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Title: Auldridge Family History

Auldrige Family Record

dedicated to our mother

Verba Lee Byrd Auldrige

June 21, 1926

-

April 27, 1999

Foreword

This family history is possible thanks to the efforts of our parents, Truett and Verba Lee Auldrige.

It was only after her death that we discovered the incredible detail of items that Verba Lee had collected, catalogued, recorded, and placed in scrapbooks during her life. There must have been some 30 or more individual scrapbooks that she lovingly assembled at various important occasions during her life;

There were separate scrapbooks for each of the children, with an amazing depth of detail... report cards from elementary and high school, mementos from various school-age events, pictures, letters, etc.

Other scrapbooks gave interesting glimpses into her earlier married life, with mementos of travels with Truett during World War II and other special trips afterwards.

She even had retained report cards for both her mother and father's school years!

In addition, she expended a great deal of effort in contacting various relatives on her side of the family, and obtained written records of kinships, birth, marriage, and death dates. Then she carefully compiled this information in a manually-recorded geneology record book.

As for Truett, we all discovered in recent years his great secret. He has kept a detailed daily diary for many years, and faithfully recorded each day's events there. It is from this source that he has been able to provide such lucid details of hundreds of events that transpired 30, 40, even 50 years earlier.

It has been my great pleasure to be able to take these wonderful gifts that my parents provided for our family, and arrange them in (hopefully) a readable format for the enjoyment of our entire family and descendents to come.

For internet-ready viewers, this entire family history is available online at either of the following locations

www.blog.auldrige.org *SELECT THE FAMILY MENU ITEM*

It is my hope that this humble beginning of the Auldrige Family History will encourage each and every member of our family to provide me with details of their individual life history, so that I can continue to update this document as I receive new material!

*Phil Auldrige - Updated November 2019 Please note new contact details:
phil@auldrige.org 512 517-0055 Dripping Springs, Texas*

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Family Group Sheet of Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge

Husband: Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge

Birth: 18 Sep 1924
 Marriage: 11 Apr 1942 in Lampasas, Texas
 Father: Levi Nathan Auldridge
 Mother: Elva Sidney Turner



Wife: Verba Lee Byrd

Birth: 21 Jun 1926 in Copperas Cove, Texas
 Death: 27 Apr 1999 in Goldthwaite, Texas
 Father: Edgar Earl Byrd
 Mother: Annie Lou Gilmore



Children:

1		Name: Nathan Phillip Auldridge Birth: 03 May 1945 in Temple Texas Marriage: 05 Apr 1986 in Monterey, Cal Spouse: Dorothee Jean Hale Other Spouses: Iris Elaine Rutherford (28 Aug 1965 in Waco Texas)	
M			
2		Name: Gene Earl Auldridge Birth: 27 Jul 1946 in Brownwood, Texas Marriage: 06 Mar 1976 in Copperas Cove, Texas Spouse: Vivian Anniece Cunningham Other Spouses: Peggy Lamkin (27 Jul 1968)	
M			
3		Name: Ronald Wade Auldridge Birth: 31 Jan 1950 in Goldthwaite, Texas Marriage: 14 Feb 1993 Spouse: Shirley Ruth Green Other Spouses: Neta Sue Berry (19 Aug 1972)	
M			
4		Name: Lee Ann Auldridge Birth: 22 May 1956 in Goldthwaite, Texas Marriage: 15 Mar 1994 Spouse: Freddy Moffatt Other Spouses: Danny Sutherland (11 Jul 1978)	
F			

Notes:

Nathan Phillip Auldridge
 Attended Howard Payne College Freshman Year, 1963, where he met his first wife, Iris Elaine. The following year, Phil transferred to Baylor, and Elaine was forced to quit college due to family finances. Both Elaine and Phil worked at a wholesale lumber company, Nash-Robinson, in Waco Texas, while Phil was attending college. Phil both worked in the yard office, and drove a delivery truck around the Central Texas area.

Also, during that time, Phil earned additional income as a 7-11 clerk, gas pump jockey, and giving private piano lessons. One of his students was General Curtis LeMay, who happened to be stationed at the Air Force Base adjacent to Waco. Later, Phil secured a job at the A.O. Smith Corp. a plant which was manufacturing bomb casings for the Vietnam war. He worked the night shift, and attended college during the day. His jobs at the plant included "material handler" on the assembly line, then fork lift operator, and

Notes: (cont.)

finally, night shipping clerk.

In 1968, Phil graduated from Baylor University with a degree in business, and was immediately employed by Peat, Marwick, Mitchell, an accounting firm, in Houston, Texas. However, in less than 6 months, he was accepted for Officer Candidate School for the Navy, and was transported to OCS at Newport, Rhode Island. Elaine and baby daughter stayed in Waco with her parents while Phil completed OCS, then the two joined him at Navy Supply Corp school in Athens, Georgia.

Phil was interested in the extra-curricular computer courses offered at Athens, and excelled in those. As a result, he was assigned to the duty of Computer Officer on a carrier, the USS Hornet. Because of demand, he was allowed to leave the school prior to completion of final exams, in order to have time to report to duty in Long Beach, CA.

While on board the ship, Phil was fortunate to witness the ocean landing and rescue of the Apollo 8 moon launch, with President Nixon on board. This was the first lunar landing, and was followed by an additional launch pickup, Apollo 11. During this time, Elaine was employed in Long Beach as an office manager.

Later, the ship was decommissioned, and Phil was transferred to San Diego. It was shortly after this transfer that Phil and Elaine decided to separate. Elaine and Deirdre went back to Houston, where Elaine's mother lived at the time. A short while afterwards, Elaine met her second in Houston, Julian Blackwel.

After discharge from the Navy in San Diego, Phil took a job as Treasurer/Comptroller for an insurance company: Sierra Mutual Fire Insurance Company. It was during this time Phil purchased a small home in Ocean Beach, and then later purchased a beautiful home with 5 other friends, located right on the ocean in Point Loma, a suburb of San Diego.

Eventually, Phil decided to quit his job at the insurance company, and become a musician. For a number of years, he performed in several groups, most of which he was the leader, at various clubs in and around San Diego, including the Hilton and Sheraton Hotels, among others.

Finally, he was asked by a close friend to join him in Monterey and assume the position of Data Processing Manager for another insurance company, California Mutual Insurance Company. After approximately 5 years in that position, he formed a computer consulting company, called "Consultants for Computer Applications", in partnership with Al Calvano and his wife, Carolyn. The company did very well, and for a time employed about 12 programmers.

However, all good things come to an end. It was during this time that Phil met Dorothee Jean Hale, and after a 2 year courtship, Dorothee finally succumbed to Phil's pleas for marriage, and they decided to move to Hawaii. Phil sold his part in the business to his partner, and he and Dorothee departed on a 4 month bicycle trip across the country, riding from St. Louis MO, through the eastern US, all the way to Maine, then back down to Williamsburg VA.

In Hawaii, Phil first worked as an independent computer consultant, later as a systems analyst for Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut Corp. He also worked as a flight instructor and air tour pilot, as well as an emergency air-medivac pilot, flying patients from various locations throughout the island chain.

In 1991, Phil bought a small 2 seat airplane, and started a small flight training company. By 1998, the company had grown to 20 employees, 8 aircraft, and two locations, at Kona and Hilo airports, offering aerial volcano tours, and a variety of flight training programs. Phil and Dorothee reside in the small community of Waikoloa Village, on the sunny Kohala Gold Coast of the Big Island of Hawaii

Gene Earl Auldridge

Child: Gene Earl Auldridge

Born: July 27, 1946

In: Brownwood, Texas

Relationship with Father: Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge - Natural

Notes: (cont.)

Relationship with Mother: Verba Lee Byrd - Natural

Address & Phone: P. O. Box 301, Goldthwaite, TX 76844
915-648-2649

Notes:

Gene graduated from Goldthwaite High School in 1964, receiving a full Football Scholarship to Rice University. In high school, he was Captain of the football team two years and All District Player two years. Gene also lettered in Track two years and Basketball four years. He was Mr. GHS, FHA Beau and in the Football Hall of Fame two years for Outstanding Defensive Line.

Gene was involved with high school rodeo and participated in Bronc Riding, Bull Riding, and Calf Roping. He was a Boy Scout and a member of the First Baptist Church having made his profession of faith in 1955. Other hobbies included raising pigs, riding horses for pleasure, and hunting.

He was quiet, somewhat timid and mostly kept his feelings to himself. However, his mother's recollections of him as a young child are those of a head strong and persistent child with a bit of stubborn determination.

Gene graduated from Rice University in Houston, Texas in 1969 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Education. While attending Rice University, he played football five years on a full scholarship. He started at Defensive Tackle for three years and received a Rolex watch his senior year for the Jess Neely Defensive award as the outstanding defensive player on the team. He worked at various jobs during those years in college, including Sheffield Iron Works, maintenance at a large shopping center, and construction work.

While a senior at Rice, he married Peggy Lamkin. Upon graduating Gene immediately accepted his first coaching position at Copperas Cove, Texas. He was an assistant to Coach Jackie Williams, who had also been his high school coach. Peggy worked at Fort Hood National Bank. They both enjoyed rodeos and horses. No children were born to this union. He coached there four years, during which time, he and Peggy were divorced in 1971. In 1973 he returned to Goldthwaite as Head Football Coach and History teacher. In 1976 he married Vivian (Cunningham) Province in Copperas Cove, Texas and retired from coaching that same year to open a lumberyard business in Goldthwaite.

Leasing property from H. C. and Alyne Letbetter, which had previously been used as a hog barn, the business began. The lease agreement was five years at \$150.00/mo. for a total of \$9,000.00 with the option to purchase for the price of \$25,000.00. With the help and expertise of his father Truett, Gene remodeled the building to include office and restroom space, and a showroom. The business was opened in August 1976, with Truett acting as Purchasing Agent, Gene in Sales, and Vivian as Bookkeeper. There was one employee, Eugene Vega, a Mexican National who was previously employed by Truett. Beginning inventory was purchased with \$20,000 life insurance proceeds to Vivian. After the first full year in business their annual sales were 423,000 thousand dollars. Truett left the business after three years voluntarily without remuneration. For his gift of time and resources, Gene is deeply indebted to his Dad and forever grateful. The sales steadily increased each year reaching 2.5 million dollars in 1985.

Soon after, there was a general recession and in 1989 profits hit an all time low. By selling equipment, revamping his employee structure, and monitoring closely his cost of sales and profit margins, Gene was able to steer the business into another successful era. Today in 1999, he is operating a successful business with 10 employees and a Net Worth of about 900,000 dollars. He has purchased the property and built several additional warehouse structures. He has remodeled the original office and sales area, and expanded into building portable storage buildings, limited cabinet building, portable toilets rental, construction management, and public school building construction. Both the First United Methodist Church and the Goldthwaite ISD have employed Gene as Construction Supervisor on projects including the Methodist Family Life Center and Goldthwaite Middle School. The cost of these projects represents a total value of 2.6 million dollars.

Notes: (cont.)

In 1982, along with partner Charles Childress of Austin, Gene purchased the Goldthwaite Laundromat. In 1985 they purchased a lot in Bangs, and built a building opening a new Laundromat there. Later they added the Santa Anna Laundromat, in 1986, and converted one end of it into self-storage rental units. The Ballinger Laundromat was purchased in 1991 and self-storage rental units there were completed in 1993. And finally in 1993 they acquired the San Saba Laundromat. Gene then solely purchased the Lometa Laundromat from Jackie Williams, and an existing self-storage facility in Brownwood. Gene does all maintenance on the laundry equipment and is responsible to arrange for the upkeep of the buildings and grounds. Also, he makes deposits to the bank and does all of the bookkeeping. This is a business that he enjoys and it has been a very solid source of income for many years. Recently Gene and Charles have entered into yet another business adventure. That is a laser car wash in Ballinger. Adding also a third partner for the car wash, Dan Williams of Ballinger.

Gene describes his marriage to Vivian as the best thing he ever did! She was a widow and brought into his life Laurel age 4, and Dennis age 2. Gene adopted these children as soon as he could and has been a dedicated father to them, offering them his love and support throughout their life. Three more children were born to them. They are: Joseph Truett (J.T.) born September 12, 1978; Vanessa Rae born September 20, 1981; and Jaclyn Jean born May 2, 1983. His children are his greatest source of pride and his greatest pleasure is watching them play sports. Gene relates to his family with a unique sense of humor and is gentle and generous. Nevertheless, he has gained their respect by clearly defining limits of acceptable behavior and they are all aware of his values and expectations. He has passed on to them, a competitive spirit. By his own example, he has taught them to persevere until they reach their goals. They have seen in his life, and developed in their own lives, such traits as hard work, determination and commitment to keeping their word. He is compassionate, always forgiving others and anxious to give a break to someone who is struggling. He has shown them the benefits of holding your temper and overcoming discouragement.

You will find Gene's name on the membership rolls of the Goldthwaite Lions Club dating back to 1973. Through this organization, he has taken part in a number of service projects in the community. It is interesting to note that, even while rearing five children of his own, he took time to serve several years on the Board of Directors for New Horizons Children's Home. Twice he served as Chairman of the Board. He donated a sizeable amount of material for the construction of the Mills County Civic Center. Additionally, he donated the football scoreboard presently in use at Eagle Field in Goldthwaite. He has served tenure as President of both the Mills County Livestock Raisers Association and Lake Merritt Board of Directors. He remained a member of the First Baptist Church up until the time another church was organized in Goldthwaite. He is now a charter member of Fellowship Baptist Church of Goldthwaite.

Over the years, Gene has enjoyed hobbies such as hunting and trail riding. He has participated in hunting not only in South and West Texas, but in Colorado, New Mexico and Oklahoma as well. His pleasures include taking a bet on a horse race or football game, dipping snuff, and driving his mule and wagon. He has also been known to drink a little Jack Daniel's & Coke on occasion! Gene loves country music, especially the oldies. His favorite musician is Ernest Tubb.

Gene has lived on his 110 acres of land east of Goldthwaite for 26 years (since 1973). He has always had horses, as well as cattle, pigs and goats and even chickens at one time. In 1977 a new house was built on the land in a grove of Live Oak trees. Another bedroom was added to the house in 1983 and the kitchen remodeled. The large back yard with a stock tank just a few yards beyond, provided a beautiful setting for the wedding reception of their daughter, Laurel, in 1996.

Gene is now grandpa to one little girl, Rylee Meghan, 2 years old. She is the daughter of Laurel and Jimmy Jones of Goldthwaite. Dennis and wife Michelle live in Lewisville, Texas. J.T. is presently attending Texas A&M University majoring in Civil Engineering. Vanessa is a senior and Jaclyn a junior in high school.

Philosophy of life: Enjoy life while you can

Most fulfilling accomplishment: Construction Supervisor to Middle School

Greatest heartache: Death of son-in-law in 1996

Death of mother in 1999

Goals yet to accomplish: Finish putting three kids through college

Notes: (cont.)

To kill a big(er) buck

Marriage Information

Wife: Vivian Anniece Cunningham

Married: March 6, 1976

Beginning Status: Married

In: Copperas Cove, Texas

By: Vivian Auldridge
October 29, 1999

Ronald Wade Auldridge**AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RONNIE AULDRIDGE:**

I was born Jan. 31, 1950 in Goldthwaite, delivered by Dr. Childress. I never lived anywhere else except the 4 years I was away at college.

My early years we lived in town and I enjoyed the good times of playing football, kick-the-can, and exploring the vacant houses. My Mom told me I hardly talked until I went to school -- just too bashful.

At age 5 we swapped houses with Grandma and Granddad Auldridge and moved to the country where we got to have a horse and milk cows and calves to rope. My two older brothers were always making deals with me 'cause they knew I enjoyed farm chores so they would pay me to do their chores also. It didn't bother me any as long as I got paid and it didn't bother them as long as Dad didn't know about it.

I learned to shoot dove with Dad's .410 shotgun and could usually get my limit and then some. I also started deer hunting with Dad and shot many deer with the old 30-30 rifle. Seemed I enjoyed hunting more than anything else.

When I was 6 years old I got a new baby sister. I remember tending to her and showing her off to my buddies.

I remember our family going to Copperas Cove on Saturday evenings and spending the night with Grandma and Grandpa Byrd and going to church on Sunday mornings. Then Gene and I got to slip off and go to the big downtown and shoot pool or go to the matinee.

At age 7 our family, along with the Campbell's and McCaslands, went on a train trip to California, a really big deal for me.

I became a Christian at age 9 while Brother Presnell Wood was my pastor. I was active in the RA program and later became a RA leader.

I enjoyed roping calves and eventually inherited a pretty good roping horse and participated in rodeos nearly every weekend. I liked riding bulls and after trying a few broncs, I decided to stock with bullriding. Luckily I never got hurt bad.

Wintertimes were spent hunting with Dad. A big highlight for me was when he bought me a new deer rifle and let me go hunting with him at Big Bend for mule deer. We went hunting there many times afterward including trips to Colorado looking for elk. But the best days were spent at Deep Creek hunting and fishing and exploring, and also at Mrs. Hapgood's place on the river fishing with Mom and Dad.

In 1968 I got a football scholarship to Southwest Texas State but by October I decided I had enough of that torture. I stayed there and graduated in 1972 and married the same year.

Fortunately Dad offered to let me work with him and I was proud to be able to carry on the tradition that Granddad had started. After several years I became foreman and then became a partner in the business.

Firstborn Craig hatched out in 1975 and was probably born with a ball in his hands. He was obsessed with all sports and always tried to be the best. Some of my proudest times were spent throwing passes, shooting baskets, and hitting fly balls. After I could go no more, he would always say - "just one more time, Dad". Then after I quit, he would stay and play some more ball by himself. All this practice surely helped because as a senior he was able to quarterback his team to the state finals game in the Astrodome.

Jenny came along in 1978 with all her little curls and a big collection of dolls. She enjoyed going dove hunting and deer hunting with her Dad so she could get some blood on her and poke at the eyeballs. I would make her go up in the tall tower deer stand with me although she hated heights and she would squeal everytime. Nowadays she is interested in shooting deer herself since she finally scored last year with her first buck.

Notes: (cont.)

Through the eighties we enjoyed the building boom and spent our leisure time at the ranch in the country and took yearly vacations going snow skiing in New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming and Utah.

I divorced in 1992 and regretfully had to sell the 125 acres in the country to pay the settlement. This was the time when Mom paid the way for the two kids and I to fly to Hawaii and stay with Phil and Dorothee for a week.

1993 was a big year cause I not only was fortunate enough to find my new bride, Shirley, from Richland Springs, but I also was blessed with inheriting two more kids, Jason and Aimee, along with a pet sheep and a dog.

We bought the old Warren Duren house and began remodeling and moved in shortly afterward. We also got to buy Phillip Nichol's old storage building next door and convert it into a shop so now I have a short walk to work each day.

Thank goodness the building boom was still going on because at one time we had all four kids in college. It was a real challenge but we made it.

Losing my Mom in '99 to cancer was the first time I had ever lost anyone so close to me. I was so proud to be able to be with her so much through her last days. She was so strong and only worried about her family - not herself. So many people have told me how she influenced their lives and how they noticed that she treated all people the same. Thank the Lord for her wonderful nurses and John Seth for tending to her pain. I'm glad she is in Heaven now and is hurting no more. My goal is to pass on to my family the qualities that have been handed down to me by my Mom and Dad. A real challenge, I know, but I aim to do my best.

Lee Ann Auldridge

My trip to Europe was another expression of love and trust by my parents. It took me 3 months to sell the idea to them but I'm sure I left with many prayers. I can't imagine sending my daughter to Europe at 19. I worry about her making it just in the big city of Fort Worth. Anyway I attended the American College of Foreign Institute in London England. I met with approximately 300 other American college students in New York city and flew over to England. The campus was an old monastery and classrooms, administration and coed dormitory all in one huge building. The rest of the student population was from every other country in the world. Each Thursday night was culture night with a different country taking control and preparing a meal and providing entertainment. Even though my grade point average was cut in half this semester, I learned more in this 6 month period of my life than any other. Of all the places I went while I was over there, I didn't do the tourist route. Instead I tried to learn what the people were like, how they lived, how their life differed from mine. I took a trip with the school to Paris, France and did the tourist thing there. But I also took trips with my new friends to Scotland and Spain and Madrid. I would not trade my learning experiences and wonderful memories of this trip for anything in the world.

My greatest blessing in life was being born into the Auldridge family and having two loving parents that were devoted to the raising of their children. Looking back at my childhood it amazes me how they made time for so many things. During rodeo season Dad never missed a weekend hauling me and Tonka my horse to a rodeo three nights a week. I won several trophies and had loads of fun competing in barrel racing and pole bending. If I ever had a friend who lived in town and didn't have a horse but wanted to try out rodeo sports, Dad was there providing the horse and being the coach.

In high school as a cheerleader and on the pep squad we turned Dad's shop into the run-through and sign factory. Birthdays and holidays were more than just a special day on the calendar. Once for my birthday he took 5 of my girlfriends to Deep creek with a horse for each of us. We rode all over that huge ranch, swam in the creeks and just had a ball for the weekend.

Notes: (cont.)

I have really come to appreciate the meaning of "traditions" as an adult. I regret that in raising my daughter I did not follow my mother's example and create traditions for Cheyenne to remember and carry on in her life. Growing up we had the traditional Sunday dinner with roast and all the fixings including homemade desert. How did Mom do that? She taught Sunday School, went to church, but when we came home Sunday dinner was still on the table promptly at 12:00. Thanksgivings were special for me with my Mom because all the guys were gone deer hunting. She didn't have to cook so we ate out which was a real treat then. It also meant our annual shopping trip to Austin for winter clothes. We always made a long day of it. I don't know how in the world she did it. I would drag her through every store in the mall and we would get ideas for the new clothes I wanted. Then we would go to the fabric stores and pick out the patterns and fabric for her to make the new things I wanted. Of course when we got home I wanted all of them made in time to wear to school on the first day. Sometimes she actually accomplished that too.

On June 11, 1978, I married Danny Lee Sutherland of Goldthwaite. I not only became a new bride but also a mother to his two boys Chakoda (Kody) Lee, age 4 and Jory Heath age 2. We moved to Dallas, TX so I could continue court reporting school and Danny started a fencing company. Two years later on November 14, 1980, Cheyenne was born. She was a delightful new "plaything" to her two brothers and very soon began following them everywhere. About the time she was born Danny accepted a job as ranch foreman of the Sammy Baugh ranch located between Aspermont and Rotan in west Texas. We moved our family to the ranch that was 20 miles from town. This was a real special time for me as I got to be a full time stay-at-home mom and had the chance to sharpen my domestic skills. We had chickens, goats, a milk cow and a large garden. Twice a year we had round up and I helped by cooking the meals for all the cowboys that came to work. In 1982 we moved back to Goldthwaite and lived on the Dutch Smith place that Dad had recently purchased. Not long after Danny and I divorced and I went to Real Estate school in Austin. After getting my real estate license Cheyenne and I moved to Kingsland, TX. I went to work for ERA Tom Beard & Associates. Kingsland is basically a resort town 40 miles from Austin and most of the population is retirees. Cheyenne had lots of surrogate grandparents there but I was very lonely, as there were very few young people that lived there. So, after two years there we moved back closer to home to Brownwood. I started my own real estate company using the skills so patiently taught me by Tom Beard. In 1990, I met Freddy Moffatt and in 1994 we were married. Again I was blessed with a new stepchild, Shelly Moffatt. Cheyenne finally had a sister that she had always wanted. Shelly was 5 years older and Cheyenne looked up to her in every way. In 1995 Shelly married Dennis Smith and on March 18, 1996, they gave me my first grandchild, Darian Kye. I temporarily shut down my real estate office to help take care of Shelly and the new baby and when Shelly decided to go back to college I wanted to continue to stay home and keep the new baby whenever I was needed. On March 5, 1998, Shelly gave birth to another beautiful baby girl, Nadalee Rosanne. Shelly graduated from Tarleton State University that year and accepted a job with Lockheed Meacham in Fort Worth. On her second day at work she got a call that shook all of our lives. The new baby had stopped breathing while at her babysitters and had been rushed to the hospital. The Lord took little Nadalee home to be with him on that day. She died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. It was the worst tragedy any of us had ever had to deal

Notes: (cont.)

with. Shelly and Darian now live at Lake Granbury near Fort Worth and Cheyenne is living in Arlington.

Ancestor Tree of Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge

James Gilbert Auldridge

b: 20 Jun 1811
m: 08 Feb 1849 in Marion Co, Ill
d: 30 Sep 1869

David Dudley Auldridge

b: Jul 1865
m: 07 Apr 1889
d: 01 Sep 1927

Jane Elliot

b: 06 Feb 1833
d: 24 Jan 1919

Levi Nathan Auldridge

b: 18 Jan 1894 in Bosque County,
Texas
m: 13 Jun 1918 in Copperas Cove,
Texas
d: Feb 1964 in Goldthwaite, Texas

Thomas Jefferson Hardin

b: 08 Dec 1848 in Dadeville,
Tallapoosa Co., Alabama
m: 21 May 1871 in Polk Co., Texas
d: 24 Mar 1933 in Mont Belvieu,
Chambers, Co., Texas

Miranda Purtela Hardin

b: 24 Aug 1873
d: 23 Apr 1958 in Copperas Cove,
Texas

Louisa Catherine Ludie King

b: 07 Mar 1855 in Polk Co., Texas
d: 16 Jul 1938 in Daisette, Texas

Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge

b: 18 Sep 1924
m: 11 Apr 1942 in Lampasas,
Texas
d:

Sidney Evans Turner

b: 18 Sep 1853 in Coffeetown, Miss
m: 11 Jan 1870
d: 07 May 1933

Lewis Perkins Turner

b: 05 Feb 1871
m: 22 Jun 1892
d: 22 Jun 1910

Sara Elizabeth Rounsaville

b: 22 Nov 1852 in Grenada, Miss
d: 07 Jun 1937

Elva Sidney Turner

b: 24 Mar 1900
d: 08 Sep 1980 in Gatesville, Texas

Ada Carrie Donia Blackwell

b:
d: 20 Jan 1954

Tribute to Truett Aldridge

Purpose Statement By the end of my speech the audience will know the accomplishments and characteristics of Truett Aldridge and how he has affected my Introduction Who do you know who's traveled half way around the world with a pet Transfer Auldrid Br. Ma Da? Well, of course we all know that is my Paw Paw Levi Nathan Preview Statement Today I'd like to recognize Truett on his birthday for some of his fine accomplishments and what he has meant to me.

