IT OCCURRED IN KIMBLE

IT OCCURRED *in Kimble*

By

O. C. FISHER

ILLUSTRATIONS BY LONNIE REES

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DEDICATION

To the memory of my mother, Rhoda Clark Fisher, than whom no finer spirit ever lived. A product of the Texas frontier, who as a child saw her grandfather's body, mutilated and scalped, borne from the wilderness to his Kimble County ranch home; who saw, mounted on the bare backs of their Indian ponies, a band of painted, war-whooping Comanches, dressed in full tribal regalia, encircle her childhood home: this book is affectionately dedicated by the author.

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FOREWORD

SOLOMON ONCE SAID, "Remove not the ancient landmarks which thy fathers have set." It is with the idea of preserving some of the landmarks of the achievements of the early settlers of Kimble County that this work has been attempted. Many a Kimble pioneer, single-handed, held his ground and protected his wife and children against bands of savage warriors. Many a pioneer mother shouldered a needle gun or a Henry rifle and stood shoulder to shoulder with her husband to repel attacks from the red vandals who swooped down from the staked plains or up from the impenetrable chasms of the Rio Grande. Those pioneers were men and women of steel—not soft as we are today—and sought no publicity for their deeds of daring. In that locality perhaps a hundred deeds of frontier valor, clothed in finest attributes of heroism, have passed into oblivion and gone unrecorded.

In collecting material for this work, the primary purpose has been to separate truth from fiction, to segregate fact from unfounded rumor, and to record only those things which bear the stamp of reasonable accuracy.

It is sincerely hoped that the reader will not be critical of the lack of literary touch in these pages, but will understand the aim has been simply to record in understandable language some of those episodes of a passing age. The author, himself a native of the shin oak hills of Kimble County, will feel well compensated for his efforts if some who may read these pages may become in some measure impressed with the types and characters of those stalwart men and women who as trail blazers dared the wilderness, who pushed forward the lines of civilization and became the forerunners of

a new day and a new era. There is much truth and beauty in Macaulay's

> "A people that take no pride in the noble achievements of remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by their descendants."

A like sentiment was well expressed by Emery A. Storrs:

> "We must not content ourselves with venerating the names that have preceded us, nor yet in writing praises upon their tombstones, but by active exertion serve to render ourselves worthy descendants of such noble ancestry. Because there were giants in those days, it can certainly be no good reason that we should be all dwarfs and Liliputians in these days."

Acknowledgment is here made of the author's deep gratitude to all who have so generously assisted in recording these historical episodes. Included among those who have rendered especially helpful service in furnishing information and material are: Mr. and Mrs. Lou M. Walton, London; Frank Clark, Menard; Wilce Wooten*, Mason; Jasper Gibson, Harper; Jobe Fisher, Junction; Cash (Dock) Joy, Roosevelt; Mrs. Leaf Birt*, Brady; Sebastian Counts, Llano; John Coalson*, Mule Creek, New Mexico; William Coalson, Hillsboro, New Mexico; Mr. and Mrs. John Allen, Ft. McKavett; Mr. and Mrs. James A. Parker, Roosevelt; O. N. Blair, Robert Lee; G. W. Davidson, Edith; William G. Moss, Segovia; Peter J. Rembold, Segovia; A. L. McDonald, Noxville; Leander Miller, London; Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Patterson, Junction; Miss Harriet Smither, Archivist of the Texas State Library; Joe Deats*, Christoval; James N. Caviness, Mason; Gus Reichenau, Mason; Ben Hey, Mason; Mrs. Wilson Hey, Mason; Mrs. Fannie Gentry*, Menard; Hon. Carl Runge, Mason; James Latham*, Mason; Mrs. John J. Smith, Junction; Frank Van Court, San Angelo; Hon. Howell Johnson, Ft. Stockton; George Pearl, London; Jerry Doyal, Mason; Mrs. Cassie Weaver, London; Mrs. Alfred Bannowsky, Cleo; Mr. and Mrs. Mann Harrison, Junction; Mrs. M. A. Nixon, Menard; Mrs. D. M. Stewart, London; Louis Wiltz Kemp, Houston; and others. To Hon. Robert T. Neill, of San Angelo, I particularly acknowledge the assistance he has given me in permitting the use of his splendid library on Texas history.

* Deceased.

INTRODUCTION

To UNDERSTAND and appreciate frontier conditions and Indian depredations during the formative days of Kimble County history, one must first have a conception of general frontier and border life as it was during that period of time, as well as a panorama of the historical background of the native Indian tribes who wielded the tomahawk and scalping knife in southwest Texas.

When the Civil War began in 1861, the hazards of frontier life in Texas had been greatly reduced. The great tribe of Comanche warriors, who for many generations had prided themselves as being "Lords of the Plains," were, at last, under partial control. In numbers and in fighting qualities, the Comanches were superior to all other tribes combined. The subjection of this dominant tribe was attended with bitter resistance. It was an arduous and difficult process. These Indians revered their customs and legends, were proud of their heritage, and bore a burning resentment to being shunted from one frontier to another. Like a volcano, when there appeared to be peace and quiet on the surface, their savagery would suddenly erupt and flare anew.

"Their war cry is fast dying away to the untrodden west," spoke Sam Houston in a speech to the United States Senate.

"Slowly and sadly," he continued, "they climb the mountains and read their doom in the setting sun. They are shrinking before the mighty tide which is pressing them away. They must soon hear the roar of the last wave that will settle over them forever."

The summer of 1840 witnessed the first major organized Comanche raid into Texas settlements, although there had for many years been depredations on the edges of the fron-

tier. Early on the morning of August 8 of that year, a huge band of war-whooping Comanches, numbering about a thousand warriors, moving rapidly by the light of the moon, swooped down into the coastal regions of Texas. Striking first at Victoria, and then at Linnville, fifty miles to the east, they left a trail of blood and desolation. It was a vicious, blood-thirsty, warring band, their pathway being strewn with murder and rapine. Linnville became a panic-stricken, helpless town, at the mercy of a warring tribe of human demons—who knew no mercy.

Men, women and children alike ran about, terror-stricken, and without a chance to offer even a gesture of defense or retaliation. The town was plundered and sacked, and all food stuffs, clothing and merchandise were taken by the painted vandals. Between twenty and twenty-five people were wounded and killed, and some women and children were taken into captivity—an ordeal even worse than that of murder. A majority of the populace, however, saved themselves by taking out to sea in hastily commandeered fishing boats lying in the port. To make their work complete, the marauders then burned the town, and all horses and mules in the vicinity, numbering several hundreds, were driven away.

Following the burning of Linnville, under cover of night the Comanches turned back toward their camping grounds on the Staked Plains. Like lightning, the news of this savage outburst was spread from one settlement to another, and soon the citizens of Guadalupe, Gonzales, Lavaca and Colorado Counties were up in arms. Adam Zumwalt, Ben McCulloch and John J. Tumlinson had already begun the organization of settlers to pursue the vandals. In those settlements lived many of the heroes of the Texas War of Independence. They remembered the days of '36, and being outnumbered manyfold was no new experience to them. The settlers quickly rallied into companies, organized for action, and prepared to resist the savage scourge from the west.

By the night of August 11, three companies, comprising a total of two hundred men, had converged at Plum Creek,

several miles ahead of the advancing horde, and prepared to give battle. On the following day the seething mass of Comanches appeared—with ribbons and bright-colored tassels and streamers flying. With them were a thousand or more mules and horses, many of which were laden with booty from Linnville and Victoria. Freshly bathed in the blood of vanquished palefaces, the warriors became wildly aggressive when confronted with the small band of Texans who would give challenge to their victorious march.

The ensuing battle was a furious one. The Texans presented an organized, united front, led by Gen. Felix Huston, Col. Edward Burleson, Capt. Matthew (Old Paint) Caldwell, and others. Creed Taylor and Bate Berry, two early-day Kimble County pioneers, took part in that famous battle. The trained military leadership of the Texans was too much for the unorganized, primitive methods of the opposition. After several hours of intensive fighting, including some hand-to-hand combat, the Texans had killed between fifty and eighty Indians, had captured a hundred horses and mules, recovered much of the stolen plunder, and put the enemy to rout. The Comanches suffered their worst defeat in Texas in the Battle of Plum Creek.

Thereafter, on the Texas frontier these Indians had their backs to the wall, and were obliged to gratify their fighting instinct by isolated forays and raids at widely different points, making their attacks from the northwestern plains.

Despite these raids, the frontier continued to be pushed westward. It was a grim, predestined march of civilization. And by 1855 the Comanche braves appeared to be making their last formidable stand, what with the United States Government establishing military forts and posts on far-flung points bordering the outlying settlements, extending from the Rio Grande to the Red River.

Fort Terrett

The establishment of Fort Terrett near the head of the North Llano, but a stone's throw west of the present boun-

dary of Kimble County, proved to be a colossal army blunder. The fort was set up early in 1852, probably on recommendation to the War Department by Gen. Percifer F. Smith, the department commander, and his reasons for doing so have never been revealed. Ostensibly, the new fort was one of a series in the government's plan to move the general line of frontier fortifications further to the west. Lieut. William H. C. Whiting of the army suggested, after a survey, that such outposts be so established, and thereby impress the savages with the strength of the military. It was supposed that the forts being located in the western wilderness and in the very range of the enemy, the presence of such armed strength would serve to intimidate the savage tribes and discourage formidable organizations of raiding parties.

The new fort was under the command of Lieut.-Col. Henry Bainbridge, the regimental and post commander. Brig.-Gen. R. W. Johnson, one of the first officers stationed there (being prior to his advancement in rank), made this description of the new home:

> "Here we had evidently trespassed upon the home and domain of various families of rattlesnakes, and it was several weeks before they were exterminated. One was killed just at the entrance into our sleeping apartment. It was really dangerous to go out after dark. Many were killed, and the noise probably drove others off, so that at last we were free from molestation from that source . . .
>
> "The country for miles around was devoid of timber, except some that skirted the streams. To these wild turkeys repaired every night to roost. Thousands of turkeys roosted every night within a mile of the post, and could be easily killed in any number required."

In constructing the new fort, orders were that nothing but "iron and nails" were allowed, and there was rigid enforcement of that order. The troops were assigned to cut logs, make shingles, quarry, lay stone, etc. The company barracks were constructed of logs, and officers' quarters were of stone. It was November before the work was complete. The officers, being restricted to requisitions for "iron and

nails" only, were forced to furnish at their own expense, doors, sash, and glass.

The head of the North Llano country was then a lonely, gloomy section. In fact, Col. Bainbridge named the new post *Camp Lugubrious*, but the department commander considered that a reflection, and ordered it named Camp Bainbridge, which he observed, was synonymous. The War Department later gave it the official name of Fort Terrett.

The companies at Fort Terrett were commanded by Captains John H. King, Robert S. Granger, Stephen D. Carpenter, and James N. Caldwell. Lieut. F. J. Denman was the regimental adjutant, and lost his life near the fort March 2, 1853, by the accidental discharge of a gun, his place being subsequently filled by R. W. Johnson.

There appears no record of any conflict between the Fort Terrett soldiers and Indians or outlaw bands. There was, in fact, practically no activity of the kind in that territory at the time. Soon the War Department discovered the folly of the establishment of the fort at that point, and it was ordered abandoned in September, 1853, the troops composing the garrison being returned to the Rio Grande, with regimental headquarters at Fort Duncan, in what is now Maverick County. The move was made by way of San Antonio.

Fort McKavett

Only a few miles to the northwest of the present Kimble boundary was located Fort McKavett, and the military arm of the government was thus extended to give protection to the territory embraced in the valleys of the Llanos.

Fort McKavett was established March 14, 1852, its establishment having been contemporaneous with that of Fort Terrett. Col. M. L. Crimmins thus locates it: "It was situated on an elevation near the right bank of the San Saba River about two miles from its source in the latitude 30 degrees, 50 minutes North and longitude 100 degrees and 20 minutes West. The altitude is about 2,000 feet and is on the

rolling surface of the Edwards Plateau. The limestone soil produces what is said to be the best grass in Texas for horses."

From the surrounding country all wood materials for the construction of the fort were procured from oak and pecan trees. The nearest post office at that time was at San Antonio, one hundred and sixty-four miles to the southeast, and mail came weekly by way of Fort Mason and Fort Martin Scott of Gillespie County.

Col. Crimmins gives this sketch of the Indian situation in the vicinity of the fort at the time of its establishment:

> "There were three Indian bands belonging to the Comanche tribe within a circuit of 100 miles. Although they frequented the post it was hard to estimate their number. The San-a-po's band resided on the Concho and the headwaters of the Colorado; Buffalo Hump's Band lived along the Colorado, and a band under Ketumseh and Yellow Wolf ranged between the San Saba and Colorado Rivers. A small party of Tonkaways had come over from the Brazos River and were camped near Fort McKavett. They were friendly to the Americans and unfriendly to the other Indians, and were subsequently used successfully as scouts by our army."

At the time the fort was set up the commanding officer was Bvt. Lieut.-Col. E. B. Alexander, Eighth Infantry, with Companies B, D, E, F and H of that regiment. The fort was abandoned March 22, 1859, and reoccupied by Companies A and F, Fourth Cavalry, and D, E and I, Thirty-fifth Infantry, April 1, 1868. Occupation was continued until June 30, 1883. By that time the Indians had been silenced, and the purpose for which the fort was originally established no longer existed.

Early-day Frontier Forts

The earliest frontier forts in Texas were placed at strategic points to protect the citizens from Mexican and Indian depredations. Aside from the border posts, others spread northeastward from the Rio Grande, and included Fort Lin-

coln on the Rio Seco (1849); Fort Martin Scott in Gillespie County (1848); Fort Croghan, in Burnet County (1849); Fort Gates in Coryell County (1849); Fort Graham in Hill County (1849); and Fort Worth in Tarrant County (1849). Experience soon demonstrated that these forts were situated too close to the thicklier populated settlements, and new ones were next established to the west, some beyond the western borderline of settlements, and included such as Terrett, Mason, McKavett, Clark, Chadbourne, Davis, Stockton, Bliss, Belknap, Phantom Hill, Lancaster and others. At the conclusion of the Civil War, and at a time when the need for frontier protection was most urgent, the government established Fort Concho, to take the place of Fort Chadbourne, Forts Griffin and Richardson to serve the purposes of Camp Cooper and Fort Belknap.

War-time and a Terrorized Frontier

With much progress thus having been made to militarize the Texas frontier, and with much advancement having been made in placing the situation under control, there came the conflict between the states in 1861, causing a withdrawal of this frontier protection. The result was a ten-year siege of murderous raids resulting in a terrorized frontier, and indeed extending far into the 70's.

The Texas Almanac of 1869 summarizes the preceding Indian depredations: "The wild tribes of Indians still continue their depredations upon the frontier of Texas. From official sources it appears that between May, 1865, and August, 1867, no less than 162 persons were murdered, 24 wounded, and 43 carried into captivity from Texas by the Indians . . . The Comanches, Kiowas and Lipans could probably put into the field 5000 warriors."

Some historians regard the 1870 decade as the most severe from the standpoint of Indian depredations. This was but a natural consequence since this period marked the construction of the railroads, the gradual extermination of the buffalo

—the Indians' primary dependence for food and clothing, and the appearance of many new settlers in the shadows of the Indian range.

Even after the Comanches had been driven into the reservations, and their kinsmen, the Kiowas, likewise subdued, the Apaches, Lipans and Kickapoos, operating in small bands, unexcelled in savage treachery, and using Mexico as a base, made devastating raids into the border settlements, a number of which extended even beyond Kimble County.

The reservation Indians made many raids into Texas, swooping down from Indian Territory, striking swiftly and then returning with scalps and plunder to their homes. It was not until Gen. Ronald S. McKenzie rounded up the Indians in 1874 and 1875 and delivered them to their reservations, finally resorting to the killing of their horses by the hundreds to prevent their repeated raids, that the constant terror of those redskins in Texas was abated.

It was in 1871 that Gen. William Tecumseh Sherman crossed Texas on an inspection tour and observed first-hand the activities of the Indians. Settlement raids had become more frequent and the ferocity of the raiders more marked, and appeals had been made to the authorities in Washington for relief. It was in response to those repeated appeals that Gen. Sherman made his tour of 1871. He was accompanied on the trip by Gen. Randolph B. Marcy, Inspector-General of the Army, and on his journey from Belknap to Jacksboro, Marcy noted in his journal:

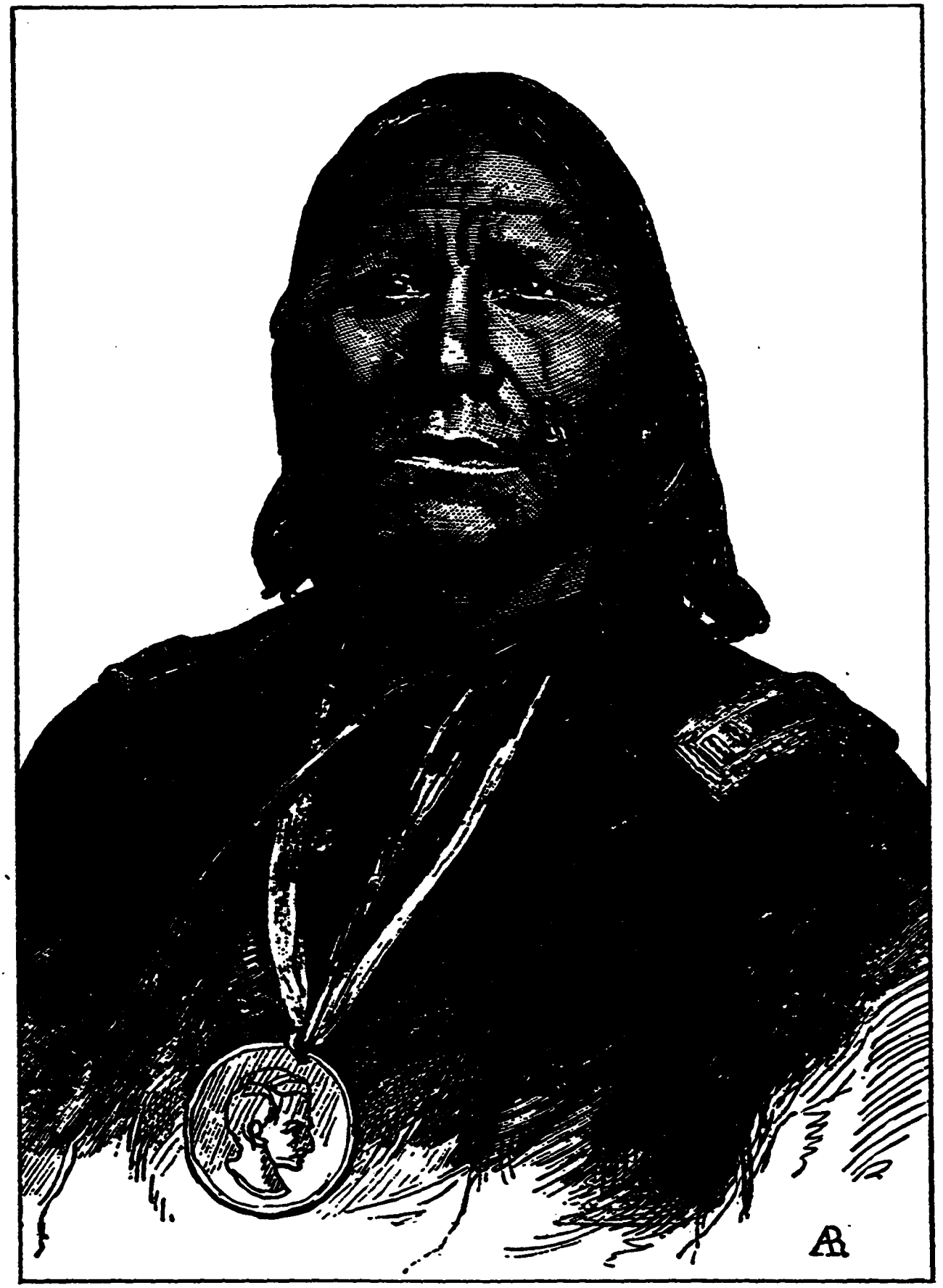
> "This rich and beautiful section of country does not contain today (May 17, 1871) as many white people as it did when I was stationed here eighteen years ago, and if the Indian marauders are not punished, the whole country seems to be in a fair way of becoming depopulated."

An incident of historical importance occurred in Jack County, near Fort Richardson, which served to indelibly impress the seriousness of the situation upon the mind of Gen. Sherman. On the day after his arrival at that fort (May 18) the mule-train of Capt. Henry Warren, a government contractor at Fort Griffin, was attacked by a band

of Indians one hundred and fifty strong. This took place in the vicinity of Flat Rock Mountain, a half-way point between Belknap and Jacksboro. Six of the twelve teamsters were tortured, mutilated and murdered, and others of the twelve, some wounded, escaped into the brush. All of the forty-one mules were driven away and the remains of the wagons were reduced to ashes.

Gen. Sherman immediately dispatched Gen. McKenzie with one hundred and fifty cavalry and thirty days rations on pack animals to pursue the marauders. Before Gen. Sherman left Fort Richardson for Fort Sill, Indian Territory, he was petitioned by a number of citizens to help them in a fight for survival against the deluge of barbarism that was threatening to depopulate their settlements, to which supplications the General gave a sympathetic ear. The government policy of placing the Indians on the reservations, and leaving them there without restraint, was a failure so far as the Texas frontier settlers were concerned. Gen. Sherman arrived at Fort Sill on May 23, and busied himself with an investigation of Indian raids from that base. The result was that three Kiowa Chiefs, Satanta, Big Tree and Satank were arrested, placed in irons, and on May 31 two of them were lodged in the guard house at Fort Richardson, to be turned over to civil authorities in Texas to stand trial, for the murder of the teamsters. One of the three, Satank, while on the trip, managed to remove the handcuffs from his arms by gnawing the flesh, and while attempting to shoot one of the guards was himself shot and killed.

The approaching trial of the two Chiefs created much interest on the western frontier. It was something new, requiring the barbarians to stand before the bar of justice to answer for their crimes against organized society. Judge Charles Soward, whose judicial district included Jack County, fixed the dates of the trials to begin July 5th, 1871. Hon. S. W. T. Lanham, who later became Governor of Texas, was the district attorney who ably conducted the prosecution for the State. The jury deliberated and returned a verdict of guilty with punishment fixed at death, and the trial of



SATANTA

the second defendant resulted in the same verdict. The defendants were duly sentenced to be hanged on September 1, 1871, but Gov. E. J. Davis, upon the recommendation of Judge Soward, commuted the sentences to life imprisonment, basing his action upon the fact that the crimes were the result of savage warfare rather than of a criminal animus as defined in the Penal Code. Both were later paroled at the request of President Grant. Satanta was later reincarcerated, and committed suicide in the prison at Huntsville by plunging from an open window.

As has been noted, following the Jack County spectacle the government adopted a different policy in controlling the reservation Indians. Gen. McKenzie was the man largely responsible for the purging of the frontier of the red menace. This was completed by 1875. In that great human roundup, columns of soldiers were sent out under Gen. N. A. Miles, from the North; Lieut. Col. John W. ("Black Jack") Davidson came out from Fort Sill, to operate West; and Gen. McKenzie, with his famous Fourth U. S. Cavalry, based his operations from Fort Concho, and worked North and West. Col. George P. Buell and Lieut.-Col. Thomas H. Neill from Fort Griffin were in the Fort Sill territory, and Maj. William R. Price put forth from old Fort Bascom, New Mexico, pushing eastward.

Thus, 2000 trained troops were systematically and simultaneously put on converging fronts—the great man-hunt of the age—and the picked fighting forces of the United States Army were pitted against the last stand of the "Vanishing Race." The haughty Comanches, whose ancestors had conquered every tribe that dared oppose them, and whose fighting spirit became a burning fire against the encroachment of the white man, and who in crude tribal solemnity had sworn vengeance against those who had taken their hunting grounds and slaughtered millions of their buffalo, were now to face extermination from the Western Plains. Strangely to them, their repeated incursions, their brutal, savage mutilations, their capture and torture of women and children, did not deter the white man's westward push.

Gen. McKenzie, "than whom there was no more effective fighter in the entire army," set out with his troops from Fort Concho to play a leading part in that wide-spread military movement. It was a conquering march, the blazing of a trail, given poetic recognition by William Lawrence Chittenden:

"Stretching onward toward the sunset,
O'er prairie, hill and vale,
Far beyond the Double Mountains
Winds the old MacKenzie Trail.
Ah, what thoughts and border memories
Does that dreaming trail suggest;
Thoughts of travelers gone forever
To the twilight realms of rest."

While the Kimble settlers were benefiting from the assistance to the northwest, they were constantly harassed by the raiders from the Rio Grande to their southwest. When Gen. Sherman appeared before the Congressional Committee on Military Affairs investigating border troubles in Texas, at a meeting of that committee on January 12, 1878, in describing Indian border raids, he testified:

> "The frontier of Texas is very extensive, and the southern and western part, in its whole extent, is more or less exposed to Indian incursions, and especially to 'raids,' as they were termed, made by parties from Mexico, composing sometimes of . . . hostile Indians residing in Mexico."

At the time of Gen. Sherman's testimony there were quartered in the State of Texas, giving particular attention to border raids, the 8th and 10th Cavalry, reported respectively as having 818 and 926 men. There were also three regiments of infantry in the State at that time: the 10th, having 469 men; the 24th, with 332 men; and the 25th, with 346 men.

The border raiders included many New Mexico Indians who were classed as malcontents and who had gradually left the New Mexico reserves in order to rid themselves of the restraint imposed by the reservations, and also in order to

provide a base in Mexico from which they could operate with greater ease.

The bands that operated out of Mexico were usually in numbers of from ten to thirty. Col. H. B. Clitz, of the 10th Infantry, stationed at Fort McKavett, appeared before the Congressional Committee, heretofore referred to, and in his testimony (given December 7, 1877) he referred to the Mexico Indian raids, and said:

> ". . . I suppose that almost every alternate moon, at certain seasons, there has been some sort of a raid in there from either the Lipans or Mescalero Apaches, accompanied by some Mexicans . . . They generally cross the Rio Grande above the mouth of the Pecos, cross Devil's River and *enter into the settlements between the forks of the Llano* and go toward Kerr County, or toward Fredericksburg and Mason."

It must be remembered that the border country was in a turmoil during the middle '70's. A revolution was raging, and police protection along the border was hard pressed. A wild, unsettled region, extending from San Felipe and above and as far down the Rio Grande as Palafox offered ideal passageways for the marauders to keep themselves hidden and beyond the reach of pursuers. In fact, during that time there was hardly a white settler from Presidio to the mouth of Devil's River, and this unprotected area covered a distance of four hundred miles.

Lieut. John L. Bullis, of the 24th Infantry, in his testimony before the Congressional Committee evinced a thorough understanding of border conditions and Indian habits. "I am in command of the Seminole Scouts," he testified, "stationed at Fort Clark, Texas. The Lipans, before the war, lived on a United States reserve in Texas. . . . There are bands of Kickapoos at present in Mexico, some of them, but they are mostly on the reserves. . . . There are five bands of Indians on the Mexican shore, none or very few of whom have ever been on reservations. I have followed them for years and years and fought them, and know their chiefs. The name of the present chief of the Lipan Indians is Washa Lobo. This Indian and his people reside

most of the time near Saragossa in Mexico. They steal constantly on the American side and have done so for years. They came over and made two raids in 1876. . . . On one of these they killed thirteen men and one woman . . . and in the same year the same party of Indians came over and killed twelve men. Washa Lobo is a cunning fellow . . ."

This chief, he explained, headed the tribe nearest to the border, being about forty miles south of Piedras Negras. Other tribes resided further into the mountain fastnesses, ranging from sixty to two hundred miles. Lieut. Bullis, one of the most famous and courageous soldiers who ever operated on the Texas border, gives an interesting bit of information in reference to details of raiding operations:

> "The Indians cross the Rio Grande," he continued, "in parties of from two up to thirty-five or forty. They invariably come in on foot, wearing moccasins, although I have known one or two instances where they have brought in one horse carrying packs. They work east from the Rio Grande through the rough, broken country, through cedar-breaks and through brush. During the day-time they hide or stay on the top of the highest peaks or mountains, and when the moon is nearly or quite full they come down. I have known them to gather up within one or two nights two hundred head of horses. Then they put out, driving night and day, and cross the Rio Grande generally within four days and nights.
>
> "They change from one horse to another, bare-back. They have no saddles whatever. They take a piece of raw-hide from cattle which they kill while on the Texan side, put a string of it over the head of a horse and pass a piece of wood through the horse's mouth for a bit, and use a strip of rawhide for a bridle rein, and in this way they will travel from sixty to eighty miles in a day and night."

The Texas rangers were usually more readily available than the troops in repelling the border invaders in the inland settlement areas. Those rangers were quick-shooters, hard-riders, and did not mind missing sleep when a fight was in the air.

It was not, however, until 1878 that sleep was assured by the triumph of law and order over savage barbarism. At last the frontier populace who made their homes along the

quiet sequestered valleys of the Llanos could relax from the constant fear of attack from those moonlight despoilers who had "tasted blood and lived it as their food." No more bloody, more revolting murders in the annals of man were ever experienced or recorded than some of those that occurred in Kimble.

KIMBLE COUNTY PIONEERS

Kimble County Pioneers!
Men of action, bold and rugged,
Brave and fearless, men of fate.
Hewers of wooded, frontier forests,
Soldiers in the frontier battle.
Promulgators of Law and Order,
Nerves of steel, determined, headstrong,
Palefaced replacers of the redskins.

Spears, Kountzes, Gibsons, Parkers,
Taylors, Joys, Moores and Berrys;
Brownings, Lattas, Jones, Bradburys,
Nixons, Coalsons, Waites and Gentrys;
Reichenaus, Korns, Nabers, Schumanns,
Connoways, Sewells, Smiths and Pearls;
Pattersons, Harrises, Millers, Johnsons,
Waltons, Wootans, Parks and others:

You formed the frontier's vanguard,
Risked your lives and gave your lifeblood;
Civilized a virgin country,
Builded homes and fenced the valleys.
You carved new trails with purpose daring,
And with daring took and dedicated.
You pioneered and cleared the pathway
For generations of the morrow.

CHAPTER ONE

THE CALL OF THE LLANOS

From the upper Llanos, with an abundance of wild and luxuriant vegetation, came a beckoning call to the frontiersman of 1860. Despite the ever-present danger of attack from hostile Indians, and the distance to the nearest trading post, or medical aid in event of a snake bite or serious illness, those fearless pioneers answered the call of romance and adventure offered by a virgin, unspoiled country "whose bosom no plow had touched." It was the call of "come and take."

A hilly, broken topography, except for the valleys, made of Kimble County an area suitable primarily for the raising of livestock rather than for farming. Shin oak, cedar, mesquite, and live oak were found in abundance. Other trees of varied quantities found were elm, cottonwood, hackberry, white oak, pecan, persimmon, Mexican (wild) plum, sycamore, blue thorn, willow, sumac, and a variety of bushy growths. A few wild mulberry trees could be seen in isolated sections. A species of walnut, of but little commercial value, grew in the creek beds and river bottoms.

A variety of native grasses covered the hills, plateaus and valleys. The mesquite and grama grasses were the more common, and were found to be especially valuable as drought resistants, as well as being fattening for livestock. These grasses were hardy and served to hold the soil and prevent erosion.

The first settlers came in ox wagons—horses were scarce in those days. Each wagon was drawn by from two to four

yoke of oxen. It must have been a sight—those first settlers—as they lumbered along with their rickety, hand-made, covered wagons, sheeted with tattered wagon covers beneath which peered sparkling eyes of youngsters.

The roads into the upper Llano valleys were uncharted, except for a dim, rarely-traveled government road that crossed the Llanos near the junction of the two rivers and followed the Bear Creek route to Fort McKavett.

Awaiting the Kimble pioneer of 1860 was an abundance of wild game of almost every description known in Southwest Texas. Deer skipped about in silent wonderment at the appearance of so queer an arrival. The javelinas stamped their feet and boofed out a chorus of alarm and disapproval. The panther crept from his ledge of rock to peer through the crevices. Wild turkey by thousands let their curiosity make them appear half-friendly.

The Kimble-bound pioneer would call out to his steers, "Whoa, you, whoa!" and the wagon would come to a standstill in a spring-fed mountain rivulet.

The settler found wood and water in abundance, and a place to camp for the night. The sloping knee-high grass plots were close by seductively inviting one to linger. The air was filled with a rich aroma of flowers, and all nature was singing a song of quiet and peace. In the distance could be seen the meandering outline of the main Llano, studded on either side by the towering pecans which reflected a deep blue against the evening sunset. Small wonder the settler of that day dared the wilderness of the upper Llanos!

Nature's Rendezvous

The valleys of the Llanos were indeed a rendezvous for game. Here was a retreat—a Utopia for the wild things. Peaceful were these valleys. The deep, rich soil was kept fertile by overflows from the bordering hillsides. The valleys proper were several miles wide in places presenting a smooth, rolling topography, breaking roughly toward the

surrounding hills. Down the North Llano came a pure, spring-fed stream with a lively flow the year 'round. From the south came another Llano, a more restless, meandering stream. With a source that provided an illimitable supply, with millions of gallons pouring and gushing wildly from a mountain side, its flow had been a steady, continuous one for untold ages. As the two streams converge, the waters become more tranquil.

From many a mountain-side nook and crevice spurted isolated springs. There, many a natural, secluded retreat was hidden, waiting to be found by the world. Clusters of wild grape vines, bearing a small fruit with an acidulous taste, were draped as though arranged by a Master Decorator. Intertwined with the grape vines was an occasional climbing sumac, all drooping toward the mirrored water below and swaying cradle-like in the breeze. Many a stony precipice gave a rugged background to a bronzed thicket below in a surrounding of multi-colored flowers—a setting for reverent contemplation.

Javelinas

A queer animal in considerable numbers was the musk hog, given the Spanish name of *javelinas*. They were often seen in herds of fifty or even a hundred, with a tendency to be ferocious. Many a tender-foot in those parts, upon first seeing a band of boofing javelinas, if he were afoot, looked cautiously about for a tree to climb in case his gun should jam or he should be attacked *en masse*. They were wild, but were not to be too closely pressed or cornered. And it was a familiar sight to see them, when approached, rally into battle array and put on a convincing picture of wrath and indignation, probably a leader advancing toward the intruder, supported by a chorus of stamping, jaw-popping and boofing demonstration from the companions.

The javelinas were small in stature, the average grown animal weighing from fifty to seventy-five pounds, a few

of the boars being even larger. In color they were, as a rule, yellow-reddish, giving a rainbow effect as they pranced about in the sunlight. One man said of the javelina, "His head was too big for his body, and his short, thick neck showed that it had great strength."

This animal was hardly fit for human consumption, though the fat ones were devoured by some people who likened the taste to ordinary bacon. When butchered, it was essential that the odor-producing musk be removed immediately after the animal was killed. They lived principally on acorns, nuts, roots and berries, and were rarely known to be carnivorous.

The javelina was a squatty, solid-fleshed animal, with ears short and stubby and all but hidden in the rather generous growth of hair about the neck and part of the head. The white, sharp tusks were formidable and turned upward, and the hind feet contained but one upper toe. The animal was much feared, especially when in large numbers. Dogs were afraid of them and dreaded like death to encounter the little devils. They played havoc with more than one settler's corn crop or garden. At night time, or when being hunted or annoyed, they often sought refuge in mountain caves.

Eagle

A traveler who crossed the rim and dropped down into the scooping valleys of the Llanos, or who was swallowed up in one of the many canyons, was sure to see here and there flying serenely, the out-stretched wings of the eagle.

"He clasps the crag with hooked hands
Close to the suns in lonely lands,
Ringed with the azure world, he stands."

The eagle doubtless viewed with an instinctive apprehension the encroachment of the early settlers upon the secluded valleys over which he had held unmolested sway for

so many centuries. Indians had lived in those valleys for untold ages, but here came a new creature, a new rolling, worm-like thing—as it appeared from a thousand feet above. But for many decades the eagle flew proudly on, taking his living principally from rabbits, lambs, and small animal life. His doom had been written, however, and today, after three quarters of a century, a lone eagle in those valleys is a rarity, and much sought after by the alert ranchman who values the lives of his small sheep. The bird is today almost extinct in that sector.

Lobo Wolves

The Llano valley settler of the sixties found the territory seething with big lobo wolves, as well as the smaller species of timber wolves and coyotes. A coarse, stentorian voice distinguished the lobo's howling from that of the smaller species of the same family. At night time, especially in the moonlight, he would steal dangerously close to the camp fire, there to hunker down and howl out a strange incoherent message that was usually answered in the distance. One writer attempted to interpret the message thus:

"Ye favored ones, be kind to the wolf,
And he'll be kind unto you;
And the Father above who made us all,
He will mark the good that ye do.
From His hands came we, from His hands came ye;
We are brothers in His glorious reign;
So share the blessings He has showered on you,
With your poor, lost friend of the plain:
Of the plain—
Of your poor, lost friend of the plain.
Oh, bow wow wow, bow wow wow;
Of your poor, lost friend of the plain."

The lobo feasted upon smaller animals, especially the rabbit, but fortified by a few of his brethren he took special de-

light in hamstringing a steer, or, single-handed, laying waste to a half-grown calf. One frontiersman tells of witnessing a huge steer being pulled down by four lobos. The victim bawled and fought furiously, but his attackers had weakened him by cutting into his ham-strings, and he was soon torn to pieces.

The lobo, like the eagle, was making its last stand. The handwriting was on the wall with the advent of the cattle-raiser and the sheepman.

Panther

Vying for a place of prominence in the wild animal kingdom of the Llano valleys was the crouching panther. That species of the cat family was quite plentiful in those parts, and rarely a night was spent by the early-day ranchman without hearing the cat-like scream of the panther. One pioneer said the panther's scream was similar to that of a house cat, except a hundred times as loud, and was somewhat "like unto that of a woman's." This animal was not as ferocious as he has been pictured. He could be treed by a small dog, and would not make fight unless it was forced upon him.* When a fight was in the offing, the shrewd panther would often nonchalantly climb a tree, and there crouched close to a bough would look down upon his foe with a purring growl.

For his livelihood, the panther feasted principally upon colts and burros. In the absence of his preference, he satisfied his hunger upon sheep, rabbits, birds, and the like. The panther was a smart animal, and when attacking his prey usually struck from a crouching position on the limb of a tree.

Jaguar

Similar in size and bearing a similarity in habits to the panther, was the black-blue spotted jaguar. This animal

was never plentiful in Kimble, but his presence was keenly felt by the early sheepman, as the snarling jaguar was fond of lamb chops and was most destructive when preying upon a flock of bedded sheep at night-time. The extermination of this animal was practically complete by the turn of the century, though one was killed on the A. M. Reese ranch as late as 1910.

Bear

The black mountain bear appeared strong in numbers during the sixties and seventies. The early settler found them roaming up and down the streams and canyons, romping and playing in their characteristic manner. The bear provided a preferred source of food, which accounted for their early scarcity. Many ranchmen used them in place of hog-meat, and many a smokehouse frequently bulged during winter with cured bear bacon for the ensuing year. It was not an uncommon thing to hear a ranchman say he had a thousand pounds of bear meat cured.

Mountain Lion (Cougar)

Then, there was the mountain lion, with its defiant roar. Perhaps the loudest of the mountain creatures, on a still night his growling roar would echo a full mile across a mountain canyon. He was a wild, fighting animal—the terror of the animal kingdom. In appearance, the mountain lion could be likened to the lobo, except for a size larger, a slightly larger head, with a wide mouth opening, a bit more hairy over the body, and a bunch of long, bushy hair at the end of his tail. This animal was a beast of the mountains, and he was not long in beating a retreat after the coming of mankind to this native habitat.

Beaver

The timid, elusive beaver, perhaps the most industrious of the fur-bearing animals, denned in the creek and river

banks and rocky abutments. Dam-builders by instinct, the elm, white-oak, sycamore and pecan were systematically cut and arranged in order. Dams were built only where streams were shallow in order that water might be held back for depth. They were therefore more often found in creek beds. In addition to trees, the dam was made of bushes, the spaces being filled with stone and mud. When completed, the structure averaged two feet in width at the top, with thicker base. At places where the current was stronger, the dam would ordinarily course up-stream to give added strength; otherwise, it would go directly across. In the construction work it is said the beaver would cut the trees into logs of reasonable length for convenience, and would systematically set them in shape. From the bottom of the stream, or from about the water's edge, stone and mud would be carried by the beaver under its chin or in its forepaws. The system and skill displayed on a plan bespoke an uncanny understanding of elementary principles of engineering.

Swan

Along the clear, blue streams could occasionally be seen a snow-white, wide-winged swan, flying lazily along and close to the water's surface. Attention was readily attracted to them as they fluttered their wings heavily against the water in taking to the air. Long, graceful legs, and an elongated neck that arched back, exposing a heaving symmetrical bosom, made of the swan a perfection of nature.

Paisano

Another bird of attractive features was the paisano, also called the chaparral cock, which the settlers dubbed the "road runner." He was also called the bird of Paradise, probably because of his singular beauty and unique appearance. This bird was plentiful when the first settlers came,

and until this day is quite common in the wooded areas. He is swift and elusive, and is often seen scurrying through the brush and weeds beyond the reach of danger. He is characterized by rather long, extremely slender legs, and a long tail that sometimes drags in the dust. When pursued this bird will often fly a few paces, then strike the ground running at a rapid pace.

The paisano has been known to kill rattle snakes. A person who witnessed the spectacle observed the bird teasing the snake until the latter became tired from repeatedly striking into the air; then, when the snake was coiled the bird would strike his sharp bill into the snake's back, just at the base of the head. When a bloody spot appeared the attacker would shoot its beak back into the injured spot and repeat until the snake became helpless. The snake's eyes were then pecked out.

