

The Ledger of Samuel Coleman Lockett

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Introduction

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Transcriber's Introduction

Samuel Coleman Lockett was born in Arkadelphia, Arkansas on April 4, 1853. In 1862 his family moved to Texas, locating near Austin. In September 1870, Lockett was mustered in as a member of Frontier Forces, Company "B" under the command of Captain A. H. Cox. He served in this company until being discharged at the end of May 1871.

The following document consists of two parts. 1 - The first part is a transcript of a handwritten memoir. This memoir included incidents of growing up, Ranger service and his life after he left the Rangers. It provides some interesting insight on life on the Texas frontier. The ledger itself, housed in the archives of the Texas Ranger Research Center in Waco, Texas, is in poor condition. In order to preserve the book and limit further damage, access is restricted and will be granted on a case by case basis. 2 - The second is a portion of a typescript autobiography and covers only the time of his service in the Texas Rangers. A copy of the complete typescript, which only covers his life until 1872, can be found in vertical files of the Texas Ranger Research Center. Both of these documents were originally written by Samuel Coleman Lockett.

The spelling, punctuation and grammar of the ledger are reproduced in the transcript. On a few occasions words cannot be made out and they are noted by a set of empty brackets []. On a few occasions the transcriber has added a word to help clarify meaning and those words appear in brackets as well. The normal practice of using [sic] to indicate a unique spelling of a word or unclear meaning has not been employed in this case.

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Ledger of Samuel Lockett

School days

The first school I was ever in [was in] the country near Arkadelphia. My two older brothers – Melville & Willie were going to the school. I begged mother to let me go with them. One day she let me go just to satisfy me. I will never forget the log school house, the stern looking old teacher & my first half day in school. I did not like the looks of the old teacher. He was a hard looking man to me. He ruled the school by the rod. I was afraid of him as I did not have yet any lessons I had nothing to do but sit as still as I could & watch. I saw the teacher whip one boy & heard his harsh voice as he chided others & then I saw him make one boy get up on a table & stand before the school on one foot. In a crack between the legs just behind the teacher I saw a number of long switches. I had seen him use one of them & that quite enough for me. When the noon hour came I slipped off & ran just as hard as I could home which was more than a mile away. I was perfectly satisfied with school & never asked mother to let me go again.

The first school I ever attended was at Center Point after mother's death. This was one of the schools in that part of the state & liked the ladie who taught in my room, even if she did occasionally whip me, as most teachers did in those days. Tho I suppose I needed that punishment for I was always in some kind of mischief if I could see any fun even [if] it was at the expense of others. I remember when I was quite a small boy & I went in my bear feet the

skin on my great toe was thick & hard & I would stick a pin in the thick skin of my toe with the point & stick it in the boy in front of me. Of course the boy would turn & yell but the teacher saw me intently working at my book & no one saw me & the boy who made the racket was punished for disturbing the school. But the teachers caught & give me good flogging. But I have had my fun & had to pay for it.

I must have been in this school for three sessions, & I think I did well for a boy of my age, at least father said so.

After coming to Texas I attended school for one session in Kaufmann County. I don't think I learned much in this school & indeed the fact that I attended the school in Kaufmann County had intirely slipped my mind until it was recalled after I commenced to write this sketch.

After we located in Williamson County I at once started to school with my brother M. B. Lockett. In this school I made more advancement than in all the other schools I ever attended. What I learned in this school provided the foundation for the education I have.

I do not say it because M. B. Lockett is my brother, but because I believe he was the best teacher I ever saw. Indeed, I am indebted to him largely for all that I know. He made a success of all the schools he ever taught & I have sometimes thought he made a mistake when he gave up the school room for the mercantile business although he mad ea success of the later business.

A run from the Indians

~~I went out with a number of cow boy from the Burleson~~

In one of our general round up I met with a Mister Bradshaw. He seemed to take a liking to me & one day asked me if I would not like to go & live with him help him with his stock. He said he would give me a home in his family & give me my for my work one-third of the calves we could brand. In those days cattle were plentiful & there were many unmarked cattle & calves on the range. Men who owned cattle on the range would go out and gather & brand the calves & the “mavericks” these were the unmarked older cattle. Mr. Bradshaw’s proposition was to give me a third of all that fell to his part in this round up & one third of the calves branded at his house. This appear to me to be a liberal offer, so after talking it over with Mr. Dawson, He [] me that Mr. Bradshaw was a good, an honorable citizen & would make good his promises. I accepted Mr. Bradshaw’s proposition & went with him to his house on the San Saba River.

His wife was a [] woman & [] me as he would a son. She had a sweet little girl about three years. She became very much attached to me & wanted to go with me everywhere I went. Many happy hours did I spend that summer with that sweet little child down on the banks of the river playing under the shade of the trees.

I remain with these good [people] for nearly a year & before the season was over I had a number of calves on the range which I added to Bradshaw's brand & had I remain with him in a few years I might have had a good start of cattle, but after all it may have been the good providence of God which turned my thoughts homeward again. For a year or two later trouble came to the stockman in all of west Texas because of the thieves who rushed into that country & without a care in the world went out into the range to mark & brand all the calves & yearling they could get & then there were mobs & counter mobs in many parts of the state.

While with Mr. Bradshaw we went out on a general roundup with the representatives of several other ranches.

As I remember we were out on the divide between Pecan Bayou & the San Saba river. A large number of cattle had been rounded up. Three of us boys two white & one negro were left to hold the herd on the hill overlooking the valley on the Pecan Bayou. While the others of our company had gone out to round up cattle & run them into the herd we were holding. Those who had gone off on the round up had been gone for sometime & we were looking for them to show up at anytime with more cattle. The herd we were holding were all [] & the three of us were together & look up the valley about a mile away we saw nine men coming down the valley toward us as fast as their horses could run. We thought at first glance that they were out boys after cattle. You can imagine our consternation & fears when after another careful investigation we saw nine Indian warriors coming toward us with utmost speed of their horses. The first question with us boys who were then in our teens was "What shall we do?"

I have heard Indian fighters say that when attacked by Indians if you were not able to meet them in open battle the best thing to do was get into the first thicket, for they said the Indians would not go into a thicket after an enemy if [they] thought the enemy was armed. This I am sure is true from what I learned in after years. So I said at once let us go into that large thicket. But the negro boy was badly scared & he had the only pistol in our company. He [said] "no I am going to run for the settlement," which was more than ten miles. And suiting his actions to his words he turned his horse toward the settlement & put spurs to his horse & off he rush & the other white boy & myself decided we would be safer in flight than in a thicket without a gun & we the negro as fast as our horses could go. It is not necessary for me say "I was scared," for I was & most any boy raised in Arkansas would have been. The truth is it seemed to me most everything else was scared. The horse & cattle took fright from the Indians or from us & followed in the direction we were going. It was a fortunate that the horses in our herd did take fright & follow us for if they had not the Indians would have taken them.

After a race of more than two mile we ran into the other boys who were driving in more cattle into our herd.

With them we rush back & give chase after the Indians but their horses were to fast for our cow ponies. They soon made their escape. This one time I worked in the lead in an Indian race.

Soon after the above incident I decided I would go back home & I spoke to Mr & Mrs Bradshaw about [it] & they said [they] would hate to give you up for we feel now like you was our own boy, but if you feel like you want to go back home we will not try to keep you from such a purpose. Mr Bradshaw paid me a small sum for my interest in the calves we had branded & I went over to San Saba where I found a freighter who took me to Austin.

After reaching Austin I could not muster up the courage to go home but started the next day on foot for Bastrop County. This was Christmas day. A boy about my own age was with me on this long walk. I had over taken him on the way & we went together to the little town of “Hog Eye.” It took us until in the night to make this trip. I had never walked as far before in my life, yet I was not very tired, for I remember that after we had supper we spent more than an hour out with the boys of the town in Christmas sport.

On our way down we came to a farm house where a great crowd of people were assembled. The road ran near the house & as we were passing the young people who seemed to be having a lively time in the yard, called us, & invited us to come in join them in their sports. We accepted the invitation & soon were having a lively time with these strangers. But we wanted to make it through to “Hog Eye”, & knew that we could not tarry very long. We finally told them while we were enjoying their company & plays very much yet if we made it through to Hog Eye that day we would have to be moving along. But just as we were ready to start, the man of the house who had understood that we were going to leave came up & said “you are not thinking of leaving are you boys.” I replied, yes sir, we must be going or we will be in the [] getting to Hog Eye.

“Well” said, you are not going to leave until you get dinner. You don’t have to get to Hog Eye tonight, besides you will find many good homes where you can stay all night this side of Hog Eye.” It did not take much persuasion to get me [to] consent to wait for a Christmas dinner for I was already getting hungry & besides I was having a good time with the young people. My traveling companion was not hard to persuade to stay & we did stay. So we again joined the young people in their plays.

Soon the man of the house & his jolly wife came out into the yard with a large bowl of egg nog which in those days were usually served at Christmas times. We all took a glass of the tempting beverage & then went merrially on with our games and plays.

By & by dinner was announced & I was good & ready for it. I thought then it was the best Christmas dinner I had ever tasted. I certainly did enjoy for the long walk in the morning & plays with the young people had given me a ravenous appetite & then I had not seen such a dinner in more than two years.

The next morning after the night in Hog Eye I parted company with the boy who had traveled with me the day before & walked out six or seven miles to Mr Denmans where I had worked on the brick yard more than a year ago. They all appeared to be glad to see me & I had a [] good time with them during the holidays.

I had expected to go to work again on the brick yard but it was winter time & the brick yard was closed down for the winter.

But I found employment on a farm about a mile out from Bastrop with an old man by the name of Elkins [Perkins]. Here I worked in the field, the most of the time plowing with oxen.

Sometime when it was hot the oxen would get mad & so would I & we would go round & round.

Old Mr Perkins was a hard shell Baptist and a church of that denomination was located near his home. He was a regular attendant never missing the monthly services when he was able to go & on Saturdays before their meeting day I had no work to do, but was invited to go with the family to church which I always did.

This was the first hard Shell Baptist church I ever remembered to attend. Their manner in preaching was new to me, & I could not understand more than one-half of what the preacher said. He would always talk or rather sing his sermon out at such a rapid rate that I could not catch more than half he would say. I was often amused at this old time preacher when he would warm from his bodily exercise in preaching he would pull off his coat & then go on with his singsong sermon like his very life depended on it. There was a hole in the floor of the pulpit & this old preacher would spit at the hole, but seldom hit it, but his great foot always came over the hold as he would spit, & I wondered that he did not spit on his foot, but he never did. I suppose the preacher was honest & believed he was doing his duty & suppose he was, but it was new to me. I had never seen or heard anything like it before.

Mr. Perkins was the first person I remember to have seen with an eating cancer. His suffering at times must have been great. Day by day the cancer grew until the whole left side of his face was eating away & he knew that his life could not last very long. He was always kind to me & paid me regularly for my work. His good old motherly wife was like a mother to me & his widowed daughter, who live with her father, was like a sister. They could not have treated me with greater kindness if I had been a son & brother to them.

One evening I came in from work & the daughter & I had a long talk. It was the first time she had sought to find out about my home & people. I told all that I could about my home & people & all about my wondering here & there. Then she in a very kind & sisterly way urged me to write home & let my folk know where I was. I agreed to do this & at once I wrote the letter. I think to my sister Fannie, & we mailed it the next day.

About one week later, I think it was on Sunday evening, my brother Willie rode up & I rushed out to meet for I confess I was very glad to see him, & he was glad to see me too. I was glad to introduce him to the family as my brother. He spent the night with me & we talked long into the night the things of long ago. He also told me that what he had told me about the \$50 was without any founding & he had only intended to tease me. He laughed about how I had given him the slip in Austin & said I had treated him right.

He said that after they had received [my letter] my father asked to go & see how I was getting along, but not to try to get me to come home unless I wanted to come, but to tell me that all the family would be mighty glad to see me again & that whenever I could do so that I must visit them.

This message touched my heart & I made up my mind to go back home & stay. I told Willie of [my] decision, but that I could not leave Mr. Perkins for a week or two as he needed me in the farm for at least that time. It was arranged that brother should go back & that one week alter meet in Austin & take me out home & a week later I went home.

At home again

The Perkins family had all been just as kind & good to me as I could have desired or asked for. With regret I bade good bye & started for Austin. I have never seen any of the Perkins family since that day, but I learned a little later that the old man only lived two months after I left them. I hope he was not mistaken in his faith that he was one of the elect & that he now has a place with our Lord in the kingdom above, where there is no pain nor death.

I was glad to get back again into our old mountain home after an absence of two years. They were all glad to see me & I was equally glad to see them. They received as joyfully as the father received the Prodigal son. No one upbraided me for running off from school. But my father did

give me a good fatherly talk a few days later when we were out fishing together. He said I will not make you stay at home if you do [not] want to do, but he said that he thought it would be best for me to stay at home until fall & work on the farm & that he would send me to school in the fall.

I spent the rest of the spring & summer at home working on the farm & helping father in various ways. He had bought seven hundred acres joining his place on the east, which included Mt. Bonnell & the rich river valley running up the river to our old home. This was a valuable tract of land, the richest river bottom soil, much valuable cedar on the mountain north of the valley. At this time father in addition to the farm had a fishery & three or four lime kilns & these were kept going to supply the great demand for lime from Austin. Of course, I had a part in the work in all these things & I was kept busy from morning until night. But the hardest work I did was hauling timber down from the mountain in a great wagon drawn by five yokes of oxen. One one of these trips up on the mountain side for cedar on a hot August day that in some way the front wheels go astride a large cedar stump which was too high for the wagon to pass over. The wagon was on the side of a hill & the upper part which was jammed against the stump I could not get it off. It was hot & the oxen were hot & I was hot & mad. I am sorry to say that I had learned the sinful & wicked habit of swearing, but my father had never heard me swear. I was [exasperated] at the oxen & was cursing them like I was an old hand at the business. I did not think any one was near but look I saw my father standing on the hill not thirty feet from me. I was confounded for my father did not know that I ever swore. We looked at each other for a moment in silence. At last father said "Coley you are very hot, you go to a shade & cool off & I will get the wagon off the

stump.” I did so & he took the whip & in a few minutes had the wagon clear of the stump. To my surprise he never at that time reproved me for swearing but at other times told me it was a very ugly & wicked habit & that if I wanted to be a gentleman I would have to cut swearing out. I was careful that father never heard me utter another oath, I am sorry to say that [I] never gave up the wicked habit until I was converted & became a Christian.

In the fall of 1868 I went with my sister to Burnet County where we boarded & went to school to my brother M. B. Lockett. He had built up a splendid school here which was attended by a large number of pupils about my age. I boarded the first term with old Mr. James Rountree, Lewis McFarland from Burnet & Miss Amanda Altmant from beyond Burnet also boarded at the same place. Lewis and Amanda were among the more advanced students in the school & they proved a great help to me in the school. A friendship grew up between us which has continued all these years.

This school, which was taught in an old log house on the Oatmeal Creek, was then the best school west of Austin. I continued in this school for two years & it was the last school I ever attended. I owe my brother a debt of gratitude for the start he gave me & for the foundation he helped me build for all the education I have. I have many pleasant memories clustering around the old log school house in Burnet countie. During the secon year at the board with J. H. Dawson. They lived in a very humble home, but was for years of the school days one of the most pleasant homes in the world. Both Mr. & Mrs. Dawson treated me like & as a boy of the home. But Mrs. Dawson was one of the best women I ever knew & she was so good, kind & helpful to

me that I loved her as a mother. I will never forget her while I live. Several years later when I was in business with my brother at Cedar Mills their house was my home. I went there almost every Saturday & went to church with them on Sunday. Mrs Dawson kept my clothing at her house & gave them the same attention that a mother would give her sons clothing. She saw that I was dress nicely when I went out. This friendship formed when I was a boy has continued to grow all the years since & will I believe ripen in heaven.

It was in the old school house that I first heard old Uncle Ephram McDaniel preach. He was one of grand old pioneer Baptist preachers of West Texas. His life was full of good works. He has long since ceased from his labors, but his works do follow him. I will have more to say about this good man later on.

It was in the old school house on Oatmeal where I first met the girl who several years later became my wife & the mother of my children. She was then a beautiful girl in her teens & was in some of my classes in school. She was quit modest in her ways & attracted my attention, but at that time I had no thought that she would ever become my wife, for an older girl in the school had rather captured my heart at that time. But more of this by & by.

I know at least five boys in that school who afterward became preachers – Sam Vaughan, Peter Bumgardner, Felix Roundtree, Lewis Chamberlain & myself. I have lost sight of all of them but I suppose they are all living & preaching to this day.

A Texas Ranger

When I returned home after the last term of the school was out I was in poor health caused I think from being thrown from a wild horse while attending school, & I did not have much life in me. I wanted to go west again, but father advised me not to do so. Just about this time the Legislature decided to put in the field several companies of Rangers. I had a burning desire to go, but I felt sure that father & my brothers would oppose it. When the time came & Capt. Cox came down from Burnet County to be sworn into the Service, without telling anyone where I was going or what my purpose was, I went to Austin & enlisted in the service under Capt. Cox who was Captain of Company "B" & was soon on the march for Ft. Griffin in Shackelford County. Our company was composed largely of Burnet County boys so I was not with strangers. It would take several volumes if I should try to give in details all of our wanders & all of the interesting happening & incidents that occurred while I was out as a Texas Ranger. But I will mention some things in this connection that will doubtless interest those who may chance to read these lines.

Our Company was composed almost entirely of boys & young men. The Captains, the Lieutenant, Doctor & two privates were past thirty years of age, the others about 47 ranged from thirty down to seventeen years. As a rule our company was composed of honorable, honest boys & most of them were brave & could be trusted to stand on the firing line at any time. Yet we had one or two men who were cowards. One of these was discharged later on by his own request, but the Captain in filling out the blanks on his discharge for "remarks" said, "A good reliable

soldier, always ready for duty, but rather inclined to fear wolves” & this was literally true of the man & he never ought to have been out as a Texas Ranger. We had one notorious thief in our company, the Captain had picked him up, I think, in Austin to make out the full number for his company, hence no one knew him. His name was Holmes, at least that was the name he had given when he was sworn into the service. He was a brave man, but he was a thief. He would not steal from any of our boys but would steal something every time he went to town. He was afterward kill in cold blood by Jack Singleton, who I think was the only real murdered in our Company. He was of course dismissed from the service & turned over to the Civil Authorities. On trial for his crime was acquitted because for some reason the witnesses who saw him commit his dastardly & cowardly crime were never called for as witnesses. His crime was a cool premeditated murder & according to the laws of the state his neck should have been broken to rid the state of a cowardly murderer.