- A. First of all, he can never meet a stranger always seems to strike up a conversation with anyone and everyone, anyone he knew from days gone by.
 - B. Truett was a very kind and gentle man, and a very good leader. It was because of his vision and leadership that such buildings were constructed as the Mills County Civic Center, the Fellowship Baptist Telephone Co-Op in the state of Texas.
 - C. In the way that he handled his business, it shows how to relax and enjoy the life that he had. He was a very good father and a very good grandfather.
- II. Truett has been a good example that we would be proud to live up to.
- A. As one of his granddaughters, I know the loving support that Paw Paw gives encourage us.
 1. He always lets us know how special we are to him by helping us in every way he can.
 2. One day Laurel's dog Spirit got run over. Paw Paw was right there to We had a burial ceremonial and everything in our pasture.
 - B. I always remember how kind and gentle he is when I think of this story.
 1. One day Laurel's dog Spirit got run over. Paw Paw was right there to
 2. We had a burial ceremonial and everything in our pasture.
 3. Paw Paw brought his tractor and dug the hole.
 4. We all cried and gave our good-byes to Spirit.
 5. Paw Paw never laughed at us once in his life, that over all the world, Paw Paw

Conclusion If you ever have any questions or comments, please contact me at the number of person Submitted by: Jaclyn Aldridge

July, 1999

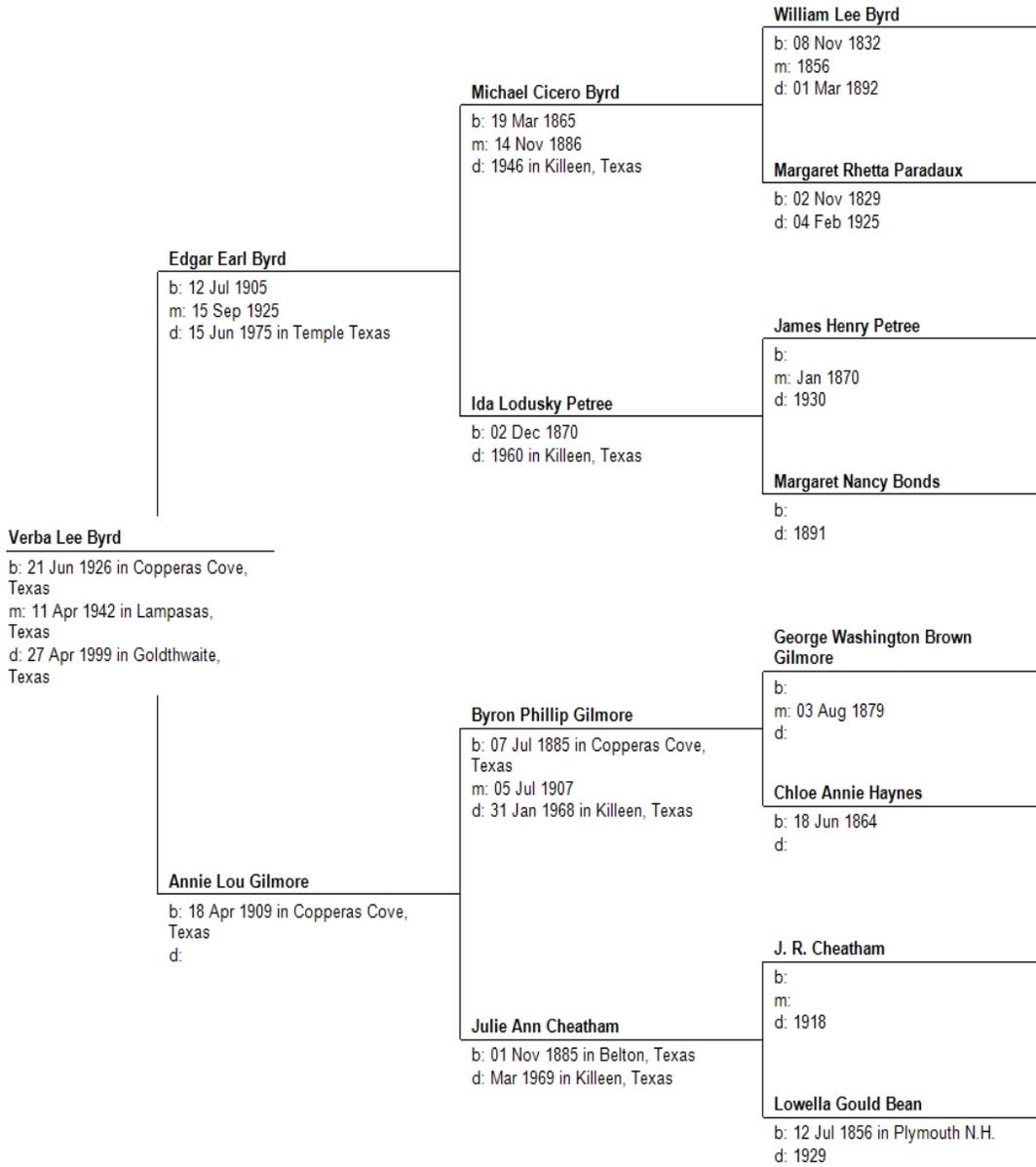
Kinship Report of Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge

Name:	Birth Date:	Relationship:	Civil:	Canon:
Allen, Henry Walter		Husband of aunt		
Auldridge, Alan Wayne	20 Jul 1962	Nephew	III	2
Auldridge, Annie Pearl	10 Jul 1909	Aunt	III	2
Auldridge, Cheyenne Sutherland	14 Nov 1980	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Cloise	17 Oct 1911	Uncle	III	2
Auldridge, Craig Stuart	14 Jan 1975	Grandson	II	2
Auldridge, David Dudley	Jul 1865	Paternal grandfather	II	2
Auldridge, Deirdre Lynn	11 Jun 1968	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Dennis Ervin	28 Jul 1935	Brother	II	1
Auldridge, Dennis Wayne	13 Feb 1974	Grandson	II	2
Auldridge, Gene Earl	27 Jul 1946	Son	I	1
Auldridge, Gilbert Doyle	27 Mar 1927	Brother	II	1
Auldridge, Horace Wilson	13 Jan 1896	Uncle	III	2
Auldridge, Jaclyn Jean	02 May 1983	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, James Gilbert	20 Aug 1904	Uncle	III	2
Auldridge, Jefferson Davis	28 Jan 1890	Uncle	III	2
Auldridge, Jenny Suzanne	03 Jan 1978	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Jeraldine Onita Naomi	28 Jul 1922	Sister	II	1
Auldridge, Joseph Truett	12 Sep 1978	Grandson	II	2
Auldridge, Laurel Denniece	25 May 1971	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Lee Ann	22 May 1956	Daughter	I	1
Auldridge, Lena Mae	18 Dec 1892	Aunt	III	2
Auldridge, Levi Nathan	18 Jan 1894	Father	I	1
Auldridge, Levi Nathan Truett	18 Sep 1924	Self		
Auldridge, Ludie Jane	01 Nov 1900	Aunt	III	2
Auldridge, Mary Elizabeth	13 Feb 1902	Aunt	III	2
Auldridge, Nadine Zoma	04 Sep 1920	Sister	II	1
Auldridge, Nathan Phillip	03 May 1945	Son	I	1
Auldridge, Ronald Wade	31 Jan 1950	Son	I	1
Auldridge, Vanessa Rae	20 Sep 1981	Granddaughter	II	2
Bergara, Roy	29 Jul 1969	Husband of granddaughter		
Berry, Neta Sue		Daughter-in-law		
Blackwell, Ada Carrie Donia		Maternal grandmother	II	2
Byrd, Verba Lee	21 Jun 1926	Wife		
Casey, Frank		Husband of aunt		
Christie		Wife of nephew		
Cook, Daisy		Wife of uncle		
Cox, Dan		Husband of aunt		
Cunningham, Vivian Anniece	17 Nov 1945	Daughter-in-law		

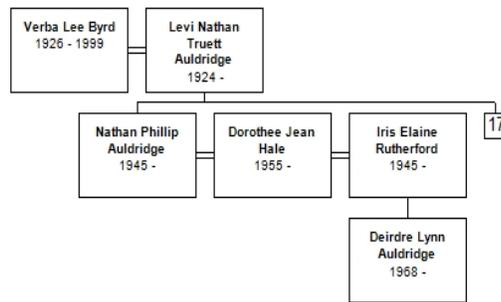
Name:	Birth Date:	Relationship:	Civil:	Canon:
Edward, David Jr.	31 Jan 1962	Nephew	III	2
Eilers, Earl Raymond	09 Feb 1944	Husband of niece		
Ervin, Auldridge Dennis Jr.	27 Mar 1958	Nephew	III	2
Gotcher, Elva Judith	09 Feb 1944	Niece	III	2
Gotcher, Howard		Brother-in-law		
Gotcher, Jerrilyn Dawn	07 Feb 1940	Niece	III	2
Green, Shirley Ruth	03 Aug 1950	Daughter-in-law		
Grell, Kenneth Darwin	04 Feb 1939	Husband of niece		
Hale, Dorothee Jean	02 Feb 1955	Daughter-in-law		
Hardin, Miranda Purtela	24 Aug 1873	Paternal grandmother	II	2
Hartan, Nettie		Wife of uncle		
Harvey, Charles		Husband of aunt		
Horton, Sam		Husband of aunt		
Jackson, Annie		Wife of uncle		
Jones, Sam		Husband of aunt		
Lamkin, Peggy		Daughter-in-law		
Lee, then Lucille Simms Exie		Wife of uncle		
Lindsey, Michelle		Wife of grandson		
Lyn, Donna Jr.	10 Mar 1960	Niece	III	2
Mabel		Wife of uncle		
Margaret		Wife of nephew		
McClement, James Morris		Brother-in-law		
Melba		Wife of uncle		
Millsap, Connie		Husband of aunt		
Moffatt, Freddy		Son-in-law		
Morris, McClement James Jr.	02 Feb 1944	Nephew	III	2
Ortega, Mary Carmen		Sister-in-law		
Palvador, Vinnie Bea		Sister-in-law		
Pereira		Husband of niece		
Rutherford, Iris Elaine	22 Nov 1945	Daughter-in-law		
Shepard, Adrian Gayle	21 Feb 1945	Nephew	III	2
Shepard, Barbara Elaine	29 Oct 1947	Niece	III	2
Shepard, Jack Errol		Brother-in-law		
Shepard, Jerrold Sidney	01 Nov 1943	Nephew	III	2
Sutherland, Danny		Son-in-law		
Turner, Elva Sidney	24 Mar 1900	Mother	I	1
Turner, Fred Travis	26 Oct 1901	Uncle	III	2
Turner, Guy Winifred	15 Apr 1898	Uncle	III	2
Turner, Lewis Perkins	05 Feb 1871	Maternal grandfather	II	2
Turner, Lewis Perkins Jr.	1893	Uncle	III	2
Turner, Linnie Essie	26 Jun 1894	Aunt	III	2

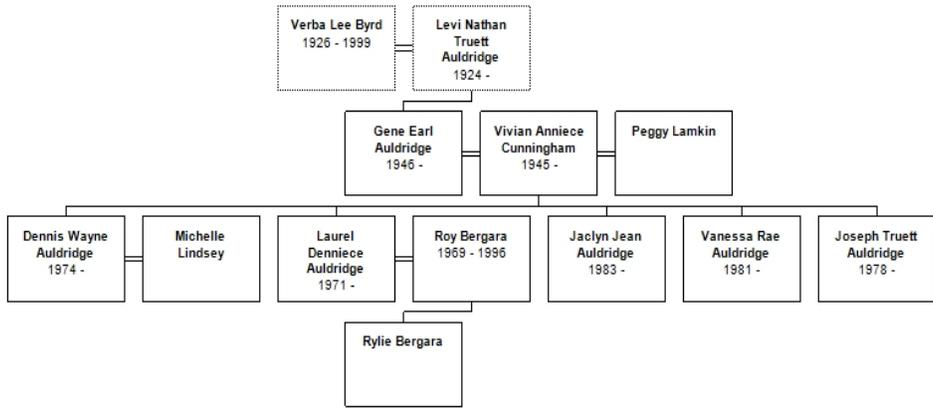
Name:	Birth Date:	Relationship:	Civil:	Canon:
Turner, Ora Ethel	08 Aug 1896	Aunt	III	2
Turner, Orban Lewis	14 Jan 1907	Uncle	III	2
Turner, Ruby Elizabeth	27 Oct 1904	Aunt	III	2
Turner, Viola Trudy	01 Aug 1908	Aunt	III	2
Valorie		Wife of nephew		
Vera		Wife of uncle		
Wilkinson, Joseph Hill		Husband of aunt		

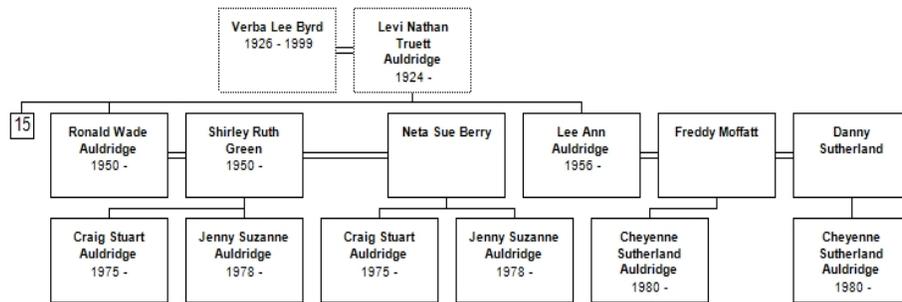
Ancestor Tree of Verba Lee Byrd



Descendant Tree of Levi Nathan Truett and Verba Lee Auldridge







Outline Descendant Tree of Truett and Verba Lee Auldridge

- 1 Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge b: 18 Sep 1924
 - + Verba Lee Byrd b: 21 Jun 1926 in Copperas Cove, Texas, m: 11 Apr 1942 in Lampasas, Texas, d: 27 Apr 1999 in Goldthwaite, Texas
 - ...2 Nathan Phillip Auldridge b: 03 May 1945 in Temple Texas
 - + Dorothee Jean Hale b: 02 Feb 1955 in Dayton Ohio, m: 05 Apr 1986 in Monterey, Cal
 - + Iris Elaine Rutherford b: 22 Nov 1945, m: 28 Aug 1965 in Waco Texas
 -3 Deirdre Lynn Auldridge b: 11 Jun 1968
 - ...2 Gene Earl Auldridge b: 27 Jul 1946 in Brownwood, Texas
 - + Vivian Anniece Cunningham b: 17 Nov 1945 in Jasper County, Mo, m: 06 Mar 1976 in Copperas Cove, Texas
 -3 Dennis Wayne Auldridge b: 13 Feb 1974
 - + Michelle Lindsey m: 19 Oct 1996
 -3 Laurel Denniece Auldridge b: 25 May 1971
 - + Roy Bergara b: 29 Jul 1969, m: 28 Apr 1996, d: 04 Oct 1996
 -4 Rylie Bergara
 -3 Jaclyn Jean Auldridge b: 02 May 1983
 -3 Vanessa Rae Auldridge b: 20 Sep 1981
 -3 Joseph Truett Auldridge b: 12 Sep 1978
 - + Peggy Lamkin m: 27 Jul 1968
 - ...2 Ronald Wade Auldridge b: 31 Jan 1950 in Goldthwaite, Texas
 - + Shirley Ruth Green b: 03 Aug 1950, m: 14 Feb 1993
 -3 Craig Stuart Auldridge b: 14 Jan 1975
 -3 Jenny Suzanne Auldridge b: 03 Jan 1978
 - + Neta Sue Berry m: 19 Aug 1972
 -3 Craig Stuart Auldridge b: 14 Jan 1975
 -3 Jenny Suzanne Auldridge b: 03 Jan 1978
 - ...2 Lee Ann Auldridge b: 22 May 1956 in Goldthwaite, Texas
 - + Freddy Moffatt m: 15 Mar 1994
 -3 Cheyenne Sutherland Auldridge b: 14 Nov 1980
 - + Danny Sutherland m: 11 Jul 1978
 -3 Cheyenne Sutherland Auldridge b: 14 Nov 1980

Kinship Report of Verba Lee Byrd

Name:	Birth Date:	Relationship:	Civil:	Canon:
Auldridge, Cheyenne Sutherland	14 Nov 1980	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Craig Stuart	14 Jan 1975	Grandson	II	2
Auldridge, Deirdre Lynn	11 Jun 1968	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Dennis Wayne	13 Feb 1974	Grandson	II	2
Auldridge, Gene Earl	27 Jul 1946	Son	I	1
Auldridge, Jaclyn Jean	02 May 1983	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Jenny Suzanne	03 Jan 1978	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Joseph Truett	12 Sep 1978	Grandson	II	2
Auldridge, Laurel Denniece	25 May 1971	Granddaughter	II	2
Auldridge, Lee Ann	22 May 1956	Daughter	I	1
Auldridge, Levi Nathan Truett	18 Sep 1924	Husband		
Auldridge, Nathan Phillip	03 May 1945	Son	I	1
Auldridge, Ronald Wade	31 Jan 1950	Son	I	1
Auldridge, Vanessa Rae	20 Sep 1981	Granddaughter	II	2
Bergara, Roy	29 Jul 1969	Husband of granddaughter		
Berry, Neta Sue		Daughter-in-law		
Byrd, Arnold Irene Young	07 Apr 1926	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Byrd, Baby Girl	14 Apr 1903	Aunt	III	2
Byrd, Baby Girl 2	14 Jul 1904	Aunt	III	2
Byrd, Billy Ward	04 Jul 1923	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Byrd, Clifton Nathaneal (Baye)	25 Nov 1914	Uncle	III	2
Byrd, Dorace Ann Neal	10 Feb 1942	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Byrd, Duncan Ned	07 Feb 1924	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Byrd, Edgar Earl	12 Jul 1905	Father	I	1
Byrd, Elizabeth Eliza (Doad)	21 Nov 1895	Aunt	III	2
Byrd, Ernest Andrew	18 Apr 1892	Uncle	III	2
Byrd, Ida Jo	12 Dec 1928	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Byrd, Jimmie Lee	14 Apr 1921	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Byrd, Lillie Velma	02 Mar 1898	Aunt	III	2
Byrd, Loyce Easterwood	19 Apr 1908	Uncle	III	2
Byrd, Maggie Lee	08 Dec 1889	Aunt	III	2
Byrd, Marvin Ernest	17 Jul 1918	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Byrd, Michael Cicero	19 Mar 1865	Paternal grandfather	II	2
Byrd, Mike Julius	23 Jul 1900	Uncle	III	2
Byrd, Ruby Lodusky	28 Nov 1911	Aunt	III	2
Byrd, Verba Lee	21 Jun 1926	Self		
Byrd, Vida Ethleen	03 May 1914	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Byrd, William Henry	21 Feb 1888	Uncle	III	2
Byrd, Willie Mae	18 Apr 1912	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Cheatham, Julie Ann	01 Nov 1885	Maternal grandmother	II	2

Name:	Birth Date:	Relationship:	Civil:	Canon:
Cunningham, Vivian Anniece	17 Nov 1945	Daughter-in-law		
Duncan, Artie		Wife of uncle		
Edwards, Kathleen		Wife of uncle		
Gilmore, Annie Lou	18 Apr 1909	Mother	I	1
Gilmore, Byron Phillip	07 Jul 1885	Maternal grandfather	II	2
Gilmore, Glendell	06 Nov 1916	Uncle	III	2
Gilmore, Lewis Robert	20 Sep 1912	Uncle	III	2
Green, Shirley Ruth	03 Aug 1950	Daughter-in-law		
Hale, Dorothee Jean	02 Feb 1955	Daughter-in-law		
Henderson, Don Terrell	02 Dec 1935	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Henderson, Lyell James	30 Mar 1897	Husband of aunt		
Henderson, Lyell James Jr.	16 Feb 1927	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Henderson, Rayma Lee Eckert	10 Jul 1921	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Henderson, Robbie Aline Hammond	22 Feb 1924	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Henderson, Ruby Lucille Maddox	21 Nov 1918	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Henderson, Velma Lavera Long	14 Aug 1916	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Herring, Ben		Husband of aunt		
Herring, Daniel Cicero	10 Sep 1920	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Herring, Lillie Jewel Mears	11 Sep 1915	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Herring, Opal Elizabeth Henderson	01 Jan 1913	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Lamkin, Peggy		Daughter-in-law		
Lindsey, Michelle		Wife of grandson		
McMillan, Edna Wayne		Wife of uncle		
Moffatt, Freddy		Son-in-law		
Petree, Ida Lodusky	02 Dec 1870	Paternal grandmother	II	2
Riley, Glyndell Ray	09 Sep 1932	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Riley, Henri Daune Bauman	11 Mar 1921	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Riley, Henry		Husband of aunt		
Riley, Lois	13 Sep 1903	Wife of uncle		
Riley, Ruth Lanell McKee	01 Oct 1914	Paternal 1st cousin	IV	2
Rutherford, Iris Elaine	22 Nov 1945	Daughter-in-law		
Sink, Louise		Wife of uncle		
Sutherland, Danny		Son-in-law		
Turner, Loyd		Husband of aunt		
Young, Dorothy		Wife of uncle		

A LIFE HISTORY OF
Verba Lee Byrd Auldridge

as compiled by her husband

Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge

Spring, 1999

Before Verba Lee was a teenager she had golden, honey colored curly hair that she styled it in long vertical curls. She didn't like her hair that way and begged to get it cut short but her mother wouldn't hear of it. One day a bee got up in one of those curls and stung her. After she got over that she got her hair cut.

She was taught in first grade by Miss Jewel Yarborough (who taught 1st grade for 46 years straight) and was a sister to O.H. Yarborough that started the dry goods store in 1913 at Goldthwaite. Miss Jewel's first school was at Caradan.

Verba Lee always brought an apple or orange to school for 10 o'clock break. In about the 3rd grade I was accused of taking her apple from her desk and the teacher made me give her the

one I had. I was in fourth grade and sat near her but I did not steal her apple! She was about 13 years old (after that incident) before I noticed her or how pretty she was. My best buddy, G.E., had took a shine to her and I had to take her away from him before I had my first date. We had a double date and she faked a dislike to him, so I swapped gals with him and took her home from a party.

After that it was steady dating until she was 15, a JR in high school and I was a SR and we got hitched April 11, 1942 at Lampasas by a Methodist preacher, before I graduated in the last part of May. After school was out I got a job as carpenter at Ft. Hood until March '43 when I was inducted into the Air Force. Her mother and Dad moved in the little bungalow with her while I was in the service.

She worked at the only job (after we'd married) at a bus station across the street from her Granny's house. There were no cars being built during this period and most people traveled by bus or train. There was lots of troop movements at this time also, mainly by rail, so the service man's families traveled mainly by bus. Most of these bus riders were wives and children from up north and when their husbands were moved out of Ft. Hood, usually on short notice and to overseas, the women would buy a bus ticket and go back home. Many times they had no money and would come into the bus station in tears. Verba Lee would pay for their tickets out of her own pocket, with their promise to send payment after they reached home. I thought she would never be repaid but she never lost a single dime.

It was in August 44 on my last furlough at Copperas Cove before leaving for overseas that Verba got pregnant, and Phil was born May 3, 1945 at Kings Daughter hospital at Temple. I was in Luping China with the 23rd Fighter Control Squadron when the telegram came. It would be 6 months later before I would be home with her and see my first son for the first time. I couldn't image how much prettier that she had become and a son that looked so much like her. I'll always remember her Granny Gilmore saying that was like an old pussy cat, the more babies they had the better they looked.

Getting back home in Nov. 45 and with a 60 day recuperation leave we settled in Goldthwaite, renting a one bedroom with my Dad, Levi, sharing bath and kitchen with an old maid Lula Davis, in the west part of town. Housing was short and that's all we could find. The bedroom floor was pine wood with lots of splinters, we'd been there only a few days when one night Phil got to whining and wouldn't go to sleep. I popped him on his diaper with my hand and told him he'd better settle down and go to sleep (which he did) and told her she had him spoiled. The next morning while she was bathing him she called me in to look at his big toe. There was a large wood splinter in it, all festered, so I pulled it out and treated it and she said "Now aren't you ashamed of calling Phil spoiled and swatting him when all the time his toe was hurting?" I don't remember if I got any breakfast that morning!. I do know she did a good job of getting our family started off right without my help. I made a commitment with her when I got home that if she would stay home and raise our kids (we'd planned several) and not take a paying job, I would work and try to make a living for them and I'd never fuss about the cost of food as long as she would cook us some good meals. She did a better job on her part than I did on mine.

I was discharged from the Air Force in January 1946 and soon after we moved into a new home with my parents and started next door, a 3 bedroom home for our family. We bought a 1929 Model A coupe for \$225 (our first car) and regularly drove 55 miles to Copperas Cove on the weekends to see her folks down there. Verba Lee was pregnant again and we had our home

finished before Gene was born July 27, 1946, a day I'll long remember. She had been going to Dr. Slaughter for prenatal care and that morning she told me she thought that this would be the due day and for me to go down and check with the doctor to be ready. I found that he was on one of his long drunks at his ranch and his nurse told me to find another doctor. I wanted to find a gun and shoot the bastard as it scared me that he couldn't help us when we needed him. I went home and we decided to head for Brownwood Hospital. The pains had eased before we got there but we got a doctor and he checked Verba and told us it would be awhile so we came back home. Wasn't long before Verba was having pains and we rushed back to Brownwood and Gene was born without any complications.