The male and the female of this species are quite similar in appearance, and can hardly be distinguished. They are usually seen near chaparral brush or other bushy growths where they may flee for protection if attacked, and are popular with farmers and ranchmen. The paisano is not a singing bird, but makes a sort of subdued guttural sound.

Mexican Mocking Bird

Bearing some similarity to the chaparral that inhabited the Llanos was a kind of mocking bird, called by the natives "scissor-tail," and more properly called a Mexican mocking bird. This bird made its appearance in the valleys with the coming of Spring, and, indeed, its presence was a sure chronicle that winter had been dethroned and that springtime was definitely present. It could be distinguished from the common mocking bird by two long tail feathers that shot out with a perceptible outward bend. Also, the Mexican mocker was slightly more sluggish, more gaudy in dress than its kinsman—the common mocking bird, and lacked the finer musical qualities of the latter. It could often be seen perched

on a place of prominence in a tree top, and would dart in pursuit of the first passing hawk. This bird was similarly combative toward the common mocking bird, and they were never known to be on friendly terms.

Rattle Snake

On the first warm days of spring the rattlesnakes crawled from their places of hibernation in the mountain cliffs and crags. They came forth to sun themselves and gain their fire and strength following months of sleep and inactivity. It would have been unusual for a man to walk or ride up a hillside or through a valley and not have encountered at least one of these poisonous serpents.

Contrary to much opinion, the rattlesnake was never exactly combative, but almost invariably receded for protection and sought refuge when attacked. This venomous snake, capable of inflicting serious injury or death from its quiet position to the side of a pedestrian's pathway, rarely ever struck without first imparting a rattling warning to the would-be victim. Great indeed are the wonders of nature! As he lay with his head emerged from the coiled circle, and a sharp, black tongue whipping in and out, and his rattles erected perpendicularly from the ground and singing a buzzy, rasping sound, the snake gave warning sufficient to one who did not choose to be attacked. And, strangely, considering the large numbers of these serpents, few people were bitten.

Texas Norther

The Texas norther had far from spent its fury when it unleashed a whirling blast from over the rim and into the Llano valleys. The northers usually came unannounced, without any natural warning. In sheer fury and terror an Arctic blizzard might have appeared relatively moderate. Like a whip-lash, the clouds appeared over the horizon

driven and whipped about in a disorderly fashion as if by some phantom demon. The storm was usually preceded by a period of warmth, often of summer-heat intensity, and a still, motionless atmosphere. With hardly as much warning as is given by the rattlesnake when about to strike, the north wind suddenly crashed into the valleys and sometimes continued for hours without a moment of respite. Deer, scenting the pending atmospheric change, galloped uneasily to the hillsides for protection, or else dived head-long into the wooded bottom lands. But man, unsuspecting, rode along, and if he were a new-comer to Texas he probably was poorly equipped for the forthcoming ordeal.

It is said these unusual winds (which have become considerably milder), were exclusively Texan, and gained their origin on the staked plains where the humid, heated atmosphere was taken aloft and suddenly replaced by the pure air that came down from the stratosphere. This cold air current came plunging to the earth's surface and then spread out with extreme suddenness, the wave of cold wind gaining momentum and often engulfing the entire southwestern part of the state. It then appeared as if the storm-god were "thrusting into battle with a thousand chariots of brass." The continuous blue wind often howled, whistled and drove with great intensity.

"While trees, dim-seen, in frenzied numbers, tear
The lingering remnants of their yellow hair."

After raging for perhaps forty-eight hours, the storm would subside. The sun would shine down upon the country-side, and the resulting fresh, pure atmosphere became bracing and invigorating. Great indeed are the wonders of nature!

Springtime

Following the last blast of the north wind came the slow, southerly breeze and springtime. Nature put on her spring clothes for the admiration of the settler, and the valleys gave the appearance of an artificially arranged flower bed.

Blue ranges hovered in the distances, and the dark forms of tall trees seemed to lean heavily against the mountain-sides. Here and there were white haws with snow-white blooms. As spring advanced, flowing layers of blue bonnets made their appearance in the valleys and on the hillsides. Bordering the blue fringes the wild phlox and poppies added a restful pink to the color outline. Adding to the spreading bouquet arrangement, the green prickly pear, with its corpulent leaves and linked branches, appeared in clusters with bell-shaped yellow and orange blossoms. Here and there little dabs of purple verbenas added a color fascination to the landscape.

Thus, it may be seen that the valleys of the upper Llanos, when first penetrated by man—the first of such exploration of any consequence having been in the sixties—were beautiful and alluring. Partially hemmed in from the outer world by the surrounding divide lands and mountain peaks, the valleys presented a picture of grandeur and colossal natural beauty. Here was the undisturbed, unspoiled handiwork of God, the Supreme Architect.

Into these valleys came those first Kimble settlers—men and women who were not afraid, who had their own lives to live, who went forth, as Matthew Arnold has it,

> *"Tracking out their true, original course;*
> *A longing to inquire*
> *Into the mystery of this heart which beats*
> *So wild, so deep in us,—to know*
> *Whence our lives came and where they go."*

The Kimble County valleys, surrounded by shin oak hills and cedar-coated canyons, became the stage for new life dramas to be played by new actors. Curtains were drawn back. The new stage was in readiness. Said Shakespeare:

> *"All the world's a stage,*
> *And all the men and women merely players;*
> *They have their exits and their entrances,*
> *And one man in his time plays many parts."*

CHAPTER TWO

GENTRYS MOVE TO KIMBLE

It was in the late 50's that Raleigh Gentry moved to Kimble County. He selected for the site of his home a place on the banks of Bear Creek, approximately five miles from where that creek flows into the North Llano, and became one of the very first of the white settlers of the county.

A more beautiful, enticing location could hardly have been found. Within a stone's throw of a mountain spring, which fed a lively stream that provided water for the cattle, the pioneer Gentry set up a home. This homestead was a typical one, composed at first of two log houses, enclosed by a heavy picket fence. The ax was put to use and tall, stately pecans and white oaks were appropriated, split, notched and squared, and soon a home was made. In the background, only a hundred paces away, a bluff lifted itself above the horizon, with yawning declivities breaking toward the level land below.

The family fared well on the frontier. If their presence was discovered by the Indians, no hostility was shown, and for fully three years the family went about its affairs undisturbed. The Gentrys were never without an abundance of game, including bear, turkey, deer and wild beef. Honey was plentiful, and could easily be found in the cliffs and in the hollow of live oak and pecan trees.

A small field was cultivated, mainly to provide corn for bread. This grain crop was usually grated into meal by hand, or, at convenient seasons, taken to Lang's Mill in Gillespie County. Once or twice each year a trip was made to Fredericksburg for supplies.

Raleigh Gentry was a hunter. With his growing sons, he made trips to the buffalo range on the head of the Conchos and brought home a supply of choice meats to be cured and consumed as needed. The valleys surrounding the homestead furnished game meats to satisfy the most fastidious taste. The ranching business included the raising of cattle and a few hogs.

There, on the Bear Creek retreat, Raleigh Gentry spent several unmolested years. He reared a large family of boys: Allen, Lee, Gilford, William, George and Jack. The sons were quite satisfied to grow up in their new home, and the ambition of each was to own a horse of his own. From early childhood the frontier boy learned to ride horses and to wrangle livestock. In riding after cattle the young rider must learn "to follow the steer's dodge as if his horse were tied to his tail." Such was the environment in which the Gentry family lived on Bear Creek.

In 1862 Gentry sold his improvements on Bear Creek to Rance Moore, and moved his family to a creek about fifteen miles northeast. He settled on the banks of the stream now known as Gentry Creek. There on the south bank a new home was built, just east of the present Junction-London highway. The creek was spring-fed and provided an abundance of running water the year 'round. Like the Bear Creek valley, the Gentry Creek water shed provided a haven for wild animals. The creek afforded a favorite habitat for the beaver, and many long water holes were created by the wooded dams.

One of the sons, William, died of illness while serving the Southern cause in the Civil War. Indeed even before the family moved from their original Kimble County home, a terrible storm had arisen in the political sky, rumblings of which were relayed to the Gentry household. The sky was split by bolt after bolt of destruction that swept across the country, and the call to arms was echoed to the remotest settlements. Only a sufficient number were retained at home to give a measure of protection to the women and children and the property of the outlying settlers. News of the death

of young William Gentry fell like a pall over the Gentry household. Especially was the death blow felt by the widow, Nancy Frazier Gentry and her small son, John. Bate Berry, who had made a brilliant record in the Texas war for independence, lived on the main Llano some six miles below the mouth of Gentry Creek, and two years later a courtship developed between Berry and the Gentry widow. They rode horse-back to Fredericksburg, obtained a license, and were married.

While living on Gentry Creek the Gentry family experienced many hardships. They lived there during the time the Indians were at their worst on the Kimble frontier. Periodic raids were made through the section on almost every full-moon. Horses were stolen from the family on a number of occasions. It became difficult to keep a sufficient number of horses to carry on the ranch work. On the occasion of one of the many raids, two of the young sons were herding a few of the family's horses less than a mile from home, and as the horses grazed leisurely about on the hillside, a band of Indians suddenly swooped down upon them, stole the animals, and the herders were hard-pressed to escape with their lives. On still another occasion, a fast race horse was hobbled in the valley near the home, and as the men went for him early in the morning they could see an Indian astride him, racing across the side of the mountain.

The full terror of the Indians was not felt by this pioneer family until the spring of 1867. Allen Gentry and his younger brother, Lee, the latter being only fourteen years of age, mounted the horses early one morning and went northeast into the Little Saline country on a hog-hunt. On Little Saline Creek they were joined by Felix Hale. Hog sign led them to Leon Creek, just over the present Kimble line in Mason County. The three of them headed up the brushy creek, separated—Allen going up the south side of the stream and Lee and Felix Hale going up the opposite side. As the latter rode leisurely along they became attracted by the thud of running horses across the creek, and through a clearing they saw a band of Indians chasing Allen.

As the red skins advanced they opened fire, and appeared to be crowding their victim closely.

The youthful Lee, seeing his brother in distress and running a losing race with death, being young, loyal and impulsive, wanted to go to his older brother's relief. But in this he was deterred by the seasoned Hale, who explained that such effort would be fruitless and suicidal. The two then wheeled their horses around and ran full-speed to the nearest aid, which happened to be the Gamel Ranch on Bluff Creek.

A speedy gathering of neighbors followed, and grim-faced pioneers went forth to claim the remains of another victim of Indian savagery. The body was found a few hundred yards from where the chase had been seen by his companions, being a short distance north from what is now known as Leon's Point, near the present Junction-Mason highway. There was a spear wound through a hand and the body was riddled with bullets. An improvised hearse was prepared by tying four corners of a blanket to a straight pole, placing the corpse therein, and in that way it was conveyed a distance of some four miles to the home of Mathew A. Doyle. There the body was placed in a hack and carried to Gentry Creek—back to a heart-broken widow and two grief-stricken children. Interment was in what is now known as Gentry Creek Cemetery, located half a mile west of the Gentry home.

Following the discovery of the body near Leon's Point, a posse of settlers followed the Indians for many miles, but failed to overtake them.

As the Indian depredations became more furious and dreaded, the Gentry family finally despaired and moved to Burnet County.

At this writing Mrs. Fannie Gentry, the surviving widow of Lee Gentry, resides in the town of Menard, where her husband died in 1927. She and her late husband, in their childhood had seen with their own eyes the full terror of the Comanches. Mrs. Gentry, whose father was Robert Caviness, recalls when as a child her family lived on the

plains and kept an out-post stage stand some twenty-five miles from the nearest neighbor. At that far-away point on a cool autumn day one hundred Comanches suddenly appeared in a cloud of dust, circled the premises a number of times in typical war-like fashion.

"My father, two brothers and one old man were all the men folks there," recalls Mrs. Gentry. "They persuaded father not to shoot as it would but arouse the Indian's savagery. Father finally pulled his gun in and barred the window, which was a signal to the Indians to approach the corrals and get the horses. This they did, then shot into our house twice, circled it three times, repeated their war-whoop, and rode away. I can never forget the tinkling bells on their shields."

CHAPTER THREE

RANCE MOORE ON BEAR CREEK

Homesteader, frontiersman, cattle-raiser, Indian fighter, was Rance Moore. During the Civil War a number of men were placed in what was known as "frontier service," to give protection to the northern and western frontier of Texas. At the outbreak of the war Rance Moore lived in Milam County, five miles from the town of Cameron. He had previously lived in McLennan County. He was assigned to a company to serve on the frontier, and while absent the family continued to live in Milam County.

It was in 1862 that Moore purchased from Raleigh Gentry the latter's improvements on Bear Creek, located five miles from where it flows into the North Llano River. Grass was good and range was free, and Moore liked the lay of the land.

To this outpost—this fringe of civilization—came pioneer Moore and his wife and six children. The children were: Anna, Liza, William, Dan, Betty (who married James Bradbury, Jr.), Leaf (who married J. A. Birt), and Ella (who married Lou M. Walton, and now lives with her husband on Big Saline in Kimble County). Ella was only two years old when the family moved to Bear Creek. Other children born later were James, Robert, John, Tom, Creed, Lillie (who married Charlie Ervin), Josephine (who married John Baker), and Kitty (who married Light Townsend). The Gentry living quarters were added to, new log houses were constructed, and in the nearby field and land adjacent thereto grubbing was done to enlarge the cultivated area.

The sound of the ax and the crash of falling trees could be heard as the new homestead was improved, corrals built, and the yard fence was enlarged.

Charlie Jones, a brother-in-law of Rance Moore, was also connected with frontier service, and joined with the Moores in moving to Bear Creek. He, with his family, settled three miles below the Moores on Elm Flat, and there built a home. Charlie Jones was in the cattle business, and had trailed a string of cattle from his Milam County ranch. He was also an expert blacksmith, and soon installed a shop on his Elm Flat premises. During the ensuing years to his shop came settlers from miles around to have their plow points sharpened and their appliances and tools made and repaired and other blacksmith work done. The shop became a favorite meeting place for settlers, and there they came to talk over the problems of the day, smoke and chew Battle-ax, and pick flaws in current gossip.

The Jones family lived neighbors to Rance Moore on Bear Creek until 1873. The children in this family consisted of Martha (who married Bill Moore, and after his death married Ben Jones); Bell (who married James Latham of Mason County); Lodd; Jane (who married Alec Ferguson); Roxy (who married Steve Jones); Florence (who married George Kiser); Kate (who married Fayette Kiser). The elder Jones moved from Kimble County to Willow Creek, in Mason County, where he lived until his death in 1906. On his Willow Creek place he reserved one acre of land, and had it set aside "as long as the world stands" as a family cemetery. There he and members of his family lie buried.

Shortly after the Rance Moores established themselves on Bear Creek, an old acquaintance, named Billy Waites, joined them. The latter continued to live with them until his marriage some three or four years later, when he built himself a home only a mile away. Waites was an old Indian fighter, and was invariably called on when protection was needed during an emergency. He was past middle-age and was becoming grayish.

Rance Moore and Charlie Jones trailed their cattle together from Milam to the grassy valleys of the upper Llanos. In addition, they had hogs, and later on had a few horses. The livelihood of the families consisted of the usual fare—fish, honey, beef, bear, turkey and venison. Periodical trips were made to the trading posts for ammunition and supplies. On such occasions corn was taken to the mill. Honey, furs and the like were included in the out-going cargoes, and such commodities were turned into money or exchanged for necessities for the family use. Now and then fat beeves were driven to settlements below for market. The main concern of the families was an adequate supply of ammunition—a basic necessity both as a means of providing a livelihood and as protection against possible Indian incursions.

Into the Moore settlement came others during the 60's, including Lane and William Gibson with their families, the Indian experiences of whom will be discussed elsewhere. Also, in 1869 came James Sewell with his bride, and into which family tragedy stalked when Sewell later became a victim of the redskin warriors.

In 1867, Rance Moore decided to take his family temporarily to Mason, there to attend a session of school and enjoy the protection afforded by living in the more settled areas. During 1866 and 1867 the Indian threat had reached the height of its terror, and many settlers deserted their frontier homes and grimly and reluctantly turned their wagons toward civilization. Others chose to remain and take their chances with fate.

But tragedy followed the Moore family. On the night of the 5th day of February, 1867, in Mason County, Rance Moore became aroused from his sleep by a noise in the horse stable nearby. "Indians" he said to himself, as he arose and quietly peered through an opening and at the same time felt in the dark for the barrel of his gun. Rance Moore knew Indians, and he knew how disturbed horses became when Indians were around. He gripped his gun, and peered again from a vantage point. What did he see but a bold Indian

near the corral! Moore raised his gun to his shoulder and, like the roar of a cannon breaking the stillness of the night, the gun discharged squarely into the target. Rance Moore was not a man to waste bullets. He was a marksman and a sure shot. An object tumbled forward in a crumpled heap.

A cold chill came over Rance Moore. That man did not fall like an Indian! No other Indians were heard from. No redskin compadre rushed forth to claim the fallen brave. Moore staggered forth to the prostrate, lifeless form of his own blood—his son!

On a native stone, taken from the Reichenau Mountains of Kimble County, and set over a grave in the Koocksville Cemetery at the side of the Mason-Brady highway, just out of the town of Mason, may now be seen the following inscription:

"DANIE MORE, SON OF PERMELIA AND RANCE MORE
BORN FEBRUARY 10, 1852—DIED FEB. 5, 1867"

The family, weighted down with grief, soon removed to the Bear Creek ranch. There they lived and Moore fought Indians and raised cattle until 1873 when along came Asa Ellis, who, acting for the partnership of Ellis and Fitzgerald, bought every cow brute Moore had in his brand at $1 per head, range delivery. The total, including improvements, came to around $6,500 as the Rance Moore brand could be seen on the heads of the San Saba and the Conchos as well as in the Llano river country.

After the sale of the improvements and livestock, the family packed up, and were soon on the move. Rance Moore was restless and wanted a change. He had not been exactly the same man since 1867, and he felt that he must have a change—a diversion from his old haunts. He traded with John Joy for an irrigated farm on Johnson Fork of the Llanos. Here was a chance to get his mind on something else—something different. Then, too, Moore felt he would be happier to live just over the mountain from his old friend, Creed Taylor, who held sway on Devil's River. Farming was good in the mountain-studded valley of the Johnson

Fork. But a year of this was enough, and the farm was sold to Rainbolt and Cape Willingham, and again the Moore family went forth to seek a new location and build a new home.

Grass was good in the Saline country, and Rance Moore had a hankering for cattle. Saline creek valley offered everything the upper Llanos and Bear creek could offer, and it was not long until a new homestead had been carved out of the wilderness, and the old Reichenau premises were improved and again put into use. The Moore brand was soon to be counted in the hundreds.

The presence of Indians required a constant vigil. It was difficult for a settler to keep horses, and Rance Moore suffered many losses on Saline, one of which occurred in December of 1874. It was on the 23rd day of that month that a band of nine raiders invaded the Moore ranch and made away with several head of horses. At daylight the loss was discovered, and the missing horses left no mystery of their whereabouts, what with fresh Indian signs going up the creek.

It happened that Capt. Dan Roberts' ranger camp was only five miles away, and one of the Moore boys mounted a fast pony to carry the news to the Captain. The Rangers soon picked up the trail, as it was fresh and plain, and followed it west up Big Saline for some ten miles to where the creek made a bend to the southwest. The Rangers made a strenuous effort to track down the marauders and recover the stolen horses, but no horses were recovered.

In 1874, Rance Moore made a mistake. He did a thing he had not often done during his rugged life on the frontier: he misjudged a man. It happened this way: Having but limited facilities for handling cattle, he made a deal with Jim Poke Mason and Henry Sharp to keep a string of his cattle, attend to them, mark and brand the calves, and do all this on shares. Came the Fall of 1875 and a settlement was had. The cattle were divided, as agreed. The Moores were now prepared to take charge of and herd the cattle, and the services of Mason and Sharp were, therefore, to be

dispensed with. In making the change Mason became angered at something pertaining to the camp equipment involved in the change, and cursed one of the cow hands. On December 12 he and Wes Johnson rode up to the Moore home on Saline, dismounted, were received and invited inside, where, according to Mrs. L. M. Walton, they remained for several minutes conversing.

They warmed their hands by the open fireside, and Mason proceeded to air his grievances. Moore stared at him closely and undertook to read his intentions. Mason, although somewhat sullen, seemed satisfied, and prepared to leave. The host, unarmed, followed them outside, and the argument continued. Suddenly Mason turned as though he had forgotten something, and in an angered voice, said: "Well, you've acted . . .," and without finishing the sentence fired a shot into Moore, the bullet going through the kidneys, mortally wounding him. Wes Johnson, several years later, in recalling the shooting stated that as the argument continued outside Moore said to Mason, "How do you want to settle it?" and the latter replied, "This way," patting his gun. Moore then countered, "Then I'll get mine," and went inside for his gun, and as he started to emerge from the door on his way outside, Mason shot and killed him.

The culprits jumped astride their ponies as the smoke oozed from the barrel of Mason's gun, and made a hasty get-away. Johnson was later arrested, indicted, tried and convicted as an accomplice and was sentenced to four years in prison. Mason was indicted for murder, but was never arrested.

Rance Moore left a large family to mourn his passing. His remains were interred in the Koocksville cemetery in Mason County, beside the grave of his lamented son, Danie.

Thus ended the life of a frontiersman who had played his part in the frontier drama.

CHAPTER FOUR

INDIANS ATTACK GIBSON CHILDREN

Charles Lane Gibson, at the age of twenty-five, came to Texas in 1852 from Missouri, and settled on the head of Pecan Creek in the edge of Blanco County, close to Round Mountain. From there the family moved to Cold Springs Creek, twenty miles east of Mason town. Gibson was engaged in the cattle business, and there came a severe drought in 1863 and '64. In 1865 he made a trip up the Llano and found range conditions to be good. Whereupon, he and his brother, William, determined to move and settle on Bear Creek. Lane Gibson owned three yoke of steers, and the slow trek was soon under way.

For their new homes the Gibsons picked a shady, timbered spot, only three quarters of a mile below Rance Moore's ranch headquarters. The two Gibsons set about hewing logs, making clap board lumber. Corrals were built along with the typical home of the time. The two Gibsons were fifty yards apart. That placed them in the immediate neighborhood of Rance Moore, Billie Waites and Charlie Jones. And it was but six miles down to where Andrew Jackson Nixon lived. The latter was a door neighbor of his son James, who had a family, and John New, a son-in-law. The Nixons were in the cattle business, did a lot of hunting, and made good frontier neighbors.

Lane Gibson could feel reasonably safe in these surroundings. Neighbors usually joined in bear hunts, and when a wild beef was butchered by one, it was divided with others in the settlement. Gibson was a cautious man, and loyal to his family.

Indians Attack the Gibson Children

Elizabeth Lambeth Gibson, his wife, was a native of Tennessee and a brave, industrious home-maker. She was much sought after by the neighboring ladies because of her skill with the needle, and for the further reason that she was unusually adept with the spinning wheel. Her kindly, charming and generous ways made of her a popular figure on the frontier. All in all, the Gibson family was a happy one, and their new home added zest to their family life and hope for their future well-being.

The cattle that had been moved from their native range in Mason County were not content with the change, and many of them soon drifted down the river. In the fall of 1867, Lane Gibson, with his eldest son, Lytle, and his brother, William, made a trip to Loyal Valley for the purpose of branding and marking the calves that were on that range. But Mrs. Gibson was not lonesome with her seven children with her as well as the company of her sister-in-law. Indians never announce their appearances and always strike unexpectedly. However, their devilment was mostly horse-stealing by the light of the moon, and there was very little danger of being attacked during the day time, especially in the midst of a settlement. So with the feeling of security in the numbers about her, Mrs. Gibson went busily along with her spinning and sewing for the family. Winter was just around the corner and there was work to be done.

It came to pass on a late October afternoon, as was their custom to do occasionally, the children, Jasper, Louis, and Albert, aged twelve, six and five, respectively, went out with their little truck wagon to gather wood. It was a home-made vehicle, the wheels being made of pecan by slicing the trunk of a pecan tree with a cross-cut saw. The bed was of carefully hewed boards from trees, and the finished structure turned out to be an object of just pride on the part of the Gibson children. The drift wood was easier to get, and there was a lot of that in the creek bottom. Their mother wanted dry, hard wood, and they were careful in making the selection. They felt that she would prefer Spanish oak branches, and they carefully culled out the mesquite, as it

was not desirable for cooking purposes. At last the wagon was loaded, the ax was stuck down into the wood, and the three boys had to heave and puff to pull that load up the bank of Bear Creek. Just as they ascended the creek bank they saw three men coming, galloping bare-back to meet them. As they approached . . . but let us hear Jasper Gibson's version of the experience:

"As we came out of Bear Creek with the load, we immediately saw three men on horses coming to meet us in a gallop. We had no idea they were Indians and thought they were soldiers from some fort passing through. When they got closer we saw they were Indians.

"They stood there a bit apparently deciding what to do with us. There was a big bend in the creek and we lived in that bend. Finally one of the Indians decided to stay and watch us, and the other two rode toward our house, but soon returned. We could do nothing and just stood there waiting.

"Then one of the men motioned to us to hand him an ax that was in the wagon. But we were too frightened to move. One of them then caught the ax with the end of his bow, and pulled it up on the horse. We wondered if he would use it on us. Another Indian then reached down and caught one of my hands and tried to pull me up on the horse. I kicked and fought hard. My little brother Lewis, who was only six years old, then caught my other arm and helped me to pull loose. The man then let me go, probably because he changed his plans, because he could have forced me to get on had he tried hard enough.

"The Indians seemed undecided about what to do with us. I thought sure I would be killed when one of them put an arrow in his bow and aimed it squarely at my head. I thought I could see another of them shake his head, so the bow was pulled down.

"They then let us go on ahead of them a ways, and we crossed the creek near where the trail forked, one going toward Charlie Jones' and the other being the dim San Saba road. We started to take the trail to the Jones' place, but they rode in and turned us away and motioned for us

to take the other path. That would lead us away from home, so we screamed and started running frantically toward our mother.

"As we ran down the hill the Indians sat on their horses and started shooting arrows into us. One arrow struck me in my left side, near my heart, and plowed along my ribs. Another hit me about the same place on my right side. Both had steel heads, and penetrated the muscles but did not cut into my vitals. Neither of them went through, and were left dangling from my sides. My little brother, Lewis, was shot in the back, right between his shoulders, but the arrow was a blunt-headed one, and Lewis reached back and pulled it out as he ran. Little Albert was shot in the back, the steel-pointed arrow going entirely through his body, the head barely emerging in front, but by some miracle did not penetrate his bowels.

"We were all running and screaming, and as we were only a short distance from home, the Indians were probably afraid aid might come to us, so they disappeared in the woods.

"But our screams were not heard, and our mother knew nothing of the attack until we were near the house. She was sitting with our aunt, out at the loom, spinning, when we got there with blood streaming from our wounds and the arrows dangling from our sides. My older sister, Mary, immediately ran, alone, to Rance Moore's for help. As she approached the Moores, Rance Moore was below the house setting out fish hooks in the creek and looked up to see her fly by and into the front yard. She was overcome and fainted as she entered the front door, but soon revived and sobbed out her story. Mr. Moore did not wait for details. He hurried to Charlie Jones, and the two of them were at our house in a little while.

"They pulled the arrows out of my body. In Albert's case, Charlie Jones cut the arrow head off and pulled the arrow back out the same way it had entered. They doctored us up the best they could and we were put to bed.

"Mr. Moore went on over to Nixons on North Llano.

Mr. Nixon was regarded as a right good home doctor and he came over to render what aid he could. The first thing he did after looking us over was to prepare what he called "slippery-elm bark poultice." To prepare the preparation he would break the elm bark up and beat it into a pulp, then wet it and apply this to the wounds. It was supposed to have great drawing power and Mr. Nixon claimed it would keep the wounds open until they healed from the inside."

And thus is given a vivid description of another of the frontier episodes that occurred in Kimble. It seems providential that all three of the youthful victims survived. It developed that Lewis, who was apparently the least injured of the three, suffered the most from the blunt-arrow wound in his back. A bone had been chipped and an infection developed many years later. At the time of this writing he lives at Jourdanton, Texas, where he operates a drug store.

After the first-aid treatment had been administered, Bill Moore, son of Rance Moore, was dispatched to Mason to carry the news to the father and brother of the victims. By traveling all night he arrived the next morning, and before sunset of that day the anxious father and brother had arrived at their Bear Creek home.

The wounds soon healed, and not long thereafter the Gibsons headed their oxen away from the setting sun and back to the settled area of Llano County. The cattle had already drifted back, and the children needed schooling. In Llano County they settled on Hickory Creek at the foot of House Mountain. After two years there, they moved to Squaw Creek in Gillespie County. On the Squaw Creek homestead in 1871 Mrs. Gibson passed on to her reward, long before she had reached her three score and ten years. She left behind her eleven children, consisting of Lytle, Jasper, Mary, Martha, Elizabeth, Lewis, Albert, Sarah, Charles, Benjamin and Ellen. Lane Gibson later moved to Globe, Arizona, where he died about 1898.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE BRADBURYS—INDIAN FIGHTERS

On the scroll of honored Texans who went forth to defy the dangers of the frontier and there to strike a blow for the cause of law and order, must be added the names of James, Jr., James, Sr., Theodore and Allen Bradbury. John Bradbury, another son, married a daughter of the Warnicks of Williamson County, and moved to Cow House Creek in Coryell County, where he died a few years ago.

It was well up in the 60's that James Bradbury, with his white, patriarchal beard, grief-stricken by the death of his wife, left his Gabriel Creek home in Williamson County and headed west. He was joined by his three sons, and his three daughters—Jane, Rhoda and Matt. The family had resided at the Gabriel Creek homestead during the war and for several years prior thereto. But James Bradbury yearned for more room and a change, and the Kimble country provided both.

The new settler brought a string of cattle to Kimble with him. For a home he selected a spot on the grassy valley of the South Llano, approximately three miles above the forks of the rivers, and was about half-way between where the Junction cemetery is now located and the South Llano river. The new home was only 200 yards from the river's edge. A lively spring on the nearby river bank furnished the family water.

The setting for the new home was ideal from the standpoint of a frontier home-maker. As the oxen heaved a sigh of relief on the afternoon of the arrival of the new settlers,

Bradbury Ranch

the streaking rays of the setting sun cast themselves over the terrain and the shadows of the ox brutes grew long and slender. To the northwest was Round Mountain, volcanic in its appearance. To the east could be seen the white-rock precipice which bore the legendary name of Lover's Leap. The story was believed then—that the Indian brave having been denied by an unfriendly chief the marriage of the beautiful Indian maiden who shared his love, plunged with her, locked in their last embrace, to sudden death hundreds of feet below.

As the evening sunset faded, the pecan-timbered area adjacent to the river was given over to flutter of turkey wings as thousands of the native birds perched themselves high in the protecting boughs of the pecan and elm. And with the still hush of night, the whole wilderness became a reverberating medley of a thousand voices. The mountain lion roared thunderously across the river and in the distance. Before the echo died away, the crouching panther screamed out a defiant answer. The timber wolf joined and was answered by a she wolf far beyond the bend of the river.

With sunset gone, the clear canopy above presented a richness of subdued color as its glare settled on the sweeping South Llano valley, to lend a fairy-story enchantment to the wooded, rolling horizon. The echoing voices all but drowned out the coarse croak of the bull frog in the river below as he sought heroically to equal or excel all other forest sounds. The night owl hooted its contribution to the chorus, and the chip-munk cocked its ears and squawked a rapturous little song of its own. James Bradbury lit his pipe with a coal of fire as the moon lifted itself over the high brim of Lover's Leap and cast its silver beams on the valleys. If the legend really happened, it must have been on a night like this!

Before day-break the next morning the elder Bradbury had the coffee pot boiling. He stood there before the flickering fire that was made of dead mesquite, and his shadow must have been a hundred feet long as it stretched out

grotesquely on the grassy carpet and reflected against the mesquite and liveoak in the background.

The building of a new home was a methodical job. The logs were cut, hewed into shape to cause them to fit closely together. They were pulled in with the oxen, notched and placed in order. The home was composed of three log houses, around all of which was a two-acre enclosure. The latter contained no gates, but steps were arranged for ingress and egress. Clap-board was painstakingly hewed for floors, and the bedsteads consisted of pickets arranged cross-wise upon which the mattresses were placed, separated from the wooden surface by grass or cotton.

As was the usual procedure with such settlers, the living consisted principally of wild game, fish and honey. Seasonal trips were made to Fort Mason or Fredericksburg for food essentials, mail and ammunition. Deer hides were so skinned that ends of the legs could be tied and the hide thus filled with honey, to be marketed with hides, beef and like commodities.

Bear meat was much desired and delicious as a food. The skilled hunter skinned the animal so as to leave the layer of fat on the hide. The meat was then "cured," as bacon was, and could be kept for months and retain its pleasing taste. Smoke houses were made for this one purpose—to house the "bear bacon" for the family use.

Hospitality was ever-present at the Bradbury household. Any stranger passing that way was welcome to spend the night and break bread with the family, and perhaps spend a week.

Such was the universal frontier custom. The stranger or old acquaintance of the family would ride up in the evening, unsaddle his horse, and, in the absence of men folks, he would proceed to feed the animal, and then make his way to the house for his meal. If the family had already eaten, a fire would be started and the food would be warmed and some fresh meat fried. The stranger could have his choice between corn bread or biscuits, or, perhaps light bread had been baked a couple of days before, and he would prefer

that. James Bradbury, when the stranger put in his appearance, drawled out a welcome. "Come right on in, Mister, and have something to eat. We've just eat, but the girls 'll throw something together for you. The boys will see about your horse. Did you come in from down Mason way?"

At different times there were employees and hunters at the Bradbury ranch. James Bradbury was a blacksmith of attainment, and maintained an improvised forge where horses were shod—such being an essential requirement in the hill country.

The Bradbury Neighbors

John Hamilton, a single man, lived in the Bradbury colony for a time. Likewise, Lyle Osborn, a bachelor, and Jim Leverts, both of Llano County, were located north of the Bradburys, and later lived a few miles below on the Main Llano. Near them lived Jim Dorsey, who had a wife and one child.

At one time Jim Wade and family of Mason lived on South Llano, about five miles from the Colony. Eight miles below, on Main Llano, ranched the veteran Bate Berry, fighting kinsman of James Bradbury, and a frequent visitor to the new settlement center.

In 1866, there came from Kendall County, Louis Deats, to settle near the forks of the rivers. He was a Civil War veteran, and to his new Llano Valley home he brought his wife and two sons, Joe and Julius, aged five and one, respectively (the former now of Christoval and the latter of Orient, Texas). Like others, they trekked to the new home in an ox wagon and brought a string of horses and a few cattle. Deats was a native of Bastrop County, and his wife, Mary Miller Deats, was born in Bandera County—each of strong, pioneer Texas blood. With this family came Charlie Thompson, a bachelor, who engaged in the cattle business with Deats. "But Indians stole us out so much we had to move back to Kendall County after around two years," comments Joe Deats. From Kendall this family later removed

to Llano County, where some members of the family reside at this time.

A neighbor to Louis Deats was one Tim Williamson. He was in the cattle business, and, like all Kimble settlers, did a great deal of hunting to provide a livelihood for his family.

Further up South Llano, on what is now called the Bud Fleming ranch, lived for a time one Jim Williams and family. Near him lived Frank Williams.

John and Pete Mankins lived near Jim Wade, and in the same neighborhood lived George Hutchison and his father Jim. An early-day tragedy occurred there. Jim Hutchison, an old man, was out hewing logs, and Pete Mankins approached him as he worked. The visitor stood by and poked some fun at the venerable old gentleman, and aroused the old man's anger.

"If you don't leave me alone, I'll hit you with this broad ax," warned the elderly Hutchison. He had hardly spoken when Pete Mankins, then a young man, shot and killed him.

During the 60's, Silas Berry and his wife and two children claimed refuge from frontier dangers by settling in the shadows of the Bradbury ranch. Also came William Berry, who had married one of Jim Hutchison's daughters. During their sojourn there their little boy died with diphtheria. Non-professional family treatment proved inadequate.

With the dawn of the 70's there came to the settlement a young man named Ira Kirkpatrick, who made bold to court the lovely Jane Bradbury, and they were later married. In 1873, they moved to Honey Creek in Mason County, and for a time lived in the home of James Bradbury, Jr. Jane Kirkpatrick died in 1880. There were no children.

In 1873, Wilce Wooten (who at this writing lives on his ranch in Mason County) joined the Bradbury settlement. Another frontier romance developed, and the hand of the charming Rhoda Bradbury was given in marriage the following year.

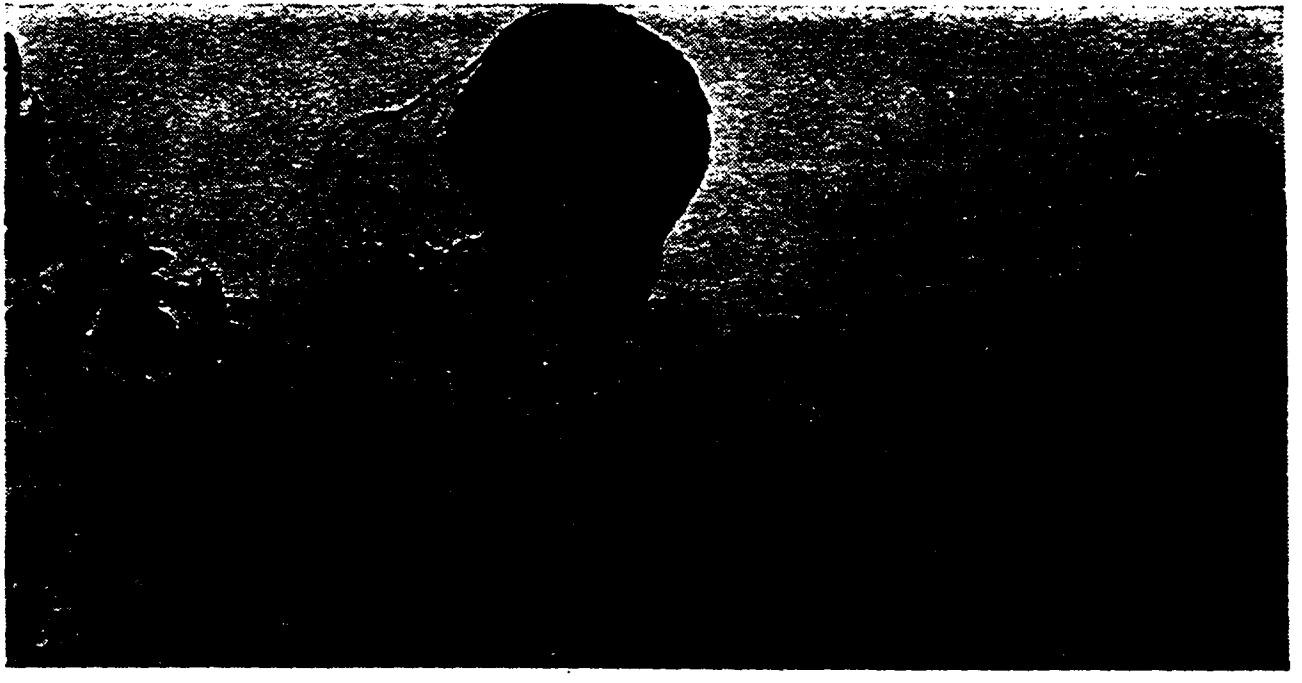
It should be remembered that many of the settlers were not permanent. At different times different families would settle for a few months or a year or so and then move on.

Indian skirmishes by the Bradburys were of minor import during the terrible days of 1866 and '67, and even up to the 70's. As they scouted the frontier, hunted and cattle-hunted, the Bradburys were ever cautious and went well armed and prepared for the unexpected. By their vigilance their live-stock losses were comparatively light. Indians had a way of keeping tab on the man-strength of adversaries, and they avoided the Bradburys.

The new ranch home was made sad in 1872 when news came that Alvin Clark, a Confederate veteran, and husband of Nancy Bradbury Clark, the oldest daughter of James Bradbury, had been shot down and killed in Georgetown by one Eugene Houghton. The tragedy had occurred on Christmas eve, 1871, and death followed on New Year's day. That meant a widow and some little children had to be provided for. There were five of them, James, Green, William, Frank, and the only daughter, Rhoda—about whom Leaf Birt recently recalled "she was the most beautiful little child I ever knew, and had long, black, wavy hair." So in the summer an ox wagon was fitted out and dispatched to Georgetown, commandeered by Theodore and Allan Bradbury and another man. Frank Clark, who now ranches near Menard, recalls the trip with this comment:

"I remember this trip very well. When going through the brush country between Saline and the Bradbury Ranch, we passed along the foothills of the shin-oak covered mountains, and the men warned us to be on the alert, that Indians could easily see us from the mountains. One of the men rode ahead of us, and each of the other two walked along at some distance on either side as mother drove the team. We children all lay down, peeked from under the wagon sheet for Indians."

News was taken to the Bradbury camp that the murderer of Alvin Clark had been convicted and given only five years in the penitentiary.



Ox Wagon Trek of the Clark Family to Kimble

CHAPTER SIX

THE KILLING OF JAMES H. SEWELL AND JAMES BRADBURY, SR.

In 1869, to the Rance Moore settlement there came to live a groom with his sixteen-year-old bride, Mr. and Mrs. James H. Sewell. Mrs. Sarah Sewell was the daughter of James Gossett, a noted Texas Indian fighter. Two of her brothers had given their lives while fighting under the banner of the South, and a third brother, Jack, rendered frontier service as a Ranger. True pioneer blood flowed through her veins.

A log house was constructed in the Rance Moore yard for the new arrivals, the presence of whom would add strength to the settlement in the resistance against Indian raids. The Sewells were home-makers, and hardly four years had passed before two babies had come to bless their home and to add happiness to their fireside.