Holmes and Singleton were bed fellows. Singleton was a high tempered overborne man & he & Holmes had had trouble several times on our trip from Austin to Ft. Griffin. These rows had culminated in a fight between the men the day before the killing & Holmes had given Singleton a whippin which he needed for the vile & abusive language he had used. In this fight Singleton had shown his cowardise. He could have shot Holmes at the time but he was too much of a coward to shoot when Holmes eyes were on him. He waited two days & then slipped up behind Holmes while he was sitting at the mess box eating his breakfast & shot him in the back, the ball taking effect in Holmes neck. Our mess was not over 20 yards from where the killing took place. I had just finished eating my breakfast & walked to the fire. The sound of the first shot aroused our

camp. I turned my head & looked at the sound of the report of the gun & I saw Holmes jump to his feet & heard him cry “O Jack, God---- you Jack.” He ran a few steps in the direction of our mess & Singleton ran around a [] & fired an other shot & poor Holmes felled to the earth a dead man & then Singleton shot him twice after he fell before any of us could reach him. Both of the last shots missed the body but hit Holmes hand in which he had a knife & a piece of bread of which he was eating when the coward fired the first shot. If any man was ever hung for murder I think Singleton deserved it.

Our company had marching order & everything was in readiness for moving when the tragedy occurred. But starting was delayed until Holmes could be buried. The grave was dug at the root of a mesquite. His blanket, arms, clothing, saddle and other things were placed in the grave & we wrapped a blanket about the cold lifeless body of Holmes & lowered into the grave & covered it with the dirt. It was a sad funeral because a life had been snuff out in a moment & the poor man went up to meet God with an oath on his lips. It was fortunate for Jack Singleton that Holmes did not have a personal friend in the company to avenge his death; for I am satisfied in my own mind, had Singleton killed any other man in Company “B” in the cowardly was he killed Holmes that he would have been swung up to a mesquite tree before Holmes was buried. As it was there was talk of lynching among the boys. Our Lieutenant as brave & true man as ever lived, said openly that Singleton was not fit to live & ought to be hung.

In Winter Quarters

Just as soon as Holmes was buried our Company started on the march for Earth County where we were to be located for the winter. Singleton was under guard and it was my misfortune to guard one watch at night. He was in terror. I asked why he had killed Holmes in the way he did. His reply was "I was afraid of him" & that was the truth. The poor fellow did not sleep while I was on guard. He would cry like a baby. But his tears came too late. The deed had been done & he must go through life with the brand of Cain on him. If men would only stop & think before they act in such things there would never be any murders, but alas, men do not think, but give loose reins to their passions & these awful crimes are committed which curse the living more than the dead.

Our permanent camp, which was to be our headquarter while we remained in the service, was located in a valley on a small creek south of Stebensville about four miles on the road leading from Stebensville to Dublin. It was a splendid location, with nice flowing water at hand, plenty of ~~wood~~ for lumber for building our quarters & fine grass for our horses.

We went to work at once to build our winter quarters. These small one room houses were built out of split post oak logs & set up picket fashion for the walls. The top was made by placing split logs across from wall to wall & these were covered first with straw & then with dirt at least twelve inches thick & this made a good roof to keep out the rain & snow. The cracks were

daubed with mud to keep out the wind & a dirt & stick chimney was built for each house. These houses proved to be very comfortable. Here we spent the winter. Of course scouts were out most all the time & some us go as gards for the courts.

The captain sold our salt & pickle pork the State furnished & bought beef for us. I am not sure that he always paid for the beeves we killed but he was supposed to do so.

This brings to mind a bit of experience we had at Weatherford when we had several things happen which were both serious & exciting. Taking some of the things that occurred in the order they came.

As we were marching out of the town going west, a lady came hopping up the sidewalk. She seemed to have nothing on but a white Mother Hubbard dress. Few of any of our boys had ever seen a woman in a Mother Hubbard. The one this woman wore was snow white & look very much to a country boy like a night gown. It looked like it to me & it looked like it to Jimmie Odum the modest & youngest boy in our company. As the woman passed us Jimmie said, "that woman ought to put on her dress before she comes out in the street," & he said it loud enough for the woman to hear. While the woman did not say a word, yet her look show she was mad, & she ran on up town & told her husband that she had been insulted by the Rangers. This was not true of any of the boys except Jimmie for that was not a man in that company who would not have defended any lady in Texas with his own life. It is true that the ranger boy should not have made that remark about the womans dress & it is also true that the woman coming out on the should

have put on a street dress & not come out in the street in that great white gown to attract the gaze of men & invite just such remark as the boy had made.

Then when we went into camp some nine mile west of Weatherford for the night, the corporal for the day took four of us boys who were on duty for the day, out with him to kill a beef. This was the order of the captain with instructions that mark & brand of the beef we kill should be taken down & turned over to him & that he would pay for the beef out of the money he had received for the pork, & we always did. I think it doubtful whether beeves were all paid for. I know that some of them were. But be that as it may, we went out on this particular day & ~~find~~ found a nice young beef & the corporal shot & tool down the mark & brand. Then we proceed to dress it. While we were at work on the beef a nice gentlemanly man rode & spoke in a friendly to us all. He got down & assisted some in dressing the beef. When we were through & ready to start to the camp the man said “Well, boy I am glad to have met you. This beef you have just killed may be my property, but if it is you are perfectly welcome to it and to as many more as you need, for I have on this range more than 1500 head of cattle & many horses & your presence here if worth more to me that all the beeve you may eat.”

The corporal explained our orders to him & said I have here the mark & brand of the beef we kill, if it is yours & you will go with us to camp, the captain will pay you for it. But the man said “No, I don’t want to see the mark & brand for if it should be my beef I would not take a cents pay for it.”

We bade him good day with an invitation for him to come around to the camp & see us, & we started for camp. About halfway to our camp we met an old man who lived down within a hundred yards of our camp. He was riding at high speed. As he came up to us he drew up his horse with a jerk & said in a very angry tone of voice, "What did you kill my beef for?"

Our corporal [said] "I do not know that we have killed your beef, but if we have done so & you will go with us to camp the captain will pay you for it."

But the old man was mad & he commenced to curse us all & the officer in particular. I could see the corporals blood was getting hot & know that an explosion would come & it did come, for when it came to cursing our corporal could beat the cusser from Cusserville. It is enough to say that the old man soon put that he had pressing business on some other part of the range. The conduct of the old man was soon known to all our boys & before the day closed he came in for a liberal share talk & cursing by the boys. The captain had bought corn for our horses & it was piled up in abundance in our camp, but our boys had it in for the cross, cursing old ranchman, so after dark three of them slipped out of camp & got into the old man's corn field. It so happened that neither of them took a gun with them & they were in the field without arms, & it also so happened that the farmer was watching them armed with a double barrel shotgun & when one of the boys happened to get off from the others the old man ran up & assaulted him. The other two came running into the camp & said that one of the boys had been arrested. I was on guard that night & just about the time I had passed the camp to go on my rounds about the horses I heard

the commotion in the camp & saw a score or more of the boys running up the road with their guns in hand.

In the meantime the old man with his prisoner was march down the road to our camp. When he & our boys met, the boys took charge of the prisoner & arrested the old man & march him back to his house & told him not to show his head again that night. I think he obeyed the order for we heard no more from that night.

I was on guard with instructions not to let anyone enter or pass from the camp with the countersign. But I had a walk of more than three hundred yards around the camp & the horses staked out on the prairie. Of course as I would leave the camp first to go around the horses the boys would slip out & go up to the old man's potatoe patch & back into camp loaded with potatoes & these were roasted in the big fire around which a score or more of the boys gathered during my watch which was three hours. The boys did not forget me, for as I would pass them on my round they would hand me a well cooked potatoe & some barbacued meat. Of course I did not ask them where they got the potatoes. I did not see them go out not come in, neither did I see them get the potatoes, but I did eat the potatoes & beef with a relish. Of course I had an idea where those potatoes came from, but I asked no questions & had nothing to report when I was relieved after midnight. I do not try justify the boys in doing what they did, neither do I try to justify my own actions in the matter. We all did wrong.

Early the next morning the old man & two officers came riding into our camp. They were soon in conference with the Captain. Of course, none of the boys ever knew what passed between the captain and the men, but we have an idea, & were not surprised when the bugle sounded & calling us to fall into line. This we did in a few moments. We stood at attention facing the captain. The roll was called & all were present.

The Captain said, "Here are all my men." The civil officer said to the old man who had caused the trouble, "Pick out the men you want arrested & are willing to file charges against." The old man showed that he did not know just what to do & he replied "I do not know one of the men from the other. It was dark & I could see when they arrested me." The officer [said] "I will you don't suppose I will arrest all these men." This ended the incident except a short speech the captain made to us. His speech as we could see was intended more for the benefit of the civil officer than for his men, for he was just about as deep into the mud as the others were in the mire. I may say here that this is the only time even had any trouble with any citizen.

During this winter time we did not do much scouting for the indians did not often come into that part of the state in the winter time. We [had] good quarters & plenty good food & all things considered we had a good time.

Made Rails & Chopped Wood

With Captains permission when the weather was good I went out to nearby ranches & made rails and cut posts for pasture fences. I made my spending money in that way. We did not receive a dollar from the state while we were out. At that time the state was low in her finances & her script sold at a discount. I think it was fortunate we did not receive our pay until we went out of the service, for if we had much of it would have been spent foolishly & possibly some of it would have been spent on liquor. As it was we had to study economy & when we come out we had all our money in a pile.

Our lieutenant was also named Cox & he was a fine man. He was past forty years of age, was as brave as a lion, never drank. While we did not have a religious man in our company yet I think that Lieutenant Cox lived as moral & upright life as most Christians do. He seemed to think a great deal of me. He often called me his boy & he was prone to advise me in all things as a father would have been. He kept me from many snares & pitfalls. I went with him on every scout whether it was after Indians or white desperadoes. I rode by his side when we were on a march & I was beside him when danger was near. I went with him several times when desperadoes were to be arrested & we all knew there was danger ahead sometimes it took all the courage I had to go with him into a house at night to make an arrest. But when the first word was spoken all fear left me & I could & would have followed him into the jaws of death. I owe much to this good &

brave man & I shall never forget his kindness to me. I have lost sight of him & suppose he has gone the way of all the earth.

Gilbert Stewart was another good friend to me. He was perhaps the oldest man in the company. We called him “Congress head,” because he had traveled all over the nation & was the best inform man in the company. He settled all of our disputes on history, geography, and literature. His discussion on these questions were final with us. If old Congress Head said a thing was so, it must be so, we thought. I was often with Gilbert in roaming over the prairies, resting under the shade of the trees when we were not on duty & often went him on scouts & be out for days. I had never played card in my life. After we were out in camp the boys persuaded me to join them in a game. I insisted that I did not know the game, but they said they would learn. I had played only two or three games – not enough to learn the names or value of the cards. One day I was out with Gilbert & we were sitting under a mesquite tree on a hill overlooking our camp. We had talk, or rather Gilbert had talked about many things. He appeared more serious than usual, & in all he said he had been leading to some advice which he thought I needed.

He said “Coley I have noticed you playing cards with the boys & want you to quit it.”

But I said “Gilbert, I have never played cards only a few times & I would not think of betting on cards.”

“That is the very reason I am advising you to give up card playing now,” he replied, “For it will not be hard for you to give it up now as the habit has not been form.” He then went on to tell me that how, when about my age he learn to play card, how the habit had grown on him, how through card playing he had become a gambler & how gambling had wrecked his life & made him a wanderer over the world without home or friend. He talked long & earnestly to me, giving me in details much of his life. Then looking full in the face he said, “I warn you, my boy, there is danger in card playing. Won’t you promise me that you will not play cards with the boys?” I promised there that I would never play another game of cards. That promise I have sacredly kept from that day to this although I have been often tempted by men & women in society, thank God I have always kept this promise & I think I am now too old to be tempted on this line.

As the years have come & gone I have from actual observation found out that all that Gilbert told me about the results of gambling is true. It would be a blessing to the boys of our nation is some “Old Congress head” would point out the dangers of gambling to them as Gilbert did to me. If anyone should ever read these lines I hope they will do as I have done “let cards alone forever.”

Cotton Picking & a Dance

A farmer who lived near our camp & who frequently came to talk with the boy had much sickness in his family & was not able to gather his cotton. The boys talked among themselves in the camp. We saw that his field was white & that the cotton was all open & not a [lock] had been

picked. Winter was coming on & the chances were that if bad weather should set in the farmer would loose of his crop. Some of the boys suggested that we all go down & give the farmer one days work. It was also suggested that the farmer might give us a party at his house if would pick out his cotton. This suggestion brought all of the boys into the plan.

After talking it over with captain & he agreed to give us all a day & night off for the cotton picking & dance, the matter was settled if the farmer would agree to our suggestion. Several of the boys went down & the offer to give him a days work & pick out his cotton if he would give our boys a party at his house. The farmer was pleased with what he called our “kind offer” & he said yes you can have the party & I will get all of the girls in community to come to the party & give you a good old country dinner & supper.

The day came doe the cotton picking & all our company, except a few who had to stay & keep the camp, about 45 in all, march down to the farm & staked out horses on good grass, & went into the cotton patch & with some of the neighbors, men, women, & girls, went to work picking the crop. We had some splendid pickers in our company & then we had some like me, who could not pick much but we all worked from the time we entered the field until the last [lock] was gathered. It was a rush, each one trying to do his or hers best, for we set in to finish that crop before night & we did to the joy of the farmer.

The farmer, true to his promise had prepared a splendid dinner for us. There was an abundance of turkeys, chicken, ham, eggs, cakes, pies & custards for all. Did we enjoy the dinner, I should

say so, for we had not eaten a home cooked dinner since we left our homes early in the spring. There was plenty left over for supper & we insisted that the lady of the house should not cook supper.

After the supper came the dance. It was a treat to our boys to be in the company of ladies & girls for many of them had not spoken to a girl since leaving home. The dance it was understood was for the Ranger boys exclusively & the girls said they would dance with none but the ranger boys that night & they did not. However, late in the night a number of boys came out from Stevenville. I think they were drinking for they were very noisy and at times acted as if they wanted to ruin the party.

The man of the house went to them & requested them to be quiet & not to disturb the dance but this seemed to do no good. Then our Lieutenant [went] out & quieted them in short order. I do not know what he said to them, but I know that in ten minutes after there was not one of the town boys in the place.

The dance went on until wee small hours of the morning when we all went back to camp & was there at roll call.

Thus ended the only social recreation that I had while in the service.

An Indian in Camp

In the spring of 1870 some Comanchie Indians made a raid into Burnet County. The citizens gathered & give chase & overtook them on the waters of the Lampasas River. A fight followed & some of the Indians were killed & among the number was a squaw who was mortally wounded but the citizens thought she was dead. Her husband came back to the battlefield after citizens were gone. He found his wife alive & carried her some distance & hid with her in a thicket where she died a few days later. He buried with his own hands & then started to the north to join his tribe. But in the battle he had lost his bow & arrow & while watching with his wife had use all the ammunition for his pistol. On his journey northward he had to live on roots & such berries. He reach Doublin one morning & went up to a farm house & without speaking he went directly into the kitchen & to the cupboard where he proceed to satisfy hi hunger. There was no one at in the house when he entered it except two small children. They were not frightened for they took the Indian to be an old negro woman who lived near, but they run out of the house & hunted up their mother who was somewhere about the place & told her that the negro woman was in the kitchen eating out of the cupboard. The ladie ran to the house& you can imagine her surprise when she found a full grown Comanchie Indian in her kitchen. She at once gave the alarm & some of the neighbors came in an took charge of the Indian. He did not try to get away, but ate as long as there was any food left in the cupboard. He never uttered a word while he was eating & could not, or would not talk to the men who arrested him.

Our Captain was notified & he & the Lieutenant went over to Dublin & brought the Indian to our camp. We kept him for seven days in our camp. The captain gave him a pair of shoes & some sox, but he would not keep them on his feet but would carry them in his hand. He did not try to get away. But he would not talk to anyone but the captain. He was always ready to speak to the captain in the Spanish language. He was finally turned over to the United States troops & carried to Ft. Griffin. I learned later that this Indian never went back to his tribe but continued with the U. S. troops & became a useful guide to them.

At Mountain Pass

Early in the spring of 1870 the Indians made numerous raids to the settlements in the frontier of Texas & the rangers were kept quite busy chasing them out of the country.

Word came to us that the Indians had raid the country east of us & had made good their escape carrying with them a hugh number of horses stolen from the settlements.

Two scouts of about 15 men each were at once sent out to head off the Indians in their flight to the northwest. One division was sent into Palo Pinto County & the other out toward the head of the Clear Fork of the Brazos River. Lieutenant Cox headed the scout which was to go out toward the head of the Clear Fork of the Brazos River & I was on his scout. We were out on this trip for several week, but the Indians had gone out to the northwest & the other scout which left camp at

the same time we did had overtaken them killing five of their number & capturing all of their horses. We will occasion to mention this battle later. On our long trip to the west we had some exciting experiences, some of which I will briefly mention.

On this trip I saw the first live buffalo I had ever seen. There were thousands of them west & northwest Texas at that time. This was late in the spring of the year & the buffaloes were exceedingly poor. As our supply of ammunition was limited the Lieutenant gave orders for us not to shoot the buffalo only as he should give permission. This was a wise order because if it had been left to the boys they would have wasted all their ammunition & kill the bison without any purpose. Usually we killed once each day for our meat. Sometimes the meat was awfully tough & always coarse. I remember that one evening one of the boys roped a yearling & two of them brought it into camp alive. It would fight its shadow, we had much sport with it. It was held by two ropers & of course could not get to either of the boys who held the ropes, but some of the more venturesome boys would go out to tease the animal & as it would run at them the boys who held the ropes would give yearling rope & several times it knock the boys down & run over them to the sport of all.