We paid our hospital fees there but never received a bill from Dr. Slaughter, or used him again so I guess if Gene seems about "half-off" its because he's just half paid for! Born the smallest of our 4 kids he has grown to be the largest of the litter. When he got large enough to get his hair cut he would have a fit if I carried him, but James Leonard could take him and he would be just fine. James and Faye had just wed and lived with us in our first home in a small apartment we made. Verba and I had went to school with James and Faye has been a true friend ever since. She made a nurse and today, retired, she comes or calls every day, is like a sister to Verba. As best friend she has gone with Verba to the doctors and hospitals and has shared fun times, quilting, shopping and traveling.

When we sold our first home, we rented a large old house from Mr. Weems and James and Faye lived with us there until we built another home. In this first home we had newly weds M.C. and Zelda Waldon to live in the apt. with us, prior to James and Faye. The Waldons have been life long friends also.

When we arrived in Goldthwaite we immediately started attending the First Baptist Church and were continuous members for 52 years. Verba Lee started working with the babies and young children there and taught and supervised them for over 35 years.

It would be 3 1/2 years later after Gene was born that Verba gave birth to Ronnie 1-31-50 while living in our second owned home on Cline Street. While living there, tragedy hit the family of our good friends, the Waldons. Their first son Miles Lee developed a brain tumor and at that time no treatment was available and he went from a bright, good looking boy to a skeleton and it took his life. With 3 boys of our own it had quite an effect on our lives and how precious each one is.

As time went on while living in town on a busy street, near the schools, our boys played on the street a lot, especially after I rigged them up a little car with a T model cut down axles and a little gas engine, until they ran out of gas one day and Gene and Phil talked Ronnie into striking a match and looking into the tank. Needless to say Ronnie lost quite a bit of hair Phil & Gene lost quite a bit of hide off their little butts. Wasn't long before they were able to put on their helmets and pads and play football. Phil got to sneaking through the back fence and across a neighbors chicken yard to Mrs. Sheppards house. She was a piano music teacher and she told Verba Lee that Phil had a real talent for music and he needed to take lessons. I thought she was just trying to drum up business but went over there one day and was amazed at how he could pick out a tune so we signed him up for lessons. They did real good together up until she got cancer and died and then Phil started lessons with Sybil Head, followed by Gene, Ronnie and Lee Ann; and we decided later that was probably the best money we ever spent on our family.

As the boys continued to grow Verba Lee got them interested in cub scouting and was a den mother along with Frances Langford, wife of Floyd, and they had 3 sons and a daughter about

the age of our family. We were real close family friends, had many good times together, went to the same church and later on as Floyd became a scout master I helped him as assistant master and went on lots of camp outs and contested events.

In 1955 our family life style changed when we traded our home in the city for my Dad's 102 acres one mile from town. With our boys growing and living on a busy school route street, it was time for us to get them off the street and out in the country. Verba Lee was all for us moving although she had never lived in the country before. Back in 1947 we had an opportunity to trade our first home for 278 acres with an old house about 4 miles out of town on the hiway 16 toward Comanche. The house needed lots of remodeling and Verba wasn't too interested in it but she was all for us trading for Dad's place. This was the best decision she and I ever made in our married lives and a perfect location to raise our family. We bought us a 56 Chevy Black and White station wagon and the boys got into little league baseball and Verba had a bigger job making cookies and drinks for a whole team of boys as we hauled them everywhere in our station wagon.

It wasn't long until we got us a queen to go with our 3 jacks. We named her Lee Ann on the day she was born May 22, 1956. Verba had learned to sew, watching her mother make all those dresses for her (and other people as a full time job). Now Verba had her dream come true as she made clothes for our new daughter. She had always wanted a daughter but had about decided it was going to be all boys. The boys had got them a horse to ride and as soon as Lee Ann could hang on we found her a Shetland pony named "Fred" and it was the perfect pony. In no time she was ready for a larger mount and we bought a small mare, "Daisy", from Al Allison. The boys graduated also into larger horses and started roping and their mother was really put to work furnishing drinks and cookies as I did my job of turning the calves out of the chute as the boys rode "Stigger" and "Skinny Minnie" and other animals. Her job wasn't any easier when Don Barnett came home with Phil, as she always said when she saw him coming she'd grab her mop because Don was so clumsy, he was going to turn over his milk on the floor or trip on something and she'd clean it up.

There was always a group of boys and later on, girls also, that put their feet under our table and she always had plenty for all to eat. Later on as I worked and trained young boys like Randy Cobb, Joe "Rojo" Brooks, Jory Sutherland, Travis Hall, and several others, including grown men, she always cooked enough for them when they were working in the shop or close by. The boys would bring their friends, L.V. Benningfield, Kay Benningfield, Butch Schuman, Mike Skiles, Harlan Jernigan, Dewayne McCasland, Bobby Morgan, Ronald Cagle, Danny Spradley, Charles Hardgraves, Sam Campbell, Clydie Cockrum, and others that could eat all the she cooked and they have never forgot the good meals she prepared.

Most of these guys mothers were school teachers or worked and since her full time job was housewife, she was always on the list to furnish cookies, cakes, and pies for all the weekly events in Mills Co.

Then when Lee Ann was born, more time and work took place as Sally and Stephanie and Jan became regular boarders at our house along with parties, baby and wedding showers, recitals, proms etc., occurred. Verba Lee was blessed with having lots of patience and energy and good health, but would worry about the kids especially as they matured. When they began to date and would be late coming home, she would wake me up at night and worry about where they were, sometimes want me to go try and find them. I'd tell her we tried to raise them right and couldn't be with them all the time, to go back to sleep and trust that they would be in soon and everything

was going to be alright. She'd always say that they could be out there in a wreck or in trouble and that I would just sleep and never worry. When they did come in she would be up to find out where they'd been. Phil would tell her most everything, Gene wouldn't tell her anything and Ronnie never did have to do much explaining as he never got into any trouble. Lee Ann always had a story but sometimes it wasn't the "rest" of the story!

All through the 50's Verba Lee would see her boys engaged in all community activities. Phil, Gene and Ronnie would attend many music recitals; Phil would win State with his flute and master the piano and organ; Gene would toot the trombone and pound the ivory; Ronnie would also play in the band and play the piano. Sports followed up with Phil loving tennis and a typing champion in between and lettering in football his senior year, Band Beau, Sr. Class President, Beta Club president, FFA, student of Christian Union, elected most popular and Jr. Class favorite. Gene was captain of the football team 2 years and all district for 2, and a full football scholarship to Rice, lettered in track 2 years, basketball 4 years, was Mr. GHS and FHA beau and in the Hall of Fame 2 years, graduating in 1964. Ronnie was an 8th grader as Gene graduated and Phil was a freshman at Howard Payne University. Lee Ann would be in the 2nd grade. Ronnie ran track and lettered in basketball and football, and graduated in 1968, receiving a football scholarship to Southwest University. Phil went to HPU for one year, transferred to Baylor and graduated in 1968 with a degree in business. Gene graduated from Rice in 1968, playing football 4 years and with a degree in PE. Ronnie graduated in 1972 with an ag degree. Lee Ann would graduate from high school in 1974 and enter Angelo State University. In high school she was active in the band and was elected Eagle Home Coming Queen in 1973 and also president of the Pep Squad. She was very active in rodeo and won many races and trophies in barrel racing and pole bending.

Ronnie and Gene were involved with high school rodeo as Gene participated in Bronc riding and calf roping. Ronnie entered bull riding and calf roping events. All during these many events Verba Lee was full time mom, taxi driver, cookie and punch maker, costume designer and sewing machine operator, counselor, band and medic, room mother, party sponsor, baby sitter, PTA member, but never one to seek recognition for the many things she did.

In about 1958, with Lee Ann just a toddler, our family along with the Campbells and McCaslands took a Santa Fe train special to California and Six Flags, San Francisco, the redwoods, trolley cars, etc and really had a first family vacation. Verba Lee didn't have to do any cooking or housekeeping and had a good time for all.

A couple of years later in 1960, she and I flew to Bermuda Island for a week and it was a honeymoon trip for us that we never had back in 1942. We won this trip selling G.E. Air Conditioning so the cost was on them. In 59 and 60 I was elected president of the local Lions Club, a club that believed in the members getting all the credit and awards for community projects but with the women (wives) doing most of the work, and Verba Lee did her part, preparing meals, decorating and operating concession stands, auctions, etc. The kids were all active in 4H and FFA and worked regularly at the rodeo concession. Again, Truett got the honorary chapter and state farmer award while she did the work. The Lions Club had begun having fund raising auctions when Lee Ann was not old enough to attend school. It was at one of these auctions when she pulled a winning ticket out of the hopper and we won a electric portable organ. It took quite a while to live that down.

In 1981 the Lions Club was donated the Reynolds estate home and ranch items and Howard and Lee Ruth Campbell, Verba and I worked over a week hauling and repairing and cataloging it all

and at the civic Center fund raising auction on June 6, 1981 approximately \$12, 000 was raised at this event.

Verba Lee was so proud of all her kids, encouraging them to get the education that she never received. Phil would be the first Auldridge, ever, to receive a college degree. Gene would be the first football player from Mills Co. to play southwest Conference football. Then when Gene, Ronnie and Lee Ann all graduated from high school and on to college, she was really happy. She never was a person to keep tabs on each one while they were engaged in sports or contest, like a lot of mothers do with their little note pads, marking scores, fouls, etc., but interest in all the kids that participated. She was proud of me also, with only a high school diploma, serving on the school board and as president of that group for one term. Le Roy Beard was superintendent and looked and acted like Levi Auldridge in so many ways and his wife Venita was such a good friend to Verba Lee and worked close with her in church.

It was during this period of her life that she decided to get involved with the rest of the family in hunting and fishing. She had spent much of her time cooking, washing, ironing and mending so when the kids were away in college she had a little time to have fun with the rest of the group. Her uncle Bob Gilmore had taught her at an early age to shoot a 22 cal. Rifle that she was very accurate with. Also her granddad Gilmore loved to go fishing and took her along at times. We had several deer leases before we were able to get one on the Deep Creek ranch in San Saba County, on Brady Creek and the San Saba river, that would last almost twenty years. It was a really good place for not only hunting and fishing but also a family gathering place to have lots of fun. She killed her first buck there (3 pt) in 1970 and being a good shot killed several more including an 8 pointer and a large wild hog.

In the seventies our family would begin to grow as Phil would marry Elaine Rutherford and have our first grandchild, Deirdre, followed by Gene and Peggy, then Ronnie and Neta would wed and have Craig and Jenny, Lee Ann would marry Danny Sutherland with sons Kody and Jory and have Cheyenne as first daughter. Later Gene would divorce and marry Vivian Cunningham (a young widow with daughter Laurel and son Dennis) and then add a son J.T. and daughter Vanessa and Jaclyn. By this time Verba Lee would really love her housewife job as she did more cooking, sewing, baby sitting. Etc. She loved all this extra work along with the kids.

On April 20, 1979 another tragedy would affect our family when Nubbin and Kay Lewis and daughter Katherine, our closest family friends, were in an automobile accident near Brownwood. On that day Nubbin had stopped by and told us they were taking off work early so Kathy could attend the rodeo at Brownwood. She had got her a nice palomino horse and I had helped her for some time in training it to barrel race and she got pretty good at it, winning trophies at several of the smaller rodeo's. We regularly visited with the Lewis's and ate a lot of homemade ice cream together. Nubbin would often ask us over after church and always say "old chap I need a little help with some ice cream Kay has whooped up" and we'd always oblige. On this particular day they encountered a wind and rain storm on a hill before coming into Early, Texas. A Grooms Co. truck hit a fault in the wet road and jackknifed across the road right in front of Nubbin's pickup and trailer. The pickup hit a fuel tank and caught fire, pinning all three in the vehicle. Nubbin was decapitated and died instantly, Kay in the center was crushed and burned and Kathy would have received the same fate except for a quick acting guy named Perkins that pried her out of her seat by pulling on her belt and out of the pickup we received a call soon after, that our friends were dead and Kathy was delivered by ambulance to Abilene Hospital. Verba Lee and I drove to the hospital and found that she was in terrible shape. Broken arm and leg, burns, teeth knocked out and cuts all over. It was a hard blow to both of us losing two of our best friends and

worse yet as Kathy battled to survive.

It would be months and many trips daily as Verba Lee would drive to be with her and attend to her needs until she was strong enough to come home with her. Then many miles more taking her to specialists at Dallas Hospital. Verba Lee nursed her, made dresses and we got her back in high school for her senior year and helped her graduate with her class. The insurance company eventually paid her about 1/3 million dollars from the truck liability but Verba Lee never charged her one cent for all the meals, car expenses and a place to live. Verba said that Kay and Nubbin would have done the same for us and she was proud to be a mother to a girl of 17 that needed love and help. Kathy was an adopted child and while she was living with us we found her real mother at San Angelo and they got together but never really got close to each other. Her mother had her out of wedlock, by a soldier stationed at Camp Bowie and gave her up the day she was born.

Kathryn's Dad, Nubbin, and I were ordained as deacons in 1965 at First Baptist Church. If the church doctrine approved of women deacons, Verba would have been ordained also as she was more qualified than I was. The Bible plainly teaches that the wife of a deacon should have the same qualities as a deacon.

In 1981 I received the award from the Chamber of Commerce as outstanding citizen of the year, and as it was presented to me I told those present I would accept the award on the condition that my wife and sons take credit for helping me in everything I'd ever accomplished. In 83-84 I was chamber president and again it was with the help of my wife I got through my term successfully.

In 1982 Verba Lee and I were surprised and proud of our family as we saw the ½ page ads stating "Merry Christmas to the worlds most special parents from your children" displayed in the local Eagle weekly. It was about this time that Verba Lee and I sponsored, through our church, a Chinese brother and sister (Jhung and Phung pronounced Juan and Fawn) from Vietnam who were refugees at Taiwan. They had been run out of their country to escape with only a few clothes. We paid for their exchange expenses and picked them up at DFW, a tired and scared couple who could speak no English. She could write English with a beautiful handwriting and he could no neither. We fixed them up an apartment in the office building and Verba Lee found she was a talented person with needle work. We got her a job at the local blouse factory and in no time she was outperforming all the other employees. Her brother worked with Ronnie and I in construction but he was as dumb as she was smart. Both were homesick and had trouble adjusting to a different life and country.

Verba Lee had the patience that I lacked, to teach and help her but I didn't do too good with him. They later found kin in Georgia and left for there. She is now in California and we don't know about him but it was an experience we'll never forget.

About 2 days a week Verba and I would go down to little Willie Casbeer's ranch, 13 miles out on the old Lometa road, that Gene and I had leased for cattle and hunting. Ronnie also got in on the hunting with the rest of the family and Verba killed some nice deer down there. We would always carry a pair of loppers in our Jeep and would spend about 30 minutes cutting small cedar. Verba being closer to the ground, could cut more cedar than I. Needless to say we did eradicate lots of that cedar plus the many fence stays and posts that we cut on cold days. We also cut our firewood there; she would load faster than I could cut with my chain saw. About half way out on the same county road, just past San Saba Peak, was the Dutch Smith ranch. It had a real pretty flagstone (rainbow) rock house on a little draw with lots of big live oak trees. Dutch

called one day and told me he wanted to sell it to us so we went to see him. It had 250 acres, 2 ponds and a couple of wet weather creeks through it, plus deer and turkey. The house was never finished on the inside and no garage or carport but did have a little guest house at the rear. We bought it for \$665 an acre and let Gene have 125 acres of it. He kept his part 6 months and sold for \$200 an acre profit. We finished the house inside, installed central heat, a new metal roof, new carport, paint and carpet, cleaned out the cellar, repaired and built fences and Lee Ann and Danny lived there about a year before splitting up. We kept it a full 2 years and sold it for \$1,100 an acre which we received enough to pay for the original cost plus remodeling and repairs and \$10,000 a year for 10 years. So we made \$100,000 which was enough for the two of us to live on each year. Verba and I did do lots of hard work including a large garden and fruit trees.

Later on in 1984 Verba Lee and Betty Griffin started planning a trip to Alaska in 1985. We left on July 1 with Griff driving his van, pulling our Scamper trailer and stopped at Yellowstone Park and on to Calgary Canada for the Stampede and chuck wagon races and the largest and longest parade we'd ever seen. Then on to Fairbanks by the Alaskan Highway and down to Skagway to put our rig on a ship, along the coast line and up to Washington State where we unloaded.

While at Skagway we saw college girls giving rides from the ship docks to downtown, a distance of about 1/3 mile. I took note of their little 2 seat rigs, pulled by a small horse and jotted down design and estimated size. Verba Lee wanted to know why I was sketching the design and size of their rigs and I told her that when I got home I was retiring and I would make me one of those money making machines as a hobby. She laughed at me and said I'd never quit work or even get me a hobby. Well I did build a small buggy, buy and train a young Morgan gelding, build the harness for it and just before Christmas sell that complete outfit for a nice profit through a \$5.00 ad in the Rural Coop Elec. Magazine. Then to follow through on my retirement I told Ronnie (my partner in Auldridge Bldg. Const) that come Jan 1, 1986 I would have no interest in that business.

Verba and I had made a 10 day bus trip in 1979 with the Campbells on a fall foliage trip to Niagara Falls, Toronto, Canada, Maine, etc., and we had fun traveling so the next year we did another bus tour to the North West States and Canada that was equally enjoyable. So when the 1986 Texas wagon train, celebrating the sesquicentennial status, we bought a little covered wagon and Welsh team, in partners with Gene, and we had the time of our lives traveling around Texas, part time for 6 months and 3300 miles. All our family except Phil and Dorothee participated, including grand kids that we had at that time. This was over in July and ended in Ft. Worth at the Stockyard and an auction at Billy Bob's honky-tonk, Gene purchased one of the wagon train draft teams, "Tex" and "ranger", that he owned and drove for several years on wagon rides that Verba Lee and I helped sponsor through the years.

In August of that year Phil and Dorothee had begun a bicycle tour from St. Louis up to Niagara Falls, Maine and down to Williamsburg, Va., where Verba and I met them in our motor home, loaded their bikes and headed for Dollywood in Tenn. We had a good time there and then headed home for Texas.

In 1987 Verba and I hauled our horse and buggy to a ranch in San Saba where we unloaded, hitched up and drove to Cherokee Baptist Church where her cousin Don Henderson was pastor and helped celebrate their 100th anniversary. At the church service Don introduced Verba Lee as his cousin and told everyone that we had left Goldthwaite at 830 and drove our buggy there,

arriving at 1045 for the service. He didn't know we had only drove the buggy about 8 or 10 miles.

We carried our little rooster "Brother Jack" on this trip as we had since fall of 86 and until Nov. of 98 when he died. He had ridden with us on all of our wagon rides during this time and traveled about 10,000 miles. Verba Lee loved this little rooster like a grand kid, almost, until he started pecking at her hands.

In 1989, 90,91,93, and 94 Verba and I would begin traveling to the Amish Country in Ohio, Indiana and Missouri and Oklahoma where she enjoyed visiting with the Amish women, doing quilting, going to their shows and auctions, craft and flea markets and I would go to the many buggy shops and buy vehicles, wheels, shafts, and parts. In 91 the Spradleys took their fifth wheel travel trailer and us in our motor home to Ohio and it was a real vacation.

Then in 93 (we skipped 92) we met Buddy? And his wife at their place in east Texas and they went with us. Again in 94 Griff and Betty with their big motor home and our new Winnebago we were back in Ohio, shopping, visiting and sightseeing, a couple of days in Charm, Ohio (that was as scenic as its name).. we stayed with the Roy Millers and the next early Spring their son Allen and his friend, also Allen Miller, came and spent a week with us at our home. That year, 95, there were 19 Amish who came and spent 3 nights with us between Christmas and Hew Year's. We had business with them (buggies) in Montgomery, Indiana, and Griff and Betty and Verba Lee and I had taught them to play 84 dominoes as we visited them up there for a couple of days. They really took a liking to Verba Lee especially after they saw all her quilts and needle work.

In 1993 we were back into wagon rides with Bro. Jack as usual and belonged to the Texas Friendship Wagon Train Association, that we were charter members of in 1987 and at the end of our fall ride in 93, Verba and I were honored with the American Pioneer Spirit Award that we were so proud of.

Then again in 94 in Mills Co., Verba and I were given the outstanding Senior Citizen Award, for her work in the church, museum and historical committee works and helping our community as a whole. We were proud but humbled that as newcomers, not natives, only being here 50 years, that we would receive this honor. We had received lots of recognition by the newspapers all over Texas and including our little rooster Bro. Jack but they didn't know Verba Lee and I like our home county people did.

Verba Lee and I had another unique experience in 1991 when I built 2 ole-time bakery wagons to promote Grant's Farm Bread, owned by Anhauser Busch Co in St. Louis, Mo. The advertising agency asked us to take our carriage horse, "Sally", and the wagon, to promote this new bread in St. Louis, Evansville, Ind. and Owensboro, Kentucky, for 26 days. We were paid \$9,300 for this experience of a life time. We displayed at supermarkets and were in a huge parade one weekend during the times we were gone.

Over all the years of Verba Lee's life there has never been any doubt in my minds or in the minds of her family and friends of her ability to live with all daily problems and encounters as she lived to be the best mother, friend, neighbor, counselor, cook, teacher, example and wife that God ever brought into his kingdom. She lived to live and have compassion for everybody that she knew. She had the ability to see the best in every person that she had contact with and never complained when she had sickness or pain. She always, her whole life, tried to take care of her physical body and her family by planning good, balanced food and meals, keeping her

weight right and exercising regularly and it was so unexpected when on January 6, 1998 she had a light stroke and on the same morning, fell and broke her hip. It was discouraging to her to have a hip joint replacement operation and get her heart system back in order but through dedicated therapy, prayer, and help from family and her many friends, she was in just a few months, healed to the point that she could attend the new church she helped start and build on the 2 acres of our land that we donated.

She had healed to the point that she was back doing the things she so enjoyed; helping with her grand kids, going to her quilt club each week and shopping with her friends, looking forward to getting back into wagon train traveling and trips back up to the Amish Country.

In November 1998 our little trail riding rooster died suddenly and soon after she discovered through tests and biopsies that she had terminal cancer in her esophagus, liver and stomach, with no possible operation or treatment to cure it. In her usual and true way she asked for no sympathy for the blow that would be devastating to most, but to her a victory as she had planned her whole life for and to begin life anew in a place where she would live forever.

Note This short autobiography was found in her scrapbook shortly after her death. It was written by Verba Lee as a school-girl assignment during her eight grade year, and dated March 7, 1940. Although she did not complete High School, Verba always wrote and spoke with near-perfect grammar, as evidenced in this document, which was transcribed exactly as originally recorded in her beautiful handwriting style.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY

I was born June 21, 1926 at Copperas Cove, Texas.

I moved around a good bit after that. I moved to Mullin, then to Goldthwaite, and then to Rogers. I don't remember much about those trips.

When I was about one and one-half years old, we moved to Nolanville. I remember when we lived there I used to run off to see a lady named Mrs. Jackson. We owned a store then and I stayed down there most of the time. Mrs. Jackson had a baby and I always wanted to feed it its bottle of milk. She said I would lay the baby down and if it didn't shut its eyes I would try to shut them. I thought they ought to shut like my doll's. I got a whipping nearly every time I ran off, but it didn't seem to make me stay at home.

Then we moved to Kempner where we lived about two years. I had a large German police dog. His name was Jack. After I moved to Copperas Cove I had to take him out to my grandmother's where he got killed.

One day I went over to Hughes (they lived in Kempner the same time we did) and Arleta, Ruth, and I made some mud pies. We got some eggs out of one of their hen nests to make them out of. We never would tell mother or Mrs. Hughes.

When I would hear mother call me, I would start crying and cry all the way home because I knew I would get a whipping for running off.

I would always go out the front gate and go to see the lady who lived across the road from us until the gate got to squeaking. then I crawled over the fence.

One time mother and I went to see some people who lived just a little way from us. They had a pony and I wanted to ride it. (The boys who lived there were a little older than I). They put me on the pony, and I rode along nicely until we went under a tree. One of the limbs was low so I thought I would just catch on to it. I caught the limb, the horse walked out from under me, and I fell in a mud puddle under the tree. They had to take me to the house. I had mud all over me.

We moved to Ballinger where we lived about two months. I can't remember much about living there.

When I was five years old, we moved to Copperas Cove where I have lived ever since.

I started to school when I was six years old. I had the whooping cough when I was in the first grade. I can remember in the second grade I broke out a window light. I was running behind the stove to hide from someone during lunch hour. I hit the window and broke it. Miss Yarborough made me tell the janitor I was sorry.

One day in the third grade I cut the buckle off my shoes so I could go barefooted. It was raining and I wanted to wade in the water. I told mother the buckles came off and I couldn't keep my shoes on so I had to take them off.

I had the measles and chicken pox when I was in the third or fourth grade. Mother had an appendicitis operation in 1935. I cried all time they were operating on her. Then we moved to Mullen. I went to school there about a month. I was in the fourth grade. While I was there my uncle in Temple sent me a dog. He sent it to Copperas Cove. It died April 18, 1940.

The first year we went to school in the new school building was when I was in the fourth grade.

In the fifth grade Miss Gibbs was our teacher. Mr. Anthony taught us geography for a while. Miss Scott taught us history. That year I had scarlatina and I missed about two weeks of school right after mid-term. The boys used to hide her strap under the stove, but she usually managed to find it or get another one.

Miss Gibbs gave Gordon Adams a whipping one day with a board that had a nail in it. I think most of the boys in that room either got a whipping or a hair-pulling.

In the summer of 1936 I had my long curls cut off. I was glad to get rid of them so I could comb my hair myself.

Cotton used to sit behind me in school and he would stick pencils up my curls. It surely would make my angry. Mother said every time she would comb my hair I would yell as loud as I could.

Mrs. Culwell was our teacher in the sixth grade. We had a lot of fun that year, also.

Miss Sue Joiner was our teacher in the seventh grade. We had quite a bit of fun that year.

One day right after lunch all the girls pulled off their shoes and went barefooted the rest of the afternoon. Mr. Culwell hid our shoes in his office and we had to march in there and get them after school.