But the grim hand of tragedy was king for a day in the Sewell home. In the fall of 1872, Jim Sewell had contracted with Charlie Jones to cut cedar posts for him. Each day he would go out to the cedar brake with his ax, his Winchester and his colt's pistol. Each evening he would return to be met by the smiling faces of his wife and children.

One morning Jim Sewell left his pistol at home as he went forth for the day's work. There was no particular reason for leaving the gun behind, except that it was heavy and he had never needed it in the cedar brake. At night he did not return. Long, sleepless hours were in store for the wife. Although pretending to be hopeful, she instinctively knew

it could not be. Billy Waites was sent for. When he went to his stable for his horse he found the redskins had cut the heavy leather hinges from the door and had made away with his saddle pony. At high noon on the following day, Waites, Charlie Jones, an Englishman named Howard Calvert, and a negro servant bore the mutilated remains of the dead man to the yard fence. Mrs. Lou Walton (nee Ellen Moore), who saw the men at the fence, says: "When they got in sight of the house they took the body off the horse and rolled it in a blanket so Mrs. Sewell would be spared the ordeal of seeing the mutilated figure."

The body had been found three miles from home. Tracks at the scene of the tragedy indicated that probably as many as a hundred savages comprised the band that attacked the man. It appeared as though the warriors had been attracted by the sound of the ax, and had crept near him before being discovered, and opened fire. On the ax handle, which, strangely, the Indians did not take, was sign of blood, indicating he had been wounded before dropping the ax. His Winchester apparently had been leaning against a cedar tree only a few steps away. It appeared that Sewell had made a run for the gun, but was mortally wounded before reaching it. Many lance and gun shot wounds told a silent story of torturous murder. The body was stripped of clothing, the head was scalped, and gun, horse and saddle were taken. The remains of James Sewell were buried in the Bear Creek cemetery, and became the second grave in that place—the first being that of Steve Caviness who had been killed by Lieut. Bullis of the United States Army.

A Posse Is Organized

The news of the Sewell killing spread fast. Up and down the rivers many ranchmen took stock of their horses. "Look out for the Indians!" was the watch-word, carried from one home and settlement to another. James Bradbury immediately organized a posse. He mounted his gray stallion, called

"Possum," and headed a group of nine men in pursuit of the red raiders. This party included the three Bradbury boys, Rance Moore, John Nabers, Mart Epps, and probably Charles Wagner. The latter had married Matt Bradbury.

It was insisted that the elder Bradbury, being somewhat old, stay behind and furnish protection to the settlement women who had mobilized themselves in the Bradbury quarters, but the old gentleman would listen to no such nonsense. Was he not the battle-scarred veteran of many an Indian fight? Had he not saved the day on other occasions with his cool nerve and straight shooting? Besides, he was only seventy-five years old and had never seen a sick day.

As the party mounted, a longing expression of apprehension and suspense swept over the dozen ladies as they waved a farewell from the ranch stockade. The two pet bear in the yard scuttled about in careless play. The pale faces were off to follow the trail of the redskins! A day of accounting was in the offing.

The Indian trail was intercepted four miles below the forks of the rivers, as it led easterly from the mountains, and thence took a northeasterly course down the river valley for a few miles. From the signs, it appeared that the Indian band was not as large as it had been supposed. Just south of the Runnels Point the trail turned abruptly west, passed some distance north of Teacup Mountain, and thence west and passed near the site of the present ranch home on the Goodall Kothman ranch, and on into the foothills.

The posse followed on in close pursuit. As they came near the mountains, now known as Bradbury Hills, the trail showed definite signs of being freshly traveled. Presently in the distance, in a clump of brush near the top of the mountain range, a smoke could be seen. The settlers hugged the brow of the hills to avoid being seen, and in that way gained a position within two hundred yards of where they had seen the smoke. The possemen carefully checked their guns to see that they were in shooting order, and girded themselves for the pending fight. They surmised the Indians were roasting horse meat and resting. Cool-headed James

Bradbury, Sr., led the way, holding his rifle in his right hand. An Indian sentinel was seen in the brush on the hill-side. The whites debated briefly, and Bradbury determined on an open attack, regardless of the number of warriors in waiting. According to James Caviness of Mason County, who discussed the battle with the surviving sons, "Come, let's fight 'em!" was Bradbury's order. Over objection of Rance Moore and some of the others, Bradbury dismounted, laid his gun over his saddle, took careful aim, and fired at the Indian sentinel. The latter staggered, probably mortally wounded.

At the crack of the Bradbury gun, a hundred red-faced savages, in battle array, swarmed out from behind the live oaks where they had been eating. There were at least one hundred in the band, and Rance Moore said: "They were as thick as blackbirds!" Shields were brandished and there was a quick exchange of fire, followed by a sharp and spirited battle. The Indians realized their superior strength and the advantage in their hill-side position, and slid down the mountainside in hordes, firing and whooping aloud. John Nabers was riding a mule, which was shot from under him. Rance Moore's horse was shot in the shoulder and became unruly. Nabers jumped up behind Moore, just as an arrow streaked through the stomach of James Bradbury who fell, mortally wounded, the arrow still dangling from his side. The settlers were overpowered and so outnumbered that a disorderly retreat was effected. James Bradbury, Jr., remained by his father's side. In later years he stated that one Indian came within a few paces of him and poised to thrust a deadly tomahawk into him, at which instant he threw his pistol at the Indian, causing the thrust to be deflected, and thereby saving his life. An Indian brave ran to the dying man's side and grabbed his Winchester, whereupon the brave son wheeled his horse and, hovering closely over the pony's neck, was soon out of range of the warring savages.

The men then made their way to the valley road where a covered wagon chanced to be passing, going south. The

travelers were requested to give the news to the women and inform them the survivors would arrive during the night.

After darkness had settled upon the mountain fastness the possemen wended their way back to the scene of the encounter. There, in the spectral shadows, was found all that was mortal of the veteran Bradbury. He had been scalped, stripped, and a deep flesh cut was inflicted in the form of a cross slashed across the front of the body. A dagger or lance had been driven twice through the neck and throat, crosswise. A later examination of the surrounding terrain disclosed that two different bodies of Indians had met at the top of the mountain where the feasting was in progress. A dozen warriors had skimmed the Llano valley, whose trail was followed by the settlers, and a much larger band, coming from the direction of the heads of Gentry and Bear Creeks, met them at the scene of the ensuing fight.

In the meantime, as the hours of the men's absence dragged on toward night time, the women were all but delirious, but stoutly maintained their composure under the terrific strain. They walked about the yard, some carrying their babes in their arms, nervously humming a bed-time lullaby. The writer's mother, Rhoda Clark Fisher, often told of that vigil of watchful waiting. "There was a big white bull dog at the ranch," she recalled, "and I can never forget how that dog looked and sounded as he hunkered down, held his head to the skies and howled out in a most melancholy manner."

An improvised casket was prepared, and interment was made under a live oak tree on the north bank of the North Llano River, shortly below the present bridge. Thus ended a noble, well-spent and useful life, and finis was written to the last chapter of a career that had been devoted to the taming of the wild frontier.

A short time later a fresh Indian grave was found near the scene of the battle, which probably was the result of the opening shot by James Bradbury.

Rhoda Clark Fisher

"And they left him at rest on the spot where he died
With his horse meat, his arrows and his bow by his side,
Never more, with his wild war whoop, to dash on his prey,
Or to sneak into lots and steal horses away."

Back to Mason and More Indians

Following the death of the elder Bradbury, the Colony was held intact for almost a year, when it was dismantled and abandoned, and the Bradbury brand, with more than 2,000 head of cattle, was sold to Felix Mann of Menardville. The three Bradburys took their families to Honey Creek in Mason County. There they had but one skirmish with Indians. Tom Hennessy, who lived in a house with James, oldest of the Clark children, was out riding alone and was attacked by some Indians, who chased him toward his home, near which the horse stumbled as it climbed a hill, and fell. As Hennessy called for help, Theodore and Allan Bradbury appeared, opened fire, and the Indians retreated. The Bradburys then speeded to their sister Nancy's home, as there were no men folks at the place. As they crossed Honey Creek, they saw two or three Indians some distance below, scratching in the sand for water. Whereupon, Theodore dismounted, took careful aim across his saddle, and fired. To his surprise, some twenty or twenty-five Indians jumped up and gave chase. As the Bradburys headed for their sister's place, Allan's horse, which was not well trained, veered away and pulled in below the field. Both had fired intermittently across their shoulders as they ran from the savages. Theodore went directly to the house, jumped from his horse and from inside the picket fence, opened fire. Both he and his brother used rim-fire guns.

The Indians circled the premises two or three times, roaring out a typical Comanche war-whoop. The Comanches could usually be easily distinguished from the Apaches be-

cause the latter rarely ever made whooping sounds during the course of a fight. Allen soon joined his brother in the battle, and both barricaded themselves for a fight to the finish. After a few moments the Indians made their departure. Frank Clark says he well remembers hearing Theodore say to Allen, after the warriors had gone, "I have one shell left!" And the answer was, "Yes, and I have only two left!" Their sister had dressed herself in men's clothing and hat and had paraded about the premises to be seen during the course of the hostilities. When the redskins departed, she was in the house searching for more ammunition.

The Bradburys continued to live in Mason County for several years, and moved to a wilder frontier—Arizona. There they reared large families. During 1935 John Bradbury, a son of James Bradbury, Jr., while acting as a special railroad officer, was murdered by Jack Sullivan, a Colorado ex-convict. Bradbury had previously acted as Sheriff at Duncan, Arizona. Sullivan was tried, given the death penalty and on May 15th, 1936, was executed in Arizona's lethal gas chamber. The trial and execution attracted nation-wide attention.

CHAPTER SEVEN

COALSONS ON COPPERAS

The headwaters section of Copperas Creek presented every appearance of being a hunter's paradise in 1866 when Nick B. Coalson pulled his oxen to a halt and dedicated a new Kimble County home. He was only fifteen miles from the ranch home of Rance Moore, and a slightly closer neighbor was Andrew Jackson Nixon who settled on the North Llano. It was only a year or so until John Williams settled a few miles away and became the nearest neighbor. A Mr. Shackelford settled on Copperas shortly after the coming of Coalson.

Nick Coalson was a native of Illinois, had lived for a time in Missouri, and had moved to Texas at the beginning of the Civil War. Through his veins coursed the blood of a fearless frontiersman of the old order. In Texas Coalson at first settled on the Clear Fork of the Brazos near Jacksboro, but after 1865 moved further west and settled six miles west of Menard on the San Saba River, and during the following year established his ranch on Copperas.

Jennie Blackwell Coalson, wife of the Copperas settler, was brave, talented and charming. She was a talented musician, and had been a teacher. Fearlessly she faced the frontier, and was a leading spirit in the making of the new home.

The new home was built of logs, and consisted of two buildings, with a wagon shed between them, a smoke house at one end, and all under one roof and facing south. The rooms were about 16 x 16 feet and were bullet-proof except for the window-openings and the doors. To the south of the house a ten-acre tract was cleared, with but little

clearing to the north. The plow was put to use and a corn crop was raised each year. One hundred yards to the west of the ranch house a barn was built, along with corrals for the cattle. A bubbling spring a hundred paces away provided drinking water for the family. Copperas Creek had a lively flow, and the stream, coupled with the high bottom timber, grassy valleys, and brushy hillsides, provided a beautiful setting for the new home-makers.

Coalson kept a few cattle and a number of hogs, but his principal occupation was that of hunting. "My father always had from twelve to fifteen dogs and hunted bear every winter," recalls John Coalson, of Mule Creek, New Mexico. Wild game was plentiful, and there was an unlimited supply of turkey and deer. The favorite winter kill was bear, which was cured and kept for use during the following summer season. An occasional trip was made to Fort McKavett or Menardville for supplies. The cupboard might be lacking in the dainties of the dietitian, but the gun rack was never shy of good guns and ammunition. A few beeves were driven to market now and then and sold or traded for such supplies.

Nick Coalson was a fearless sort of man, attended to his own business, and was not a trouble-maker. A man named Tom Baldin settled on the creek some three miles from the Coalsons. The new neighbor was what the settlers termed "nester," and was not an easy man to get along with. Coalson lent him a cow to milk for a season, and, as is not without precedent, being a benefactor brought on trouble. A few months later Baldin, smarting under some disagreement that developed, rode up to the Coalsons, dismounted, and with a pistol held menacingly in his hand, advanced near the house. The situation was not conducive to Baldin's health, nor did it add to his life's expectancy. He either did not know Nick Coalson very well or else he did not value his own life very highly. William Coalson, who now lives at Hillsboro, New Mexico, was an eye-witness to what happened, and describes it as follows:

"Father and Baldin had words over the cow a few days prior to the shooting. Baldin rode up and got off his horse

and started towards the house with a pistol in hand. He yelled out, 'Get ready, Nick, I am after you!' Father was lying in bed crippled, having been wounded in the hip from an Indian fight. He got off the bed and grabbed his shotgun and went to the open door. Baldin raised his pistol, and father shot him in the chest with a load of buck shot, killing him instantly. I was laid up in bed, crippled from a fall from a jack-ass, and was an eye-witness to the shooting."

Indian Trouble

Indian raids were always unexpected. And the unexpected came to the Coalson home on December 1, 1870. At that time there were two men employees on the ranch—Joe Harris, who worked in the field and hunted, and Charlie Mann, who acted as teacher for the Coalson children. The latter had been shot and was crippled in one leg. There were seven children: Douglas, aged eleven; William, aged nine; John, aged seven; Otis, aged five; Elizabeth and Arthur (twins), aged three; and Lula, aged one. Mann, who also hunted with Coalson, was spending the winter, and each day conducted classes for the older children. Harris was married and had a one-year-old child. Thus it may be seen that on December 1, 1870, this frontier home was a busy one, and Coalson could be assured of assistance should an Indian attack be made.

A light Texas norther was blowing that morning, and there was a definite tinge of winter in the air. The sycamore trees nodded lightly and now and then gave up one of the few remaining yellow-tipped leaves. The hounds howled for a chance to run and bear-hunt. So by sunrise the horses were saddled, and Nick Coalson and Charlie Mann were off with the dogs. There were only the two horses on the ranch, others that had been acquired from time to time having been stolen by the Indians. "We had two horses," recalls John Coalson. "We could not keep them on account of the Indians." A mile from the ranch

house the dogs struck a fresh bear trail, and were soon out of hearing over the mountain range. Charlie Mann pulled his horse to a stop, and said,

"Nick, hear that shootin'?"

"Yes, that's Jennie shootin' squirrels for dinner, or it may be soldiers from McKavett. What's become of them confounded dogs?"

The two men listened again, and decided to return and investigate. As they rode down a draw north of the house, they passed through a shin-oak thicket, and at that point were fired on by the warriors who had secreted themselves in the brush. One shot took effect in the horse Mann was riding, but the animal ran the remaining distance to the yard gate, where he died. Neither of the men were injured in the fusillade, and a moment later were dismounted and inside the house.

It had been a bloody battle. Shortly after the hunters had ridden away, and Joe Harris had gone to the field, fifteen Indians made their appearance from the brush. Mrs. Harris and her baby boy happened to be inside the Coalson house, and, like chickens seeking shelter from a hawk, the Coalson children clambered from the yard into the house. The doors were securely barred in the one-room cabin, and Mrs. Coalson selected the best gun in the rack, but planned not to use it except as a last resort. She was not anxious to aggravate the savagery of the invaders.

In the meantime, Joe Harris had heard the commotion and discovered that Indians were charging the house; whereupon he ran to the assistance of the women and children. But he did not know the Indians, else he would not have exposed himself to the red warriors as he approached the house. Within a hundred yards of the home, and in plain view of his horrified wife, he was shot down and scalped. The wife became grief-stricken and terrified. In retaliation, Mrs. Coalson poured a load of buckshot into one of the attackers as he and others advanced toward the house.

"As he was falling," remembers William Coalson, who was peeking through a crack in the door, "I saw two Indians

grab him and they kept him from falling to the ground, and carried him away. That was the only shot my mother fired."

The attackers craved revenge, and prepared to set the house on fire. Eleven-year-old Douglas begged his mother to let him shoot, but he was told to keep a gun loaded so she could, if necessary, continue her firing through the window without being interrupted, Cash Joy, of Roosevelt, and Mrs. A. W. Noguess, of Menard, remember hearing Douglas Coalson, when he was later on the Ranger force, describe the fight and recall how badly he wanted his mother to let him shoot. He had hunted with his father and was an expert rifle shot.

The Indians retired temporarily, and while away, Mrs. Coalson employed the popular ruse of the frontier woman. "Mother put on a coat to make them think she was a man," recalls her surviving son, John. As the savages renewed the attack, Mrs. Coalson, with a hat pulled over her forehead and clad in her husband's coat, let them get a glimpse of her through the door-way, and then in a coarse, masculine voice, cursed the attackers furiously.

As the Indians prepared to set fire to the log house, and continued their firing, a terrible tragedy may have been averted by the appearance of Nick Coalson and Charlie Mann. The Indians carried their dead comrade away; a new grave was made near the Coalson home for the remains of Joe Harris. On that tragic day "the sun did not shine and the birds did not sing" for the widow, who could not understand why it had to be thus.

Lieut. Bullis and a company of Seminole scouts are reported to have tracked and followed the fleeing warriors, but to no avail.

Coalsons Move to Edwards County

In 1875, Mrs. Coalson died. Few women or men ever spent a more active and useful frontier life than did this

noble character. Her untimely death was a severe loss to the children as well as to her husband.

The following year Nick Coalson married Alice Humphries, and a year later the family moved to the Nueces River in Edwards County. There, in the cedars and shin oaks, a new home was built and a goat camp established. The new home was located about fourteen miles from Barksdale, and was six miles from the head of Cedar Creek.

There were no fences, and it was necessary that the goats be herded in order to protect them from the wolves and wild cats. Camps were set up and moved from one spot to another up and down the creek, depending on range conditions. It was a custom of Coalson to keep two of his sons with him to assist in herding and caring for the animals. The sons carried pistols, and each of them at an early age learned to shoot.

During the summer of 1877 a camp was established near the head of Cedar Creek, and brush corrals were erected. Two sons, John, aged fourteen, and Arthur, aged ten, were camped with their father at the time. On an afternoon the boys were herding the goats a few hundred yards from camp, when a band of Apaches from across the border swarmed out of the cedar brake and attacked them. The younger one was shot and killed, and the other severely wounded and left for dead. The savages then surrounded the camp where the elder Coalson was working. Coalson, single-handed, fought the attackers for two or three hours, and finally made his way into the cedars and thence to his home. Capt. Pat Dolan and his company (F) of the Frontier Ranger Battalion were stationed near Barksdale, and were immediately sent for. The Captain and several of his men arrived on the scene of the tragedy early the next morning and found John Coalson, still alive though severely wounded, waiting at the camp. The Indians, six in number, divided and some went in the direction of Junction City and the others headed back toward the Rio Grande, supposedly carrying an injured comrade.

Exactly one year later, to the day, according to John Coal-

son, the Rio Grande Indians made another attack on the Coalson ranch. On a Sunday afternoon Nick Coalson, with his wife and two children—one a baby, rode a horse and two burros to the creek some three miles distance to gather grapes. On the return trip the group divided—Coalson taking one route to drive the milk cows home, and the others following a more traversable route. When about one mile from home, Mrs. Coalson and the two children were wantonly murdered by a band of savages who had concealed themselves in the cedar brake. Each of the bodies had several arrows penetrating them. Elizabeth, who was killed, was a twin sister of Arthur, who had been killed by the Indian raiders one year before.

The attackers were trailed by Rangers for many miles into the Junction country, and there it was taken up by Capt. Dan Roberts and some of his men, including Doug Coalson. The Indians were followed into the Menard country, and thence into McCullough, but were never overtaken.

With the remnants of his family, Nick Coalson moved to New Mexico and Arizona, and at the time of his death on June 6, 1919, lived on Bullard Creek, a tributary of the San Francisco River, near Alma, New Mexico. Three of the Coalson children survive, namely, John, of Mule Creek, New Mexico; William, of Hillsboro, New Mexico, and Lula (Mrs. A. J. Hart), of Toyah, Texas. Perhaps no frontier family tasted of the bitter cup of Indian savagery as did the Coalson family.

Bate Berry

CHAPTER EIGHT

BATE BERRY

No record of Kimble County's early-day episodes, and the participants therein during the period embraced in this work, would be quite complete without more than a passing reference to Bate Berry and the part he played as an early settler there. He moved to Kimble in 1865 and remained there until 1871.

John Bate Berry was born in Indiana, on May 8, 1813, and passed to his reward December 20, 1891, at his home on Willow Creek in Mason County. He was a noted Indian fighter. Wilce Wooten, who knew him in Kimble and Mason Counties, says of him, "When Indians were in the country, people would always go after old man Bate Berry to help chase them." Seasoned as he was by a brilliant Texas Independence War record, Berry's cool judgment and calm behavior when facing danger caused him to be much sought after in leading frontier skirmishes against Indian raiders.

Bate Berry was a son of John Berry, who moved to Texas directly from Kentucky in 1826 as one of Robinson's colonists—and as such received a league of land from the Mexican Government. The family had previously lived in Indiana. John Berry's occupation was that of blacksmith and gunsmith, a type of service for which there was considerable demand during those times. He was a widower, and had been in the new state only five years when he married Hannah Devoe. The latter was born in Catahoula Parish, Louisiana, the daughter of Jesse Devoe. Her family had settled in Liberty County in 1828.

The Berry family moved to Bastrop in 1834, and it is said that in 1836, when Col. David Crockett came through there on his way to join the Texans at the Alamo, he called on John Berry to repair a gun he had and which had been broken at the breach. The gunsmith took special pride in being called on by so distinguished a character as David Crockett, and, in repairing the broken place, welded a silver band over the repaired portion of the gun. Crockett was well pleased and commented that the gun was stronger than before it had been broken. Historians have commented on the silver-mounted gun which Crockett lost when he was killed at the Alamo, and which was taken by the Mexicans. Years later Mrs. Berry stated she would still know the gun by the silver band her husband had fitted on it.

With the outbreak of the Texan War for Independence, three of the Berry boys joined the Lone Star forces—namely, John Bate, Andrew Jackson, and Joseph. The historian Sowell quotes Mrs. Hannah Berry as saying that John Bate and Andrew Jackson Berry took part in the Battle of San Jacinto. Both did belong to Company C, First Regiment, Texas Volunteers, Capt. Jesse Billingsley commanding and both saw service in the San Jacinto Campaign. On April 21, 1836, Bate Berry was detailed to guard the baggage at the camp opposite Harrisburg. Andrew Jackson Berry, with his company, was of course, in the thick of the battle. The Comptroller's Military Service Records in the Archives of the Texas State Library, give the following in reference to John Bate Berry's record during the Texas Revolution:

> "I do hereby certify that John B. Berry has served as a private in the permanent volunteer company of Texas Militia and as such discharged his duty for fifty days under my command in Col. Moors Batalion.
>
> Mina, September 13th, 1835.
>
> R. M. WILLIAMSON,
> Capt. Commanding.
>
> J. H. MOORE,
> Col. Commandant.

"Hickory Point, July 3rd, 1836.

This is to certify that John B. Berry served in my company as private from the present time until the third day of October in the ranging service on the frontier and is this day honorably discharged.

WM. W. HILL, Captn. Comadt.

By order of Genrl. Thos. J. Rusk."

"Mina

This is to certify that John B. Berry entered the militia service of Texas as a private on 28th of February, 1836, and served faithfully 22 days as such at which time he was appointed driver of a team which duty he faithfully discharged with honor to himself and his country, during his term of service this June 1st, 1836.

JESSE BILLINGSLEY, Capt.

A. SOMERVELL, Lt. Col. 1st Regt. T. V."

"This is to certify that John B. Berry enlisted under my command in the ranging service of Texas for the term of three months, commencing January 6th, 1838, and ending this day. And is honourably discharged by order of the Secretary of War.

JOHN L. LYNCH, Capt.
C. R.

County of Bastrop)
February 20th, 1838)"

The famous Battle of Mier was fought on December 25 and 26, 1842. In that battle less than three hundred Texans engaged a large force of Mexicans. That encounter, although resulting in the surrender of the Texans, was a fine exhibition of courage and patriotism. Bate and Joseph Berry took a prominent part in that fight, Bate having enlisted from Jackson County.

During the course of the Mier battle Joseph Berry was dispatched with Capt. Charles K. Reese to go a distance of two hundred yards and fire into an enemy picket guard for the purpose of drawing them out and measuring their strength. In attempting to return to their own lines, Berry fell down a precipice, which was thirty feet high and broke his thigh. Dr. J. J. Sinnickson and a guard of seven men, including Bate Berry, were detailed to watch over the in-

jured man in a nearby house. During the time the Texans were in the house the Mexicans, in undertaking to storm Capt. Ewan Cameron's position where he had barricaded the streets, came in rifle shot of the house without knowing it to be occupied. In their enthusiasm, one of the Texans in the house could not resist opening fire. This exposed their position to the enemy. When it became apparent they would all be annihilated in short order, the wounded Joseph told his comrades to run and save themselves if they could and to leave him to his fate, else they would all be killed. The men then left him and made a dashing, desperate attempt to reach Cameron's position. They were met by a volley from a band of Mexicans, commanded by a lieutenant, advancing on the house. Bate Berry recognized the lieutenant as an acquaintance he had made in San Antonio. The Texans, all ammunition having been fired, engaged in hand-to-hand combat.

In the dash for the Texan position, James Austin, William Hopson and J. Jackson were killed; Richard Kean, Dr. Sinnickson and D. H. E. Beasley were taken prisoners; while Bate Berry and Tom Davis succeeded in reaching the Texan forces, with empty guns, and hatless. During the skirmish the Mexican lieutenant went into the house and killed Joseph Berry, and then emerged brandishing his bloody sword.

During the capitulation and surrender of the Texan army at Mier, Winfield Chalk escaped and made his way back to Texas where he reported to the Berrys the fate of the lamented Joseph.

At Perote, Bate Berry was one of the Texan prisoners to draw a white bean from a jar containing black and white ones—the former meaning death and the latter, life. The decimation resulted in seventeen of as good men as ever walked on Texas soil being shot down in cold blood under the orders of Santa Anna, notwithstanding the fact the latter had been given his liberty after he had been captured at San Jacinto.

John Rufus Alexander, one of the Mier prisoners, later wrote: "At Saltillo, one of our guards derisively cast at Bate

Berry's feet an old, cast off infantryman's jacket, a mass of tatters that, ordinarily, a rag picker would have kicked aside.

"Ever on the alert, Berry took it up and finding one of the sleeves partially intact, removed it and concealed it underneath the folds of his own dilapidated raiment.

"With this empty sleeve and a small round stone, weighing a pound, Berry fashioned a sling-shot, and with this rude and primitive weapon he brained two of the guards when the break was made at the Hacienda Salado, February 11, 1843. This was his first blood offering on the altar of revenge for the cold blooded murder of his brother, Joseph Berry, at Mier on December 26, 1842."

One of the men Berry killed at the Hacienda Salado was the Mexican officer who had run his brother through with his sword while the helpless Texan lay on his cot suffering from the broken thigh-bone—according to Houston Wade, authority on the Mier expedition. In summing up Bate Berry's record with the Mier expedition, Alexander refers to him having . . . "drawn a white bean at Salado, lived through a long captivity at Perote, returned home, and when the war with Mexico and the United States broke out, was among the first to enlist under Jack Hays, and with tiger-like ferocity fought on many fields to avenge his brother's murder."

A volume could be written describing a part of the agony experienced by Bate Berry and other Perote prisoners—the like of which probably has never been exceeded in human history; but it will suffice to say that Berry was released from the Mexican prison on September 16, 1844, and, with others, gained passage on the schooner *Creole*, which sailed from Vera Cruz on September 22 and put in at New Orleans thirteen days later. The ship was piloted by Capt. Dessechi.

The following instrument reflects the service record of Bate Berry during the Mier expedition:

> "Know all men by these presents that John B. Berry was duly enrolled in the company of Capt. Wm. P. Rutledge on the seventeenth day of October A. D. One thousand eight hundred and forty-two. And was transferred to Capt. J. B. Robinson's

company on the fifteenth day of November in the aforesaid year. And was again transferred to Capt. C. K. Reese's company on the nineteenth day of December in the aforesaid year.

And has faithfully performed the duties of a private up to this date. And he is hereby honorably discharged from the service of the republic of Texas.

Given under our hands this the 16th day of September A. D. One thousand eight hundred and forty-four.

F. W. DOUGLASS, 2nd Lieut.

WILLIAM S. FISHER,
Colonel Comdg."

It may be said, in passing, that Bate Berry's father was, himself, an old war veteran, having taken part in the War of 1812. He drew a pension for that service until his death, when it was thereafter paid to his widow. She, at the time of her death after the turn of the century, was one of the very last in the United States to draw a pension of that kind. John Berry also served under General William Henry Harrison, and took part in a number of famous Indian fights, including the battles of Tippecanoe and the Thames.

After all this, when Bate Berry moved to the unpopulated, Indian-infested upper Llano valleys in 1865, the potential dangers that attended the frontier venture must have appeared tame indeed to him. Small wonder he was sought as a leader in chasing the red warriors. His ranch home was established on the main Llano, beginning at a point two miles up that stream from the mouth of Red Creek. There Berry engaged in the cattle business. The United States Census Report on Agriculture of 1870 shows the Berry possessions in Kimble County as follows: Six horses, twenty milch cows, 600 other cattle, and twenty hogs. The Berry home was an unpretentious one, he being a bachelor at the time. A high picket fence enclosed his house, and adjacent to the yard was a corral, and a stable for two horses. The pickets to the stable were set deep in the ground and the gate was securely locked to prevent the Indians from making away with the ponies. Despite that precaution, the Indians managed during the night to pry the pickets up from the ground and make an opening large enough to lead

the horses through, and did so without making enough noise to arouse the veteran Berry from his slumbers.

On one occasion in 1867, Louis Deats corralled in the Berry pens a bunch of cattle he was gathering, and left the latter's negro servant boy to watch after them and the horses while the men were eating their dinner. A band of savages suddenly rushed upon the boy, took a shot at him, stole the two or three horses, and were soon out of gun-shot range. Berry and Deats obtained mounts and followed the Indians into the vicinity of what is now the village of London, where the small band they were following merged with what appeared to be fifty or seventy-five others. The two then wisely retraced their tracks homeward.

Jim Latham, who now lives at Mason, and who at one time served several terms as Sheriff of Sterling County, well remembers an Indian fight in which he and Bate Berry, along with others, took part. Latham was a member of J. M. Hunter's Ranger Company at the time, and was a veteran of a number of skirmishes with Indians. He had joined the company in 1870, at the age of twenty, and served with distinction until 1873, when he was honorably discharged. Jim Latham was a son of Mastin Latham, who moved from Illinois to Texas when a small boy. The family settled in Cherokee County, where, on January 27, 1850, Jim Latham was born. Young Latham married Bell Jones, a daughter of Charlie Jones of Bear Creek in Kimble County. His acquaintance of Bate Berry extended over a number of years, and they were close friends.

"A band of Indians had passed down through the Honey Creek country in Mason County," Latham recalls, "and a number of us followed in pursuit. The Indians had the advantage because they could travel by the light of the moon, and we could not trail them except during daylight. Harve Putman at that time was a Ranger, but was not connected with our company. He knew every trail in Llano County, and he joined us for a night ride. Putman told us the Indians would go to Widow Martin's house, and that we might overtake them there. We arrived at the Martin place at

daybreak, and found that the Indians had just raided the place, and took some horses.

"Several men were camped at the Martin place at the time, and were threshing wheat. We learned that during the attack a negro laborer became frightened and ran to a haystack, into the side of which he rammed his head, his body being exposed. While in that position he had been shot in the back and killed.

"The Moss ranch was but a short distance from the Martin place, and there the three Moss brothers joined us. We trailed the Indians for miles, and circled around by Packsaddle Mountain, and back toward the Moss ranch. Darkness overtook us and we decided to camp for the night. We pitched our camp about three hundred yards from the Bill Moss ranch. Bate Berry was on guard duty that night while the rest of us were sleeping. During the night the band of Indians paid us a visit, and were right near us before Berry saw them. He opened fire, and every man in camp jumped to his feet with his gun in his hand. I shot twice with my Winchester, and it quit shooting. I threw it down and started shooting with my pistol. We had our horses right in camp—tied by our pallets.

"The Indians circled the camp at high speed, yelling and shooting as they ran. One man yelled out, 'I've got one of them boys! Let's go and get him.' Another of our men said, 'They're carrying him off.' I recall hearing Bate Berry caution the men to stay where they were and keep shooting. Bate seemed to be having a big time and was enjoying himself thoroughly. He would yell out to the Indians in Mexican language while he was shooting. After a short but lively fight, the raiders circled away from the camp and left. The next morning there was a puddle of blood where the man had shot down the Indian."

Bate Berry enjoyed hunting, and kept a few hounds for bear hunting. Often he would be seen visiting his kinsmen, the Bradburys, or the Joys on Johnson Fork, or Adolph A. Reichenau on Saline. He and his brother had served with distinction under Gen. Sam Houston in the Texas-Mexi-

can War with the latter, and they had much in common. Gus Reichenau, who now lives at Mason, recalls Berry visiting at his father's home on many occasions.

It was early in the year of 1867 that a romance developed between Bate Berry and Nancy Frazier Gentry, a Civil War widow, who resided with her little son and the Gentry family on Gentry Creek. A marriage was agreed upon, and the two rode to Fredericksburg for a marriage license, and there the ceremony was performed. For some four years thereafter they made their home at the Berry ranch on the Llano, after which they removed to Willow Creek in Mason County. The Berry ranch on the Llano was taken over by the Gamels of Mason County, who established a cattle ranch there, and for many years thereafter the place was known as "Gamel Pens."

The veteran Berry was a devout Christian. Before him his step-mother had been a member of the Baptist faith. The first Missionary Baptist Church in Williamson County was organized in the Berry home by Rev. Garrett and Talafero, and the latter preached there for fourteen months. The writer's father recalls an incident which illustrates Berry's reverence. Bate Berry had been invited to lunch with him, and, cowboy style, the host said, "Help yourself, Bate, to what little we've got to offer." But Berry very promptly said, "Wait a minute, Jobe, I always thank the Good Lord for what I eat!" Whereupon the blessings of the Almighty were invoked and the eating proceeded. That mistake was not made again when Bate Berry was at that table. Berry repeatedly communed with the Almighty, and gave Him full credit for all human blessings. On his tombstone in the old Bradbury Cemetery in Mason County may now be seen the simple inscription:

"HE DIED AS HE LIVED—A CHRISTIAN"

Bate Berry was a terror on the frontier when in pursuit of savage Indians. It had been a super-human act when he killed two Mexicans when the dash was made by the Mier

prisoners at Salado. But in his private life he was a peaceable, kindly man—the home-loving type. Wherever he could, he turned aside to make lighter the widow's burden, or to bring smiles to the faces of orphan children. There was nothing Bate Berry would not do for one in need. He was loved and respected by his neighbors and friends. The writer's mother, as a homeless, orphan child, for several years found food and raiment and a warm parental protection in the modest home of Bate Berry and his good wife, Nancy. An abiding love and respect for her great-uncle, Bate Berry, and for his wife, followed Rhoda Clark Fisher throughout her life.

In Mason County, Berry owned his own home, continued in the cattle business, and farmed some on a small scale. He drew a Mexican War pension, and this, with the income he had from other sources, insured him and his family a comfortable living. Berry was a stocky-built man, and was about five feet, seven or eight inches in height. Most of his life had been spent in the open air, and he enjoyed good health throughout most of his life.

CHAPTER NINE

A SOUTH LLANO INDIAN SKIRMISH

In the summer of 1874, the time being about six months after the James Bradbury killing, Ira Kirkpatrick determined to establish a ranch on South Llano, about eighteen miles above the forks of the rivers. He had won the hand of the fair Jane Bradbury, and they envisioned a log home of romance and happiness in the grass-clad section of the upper valley. To assist in the construction of the new home, he enlisted the services of Wilce Wooten, John Nabers, Walter Carroll and George Hutchison.

The workmen set out with wagon and team, bearing the saws, axes and other mechanical essentials. The foundation was laid and some progress made on the log walls, when, without warning, they were suddenly besieged by a band of Indians, who opened fire. A stampede was in order. Kirkpatrick's needle gun was leaning against the wagon seat. But no one had time to lose. Wilce Wooten gives this dramatic version of the escapade:

"My gun was leaning against a tree near the end of the wagon tongue. I grabbed for it, and a trace chain tripped me and I fell. As I scrambled to get to my feet it seemed I could see Indians all around me. They failed to get their hands on me, however, and I got up and ran for my life. All the other boys were out of sight, and I cannot until this day understand why the Indians did not catch or kill me, for they were only a few feet from where I had fallen on the ground.

"It was not far to the ice-weeds that bordered the water,

and Indians would not go into these as they were afraid of being ambushed. Within two hundred yards I caught up with the others who were more surprised than I that I was still alive. Carroll was wearing chaps, and I told him to 'pull them things off and run!' When he went back and looked for them the next day they were gone. We dodged about in the high weeds and wild cane in the river bottom, and waded the river to avoid the Indians. At one point we saw six Indians cross the river below us, riding three horses. When we got down within four miles of home John Nabers became exhausted and could hardly walk or run. But we came upon a gentle horse in the river bottom upon which we put John. A little later our pursuers intercepted us as we made our way from one weed and cane brake to another. They fired a number of shots and I could hear the bullets whizzing near me.

"We returned to the cabin the following day, and were surprised to find the ruffians had not burned the wagon or harness, though they had taken a part of the latter. Kirkpatrick decided he did not want to live up there. The Bradbury ranch was abandoned a short time after that."

CHAPTER TEN

THE PACKSADDLE MOUNTAIN FIGHT

The famous Packsaddle Mountain Indian fight in Llano County falls beyond the geographical scope of this work, but since there was a strong link betwen the fight and contemporary Kimble County troubles, a brief reference thereto is given. In fact, the very band of Indians engaged at Packsaddle Mountain included those who had made the South Llano attack a few days previously. Wilce Wooten remembers that Walter Carroll went to Llano after hearing of the encounter there and recovered from the Moss's Wooten's gun, saddle and horse, and some other things that had been taken from the South Llano cabin.

The Packsaddle battle occurred on August 4, 1873. The Indians had taken a swing down the main Llano River in Kimble County, thence through Mason, and probably into San Saba County. It is supposed the same band killed Newt Phillips. They drove before them a string of stolen horses through the Llano country and took a few horses from the Moss ranch. The three Moss brothers, James R., Steve B., and William B., organized a posse to pursue them. Included were Ely Lloyd, Robert Brown, Archer Martin, Pink Ayres and E. D. Harrington. The trail of the looters was picked up early in the morning and followed for some thirty miles. The Indians appeared to have come in from the northwest, as their trail was picked up near Bull Head Mountain. From there the trail led by Gambol Spring and Cutoff Gap. From there they turned north, passing Cedar Mountain to their left, and thence direct to Packsaddle.

The Packsaddle Mountain Fight

The possemen turned their horses up the mountain and chanced to see an Indian spy on a bluff, but since they were not seen by the sentry—who seemed to be occupied with a mirror that had been stolen—they swung around and ascended from the east side.

The whites were within thirty or forty paces of the Indians before their presence was known. They then spurred their horses in between the Comanches and their mounts, jumped to the ground and began shooting. It was a piece of stampeding strategy.

The warriors were lying about resting, and roasting meat for their dinner. They were near the edge of a bluff, which made a hasty retreat inconvenient. The warriors, numbering twenty, which number included seventeen bucks, two squaws and a boy, jumped to their guns, wielded their shields, and returned the fire. After being once repulsed they rallied again in a desperate effort to reach their horses, but were badly whipped. The Indians then began a chant and filed off from the table-land, and were hidden from view under the bluff. On the ground were left the bodies of three "good" Indians, and the braves carried a number of their wounded away with them. Behind them the red raiders had left a number of horses, a few blankets, shields, some firearms, saddles, and other plunder.

The victors suffered four wounded. William B. Moss was the most seriously hurt, having been shot in the right arm and shoulder, the ball ranging through the breast and coming out on the left side. Arch Martin received a shot through the left groin, and Pink Ayres was shot through the hip. Ely Lloyd was pierced through the arm and across the wrist. The wounded were taken to J. B. Duncan's ranch by their comrades, and there Dr. Smith of Llano rendered medical aid.

From appearances near the battle ground it was believed other Indians died from wounds sustained during the fight. Some two or three weeks later Dick Duncan reported seeing two Indians sitting on a rock in the bed of Honey Creek, not far from the scene of the fight, and were dressing their

wounds when seen. Duncan summoned a posse, but all they found were bloody rags in the creek bottom.

W. B. Moss recovered, as did the others who were wounded. Dick Ayres suffered permanent injury, his hip having shriveled from the effects of the wound.

Lo! the poor Indian whose untutored mind
Sees God in clouds and hears him in the wind.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

THE JOYS OF JOHNSON FORK

Out of the wild slashes of the Arkansas Ozarks there came in 1857 Wiley Joy and his family, destined to play a prominent part in the tragic events on the Texas frontier. The trip to Texas was a slow, ox-wagon movement. The family first settled in Doss' Valley in Gillespie County. From there they moved to Spring Creek in the same county, and in 1860 they moved over the line into Kimble County, and carved out a home in the untamed James River valley. To the James River retreat also came Henry Hutchins, a brother-in-law of John Joy. There were several of the Joy children, including John, Tobe, Troup, Charles, and a daughter, Alwilda.