Finally the boys decided to ride, but each one who tried found out that a buffalo calf is hard to ride, for they all were tossed into the air & came to the ground. This was immense fun for those of us who felt safer at a distance.

Finally the brute was killed & we had a feast on its tender meat.

Sometimes the Lieutenant would give permission for three or four of the boys to dismount & kill a buffalo. One day four of the boys dismounted to kill one of the largest bulls we had seen. As the boys dismounted the animal moved away from us & the boys had to leave their horses with us & go out some fifty yards away to get a good shot.

At the crack of the guns the great beast dropped in his tracks & we all thought he was dead. The boys who did the shooting thinking the beast was dead ran toward the body. But when they [were] about ten paces from the buffalo he came to his feet as if he had never been shot, & came with a rush toward them. Albert Jennings of Burnet Co. was one of the number. He was the largest man in our company & he was too fat to run fast. He turned & made a bee line for his horse & the buffalo was not far behind him, but the other boys as the bull came with his head stepped aside & shot the bull dead, but Albert never stopped nor looked back until he reached his horse. It was an exciting time & those of us who were on our horses made the air vocal with shouts & laughter at Alberts race. It was strange, indeed, that people will laugh & have their sport under such condition, but they will. It had always been so, & always will.

One night when we were camped on a hill overlooking a valley which stretched away to the west as far as the eye could see. Before the sun went down we could see thousands of buffalo feeding in the valley. We were all tired from the long ride that day & early wrapped ourselves in our blanket & pillowed our heads on our saddles & were soon in the land of nod.

It was about midnight, I suppose, when we were suddenly awakened [by] the mad rush of the buffaloes from the valley. They were on us before we knew it they must have stampeded. In a moment we were on our feet with guns in hand. Some of us thought the Indians were on us. As the wild brutes came rushing around, the Lieutenant ordered us to fire into them the firing of our guns turned the leaders & the vast herd followed them & passed around us.

It was fortunate for us that we were able to turn the wild herd from our camp, for if they had come on through our camp the chances that we would all have been trampled to death, or lost all of our horses & been left afoot more than 200 miles from camp.

The next day we started out a cross or up the long valley which was covered with small mesquite trees as high as our head as we sat on our horses. This was a dry country & water was very scarce. We did not find water all that day for ourselves & horses. Thos was the first time in my life that I had ever felt the pangs of thirst. We had no water at night, but rested out horses & waited until daylight. In the morning changed our course toward a range of mountains to the south. After riding all morning looking for water we came in sight of quite a lake which we could see for more than a mile we pressed our tired thirsty horses forward at a rapid gate for we all wanted water & here was a large beautiful lake full with clear water. We rushed up tp the lake letting our horses find their way into nice water. In a moment I was down on my hands & knees. But alas one mouthful was enough for it was as salty as brian. Then I look down & saw that the salt was at least an inch thick all around the lake. It was a sore disappointment to men & horses.

It was some five miles on to the mountain. When we came near the mountains, the order came for us to halt & a detail of five men with canteen were sent into the mountain to hunt for water. After more than an hour the scout returned with nice spring water. I never knew till then just how to prize good water. We move near the spring & camp until the next morning.

Late the next day we made the small U. S. fort at Mountain Pass. This fort is the pass through the mountain range which divides the waters of the Colorado & Brazos Rivers. The water which falls on the shed to the north of the mountain finds its way into the Brazos river & the water which falls on the south finds & [] in the Colorado River.

We were now at the head of the Clear Fork of the Brazos River some two hundred miles from any settlements. As we had found no trace of Indians& heard nothing at the US post of any Indians. On the second day after our arrival at the post we parted with the US troops & started to our camp in Erath County. In the afternoon five of our boys got permission & went up on the mountain to try to kill a bear & five more of them were to travel near the mountain while the remaining four were to stay with the Lieutenant. We parted with the understanding that we would meet at night at a designated point down the mountain range. The sun had gone down & we were just ready to turn towards the mountains to camp when there came dashing thru the mesquite a man or Indian on horseback about one hundred yards in advance of us. At the command of the Lieutenant we put spurs to our horses & dash toward the fleeing man. He was ordered to halt but he only ran the faster, then the order came to halt & fire. We did but he kept running.

We then turn & road to the place where we were to meet the other boys, but they were not there & it was after dark. We made a fire & left a note for the boys to meet us the next day at a given point. We then went east about a mile & then turned north & went two miles & camped for the night.

We never saw the other boys of our scout until we reach camp a week later. The day after our arrival at camp the scout which had gone to the northwest returned with their trophies of battle. The trail of the Indians some days after they left our camp & followed until they over took the Indians in the northwest corner of Palo Pinto Co. The Indians had many horses & could not travel as fast as our boy could. While there were more Indians than Rangers, yet the Indians tried to avoid a ~~fight~~ fight by flight, but our boys gave chace & were soon in a running fight which spread out over several miles. There were five Indians killed, among the number was a boy about seventeen years. He proved to be a white but he was painted & dressed as an Indians & it was not discovered that he was white until after one of the boys had scalped him. An examination proved that he was not an Indian. Regrets were express by all the boys that he had been killed. Possibly he was one of the many boys captured by the Indians in their raid into Texas & had been raised by them.

In this battle our boys captured 75 or 100 head of horses, saddles, blankets, shields, bows & arrows & some Indian trinkets.

On way home from the battle they came through Stephenvill & the people gave them a regular ovation & too much bad whiskey. When they reached camp they were feeling the effects of drink & they came into camp making more noise than a tribe of Indians could have made & with their spoils of battle displayed they marched round & round the camp amid the firing of guns, music of the bugle & the shouts of all the boys. We were proud of the victory won without the loss of men.

It was reported Austin that some of our boys were wounded in the fight but I never saw a wounded man. True one man Bill Morrison had been hit in the back with a blunt arrow & Bill Hagood had a mashed finger & hereby hangs a tale told by Jimmie Adison of the fight.

Bill Morrison was considered coward in the camp. He was half witted & would never resent anything. He was considered a harmless man & all of us thought that if he ever had to go into battle he would be sure to run. He road a fleet horse. But when the battle was on Jimmie said old Bill fought in the lead & was often in danger of fire of our own guns as well as the arrows of the enemy. Near the close of the battle he was far in advance of the other boys & his gun would not work. As he run he tried to fix his gun but finding he could not shoot he took the barrel in his hand & rushed madly into a bunch of Indians using his gun as a club, & with it he knock right & left as his great horse rush through the Indians. As he passed beyond through the enemy he was hit in the back by a blunt arrow, of course it hurt & made a great black place where it hit him. Bill thought that he had been shot through & through, & then to add to his trouble his horse was shot with an arrow in the lower part of the neck & Bill could see the arrow sticking in his horses

neck & the blood freely flowing from the wound. But the battle was over & Bill came back to the other boys who had dismounted & stood near two dying Indians who were lying in the grass. Bill was crying when he came up. He said, "Boys I have been shot & the red devils have killed my horse" & it is said that he raised his gun & shot the dying Indian & ended his dying struggles. The governor sent Bill Morrison a nickle plated gun as a reward for his bravery. This reward was well merited.

Bill Haygood was always boasting about his fighting. He vain, boastful & of an overbearing disposition. Up to this time we all thought that Hagood would fight when the time come, he rood a fast horse, but Jimmie said I he was careful to say it where Hagood could hear. "Yes, Haygood was there but he was so far in the rear that he was in no danger from the Indian arrows."

Haygood claimed that he was hit on the finger by an arrow & he was reported as one of the wounded. To this claim Jimmie said to Haygood, You know that is not true, Bill, for you was never near enough to the Indians for an arrow to reach you. Your finger was mashed on the horn or your saddle by your gun when you were pulling on the reigns to keep your horse in the rear. This was about the truth for from that day on Haygood never boasted a about fighting when Jimmie around.

As I have already said Jimmie Addison was the youngest boy in our company. He was the son of our doctor. He was a good boy of noble impulses, but at times reckless. He was liked by all the men & seemed to be a favorite of the officers. I only a little older & Jimmie & I were close friends & associates in the service.

Preached to the Boys

As far back as I can remember I wanted to preach. When a boy on Mr Goodman's farm I often preached to the negro children out in the great barn. We had some great meetings too.

On Christmas night in camp we were having a lively time as boys will have. The Lieutenant gave us all a dram or two of whiskey as a Christmas treat & we were feeling it some. We had been dancing for some time to musick made by Tom Thurman. When this was over the boys called on me for a speech.

I replied, "Boy you know I cant make a speech, but I tell you what I can do, I can preach you a sermon." Then they all cried give us a sermon & I did. The boys frequently responded with loud "amen" & when I was through they all came around complemented me for the "sermon" as we called & gave me a good hand shaking all around. I did try to make fun for the boys, but I was very much in earnest & serious in all that I had to say, just as a sure enough preacher would have been. I don't think I was ever ore serious in my life then I was that night while talk to the boys. I do not remember all that I said to them, but I do remember, that I was personal & practical in my talk & pointed out to the boys the mistakes we were making in forsaking our Mother's religion & that we ought to remember our mother's advice & never do any thing that mother would grieve to know. I warned the boys of the danger to us in the habit of drinking, swearing & gambling.

This talk cut deep into my own life & the boys knew & as I had told them in my talk. So I close by saying “Do not do as I do, but do as I have told you.”

There was a spirit of serious followed my sermon. I was serious myself for my talk had up some of the memories of my sainted mother & the scenes of my childhood & I think it did the same thing for others. There was no more fooling & dancing that, but as the hours was late we soon were in our bunks & asleep.

Some of my Ranger mates have heard me preach often since I have been a preacher & they have frequently said to me “the best sermon you ever preached was the one you preached to us boys in camp that Christmas night.”

That night a heavy snow fell & in the morning the ground was covered with more than two inched of snow. But the first I knew of the snow was when some of the boys raised the cover & dash a handful of snow on me as I was sleep in my bunk. Of course this aroused me from my dreams & I was out of bed in a moment & in my night clothes I chased my tormentor up & down the streets in the camp until I caught him & gave him a good rubing in the snow. My, it was cold but I enjoyed the sport.

Mothers Influence

As I have already said my mother died when I was a very small boy, but thank God she lived long enough to impress some lessons on my mind that have been a safe guard to me all the days of my life.

One day I had been over to Ft. Griffin with a number of the boys & in returning to camp in the evening I fell in with Holmes, the man, who a few days later was killed by Jack Singleton, & we rode on together to camp. As I have before said, Holmes was a thief & we all knew it, but was a smooth talker. He told on that ride of some of his life & the troubles he had been in. I did not have much to say. Holmes did most of the talking. Finally he said, "Coley," for that was the name I went by, "I know how we can make lots of money." Then he laid bare his plan for stealing some horses which were held by the Tonkaway Indians camp above the Fort in the river. This Indians had a large herd of horses which no doubt had been stolen from the settlement east of us. "You go over," he said, "& claim that certain horses in the herd were stolen from you & I will swear that the horses are yours, & then we can both take them & sell them."

While laying before me this diabolical plan for stealing the horses, the spirit of my mother seemed to come to me & her hand appeared to again rest on my head again as it did just before her death.

I turned in my saddle & faced Homes & looking him [in] the eyes I said in an angry tone, for I was mad: “Holmes you are a thief. You do not know me, or you would not make such a proposition to me. I would not disgrace my parents by such a dishonorable act for all the horses in Texas.” I thanked God that day for a Christian mother & father & I have cause many times since to thank God for their teaching which was helped mw in temptation & battles of life.

But poor Holmes, his end was near when he must meet God & the record of his life. I have often wondered if he had a Christian mother, & if she knew how he had died. He died at a murders hand. If he had a friend on the world to drop a tear of sorrow on his grave I did not know it.

Going Home

When our term of service expired Company “B” was ordered to Austin & disbanded.

In our march to Austin it rained on us most of the way. We marched the Leon River & found the river past fording. We camped for the night out one mile from the river on what looked like a dry branch. Shortly after midnight a terrific storm came. The rain fell in torrents. I remember that I sat at the root of a tree on my saddle with my blankets wrapped about me for an hour & the rain pour until I was wet to my skin.

Then the creek rose & the water came ~~back~~ out over the banks & our camp was flooded & in the storm we had to move out to higher ground. We went out to a high place in the valley & spread out our blankets on the wet ground & then in our wet clothes turned to get some sleep.

It was warm weather & I soon got warm & fell asleep & I don't think I ever had a sweeter & more refreshing night's sleep in my life.

When I woke in the morning I found I had been sleeping in more than two inches of water, for the water covered the whole valley. It took all day to cross the Leon River. We had to swim our horses in crossing for more than 100 yards & then raft our baggage over on logs. I was in the river all day & I came near losing my life. One of the horses I was taking over turned down the stream & I followed. The current was very swift & carried me under the branches ~~of a tree, The~~ ~~current~~ of a tree as I was swept under the branches my shirt caught on a limb & I could not get my head out of the water & my presence of mind saved my life. I unbuttoned my shirt at front & at my cuffs & then turned my body down the stream & let the current strip me of my shirt. I lost my shirt but saved my life. Some of the boys who saw me go down thought I was lost, & loud were their shouts when they saw me immerge from the water more than 20 feet below the tree. I was out of breath when I came up & God's pure air never smelled so sweet to me as at that moment.

Dead Drunk

Late in the evening we started on the march & soon reach the little town of Hamilton & camp for the night near the town. The Lieutenant out of the goodness of his heart for his men, thought we needed some whiskey, as we were wet to the skin & had been for 24 hours and he bought as much of the fiery stuff as he thought we needed. The canteens were passed around among the boys & all took some.

I took one mouthful swallowed some of it & spit the rest on the ground. It was the meanest whiskey I had ever tasted. To me it was like beyond fire & burned my mouth & throat. It was liquid poison & was composed of chemicals & tobasco juice.

After supper some of us boys walked down to the little town. We were still wet. We chanced to meet a doctor. He said you boys must have some good brandy. You need it boy, come into my office & I will give you some good apple brandy. We went to his office & he gave each of us a glass of brandy. It tasted good to me I drank what he gave me. I never once thought it would make me drunk, but it did. I remember leaving the Doctors office & that is the last thing that I remember until the next day about ten o'clock. The boys however cared for me & my old friend Gilbert Stewart took charge of me & cared for me as if I have been his own brother. When I came to myself I was sick & heartily ashamed of myself. But Gilbert spoke kindly to me & said you will be alright after a while.

At noon we stopped for dinner. A small beef had been killed but I was too sick to fix my dinner & I crawled under a tree & tried to go to sleep But I could not. At last coffee was made & the beef roasted and as I saw Gilbert take the large piece he had roasted from the fire I said to him “Gilbert give me a small piece of your meat.” He looked at me a moment & said, “Coley, don’t you ever ask me for any thing again.” This was like a knife thrust coming as it did from Gilbert. After a moment pause, he added. “But if I ever have anything you want take it.” I could not suppress the tears & Gilbert saw it said, “O don’t do that, but come on and eat a good dinner & you will feel better.”

I am glad that a few years later I had an opportunity to repay, in part at least the kindness shown me by this good & true friend. After we disbanded, Gilbert went to his people who live above Austin. & a year later in some way got into serious trouble & shot a man, but did not kill him. For this act he was sent to the Penitentiary for two years. It was my privilege to help him get a pardon & he came back home & made an honest living as long as I kept up with him. He has before this no doubt, no doubt gone to his long home. I hope he became a Christian & I shall meet him again in heaven. In many ways he proved a friend to me & I shall always thank God that he gave me good advice when I needed it.

The last time I was ever under the influence of strong drink was the day we were mustered out of the Ranger service at Austin. My brother Willie who live just above Austin came to meet me & take me out to his home. We drank some beer as we passed around here & there over the town &

as we were getting read to start out of town brother said lets go in get a glass of wine before we go. This I consented. I did not feel the effects of the beer & I had no thought of that a mild drink like wine would make drunk, but it did. No I did not get down like a hog as I had before but I was feeling the effect of the wine before we reached brother's home & was a pretty lively boy.

I was ashamed for Willie's wife to see me under the influence of drink & I did my best to keep her from finding out.

That night after midnight I awoke & and was perfectly sober, but very thirsty. I went to the water bucket, but found it empty. They used river which was considered the best water to be found.

~~The River was~~ It was about 150 yards to the river, but I was burning up with thirst & must have water. I walked down to the river got down on my hands & knees and drank my fill & then I rolled over in the sand & lay there looking up into heaven & the stars seemed to be looking at me. I thought of my mother & father & of their teachings & I said to my self, "What a fool I am to drink & get drunk this way," & then I vowed that I would never get drunk again & I never have from that night to this time been under the influence of strong drink & never expect to be again. I have never tasted of liquor but a few times since & have not ever used any for medicine but once in forty years. There has never been any of the poison my home. None of my children ever took any alcohol for medicine, & if any of them should ever drink, & none of them do now, they can't say that they learn the taste for it in the home.

No Home to Go To

While I was away with the rangers my father had sold out and moved to Arkansas & I had no home to go to. My sister had married while I was away to Mr. Wm. Lloyd. They live on the old home place. My brother Willie has also married Miss Minerva Nelson & they lived a few miles up the river & I made my home with them.

I soon went to work there in getting out cedar post, pickets, tyes & cord wood & shipped it by raft & boat to Austin. The hardest work I ever did was running a flat boat to Austin & back.

While I was engaged in the work my brother M. B. Lockett who was at this time in the mercantile business at Cedar Mills, Burnet County, sent John Roundtree down to me with a proposition to come & work in his store. After John stated his business, I was standing in water waist deep unloading a raft of cedar post at our landing in Austin. I said, "Alright John, I will go with you." I crawled out of the water, sold my interest in the cedar business & started for Burnet County.

Selling Goods

Arriving at Cedar Mills I went at once to work in the store. I was as "green as a gourd" about the business but I soon learned the business & enjoy the work.

Cedar Mills was only a small trading point. Two stores, grain & mills combined & a blacksmith shop. I boarded with John Davis the blacksmith. He had a son named Phillip about my age. We became chums. He was intelligent & a good smith & very pleasant companion. Old Mrs. Davis was a good motherly old ladie. The old man was a fine smith, but uneducated & rough & profane in his language.