I graduated from Grammar school May 25, 1939. Rev. Geldmeire was the speaker. Arleta Hughes and Claude Elevyn White were the ushers. In the summer of 1939, I went to the river twice. Once on the fourth of July and again in August. I had a lot of fun both times.

Miss Neil, Mr. Culwell, and Mr. McDaniel are my teachers in the eight grade. This is my first time to go to county meet. I have always wanted to go, but mother would never let me until this year.

I have been to Houston, Galveston, Ft. Worth, and Austin. I have been to many smaller places. I spent two summers in Sweetwater and one summer in Rowena.

I hope to go all through high school and maybe to college.

VERBA LEE BYRD AULDRIDGE

written as an obituary on the occasion of her death
by her husband
Levi Nathan Truett Aldridge

Verba Lee Byrd Aldridge was born May 21, 1926 at Copperas Cove, Texas to Edgar and Annie Lou Byrd. Her great grandparents the Gilmores and the Clements were the first settlers in Copperas Cove in Southern Coryell County. The small town was located near the Santa Fe railroad where her father worked. He was station agent at Mullin, Texas where Verba Lee attended 5th grade for a short period of time. They lived in a house there, near the railroad and north of the old Mullin Hotel.

Much of her single life was spent in Copperas Cove, living with her grandparents and attending church and school there. Her mother was a professional seamstress, full time, so she taught Verba how to sew at a very early age. Verba made most of her own clothing and later for her whole family and friends. She has sewn and designed many quilts with her many friends. Verba was an only child; the nearest thing to having a sister was Faye Leonhard. Verba Lee attended school at Copperas Cove with Faye's husband, James Leonhard, and when they married they lived with Verba Lee and Truett in Goldthwaite.

In 1942, at age 15, Verba Lee married her high school sweetheart, Levi Truett Aldridge, when a Junior in school. Less than a year later Truett entered the Air Force for a 3 year period. Truett had been in China about 3 months when their first son, Phil was born in May and would be 6 months old when his father returned home in November, 1945. The family moved to Goldthwaite that same month and built their first new home. In July 1946, son Gene was born, followed by son Ronnie in 1950 and finally a daughter Lee Ann was born in 1956. As a full time mom, Verba put her sewing skills to work dressing her daughter and raising her family, but still found time to work with Scouts, Little League baseball, football and basketball, Lion's Club activities museum and historical boards, room mother, helping with pep squad and cheer leading, concession stand worker, rodeo association member, and many other community activities and events.

She was a member of First Baptist Church for 52 continuous years, serving for 35 years as a teacher and leader in the children's dept and paying for many kids to attend summer camp. For the past 2 years she has been a charter member of Fellowship Baptist Church, one that she helped organize and support. She was very active with her husband in building and maintaining the Mills Co. Civic Center.

Her hobbies were quilting, deer hunting and trail riding in a wagon or buggy for many miles and days over the past 13 years. She loved to travel and has been to Bermuda, Hawaii, Mexico, Canada, Alaska, and most of the United States.

Verba Lee played the role of mother to an young girl, Kathy Lewis, who was

orphaned 20 years ago as a result of a tragic auto accident with her parents. She cared for Kathy as her own for over a year, as she coped with losing her parents, and gave her a home with love to get her through high school and on with her life. Verba also sponsored and supported an oriental brother and sister in her home after they were driven out of their Chinese homeland and were refugees in Taiwan. She helped make their lives better by teaching them the basic skills to live in the USA.

Her greatest joy was with her close-knit family and many friends. She has always had a near perfect relationship with her in-laws and showed no favoritism among her grandchildren. She has, through her faith, coped with her battle with cancer since December 1998, following a light stroke and broken hip in January 1998, but has never complained of her pains and discomforts or asked the question "why me, Lord?" Although with these misfortunes she has never in her life given in to alcohol, tobacco, illegal drugs, or even tasted of coffee, she continued to live her life as God expected, exercising daily, eating a well planned diet, never bending to stress and planning each day for her family and friends.

Verba Lee was in one way like Will Rogers she never met a person she didn't like (but naturally there were some she liked better); but no doubt everybody liked and loved her. She was the best of cooks and loved to cook for the young boys that worked for Truett. Randy Cobb, Joe Brooks, Juan Cardenas, Jory Sutherland and Travis Hall were a few that ate at her table and she loved each of them like her own. She was not just a house wife but a home maker, who reached her goal of becoming a true example of a Christian lady.

To My Mother

written by Phil Auldridge, and read to my Mother one week before she died.

My earliest memories of life are of my mother. Warm, loving, attentive, caring, and protective, you skillfully guided each of us siblings through the carefree, innocent days of childhood along the difficult path to adulthood. Now, each of us are mirrors of you, and I take special pride when someone tells me "I see a lot of your Mother in you", for your life has exemplified every thing that is good, and pure, and loving, in this life.

We learned to apply the golden rule to all dealings with our fellow men, not because you ever recited it to us, but because your actions continuously demonstrated those principles. We learned the values of integrity and of keeping our word, because of your shining examples. And we learned to open our homes to friends and strangers alike, because there was always an extra plate and plenty of food at your table. There has never been anyone entering through your doors who remained a stranger for more than a few minutes.

There are so many special memories I have of you, and so few unpleasant ones. I can never remember your ever raising your voice, either to us children, or to anyone else. Yet, you managed, in your kind, gentle way, to enforce a firm discipline in our family that transformed each of us into mature, responsible adults. I remember, as a child, going as a family to the old swimming hole on the river, long before there was a city swimming pool. I remember our family sitting around the radio and listening to those wonderful weekly serial programs, or listening to the narrator reading the newspaper comics on Sundays. I remember sitting outside in our front yard in the summertime, at our little house on Cline street, looking at stars and constellations, and I wonder how many families today can tear themselves away from television long enough to experience such wonders of the universe.

You have had little rest here on this earth. From my earliest remembrance, you were always the first one up in the morning, and the last to bed at night. You never had a retirement, but instead, right up to the end of your time here with us, you continued your tireless efforts to make the Auldridge household the center of our family's universe. Your special domain was your kitchen, and every precious item in that kitchen will be a lasting monument to you. In that wonderful place, you reigned as the undisputed center of our Auldridge family and for all the many friends who have been there. There are so many beautiful memories that we all have, passing through

that kitchen, all the delicious smells, with the entire room just bursting with warmth and kindness and love. Now that you will no longer be there, it almost seems sacreligious to enter that special place, yet we know that the memory of your presence there will linger always.

It is so hard for all of us to accept that our mother, Mimi our grandmother, our great-grandmother, or our good friend, will no longer be with us here on earth. Yet we all try to understand that this is just part of life's grand scheme, and that, finally, after months of pain, you are resting in peaceful bliss. We take some small solace, in this our darkest hour of grief, in knowing that the memory of your joyful love, will last forever in the hearts of each of us who have been blessed with your presence here on earth.

May you rest in the peace you so deserve.

Birthday report

Ada Carrie Donia Blackwell

Marriage: 22 Jun 1892

Death: 20 Jan 1954

Adrian Gayle Shepard

Birth: 21 Feb 1945

Marriage: 16 Aug 1963

Alan Wayne Auldridge

Birth: 20 Jul 1962

Annie Jackson

Marriage: 24 Mar 1917

Annie Pearl Auldridge

Birth: 10 Jul 1909

Auldridge Dennis Ervin Jr.

Birth: 27 Mar 1958

Barbara Elaine Shepard

Birth: 29 Oct 1947

Charles Harvey

Marriage: 16 Jul 1912

Cheyenne Sutherland Auldridge

Birth: 14 Nov 1980

Christie

Cloise Auldridge

Birth: 17 Oct 1911

Connie Millsap

Marriage: 18 Jul 1930

Craig Stuart Auldridge

Birth: 14 Jan 1975

Daisy Cook

Marriage: 01 Mar 1930

Dan Cox

Marriage: 1912

Danny Sutherland

Marriage: 11 Jul 1978

David Dudley Auldridge

Birth: Jul 1865

Marriage: 07 Apr 1889

Death: 01 Sep 1927

David Edward Jr.

Birth: 31 Jan 1962

Deirdre Lynn Auldridge

Birth: 11 Jun 1968

Dennis Ervin Auldrige

Birth: 28 Jul 1935

Marriage: Mar 1955

Person Notes: Dennis started school at Copperas Cove, in 1943 was transferred to Melvin, and in 1946 to Goldthwaite. He had an amazing ability at learning, but tired of school and quit, however at 17 years old he enlisted in the Navy and finished high school requirements. In the Navy he took three courses in Electronics, after his discharge he attended the Southern College of Commerce at Fort Worth, Texas and finished the course in Electronics in less than three months, setting a record in this school as having finished faster than anyone. In August 1958 he and his wife, Mary, moved to Forth Worth, Texas where Dennis was employed at Convair.

Dennis fell on hard times, thanks to alcoholism and other factors. He was involved in a holdup for which he served time in prison. During that time, he wrote several treatises on psychology, became a preacher, among other things. Afterwards, he lived at various places, including Arkansas, Missouri, and around Killeen.

Dennis Wayne Auldrige

Birth: 13 Feb 1974

Marriage: 19 Oct 1996

Donna Lyn Jr.

Birth: 10 Mar 1960

Dorothee Jean Hale

Birth: 02 Feb 1955 in Dayton Ohio

Marriage: 05 Apr 1986 in Monterey, Cal

Earl Raymond Eilers

Birth: 09 Feb 1944

Marriage: 17 Nov 1962

Elva Judith Gotcher

Birth: 09 Feb 1944

Marriage: 17 Nov 1962

Elva Sidney Turner

Birth: 24 Mar 1900

Marriage: 13 Jun 1918 in Copperas Cove, Texas

Death: 08 Sep 1980 in Gatesville, Texas

Frank Casey

Fred Travis Turner

Birth: 26 Oct 1901

Marriage: 10 Oct 1919

Freddy Moffatt

Marriage: 15 Mar 1994

Gene Earl Auldrige

Birth: 27 Jul 1946 in Brownwood, Texas

Marriage: 06 Mar 1976 in Copperas Cove, Texas

Person Notes: Child: Gene Earl Auldrige

Born: July 27, 1946

In: Brownwood, Texas

Relationship with Father: Levi Nathan Truett Auldrige - Natural

Relationship with Mother: Verba Lee Byrd - Natural

Address & Phone: P. O. Box 301, Goldthwaite, TX 76844
915-648-2649

Notes:

Gene graduated from Goldthwaite High School in 1964, receiving a full Football Scholarship to Rice University. In high school, he was Captain of the football team two years and All District Player two years. Gene also lettered in Track two years and Basketball four years. He was Mr. GHS, FHA Beau and in the Football Hall of Fame two years for Outstanding Defensive Line.

Gene was involved with high school rodeo and participated in Bronc Riding, Bull Riding, and Calf Roping. He was a Boy Scout and a member of the First Baptist Church having made his profession of faith in 1955.

Other hobbies included raising pigs, riding horses for pleasure, and hunting.

He was quiet, somewhat timid and mostly kept his feelings to himself. However, his mother's recollections of him as a young child are those of a head strong and persistent child with a bit of stubborn determination.

Gene graduated from Rice University in Houston, Texas in 1969 with a Bachelor of Science Degree in Physical Education. While attending Rice University, he played football five years on a full scholarship. He started at Defensive Tackle for three years and received a Rolex watch his senior year for the Jess Neely Defensive award as the outstanding defensive player on the team. He worked at various jobs during those years in college, including Sheffield Iron Works, maintenance at a large shopping center, and construction work.

While a senior at Rice, he married Peggy Lamkin. Upon graduating Gene immediately accepted his first coaching position at Copperas Cove, Texas. He was an assistant to Coach Jackie Williams, who had also been his high school coach. Peggy worked at Fort Hood National Bank. They both enjoyed rodeos and horses. No children were born to this union. He coached there four years, during which time, he and Peggy were divorced in 1971. In 1973 he returned to Goldthwaite as Head Football Coach and History teacher. In 1976 he married Vivian (Cunningham) Province in Copperas Cove, Texas and retired from coaching that same year to open a lumberyard business in Goldthwaite.

Leasing property from H. C. and Alyne Letbetter, which had previously been used as a hog barn, the business began. The lease agreement was five years at \$150.00/mo. for a total of \$9,000.00 with the option to purchase for the price of \$25,000.00. With the help and expertise of his father Truett, Gene remodeled the building to include office and restroom space, and a showroom. The business was opened in August 1976, with Truett acting as Purchasing Agent, Gene in Sales, and Vivian as Bookkeeper. There was one employee, Eugene Vega, a Mexican National who was previously employed by Truett. Beginning inventory was purchased with \$20,000 life insurance proceeds to Vivian. After the first full year in business their annual sales were 423,000 thousand dollars. Truett left the business after three years voluntarily without remuneration. For his gift of time and resources, Gene is deeply indebted to his Dad and forever grateful. The sales steadily increased each year reaching 2.5 million dollars in 1985.

Soon after, there was a general recession and in 1989 profits hit an all time low. By selling equipment, revamping his employee structure, and monitoring closely his cost of sales and profit margins, Gene was able to steer the business into another successful era. Today in 1999, he is operating a successful business with 10 employees and a Net Worth of about 900,000 dollars. He has purchased the property and built several additional warehouse structures. He has remodeled the original office and sales area, and expanded into building portable storage buildings, limited cabinet building, portable toilets rental, construction management, and public school building construction. Both the First United Methodist Church and the Goldthwaite ISD have employed Gene as Construction Supervisor on projects including the Methodist Family Life Center and Goldthwaite Middle School. The cost of these projects represents a total value of 2.6 million dollars.

In 1982, along with partner Charles Childress of Austin, Gene purchased the Goldthwaite Laundromat. In 1985 they purchased a lot in Bangs, and built a building opening a new Laundromat there. Later they added the Santa Anna Laundromat, in 1986, and converted one end of it into self-storage rental units. The Ballinger Laundromat was purchased in 1991 and self-storage rental units there were completed in 1993. And finally in 1993 they acquired the San Saba Laundromat. Gene then solely purchased the Lometa Laundromat from Jackie Williams, and an existing self-storage facility in Brownwood. Gene does all maintenance on the laundry equipment and is responsible to arrange for the upkeep of the buildings and grounds. Also, he makes deposits to the bank and does all of the bookkeeping. This is a business that he enjoys and it has been a very solid source of income for many years. Recently Gene and Charles have entered into yet another business adventure. That is a laser car wash in Ballinger. Adding also a third partner for the car wash, Dan Williams of Ballinger.

Gene describes his marriage to Vivian as the best thing he ever did! She was a widow and brought into his life Laurel age 4, and Dennis age 2. Gene adopted these children as soon as he could and has been a dedicated father to them, offering them his love and support throughout their life. Three more children were born to them. They are: Joseph Truett (J.T.) born September 12, 1978; Vanessa Rae born September 20, 1981; and Jaclyn Jean born May 2, 1983. His children are his greatest source of pride and his greatest pleasure is watching them play sports. Gene relates to his family with a unique sense of humor and is gentle and generous. Nevertheless, he has gained their respect by clearly defining limits of acceptable behavior and they are all aware of his values and expectations. He has passed on to them, a competitive spirit. By his own example, he has taught them to persevere until they reach their goals. They have seen in his life, and developed in their own lives, such traits as hard work, determination and commitment to keeping their word. He is compassionate, always forgiving others and anxious to give a break to someone who is struggling. He has shown them the benefits of holding your temper and overcoming discouragement.

You will find Gene's name on the membership rolls of the Goldthwaite Lions Club dating back to 1973. Through this organization, he has taken part in a number of service projects in the community. It is interesting to note that, even while rearing five children of his own, he took time to serve several years on the Board of Directors for New Horizons Children's Home. Twice he served as Chairman of the Board. He donated a sizeable amount of material for the construction of the Mills County Civic Center. Additionally, he donated the football scoreboard presently in use at Eagle Field in Goldthwaite. He has served tenure as President of both the Mills County Livestock Raisers Association and Lake Merritt Board of Directors. He remained a member of the First Baptist Church up until the time another church was organized in Goldthwaite. He is now a charter member of Fellowship Baptist Church of Goldthwaite.

Over the years, Gene has enjoyed hobbies such as hunting and trail riding. He has participated in hunting not only in South and West Texas, but in Colorado, New Mexico and Oklahoma as well. His pleasures include taking a bet on a horse race or football game, dipping snuff, and driving his mule and wagon. He has also been known to drink a little Jack Daniel's & Coke on occasion! Gene loves country music, especially the oldies. His favorite musician is Ernest Tubb.

Gene has lived on his 110 acres of land east of Goldthwaite for 26 years (since 1973). He has always had horses, as well as cattle, pigs and goats and even chickens at one time. In 1977 a new house was built on the land in a grove of Live Oak trees. Another bedroom was added to the house in 1983 and the kitchen remodeled. The large back yard with a stock tank just a few yards beyond, provided a beautiful setting for the wedding reception of their daughter, Laurel, in

1996.

Gene is now grandpa to one little girl, Rylee Meghan, 2 years old. She is the daughter of Laurel and Jimmy Jones of Goldthwaite. Dennis and wife Michelle live in Lewisville, Texas. J.T. is presently attending Texas A&M University majoring in Civil Engineering. Vanessa is a senior and Jaclyn a junior in high school.

Philosophy of life: Enjoy life while you can

Most fulfilling accomplishment: Construction Supervisor to Middle School

Greatest heartache: Death of son-in-law in 1996

Death of mother in 1999

Goals yet to accomplish: Finish putting three kids through college

To kill a big(er) buck

Marriage Information

Wife: Vivian Anniece Cunningham

Married: March 6, 1976

Beginning Status: Married

In: Copperas Cove, Texas

By: Vivian Auldridge

October 29, 1999

Gilbert Doyle Auldridge

Birth: 27 Mar 1927

Marriage: 05 May 1952

Person Notes: Attended school at Copperas Cove until 1943 when the family moved to Melvin, Texas. Several months before he graduated from high school, Gilbert enlisted in the Navy, with his Mother accepting his diploma at graduation night.

He lived in Hobbs, New Mexico, where he was employed with El Paso Natural Gas.

Guy Winifred Turner

Birth: 15 Apr 1898

Marriage: 24 Mar 1917

Henry Walter Allen

Marriage: 1918

Horace Wilson Auldridge

Birth: 13 Jan 1896

Howard Gotcher

Marriage: 27 Jan 1937

Iris Elaine Rutherford

Birth: 22 Nov 1945

Marriage: 28 Aug 1965 in Waco Texas

Jack Errol Shepard

Marriage: Sep 1940

Jaclyn Jean Auldridge

Birth: 02 May 1983

James Gilbert Auldridge

Birth: 20 Aug 1904

Marriage: 1925

James Morris McClement

Birth: Hawk Run, Pa

Marriage: 10 May 1948

Jefferson Davis Auldridge

Birth: 28 Jan 1890

Marriage: 1913

Jenny Suzanne Auldridge

Birth: 03 Jan 1978

Jeraldine Onita Naomi Auldridge

Birth: 28 Jul 1922 in Fry place nine m north of Copperas Cove

Marriage: 10 May 1948

Person Notes: Excerpts of notes written by Jeraldine: "I was born on the Fry place adjoining the Shouse place, nine miles north of Copperas Cove, Texas on July 28, 1922. Except for one years schooling at Taylors Creek, the remainder of my skimpy education was received at Copperas Cove, I quit school in the 3rd month of my ninth year grade. Howard and I lived at various places including Kempner, Copperas Cove, Gatesville and Fort Worth. Divorced at Fort Worth, Texas on Dec 23, 1946, after nine years. On May 10, 1948 married James Morris McClement of Hawk Run, PA, at Lubbock. His son, James Morris, Jr, whose mother died when he was born, and was raised by his maternal grand parents at Lubbock, Texas. We lived at Lubbock until June 1951, when we moved to Goldthwaite, Tex."

Jerrilyn Dawn Gotcher

Birth: 07 Feb 1940

Marriage: 19 Aug 1961

Jerrold Sidney Shepard

Birth: 01 Nov 1943

Joseph Hill Wilkinson**Joseph Truett Auldridge**

Birth: 12 Sep 1978

Kenneth Darwin Grell

Birth: 04 Feb 1939

Marriage: 19 Aug 1961

Laurel Denniece Auldridge

Birth: 25 May 1971

Marriage: 28 Apr 1996

Lee Ann Auldridge

Birth: 22 May 1956 in Goldthwaite, Texas

Marriage: 15 Mar 1994

Person Notes: My trip to Europe was another expression of love and trust by my parents. It took me 3 months to sell the idea to them but I'm sure I left with many prayers. I can't imagine sending my daughter to Europe at 19. I worry about her making it just in the big city of Fort Worth. Anyway I attended the American College of Foreign Institute in London England. I met with approximately 300 other American college students in New York city and flew over to England. The campus was an old monastery and classrooms, administration and coed dormitory all in one huge building. The rest of the student population was from every other country in the world. Each Thursday night was culture night with a different country taking control and preparing a meal and providing entertainment. Even though my grade point average was cut in half this semester, I learned more in this 6 month period of my life than any other. Of all the places I went while I was over there, I didn't do the tourist route. Instead I tried to learn what the people were like, how they lived, how their life differed from mine. I took a trip with the school to Paris, France and did the tourist thing there. But I also took trips with my new friends to Scotland and Spain and Madrid. I would not trade my learning experiences and wonderful memories of this trip for anything in the world.

My greatest blessing in life was being born into the Auldridge family and having two loving parents that were devoted to the raising of their children. Looking back at my childhood it amazes me how they made time for so many things. During rodeo season Dad never missed a weekend hauling me and Tonka my horse to a rodeo three nights a week. I won several trophies and had loads of fun competing in barrel racing and pole bending. If I ever had a friend who lived in town and didn't have a horse but wanted to try out rodeo sports, Dad was there providing the horse and being the coach.

In high school as a cheerleader and on the pep squad we turned Dad's shop into the run-through and sign factory. Birthdays and holidays were more than just a special day on the calendar. Once for my birthday he took 5 of my girlfriends to Deep creek with a horse for each of us. We rode all over that huge ranch, swam in the creeks and just had a ball for the weekend.

I have really come to appreciate the meaning of "traditions" as an adult. I regret that in raising my daughter I did not follow my mothers example and create traditions for Cheyenne to remember and carry on in her life. Growing up we had the traditional Sunday dinner with roast and all the fixings including homemade desert. How did Mom do that? She taught Sunday School, went to church, but when we came home Sunday dinner was still on the table promptly at 12:00. Thanksgivings were special for me with my Mom because all the guys were gone deer hunting. She didn't have to cook so we ate out which was a real treat then. It also meant our annual shopping trip to Austin for winter clothes. We always made a long day of it. I don't know how in the world she did it. I would drag her through every store in the mall and we would get ideas for the new clothes I wanted. Then we would go to the fabric stores and pick out the patterns and fabric for her to make the new things I wanted. Of course when we got home I wanted all of them made in time to wear to school on the first day. Sometimes she actually accomplished that too.

On June 11, 1978, I married Danny Lee Sutherland of Goldthwaite. I not only became a new bride but also a mother to his two boys Chakoda (Kody) Lee, age 4 and Jory Heath age 2. We moved to Dallas, TX so I could continue court reporting school and Danny started a fencing company. Two years later on November 14, 1980, Cheyenne was born. She was a delightful new "plaything" to her two brothers and very soon began following them everywhere. About the time she was born Danny accepted a job as ranch foreman of the Sammy Baugh ranch located between Aspermont and Rotan in west Texas. We moved our family to the ranch that was 20 miles from town. This was a real special time for me as I got to be a full time stay-at-home mom and had the chance to sharpen my domestic skills. We had chickens, goats, a milk cow and a large garden. Twice a year we had round up and I helped by cooking the meals for all the cowboys that came to work. In 1982 we moved back to Goldthwaite and lived on the Dutch Smith place that Dad had recently purchased. Not long after danny and I divorced and I went to Real Estate school in Austin. After getting my real estate license Cheyenne and I moved to Kingsland, TX. I went to work for ERA Tom Beard & Associates. Kingsland is basically a resort town 40 miles from Austin and most of the population is retirees. Cheyenne had lots of surrogate grandparents there but I was very lonely, as there were very few young people that lived there. So, after two years there we moved back closer to home to Brownwood. I started my own real estate company using the skills so patiently taught me by Tom Beard. In 1990, I met Freddy Moffatt and in 1994 we were married. Again I was blessed with a new stepchild, Shelly Moffatt. Cheyenne finally had a sister that she had always wanted.

Shelly was 5 years older and Cheyenne looked up to her in every way. In 1995 Shelly married Dennis Smith and on March 18, 1996, they gave me my first grandchild, Darian Kye. I temporarily shut down my real estate office to help take care of Shelly and the new baby and when Shelly decided to go back to college I wanted to continue to stay home and keep the new baby whenever I was needed. On March 5, 1998, Shelly gave birth to another beautiful baby girl, Nadalee Rosanne. Shelly graduated from Tarlton State University that year and accepted a job with Lockheed Meacham in Fort Worth. On her second day at work she got a call that shook all of our lives. The new baby had stopped breathing while at her babysitters and had been rushed to the hospital. The Lord took little Nadalee home to be with him on that day. She died of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. It was the worst tragedy any of us had ever had to deal with. Shelly and Darian now live at Lake Granbury near Fort Worth and Cheyenne is living in Arlington.

Lena Mae Auldridge

Birth: 18 Dec 1892

Marriage: 1912

Levi Nathan Auldridge

Birth: 18 Jan 1894 in Bosque County, Texas

Marriage: 13 Jun 1918 in Copperas Cove, Texas

Death: Feb 1964 in Goldthwaite, Texas

Person Notes: After release from the service, he received a pension of \$15/month, which began about 4 months later. Grocery bill was \$7/mo, and they bought 100 lbs of sugar each year for 4 or 5 years.

He lived with a crutch all his life, but was so active doing all the jobs, etc., that anyone else could do that the family never considered him being crippled. He was so determined to be normal and a good provider that he more than succeeded. He did a tremendous job, for the family never went hungry or without the best of clothes.

Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge

Birth: 18 Sep 1924

Marriage: 11 Apr 1942 in Lampasas, Texas

Lewis Perkins Turner

Birth: 05 Feb 1871

Marriage: 22 Jun 1892

Death: 22 Jun 1910

Lewis Perkins Turner Jr.

Birth: 1893

Linnie Essie Turner

Birth: 26 Jun 1894

Marriage: 16 Jul 1912

Ludie Jane Auldridge

Birth: 01 Nov 1900

Marriage: 1924

Mabel

Marriage: 1925

Margaret

Mary Carmen Ortega

Marriage: Mar 1955

Mary Elizabeth Auldridge

Birth: 13 Feb 1902

Marriage: 1923

McClement James Morris Jr.

Birth: 02 Feb 1944

Melba

Michelle Lindsey

Marriage: 19 Oct 1996

Miranda Purtela Hardin

Birth: 24 Aug 1873

Marriage: 07 Apr 1889

Death: 23 Apr 1958 in Copperas Cove, Texas

Nadine Zoma Auldridge

Birth: 04 Sep 1920

Marriage: Sep 1940

Person Notes: Born on the Shouse place in Coryell County. She attended school for a year at Taylor's Creek School in Lampasas County and the remainder at Copperas Cove where she graduated. Was enrolled in Howard Payne College at Brownwood, Texas, when she decided to get married. She and Errol lived for awhile at the Shepard home place several miles out of Killeen; later moving to Lubbock, where they lived until about June 1952. They then moved to Goldthwaite, where they lived until December, moving back to the Shepard place.

Nathan Phillip Auldridge

Birth: 03 May 1945 in Temple Texas

Marriage: 05 Apr 1986 in Monterey, Cal

Person Notes: Attended Howard Payne College Freshman Year, 1963, where he met his first wife, Iris Elaine. The following year, Phil transferred to Baylor, and Elaine was forced to quit college due to family finances. Both Elaine and Phil worked at a wholesale lumber company, Nash-Robinson, in Waco Texas, while Phil was attending college. Phil both worked in the yard office, and drove a delivery truck around the Central Texas area.

Also, during that time, Phil earned additional income as a 7-11 clerk, gas pump jockey, and giving private piano lessons. One of his students was General Curtis LeMay, who happened to be stationed at the Air Force Base adjacent to Waco. Later, Phil secured a job at the A.O. Smith Corp. a plant which was manufacturing bomb casings for the Vietnam war. He worked the night shift, and attended college during the day. His jobs at the plant included "material handler" on the assembly line, then fork lift operator, and finally, night shipping clerk.

In 1968, Phil graduated from Baylor University with a degree in business, and was immediately employed by Peat, Marwick, Mitchell, an accounting firm, in Houston, Texas. However, in less than 6 months, he was accepted for Officer Candidate School for the Navy, and was transported to OCS at Newport, Rhode Island. Elaine and baby daughter stayed in Waco with her parents while Phil completed OCS, then the two joined him at Navy Supply Corp school in Athens, Georgia.

Phil was interested in the extra-curricular computer courses offered at Athens, and excelled in those. As a result, he was assigned to the duty of Computer Officer on a carrier, the USS Hornet. Because of demand, he was allowed to leave the school prior to completion of final exams, in order to have time to report to duty in Long Beach, CA.

While on board the ship, Phil was fortunate to witness the ocean landing and rescue of the Apollo 8 moon launch, with President Nixon on board. This was the first lunar landing, and was followed by an additional launch pickup, Apollo 11.

During this time, Elaine was employed in Long Beach as an office manager.

Later, the ship was decommissioned, and Phil was transferred to San Diego. It was shortly after this transfer that Phil and Elaine decided to separate. Elaine and Deirdre went back to Houston, where Elaine's mother lived at the time. A short while afterwards, Elaine met her second in Houston, Julian Blackwel.

After discharge from the Navy in San Diego, Phil took a job as Treasurer/Comptroller for an insurance company: Sierra Mutual Fire Insurance Company. It was during this time Phil purchased a small home in Ocean Beach, and then later purchased a beautiful home with 5 other friends, located right on the ocean in Point Loma, a suburb of San Diego.

Eventually, Phil decided to quit his job at the insurance company, and become a musician. For a number of years, he performed in several groups, most of which he was the leader, at various clubs in and around San Diego, including the Hilton and Sheraton Hotels, among others.

Finally, he was asked by a close friend to join him in Monterey and assume the position of Data Processing Manager for another insurance company, California Mutual Insurance Company. After approximately 5 years in that position, he formed a computer consulting company, called "Consultants for Computer Applications", in partnership with Al Calvano and his wife, Carolyn. The company did very well, and for a time employed about 12 programmers.

However, all good things come to an end. It was during this time that Phil met Dorothee Jean Hale, and after a 2 year courtship, Dorothee finally succumbed to Phil's pleas for marriage, and they decided to move to Hawaii. Phil sold his part in the business to his partner, and he and Dorothee departed on a 4 month bicycle trip across the country, riding from St. Louis MO, through the eastern US, all the way to Maine, then back down to Williamsburg VA.

In Hawaii, Phil first worked as an independent computer consultant, later as a systems analyst for Mauna Loa Macadamia Nut Corp. He also worked as a flight instructor and air tour pilot, as well as an emergency air-medivac pilot, flying patients from various locations throughout the island chain.

In 1991, Phil bought a small 2 seat airplane, and started a small flight training company. By 1998, the company had grown to 20 employees, 8 aircraft, and two locations, at Kona and Hilo airports, offering aerial volcano tours, and a variety of flight training programs. Phil and Dorothee reside in the small community of Waikoloa Village, on the sunny Kohala Gold Coast of the Big Island of Hawaii

Neta Sue Berry

Marriage: 19 Aug 1972

Nettie Hartan

Marriage: 1913

Ora Ethel Turner

Birth: 08 Aug 1896

Marriage: 1918

Orban Lewis Turner

Birth: 14 Jan 1907

Marriage: 01 Mar 1930

Peggy Lamkin

Marriage: 27 Jul 1968

Pereira

Ronald Wade Auldridge

Birth: 31 Jan 1950 in Goldthwaite, Texas

Marriage: 14 Feb 1993

Person Notes: AN AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF RONNIE AULDRIDGE:

I was born Jan. 31, 1950 in Goldthwaite, delivered by Dr. Childress. I never lived anywhere else except the 4 years I was away at college.

My early years we lived in town and I enjoyed the good times of playing football, kick-the-can, and exploring the vacant houses. My Mom told me I hardly talked until I went to school -- just too bashful.

At age 5 we swapped houses with Grandma and Granddad Auldridge and moved to the country where we got to have a horse and milk cows and calves to rope. My two older brothers were always making deals with me 'cause they knew I enjoyed farm chores so they would pay me to do their chores also. It didn't bother me any as long as I got paid and it didn't bother them as long as Dad didn't know about it.

I learned to shoot dove with Dad's .410 shotgun and could usually get my limit and then some. I also started deer hunting with Dad and shot many deer with the old 30-30 rifle. Seemed I enjoyed hunting more than anything else.

When I was 6 years old I got a new baby sister. I remember tending to her and showing her off to by buddies.

I remember our family going to Copperas Cove on Saturday evenings and spending the night with Grandma and Grandpa Byrd and going to church on Sunday mornings. Then Gene and I got to slip off and go to the big downtown and shoot pool or go to the matinee.

At age 7 our family, along with the Campbell's and McCaslands, went on a train trip to California, a really big deal for me.

I became a Christian at age 9 while Brother Presnell Wood was my pastor. I was active in the RA program and later became a RA leader.

I enjoyed roping calves and eventually inherited a pretty good roping horse and participated in rodeos nearly every weekend. I liked riding bulls and after trying a few broncs, I decided to stock with bullriding. Luckily I never got hurt bad.

Wintertimes were spent hunting with Dad. A big highlight for me was when he bought me a new deer rifle and let me go hunting with him at Big Bend for mule deer. We went hunting there many times afterward including trips to Colorado looking for elk. But the best days were spent at Deep Creek hunting and fishing and exploring, and also at Mrs. Hapgood's place on the river fishing with Mom and Dad.

In 1968 I got a football scholarship to Southwest Texas State but by October I decided I had enough of that torture. I stayed there and graduated in 1972 and married the same year.

Fortunately Dad offered to let me work with him and I was proud to be able to carry on the tradition that Granddad had started. After several years I became foreman and then became a partner in the business.

Firstborn Craig hatched out in 1975 and was probably born with a ball in his hands. He was obsessed with all sports and always tried to be the best. Some of my proudest times were spent throwing passes, shooting baskets, and hitting fly balls. After I could go no more, he would always say - "just one more time, Dad". Then after I quit, he would stay and play some more ball by himself. All this practice surely helped because as a senior he was able to quarterback his team to the state finals game in the Astrodome.

Jenny came along in 1978 with all her little curls and a big collection of dolls. She enjoyed going dove hunting and deer hunting with her Dad so she could get some blood on her and poke at the eyeballs. I would make her go up in the tall tower deer stand with me although she hated heights and she would squeal everytime. Nowadays she is interested in shooting deer herself since she finally scored last year with her first buck.

Through the eighties we enjoyed the building boom and spent our leisure time at the ranch in the country and took yearly vacations going snow skiing in New Mexico, Colorado, Wyoming and Utah.

I divorced in 1992 and regretfully had to sell the 125 acres in the country to pay the settlement. This was the time when Mom paid the way for the two kids and I to fly to Hawaii and stay with Phil and Dorothee for a week.

1993 was a big year cause I not only was fortunate enough to find my new bride, Shirley, from Richland Springs, but I also was blessed with inheriting two more kids, Jason and Aimee, along with a pet sheep and a dog.

We bought the old Warren Duren house and began remodeling and moved in shortly afterward. We also got to buy Phillip Nichol's old storage building next door and convert it into a shop so now I have a short walk to work each day.

Thank goodness the building boom was still going on because at one time we had all four kids in college. It was a real challenge but we made it.

Losing my Mom in '99 to cancer was the first time I had ever lost anyone so close to me. I was so proud to be able to be with her so much through her last days. She was so strong and only worried about her family - not herself. So many people have told me how she influenced their lives and how they noticed that she treated all people the same. Thank the Lord for her wonderful nurses and John Seth for tending to her pain. I'm glad she is in Heaven now and is hurting no more. My goal is to pass on to my family the qualities that have been handed down to me by my Mom and Dad. A real challenge, I know, but I aim to do my best.

Roy Bergara

Birth: 29 Jul 1969

Marriage: 28 Apr 1996

Death: 04 Oct 1996

Ruby Elizabeth Turner

Birth: 27 Oct 1904

Sam Horton

Marriage: 1924

Sam Jones

Marriage: 1923

Shirley Ruth Green

Birth: 03 Aug 1950

Marriage: 14 Feb 1993

then Lucille Simms Exie Lee

Marriage: 10 Oct 1919

Valorie

Marriage: 16 Aug 1963

Vanessa Rae Auldridge

Birth: 20 Sep 1981

Vera

Verba Lee Byrd

Birth: 21 Jun 1926 in Copperas Cove, Texas

Marriage: 11 Apr 1942 in Lampasas, Texas

Death: 27 Apr 1999 in Goldthwaite, Texas

Vinnie Bea Palvador

Marriage: 05 May 1952

Viola Trudy Turner

Birth: 01 Aug 1908

Marriage: 18 Jul 1930

Vivian Anniece Cunningham

Birth: 17 Nov 1945 in Jasper County, Mo

Marriage: 06 Mar 1976 in Copperas Cove, Texas

Family Group Sheet of J. R. Cheatham

Husband: J. R. Cheatham

Death: 1918
 Father:
 Mother:



Wife: Lowella Gould Bean

Birth: 12 Jul 1856 in Plymouth N.H.
 Death: 1929
 Father: Andrew D. Bean
 Mother: S. J. Leonard



Children:

1 Name: Julie Ann Cheatham
 F Birth: 01 Nov 1885 in Belton, Texas
 Marriage: 05 Jul 1907
 Death: Mar 1969 in Killeen, Texas
 Spouse: Byron Phillip Gilmore



2 Name: James Dudley Cheatham
 M Birth: 20 Feb 1876



3 Name: May Juline Cheatham
 F Birth: 09 Apr 1878



4 Name: Birdie Cheatham
 F Birth: 09 Sep 1880



5 Name: George Dudley Cheatham
 M Birth: 31 Jan 1883



6 Name: Lottie Cheatham
 F Birth: 02 Apr 1888



7 Name: Richard Bean Cheatham
 M Birth: 31 Aug 1890



8 Name: A.D. Cheatham
M Birth: 20 Oct 1893



9 Name: Sara Jane (Sadie) Cheatham
F Birth: 17 Aug 1896



Notes:

J. R. Cheatham

Obituary, in The Belton Evening News Tuesday, June 11, 1918

J.R. Cheatham died almost suddenly at his home about 5:45 yesterday evening. He had been in poor health for about six years, but up to a short time before his death had been around as was his custom. About four o'clock he was taken with a "sinking spell" while on the gallery at his home, where he fell. After being placed on a bed a physician was called and a dose of medicine administered, after which he apparently went to sleep, snoring loudly until about 5:45 when the snoring stopped suddenly. Members of the family upon going to the bedside were very much surprised to find him dead. The spark of life having peacefully passed away.

Deceased was sixty five years of age, and came to Belton about forty-five years ago, and has reside here since.

Family Group Sheet of David Dudley Auldridge

Husband: David Dudley Auldridge

Birth: Jul 1865
 Marriage: 07 Apr 1889
 Death: 01 Sep 1927
 Father: James Gilbert Auldridge
 Mother: Jane Elliot



Wife: Miranda Purtela Hardin

Birth: 24 Aug 1873
 Death: 23 Apr 1958 in Copperas Cove, Texas
 Father: Thomas Jefferson Hardin
 Mother: Louisa Catherine Ludie King



Children:

1 Name: Levi Nathan Auldridge
 M Birth: 18 Jan 1894 in Bosque County, Texas
 Marriage: 13 Jun 1918 in Copperas Cove, Texas
 Death: Feb 1964 in Goldthwaite, Texas
 Spouse: Elva Sidney Turner



2 Name: Jefferson Davis Auldridge
 M Birth: 28 Jan 1890
 Marriage: 1913
 Spouse: Nettie Hartan



3 Name: Ludie Jane Auldridge
 F Birth: 01 Nov 1900
 Marriage: 1924
 Spouse: Sam Horton



4 Name: Horace Wilson Auldridge
 M Birth: 13 Jan 1896
 Spouse: Melba



5 Name: Mary Elizabeth Auldridge
 F Birth: 13 Feb 1902
 Marriage: 1923
 Spouse: Sam Jones



6 Name: James Gilbert Auldridge
 M Birth: 20 Aug 1904
 Marriage: 1925
 Spouse: Mabel



7 Name: Cloise Auldridge
 M Birth: 17 Oct 1911
 Spouse: Vera



8 Name: Annie Pearl Auldridge
F Birth: 10 Jul 1909
 Spouse: Frank Casey



9 Name: Lena Mae Auldridge
F Birth: 18 Dec 1892
 Marriage: 1912
 Spouse: Dan Cox



Notes:

Levi Nathan Auldridge

After release from the service, he received a pension of \$15/month, which began about 4 months later. Grocery bill was \$7/mo, and they bought 100 lbs of sugar each year for 4 or 5 years.

He lived with a crutch all his life, but was so active doing all the jobs, etc., that anyone else could do that the family never considered him being crippled. He was so determined to be normal and a good provider that he more than succeeded. He did a tremendous job, for the family never went hungry or without the best of clothes.

A Brief History of the Thomas Jefferson Hardin Family

In 1880 Thomas Jefferson Hardin was thirty-two years old and Louisa Catherine King Hardin was twenty-five. They lived in Ross County between Waco and Forth Worth. The land they lived on was a shallow, rocky soil. A lot of rock to contend with as well as plenty of tree stumps. Oats, corn, wheat and peanuts were the main crops grown in that area. The fields were small in most places. To the south of Hico, Texas was a larger town Meridan, Texas. Larger fields, better land and a better school was located there.

Now at this time there were four girls in the T.J Hardin family. Belle, was eight years old; Miranda was seven years old; Anjilena was four; and Mayola was two years old.

These six people lived in a two room house with a shed room added as a kitchen. There was a shallow well with a bucket and rope with a pulley to draw up the water. slow work, when washings had to done with hand drawn water. Of course when it rained they caught rain water from the house roof in the water barrels to help. The two older girls worked very long and hard to get the work done. T.J. helped with the water drawing when he could but he had his hands full trying to feed and clothe his family. He tried to farm grain crops to feed his family and animals. He was sore pressed to have enough surplus to trade for extra things that were needed, such as salt, soda, sugar, honey or syrup and cloth for new clothing once in a while. There were a few cows for milk and meat as well as a few sheep for wool.

The work animals were small and not very strong. All plowing and cultivation was done by walking behind plows and teams. The farming implements were very crude and simple. Gathering and harvesting the crops was all done by hand. Some time farmers were able to trade out work to help one another. If there were sons in the family the tasks were not so difficult because they shared the work. But in T..'s case, he had no help, because it was unheard of for girls or women to do farm labor. Besides, Belle and Miranda had their nose to the "grindstone" every waking minute. L.C. was pregnant and didn't feel like doing much of anything. So into this world of struggle and stress came the first male being of the T.J. and L.C. Hardin family.

The first son of T.J. and L.C. Hardin was a long, lanky boy with long arms and legs, very narrow feet, black hair and clear blue eyes. Typically Irish in looks, there was little resemblance to his black haired, brown eyed mother of French and Indian descent. He grew up in a home of a very strict father and a doting, babied mother. She married young and was very inexperienced in cooking and housekeeping. The older daughters were really kept busy doing all the house work, washing, and most of the cooking. Mayola was only two years old when Edmon was born. She was designated to look after the baby boy; rock the cradle and keep him happy if she could. Because she was too small to do household chores, that was her one assigned task, daily.

T.J. could not wait until Edmon was old enough and strong enough to do heavy field work. He was pressed into work in the fields by the time he was five years old. When he was eight or nine years old, he was kept home from school to work in the fields. He resented this very much because he, like any normal boy, wanted to play with the other boys at school. He was forced to do his school work at night by dim lamplight when he was tired and would have liked to have gone to bed, rested, or played. T.J. was a hard "taskmaster" and forced him to do his "sums" and try to learn to read. Some of this was trying to read the Bible, which was a very difficult task for an eight year old boy.

We were told that the pressure was so great, Edmon ran away from home and went to the home

of one of his father's brothers, William, near Hamilton, Texas. He was found, brought home, and severely unished. I am sure he vowed that he would leave as soon as he could manage. He did that very thing, by the time he was sixteen years old.

Edmon was a lover of horses and animals. He longed to have a horse of his own. To earn enough to get one for himself he "broke" horses for the neighbors and friends. He trained them to be work animals and to be saddle horses. He soon had a horse, to ride, of his own. The next project was to earn enough to buy a saddle and new boots. This took quite a while, for these were poor farming class of people who barely eeked out a living on the land, with very little money to spare.

When Edmon was 1 1/2 years old, the family moved from Hico, in Ross County to near Meridan, Texas, in Bosque County. Meridan was the county seat with a better school and a Baptist church in the town. The children were 9 miles from school. In bad weather, they were forced to stay at home.

When Edmon was two years old in 1882, a second boy was born, Elmer Presley. He, too, had black hair and blue eyes, but was a smaller baby than Edmon. He was a special favorite of T.J.'s and was destined to become the preacher of the family. Elmer never disobeyed his father and strove to please him in every way he could. He got special tutoring in Bible reading and learning to sing hymns, by rote, from T.J., who had a very good baritone voice. Elmer was urged to take special note of every preacher's method of delivery and custom. T.J. was grooming him for the ministry in the Baptist church in Texas. By the time he was 16 years old, he was a lay preacher and leading the singing for the camp type and brush arbor revival meetings. The pay was very meager, but Elmer with his father's help got a buggy and horse to travel about for his work. He became an ordained minister when he was 17 years old.

Edmon began to help other people with their work to earn money to feed his horse and buy his own clothes. He was gradually becoming more independent of his parents. There were two more boys born to the family - James Woodson in 1884 and Thomas Roy in 1890. They were put to work as soon as they were big enough. News of cattle drives to Fort Worth interested Edmon and he began helping out as a "cow hand" for owners of these cattle for board and room for himself and his horse. Then, finally, he progressed to pay to buy clothes and a better breed of horse. Edmon always took good care of his horse and fed him well. He began to long to be in south Texas where cattle ranges were full of cattle - a haven for lone cowboys, like Edmon.

He came to Waller county near Hempstead, where he went to the William John Morgan ranch in search of work. Mr. Morgan had 4 sons - Edward (called Ned), William (called Willie), Ira, and John, - who were Edmon's age and Edmon was invited to bunk there and rode with the Morgan boys and their friends. Mr. Morgan warned the boys about associating with the Crowder boys. These were rough "would be" outlaw type of fellows - stealing cattle, changing brands, and beating up on innocent people who objected to their way of life. The Crowder traveled in gangs with their cousins and followers of their kind. By out-smarting them, Edmon and the good guys weren't harmed.

T.J. and his family migrated to Waller county and then onto Fort Bend County. L.C. was always wanting to move. If she had her way, and usually did, they moved about every 2 years. She was never satisfied in one place very long. That kept T.J. broke, but, he usually let her have her say to have some peace.

About this time, Isaac Clark Davis, from Moberly, Missouri moved to Modena area of Fort Bend County. Davis was a prosperous man and owned teams of strong healthy Missouri mules that were outfitted with good leather harnesses. These well-fed animals caught the eye of Edmon Hardin because he really was interested in good animals. He asked Grandpa Davis, later, how he kept them looking so nice and healthy. He replied, "Son, if you work or ride an animal, it must be fed to keep it strong. I never slight my teams, they eat or they don't work. Remember that!" Edmon vowed he would have teams like those some day, and that came true very soon in his life. He worked for Grandpa Davis as he contracted road building in Fort Bend County and with any kind of work using teams throughout the area. Edmon was hard-working and thrifty.

The Davis family consisted of George B., Sidney Holman, James Daniel, Martha Hosephine (Matephine), and Grace Darling. Earlier, Grandma Alice Davis, and the two older daughters - Martha and Allie - had died of pneumonia soon after they moved to Texas from Missouri. The weather was cold, wet, and rainy every day for weeks. The northern people were not used to damp Texas gulf coast weather. Most of all, the poor housing they were in was to blame for their illness and death. It was impossible to build or improve their living quarters in that cold wet winter weather.

Matephine was only five years old at the time she was pressed into service as a cook, housekeeper and helper around the house. Her father was very patient and a good teacher. He could do almost anything. Matephine was the daughter that Edmon met later on as he came to work for Isaac Clark Davis. He became interested in her as a mate from that time on. He was a shy young man, but very humble and always very polite. He was a hard worker, never lazy or lagging. Naturally, he wanted to impress Mr. Davis because of Matephine. She had 3 older brothers he was concerned with, also. George was a school teacher, Sid was a farmer and Dan didn't know what he wanted to do. He was a young delicate young man - not big like George, Sid, or his dad.

In 1091, Edmon, Dan Davis and several more young men from Fort Bend went to Dallas to work on the Auditorium of Music House that Dallas people wanted completed so the Polish pianist, Ignacy Jan Paderewski could play there. They found a place to room and board with laundry done for \$1.50 per week. Edmon intended to save money so he could marry Matephine Davis when he went home.

On May 29, 1902, the day set for the concert, the roof was not completed so the workmen were instructed not to hammer during the performance. They lay on the top of the building peering down through the rafters and listened to the powerful, beautiful piano music. I can remember hearing Daddy tell how beautifully Paderewski played. From that day on, he wanted to have a child who could play like that.

The men stayed on to help finish the job before coming back to Fort Bend County. They had saved their money and came home feeling good for having had the opportunity to get a nest-egg started. Edmon had big plans for his money, because he was planning on getting married to his sweetheart, Matephine Davis.

On August 9, 1903, Edmon and Matephine were married and moved into what was known as the "Old Bolton Place" in Modena near Snake Creek. Grandpa Davis helped them get set up for house keeping. Edmon bought some good mules to start his farming with. They were very proud of their home on this black land farm. The house was a big 3 room single walled house, set a long way from the barn and water well. The well was near the barn so the animals could

be watered easily.

The pump had no pipes that led to the house. Every drop of water had to be carried to the house by buckets. The washing was done nearer to the well so the water didn't have to be carried so far. Clotheslines were nearby. Anyway you went, there was a lot of walking to be done.

Edmon began married life with a full day. He farmed and did contract work on the side, like road building, breaking land, ditch making, or even fencing land. He came in with his teams to get farm work started and then off to the jobs. He stayed away from home on nights that he was too far away to come in every night. He hired anyone who wanted to work and furnished their food while they were away from their homes. Grandpa Davis helped to keep things running smoothly. He set up camps for them and did a lot of the cooking and getting the supplies they needed. If it rained a big rain, they all came home for a few days until it was dry enough to road build again. If it were a fencing job, they went back as soon as the rain let up. Edmon fed his teams well and was so proud of them.

On June 16, 1904, a daughter was born to the Hardin home. Her name was Thelma Adah - a blue-eyed, blonde, delicate baby girl. As she grew older her hair had curls and a golden glint to it and she had brown freckles all over her face and arms. She was very quiet, a lady like child. Striving to please everyone, especially her parents, if she was scolded for anything, it almost broke her heart.

The school teacher boarded with Grandpa Davis and he furnished her a horse and buggy so she could ride to school. She came by and picked Thelma up and took her to school when Thelma was just 5 years old. The teacher only had a few children then, so, if Thelma got sleepy, the teacher fixed her a pallet and let her take a nap.

About this time, Edmon and Sid Davis (his brother-in-law) bought a big, grey stallion to breed mares with. His name was Eagle - such a magnificent animal. Both the men were very proud of him. Matephine was in the field rolling the corn rows as she rode Pet across the fields from end to end. It was spring and a rabid dog came through our yard, fought with our three Spitz-Collie dogs near the house. Then he went through the horse lot and bit poor Eagle as he went by. The alarm was sounded through the neighborhood and men tracked the dog and killed it.