Lafe McDonald, of the Spring Creek McDonalds, was the proud husband of the gifted and charming Alwilda. The latter was indeed a beautiful lady. Her complexion was dark, her hair was dark and somewhat wind-blown, and when unbraided it fell around her shoulders and below her knees. It was a prize catch for Lafe McDonald. James River furnished a perfect setting for the new home of Lafe McDonald and his wife. It was a land of rugged scenery and mountain grandeur. The Joys and McDonald were hunters, and the new territory was replete with every species of game common to Southwest Texas.

Fortune moves in a mysterious way, and as the new inhabitants began to establish themselves, there came news of the struggle between the states. Lafe McDonald kissed his bride good-bye, and answered the call. Many weary, rest-

less weeks passed, and then months, and the conflict continued. The nearest mail delivery was Fredericksburg—forty miles to the northeast. Occasional trips were made to the Munroe McDonald home, located about the half-way point, and where the mail belonging to the Joys was usually relayed.

Wiley Joy and two of his sons put in a small farm on the Johnson Fork of the Llano, some fifteen miles over the mountain to the southwest of their James River home. On an occasion in the spring of 1864 the elder Joy with two of his sons, Troup and Charles, were spending a few days cultivating the new crop. During their absence Alwilda developed a fancy a letter from her husband awaited her at the McDonalds. She would not be restrained another day! The result was that she and her mother saddled horses, and determined to make the round trip in a day. They were delayed on the return, however, probably because the mail had not arrived until late, and it was quite late in the afternoon that they turned their horses homeward. As they crossed Banta Branch, within a mile of where the town of Harper is now located, a group of Indians, presumed to be Comanches, hailed them from the brush. Being cut off from escape, the two women were foully murdered. The mother was the first to fall, and her body was found on the west side of the branch. Alwilda, who was riding a black horse, somewhat faster than her mother's mount, made a desperate attempt to escape, and her body was found a half mile from her mother's and on the east side of the creek.

Dock Joy, who now resides near Roosevelt, Texas, a son of the late John Joy, was a lad of only seven years, but his memory of that tragic event is keen and vivid to this day. He was with his mother, his aunt, and others at their James River home at the time of the attack.

"The night after Grandmother Joy and Aunt Alwilda were killed," he recalls, "I well remember how we all gathered in the yard and listened intently for a sound that night. We knew they should have returned long before, and

mother knew something dreadful had happened. Finally, some one of us heard the faint beat of a horse's hoof against the rocky mountain side. A complete hush fell over us. It was a few moments before mother concluded the noise was from but one horse. A sigh of relief was breathed by all of us because that was a sign the rider was a white messenger and the noise was not that of a band of Indians.

"It seemed a long time, but it must have been but a moment until Old Man Mathew Taylor skidded his horse against our picket fence and came to a halt.

" 'Well, girls,' he told us, without waiting to be asked a question, 'I've got some awful bad news to tell you. Your mother and sister were killed this evening.'

"The horse panted a moment. Mr. Taylor got a fresh drink and rode on to Johnson Fork to notify Wiley Joy and his sons. The next day Grandfather Joy and his sons came by and got us, and took all of us to Spring Creek in an ox wagon. We never returned to James river again until after the war was over."

A Johnson Fork Colony Is Organized

Following the close of the war, a colony was organized to claim the rich, fertile valley of the Johnson Fork of the Llano. A number of ox wagons were utilized, there being but one horse amongst the colonists—that being Jim Taylor's big bay pacing horse.

A Mr. and Mrs. Grider joined the settlers. They taught school in the new settlement, and Grider assisted in the farming and hunting activities. The Griders were soon discharged, however, because they are reported to have taught the children the world was round!

Others in the Joy colony, aside from Wiley and his sons, were Mathew Taylor and wife, both frontier Methodist preachers—pious and devout—and three of their sons, Thurman, Presley and James. The latter's wife had been killed by Indians only two years before.

The Mathew Taylors

The colony was comprised of men and women who knew something about Indians, their warfare and treachery. Only two years before, the Mathew Taylor family had tasted of the bitter cup of Indian savagery. The Taylor home had been at the head spring of the Perdinales, in Gillespie County, about where the town of Harper now is, and a short distance east of the east boundary of Kimble County. With the Taylors lived Eli McDonald, a son-in-law, and family. Mathew Taylor and his son, J. J., were away from home, and early on an August afternoon some twenty Kiowa Indians surprised the family and besieged the house. Their presence was first disclosed when Mrs. Gilstead Taylor, another daughter-in-law of the elder Taylor, went to the spring for some water, and there was shot with an arrow from ambush. As she ran to the house screaming, another arrow struck her in the back. She continued to run, but fell, mortally wounded as she neared the house.

Eli McDonald fought the attackers for a while. At last, with complete annihilation appearing imminent, he surrendered after the warriors hoisted a white flag and yelled out, in Spanish, "Amigo! Amigo!" But the savages, whose cunning was only exceeded by their treachery, shot and stabbed McDonald to death, then scalped him and Mrs. Taylor who had been first shot, then ripped open the bed ticks and scattered the feathers about the yard, and took Mrs. McDonald and her five children away as prisoners.

In the meantime, Mrs. Hannah Taylor, wife of Mathew Taylor, had escaped into the woods, hid herself from view and watched the savages as they searched for her. After they were gone, she made her way, alone and afoot, to Doss' Valley to give the alarm.

Mrs. McDonald and the children, after undergoing inhuman treatment for almost a year, were ransomed in Kansas and returned to their people in Gillespie. It might be of interest, in passing, to say that Mrs. McDonald three years

after her return from captivity, married Peter Hazlewood, who in a fight with a band of Indians on Spring Creek in 1873 was shot through the head and killed.

The Cclony Becomes Settled

Log houses in the new colony were built, and were placed near each other for mutual protection. Farming and hunting were carried on extensively. The children in the colony were carefully held together in the yards to avoid an Indian kidnapping. Religious services under the supervision of members of the Taylor family were regularly held. The colonists went to church on Sundays, and carried their Bibles in one hand, and, like the Pilgrims of old, held their loaded rifles in the other.

The new settlement was far removed from neighbors, and Fredericksburg was the nearest County seat at which a marriage license could be procured; but that fact did not deter Cupid, and within a year several marriages were performed. Tom Compton, of the colony, wooed and won Alwilda Gentry of the Gentry Creek family. Tobe Joy and Miss Lou York were joined together in the holy bond. Ed James, of Spring Creek, came across the mountains to claim the hand of a pretty daughter of Mathew Taylor, who proudly performed the ceremony.

The colony lasted for a little longer than one year. The Taylors then moved to Spring Creek, and the Joys moved to the Johnson Fork of the Guadalupe, just below the present town of Mountain Home. Their stay there was short-lived, and they were soon back on the Johnson Fork of the Llano. There the Joy family, or a portion of them, lived until 1880, when they sold their land to Peter Rambold, the present occupant. If the old rock fences yet standing could talk, many incidents could be related covering the period when civilization was fighting for a foothold on Johnson Fork.

The Vengeance of Wiley Joy

Wiley Joy swore vengeance against the savage Indians when his wife and daughter were murdered on Banta's Branch, and he knew something about Indian habits and customs. As a mere child he had been carried into Indian captivity, his release having been effected eight years later when he was twelve years of age. As Joy studied the wanderings of the Indian marauders, he located their hide-outs and camping places. Many a time he was seen to saddle his horse, fill a food kit, and ride away. He knew arrows were made of dog-wood, and he knew that dog-wood thickets were but few in that section, and were restricted to certain areas in the James River country. About those places he would spend many nights when the moon was right, hiding and waiting for his chance. He is reported to have sent a bullet through a chief as the latter sat on a log watching his tribesmen gather arrow materials from a dog-wood thicket. Wiley Joy was not much of a talking man, and it is likely that many such experiences were never disclosed to his family. Unlike the trend of many people in modern times, he did not seek cheap and undeserved praise. Wiley Joy went his own way and resolutely lived his own life, and followed a course of conduct which he conceived to be proper and righteous in the sight of God and man.

Wiley Joy was a man of more than ordinary intelligence, and he was well regarded by his acquaintances. He was never the same man after his great loss, and spent much of his time alone in the woods. On one occasion, in 1868, Joy with his son, Charles, and his grandson, Bud Hudson, camped some seven miles from the Joy home while on a bear hunt. As Dock Joy puts it, "They were over there 'bearing.'" While in the camp it was necessary for the work horses to be tied up and guarded to keep the Indians from stealing them. The corn supply became exhausted, and Charles drove the horses to the ranch for a supply. Hudson was in the river bottom hunting squirrels, and Wiley Joy carelessly entered

an abandoned shack, the remains of the old Holden home, and sat down. He was being watched, and in a short moment received a flesh wound as an Indian fired at him through the picket enclosure. The injury was painful but not serious. Joy's favorite horse was hobbled and belled only a few paces from the cabin, and the redskins, after firing, ran to the horse, waved a red blanket at him to cause the animal to gain distance from the shack notwithstanding the hobbles. In this they were successful, and for once the veteran Joy was out-smarted. He sat in the cabin, weak from loss of blood, and watched the hobbles removed from the animal and the horse then ridden wildly away into the mountain fastness. He often said if he had been sitting outside with his gun they would not have gotten the drop on him and made away with his favorite mount.

The grandson, Bud Hudson, had moved from Fredericksburg and had established a ranch on James River, the improvements having been later sold to Creed Taylor.

Indians of that day gained rank and prestige in their tribes by the number of horses stolen and brought to camp. A horse that was left unattached at night, especially when the moon was bright, was almost invariably gone on the morrow. A side light on the cunning methods employed by the Indians is given by Dock Joy, son of the late John Joy:

"On Johnson Fork, Indians tried to get our horses that were hitched to our gallery posts with trace chains. It was claimed they could see at night time far better than whites. I remember them tapping on our bee gums one night so we would come outside to investigate and they could then kill us and steal our horses. On the night they attempted to take our horses from the gallery posts, I remember my father and I started to follow them, he having turned the dogs loose. But after going only fifty yards my father suddenly stopped and said, 'Son, we better not do this; this is fool's play. If they should kill us out here they can get back and overpower the folks even though they are armed.' His decision suited me. Pa always did say that was the biggest fool's play he ever was guilty of, trying to follow those

Indians in the night time. The next morning we saw moccasin tracks all around the place, and not far away they had roasted meat right in the middle of the road."

Many and varied were the experiences of the Joy family with the Indian raiders of the time.

Tobe Joy's daughter, Mrs. James A. Parker, tells of an experience later related to her by her father. One tributary of the James River was the scene of this occurrence, the site being in what is now the W. H. Whitworth Ranch. Tobe Joy and Jim Little staked and hobbled their horses out while on a hunt in that area. The next morning they went different directions for their ponies. As Jim Little sat down to remove the hobbles from his horse, an Indian, who seemed to be alone, fired at him from ambush, the bullet glancing his knee. The Indian became scared and ran, tearing wildly through the brush and right toward where Joy stood with his bridle over one arm and his pistol in his other hand. As the red man whizzed past him he, Joy, stuck his pistol forward and fired, breaking the Indian's arm. The latter then disappeared in the weeds and brush. The two hunters borrowed some dogs, returned and trailed the Indian to a dense patch of river-bottom weeds, where he was found flying flat on his back, in hiding. The Indian was killed as he fled.

Gray's Branch

In the 60's Wiley Joy and two of his sons, Tobe and John, were chasing a bear with their dogs in the James River territory. The dogs bayed the quarry, and Wiley rode his horse in to get a close-range shot at the "aggravatin' b'ar," and be certain not to hit a dog. The bear jumped high as the intruder approached, and slapped the horse rudely with an outstretched paw. Joy was riding a big gray horse, and from that day to this the little creek on which that incident occurred has been called "Gray's Branch."

The stream now dubbed "Little Devil's River," also got the appendage from the bear-hunting Joys.

Red's Hole

A spot familiar to the ranchmen of the Little Devil's River country, and located on the head of that stream, is Red's Hole. The Joys were once chasing a bear, and one of the dogs in the pack was red. The bear stopped in a hole of water and made fight. The red dog responded and the fight was on. The dog was no equal for his combatant and was torn to pieces and lay mortally wounded in the hole of water when the Joys arrived. Thereafter the spot has been called "Red's Hole."

CHAPTER TWELVE

OTHER JAMES RIVER SETTLERS

Following the Civil War, several settlers made their way into the fertile but broken valleys of James River. Grazing conditions were good, both in the valleys along the streams and on the rough divide lands. There was but a limited amount of cedar growth, only a few stubby patches here and there, and the country was clad in a thick growth of mountain grass. Explanations of why the cedar growth was negligible then as compared with the present are varied. Old settlers recall that when they came to Kimble they found many giant cedar stubs that had been burned. And since there was then a heavy, rank growth of grass, it was supposed that Indians ignited the grass which swept thousands of acres clear of most vegetation. Many also believe that there had been no prolific growth of cedar in the past, and that it was only after the middle of the nineteenth century that the growth became noticeably abundant.

The grassy divide lands, sliced with spring-fed canyons and creeks, provided a game resort for the early day hunter. Hogs became fat by feeding on the mast from live oak thickets. On the creek banks there was an abundance of wild pecan timber, and cattle readily gained weight as they grazed on the mountain sides and narrow plateaus.

Jim Little

A famous household name in the James River section is that of Jim Little. Little was a typical pioneer of the day,

and enjoyed hunting and fighting Indians. He was reckless and unafraid. It was about 1867 that he settled on the old Hudson Ranch, which was later owned by Creed Taylor. From where he lived it was in the neighborhood of forty miles to Fredericksburg, the nearest mail delivery. It came Jim's turn to go for the mail, as it had developed into a custom among the Johnson Fork and James River settlers to follow a schedule of rotating the trip. Little could go either of two ways, the direct, or what was called the roundabout route via Cherry Springs. He selected the latter, as Indian sign had been recently reported, and the savages might watch the usually traveled trail. It was a rule that if a man should be gone as long as three days after the mail that it was time to institute a search. Three days came and passed and Jim Little did not return. Whereupon Tobe Joy and others instituted a search. They knew his route and followed to Salt Branch, where a most revolting murder had been committed. The torso of Jim Little was scattered about, portions of his flesh having been cut into strips and hung on live oak branches bordering the creek, mute testimony of a cruel mutilation. Nearby, the victim's faithful horse lay dead, probably killed from under the rider as he attempted to flee. This incident happened about twenty miles northeast of Noxville.

It is said that the act of mutilation may have been a matter of retaliation on the part of the Indians. A few years before a similar fate befell an Indian that had been killed by a company of men under Captain Banta, and not far from where Little met his death. It is reported that the whites would sometimes cut skins from the sun-tanned hides of dead redskins to be used for quirts, razor straps, and the like.

More Settlers

Among the settlers on James and Little Devil's River in the early 70's were Munroe McDonald and family; Lige and Dick Hall, relations of the McDonalds; John West; a Mr.

White; Tobe Joy, who settled within sight of Creed Taylors; Dave Ogle, down the river from Taylor; Jess Whitson, also a neighbor of Taylor; James H. Parker; Noah Knox, who became the first postmaster at Noxville; and others. The postoffice was named after settler Knox, and was originally located on Devil's River. Later it was removed to James River, where it now stands. New settlers would come and go, some remaining for only a few weeks or months, and others becoming permanent citizens.

James H. Parker, a native of Florida, moved to the Colorado River in McCullough County before the Civil War. On August 10, 1874, the family moved to Kimble County, and established a ranch on the east prong of James River, known as Little Devil's River, and were four miles southeast of Creed Taylor's ranch. Some members of that veteran family still live in that community.

Alex VanCourt loaded his family in an ox-drawn covered wagon in 1871 and headed Texas-ward from their Coffeyville, Kansas home. As "slow the Kansas sun was setting" this pioneer family looked toward a new frontier. Early in 1872 the VanCourt homestead in Texas was established on Devil's River in Kimble County, the location being only five miles south of Creed Taylor's new rock home.

"The Indians got a lot of our horses," remembers Frank VanCourt, a son of the late Alex VanCourt. "I remember when my brother Ben," he continued, "had to kill an Indian on the nearby Perdinales. It was a close call for Ben. After he had fired at the savage his gun jammed and the Indian was in the act of overpowering him when he got his gun to working again. He then shot the attacker, and some of the men folks later found an Indian body buried in a cave close by." VanCourt vividly remembers Creed Taylor and his newspaper-rolled, cigar-shaped cigarettes. "Old Creed took a fancy to me," he said. "He gave me a bowie knife and a gun, and he would ask me, a small boy, how many Indians I had killed!"

Alex VanCourt served as one of the first four commissioners that comprised the commissioners' court when the

county government was organized. In 1878 the family moved to Tom Green County, where Frank VanCourt later served as sheriff.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

THE SALINE SETTLEMENT

The valley of Big Saline drew a number of the first settlers of Kimble County. The luxuriant grass lands adjacent to the clear-flowing creek, furnished an attractive grazing region for the cattle man of the 60's. Sparkling springs from mossy rivulets up and down the length of the valley provided an ample distribution of water supply. The valley claimed probably the first sheep in Kimble when Louis Korn settled in 1862 with a herd of bleating Merinos. Up and down the valley for miles a beautiful, brush-clad grass land stretched, snugly encased between rolling shin-oak hills.

Wild game was plentiful in those parts. Gus Reichenau relates an experience in which he killed four buffalo that had drifted into the valley. Caves and hollow trees abounded with honey. Mountain bear were plentiful and deer and turkey found the living conditions to their liking. The creek itself was more properly a small river. There were water holes a mile long, with a steady current all up the stream. Fifty-pound cat fish were common catches by the fishermen. The Saline was a favorite home of the beaver, and numerous dams were built by them along its length.

Along the upper reaches of the Saline the Indians had for ages found a camping ground where they were unmolested and undisturbed. Flint rock was plentiful on the hillsides, and today there may be seen much evidence of the activities of the redskins in making heads for their dogwood arrows. Lying on the surface here and there may be found broken flint arrow heads, and occasionally a fortunate souvenir hunter may find a flint head in perfect condition.

Frank Putman

Frank Putman and his family became probably the first settlers in the Big Saline valley when they settled there in the 50's. Included in the family were three sons—Harve, John, and Dock. Their frontier home was built on the south side of Big Saline Creek, just east of where the present Junction-Mason highway crosses that stream. There the Putman family lived peaceably for several years. The father and sons made hunting trips up the valley, and in the fall of the year they would round up their cattle and brand. Before the new home had been discovered by the Indians, Putman in 1860 sold his improvements to Adolph A. Reichenau, and moved his family to the House Mountain community in Gillespie County.

The Putmans continued their cattle business in Gillespie County. On one occasion Frank Putman and his son, Harve, started on a trip to Kimble County in search of some missing cattle, and got mixed up with some Indians who attacked them between Bluff and Leon creeks, a few miles from Little Saline. The Putmans fought off the attackers, but during the fight Frank Putman had been seriously wounded. After darkness had set in, the father insisted that his son leave him and go for help. This he did, but not until he had pulled his father up against a tree and placed a loaded gun in his hand. Three hours later Harve Putman returned with help. The old gentleman was carried to the nearest ranch house, a few miles away, and finally recovered from the wound. The son, Harve, later joined a Ranger company, and engaged in a number of frontier Indian fights. He gained a reputation for being a straight-shooting and fearless Indian fighter.

The Reichenaus Settle on Saline

Adolph A. Reichenau came to America from his native Rhineland at the age of sixteen, landed in New Orleans,

and within a few months was on Texas soil shouldering a gun against the forces of Santa Anna. He was a German patriarch of the old school—dignified, bold and unafraid.

During the '50's Reichenau engaged in the cattle business at Castell, in Mason County. His nine children were, Adolph (now deceased); Gus (who now lives at Mason); Augusta (who married Louis Eckert); Emma (wife of Adolph Keller); Ida (late wife of Charles Martin); Albert (now deceased); Alex (now of Mason); Max, and Olga (who married Louis Christelles).

In 1860, Aaron Crownover of Burnet County owned many cattle, and they were scattered about over the fenceless regions of southwest Texas. He made a deal with Adolph Reichenau whereby the latter would move to Saline, in Kimble County, and trail a string of the Crownover cattle, there to keep them on the shares. The good range conditions would insure fat beeves and a good calf crop. Besides, Adolph Reichenau cherished a longing for the frontier—the regions far removed from "civilization's confines."

After the bargain was driven, the Putman improvements were purchased on the banks of Big Saline, and a wide-open valley lay at the feet of Reichenau. Here he could live happily with his family, would be provided with ample game for food, and could watch the cattle grow and multiply. The Putman premises were improved, heavy wooden corrals were built, barns were constructed, and the Reichenau headquarters became the center of a new settlement. Reichenau was active in the drive for law and order, and later became a member of an association of Minute Men, a group that aligned themselves against Indians and outlaws.

"We lived there about two years," recalls Gus Reichenau, "before the Indians bothered us, and after that they would come in on each full moon, and would steal, depredate and kill."

Aaron Crownover

Aaron Crownover was a son of Arter Crownover, the latter having been a veteran of the San Jacinto campaign.

The former had established a big ranch and plantation on Big Sandy Creek, below Cedar Mountain, in Llano County. Arter Crownover became one of the most extensive cattle-raisers in that vicinity, his cattle being known by the brand of "C 2." He owned a large number of slaves, which he used to advantage in his ranching and farming activities. Later the elder Crownover became a frontier preacher, and conducted services at many points on the frontier.

The son, Aaron, being assisted by his father, became an extensive ranchman, and his cattle, recognized by the brand of "A C," wandered over a wide area. In the early '60's Adolph Reichenau moved a string of the "A C" cattle for Aaron Crownover to the Saline valley in Kimble County and cared for them on the shares.

"I well remember the round-up at the Crownover Ranch in Llano County," says Gus Reichenau of Mason. "When the cattle were cut out for father to take to Big Saline, a number of us went there to receive them and have them counted out to us. It seemed like Aaron Crownover's father had hundreds of slaves. That was about the time, or a little before, the Civil War started. I remember that Crownovers had just bought two new slaves. They must have been right out of the wilds of Africa, because they couldn't talk a word of English, and neither of them had ever been on a horse. They were called Gus and Jim. The cowboys made them get on wild horses and try to ride them, and everybody had a big time watching the fun. It wasn't long, though, till those two negroes were good riders, and became top hands."

In 1866, which was about the time Adolph Reichenau abandoned his Kimble County venture and moved to Mason, Aaron Crownover established a cow camp at the George Scott Springs on Red Creek in Kimble, and which was about six miles south of where the Reichenau ranch had been. There Crownover spent a portion of his time looking after his herds. Louis Deats, who lived near the junction of the Llano rivers, joined Crownover in the Kimble County operations, and they camped and rode together extensively. Seth

Mayberry, another pioneer settler, for a time had a working arrangement with Crownover in the cattle business. Indian depredations became so frequent, however, that in 1869 the Kimble County camp was abandoned, and the cattle were drifted back to the Llano County headquarters.

Other Saline Settlers

As was often the case, where a new trail had been blazed and a new home built, such became the nucleus for other settlers. George Braden and family, who worked for Reichenau, built a home two hundred yards from the Reichenau home. Only two months after Adolph Reichenau moved to Saline, there came Gus Schumann and family to live only three hundred yards from the former. The Schumanns moved cattle from Gillespie County. Their home was made of pickets, with raw-hide lumber used for a covering.

Two years later came Louis Korn, who knew something of Indian savagery. His son, Adolph, had been taken into captivity by the Comanches. Korn settled between Reichenau and the main Llano. Into the same neighborhood came Adam Rodenbusch and family. Peter Harber and Christian Winkel and their families settled near the Korns. Another settler in that neighborhood was Jerry Walker.

The year 1863 saw Frank Hardin with his wife and two children bravely settle themselves some six miles above Reichenau on the banks of Big Saline. Further up that creek, at a spring near its headwaters, lived John "Parson" Jolley with his wife and children.

Eight miles to the south of the Reichenau home George Scott settled in 1865. His home was built near a spring, now known as Scott Spring, and on what is now known as the Herbst place. Tall pecan trees surrounded the spot. Scott hailed from Burnet County, and had seen Civil War service. He had married a daughter of Frank Putman. Mrs. Scott was hard-working, industrious and brave. Her husband

traded in livestock considerably, and while on business was at times detained from home. Mrs. Scott milked a number of cows, and in one season raised and milk-fattened for market more than one hundred hogs. After these hogs had been sold, George Scott went away for the expressed purpose of converting the money into cattle, but was never heard of again. That happened about 1867.

Six miles to the north of the Reichenaus, in the valley of the Little Saline Creek, came Bill Parks and his wife and grandson. Near Parks lived Felix Hale, Jim Whitlock, Fred Connoway, Bill Parks, Jr., Mathew A. Doyal, Frank Johnson, and James Bolt. Felix Hale had married Jim Bolt's stepdaughter. In 1867 Hiram Casner moved into the settlement. The settlement was made up during the early 60's.

Thus, it may be seen that by the time of the terrible days of 1866 to 1870, during which time the wave of Indian forays in Kimble County rose to the highest ebb, the valleys of Big and Little Saline were dotted with intrepid settlers. Intermittent Indian raids made for a shifting frontier population—now and then a new family coming into the settlements, and almost as often a discouraged family moving out.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SALINE VALLEY INDIAN RAIDS

The Parks Massacre

Bill Parks, with his wife and grandson, became among the first white settlers in Little Saline Valley. The Parks home was built within one mile of that of Mathew A. Doyal, who had moved there the previous year. It was in 1862 that Parks made the move from Llano County to the new home, and he immediately erected a log house and some picket corrals. He was in the cattle business, having trailed a number of his stock from Llano. Shortly thereafter his son, Bill Parks, Jr., settled about one mile away, and about the same time Felix Hale set up a home only a half mile from him.

It was about the year of 1866 that a band of cut-throat, blood-thirsty Indians made a trip through the country committing murders and stealing horses. A surprise attack during the night time was made on the Parks home. From appearances on the scene of the disaster it was supposed that the senior Parks was shot, and as his wife and grandson ran to escape assassination, they, too, were overtaken. The log house was found the following morning burned to the ground, and the body of Parks was found lying with one leg in the edge of the fire. In the edge of some live oak brush some thirty yards below the house was found the body of Mrs. Parks, and some thirty yards further the remains of the young grandson were discovered. All three of the victims were scalped and most of their clothing taken. The

savages had removed a feather tick from the bed and opened it in the valley in front of the premises and there scattered feathers to the winds. There was no witness to tell the story of torture inflicted before the breath of life was gone.

The neighbors gathered and a funeral service was hurriedly conducted, the three being buried in the same grave. A posse picked up the trail of the murderers and followed it into San Saba County, where a fight ensued and at least one Indian was killed.

Two Schumanns Killed

Within a few months of the Parks attack, another chapter of human sacrifice was written in blood in the Little Saline community. Gus Schumann lived near Adolph Reichenau, and had arranged to establish a new ranch and build a home on Little Saline. Trees had been felled and Schumann and his twelve-year-old son, Billie, at their leisure, went to the site of their new home on horse-back and worked on the log house and picket fences. The new home was to be located on what is now known as the Mabry ranch, owned by Judge M. D. Slater. Adolph Reichenau advised Schumann not to make the trip on the tragic day, but the work was to be done and the weather was fair.

As sunset approached, Gus Schumann wiped the perspiration from his brow, and was proud of the progress of the day. He and Billie rode out on their horses to find a yoke of oxen which they knew to be nearby, when, striking swiftly, a band of savages rushed upon them and poured volleys of arrows into the fleeing pair. As a rule, good Indian fighters never ran from Indians. To do so was almost sure death. The natives were expert horsemen, and did their most effective fighting while running at top speed. The wise thing to do when so attacked, when it was some distance to a creek, bluff or a similar type of protection, was to jump to the ground, and from behind a tree or rock return the fire.

"I remember the Schumann killing very well," comments

Gus Reichenau. "A Mr. Casey and another man had trailed those Indians from the upper Llanos that day. They abandoned the trail for the night near Jess Connoways on Little Saline, and came to our house to spend the night. A short time after they arrived, the Spanish pony which little Billie had been riding came home, running full-speed, nervous and excited. My father came home later that night, and by daybreak the following morning the men folks saddled and rode to the scene of the tragedy. I rode the sorrel-colored Spanish pony.

"Mr. Schumann's body was found lying three hundred yards from that of his son, indicating the father was shot first. The boy had been riding a much faster horse than had the elder Schumann. When we neared the scene of the encounter, the pony I was riding snorted and shied away. He was scared and excited, and I could not induce him to go within one hundred yards of the place. We examined the ground and concluded the Indians had chased the pony after the boy had fallen off, and the horse, being fleet of foot, had won the race. The savages had turned back within a mile of our place."

The Schumann boy's body had twelve arrow wounds, all inflicted from the back, and the father's body contained fourteen such wounds, and all entered from the back. A strange coincidence was that the boy had been shot with wooden-headed arrows, and those fired into the elder Schumann's back were of steel. Reichenau recalls that one arrow penetrated the body of the elder Schumann, the head of the arrow having gone entirely through. Both victims were scalped and their clothing taken, except one sock was left on one of Mr. Schumann's feet.

"Also, we concluded that Billie was not dead when scalped," continues Reichenau, "because his body was drawn up in a cramped heap, which was the result of the death struggle after his clothes had been removed."

The bodies were buried under a live oak tree near where they were found. George Pearl, who now lives on Little Saline, remembers that when he came there in 1876, boards

were nailed on the tree above the graves of the Schumanns and containing their names.

The Spanish pony was a sort of hero of the occasion. On other occasions, when he had gotten loose, he had gone directly to his old grazing range up the creek. But on the evening of the tragedy he ran straight to the Schumann front door, and stood there, panting and winded, as though to give the alarm that something terrible had happened.

Members of Johnson Family Are Killed

Frank Johnson and family settled on Little Saline Creek in 1863, having previously lived in Llano County. The Johnson children included: William, Boy, Frank, John, Lite, Charles, Alfred, Thomas (Babe), Puss (who married Lige Modgling), Cynthia (who married Jack Bradford), Cart (who married James Needham), and Nancy, who died, single, at the age of eighteen. Johnson had brought a herd of cattle to the Saline country with him. He was an old man, patriarchial in appearance, and had long white beard and hair. On a morning in the spring of 1866, Johnson went in search of some horses. A grandson, Will Johnson, who now resides in Mason, recalls his grandmother's version of what happened. "My grandfather was riding a good mare, and the Indians surprised him in the woods and shot the mare from under him. He had no gun with him, and grandmother often said she guessed that was the only time my grandfather ever went away from home without his gun. The body was found several miles from our home the next morning. It was full of arrow holes." The scalp from all the front part of the head had been taken, says Jerry Doyal, who viewed the body after it had been recovered. John Doyal remembers that when the body was found a fresh, unused arrow was lying diagonally across the wounded chest.

Shortly after the death of Frank Johnson, the family moved to Bluff Creek in Mason County. Thomas (Babe) Johnson and Boy Johnson had married, and the former had

two children, and the latter had one. A few months later the Johnsons moved to Llano County, near Cedar Mountain, and after having lived at the new home for a short time a most tragic thing occurred.

"My grandmother lived half a mile from John Friends," recalls Will Johnson, who at that time was five years old, and was a son of Thomas (Babe) Johnson. "I remember hearing many times of how Mrs. Friends came over to our house to get my mother and my aunt, Mrs. Boy Johnson, to spend the night with her because her husband was away, as were my father and Boy Johnson. My little brother, James, and I stayed with my grandmother and for some reason did not go along, though I am sure we wanted to go. My mother took my baby sister along, and my Aunt took her little girl also. This was in 1866. It was about dark that night that the Indians made an attack on them. An Indian peeked over or through a door and saw there were no men folks there, so he jerked the door down and the fight started. Mrs. Friend knocked him down with a smoothing iron, but other Indians came piling in, and there was one negro amongst them. Mrs. Friend fell with an arrow through her side, and she lay there perfectly still as though she were dead. An Indian twisted the arrow around and when she didn't flinch, he just scalped her and left her for dead.

"After the fight, Mrs. Friends lay still a little while, and got up and everybody was gone. She saw lots of blood everywhere, and with the arrow through her side she made her way to my grandmother's. We got a doctor that night and early the next morning the arrow was pulled out. Mrs. Friends got well, as I saw her fifteen years after that.

"The men folks organized that night, and early the next morning the Indian trail was picked up. They did not go far until they found my little baby sister's body thrown out to one side, and a little further they found my Uncle Boy Johnson's little girl lying dead in a bunch of brush. On the top of Cedar Mountain my mother's body, which had been half devoured by wild hogs, was found, and nearby they

found the remains of my Aunt. But they did not find the little Friends boy, who had been taken away, nor the little Cordell girl, who was staying with the Friends. Two years later Mr. Friends went away to some reservation or Indian trading post and bartered for the return of those children and brought them home with him." It is reported that another, Amanda Townsend, was at the Friends home on the occasion, and her body was found the next day in the vicinity of Cut Off Mountain.

The posse followed the Indian trail for many miles, but to no avail. The savages had exacted a heavy toll from these families!

Matthew Doyal

Matthew A. Doyal was born August 26, 1802, and immigrated to Texas from the State of Illinois several years prior to the Texas-Mexican war. In Texas he lived for a time in the American colony in Gonzales County. He married Barbara Walker, daughter of Joe and Beckie Walker. Doyal distinguished himself as an Indian fighter; served with the Texan forces in the Mexican war, and then moved with his family to various points on the Texas frontier. The early '60's found him homesteading on Little Saline Creek on the northeastern border of Kimble County. There he pioneered and fought Indians for six years before retreating from the constant danger from increased depredations from the savages. From Saline he moved to Little Bluff Creek in Mason County, where he continued to live until his death on February 8, 1887.

There were six children in the Doyal family: Barbara Jane (who married Babe Johnson, his first wife having been killed by the Indians), Martha (who married Jasper Caviness), George (who married Nancy Bradbury Clark), Thomas (who married Mattie Surrell), John C. (who married Lucinda Bankston, and who now lives in Mason), and Jerry W. (who married Victoria Caviness, and who now lives on Bluff Creek in Mason County).

Matthew Doyal became a somewhat noted character after taking part in the famous Indian fight, known as the Battle of Calf Creek. Of this fight the historian, John W. Hunter, wrote: "This battle was fought in November, 1834, and considering the numbers engaged on each side, the advantageous position of the enemy and his fearful loss, the Calf Creek battle was the most heroic and stubbornly contested engagement ever fought on Texas soil." The Texans, numbering only eleven men, were led by James Bowie, who was two years later to become one of the immortal heroes of the Alamo. This little band of men fought valiantly for many hours against 164 well-armed Indian warriors commanded by the Lipan Chief Tresmanos. The scene of this encounter was in Mason County and was a few miles from what was later to become Kimble County.

The eleven Texans who participated in the Calf Creek encounter included James Bowie and his brother, Rezin P. Bowie, David Buchanan, Cephas K. Hamm, Matthew Doyal, Thomas McCaslin, Robert Armstrong, and James Morriell. Rezin P. Bowie later wrote a detailed account of the fight. The prelude to the affair goes back to the supposedly legendary Bowie Mines, about which there has been much speculation, and was occasioned by the fact that Xolic, a Lipan chief, and his tribesmen were, during the '20's, known to bring considerable silver into San Antonio and other trading posts, and the supposition was this was taken from a hidden mine in the San Saba River region. The Bowies became attracted by this, and determined to find the location of the mine from which the mineral was being taken. James Bowie joined the Xolic tribe, became one of them, and for several months reputedly roamed the San Saba country with the natives. In this manner he was able to determine the location of the San Saba mine. After withdrawing from the Lipans, Bowie organized the band of Texans who went in search of the fabulous mine. When within supposedly a few miles of the treasure, the band, which had dwindled to 11 men, was attacked by James Bowie's erstwhile tribesmen who

were now under the leadership of the warring Tresmanos. The latter had succeeded Xolic, who had died.

The expedition is reported to have crossed the Llano River at the falls at the mouth of Comanche Creek, in Mason County, and followed a westerly route up the valley section where the town of Mason was later established, and thence up the valley of the San Saba River to the mouth of Calf Creek. A few miles up that creek the famous battle occurred.

"During the time we were defending ourselves from the Indians on the hill," wrote Rezin P. Bowie, "some fifteen or twenty of the Caddo tribe had succeeded in getting under the bank of the creek, in our rear, at about forty yards distant, and opened a heavy fire upon us, which wounded Matthew Doyle, the ball entering the left breast and coming out at the back. As soon as he cried out that he was wounded, Thomas McCaslin hastened to the spot, when he fell, and observed 'Where is the Indian that shot Doyle?' He was told by a more experienced hand not to venture there, as from the reports of their guns, they must be riflemen. At that instant he discovered an Indian, and while in the act of raising his piece, was shot through the center of the body and expired. Robert Armstrong exclaimed, 'D—n the Indian that shot McCaslin, where is he?' He was told not to venture there as they must be riflemen, but on discovering an Indian and while bringing his gun up, was fired at, and part of the stock of his gun cut off, the ball lodging against the barrel. During this time our enemies had formed a complete circle around us, occupying the points of rocks, scattering trees and bushes. The firing then became general from all quarters. Finding our situation too much exposed among the trees, we were obliged to leave them and take to the thickets. The first thing necessary was to dislodge the riflemen from under the bank of the creek, who were within point-blank shot. This we soon succeeded in doing by shooting most of them in the head, as soon as we had the advantage of seeing them, when they could not see us. . . . We baffled their shots by moving six or eight feet the moment

we had fired, as their only mark was the smoke of our guns. They would put twenty balls within the size of a pocket handkerchief when they had seen the smoke."

At the end of the all-day fight, during which the Indians had set fire to the tall dry grass which, swept by the wind, all but consumed Bowie and his men, the Indians withdrew for camp. They suffered some eighty killed and a number wounded, including the Chief who later died. The Texans lost but one man, with three wounded. James Bowie died at the Alamo two years later, and there was forever lost the secret of what may have been a rare treasure. Matthew A. Doyal recovered from his wounds, and became the last of the eleven to die. Two of his sons, John and Jerry, who now reside in Mason County, vividly recall hearing their father tell of the famous Calf Creek Battle.

Doyal was active in the Texan Revolution against Mexico, following which he settled in Guadalupe County, and was a member of the first Grand Jury that was empaneled in that county in 1846. He later moved with his family to Llano County, and from there in the early '60's settled on Little Saline.

"Parson" Jolley Gets a Scare

John ("Parson") Jolley was a brave man, else he would not have ventured to establish an isolated log house ranch on the lonely head of Big Saline. It was a matter of only six miles distance down to Frank Hardins', a brother-in-law, and he felt that he could be called a close neighbor of his kinsman and the advantage of mutual protection would apply. Not only that, he was not afraid of Indians. They had never out-witted him. In fact, Indians had avoided his premises on more than one occasion, and the parson found some backing for his conclusion that the redskins were "buffaloed," and were not out hankering for a run-in with Parson Jolley. It had gone that way for months. Fall weather was setting in, and a trip must be made to Menardville before winter. It was only a matter of some twenty-five miles,

and the trip could be made in two good days' riding. Jolley wanted to get the trip behind him, and as he set out one morning he suggested to his wife that in the event a certain old gentle horse that had wandered away should return for her to saddle him and take the children to the Hardins.

On the following evening John Jolley returned, alone and unafraid. Turkeys had just begun to fly in to roost in the tall timber up the draw from the home place, and Jolley just felt that it was the coolest evening of the new season and that autumn was really in the air. His horse splattered water knee-high as he splashed across the creek. As he rode down the trail a half-grown black mountain bear toddled awkwardly across the trail ahead of him. A peculiar feeling came over the man. He found himself spurring his cayuse into a trot. When he caught himself doing that, he jerked the horse's head and pulled him back to a jog. John Jolley was not a man to imagine things, and he knew he was one of the coolest headed men on the creek. Had Frank Hardin not told him about hearing two men express that opinion down at Reichenau's round-up only two weeks before? Not only that, he remembered, had his wife not said more than one time, "John, you're a brave man. You never lose your head, and you aint afraid of nothin' "?

By this time Jolley rode around the chaparral just west of the corral, and clinging to the side of the thicket he saw some feathers. Before he had spurred his mount another ten steps, his eyes were fastened squarely on a whole bed of feathers clinging to a bunch of prickly pear! Parson Jolley was not to be fooled. He knew something had happened. In another instant he was at the yard fence and sprang from his horse over the pickets, and the rowels in his shop-made spurs rattled noisily as he made his way in long strides across the yard and into an open door to his mountain shack. No one was there! The feather bed—just as he had guessed—had been ripped apart and the contents scattered about the premises. This was no time to indulge in false conclusions. Indians had visited the premises

of John Jolley! Like a break of forked lightning the reality of the thing flashed upon him. The house was littered; the clothing was gone; the windows were broken; the dishes were cracked and littered about on the floor; the trunk had been pried open and the old family pictures were torn and scattered. Now Parson Jolley was looking for blood—the blood of his own flesh! He dropped to his knees to pray, but for some reason he jumped upright. This was a time for action, not words, something told him. It was almost dark, but there was enough light for him to get a definite clue—he saw moccasin tracks in the flower bed as he emerged from the front door!

A streak of dust followed the path of Parson Jolley as he gave spur and lash to his already tired horse, and in less than fifteen minutes by any man's watch he brought his horse to a stop at Frank Hardin's front gate. His appearance was preceded by no little commotion as he had been no respecter of the shin-oak thickets and mesquites that blocked a straight pathway approaching the Hardin homestead. Frank Hardin made hurried preparations, and even got his needle gun out and stood by, because he knew no one man and one horse could make that much noise. It occurred to him that somebody was being chased. He hurriedly ripped out directions to the women what to do in case this or that might be the reason for this twilight stampede. And by that time Jolley had managed to bring his horse to a complete stop as he skidded against the picket fence.

Frank Hardin later said Jolley "looked like a sheep-killing dog" as Mrs. Jolley emerged from the corner of the house with the youngest child in her arms, and demanded of her husband, "John, what on earth are you running so hard for?" But John Jolley should not be criticised. Even a cool-headed man is entitled to get excited upon proper provocation. An act of providence had saved Mrs. Jolley and her children in the nick of time, and the feather-bed destruction was news to her.

