have been. Then we could draw the strings up as tight as we wanted it, so we could have a nice fit. I think they were all made the same size, and it was up to us to make them fit with that shoe string. They only cost fifteen and twenty-five cents apiece, so that being the case, most all boys wore them, and even some young men wore them also. One of my favorite fishing spots was a rock about the size of a wash tub, and it was only six inches up out of the water. The only way you could get out to it was to swim; so I would swim out to it, sit there with my feet dangling in the water and fish. I would tie my string of fish to my left toe, and I practically had that part of the hole all to myself. The hole was just below the mill race there on the south side of the river. It was not too large a hole, but from where I sat, I could reach places where very few others could reach. In those days, we all used a cane pole. Mine was just medium length, and not too heavy. There were very, very few people who had a rod and reel. A few like Jack Carter had reels, but then they were mounted onto long cane poles. Jack Carter's reel had a spring on it, and it would rewind itself if there was no fish on it. I remember one day I was out there on my rock fishing, and I caught a fish, so I lifted up my left foot to untie the string from my big toe. Just as soon as I pulled it up, I saw that there was a water moccasin on it also. He had tried to swallow one of the smaller catfish on the string, and he had over half of it down his throat; and the little catfish had spread out his fins, and there, Mr. snake was caught. He couldn't swallow it, neither could he spit it out. I don't know which was more scared, the snake or myself. Anyway, I didn't stop to argue with him, I let out a yell and plunged into the water and headed for shore. When I reached the shore, my pole and line and also my string of fish which was tied to my big toe were all gone. I do not know just how I lost my string of fish because it was a pretty nice string, and was tied pretty securely to me big toe also. It is a wonder I did not cut my toe off kicking like I did. I later recovered my pole and line, and when I pulled it out, it had a nice Gasper Goo on it too. I never did find my string of fish though, but I am pretty certain that someone else did, later on.

Another day I was out there fishing on that same rock, and here came Jim ("Toots") Dunaway, the Constable, down to the river where I was fishing and called for me to come out because he wanted to see me. When I got there, he told me to hide my pole and line some place because he wanted to take me up town for a while. I always kept my pole hidden in the Flour Mill, or else, in the power

house. When I put my pole away, he took his left foot out of the stirrup and told me to climb up behind him on his horse. When we reached the top of the river banks, he headed straight for the jail. When we arrived, I saw Mack Heard already locked up. I asked him what this was all about. He replied, "You will find out later." Darned if "Toots" didn't lock me up also. I couldn't imagine what for. Mack and I were both in the same cell, in front, right over the entrance. At the time, Mack was wearing a cap. He was one of the boys who never wore a big straw hat. I grabbed Mack's cap and threw it out the window. Then Mack began hollering for "Toots" to bring him his cap, and just as "Toots" bent down to pick up the cap, Mack got a cup of dirty water out of the commode and threw it right on "Toots" face. It made him so mad, he threw the cap down and said, "You can get it yourself when you get out!"

In about an hour, the District Attorney came down to question us. He started on me first. He asked me where I was between two and three o'clock that afternoon. I told him that I had been down on the river all day fishing. He said, "Can you prove it?" I replied, "Sure thing!" I began to name about five or six of the other fishermen who were down on the river. Then he said, "I guess that you were not in the bunch then. Guess you can go now. Let him out, "Toots"." After they turned me loose, I began to inquire around about what had happened. The W.C.T.U. had established a public reading room up over the J. N. Newsom Grocery Store. They had a few tables and chairs, games such as checkers, dominoes, etc., had a few books, and also a water cooler. I do not know where they got their ice, probably from some saloon or soda fountain because all ice was shipped in to Llano at the time. They also had several spittoons scattered around on the floor. It was about the only place in town where you could just walk in and help yourself to free ice water. Since I think about it, The Woman's Christian Temperance Union would hardly stoop to buying ice from a saloon, so they must have bought it from someone else. Anyway, on that afternoon, between two and four in the afternoon, about five or six boys went up there to get a drink of ice water. While there, they seemed to be all alone, so they proceeded to wreck the place — turn over tables and chairs, scatter dominoes, checkers, books etc. — all over the place. Then to cap it all, they took the lid off the ice water cooler and dropped a couple of spittoons into it and replaced the lid, so that it looked just about as good as ever. About that time, they heard some one coming upstairs, so they all went out of the windows, on to the roof of the other low buildings, ran down to the bank building and got in through one of the windows of one of those offices, and then scattered out. It was a younger bunch of boys than the gang which I ran around with. I think my little brother, Floyd, was one of them. I don't know how come Mack Heard to be with that bunch. The steps which they heard coming belonged to old man Newsom. He was a pretty old man and limped in one leg. He always walked with a cane, so it was a pretty

strenuous effort for him to climb those stairs, and he could not see any too well either. He always came up there about the same time each afternoon to get a nice cold drink of ice water. There was an old tin cup chained to the cooler, so anyone would not take it away. Mr. Newsom walked up to the cooler and took the tin cup and filled it full of water and started to drink it. Luckily, as soon as he got a mouth full of it, he could taste something very wrong with it. So he spit it out of his mouth onto the floor and went down and told his grown son, Allen, to go up and see what was wrong with the water cooler. So, Allen went tearing up the steps. As soon as he entered the door, he saw that something terrible had happened. Then he looked into the cooler and saw all of that mess in there. He immediately reported to Jim Dunaway. ("Toots", the Constable). So "Toots" started out looking for Mack Heard and I because when ever any meaness happened, we were always blamed for it, whether we did it or not. Ever since Papa went to Houston, it seemed "Toots" used to sort of pick on me. I do not know why because Mr. Dunaway and a couple of the other boys used to work for Papa as carpenters, and Mrs. Dunaway and Mama were very good friends. May Dunaway was in my class at school, and Ruby, ("Tough") a boy about one year older than I, used to run around in my gang. We were all good friends. I think that "Toots" was the black sheep of the family. He used to always like to draw his gun when he was sure he could get the "drop" on the other fellow. He, later, joined the Texas Rangers. I do not know what ever became of him after that. He had one son, Jim Jr.. I saw him several years later, and he was minus one arm then. I don't remember just what happened to it.

CHAPTER 26

SOME HAPPENINGS IN THE BARLER FLATS AND THE FAIR GROUNDS

The Barler Flats were pretty important in Llano, especially before the Fair Grounds were opened. We would have horse racing, steer roping, and then they had a tournament ground there, also. I never hear of that game anymore. It was, I believe, three poles — maybe more, planted in the ground five or six feet deep. At the top, there was a sort of an L sticking out horizantally for about four feet. Then, there would be another two by four, about three feet, dropping down toward the ground. On the very end of that, there was a very stiff piece of leather nailed to it. It would have a ring, about the size of a saddle girt's ring, sticking into it, which would come out pretty easy if it was pulled on. The idea was for the rider, on horseback, with a fifteen or twenty foot spear, to ride down the track at a dead run and spear as many of those rings as he could. The one who got the most rings won the game.

In the steer roping contest, they would rope the steer and throw him and tie him up just like they do it today. Then, they had the steer wrestling contest, just like they do today — ride up along side of a steer, reach down and grab his horns, then twist his head around until they threw him to the ground. Only we had a large nigger cowboy who would run up along side of a steer, grab him by his horns, twist his head around, then reach his head down and grab the steer's nose in his teeth, then he would turn loose with his hands, stick his arms out straight and just sort of fall backwards with his body and throw the steer with his teeth. We all wondered just how he managed to always fall so he would be between the steer's horns, but he did somehow. His name was Will Pickett. I am pretty sure that any of the old timers around Llano will remember him. He was around for quite a while, even after the Fair Grounds opened. The last time I saw him, he had lost most all of his front teeth — said that he would not be able to do his "stunt" much longer.

Along about that time a fellow by the name of Herman Lehmann appeared on the scene. He had been captured by the Indians while he was a very young boy. He was raised up by them and looked more like an Indian than he did a white man. I imagine he was around thirty-five years old then. He would get on a wild horse without any bridle or saddle, only a rope tied around the horse's lower jaw, and he always carried his bow and arrow. He would chase a pretty wild steer and shoot him through the heart with an arrow. When the steer fell, he would jump off of his horse, cut the steer's liver out while he was still kicking, eat the raw liver and smack his lips as if he really enjoyed it. Most all of us kids were afraid of him because most older people called him a scourge. However, before he left Llano, he had his chance to do his good deed. The Llano River had a very big rise;

about a fifteen or twenty foot rise. When on one of those rises it is very swift. Anyway, it seemed that Pete Adams and Adolph Corday, who were down the river about Sandstone fishing, got marooned in a clump of those large Willow trees. They spent one night in those trees, fighting off water moccasins and just hanging on for dear life. All of the rescue teams were trying to figure a way to get a rope out to them from the bank. So, along came Herman Lehmann and told them to get some light fishing line, then gradually increase the size of the fishing line until it was strong enough to pull a rope out to them. Then he tied the light line onto the end of his arrow and shot it right out to them, in arms length of where they were hanging on, and it was quite a distance, too. No one thought that he could shoot it that far, but he did. Then they did as Herman told them to, and pretty soon they had hold of the rope. They both had to tie themselves on the same rope. They were tied about twenty feet apart. Then they slid into that swift water, and the men on shore pulled them in. Both men were good swimmers, but they had to come in sort of feet first so they could use their feet to push themselves off of those big rocks and keep from dashing themselves to pieces. Believe me, those were two happy men when they landed on shore again. I believe that they were both bartenders, and they invited Herman and the whole gang to come on up to the saloon, and the drinks were on them. I think the whole gang stood there and got so drunk they couldn't walk and had to be taken home. Poor Herman didn't have any home, so "Toots" Dunaway gave him one for the night. He left town pretty soon after that.

Corday had three children; Adolph, Jr., Paul and a girl by the name of Elsie. I used to play with them quite a bit. They lived up the river a little ways, just about even with the Bradley place. Adolph and Elsie were in my room at school.

After Herman Lehmann left town, then we kids had a new "fad". We all had to have bows and arrows. We made all kinds of spikes which we would put on the ends of our arrows, then we would go around shooting most everything we saw. A lot of us would shoot cows, calves, dogs, hogs or most anything we saw. They really were dangerous. We kept that up until so many milk cows would come home at night with our arrows sticking in them that they finally outlawed them, and we had to give them up. Oh, well, we still had our nigger shooters so we made out with them.

About once a year the Mollie Bailey Circus came to Llano and stayed about three days. It was only a small wagon circus, but it was a real good show, and we all enjoyed it very much. If I am not mistaken, they would have a parade each day. All of us kids would hang around all the time until they would take the horses and elephants down to the river to drink. The city let them use the water in the river because it was below where we got our water supply. Those elephants sure enjoyed that river; they would lay down in it.

Then every so often a Stock Show would come to Llano and play

for a week or so. One, I remember very well, was the Keller Stock Company. I remember they had a small boy about my size and he took down sick. He was to play Little Lord Fauntleroy. John Waits told them that I played in lots of school plays, so they got me to "sub" for this boy in two or three plays while there. When they left, they tried to get me to travel with them. I was all for it, but my Mama Watkins said NO, and THAT was THAT!

While I was in school, Miss Maude Nunnaly taught elocution and physical culture in the basement of the school. I took both, so most every school play they had, I was in it. I must have been pretty good or else they would not have had me in so many plays. Miss Maude had a sister, Miss Grace, and they were not anything at all alike. Mr. Nunnely was an assayer. I do not know where all of his business came from, but he always seemed busy.

Something has always bothered me ever since I left Llano. When I was a kid there, there was a bunch of Mud Swallows which built their nests all around the eaves of the courthouse. There was a sort of scalloped work made with granite, which the courthouse was built with, and in each of these little scalloped places the swallows would build a mud nest. Then we kids would come along with our nigger shooters and shoot the nests down. When you would hit one, it would usually burst all to pieces, but the swallows would rebuild again right away. Now days you can't even see any signs where they ever used to be. We would climb all over that old courthouse, too. I remember that there was a slate roof on it, and it was pretty hard to climb up, but somehow we made it. Also, when we would go up in the cupelo, we would have to go up a ladder, and we would pass through the "bat dungeon", and boy, did it stink up there! We would carry paddles with us and fight the bats and kill quite a few of them also. That is another thing you never see now — bats up there. Up around the very top of the cupelo was where a flock of pigeons made their nests or homes. We used to capture quite a few. We could get a good price for the squabs at any of the hotels. Pretty soon the wild pigeons from the courthouse started comming around our pens to get some of the feed which we fed our pigeons. We just opened the door to our pens, and the wild ones would come right in and eat with the tame ones. We had good shelter for them and plenty for them to eat and drink., so they just moved in, and in a years time, we couldn't even run them off. The courthouse has a different cupelo on it now. I wonder just why they changed it? I think that the older one was much prettier. It had a little floor up in the top there, and the dome was built up over the floor. At each corner, on the outside, was a fancy little pointed dome. In between the domes was a rounded sort of a place where the clock was supposed to be, but for some reason, they never got around to putting the clock in. It is a wonder to me that some of us kids didn't get killed there on that courthouse the way we would climb all around on it.

And the old Llano Bridge — I used to climb all over it, also. I

The old courthouse in the 1890's.

would climb up on the top of those spans and practically run from one end to the other, also walk a beam from one side of the span to the other side. Then I could go over the hand rail of the bridge at any of the granite abutments, and then climb down on to the abutments. Then I would straddle a couple of beams, running lengthwise, and go from one end of the span to the other. In fact, I have gone the whole length of the bridge that way. That was one game of "Follow the Leader" that none of the other boys would follow me in. All of that climbing I did as a kid came in handy later on, while I was living in Philadelphia. I was considered the best bridge painter and "steeple jack" in all that part of the country.

About once a year, Ringling Brothers Circus would come to Austin, Texas for a couple of days stand, and boy, that was the best in those days! The railroad would always run an "Excursion" from Llano to Austin for one day. Round trip was one dollar, and when we got to Austin, admission to the circus was fifty cents for adults and twenty five cents for children. For a full week before the excursion there were circulars hanging all over town announcing the event and to give everyone time to dig up the money. Now that was one occasion which nearly everyone in town went to. Me — I never missed one. I would get myself a job with the "News Butch" on the train. He and I were good friends, and besides, he always did a land office business on one of those trips. He hired three or four of us boys. We got our free ride on the train for our work. The "Butch", himself, was kept busy filling up the baskets for we assistants to peddle all through the train. We had ten or twelve coaches. Besides, he had to stay with his goods or else someone would come along and just help themselves to whatever they wanted. I always took along my shoe shining kit, and I would make a couple of dollars off the side — shining shoes.

On the day which we were supposed to leave, the train's engineer started blowing his whistle at four o'clock in the morning to wake everyone up to eat breakfast and get dressed because the train left Llano at five thirty in the morning. We would start out with about five coaches and a baggage car. Then we would stop at every "whistle stop" along the road and take on more passengers. Also at the larger towns we would add on four or five more coaches. We would finally arrive in Austin around twelve, noon, just in time to see the one o'clock parade. Then the circus would start at three thirty in the afternoon, and it lasted until around four thirty. By that time, we would all rush back to the depot to catch our train back home. It left at six o'clock in the afternoon and arrived back in Llano around midnight. Some of the folks stayed over in Austin until the next day. We made better time coming home than we did going to Austin. Along about nine o'clock that night, everyone was so tired and so full of eating new foods in Austin, that the "news butch" didn't have much business. He locked up all of his large baskets, gave each of us fifty cents apiece, and told us to find us some place and go to sleep. I

wandered on back to the end of the train and found that they had attached a Caboose on to the very end, so I climbed up in the cupola of the Caboose and went to sleep. I did not know a thing until it was broad daylight the next morning. One of the brakemen just happened along and found me. He woke me up and found that I had a high fever. He asked me where I lived, and I told him. He got someone to take me home and called Dr. Townsend. He said that I had the prettiest case of Scarlet Fever that he ever saw in his life. I was pretty sick for about a week. Then after I got well, I went to meet the noon train to see if the "news butch" knew where my shoe shine box was. He reached behind his baskets and pulled it out and said, "Sure, here it is. I heard that you were sick and I kept it for you. All I did was shine my shoes out of it a couple of times. Was that OK?" I said, "Sure!" I was mostly concerned about the box, brush and my rags anyway. I tried to get him to get me a job as news butch, but he talked me out of it — said that there was no future in it, and after the new had worn off, then I would most likely quit.

As I stated before, in those days, we celebrated Christmas by shooting fireworks; and on Christmas Eve nights, the country boys would come to town, and the town boys and the country boys would have Roman Candle fights. It was great sport to chase each other with Roman Candles. We had the very small five shot, and then the ten shot, the twenty shot and the thirty shot Roman Candles. I remember one time I was chasing a large country boy with a little old ten shot candle, and boy, I really had him running! Pretty soon my little ten shot had run out, and he looked back and saw what a small kid had been chasing him. In the mean time, he had lit up his thirty shot. Then he just turned around and stuck his big old thirty shot right in my face. He wasn't over ten steps from me, and one of the shots of his struck me right in the eye and completely blinded me in that one eye. At the time, Mama and I were living in that small house, on the west side of the square, next door to the Bon Ton Barber Shop. Of course, I went running home as fast as I could go. When I arrived, Mama was not home, she was visiting someone, so I lit the kerosine lamp. That was before we had electric lights. After I lit the lamp, I started looking for Mama. I must have turned the lamp up pretty high and the wind or something blew our window curtains into it, and they caught fire. I heard some folks hollering, and Mr. Justus and a couple of men from the barber shop ran in and pulled the curtains down and put the fire out before the house caught on fire. My eye was in pretty bad shape for quite a while. My eye lashes and brow were both singed off, and I had a black eye besides.

Most all of the boys who participated in those fights had large yellow spots all over their backs, on the coats I mean, and they were very hard to clean out. Most just left them to wear off.

CHAPTER 27

MY JOB WITH DR. TOWNSEND

I started driving for Dr. Townsend about this time. He was always kept pretty busy, and he made almost all of the calls out in the country. In those days hardly anyone paid the doctors any cash. They just didn't have it to pay, but one thing, the doctors always had plenty to eat. The farmers would give them all kinds of vegetables, corn, oats and stock feed for their horses and cows, if they happened to have one. However, I do not remember ever seeing a doctor who owned a cow. In the first place, they did not have time to tend to a cow; and in the second place, the farmers always gave them all the milk and butter they needed.