The sad part was that our three dogs had to be destroyed and so did Eagle. In getting Eagle away from the lot out into the pasture to destroy him, both Edmon and Sid were infected by rabid saliva from the horse's mouth. This meant a trip to Austin for 18 days of rabies shots in the stomach. Both men were bundled up and sent away for the treatment.

Matephine was left with 3 little girls and one son until Edmon got home again. Sarah Minette was born September 19, 1905, MayBelle on September 15, 1907, and Davis was born in 1909.

In the summer of 1910, tragedy struck the Edmon Hardin home. Little Davis ate too many fresh Irish potatoes and died of congestion of the stomach despite all efforts to try and save him. Ten and eleven miles was a long way from a doctor in horse and buggy times. It took too long for the doctor to get out there to try to save the little boy. Both parents were devastated. They couldn't understand why God allowed this to happen.

The families rallied around, but they couldn't help much in this situation. Elmer Hardin was an

ordained minister by this time and came to conduct the service for Edmon's family.

The next morning, Elmer, Woodson, and Roy were all waiting their turn to shave using the straight razor and razor strap. The men began "horsing" around and got into a wrestling match over the razor strap. They were in the yard outside the door. Roy attempted a leg trip on Elmer and in doing so, broke Elmer's leg. The bone was heard to crack like a broken stick. This added further misery to the already sad situation. In time, the broken leg healed, but was always crooked because of such a long time getting it set.

New homes were being built in the nearby community of Beasley, Texas. Land was being broken for farms around there. Edmon rented land from Samuel Cobb a dentist and son-in-law of Freeman Booth of Booth, Texas. The land was broken and the houses were being built for the Hardins and Sid Davis about a half mile apart. In the spring of 1912, we moved to Beasley about one mile from town. T.C. was born at the Bolton place December 15, 1910. He was a delicate baby boy and both parents were nervous about his health. If he got sick, Daddy almost got sick, too, with worry. He didn't want to lose this son. T.C. was almost two years old when we moved to Beasley.

Both our parents were very interested in our education and supported every phase of the schooling process. Daddy wanted to be sure his children got a good education and were not kept out unless there was a dire emergency or illness. Our mother was an elocution specialist, and tutored us on our speeches and parts for the programs. The Hardin children were always chosen first for program parts. They could rely on Matephine Hardin to see that her children knew their parts and speeches or songs perfectly. She drilled us over and over until it was letter perfect. And as for costumes, she was very inventive and original in costume designing for programs. I don't know how many dozens of angel wings and such props that she made over the years. She never said "no" to anyone that came for help. Daddy always saw that we got there to practice and on time. Those things were important to him for he wanted his children to have and be the best that he could afford. He always supported box suppers and war drives and community events 100%, plus some extra.

All the years he was helping anyone who asked for it, especially on his family side. He was a deputy sheriff and worked wherever he was needed anytime he was called on.

On July 18, 1913, Flora was born and 3 days later, Aunt Mary gave birth to Bessie Lee Hardin in the same house. Flora and Bessie Lee became as close as twins, even though they were cousins and lived in different homes.

Aunt Mary was Mary Ashley Hardin, first wife of Woodson Hardin. Woodson had left Mary and their two children, Luther and three year old Ethel Mae, at Mary's parents home in Ralls, Texas. When the Ashleys learned that Mary was going to have another child they told her she had to leave.

When Mary wrote to Edmon and Matephine for help they immediately told her to come on down to our house. Edmon contacted Woodson to come and take up his fatherly responsibility. He came and Dad rented them a small house in Beasley. The arrangement lasted about two or three months, then Woodson left and never came back.

Aunt Mary did sewing and practical nursing. Our family helped her when she needed help. She obtained a divorce, in time, and married William Kageler, a widower who lived in Beasley. He

had children, so they became a large family. Mr Kageler was a blacksmith. The Kageler children were all older than the Hardin children. Aunt Mary tried to help them all she could because their mother had died when they were all small. The two daughters married in a short while and left the household.

When Bessie Lee was five years old she became very ill. Mama and Aunt Mary did their best to save her life. The doctor was drunk and did not get there until after her death. This was a very trying time for all. Luther never got over the fact that Bessie might have lived if the doctor had been a reliable person.

On November 5, 1915, Martha Inez was born into our lives. She had whooping cough and polio and could not walk for about a year. Mama massaged her legs and feet b the hour until she finally began to walk again. She was a very jolly, fun loving girl all her life - loved and enjoyed by everyone who knew her as long as she lived.

In 1917, T.J.'s brother Benjamin franklin came to Beasley, and he ended up at our house. Ludie wouldn't let him stay at their home, but of course, Edmon didn't ever say no to anyone. B.F. was on dope before he came and at our house, he couldn't and didn't get any more. He was depressed and committed suicide in our house one afternoon. There were funeral expenses and arrangements and of course, Edmon paid for it all. The room was scrubbed, painted, and all the furniture was burned to clean up the awful mess.

Matephine was pregnant, and Abe. R. Hardin was born June 30, 1917. He was named for Mr. Abe Robinowitz, a good friend of our parents. He gave Abe a \$50.00 war bond for a namesake present.

While our parents lived on the Bolton place, Mr. Abe came around with a peddler's pack, selling notions to make money to bring his family out of Russian territory where they were persecuted. Mama always fixed him food when he came, gave him water and soap to clean up, and helped him all she could. He became a loyal friend and he and daddy were very close. In fact, later he opened a general mercantile store in Beasley. Dad helped him through many experiences that arose in his business dealing with many people. The Robinowitz family of brothers and sister became our very best, loyal friends throughout our lifetime. There wasn't any thing daddy wouldn't do for them and the same was true of their family.

On October 30, 1919, another brother was born, Nelso Wyatt Hardin. Then came Karl Knarlhing Hardin, who was born on October 5, 1922. Karl was the largest baby of the family. The doctor said he weight 15 lbs at birth. Next came the baby, James Roy Hardin, born December 29, 1926. This made five boys and dad was really proud of those boys.

T.C. wasn't a very strong fellow when he was in his teens, but he wanted to be with daddy all he could. He was a muleskinner along with the strongest of the negro hands that worked. He never complained, even though sometimes it was tough. Dad didn't expect that much from him, but was so proud he could depend on him to be there where they could be together. He wanted T.C. to be a rodeo performer, to rope. He bought him good horses and the equipment necessary like saddles, ropes boots, hats, etc. T.C. told Mama he would have givben anythings for a bicycle but he didn't dare disappoint Daddy with the rodeo appearances.

In the winter time we often played "42" or dominoes. Dad and Mom would take T.C. or I for a partner so we could learn to play well. It was good fun.

During the long winter nights, we liked to have candy or popcorn to munch on. Daddy especially liked "Divinity" candy. He would say "Girls, don't you think it is about time to make up some candy? The boys and I will pick out the pecans, if you girls get the candy made." That was all we needed to get us started. We made batches of all kinds of candy. We even learned how to make dipped chocolate drops. "Divinity" was our favorite. Once, I was beating the egg whites and Flora was pouring the hot syrup in. She accidentally poured syrup on my right thumb. All the skin came off down to the bone. I had a sore thumb for quite some time, but it did not stop me from making candy. We made pounds and pounds at Christmas time.

Also during the winter months we heard many good books read. Mama was a good interesting reader, so she would read a chapter of a story each night. We hurried up to get the dishes done and kitchen cleaned up so we could hear the story. It was a pleasant time for all of us. Of course that was in the days before radio or T.V. You made your own family entertainment if you knew how.

If we had visitors, there was always many tall stories that were told. Just hearing about things that had happened years before was entertaining for young people. Sometimes there were checker games, but that was rather dull because only two people could play. If there were enough grownups we often had two tables of "42" going at a time. Then the winner at table one played the winner at table two. We didn't stay up late on school nights. Of course the lessons had to be done first, before we could play.

Since Daddy was an officer, he was called on to make a many arrests and such things. He never mistreated a person he took into custody. The negro men trusted him and respected him as well as he respected their rights and habits. It was quite natural for them to get into fights and some were quick with the razor as a weapon. If any of them got into trouble and knew they would be arrested, they would come to our house night or day and ask "Mr. Ed" to please take them to jail. They knew he wouldn't mistreat them like some of the other white deputies did. He never refused to do what he could to help. All our lives, we had black people work for us and never had trouble getting help during harvest time, because Dad was fair and kind and they liked to work for us.

At hog killing time, we always had 2 or 3 times more help than we needed, but they knew they would all take home good helpings of fresh pork for pay, and besides, they got a good free meal at noon. Dad would never lock the smokehouse, even though he knew some were helping themselves to bacon, ham, and sausage or lard. He always said, if they were hungry, it would not hurt to let them take some food. He always killed more hogs than our family needed because he knew that some would help themselves.

Minette married Homer Griffith. Dad was disappointed because he wanted her to study music at Baylor College. But, when the first grandson, Marvin Leroy Griffith came along, he got over the hurt because he was so proud of that cute, smart, little boy.

Then, Thelma married Albert Meyer, a good friend of the family and they had Wallace - another grandson.

All this time, T.J. and L.C. were moving from place to place. She was never satisfied for any length of time at one place. Of course, moving costs were high, and our dad did more than his part keeping them up as well as other members of the family. There were always emergencies

like death of children, husbands, or some member of his family asking for help. He never said a word, but did what was asked of him, even though his own family could have had more themselves if he hadn't given so much away. Even to a sister-in-law who came with \$50 French style shoes paid by our dad's money, our mother never said anything, but I know she thought plenty. She never caused any unpleasantness in any family circles.

Some gypsies came to Beasley and they had smallpox. Three of their children died. Daddy had to contact the doctor and undertaker and keep them in quarantine until the danger was over. He came home after the ordeal with a smallpox inoculation and a bad chill and fever. Mama put his clothes in boiling water to sterilize them and to protect us. Of course, we all had to have the smallpox vaccination at home and everyone in the community who had not been inoculated had to take them.

When automobiles began to reach our rural communities, we were one of the first to acquire one. I remember the first one had carbide headlights that were activated by the addition of water, like the miner's old headlights. Then, later we got a Model T Ford with a battery and headlights from the battery. One of our first trips from the community church on Sunday was to visit Damon Mound, Texas, to see the sulphur mine in operation there at the time. Those days we thought that was a long trip over the all dirt grade roads. Our Dad supervised the arrangements for the trip and visit into the mines.

Daddy continued to do contract work for the county, state, and for private individuals as well as corporations. He farmed some eighty acres in corn and cotton along with the outside work going on all the time. He felt he had to do this for there was a constant drain on our finances because he helped so many others.

Dad had an ulcerated stomach and was having his teeth all pulled. I know he didn't feel well. He was ordered by his doctor to quit smoking and was on an all liquid diet. But, anyway, he got ready and went on down to Needville. T.C. was there roping in the rodeo and Dad was concerned about how he was doing. He wanted T.C. to have this rodeo stint because he was leaving for college the next week. Dad wanted him to go, but knew he was going to miss him terribly.

Dad was asked to pick up a man who had slipped in without buying a ticket. He picked the man up and was on his way back to the main gate of the grounds and drove right into the path of an airplane that was taking off from the grounds with passengers. The car was flipped over and over and crushed him between the steering wheel and the seat. It almost severed his spinal cord, causing him to be paralyzed completely on his right side and the legs below his waist were numb. He was rushed to Rosenberg to the hospital to our family doctor, Dr. J.W. Weeks. Dr. Weeks told us that there was no chance he could live more than 24 hours, his spinal cord was only a thread and it would break and cause his death. He lived until about 9 o'clock the next night and died on September 16, 1927.

Now, our dad was not a perfect man no one is but he was a kind a compassionate man who cared about people and gave his all for his family. In fact, if there were more people in the world like him, the world would definitely be a better place to live today.

Family Group Sheet of Levi Nathan Auldridge

Husband:	Levi Nathan Auldridge	
	Birth:	18 Jan 1894 in Bosque County, Texas
	Marriage:	13 Jun 1918 in Copperas Cove, Texas
	Death:	Feb 1964 in Goldthwaite, Texas
	Father:	David Dudley Auldridge
	Mother:	Miranda Purtela Hardin



Wife:	Elva Sidney Turner	
	Birth:	24 Mar 1900
	Death:	08 Sep 1980 in Gatesville, Texas
	Father:	Lewis Perkins Turner
	Mother:	Ada Carrie Donia Blackwell



Children:			
1	Name:	Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge	
M	Birth:	18 Sep 1924	
	Marriage:	11 Apr 1942 in Lampasas, Texas	
	Spouse:	Verba Lee Byrd	
2	Name:	Nadine Zoma Auldridge	
F	Birth:	04 Sep 1920	
	Marriage:	Sep 1940	
	Spouse:	Jack Errol Shepard	
3	Name:	Jeraldine Onita Naomi Auldridge	
F	Birth:	28 Jul 1922 in Fry place nine m north of Copperas Cove	
	Marriage:	10 May 1948	
	Spouse:	James Morris McClement	
	Other Spouses:	Howard Gotcher (27 Jan 1937)	
4	Name:	Gilbert Doyle Auldridge	
M	Birth:	27 Mar 1927	
	Marriage:	05 May 1952	
	Spouse:	Vinnie Bea Palvador	
5	Name:	Dennis Ervin Auldridge	
M	Birth:	28 Jul 1935	
	Marriage:	Mar 1955	
	Spouse:	Mary Carmen Ortega	

Notes:

Levi Nathan Auldridge

After release from the service, he received a pension of \$15/month, which began about 4 months later. Grocery bill was \$7/mo, and they bought 100 lbs of sugar each year for 4 or 5 years.

He lived with a crutch all his life, but was so active doing all the jobs, etc., that anyone else could do that the family never considered him being crippled. He was so determined to be normal and a good provider that he more than succeeded. He did a tremendous job, for the family never went hungry or without the best of clothes.

Nadine Zoma Auldridge

Born on the Shouse place in Coryell County. She attended school for a year at Taylor's Creek School in

Notes: (cont.)

Lampasas County and the remainder at Copperas Cove where she graduated. Was enrolled in Howard Payne College at Brownwood, Texas, when she decided to get married. She and Errol lived for awhile at the Shepard home place several miles out of Killeen; later moving to Lubbock, where they lived until about June 1952. They then moved to Goldthwaite, where they lived until December, moving back to the Shepard place.

Jeraldine Onita Naomi Auldridge

Excerpts of notes written by Jeraldine: "I was born on the Fry place adjoining the Shouse place, nine miles north of Copperas Cove, Texas on July 28, 1922. Except for one years schooling at Taylors Creek, the remainder of my skimpy education was received at Copperas Cove, I quit school in the 3rd month of my ninth year grade. Howard and I lived at various places including Kempner, Copperas Cove, Gatesville and Fort Worth. Divorced at Fort Worth, Texas on Dec 23, 1946, after nine years. On May 10, 1948 married James Morris McClement of Hawk Run, PA, at Lubbock. His son, James Morris, Jr, whose mother died when he was born, and was raised by his maternal grand parents at Lubbock, Texas. We lived at Lubbock until June 1951, when we moved to Goldthwaite, Tex."

Gilbert Doyle Auldridge

Attended school at Copperas Cove until 1943 when the family moved to Melvin, Texas. Several months before he graduated from high school, Gilbert enlisted in the Navy, with his Mother accepting his diploma at graduation night.

He lived in Hobbs, New Mexico, where he was employed with El Paso Natural Gas.

Dennis Ervin Auldridge

Dennis started school at Copperas Cove, in 1943 was transferred to Melvin, and in 1946 to Goldthwaite. He had an amazing ability at learning, but tired of school and quit, however at 17 years old he enlisted in the Navy and finished high school requirements. In the Navy he took three courses in Electronics, after his discharge he attended the Southern College of Commerce at Fort Worth, Texas and finished the course in Electronics in less than three months, setting a record in this school as having finished faster than anyone. In August 1958 he and his wife, Mary, moved to Forth Worth, Texas where Dennis was employed at Convair.

Dennis fell on hard times, thanks to alcoholism and other factors. He was involved in a holdup for which he served time in prison. During that time, he wrote several treatises on psychology, became a preacher, among other things. Afterwards, he lived at various places, including Arkansas, Missouri, and around Killeen.

LIFE of LEVI

Levi Nathan Auldridge
1894 to 1964

Compiled by
Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge
First Born son of Levi
February 1999

All names, dates, events written herein
are true and fast as to the
best of my memory and
ability to write them

DEDICATION

*This book is dedicated to the memory of all
the Auldridges past whose name lives on now and for evermore.
I've compiled this book for my family that I love so much.*

Levi Nathan Truett Auldridge

INTRODUCTION

The name Auldridge is English in origin, dating from 1739. Previously the name was derived from the German version of Aldrich, which is interpreted to mean "Old Ruler". Other prominent variations of Auldridge are Alldredge, Aldridge, and Aldrich.

The United States Census Bureau in 1970 estimated that there are approximately 100 heads of households in the U.S. and with the average household of 3.1 there would be 310 people carrying the Auldridge name.

Levi Nathan Auldridge's grandfather was James Gilbert who left Cheshire, England on a freighter and bound for the U.S.A. He left to avoid serving in the Royal Army. He arrived in Nashville, Ill. In 1827 at age 17. He married Sarah Jane Elliot who was born in Indiana in 1833. He served one year in the Mexican war and was a rancher, horse trader and tobacco farmer in the state of Kentucky. He died in 1869, born 1811.

Levi Nathan Auldridge was born January 18, 1894 the third child of David Dudley and Miranda Purtela (Hardin) Auldridge. David was born in 1865 and died in 1927. His wife Miranda (everyone called her 'Randa) was born in 1873 and died in 1958. David Dudley Auldridge was buried in Knox City. His wife is buried at Copperas Cove.

Grandpa David was a farmer all his life, farming in Basque and Coryell Counties as a tenant farmer and never owned any of the land he farmed. He and Grandma married in 1889 and had nine children from 1890 through 1911. Four daughters and five sons. They moved from Bee

House in Coryell County (where Levi was born) to Burkett community in Coleman County. My Dad told me when they moved from Bee House they passed right in front of the ranch where we live now, one mile east of Goldthwaite. He said they moved everything they owned in a wagon, rode and led horses and milk cows all the way. He said the country here was covered with shin oak and spanish oak with grass up to the saddle stirrups. They lived in Coleman County until they moved out west to Knox county. Farming around Knox City, Benjamin, Monday and Rochester.

When I was about 12 years of age I wanted to have a hound dog to run fox. I asked my Dad about getting one and he told me that he never knew anyone that chased fox hounds to amount to anything. I asked him if Grandpa David didn't run hounds and he said he did and that he didn't amount to anything either. Case closed, you didn't argue with Levi if you stuck your feet under his table.

Grandma 'Randa was a widow at age 54 and during their marriage she gave birth to Jeff, Lena, Levi, Horace, Ludie, Mary, James, Annie and Clois for a total of nine children. Her surname was Hardin and claimed to be a cousin of the infamous John Wesley Hardin who was a horse trader, horse racer, cattle buyer and card player but had enough time to put 46 notches on his pistol before John Selman shot him in the back at a saloon in El Paso. He swore that he never killed a man that didn't need killing! My Dad, Levi, said his mother always told him she was cousin of John Wesley Hardin but his sister Annie claimed there was no kin and vowed until her death that she would prove such to me and was going to reveal other family secrets but I never received that information.

Sam and Lena's oldest son, Gordon, lived with Levi and Elva in the early 30's. He could read palms and coffee grounds but was very illiterate could barely sign his name. All of the kids (unless they were nursing) slept in one room on an old tarp no mattress right on the floor.

Levi was born on a cold night that January 18, 1894. He was preceded in birth by brother Jeff in 1890 and a sister Lena in 1892. Brother Jeff developed into the toughest of the 9 children becoming the best bronc rider in the country. There never was a bronc he couldn't tame but he was a gypsy type of man that never had any desire to become anything greater than a bronc buster and he never did. He picked cotton from the plains of West Texas to the valleys of California, never owned a dress suit in his life or ever had very much to put on the table except flour and water gravy but he lived longer than any known male Auldridge and died in his 90's at Poteet in South Texas.

Sister Lena didn't fare any better than Jeff. She married Sam Cox in Coryell County and lived most of her married life in a two room shack in the community of Pulltite and had 15 children. Two of them died at birth. Her husband Sam was a 135 lb., whiskey drinking (mostly moonshine) tobacco spitting cedar chopper. My Dad said he had seen Sam, many times, knock a mule to his knees with one well placed blow to a spot above his eyes and that he could cut a cedar post down with a double bit cedar axe as fast a man could do it now with a chain saw. Sister Lena died in the same room where Sam had delivered all 15 kids. Levi would regularly buy flour, beans, potatoes, lard, and corn meal and deliver it to them. He would also buy tennis shoes for them to wear and I went with him one time there.

As we arrived one of the kids run up to him and said "uncle Levi" mama has had twins! My Dad asked what they named them, and they answered "we wanted to name them apple and orange" (thinking of something eat, I suppose) "but mama named them Orrey and Tony."

Levi was born with light brown curly hair and blue eyes. He didn't like the curly hair and would comb it out straight until his brother Horace was born with red kinky hair, which the kids called "nigger hair", from the type that most negroes were born with. So Levi accepted the wavy hair better after seeing the trouble his brother was having combing it.

Levi's place of birth was at Bee House in Coryell County in an old farm house that is barely standing today and over 100 years old. Bee House was so named because of a swarm of bees took over the old school house there. It is located between Evant, Texas and Imyara, Texas about 20 plus miles from the county seat, Gatesville, Texas. While growing up Levi developed into a cowboy and farm worker. There being no football played there in those days his spare time was spent playing baseball out on the native prairie grass field. He also loved croquet games, playing marbles, pitching horse shoes, knocking pie pan-sized wasp nests, fighting bumble bees with a shingle paddle, killing rabbits with a sling shot, shooting squirrels with a "nigger shooter", twisting rabbits out of hollow trees and popping snake heads. I've seen my Dad reach into an old elm tree that had a hole in the side, grab a chicken snake by the tail and in one movement pop its head off.

Another past time, and food source also was robbing honey out of bee trees. Honey was always on the table at every meal along with "mush" a corn meal breakfast cereal, sugar syrup (made from sugar only) lots of molasses, red beans, corn pone, sour dough biscuits, mountain oysters (in season), poke salad, fried chicken, fresh dug taters, (usually fried) and corn on the cob lots of time it was roasted with the shuck on the open fire place that most people used for heat and sometimes cooking. Most of the heat went up the chimney so everyone that stood in front of it burned their shins and had frozen behinds! The house they lived in had wood shingles most of the time, occasionally a tin roof. The walls were single 1 x 12" stripped on the outside (vertically) with oak batts or plain 1x4, with no place for insulation, unknown at that period of time.

Walls were covered inside with newspapers with flour paste or if money was available walrite a course heavy wide strip paper was tacked on with ornamental tacks. The ceilings were beaded ceiling (a thin hard pine) tongue and groove about 3 ½" wide. Some times the ceilings were 1x6 tongue and groove and canvas would be tacked on and ceiling paper pasted to the canvas. Many times burlap would be tacked on and of course the dust would come right on down when a strong wind was blowing. Nearly all the windows were 8 pane 4 over 4 lite and doors were 30" wide x 6'6" high and only 1 1/8 inches thick. Exterior doors were usually the same. All had rim lock hardware because the doors were too thin for a bored in concealed lock that is common today. Of course there was no electricity and no plumbing but there was always a 2 or 3 holer outhouse located down hill from the house and the wood pile was located near the out house.

The rule was every time to went out to outhouse you would take a handful of clean cobs to use there and bring back an arm load of wood. The wood was cut with an axe, hauled in with a wagon and team and split before using. Live oak was the hotter long burning wood for fireplace or heater but spanish oak was preferred for the kitchen wood stove as it burned faster and hotter. If it was ironing day the stove would be keep burning after breakfast and the irons were heated and the ironing completed early so as not to heat up the house. The kitchen many times was located in a shed room added to the rear of the residence and a large crock jar was always on a stand for drinking and cooking water. The dining table was long and covered with oil cloth with wood benches on one or two sides. Rope bottom or hide covered chairs were used by the adults and the kids were expected to use the benches. Quite a few homes only had wood nail kegs to sit on. The iron bed steads were equipped with lump cotton mattresses or feather filled

mattresses, some contained nothing but shucks. Always in the kitchen or on the back porch hung a wooden water bucket and a gourd dipper or long handled tin cup.

At age 16 Levi left home and got his first full time paying job. He went to work for Morgan Allen and his wife Becky of Pidcoke Texas. It was located on Bee House Creek and had good bottom farm land where they raised wheat , oats, cotton, corn and maize. He almost lost his job the very first day of his job. Uncle Morg (we called them uncle and aunt, although they were no blood kin) put him to cutting wheat with a binder and 3 up team and had come back to the field and noticed a small spot left uncut. He asked Levi why he left that spot and he told him there was a bird nest with eggs in it and he didn't want to ruin it. Uncle Morg told him if he didn't cut it he might have to fire him. Levi told him he better just pay him off even though he sure needed to work. Uncle Morg just grinned, took another chew of tobacco and told him if he had that much compassion for a little old bird next he might ought to keep him around. That broke the ice for the beginning of a life time friendship.

Levi had learned to fish and hunt on Bee House Creek and in going to school at nearby Pearl, Texas he crossed Bufford Creek where fishing was good. Levi always said his education was short he kidded that he only went 3 days. He said one day the teacher was gone, the next days was Saturday, and Monday was a holiday. I believe he did finish the sixth or seventh grade but he was super at mathematics. He had a knack for adding, multiplying etc., in his head and seldom wrote any problem down. I've told several people I would like to match him up with an electronic calculator because he'd have the answer before they got it punched in. He always said his 3 R's consisted of 'Racing, 'Rassling, and "recess! His brothers attested to the fact that no one ever beat him in wrestling as he was growing up.