Reproved for swearing

One morning I was opening some boxes of new good with a hammer & in some way mashed my finger with the hammer & then I proceed to curse the hammer, the boxes & the whole business. Just then old man Davis came & he was a very profane swearer. He in the door & listened to my oaths. Then he came in & took his seat near me remarking as he did so, "Well young man I have been swearing for sixty years & I thought I was an expert, but I must say you beat me at the game." Of course I ceased swearing & look at the old man without saying a word.

But this rebuke set me to thinking & during the day I ask myself over & over again. "Do I swear like that old man?" "What is the good in swearing any way?" "Why not quit it?" The habit, I decided, was a useless one, an ugly one & an ungentlemanly one. It does not help any one to swear. It does not in anyway pay to swear & there & then I resolved that I would quit the ugly, visious & wicked habit of swearing, but this I was able fully to do until some months later when I gave my heart & life to God. He helped me to quit it.

My brother, a modle young man & although not a avowed Christian he live a model life for a young man. He did not swear drink and as far as I know had no bad habits & I am sure that at times I must have vexed his righteous soul, but we got along nicely & he gave me a fourth of his profits from the business as my part & it brought me a good salary.

My Conversion

While in the store I went to church somewhere every Sunday, perhaps more for the purpose of being with the girls than to hear the preaching. The Cumberland Presbyterian had their church at Hopewell some five miles from Cedar Mills to the east. The Baptists had their church over on Oatmeal & the Methodist on Bear Creek. I went to all these churches each month & I had a good time. I could not tell anything the preachers said, but I do remember that R. B. Davis a silver tongue orator preached at Oatmeal & Robt. King preach at Bear Creek. They were all good men & I liked them but cared but little for their preaching but I did love to be with the young people & go with the girls & there were a number of fine girls in each of the communities.

Early in the summer I went down to Austin to spend a week in a visit with my brother & sister. While there I attended a meeting up on Bull Creek. I think that a young preacher by the name of Stoaks was doing the preaching. In that meeting I was brought under conviction for sin & I went to the alter several times thinking I could get religion there & then go back home & no one

would ever know it. But how little I knew then about religion & the terms of discipleship in the Kingdom of God. Of course, the Lord would not save me on such conditions.

During the meeting I was taken violently sick & for days was confined to my bed with burning fever. The doctor came, looked very serious said I was a very sick man. I really thought I would die & I knew I was not prepared to die. I prayed to God to spare my life & promised him that I would serve him all my life & he heard my prayers & soon the fever left me & in a week or two I was able to return home & go to work in the store. But alas, I did not pay my vows into the Lord.

The time came in the month of July for the Methodist camp meeting at Bear Creek. Most of the people for mile around attended. But I did not want to go to that meeting, but went instead to Hopewell to have a good time with the girls. When I reach the church there was no one there but Wash Thornton once of my friends. He said, after we had waited some time & no one else came in. "Coley the other boys & girls have all gone to Camp Meeting, & if we want to get with them we will have to go there." We soon agreed to go & road the eight miles across the country reaching the camp ground just before the noon hours. We soon located out set, had a good dinner & I tried to be jolly & funny as usual, but I could not, for my mind on the vow I had made on the sick bed.

At the evening service I found a seat under the arbour. A great crowd was there & Brother King preached & ever word he said seemed to be an arrow aimed at my heart. He call penitents & many went to the "mourners bench," but I went from under the arbour & around nearer the pulpit

& sat down under a tree. I felt that I was a lost sinner & ought to go to the alter & pay my vows unto God But I did not have the courage to go.

When the service closed I went out to my horse & unhitched him & started to mount him & ride home for I felt I must get away from that meeting. ~~Just as I~~ & May Vaughan a young lady friend spoke to me & said “Where are you going?” “I am going home,” I said. “But I want you to stay.” But I insisted that I must go so as to be there in the morning to open the store for brother is away & I have work to do. “Yes,” she replied, but I want you to stay and hear the sermon tonight,” & then she plead, “Please stay for my sake.” Thank God I let her persuade me to stay.

That night when Bor. King called for seekers, I walked down into the alter & bowed at the “Mourners Bench” with more than a score of others & tryed to pray. Then on that Sunday night in July I made up my mind that I would be a Christian no matter what it cost, but I was not saved that night, but I had won a victory over the devil & over my pride. Mary went with out to my horse & asked as she told my goodbye, to come back to the meeting. I will Mary, just as soon as brother gets back from Austin & then I went on home praying all the way.

My brother came in on Tuesday about noon, & when he came in I said, Melville I want to go over to the camp meeting & spend a few days. He must have noted the serious anxious look on my face, & he said alright go & stay just as long as you wish. I went back to the camp ground with my mind made up to find Christ in the pardon of my sins before I left the meeting. I went to

the alter the first opportunity, & for three days & nights I sought the Lord with repentance & tears.

On Friday night I was down in the alter of prayer with the definite purpose of settling the question [that] night. A little Baptist preacher by the name Mullins came to me & stayed with me. He would pray for me & then talk to me. He never left me. He asked me finally to promise him that I would give up everything that might stand in my way. "If you will do this," he said, "Give me your hand." With some hesitation I gave him hand, for there was one sin I felt I could never give up.

I loved to dance & this sin had stood in my way from the first, I had given up other sins one by one until all were out of the way, but dancing. When I gave my hand to the little preacher I cried in dispare unto God for help for I felt that I was a lost sinner as I had never felt it before & it seemed to me that hell itself was open before & I was slipping into.

It must have been at this moment the little preacher "If you give up every thing & will give yourself to the Lord give me your hand." My hand went out to the preacher & my heart went up to God & Jesus in a moment came into my heart.

Like sparks from smelting steel

My sins were all taken away.

I leaped to my feet, hugged the little Baptist preacher & shouted praises to the Lord for saving me. I had a definite experience of God's grace in my heart. I did not want to shout, & had often said "There is nothing in all this shouting." If I ever get religion I will never shout. An incident which occurred at one of my father's meeting when I was a small boy caused me to be prejudiced against shouting & caused me to hate one shouting woman. Father took me with him to one of his meetings. During the meeting I took the chills. These chills came every other day followed by high fever & a severe headache. I took to chill one day at church while Father was preaching & a woman took my head in her lap while my body was stretched out on the bench. After the chill the fever came & it seemed that my little head would burst.

Father warmed in his sermon & the sister who was holding my head in her lap warmed up in spirit & as father reached his climax the people were moved to shout & praise God aloud. The ladie who had charge of me became so interested in the sermon that she forgot all about the little boy's head in her lap & leaped to her feet & joined shouters & of course when she jumped up my head came down with a sickening thud on the hard board bench & it seemed to me would burst open. I yelled & cried but the people thought I was excited by the shouting. IN my little heart I hated that woman & the truth is I never liked a shouting woman after that during my boyhood days. I had alway thought & said "I will never shout," but I did.

Shouts Itself

I was like Sister Raystone of Round Rock was when Dr. Raystone, her husband was converted. She was raised a Presbyterian & did not believe in shouting. But when the doctor was converted she shouted all over the camp ground. She met her pastor Rev. R. B. Davis in rejoicing & the humorously said "Sister Raystone I thought you did not believe in shouting." "I don't," she said, but it just shouts itself."

That was the way it was with me I did not want to shout but when the power of God in cleansing power went through my heart it thrilled my whole being & the praise to God came bursting & rushing out of my heart through my mouth & I shouted long & loud. But why should not people, who are saved from the power of sin & the devil & they know it shout the praises of God. To be saved means something & one know that he is saved & he cannot help rejoicing. If the cup runs over, well, just let it run.

It was long after midnight when the meeting closed that night & there had been a number of conversions & among the number was Freeman Clark of whom I shall speak later.

The next morning I went home & worked in the store. It was all light & joy to me during the morning hour, but a temptation came in the after noon & I was in doubt & under a cloud for a time.

The Temptation

On this Saturday there was a political convention held at Cedar Mills to nominate a representative to the State Legislature. I went to the convention & took a part in it. Trouble came up between the faction & I thought for a time that there would be serious trouble. I was a party to controversy & I confess I lost my temper & was ready for anything that might come up. When it was over, the tempter came & said “You are great Christian aren’t you?” “You haven’t got religion” & I was in awful gloom. I went out above the store & got down under a cedar tree & tried to pray, but the tempter followed me & I found no relief.

The next morning, I was in great doubt & fear about my conversion, but I was up & off to the camp meeting at an early hour.

Joined the Church

In spite of my doubts & fears I resolved that I would join the church by the help of God strive to live a Christian even if I had to live in doubt all through my life. I knew that I had been saved for I had the evidence of the spirit & felt it would be cowardly to give up in the first conflict.

I had been raised by & had always been associated with the Methodist. My mother had been a Methodist. At that time I was ignorant by churches & their doctrines & [] & when Brother King opened the doors of the church I was among the many who joined. I had already been baptised for my mother had dedicated me to God in baptism when I was a child.

I Remember My Baptism

I was baptised at a camp meeting near Center Point, Ark when I was quite small by a preacher for whom I was named. I remember the circumstances well. My mother had dressed me up for the occasion in a nice little velvet suit. I was proud of it. I stood in the stream nearly up to my knees in the Alter by the side of my mother. The preacher stood before us & talked some to mother & prayed & then stood & with one hand on my hand & poured water over my head from a pitcher which he held in the other hand. The water ran down & off my head down on my new suit & I thought my new coat was ruined. I looked up at the preacher & said “What did you pour water on my new coat for?”

Years after this preacher spent a night with me when I was pastor at Liberty Hill & he told me many things about my mother & her work as a Christian that I never knew before. He well remembered what I had said to him about my coat when I was baptised.

Victory Gained

When the meeting closed Sunday night I was still in doubt. I stood near the pulpit as the congregation was dispersing. I felt that I could not leave the camp ground in doubt about my conversion. I went down in to the alter & got down at the place where I had been saved & I prayed that Lord to give me the evidence of my conversion, & after a long season of prayer such an overpowering of the Holy Spirit came upon that I was for a time as a dead man. My friends were with me & hey were singing & praying over me but I did not need their prayers then for I was filled & thrilled with the power of the divine power & when my tongue was loosen I sang & shouted praise to Almighty God until the night was far spent.

I had promised the Lord if he would give me the evidence of my salvation again, two things (1) that I would never doubt my conversion again & I never have. (2) That I would do anything he wanted me to do. This I have not always done for I have neglected my duties in the years of the past, but I have tried to serve Him from that day to this.

Call to Preach

The first time I felt the call to preach was early Monday morning after the Sunday referred to above. It was just before day. I did not go to bed that night at all. I was sitting all alone at the root of an old like Oak tree which stood just behind the pulpit. Think of the past & the future & the

thought came to me as one speaking from the skies, “You promised me that you would do anything if I would give you the evidence of your conversion. You must go & preach. Will you do it?”

I was astounded. I felt that I could never preach. I knew what a preachers life meant for my father was a preacher. It meant poverty & privation. Then I was ignorant and could never preach. For months I was troubled & yet the voice within me was calling “Come follow me.” This call was finally settled when I said “Lord I will go anywhere & do anything. My life I give to thee.” O what joy & peace came to me when this consecration was made.

A Prayer Meeting Started

Freeman Clark, of whom mention has already been made, he was converted the same night I was. We were ever afterward good friends & were fellow workers for about one year.

At the camp meeting when we were converted, on the last Sunday a “love feast” as it was called then, but really an experience or testimony meeting was held. Many testified, Freeman & I were sitting together & both felt that we ought to speak, but did not. When the service closed we locked arms & without speaking a word, walked off down the creek & crawled into a quiet place where we were hid from the crowd on the camp ground, by some friendly [] Here confess to each other [] of our failure to speak in the meeting U& with hands joined promised each other

that we would always be witnesses for Jesus whenever wherever we had an opportunity to do. Then we prayed together & felt much refreshed & returned to the camp. One day sometime later, as Freeman & I were going home from church in Oatmeal we decided that we would start a prayer meeting at that place & that we would never fail to be there if we were able to get there. This we did two weeks later & kept it up until the next spring. The prayer, which increased in intensity & attendance week after week until the house would be crowded each prayer meeting night, was a great blessing to me & I am sure it was to all who attended. Many persons were converted during the fall & winter. In the prayer meeting I did my first public work as a Christian & the Lord blessed me in it.

In Doubt About My Baptism

I was baptised when a child & I always was satisfied with my baptism & while I did not know anything about the subject of baptism yet I was sure that my sainted mother * my father had some good reason for having me baptised in infancy. The oatmeal community was composed largely of Baptist & Campbellites & about all that I heard for several months about baptism. They told me that there was no authority in the Bible for infant baptism & that I had never been baptised.

A Baptist preacher who preached in the church on Oatmeal seemed to take a great interest in me. He would always call on me to pray in his meetings & frequently on Sundays call on me to conclude the services for him, even when there were preachers present. He always wanted me to

go with him to dinner & then he would talk to me about baptism. He said “I know you are a Christian but it is your duty to follow the “Lord in Baptism.” He talked against infant baptism & said it was a stick of popery. Then he would urge me to join the Baptist church & let him “bury me in baptism” &c &c I had confidence in him.

One day I said him as we were riding together, “My father & mother must have had some good reason for having me baptised when I was an infant. While I am ignorant & do not know their reasons for what they did, yet I must study and find out if I can why they had me baptised before I repudiate what they did for me in good faith. Now I will tell you what I will do, I have heard from you & others your side of this question & I am going to Austin & buy me some good book on the other side, My father’s side & read them & if I find that you are right & they are wrong then I will join the Baptist church, otherwise I will remain when I am.

His reply was this is not the thing for you to do at all. “The Baptist church is the only true church, the others are only societies organized by men & there is only one baptism an that is Believers Baptism which is the immersion of the body in water by a Baptist preacher.” So you come on join the Baptist Church & obey the Lord’s command to follow Him in Baptism.

“You may be right,” I replied but I am going to study the question for myself.”

I like the baptist people & their views on the atonement & if it had not been for repudiating my father work in having me baptised when an infant I suppose that I would have joined the baptist

church without an investigation. But I thank God all these years that I took time to investigate for my self.

Old Brother Roundtree a good old Baptist with whom I have boarded when in school, said, “Coley I am sorry you bought those books for know I know that you will never be a Baptist. You ought to have gone on & joined our church & we would have sent you to Baylor & made a great Baptist preacher.”

I noticed after I would not rush into the Baptist Church without an investigation that Brother Talley never called on me any more to close his services. I now understand that this was one of his prospecting schemes.

The Old Gin

At this time there were some other candidates for the ministry & we organized a school for the prophets. In this school Louis Chamberlain, Sam Vaughn, Levi Collins & myself. We had fitted up some rooms in an old gin house which belonged to Louis Chamberlain’s father. These rooms were not fitted in modern style, but they were comfortable. For more than months we studied together. We had no teacher but we helped each other all we could. While in the old gin I was trying to settle the question of baptism & was carefully studying the book I had bought on this subject, & then I took the Bible & studied all that is said in it on the subject, but still I was

undecided. I had heard so much about going down into the water & coming up from it from the Baptist & Campbellites that I was inclined to immersion.

Preachers often dropped into see us. One day old Brother McDaniel come. He said to me, “Coley I have brought you a little book to read & if you will take time read I am sure it will settle the question of baptism for you.”

I took the book & promised him that I would read it. UP to this time in my investigation I had read every book with a bias in favor of immersion & against infant baptism. In the evening after Bro. McD brought the book I took it up & began to read. On the very first page a statement like this was made, Baptism is a mortal word & alway meant to dip. I put the book down on my desk & took up my Bible to see if this statement was true. In searching the Bible I found (1) that the mountains around Jerusalem were baptised with the dews from heaven, (2) that baptism of the Holy Spirit was “pour out” (3) that people were alway baptized with water. Then I reasoned with my self. This statement that the word baptize alway “means to dip” could not be true & that if a man started out with a false premise he was sure to reach a false conclusion. Then I fell on my knees & asked God to help me settle this question. From that moment I read & studied to get the truth & not to prove that immersion was right. I read Bro. McDaniel’s book through & the more I read the more my eyes were opened to the falicies & unscrupulous arguments of the immersists. With my eyes open it did not take me long to get the truth on this subject.

I gave the book back to Bro. Mc & said to him “I thank you for giving that book. It had forever settled that question & I can never be a Baptist.”

My First Sermon

I was not license to preach & have my letter from the Methodist Church in my pocket. But I had been holding prayer meetings around the neighborhood & exercising in public as occasion demanded. One night after prayer meeting Bro. John Jennings said, “Coley when you preach your first sermon I want you to preach it in my house.” In those days few churches & frequently preached in private houses.

“Alright Bro. Jennings I will do it.” I replied, then added, “you can announce that I will preach at your house next Thursday week.”

I went away from the prayer meeting feeling I had made a great mistake. “You are not a preacher & have no right to preach & you don’t preach” were some of the thoughts which passed through my mind as I went back home. But the appointment was made & I felt it would be cowardly to back down.

I had two weeks to prepare for this the most important & [] event of my life. Every day & hour my mind was on the appointment & I study hard & late on my first sermon. I knew nothing about

homolies & but little about the Bible. I selected a text “You are the salt of the earth” & I studied hard to get something to say to the people. The devil tempted & tried me much during these two weeks. “You are no preacher, you can’t preach, you are too ignorant to preach, you are not called to preach. You do the cause of Christ more harm than good. The people will make fun of your ignorance.” These and a thousand other discouraging thoughts came to me. Sometime I was tempted to give it up & call off the appointment. Then I would try to comfort myself with the hope that only a few of my friends would come out to hear me & I would just give them a short talk & turn the meeting into a prayer meeting.

The day came, I could do nothing but think & pray over the meeting. Just about dusk I road up to Brother Jennings place. He lived in a two room log house. When I saw the wagons, buggies & horses hitched around the place & the great crowd of people who seemed to fill the yard my heart almost fainted within me & I felt that I could not preach to that great company, but the good Lord gave me grace & I walked through the crowd & into the house. Soon after I stood at the door where I could see those in the house & those in the hall & then after song & prayer I preached my first sermon to one of the most attentive & appreciative audiences I have ever tried to preach to.