Dr. Townsend drove a team of the most beautiful gray horses, and about the smartest ones, I ever saw in my whole life. They were the only horses I ever saw which you could not founder. Dr. Townsend told me to keep their feed trough full of corn at all times. They would eat until they had enough, then they would quit. Most horses will eat just as long as there is a grain of corn left in their trough, and if it is too much for them, they will founder. He had a large shed, which he just drove into, and when we unharnessed them, we always hung the harnesses up. It was suspended from the ceiling just like the firemen used to suspend their harnesses to their fire trucks. The horses were trained to walk into their proper places; and then the harness would be lowered onto their backs, and then hooked up, and we would be ready to go. Dr. Townsend's grays were so smart that when I went out to harness them up, they would even lower their heads down so I could bridle them. Now that is most unusual for most horses. The main reason Dr. Townsend needed me was to open and close the gates which we went through. If the call was not a rush call, he would let me drive and he would snooze because that is about all the sleep he ever got, for he was going night and day most all the time. When I was driving, the horses would just jog along. I would use the buggy whip on them, and they would just switch their tails at me and keep their comfortable jog. If Dr. Townsend was in a hurry, he would not need any whip. He would take the reins and sort of "cluck" to them and say, "Come on boys, we are in a hurry!", and boy, that team would light out at a dead run. They would certainly cover the ground when going at that pace. Dr. always carried a loaded thirty eight revolver on the seat, as well as a half gallon bottle containg pure alcohol cut with water and sweetened a little. It was sort of a "toddy" which he would sip every now and then. He told me, when it was pretty cold, that I could take a nip now and then, but to be careful and not take too much. I always had to sit out in buggy while he was in making a call, and sometimes I got pretty cold. When we started home, after we had passed through all of the gates, we could both go to sleep, and the horses would take us

straight home and right under the shed. Then they would wake us up by pawing on the ground and "whinneying", and we would get out and unhitch them. I would see that they had corn and hay in their feed box. I always kept plenty of shucked corn on hand all the time, so all I would have to do is just replenish their supply. Dr. Townsend wouldn't have taken a thousand dollars apiece for those horses, and that was an unheard of price in those days.

I had a little "shotgun" house all to myself just back of Dr.'s back porch. He only had two bedrooms to his house. He and his wife occupied one and his daughter, Fay, the other, and I, the little cottage. We all ate in the main dining room, and believe me, we really ate, too. The Dr. was very fond of tripe, that is pickled tripe. I had never even heard of it before, but when I ate some, I liked it. I liked it until he told me what it really was, then I lost my appetite for it. The Dr. liked to "rush the growler" quite a bit. The growler was their beer can. In those days, you could get one of those cans of beer for only ten cents, and they were gallon cans, too. After the foam settled, it was not full, but you still had plenty of beer. He would always give me one glass and that would be all. I sure liked beer then. Dr. said if you drank it right, it was healthy.

Dr. Townsend never paid me any money, just my room and board, but then I guess my family owed him ten times as much as I ever earned working for him. Everyone in Llano just loved him, and I don't think that he ever worried about paying for anything he ever bought either, like meat bills or groceries either. No one ever refused him anything, and he never refused to go see a sick person even when he knew he would never get paid.

I remember one night, about two A.M., a man came riding in from Lone Grove. A patient who had crushed one of his legs pretty badly had taken a turn for the worse that night. I think that gangrene had set in, and his leg was paining him very much. At the time, it was just pouring down rain. Dr. wanted to wait until daylight before he left, but the man who came in for him pleaded so much, telling how much pain the man was in; so finally the Dr. said, "All right, Allan, go and hitch up the team. The poor devil owes me more now than he will ever be able to pay, but then I guess the poor devil wants to live just as much as we do, so, come on and lets go." The further we got from town, the harder the storm seemed to get, and just before we arrived there, it turned into a hail storm. He lived in a house right at the top of the small hill after we crossed the Little Llano River. There was a real large pecan tree out in front of his house. Dr. Townsend said, "I know that under a tree during a storm is the most dangerous place we could get;" but then he said that he could not leave me and the horses out in the open without any protection. So we pulled just as far under that tree as we could get. Now days, with the automobile, that trip would only take about ten minutes, but in our time, it took fully two hours. The doctor was in the house a mighty long time. When he came out, he told me that he had to take

the poor man's leg off to save his life. Luckily, by now the storm had subsided. I was afraid that the Little Llano River was going to get on a rise, so we could not cross it going home, but we beat the rise and made it back home just at day break. We both went to bed to get some much needed sleep.

One Saturday night, I had gone to town to try and shine some shoes and make a few extra dimes. When I started home, there were a bunch of Llano sportsmen, all on horseback, out in front of the Charlie Wallace Saloon. They were getting ready to go one one of their "fox hunts". One man was blowing the hunting horn and the hounds were all excited and barking and very anxious to get on with the hunt. One of the riders always carried a large bull whip, and every so often, he would crack the whip real loud, and that excited the dogs more than ever. Now I played with those dogs every day. They were kept in a large pen back of the saloon. I even fed them quite a bit, when no one was looking, because they did not want them fed too much. Said that they would hunt better when they were hungry. Anyway, that particular night, I ran right into the midst of those excited dogs, swinging my shoe shine box around and hollering at them. Bless Pete, they jumped me, and got me down on the ground, and were trying to reach my throat. I was fighting them all the time. I think most of the hunters were pretty drunk by that time. I was wondering why any of them never got off their horses and tried to help me. Finally the man with the bull whip came to my aid and drove them off. I, then, went on to my little house in the rear of the Dr.'s house. I was crying, and Fay came out to see what had happened. When I told her, she went in the house and brought the Dr. back. After I told him what had happened, he told Fay to go and warm a pan of water, and then come back with some castile soap and some cotton. In the meantime, I had taken off my shirt, and he was looking me over. He said, "Why those dogs must be so old that they have lost all of their teeth because all I can find is one little bite here on your right shoulder." He washed the wound out good and put some disinfectant on it. It didn't even get sore. I never will know just why those dogs didn't tear me up more than they did, unless some of them did recognize me.

After I had been driving for the Dr. quite a while, Grover Walker and I decided that we wanted to make a trip out to the "Enchanted Rock" on a hunting trip. I told the Dr. that I wanted to take about a week off. He said o.k., and he guessed he could spare me, and that he would like to make the trip with us. I had never been there before. Now Grover's father still owned and ran the Walker's Wagon Yard, and Grover talked his dad into letting us have an old, poor skinny horse which could barely walk, and also, he let us take a small worn out delivery wagon. The iron tires had to be wired onto the wheels with bailing wire. We took it down to the river and soaked them for twenty four hours, and they fit pretty tight then. Only the wheels wobbled quite a bit. But that didn't dishearten us in the least. We got

all of the spare bailing wire we could find, and Grover swiped a couple of bales of hay and a little other feed for the horse, to feed him on the way. After we arrived we hobbled him and turned him loose. Grover had a thirty-thirty Winchester, and about twenty shells for it. Then both of us got a couple of quilts and all the food we could mooch from our kitchens. Grover had two old hound dogs which we took along with us for protection. Grover was about twelve years old, and I was about eight and a half. So, here we took off bright and early. It was pretty slow going for us because the horse could only walk, and besides, we were afraid that if we went any faster, our wagon would fall apart, so we just took our time. Oh yes, I was about to forget, Grover rustled up a frying pan; that and a little bacon, sugar and coffee. We used a tin can to make coffee in. We also managed a couple of dozen eggs. On our way out there, we passed a nice corn field which was just loaded down with roasting ears. We helped ourselves to three or four dozen of those. We even ate a couple apiece raw that noon for dinner, and we each had a bag of cold biscuits which we nibbled on. I think we also found a few watermelons and cantalopes. We only took a few of those. We were afraid the farmer would catch us. We had crossed Big Sandy by now, and Grover said that it wasn't much farther, so we moseyed along. Just as it was turning dusk, we arrived at our camping ground, right at the foot of the Enchanted Rock. I thought that was the greatest sight I had ever seen, and it still is a pretty sight — a solid granite rock which covers six hundred and forty acres of ground, a whole section. We camped right on the banks of Big Sandy near that permanent spring of good water. It is still running today. We fed and watered the horse good, and then hobbled him and turned him loose. Then, by that time, it was getting dark, so we gathered up enough wood to last us all night. Then we cooked some bacon and eggs, coffee, and boiled a couple of ears of corn apiece; and we really stuffed ourselves that night. Grover said, "We will kill a deer tomorrow." We threw the dogs a few scraps, and told them to go catch a rabbit or something for them to eat. After we had stuffed ourselves so full we could hardly move, we scattered a bale of hay on the ground, and then spread our quilts on the hay and we had a pretty good bed. We thought that we would both sleep like a log, but then I don't think that either of us slept a wink. The dogs were growling all night, and we would see eyes, shining all around us because we kept the fire going all night. Guess we were afraid. Grover said that the fire would keep all animals away from us so the fire was standard equipment for us each night.

The next morning for breakfast we had some more bacon, eggs and coffee and cold biscuits, and boy, you would be surprised how quickly our food supply was playing out. Well, the next day, we didn't even see any deer, let alone kill any. We did not have many deer in Llano County then like they have today. What you did see, were plenty wild. We spent the most of that day climbing all over

Enchanted Rock. The "fad" in those days was to gather smaller rocks and write your name and the date with the smaller rocks on Enchanted Rock. The trick was to pick a prominent place, on the side of the rock, and then write your name, just as large as you could, so you would be able to see it from the ground. When we got on top, we walked all around up there. You could see quite a distance in all directions. We also found several small caves around it. We never entered any of them because we were afraid to. The dogs followed us up the first day, but after that, they would not climb it any more. They probably had more sense than we had. Most every day we would write our name in a different place. By the time we left there, I think we had our names in four different places.

On the third day, we ran completely out of food, and Grover said that if we did not kill a deer today, we would have to head for home. So, he took his Winchester, and we were scouting along the banks of Big Sandy, when all of a sudden Grover stopped and signaled for me to do the same. We went creeping along, and I asked him what he saw. He replied, "A deer." Then I asked, "Where?" We were both on our hands and knees now. He motioned for me to come and look through some bushes and said, "See that deer lying down out there in the creek?" I said, "I see something brown looking which looks like a deer." I don't think that I had ever seen a deer in my life. Then Grover handed me the gun and said, "Here Allan, I am going to let you shoot him, so you will be able to kill your first deer." I thought he was getting mighty good to me all of sudden, but anyway, I took the gun. Then Grover said, "Here, take sight over my shoulder, and be sure and don't miss because we are out of food." I took careful aim and squeezed off a shot. I saw the brown object sort of jump, and Grover yelled, "You've got him!" We both went running up to him, and then Grover said, "Oh my! Just look what you have done! You have just killed a small calf!" Then he said, "Being that he is dead now, we may as well skin him and eat part of it." So we took the two hind quarters and cut off several steaks to eat right away. Then we wrapped up what we could not eat that day in a flour sack and hung it up high enough so that anything could not get to it. The front part of the calf, we cut up to feed to the dogs. After we had eaten all we could hold, we lay down and had the first good sleep we had had since we arrived there. Then we took a walk to see how our horse was getting along. When we found him, he actually looked fat, compared to what he looked like when we left home. So, we came on back to camp and just messed around until time to eat supper.

We were out there for five days, and I must say, that I thoroughly enjoyed every minute of it, even if we were both completely worn out.

On the last night we spent there, something queer happened. I had a dream about Dr. Townsend. I dreamed that he died that night. The next morning, I told Grover about my dream. He just laughed and said, "Sometimes people have the silliest dreams." I didn't think any

more about it, until I got home. Then I said to Mama, "You know, I dreamed last night that Dr. Townsend died." She looked at me sort of funny and said, "Well, he did." Boy, you could have knocked me over with a broom straw when I heard that. I never have figured out how come me to have that dream, unless Dr. Townsend was thinking about me pretty strongly that night, and it was just mental telepathy.

CHAPTER 28

NEW JOB — NEW EXPERIENCES

I was now looking for a new job. Now that I had all the time on my hands, more than I knew what to do with, I worked all the harder shining shoes, cleaning out offices etc.. It became almost a fad there in Llano for all of us kids to have shoe shineboxes and shine shoes. I still had my regular stand there in Bon Ton Barber Shop, and then I would go out on the streets besides, but competition got so bad, that I looked for other ways to make money. Tom and Bob Lindsey lived up on a hill back of where Papa Watkins lived. We had a couple of wagons, and we would gather up scrap iron every so often and sell it. Then we also gathered up old bones; there was always a market for that. Then, in season, we would sell pecans and grapes. They never went fishing with me, for they were both younger than I, and their parents would not let them go on the river much.

There used to be a nigger boy, Bill Peepers, who lived in the big old building where I first started to kindergarten school. He used to come down in front of the barber shop, and he and I would play marbles "keeps". When we got tired of marbles, we would shoot "craps", dice. He had a couple of nickels with him most of the time, and boy, how he did try to cheat! He was also a very hard loser, so naturally we had quite a few fights. He would get the best of me sometimes, and I would whip him sometimes. By this time, I was getting pretty good at fighting, and I was beginning to love to fight, just for the hell of it.

On Saturday, when all of the country boys would come into town, all of my gang which I played with would come and look me up. Then we would follow along beside the country boys, trying to pick a fight with them. Some boy would sort of push me, and I would just fall into him with all my might and nearly knock him down. Then I would say to my friends, "Quit pushing me into this poor boy!" That would go on until he finally decided to fight me. I usually got the best of the fight because you know the old saying, "Practice makes you perfect", and I certainly had plenty of practice. Later on, after I had grown up and was in Llano on a visit, one particular boy who I used to pick on so much, came up to me and was telling me how scared of me he used to be. He said that he used to go clear across the street, just to keep from meeting me. He looked at me for a few minutes and then said, "I don't believe that you could do that now." I replied, "You want to bet?" and began to peel off my coat. Then he laughed and said, "Yes, I believe that you could at that!"

I remember another time, there were three or four of us boys standing in front of the Watkins Brothers Hardware Store, owned and operated by Mr. George Watkins and Mr. Wallace Watkins. (Mr.

Wallace Watkins is alive today — 1969). We were all there in his front doorway talking. I believe that I had just finished shining a pair of shoes for one of them, and I still had my shine box hanging over my shoulder. There was a young boy there by the name of Tom Brown, and he was bragging about his big brother just getting out of the penitentiary. He was whittling with a new IXL knife. He said that his brother bought it for him and told him that if any one ever jumped on him, to cut their guts out, and he said that was just what he was going to do. Mr. Watkins told him to put his knife up and that I would beat him to a pulp. He said, "Huh, I am not going to fight a prize fighter because Allan is a regular boxer." — but if I ever jumped on him, that he would cut my guts out. Just about that time, I had slid my hand down into my shining kit and got a hold of my shoe brush. I just turned it over in my hand so the back part would be facing out, and I slapped him along side of the head with the back of my brush. His knife went flying out of his hand. Mr. Wallace picked his knife up and said, "All right Allan, I have his knife. Now, go ahead and beat him up." So, I lit into him, and gave him a good licking. He was crying as hard as he could — said that he was going home and get his big brother and that he would come down and clean the whole store out. Mr. Wallace said, "You just tell him to do that, will you? It will be the last place he ever tries to clean out!"

It seems to me that the Watkins Brothers had a Mr. Gillespie working for them at the time, as a clerk.

Note Watkins Hardware as well as the Corner Drug and Hardy and Rogers Restaurant.

CHAPTER 29

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE CYCLONE

About the cyclone which struck Llano — I was out in front of the Bon Ton Barber Shop, at the time. It seems to me that it came just before noon, and it was coming from the east, southeast. It first struck Old Holly, our good swimming and fishing hole. It looked to us just like it sucked that whole part of the river dry. We could see the water in the cyclone. Then it jumped on across the river and struck the Dabbs Grocery Store and the Wagon Yard, which was behind the store. It did not bother the bridge at all. It then kept going north and wrecked a couple of more buildings before it struck the Algona Hotel, a large three story brick building. It had a composition roof on it, and they say that it just rolled that roofing up like you would roll a carpet up, and deposited it out behind the hotel. The kitchen had a large brick smoke stack, and the twister hit that stack and just sucked all the "soot" out of it better than if it had been cleaned by some expert cleaners. I'll tell you, that old hotel was certainly lucky that it was not damaged any more than it was. Professor Badu's house was just across the road from the hotel, and it was damaged quite a bit, I believe. There were also others, but I do not recall their names just now. That gave us folks in Llano something to talk about for quite a while.

Old Moss Rose Saloon wreckage after it was struck by the cyclone.

CHAPTER 30

SOME EARLY DAY ENTERTAINMENT

As I said before, Llano was always a great place for entertainment. We were always having Sunday School picnics, school picnics, and once a year, we would have our three day reunion. That is the one that all of us kids looked forward to because we always had free barbeque, and most everyone liked their barbeque. Then the Molly Bailey Wagon Circus was a yearly event, as well as the Excursions to Austin for the Ringling Brothers Circus. The Llano County Fair was still in operation, too.

One day, Burnet gave their three day reunion and picnic and invited all of us Llanoans to come over and participate in it. They had their sack races, potato races, three legged races, etc., just like we had in Llano. Only their greasy pole was a wooden pole instead of an iron one. They are much easier to climb. Anyway, when they started trying to climb the pole, there wasn't a boy there who could climb it. So Pat Hargon, Eudie Alexander, Willie Rogers, Wayne Foster, and a bunch of the larger boys said, "We will get you a Llano boy who will climb it for you." So, they came and got me and said, "Come on Allan and show these Burnet boys how to climb a greasy pole." Just as luck would have it, I had on another brand new suit of clothes which my Uncle Ernest, who was in the Navy at the time, had sent me from Wannamakers Store in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. I said "Heck, I wouldn't ruin my new suit of clothes for all the brass watches there was in Texas." A brass watch was always the prize for climbing a greased pole. So the big boys from Llano asked, "How much did your suit cost?" I said, "Eight dollars." So, Eudie Alexander took off his hat and passed it around to take up collection to pay for my new suit of clothes which I would ruin. After a while, he counted the money in his hat and said, "Allan, here is fifteen dollars. Will that pay for your suit?" I said, "Heck, yes!" — and took the money and put it in my pocket. By that time, all the rest of the boys who were trying to climb the pole had most of the grease wiped off, so I just pulled off my coat and handed it to one of the boys to hold for me. Then I didn't even pull off my shoes, but climbed right up with my shoes on, took the brass watch off and slid down the pole. There, on the ground, I made a new friend. He was John Hill from Kingsland, Texas. His father and mother ran the Hill Grocery and General Mercantile Company there. He had a sister, Lillie Hill. She still lives down there on the Buchanan Lake some place. John thought me climbing that greasy pole was just about the greatest thing he ever saw in his life, so I made him a present of the brass watch. Then, after that, there wasn't anything too good for me. He took me and introduced me to his family. They had come over from Kingsland in a wagon, and were camped out there. They invited me

to eat and sleep with them, and I took them up on it.

Then, after that, John wanted me to come to Kingsland and spend a whole week with them. I also took them up on that deal.

That was way before they had any lakes down there. The Antler Hotel, which was owned by the railroad, was about the main attraction there then. It was a very beautiful place, and the train used to stop there just as often as they could. They also gave big parties there, and even ran excursions trains there, to attract people to that place.