I personally saw him take on Stanform Smith age 19, he was O.O. Smith's nephew and sent up to work at the lumber yard. Stanford delivered a load of siding out to a job my Dad and I were doing for James Leonhard. He unloaded the bob tail delivery truck by putting it in compound gear and jumping it out from the house to the hiway. He came in and asked Levi what else he needed. Levi told him he would like the wood siding stacked up near the job. He said he didn't stack, just deliver. Levi told him to just load it up and return it to the lumber yard. He told Levi if he wasn't an old man (47 at the time) with a crooked leg he'd cut him down a notch. Levi told him to pay no attention to age or his leg, just cut loose. Stanford made a pass at him and Levi grabbed him by the arm, threw him down on the ground and put a scissor lock on him with his arm pulled up behind him before you could say black cow. Stanford in pain was hollering for him to turn loose. Levi told him when he apologized and would promise to stack the lumber he'd let go. So he apologized and stacked the lumber and then asked if there was anything else he could do. He told him to go tell his boss what he had done and let that be a lesson to him and it was!

So Levi worked for uncle Morg several years digging tanks and ditches, building terraces, etc., with horse drawn fresno or slip, building fences and gates along with the farming and cattle ranching. They also raised a lot of hogs and Levi learned to fatten them on corn and all through his life he loved to raise hogs. It wasn't long before his interest turned to more than hogs and he would borrow uncle Morg's horse and buggy and drive off and cross tablerock creek up on the prairie to Antelope and visit with the Turner sisters, Elva, Linnie, Ora and Ruby. He immediately took a shine to Elva and his brother Horace got to romancing Ora. Before long uncle Morg's brother, Walter, had a good horse and buggy and he cut Horace out of the picture with Ora. So brother Horace decided to change his attention to Elva, and one day while on the way to the Turners, he and Levi in the buggy and Levi fell asleep so Horace gave him a whiskey shampoo

before Levi knew what was going on. He tried to dry it off, and did, but the odor remained. The purpose was to turn Elva off in attention to Levi as she would have nothing to do with anyone that drank, but it didn't fool Elva and Horace was left without a girl friend. Now I doubt that one incident ruined his passions for women but I do know that he never married until he was in his forties and the woman he married was in her twenties. So the romancing was solid between Elva and Levi, with the only problem being Elva's father, Louis Turner. Grandpa Turner (we all called him Pa) was born in 1871 and being from the old school didn't think any of these buggy drivers showing up at his house were good enough for any of his 5 daughters. Not only that but Ma Turner (Donie Blackwell Turner) rode a tight herd on those gals also. In fact they acted like they wanted them to become old maids, and I've come to that conclusion by reading many old letters and what my parents have told me.

Pa and Ma Turner were down right mean and domineering toward their 5 daughters but had loose reins on their 3 sons. They were poor and had a hard time feeding their 8 children and the sons were allowed to work and keep their money while the daughters picked cotton in season for the neighbors but their father kept all the money they made. The summer my mother got married, Pa Turner didn't even give her enough money to buy cloth to make her a new dress.

Elva was born March 24, 1900 at Copperas Cove, Texas and went to school at Antelope not far from where she lived. It was not too far from great grand parents the Blackwells who ranched on the Cowhouse Creek with their old Bachelor son George who was a brother to Ma Turner. I remember Uncle George visiting our home in Copperas Cove when he would drive cattle into the rail yard on his old cow horse. He was a real old time cowboy and had asthma real bad; my Dad always said it was because he slept with his boots on.

I remember his old stiff, tan colored cloth dungarees, always left his spurs attached on his boots and wore that old sweat and grease stained felt hat all the time unless he was at the table eating. The hat was milked down in front and creased almost flat where he had handled it. He was probably mama Elva's favorite uncle.

The day came on June 13, 1918 when Levi made his move on Elva that would completely change both of their lives. Elva had turned eighteen on March 24 and was legally able to leave the family that had become so hard to live with and be happy so she was ready to leave the nest but had no means of support and no place to go. But Levi had made plans to take care of that problem. He had written Aunt Dovie Pass that he was pretty sure that he would be called up for military service real soon and he wanted to marry Elva but he didn't want her to live at home while he was gone. Aunt Dovie told him she was welcome to come to Goldthwaite Texas and live with them. So Levi had contacted Elva and found that she and her sister Ruby would be coming to town on June 13 with their father.

<<< - Elva's parents, Lewis Turner

They came into Copperas Cove, Texas and went to the drug store. Elva slipped away and called Levi. He hired a car and came by and picked her up and they drove to Mr. Brown's and were married on Wednesday, June 13, 1918 at 11 AM They drove back to a hotel and had lunch then went to the drug store where her papa and sister were at. She told her papa they got married and asked if she could go home and pick up her clothes and things and he said she could. They went and spent the night at Lorne Chisums and with the McDonald family the next day, later going out to the home place near Antelope and picked up her things. Levi and Elva spent their honeymoon with the Nathan McDonald's and about 10 days later the call came for

him to report to Waco, Texas. Levi carried Elva to Goldthwaite to live with Mr. And Mrs. E.L. Pass and reported for duty.

He wrote a letter to the Pass's on July 24, 1918 and advised them that he was in the Army Infantry assigned to Co. A. of the 34th Infantry 7th Division. He was issued clothing and equipment and the next day put on a troop train for New York. He was in quarantine there for 10 days and shipped to France, although they had told him he would receive 6 months training before seeing any front line action. That didn't prove true because soon after he arrived in France they put him right into action. Being a ground soldier he was issued a rifle with bayonet and spent a lot of time in the trenches. It was very wet over there and besides all the wounded in the hospitals and infirmary there was lots of trench mouth, athlete's foot and pneumonia.

On November, 1, 1918 at St. Mihiel in the south sector of France, Levi was hit by shrapnel in his left leg and knee, removing his knee cap and almost severing his whole knee joint. He was in severe pain and passed out and his comrades moving up to the fighting front took him to be dead. He came to and saw a big strapping soldier approaching and he cried out for help. The soldier stopped and picked him up and he thought from all the pain he felt that his leg had fallen off. This man by himself took Levi to the infirmary on the battle field and laid him on a stretcher. Levi asked him his name and he said he was Asa Talley from Brownwood, Texas. Levi thought he would bleed to death but he told this big raw bone soldier "If I live I will never forget you or your name and I thank you for saving my life and if I get back home I'll hunt you until I find you and do something to repay for your kindness". The soldier replied that he was able to help wished Levi good luck and returned back to the battle field. Levi never saw this man again until 1946, 28 years later. This meeting will be addressed later on. Levi was moved to a hospital there in France where he stayed for 2 months before he was shipped back to the USA.

Meanwhile back in Goldthwaite, Texas Levi's wife Elva was living with her aunt and uncle, the Pass's, and working for the Harvey family at 1809 Fisher street. They operated a boarding house there, that Elva helped with, and a variety store downtown. One day a telegram was delivered to Elva and she opened it and was devastated when she read "Private Levi Nathan Auldridge was killed in action Nov. 1, 1918 at St. Mihiel, France" Saddened she didn't know what to do and she turned to her uncle and aunt for comfort and advice as she had left her mama and papa and married a man they neither liked or wanted her to marry. He sister Ora had married Walter Allen and another sister Linnie had left home at Antelope and went to San Antonio, Texas and were working for pretty good pay at Fox Studio's there. This was at the time the top film company in the country and had their logo and advertisements painted and plastered on signs, barns and in the newspapers everywhere. It was decided that Elva would need more money to support her, with the loss of Levi so she packed up and left Goldthwaite for San Antonio, although hating to leave her Aunt and Uncle that had grown closer to her than her own parents. Elva did get a good position in the developing part of the film company.

Things were going good on the job when she received another telegram. Nervously she opened it and it read "Private Levi Nathan Auldridge is alive and is on his way to a hospital in New York." Elva was elated with the news and began looking forward to seeing her short married life be renewed.

Levi arrived in New York on his birthday Jan. 18, 1919 and thought that was a great way to celebrate and remember it. From New York Hospital he was sent to Atlantic City, Georgia. He was there lying flat on his back for about 9 months as they grafted a bone in his knee joint to reinforce it and make it stiff, later on he was sent to Ft. Sam Houston in his home state of Texas

where he spent more time but did get reunited with his war bride, Elva. It would be 26 years later before he was awarded the Purple Heart he so much deserved.

Levi finally received an honorable discharge from the Army and he still had his leg that they wanted to amputate but he also had 2 crutches that were necessary for him to walk on his own. He and Elva returned to Copperas Cove, Texas and he had decided while spending time in the hospitals that he would try to enroll at A&M college in College Station. He went down to A&M and was accepted for enrollment but discovered that most of the classroom buildings were built high off the ground and had too many steps for him to climb with a pair of crutches. He was disappointed but he returned to the community of Elizah on the CowHouse Creek and leased a place to farm. He later said that he was glad he could not finish the ag schooling as he never met a man with an ag degree that could make a living on the land he farmed or ranched.

Now back on the farm Levi began to plant cotton, raise hogs and milk 2 or 3 cows for milk and butter and raise chickens for meat and eggs. The land in Coryell County had seen little rain in 1918 & 1919 but in 1920 the crops received plenty of moisture and by fall a bumper crop of cotton was ready to pick. Levi left for the war and owned a sorrel mare named Ribbon that a friend took care of while he was gone. She was an excellent riding, buggy and work mare so he built a wooden sled just wide enough for him to have a seat in front and a large box behind.

He could not bend over, standing up, to bend over and pick cotton so he hitched Robbin to the sled and as she moved slowly down the middle of the cotton rows Levi could pick each side of the sled (that is row to the right and row to the left) and throw it in the box on the rear. He had to have perfect control on the mare and she had to respond perfectly to Levi's command. Clucking was his main choice for her speed control. He always said that clucking was a universal language. It would make a dog stay, a woman come, and a horse go. So as Levi picked, Elva was by his side, picking one row and when he got the box full she would throw her cotton sack on top and they'd go to the wagon and weigh up and load the cotton into the wagon with a seed fork. Using this team effort there was never anyone in the same field that could beat them.

As time went on there were two elements in their life that brought about changes that would cause them to relocate and seek other means of making a living. The first event was in September 1920 when their first child, Nadine, was born. Then in July of 1922 another daughter Geraldine (Jerry) was born, followed by first son and namesake Levi Nathan Truett in September 1924, and two years later March 1926 Gilbert Doyle. Finally in 1935 son Dennis Ervin was hatched. The second event to change their life style was all connected to King Cotton. The dry weather began to reach into that area of Texas, the cotton boll weevil began to rare its ugly head and cotton prices began to fall. Levi and Elva began to look at their hole card and decided to leave the farm land near Cowhouse Creek and move into Copperas cove.

They bought a house on the north edge of town on the old Pidcoke road and he ran for the position of county Public Weigher and warehouseman. He was successful in getting enough votes to win that election and began to operate the scales, warehouse and cotton yard. A main part of his job was to take a sample of each bale of cotton, grade it, weigh the bale and unload it from the farmers wagon and move it on dollies or hand trucks on to the cotton yard (outside) or into the big metal warehouse. One problem Levi had was in keeping the farmers (mainly German) honest when weighing their cotton. Some would sit in their wagon while getting the cotton bale weight, then unload and return to weigh the empty wagon. Then the drivers that didn't want to be real honest would claim they were on the ground while being weighed. If they could catch

Levi off guard they would gain their body weight and get paid that amount plus the weight of the cotton.

The samples taken out of the bales for grading (usually 4 or 5 lbs) were the property of the public weigher and he'd put them in a burlap sack and it was his to sale. Levi left his samples in the scale room and one time I remember striking a match to that cotton and it caught fire. As soon as my Dad got that fire out he jerked his belt off and built a hotter fire on my butt. I had to eat for 2 days standing up and off the fireplace mantle until my constitutional rights were healed. While operating the cotton yard Levi had to turn the cotton bales regularly that were outside to keep the cotton from rotting. On two occasions Levi got his left leg broken by a falling bale and it was back to 2 crutches instead of one he regularly used. On his own, not connected with his county job, he had a hog feeding operation and he loved to see how fast he could put weight on those hogs and move them to market.

While operating the cotton yard Levi was in contact with all the land owners and he had for some time while driving around with our family on weekends in his whippet sedan that a farm and ranch 2 ½ miles west of Copperas Cove on the Topsey road began to take his eye. Finally he contacted the owners, the Stevens family, and they were interested in selling. He made a trade with them for his house and lots in Copperas cove and Pearl (Stevens) Vann, a widow with daughters Dorothy and Irene and son Thomas and Pearl's bachelor brother Nelson Stevens moved into our house and we moved to the country. All of the Stevens family except Irene had a history of epileptic spells (everyone then called it fits) but the bachelor Stevens had them more often and severe than the rest. I've seen him fall backwards on the sidewalk and pop his head so hard you could hear it and he would lay there for a spell with his eyes rolling back in his head. He'd sit up and start feeling around with his hands, look real queer and nervous, get up and stagger off toward home. Thomas, the young one of the family, was the town laugh. He would come up to any stranger or people he knew and say "Do you know who I am?" "I'm Thomas Tootie Mud Duck Vann and I'm my mama's little darling".

After trading for the country place Levi continued operating the cotton yard until he let a bale fall on his bad leg again so it wasn't long he decided to end his term as public weigher and devote all his work and time on the ranch. The place was about 300 acres and divided by a country road with 2/3 of the land on the west, with house and barns on the east. It had a spring fed creek on the east side that was the headwaters of House Creek that run into "Blue Hole" and was the favorite fishing and swimming for everyone. From the west part of the ranch another spring fed creek flowed until it fed into House Creek. It was just off the side of this creek that a hand dug well was made and with a hand operated pitcher pump, furnished water for the household use.

After toting all our water with buckets for drinking, bathing, cooking and cleaning, Levi decided to drill a well and erect a windmill and had a rock and concrete storage tank built. After all he could well afford it with only 4 kids to feed and a big raise from \$22 a month to \$50 for his war time injury compensation. Elva had begun to raise turkeys free range, had Levi build a big chicken house and milking 3 cows she had money coming in every week selling eggs, butter and cream and then in the fall would sell of her grown turkeys. Levi had fenced off an area with real fertile ground on both sides of the spring fed House Creek and the smaller area was the garden that he would plow and plant and Elva would work it and produce enough to feed and can for all our family and share with our neighbors.

The larger area was planted in fruit trees, peach (mainly) plum, pear and a couple of apple trees.

Each hole was dug 3' by 3' and 2' deep. They to be exactly that size, not round, according to his instructions and uncle Horace, a bachelor at the time, was living with us and helped dig them and he was always arguing that a young tree didn't know whether it was planted in a round hole or a square hole. I don't think he ever changed Levi's thinking.

Horace helped with the farming and ranching, cutting wood for sale and home use as there were lots of spanish oak and live oak in all the pasture land. Levi decided also to be one of the first ranchers to raise angora goats but first he had to replace the old barb wire fences with goat proof net wire and for over a year all spare time was spent building fence. Again Levi had his own specifications on doing that. Each gate and corner posts had to have an 8" min. bottom, cedar- with all bark removed, the line posts to have a min 5" top and all bark stripped clean. The corner holes, all hand dug, to be at least 36" deep and all line posts dug 24" min. No concrete allowed around a post but filled with good small graveled cliché and absolutely no rocks used for tamping. If the dirt that came out of a hole was not good cliché it would be hauled in with a wagon from a good cliché pit.

At this time I was big enough to strip the bark off the posts and Dad would pay a penny for a stripped stay, 2 penny for a line posts and 3 penny for those big Cedar Corner posts. I tried to enlist younger brother Gilbert to help but he was more interested in swiping cigarette papers from Uncle Horace (who rolled his own with one hand using Dukes mixture or Bull Durham tobacco), and use the finer bark for tobacco and light up a smoke. I tried it a few times along with grape vine, but like my president, I didn't inhale! It burned my tongue so bad that I was afraid it would do my throat the same way. We did get some of Unc's Bull Durham butts and early one morning while down on the creek feeding and doctoring a sick cow we lit up. Just as we got puffing it good Dad stepped out of the brush and asked what we were smoking. Gilbert said it was Bull Durham and kept on smoking. I stomped mine out and Dad started telling us how "proud" he was of us and how we had become "grown". So proud in fact we could take a busting or go tell Mama how grown up we were. Gilbert took his busting and I headed for the milk shed where Dad said Mama was milking. She asked what I was doing down there (this was about daylight now) and I didn't answer but finally after questioning I told her Dad caught me smoking. When she got through telling me how disappointed she was in me and shaming me I told her I would never smoke again. I never took up the habit but I wished I had done like Gilbert and got busted, for her lesson with tongue was lots worse than the belt.

On that same creek we would find some real good possum and mustang grapes that mama would make grape juice or jelly that sure went good at our table. It would be about 1932 before we got our first goats from "pole" Clark who ranched 10 miles south of us. Dad and I hauled these goats 60 head in all- in a farm wagon with net wire on top to keep them in, making 2 trips each day or almost 40 miles a day from "can't to can't". The new fence sure kept them in until a big rain would come and wash out the water gaps then it was my job to saddle Ranger, our bay gelding, and round them up.

With new fencing on much of the ranch including the cultivated fields Levi began to utilize the land by terracing the fields which were something new in farming, burning the tall blue stem grass in later winter that many of the educated ag wheels said was a mistake but today is a proven practice and change the method of hay harvest used at that time period. Most of the German farmers had practiced the pole and stack way of storing loose hay. A tall pole would be placed in the ground and hay that was cut and cured was hauled in by a hay wagon and with a pitch fork place the hay around the pole in layers, then as it reached the top of the pole the hay was pitched to turn water. The hay stack would be fenced and stock turned in the consume the

hay. The big problem was that a lot of the top layer would rot because the rain and snow penetrated down.

Some of the stacks were made of hegira, red top cane, sudan grass and corn top fodder. Some of these were bundled as they were cut and made a tighter more water proof stack. Levi traded for a hand fed square bale hay baler, a 6 ft sickle mower and a ten ft tooth dump rake and planted much of his land with red top cane his favorite type of hay. This hay baler machine used one horse to power it and the horse traveled in a circle to operate the large spring loaded plunger that compressed the hay. It took a steady pulling animal that would not lunge or balk when the plunger pressure reached its maximum point. Levi loved to feed the hopper and it was my job to "tie out", that is 2 wires were placed in cracks of wooden blocks and wrapped around the bale and at the right moment tie the wires very tight. As the bales were pushed out another worker would stack the bales on a wagon or in a stack. It was the job for the tie-out worker to also pick up the wooden block and place it near the person feeding the hopper with hay.

I've went to the hay fields many times with my Dad way before daylight and with only the light from our Whippet auto head lights start baling hay that we had raked up in a pile the evening before. The hired help was expected to be there by day light and if they showed up about sun up he'd tell them they were too late and go home.

But not all the days were made for work as Levi loved to get a bunch together and we would round up the goats and cut out the slick necked ones, saddle up our horses and start roping goats. I thought I was pretty good until Uncle Jeff or Uncle Horace showed up. Levi would pick out a good fat kid and we'd have good barbecue to eat along with plenty of homemade ice cream and cake of all kinds. Many times we'd have a gospel singing afterward for we always had an old upright piano that Nadine and mama could play. There was a singer named David Storm that knew how to read music and could teach the old gospel songs that many are still sung today and he would go around the country and for a small fee furnish books and teaching to all who came.

Much of Levi's time was devoted to hauling people to and from the social and church events that were popular because he always drove a good and so many people at this time had to walk, ride a train or go in a wagon or buggy to go places. When I was 12 years old my Dad bought me a 1928 model T 4 door sedan and took me to Gatesville the county seat and got the county judge to issue me a driving license so I would be legal and could haul my 2 sisters and 1 brother at the time, to school. He also 'volunteered' my services to pick up the widow Vann and her clan when a special day was on at the Taylor's Creek Baptist Church and there would be dinner on the ground. Every time I would pick them up old Dorothy with her rotten teeth would jump in the front seat by me and when we'd get to church my brother Gilbert would come around snickering and telling me what a cute couple we made with me wanting to kill him and Dorothy both.

After we moved from town out in the country my Dad and family moved our church membership from First Baptist Church Copperas Cove to a little church out west of us, Taylor's Creek Baptist, where my Dad was recognized as a deacon and if the preacher couldn't make it, the dirt roads turned to mud when it rained, Levi was self appointed preacher and we knew that services weren't going to be over come 12 o'clock. My sister Jerry and I were usually called on to sing a duet with sister Nadine playing the piano and we only knew one song "How beautiful Heaven must be" so Dad took us to a lot of country churches and we'd do our regular number and go home thinking we'd get on radio somehow.

We had an uncle, Elmer Hardin, a brother to Grandma Auldridge that was a Baptist preacher and he would come live with us for 2 weeks every summer and hold a revival under a brush arbor at Taylor's Creek Baptist. He was a hell fire and brimstone type preacher and he had 2 sons and a daughter about the same age as my sisters and brothers. Uncle Elmer wouldn't let his kids play dominoes, he considered that a gambling device, and our folks thought cards or any game using dice should be frowned on and in those days with only a squeaky radio if you could pick up a station besides Mexico, there wasn't much to do but play "annie over" kick the can, etc, pop corn or make homemade ice cream.

Now about this time in Levi's life he had the ranch fenced, the new well and windmill up, a sleeping porch added to the house, a large fruit orchard started, he'd wiped out the dreaded Johnson grass, he transformed a spanish oak thicket into a park-like setting including electric lights from a 32 volt generator and with that generator converted mama's Maytag washer to electric and bought her an electric floor fan and iron, making things a lot more comfortable for the whole family. But being a workaholic Levi had for years "set up" with his friends when they were sick and with corpses at the funeral home or if they lie in state at home. He always chose the shift that was the hardest from midnight to daylight. Another volunteer job out with the country people was as undertaker. If they were too poor to afford a funeral home service Levi would build the coffin, clean and dress the body and place fruit jars filled with ice and wrapped in newspapers all around the body, literally freezing the body until their folks could come from as far away as California. He would help dig the grave and make graveside services available. I've went with Dad on several occasions to re-ice the jars as the ice melted.

Another job Levi like to do was help people get to the doctor, hauling people to the hospital, work with veterans on disability claims and into Veterans hospitals and taking people in his old Whippet car to the T. B. Sanitarium at Carlsbad (West) Texas. In 1936 a German family neighbor the "Doude's" took off for California in a brand new 36 For sedan that would run 85 miles per hour. The car belonged to Joe Kattner, a bachelor brother of Mrs. Doude and he planned to make a record time in driving to the west coast to see kinfolk. The Doudes were dirt poor but good people trying to eke out a living farming a worn out, rocky, hillside across the tracks from our place.

They got as far as Snyder in West Texas when an old farmer pulled out from nowhere and they hit him broadside. Alvin, Lydia and daughter Marie went head first out through the windshield and it scalped Alvin Doude. They were hospitalized and survived and sent for Dad to come get them. They spent their last dime at the hospital but wanted to pay Dad but he said there would be no charge. After they came home, Mrs. Doude would bake and bring 2 loaves of bread and a coffee cake to our house every Saturday morning for as long as I can remember, and she would take no pay.

As if Levi didn't have enough to do he decided he would like to become a county commissioner in our precinct. He had been successful in being elected precinct public weigher and felt that he had done a good job along with making friends with the voters there so he threw his hat into a new ring. Ray Evetts was the current office holder and there seemed to be dissatisfaction with him in the Copperas Cove area as it was located on the edge of Lampasas and Bell counties but located in the south corner of Coryell. Mr. Evetts lived at Flat, Texas and it was in the east edge of Coryell County, still in the same precinct. Many felt that he neglected the road system in our part with preference, naturally, for the people in his section. Levi filed for the position and much to his surprise a friend, Hans Leonhard of Copperas Cove filed also. Levi campaigned in earnest and attended all the election forums, debates and gatherings. It was at Flat Texas the

incumbent's home town they had one and Dad asked me to go with him. After he arrived he instructed me to mingle among the big crowd and as each spoke, judge the acceptance, as each candidate spoke. I moseyed around the people and ran into a pretty little blonde Cornelia Clauson. We called her "knee high" as that fit her size. We moved out of the crowd and to our car where the activities consisted of everything but politics. Before long the crowd began to disperse and Dad came to the car "knee High" had left to join her family and he said "How did I do?" I said "do what?" "My speech" he replied. I told him I thought he had everything wrapped up but I sure didn't tell him that I didn't hear a word he said!

Well, the election was held, Dad beat Roy Evetts but his friend came out on top so Dad went back to farming and ranching.

He loved to raise cane sorghum that is, as the Gotcher family down the road on Taylor's creek had a syrup mill and he would cut and strip his cane and take it there and help them run the mill as it squeezed the juice out and then cook it in the big tin pans, skim off the top then pour up into one gallon tin cans. It would be labeled "Gotcher's Sorghum Molasses". It was after one of these work days that our phone rang and the Gotchers were alarmed that Mary, their oldest daughter about 25 years and single, was missing and wanted Levi to come search for her. They began looking all around the farm and about dark found her down on the creek not far from the syrup mill. She was dead and from all the indication she had taken strychnine poisoning. This was quite a tragedy for our community as she was a very pretty, but shy, popular young lady and this was hard to believe.

About a year after this happening my Dad made a trip to Lampasas and as was his habit he would go the county clerks office and check past recorded events of deeds, death reports and marriage licenses. While checking the marriage licenses issued he was surprised to see the names of Howard Gotcher and Geraldine Auldridge, his 14 year old daughter. This was the brother of Mary Gotcher and he was about 20 years old and had been hanging around our house for some time. I'm sure Levi drove his car at top speed to return home and confront Jerry (Geraldine) about this. I didn't witness this and am glad I wasn't around as I'm sure the old Auldridge temper had reached a new high, but after getting Jerry and Howard together the discussion turned from annulment to acceptance and they went on to having 2 beautiful daughters and Howard enlisting in the Navy when WW2 began.

It was about this same time that Levi and Elva had another addition to the family, nine years from the birth of Gilbert, a son Dennis was born. I never knew if this was planned or an accident (they told us kids they found him under a rock in the park), and we turned over every rock around there looking for another baby but with no luck. At this period of time a woman's pregnancy was secretive and never discussed in mixed company so us kids just thought Ma was just eating too much fresh pork and gaining weight. They agreed to raise Dennis in a different fashion and keep the old razor strap out of sight as they feared they may have warped the personality of us previous four. The only thing I remember was my behind got warped!