Indians Kill Fred Connoway

A wife and two rosy-cheeked daughters made up the family of Fred Connoway, who had a cow ranch on Little Saline in 1867. Prior to that time he had ranched on Red Creek in Kimble County, where he had built a combination log and picket house. Scattering remains of the place are on this date evident in the creek bottom some three hundred yards north of what is known as the "Noguess Water Hole." Nancy Berry, widow of the late Bate Berry, during her lifetime (she died in 1928) told members of the writer's family of occasions when she and her husband visited the Red Creek home of the Connoways, and pointed out the location.

James Caviness, who now lives on Honey Creek in Mason County, knew Connoway well before he moved to Kimble at the close of the Civil War. Connoway had been a bugler, says Caviness, during the war and while stationed at Camp San Saba.

Early on a morning in 1867 Fred Connoway passed the Reichenau ranch, says Gus Reichenau, on his way to the Johnson Fork settlement to get a yoke of oxen. He asked the elder Reichenau to go along, but it happened to be rounding-up time and there was branding to be done, and the request was declined.

Connoway rode leisurely up the Llano river trail, taking his time because he could not start back before the morrow anyhow. Later examination of tracks indicated he crossed Red Creek and rode on beyond the creek for a mile, where, at a point probably near where the present E. Rohner home is located, he was surprised by a furious attack from a band of Indians that came storming from a hillside. The chase was on, and Connoway retreated east, down the Red Creek valley, probably wounded. As he came to a bluff in the creek bank he jumped from his horse and took refuge in a cave, which was a smart thing to do. There, armed with a pistol and rifle, he held off the attackers. He became weak from loss of blood and after the Indians disappeared he abandoned the cave and made his way back toward the Saline

settlement on foot. He must have been weak and suffering intense pain, and was perhaps hardly rational.

He finally made his way to Scott's Springs, more than a mile from the cave he had abandoned. At the springs he apparently bathed his face and quenched his thirst, then hid his pistol under a flat rock (where it was later found by the Reichenaus), and, unarmed, changed his direction and walked back toward the Llano River. Connoway was apparently a very sick man by the time he reached the river. He waded the stream, however, at a point near the mouth of Red Creek at a ford that is now called "Beef Trail Crossing." Fifty yards beyond the stream his footsteps abruptly turned back, and he appeared to have retraced his steps and at the water's edge dropped down to drink and satisfy a dying thirst. In that position he was found three days later, one hand partly in the water and a walking stick lying nearby.

Search for the body was conducted by Gus Reichenau, his father and others. Rance Moore came over from Bear Creek and assisted. There appeared but one bullet wound, which passed entirely through his body. The body, exposed to the hot sun, was partially decomposed when found and the odor therefrom had attracted the vultures of the air. It was wrapped in a blanket and buried under a live oak tree near where it was discovered.

The investigators surmised that Connoway had concealed his pistol under the rock at Scott Springs realizing that he might not recover, and that since the springs were frequented by whites some of his own people might come into possession of the gun, and it would not get into the hands of Indians. The pistol was branded "F 5," the Connoway cow brand.

The Red Creek cave gave up the Winchester, which had not been fired. Inside the cave was found considerable blood and also bullet marks where Indians had fired, evidently supposing the bullets would ricochet and strike the target. The bridle reins of his horse, which he had tied near the entrance to the cave, had been cut, probably by the

Indians in making away with him. Near the cave could be seen Indian tracks, with a smattering of blood, indicating one had been wounded.

The Connoway widow moved back to Llano County where she later married Gid Cowan. One of the daughters married Jim Hunter and the other married Bill Derrick. For a time they all lived on the Nueces, and then moved to New Mexico.

Todd Girl Captured

It was about Christmas time of 1864 that George Todd, accompanied by his wife and Alice Smith—a step-daughter, and a negro servant girl, were riding on horse-back to the town of Mason. After having traveled a few miles, and when they were about four miles from Mason, a band of warriors surprised them, killed the negro girl, severely wounded Mrs. Todd—from the effects of which she later died, and captured little Alice. The latter had fallen from the horse George Todd was riding, the two having been riding double. The tragedy occurred near the point of a mountain, and has since been called Todd Mountains.

There is an interesting connection between that massacre and an incident that happened that very night in the horse pasture of Adolph Reichenau on Big Saline in Kimble County.

"The night after the capture of the Todd girl," recalls Gus Reichenau, "Indians camped in our horse pasture not so far from our house. Snow was on the ground and it was bitter cold. The next morning we discovered moccasin tracks in our yard. The previous day had been wash day at our home, and one of the Indians had managed to enter our yard under cover of night and steal the last piece of clothing from our clothes line. We soon found where they had camped, and there we could see tracks of a child, supposedly those of the little Todd girl. The tracks circled a tree many times, to which we assumed the child was tied. The tracks of one of the Indian's horses kicked up consider-

able mud, and we supposed the animal became scared at the bundle of clothing that was likely loaded on him. A party of us followed the Indian trail up to the head of Elm Creek in Menard County. There the three Indians joined with a large number of their tribesmen, and we turned back."

The Todd girl was never recovered. One story that has made the rounds is that while in captivity she married a captive Mexican boy and later was heard of in Arkansas, but would not return. Jim Smith, an orphan surviving brother of the lost girl, is reported to have spent much time in a futile search for his sister. Rumor has it that while on a search for her he became hungry, climbed a steep precipice to extract honey from a cave, lost his footing and fell to his death. Another is that in New Mexico he learned from reservation Indians that a little girl of Alice's description had been carried by her captors to the tribe, where she fell from her horse, frozen to death.

Louis Korn on Big Saline

Louis Korn was born Christmas day, 1816 in the city of Meisenhein on the Rhine, in Germany, came to Texas in 1845, and married Fredericka Grote in 1848 at New Braunfels. For a time he operated a bakery business in the city of San Antonio, where Mrs. Wilson Hey, of Mason, a surviving daughter, says "we children played hide-go-seek in the Alamo." His bakery business was sold and he and the family moved to Castell, Mason County. This move followed the remarriage of Korn, his first wife having met an untimely death in 1858. At Castell the Indians kidnapped a son, Adolph, at the age of twelve, who was released and returned twelve years later as a result of a trade for some Indian captives at San Antonio.

From Castell the Korns followed the Reichenau trail and moved to Big Saline in 1862, settling some three miles east of the home of Adolph Reichenau. Korn moved a herd of sheep for Charles Lehmburg to the fertile grazing lands of Saline. The family lost no lives during the sojourn there,

but many Indian raids were made in their neighborhood. Mrs. Hey recalls a narrow escape.

"My step-mother and I had the habit of getting up about midnight and turning the cows into the pens and the calves out so the latter could graze during the balance of the night. The cows had formed the habit of coming in late. On a bright moonlight night I went around the cows, and as I passed a brushy spot an Indian jumped up like a cat and grabbed at me. He hardly touched me, and I yelled out to my step-mother, and we made for the house. As we rushed through the front door and slammed it closed, a part of my dress caught when the door slammed. The Indian was right behind me, and stuck his head through an open panel in the door and took a wild glance about the room. I yelled out, 'Papa, get your gun, there's an Indian!' By that time the dogs were barking, and Indians hate dogs. The next morning not far from the house we found a bead-laden saddle which had been left or lost by the Indian visitors. We thought it may have been intentionally left during the excitement to cause the dogs to quit the trail, or that it may have been dropped accidentally. Mother made us dip the saddle in a pot of boiling water to kill the bugs. So we had lots of beads to wear and the boy had a saddle to ride."

Mrs. Hey recalls that she spent most of her time in Kimble at the home of George Scott at Scott Springs. There, she says, the spring was "walled up" where the milk and butter was kept to keep it cool.

On one occasion, she remembers, an Indian slipped up and grabbed through an open window at twelve-year-old Georgia Scott. The latter was sitting in an open window, facing Mrs. Hey in the room.

"I saw the Indian as he crept up behind her, and screamed," she recalls. "Georgia jumped as I screamed and the Indian ran off. It was a moon-light night."

On another occasion, in the absence of her husband, Mrs. Scott was visited by a neighbor and two children. A band of some fifteen Indian warriors suddenly appeared and surrounded the house. They must have been Comanches, as

they joined in a loud war-whoop as they circled the premises on their ponies. The women barricaded themselves, and Mrs. Scott, as cool-nerved as any man, held her rifle pointed outward in a menacing fashion. She thought that would keep the attackers from coming too close. She had a shortage of ammunition and could not afford to exchange fire. Not only that, being outnumbered she could ill afford to arouse the savagery of the invaders. After a half hour of cavorting, the savages whooped out a defiant yell, kicked their mounts and raced away.

Mrs. Hey recalls being with Mrs. Scott one day when the latter's husband was away, and some Indians could be seen by them on a nearby mountain-side, apparently surveying the situation and awaiting the cover of night to aid them in making an attack. The Indians could, from their position, learn whether any men were about the Scott premises, and could see any new arrivals. Before night-fall, however, it happened that two travelers chanced to stop at the Scotts and were persuaded to camp at the spring to furnish protection in the event an attack should be made. The Indians did not fancy a raid under the circumstances and soon disappeared from the mountain. It was later learned that horses were stolen from some Saline settlers that very night.

Mrs. Hey was born on August 21, 1850, in New Braunfels, and spent her early childhood in San Antonio. After the Kimble experiences she lived in Mason where she married Wilson Hey, a respected citizen—as evidenced by the fact that he served that county for thirty years as its clerk. Mrs. Hey continues to reside in Mason where, in her ripe old age, she enjoys good health and is happy with some of her children and grandchildren about her.

Rescue of Wash Wolf

During the year of 1869 a band of twelve Indians made a raid into Llano County, stole a number of horses, and as they were heading up the Llano river killed Hiram Wolf.

The latter, accompanied by his brother, Wash, and Bill Wooten, were in the river bottom looking for some horses. After finding a horse that belonged to the Wolfs, the two brothers started homeward, and their companion, following a different route, did likewise. The Indians surprised the Wolf boys, opened fire on them, and succeeded in killing Hiram and capturing Wash. The two were young, and were sons of George W. Wolf, a Methodist preacher.

As the raiders, with the captured boy and his horse, made their way through Mason County, they were seen by Jim Biddy as they passed one mile below where the Honey Creek flows into the Llano river. Biddy, who lived on Honey Creek, was hunting for game and was alone and on foot when he saw the band of warriors. He concealed himself in a liveoak thicket, and as the Indians neared him he saw they were in possession of a white boy. Whereupon he opened fire with his muzzle-loading Citizen's rifle, and one Indian fell to the ground. Biddy then ran for his life a distance of two hundred yards to the tall weeds in the river bottom, into which he knew the redskins would not venture. In this he was successful, and finally made his way to his home and reported what he had seen. A runner was sent to Mason for help, and four fighting frontiersmen, namely Jim Latham (who now lives at Mason), Charley Cox, Scott Jones and Jeff Wood, immediately responded. On Honey Creek they joined Jim Biddy and his brother, Ham, and Henry Monk, making a total of seven. The posse went to the mouth of Honey creek and picked up the trail, and, it being a moon-light night, they were able to follow the trail by some of them walking.

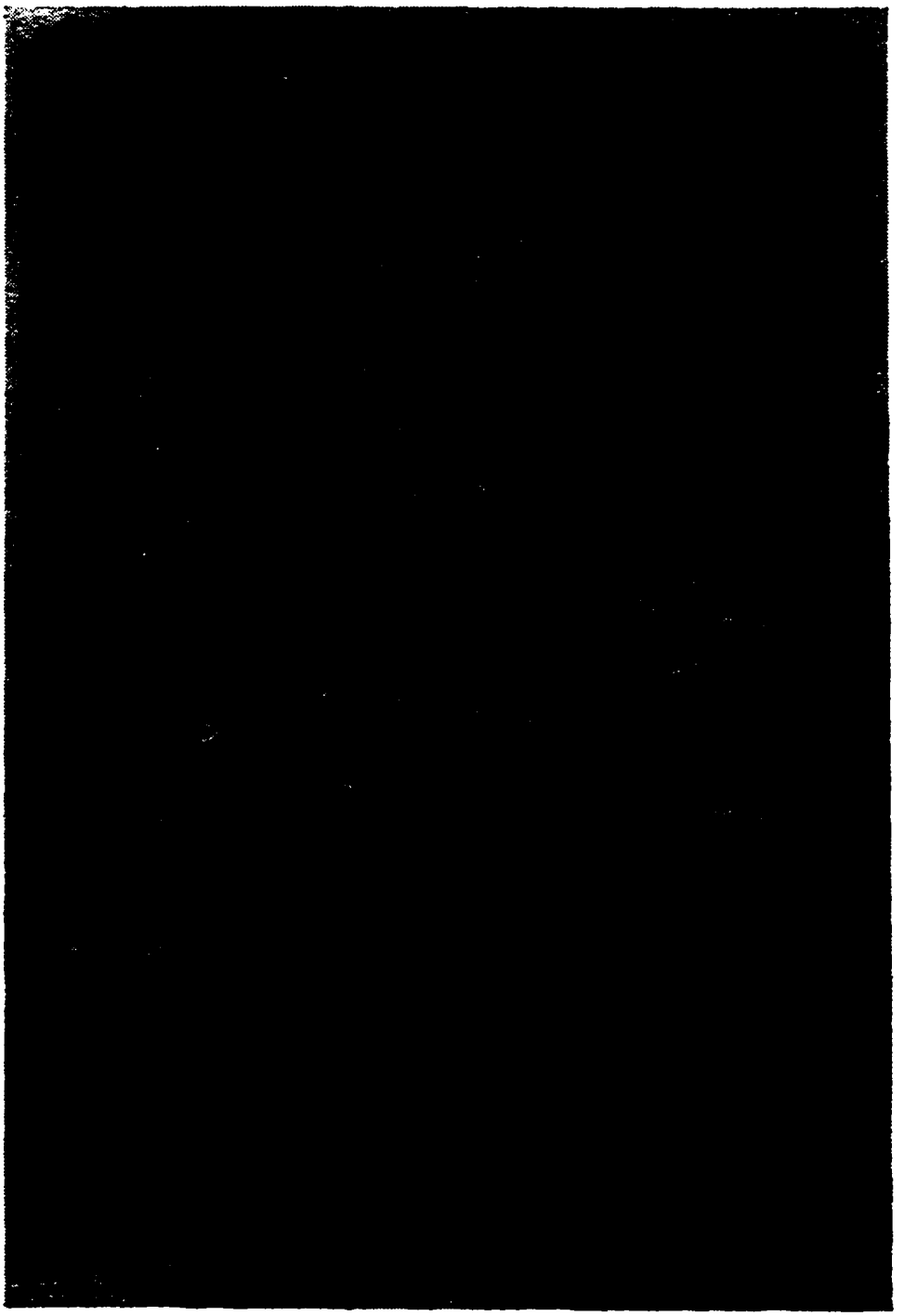
When the pursuing party crossed Bluff creek they stopped at Bill Gamels, and there found him and Jim Johnson. They were sleeping, and had their horses tied in the yard near where they were asleep. Joined by these veteran Indian fighters, the party renewed the pursuit, and by day-light they were at the point of Long Mountain, where the Indian trail was quite fresh. They spurred their horses into a fast

gallop as they knew that time was an important factor in a chase of this nature.

The Indians were sighted near the head of Big Saline. The whites rushed forward for an encounter.

"All the Indians but one bunched together and turned back to fight us," recalled Jim Latham. "One of them, leading the horse the Wolf boy was riding, rode ahead. Some of the older members of our party called out: 'We've got to fight, and don't quit!' Several of us fired at the Chief and during the firing his horse was shot from under him. By that time the Indians were becoming scattered. The Chief ran on foot to where the boy's horse was being led, and at that point the Wolf boy was pushed off and the Chief took his place. The boy yelled out to us, 'Don't shoot me!'

"We pressed on in pursuit of the fleeing Indians. My horse was shot from under me. Our horses were tired and soon we were forced to abandon the chase. We knew some of the Indians had been wounded. One of the horses we captured, which had been ridden during the fight, had considerable blood on his back and shoulders, which we knew had come from the rider's wound. A total of twenty-four horses were recovered, and we trailed back to where the boy had been left. A big white horse the Indians had been driving had been left near where Wash Wolf was waiting, and he had caught and mounted him. He said he felt safer on horseback, as he could run if Indians should drive us back and try to take him. The white horse had been stolen from the Moss brothers in Llano County. The Wolf boy, unharmed, was returned to his father.



Creed Taylor

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

CREED TAYLOR

Creed Taylor was born in Tennessee April 10, 1820, and died at his home near Noxville, in Kimble County, December 26, 1906, after a residence there of thirty-six years.

A. J. Sowell, in his *Early Settlers and Indian Fighters* published in 1900, after an interview with him, gives this account of Creed Taylor's colorful life:

"His father, Josiah Taylor, was born and raised in Virginia, in James County, on the James River, and was related to General Zachary Taylor, so the general himself said. The occasion of his saying this was during the Mexican war when Creed Taylor, as a dispatch bearer, brought a message to the general, and he asked the young courier what his name was, and on being told it was Taylor he asked several questions as to where his people came from, and if his father had a brother named William, and on being told that he had to the latter question, said, 'Well, I am your kinfolks, then.'

"Captain Josiah Taylor, father of Creed, came to Texas in 1811 on an exploring expedition with many others from the States at that time to look at the country, and many Americans that already settled in the eastern part of the State. In the following year a revolution was inaugurated by the Mexicans to throw off the Spanish yoke, and many Americans and Indians in Texas joined them. The army collected at Spanish Bluff, and after an organization set out for Goliad to attack the Spanish army there. The force opposing Spain in this body of men were mostly Americans

and commanded by American officers, of whom were McGee, Kemper, Ross, Gaines, McFarland, and Captain Josiah, who had joined the expedition and commanded a company. One of the Mexican commanders was Bernardo and another was Manchaco. The American force, as we will call it, for they largely predominated, numbered eight hundred when they left the bluff, and many battles were fought with the Spaniards with various successes until 1813, when the Spanish army retreated to San Antonio and the Americans followed. Reinforcements had been sent to the Spanish Governor of Texas, Salcedo, and he now sent his army to meet the advancing Americans. The Spanish army, which was at the mouth of Salado Creek where it empties into the San Antonio River, consisted of fifteen hundred regulars and one thousand militia, all under the command of the officer who brought the reinforcements from Mexico. He had solicited this position, and pledged his head to the Governor that he would kill and capture the entire American army. . .

"In 1824 Captain Taylor returned to Texas with his family and died in the winter of 1830 on his ranch, below Cuero.

"Creed Taylor, after the death of his father, was sent to Gonzales to his mother to attend school, and he boarded at the house of Almon Dickinson, who was afterwards killed in the Alamo. His school teacher was named Miller, and his schoolmates were the Sowell boys, Andrew, John,, and Asa, Highsmiths, Pontons, John Gaston, Galba Fuqua, and Dave Darst. In 1835 when the Mexicans came to take the cannon, Creed was in the fight five miles above the town near Zeke Williams' place, since called the Dikes place. He says they loaded the cannon at John Sowell's shop and carried it with them, and fired it three times during the night."

Even though he was yet quite a young man, Taylor volunteered in the Texan army during the war for independence and served for some months. The records show he entered the federal army of Texas as a private in the com-

pany of Mina Volunteers on September 28, 1835, and received an honorable discharge on November 8 of the same year. He entered the service again in 1836, as shown by Comptroller's Military Service Record No. 1925, countersigned at Columbus December 31, 1936, by George W. Poe, paymaster general of the army, which reads: "This certificate entitles Creed Taylor to $11.12 for one month and twelve days' service from 4 July until 16 August, in Texas service." It is possible Taylor may have performed other military service during the course of that war, but if so it was while he was not officially connected with the Texan army, and of which there is no official record.

Sowell discusses some dramatic moments in Creed Taylor's life after the war clouds had cleared away.

"In 1840, when the Indians burned Linnville," he continues, "he was in the pursuit and battle with the Indians at Plum Creek in the company of Captain D. B. Fryer. Among the men whom he remembers seeing in the battle was Robert Hall, French Smith, Zeke Smith, Andrew Sowell, James Nichols, Ben McCulloch and his brother, Henry, and Matthew Caldwell. Mr. Taylor killed several Indians in personal combats during the long running fight.

"In the fall of this same year he went on Indian expeditions commanded by Colonel Tom Howard and belonged to the company of Captain Matthew Caldwell. There were 170 white men on this Indian hunt, and they located a large camp of them where Brackett is now. A considerable battle took place and a great deal of noise was made, but none of the white men were killed and but few wounded. Twenty Indians were killed and seven hundred head of mules and horses were captured. Among the men along from the Guadalupe were William Tumlinson, Dan Grady, Calvin Turner, and John Gattes. A great many of these mules and horses had been carried off by the Indians from below in the settlements along the rivers and were returned to their owners.

"After the expedition Mr. Taylor joined the rangers under Jack Hays and was in the fight at Bandera Pass. The

men that he can remember who were in the fight were, besides Captain Hays and himself, two of his brothers, Josiah and Pipkin, Andrew Erskine, Peter Fore, Ad Gillespie, Kit Ackland, Sam Luckey, George Neill, James Dunn, Sam Walker, and George Jackson. His recollection is that the time was June of 1841, that twenty-five rangers were in the fight and that it lasted more than an hour. The Indians fired on them first and soon showed themselves in large force and came close, and the rangers had all they could do to manage them. About 11 o'clock the Indians began to give back towards the north end of the pass, pursued by the rangers, who constantly mixed with them and hand to hand conflicts took place, in one of which, near the north end of the pass, Kit Ackland killed the Chief, and many horses were killed and wounded. Among the rangers killed was Peter Fore and George Jackson. The latter was a son of Tom Jackson who was killed in the Alamo. Peter Fore was shot through the body with an arrow, the spike being on one side and the feather on the other. Sam Walker was thrust through with a lance and Andrew was wounded in the thigh with an arrow. He charged the Indian with a five shooter, but the barrel dropped off without his knowledge, and he almost touched the Indian trying to shoot, but failed. The Comanche had his bow stick shot in two and was almost unable to shoot, but noticing the condition of the ranger's pistol, grasped an arrow in his hand and tried to stab him with it, but was at this time shot and killed by Creed Taylor. Mr. Taylor says other rangers were wounded and had to be carried to San Antonio to be treated, but he does not remember their names. He can only remember two that died on the ground.

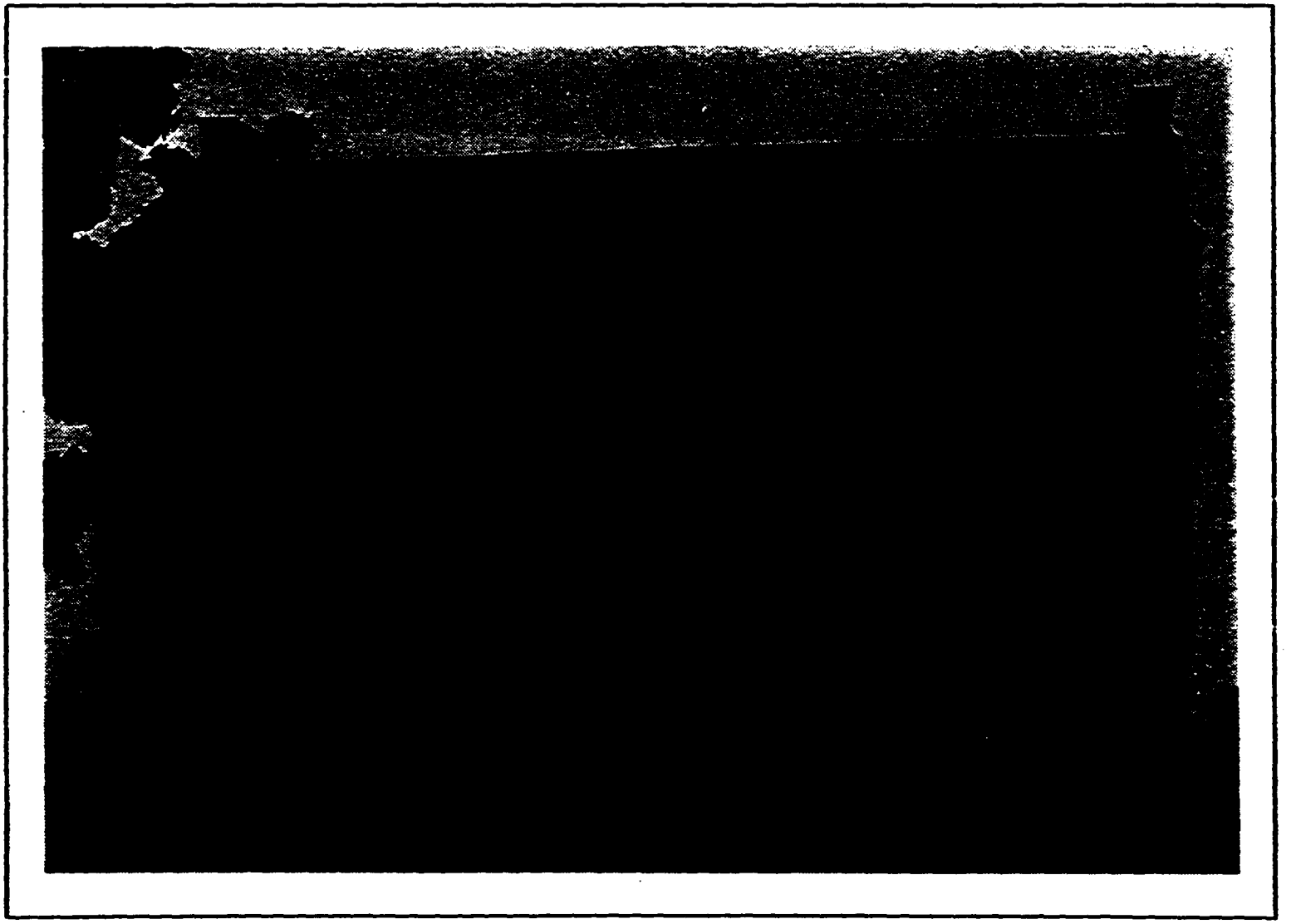
"When Wall captured San Antonio in 1842 the Rangers were quartered in San Antonio, but most of them were out on a scout with Jack Hays and made their escape. When the Texans were gathered on the Salado to fight them and Captain Hays drew them out, Lieutenant Henry McCulloch covered the retreat with ten picked men, four of them Taylors, Creed, Pipkin, Josiah, and James. Towards the

last of the race Creed Taylor and McCulloch were along in the rear, and two hundred shots or more were fired at them by the Mexican cavalry, but neither were hit.

"In the main battle that came off on the creek Creed Taylor had his arm broke, shot in the middle of the elbow and the ball split on the bone, half going out and the other remaining. As it would never permanently heal, years afterwards he had the other part of the ball taken out by Dr. Herff of San Antonio. After the battle Mr. Taylor went to Seguin and stayed until his arm apparently got well, staying with Tom Nichols during the time. On the way to Seguin he passed over Dawson battle ground, and said he never saw such a sight of mangled men and horses. He says in the Salado battle Calvin Turner was glanced on the side of the head with a grape shot and knocked down . . . When the Mexican war of 1846 broke out Mr. Taylor joined the regiment of rangers commanded by Captain Jack Hays, and passed through nearly all of the battles in Mexico, the last he was in being at Buena Vista. The first one he says was at Palo Alto . . . Both armies met each other with all the regimental bands playing at once on both sides and five hundred flags were in sight."

Creed Taylor Moves to Kimble

Creed Taylor moved to Kimble in 1869, and bought out Bud Hudson's improvements on James River. There he set up a ranch, and employed Henry Wall, a stone mason, to build a huge, two-story ranch house. The building was an expensive, comprehensive one, with wide, roomy, built-in fireplaces at the north and south ends of the building on both floors. At the time the building was completed, after two years of work, it was not only the most expensive and best built house in the county, but was also one of the finest of its kind west of San Antonio. The tall, rambling, white structure stood out in bold relief among the thickly clustered woods of the upper valley of James River. To the



Creed Taylor's Home

west and north was a narrow stretch of black, fertile land. To the south was a rim of bushy hills which circled back to the west. To the east was the river, a clear, spring-fed lively stream bordered on either side by tall timber. Then to the east of the river were more hills stretching and rolling as far as the eye could see. It was a natural setting, a hilly surrounding, a hidden retreat in the heart of a mountain fastness.

Creed Taylor was not a large man, being about five feet, nine inches in height, but rather heavy in body. A busy outdoor life had caused him to become slightly round-shouldered, and like the cowboy of old, he was bow-legged, but not extremely so.

The veteran Taylor was dark complexioned, and had long, black, wavy hair. Even at the time of his death, his hair retained its black color, there being but little evidence of grayness. His eyes were dark, piercing, and intelligent. He wore a clipped beard, of an almost bluish hue.

Prior to coming to Kimble, Taylor had lived on Ecleto Creek in Wilson County. There he was known by James A. Browning, who died recently at Junction, and also by John Allen, who now lives near Fort McKavett. He is reported by Ben Hey of Mason (who spent a week with Taylor in 1900 taking notes on the life and reminiscences of this noted frontier character) to have survived the Taylor-Sutton feud of around Hellena, Karnes County. Fresh from that feud, he moved to Kimble with a string of cattle and horses, mostly race stock.

Taylor was not a drinking man, but was an incessant cigarette smoker, and a heavy imbiber of coffee, and liked it black and strong.

"I like my coffee," he told Ben Hey as he saucered his coffee and blew the steam from a stained cup, "so strong that it will float an iron wedge!"

In smoking his cigarettes, Taylor invariably used but one type of paper. If newspapers could not be had, Creed did not smoke under any conditions. James A. Parker says he has seen Taylor in a cow camp for a week at a time and never

take a puff from a cigarette because there were no newspapers in which to roll them!

As Ben Hey rode into Noxville one day he met Taylor riding out, carrying a sizeable roll of newspapers.

"What have you got there, Creed?" queried Hey.

"Oh, just a supply of cigarette papers," was Creed's answer.

Cowboys in the James River country learned that when riding the range in that vicinity it was an easy matter to determine if Creed Taylor had camped at a particular camp fire. If so, a number of newspaper cigarette stubs could be seen strewn about. And Creed did not get stingy when rolling his smokes. They were a full four inches in length, and sometimes five, with a circumference of that of an average index finger. The cigarette, while being smoked, was held tightly at the half-way point, and when smoked exactly half way, the balance was discarded.

Hey recounts an account Taylor gave of an experience when scouting with four rangers at a time when he was attached to that service before coming to Kimble.

"We had come to an abandoned house in a canyon," explained Taylor. "It was snowing and sleeting, and we chose the house for protection from the storm. I went into a side-room, feeling around in the dark for some kindling wood to start a fire with. Suddenly I put my hand on a man's head! The man was dead. Fresh blood oozed from an open wound."

The four companions decided, for personal reasons best known to themselves, to prepare camp at the side of some canyon drift wood, a hundred yards below the house. The drift wood would afford them but little protection from the norther, but there were other things to consider. However, Creed went about his business of starting a fire in the fireplace with some chips he had found in a corner. He had no patience with the tenderfooted companions who were preparing to shift camps.

"Hell," snapped Creed as he hunkered down to blow the embers into a blaze, "for myself, I'm going to sleep right

here. Who in the hell is afraid of a dead man? It's the live ones I'm afraid of!"

Creed Taylor was a lover and follower of race horses.

"Down in Wilson County," remembers John Allen, "Creed matched a horse race with a man in that community. Creed knew the man's tactics, and suspecting his racer might be stolen for a trial race at night, Taylor concealed himself in his horse pasture and watched the trick. The horse was safely returned long before day-break. On schedule, a few days later, the race was run. The Taylor horse was the victor by three good lengths, and Creed stuffed the spoils into his side pocket. The losing man was amazed, and accused his rider—a brother-in-law—of holding his horse back, and even threatened to kill him. He had lost heavily on the race.

"Oh, no you won't," interposed Taylor when he heard what the fuss was about. "Don't blame John. I knew your tricks, and the reason my horse wouldn't run so fast when you stole him out that night was because I had him fixed so he wouldn't. The horse was himself when the race was run today!"

In Kimble County Taylor conducted many public and private horse races. He could often be seen riding along a trail on his favorite mount, a brown horse called "Cedar Brake," and heading for a racing event somewhere. He was popular about race tracks, and his judgment of favorites was much sought after. One of Taylor's finest money winners in Kimble was "Monkey Jack," a fantail that rarely ever lost when the wind was right. Sebastian Kountz recalls that at Junction City the races were usually conducted in the open flat area between Round Mountain and the place where the cemetery is now located.

On one occasion Creed Taylor brought "Monkey Jack" across the mountain to John Joy's on Johnson Fork. He was hankering for a race that morning and had come to the right place. "John," Taylor began, "Monkey Jack is a-getting a little old but he can still run rings around that bay filly of yours that you had over at town the other day!"

John Joy took a fresh chew of tobacco, adjusted his hat, and nonchalantly looked the situation over. He might have taken a great deal of personal abuse, but for a person to cast reflections on his racing filly grated harshly on his pride. He had implicit faith in his filly and believed "Monkey Jack" had seen his best days.

"Now, Creed," Joy replied with a poker face, "you know you've got the fastest thing in the County, but I'm thinking about running you anyhow." Taylor again reminded Joy that "Monkey Jack" was showing his age, and adroitly urged him to make the match.

Less than thirty minutes later Creed Taylor's veteran money winner was chewing his bridle bits and restlessly pawing the ground with John Joy's racing filly warming up for one of Johnson Fork's most famous races. It is said that even Mrs. Joy's feather beds were put up to match the offerings of the proud owner of "Monkey Jack."

"That was the toughest loss Creed ever suffered," remarks one pioneer. "He never did seem to get completely over that. That bay filly became a streak of lightning that morning, and went out two lengths ahead of the best the aging Taylor horse could offer."

When the mortal remains of Creed Taylor were borne to the Noxville cemetery in a wagon, old timers scratched their heads and mused, "It's a wonder he don't break right out of there! That's more than he ever did alive—ride on a wagon!" Never one time during his lifetime was he seen in a wheeled vehicle. If he and one of his boys or a ranch hand were going to town with the wagon, Creed saddled "Cedar Brake," and with his Winchester snugly by his side, would ride along behind the wagon; but in it—never.

"Creed was an old curiosity," was John Allen's summation of the man.

Taylor's Kimble County cattle venture was not lucrative. He trailed out many cattle, but many others drifted away and were gathered by rustlers. He kept a few head moving to Kerrville to market, and that, coupled with his race track winnings and his Mexican war pension provided a comfortable living for himself and family. On his premises

he kept a pack of hounds and hunted for wild game far and wide.

"Creed Taylor was a good man at heart," one old acquaintance testifies. "If he liked you there was nothing he wouldn't do for you; but if he didn't like you—then it was different." Many a weary traveler found succor at the Taylor dinner table, and there were people dropping in all the time. Taylor was prone to lend a helping hand to the man in trouble. Ben Hey recalls him telling of an occasion when Frank and Jesse James robbed the San Antonio and Austin stage and came to his house and spent the night in making their escape, but they did not make known to Taylor what they had just done. That robbery may have been the one to which reference was made in a resolution passed by the Legislature on April 8, 1874, which provided as follows:

> "Be it resolved by the legislature of the State of Texas, That the Governor be and he is hereby authorized to offer a reward not to exceed three thousand dollars for the apprehension of three highway robbers that robbed the passengers and the United States mail on the San Antonio and Austin Stage, on the 7th April, 1874, to be paid out of any moneys in the treasury not otherwise appropriated."

Mary Taylor, one of Taylor's daughters, married Jeff Hardin, a kinsman of the notorious John Wesley Hardin. After Jeff Hardin's death she married Bob Blunt.

A short distance below Taylor lived Jess Whitson, who died in 1898. The old gentleman was quite feeble for two or three years before his death. The neighbors vow that on one occasion when the ailing Whitson was depressed and feverish he sent for his old neighbor, and at his bedside looked up at him and said: "Now, Creed, all I've ever said about you or done to you, *if* I die I want you to forgive me for; but if I live, by gatlins, it still stands good!"

Creed Taylor was a Master Mason, and had been a member of Coletto Lodge No. 124, Yorktown, Texas, which lodge demised in 1871. His initiation into that lodge was completed on December 19, 1853, according to Grand Lodge records.

On the well-preserved tombstone over his grave in Noxville cemetery may be seen this epitaph:

CREED TAYLOR

Born April 10, 1820 Died December 26, 1906

The seraphs round the shining throne
Have borne thee to thy rest,
To dwell among the saints on high
Companions of the blest.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

THE SEVENTIES BRING NEW FACES

During the early '70's a number of pioneer families settled in the Llano valleys. Many of those who had survived the '60's had moved on, and were as readily replaced by new pioneers.

Lou M. Walton

In 1873 Lou M. Walton, a native of Arkansas, settled in Kimble County. His father was George Walton, and was born in St. Louis on May 9, 1817. He moved to Texas in time to participate in the Texan War for Independence, acting as a courier when the Indians burned Linnville. Not only that, the veteran Walton saw service in the Civil War following the banner of Robert E. Lee. He died in the home of his son, Lou, on Big Saline creek in Kimble County in 1893.

Lou Walton could take pride in his maternal ancestry, as well. His mother, christened Louise Zumwalt (Zumwatt), of Pennsylvania Dutch extraction, was born in Texas, near Nacogdoches, and her parents were in the Austin Colony. Two of Walton's mother's brothers shouldered muskets in the Texan struggle, and Isaac Zumwatt was a member, along with Bate Berry and others, of the ill-fated Mier Expedition, during which he drew a white bean in the famous decimation at Solado. He was released from the Perote prison September 16, 1844.

Lou Walton married Ellen Moore, a gifted daughter of

the pioneer Rance Moore. In the Kimble country Walton participated in a number of scouting expeditions in pursuit of raiders and outlaws. He settled in the Big Saline Valley, where he and his wife continue to live.

John Alexander Miller

Fifty cents in money, a yoke of steers, one pony, and an old saddle constituted the worldly goods belonging to John Alexander Miller when he camped at the mouth of Gentry Creek in Kimble County in 1874. The report of the "land of the flitter trees and honey" had lured him to the Llano valleys.

John A. Miller was born in Mississippi, and with his father, William Miller, came to Texas and settled in Gonzales County. In the latter county the Millers had been neighbors and friends of A. P. Browning and family. Before coming to Kimble, John Miller had married Miss Martha Browning, a daughter of A. P. Browning. They settled at the mouth of Johnson Fork where they lived for many years and reared a large family. Miller engaged in the cattle business, and took an active part in protecting the frontier against Indian raiders. He joined a company of Minute Men and engaged in a number of skirmishes with the Apaches and Lipans.

A few months after John Miller and family settled in Kimble County, they were joined by the father, William, and his family. Jerry Roberts, who had married Mary Browning in Gonzales, came about the same time, as did A. P. Browning and family. About the same time Frank and George Miller, brothers of John, made the same move. The Brownings settled at the mouth of Gentry Creek, three miles below the John Miller home, and the occasional presence of warring Indians in the vicinity caused the families to keep in close contact.

John A. Miller was a man of strong character, and throughout most of his life was known as "Honest John."

He preempted what he thought was a section of land on the Johnson Fork, but surveys were inaccurate, and other preemptions overlapped the one he had made, and he was finally allowed only fifty acres. During a time when many frontier settlers were enlarging their herds by branding "strays" and "mavericks," John Miller carefully avoided placing his brand on any animal to which he did not have a clear title. Through his scrupulous honesty, he gained the admiration and respect of his neighbors, and that reputation followed him through his life.

John Miller and his wife reared a large family, and there are now eight living children: Alfred, Leander, Larkin, Mrs. Mollie Wright, Mrs. Jack (Maggie) Jobes, Mrs. Ernest (Zora) Burt, Mrs. Doug (Georgia) Jobes and Mrs. Nettie Hodge. A son, William, is deceased. The elder Miller died during November of 1926, and at the time of his death had thirty-seven grandchildren and twenty-six great grandchildren. His wife died four years later.

The frontier was far from being tamed when the Millers settled on Johnson Fork. Leander Miller recalls having been told of an occasion when George and Frank Miller, then quite young men, were away from home hunting calves. George had climbed a pecan tree in order to be able to search the bottom lands for some distance, and while there a band of warriors galloped through the valley, saw him in the tree, and paused and looked at him. In the meantime Frank had secreted himself in a clump of grass and weeds, and afterwards said the Indians were so near him that he could have thumped a rock against them. John Miller later expressed the opinion that the band may have been made up of white ruffians dressed as Indians. The invaders apparently believed a trap had been laid for them, because after looking cautiously about they wheeled their horses and speeded toward Indian Hollow, a canyon in the mountains to the east. John Miller, along with his brother-in-law, Jerry Roberts, took a prominent part in the chase after the Indians that killed Isaac Kountz and Sam Speer on Christmas eve, 1876. Eight settlers participated in that chase, but

after an heroic effort that lasted three days the possemen were forced to abandon the trail. In addition, Miller engaged in other stands against early-day Indian incursions.

John Miller and his violin were popular favorites at the old-time dances. He was considered a maestro among the fiddlers in those parts, and his supremacy was never challenged. Neighbors would come for miles to implore his services, and would often bring a horse, saddled and ready for him to ride. Miller would carefully place his violin in an empty flour sack, strap it to the saddle, and off he would go to add zest and life to the spirit of an all-night neighborhood party. His children were musically inclined, and when quite young, Leander, Larkin and William became adept with the violin, and they were ably accompanied on the guitar or banjo by their sisters. The services of the entire family were sometimes sought to furnish music for the larger occasions.