Kingsland is where the Llano River runs into the Colorado River. John, Lillie and I used to go down by the Mill and go swimming there in the mill race, just below the dam. Mrs. Hill made us all bathing suits. We also did quite a bit of fishing. One day John and I got upon the dam and we saw that we thought was a large log. I said, "I'll race you out to the log." When we were a little way out, the log began to move, so we swam back to the dam and climbed back on top of it. Then we saw that it was an alligator. John said, "I didn't know there were any alligators in the Colorado River!" So we asked the man who ran the mill about them. He said, "Yes, there are quite a few of them there." — and for us to always swim below the dam as there was not much danger there.

After I finished my visit with John, that just whetted my appetite for Kingsland. Mr. Hill would let us go behind the counter and fill our pockets with candy. I'll bet that he lost money on his candy business as long as I was there. I sure fell in love with Kingsland.

Later on, I paid them an unexpected visit, and I don't think that Mr. and Mrs. Hill were overjoyed with that visit because I brought three more boys along with me this time.

It was the time of year when a bunch of the stockmen were shipping their cattle up to the "Territory" to fatten them before they were sold for slaughter. That was before the Indian Territory was taken in to Oklahoma. As always, when they were shipping cattle, most every kid in town was down at the shipping pens helping to load the cattle. Now this particular day, they finished loading around four P.M., and were waiting for orders to pull out. Now I had been telling the other boys what a grand place Kingsland was, and that I had some mighty good friends living there. So we made it up among the four of us to hide in the "hay rack" of one of the cattle cars, and as soon as the train got well under way, we would show ourselves so the brakeman would put us off at the first stop. Now Kingsland was only twenty miles down the track from Llano, so we knew that we would be put off there. When the train was just about ten miles out of Llano, we crawled out of our hay racks and began running up and down on top of the cattle cars. Then, just as we wanted them to do, here came the brakeman and the conductor and asked us where we were going. We told them just for a ride. The conductor said, "Well, it will be a short one because we are putting you off at Kingsland." We said, "O.K.". I did not tell them that I had

friends there. When we were put off, I headed straight for Mr. Hill's store. When we arrived I said, "Hello, Mr. Hill. Where is John? I have brought some of my friends to see him." He was so mad! He said he felt like spanking all of us. He told me to take my gang on up to the house while he sent a telegram to our folks, telling them where we were, and that he would send us all back home the next day on the noon train. Mrs. Hill let us all eat supper with them, but I could tell that none of them were very glad to see us, not even John. We all slept on a pallet that night, and the next morning, Mrs. Hill got everyone up bright and early because they had work to do. After we had eaten a good hardy breakfast, we four run aways decided that we would not wait for the noon train, but would head right down the track to Llano. Mr. Hill didn't want us to do it — said we might get lost, and besides, it was a twenty mile hike. We told him that we walked farther than that most every day, and as for us getting lost — how could we get lost following the railroad track? So we lit out for home and believe it or not, we beat the train in by fifteen minutes. However, we did trot part of the way — just to show that we could do it.

Mine and John's friendship sort of cooled off a bit after that. He never invited me back any more.

It was just about this time that the Spanish-American War broke out. I remember it well because I was still selling my newspaper, The Austin Statesman. All during the war, I always sold all of my papers. My agent, Mr. Haygood, increased them to one hundred papers a day, too. Some of the men, after they had read the paper, they would give it back to me, and I would sell it again. Mr. Haygood was certainly a fine man, and he sure put up with a lot from me. When he would come to settle up with me each month, I most always was short. I never would have anything coming for myself. I would spend my money about as fast as I made it. Poor Mr. Haygood was shaving one morning and nicked himself with the razor. He didn't think much about it. He just stuck a cigarette paper on it to stop the bleeding. Everyone used a straight razor in those days, a safety razor hadn't been invented yet. Well, anyway, from that little old nick with the razor, and the cigarette paper, Mr. Haygood took blood poisoning and it killed him. I sure did miss him because I knew they would never get another agent like he was.

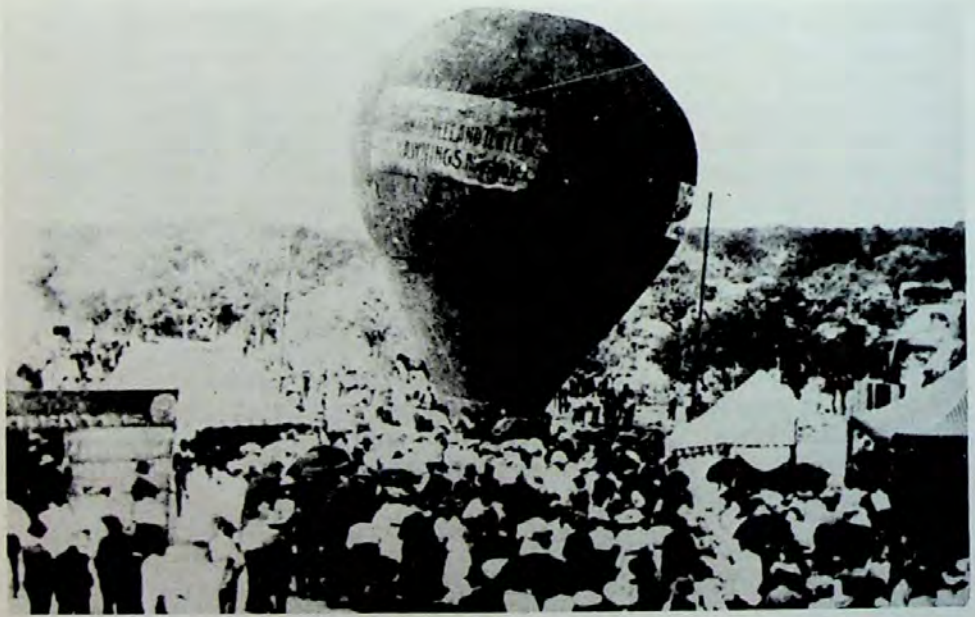
All during the Spanish and American War it seems like two or three new songs would come out. They were all good songs, too; not like that stuff they put out today with only four notes in the whole song. Some I can remember were; "Just as the Sun Went Down", "There Will Be a Hot Time in the Old Town Tonight", "The Georgia Cake Walk", "Come Along and Get Yo'self Ready" for this good old, good old town-for there is going to be a meeting in this good old, good old town, "Under the Bamboo Tree" and then there are several others which I cannot think of at the present time. Llano had several boys who went to that war. I think that most of them were pretty

lucky, too, and lived to come back home again.

With all of my different jobs, I was beginning to save a little money. I saved up about twelve dollars and put it in the bank. Then along came Mr. McCleary with the prettiest little filly you ever saw in your life. She was a natural born pacer, and he sold her to me for nine dollars. There was one thing wrong with her though; you could not ride her very hard because she had on one of her front feet, what they call a "gravel hoof". There was a grain of sand some place between her hoof and the ankle joint of her foot. If you rode her too hard, her foot would seem like she sprained her ankle and she would hop along on three legs for a minute or so. Sometimes she would go a whole month without it hurting her, then all of sudden, it would strike her. I could gallop her all right, but then I never did try to run her.

Mr. Spears, the mayor, lived right behind the barber shop. He lived in a large corner house, and he let me keep my mare in his lot for free. All I was out was the feed. Hay was thirty cents a bale then, and I also fed her some oats and chops. I bought a saddle and bridle with blanket for two dollars and fifty cents. It was what you called a "mulie" saddle because it didn't have any horn on it.

After I got my pony, I really thought that I was something. At the time, I was sort of sweet on Lacy Mae Sellman. Lacy Mae had a friend, Ida Breazeale, and I used to let them have my pony quite often. They always rode her at a walk, so they never hurt her any.



An old fair ground scene with the crowd enjoying the balloon.

CHAPTER 31

LLANO GETS LIGHTS

I was getting to be just about nine years old now. About this time, Mr. Schuwirth came to Llano and started putting in the first electric lights there in Llano. He had a pretty smart electrician by the name of Lee Jernigan working for him. It took quite a while to get them installed all over town. I can remember the first ones now. They were real clear, and it looked like just a loop of pretty good size wire in it, (the bulb) and it looked like the wire just got red hot and that made it glow. I think the first lights I saw were in the wagon yards. They didn't give any too much light then either.

Pretty soon after that, Mr. Schuwirth moved his family from San Antonio to Llano — his wife and two children, Willie and Anita. They lived in a small cottage on the street which ran down to the power plant and water works. Their home was just about one block from the plant. From then on, Willie and I became quite good friends. We would play and fish together quite a bit.

Llano had Carnivals, and a small Mexican tent show would come there quite often. There were several Mexican boys and girls who performed in the show. We got real friendly with them, and we played together quite a bit. That is how Willie and I came to build the gymnasium in his back yard. Of course, we could not build it all at once, but we would try to substitute everything which the Mexicans had in their show. The boys would come down to Willie's house and show us how and even help us build it. We kept on until we had most everything which they had in their little circus. Of course, we were practicing all the time, and as I stated before, we got pretty good on them all. There were six or eight of us boys there most every day. Lets see if I can name a few of them; Albert (Sid) Johnson, Hubert Forman, Frank Howard Wallace, Louis and Emmett Kuykendall, Mack Heard, and Ford Rogers. Even some of the boys from the "north side" would stop by after school some days. We always had a crowd there. It is a wonder that Mrs. Schuwirth didn't run us all off because we made so much noise, but she never did. In fact, I think she enjoyed watching us sometimes.

Here is something that I'll bet that even Willie doesn't remember. They had a very beautiful dog by the name of "Snip". He was supposed to be one of those long haired bird dogs. His color was white and black, and his ears were black and then he had large black spots all over him. I think he must have had quite a bit of water spaniel in him also, because I never saw a dog who loved the water any more than he did. Right out in the middle of the Mill Pond, there was an island. We called it "Goose Island" because there was always a bunch of geese that lived on it. I guess there were twenty or thirty of them. They would build their nests there and raise young ones. Old Snip's favorite pastime was chasing those geese and fighting

water moccasins. He sure hated snakes, but the geese, he just chased for fun. Snip would follow me any time I wanted him to because I went up the river quite a bit, and that is what he liked best to do.

There was a "punt" tied to some trees along the bank of the Mill Pond. It belonged to the mill people. A punt is a flat bottomed boat, about twelve feet long and square at both ends. It was about four feet wide, and it was almost impossible to tilt it or turn it over. A bunch of us boys would take that boat and go out to Goose Island and gather up goose eggs. You did not row that boat, you poled it along or if you knew how, you could scull it. It had one long oar in it. We would gather up all the goose eggs we could find, and take them up on the hill by Judge Johnson's house where Nigger George made his chili and have another chili party. These eggs were good fresh eggs, but, oh my, they may as well have been rotten because they were so strong, you could hardly eat them. We managed to choke them down though. We were ashamed to say that we didn't like them.

It was just about this time that Mr. Canine and his family came down from up north somewhere, and erected his flour mill. He had two grown sons, Stanley was one, and two daughters, Bernice and Wilma. The flour mill was a huge affair, we thought. It was erected on the banks of the river between the power plant and the bridge. I believe that it was four stories high, and I don't know how in the world it ever kept from blowing away, it was so tall and so narrow. I guess the heavy machinery held it down because it had quite a bit of machinery in it. The Canines lived in a small cottage just across the road from the mill. It was sort of back of where Willie Schuwirth lived. Bernice and Wilma went to school with us.

After the mill was all finished, we kids used to play all over the place, there. It is a wonder that Mr. Canine (I don't remember if their name was Kanine or Canine, but I don't guess that it makes much difference) allowed us kids to run around the mill. His two sons practically ran the place. They tried to hire all the local help they could get. I worked for a while sewing sacks up after they were filled with flour. They also ground cornmeal, too. A forty-eight pound bag of flour sold for ninety cents, and a twenty-five pound sack of cornmeal sold for twenty-five cents. Quite a difference now, eh!

On one floor, there in the mill, was a large wheel, a sort of support to keep the long belt from sagging. Anyway, the wheel was turning pretty fast, and you could grab a feller's cap or felt hat and throw it into that wheel, and it would take his hat or cap around so fast you could hardly see it. We would leave it there until the boy was just about ready to cry. Then the younger Canine boy would get an old sack and bear down on the wheel until it stopped, then take the feller's hat out. Outside of being a little dusty, the hat wasn't damaged a bit. Then everyone had a good laugh about it.

Right in front of the mill there was a road which drove over a pair of scales which weighed the wagon loads of wheat, wagon and all.

Then just as they drove off of the scales, they drove onto the dumping rack where they dumped all of the wheat down into the wheat bin. Then they drove back around onto the scales again and weighed their empty wagon so they could see just how much wheat they really had. Down in that wheat bin is where we kids used to play. Willie and I used to hide our fishing poles down there some place. We never did take them home with us. It was a lot more handy to just hide our poles there. Bernice and Wilma used to fish and play around the mill with us also. I think that Willie was sort of sweet on Bernice. I can't blame him much, for she really was a pretty little girl and smart at school also.

Llano Milling and Manufacturing Company.

CHAPTER 32

ESCAPADES WITH MY BROTHER, FLOYD

Up to the present time, I have not said much about my brother, Floyd. It is a shame how I used to tease him. He always wanted to go with me every place I went. I was only two years older than he was, but he ran with a gang just about his own age. It seems that just about every two or three years, there was a special gang for that age bracket. Floyd would always try to follow me, and I would run off and leave him. Then, no matter where we were, Floyd would begin to holler, "Mama Watkins!" He was her pet. I would tell him that we were several miles from home, and that Mama Watkins could not hear him, but he would always say, "Oh yes she can, too! She could hear me even if I was a hundred miles away!"

Floyd could pick more fights than any kid in town and then yell for me. When I would come to his rescue, he would always manage to disappear some place. What caused me to change my attitude toward Floyd quite a bit was that he won a muzzle loader shot gun in a raffle. He won it on number thirteen. Of course, he was too small to shoot a shotgun, so I took charge of the gun. After then, I would always let Floyd accompany me on all of my hunts. The ramrod was the best one I ever saw. The tamping end of the rod was fitted with a piece of deer horn stuck onto it some way and was just as straight and strong as it could be. There was even a powder horn and a shot box, as well as a copper tube to carry the caps in. I sure killed plenty of game with that old gun — doves, squirrels and one time down on the mill pond, I killed two green headed ducks with one shot. I sure was proud of Floyd's gun. He kept on begging me to let him shoot it once. So, I put in an extra heavy load of powder and shot, and then we saw an old crow sitting on a fence post. I handed the gun to Floyd and said, "All right, let me see you knock that old crow off that fence post." He took the gun, took good aim and fired. It kicked him down and all but stomped him. He handed the gun back to me and never did ask to shoot it any more. That was a real dirty trick for me to play on my own brother, but then, I was just as mean as hell then anyway.

I believe it was the first winter after the Canines built the flour mill that we had a real hard freeze, and the Mill Pond froze over solid. It is the only time I ever heard of it freezing over like that, either before or afterward. The Canine family, all being from the north, had ice skates, so they all broke out their skates and were skating all over the pond. Just up the river from the mill, a couple of blocks, was a real large gulley, and water was backed up in it for about a hundred yards. In that little slew, the Canine boys kept a couple of boats tied. The banks on either side of the gulley were real steep, and at the time, very muddy. We had to go up the creek a bit before we could cross the creek and come down to the banks of the

river to where we wanted to go, to the boats. I wanted to get into one of them. The water had a thin coating of ice on it there by the boats. I don't think that the cold weather could reach it too well. Hence, the thin ice. So, I proceeded to climb down the steep bank to the boat, when all of a sudden, my feet slipped out from under me, and down I shot — right down that bank into that thin crust of ice, which of course, broke. I shot clear out of sight right in that cold icy water. Poor little Floyd was jumping up and down up on the bank yelling, "Allan, Allan, come out!" I wondered what he thought I was trying to do. Anyway, I finally treaded water up to the bank and then just dug my fingers into that soft mud and finally climbed up to the top again where Floyd was waiting for me. We started for home and we passed a nigger house. I saw smoke coming from their chimney. We knocked at the door and asked if we could come in and get warm. Boy, she grabbed me and pulled off all my clothes and wrapped me in a quilt and hung my clothes up before the fireplace to dry. Then she gave me a hot bowl of soup. Floyd spoke up and said, "I am cold, too." She sort of grinned and gave him a bowl of soup, also.

Floyd Townsend in a suit made by his mother. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 33

A TALE OR TWO

Llano had very few niggers, but those we did have, were real good ones, and we all loved them and they loved us. We kids played with them, and we all got along fine. There was no such thing as segregation then. If we wanted to associate with any of them, we did, and no one tried to force themselves on anyone. There was only one nigger in town whom I did not like. That was Nigger Sally. She used to chase me with a buggy whip. If she could have ever caught me, I believe that she would have whipped me good because she had a little boy, Nigger Ben, whom I beat up one time, and ever since that — she would chase me with her buggy whip. Her husband, Willis McGowen was a cowboy, and he worked for some stockman. He would laugh and say that Sally knew that I was afraid of her, that is the reason she always chased me.

While we are on the subject of Nigger Ben, one day he was taking a letter to the post office to mail. He was carrying the letter in his hip pocket. Sebe Dalrymple had a new nigger shooter and some buck shot, so he took a shot at Ben and hit him right in the rear pocket, where he had the letter. The buck shot went right through that two cent stamp and ruined it. Ben began to cry and say, "Now I can't mail Mama's letter, and she will whip me." He had not mentioned any damage to his own rear end. So, Sebe said, "I'll get you a new stamp, Ben." He did — and then everyone was happy.

It was just about this time that President McKinley was assassinated in Buffalo, New York, so my paper sales boomed again. I was still too young to know much about McKinley, only that he was the President, and that I was selling more newspapers now.

About the next big event I remember was the Presidential race to elect a new President. At that time old William Jennings Bryan was running for President, for the first time, I believe, and Stevenson was his running mate. To be in style, I bought one of their campaign hats. It had a Bryan and Stevenson ribbon around the hat band. I was very proud of that hat. At the time, the Llano River was on a pretty good rise. We were all down on the bridge watching it, as it was rising more and more all the time. I had my head poked through one of those holes of the hand rails on the side walk of the bridge, when old Dr. Townsend, Dr. Billy and Dr. Ed's father, came up to my back and grabbed me in the ribs and said, "Wheee-e-e!" Of course I jumped. I was very ticklish anyway. In the process, I knocked my pretty new hat off into the river, and there wasn't a chance of recovering it, so I began to cry and to bawl the old man out. He put his arm around my shoulders and said, "Don't cry Allan. Come on and I will buy you another one just like it." So, he took me up to the store and duplicated it so that I could not tell the difference, and we were both

happy again.

I wasn't the only one who thought that I had good taste in buying hats. I bought another one just before that one. It was sort of tan in color. At that time, it was sort of a fashion for us to wear our felt hats coming up to a point like the soldiers did in the Spanish-American War. Around this hat band, I went to the saddle shop and got Herman to make me a leather strap to wear around the band. All around the band was stamped the figures of horse's heads. I did not know it at the time, but later on I ran across one of the Llano boys who lived out in the country a ways, named Tate Moss. He told me that he always thought that I had prettier hats than any other boy in town. But me — I was always glad when summer came, so we could all switch back to our ¼ bushel straw hats. They were our old stand bys.