At first I was very much embarrass & with fear & trembling I proceeded with my discourse. I gained confidence & the Lord gave me utterance & the power of his Spirit. While I do not remember a word I said yet I do know that the Lord was with me, & that night as I was alone in my room there came waves of glory flooding my soul & I was the happiest boy in Burnet

County. My friends friends said I did well. Mrs. Dawson who was like a mother to me & whose house was my home came to me after the sermon, patted me on the back & said “Good boy, you did well tonight & I am proud of you.” These kind words were like apples of gold in pictures of silver to my soul, coming as they did from one of the best friends I ever had in my life.

After this I had many invitations to preach but it was sometime later before I tried preach again. My second sermon was delivered at Hopewell. Here a large crowd came out to hear the boy preacher. It was now summer time & the camp meetings were being held. I put in all the summer in these meetings & preach often, but generally at 1:00 p.m. I found out that this is a very hard hour to preach at a camp meeting, for just after dinner an full & some get sleepy, & it takes a good preacher to keep the people awake at that hour.

My First Meeting

Uncle Benny Jones one of the elders in the Hopewell church asked me to go with him down to Austin to attend a camp meeting on Bull Creek, as that was my old home I readily consented to go with him.

We made the trip on horseback. It was 50 miles ride. We reached the camp ground late on Friday evening. A number of campers were at the ground. The camp ground was located on Colorado river at the mouth of Bull Creek. It was a high point of ground overlooking the river on the south

& the creek on the east with mountains to the north & west. It was an ideal place for a camp meeting with cool shades, good water & cool breezes. I had no thought of preaching in this meeting. I had only tried to preach three times, & indeed was not licensed to preach at the time. But the preacher who was to hold the meeting had not arrived & there was no other preacher there, so Bro. Nelson came to me just before night & said, "Coley I guess you will have to try and preach for us tonight." I replied "Alright Bro. Nelson I will do the best I can." For I made up my mind that I would always try to do what I was asked to do in Christian work & it had always been my rule to preach when invited to do so!

At the appointed hour the people gathered under harbour & after singing & prayer I preached one of the three sermons I had in stock at that time. We had a good interest & there was one conversion at the first service.

Of course we all expected the preacher in the morning in time for the morning service, but he did not come & about one hour before preaching time Bro. Nelson, who was acting as the bishop of the meeting came to me & said "Coley, you will have to preach for us this morning for the preacher had not come." Again I tried to preach & we had a good service.

During the afternoon many other campers came & pitched their tents for the meeting & by the time for the night service the camp ground was swarming with people, but no preacher came. So for the third time Bro. Nelson said, "Coley you will have to try it again." I said, "Alright but Bro. Nelson I only have one more sermon."

A large audience was present & the Lord blessed in preaching & there were three conversions. It was a glorious service. I felt that I had finished my work as for as preaching was concerned, for I had preached the best sermon I had & there was no more meal in the barrel, besides we all felt sure that pastor would come or send a preacher Sunday morning. But alas, for me he did not come.

Sunday morning at 9:00 o'clock I conducted a prayer & song service and during the recess which followed before time for preaching, Bro. Nelson came to again & said, "Coley, the preacher has not come we not heard from him & we have decided to turn the meeting over to you." "Bro. Nelson, I am not a preacher & I have no experience in holding meeting besides I have preached already all that I know. But if you were to go out to the stand & hold a prayer meeting & pray for the Lord to help me I will take charge & do the best I can."

He went to the arbour & I went off down in a deep ravine to pray.

I got down on my knees with my Bible open before me & I prayed. "O Lord God, I am a poor ignorant boy. Thou has called me to preach & I have consecrated my life & am willing to do what thou wouldst have me do. Now Lord I have been called on to hold this meeting. I do not know how to run a meeting & I do not know how to preach. Lord help a poor ignorant boy. Help me to direct the meeting & lead the people & Lord help me to preach. It is all a failure without they help & guidance. I must preach to the great congregation this morning. I have no text no sermon & no preparation, but though are mighty & all wise & can do great things even through a

lad like me. Let me be the lad with the small fishes. From the very little I have you can feed the multitudes.”

I prayed long & earnestly & then the “Lo I am with you” was whispered into my soul. Without getting up from my knees I took up the open Bible & closed it. Opened it again at Rev. 3 & read down to 20th verse. This was the text I use that morning. I do not now remember any part of the sermon, but I know that the Lord was with me & preached through me. The Holy Spirit was manifestly present. The altar was crowded with penitents & a number save at that service.

In the Meeting Thirteen Day

For 13 day this meeting went on increasing in power & influence until thee whole community was brought under its influence. We held 4 services a each day – 9 a.m. Prayer meeting, 11 a.m. sermon, 3 p.m. Prayer & praise service, 7:30 p.m. preaching. I held every preaching service except two & most of the afternoon services. But I was then young & strong & did not know what it was to get tired by the good work. From early morning until midnight I worked!

All But One Converted

I do not know how many were converted in the meeting for I have never counted converts. I have always left that for the Lord to do as He never makes any mistakes in the count, but I do

know that every man, woman & child in the community who attended the meeting singularly except one professed conversion in the meeting.

My Brother Willie's Conversion

My brother Willie lived in this community. Before leaving home I had prayed for my brother in this meeting, & the Lord had given me the earnest that my prayers had been answered. But when I reached the camp ground my brother was not there but was in Austin attending to some business & would not, his wife informed me, return for several days. Monday after the first Sunday of the meeting I moved Brothers wife & children onto the campground & took charge of the camp. I did this to help answer my prayers for my brother for I was certain if his wife was camped on the ground, that brother would come to the meeting when he came & found his family gone, which he did. I preached on all week & prayed for Willie but he never moved in any way.

On Monday morning of the 2nd week I was sitting out alone on a log near harbour. Willie came out & took a seat by me. I turned to him & said, "Willie I have about made up my mind to close the meeting tonight." "You must not do that Coley," he replied.

"I had hoped & prayed that you would be converted in this my first meeting, but it seems that I have hoped & prayed in vain & I feel like closing the meeting & going home."

Then Willie, for the first time, showed that he was interested when he said “You must not close the meeting for I want to seek salvation.” My heart leaped with joy at these words & I said “Willie I will stay & hold this meeting until you are saved.”

He came to the altar that morning but was not saved until Tuesday night. It rained Tuesday evening & we had to hold the service in the school house at night. The house was packed with people. Every inch of floor space was used all the seats were filled & people stood in all parts of the building, & some stood outside in the rain. I sat in a chair near the door with people packed all about me.

Just before I open the service Willie came in & I gave him my chair. The power of the Holy Spirit filled the house. In all my ministry I have never felt the Spirit’s presence & power in preaching more than I did that night & the whole audience was under his influence. When I closed the sermon I said we have no altar place & there is no room in this house only for individual altars. All who want salvation tonight just kneel down at your seats & pray. All the unsaved in the house bowed.

My brother went down on his knees & prayed. I was at work in all parts of the house, souls were saved & the shouts of victory went up from a majority of the people & the mountains round about Bull Creek were vocal with the songs & shouts of the redeemed. I turned to go to my

brother, & I saw him slowly rising from his knees & I thought that he had become disgusted with the noise & was going to leave the house.

He arose to his feet & stretched himself to his full height & left his hands high above his head & opened his mouth & shouted “Glory to God” & then he joined the shouters. I left the house at midnight & went to my tent for some rest but the meeting went all night. As I was going out of the house that night Old Aunt Peggy Veneables said, “Thank God we have got more than we expected to look for.” The next night I closed the meeting. It was in many respects the best meeting I ever held. My father had held several camp meetings at this place.

Teach My First School

After the close of the camp meeting at Bull Creek many of the people urged me to take the school at that place. This was before the days of our public free school system. When the people made up the school & offered it to me I accepted. I think it was September 1st that we opened the school. I had a friend to teach for three months only. This I did & then went prepared to go into the active work of the ministry.

A Season of Trials

I have never doubted my conversion “I know in whom I have believed,” & I know better than I know anything else that I was saved through the riches of his grace. But about eight months after my conversion I was sorely tried & tempted by the devil, & for months I had to walk by faith & not by sight. It was like passing through a dark tunnel, but occasionally I could see the light, but most of the time it was all darkness. The devil tempted me often to give up the fight, but thank God, my head was fixed & I pressed on. Often I said in my prayers like Job, “Though thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee.” I fought it out & over came the devil & the Lord brought me out into a “Large place.” Praise his name.

Join the Conference

After my school was out I joined the Quarterly Conference & was licensed to preach by Dr. Wm Brush who was one of the best friends I ever had in the ministry. The Austin Conference of the M. E. Church met in December 1873 in the city of Austin. Bishop Bowman presided. I joined this conference & was appointed to the Jollyville Circuit.

Married in 1873

Soon after I joined the Conference I went to Burnet County & was married to Miss Elisabeth Ruth Kincheloe on Dec 30, 1873. Rev. E. McDaniel officiating. The wedding took place at the bride's father's home, L. C. Kincheloe. For forty years we have journey together side by side sharing each others joy & sorrow. As a result of this union there have been born to us eleven children as follow: Lewis Melville, an unnamed daughter dying only 3 days old, Ada May, Charles Edmon, Hudson Coleman, Annie Kate, Lillie Ruth, John Harper, Minnie Jewel, Libbie Maud & Clinton DeWitt. Annie Kate lived to be grown & marries & died five years ago. Nine of these children are living. Harper & DeWitt the two youngest boys are unmarried. Only DeWitt with us now.

On My First Circuit

My first circuit was really a mission circuit embracing Bull Creek, Jollyville, Sandy & Pond Springs churches lying in Travis & Williamson Counties. These were small churches with a poor membership. Besides these churches I had a number of weekday appointments. There was not a church house on the charge. Services were held in school houses, in private homes & under bush arbours. My work on this circuit was reasonably successful. I had good meeting with all the churches, & the churches were increased in numbers & spiritual power.

My Father Returns to Texas

It was during the year 1874 that my father returned from Arkansas. While I was in the Ranger Service he had sold out his home near Austin & returned to Arkansas. While in Arkansas he had united with the Cumberland Presbyterian Church & came to Texas as a delegate to the General Assembly which met in Jefferson, Texas. After the Assembly he came on to Austin to see us.

I met him at Jollyville, where we held a meeting together. I had not seen him for four years. When he left Texas I was out on the frontier in the service of the State. I was not a Christian then but on his return I was a preacher. Father was overjoyed to find me a Christian & a preacher & I was filled with joy & gladness to be with my father again & hear him preach again. We had a great meeting together at Jollyville.

He soon moved his family to Texas & for several years were we associated in Revival meeting. During these years we held many successful meeting in Travis, Williamson & Burnet counties.

A Colporteur

After two years on the Jollyville circuit I was employed by the American Tract Society as Colporteur. I had finished my course & was ordained a deacon in the Austin Conference, & held a nominal appointment from the Conference while I was on the Tract work. For two years I held

this position working in Burnet & Williamson counties. During this time I visited almost every family in these counties & held meetings in many places.

This was a delightful work for me & a worked that was greatly needed in these frontier counties. The people were destitute of all religious literature & many were without Bibles. I could fill a volume with interesting incidents connected with my work as a colporteur, but I find that I must be brief in these notes, for my life has been a busy one, & I will not be able to give in these notes more than an outline of my forty years work in the ministry.

Kerrville Circuit

In 1877 I was appointed to the Kerrville Circuit where I spent three years. This was a frontier county then & Indians often made raids into it. The first year I lived on Spring Creek in Gillespie County. In the fall I went to Dallas & attended the Annual Conference. Here I was ordained an Elder by Bishop E. O. Havins. I was appointed & served as statistical secretary for the Conference.

At this conference I was reappointed to the Kerrville Circuit & moved to the town of Kerrville. In the fall of 1879 in company with George Clark & C. S. Knot I move across the country from Austin to Denison, Texas. It was a long drive but we had a good time on the trip & we a splendid session of the Austin Conference. This was the last conference I ever attended.

I Was Not a Methodist

I had joined the Methodist Church because my parents were members of that Church. At that time I was ignorant of the doctrinal differences of the churches. I only knew that I loved God & wanted to work for him & without a thought as to doctrine I went into the Methodist Church. But as I studied the Conference Course with my Bible I was by degrees forced to feel that I was not in harmony with the doctrines & polity of the Church. I would have joined the C. P. Church when I was ordained a deacon, but I felt that I ought to finish my Conference course & be ordained an Elder before I made the change.

My Objection to Methodism

1 – I did not believe in the polity of the Church. The Episcopacy of the church was so foreign to the teachings of the Bible I felt I was doing wrong to give my endorsement to it. I long searched the scriptures to find authority for the Episcopacy but the more I studies the more I was convinced there was not place in the New Testament Church for a Bishop. And now, after years of careful study, I am profoundly impressed that there is no Bible authority for any form of church government but the Presbyterian, which is a government by the Elders.

2 – I tried hard to believe the doctrine of Arminianism taught by Methodist, but the more I heard it preach & the more I studied on the light of revealed truth the more I was convinced that Arminianism was without scriptural authority. There are three system of the atonement taught. Calvinism & Arminianism occupy the extreme. I believe neither. Calvinism says man salvation was settled by the divine decrees before the foundation of the world. That election took place in the mind of God before the world was. To me this is a horrible doctrine which makes God responsible for man's sin & damnation. Arminianism teaches that man's salvation depend of works & that a man is not elected to eternal life until after death. This doctrine makes nothing sense & to me had nothing in it to encourage man. What is called the "Medium Theology" which put a man's election at the time he trust in Jesus for salvation had alway suited me. A posible salvation to all me & a sure salvation to believers is in harmony with the teaching of Jesus Christ & gives great comfort to believers. This is Cumberland Presbyterianism & this is the reason I am a C.P.

My Work at Kerrville

I enjoy the work at Kerrville. I was busy there. The town was full of consumptives. I visited the sick daily. I think my association with consumptives caused me to loose my voice. This was in the spring of 1879. I had o give up my work & moved back to Burnet County. Went to work on the farm. My voice improved, & in the summer I assisted in some camp meetings.

Join the Little River Presbytery

I had worked from the time of my conversion with the Cumberland Presbyterians. I liked their preachers & people. I studied their confession of faith & I fully endorsed its teachings both in doctrine & polity & before leaving Kerrville I had made up my mind to cast my lot with the C. P.

The Presbytery met this summer in San Saba County at Shoal Creek. To reach the place we had to travel across the country in wagons & hacks. It was a long trip but we had a good time. There were about 20 of us in the company. We camped out at nights.

The Presbytery was held in connection with a camp meeting. When we arrived the campers were on the ground & they gave us a warm welcome. As I now remember the following preachers were members: S. M. Davis, W. R. Buschman, R. B. Davis, ~~Louis Tucker~~ John Hudson, D. C. DeWitt, J. W. Pearson, John Stinnet, Y. T. Blanton, Rev Ish, J. R. Hodges, Rev. Hodges, J. M. Moon & possible some others.

“Buck & Coley”

When the Presbytery closed the campers wanted to continue the meeting & Rev. B E. Bowmer & I agreed to remain & preach for them This was my first camp meeting as a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher & it was a wonderful meeting in many respects.

It was hear when just my name was coupled with Bro. Bowmer's .I think it was Bro. George Campbell an elder who was camped on the ground who first called us "Buck & Coley." No matter who started it somehow our names, lives & work have been coupled together from that time to this day. It was said then "you make a good team" & it has been said hundreds of times since.

The church at Rock Shoals & the community as well had had trouble in the past & money of the people hated each other. We continued the meeting with but little results for two or three days. It was evident that there was something wrong somewhere. In preacher Bowmer & I proved around trying to locate the trouble. It was a Thursday morning at the prayer meeting one of the elders got up & said "There is something wrong with us. We have troubles in our church & we must settle these troubles before we can expect the Lord to bless us. I am a party to this troubles. Now I propose that we bury the hatchet & go to work in the meeting." Then he asked all who were willing to do this to come into the alter & shake hands. All came except the one this elder had been at outs with. He did not move. This only made permanent the old trouble with out healing it. But the spirit of the Lord was at work among the people & by the night service these troubles in the church were all adjusted & the power of God was manifested in the salvation of 18 souls. The meeting closed on Thursday night & "Buck & Coley" left for other appointments.

An Amusing Incident

One afternoon during the above meeting, Bowmer & I wanted to rest & we asked old Brother Glass, a Methodist class leader to conduct the services. After meeting started I felt impelled to go down to the arbour. So I left Bowmer to finish nap & I walked down to the arbour. Just as I took my seat near the pulpit the leader said, “Brother Henderson you are one of the oldest men here & we would like to hear from you.” Henderson replies , “I have nothing against anyone here except Bro. Poe & I have nothing against him.”

Again the leader insisted that Bro. Henderson should say something & Henderson made the same reply & then he turned to Bro. Poe who was sitting on the same seat & brought up some old trouble of years ago.

At this junction I stepped out into the Alter & call to prayer. At the same time Bro. Henderson said “Brother Poe & I will go out alone & settle our trouble.”

During the prayer I could here the two men walking in a loud voice, & I noticed a number of people leaving the arbour & running in the direction of noise. When the prayer was closed the whole audience rush out to meet the two old men who were coming out of the brush. I also rush out to meet them for I supposed they were going to fight. I got between & put my arms around their necks. They were angry and still talking in loud voices. I said to them as soon as I could

make then hear me. “Brethren, what is all trouble about?” They both started in at the same time to tell me. They told the same story & ended with the statement, “But it was all settled years ago.”

At the request of his daughter I led old Brother Henderson off to his wagon. On the way I said, “Bro. Henderson you old brethren ought to be ashamed of your selves getting up all this excitement over something you both say was settled years ago.” “Yes, said he with energy, but they kill old Henderson’s dog.” “That may be true, but you could get another dog,” I replied. “Yes, but they stole old Henderson’s cattle.” “That is also true, but old Henderson has plenty more,” I said. “Yes, he said, but they would kill old Henderson.” “Suppose they should, I replied, they would cheat you out of only a few days or years of time, & besides if they should kill you you would only get to heaven sooner.” “Yes, but when they do I will get some of them.”

Brother Henderson was very old & excitable, but really a splendid man, well known & loved by most of the people & Brother Poe had nothing against him as he told me later. His daughter wanted to get him off home & she soon had in the wagon. As he told me good bye he left a \$5.00 bill in my hand with a god bless you & we parted to meet no more in this world.