When Kimble County was organized in 1876 John A. Miller took a part in its early affairs. He was selected as one of the jurors to try a case when the District Court met under a live oak tree at Kimbleville, the first county seat. On that same jury was one Manuel Morales, a Mexican, and a respected citizen of the county. Miller early identified himself with that element of people who believed in law and order, and his efforts were always directed toward the side of fairness and right.

Johnson Fork's "7-O-L" Ranch

The early '80's witnessed an unprofitable ranching venture on the Johnson Fork when the "7-O-L" outfit bought out the A. M. Gilmer brand, for which the latter was reported to have paid around $25,000. Many other cattle were purchased by the company which was owned by interests in St. Joe, Missouri. The most ambitious fencing project ever undertaken in Kimble County was a part of the "7-O-L" dream. The fence, which was more than thirty-five miles in

length, was built on the west side of Johnson Fork, and enclosed land which the company either owned or had under lease. A part of Cedar Creek and the head of Dry Cedar Creek were included in the western portion of the ranch. Mann Harrison, who had moved to Kimble from Lavaca and Milam Counties in 1881, worked for three months on the fence-building project, and later worked for three years as a horse wrangler for the Company. It was on that ranch that he married Margaret Griffin, an attractive schoolteacher, in 1884. Many other Kimble County pioneers worked at some time or other for the "7-O-L."

Frank Richardson, who hailed from St. Joe, Missouri, was made foreman of the new ranch. There were many features of the Texas cattle business he did not understand. On one occasion he purchased eight hundred cows and calves from one Duess, "to be under one brand," and to be gathered by the purchaser. But there was a hiatus in the deal: it developed that after the required number of cattle was gathered the "one brand" contracted for was a "bar-dot" road brand, and road brands were not conclusive of ownership. Herds coming through claimed many of them, basing ownership on other than the road brand. "Road brands were hard to hold on to," says Peter Rembold. The "7-O-L" venture proved a failure, and within a few years the ranch was abandoned and the cattle were sold or trailed to market. The mention of the term "7-O-L" brings happy memories to the minds of many of the county's pioneers.

Saline Valley Settlers

In 1876 John Pearl, Sr., with his wife and three sons—John, Jr., Henry and Alex, and one daughter, Adeline, moved from Burnet County and settled on Little Saline Creek in Kimble County. George Pearl, who now resides in the Little Saline community, was a son of Ed Pearl, and come to Kimble with his grandparents, John Pearl, Sr., and wife, with whom he lived. John Pearl, Sr., settled on a

place that is now owned by Betty Pearl, a widow of the late John Pearl, Jr. Henry Pearl, a brother of John Pearl, Sr., moved to Saline with his brother, and shortly thereafter became the first County Commissioner for that precinct.

"Little Saline was running the year 'round then," recalls George Pearl, "and fish were plentiful anywhere on the creek."

About three miles below the Pearls, on what is now known as the Mabry ranch, Joe Harkey had settled two years before. He later moved to San Saba and served as sheriff of that county.

Two notorious outlaws, Bill and Bob McKeever, lived on Little Saline in 1876. They were both on the "dodge," and were wanted at other places for murder. They were later arrested and taken away.

Bob Anderson and wife lived a mile up the valley from the Pearl settlement. A man named Anderson, who was an uncle of Bob Anderson, lived on Big Saline, and the remains of his rock house continue to stand. In its rock walls may be seen a number of small openings, large enough to shoot through and specially arranged for that purpose.

John L. Jones, who later became sheriff of Kimble County, and his brother, Jim Ike Jones, settled on lower Little Saline in 1876. One year later John L. moved across the main Llano and established a ranch. Jim Ike Jones moved to Arizona.

In 1878 Frank (Pete) Weaver and family settled in the valley of Big Saline. He was a native of Alabama, where he was born in 1843. He died in 1920 at his home in the village of London. His wife was a daughter of Luke Guffey, a native of New York State. Mrs. Weaver was born at Castroville May 28, 1854, and now recalls many of the early-day experiences. There are eight surviving children: Mrs. Alfred (Emily) Bannowsky, Mrs. W. M. (Edna) Haley, Mrs. John (Maggie) Dragoo, Mrs. John (Gussie) McCollum, James J. Weaver, Tilman Weaver, Mrs. Henry (Daisey) Waddell, and Mrs. Ira (Lydia) Bowers. Frank

Weaver settled about one mile above the old Mabry ranch, which was then occupied by John Harkey.

Along with Frank Weaver came Sam Weaver, who settled in the Saline Valley. He continued to live in the London community until his death a few years ago. He reared a large family.

In 1877 James, Rastus, Andrew and Jack Brewer, accompanied by their father, settled on a place that is now known as the Jake Fritz farm. The elder Brewer had with him a niece, Razee Hillebrandt, who later married Fred Wahrmund. The Brewers were in the cattle business and did some farming. Rastus operated a store in London for many years, and was for many years prior to his death regarded as the town's most beloved citizen.

James A. Browning

In the winter of 1874 A. P. Browning sold his ranch holdings in Guadalupe and Gonzales Counties, and moved to the Llanos for his wife's health, and settled at the mouth of Gentry Creek. A son-in-law, John A. Miller, had moved to Kimble several months before. The Browning children were: J. A., L. M. (Bood), J. B. (Dock), Anthony, Mrs. Jess (Kittie) Schrier, Mrs. Zora Southall, Mrs. Jerry (Mary) Roberts, and Mrs. John A. (Martha) Miller. The elder Browning had lived in the new home only one year when his wife died, after which he returned to his old home. His son, James A., remained to cast his fortune with the new frontier.

"Our postoffice was for a long time Mason," Browning wrote in his *Memoirs* in 1929. "We would go about once a month for the mail, and on that trip I would pass only one house from where I lived on Gentry Creek till I got to Honey Creek, six miles this side of Mason. I think there were about twelve families in Kimble then. They are all gone but L. M. Walton at London and myself. But this did

not last long. About 1876 a good many people began to move in here."

James A. Browning was a native of Guadalupe County, where he was born February 3, 1857. He attended the Leasville School in Gonzales County, and was also at one time a student at old Sandies Chapel, also in that county. After his father returned to his old home, James A. cultivated a small field in the Llano river bottom for a year or two, and then clerked in Dan Baker's store near the mouth of Johnson Fork. Many and varied were his experiences, and he was a witness to or a participant in many of those early-day events that occurred in Kimble.

"Indians visited us frequently," he continued in his writing. "They got the last horse I had, and we had to go for the mail in ox wagons."

J. A. Browning saw Indians on several occasions, and at times he acted as a courier in spreading Indian news through the settlement.

"Another time there was a bunch of men from Mason up here on South Llano," he wrote. "They had gathered a bunch of cattle so they were at camp eating dinner one day and the Indians made a run on them and got their horses. So they had to turn their cattle loose and walk back to Mason; this was the time I made the famous ride down the South Llano.

"I was just a big boy and lived at the mouth of Gentry Creek. I heard of a cow outfit, as we called them, and I was on my way up to their camp when I just met a man riding the only horse the Indians had left them (and this horse was no good). Well, this man had lost his hat and was whipping his horse and riding as fast as the poor horse could go. When I saw him coming I well understood there must be Indians. He says: 'The Indians got all the horses just now at camp and I was going down the river to notify the settlers.' But, he says, 'this horse can't go any further,' He then turned to me. 'Can you let the people know about it?' I replied 'Yes,' so I turned my pony and pushed on the bridle rein.

"I did not know till then how fast this pony would run.

The first house was Dr. E. K. Kountz. I stopped there long enough to manage to tell them about the Indians. They lived just below where the Price Tourist Camp is now. Well, that was the only house between the Llanos where we now have a thriving town. The next house was a log house in what is now called the Jeter Bend. There was an old man living there by the name of Coffey. I ran up and told the old lady to look out, that the Indians were in the neighborhood. Mrs. Coffey had a big old boy named Charley who was not right bright. He said, 'That is alright, I will kill them every one.' The next house was one at the Bogs. On the way there I met Mrs. Latta who is now at Del Rio. She had her two children, Oscar Latta and Mrs. Bell Stewart, who now lives near London. They were little children. I told Mrs. Latta about the Indians and turned back to her house and I stayed with them until they were in the house. Then the next place was my home and I was soon there. The old Lady Coffey said later that I had just been gone a few minutes when she saw the Indians rounding up their horses, and they never left a one. Mrs. Latta would probably have just about got there in time to have all been killed."

Uncle Bennie Goes A-Gumming

J. A. Browning recalls an early-day incident that fell barely short of loss of blood. Uncle Bennie Pepper knew something about the value of a dollar and saved his money. Sel Denman, who lived down the Main Llano about where the Cloud place is now located, found it necessary to borrow money from some one, and being a friend of Uncle Bennie he made it convenient for the latter to know of his financial straits, and how easy it would be for him to repay the note when it came due, and was advanced the sum of $500. Note-paying time came around and Denman had not a cent with which to pay. Uncle Bennie waited a month, but still no money. Two more months clicked by the calendar, and Denman began to dodge Uncle Bennie when they were both

in town. One day Pepper rode through town carrying a double-barrel shot-gun, and in front of a saloon made the public announcement that he was then on his way down to Denman's place to shoot Sel for beating him out of $500! And he refused to be talked out of it.

A few minutes later he rode up to the Denman yard gate. The winds were blowing in Denman's favor that morning. He had gone away from home and was somewhere in the woods. Mrs. Denman caught the significance of the visit, as she peered through the window at the shot-gun. After much insistence she induced Uncle Bennie to come inside, there to await the coming of her husband. "And," she added, "I have dinner about ready." Browning, in his *Memoirs*, says "they treated the old gentleman so nice that he got alright with Denman and loaned him some more money. He then came back through Junction telling the people that if everybody was as good a man as Sel Denman was that we would have a better country. I think Denman paid him all he owed."

N. Q. (Nick) Patterson

It was a few days before Christmas, 1875, that N. Q. Patterson and his family pitched camp on the north bank of the South Llano river near Flat Rock crossing. Their camp was only three hundred yards from the log-house home of Dr. E. K. Kountz. Patterson was a Tennesseean, and moved from that state to South Carolina shortly after the close of the Civil War. In the latter state Patterson located near Walhalla, a trading post on the North and South Carolina border. There the family lived until 1868, when they turned their eyes to Texas, and began the long, slow trek to the new frontier. Their first Texas residence was in Limestone County, and from there they moved to Williamson County, and thence, in 1875, to Kimble. The elder Patterson and his son, Andrew, had made a trip up the Llano valley, had met the Kountz family and visited in

their home, and then returned to Williamson County to move the family.

There were seven children in the Patterson family: Nancy (who married Dr. William Vaughn); Cynthia (a twin of Nancy, and who married Lynn Allen); A. J. Patterson (deceased); C. Q. Patterson; F. G. Patterson; Ellen (who married Robert Tomberlin); Jane (who married Charley Vickers, and who is now deceased); and N. C. Patterson, who continues to reside at Junction.

N. Q. Patterson became one of the leading citizens of the setlement into which he moved, and was instrumental, along with Dr. Kountz and others, in the setting up of the County government, and became the County's first Treasurer. His son, N. C., who resides at Junction, was born in Tennessee on February 15, 1855, and was almost twenty-one years of age when the family made the move to Kimble. He married Elizabeth Kountz, a daughter of Dr. E. K. Kountz. Young Patterson, like his father, identified himself with the well-being of the community. He was riding bailiff for the first court held in the County, and he, John A. Miller and J. R. Steffey served as the first jury Commissioners in the new county. He carried an early-day mail to and from Ft. McKavett, and served as postmaster of Junction City.

N. C. Patterson well remembers his first night spent in Kimble County. From the Patterson camp above the river bank he heard the flutter of wings as hundreds of turkeys "flew in" to roost in the tall river-bottom trees.

N. Q. Patterson moved from Kimble County to New Mexico. In 1898 he suffered a severe injury when kicked by a horse, and this resulted in an attack of pneumonia which caused his death. He died near the mouth of Cox Canyon, New Mexico, and was buried near Cloudcroft, in that state.

Dr. E. K. Kountz

Dr. E. K. Kountz, a Confederate veteran from Virginia, with his wife, Harriet Lindwood Kountz, and their children,

moved to Kimble County in 1875, shortly before the county was organized. The move was directly from Cowley County, Kansas. The family had moved to Kansas in 1869 from Virginia, and had settled acros the Vertigus River from Coffeyville. The Osage Indian reservation was located there, and Mrs. N. C. Patterson recalls, "We got our water from the same spring as did some of the Indians." Four years later they moved to Cowley County, the location of the reserve for the Caw Indians.

Dr. Kountz and his son, Columbus, came to Kimble County in December of 1874, looked the country over and decided to settle. Directions were sent to other members of the family, and the move was made to Texas by the way of Denison and Dallas. "I recall," says Mrs. Patterson, "that when we passed through Llano on our way to Kimble County people warned us and said: 'Oh, you'd better be careful—this is moon-light time, and the Indians will get you!"

The Kountz residence was set up on South Llano, about three miles above the forks of the rivers. The new home was built on the remains of the abandoned Bradbury ranch, one or two of the log and picket houses of which continued to stand. Mrs. Patterson recalls that one of the Bradbury log houses was used, and one, a picket structure, was not in condition for use. Other houses on the old ranch had been burned, and in places burned parts of picket stubs protruded from the ground.

"I remember the abandoned cabins," recalls Sebastian Kountz. "Nearby there were the remains of what looked like an old blacksmith shop with an old-fashioned forge. On the river, two hundred yards south of the house, was a beautiful spring from which we got our water."

One of the log houses was made into a two-story structure, with a tall rock chimney. Corrals were built nearby, and other improvements that were typical with the pioneer ranch home were made. Horses were kept under close guard because, says Mrs. Patterson, "the Indians would come through there on every light moon." From the day the family settled on South Llano, on July 24, 1875, they used

every precaution to avoid depredations from the marauders, and this was climaxed by the Indian murder of Isaac Kountz on the following Christmas eve.

Dr. Kountz was a useful citizen during the formative days of the county's history. He served as its first County Clerk, and later operated the first drug store in Junction City. He died in 1884 in Del Rio, his death preceding that of his wife by seven years.

Other Settlers

In 1876 Frank Latta, with his wife and two children—Oscar and Bell—settled on the north bank of the North Llano River, and built a log house just below the place where the North Llano bridge is now located. Latta, who was born in the State of Indiana in 1847, lived for a time at Ft. Scott, Kansas, where in 1867 he married Elizabeth Thomas, a native of Illinois. From there in 1874 the family trekked to San Antonio, Texas, and thence two years later to Kimble County.

When the county government was organized, Latta was selected Sheriff and Tax Collector. In later years his son, Oscar, served Kimble County in a like capacity, and today resides in Del Rio, Texas. The daughter married Dave Stewart. Frank Latta died in 1902 at his home on the main Llano, having lived in the county from the time he selected it as his home in 1876.

The Johnson Fork Valley attracted many ranchmen during the '70's. In the middle '70's George Snider established a ranch near the head of that stream. A few years later John Hankins (an uncle of John M. Hankins, who has been a citizen of Junction for many years) and John Ames ranched on the river two miles below the Joys. Below them was a cattleman named A. M. Gilmer, and four miles further up the valley Hodge Glass settled.

In 1879 William G. Moos, who first saw the light of day in Gillespie County, Texas, on August 20, 1856, moved to

Johnson Fork and set up a cow ranch. He was a son of John Moos who was born in Berlin in 1825, and who moved to America when only fifteen years of age. In his Johnson Fork ranch William Moos has lived until this day. He remembers that in the early days in Kimble County there was a rushing business done by grand juries, and that for a long time he was called to serve on either the grand or petit juries at almost every court session. Horse and cattle stealing consumed much of the court's time. Mr. Moos and others of his type took a hand in upholding the law during the times in the county's history when the law-breaking element of the population was strong in numbers and unscrupulous in their methods.

In 1879 Peter J. Rembold bunched his cattle in with those of Chris Schuchart at Castroville, in Medina County, and they were trailed to the Johnson Fork country. This pioneer was born in Befour, France. It was a coincidence that his son, Frank, as an American soldier during the World War in 1918 chanced to march through the village where his father was born. Peter Rembold, an orphan child, was at the age of eighteen months brought to America by his grandparents.

On Johnson Fork Rembold preempted 160 acres of land located about four miles below his present home. Schuchart purchased 360 acres nearby. In 1882 the 424-acre homestead of John Joy was purchased by Rembold and he has lived there continuously since then. He recalls the old Joy improvements on the place. The stable was made partly of large cedar posts set several feet in the ground. To those posts Joy would chain his horses in order that Indians could not get them loose. Mr. Rembold remembers seeing John Joy many years later when the latter was quite an old man, and after the advent of the automobile. Joy appeared a bit disgusted with the world, and said to Rembold: "Pete, these cars just go flying by me 'z-i-p-p', and I don't have a chance to talk to my friends any more. They don't seem to have time."

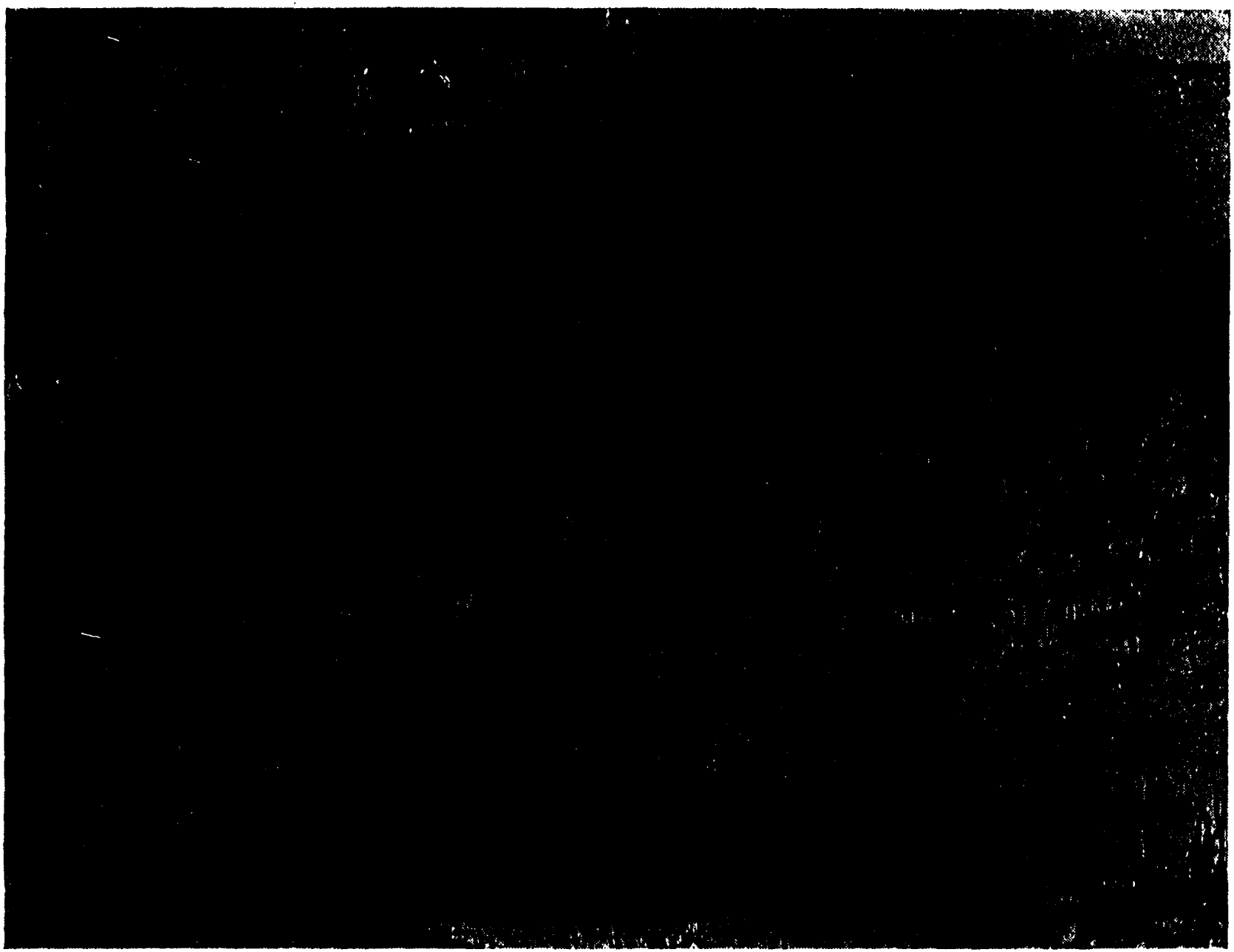
Rembold worked for Schuchart, as the latter owned a

large number of cattle. Also, he worked for another veteran cattle man named Tom Taylor. "While I was with Tom Taylor on his cow outfit," comments Rembold, "it cost me only twenty-five cents per day for board. Taylor was one of the best men I ever knew. I remember an occasion when a cowboy killed a stray beef, and when Taylor came in and saw the hide he inquired who had killed it. The hand said, 'I did.' Taylor asked no further questions, and turned to the man and said: 'I'll give you your time—we kill no strays!' "

In the fall of 1876 several Smith families, including William Smith and family from Llano, settled on the Llano River near Junction City. William Smith, who was reared in the State of Illinois, moved to Texas before the Civil War. He and his family settled on what is now known as the Hoy Smith place, and a year later moved nearer the Junction of the Llanos. William Smith died in 1885, and the widow married the deceased's brother, John J. Smith, who had moved to Kimble in 1881. Mrs. Smith, who survives her husband, continues to live at the old Smith homestead established in 1877. "Indians didn't give us half the trouble that thieves did," recalls Mrs. Smith. "We had been there for about three months when the Indians made the raid that resulted in Isaac Kountz and the Speer boy being killed. After that there were but one or two raids down the river that amounted to anything."

John J. Smith and members of his family took an active part in the early development of the county. His surviving wife was a daughter of James R. Billingsley, Sr., surveyor of the town of Weatherford when it was laid out. In Parker County the Billingsleys were neighbors and friends of the parents of the famous Cynthia Ann Parker. "I'd rather live during those times," says Mrs. Smith. "There's more stealing and meanness now than there was then. You could trust a man's word then and people wanted to help one another."

D. M. Davidson moved to Kimble County in 1876 and located a half mile below the mouth of Johnson Fork in the Miller-Browning settlement. He served on the first jury



A South Llano Indian Skirmish

that was empaneled when court met under the live oak tree at old Kimbleville. His son, G. W. Davidson, survives him and lives near Edith, in Coke County. In the late '70's, C. C. Blair settled on Red Creek, two miles above the Llano River. A surviving son, O. N., resides at this time in Coke County.

In 1876 Ben Pepper settled a few miles above Junction City on South Llano. James R. Billingsley and Joe Ramsey were among others who moved in about the same time.

William J. and Bob Turner moved up from Goliad and settled on the South Llano in 1877. William J. Turner bought a place from Jim Dublin, located twelve miles above Junction, and his brother, Bob, preempted 160 acres four miles down the river. He purchased other land and became a well-to-do ranchman.

About the same time Rufe Holland moved in from the Mason-Llano country, and, with his family, became identified with the ranching business. When occasion presented itself, he struck a blow for the cause of law and order during the perilous times in the county's history when outlaws and thieves seriously threatened to gain control of the local government.

CHAPTER SEVENTEEN

INDIANS KILL ISAAC KOUNTZ

Indian raids in Kimble County had become less frequent by 1876. Gen. McKenzie had quieted the Comanches, and had shot their horses to prevent repetitions of the forays of the '60's. However, the settlers continued to be harassed by the frequent raids that were made by the Apaches and Lipans who operated from the Big Bend and from Old Mexico. Those bands were ruthless, bold and sinister. The rolling plateaus, brushy canyons and hill country from the Llanos to the Rio Grande furnished protecting avenues of escape to the outlaw Indians.

On Christmas eve, 1876, the peace and quiet of yule-tide held sway among the settlers of the upper Llano valleys. The people were in a good frame of mind, and happiness and good will prevailed. Snow fell gently that morning, and a lace-like white carpet was spread out over the countryside. The fall was intermittent, giving way now and then to the fresh gusts of the north wind that sent children scurrying to a windbreak and caused men folks to pull their collars more tightly about their necks. Whirls of smoke gulped from a dozen log-cabin chimneys up and down the river bend. There would be fireside merry-making on this night, as old Saint Nick paused to reward the little tots for their good behavior.

In the Kountz home the old-fashioned fire place was almost filled by a huge back-log, and the flames lapped at it greedily. In the glow of the fire the cedar and mistletoe decorations in the living room added to the homey, Christ-

mas air. Elizabeth and Dixie, the two daughters, were busying themselves with the last minute Christmas preparations. The two young sons, Sebastian and Isaac, had many errands to run, and now and then it became their task to supplement the supply of fire wood. Dr. Kountz was County Clerk at the time, and early that morning his official duties had taken him to the County seat. The typical Christmas spirit was present in the Kountz home.

Dr. Kountz was a trader. He engaged in buying a few sheep, goats and cattle here and there, and then holding them together until the herd increased to a marketable number. Two of his older sons, C. C. and John, had joined a cowboy outfit to trail a herd of cattle for Lewis & Hurst to Dodge City. The outfit was bossed by Big Tom Moore. Two younger sons, Isaac and Sebastian, aged sixteen and eleven, respectively, remained home and assisted their father by herding and caring for some of the stock.

"Go on and bake that cake," Isaac called out to his sister, Elizabeth, as he opened the corral gate and turned the flock of sheep out to graze. His younger brother, Sebastian, helped to drive the small herd to the mountainside, a few hundred yards away. About ten o'clock on that Christmas eve morning the two herders turned the sheep from the mountain to the level valley below. They were about three hundred yards from their home, trailing after the flock, when they were suddenly attacked by nine red-faced savages, riding madly toward them from up the river.

"We were both together," relates Sebastian Kountz, "when we saw the bunch of Indians coming toward us. Each of them was on horseback and riding fast. As they came nearer, we ran down the hill, and three or four of them followed right after us, shooting. Other members of the band rode on toward North Llano. I was a little ahead of my brother, Isaac, and we were both trying to make it to a small field between us and the house. As I ran I could hear the bullets whizzing about me. I glanced back over my shoulder just in time to see my brother throw up his hands and fall forward on his face. I continued to run, and two Indians ran

their horses right by me—so close I could have reached out and touched them. One of the Indians spurred his horse against me, and I could plainly see the gun in his hand. He carried an old Citizen's rifle—the muzzle-loading type. I saw cross-stripes on the handle, and the barrel was long—like Dave Crockett used at the Alamo.

"It seemed that one of the Indians tried to get his horse to run over me, but the animal would dodge, and acted fidgety. By that time I was to the field fence, the old-fashioned stake-and-rider type, which I managed to fall over, and got the fence between us.

"All those Indians had long hair but were dressed like whites. It has been rumored some of the band were white renegades posing as Indians, but I am positive those I got a look at were pure Indians. I knew Indians well, having lived amongst the Osage and Caw tribes in Kansas. One that was chasing me was riding a big sorrel horse, and had no bridle—just a rope. We later learned the sorrel had been stolen from a ranch on the head of South Llano.

"My sisters had heard the shooting and met me in the field and asked where Isaac was. I said I supposed the Indians had killed him as I saw him fall."

The two sisters had witnessed a part of the attack. Elizabeth (Mrs. N. C.) Patterson, vividly recalls the experience. "Dixie and I were at the cow pen milking," she recalls, "when we heard some shooting northwest of the house and in the direction of where the boys had taken the sheep. We ran up on a hilly place near the house so we could see. Only the top of the house could be seen from where the shooting occurred. We saw two Indians chasing Sebastian, and each of them had guns in their hands. We saw one of them catch him on the shoulder just as he pulled himself over the fence and fell to the ground on the other side. The two attackers sat on their horses for a moment and seemed to be unable to decide what to do. We supposed that when they saw us they concluded help was close by so they wheeled their horses around and followed the others around the mountains."

A few minutes later Dr. E. K. Kountz returned home, having heard the shooting. He picked his son's body up and carried it to the home and there laid it down on the floor. Two bullet wounds were found—one in the hip and one through his head, the fatal shot having passed through the head from ear to ear. After placing the body on the floor, Dr. Kountz turned to his wife and said: "Bear up and do the best you can—I'm going to try to get those Indians." The Meredith and Temple families were camped at the time on the river bank a short distance from the Kountz home, and had been attracted by the sound of the shots. Jeff Meredith and Lewis Temple helped to dress the body for burial and assisted in the funeral.

The raiders drove many stolen horses and mules before them. Three miles up the river from the Kountz ranch, William Smith had gone out for his horses and mules and found them to be gone. He observed a fresh horse trail passing through, and his suspicions were soon confirmed when Lewis Temple raced by the Smith home to notify them of the tragic death of Isaac Kountz. Not one saddle horse had been left in the Kountz pasture.

CHAPTER EIGHTEEN

SAM SPEER KILLED

The band of raiders that comprised the Christmas murder party numbered nine. Following the killing of Isaac Kountz, the daylight marauders circled Round Mountain, whipped their horses north a distance of some three or four miles, and crossed the North Llano river one-half mile above the present crossing, and then turned north toward the hills. Jim and George Deaton reported seeing them near the point of Round Mountain where they had stopped to re-load their guns. Two of the raiders were seen as they climbed on foot high up the mountainside, apparently to scan the surrounding country. After that brief pause, the warriors remounted and rushed north toward the North Llano River.

The widow Speer (a grandmother of Sam Speer, whose death by the Indians will be described) lived with her two children, George and Nora, and a grandson, thirteen-year-old John W. Gray, in a log house a short distance below the present North Llano crossing, on the north side of the stream. Tom Doran lived between Mrs. Speer and the crossing. A runner sped from cabin to cabin up and down the river-side, spreading the alarm that Isaac Kountz had been killed and that Indians were in the vicinity.

The marauders crossed the river about one hundred yards above where Tom and Sam Speer and other members of that family lived. It happened that just before the Indians crossed the river, Tom Doran had arrived at the Speer house with the news of the Indians, and found that Tom Speer had gone out into the flat after the horses, not knowing that the

Indians were running rampant through the neighborhood and even then were nearing the Speer premises. When the news was relayed to Sam Speer, who was about seventeen years old, he took Tom Speer's gun and ammunition and went in search of the latter and soon found him with the horses. The gun was given to Tom, and it was agreed that Sam was to drive the horses.

At that moment like the tramp of a stampeded herd came the sound of the Indians after they had crossed the river and headed north. In a moment they were in sight of Sam Speer, who, unarmed, undertook to out-run them. Two savages turned their attention to the fleeing man, ran to his side, and one of them shot from close range and killed him instantly. The other shot at Tom Speer, who was only a hundred yards away, then both of the attackers turned and joined the band, adding to their string of stolen horses those the Speer boy had been driving.

Tom Speer, who was armed with a sharp-shooting needle gun, 50 calibre, failed to fire a shot, apparently being completely unnerved by the presence of the band of warriors. The Indians drove the stolen horses north into the hills, and passed up a draw just east of what is called "Double Cliffs," and thence northeasterly.

CHAPTER NINETEEN

CHASE OF THE KOUNTZ-SPEER MURDERERS

As the news of plunder and murder spread over the valleys, a posse was speedily organized to pursue the raiders. Feeling was running high and there was wild excitement on every hand. The day had become increasingly cold. Fleet-footed ponies could be seen scurrying with couriers from house to house. Two riders, Billie Gilliland and P. C. Lemons (who lived on the old Rance Moore place on Bear Creek) carried the news to the rangers stationed on Bear Creek, and came back with the report that Lieut. Moore and six men had been sent out.

The possemen engaged in an all-night ride, but failed to discover the tracks. At dawn the following morning a plain trail was picked up where it had struck the valley at the point where the highway now crosses Gentry Creek. The Indians were making their departure down the river valley. At that point, as a matter of precaution, Dan Baker and Bill Estes were dispatched back to the settlement to furnish protection should there be another attack. Estes freighted for Baker and both lived near the mouth of Johnson Fork.

The remaining eight men—John A. Miller, Jerry Roberts, Billie Waites, Dr. Kountz, N. Q. Patterson, and the latter's nephew, Andrew Patterson, Billie Gilliland and P. C. Lemons—encouraged by the fresh sign in the snow—rushed on. At nine o'clock, according to John A. Miller, the remains of a butchered roan horse were found on the trail. This was on the north bank of the main Llano, a short distance below the mouth of Red Creek. The pursuers roasted

a breakfast from the roan, and pushed forward. Night time found them in Mason County, and the trail was still fresh. By the side of a huge camp fire the settlers, tired and sleepy, slept and rested, notwithstanding the bitter cold.

The following morning the pursuit was renewed at daylight, and within two or three miles the settlers overtook the rangers.

"We went pretty fast," writes John A. Miller, "and about three miles further on we came to the Indians' camp where they had spent the night before. The sign was plain where they had the horses corralled, and there appeared to have been about forty head. Nine Indians had slept around their fire with a bunch of grass under each one's head for a pillow, and a bunch under the hips for a bed."

The trailers continued in hot pursuit. Four miles further they found where a fat cow had been butchered.

"We were satisfied they would roast this meat before they had gone very far," continued Miller, "and we pushed up a bit. And sure enough, in about three or four miles we saw a smoke. We knew that was the Indians, and it excited our boys very much, but Lieutenant Moore held us all together and would not let us advance too rapidly. When we reached the top of the ridge where we had seen the smoke coming from, we found about forty pounds of fresh roasted meat. We knew then the Indians had seen us coming and had left in a hurry." The course of the fleeing Indians then turned south across the main Llano. John Miller continues his description of the pursuit: "After we had gone ten miles we began to find horses that had given out and had been left behind. About seventeen horses were captured by us and we found about that many dead horses. . . ." One of the recovered horses was a yellow animal, called "Old Satan," and belonged to Dr. Kountz.

"By this time," continues Miller, "we were reaching the breaks of the Guadalupe, and the Indians were gaining on us after we reached such rough country. . . .

"Next morning in going down the valley we saw men in every direction armed and on the lookout. They said the

Indians had stolen all their horses the night before, and by and by we struck their trail again but they were now mounted on fresh horses, while ours were tired and jaded, so we decided to turn back home."

N. C. Patterson quotes John A. Miller as saying that when the settlers were forced to abandon the Indian trail, Dr. Kountz "cried like a baby."

A report of the chase of the raiders is made by S. R. Merritt, Captain Commanding Company A, Reserve State Militia, dated January 15, 1877, addressed to E. W. Steel, Adjutant General.

"I have the honor," the message began, "to report to your office for the month of January, 1877, for my Company. On Christmas evening a party of Indians, Mexicans, or outlaws disguised as Indians 8 or 10 in number made their appearance on Bear Creek, a tributary of the North Forke of Llano in Kimble County, stole a number of horses and killed two boys by the name of Sam Spears and Kountz and thence proceeded southeast by the way of Pedrenales to a point near Hendersons Creek, a tributary of the Guadaloupe river 10 miles above Kerrville, where they stole a number of more horses thence proceeded by way of Indian Creeck to South forke of Guadaloupe River to the head of Walles Creeck, a tributary of the Medina River, and from there proceeded in the direction of the Rio Frio, stealing many horses on the way and killing one more man on the Medina river by the name of Allen.

"Captain Moore of the frontier batallion, on the killing of the two boys on Bear Creek, started immediately in pursuit following the said trail for three days and nights, leaving off at the head of Walles'es Creeck owing to the horses and men being unable to pursue further.

"Upon my learning of the Indians trails leading in the direction of the Rio Frio and believing them to turn toward the head of Nueces or Devil's River I detailed 6 men and started to the waters of the Rio Frio expecting perhaps to intersect possibly the trail or meeting the party.

"As it turned out, however, the Indians had passed further

down on the Frio and I have since learned had been pressed so hard as to leave all their stolen horses by a party of citizens near Frio City in Frio County. Our scout not succeeding in our purpose, returned on the fourth day after traveling a distance of about 120 miles. Losses occurred during the scout: none."

CHAPTER TWENTY

THE LAST RAIDS IN KIMBLE

The Kountz-Speer murders marked the last serious Kimble raid by the Mexico Indian marauders. However, in the fall of 1878, a band of raiders was seen in the James River country. They passed within sight of the Creed Taylor and the James H. Parker ranch homes.

The Dowdy Massacre

On the day of the Dowdy massacre, which happened in the fall of 1878, James H. Parker saddled his horse and rode leisurely over Devil's River way. Just before he pulled up at Creed Taylor's he saw some men riding around the foothills in the distance. As he rode up, Taylor was throwing the saddle on "Cedar Brake." James Parker thought the travelers were whites, but Taylor said, "Jim, that's Indians." He, too, had seen them.

"In the meantime," remembers James A. Parker, "my mother was out milking and I and my two brothers—one older and one younger than I—were on the cowlot fence watching her. I well remember how those cows acted. Very suddenly they became restless, walked nervously about the pen with their heads up. My mother yelled to us, 'Get off that fence and get to the house. The cows smell Indians!' We couldn't see them, but mother knew from experiences what it was. We all went toward Noxville, two miles away, where Noah Knox and Munroe McDonald lived."

The elder Parker arrived at his home, and finding his family gone, and not knowing the cows had "winded" the Indians, he feared for the family's safety. He ran his horse at top speed to Noxville to find them.

The Indians, twenty-five or thirty, headed in the direction of the Johnson Fork of the Guadalupe.

A man named Dowdy had staked out a home near the head waters of Johnson Fork of the Guadalupe, and, with his family of a wife and five children, operated the ranch which was stocked with sheep and cattle. On the day the Indians had been seen on James River in Kimble County, the two Dowdy sons—one grown and the other about fourteen years of age—herded a flock of sheep on the green, bushy mesa below the hills, and less than a mile from the ranch home. The three daughters, who were in the glory and bloom of young womanhood, walked out to the flock to relieve the older brother of his pastoral duties so he could attend to an errand at the ranch.

An hour later the older brother returned to the flock to find that one of the most revolting murders in frontier history had been committed. The marauders had surprised the young boy and defenseless girls and murdered them. A frontier posse chased them, without success, more than two hundred miles into Devil's River country nearly to the Rio Grande. Those Indians may have been Lipans or Mescalero Apaches raiding from across the border.

Other Indians Are Seen

Following the Kountz-Speer murder, there were a few Indian appearances into the Kimble country, but of minor import. For instance, a telegram from headquarters, Fort McKavett, dated November 6, 1877, addressed to Assistant Adjutant General, Department of Texas, San Antonio, read:

> THERE IS A REPORT HERE THAT A LOT OF HORSES WERE STOLEN BY INDIANS YESTERDAY AT JUNCTION CITY AT THE FORKS OF THE LLANOS AND ALSO THAT THE RANGERS HAD A SKIRMISH WITH THEM ON BEAR CREEK SOME HORSES ALSO STOLEN NEAR MENARDVILLE HAVE NOTIFIED GRIERSON
>
> ANDERSON

The assistance rendered in suppressing the Indian raids by the government fort was a factor in blotting out the desperadoes.

A telegram dated at Fort Concho, November 7, 1877, also addressed to the Adjutant General's office at San Antonio, said:

> YESTERDAY INFORMATION WAS RECEIVED THAT A PARTY OF RANGERS HAD ATTACKED INDIANS TWENTY-FIVE MILES SOUTH OF MCKAVETT THAT STOCK HAD BEEN STOLEN FROM NEAR MENARDVILLE AND THAT THE INDIANS WERE SUPPOSED TO BE MOVING NORTHWARD ALTHOUGH THEY MAY STILL BE GOING SOUTH HAVE SENT CAPTAIN NOLAN WITH A DETACHMENT TO SCOUR THE COUNTRY EAST TOWARDS THE BRADY AND MOUTH OF CONCHO RETURNING VIA THE COLORADO AND THROUGH THE MOUNTAINS TO THIS POST WITH VIEW OF INTERCEPTING THEM LIEUTENANT LANDON LEFT THIS MORNING WITH DETACHMENT OF NINETEEN MEN FOR CLARK AND WAS ADVISED TO KEEP SHARP LOOKOUT FOR THE TRAIL AND IF FOUND TO FOLLOW IT LIEUTENANT JONES WITH FORTY MEN SUPPOSED TO BE AT PRESENT MOVING SOUTH FROM STOCKTON
>
> GRIERSON
> COMMANDING

John Allen recalls a stealing raid in 1878. Bill Clements was away from home on business, and before he had left he had arranged for John Allen to spend the night at his home to give protection to Mrs. Clements and the children. During the night, while Allen was lying asleep on the porch, the Indians undertook to untie his horse that was tethered to a yard fence post. On the following morning fresh moccasin tracks were visible on the ground near the horse. It was supposed the thieves had seen Allen lying on the porch and thought it better not to risk arousing him. Clements had around twenty-five horses in the horse trap, and

the Indians made a futile effort to take them. The following morning one of the horses had an Indian raw-hide lariat dragging from his neck. Apparently he had pulled loose after being roped.

John Allen served as a deputy under two Sheriffs, John Gorman and Jess Garland, and recalls two or three stealing raids between 1877 and 1879. On one occasion he joined a posse that chased the invaders many miles toward the Rio Grande, but they were forced to abandon the effort because the country became too rough and difficult to penetrate.

Allen vividly recalls his worst Indian scare. His eyes twinkled a bit as he went back to 1878, about the time of the Dowdy massacre—but let him tell it in his own words:

"I remember one moonlight night when I was riding a slow mount up a Llano valley canyon—alone and unarmed except for a butcher knife. Before I knew any one was near, I looked a few paces ahead and there saw nine Indians, trailing along in single file, and angling up the mountain side. I was petrified. It looked like the best strategy under the circumstances was to keep still. Silent, without a word from a one of them, they wended their way along, and all the time getting a little bit closer—mind you—and became more discernable in the brightness of the moonlight. Then I was relieved. It was John Joy and eight Mexican shearers heading to a distant sheep ranch to begin shearing a flock of sheep the next day!"