CHAPTER 34

MY GANG AND SOME OF OUR FAVORITE PASTIMES

There were quite a few boys in my gang whom I have not mentioned yet because, as I said before, they were coming and going all the time. One was a boy by the name of Ruby Dunaway and another was Bennett Colwell. His brother, Leslie, was in my little brother's gang. His sisters were Kate and Opal and there was another which I don't remember. We all ran together and hunted and fished together. We used to all go in swimming together down at Old Bailey swimming hole. Dick Moore and Prentice (Penny Hopper) were there quite a bit also. Then Sid Johnson, Ford and Raymond Rogers, George Rogers (they were cousins), Frank and Howard Wallace, Louis and Emmett Kuykendall and at different times, there would be different kids in. One of our favorite sports was for a couple of boys to slip out of the hole and go around and tie knots in the sleeves of everyone's shirts and then tie the pants legs also. Then when someone would start to go out and put his clothes on, we would let him get all of the knots untied and then some one would throw a handful of mud on him. Then, of course, he would have to come back in again to wash the mud off. Sometimes we would keep that up until the poor boy was just about ready to cry. We always called that "a dirty trick"!

Every fall when the pecans began to hull, all of us boys would get so impatient that we could not wait for them to begin to hull good. We would go out and gather them, then take our knives and cut the hulls off of them, so pretty soon our fingers were blacker than any niggers in town was. Then, after they were hulled, we would spread them out on the roof of some shed or something to dry. Then we would all fill our pockets with pecans and while at school, we would all stand around at recess and at lunch hour and try to bum pecans from one another. Roy Frazier, who lived over on Flag Creek, (his nickname was "Snake") and Quantril ("Coonie") Cone always brought the best pecans I thought. They would all share a few with me. Andrew Moss was also pretty liberal with his pecans. My favorite place to gather pecans was up the river and then up and down Flag Creek. All of those creeks were full of pecan trees in those days. Most all of us boys became familiar with the trees which produced the most and the best pecans, so we would always race to see who would get there first. Some of us boys would even get a board and mark "Posted" on it and nail it to some good tree. That didn't do much good though, because no one paid any attention to a "Posted" tree. The law said that anything within the high water mark could not be posted, and most all of those trees came within the high water mark. I remember one day Sebe Dalrymple and I were up the river, and we were inside of Mr. Deat's fence, too. We were both up in the tree just thrashing away to beat the band, and we were not paying

much attention to anything, only thrashing those pecans off that tree. When we came down out of that tree, there was old man Deats there on the ground picking up all of the pecans which we had thrashed. He said, "Hello boys. I sure do thank you for thrashing this tree for me because I was dreading to start on it." He had already picked up over a half a flour sack of pecans. We knew that we couldn't do anything about it, so I said, "Mr. Deats, aren't you going to give us any of them?" He said, "Oh yes, you boys can pick up all which I have left on the ground." So, all we could do was to go to work and salvage what he had left us.

Old man Goodman, who had adjoining property to Mr. Deats, used to do the same thing. He would hide and wait until someone came by and thrashed his trees for him, then come out and claim his pecans. We soon learned to leave those pecans alone which belonged to Mr. Deats and Mr. Goodman.

Llano was really beginning to grow now. I think that they had already erected a couple of stand pipes. One up on the hill behind the school house, and the other one was up on the top of the river bank, just behind Mr. Canine's house. So, now a man from Austin, a Mr. A. J. Zilker, (so my friend, Willie, tells me) came to Llano and bought the power plant from his father. Then he decided to put in an ice factory. He started to work immediately. It doesn't seem to me that it took too long to do that. Then, after it was completed, he really went to town with it. We kids thought it was about the grandest thing we had ever seen, and it was for Llano, too. Most everyone in town would buy ice. Then the ice vault did a land office business also, cooling melons, fruits and meats, etc. A nice big watermelon which we could buy for about fifteen cents hot, would cost us twenty-five cents cold, but we did not mind that though, one bit. We would all chip in and buy a nice cold melon and take it out on the river bank under some shady trees and sit there and eat until we nearly popped. It was really good, too. Always, before, my grandfather would bring a melon home and then wet some toe sacks good, spread it all over and around the melons and let them lie overnight and up until afternoon. Then he would cut it, and we all thought that was plenty cool. I expect that it was a lot healthier at that!

Then Llano had an ice wagon also. A Mr. Kinney had a pair of small mules which he put bells around the neck of each of them. These little mules were just about the toughest pair of mules I ever saw. He would load that ice wagon with three hundred pound blocks of ice, and after they got it up to the top of the river bank, those little mules would go at a dead run most all of the time. Ice was cheap then, too. You could get a twenty-five pound hunk for ten cents, a fifty pound hunk for twenty cents and one hundred pounds for twenty-five cents. So, most everyone in Llano bought ice. Mr. Kinney never would have made it if he had not had so many helpers. He had a gang of us kids following him all over town. We could carry

the ice in for him, and the only pay we ever got was when he was sawing the ice, he would let us hold our hand under the saw and catch the "saw ice", which we called snow. That handful of snow on a real hot day more than paid us for our work.

As I said before, most everyone in town bought ice, if not regularly, then on special occasions, like Sundays when most everyone would make a freezer of ice cream. That sure hurt the ice cream parlors for a while until the new wore off. Most folks had a cow or two of their own, and if they didn't, it didn't make much difference because you could buy whole milk for twenty cents a gallon and all the eggs you wanted for ten cents a dozen. Sugar was the most expensive thing we had in those days, that is, white sugar. It sold for sixteen pounds for a dollar, but you could buy brown sugar, twenty pounds for a dollar.

My grandfather would buy a fifty pound chunk of ice on Saturday, and would keep it wrapped up good in a gunny sack and it would last for three days. We didn't use much ice, just a small chunk in the water bucket, and then ice tea on Sunday.

We kids used to give quite a few parties. Seems like we would have a couple of parties a week. If you were in the gang, you were always invited. We would play indoor games like; "Spin the Plate", "Post Office", "Pin a Cup of Water on the Wall", "Wink-tum", and "Pin the Tail on the Donkey"; and outdoor games like: "Blind man's Bluff", "Drop the Handkerchief", "Hide and Seek" (that was the one I liked best), and "Black Man". Then, along toward the last, we were served refreshments — mostly home made tea cakes and lemonade. We didn't have Cokes, etc., in the bottles in those days. On a birthday party, we always had a more elaborate affair because each one was supposed to bring along a present, and as they got all of those presents, they always put themselves out a little bit more.

One of our main play grounds was the cotton yard where the cotton buyers kept their cotton. Also, there was usually a bunch of cotton stored over on the loading platform, located between the passenger and the freight depots. The reason we always liked to play on the bales of cotton was that we would move some of them different distances apart, and then practice jumping from one bale to another. If we could get a pretty good running start on the other bales, some of us got to be pretty good jumpers. Even if we missed, it did not hurt us too badly. I guess that we had played in the cotton yard for two or three years, and one day Ross Hargis and Sebe Dalrymple were down there, all by themselves playing, and they set the cotton on fire some way. I do not know how they did it, but some how it caught on fire. I don't know whether you know it or not, but cotton is very hard to put out once the fire gets started. The wind was blowing pretty strong that day, too. and Llano had no fire department then either. So, about all they could do was let her burn. That large gulley ran along just to the rear of the cotton yard, and old Sebe and Ross got in that gulley, ran down to the river, which

was only about three blocks away, then went down to the Old Bailey swimming hole and went in for awhile. When they came out, they circled way around the whole town and came in from the sourthern part of town, just as innocent as could be and said, "What happened? What is all of the excitement about?" I believe that some of the floats in town loaded up with empty barrels and then went to the river and filled them with water. Then they came back to the cotton yard and took a bucket and dipper and poured just enough water on the cotton to stop the fire. Then they would pull the cotton out by hand all around the burned place. That was about the only way that you could be sure the fire was out because you could pour water on a spot and then think that it was out and go away and leave it, and the fire would spring up again. So, to be sure, you had to pull all of the burned part out. I guess the buyers carried insurance on the cotton, but it was not damaged too much, outside of getting pretty wet, and you know that didn't do it any good! I do not know what they ever did do with it, but I do know that it put a quietus on the kids playing in the cotton yard. We were not allowed to go anywhere near it anymore. Most of us went over on the north side to the loading platform if they were getting ready to ship it out to some factory, after it was sold. We would get up on top of the box cars and jump off of the top, down onto the bales of cotton. It is a wonder some of us didn't break our necks.

Arthur Holden was in charge of loading all of that cotton into those box cars, and Arthur was pretty much of a man in those days. I have seen him stack that cotton, two bales high, in those box cars all by himself. After he was grown, I met him out at the Masonic Home in Arlington, Texas, where he was living at the time. He was sort of crippled then, also, and I told a bunch of his fellow inmates, there at the home, just what a man he used to be when he was young. It nearly tickled old Arthur to death. He told them, "See! I told you boys that I wasn't always in the shape that I am in now!" Then I spoke up and said that Arthur was the best first baseman the Llano ball team ever had, and Llano had the best team in that whole part of the country then, also. They beat them all going and coming.

I brought Arthur down to Llano with me a couple of times while he was at the home, before he died. He told me that he wanted to catch just one more fish out of the Llano River and he would be satisfied. I took him up the river to Sebe Dalrymple's place. We gave him an old cane pole like we used to fish with, and pretty soon we heard him hollering, "Sebe, Allan, come and help me!" He had something on his line which he couldn't handle, so we both helped him. We finally got it to the bank where we could reach down and grab him in the gills. It was a big old twelve foot German Carp. I don't believe that I ever saw anyone as happy as he was. He wanted to take it home with him to show the other boys — said they would never belive him if he went home and told that story. I told him that it would stink both of us out of the car before we could get him there.

CHAPTER 35

A SAD EVENT

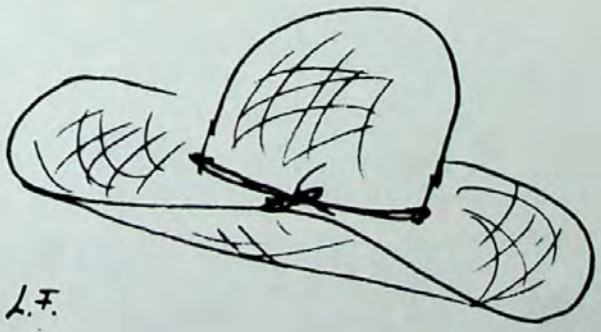
Now back to Llano again. By this time, I was just past ten years old, and we received the sad news that Papa had been placed in an institution in San Antonio, Texas, and that he had passed on. Boy, that really jarred me. He had requested that his large heavy Elgin watch and a gold medal for sharp shooting, which he had won in a shooting contest, be sent to me. The watch was open faced and had a screw front and back on it, and on the back was an inlaid golden buck deer. I thought that it was the most beautiful watch I had ever seen in my life. I have seen my father use that watch to crack pecans with several times, just to show off, I guess. I held on to those until I went into the U.S. Navy. While I was in the service, I think that my little brother, Floyd, hocked both the watch and the medal. For in 1908, while I was home on my first furlough, I was looking for them, and Floyd said that the watch was at the jewelry shop being repaired. I knew he was lying, and I asked him to give me the pawn tickets, and I would get them out. He had a good job with the Western Union, in the office at the time, and there was no cause for him to pawn that watch. But, then, he was quite a lady's man, and I think they kept him broke most all the time. Anyway, I never saw the watch nor the medal again, and I hadn't anymore than got to my ship until I heard that Floyd had joined the Navy. He thought that he could be with me, but they sent him to the west coast instead. After he left Boot Camp, he shipped out on the old U.S.S. Helena, a gun boat, and they sent to China. Poor kid, before he was over there a month, he took the Chinese Small Pox and died. He had not been in the Navy a year yet. Because he died of a contagious disease, they said that he had to be buried for at least two years before we could bring his remains home. So they buried him in the Bubbling Wells Cemetery, there in Shanghi, China. His shipmates gave him a beautiful burial, a nice tombstone, and the plot which he was buried on had a nice little iron fence all around it. We have several pictures of his grave. When the two year's limit was up, and we could have brought his remains home, we decided not to disturb his grave at all because we know that he was not there anyway.

Back to Llano again. Right after Papa died, I decided that I would have to quit school and go to work. I guess that was just more of an excuse than anything else. I did quit school though, and I have been sorry ever since because that was the only schooling which I ever had, and I was only in the fifth grade then, too.

Before I quit school, I want to tell of an incident which happened to my friend, Mack Heard. Around Christmas time, we had some pretty dangerous play toys. Sometimes, for instance, we would have a sort of walking cane, and on the bottom of it was an iron contraption which worked something like a cap pistol, only it was

much heavier than the pistol because they shot dynamite caps. To fire them, all you had to do was to bang them down hard on something solid, and it had a real loud report, just like a large fire cracker. If you had the slot where you put the caps in pointed towards someone's legs, fine particles would fly out and sting their legs pretty badly. I think they finally outlawed them, and they could not sell any more. Then, next, they came out with a small twenty-two caliber pistol which was supposed to only shoot blanks. Of course some of us wise boys discovered that you could buy the real small twenty-two shorts and take your knife and trim the lead down just as much as you could, and the little pistol would shoot them. One day at school, Professor Stubbs had a run in with Mack Heard. He was trying to take Mack up to his office to give him a whipping, and Mack reached in his pocket and pulled out his little twenty-two pistol, which was loaded with a real bullet, and fired point blank at the Professor. Mack had not trimmed the bullet down quite enough, so the whole barrel of the pistol was blown off. By this time, Professor Stubbs realized just what had happened; that Mack had really tried to shoot him. So, he knocked Mack down and stomped him, right there in the entrance to the school. He then, dragged him up to his office and gave him the whipping which he started out to give him in the first place. After that, all of the boys obeyed the Professor any time he told them to do something.

Another peculiarity which Mack had was, when marble season was on, if he saw a real pretty agate which he liked, he would just pick it up and swallow it. Now belive it or not, I have seen Mack swallow as many as three agates, and you could hear them click together down in his throat. He would smoke a cigarette, drink a glass of water and all; then he could spit them up, one at a time. He could swallow nickels and dimes the same way. Just ask any of the old time boys there in Llano about it. They have, most all of them, lost agates to him. I have never seen anyone since who could do that stunt. I do not see how he could do it.



CHAPTER 36

MY TRIP TO THORP SPRINGS

About that time, Mr. Randolph Clark came through Llano. He had heard of Papa's death, and he came by to try and comfort Mama. Randolph and Addison Clark, two brothers, were the founders of the Add-Ran College, located in Thorp Springs, Texas. That was the college which Papa graduated from. Then, when I was born, Papa named me Allan Randolph Townsend. The Randolph was in honor his Professor Randolph Clark. They must have thought quite a bit of Papa because now Mr. Randolph Clark wanted to take me back to Thorp Springs and put me through the same college Papa graduated from. So, Mama let me go. Of course, I was always ready to go anywhere. I remember the trip well. The trip took us two days. We left Llano on the one o'clock train and went to Burnet. Then we rode another train to Lampasas where we had to stay all night. I never will forget that night in the hotel room. It was hot as blue blazes, and the mosquitoes nearly ate us up. After breakfast, we caught another train, the Sante Fe or the Frisco, one, I do not remember which. We only rode this train as far as Granbury, Texas. We arrived there around four P.M. It was still seven and a half miles out to Thorp Springs. A Mr. Holloway, Mr. Clark's son-in-law, drove in to meet us. It was then that we learned that the college had burned down, so we drove on out to Mr. Holloway's house to spend the night there. Mr. Holloway had two sons, Robert and Sterling. Mr. Holloway told Mr. Clark that they were going to start rebuilding the college immediately, and that I could live there, at his house, and he would find a job for me, as a water boy on the job, if I wanted it. I agreed, so in about a week, we got started working. In the meantime, I was running all around getting acquainted. Most all of the folks there remembered my father, and they all told me what a fine man he was. I got acquainted with the Robinson boys. There were three of them. I do not remember the oldest one's name, but next to him was Hoover, then came Gil. They were both near my age. There was another young man who lived there, Sidney Garb. Mrs. Robinson ran a boarding house, and it seems that Papa used to board with her. I ate there quite a bit myself because I was such good friends to Hoover and Gil. I was very popular there, and they all insisted on calling me Randolph, instead of Allan, so I just let them go ahead and call me Randolph. However, it was pretty hard to get adjusted to that new name. I just thought of the older Robinson boy's name; it was Harry.

The longer I stayed in Thorp Springs, the better I liked it. One thing I liked most was the nice swimming hole we had there. Just before we pulled into Thorp Springs, coming from Granbury, we crossed a pretty large creek which had some running water in it most all the time. The creek was an awful winding creek, almost like a

cork-screw. Now just behind the Robinson house, after we passed through an abandoned peach orchard which had some mighty fine peaches in it, we came to a sharp bend in the creek, where it was pretty wide and the water was deep. That was our swimming hole, and every evening the hole was full of bathers. Guess that is about the only baths most of us ever got, but then I guess that was sufficient.

About one or two nights a week, we would all pair off and take a walk down to the Sulphur Springs. I never did have to worry about getting a girl there, for as I said before, I was pretty popular. I did not care too much for the springs, though, it always stinks to me. It made me think that there was a bunch of dead frogs in it. All the rest of the bunch would drink that stuff — said that it was healthy, but healthy or not, I just could not drink it.

The boys and girls there gave quite a few parties in my honor. Sometimes we would have a couple of parties a week, and I was having the time of my life. I even ran into one family there, who claimed to be kinfolks of mine. They were a German family by the name of Rohatch. They had a small farm out at the edge of town. Mrs. Rohatch said that she was a Townsend before she married. They had two children which I remember, a boy, Justin, and a girl named Elsie. They were awful nice to me at all times. I remember one time, just about cotton picking time, Justin and Elsie came up with the idea of giving a party, and then have all of us to go out into the cotton patch and pick cotton, so they could pick it all in one day, besides having a good time, also. Mr. Rohatch agreed to pay us forty cents a hundred pounds for what we picked, which was standard price in those days. Now I had never picked a boll of cotton in my life, but I took a bag and slung it over my shoulder, and started down a row starting to pick cotton. Every few minutes I would go running up to the wagon and dump my cotton, then hurry on back and start picking again. We all went as hard as we could go all afternoon. I though for sure that I must have a couple of hundred pounds picked by the time we quit. So, we all went up to the wagon to get our cotton weighed, and then get our slip stating how much we had picked. When they came to mine and weighed it up, it all just came to fifty-six pounds. I couldn't believe it. I said, "Are you sure that is all it weighs?" They all began to laugh, and he put it on the scales again and said, "See for yourself." Then I saw what large piles all the rest of them had, and I realized then that I was no cotton picker. That was my first and my last time of picking cotton.