My first Pastorate

A Colporteur

While on the Jollyville Circuit I became acquainted with Rev. George Whitford, the superintendent of the Am. T. Society for Texas. He was a very fine Christian man, and at his suggestion & with the consent of my P.E. I became a Colporteur of the Am. T. Society. I worked at this first U last about two years. But all this time also kept up the work on my circuit. I think I did some good while in the Tract work. I preached four & five times each week & left tracts & books in thousands of home in Travis, Williamson, Burnet, Llano & Mason counties. I was complimented for my work by the Society.

Negro Hung

It was while working for the Society that I made a loop into Karnes County. My brother-in-law, John Chamberlain, lived near Hellena & it was partly to visit him & family & partly to do some special work for the Society took me to that county. My wife & little boy went with me on this trip. We traveled in a hack & camped out at night. The weather was good & we had a very nice trip. I spent about one month in the county & had fairly good success.

I had an appointment at Hellena on the Sunday before I left the county. My brother-in-law lived out about three miles from the town & on Sunday morning we road over in the hack to Hellena.

It was a beautiful spring morning. All nature seemed to be in harmony. We were enjoy the morning drive.

When in about one mile from the town we saw a company of about 20 men standing around a mesquite tree about 100 yards from the road to our right. Chamberland said, "I think a negro was hanged out her last night. Lets go out & see." We drove out to the men & found a negro hanging to a mesquite limb. The limb of the tree was so low that the dead man's feet touched the ground. His neck had been broken & it was stretched out a foot long. To me it was the most horrible sight I had ever seen. I had never seen any man hung not one hanging before & I never want to see one again.

The men who surrounded the negro had no part in the hanging, but they were a rough set & I was glad to move on. As a ghost the dead negro went before me. I could see a vision of him at every turn.

We reached the church & I went in & took my seat by a window. I could think of nothing & see nothing but the swinging negroe. I felt in that condition I could not preach. I left the church & walked out among the chaparell & tried to pray, but still the ghost of the negro was there. I walked back to the church with the black image before me. But when I slipped into the pulpit the horrible image left me & I preach with good liberty.

No, No, I never want to see anyone white or black hanging again. I think I would run from such a sight.

My First Pastorate

After I joined the Presbytery I spent the time in meetings for six months. At the Winter Session I took charge of some churches in Lampasas County. One on Lampasas River & one on Simms Creek.

Built First Church House in Pres.

When I joined the C. P. Church there was not a Church house within the bounds of the Little River Presbytery. Old Bother Miller who lived out on Sims Creek said on my first visit, “We must build a church house this year.” “All right,” I replied, “We will do it” & we did.

It was a neat frame church & cost more than \$1000.00. Bro. Miller furnished of the money. Bro. Miller was the first tither I had ever had in any of my churches. He was a great & good man. The Church was complete in the spring of 1881 & summer meeting of the Presbytery met with the congregation & the first C. P. church house ever built in the Little River Pres. was dedicated. If I remember correctly Rev. John Hudson preached the dedicatory sermon.

Presbyterial Missionary

At this meeting I appointed Presbyterial Missionary, & directed to work in the Town of Lampasas. I went to Lampasas, found a few C. P.'s & after about one month organized a C. P. Church with 20 members.

As I saw it, the first thing to do was to a church house. The day following the organization a building committee was appointed & I started out to raise funds for church building. In one year we completed a \$2500.00 building & the church had increased to more than 50 members.

An Incident

There lived in Lampasas at the time I went there an old C. P. & his wife. They were good people but the two sometimes had spats & sometimes fights. This was known to every one in the city & most of those who went into organization thought it would be best for these parties not to come into the church at organization. I went around & had a talk with the old brother & suggested to him that it might be best for the cause for he & his wife not to come on at the time of the organization. He was a good man & loved his church.

He said in reply, "I am sure you are right. Mother & I hade not lived right & it will be best for us to stay out for the present." He was present when I organized the Church but did not come into

the organization. The next day he gave me \$100 for the new church & before its completion put \$300 into it. After the church was dedicated he & his wife were received into the church. I had not moved my family to Lampasas but lived on my little farm near Bertram in Burnet County.

An Accident

Just about the time the for the laying of the cornerstone of the Church I was at home & one day my horse ran away & threw me out of the buggy. I fell across the wheel of the buggy & broke a rib. My head struck the hard road & my mind became a blank. I did not know anything. It was more than a month before I could get out to my work again. I have never fully recovered from that fall.

Sunday School Missionary

After one year in the work at Lampasas I resigned to take a position with the Am. S. S. Union as missionary for West Texas. In the beginning of this work I was associated with Rev. Geo. O. Bachman whom I received later into the C. P. Church from the Christian Church & later had the pleasure of baptising all his children.

For eighteen months I served as S. S. Missionary. My territory covered all of southwest Texas. Wm. Saunders of Austin supported me in this work. My salary was \$700.00 as year & expenses

the first year & \$800.00 the second year. The addition \$100.00 was paid by R. M. Castleman of Austin. I enjoyed this work & expected to make it my life's work, but certain conditions in the work in the Presbytery seemed to call for my services.

I went to the meeting of the Presbytery which was held in Lampasas County on Lucy's creek happy in the results of my S. S. work. At the Presbytery it developed that there was a division in the Lampasas church about employing a preacher. One faction wanted Pearson & the other faction wanted Stennett & both factions went before the Pres. Board of Missions & urged these claims. The contention was sharp & the Board could not harmonize them. When it was seen that neither of the factions could get their man appointed both factions said to the board there is one man in the Pres. we can all unite on & that is Brother Lockett.

The members of the Board came to me & asked me if I would under any condition accept the work at Lampasas & I replied, "No, Brethren, I would not give up my S. S. work to take any church in the denomination."

But the committee urged, "You are the only man who can unite our forces at Lampasas & you owe something to the church."

"Yes," I said, "I owe a great deal to the church, but I feel like I am in the line of work where the Lord wants me, I have had splendid success in this line of work & I think it is my duty to continue in it. Besides this, there are several other preachers in the Presbytery who are

unemployed, why not let some of them take the place, for I cannot take it.” Thus the matter ended for a time.

But on Saturday evening I was sitting in my buggy preparing to preach that night & old Brother W. A. Davis, one of the best men I ever knew, came & took as seat in the buggy with me & asked, “Brother Lockett, don’t you believe in election.” “Yes in some kind of election,” I replied. “Well,” said he, “I have come to tell you that you are elected to go to Lampasas.” And then he urged me to reconsider & take the work.

This I finally consented to do, provided the Society would willingly agree for me to do so. After one month the society agreed to put another man in my territory & let me take the mission of the Church.

Presbyterian Missionary

With reluctance I severed my connection with the Am. S. S. Union. I enjoyed the work & the Lord blessed me in it. I was commended by the Society for my work. Rev. A. B. Norrell took my place in the field & has done a good work in western Texas, perhaps more than I could have done. We move to Lampasas & continued there for two years. The membership doubled while I was there.

Back to Burnet County

I resigned at Lampasas in the summer & moved back to my little farm in Burnet County. Shortly after this I was thrown from my buggy & sustained injuries from which I was confined to my bed for several weeks.

During the time of my affliction my brother M. B. Lockett came over & spent the day with me & he persuaded me to take a place with him in business.

Behind the Counter

As soon as I was able we moved to Bertram & I went to work in the store & for one year I sold goods. During this time I preached almost every Sunday. But I was not satisfied but longed to be out in my life work again. I felt that God has called me to preach & not to sell goods, so after six months one day I said to my brother, "Melville I must go back to the pastorate. You will have to look out for another man for when my time is out. I am going back to my work as a preacher."

He urged me to stay with him, said I ought to make some money as my family was growing. He said, "You will starve if you preach to any of the churches in this country."

Brother Converted

About close of my contract with brother, I secured Rev. Jno. R. Nelson, then pastor of Methodist Church in Burnet, to hold a meeting for us in Bertram.

This was a great meeting & continued for over three weeks. My brother was among the first converts. He had already been a model man morally, almost every one thought he was a Christian even before his conversion. But religion made him a better & happier man. The meeting resulted in the conversion of 145 persons.

Back to the Pastorate

Before my time was out in the store I went to Hopewell, Mt. Zion & Shady Grove Churches & asked them to let me become their pastor. I had been preaching for these churches on Sundays while in the store. I took these churches without the promise of a stipulated salary & at the close of the Bertram meeting I took charge of the above named churches.

Hopewell Camp Meeting

The Hopewell Church was one of the oldest C. P. Churches in the country. It was their custom to hold an annual camp meeting each summer. These meetings were largely attended, people coming for mile around & camping & general resulted in many conversions.

The church had been without a regular pastor for some time & was not spiritually alive at the time I took church. My first appointment came at the time for the camp meeting. When I reached the church I found a large number of campers on the ground & our first service was well attended.

After taking in the situation & studying my people I definitely decided on two things:

1. I would do all the preaching in the meeting. The custom had been to preach every preacher who came on the ground. I had an object to accomplish in the meeting. I knew I could not accomplish this object & let every preach preach.

2. We had a membership in the church of about 150. There was only one man in the church who would pray in public & the church had never been train to work. My design & purpose in this meeting was to lead the people out to do some personal work.

I knew I had a hard task before me, but with faith in God I went about my work. The meeting continued for ten days. A number of preachers came in first & last but I went on doing the preaching. One old preacher came in alone at the first of the meeting. I bade him welcome, but state to him my purpose to do the preaching. Asked him to feel at home with us & help all he

could in other ways but he became offended & left the meeting. I was glad then that I had not invited him to preach.

The old pastor Rev. R. B. Davis came in & spent a few days with us. He was a great preacher, but I stated to him my purpose, & he agreed with me that I was right & he went to work to help me accomplish my purpose. However, when he got well in the spirit of the meeting I did have him preach & he did it well & effectively too.

Many good meetings have been killed by preaching the right man at the wrong time. As a result of this meeting, at its close the church was at work, some ten of the members were praying in public. There had been some thirty conversions & most of them had joined the church.

During this year I held successful meetings at Shady Grove & Mt. Zion, received one hundred into the church. I married more people that year than in any year of my ministry, & received more money for my services than I could have made in business.

The Helper Started

In the year 1886 I bought a letter hand press & started a little paper for my pastorate. About the first of the year Rev. D. C. DeWitt, then pastor at Daville joined me in the paper. So the paper was slightly enlarged and at his suggestion was named "Our Church Helper," & for about a year

was run in the interest of our pastorates. In the fall of 1888 the paper was moved to Liberty Hill & again enlarged & published semi-monthly. From the first the little paper made friends & its circulation had gone into many parts of the state. No special effort had been made to extend the circulation of the paper, but the subscription had grown to 1000.

A joint stock company was formed at Liberty Hill & a small printing plant was bought & I was elected editor & manager of a local paper which we called the "Liberty Hill Cyclone." (I think the paper is still running.)

In the year 1890 the Church Helper was moved to Hutto, enlarged to an to five column quarto & published week. Rev. J. W. Pearson was made a partner & remained with the paper one year. It is enough to say that first & last I was connected with the Helper for twelve years.

~~After selling the Helper~~

I served the Hutto church for about five years. The church there I organized & it grew to be the largest congregation in the town.

I resigned the pastorate at Hutto & was appointed Superintendent of Missions in Texas by the Synod, which position I held for two years. At the same time I edited the Texas Church Helper which had been moved from Hutto to Fort Worth.

In 1898 I sold the Helper, gave up the general missionary work & became Presbyterian Missionary for the Corsicana Presbytery locating in Blooming Grove. In one year the mission in at Blooming Grove became self-sustaining & I served in that pastorate for three years more. While at B. G. I started the Watchman a local newspaper which met with a liberal support & I sold it out for a good profit.

I then bought the Helper & moved to Waxahachie where I run it one year & sold it to Miss Willa Davis. The paper did not pay & I had a hard time with the various partners & was glad to get out.

I then went to Whitney where I lived for seven years & served the Whitney Pastorates one of the best I ever served.

The Union Question

While at Whitney the Union Question came up to disturb all the church. My church were all against the merger scheme & so was I. I was called from my pastorate to go out to save the church from being swallowed up by the Northern Pres. While I could write volumes about the fight I made against this unholy movement, yet I shall dismiss the subject with only a few lines.

1. The union leader in our church worked secretly & the people knew nothing of their unholy purpose until they were ready to launch the union movement.
2. Then they went before the people claiming that spontaneity of the movement proved that it was from the Lord.
3. It did not take me long to the downfall of the men behind the merger scheme.
- 4.

Dear Children:

Another year with its joys & sorrows with its sunshine & shadows & with its good & its fast is now coming to its close.

As we all stand on this hilltop of time when we can retrospect the past & introspect the future I feel like writing to you, my children, this letter Christmas greeting to let you know that you live in our hearts & minds.

1. Let me say, I am proud of my boys & girls. To me they are the best boys & girls in the world & they are a great comfort to me. In the years of long ago it kept me hustling to feed & clothe you all but that I am getting old they are paying back with compound interest all I ever did for them.

2. The year which is now closing had been a very pleasant to me. Indeed all of the years of my life have been happy ones to me. It is time I have been sick this year but sickness is most cases is a blessing.

The following, taken from a typewritten “Autobiography of Samuel Coleman Lockett,” contains a fuller description of Lockett’s Ranger service in 1870. From the evidence we have uncovered it seems as if the handwritten ledger transcribed above served as notes for the typewritten autobiography which often contains more detailed accounts of the story told above, although in a few cases much less detail is given in the later version. As far as possible Mr. Lockett’s spelling, grammar and punctuation have been retained.

Section II

Chapter I

Some Incidents in My Experience as a Texas Ranger

The Texas legislature, I think it was in 1869, provided for putting a force of Rangers in the field for the protection of the frontier from the raids of the Comanche Indians. I made up my mind to

go. My father advised against it. He wanted me to continue in school. But I had made up my mind to go and I did go over the protest of my father. While in many respects I gained much by my experience in the service of the state, yet, I am now convinced that it would have been better for me to have taken father's advice and continued in school, but like many foolish boys, I thought I knew better than my father, and so I went to Austin and enlisted as a Texas Ranger.

Join Company "B"

Company "B" was made up by Capt. A. H. Cox, of Burnet County, and as I was acquainted with the boys in this company, I joined Company "B."

We were mustered into the service on September 8, 1870, and a few days later left Austin, going via Waco and Weatherford to Ft. Griffin on the Clear Fork of the Brazos River where we remained for a month or more.

Our company was composed of boys a few years older than I. There were only four or five men in our company over forty years of age. Among this number were Dr. Odom, the company's physician, Lieutenant Cox and Gilbert Stewart. I mention these men now as I shall have occasion to mention them again in these notes.

Most of the boys in Company “B” were from the best families of Burnet County. Some of them had been my schoolmates. With exception of only three or four, we had no really tough characters in our company, and these I shall speak of later.

It would take several volumes should I undertake to give in detail all of our wanderings and all of the interesting happenings and incidents which occurred while I was out as a Texas Ranger, but I will mention some things in this connection which will interest those who may chance to read these notes.

Brave Boys

I think it is safe to say that most of our boys were brave and could be trusted to stand on the firing line at any time or in anyplace. I never heard of but one of our boys flinching when tried. He was discharged in a few months and returned home.

The captain, in making out his discharge, made the following note, “A good reliable soldier, but rather inclined to fear wolves.” This was absolutely true. If he was out at night and heard wolves howling, he would break for the camp and run as fast as he could until he was in the camp. I believe that he would rather have met a bunch of yelling Comanches than to have come up with a wolf. He ought never to have gone out as a Ranger.

A Notorious Thief

We had but one notorious thief in our company and he was not ashamed of it, but rather gloried in his ability to steal and never be caught. The captain had picked him up in Austin and he was a stranger to every one in the company. He was a brave, fearless fellow and kind hearted, but he was a thief. He would not steal from our boys, but he would steal something every time he went to town. He was killed in cold blood by Jack Singleton. Later I will give the incident of his murder.

A Lively Time at Weatherford

The state furnished us pickled pork for our meat. This, the captain sold and with the money bought beef for his men. He gave orders to the officers on duty each day, to go out and kill a beef, taking the mark and brand of the animal killed. The mark and brand was turned over to the captain and he was supposed to pay the owner for the beef. Whether he did so, or not, I cannot say. Some of the boys said he did not pay for all the beeves that were killed, but put the money in his own pocket. This may have been done. I have no proof that he did. Anyway, it was the duty of the men on duty each day, but the order of the captain, to kill beeves as they were needed. This reminds me of a very exciting time we had at Weatherford on our way out to Ft. Griffin. This grew out of a series of incidents which I will now mention.

(1) At that time but few, if any, of our boys had ever seen a woman wearing a Mother Hubbard dress. I never had, and I am sure that little Jim Odom, who figures in this incident, never had. Jimmie was the youngest boy in our company. He was liked by every one. As we marched down the street on the north side of Weatherford, a woman came out of the house and marched out on the sidewalk facing our company dressed in a snow white Mother Hubbard dress. She looked to me like she was dressed for bed and not for a street walk. Jimmie saw her. He had never before seen a woman on the streets dressed in that kind of garb, and he was amazed at the sight. Just like a thoughtless boy he said just as the woman passed up the walk not thirty feet from us, "I think that woman ought to put on her clothes before she comes out on the street." It is true that he ought not to have made this remark, but he did it, and the woman was very much offended and rushed on up the street as mad as a hornet, saying as she went, "I will inform my husband of this public insult," which I suppose she did as after developments proved.

(2) We camped for the night out about three miles west of Weatherford. It was early in the afternoon when we camped. I was on duty that day and the sergeant took me and another boy with him and went out to kill a beef as we were under orders to do. There were a great many fat cattle on the range, and we did not have to go far, nor hunt long for a fat beef. The sergeant killed it not over one mile from camp, and we proceeded to dress it. While we were skinning the beef, a nice looking gentleman rode up and spoke to us in a very kind way. His appearance showed him to be a stock man. He dismounted and came and helped us dress the beef. He said: "Boys, I have more than a thousand on this range. This may be one of mine we are dressing, but it is all right if it is, for the presence of the Rangers on this frontier will be worth more to me than all the cattle

you may eat.” The sergeant replied: “We are soldiers and under orders for the captain to do what we are doing. I have the mark and band of this beef, and if you will go down to camp, the captain will pay you for it if it is your beef.” Here the officer produced the mark and brand, but the stock man would not look at the paper, but said, “That is all right, boys, if this is my beef, you are more than welcome to it.” he helped us dress the beef and put it on our pack mule and bade us good-day.