CHAPTER TWENTY-ONE

THE COUNTY OF KIMBLE

Kimble County was created in 1858, from Bexar County, and was organized for governmental purposes on January 3, 1876. The act of the legislature creating the county was approved January 22, 1858, and provided:

> Be it enacted by the Legislature of the State of Texas, that the several boundaries hereinafter defined, shall constitute the counties therein named . . .
>
> "Section 4. That the following limits, to-wit: Beginning on the West line of Gillespie County, where the North line of Kerr County terminates on the same; thence due West with said line, and in the same course, to a point due South of the South-west corner of Menard County; thence due North to said corner of Menard County; thence due East with the South line of said County, to the West line of Mason County; thence with the lines of Mason and Gillespie Counties to the beginning, shall constitute the County of Kimble, named in honor of Kimble, who fell with the Alamo. The County seat thereof shall bear the same name . . .
>
> "Section 15. That unless now otherwise provided, or until otherwise provided by law, each of the Counties herein created shall severally be attached to the nearest County in which the District Court is held, or to the County from which the largest part of it may be taken for all judicial purposes in questions whether civil or criminal, over which that Court has jurisdiction; and this Act take effect from and after its passage."

Between the time of its creation and its organization in 1876, the county was attached to Gillespie County for judicial purposes.

The county was by act of the legislature named for George C. Kimble, a hero of the Alamo. Altogether there were

twelve counties in Texas named for men who gave their lives at the Alamo under Colonel W. B. Travis. The intervention of a hundred years has not served to lessen the appreciation of Texans of the supreme sacrifices of those who fell at the Alamo. About the memories of the names of each of those martyrs there is to every Texan a halo of inspiration.

In February of 1836 Col. Travis under orders of the governor took command of the Alamo. At the time he assumed command he had about him one hundred and fifty men, with the prospects of receiving an early attack by several thousand Mexicans who were reported to have crossed the Rio Grande and pointed toward San Antonio. To his call for re-inforcements he received one company of thirty-two men on February 23. On the 24 he issued a proclamation addressed, "To the People of Texas and All Americans in the World," in which, among other things, he said: "I am besieged by a thousand or more Mexicans under Santa Anna. The enemy has demanded a surrender at discretion, otherwise the garrison is to be put to the sword if the fort is taken. I have answered the command with a cannon shot, and our flag still waves proudly from the walls. I shall never surrender or retreat."

The siege of the Alamo lasted until March 6th. Three days before the inevitable end came, Col. Travis drew a line upon the ground with the point of his sword, and invited every man who had determined to stay and die to step across the line, giving to those who so desired the privilege of endeavoring to escape. The line was crossed by every man in the fort but one. On the morning of March 6 Gen. Santa Anna held a council of war and decided to storm the fort. The bugle sounded "no quarter," and on came the crowning catastrophe. Overwhelming the little band, the besiegers, thousands strong, swarmed over the parapets and into the fort. One by one those defenders fell, fighting to the last. Truly, "Thermopylae had her messenger of defeat, but the Alamo had none."

George Kimble, twenty-six years of age, was one of those

immortal Texans who died in that heroic struggle. Blood that poured from his sword-riddled body intermixed with the blood that flowed from the wounds of Crockett, Bonham, Travis and Bowie—and all, alike, was absorbed by the sacred soil of the Alamo.

Thirty-two men including Kimble, George W. Cottle and Andrew Kent, all of whom were members of Dewitt's Colony settlement in Gonzales County, had left their wives and children to go to the relief of Travis on March 1.

An Election Is Held

When the new county was officially organized for governmental purposes, it became necessary that officials be elected to administer the affairs of the new governmental venture. After a spirited campaign, especially in the Sheriff's race, the election of the following officers was announced:

William Potter, County Judge. Resigned May 3, 1877.

Dr. E. K. Kountz, County Clerk.

Frank Latta, Sheriff.

N. Q. Patterson, County Treasurer. Resigned May 14, 1877.

W. F. Gilliland, County Assessor.

M. J. Denman, County Surveyor. Herman Von Bickerstein had been appointed to make surveys in the county on July 15, 1870.

William Graham, County Attorney.

J. A. Burt, Inspector of Hides and Animals.

The first Justice of the Peace in Junction City was R. F. Condon. He resigned in August, 1877, and succeeded by John D. Scovill.

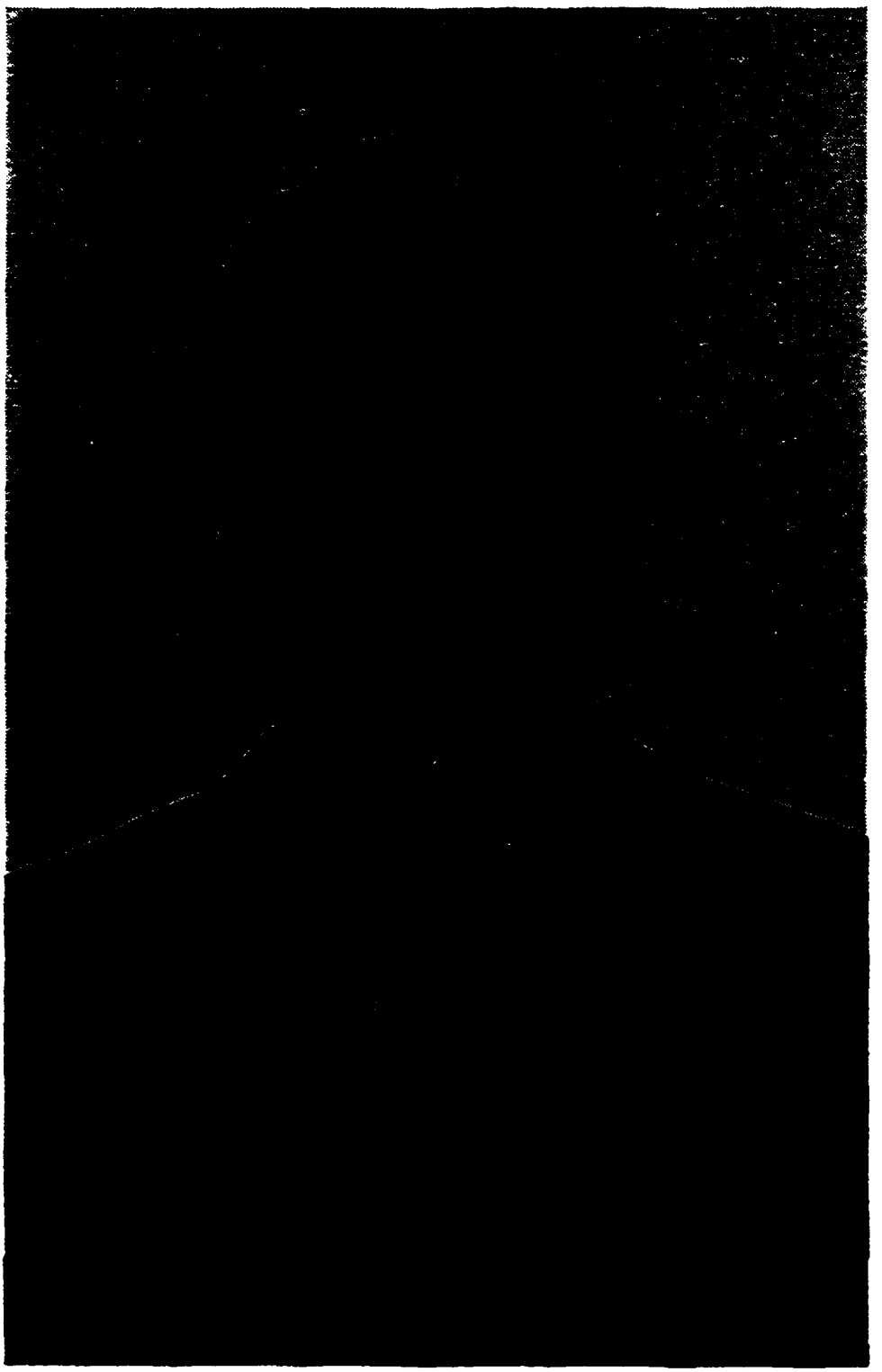
In the different precincts over the county, the following were elected members of the Commissioners' Court:

J. R. Steffey, Junction.

Felix Burton, Bear Creek.

Henry E. Pearl, Saline.

A. VanCourt, Little Devil's River. Removed from county; succeeded by Noah Knox.



Judge W. A. Blackburn

Other officials' election on February 15, 1876, were: Justice of Peace: Precinct No. 2, Wm. B. Meeks; Precinct No. 3, R. F. Anderson; Precinct No. 4, John A. Miller; Precinct No. 5, J. W. Owens; Precinct No. 6, J. C. Price. Constable: Precinct No. 1, A. J. Collins; Precinct No. 3, J. W. N. Neece; Precinct No. 4, Henry Maberry.

The County Seat

Kimbleville, located one and a half miles below the junction of the two Llanos, on the north side of the main river, was selected as the county seat. At the time of its selection the site did not have a street or a house. A short time later Dan Baker moved his store from the mouth of Johnson Fork to the site of the county seat, but the boom was brief and no other business was established there. The best explanation for the unusual selection of Kimbleville for the county seat is furnished by John Allen, who recalls that W. B. Miller had offered one-half of a tract of land to get the seat established at that point. At any rate, the selection does not reflect favorably upon the foresight of the electorate because on a number of occasions the flood water from the main Llano has swept several feet deep over that very area.

The First Court Session

Kimbleville was duly recognized as the seat of the new government and a term of district court was held there. The scene of the first court session was in an open mesquite valley, under the spreading branches of a liveoak tree. It has been reported that a hive of bees in the tree was the source of some annoyance to the court officers during the initial proceedings. Hon. W. A. Blackburn from Burnet, accompanied by District Attorney Frank Wilkes, rode horseback to the new county seat and opened the first term of court. There was no jail, and prisoners were chained to trees near the

center of the proceedings. Boards were nailed from the big tree to a smaller one nearby, and such was used as a desk by the judge. Using a piece of knotted liveoak branch for a gavel, the court sternly knocked for order, and with a law book and a docket before him, the new Judge gravely commanded the Sheriff to announce that the court was in session.

The County's First District Judge

Hon. W. A. Blackburn was born on February 24, 1834, in Granger County, Tennessee, five miles from where Maynardsville now stands, and was a son of John Ashley Blackburn, a native of North Carolina. His mother was Emma Colvin, also a native of Tennessee.

Judge Blackburn married Sarah Adelaide Graham, of the famous Graham family of Tennessee, on September 1, 1857. Four years later young Blackburn left his family to serve the Confederate cause in the Southern rebellion. For two years he was a member of Company B, 37th Tennessee Infantry, and then was transferred to the First Cavalry in which he served throughout the war, having been promoted to the rank of captain prior to his discharge.

Capt. Blackburn came to Texas on horseback at the close of the war, and when he pulled his horse to a halt in Burnet County he had but a few cents in his pockets and was using mullen leaves as a substitute for tobacco. He taught a term of school, practiced law, and a few years later was elected Judge of the old 17th Judicial District, in which capacity he served in an able and fearless way for twenty-two years. He died at his Burnet home on June 2, 1908.

A daughter of Judge Blackburn, Miss Katherine Blackburn, who continues to live in the old home in Burnet, recalls hearing her father speak of the many unusual experiences that befell him as a frontier circuit Judge. Apparently referring to the first court session at Kimbleville, her father told her of an occasion when the court was disturbed by the presence of a hive of bees in a live oak tree.

"My father said one of the attending lawyers discovered bees emerging from a knot hole up in the tree, under which court was being held. When the situation was pointed out to my father, he said: 'I'll adjourn court if somebody will agree to rob that bee tree. I like honey!' Some one volunteered to do the job, so court was adjourned until afternoon and fresh honey was served at the boarding house that day."

Junction City Becomes the County Seat

After the work of the first session was finished, the court adjourned for a period of six months. N. C. Patterson, J. R. Steffey and John A. Miller were appointed as jury commissioners for the following term of court.

Kimbleville had been selected as the county seat in a close contest with Junction City, and there were those who believed that Kimbleville had too many friends amongst the election judges. A contest was filed in the district court. Mrs. N. C. Patterson recalls her father, Dr. Kountz, who was County Clerk, being awakened one night by the sponsors of the contest to file certain papers, as it had been discovered that was the last day for such filing. The outcome was that the contestants won, and Junction City was held to be the choice for county seat by a majority of only six votes.

The County's First Stores

The first mercantile venture in Kimble County was established in 1873 by Dan Baker near the mouth of the Johnson Fork of the Llano. The building was made of logs. Most of the commodities that were sold were freighted in on ox wagons from Kerrville. The business continued until the summer of 1876 when it was moved to the site of Kimbleville, the new county seat, and was soon abandoned.

The second store in the county was opened for business in 1875 by Jim and Pete McKinley, late of New York. It

was located on the old government road near what is now called the Skaggs place, northwest of Junction. Cash Joy drove a five-yoke team of oxen from Kerrville in freighting the lumber for the building. At that time there was no building of any character in Junction City, as the town had not been established, and the McKinley trading post had but little competition. The McKinleys did a fairly good business in the new venture. They bought hides, furs, and the like, and kept a small stock of groceries and ranch supplies.

John Allen recalls the McKinley store building was standing when he came to Kimble in 1877, and says it was located about three-fourths of a mile north of where the North Llano bridge is now located, and was a bit off of the government road. Bud McFadden later moved the building, which was made of a good grade of pine lumber, to Junction City, and placed it on a lot just west of where the Becker Hotel now stands. When moved to Junction City, it became the second plank house in the town, the small postoffice building being also of lumber. The latter building had been built by Dr. E. K. Kountz from lumber that had been hauled from Austin. After the establishment of Junction City as the county seat, several small stores opened.

The First Schools

Probably the first definite effort to establish a school in the county with a paid teacher was in the Joy-Taylor Colony on Johnson Fork in 1866-67. A Mrs. Grider was employed to conduct a term during the winter, and had in her class about a dozen youngsters. However, the effort was of short duration, as the colony disbanded in 1867.

The first school house in Junction City was located just north of where the jail now stands. It was a little plank house, measuring about 16x18 feet and had a door at one end and a window at the other, and one window on the north side. Board benches were provided for seats. Among those

who attended the first school were John Smith, Fannie Pierce, Doug Coalson, Dixie and Elizabeth Kountz, N. C. and F. G. Patterson, Nancy and Cynthia Patterson, and others. The teacher was Frank Latta. Before the first school session was completed Latta resigned, and George E. Stewart was employed to finish out the five-month term. Others who taught during the first few sessions of the school were John W. Miller, an Englishman, a Mr. McArthur, J. M. Prude, and a man named Beatty.

The principal text books that were used in the first school sessions were the old blue back speller and McGuffey's reader. The terms were short, but a great deal of education was dispensed in the old-fashioned way.

"Let memory carry them back once more
To the days of Auld Lang Syne,
When 'spellin' skules' were glorious fun,
And they stood up and 'toed the line.'"

Friday afternoons were often given over for the holding of old-fashioned "spelling bees." Many of the patrons of the school attended and took a part in those functions. On one occasion N. C. Patterson was pitted against Miss Elizabeth Kountz for a spelling championship. All other participants on either side had been "set down," and the test of the two rivals was a prolonged one. Finally, the teacher called out the word "scintillate." The room was quiet. It was Patterson's turn, and he hesitated. That was a bad sign, and his supporters twitched their fingers and became nervous. He missed! All eyes were then turned to his rival, Miss Kountz (who later became his wife). She also missed! It was a draw, and the prize, which consisted of a sack of fruit and candy, was divided amongst all who were present.

Junction City Staked Off

"I was herding cattle for Jim Deaton in the spring of '76," recalls John W. Gray, "and had these cattle grazing

in the mesquite flat where the public square of Junction now is, when Dr. Kountz, John Kountz, Mr. Patterson and others, including Sel Denman, the surveyor, were engaged in surveying out the town of Junction City. I was right on hand July 4, 1876, when the people of Junction and Kimble County held the first big celebration of the new town with a barbecue-picnic and an all-day and night dance, under an arbor just down under the hill south of the square, at or near the point where there was later a water mill."

The townsite of the new city was owned by one William McLane, who donated alternate lots for the beginning of the town. A public square was set aside and dedicated. However, the prospects of a new village did not create a real estate boom in the forks of the rivers. Building sites were cheap, and the first structures were of raw lumber and log, with the latter predominating. Dr. Kountz's little one-room postoffice building was the first investment in lumber, the materials for which were freighted by an ox-team from Austin. A few months later Sel Denman installed a sawmill at the edge of town, and was located where McWright's Camp now stands. He advertised his business by building himself a lumber residence, which continues to stand. White oak and pecan trees provided raw materials for lumber.

Court Houses

After one session of District Court had been held at Kimbleville, the county seat was moved to Junction City. At that time there were no buildings of any type in the town proper, but, as has been seen, some building was noted thereafter. The first term in the new county seat was held under a brush arbor, according to Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Patterson. The arbor, which was also used as a community meeting place for church and Sunday school services, was located east of the town and near the river. Other early-day sessions of the court were held at the same place and buildings that had been built—the choice probably depending on weather con-

ditions. For instance, a correspondent of the Mason News-Item, writing from Menardville on November 5, 1877, refers to a recent session of court in Kimble as having been held in a blacksmith shop. In describing the session, the correspondent said.*

> "Court met—not as it did in lovely spring last on the verdant lawn under a bee tree but in a blacksmith shop giving way out of respect to the Court. His Honor and Judge occupied the anvil's place on an old live oak stump in the center of the room, charging the jury on murder, poker playing, treason and other violations of the laws, while the lawyers and the jury roosted on sycamore poles that were especially provided for their benefit.
>
> "There were twenty-five cases on the criminal docket, to-wit: three for murder, one for theft of wagon, nine for theft of cattle, one for threat to take life, one for permitting prisoners to escape, two for horse stealing, and eight further cases wherein no arrests had been made. . . .
>
> "Only one case, the State vs. Wm. Allison** who was charged with a little killing scrape was tried and the defendant acquitted. Four cases were dismissed and the balance continued.
>
> "One civil case, a land suit, was on the docket. McCulloch vs. Meeks and Cawes, which owing to the fact that much writing is to do in cases of this nature and that stationery was scarce in Kimble, the case was continued.
>
> "On Friday night the Indians paid us a visit and confiscated fourteen horses belonging to natives at the county seat, besides Amos Coyote Grey, a gallant steed belonging to Judge Cooley of Fredericksburg."

The first courthouse was a two-story lumber building, and was erected in 1878, says J. A. Browning. Two years later it was burned and all county records destroyed. After that fire, a rock structure was erected which burned about 1887. What was left of the old building was renovated and repaired, and continued to stand until it was torn down in 1929 and replaced by the present modern building.

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*Copied (through courtesy of Hon. Carl Runge, of Mason) from the scrap book of the late Judge Rudolph Runge. The session referred to, in October, 1877, must have been held in Junction City, as no blacksmith shop was ever built at Kimbleville, and but one term of court was held there. Mr. and Mrs. N. C. Patterson recall that at the time of death of Isaac Kountz—Christmas eve, 1876, the county seat had been established at Junction City.

**Son-in-law of Jim Dublin.

The Town Dance

The Town Dance

"I'd like to live them times over again," said G. W. Davidson of Edith, Texas, half to himself, after describing the first dance that was held in the new Kimble County courthouse on the occasion of its formal opening. It was an all-night affair, and the best fiddlers and guitar-pickers in the community were on hand. The ladies put on their finest and the men folks shined their boots with 'coon oil. It was an orderly affair—not a drunk was there. A dance was no place for a drinking man because the lady who would stoop to the extent of dancing with a man whose breath smelled of liquor was socially ostracised.

It was a gala occasion—the opening of the first courthouse. Men, women and children were there. Those who called the dances alternated to prevent hoarseness. Square dances kept time with the swing of "Cotton-eye Joe," "Turkey in the Straw," "Little Brown Jug," "Waggoner," "Arkansas Traveler," "Old Man," and others of the fiddlers' favorites. A popular waltz was "The Side Walks of New York." Gray-bearded men returned to childhood; matrons were maids again, and—

"Very sweet and very merry, very faint and far away,
You could hear the oldtime fiddler on the string begin to play,
Keeping time with swaying bodies and a kind of whispered croon
'Till a host of shuffling slippers followed to a dear old tune."

Not until daybreak did the music cease. It had been a night of joy and feasting. "Fatty bread and coffee" had been served at intervals during the night. That night would not soon be forgotten; it had been an occasion of smiles and happy recollections. All the gallantry of gentlemen and charm of ladies had been on display. The gentleman's bow

and the lady's curtsy added grace and charm to the commingling dancers. By day-break time had flown and memories were in the making.

Many similar affairs were held in the community. At the time the first courthouse was built, a company of rangers under Captain Roberts was stationed on Bear Creek. There, under the cover of the canopy of Heaven and an improvised arbor, dances were occasionally held. It is a tradition that the Texas Ranger excelled in dancing as well as in shooting. He was usually the type of man who admired the finer qualities of a lady, and to the tune of the liveliest steps he was equal to the occasion. Men and women from miles around gathered at the camp to engage in "the gentle art of Terpsichore." "I went to several dances up there," recalls G. W. Davidson. "The dancing was on the ground, which had been sprinkled and tramped specially for the occasion."

Saddle Trouble

J. A. Browning recalled a time when several privates in Capt. D. W. Roberts' company returned to their camp after a pleasant night at a Junction City dance. But they went home bare-back and sorrowful; It had happened this way: four members of the company had ridden to Junction for the occasion, hitched their horses to a convenient tree, and lost themselves in the gaiety of the evening. Shortly before day-break they sought their mounts and found that their saddles had been taken by some culprit who distinguished not between the meaning of mine and thine. The rangers were joined by Sheriff Joe Clements and all rode back to camp sans saddles. The captain was apprised of their predicament, and all clues were discussed and checked by the Bear Creek sleuths. That night the captain, accompanied by the sheriff and two privates, rode out of camp down the North Llano, and, before reaching the village of Junction City, turned south and up the South Llano.

Before the cocks began to crow they were at the house

of a "suspect" some fifteen miles up the river, and invited the latter to drink some coffee with them. Accompanied by the South Llano resident, they cooked breakfast a mile or so down the river. Soon a man appeared, riding along the trail from the direction of Junction City, and he was taken into custody. His name was Beardsley. Captain Roberts seemed to be getting nowhere fast in solving the crime. The situation called for some strategy. He took the young man who had been "invited" to take breakfast with them into the woods a hundred yards from the temporary camp, and left Beardsley and the others together. At the appointed moment two or three shots were fired at the camp, followed by a groaning noise, and everything looked bad for Beardsley. The young man suggested to the captain that the men had shot and killed Beardsley. The captain agreed that he was right, and that no such fate could befall a man who shot square and told the truth.

Immunity was promised and it was but a short time until the captain and his men were in possession of the missing saddles. A shin-oak thicket had become the possessor of stolen property. Before the party reached Junction City on the return trip they met a man who was "wanted" for the stealing. The man, George Cleveland by name, was arrested as he rode up the river trail after having spent the night in Junction City. He was never tried for the theft of the saddles, but was indicted and tried for cattle-stealing. For that offense he was given two years in the penitentiary. After his conviction—there being no jail, he was placed under guard of a ranger, and during the night while the guard was asleep, Cleveland walked out and was never rearrested.

The First Hotel

Jack Allen erected and operated the first hotel in Junction City. A native of Misissippi, he came to Texas in 1845, then served the South in the Civil War, and landed in Kimble County March 9, 1877, where he lived until his death

Double O Saloon in Junction City

in 1911. A son, John, was twenty years old at the time the family moved to Junction. He was born down on the Trinity River in Anderson County on August 6, 1857. After moving to Kimble, he married Ola Kelly, a daughter of Capt. W. H. Kelly who had moved up from Gonzales. The latter was distinguished by the fact that he served as a captain in both the Texan War for Independence and the Civil War. The new hostelry was located about where the water standpipe now stands, according to John Allen, who assisted his father in the business, and who now resides at Ft. McKavett. The new hotel building was cut into rooms—two bedrooms being in the part of the building that was made of logs, and the shed room, which had a dirt floor, was made into a dining section. Improvements and additions on the building were made from time to time.

Among the first boarders and roomers were Bob Clark, a bartender; George Stewart, a school teacher who later became County Judge; Frank Vickery, who helped build the first courthouse and who succeeded Sel Denman as surveyor; W. A. Williamson, a lawyer and a most capable one; Johnny Strickland, a clerk in Todd & Mebus' store; T. A. Driskoll, and others. A fine bunch of town bachelors—these were.

A flourishing business caused Jack Allen to build a two-story hostelry, called "Allen's Hotel," on the ground now occupied by the well-known Fritz Hotel. "The Allen" was sold in 1881 to George Ragsdale, and from that day to this a hotel has been operated on that corner.

The First Saloons

Bill Franks opened the first saloon, it being where the Schreiner-Hodges warehouse is now located. The place was later operated by Tom Carson and Andy Royal. Many toasts were drunk across that bar, and at a nearby table some famous poker hands were dealt.

The "Double O" saloon was put in by Jim Garner and

another, and was west of the public square and just south of the old Boone Building. They sold the place to N. C. Dorbandt who hailed from Burnet County. The latter then sold out to Mike Lanan and Rufe Holland. Bill (Slick) Clements was a later owner. The "Double O" was the scene of a number of shooting scrapes.

Mike Lanan was good company, and the boys could always enjoy their drinks when Mike stood behind the bar. On one occasion he was made to believe that he was a capable broncho rider and that he could hold an even keel while mounted on the hurricane deck of an outlaw pony. While in that state of mind he was induced to crawl on "Buckshot," a rawboned cayuse better known by the cowboys on the Tom Taylor ranch on Big Paint—a tough assignment in anybody's town. No sooner had the ambitious bartender hit the saddle than the outlaw soused his head between his front legs and began bucking, and Uncle Mike was soon biting dirt. A lively crowd witnessed the exhibition, much sport was made of it, and somebody had to buy drinks for the crowd. At the bar a town wag held his glass aloft and said:

"Give a man a horse he can ride,
Give a man a boat he can sail;
And his rank and wealth, his strength and health
Nor sea nor shore shall fail."

Some one claimed Uncle Mike had said if he had not lost his seat that the horse would not have thrown him!

First Stores

The selection of Junction City as the county seat gave rise to a number of small mercantile ventures in the new metropolis. In 1877 Todd & Mebus opened the first general store in the town. The business, which was managed by Bob Clark, was located on the corner across the street and east of where the Fritz Hotel now stands. Todd & Mebus was, on the following year, succeeded by Cal Williams, who dealt principally in groceries.

In 1878 H. H. Allen & Company opened a general mercantile business, located on the corner and across the street north of where the Fritz Hotel building stands. A two-story rock building was constructed by the company, which building is in good condition to this day. The H. H. Allen & Company store was succeeded by G. K. Gordon & Company.

In 1882 H. H. Carmichael and Henry Schmelter opened a general store on the site now occupied by Craven's Drug Store. Their business was succeeded by Charlie Schmidke. He, in turn, sold to a co-operative association that was known as "The Kimble County Alliance"—one of many similar ones that were operated over the state and sponsored by the "Farmers' Alliance" of Texas. A number of local citizens bought stock in the store, which proved to be a financial failure. "I still have some of that stock I would like to sell," says N. C. Patterson. "The Alliance" was, at its beginning, managed by J. M. Prude, who was later succeeded in that capacity by George Armstrong. Jim Pepper and N. C. Patterson owned and operated the place later.

Dr. E. K. Kountz also operated a small store, which included a drug business. His wife became the first postmistress in the new town. Young Isaac Kountz became the first mail-carrier, the route being from Junction City to Fort McKavett, thirty-five miles away. The mail pouch was carried horseback once each week. After the death of Isaac Kountz the route was taken over by N. C. Patterson, who followed the Bear Creek trail to Fort McKavett for four years. During that time the mail service was increased to two trips per week, and later to three weekly trips. From 1881 to 1891 Patterson served as postmaster of Junction City, and it was during that time that the postoffice became a money order unit.

In 1879 the first livery stable, as such, was opened for business, and was owned and operated by John Allen. He had purchased the entire block of land lying from where the Hodges Hotel now is west to the end of the block. The buy looked a little high then at $120 in cash.

W. B. Meeks opened the first butcher shop in the new town, to add to the variety of the town's first establishments. Up-to-date tonsorial service (according to the proprietor) was offered by William Crim when he hung out the first barber sign. He had rented a small side room of the post-office building from N. C. Patterson. The latter recalls that Crim's razors were not always as sharp as some of the customers would have preferred. A drummer stopped at the place one day to get a shave. As the shaving progressed he continued to object that the razor was not sharp enough. When he renewed his protest after about half the job had been finished, Crim lost his patience and said: "If you don't like this just like you're getting it, then get up and get out of here!" The drummer decided he could take it, and the shave was completed.

Sam Jobe, in 1882, opened one of the first blacksmith shops in the village, located on the east side of the town square. An old man named Evans had operated the first such shop, which was located just a short distance east of where the standpipe now is. Evans lived on Cedar Creek, and while on his way to work one morning, as he was lying down to drink from the creek his pistol fell from its holster, struck a rock, and fired a bullet through the man's heart. In addition to the blacksmith business, Jobe carried a stock of groceries and feed, and also maintained a wagon yard. The lot upon which the shop was located, which is now occupied by the Safety First Filling Station, was given to Jobe by N. C. Patterson as payment for services rendered in freighting lumber from Burnet. The wagon yard and blacksmith business flourished. The settlers took their horses there to be shod, wagon tires were adjusted, and plow points were sharpened. The shop was near the school house, and it may have been that children coming home from school

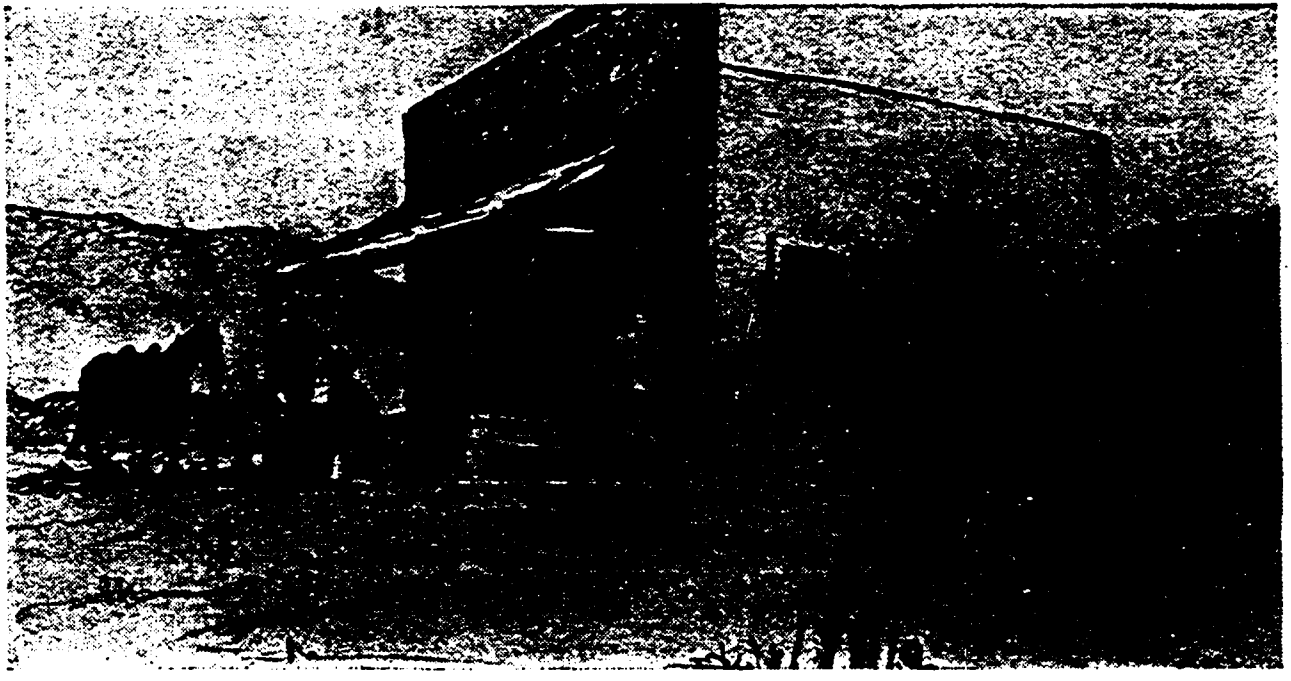
"Looked in at the open door;
They loved to see the flaming forge,
And hear the bellows roar,
And catch the burning sparks that fly
Like chaff from a threshing floor."

J. M. Prude, who at one time had operated the co-operative "Reliance" store, was later in the newspaper business in the new town. It was about 1885 that George Cook and Tom Wagner began the setting of type for the publication of a paper. However, J. F. Lewis was probably the first newspaper publisher in the town. He set up a shop in 1883 in the rear of the postoffice building, and laboriously put into print the county's news of the preceding week or two. The paper was called "The West Texas." This sheet was succeeded by "The Junction City Clipper," according to some of the old-time readers. Horace Wilson is given credit for naming the "Clipper."

London Town

The first store in the northeastern section of the county was operated by Rube Boyce, and was opened about 1878, according to George Pearl of London. Boyce was living on the old Rance Moore place about half a mile below where the highway now crosses Big Saline creek, and on the south side of that stream. The store was built on the north side of Big Saline and fronted on the highway. After it had operated for three or four months it went out of business. It was probably a tame undertaking for the notorious Rube Boyce.

In 1881 Ed and Tom Stevenson opened a small store in Fred Wahrmund's house, and later built a small one-room building in which to house the business. The land where the store was located was owned by Len Lewis. The latter had moved to the Saline community in 1878. A short time later Lewis married the widow of Bob Anderson, the latter having been killed by Rube Boyce. Lewis purchased one-half section of school land, on which the town of London now stands. Lewis became the first postmaster in the new town, the first postoffice being in his home. There each batch of mail was unloaded on a table, and each settler was obliged to search through all the mail in order to find his own. One of the Stevenson brothers, who operated the store, became the sec-



Stevensons' Store

ond postmaster, and others in succession were: J. D. Morris, Richard Bannowsky, and Rastus Brewer.

After the Stevenson store had been built, Len Lewis had the town of London laid off. Frank Vickery, the county surveyor, did the surveying, and was assisted by McNichols and others. "I saw the first compass set when that survey began," remembers George Pearl. The corner of the Stevenson store was used for a starting point by the surveyors. Lewis visioned the town as a possible future county seat, and had a public square set aside for a courthouse if and when needed.

In 1882 J. D. Morris moved to London from Llano County, and purchased an interest in the Stevenson store. An addition was built to the building, and more merchandise was added. A year later Morris bought the Stevensons' interest, and became the sole owner. About two years later Richard Bannowsky, father-in-law of J. D. Morris, took the business over, and later sold it to Rastus Brewer.

It was in 1885 that I. D. Pettigrew operated the first blacksmith shop in London. Five years later Tol and Jim Amberson built the first cotton gin in the county, and operated it for many years thereafter.

The year 1883 saw the first public school in the London community. The building, a small one-room structure, was located on a hilly place just west of the old Sam Weaver field. The first teacher was William Wagner. There were some fifteen pupils in attendance, and the term lasted a full five months. Among those who attended the first session, were: Emily Weaver, Bud Weaver, Sudie Scott, John and Lottie Pearl, William Rotans and two others of that name; and others. The following year the school was taught by Professor Arthur Rich, an Englishman who had not been in America long.

The town of London became a community center, and farmer and rancher alike who lived in the northeast section of the county looked to London as a convenient trading post.

CHAPTER TWENTY-TWO

THE BIG OUTLAW ROUNDUP OF '77

"A few years ago," testified Lieut.-Col. John S. Mason, of the Texas 4th Infantry, before the Congressional Committee on Military Affairs in Washington on December 7, 1877, "Western Texas was very full of cattle, and required large numbers of 'cow boys'; and as the number of cattle was decreased very largely, and, in addition to that, the older rancheros are fencing and keeping their cattle on their own lands, it has thrown large numbers of the 'cow-boys' out of employment. They won't work, and they go to marauding. Those are our own people; and the Texas Rangers were raised as I understand, for protection against this class of people, although they have been used occasionally for pursuing raiding parties (of Indians)."

Therein lies the explanation for the presence of many of the horse and cattle thieves, outlaws, cut-throats and desperadoes who appeared in Kimble County in 1876 and thereabout. They used that section as a base, and operated over Southwest Texas. As the Indian menace was being abated, criminals and thugs put in their presence to mar the peace and quiet of the Llano valleys. Local officials were helpless. Some of them were confederates of the violators, and others were no match for the big-time desperado, especially in the broken, hilly area. However, the Texas Rangers were equal to the situation.

In 1874 a frontier battalion of rangers was organized against the Indians and outlaws who operated in Southwest Texas. Captain Neal Coldwell was appointed captain of

Company F, Pat Dolan was first lieutenant, F. C. Nelson, second lieutenant, and there were seventy-five enlisted men.

The headwaters of the Guadalupe River was headquarters for Capt. Coldwell's men, and their scouting territory included the country from the mouth of the Pulliam prong of the Nueces to the mouth of the North Fork of the Llano where Junction is now located.

In 1877 conditions in Kimble County had become intolerable. As a habitat for murderers and desperadoes of all types, the county was second to none in all Texas. The activities of the criminals had passed beyond control of lawful authorities, and were operating without restraint.

On March 30, 1877, W. A. Blackburn, Judge of the 17th Judicial District, addressed a letter from Lampasas to Maj. John B. Jones, commander of the Frontier Battalion, in which he stated:

"I have not been in Kimble County, but from parties recently there, I have learned that from forty to one hundred men can be raised in a few hours to resist the execution of legal process, and that they declare their determination to resist the holding of any court in that county.

"It is the home of a gang of the most desperate characters from all parts of the state, who are depredating upon all the adjacent counties.

"I would like very much to have Capt. Sparks accompany me to Kimble the 5th Monday in April."

On April 6 Judge Blackburn again wrote to Maj. Jones, in which he stated: "I am anxious to hold court in Kimble and will do so, unless prevented by force, which is threatened, I am credibly informed. The time for holding court . . . begins on the 30th and last day of April, and will be very thankful indeed for an escort. I do not think it safe for me to travel through that county without one—and I know I cannot hold a court without your assistance." The escort was promised by Jones, who, on April 2nd, reported to Blackburn that it was imperative that the court term be held.

"I hope you will not fail to hold the court there," he wrote. "Unless something is done in the interest of law and order the few good people that are there will have to abandon the county to the thieves and the murderers."

Maj. Jones hinted at an impeachment trial. "The Sheriff Runnels and County Judge Potter should both be removed," he continued. "They are beyond doubt in league with the thieves."

The clamor for assistance had begun early in 1877, and gained momentum with the coming of spring and the approach of the time for the session of the District Court. H. B. Waddill, of Co. C, Frontier Battalion, writing from Ft. Mason, February 27, 1877, reported on the situation in Kimble, as he had found it.

"I find" he began, "That Kimble County is a theaf's stronghold; the two Llanos and all tributaries are lined with them."

Waddill gave the names of several of the outlaws, "Coburn, a heavy set dark scamp wants to kill every stranger that comes into the neighborhood fearing that he is a detective," he wrote. In referring to the struggle that was being made against the wave of crime, he commended Felix Burton for his stand, and continued: "Implicit confidence can be placed in Gilliland, Kountz, Temple and Pepper."

Felix Burton, who was a member of the first Commissioners' Court of Kimble County, was active in reporting conditions and summoning aid. On February 22, 1877, he wrote Major Jones on the "Magnitude of lawlessness and crime that is going on in this county." "Our horses, cattle and hogs," he reported, "are being stolen almost daily. Cattle from other counties by tens, thirtys and fifties are stolen and drove to this. . . . In short, everything from murder down to the lowest grade of thief that you can think of—this county seems to be the greatest headquarters for men loaded with crime from all parts of the state."

The influence of the desperadoes is further illustrated by Major Jones' report to Adjutant General Steele, on April

12, 1877: "I learn that outlaws have purchased all the ammunition in Kimble and adjoining counties and have not yet so much as they want."

Major Jones timed his famous round-up of Kimble County outlaws to occur on the eve of the April, 1877, term of the District Court. He kept in regular communication with District Judge W. A. Blackburn, as well as with the adjutant general. The round-up was probably the most complete and impressive of its nature ever attempted in Texas. It was a widespread man hunt, perfectly executed. On April 2 the Major wrote the District Judge of his plans to clean Kimble County of the crime element. "Will have three companies in that county," he wrote, "by the 15th of this month and will scour it thoroughly before the time for your court."

On April 11, Jones wrote Lieut. F. M. Moore, commander of Company "C," stationed on Bear Creek in Kimble. "I wish you to send three men," he directed, "who know where everybody lives on both Llanos and Johnson Fork, to meet me at Paint Rock on South Llano next Wednesday evening, the 18th inst. . . . and remain there until I arrive. You will move the balance of your company,—with ten days rations to Junction City on the evening of the 20th. I will bring Coldwell's and Dolan's companies with me and will make a general 'roundup' of Kimble County, but want it kept secret until we are ready to make the break."

The progress of the 'round-up' was reported by Major Jones in a communication to Judge Blackburn, dated April 22 from Junction City.

"I have been in this county three days," he wrote, "have had out from three to five scouting parties all the time. Have four out now. Am scouring every hollow, hill and dale of this section of country and we'll have all the active law breakers captured or driven off in a few days. We had captured twenty up to last night . . . we are cutting out some work for your court next week and I shall remain here to help you make it up."

The concentration of the ranger units was directed by Major Jones. He ordered Captain Coldwell to concentrate

the companies of Captain Dolan and Moore. Captain Dolan was in the Nueces Canyon at the time. The sweep of the outlaw drive began on the heads of the Nueces and Llanos, and the officers were inclined to arrest every man contacted, and thereby be certain to get the right ones. Each man was examined and he was required to give a satisfactory account of himself before he was turned loose.