I had quite a few chores which I had to do around Mr. Holloway's house because he only took half of my wages out to pay for my room and board and washing, and I, as water boy, was only making seventy-five cents a day, for nine hours work. So, you can see that Mr. Holloway, or myself either, were not getting rich. One of my chores each morning was to go out in the small pasture and catch old Barney, the horse which worked on the job then, and drive the calf

up so Mr. Holloway could milk the cow, then turn her out.

The two kids and I all slept on a large pallet which Mrs. Holloway would spread down for us, and in the morning for breakfast, she would always cook a large pot of cream of wheat. That was new at the time, and I never could get enough of it. I really liked it. They had their own chickens and cow, so we always had plenty of eggs, butter and milk. We really ate pretty good. I'll tell you that Mrs. Holloway sure had her hands full then, and she was practically boarding me for nothing. She told Mr. Holloway, one day, that he should promote me to a better job, so I could make more money and could pay her a little more board. He said that he would see what he could do. So, the next day, he put me on the hoist with old Barney. They didn't have any power elevators in those days. All they had was the heavy platforms with a sort of runner at each of the four corners to make the platform hoist up straight. They would grease the runners with axle grease, and then the stage was slung onto a block and tackle. A double block at the top which was tied onto an iron beam had a hook on the end of it which hooked into the sling that lifted the platform. Then from the double block at the top, the line came on back down to the ground where it was passed through a snatch block then hooked onto the single tree and to old Barney's traces. Then when the platform was loaded, I would lead old Barney out as far as it would take to lift the platform up even with the floor where they were to unload it. Then Harry Robinson would shove a couple of four by fours across the opening, then I would back old Barney back real easy, until the platform rested on the four by four. Then the gang on top would unload it. Sometimes it would be rocks, and then sometimes it would be mortar or some other material. For this job, I got twenty-five cents raise. I, now, made one dollar for nine hours work. Oh yes, I was about to forget, when the hoist was empty, we had rigged up a sort of foot brake to lower it down with. It was pretty hard on the rope, but then we didn't look very far ahead, and as long as it lowered it down o.k., that was all we wanted.

While we were building one part of the walls, there was another gang tearing down some of the old walls. They said that the heat had weakened them, so they were tearing down and just dropping the old rocks down onto the ground. Sid was in the gang out there tearing the walls down, and one day they dug into a bumble bee nest. Boy, you should have seen those boys fight those bumble bees. I don't see how in the world they ever kept from getting stung, but I guess they finally killed them all, for pretty soon one of them came over with a bucket full of honey. I did not care for it too much, though, it was too strong for me.

All my life, I always had a sweet tooth. Seems like I ate candy most every day I could. Now on this job, was a man by the name of Boyd, who was a carpenter. He also owned the grocery store up in town, and every afternoon around three o'clock, his son would come

down on the job with candy, tobacco and cold drinks, etc. Most everyone on the job bought something from him because a nine hour day is a pretty long day now, but we didn't notice it too much then. If we didn't have the cash, our credit was good.

Thorp Springs had two baseball teams, the Junior team and the Senior team, and of course, they wanted me to be on the Junior team. I never was much of a ball player, though. I was tried out on most every position on the team, and the captain finally decided that center field was the best position for me. I could bat fairly good, but all of the rest of the game, I just barely hung on. We practiced most every day, and we finally challenged Grandbury for a game. They accepted, and we went over there to play the first game. We started off pretty good, but as the game progressed, I began to lose interest in the game. We were in the field, and all of a sudden, here came a nice pop fly, it was right over my head. I yelled, "I've got it! I've got it!" So, they let me have it. The sun was right in my eyes, and I was so sure of myself, also, that the ball fell right in my hands and continued right on through my hands and hit me square between my eyes. Boy, it swelled up so that I had to turn my head sideways, like a chicken, to see anything. Right then and there my baseball career ended. I never played another game in all my life. However, that did not keep me from having a good time in Thorp Springs the whole time I was there.

My two best friends, Hoover and Gil Robinson, were going with the two prettiest girls in town. Hoover was going with Ava Gardner, a real pretty blue eyed girl with real black hair; and his brother, Gil, was sweet on Jessie Conway. She was just as pretty, only she was a blue eyed blonde. In our age bracket, they were considered "the belles of the town". They both gave me to understand that I could go out with either one of them if I wanted to, but Hoover and Gil being such good friends of mine, I sort of hung back a little.

The job on the new school was coming along just fine, and they were trying to get enough of it finished so by the time school was ready to open, they could get started with some of the local children anyway.

I think that their funds must have been running low or something because somehow, Mr. Jarvis got mixed up with it. I think that he must have had some money. Anyway, they now named the college, The Add-Ran, Jarvis College, and I suppose, went ahead and completed it.

About this time, Tom Clark, Mr. Randolph Clark's son, and Mrs. Holloway's brother, came driving in. It seems that he had some sort of a traveling job because he had been away for quite a while. He was driving a pair of the prettiest little gray mares I ever saw, and they were real spirited, too. Tom used to let me take them down to the creek and water them. He came down to our swimming hole one day and went swimming with us. While we were in, he said to me, "Why don't you run home and get the two mares and bring them down

here and give them a little swim, also." So, I lit out for the house and got the mares and brought them back. Boy, they liked to swim as much as we did. After that, I would bring them down a couple of times a week. I would get Gil, and he would ride one and I, the other. That was lots of fun for us all.

Over in Granbury, the Redman's Lodge sponsored a three day reunion. It was sort of like we had in Llano, only they did not have the barbeque. Instead, they staged a "show battle" between the white man and the Indians. They were all dressed to suit the occasion, and the Indians looked so real that some of the kids were afraid of them.

They had a good picnic. I think that each family had to bring a bunch of sandwiches and other food, like salads, cakes, pies, etc. Then they all spread their tablecloths on the ground. Some sat down, others just walked around and picked out what they wanted and ate standing up, but we all managed to eat our fill.

Then there were several rides and side shows on the grounds, also. Most all of the folks from Thorp Springs, Stephenville and surrounding towns all came in a couple of wagons, and several brought their surreys along, also. A whole family could crowd in a surrey, if the family was not too large. They all set a certain time to leave for home that evening. I was in Mr. and Mrs. Holloway's wagon. During the day, I had broken over and had taken on both Ava and Jessie. I had just gotten paid a couple of days before, and besides, I had a few dollars saved up. We were all riding on the Hobby Horses, eating candy and all sorts of goodies. I was a real good spender, too. I think that I spent just about all the money I had, around seven dollars. Anyway, when it came time for Mr. Holloway's wagon to leave, we hid. Jessie told me that I could ride home with them. I think that Mr. and Mrs. Holloway, both, looked all around for me for nearly an hour. Several told them who I was with, and they were so mad that they were frothing at the mouth. Finally Mrs. Holloway said, "Come on, let's go home. Let him walk home!" So they left for home. About an hour later, Mr. Conway got Jessie and Ava and said, "Come on, we are going home." Then Jessie and Ava both begged him to let me ride with them — said that I had missed the Holloway wagon, so, he took me in. When we finally got home, Mr. and Mrs. Holloway, both, were waiting up for me, and boy, did they light into me. They had heard about me spending my money on those two girls, and they began to question me, telling me how hard I had worked for that money, and how they had sacrificed on my board money so I could save up a few pennies for my school term. They asked me how much I had spent. I told them that I had spent all I had, about seven dollars. Then Mrs. Holloway said, "Now that is the straw that broke the camel's back! Now, you are going back home tomorrow. That is the most ridiculous thing I ever heard of in all my life — you just letting those girls work you for a good time." Then I said to her, "Oh well, come easy, go easy! and as it was my money,

"What the heck!" I was real sassy to her for the first time. Then she said, "Now that you have spent all of your money, how are you going to get back home?" I replied, "Walk, I guess." So the next day I packed my suitcase, and Tom Clark and his father, Mr. Randolph, took me to Grandbury to catch my train back to Llano. Mr. Randolph talked to the Station Agent for quite a while. I don't know what they were talking about, but I'll bet that he talked him into letting me ride home free. He was a really good talker, and could persuade a person to do most anything he wanted them to do. The trip going back to Llano didn't take near as long as it did coming up. I made it back home in one day, guess I made better connections.

CHAPTER 37

MY ARRIVAL BACK IN LLANO

After I arrived back in Llano, all of the fellows said that I had a chance to go away to school, and that I set fire to and burned the school down, just to keep from going to school.

My little pony, which I owned when I left home, was in Judge Slator's good sized pasture up the river on the north side. When I got home, I tried to catch her, but me being on foot, I just couldn't make it. She had been running loose for such a long time, she did not want to come back with me. I got a chance to sell her for ten dollars, and I let her go. The same man who bought her from had a little jenny which he said he would let me have for three dollars — said that it could not cost me anything at all to keep her. He said that I could just tie her to the wood pile at night, and when I woke up the next morning, she would be rolling fat. So, I brought her home, and that night I tied her up at the wood pile. Papa Watkins came along and asked me why I didn't put her in the cow pen. I told him that the man I bought her from told me to just tie her up at the wood pile at night, and then that would be all the feed she needed. Papa Watkins said, "Well, we will put her in the lot with the other stock, and I think she will like it better that way, because she would get mighty tired with nothing to eat but stove wood!" So, he gave her some feed after he placed her in the lot.

I used to let Floyd ride behind me quite a lot then, because he had been so good to me about his gun. While we are talking about the gun, I will tell what happened to it. We were out in Bob Davis' pasture one day, out by his stock tank. I was tamping the powder in good and tight, and some way or another, the ramrod, or tamping rod, got stuck in the gun and even Floyd and I, both, could not pull it out, no matter how hard we pulled on it. Finally, I told Floyd that I guessed the only way to get it out, was to shoot it out. So, I put a cap on the firing pin, and pointed the gun just as straight up in the air as I could get it. I told Floyd to watch closely so we could tell where it fell, then I pulled the trigger, and you know that Floyd nor I either one, ever saw that ramrod leave the gun, nor did we see it in the air either. So, that was the last we ever saw of it, and without it, the gun was useless. So, Floyd just hung it up on the wall for the dirt daubers to build their nest in.

Now back to my little jenny again. One day I was galloping along just as pretty as you please, when all of a sudden, a piece of newspaper blew out of some weeds at the side of the road. Jenny shied and jumped sideways so quick that she unseated me right there. I had several spills off of her, but one good thing, I never had to fall very far, because she was a very small jenny. She was sort of a dark bluish gray with a black stripe down her back and around her neck — sort of cute when you stopped to think about it. I taught her a good

trick also. I could take the reins from over her head, and lead her and then there wasn't a boy in town who could ride her. We never used a saddle on her, we always rode bareback. If she could not pitch them off, she would throw up her head and knock them off that way. Then when I got ready to leave, I would just pull the reins up over her head again, and jump on her back and go galloping off. She never made any attempt to pitch me off, but on the other hand, I'll bet that if I had pulled the reins over her head and let someone else lead her, I'll bet that she would have thrown me, just as she did the other boys. I never did try, or mention, that to any of the other boys.

P. J. Watkins, Allan's "Papa Watkins" (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

CHAPTER 38

JOBS, EVENTS AND HAPPNINGS ON THE NORTH SIDE

On the north side, at the Eaves Hotel, Mr. Eaves had a son, Buster, is what they called him, Buster Eaves. Everyone said that he was my "double" — said we looked as much alike as two peas in a pod. I never would believe it because he was so "cuckoo"; just a big loud mouth, and every word he spoke was a cuss word of some sort. I never did hear of him going to any school, and he just practically lived on the river. Now that is one thing which we had in common because I loved the river also.

After Mr. Ernest Marschall and his wife took over the Algona Hotel, and I became acquainted with his children, Irene, Baby (Cornelia), Willie and little Pat, who was the baby; I practically lived over there at the hotel. Irene and Willie and I were all in the same class at school. Willie and I were the same age, only I was four days older though. My birthday was the sixth of November, and his came on the tenth of November. Mrs. Marschall used to call us the twins, and she would spank my rear end just as quick as she would his. Willie and I used to wash dishes there in the hotel, and Mr. Marschall was supposed to pay us twenty-five cents a week, but, boy, how hard it was to collect that twenty-five cents. He would always put us off and tell us that he would pay us "tomorrow". Now Minnie, who was an orphan which Mr. and Mrs. Marschall were raising, was the waitress in the hotel, and Irene served the drinks. They got a few tips every once in a while. After the meals, they always had to wash and polish the glasses and silverware. When Willie and I finished with the dishes, Irene would make us come in and help her. Supper time was the main meal. Well, sometimes, the noon meal was pretty heavy also. Most every spare minute we had Willie and I would spend down on the river, fishing. We also made quite a bit of money selling bait. We would dig worms, seine minnows, catch hellgrammites, and we always kept quite a few lines out for fish, too.

One day there was a whiskey salesman in town. He bought some bait from us and wanted us to show him where a good place to fish was. We told him to give us a taste of some of his whiskey, and we would show him a good place to fish. He told us no, that he could not give us any whiskey, but he would leave his sample case unlocked if we would promise not to take too many tastes. So, of course, we promised. We took him down below the dam, on the north side of the river, which was about as good a place as there was. Then we rushed back to the hotel and up to the salesman's room. Sure enough, he had left his sample case unlocked. So we proceeded to taste them all. None appealed to us until we reached the Apricot Brandy, and that tasted so good that we kept on tasting it until we tasted it all up. By then, we were both as drunk as hoot owls. I

crawled into the dirty clothes bin down by the toilet, and I think that Willie went way up on the third floor some place and into a vacant room. We were both out of sight until we slept our "jag" off. Then, I think that Mrs. Marschall gave us both a licking.

Mr. Marschall had a surrey which he would go down to meet the noon train in each day. It seems that every hotel in town had a bus, carriage or something to meet the train in, and they would all be hollering, "Free bus to the Southern Hotel!" or "Free bus to the Llano Hotel!" or "Free carriage to the Algona Hotel!", etc. Willie and I always managed to meet the train also. Pretty soon I got my paper route back again, and I also took on a new paper to Llano, The Houston Post. Now I sold the Austin Statesman and The Houston Post. No one could get the San Antonio Express from old man Peeler and Johnny, and it was the best selling paper in town.

Willie had a pretty little roan pony, and he would take me behind him on the pony quite a bit, but pretty soon, Willie's good times with his pony were shattered for a while. They had a "titled" Count staying at the hotel, who was related to Willie some way, and they made Willie turn his pony over to the Count, for as long as the Count wanted to use him. Boy, did that burn Willie up! He could cuss sometimes, almost as good as Buster Eaves could. The Count kept the horse most all the time, and Willie couldn't ever get him. He told folks that he would be glad when that damn Count went home. The Count had a regular riding habit which he had brought over from Germany, and he did not ride like any of the natives did either. He would sort of stand in the stirrups and bob up and down. Clint Holden, over at the Corner Drug Store, asked Willie what the Count's name was, and Willie said, "Hell, I don't know! Count De No Account is what I call him!" All of the fellows around the drug store would laugh at the way he rode and make fun of him. The Count always liked to come over after the mail each day, after it was sorted. He would always ride Willie's horse, and most of the time, he would hitch him to the hitching rail in front of the drug store. One day while he was in the post office waiting for all of the mail to be sorted Clint Holden, Leo Hargon and Willie Rogers thought that they would play a little trick on the Count. So, Clint Holden went into the drug store and brought out a bottle of "Oil of Mustard". So, they took it over to the Count's saddle and rubbed it all over the seat of the saddle. When he came out of the post office and climbed on his horse, there was not a soul in sight, but there were just dozens of eyes on him which he could not see. He rode off for a few yards, sort of stood up in the stirrups and scratched his behind. Then he rode on for about fifty yards more, stood up in his stirrups again and rubbed his behind again. The oil of mustard was beginning to take effect now. When he got to about the center of the bridge, he stopped the horse and got off and then started running just as hard as he could run for the hotel, and the bathtub, I suppose. In the meantime, some of the fellows told Willie what they had done and for Willie to be

sure and clean his saddle good, first with saddle soap and water, and then to use some neatsfoot oil on it, and then it would be all o.k. The next day Willie asked the Count if he wanted to use the horse that day, and the Count told him no, that he would not be using his horse anymore because he was getting ready to return to Germany. So, Willie's troubles were over along that line.

We used to help Minnie in the morning, as she was also chamber maid there in the hotel. None of the rooms had running water then, they all used pitchers and bowls. So, each morning there would be slop jars to empty and pitchers which had to be filled with water. We kids usually did that chore while Minnie made up the beds and changed the linens, if it was needed. Most of the rooms were occupied with regular tennants who lived there. I will try and name a few of them: Mr. and Mrs. Frank Lumm, Mr. and Mrs. Ed Tarrence, the Station Agent there in Llano, and their two little daughters, and Mr. Tarrence's little screw tailed bull dog. He had owned him so long that they began to look alike, and they both walked exactly alike. It was a joke all over town about the resemblance. Mr. Tarrence was a little short man, and he always wore a derby hat. He walked fast, with little quick jerky steps, and he bobbed up and down as he walked. Every place he went, the little bull dog was trotting along right behind him. Then there was Will Orr, who lived there and his nephew was there quite a bit also. Then there was Bill Lewis and his brother who lived there, and there were also quite a few more who lived there off and on. I believe that Mr. Frank Sykes lived there when he was in town, but he traveled quite a bit. The truth of the matter was, that the Algona was the nicest hotel in town.

Now back to Minnie, the waitress, the chamber maid, and in fact, she was the truck horse of the whole hotel. On wash day, she washed all the towels, sheets and pillow slips, then ironed them the next day. All of that was done while she was resting from her regular job. In fact, most every one in the hotel had to work pretty hard. Mrs. Marschall was a worker herself, and she taught everyone around her to work also.

Then, on dance nights, Wednesday and Saturday nights, they always held a big dance. The nicest and the largest dance floor in Llano was right there in the hotel; and on dance nights, Minnie, with her nice big sweet smile, was the freshest look and about the best dancer there was on the floor. Irene wasn't any slob at dancing herself, in fact, even Baby danced. They were all just as light as a feather on their feet. The only thing I did not like about dancing with Irene was that she always insisted on doing the leading. I know that she was a whole lot better dancer than I, but even then, I did not like for her to do the leading. However, I did learn quite a bit from her.

During the time I was living over there in the hotel, there was some man and his wife who moved in there at the hotel, and opened up a dancing school there. They sure did a land office business, too. They taught us all of the new dances, and the floor was crowded

most every day. Even a lot of grown folks came to take lessons.

One of our school teachers there at school who taught Willie, Irene and I, (I will not mention her name, but most everyone who was in her room knows who she was) loved to dance better than anyone I knew of: but on Wednesday nights, the dance hall was off limits for her. However, she would slip off and come anyway. When Willie, Irene or I would see her, she would catch our eye and stick her fingers up to her lips, giving us the sign to keep mum. I am afraid that we all imposed on her a bit, just because we had something on her, but none of us ever breathed a word about it.