On the way to camp an old man came dashing up to us on horseback. Jerking his horse to a standstill in front of the sergeant who was in the lead of our detail, he said in a very angry tone of voice, “What are you doing here killing my cattle.” He was very mad and profane. The sergeant in a very gentlemanly way explained our action to him and said, “I have the mark and brand of the beef we killed, and if it is your property, if you will return with us to camp, the captain will pay you for it.” This seemed to make the man more furious and he cursed and swore like a cyclone. This aroused the fire of our officer, who was an expert at swearing himself, and he cursed the man in no gentle terms and soon convinced him that the best thing for him to do would be to “pull his freight,” which he did in short but rapid order. As it afterwards was proven, the beef was not his, but belonged to the man who helped up dress it.

One of Our Boys Arrested

(3) When we reported this incident to the company, the boys were furious. I was on duty that night and the horses were picketed out on the prairie. It was my duty while on guard to make a circuit around the camp and horses every twenty minutes. The boys had built a log fire on the west line of the camp and I had to pass this fire each round I made. On one of the rounds as I was leaving the fire, I saw one of our boys coming in a run towards the camp and heard him say to the boys at the fire, "That old man (meaning the old man we had had trouble with about the beef) had one of our boys under arrest." As I walked away from the fire on my regular rounds, I saw the boys go for their guns and heard thirty or more guns clicking and saw the boys rushing up the path leading to the old man's house. Three of our boys had slipped out of camp and had gone into the old man's cornfield. They did not go after corn, for we had plenty in camp. I never did know just what took them into the old man's field, but they were there, and one of them had been arrested. The boys in the field were not armed, but the old man had a dangerous looking shotgun. So he had no trouble in arresting one of the boys and putting the other, who came into camp and reported one of the boys arrested, to flight.

Our boys armed with their guns met the old man with his prisoner about half-way from his house to our camp. They commanded him to halt and told him they would take charge of his prisoner and him too. The boy who had been under arrest, joined the others and then marched the old man back to his house and commanded him not to leave it again that night. I did not see them go or

come in while I was on guard, but I know that some of them did go out and come and that they brought some nice potatoes in with them, for they gave roast beef and roasted potatoes more than once as I passed the fire on my rounds. Of course, this was all wrong and our boys should not have molested the old man's potatoes, but the old man was himself responsible for it. He had unnecessarily made the boys mad, and they were ready for almost anything to worry him.

(4) Holmes, our notorious thief, in passing through Weatherford had stolen a hat and some clothing for which he was severely reprimanded by the captain, but he kept the clothing and hat and wore them. In this, I then thought and now know that the captain did not do the right thing. The goods should have been returned to the owner and Holmes should have been punished. However, it was the general opinion among the boys that for some cause the captain was afraid of Holmes.

We Face a Civil Officer

Early the next morning we saw the old man and two officers from Weatherford come riding into camp. We had fully expected this and were not at all surprised when they came. The officers had had a private talk with the captain. Soon the bugle called us into line facing the officers and the captain. The roll was called and every man was present. The captain then turned to the officer and said: "Here are all of my men. You will pick out the one you want." The officers said to the old man, "Pick out the men you want us to arrest." The old man seemed very much confused and

relied to the officer, "Sir, I cannot tell one from another." "Well," said the officer, "Surely you do not expect me to arrest all of this company of men when you cannot identify anyone who you say you caught in your field last night." This ended the matter as far as the officers and the old man were concerned, but the captain stepped out and made a little talk to the men who had been trespassing. Among other things he said, "If I could find out the guilty one, I would fine him \$100.00." But this was all buncombe, for the captain had no power to fine anyone and he knew it, but his talk served the purpose, and we were soon on the march. But the boys had it in for the old man who had caused the trouble, and as we marched out we had to pass around his garden, and some of the boys who were experts with the rope would rope cabbage heads and drag them up the road. This was pure and unadulterated meanness on the part of the boys, and I took no part in it. The cabbages were wasted and the act of destroying them could in no way profit the boys, except to gratify their spleen against the old man. These same boys would have given their lives in defense of the life or property of any man who would half-way treat them right.

We Reach Ft. Griffin

After being on the road for several weeks, we reached Ft. Griffin without any serious mishap. We camped in the valley just across the river from old Ft. Griffin which stood on a high hill south of the Clear Fork of the Brazos River. The river was up and we had to bring our supplies across the river from the fort in a raft. The weather was fair and warm and we had a good time resting here for over a week under the shadows of the old fort. After about a week, we moved

our camp out on a creek some three miles from the fort where we remained until we were ordered to Stebensville which I think was about one month. There was some scouting done, but most of the time was spent in camp or hunting for game. We had some good deer hunters in our company and they generally kept us well supplied with venison. While I hunted some and occasionally shot a deer, yet I never killed a deer while I was in service, and the fact is I never killed a deer in all my life that I know of.

Holmes Killed By Singleton

On the morning we left this camp for Stebensville, a cowardly murder was committed which I will never forget. While I had seen men killed before, yet this was the first time I had ever seen man murdered in cold blood.

Holmes, to whom reference had already been made, was mess mate to Jack Singleton. They were bed fellows and they usually rode side by side when we were marching. Holmes was a thief, but a brave fearless man. Singleton was a coward, with an overbearing disposition. He and Holmes had had numerous spats on their way our and Singleton had cursed Holmes. Just before we reached Ft. Griffin, Singleton had cursed Holmes for the third time. When he quieted down, Holmes said to him: "Jack, this is the third time you have cursed me, but it is the last time I will stand it. The next time you curse me I will whip you, so don't try it again."

After this they seemed to get along very well until two days before we were to move camp, when some dispute came up between them and Jack having forgotten Homes' warning, proceeded to curse Holmes again and then Holmes proceeded to give Jack a good thrashing. In this conflict, Singleton never tried to defend himself, but took his beating like a cowardly cur. he had his pistol on at the time, and there might have been some little excuse for him if he had shot Holmes at the time of the difficulty. But he was too much of a coward to shoot Holmes while facing him. He waited two nights and days and then like the coward he was, he slipped to Holmes' back while he was eating his breakfast. Our mess joined them on the west and I had just finished eating and walked to the fire when I heard the sharp report of a gun, and turning, saw Holmes leap to his feet and Jack doing the same thing behind him. Holmes ran toward our mess for a few jumps and then turned toward the tree where his gun was hanging. Just as he turned, I could see Jack who was not twenty steps away from me with his gun pointed towards our mess and he fired again. At the crack of the gun poor Holmes dropped dead in his tracks. As Homes leaped to his feet at the first shot he said, "Oh, Jack!" When the last shot was fired and as he was falling, said "God---damn you Jack." I have heard these awful words since that day. When Holmes fell and was dead, the cowardly murderer stood over his lifeless body and fired two more shots, but they did not hit the body. Both shots passed through his left hand which held a knife and a biscuit which he was eating at the time he was killed.

As the time of this murder, we had our horses saddled and most of the goods packed for our trip to Stevensville. This delayed our departure until in the afternoon. There was intense excitement among the boys. Some of them proposed hanging Singleton to a mesquite tree. If Holmes had

one friend in the company to lead the crowd, I believe he would have been hung on the spot. But Holmes had no personal friends in the company.

We dug his grave under a mesquite tree and in it placed the body of Holmes with his saddle, gun, blanket and clothing and covered them up with dirt and turned away with sad hearts.

It is sad to die anywhere, but it is especially so to be murdered and buried in a coffinless grave in a strange land, without a friend to shed a tear over the lonely grave.

But Jack Singleton

But do you ask, what became of the murderer? Of course, he was dismissed from the service and turned over to the civil authorities. He was on trial and acquitted because none of the witnesses who saw the crime committed were ever called to swear. Why this was the case, I do not know, but it was hinted many times that the captain wanted Holmes killed and that he helped Singleton out of it. I do not know that there was any real foundation for this suspicion, yet, it remains to be explained why the witnesses who saw the killing were not summons to be at the trial of Singleton.

I happened to be on duty that day and had to guard Singleton that night. He whimpered and cried all night. He was the most miserable man I ever saw. He had murdered a man in cold blood and

in the most cowardly way. In a way that a man with any degree of self-respect would have been ashamed of. If Singleton had conscience it would have troubled him because of the heinousness of his crime, but I think he was troubled more over the penalty of the law which threatened him than over the awful crime he had committed. He had heard many of the boys say in the morning that he ought to be hung. He escaped the hangman's knot by some means, but his life was wrecked by his cowardly deed. In the night I asked him why he had killed Holmes in that cowardly way, and his reply was, "I was afraid of him." This was partly true, but there was another reason. I think he had heard the boys talk about the just flogging Holmes had given him and he was sore over this and wanted revenge. He got it, but at what cost? By this crime he lost the respect of every man in the company and was told to his face by some of the boys that he was a cowardly dog. Then he had to go through life with the mark of a murderer on him. I have met Jack several times since the deed was committed and he could never look me in the eyes. He has been a failure at everything he ever undertook. He must have had a miserable life, and no doubt he has seen visions of his murdered victim and heard the bitter condemnation of the dying man many times. I would rather be poor and in want all my life than to have such bitter memories haunting me by day and night through life. No man has the right to take the life of his fellow.

In Winter Quarters

On reaching Stevensville, a camp was selected about five miles south of the town on the road to Dublin. It was an ideal camping place with plenty of good pure water, splendid grass and plenty

of timber for building our winter quarters and for firewood. As soon as we were on the ground, we commenced building quarters for ourselves and horses. This was done by cutting small post oak trees and splitting them in halves. These were set as picket in the ground and then covered with logs, grass and dirt. A chimney was built in one end of each camp out of sticks and mud, and then the cracks were daubed with mud to keep out the wind. These houses which were built in regular order on either side of a broad street with the officers quarters at the head of the street, proved to be very comfortable for us during the winter. We had but little to do during the winter months except to go occasionally as guard with the District Court, as the Indians did but little damage in the cold winter months. Some details were sent out to capture fugitives from justice, but with it all we had plenty of idle time. This time was spent by some in hunting, but I was not much of a hunter and so had to look to other things for my fun.

Made Rails and Cut Poles

I have all my life wanted to be doing something, even when I was a boy I wanted something to do. I do not remember to have ever been out of a job. If I could not get one thing to do, I would find another. If I could not get high wages, I would work for low wages. I have worked many days at fifty cents a day and thought I was doing well. I always thought it was better to be doing something than to do nothing.

So during the winter when I was not on duty, I would go out and make rails and chop poles for the ranchmen. I would ride out in the morning four or five miles and make a dollar and fifty cents and get back to camp before night. I enjoyed the work and the money I made I used for the little expenses I had. The captain was always willing for me to go out and work. All the money I spent while in the service I made in this way. At this time the state was in debt and we did not receive a cent for the state while we were out, and the little money I earned by making rails helped me out wonderfully. It was a fortunate thing for me that the state did not pay me until we were out of the service, because it made me study economy, and then if I had received my pay monthly, I might have spent it foolishly and it was better to receive the money all in a "pile."

Lieutenant Cox

Lieutenant Cox, although of the same name, was in no way related to Captain Cox. He was a model man and a splendid officer. He was past forty years old. He did not drink, gamble nor swear. He was not officious and never boasted, but was as brave as a lion. He was true to every trust and lived an upright life. As far as I know, we did not have a religious man in our company, but Lieutenant Cox lived like one. He seemed to think a great deal of me and often called me his boy and he was free to advise me in all things as my father would have done. His advice kept me from many snares and pitfalls. I went with him on every scout, whether it was after Indians or white desperadoes. I always rode by his side when we were on the march and was beside him when danger was near. I went with him several times after criminals when we all

knew there was danger ahead. On these occasions it took all the courage I had to go with him into a house at night after a criminal, but when the first word was spoken, all fears seemed to leave me and I would have followed him into the very jaws of death. I owe much to this brave officer. He was my friend and I shall never forget him. I have lost sight of him. I suppose he is dead.

Gilbert Stewart

Gilbert Stewart was another good and true friend I had in the company. He was also above forty years old. He was raised in Travis County, but had been a wanderer over the world for many years. He said that he had “Gone all the gaits,” and had traveled all over the United States in early life. Often he would entertain me for hours by telling me of his ups and downs in his wanderings. He was regarded the best informed man in the company and for this reason he was called “Old Congress Head” by the boys. He always settled our disputes. What Gilbert said, was taken as the truth. He was a man of noble impulses. His advice to me was always good and he was free to advise me to shun evil.

He Advised Me Not to Play at Cards

I have never gambled in my life, but after we located our winter quarters, I did play a few games of cards, but not enough to know the game or to learn the names and value of the cards. Gilbert

saw me playing one night, and in a few days we were out on duty together, and stopping on the hillside to let our horses rest and graze for a while and to rest ourselves under the shade of a tree, we talked about many things. Finally Gilbert turned to me and said: "Coley, I saw you playing cards with the boys the other night. Card playing ruined me and it will ruin you if you keep it up." Then he told me his experience as a gambler, how the habit had grown on him, from an innocent game of cards until he became a professional gambler in the State of California. Then he added, "My boy, you had better give up cards while you can, for it will grow on you until it becomes a passion with you." After he had finished, I turned to him and said, "Gilbert, I will never play another game of cards." He shook me by the hand and said, "That is a good resolution. Always keep it and you will make a man," I am glad to say that I have never played at cards from that day to this. I took the old gambler's advice, and now after all of these years I am mighty glad that I did so. I have often been tempted to play a social game, "just for fun," but my promise to Gilbert had been sacredly kept and I am now too old to ever begin the evil habit of card playing. If I could speak to all of the boys in the wide, wide world, I would give them the same advice that "Old Congress Head" Stewart gave me when I was a boy. "Don't play cards."

Cotton Picking and a Dance

A farmer who lived near our camp had much sickness during the fall and winter and was not able to gather his cotton which was wasting in the field. Our boys liked this farmer, for he had often been at our camp and some of the boys had been at his home. His cotton field was white and it

was evident that if it was not gathered before the bad weather set in, he would lose most of his crop. Some of the boys suggested that we all go down and pick the crop out. This proposition met with general approval. The captain agreed that we all might go and give the man one day's work, Some of the boys went down and talked it all over with the farmer, and he agreed if we would come and give him a day's picking, that he would give an old-fashioned dinner and an all night dance at his house.

The day came for the cotton picking and all of our company except the detail for the day and a few to keep camp, about forty in all, marched down to the farmer's cotton field, staked out horses out on the prairie and at once made an attack on that field of cotton. The neighboring women and girls also come to help prepare the dinner, some to help pick cotton – in those days women worked in the field. The start was made, and from that moment until we finished in the afternoon there was something doing in that cotton field. The gathered cotton which was put in heaps in the field continued to grow as the hours went by. Some of our boys were splendid cotton pickers, while other, like myself, could not pick much, but we all did our very best and at noon hour most of the cotton had been picked.

At the noon hour dinner was served. It was a magnificent dinner. Our boys who had for four months been living on camp fare, did appreciate this good old-fashioned country dinner and they showed it by the amount they consumed. After dinner which consumed more than one hour, we again marshaled out men and made the second attack on the cotton patch. The battle that followed was short but fierce, and complete victory was won over King Cotton in a two hour's

engagement. With shouts of victory, we retired to the house singing, “We’ll not go home ‘til morning.”

True to his promise, the farmer gave us a dance that night. There were a number of nice girls and women who joined us in the dance. It was a treat to our boys to be in the company of ladies again, for many of us had not spoken to a lady since we entered the service. Some of us at first, did not feel at ease in the ballroom in our coarse Ranger clothes, but the embarrassment soon passed away and we felt very much at home with the ladies. It must be understood that the Texas frontier ladies did not dress in the styles of this day and times, but they were all neatly dressed and could dance to perfection.

It was understood that the dance was for the Ranger’s exclusively. The ladies had said that they would not dance with any but the Ranger boys that night, and they did not. However, late in the night a number of boys and men came out from Stevensville. I think they must have been drinking, for they were very noisy and at times acted as if they wanted to end the party. The man of the house went to them and requested them to be quiet and not to disturb the party. But this only seemed to make the town boys worse. Then our lieutenant went out to them and quieted them in short order. I do not know what he said to them, but I do know that in less than five minutes they were gone and did not return that night. The dance continued all night and in the early morning we all returned to camp and were present at roll call. Thus ended the first and only social recreation I had while in the service. Do you ask, “Did I dance?” Yes, the best I could. I

loved to dance when I was a boy and continued to dance until I became a Christian. “Is it wrong to dance?” you may ask. I think that dancing is not only sinful, but very dangerous for girls.

An Indian in Camp

In the spring of 1871, some Comanche Indians had made a raid into Burnet and Lampasas Counties. They had stolen many horses from the settlers in both of these counties and were making their way out with them when they were overtaken by citizens down near the Lampasas River. A battle followed. The Indians were defeated and several Indians killed. Among the number was a squaw who was mortally wounded and hid in the brakes. Her husband knowing she had been shot, but was not dead, returned to her and remained with her until she died. In the fight he had lost his bow and arrows. his pistol was useless as he was without amunition. He started to go to his tribe, but when he reached Dublin he was almost starved. He went to a farmhouse and rushed into the kitchen where he found food and he went to eating without saying anything to anyone. As if happened, the man of the house was away from home, and his wife was out about the place and did not see the Indian enter the house. Some small children were about the house and they thought that the Indian was an old Negro woman who lived in the community. They ran to their mother and told her the Negro was in the house eating. The mother went into the house and to her amazement in place of the Negro woman, she found a wild Indian standing at the cupboard helping himself to all of the food in sight. He paid no attention to the woman who became frightened and gave the alarm. The Indian was arrested, and word was sent

over to our camp. The captain and two of the boys went over to Dublin and brought the Indian to our camp. We kept the Indian in our camp for several days and finally turned him over to Lieutenant Bean of the U. S. Army, and he was taken to Ft. Griffin. While we had him in our camp he never once spoke to anyone but the captain. To him he would talk freely, but not a word would he speak to anyone else. One night I had to guard him and I tried in every way to get him to talk to me, but he not so much as grunt when I would punch him with my gun. He slept wrapped in a blanket, coiled up like a dog and never once moved all of the time I was on guard. His devotion to his wife and the sacrifice he made for her had gained for him a degree of respect from all of the boys.