There were more than forty men rounded up, many of whom proved to be men wanted and they were carried to Junction City and there confined in shackles in a place called the "bull pen."

John Allen recalls the "roundup." "I was with Dave Allen, my uncle, up North Llano," he says, "when the rangers came down that river on their sweep. I recall that we met some of them as they scoured down the river. They would have made us go to Junction to be identified, but for the fact a nearby ranchman identified us and they let us go on." The law on "presumption of innocence" was reversed on the outlaws, for once, and there was squirming and gnashing of teeth.

On May 8 Major Jones, from Ft. McKavett, made a report to Adjutant General William Steele of the Kimble County operations and of the April term of court at Junction City.

"I have the honor," he began, "to report my operations and observations in Kimble County with Capt. Coldwells Company "A," and thirteen men of Company "F." I reached the head water of the South Llano in Edwards County on the evening of the 18th of April. On the 19th I divided my force in four detachments sending one down to Johnsons Fork, one down Cedar, one down South Llano, and one down Maynards Creek and North Llano, and arrived at Junction City that evening. Being joined next day by Lt. Moore's Company which I had ordered to meet me there. I sent out five detachments and in three days had scoured the county thoroughly, the southern and western part the first day and the northern and eastern part the next two. My advent was a complete surprise to the entire com-

munity. Only three persons in the county knew of my coming. . . . In three days I made twenty-three arrests . . . I . . . have made forty-one arrests in all, thirty-seven of them in Kimble County . . .

"The District Judge and District Attorney would not have come to Kimble if I had not sent them an escort. . . . Many of the good citizens of the county have expressed the same opinion and say they would not have come to court if my force had not been there to protect them against the outlaws and desperadoes. . . . A grand jury of good men was secured who worked industriously and fearlessly. They presented twenty-five bills of indictment and would have found many more but for the absence of witnesses and lack of time to procure evidence. The jury commissioners, however, reported that, besides the grand jury, they could find only nine good honest citizens of the county who were qualified under the law to serve as jurors, consequently no trials could be had at this time of the court and all the cases were continued until next term. . . . Several indictments were returned against the sheriff and he and the county judge, but he resigned during court.

"The work was very fatiguing, much of it having to be done at night. Several parties were caught by surrounding their houses, or finding their camp fires in the woods at night. Sometimes we came in contact with their women and were terribly tongue-lashed by them for searching their houses and arresting the men."

The District Court that convened following the "round-up" was faced with a heavy docket, but, as has been seen, little headway could be made in the disposition of cases. Many of the outlaws were held on suspicion, and, along with those who were indicted and could not make bond, were taken to jails in neighboring counties to await trials at later terms of the court. Aided by the presence of an entire battalion of rangers, Judge Blackburn held an eventful term of court. He did that which the outlaws had threatened could not be done. District Attorney Frank Wilkes was an

active participant in the court session. Organized outlawry in Kimble County had sustained a definite set-back.

Wilkes, a fiery, vigorous district attorney, was succeeded by scholarly Walter Acker, a clear-thinking, hard-driving prosecutor. Born on a Mississippi plantation on September 2, 1844, Acker attended a military school, joined the Confederate army at the age of 17, and served in Company F, 16th Mississippi Infantry, which became a part of Ewell's Division, Army of Northern Virginia. He was later attached to Company F, 12th Regiment, Mississippi Cavalry, Ferguson's Brigade, W. H. Jackson's Division, Stephen D. Lee's Corps, in which service he became a First Lieutenant, and succeeded to the command during the siege of Savannah, Georgia.

Following the war Acker was graduated from the University of Mississippi and admitted to the bar in 1868. In 1875 he settled in Lampasas County, which was in the old 17th Judicial District. In 1878 he was elected District Attorney, was re-elected, and resigned in 1882 to become a member of the Texas Legislature, where he served during two sessions. In 1887 Acker was appointed Associate Judge on the original Commission of Appeals, an adjunct of the Supreme Court, and later became presiding judge of that court. After five years' service he resigned. Opinions written by him are contained in volumes 68 to 79, inclusive, decisions of the Supreme Court of Texas.

Judge Acker served three terms in the legislature, from 1924 to 1930. He died in Austin on February 18, 1933.

CHAPTER TWENTY-THREE

OUTLAWS AND TRIGGER-PULLING

Kimble County, and especially the South Llano country, was the rendezvous for many a noted early-day outlaw. The rough canyons, patches of cedar brakes, shin-oak hills, and the dense vegetation in the lowlands, combined to furnish much natural protection to the slippery outlaw of the time.

Dublins

Jim Dublin, accompanied by his family, including his son-in-law, William Allison, moved to Kimble County about 1874. Dick, Role and Dell, the sons, were "outlaws in the rough." The family moved in by way of Mason and Saline from Coryell County, and settled on the wild slashes of South Llano. At the time Dick Dublin was wanted for murder in Coryell County, and the other two brothers soon made themselves "wanted" for crimes of major import. The Dublins trailed cattle to Kimble, and Lou Walton remembers them passing the Rance Moore ranch on Big Saline. There was committed their first Kimble County offense. Coming out of the soft, sandy-land belt, their horses became tenderfooted as they tramped against the rocky hillsides. Rance Moore had a number of freshly-shod saddle horses in his horse trap on the creek, and it was quite a coincidence that Moore's horses came home that day sans shoes—and there had been nobody through those parts except the Dublins!

The rangers under Lieut. N. C. Reynolds, of which com-

pany the famous Jim Gillett was a member, captured Del Dublin in October of 1877. He was wanted for the murder of Jim Williams. He does not appear to have been convicted, because in the spring of 1879 he was running loose and was arrested with others on a Federal charge of robbing the stage at Peg-leg crossing on the San Saba River in Menard County.

Del Dublin had killed Jim Williams after an argument over a beef. This happened on the old Bill DeLong place on South Llano—later the Bud Fleming place. Williams had slaughtered a beef, and when Dublin, who lived a mile below Williams, heard about the beef being butchered, he loped his horse up to where Williams was, engaged him in argument, and shot him down. Williams' two small brothers were with him in the cow lot at the time, and it is reported that after Dublin had killed their brother with them looking helplessly on, one of the boys heroically grabbed his brother's gun and shot at Dublin as he passed through the cowlot gate. The bullet struck the fence right by the killer, and fragments of bark splattered on the outlaw. Jim Williams had been married only two years and had a small child.

In January of 1878 the rangers surprised Dick Dublin as he rode into Tom Potter's place on South Llano, and when he fled after refusing to surrender he was shot and killed by Ranger Jim Gillett. Dublin, who had escaped capture for some time, and for whose capture there was a $700 reward outstanding, had been protected by his confederates, including Starke Reynolds, William Allison, the Potter family, his own people, and other bandits who resided in that section.

During 1877 and 1878 a stage was held up and robbed a number of times on the San Saba River in Menard County. The bandits were masked and each time managed to escape. In the spring of 1879 a detail of rangers under Capt. D. W. Roberts rounded up Rube Boyce, Mack Potter, Role and Del Dublin, and charged them with the Peg-leg crime. It developed that Mack Potter had a very small foot, and that fact connected with the small foot prints that had been found with others on the scenes of the robberies, was a strong cir-

cumstance pointing to his guilt. The defendants were arraigned in Federal Court at Austin, and the Dublins and Potter entered pleas of guilty and were each given fifteen years in prison. Rube Boyce escaped jail, but was later tried and acquitted.

The Potters

The Potter family is reported to have moved in from California and settled in Kimble County about 1874. They established a ranch on the South Llano, only two miles from their friends and confederates, the Dublins.

Tom Potter was an old man, and had living with him in his mountain shack four grown sons, Mack, Jim, Bill and John. All the boys were half-breed Indians.

Jim and John Potter were indicted for stealing horses from H. K. Hutchison, and when the rangers attempted to arrest them when they were discovered on the plains, they resisted and Jim was killed and John was wounded. There being no jail at Junction City, Potter was incarcerated in San Antonio, pending trial at Junction City. Bill Dunman, who had been indicted for murdering a man named Conley on James River, was also in the San Antonio jail awaiting trial at Junction.

Trial of the two defendants was set for the spring term of 1879, and Junction officers, including Deputy Sheriff Kimbro and Sam Jobe, went to San Antonio for the prisoners. On the return trip, at a point about a half mile west of Mountain Home, they were accosted by two men, brandishing shot guns. The two prisoners were taken from the hack and into a nearby live oak thicket. There Dunman was liberated and was never rearrested, and John Potter was cut and shot to death. The identity of the two men who stopped the officers was never officially determined. It was general talk, however, that Potter had been suspected of being a member of the band of Indians that murdered the Dowdy children, which occurrence happened not far from Mountain Home, and that fact may have had some connection

with his death. It was rumored, too, that Potter had disclosed his connection with the Indian gang to Dunman, who had been his cell-mate in the San Antonio jail, and that the latter had passed this information on to friends of the Dowdy family.

Mack Potter's arrest, trial and sentence of fifteen years' imprisonment for participation in the Peg-leg stage robbery has already been related.

Rube Boyce

Contemporary with the regime of the Dublin and Potter gangs, there lived in the county the slippery Rube Boyce. Boyce had lived in the Saline country a number of years, and married Adeline, a daughter of John Pearl, Sr. Two weeks after his marriage, Boyce shot and killed Bob Anderson, his brother-in-law, the latter having married Betty Boyce. A herd of cattle had passed through the Saline country and a yoke of work steers had been lost in the vicinity. The trail boss gave Alec Pearl and Anderson a joint power of attorney to take and hold the steers, with the agreement that the finder would be given $10 for his trouble. Rube Boyce and Alec Pearl, while riding together in the Little Saline country, found the steers and corralled them at John Pearl's, where Boyce and Alec Pearl were staying.

Anderson, who lived a mile up Little Saline from the Pearl place, heard about the steers having been found, and rode down to claim them. He and Boyce had had trouble before, and there was bad feeling between them. George Pearl, who now lives only a mile from where the trouble occurred in 1877, was an eye-witness to the shooting.

"I can never forget seeing Bob Anderson ride up to the John Pearl place that morning," says Pearl. "A chimney was being built onto the house there, and Henry and John Pearl, Rube Boyce and I were all sitting on the rocks, talking, when Anderson rode up. He got off his horse, walked up and said to Boyce, 'I've come down after them steers.'

Boyce answered that he could wait until Alec came in, as the latter also had a power of attorney to take and hold the animals. I remember that Rube was sitting down with a rock in his right hand, chunking it against another rock. Talk between Boyce and Anderson became spirited, and one of them called the other a liar. I saw Anderson whip his right hand across to his left side and pull his gun. As he pulled the gun and fired Rube threw the rock he was holding and it struck Anderson on the shoulder, and the bullet whizzed by Boyce's ear. In a flash Boyce pulled his own gun and fired twice, one bullet taking effect in Anderson's breast and the other in his head. He lived for about two hours.

"After the shooting Boyce appeared to be the least excited one in the crowd. He took the empty shells from his gun, and calmly said, 'Another damn Scotchman gone to hell!' He then got on his horse and rode off. Boyce went to Burnet and a few days later returned to Mason and surrendered. He was indicted in that county, and when the trial was about to begin the judge learned the killing happened over the line in Kimble, and it was transferred."

The case against Boyce was continued for one or two terms, and when the trial was finally had the verdict was an acquittal. He was defended by Hal Fisher, of Georgetown, and also by Bill Martin. McGinnis was district attorney at the time.

The widow of Bob Anderson later married Len Lewis, the founder of the town of London.

Prior to the Anderson killing, Rube Boyce is reported to have had trouble with a man named Johnson in Llano County. Two years later, while on the "dodge" after breaking jail at Austin, rumor had it that he had an encounter with a man in New Mexico. He was questioned in reference to a robbery of Charlie Schmidke at Junction City.

Schmidke operated a general store. At about 10 o'clock on a morning in 1883 two men walked into the place with drawn pistols and robbed Schmidke of more than one thousand dollars cash—the first daylight hold-up ever staged in Junction City. The robbers overlooked another roll con-

taining fifteen hundred dollars which Ranchman Joe Taylor of Big Paint had on deposit there to pay cowboys. After taking the money, the hijackers left through an open back door. Schmidke then followed to the door and fired his pistol at them, whereupon they returned the fire, their bullet striking the door facing dangerously close to where Schmidke stood, according to G. W. Davidson of Coke County, who was in the store when the robbery took place. N. C. Patterson recalls seeing the bullet-hole in the door-facing many times.

Rube Boyce was arrested in 1879 and charged, along with Dell and Role Dublin and Mack Potter, with the Peg-leg stage robberies. He refused to plead guilty, and while awaiting trial in Austin escaped from jail. A pistol was smuggled into his cell, which he used in making his escape. He mounted a horse which had been conveniently placed for him, and it is reported that as he rode out of Austin at top speed he fired several times into the air. He was later arrested in New Mexico, and was taken to Austin where he was tried and acquitted.

At the time of the Peg-leg robberies Boyce lived at Franklin Springs, near the Kimble-Menard boundary. The Peg-leg stage stand was located about twelve miles below the town of Menard. One man reports being at the Boyce house at Franklin Springs on the night when a Peg-leg robbery was committed, and recalls that it was late in the night that Boyce arrived home.

Rube Boyce was an uneducated and illiterate man. Lou Walton recalls that he once asked him why he did not take time to learn to read and write. "It takes all my time to dodge bullets," he replied.

Boyce died about three years ago at Coahoma, Texas.

Fewer Outlaws

The activities of the rangers had made life miserable for many of the desperadoes who resided in Kimble County. Aside from those that have been discussed, many other ban-

dits and outlaws claimed Kimble as their home and hiding place. There was a semblance of organization amongst them and they worked in gangs. The head-way of the rangers by January 1, 1878, is indicated by this excerpt from the *San Antonio Express:*

> "If there is any one thing more than another the people of Western Texas have to congratulate themselves upon in connection with the progress of the year 1877, it is the breaking up and almost entire eradication of the bands of cut-throat desperadoes that infested our section a year ago. Strong in numbers and the self-interest that banded them together, they had defied the officers of the law, and laughed at the idea of arrest and punishment for the serious crimes almost daily committed. But the rangers entered in among them and their presence gave encouragement to the officers of the law, and now the penitentiary and jails are almost crowded with the scoundrels; most of the ringleaders have been arrested, and the others have become demoralized; they are being hunted down and driven from the country. Crime in Western Texas has been almost paralyzed, and barring the acts of desperadoes who cross the river from Mexico, Western Texas is today as safe a place for peaceable, law-abiding citizens as any part of the United States with the same population. . . ."

The situation as it existed in Kimble County was not so favorable, however. There the transition from one of outlawry to one of law and order was a gradual one. Many of the outlaws and their bands, though somewhat disorganized, continued to operate. As late as February 19, 1879, a petition signed by sixty-seven citizens of the county, addressed to the State Legislature, urged the continuation in service of the State Frontier Battalion. "The protection afforded by it to the frontier," the petition stated, "is of incalculable benefit, and to disband it now would place at the mercy of Indians and outlaws, the fairest portion of the state."

For a number of years thereafter a company of rangers was maintained in the county, and was located on Bear Creek. Frank Moore and D. W. (Dan) Roberts were two who commanded the company at different times. That company was an active one and contributed much to the purging of the frontier of outlaws and thieves.

CHAPTER TWENTY-FOUR

SOME EARLY-DAY KILLINGS

During the late '70's and early '80's many killings occurred in and around Junction City. If it appeared that a homicide was reasonably justifiable, the offender was rarely arrested and put to the expense of a trial. Practically every man wore a six-shooter, which, in many instances, represented "the majesty of the law."

Many a frontiersman with a wide-brimmed sombrero would ride up to the hitching posts, tie one rein of his bridle to the rail and saunter into the saloon. As the visitor, just short enough to enter without bending, would arrive at the saloon door, he would look the room over to see who was loafing around. Likely as not he would see some acquaintance. He might also see an enemy—some one who had made a threat. The new arrival would be wearing tall boots, and just before he stepped into the door he usually, without being conscious of his act, would drop his hand down and get the "feel" of the handle of his gun, and adjust it into its more convenient position. Every man had his own shooting style, and carried his gun, like his hat, at a peculiar slant or angle. Likely as not this new arrival wore a handle-bar mustache and a stubby beard with streaks of tobacco juice evident from the corners of his mouth. He was not looking for trouble; neither was he aiming to run from it. He had not meddled in anybody's business, and he was not hankering for somebody to meddle in his. If there was going to be trouble, he was not asking for odds, nor was he calling on the sheriff for protection. In fact, the chances

were he and the sheriff did not get along anyhow, as he may have supported the other man in the last election.

Just looking at the man you would hardly have thought that he had a human life on his conscience. But, for that matter, the victim may have needed killing according to the prevailing rules of conduct. In his own heart he knew that if he had been left alone it would never have happened.

Now and then in Junction City a man would be killed. A shot would be heard around the corner or in a saloon, and then another shot. Or it may have happened out in the quietness of a cow pasture with no eye-witnesses. It was a part of the frontier, a part of a system whereby men made and enforced their own laws.

A Killing at Grandstaff Springs

It was about the year 1882 that Dave Ogle shot and killed George Rich at Grandstaff Springs near James River. Rich, with his brother, a tubercular, and his mother, were stopping temporarily at Creed Taylor's. They hailed from Tennessee, and were traveling for the sick man's health. Ogle lived only a few miles away. His sister had a camp at the Springs—where Dr. Grandstaff, later of Mason, had lived—and when Rich called there on a visit, a quarrel developed, and Ogle, who happened to be present, shot and killed him. Two weeks later the sick brother died. The mother buried the two in Noxville cemetery, and then departed for her Tennessee home.

Dunman Kills Conley

Another James River killing occurred in 1877. Bill Dunman killed a man named Conley who was camped near the Jim Davis place, some three or four miles from where Creed Taylor lived. Dunman was staying at the latter place at the time. There had been bad blood between Dunman and Conley, and the former is reported to have challenged Conley to a duel at a certain time and place.

Davis told Conley not to take the risk. "Conley," he warned, "if you go out there this morning, I'll have to take my oxen and haul you in." The report was that as Conley approached the designated meeting place, Dunman shot him off his horse. An indictment was returned at Junction City, and Dunman was arrested and lodged in the San Antonio jail. At the next session of the District Court in Kimble County, following the defendant's arrest, he was sent for to stand trial. On the way to Junction Dunman was taken from the hack by two armed men and liberated. John Potter, taken from the hack at the same time, was assassinated by the masked pair. Dunman was never rearrested.

"Burrow for Breakfast"

Jim Burrows, who operated a ranch for a man named Bruton and another, in about the year 1879 killed a negro employee. The latter, probably the only negro in the county at the time, was regarded as mean and dangerous. A subdued feeling had arisen between the negro and Burrows, and the latter was not a hand to listen to idle talk, especially when coming from a negro.

One morning the negro arose and spoke out so Burrows could hear, and sarcastically said: "I'd sho' like to kill a b'ar fo' my breakfus' dis mawnin'." He made the pronouncement of the word "bear" sound like "Burrows," and the latter shot and killed him with a shot gun.

Another Negro Killed

In 1882 Creed Taylor had a negro employed to work for him. One day Jim Roberts, J. Rader, and the negro were hauling corn from the field to the Taylor barn, and Jack Morris, who also worked for Taylor, joined them. A small difference arose between Morris and the negro, whereupon the former struck the latter with a hoe. Before daylight on the following morning the negro arose and procured a big

hack knife that belonged to Creed Taylor, and entered the room where Morris was lying asleep. When Morris awoke the negro was astride him, with the knife raised to strike. "Mister Morris, I'se a going to hurt you and I'se a going to hurt you bad!" said the negro as he whacked the knife against the man's head. Morris jerked himself from under the attacker as the knife glanced against his head. With blood streaming from his head, the injured man ran into the room where Creed Taylor was sleeping, and called for help.

The negro fled into the mountains, and an intensive search was made for him. On the following day Rader and Roberts, as they drove their wagon along the road, saw the negro as he lay asleep near the roadway. The two men shot and killed him where he was lying, and then loaded the body into their wagon and hauled it into Fredericksburg. They were never indicted for the killing.

Ed Jones Kills Caston Rainer

On July 4, 1884, another early-day killing occurred in the James River country when Ed Jones shot and killed Caston Rainer. The two men had previously disagreed, and feeling between them had been tense. On the morning of the killing, Rainer rode up to the Jeff Wallace ranch, which was located on the Falls Prong of James River, and sat on his horse and talked with Mrs. Wallace. While so doing, Jones drove some horses by, and as he passed the Wallace home, turned his horse and rode down to where Mrs. Wallace and Rainer were conversing. Jones spoke to Rainer, but the latter failed to return the greeting. Jones then rode after his horses, and in a few moments Rainer departed. As he was leaving, Jones saw him, galloped his horse near the man, pulled his gun and shot and killed him.

Ed Jones was a fugitive from justice for eight years. Finally he surrendered, and was tried for the killing and acquitted.

Rainer lived with his family in a flat area in the Falls Prong valley. He was buried in the pasture near his homestead, and the epitaph on his tombstone, which still stands, reads:

CASTON RAINER
BORN SEPTEMBER 17, 1839
MURDERED BY ED JONES
JULY 4, 1884

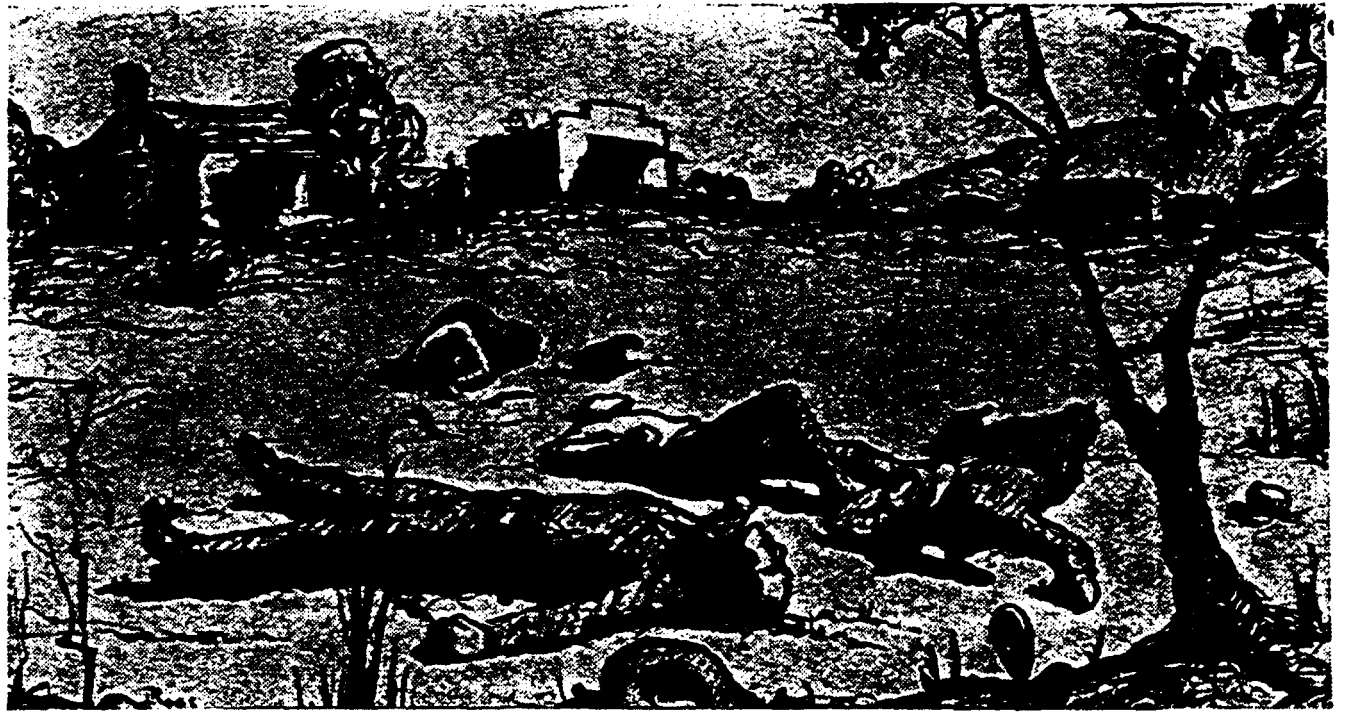
The Brashear-Wright-Gorman Killing

One of Junction City's main streets was turned into a veritable battle field about noon time on a day in the year of 1878. It was a finish fight. The following day four bodies were buried. The scene of the shooting was about one hundred yards east from where the Hodges Hotel is now located.

Button and Pete Brashear, cousins, had a lawsuit with Wright over a yoke of oxen, and the suit was being tried in John D. Scovill's Justice Court. The Brashear boys . . . but let us hear John Allen's description of the fracas. He was an eye-witness:

"The Brashear boys," begins Allen, "had been up town drinking, and were heading back toward the Justice Court when they met Major Wright on the road, and they stopped and talked a while. I was watching them, as I knew trouble was brewing. I heard some loud talk. About that time Sam Smith, a deputy sheriff, and Sam Gorman, a brother of the sheriff, came up to where the talk was. I could hear Button Brashear talking right loud. The deputy tried to take Button Brashear's pistol from him, but the latter raised his hand with the pistol in it above his head and then held it behind him to keep Smith from getting it.

"Pete Brashear was standing with an old needle gun in his hands. Then Sam Gorman and Pete Brashear got to talking and Sam pulled his pistol and shot Pete; whereupon



The Brashear-Wright-Gorman Killing

Pete returned the fire and shot Gorman with the needle gun, though he, himself, was mortally wounded.

"Button Brashear then shot his pistol at Major Wright four or five times, and killed him. As Wright fell I saw him throw his pistol and cry out. That made three of them killed, with Button Brashear still standing. John Gorman, the sheriff, then fired a shot from a Winchester as he sat in the corner of Frank Latta's house. He fired twice, the first striking Button in the chest, and as he wheeled around, the second shot hit him in the back. He also received a shot in the foot after he was down."

The smoke cleared away and Justice Scovill declared a recess for the day so far as Wright vs. Brashear, et al was concerned. He brushed the dust from his inquest docket and made four entries therein. It had been a good day's run in the Justice Court. He wondered how he would be able to collect the costs in the pending litigation.

Tom Doran Kills Jim Deaton

Early in 1880 Jim Deaton tried to kill Tom Doran when they met in Bill Franks' saloon. Doran sat in the saloon, leaning his chair against the bar. Deaton, with an open knife in his hand, entered, and paced to and fro in front of Doran. Suddenly, as he passed, he whipped the knife blade across Doran's throat. Doran ducked, the blade slashing at the under edge of his chin. He then raised his head and the flesh under his chin dropped down "like an apron," as one who helped sew him up puts it. Deaton had drawn blood, but the feud between the two was not settled. Everybody in Junction City knew there would be more trouble.

Six months later they met just outside the same saloon, and one word brought on another. Construction work was being done on the building, and Deaton grabbed a loose lathe with which to strike Doran, and the latter shot him with a needle gun and killed him on the spot. That feud was ended. "There was no trial," remembers one man, "as it

was a plain case of self-defense, and why bother the man with a trial? They cost money."

Tom Doran's preliminary hearing was conducted under an arbor, and during the course of the proceedings Mrs. John J. Smith, who was present, recalls that Jim Deaton's widow made a dramatic appearance on the scene. Brandishing a loaded gun she made her way through the crowd and announced that she wanted "to kill that man Doran." Several men relieved her of the weapon, order was finally restored, and the proceedings resumed.

The Doran-Temple Fight

On December 23, 1881, came the Tom Doran-Lewis Temple fight—the bloody culmination of a feud of some months' standing. People had been expecting this fight for a long time. It was one of those inevitable things that everybody knew would happen sooner or later. Lewis Temple was a deputy sheriff at the time, but that gave him no advantage because Tom Doran was himself a good shot and never wore a glove on his right hand. It was one of the most dramatic shooting scrapes ever staged in the town. If you had dropped in there that evening you would have thought you were being treated to a rehearsal for a wild-west drama to be presented by local talent in the opera house the next week; that is, until you had seen the blood start flowing.

The scene: Double-O Saloon, which then belonged to Frank Garner and Jim Calhoun. Time: shortly after dark. Enters Tom Doran, who takes a seat in a chair and says nothing. Next enters Lewis Temple, who glances about the room, takes careful stock of the situation, walks to the bar and speaks a moment to bartender Jim Calhoun, then turns to the silent crowd in the lamp-lit saloon (which included John Allen and Joe Clements), and with the wave of a hand broke the silence, and said: "You gentlemen all come up and drink on me!" With the exception of Doran, the crowd, numbering ten, comply. Temple squints one eye and

The Doran-Temple Fight

fixes the other on the man who had declined his "invite." More silence. Doran keeps his seat and says nothing. The bartender hesitated about fixing the drinks. He seems to be possessed of an intuition it might not be necessary.

Lewis Temple then steps to where Doran sits, rests one hand on the back of the chair, talks a moment, and Doran speaks out plain: "____ ____ you, I can kill you and give you the first shot!" he counters. Both men simultaneously reach for their guns. Temple gets the drop and shoots Doran through the right breast. Doran retreats, backwards, toward the open door, and Temple follows him with his pistol in firing pose. Doran has his pistol in his right hand.

As Doran reaches the doorway he grasps the door-facing with his left hand, and fires his pistol at Temple, the bullet striking him in the middle of the forehead above the eyes. Brain particles and blood splatters on the door-facing. One man is shot and another mortally wounded.

But the fight was not over as it appeared to be. As Doran shot he stepped outside into the dark. Whereupon John Temple, Lewis Temple's father, and another man grabbed Doran and a scuffle over the gun ensued, the participants fighting back into the saloon. There Joe Clements caught Doran, and called to the crowd for assistance in separating the combatants. John Allen complied, and as Clements wrenched at the pistol, it exploded, at which time Doran pulled loose and ran out through the doorway. The pistol fell to the floor and fired; John Temple picked it up, and shot Doran through the hips as he ran out. Temple then threw the gun down and ran in pursuit of the man he had just fired on. He drew a knife and slashed Doran thirteen times, and killed him on the spot. It had been a bloody night in the Double O.

John Temple returned to the saloon, turned to John Allen and said, "John, he killed him, but he won't ever kill another." Temple was gray-bearded and his long hair struck his shoulders. His son evidently knew he was waiting outside the door, which accounted for his failure to shoot a second time as Doran backed to the doorway.

George Graves Killed

Bill Clements killed George Graves. Clements was a son-in-law of Joe Clements, though there was no blood relationship. He had been a ranger, and had been regarded as an efficient officer while in that service. This killing occurred in Andy Royal's saloon, and the time was about 1885.

George Graves was a freighter, and came to Junction City one morning and left his team standing hitched to the wagon on the public square—where they still stood late that night when he was killed. He was in Bill Clement's saloon and while there some trouble developed between him and W. W. Baker, a bartender. When Clements came to the saloon from supper, Baker told him about the trouble with Graves. Soon Clements closed his own saloon and went over to Royal's. There he and Graves started a conversation, and accusations were exchanged. They grappled at each other, during the course of which Clements fired his gun, the shot taking effect in Graves' heart. He was tried and promptly acquitted.

Jim Stout Killed

Jim Stout, a high-rate gambler, came to town a stranger and had been in Junction City for only a few months when he had trouble. Stout was a likeable sort of man, and made a number of friends during his brief residence in Junction. He came to town broke, and worked as a bartender in one of the saloons for a time.

This newcomer was handy with his fists, and the town "toughs" soon learned to respect him. Some boasting bad men heard about Stout, and walked into the saloon one night to take stock of what the new bartender had to offer that might be stronger than straight whiskey. Fifteen minutes later three men were carried out—not seriously hurt, but painfully so. Stout had taught the lesson with an iron weight. After this occurrence there were no challengers,

but there was an undercurrent of talk that there was some subdued jealousy toward Stout on the part of a few who were there before he came.

Tom Carson and Andy Royal were running a saloon where the Schreiner-Hodges warehouse is now located, being the old Bill Frank's place. It seemed that Stout had some trouble with the saloon keepers over gambling, and one moon-light night the saloon was closed and the three of them emerged from the back door, and were about to close for the night. It was bitter cold on that winter night in the year of 1884. It happened that it was also closing time for Stout because as the door was being locked Tom Carson pulled his pistol and shot him. Stout ran a distance of about one hundred yards, and fell at a point where the Hankins Drug Store is now located. It was a case of self-defense, claimed Carson. His story was that he knew Stout carried his pistol under his sleeve in his overcoat, and that he fired at him after Stout reached his hand into his coat.

Carson and Royal were indicted, and their trial was presided over by a special judge. N. C. Patterson was a witness. He testified that he and others picked Stout up after the latter had fallen from the shot, and that while they were carrying him to a room on a stretcher, the wounded man said: "I went to that saloon tonight on their invitation to have a little game. I thought Tom Carson was the best friend I had.... Boys, don't ever put too much confidence in a man—not even a friend." The jury found the defendants to be not guilty.

Tom Carson, who continued to live in Junction City, was killed by Bill Holman in Kerrville on April 21, 1893. The killing happened in Benton Weston's saloon. Holman was tried and acquitted during the following year. He was later killed in Del Rio by the late Judge James Cornell, for which the latter was promptly acquitted.

In 1889 Andy Royal moved to Fort Stockton, where he was later elected sheriff. He was assassinated there on November 21, 1894, and was at the time of his death thirty-nine years of age.

Hon. Howell Johnson, a veteran attorney of Ft. Stockton, gives the following sketch of the life of Andy Royal: "A. J. Royal moved to Fort Stockton, Pecos County, Texas in the year 1889 with his family, and located temporarily in the town of Fort Stockton. April 11, 1889, he purchased what was and is still known as the Leon Spring Irrigation Farm and Cattle Ranch from G. W. Frazier, located eight miles west of Fort Stockton, and he also purchased a residence in Fort Stockton. He was a resident of Junction, Kimble County, until he moved to Pecos County. Mr. Royal was apparently about 40 years of age and a descendant of a fine father and mother, originally of Alabama. Mrs. Royal was a most estimable lady and although old age has come upon her she still enjoys life and the love and affection of four daughters.

"Mr. Royal was elected sheriff of Pecos County, November, 1892, and served for two years, and his successor was R. B. Neighbors, a very efficient officer and served ten years, from 1894 to 1904.

"Mr. Royal was a real good family man and quite a good business man, but was very high tempered and aggressive, and for two years preceding his demise . . . he gained many enemies . . . of a good many citizens of Fort Stockton and some of the old style cow punchers. . . . He was finally slain on the 21st day of November, 1894. He was killed in his official office in the afternoon. He had turned over the office of sheriff and tax collector to his successor, but on the date he was killed was in the office going over some antecedent official papers with his clerk, Charles Crosby, and sitting at the desk with his back to the door of entry. Some one stepped to the open door of entry and fired a shot, the bullet entering just below his right shoulder, and he passed away instanter. Who fired the shot was never disclosed and no one was indicted. . . .

"He was buried in the old cemetery north of the main business section of the town and there was engraved on the tombstone—'A. J. Royal—Assassinated.'"

Other Killings

There were a number of other gun fights in the Junction vicinity during the '80's. In the middle '80's Bud Fleming killed his brother, John, on the former's ranch on South Llano. For this offense he was tried and acquitted. A few months before that occurrence Bud Fleming had severely cut Andy Royal about the abdomen with a knife.

In the '90's John Taylor killed a man named Langholz, a saddler, who lived in San Antonio. For this offense Taylor was given punishment of imprisonment for ninety-nine years. About 1886 Jeff Wallace and Jim Hagan (the latter being an officer and one time sheriff of Gillespie County) are reported to have killed a man named Tubbs and another when they refused to surrender. This occurred near what is called Rogers Wells, being approximately where the I. O. Weldon ranch is now located. The homicides were justifiable, since the officers had warrants for the arrest of the men who were wanted for commission of major offenses.

On Monday night, March 28, 1898, in front of what is now the Hodges Hotel, Gip Hardin shot and killed John Turman, a deputy sheriff. Hardin was a brother of the notorious John Wesley Hardin, and was principal of schools at Junction City at the time. He was tried at Junction City and the jury found him guilty and assessed his punishment at thirty-five years imprisonment. The judgment was reversed, however, and at a second trial held at Fredericksburg he was convicted and given only three years in prison, and was later pardoned.

There were other early-day kililngs in Kimble, but which will not be here recounted.

A New Frontier

And so the Kimble frontier was tamed. It is true that in the early days there came into that country, as was true with other frontier communities, some of the very dregs of so-

ciety, men who had become thoroughly schooled in the art and trickery of crime long before they saw the confines of the County of Kimble. Many went the way of most criminals who follow careers of crime; others stole, accumulated, and with a measure of wealth to recommend them, became respectable citizens. Some of the best citizens were sometimes involved in cutting or shooting scrapes by no provocation or fault of their own. The dominating element of the populace was law-abiding and law-respecting, and early in the county's history gained the upper hand. Truly, the whole history of civilization is repeated with each new frontier.

Today the county that is Kimble is a thriving, progressive region. A more law-abiding, peace-loving people can hardly be found anywhere. Trails have been blazed and bridges built to make the going easier. The old frontier—a frontier that challenged the best in any man or woman of courage and purpose—is on the wane. That day is being darkened by the setting of its sun. Today, built upon the foundation of the unselfish efforts and sacrifices of the pioneers of the past, a new and changed frontier presents itself.

Tennyson in his *Locksley Hall* took a long-range view of the forward march of time, and said,

> *"Not in vain the distance beacons, Forward,*
> *forward let us range,*
> *Let the great world spin forever*
> *Down the ringing grooves of change."*

APPENDIX

Early day county officials of Kimble County included the following:

County Surveyor	*Date of Election*
Frank Vickery	Nov. 5, 1878
Frank Vickery	Nov. 2, 1880
Frank Vickery	Nov. 7, 1882
John McNickel	Nov. 4, 1884
C. E. Davis	Nov. 1886

County Clerk	
John C. Kountz	July 20, 1878
Will A. Spencer	Nov. 5, 1878
Will A. Spencer	Nov. 2, 1880
Will A. Spencer	Nov. 7. 1882
A. J. Wilson	Nov. 4, 1884
W. A. Boyle	Nov. 1886

Sheriff	
J. M. Reynolds	Oct. 18, 1876
Appointed; succeeded by Runnels, who resigned.	
John B. Gorman	May 3, 1877
Appointed.	
John B. Gorman	Nov. 5, 1878
H. J. Garland	Nov. 5, 1880
John B. Gorman	Nov. 7, 1882
W. A. Spencer	Nov. 4, 1884
W. A. Spencer	Nov. 1886

Assessor of Taxes	
Wm. F. Gilliland	Nov. 5, 1878
O. H. P. Kerr	Nov. 2, 1880
T. J. Benley	Nov. 7, 1882
Thos. J. Bailey	Nov. 4, 1884
J. A. Browning	Nov. 1886

Inspector of Hides and Animals	
Wm. B. Meeks	Nov. 5, 1878
Wm. B. Meeks	Nov. 2, 1880
G. W. Hodges	Nov. 7, 1882
A. D. Cabler	Nov. 4, 1884
Sam A. Hunter	Nov. 1886

County Judge	
N. Q. Patterson	May 3, 1877
Appointed; resigned March 11, 1878.	
J. J. Ramsey	Mar. 11, 1878
Appointed; resigned June 11, 1878.	
Geo. E. Stewart	June 11, 1878
Appointed.	
Geo. E. Stewart	Nov. 5, 1878
E. S. Alley	Nov. 2, 1880
E. S. Alley	Nov. 7, 1882
E. S. Alley	Nov. 4, 1884
E. S. Alley	Nov. 1886

County Attorney	
Henry W. Shannon	Oct. 3, 1876
Appointed; revoked by court.	
Geo. W. Perryman	Aug. 3, 1878
Appointed.	
Geo. W. Perryman	Nov. 5, 1878
H. C. Fisher	Nov. 2, 1880
P. M. Trammell	Nov. 1886

County Treasurer	
John C. Kountz	May 14, 1877
Appointed; resigned March 11, 1878.	
J. E. Temple	Apr. 1, 1878
Appointed.	
Robert A. Clark	Nov. 5, 1878
C. C. Kountz	Nov. 2, 1880
H. H. Allen	Nov. 7, 1882
H. H. Allen	Nov. 4, 1884
H. H. Allen	Nov. 1886

PRINTED SOURCES CONSULTED

As indicated by the acknowledgments in the Foreword, the bulk of the data in this book has been gathered over a period of years from survivors of many of the episodes or in interviews with descendants who inherited first hand, family history and regional tradition.

For purposes of continuity and occasional confirmation, many books, periodicals and documents have been most useful, particularly:

Johnson—A Soldier's Reminiscences
McConnell—Five Years a Cavalryman
Carter—On the Border With McKenzie
Wharton—Satanta
Gillett—Six Years With the Texas Rangers
McDanield & Taylor—Texas, the Coming Empire
Sowell—Early Settlers and Indian Fighters
Gammel—Laws of Texas
Hooker—Crickett
Roberts—Rangers and Sovereignty
Matthews—Interwoven
Green—Journal of the Texian Expedition Against Mier
Dixon & Kemp—The Heroes of San Jacinto
Wilbarger—Indian Depredations in Texas
Browning—Memoirs of J. A. Browning
Solms-Braunfels—Texas 1844-45
Southwestern Historical Quarterly
Texas Almanac
West Texas Historical Association Yearbooks
The Frontier Times
Comptroller's Military Service Records

Files of The Junction Eagle, The San Antonio Light, The San Antonio Express, The Fort Worth Star-Telegram, The Dallas News and The Houston Post have from time to time yielded with clarity and accuracy the contemporary viewpoint so valuable to the historian.

Of this First Edition of
IT OCCURRED IN KIMBLE
Five hundred copies have been
printed, of which this is