One morning, while we were cleaning up on the third floor, we found a couple of long two inch ropes which were fastened good to the window facing on the inside of the room. They were fastened real good with new hooks and rings, then the rope had had an overhand knot tied in it every three feet all the way down to the ground. The hotel did not have any fire escape at all, and this rope with the knots in it was supposed to be used as as a fire escape in case of fire. They kept the rope all coiled up and laying on the floor. So, I said, "I believe I'll see just how good this thing is." So I picked up the rope and threw it out of the window, then started down it. When I was about half way down, Mr. Marschall spied me, and he came running up to the rope and was yelling at me at the top of his voice. He said, "What are you doing up there? You come down this very minute before you fall and break your neck." And he kept on yelling, "Come down, come down!" I said, "What do you think I am doing? I am sure that I am not trying to climb up it!" And boy, that was the hardest rope to slide down I ever saw in my whole life. I was a pretty good rope climber, too, but this one was a new manilla rope, as it had not been used any and was lying there in the room out of all of the weather, it was still just like a new rope and was still sort of oily and was very hard to hold on to. I thought to myself that it sure was a good thing that no one had ever had occasion to use it or I am afraid that several would have fallen.

Mr. Marschall was always a very good natured man, and I never saw him really mad but once in my life. He had Willie down out in the cow pen giving him a whipping. It seems that Willie had called him a son-of-a-bitch, and Mr. Marschall would give him a whack with his belt and say, "Are you going to take it back?" Then he would give Willie another wallop and say, "Are you going to take it back?" Finally Willie said, "Yes, I'll take it back you son-of-a-bitch, come on and let me up!" Then Mr. Marschall realized that Willie didn't even realize what he was saying, so he let him up.

That old hotel was up pretty high off the ground, and we kids used to play under it quite a bit. We could almost stand upright under it. I think that the girls played under it more than Willie and I did. They would have their play houses under there — Irene, Baby, Kitty Badu and a pretty little girl named Polly Mahan, whom Irene

says she does not remember. Her father worked for Shook and Shook Grocery Store about a couple of blocks east of the hotel. That store was also in a large two story brick building, and families lived in the upstairs part of it. The Mahans lived upstairs there and the Shook brothers and their families also lived upstairs. I believe that the whole building is torn down now.

About this time, a family by the name of Campbell moved to Llano. There was the old man and his wife and daughter, Daisy, who lived in a house down near the Barler Flats. Then he had two grown sons, Hal Campbell and Sidney Campbell. Sidney was a baker, and he opened up a bakery on the north side, and he introduced those little nickel pies there in Llano. Boy, he just couldn't bake enough of those pies for the demand he created, and he also made a fine nickel loaf of bread. He had the first bakery wagon there was in Llano. He just about put the Calhoun Bakery out of business, but then they were getting pretty old, and I guess that they were glad of it.

Hal Campbell and the old man opened up a meat market on the south side, just across the bridge and next door to John Frazier's Shoe Shop, and they gave me a job delivering meat on horseback.

All markets slaughtered their own beef and hogs in those days. They would kill the beef in the evening, skin it and quarter it up and bring it in; then they would hang it up in a screened in compartment to keep the flies away. Then they would start selling it the next morning for breakfast. The brains, liver, heart and tongue, they would not even bring in unless they had a special order for them, and even then, you could get the whole set of brains for about fifteen cents, and the liver, tongue and heart for about the same amount, fifteen cents. I believe that I stated earlier in this story that in those days all of the working people had to have steak and hot biscuits before they would go to work, and then taper off with a couple of hot biscuits buttered with fresh cow butter and molasses. We all ate a hearty breakfast in those days. Now all we want is a cup of coffee and a roll or a piece of toast. As I was hired to deliver meat, I had to get up at four o'clock in the morning and eat a hurried breakfast, and then go out and saddle my horse. I always lived with the man who owned the market because the horses were always kept there. Mr. Campbell had two horses; one a lazy dun, and the other, a dapple gray. I would ride one in the morning and the other in the evening. They were both ridden pretty hard because everyone was always in a hurry for their meat, as hardly anyone had a telephone then.

Most folks had a standing order for their meat, and most of them always managed to come by the market once a day, anyway because we also had a nice barbeque pit. The barbeque was already cut up in hunks, and we wouldn't even weigh it. We would just guess at it, and the hunks usually sold from fifteen cents to thirty five cents a hunk. A man could feed a family of six or seven for one of those thirty-five cent hunks. All cuts of the good steaks and roasts sold for only ten cents a pound, and that was delivered if you wanted it that way.

Girls are dressed up for one of the county fairs. Left to right: Ruby Jackson Montgomery, Lizzie Breazeale Wilson, Nina Lindsey Fowler, Margaret Johnson Weir, Lura Jackson Connelly, and Ray Rogers Walker. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Patsy Parker)

Boys also dressed up for fair. Left to right: Charlie Wallace, Ford Rogers, Carlos Foster, Will Rogers, Monty Wyckoff, Frank Wallace and Jim Johnson. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Jack Little)

Besides, they most all charged it, and you had to wait a whole month to get your money, and sometimes even longer. After I had all my meat delivered, it was my job to tend to the barbeque pit also. That is where I learned to cook barbeque. We used to have several of the men from the country and the wagon yards to come by and buy a hunk of barbeque and a couple of loaves of Sid's bread. We always kept some of his bread and pies on hand. Then they would send one of the men to the saloon to buy a bucket of beer, and on his way to stop by and get a couple of large onions and a nickels worth of sour pickles. A whole bunch of them could eat for about fifty cents. We also made our own sausage. This was beef sausage. Then we would stick an old hoe handle through the rings and barbeque the sausage. Boy, if you want to taste something good, just try one of those sausages while it is still hot. Squirt a little pepper sauce on it, and yum yum, was it good!

Early one morning, I was delivering meat on the north side. I was riding the dapple gray horse, and the ground was covered with snow. It was real cold and there was ice in some places, too. I was over there almost in front of the Eaves Hotel, and I was riding at a fast gallop. I started to turn a corner, and my horse's feet slipped from under him, and he fell flat on his left side, and my left leg was pinned underneath him. He sort of groaned and scrambled to his feet, and in the meantime, my foot had come out of the stirrup, and I scrambled to my feet also. My left leg was sort of numb, but I could still walk, and then I knew that my leg was not broken. So, I managed, somehow, to climb back upon my horse, and then I lit out as fast as I could go back across the bridge. It was a five dollar fine to ride or drive across that bridge faster than a walk, and when I hit it, I was going at a dead run. I think that I woke up everyone in town, because the bridge had a wooden floor in it. I pulled up in Dr. Darnell's back gate, and I began to holler for him. He finally came out to see just what was wrong, and I told him just what had happened. He told me to go home, and he would be out in a few minuted and look at my leg. In the meantime, I had to pass right by the market to go to Dr. Darnall's house, and Mr. Campbell saw me as I went by, and so they came by my house to see what was wrong. They knew something had happened, and by the time that they got there, Dr. Darnall was already there. He said that my leg was not broken, but that I had a mighty bad bruise, and that he wanted me to stay off of it for a while. It seemed like the girt of my saddle had hit on the thigh of my left leg, right above my knee, and there was a terrible bruise there, and the hide was broken in several places. All the doctor did was to leave a bottle of "Witch Hazel" and told my grandmother to keep me in bed and to keep a thick piece of that medicated cotton and gauze just saturated with witch hazel on the bruise all the time. So, I had to stay in bed for a couple of weeks, and finally, a piece of that bruised flesh fell out of my leg; a piece almost as large as my fist, then it healed. I have a scar there on my

leg right now about the size of a half dollar.

By the time my leg had all healed up, my job at the meat market was taken over by a boy by the name of Tom Russell. Mr. Campbell said that I could have my job back if I wanted it, but I told him that I thought that I would just bum around for a while yet because my leg was still a little sore.

Before I leave the subject of Mr. Campbell, I want to tell of an incident which took place while I was still living at his house. As I said before, they had come down from the northeast some place and were not familiar with the use of kerosene oil lamps. One night we were all in the living room and were getting ready to go to our rooms and go to bed. It was in the winter time, and all the windows were pulled down. Mr. Campbell turned the wick on the lamp down real low, and then tried to blow the light out. Instead of blowing the flame out, he blew it down into the lamp, and then the flame was just floating around on top of the oil down inside of the lamp. Mr. and Mrs. Campbell didn't know what to do. They were scared that it would explode most any minute, which I suppose it would have. I picked the lamp up in my right hand and raised the window with my left, and just threw the whole thing out the window. Then we all were looking for it to explode, but believe it or not, the lamp did not even break. The chimney broke, but that is all, and the flame also went out. I was just as surprised as they were.

One night we had a terrible killing there in Llano. All of this I am telling now is here say. I do not know where I was, but I was not there. There was a bunch of men over in John Cummins' Saloon drinking — Bob Moseley, a very successful rancher who built the "Granite Cliff Ranch", and some more prominent ranchers, and Clyde Yoe, a deputy sheriff I believe, and Poke Adams, just a hanger on. Somehow, a fight started. I heard that Clyde Yoe was trying to stop the fight, and that Bob Moseley pulled a gun on Clyde, and Clyde shot Bob and killed him. Then they said that Poke Adams pulled a knife and stabbed and cut Clyde Yoe to death. Some said that he did not do it, but they convicted him for it and sent him to the penitentiary for life. He was in the penitentiary for a mighty long time, whether he was guilty or not. All men concerned were well liked by everyone in Llano. Poor old Poke was the town drunk, and some said that they just pinned the rap on him because he was probably so drunk that he, himself, did not know whether he killed Clyde or not. Clyde left a good looking widow and two fine children. Later on Mrs. Yoe and Willie Ross opened up a hotel on the north side.

While I was not working, I sort of drifted back over to the Algona Hotel and hung out around there for a while. That place seemed like a sort of a home to me, as much as any place did because I never lived at one place very long.

Willie had a cousin who lived in the country. He was Herbert

Marschall, and ever so often he and his family would come to Llano for a few days. Every time he would come, he and I were just as sure to fight as the sun was to rise in the morning. Herbert was about the best fighter I ever tangled with, and neither of us would concede to the other, so we never did find out just who was the best fighter. Neither of us would be mad at the other, and after the fight was over, we would all play together just as if nothing had ever happened. Every time Minnie and Irene would hear that Herbert was coming to Llano, they would start kidding me, telling me that I had better start practicing up fighting because Herbert was coming to town. I told them that I was always in practice.

I have a picture post card of the old Algona Hotel here some place if I can only find it. Mary Rogers sent it to my brother, Floyd, before he ever joined the Navy. They used to correspond quite a bit while he was working in the Western Union office. I saw, just the other day, another picture post card of the street running down the road between the Hedeman Saloon and the Stockton Dry Goods Store. It said the picture was taken from the top of the Franklin Hotel. Now it must have been the Algona. I do not remember of it ever being called the Franklin though. All I remember it as was first the T.M.I., then the Algona, and the next time I saw it, in 1911, it was the Don Carlos. It must have been called the Franklin while I was in the Navy.

I remember one day a bunch of us boys were up the river in swimming in Little Hole, one of our favorite holes — lots of nice clean granite rocks and nice clean sand. The Llano River has very little mud in it, and I believe that is the main reason the Llano River fish are so different from all other fish, they just seem to taste cleaner. Well, this day, there were about ten or twelve of us in swimming, and there were some younger boys in also. In fact, most all of them were younger than I. Lets see, there was Howard Wallace, Emmett Kuykendall, Harry Hedeman, Leslie Colwell, Floyd and myself, and several other boys. We were playing "black man", one of our favorite games. Now the main part of Little Hole was pretty swift because the water which led into it came in between two large rocks about fifteen feet apart, so that made the water pretty swift there. Then on the south side of the hole was a long sand bar, and that is where we all lounged around when we were not in swimming. Anyway, Harry Hedeman was not a very good swimmer, while I was a regular duck, and I always dived with my eyes open. I saw almost everything, and I could dive a good long ways, too. Anyway, Harry got into the swift deep water that day, and he had already gone under a couple of times, so I dived under him and got hold of his legs. I was walking on the bottom and holding Harry up so his head was out of the water, and I walked over towards where that sand bar was. All the other boys were on it, and just gave Harry a shove up on it, and the other boys fished him up on the dry bank. By that time I

had held my breath so long that I was just about ready to pass out myself. I just sort of floated on down stream, and I finally came to and went on over to the sand bar and walked up to where all the other boys were. I never saw a boy as thankful as Harry was. He said, "Allan, you sure saved my life today. I am going to tell Papa what you did, and I know that he will reward you for it." I said, "I don't want any reward; I thought that we were still playing black man, and I was just helping you to get home!"

Another time, down to Red Rock, just below the bridge, (that was before this time I just told about) another boy, Eddie Phillips, got drowned there. I was not in that bunch. In fact, I can't even place Eddie Phillips, but the whole gang which he was with, I knew them all. Clark ("Boots") Lawrence, Ed Beeson, Ford Rogers, Dick Moore and several other boys were all there when it happened.

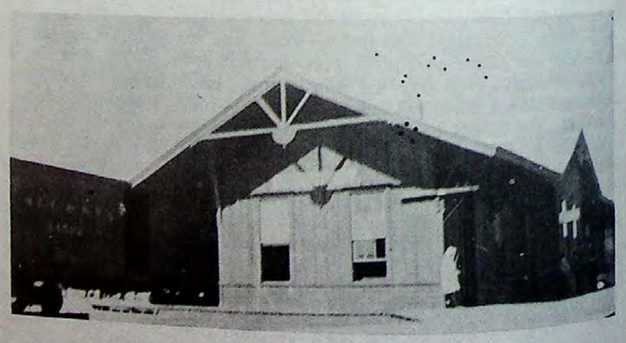
You know what? Most all of those big rocks are all covered up now, and most all of Little Hole is covered up. And another thing, there aren't near as many fish now as there was then. I know, you are going to say that there are more fishermen now than there then, but not so, because in those olden days, there were two or three times as many folks fishing as there is today.

On my next job, Jess Parish opened up a small meat market on the north side, and he wanted me to work for him. Poor Jess, he opened up on a shoe string. He had a brother who helped him a little, but then his brother didn't have much more than Jess did. Jess even did his own butchering, and I think he had to buy his cattle on a credit. You could buy a beef then for seven or eight dollars. Anyway, Jess was a real butcher. He taught me how to cut meat a little because I had to stay there while he was out to the slaughter pen butchering another beef. I also lived at his house. He only had a small two room shack. It was sort of out in a mesquite thicket, and there were plenty of weeds all around, too. There was just he and his wife and daughter about nine years old. She was dumb and could not talk, and what you might also call an idiot. She would just hang around out side the house and play. They did not have any fence, it was all open country. One day we were coming home, and we saw her all squatted down there by one of the paths around the house. She had a small twig in her hand, and it looked like she was trying to tickle something with the twig, and she was cooing to it just like a baby. Jess said, "I wonder what she has got there now." So he just sort of walked up to her real slow, and saw that she was scratching the head of a great big old rattle snake, and she was petting him just like she would pet a cat or something. Jess was afraid to call to her and make her make a quick move, so he just said to her real naturally, "Come on home, honey, we are going to eat supper." She just got up real naturally and walked away just as unconcerned as could be. Old Jess said, "Now do you believe that the good Lord takes care of those who haven't enough sense to take care of themselves?" I replied, "I know that He does, because I have had too many narrow escapes

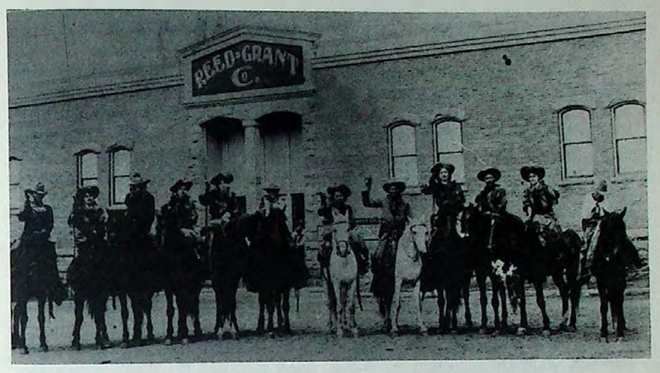
myself."

Poor Jess, he didn't last much longer. He just didn't have enough money to see him through, so he folded, and I was out of a job again. I don't know if he was ever able to pay me any real money or not, but then he would give me meat to take to Papa Watkins, where Floyd was living, all the time. So they never had to buy meat while I was working in a meat market.

We had quite a few carnivals and medicine shows coming to Llano ever so often. One carnival side show had a huge dried saw fish. I guess he was thirty feet long, and they also had Esau, the snake eater, and of course, several rides and hamburger stands. Hamburgers were new then, and they went over big.



The freight depot.



Left to right: Carlos Foster, Ruby Jackson Montgomery, Ford Rogers, Lizzie Breazeale Wilson, Nina Lindsey Fowler, Frank Wallace, Ray Rogers Walker, Will Rogers, Margaret Johnson Weir, Monty Wyckoff, Lura Jackson Connelly and Jim Johnson. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Patsy Parker)

The Llano Gun Club in the early 1900's. Left to right: Clarence Sweeney, Will Lewis, Lewis Swanson, and unknown visitor, Charles E. Schultz, Will Orr, E. H. Qualls and Jim Freeman. Boys are Ford Rogers, Sam Roberts and Allan Townsend. (Photo courtesy of the musuem)

CHAPTER 39

THE OPENING OF THE FORMAN'S DRY GOODS STORE

W. J. (Will) Forman and his brother, Albert Forman, opened their dry goods store. Will Forman, as I stated before, had three children, Ebby, Hubert and Bonnie, a girl. Albert did not have any children which I knew of. Will Forman was quite a sign painter, and right away, he declared war on all of the Jews, which operated all of the clothing stores in Llano. P. G. Sheppard owned a dry goods store at one time, but he had sold out by this time. W. J. would take his paint brush and a can of black and a can of red, paint, and he would go down on the river, which was just full of large granite rocks. All across the river, below the dam, and where they could be seen from the bridge, he would paint his slogan signs. "Forman's is the King of the Jews", "Go to Forman's — He is the best Jew in Town". He had a dozen or more slogans which he would write on every rock, which was large enough to put a sign on. So the whole river was just covered with them. Then he would paint a bunch on wooden boards which he could get from his packing boxes his merchandise came in. Then he would go out on every road leading into Llano, and he would nail his signs on every prominent tree which he passed. They were on all roads leading east, west, north and south. He made sure that anyone coming into town knew who and where the Forman's Dry Goods Store was.