Christmas in Camp

The Christmastide of 1870, I spent in camp. Old Santa did not come. But we had a very good time all the same and celebrated the occasion in various ways. One thing, the ice was thick and we had lots of fun on the ice. The lieutenant, out of the goodness of his heart, sent over to Stevensville and bought some whiskey and treated the boys. I did not take but one drink, but the others took man and got drunk. This caused one boy to get a good beating in a drunken row. Then we had music and what was called a “Stag Dance.” That is a dance with only men.

One Death in the Camp

While we were in the service there was only one death from natural cause. This was a man by the name of Goodlet. I think he came from Burnet County. He was a weakly man, but a splendid fellow. From some exposure he took pneumonia and died after a few days illness. I think he was buried in Stebensville, but am not sure, as I was out on duty at the time of his death. It was a sad day in our camp when he died, for all of the boys liked Goodlet. Holmes was killed by Singleton. These were the only two we lost by death during our term of service. One man deserted and has never been heard from as far as I know. Only a few were discharged, so most of the men who entered the service were mustered out of the service at the same time.

On the Scout

Early in the spring of 1871, the Indians made many raids into the settlement along the frontier, and we were kept quite busy chasing them out of our territory. Word came to us about the first of April that the Indians had raided the country east of us. Two scouts of fifteen men each were sent out, one to the north and the other to the west to try and head off the Indians on their return to the northwest. One of he scouts went north to Palo Pinto County and the other went west to the head of the Clear Fork of the Brazos River. It was my good fortune to go with Lieutenant Cox to the west. Both scouts started at the same time. Jimmie Odom, who was with the scouts going north,

called to me as we marched out of camp and said, "Coley, if you kill an Indian, be sure and bring me his scalp and if I kill one, I will bring you a scalp." "All right," I answered back.

It was the aim of our lieutenant to get in ahead of the Indians. With this purpose in view, we traveled very fast for the first three days, then we felt sure that we were ahead of the Indians if they should come to the west, and so we were in no hurry, but took our time and watched for them. We learned later that the Indians had gone north, but this we could not know then, but continued west until we reached Mountain Pass on the headwater of the Clear Fork of the Brazos River. It was a long trip and we had some exciting experiences on the way, both going and coming.

Many Buffaloes to be Seen

The first real live buffalo I ever saw was on this trip. There were thousands of them to be seen. As this was in the early spring, the buffaloes were very poor and it was only occasionally that we found one fat enough to eat. Our supply of amunition was limited and we were more than 200 miles from the settlements and in danger of running into the Indians any day. Our lieutenant wisely ordered us not to waste amunition on any kind of game except when he gave permission for us to do so. But for this order, I am sure that we would have wasted most of our amunition on the buffaloes.

Lieutenant Cox gave us all privilege to take part in killing a buffalo on our return trip to camp. Usually one was killed each day for food, but most of them were so poor, the meat was not good. I remember one day one of the boys roped a yearling buffalo and two of them brought it into camp alive. We had great sport with it. It was held by two ropes and, of course, could not reach the boys who held the ropes. Some of the more venturesome would go out to tease the yearling, and when it would turn to fight the boys, those holding the ropes would give it rope and it would go rushing after the teasers and several times it ran over to them much to the amusement of the crowd. Some tried to ride the yearling, but it did not take them long to find out that it was easier to ride a bucking bronco than it was to ride a yearling buffalo.

A Buffalo Chases Albert

One day we came to a large herd of buffalo. In the herd was one very large bull, the largest I think I ever saw. The lieutenant gave his permission for four of the boys to kill the bull. The four boys dismounted and advanced on foot some fifty yard towards the bull. They had to do this in order to get a good shot. At the crack of the guns the bull dropped in his tracks and we all thought he was dead. The boys who did the shooting rushed up to the beast, but when they were in a few yards of the body, the buffalo, to their great surprise, leaped to its feet and started after them in a mad rush. Three of the boys stepped to one side, but Albert Jennings made a bee line for his horse which was held by the other scouts. With the mad bull just behind him, and but for the fact that the boys who had stepped aside as the bull came at them, shot him again as he

passed them, the bull would no doubt have caught Albert, for he was right at his heels when he was shot.

In Want of Water

This was a dry country and but little water was to be found anywhere. Fortunately, we had all filled our canteens in the morning and this water lasted us until dinner time. But we made our start after dinner with empty canteens and our poor horses had had no water since morning. Before night both men and horses were longing for water. Late in the afternoon we came in sight of a beautiful lake of water. We all rushed down to the lake, and leaping from our horses we were all down on our hands and knees to slake our thirst. But alas, it was a lake of salt water, and one swallow was more than anyone of us wanted. The little we did swallow only intensified our thirst. We left the lake in disgust and turned towards the south to a range of mountains, but still found no water. It was decided to camp for the night and send out some of the boys into the mountains to seek water. The horses would not eat the grass and the men could not eat their food without water. Water was desired above everything else. We waited long for the return of our boys from the mountains. Hours passed and still we waited.

This was the first and only time in my life when I suffered for the want of water. I had read about others who had died of thirst, but I did not know anything about real thirst until that night.

It must have been after midnight when we heard the boys coming. They did not leave us long in doubt as to the success of their hunt for water, for their shouts and laughter told us they had found water. They came running into camp with the best water I ever drank. In the morning we all moved out to the mountain spring and rested for one day.

After the rest which we all enjoyed, we again started out and the following day reached Mountain Pass. This was a U. S. fort at that time between Ft. Griffin and Concho. There were only about fifteen soldiers at Mountain Pass, but they gave us a warm welcome and we spent a few days with them before starting back to our camp. The hunters in our scout killed some game and we fared sumptuously while at Mountain Pass.

On Our Way Back We Shoot at a Man

We started out from Mountain Pass early one morning on our way back to camp in Erath County. In the afternoon of the first day some of the boys asked the lieutenant for permission to go into the mountains and hunt for game. This request was granted and all of the boys except four went out on the hunt. Four of us remained with the lieutenant. It was understood that we were all to come together at night at a certain point down the mountain range. Late in the evening as we were nearing the place agreed on as a camping place, a man crossed our path just as fast as his horse could run. We could not tell whether the man was an Indian or a white man. If he was an Indian we wanted to get him, and if he was a white man the chances were that he was a fugitive

from justice, and if he was a fugitive we wanted him. Headed by our lieutenant, we dashed off after him. He was commanded to halt, but he only went the faster. Then came the order to fire and we all fired at the fleeing man, but did not follow home as it was almost dark and we did not know but what he was as Indian and was trying to lead us into ambush. This was the first and only time I ever fired a gun at a man. I am sure we did not hit the man. I congratulate myself that in all of my life I never shed human blood. We were then in the Indian's country and had to be careful, so we went to the place where we were to meet our other boys. They were not there. We built a fire and left a note directing the boys where to meet us the next day and warning them to watch for Indians. We then turned to the north and found us a camp some four miles from the river. This change in course was made to throw the Indians off our trail if they should be following us.

Other Scouts Has a Fight With Indians

The day after we reached camp, the scout which had gone to the north returned. They had a fight with the Indians over in Palo Pinto County and killed five Indians. In coming through Stevensville with the spoils of the battle, the people of the town gave them a great ovation and some mighty bad whiskey. Some of the boys were feeling it too, when they came at full speed into camp. They were yelling like a band of Indians, and the cheering of the boys in camp made some noise in our camp that day.

This scout struck the trail of the Indians a few days after they left camp and followed it until they overtook the Indians in the northern part of Palo Pinto County. The Indians had many horses and could not travel as fast as our boys. The fight which followed was a running fight. While the Indians outnumbered our boys two to one, yet they fled before our brave boys. Our boys gave chase and the fight spread over several miles.

A White Boy Killed

In this fight a boy who was supposed to be an Indian was killed. As the time he was killed, the Rangers were chasing the Indians down a hill. The boy had either been thrown from his horse, or had dismounted with the hope of surrendering. He was behind the loose horses and seemed to be driving them. Two of our boys who were running and firing side by side, fired at the boy, putting two balls through his body on the right side within two inches of each other. He fell at the crack of the guns and the boys pressed on in the fight. The boy was scalped with the other Indians and then it was discovered that the boy was a white boy. The boys said that when they shot, he was crying, "Comanch, Comanch," but we were all sure he was saying, "No Comanch." However, he was large and his hair was long and of course he was painted. It is probable that he had been stolen when a small child and raised by the Indians. The boys who killed him often said, "We wish we had taken him a prisoner, for he might have been a Texas boy captured when a child."

In this fight our boys captured some fifty horses which the Indians had stolen from the settlers east of us. Among other spoils of this battle were blankets, saddles, bows and arrows, shields, and other Indian trinkets.

Bill Morrison's Bravery

Bill Morrison was called a coward in camp. No one could insult him or make him fight, for he was not a fighting man. He was not considered bright. We all thought that Bill would run in the first fight. But in this we had all been thinking wrong. When the showdown came old Bill was "Johnnie on the spot," and led the boys in the fight. He was riding a fine horse and he rushed into the fight like a mad man and was soon rushing past the other boys. It was not long until he was right in among the Indians shooting right and left among them. Finally his gun got out of fix and would not fire. Then he took the barrel of the gun in his hand and used it as a club and with it knocked several off of their horses. As he passed through the bunch of Indians, a blunt arrow struck him on the shoulder and his horse was hit in the neck with an arrow. Bill thought he was seriously wounded and that his horse was killed. When the fight was over, he came back to the other boys. He was crying and said to them, "Boys, I am shot and my horse is killed." In the fight, Bill broke the stock off of his gun and the governor made him a present of a nice nickel plated gun for his bravery. He merited it.

A Bully, But Not So Brave

Bill Haygood, who was always boasting about his fighting qualities, was also in this fight, but the boys said that Bill was far in the rear while the battle raged and never came in range of the Indian's horses. I mention this to show that it is not always the barking dog that is dangerous. I have noticed that the boaster is not to be feared. Their bark is louder than their bite. Haygood never again boasted of his bravery.

Jimmie Odum

As I have already said, Jimmie was the youngest boy in our company. He was the son of our doctor, and a boy of noble impulses, but at times rather reckless. He was liked by all of the boys and was favored by the officers. He and I were great chums. He was in the fight and fought like an old soldier. He was in the front and was praised by the officers for his bravery. True to his promise, he brought me an Indian's scalp, which I kept until I was mustered out of the service at Austin in May, 1871, when I gave it to one of the state officials.

I Preach to the Boys

As far back as I can remember I wanted to preach. When I was quite a small boy, I used to gather the little Negroes in the large barn on Mr. Goodrum's place and preach to them on Sundays while the older people were at church. We had great meeting. I had once been with father in

meetings and I tried to follow his methods. On these Sundays I would stand in the barn door while the little Negroes were lined up on either side of the hallway. I preached to them, called mourners, took them into the church and baptized them just like father did at the camp meetings. I may also add that in these meetings I was just as much in earnest as I have ever been since I became a preacher.

On Christmas we were having a lively time in camp as boys usually do. In the midst of our fun some of the boys called on me for a speech. I replied, "Boys, I can't make a speech, but if you all want me to do so, I can preach you a sermon." They all cried out, "Give us a sermon." "All right," I said, "If you will all sit down and keep quiet until I am through, I will give you the best I have." I mounted a bench and talked to them for about thirty minutes. I was never more serious in my life. I gave them some good advice and warned them of the dangers of evil doing. The boys were very quiet and attentive while I talked. Occasionally, one of them would say, "Amen," just like people did at church. There was no fun making while I talked, for there was no fun in what I was saying to them. The longer I talked, the more in earnest I became. When I closed, we were all serious. The fun making spirit was gone. The boys came around me and gave me their hands and complimented me just like they do at meetings.

I do not remember all that I said that night, but I do remember telling them we were all making a great mistake in rejecting or neglecting the God of our mothers. Many of my Ranger mates have heard me preach often since I have been a preacher, and they have said to me, "The best sermon you ever preached was in camp on that Christmas night."

Heavy Snow Falls

That Christmas night a heavy snow fell. The first I knew of the snow was in the morning when one of the boys raised the cover and dashed a hand full of snow in on me. This brought me out in short order and I had a chase after the disturber of my rest all over the camp. When I caught him we had it up and down in the snow.

My Mother's Influence

As I have already said, my mother dies when I was a very small boy, but thank God she lived long enough to impress some lessons on my mind which have been a safeguard to me all of the days of my life. One day I had been over to Ft. Griffith with a number of the other boys, and in returning to the camp in the evening I fell in with Homes, the man who afterwards was murdered by Jack Singleton. We rode on to camp together. As I have already said, Holmes was a thief and we all knew it, but he was a smooth talker. On this ride he told me of his life and the troubles he had been in and how easily he had gotten out of most of his troubles. I had but little to say to him. Holmes did most of the talking. Finally he said to me, "Coley," for that was the name I went by in the company, "I know how we can make lots of money, if you will go with me." Then he laid bare his plans for stealing some horses which were held by the Tancahua Indians who were camped a few miles west of us on the river. These Indians had a large number of horses which had been stolen from settlers along the Texas frontier. "You go," said he, "and claim the

horses and I will swear to you claim, and then we can take them off and sell them and divide the money.

While he was laying before me this diabolical plan for stealing these horses, the spirit of my sainted mother cam before me and her hand seemed to rest again on my head as it did just before her death. I turned in my saddle and faced Holmes. Looking into his eyes, I said with some warmth, “Holmes, you are a thief and some day will reap a reward as such. you do not know me or you would never have made such a proposition to me. I would not for all of the horses in Texas do a dishonorable act to disgrace my sainted mother and noble father.” I thank God for a Christian father and mother. I have had cause many times to thank God for their teachings which have many times helped me in times of temptation and in the battles of life.

But poor Holmes, his end was near when he had to meet God and the record he had made in life. Only a few days after thins incident, he was killed by Jack Singleton. I have often wondered if Holmes had a Christian mother and if she ever knew how he died. He died at a murderer’s hand and with an oath on his lips, without a friend to drop a tear of sympathy and love on his grave.

Going Home

When our term of service was out, Company “B” was ordered to Austin to be mustered out of service. In our march to Austin it rained on use most of the way. When we reached the Leon

River it was past fording. We camped back from the river on what we supposed was a dry creek. Soon after nightfall a terrific storm came up. The rain fell in torrents and soon our “dry creek” was a roaring river and the water from the creek and river flooded the valley, and in the midst of the storm, we had to move out camp out to the highest point in the valley. Before an hour, the water was six inches deep all over camp. I slept in water half side deep that night. We spent the following day in swimming our horses, pack mules and baggage over the Leon River. We were in the water all day. I came near losing my life in the river that day. One of the horses I was swimming across the river was carried down the river in the swift current. In going under the limbs of an overhanging tree, my shirt caught on a hidden limb and I was dragged from the horse and carried under the water. But for my presence of mind, I would have lost my life there.

Dead Drunk

It took us all day to cross the Leon River. We had been wet to the skin for twenty-four hours, but the weather was warm and we did not suffer from the exposure. When we reached the little town of Hamilton a few miles from the river, our big-hearted lieutenant thought that we needed some whiskey after being in the water all day, and he bought several canteens of the fiery beverage. The whiskey he bought was from a barrel and it was the meanest whiskey I ever tasted. I did not drink more than a large spoon full of the stuff, for it was so fiery that it burned my throat. The boys called it “bust head whiskey” and from my experience, they named it right. We camped for the night on the edge of the little town, and after supper, in company with two of the boys, I went

down in town. As we were walking up the street, a doctor called to us and invited us into his office, saying as we entered. "You boys have been in water all day and you need some stimulants. I have some good brandy here and you must take it." The doctor's heart was in the right place, but he had mighty poor judgment. We all took a glass of his brandy. It was pleasant to the taste and was what drinkers call "good liquor." We soon started back to camp feeling the effects of our mixed drinks. The fact is, I do not remember anything after we left the doctor's office. I was beastly drunk before I knew anything.

This is one incident in my life of which I am ashamed, and only mention it in this connection to warn others, especially my own boys, not to do as I did. I did not then know the evils of the cup and the awful danger there is in strong drink. When I accepted there drinks, I never once thought about getting drunk, but I did. While in this state, the boys cared for me as if I had been a brother, and I shall always kindly remember them.

A Mighty Good Friend

My old friend Gilbert Stewart, took care of me and when I came to myself he spoke kindly to me and said, "You will be all right after a while." My, how my head did ache, and then I felt condemned in my own heart for making a fool of myself and really felt that I did not have a friend in the world. When we stopped for dinner, I was too sick to cook my dinner. The boys had killed a young beef and Gilbert had barbecued a large piece before the campfire. I did not know then that he had intended a part of what he cooked for me.

When the beef was cooked and dinner was ready, I said to Gilbert, "Gilbert, won't you give me a small piece of your meat." He did not reply at once, but turned his large eyes on me for a moment and then said, "Coley, don't you ever ask for anything again." Here he paused with his eyes still fixed on me. Oh! the horror of that moment to me. I was already self-condemned and then the thought that my best friend had gone back on me was crushing, indeed. When he had let the words sink in, he added, "Hereafter, if I have anything you want just take it." Tears of gratitude came into my eyes. I said, "Thank you, Gilbert, I will never forget you and your kindness to me." As he saw my tears he said, "Oh, don't do that, but come and eat some dinner and you will feel better."

Mustered Out of Service

May 31, 1871, we reached Austin and were mustered out of service. This ended my experience as a Texas Ranger. I am not sorry I had this experience. I came out of the service strong and healthy, besides in the service I learned much about the disposition of men which I perhaps never would have known without it. Then some ties of friendship were formed in the service which have never been broken. I have lost track of most of the boys who served with me. Most of them have gone to their long Home, and I am hastening to it. I only know of five of the boys who are now living.

[End]