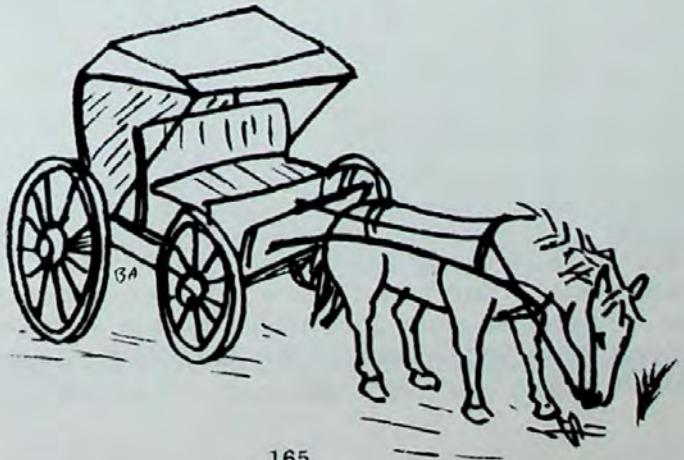
Then one day he cleaned out his store of all the old merchandise he had, and he rented a covered wagon, got a driver, and put his signs all over the wagon sheet which covered the wagon. Then he put cow bells around the necks of the horses to attract attention, and then he loaded all of his old stock into the wagon. It consisted of shoes, hats, slippers, and some of his old calcico cloth which he could not sell. He would cut the whole bolt into about fifteen or twenty yard lengths, and then tie it up to pass out. He even had a few shirts and pants which he put in the wagon. Then he would buy a couple of buckets of cheap mixed candy, which sold for ten cents a pound, and sack it up in little sacks. Then he got several of the noisiest kids in town, which of course I was the leader, and he supplied us with all of the noisy Halloween horns and racket makers he could get. By the way, the time of year was just before Halloween. We all piled into that wagon and we would start ringing bells, blowing horns and shouting some Forman's slogans such as "Forman is the King Jew", and "Come to Forman's, he will give the best prices!". The wagon drove all around the courthouse square, and while some of us were making all of the noise we could, Hubert and Ebby were in the wagon throwing out bags of candy to the kids, and the shoes, hats and clothing to the other folks which they thought needed it the most. Of course, everyone knew everyone else in town in those days. After we had covered most all of the town, the wagon was just about

empty by then, and that sort of advertising certainly brought him plenty of business, too. The poor Jews couldn't take much more of it either, so they gradually started leaving town. I remember in the Pessels' Dry Goods Store, when it first started, there were two elderly brothers. The sign on the front of the store read "G. Pessels' Dry Goods Store". One of the old men didn't even have any teeth, and he had a huge nose. He would stand out in front of the store and sort of chew his gums, and his large nose would come down and cover his mouth and most of his chin. So on a Halloween night, one of our sign painters (I do not know if it was Leo (Pat) Hargon or Pete Cross) came by and painted after the name G. Pessels, in front of his store to read, "G. Pessel's - What a Nose". Boy, that really got their goat!

Later on one of them had a son, Ben Pessels, who came down and took charge. Then they rocked along for quite a while, but before long there wasn't a Jew left anywhere in Llano.

W. J. Forman bought the old Hargis house across the street from Papa Watkins. The children all went to school with us. Hubert was in my class, Ebby, the oldest, was a couple of grades ahead of us and Bonnie was crowding us, and I believe she soon made our class.

W. J. began buying and selling cotton and one year he hit it real lucky. He made about fifty or seventy five thousands, and he couldn't stand prosperity. He sold his house and his share of the store to his brother, Albert, and they all moved to Austin, Texas. He bought a regular mansion home, a fine team of horses, a carriage, and boy, they really lived high on the hog for about six months. Then he lost his shirt one day, and his whole dream house and all came tumbling down around him. He came back to Llano flat broke. He didn't stay there too long. The last time I heard of him, he was in San Angelo, Texas. He was in the concrete business, mainly pouring concrete for sidewalks. I think that Hubert died. The last I heard of Ebby, he was in Kerrville, Texas, retired, I believe, and Bonnie was living in some small town. I do not remember just where.



CHAPTER 40

MORE OF MY GANG AND OUR ADVENTURES

Most all of us Llano boys were quite venturesome. We were always trying something new. One day Bennett Colwell and Clifford (Cob-footer) Simpson were out hunting. They went out Six Mile Road, and just beyond Miller's Rock was a stone quarry. They were not working at the quarry that day, so Bennett and Cob footer went rooting around to see what they could find, and they ran across a large can of black powder, a five gallon can, I believe it was. Anyway, they took it into the blacksmith shop, and were trying to rig up a way to blast something I believe. Anyway, someway, the powder caught fire, and as the top was off of the can, there was no explosion, but they did have a terrible blast. Bennett, all he lost was all of his hair on the front of his head and his eye brows and eye lashes. But poor Cob footer, besides losing the same thing was also pretty badly burned all over his face. He still carries the scars today if he is still alive. Bennett went to Austin and was working for the telephone company or the light company and was killed. He still has some brothers and sisters living in Austin today.

Sid Johnson and I used to do quite a bit of hunting with dogs. Sid had one dog in particular which we all thought was great. Old John we called him. Then he also had a couple of hound dogs around the place, but old John was the best hunter of them all. My cousin, Dee Townsend, who was living with Uncle Jack and Aunt Emma Carter, who lived on the little street just behind Sid's house, used to go hunting with us quite a bit also. One day old John was chasing a cotton tail rabbit, and he ran right into an old hollow log, wich was lying there on the ground. I came running up and ran my hand and arm clear into the hole, clear up to the elbow. I felt something which I thought was the rabbit, then something bit me on my little finger. When I pulled my hand out, there was a squirrel hanging onto my little finger. He bit me clear to the bone on both sides of the finger It is a wonder he didn't bite my finger off. That taught me a lesson which I never forgot — never and I mean never, stick your hand into a hole to pull game out of it. After that I always got a stick with a little fork on the end of it. Then when Ifelt the game, I would press on the stick and twist the stick at the same time, and when it was tight enough, pull the stick out, and if he doesn't come out with the stick, most of his hide will.

As I stated before, we always carried salt and pepper with us, and we ate most everything we killed. About the hardest thing we ever tackled was a big old rock squirrel. That was the toughest thing we ever tried. We were telling nigger George about it when we got home, and George said, "Don't ever throw one away, bring it on home, because they sure do make good chili." He had occasion to try one pretty soon, and when George got through with it, in a pot of chili, it wasn't a bit tough.

Right to left

The Scott Boys; ~~left to right~~: Absher, Proctor, Bill and Jeff. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Elmer Smith)

"Babe"

After fishing in the Llano River. Left to Right: Raymond Rogers, Mrs. and Mr. T. J. Watkins. (Photo courtesy of Mrs. Patsy Parker)

Sid always kept all kinds of pets around his house — dogs, cats, his horse, chickens, turkeys, guineas, and a billy goat, and boy, how he did stink sometimes! You had better not bend over and turn your rear end to him either because there was nothing which he liked better than to catch one of us in that position, and how he could butt, too! Sid even had four or five bee hives scattered around through the peach orchard also, but none of us ever bothered them. When they got ready to rob the hives, there was a bee man by the name of Mr. Reeves, who would always do that work for most everyone in Llano. He always wore a pith helmet on his head, and for some reason or another, bees just wouldn't sting him. He was bald headed and I have seen him put a couple of handfuls of bees in his pith helmet, then put it back on his head. He would even put a handful of them in his bosom, and I never knew of him getting stung. He said that as long as you were gentle with them, and didn't mash one, they would not bother you. I took his word for it, but I never did try it out.

Mr. Reeves had thirty or forty hives himself, and he sold honey for fifteen cents a pound. It always came in a little square frame. It sure looked and tasted good, too. You take a large pan full of hot biscuits, and put a large hunk of cow butter between each one; then get your fresh honey and maybe a slice of home cured ham, and yum, yum, hush my mouth wide open — that is a breakfast fit for a king! The best part about it was that most everyone could afford it then; it was all so cheap.

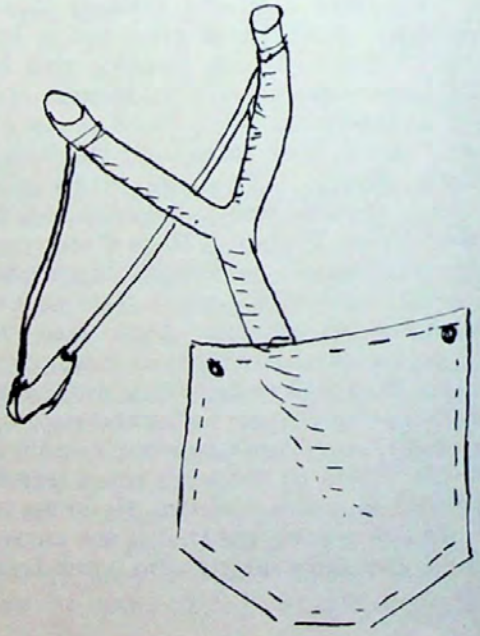
I know that I am leaving out just hundreds of our episodes, but then I am writing every line of this just from memory. When I get started, it all comes back to me, and I can see it just as plain as if it happened only yesterday. Just for fun, I am going to try and see how many names I can remember who were in our gang — or playmates. First there was Sid Johnson, Dee Townsend, Frank and Howard Wallace, Louis and Emmett Kuykendall, Ford and Raymond Rogers, their cousin, George Rogers, Mack Heard, Willie Schuwirth, Willie Marschall, Herbert Krouse, Jimmy (Skinny) Atchison, Ed and John Beeson, Bennett and Leslie Colwell. Paul and Eric Slator, Ernest and Winn Duncan, Walter Finlay, Sebe and Archie Dalrymple, Oscar Golson, Allen Johnson, Quantril Cone, Bill and Andrew Moss, Tate Lewis, Dick and Prentice Moore, Ruby Dunaway, Harry Hedeman, John Lewis, Clarence and Winston Gosh, Jim and John Cummins, Sam and Grady Roberts, Roy Inks, Roy Breazeale, Freddie and John Peeler, however, they didn't have much time to play with us, but then we did fish quite a bit together. Then there was Buster Eaves, whom everyone said was my double. All I ever saw him do was fish; he was on the river most of the time. Then there was Alfa Rogers, who lived with Dr. Mabry and worked for the Smalensky Racket Store. He was too good looking to play with us boys much. Then there was Jeff and Frank Riley. They did not live there too long. Then there was a red head by the name of J. W. Murray and another

red head, Harry McRae. Then another family by the name of Chamberlain came back to Llano. They had lived there before, but I did not remember them. Then there was Albert Ross, Owen and T. J. Watkins, Tom and Rob Lindsey, Roy Frazier, Roy Buttery, Bascomb Owens, Jess Hadden (he had a couple of smaller brothers), and Charlie (Duck-Cackle) Daniels. I was about to forget the Scott boys, Proctor, Bill, Cliff and I believe there were a couple more — one is called Babe. I do not know if he had another name or not, but he is a mighty fine fellow. I have fished on his place up the river a many a time. In fact, all of those Scott boys were good friends to me. Then there was an older boy, Absher he was too old to play with us much, but then we always knew each other and talked to each other. Also there was Henry Kothman. I believe his dad's name was Frank Kothman. I know I have missed quite a few of the boys, but then they were coming and going all the time, and it seems after they were gone from Llano a few years, they were soon forgotten, that is unless they returned to Llano quite often. Of course Floyd and I were included, too.

I will now try and name a few of the girls whom I went to school with: Lacy Mae Sellman, Ida and Lizzie Breazeale, Lois and Helen Spears, Pearl and Mattie Rogers, Rae and Mary Rogers (cousins to Pearl and Mattie), Georgie and Helena Ross, Nina Lindsey, Bell Smith, Johnnie Stoudenmeir, Margaret and Lucy Johnson, Marie, Nonie and Fay Johnson (no relation), Gloria and Mattie Swanson, Bessie Townsend, Betty, Sally and Ellen Logan, Fay Dunaway, Carrie Kittie Badu, Hattie and Gertrude Stockton, Ethel Hedeman and her sister, Irene and Cornelia (Baby) Marschall, Polly Mahan, Annie Fitchanbaum, Kate Flack (she had a brother, Joe Flack, who also went to school with us), Bernice and Lura Jackson, Lola Ranvels, Sweet Oatman, Bessie and Iva Hargis, Bonnie Forman, there was also a sister to the Scott boys, but I do not remember her name, Emily Moore, May Frazier, Mary Moss, Janice Beeson, Kate and Edith Lawrence, Minnie Stringer, Ruby Cone, Regina Biggs, Anita Schuwirth, Bernice and Wilma Canine, Mary Roberts — a sister to Sam and Grady Roberts, Elsie Corday — sister to Adolph and Paul Corday, and Bessie and Lula McDermott — sisters to Lawrence, Martin and Willie McDermott. The girls names are just like the boys names. I know I am leaving out quite a few of them, but as I said before, every bit of this story is from memory alone.

In the days before the telephone, the young "blades" all had to ask for dates by writing notes and paying one of us boys ten cents to deliver the notes. There was one couple in particular whom I'll never forget. Mr. Frank Sykes, who was a traveling man and was very much in love with Miss Edna Moore. He knew that Miss Edna liked me, and he would always tell me that if she answered "yes", to his note, that he would give me a quarter. So when I would hand her note, I would

Martin McDermott seated and Willie McDermott standing. (Photo courtesy of Connie Richardson)



always say, "Now come on Miss Edna and say yes because if you do, I will get a quarter." She would give me a big smile and say, "All right Allan, I will answer his note yes." I didn't have to coax her very hard though because I think that she was just as much in love with him as he was with her, as they were married later on.

In those days they had a breath purifier called "Sen-Sen". All of the young men who had been drinking and were going to call on their girl friends would just pop a couple of Sen-Sens in their mouth. Of course, that was a dead give away that they were trying to hide something, but then she could not tell just what. Also we kids in school, when we would ask to be excused and go out to the toilet and smoke, we would use the same gag, Sen-Sen. Of course, the school teacher always knew that we had been smoking, but then she had no way to prove it. All she could smell was Sen-Sen.

The Boynton brothers, there were three of them, George Boynton ran a dry goods store in the bank building, just next door to Jones and Strahle's Jewelry Store. He had one daughter, Elenor and I believe he had a young son, also. One of the Boynton brothers was a red headed preacher. I do not know if he had any children or not. The other Boynton brother, Irvin, ran the Llano News in almost the same place as it is located now. He had two children, a boy and a girl, Walker and Bernice. I believe I told about Walker before about how he and Ed Beeson always competed to see just who could run the fastest. They were both good..

Herbert Krouse was the messenger boy for the Western Union Telegraph Company there in Llano. Will Mason was the telegraph operator in charge. It was located in the railroad freight office, and at the time, messenger boy there was considered about the best paying job in town. It paid twelve dollars a month, and all of us kids were waiting for the job to be vacated again. But Herbert Krouse (Rabbit was the nickname he went by because he could holler just like a rabbit.) and I got to be pretty good friends because each of us subscribed for a wild west novel such as "Young Wild West", "Nick Carter" and "Diamond Dick". They were all of them just nickel novels, but Herbert and I got to be regular "fiends" about reading them. After we would read them, we would exchange with each other. After we had both read the books, we would resell them to some of the other kids and get our nickel back again. Nigger Bill Peepers got all wrapped up in reading them also. We all carried a copy of one of the books most all the time. I made Herbert promise me that if he ever quit his job, he would let me know about it first, and he said that he would.

In the meantime, I went to work for the City Meat Market again. Monroe Hadden still owned it, and as I said before, it was always customary for the delivery boys to live with the boss because that is where the Horses were kept. We had to get up at four o'clock in the morning so we could deliver all of the meat to the customers so they

could have beef steak and hot biscuits for breakfast. Mr. Hadden lived in a great big old two story barn like building out at the edge of town, almost at the entrance of the Llano Cemetery. I believe the house is still there today. He also had a large barn where he kept all of the horses and cows etc..

All of us kids slept up on the second floor. His sons, Jessie and Bascomb Owens, and I all slept up there also, but were too small to work yet. After we saddled up and were all ready to leave, Mrs. Hadden called us in to have breakfast, and boy, did she fill us up. Then we went to the market and started to work. The meat was already cut and wrapped with the customer's name written on it. So, then we had to route it and place the rolls of meat in our canvas meat bags. We had two bags sewed together, and then there was a hole between the bags so we could sling them across our saddle horn, half on each side of the saddle horn. We had to know our route pretty good because it was so dark sometimes, when we started out, that we could not read the names. We always carried a pocket full of matches because flash lights weren't even heard of then. We made our pretty good in fair weather, but then if it was raining, that was a horse of a different color. Sometimes the paper which the meat was wrapped in got wet and about half of it would come off. Then it was impossible to read any names on the wrappers. Then — most of them ordered the same thing every day, and we knew the size of the families, so we could just about guess which package belonged to whom.

By eight o'clock in the morning, we were all finished delivering our breakfast meat, so now we kept pretty busy cooking barbeque and ring sausage, etc., and in between times, we were making new sausage, both pork and beef. The beef was the kind which we stuffed in hog casings and made into rings. Then we would run a long stick through the rings and barbeque them. The pork sausage was just piled up in a bulk and sold at ten cents a pound. Pork sausage and eggs sure went good for breakfast, and with sausage at ten cents a pound, and eggs, ten cents dozen, we could eat just about all that we could hold.

There was getting to be quite a few telephones in town by now, and that sure increased business quite a bit, also.

Mr. Martin came to Llano, and he was getting quite a few new customers. You could get a residence phone for only a dollar a month, and I believe that a business phone was two dollars a month. So, most everyone was putting one in. By the way, the telephone company's switch board was just next door from the market, but it was upstairs. I believe that Miss Maude Knowles was the first operator which Mr. Martin ever had. Later on Miss Carrie Holden was added on.

Our meat business was picking up all the time, and during the rush, Charlie (Duck Cackle) Daniels would help us out with the delivering of the meat. His brother, Sid Daniels, was our slaughter

man. He did all of the killing and dressing of the meat, and he was the best I ever saw, too. Charlie was older than Jess, Bascomb or I, and he lived with his brother, Sid. They were both hard working boys. I am not sure, but I believe that I told once before about Jess getting his finger caught in the sausage mill and cutting it off right at the second joint. Old Jess let out a yell and pulled his finger out and was looking at it and said, "It is gone all right, isn't it?" He went on up back where we were working and asked Duck Cackle where his finger was. Duck Cackle pointed to a pile of sausage there in a large tub and said, "In there some place." So, I guess some of our good customers ate poor Jess's finger and never knew it. I often wondered what they would have said if they had come across the finger nail. They wouldn't have known what it was then, but thinking it was bone, they would have thought nothing of it.

Ever since that gang of kids wrecked the W.C.T.U. Reading Room, about the only place we could get a drink of ice water was in some merchant's store. Most all of them had an ice cooler now since we had our ice factory going.

One hot summer day, Jess, Bascomb Owens, Duck Cackle, and I strolled into the Buttery Hardware Store and asked if we could have a drink of ice water. He replied, "Help yourself boys." The cooler was all the way back to the rear of the store, almost in one of the rear windows. We were all standing there drinking and talking, and old Duck Cackle reached up and threw the latch off of the rear window. None of us had any idea what he had in mind then. So we had our fill of ice water, walked on up towards the front of the store, thanked Mr. Buttery for the ice water and went on back to the market. It was then that Duck Cackle explained to us why he threw the latch on the window. He said, "In the morning when we come to work, about four thirty, no one will be up then. So all we have to do is just raise the window and walk right in and help ourselves to whatever we want." So, the next morning, as we were coming to work, we went around to the rear of the hardware store and just raised up the window and walked in. We looked back and saw that Duck Cackle hadn't followed us. We told him to come on in. He said that he had to stay outside and keep watch, and if he saw anyone coming, he would knock on the front door and let us know so we could run out the back way. We all thought that was a pretty good idea, so we went on in and stuffed our pockets full of most everything we had wanted. I took mostly pearl handled knives, but Jess got a pair of brass knuckles and a forty-five caliber six shooter and a box of thirty-eight shells to shoot in it. I do not know what Bascomb got, but we all left with our pockets full, and we walked up with Duck Cackle after we came out. Then on my first delivery, I stopped under that big old live oak tree, about thirty feet up, where a squirrel used to have his nest. I ran my hand and arm down that hollow, clear up to my elbow. It was all nice and dry down there, only a few leaves in the bottom. So, I unloaded my pockets and put

everything I had into that hole and came on down and went to delivering my meat route. By the time that I had returned to the market, the burglary had been discovered. Right away, they all suspected us. We all turned our pockets inside out, and they couldn't find a thing; and of course, we all wore a poker face and didn't know a thing. Everything rocked along for a couple of days. At the time, W. C. Wallace (Frank and Howard's daddy) was sheriff of Llano. He came to me and said, "All right Allan, you may as well come clean with me and tell me all about it because Bascomb Owens had already told me that you boys did it. Now if you will tell me where you have the loot hid, and help me get it all back, I will see that they let you go free. If you do not help me get it all back, then Bascomb Owens will tell it all, and you will get the blame for it." So I said, "O.K., come along with me, and I will show you where my part is hid." So he pulled his foot out of the stirrup and said, "Climb up". So I did, and he said, "Now which way do we go?" I directed him to the old live oak tree with the hole in the limb; and I climbed up to the hole and told him to hold his hat. Then I began to drop all of those pretty pearl handled knives into his hat. I guess there were fifteen or twenty of them, and also a few other things I cannot remember now. When the hole was empty, Mr. Wallace said, "My Goodness, Allan, what were you going to do with all of those knives?" I told him that I didn't know. They were just so pretty that I liked to just look at them and fondle them. Then he said, "All right, come on down and we will go back to town and get Jess and Bascomb." Duck Cackle wasn't bothered, and he was the one who planned the whole thing. They took Jess, Bascomb and I down to the jail and locked us all up. It was then that I found out that Bascomb Owens hadn't told the sheriff a thing. He had just tricked me into blabbing everything, me being the youngest and smallest one in the bunch. Pretty soon Monroe Hadden (Jess's dad) came down and got Jess and Bascomb out. Bascomb was kin to them in some way. He said that I was a tattle tale and that he was going to leave me in jail. Then I said to Mr. Wallace, "You told me that if I told you where the stuff was that you would see that I would get off." Then he told me to just wait a few minutes, and he would keep his promise. So, pretty soon, he came back with Mr. Will Roberts, and the two of them got me out some way. Then Mr. Buttery said that being as he had gotten everything back, that he would not prosecute. So all charges against us were dropped. I never went back to work for Mr. Hadden again, though. I went back to my old job at the Campbell Meat Market, again.

I never will forget the first skating rink which came to Llano. I do not even remember the feller's name who opened it up. He just rented one of those old brick buildings over on the north side. It was about thirty feet wide and fifty or sixty feet long and just had a plain old pine floor in it, and it was all full of splinters. He had a hard time getting it started because none of us had ever heard of a skating rink before. He got hold of me one day, as I came riding by on my horse,

and he told me to come inside. He wanted to show me how I could have some fun. I always wore boots and spurs when riding because without spurs, I couldn't get my horse to go. They were all just worked down all the time. Anyway, he started putting a pair of skates on me. I wouldn't even pull my spurs off. He finally got them on me and helped me up on my feet. Then he took me by the arm and hands and walked me all around the room, all the time explaining to me how I should just slide my feet along. By the time we had completed the circle, I thought that I had the hang of it. So, he told me to go over near the wall and try it now by myself. I do not know why he told me to go over by the wall because there was not a darn thing there to hold on to except the bare wall. Just try holding on to a bare wall sometime and see how far you can get. Anyway, I took about three steps, and I immediately changed ends right there by the wall. Another thing you might try is getting up on your feet again, with nothing but a bare wall to hold on to. Finally the man came over and helped me to my feet again. After I had taken three or four more steps, I repeated the performance. I think that I must have fallen fifteen or twenty times on that first trip around the room. The man was laughing so hard he could hardly talk to me. He asked me how I liked skating. I said, "Fine, if I could only learn to stay on my feet." Then he said, "O.K., I'll tell you what I am going to do. You get as many of your friends as you can, then come back, and I will let all of you skate free until you learn how. Then, of course, I will have to start charging for it." "O.K.", I said, "Sure they will all like it, I think." So I met Ford Rogers, Herbert Krouse, Mack Heard, Ed Beeson, Willie Marschall and a couple more kids. When I told them about it, they were all just about as enthused about it as I was. So, that evening we all tried it out. Now I didn't mind falling so much because all the other boys were falling about as much as I was. In a couple of days, the word spread around that we could learn to skate free. By that time, the building could hardly hold us all. By now we older hands who had learned to stand up, we had to pay fifteen cents apiece; but it was worth every penny of it.

Later on, he had a long rope hanging all around the wall where the beginners could sort of hold on to. Then, after that, he only gave them the first day free. It wasn't long before Llano was getting some fairly good skaters. At least, we thought we were good. Now some of the girls started coming around. The skating free was really catching. The manager of the rink was having such large crowds, he could not handle them all.

Then the people of Llano began to see what they had been missing all those years. So, pretty soon, old man Barker, the man who owned the cotton gin and a large rooming house, saw the possibilities of a good first class rink there in Llano. So he and his son aquired a good sized piece of river bank, right on the northwest end of the Llano River Bridge. They built a huge rink there, about

one hundred feet by one hundred feet, and put in a good hard wood floor — a regular skating floor. All the sides had screens all around, and then they had large wooden shutters. They had hinges at the top, so in pretty weather they could be pulled up with a line run through a pulley and then fastened; in bad weather they could be lowered. He also put in a player music box of some kind. It wasn't anything like we have today, of course, but then it played pretty nice music. Then he had races, and every so often a professional skater would come by and give some exhibitions. About once a week, he would turn a greased pig loose on the floor, and the one who caught him and brought him back to the judge's stand not only got to keep the pig, but they also received a prize. Mr. Barker and his son (I can't think of his name), were certainly good promoters. They always had something special coming up; so we had something to look forward to all the time. Then they let a professional man and his wife come there and open an instruction school in fancy skating. In about a year's time, we had some real good skaters in Llano, and almost everyone learned to skate.

Every so often, he would cancel the skating for a few days, and give the dancers a chance. They really pulled some fine "balls" there on that good floor. They wouldn't allow any rough stuff at all there. If a guy got thrown out, he was barred from coming back for a long long time, or until he could prove himself worthy to come back. That, being about the only place of amusement,there in town — that went pretty hard with a fellow.

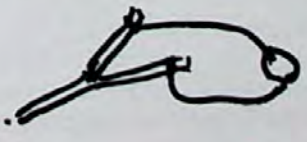
CHAPTER 41

MY NEW JOB AS TOOL BOY AT TEICH'S ROCK SHED

About this time, my Uncle Dave Collie (Pearl's husband), who was tool sharpener down at Teich's Monument Sheds, told me there would be a job open down there soon for a tool boy. A tool boy's duty was to gather all of the dull tools up from all over the sheds and bring them to the blacksmith to sharpen. Then as the stone cutters needed new sharp tools, it was the tool boy's duty to bring them which ever ones they asked for. They used four or five different kinds of chisels, points, etc.. It was a real hard and heavy job — in reality, too heavy for me, but the job paid seventy-five cents a day. That was real money then for just a boy. So, I hung on just as long as I could. Uncle Dave helped me quite a bit also. Calvin Elroy, who had the job before me, was much larger and stronger than I was, so the work was easy for him. He quit to join one of his brothers who was working in Dallas. I ran across him later on, in Dallas, and he was in business for himself, selling monuments, and was doing real well, too.

I lived down there with Uncle Dave and my Aunt Pearl and their little baby girl, Margaret, which was about a year old. He lived in one of the company houses. The main reason I liked to live there was Uncle Dave was a fanatic about good guns, and he had five or six of them. He always let me use a little twenty-two caliber rifle — I sure did like it. He liked his pump shotgun best. We did not work on Saturday or Sunday, so we always went hunting down on the river there. The whole place down there was practically in the country. It was six or seven miles down the river from Llano, and game and fish were plentiful down there then. Lots of times Will Ruby, Uncle Dave's buddy, would go with us, and we always brought back plenty of game and fish.

I kept that job down there for about six months, and one day while I was in town, I met Herbert Krouse, my buddy, who had the Western Union messenger job. He told me that he was going to move to San Antonio, and if I would buy his bicycle for ten dollars, he would help me get the job. As I had to have a bicycle anyway and his was a pretty good one, I took him up on it. So he took me into the freight office to talk to Mr. Bill Mason, who was the operator there. He already knew me, so I didn't have any trouble at all getting the job. So, I, then, went back down to Teich's and quit my job there.



CHAPTER 42

MY NEW JOB WITH THE WESTERN UNION

This job was a snap compared to carrying those heavy tools at the Teich's rock quarry. Of course, I didn't make quite as much money, but then I think that I was much too light for that job anyway. So, I was very well satisfied with my messenger job.

I didn't have too many messages to carry though, so I did quite a bit of sweeping around the office. Only in cotton season the cotton buyers would get quite a few messages which they called C. n D.'s. I think they were price quotations on the cotton market.

I kept that job for the rest of the time I was in Llano. Arthur (Echos) Holden was the fellow I worked with most. He was in charge of loading all of the freight wagons. They didn't have trucks in those days. They used mostly six or eight team freight wagons. They had lines running south, all the way to Fredericksburg, which was a three days trip. Then there was a freighter running west, through Castell, all the way to Mason, and going north all the way to Cherokee. I don't remember now whether it ran as far as San Saba or not. It seems like they had a railroad there. Then for the passengers, they ran hacks, which had about four seats running clockwise. They could carry ten or twelve persons, and they had curtains which rolled up in pretty weather. If it was raining, or cold, they would roll the curtains down and keep fairly comfortable. Things were quite different from our mode of travel today, but then that was the best there was in those days, and no one seemed to mind it much. We had pretty hard times in those days, but then it never seemed to hurt any of us though. In fact, we all seemed to think that we were all living "high on the hog" when we were able to take a trip on one of those hacks. We were in high class then.

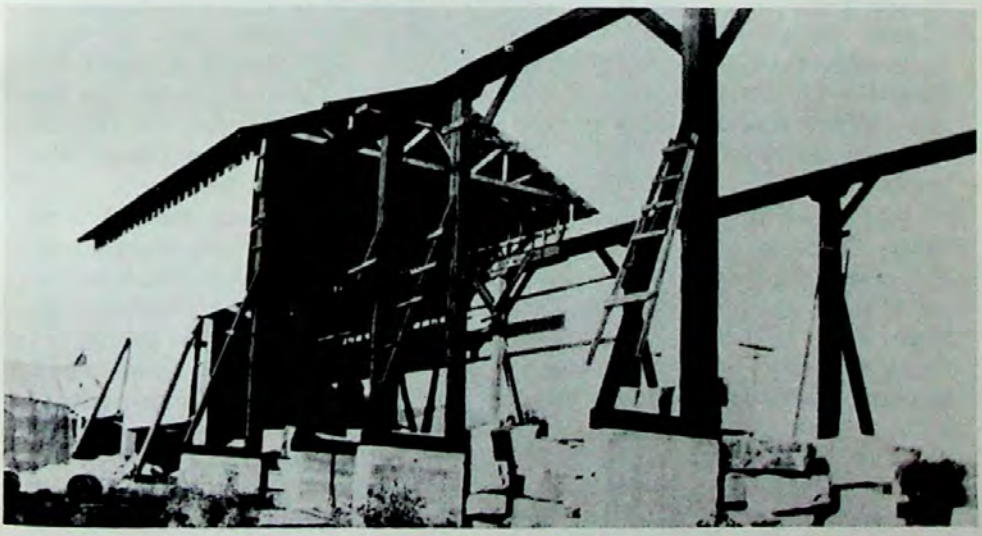
I don't know why I am writing this book because I will never finish it because I used names all through this book, and that is against the law, and they could sue me if they wanted to.

What this book needs is for someone who knows Llano well enough to edit it and give the names of all of the streets, etc., because when I was a kid, none of the streets were named. We just went by the name of the roads which you traveled to get to their house. If they lived near one of the creeks, we just gave their name like — John Frazier on Flag Creek, or Fred Lange on Flag Creek, and all of the folks which lived in the neighborhood, we gave that address. The Barler Flats was another address as was, "up the river", "on the Castell Road" etc.. Now all of the streets are named, and the streets are paved, also. When I lived there, they didn't know what pavement was. None of us kids wore shoes in the summertime, and when we went any place, we would run from one shady spot to another until we arrived to where we were going — mostly up the river to our swimming holes. The first one was "Little Hole", which

was just about even with our picnic ground then, and the "Blue Hole" was just on up the river about a quarter of a mile. Our other swimming hole was just down the river a ways. "Old Bailey", it was the nearest one and the smallest. You could plainly see us from the bridge.

All who lived on the north side of the river, we would just say, "on the north side", "up the river" or "down the river", "near the Algona Hotel", "near the Eaves Hotel" or "near Shook and Shook Grocery Store." In those days everyone knew everyone in town so it was no problem at all to go to where they lived.

The cotton loading platform.



One of the derricks that were used to load and unload granite.

CHAPTER 43

MY MOVE TO DALLAS IN 1904

We had just heard from my mother who was living in Dallas about that time. She wanted me to come on up to Dallas and live with her until we got settled. Then, later, we would send for Floyd, my brother. Mama was working for the telephone company. She was the first "matron" the telephone company had here in Dallas. At the time, there were only two exchanges in Dallas, and Mama worked at the Haskell Exchange, located on the corner of Bryan and Haskell. It was only a small three story red brick building then. Boy, you should see it today. Mama was living with Arthur Watkins then. He was her brother, and after he married, he moved to Dallas and was working for Sanger Brothers. Arthur married a Dallas girl, and they lived in Llano for about a year. He worked for Sam Watkins Grocery Store when he first married. Later he switched to Forman and Forman Dry Goods Store. Then his wife persuaded him to move to Dallas. As he had a home about three blocks from the telephone exchange, that is why Mama was living with him. After I arrived in Dallas, we rented a little apartment just around the corner from Arthur's home, on the corner of Fitzhugh and San Jacinto, and set up housekeeping. We later bought that little cottage. I didn't have any trouble at all getting a job with the telephone company myself. I was what they called, a call boy. There weren't many telephones in the homes in those days. If anyone called some one in Dallas and wanted to talk to them, one of us call boys would have to go out to their house and make an appointment for the next day at a certain hour. Then the next day, at the appointed hour, they would have to come all the way to town, to the basement of the Scollard Building on Main Street and Scollard Court. Then they could talk to the party who called them. Quite a difference now days — eh! It wasn't long until we sent to Llano for Floyd — about six months. He came up and I got him job also, at the same place where I worked, and helped him get a bicycle etc.. Floyd was always slower than I in adjusting himself to new places and making new friends, but I finally got him adjusted O.K..

I am sort of getting off of the track about Llano, but back to Llano again, now. I don't have much more to say in this story. Only my grandfather and grandmother soon followed us to Dallas because all of their children and grandchildren were living there in Dallas at the time. They had two large lots there in Llano, right across the street from the old Henry Wachtman place. They also had a good sized house — three bedrooms, a large dining room and kitchen combined, a long front porch clear across the front of the house, then a wide hallway all the way down the house to the back porch. In the cow pen they had a chicken house, also a feed barn as well as two stalls for cows or horses; then they had a wood pile right back of the barn.

Mother - Mrs. Lillie P. Watkins Townsend (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

Grandmother - Mrs. P. J. Watkins "Mama Watkins" (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

LADIES IN YOUNG ALLAN'S LIFE.

Wife - Mrs. Allan R. Townsend, Sr. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)

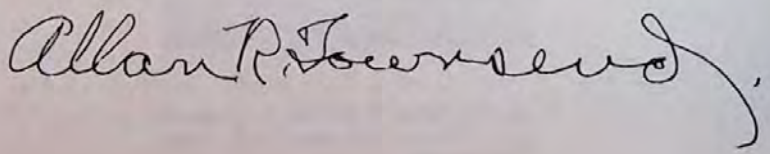
That was in the peach orchard where he had about a dozen fruit trees of all kinds. Then he had a dividing fence clear across the yard, and up in the front, he always had the prettiest garden in town. He always took so much pride in it. He would carry a basket of vegetables to town with him most every day, and he would probably get thirty five or forty cents for the whole lot. That was a lot of money in those days. Anyway, what I am getting around to is — all of his kids were here in Dallas. They kept after Mama and Papa Watkins to sell that place in Llano and move up here to Dallas with all of us. Well, since they all kept after them to move to Dallas, Papa Watkins finally gave in. He sold that whole place down there for the fabulous sum of seven hundred and fifty dollars — the two lots, house, barns and even a privey. That is what we had to use in those days.

Well, after they arrived here in Dallas, they went way out on Peabody Street, right near a railroad track. He bought a lot, built a house and even drilled a water well with that seven hundred and fifty dollars. Papa Watkins was a carpenter himself, and I think that he built most of it by himself. I can remember that place well. I was only about one half a mile from the Fair Ground, and the South Belt Street Car Line was right back of his house, and those great big tall sun flowers there were way over my head. At the time it was a very pretty place. Now that is all nigger town out that way. Well, after Papa Watkins got the house all finished, he didn't last long after that. He just pined himself away. I always did say that he died of loneliness. He didn't know anyone here in Dallas outside of his own family, and he was lonesome for his Llano friends. The Corner Drug Store was owned by John A. Weeks then, and Papa Watkins used to run the Public Scales which were located right there on the corner then. He was also lonesome for the Llano River as he was a great fisherman, and he always got a nice string, too.

Well, now that I am just about finished with this story, I do not know what I am going to do with it, because as I said, it needs someone to edit it, also it could use a few pictures of old time Llano. It would be nice to have it in the Museum, too, because everything in it is true. Some of the boys may resent some of the nick-names which I used, but then that was their nick-names at the time.

I am going to close the book now. If it was only typed, I wouldn't have any trouble getting it edited, but whoever trys it may have trouble reading some of my writing. I don't know if I could read it all myself.

ALLAN R. TOWNSEND



Allan Townsend as a young sailor in the Navy shortly after he moved from Llano. (Photo courtesy of Allan Townsend)