Uncle Horace finally got married and lived with us until their first born "Wanda" arrived so Dad decided that the old bungalow was getting pretty crowded and they found a place up the road from us to move in. They lived on it, the "McCeldon" place for awhile and then moved further down Topsy road to Dr. Burdicks ranch. It was here that uncle Horace found a bear in his pasture, called me to come see his bear tied to a hackberry tree. I drove my Model T up there and sure enough there stood a bear tied up. He said he was sitting on the front porch when he saw this black bear loping across his pasture. He had Dixie, his black mare already saddled so

he took off with his lariat rope coiled and roped the bear. It turned out to be a tame bear that had escaped from its cage on a trailer and the door came open and the bear escaped. The ownership didn't last long as the driver with an empty trailer returned after discovering he had lost his bear that belonged to a circus traveling through the country. Unc was just plain lucky that it was tame and gentle, far he raced Dixie in matched races but had never pitted her against a bear!

The next addition to the Auldrige family was when Nadine married J. Erol Shepard. Everyone called him Shep or later on "Drumgoo" (if you were his friend) as he was a traveling auto parts salesman when he acquired that name. He was a member of Church of Christ and you smiled if you called him a "Campbellite". It took awhile for him to be accepted into a Baptist family that had been nothing else. He was a fun making, joking kind of guy that loved gospel singing and when he would sit down at the piano and play and sing his Arkansas song to mother-in-law Elva, he won her over. It went like this

Woke up one morning water in the bed
Swam into the kitchen and found my mother-in-law dead
Now isn't that the funnies sight
A man like me could see
I'm going back to Arkansas
I'm going there to stay.
Sometimes you hunt the big black bear
Sometimes he gets away
I'm going back to Arkansas
I'm going there to stay.

There's more and more verses but I can't remember them. He would always sing this song if he felt good. If he didn't sign it you'd best leave him alone. Ole "Shep" cashed in his chips in the early 80's. P.S. He was also known to preach a little.

The next marriage in Levi's family occurred in 1942 when I was 17 years young and a senior in high school, when I married my school sweetheart Verba Lee Byrd, the mature age of 15 years. My Dad always said if you could put salt on a bird's tail you could catch it. Well I got me a pinch of salt and _ _ _. He had always told me if I would finish high school he would help me through college to become a doctor (my early desire) but he knew once I married I would change plans which I did. Pearl Harbor had been attacked the previous year, Dec 7, 1941, and Ft. Hood was started. My Dad was a pretty fair carpenter and I had helped him many times, so when Jerry and Howard married we built a little house for them on our ranch which was my first new one and I got the bug to become a builder. With the starting of Ft. Hood I got a job as 3rd year apprentice carpenter at 1.12 ½ per hour. I thought I'd own the county in a year with that much money. But in about 10 months after we were married I got my notice to report for military service in the Army Air Force and went to \$22 a month so the good times weren't forever.

With the war escalating in Europe Ft. Hood began expanding and they started buying more land. They were already close to our place and Levi Thought they would eventually take his ranch and he had an offer from Carl Rosencranz to buy it for \$35 an acre so he sold out and I never knew why he decided to move out of the country, but he moved to Melvin Texas in McCullough County. At this time, son Gilbert was playing 6 man football and son Dennis was in the fourth grade. Levi bought him an old Dodge flat bed truck and started hauling grain in season, from the field to the elevator and hauling gravel from Katempcy Creek below Brady. When he was not busy hauling he worked part time at the Melvin Lumber yard and began doing building and

repairs in town and on many of the ranchers' property. I remember the first leave I got from the service, Verba Lee and I went out there and we got to ride our old horse "Ranger" that Dad had hauled out there with him and found a place on a ranch to keep him. While we were there the milo was being harvested and Gilbert and I took Dad's truck and hauled the grain in all one day. We made \$50 a piece but the next day I couldn't hardly get out of bed. The exercise I was used to didn't compare with bucking sacked milo up on the truck and dumping it in the bed. We didn't have to unload though as they had a huge jack that would raise the front axle high enough to flow the grain out of the tailgate.

While living at Melvin, daughter Jerry and her daughter Jerrilyn were living with Levi and Elva while her husband Howard was serving his country in the Navy. Jerry was pregnant and when the time came for delivery they loaded up in the car and headed for the Brady Hospital. Just as they got close to town and were crossing the bridge over Brady Creek, Mama Elva delivered Judy the baby girl just as she had done so many times before while living at Copperas Cove. She had helped Dr. Burdick and Dr. Bevins deliver on many occasions before and if they weren't available she'd do it alone. Levi had always said that Dr. Burdick was his most close friend. Dr. Burdick had a bachelor son, Carter, who was a bald as a cue ball. When I was small I had never seen any person like him as he didn't even have fuzz around the edge. I asked Dad how he got his head so slick. He told me that Carter was eating goat meat with lots of tallow in it and it stuck to the roof of his mouth. He said Dr. Burdick put a hot smoothing iron on his head, it melted the tallow but made all his hair fall out! I believed that story as long as I believed in Santa Claus. Dr. Burdick died before I was 12 years old so at that time our family doctor was Dr. Bivins. I was diagnosed with a rare kidney disease, called Bright's disease. There were two other boys my age that had it at the same time. They went to a hospital in Killeen where one of them was treated by his grandfather doctor and he treated the other boy also but he died. The grandson survived. I was treated at home by the sweat method. They put a rubber sheet on the bottom as I lay on the bed and covered my body with a wet hot blanket. I could barely stand it then covered my body with another rubber sheet and a yellow mucus came out my pores with a terrible odor. This was done at intervals 4 times a day for a week. By that time I looked like a gutted snowbird but I was cured or I wouldn't be writing this!

While I was in the Air Force my wife lived in Copperas Cove with her family except while I was still in the states she came first to New Jersey and later to Warner Robins Air Base in Atlanta, Georgia. She was a Methodist when we married but went with me to the Baptist Church. While I was away she went with Levi and Elva to church and during a revival at Clear Creek Baptist Church she was baptized by full immersion in the Baptist belief. My mother and dad loved her like a daughter and were very proud of her. It was in May 1945 they became even prouder of her when she gave birth to our first son "Nathan Phillip" while I was with the 23rd fighter sqdn. She had got pregnant on my last leave before I went to China so he was born while I was there and was 6 months old when I returned back to the states in November 1945. I was given a 60 day recuperation and to report in January 1946 for discharge as the A bomb had been dropped and the war was over. Rejoining my wife and my son whom I had never seen before was the best thing that ever happened in my whole life. I remembered the terrible time my Dad had in serving his country and I felt lucky that I returned with no injury except a injured back. Elva my mother had written me every week, long letters, about everything that was happening at home and Dad was so glad to see me safely home. The day I boarded the bus at Gatesville to leave for induction was the first time I had seen my father cry as he told me he wished he was able to go in my place.

I discussed plans with my Dad that I would like to get into construction in some place other than

our home town of Copperas Cove and my wife and I had visited, soon after my return, out at Ft. Hood where I had a job waiting as superintendent of a crew with Post Engineers where I had been a young foreman of the crew prior to my enlistment. The old super was retiring and waiting for me to replace him when I visited and told him of our decision. I called my dad that night and told him of my actions and advice for a place to settle down, raise a family, and make a living.

He called back a couple of days later and said he was in Goldthwaite, Texas at Uncle E.L. Pass's home where mama had lived in 1918 while Levi was in WW 1 in Germany. He said Uncle had told him about a new city addition with lots that could be bought for \$300 and a shortage of housing and he thought it would be a good clean town to settle in and that it was in the geographical center of Texas. I caught a bus up there the next day and looked things over. We purchased 3 lots and rented a bedroom with a bath and kitchen to share with an old maid who was the town gossip. Dad returned to Melvin, Texas and loaded his truck with tools and equipment and I went back to Copperas Cove and with my wife and baby son returned to Goldthwaite. I shucked my Air Force uniform for a pair of carpenter overalls and Dad and I began building a 2 bedroom house that would belong to Dad, then our two families would live in it while we would build a home on the lot next to it for my family. We finished their home in 2 months and I returned to the army base in San Antonio and received my discharge.

We began on our new home with very cold weather in January 1946. It was a 3 bedroom, 1 bath home that we needed as Verba Lee became pregnant as soon as I returned from China, the doctor said it would be bon in July.

One day as I prepared to work on our house Dad came over with a letter and asked me what I had planned to do that day. I told him I planned on working on the house. He handed me the letter and told me to read it aloud. I read "My name is Asa Talley, formerly of Brownwood, Texas and was a veteran of WWI serving with the 7th Div of Company A, 34th Infantry and around November at St Mihiel France I picked up a soldier that was wounded and near death and carried him to the field infirmary and never saw the soldier again. I now farm and ranch at Hermaliegh Texas. To get to my place turn off hiway 84 at Wastella and go 4 miles across flat farm land on a country road until you come to the start of the caprock and that will be my place. If I am the person you've been looking for, you're welcome to come see me" Signed, Asa Talley.

I handed the letter to my Dad and this was the second time I saw my Dad with tears rolling down his cheek. I asked him when he wanted to go out there. He said "right now if you can go with me. Son, I've been looking for this man 28 years I think I've found him and you wouldn't be here today if not for Asa Talley saving my life". We loaded up the car and left in less than an hour.

Within 3 hours of leaving Goldthwaite we were looking at a mailbox with the name of Asa Talley printed on the side with an old weathered farm house in the background. We drove in and a big tall weathered cowboy looking man and his wife came out of the old house and we got out and introduced ourselves as they had no idea who we were or that we were coming. When he said he was Asa Talley, tears started down Dad's face and they grabbed each other and hugged and began to talk about that day in France in 1918.

Dad told him he would have recognized him anywhere that he never forgot his face or his name which was amazing considering the pain and condition Dad was in. Well, we visited and they talked about the battle in France, retracted their lives since then at one time only lived 100 miles apart and how Dad had spent all these years looking to find him. Asa had known Dad's sister, Ludie, while living around Brownwood but had no way of knowing the connection. Asa had us

meet his son Kirk and a daughter that was the age of Nadine, my sister and old Grampa Davenport, Mrs. Talley's father, that lived with them. He was related to the Davenports we knew in Goldthwaite. Asa related how well he had done in West, Texas, showed us his new John Deere tractor and every kind of equipment, his large herd of cattle, new card and pickup truck, and then we went back to the old run down house.

My Dad asked Asa why he lived in such a bad old house when it appeared he could own a mansion. Asa replied that he had the money to build and with 5 people in the family he sure needed a new home but it was just after the war and some building items were still rationed and there was no one in his part of the woods he could hire to build one. He said there was a big sheetrock plant near him that he could buy it direct but there was no other source nearer than Sweetwater.

Levi told him that we were building our second home and that we could get all the material and have it hauled from Goldthwaite and that he and I would come back and build the house if Asa would pay me and the help we brought and that Levi's labor would be free. Asa couldn't turn that deal down so we shook hands and returned home. We finished up my house and Asa had his old house torn down and fixed up a double T model style garage with dirt floor for us to sleep in. They borrowed an old trailer house to live in and Mrs. Talley was to do the cooking for all of us.

The day arrived for us to go west with our truck and equipment and I drove my car, a 41 black Ford Sedan, the second car Verba and I owned, the first one was a 1929 Model A coupe and "Tall Boy" M.C. Waldon went with us to help with construction. The 41 Ford was the car that Phil and Gene painted the chrome hub caps, later on, with white house paint. When I discovered that I painted their little butts red with the end of my belt!! Mercy, were they proud.

Our little crew started on the new ranch home for Asa and were coming along pretty good when one afternoon a big dark cloud came up out of the northwest and we noticed Asa put some equipment behind his big John Deere and tied a red bandana handkerchief around his nose and as the wind increased he headed for the cotton field. The dust soon got so bad that Levi, Tall Boy, and I headed for the old car garage that served as our temporary job bedroom. In just a short time we could hardly see the house we were building as we peeped out the cracks in the door. I thought I was going to die as I tried to breathe and Tall Boy wasn't doing any better. My Dad just laughed at us and got each of us a wet towel to place over our nose and mouth. I told Dad that I had never been in anything like this dust storm in my life and I couldn't believe people would live in a place where this existed and as soon as it was over I was going to load up and go home and never come back. Tall Boy said he was going with me. Dad told me that he couldn't finish the house without my help and that he would never have promised to do it if he had thought I would run out on him.

He said he knew that I would never have been born as his son if Asa had not saved his life that day on the battlefield of France and he had awaited 28 years to repay the promise he had made Asa on that day. We talked on about how terrible the storm was and it had begun to lighten up some as Dad told me he had seen worse storms than this one when as a young man he had visited his Dad out on the west Texas plains where his Dad had lived and farmed in different places in Knox County. As we talked Dad asked me if I remembered the trip he and I took to Grampa Aldridge when I was about 7 years old and he lived near Knox City. I told him I remembered the little fighting rooster I carried out there and he whipped everything out there. Uncle Horace had tried to buy my rooster but I told him he wasn't for sale. A few days later we left for home and Dad always left about 5 AM and he put me in the back seat asleep for the trip

home.

Down about Abilene I woke up. I asked Dad where was my pet rooster. He said we left him at Grampa's. I told him we would have to turn around and go back and get him. Dad replied that he had planned to leave him out there I was sure disappointed and remembered pouting all the way home. Dad asked me if I remember the time his sister Aunt Annie had come back to visit the family in Knox County from California where she had lived long enough to acquire that prune picker brogue. One night before bed time she went outside in the dark and was afraid to go the outhouse out of fear for wasps and scorpions so she just squatted down to pee in the sand when something hit her right in the twat. She jumped up screaming and ran in the old farm house nearly convulsive as the family tried to find what was wrong. She said she had been snake bit so they lit a lantern and went outside and there found a wet spot and it was right under a bull nettle! Case closed, no snake found!

As Dad and I finished talking about West Texas the wind and dust subsided as fast as it started and Asa came in on his tractor. His nose and mouth was still covered with the bandana and the only thing you could see was 2 holes where his eyes were as he had a thick coat of dust everywhere. He parked the tractor and I asked him why a man would get out in such terrible weather? He said "Son, if you had lost as many cotton crops that I have and as much as I have invested in them you'd grasp for every chance you could get to save it. I covered up as much of that young cotton as fast as I could drive to keep the blowing sand from cutting down those little plants" I asked him how he could ever learn to live out there and love it and he replied "Son you don't ever love it you just learn to live with it"

After Asa told me what hardships he had endured to farm out there, droughts, grasshoppers, dust storms, low cotton prices and high seed and equipment costs, I told Dad I was taking Tall Boy home to stay but I'd be back to help him finish the house. I did return and help Levi finish the house and learned to love and work with the man that had helped my Dad in his time of need.

Asa and his wife and Levi and Elva became close friends. Asa eventually sold his farm and ranch and returned to Bangs, Texas in Brown County only 45 miles away from Goldthwaite where Levi and Elva lived.

After returning from finishing the Talley's home Levi and I built a house on the third lot we had purchased and sold it then we built a home, a replacement of a burned rent house, where we made about \$1,000 profit plus labor in about 60 days. This was our first contracted job in Goldthwaite and on Fisher street. The owner was Mrs. Weaver, a widow of a county agent. Our second contract was an addition of 2 bedrooms on a small residence for Lewis Bide for \$1,250, we made approximately \$350 in two weeks not bad when the average carpenter at that time earned \$1.25 an hour. We went on to building a house on hiway 84 West for the Leonhard and other house additions, roof jobs, paint and paper jobs that Levi liked to do best.

Levi got on a deal and traded his first built home for a 125 acre farm in Big Valley that had an orchard of fruit and pecan trees. It had an old farm house that Levi completely remodeled and painted, he pruned and trimmed all the orchard trees and repaired all the fences and sold it to Big Boy Puget. Needing a place to move to, Levi and Elva purchased 102 acres from E.W. minuet, 1 mile east of Goldthwaite on the Caradan road. It was know as the Simpson place and Oscar Simpson built the 3 bedroom home with bath and a small basement in 1928. He also built a barn with hay loft and grain bins, a two car garage with storeroom and a washroom. A 200 ft

well was drilled, a wood tower windmill was erected along with an overhead cypress storage tank. The house was piped for ceiling type carbide lamps and the underground carbide tank and generator was installed just outside the basement.

The Simpsons supposedly built all of this for \$2,500. They raised a family there and sold the place to Floyd Fox. Floyd Fox sold the ranch to McNutt. Levi stocked the ranch with black faced suffolk ewes and a few nubian milk goats and a jersey milk cow. He purchased a team of sorrel work horses that rode also, from Uncle Robert Sutton. They were raised by Uncle Robert and named Christmas and Valentine because of the date of their birth. He also got the harness, a wooden wheeled farm wagon, 3 wheel riding sulky, a tooth harrow, wood box grain drill, pulverizer, planter and a cultivator along with a one row Allis Chalmers tractor and equipment.

He planted and raised corn, maize and sudan hay on about 20 acres, using both the horse team and the small tractor. He would raise and fatten a calf out of the milk cow and never sell the calf but butcher and eat it. He milked the cow and the grown dairy goats and butchered the fat kids and barbecued them as he loved to BBQ for the family, friends and large gatherings on a rock BBQ pit that was east of the garage at the time he bought the place.

The 200 ft deep well under the wooden windmill tower was weak so he removed it along with the cypress overhead storage tank and had Smith well drillers to dig a 353 ft. well. He had gone to school at Bee House with the fighting Smith brothers and he thought they were the best. They operated out of Evant, Texas. They installed a Deming pump jack over the well and used a Century booster pump to increase water pressure to the house and yard.

The year was 1949, Son Dennis was 14 years old and Levi was driving a 1941 Plymouth sedan, still had his old Dodge flat bed truck and had purchased a 1926 wood wheel model T Ford roadster from Clyde Estep who had got it from Brongil and Henry who were in the upholstery business and had painted and refurbished it but could never furnish a clear title as the original owner died without a will. It didn't take Levi long to figure out that it wasn't made for a teenager so he sold it for approximately \$200, about what he gave.

Levi had always loved to use and mix paint and hang wallpaper and with lots of time on his hand, he had always wanted to operate a paint store so he and I formed a partnership, leased and remodeled an old feed store and in 1950 opened up A & A Paint and Supply. We sold paint and wallpaper, floor covering, plumbing supplies and cabinet and door hardware. Our agreement was to operate the store on a 50-50 partnership with neither partner drawing a salary and to invest all profits back into the business.

Dad like to hang wall paper and was a real good salesman in that line. He was also a good brush painter with oil base paints and was one of the few painters that could paint the old time embossed metal ceiling squares with a brush and oil base paint and leave no brush marks. He always said he had spent a lifetime learning to do that and then some smart alec came along and invented "textone" or textured paint that anyone could put on. Latex paint was just coming into use and we took on the line of Gliddens Paints with the trade name of Spred Satin. This paint was more on the rubberized mix than the vinyl latex that followed. You could go in a room freshly painted with Spred Satin and it would stink like old rubber for several days. Dad has used gallons of lead base Dutch Boy Paints so we secured the franchise on that line and it proved to be the best paint on the market. We had the first color mix machine in town and used and sold more paint than the two lumber yards and hardware store combined. The 3 other dealers sold Pittsburg, Dupont and Sherwyn Williams but the Dutch Boy out-performed all three.

Dutch Boy developed a vinyl latex wall paint long before the others followed suit.

A & A Paint and Supply went along pretty good for a period of 1 ½ years and Levi decided it was boring to stay inside all the time and we had a disagreement when he decided to let 16 year old Dennis operate the store, as he had quit going to high school. That lasted about a couple of months after I discovered he was writing personal expense checks on our business account so I bought Dad's interest, run Dennis off and hired my sister Jerry to operate the business.

About this time Levi and Dennis started having friction about several things and Levi had known for some time that when he hung up the old razor strap after raising the first four kids that it was too late to change the ways of a coming 17 year old that like the old maid-modern way of child raising. This conflict came to a tragic head late one evening as I attended G.I. Vocational School. I was training in a cabinet makers course in an old army barracks behind the Goldthwaite City Hall where this was the first Veterans Vocational School in the USA. A telephone call that day from my mother told me to get out to the ranch as fast as possible with a doctor and an ambulance as Dennis had shot his father.

I called Dr. Childress and Roy Wilkins for an ambulance and drove my Chevy pickup as fast as I could make it. The doctor was right behind. Dad was lying on the ground in a pool of blood at the backyard wooden gate. Dr. Childress examined Dad and found the bullet wound right at his belly button and check his vital signs. He said he needed a surgeon and if he could live through the ride to Brownwood he might have a chance to live. Mama was so upset and me also, I felt like killing Dennis as he stood to one side looking on. Mama said Dennis was up in the barn's hay loft and shot Dad as he unlatched the gate. As I helped load Dad on the stretcher and into the ambulance he asked me to not do anything to Dennis or call the law if he didn't pull through as it was all his fault and I did promise him I'd do his desire.

The ambulance had no attendant or life support equipment, just a driver, so I asked Dr. Childress if he would ride with Dad and he said he would do what I requested. We called ahead to the hospital and the emergency surgeon and crew were waiting and the surgeon told me later if Dr. Childress had not worked with him on the way to the hospital, Dad would have bled to death. Levi gained strength daily and was able to come home in a few days and in no time was back to his original state.

In a few days after the shooting, Dennis was 17 years old, and Levi and Elva signed permission for him to enlist in the Navy. He left with forgiveness, many will always remember it, and he's still having to live with it.

Levi overcame the shooting but in the fall to the ground he broke his war injured left leg. It broke at the knee joint and I carried him to Dr. Hipps, an orthopedic specialist at Waco Baylor Hospital and he gave him a choice of amputation or a bone graft to make the knee joint stiff again. The joint removal could be immediate with an artificial leg or for the bone graft it would required 8 to 12 months. Since he had spent over a year flat on his back in 1918-19 he told them to cut it off. The surgery date was set but prior to that date, he and Uncle E.L. Pass dug a hole, poured a concrete vault in the ground and built a wood coffin sized to fit the leg and foot.

On the day of the surgery I was to pick up the leg, bring it home, place it in the coffin and put it in the concrete vault and seal it. I waited outside the room for surgery and they opened the door and handed me his leg with a course, heavy, sack covering it. I had to go through the lobby waiting room and it was full of people staring at me carrying Dad's leg like it was a stick of wood.

I came home buried the leg and returned to tell Dad if he ever had another removed, he had 2 other sons to do the job!

The reason he had the limb buried and sealed because of stories he had heard of someone losing a thumb, etc., and throwing it away. Later the stub would start a stinging feeling and go find the missing part covered with stinging ants. He said he didn't believe in such stuff but he didn't want to take any chances. The leg is buried about 2 ft east of the 10 ft diameter concrete storage tank on the El Rancho Notsogrande. A granite foot stone is placed ground level over the grave. It reads "Here Lies the leg of Levi"

As soon as the stub was healed good I took Dad to a firm in Ft. Worth and they fitted him with an artificial limb that had a rubber type suction boot to secure the leg. Dad had talked and watched everyone he could with an artificial limb and began boasting he had practiced, in his mind, putting on the limb and walking off on his own with no assistance. They installed the limb and placed him between 2 hand rails. He took a couple of steps, broke out in a heavy sweat and asked to take it off. It wasn't as easy as he had thought.

He brought it home but wouldn't wear it. One Sunday I cried Mama to church and Dad stayed home. When we returned we found him lying in the grass on the front lawn. He had his limb on and said after we left he decided he could put it on and with out the use of any crutches he would walk out the front door, unassisted, with only a 6" step to negotiate. He made it out to the grass and was doing real good until he lost his balance and went down. With nothing to help him get up he lay there until we arrived. The next day he tried again, got the hang of it and improved every day.

At this time I was building a home for Paul Kashi, a Japanese American, on a G.I. loan, the first in Mills County and Dad wanted to do the painting, so I agreed to let him paint the window screens, which at that time were wood framed, before the now-popular use of aluminum. I set up an easel to sit the frames in and Levi did the painting, standing up and not having to do any walking. I left the job to go pick up. Some material and when I returned, Levi was up on a 4 ft scaffold painting the roof overhang. Now this was only 2 weeks after he started using the new limb. I made him get off the scaffold and both on the ground but it made him mad although he was lucky he didn't fall off and get hurt.

In early 1955 Dad called one night and said that our friend Bob Steen had offered him \$5,000 and his residence, adjacent to the Methodist Church, to trade for his 102 acre ranch, and what did I think about it. I told him I didn't know they were interested in moving to town but if they were I would trade them my new home on Cline Street and give \$5,500 to boot. I told him our home was new and Bob's was an old house with a steep drop down behind the garage compared to our very level lot. They agreed to swap with us and we moved in March 1955. We were sure glad to get our 3 boys off the street that had lots of traffic between the high school and the elementary. The move was a delight to Phil, Gene and Ronnie, and in 1956 they got a new sister, Lee Ann, along with a new Black and White Station Wagon our first.

Levi and Elva would come back out to the ranch everyday as the city living wasn't as good as expected. I began to buy the boys some horses and Dad was really glad to help them get started. Of course Mama loved to come work in the garden and with the yard plants but she was disturbed with what we were doing with her house. We tore out 3 walls and a love seat and she said we were ruining it. I told her this was our house now and that we liked what we were doing. It wasn't long before Levi and Elva decided to sell their home in town and move back to Coryell

County.

They sold their home soon after to Carl Ledbetter and bought a place in Gatesville on South Leon street. It was a two bedroom house with a small cottage building at the rear. Levi immediately connected the two buildings together and I took my crew over there and installed a new roof, some new cabinets, paneling,, etc. As soon as Levi had everything like he wanted it he and Elva began to do some serious fishing out on owls creek and Lake Belton back waters. With more time on his hands than he liked he began looking for other property in the city to buy and improve. He bought a house and lot on hiway 84 west and another residence east on the state reform school road. He cleaned both these places up and with paint inside and out, sold them for a nice profit. But the years were rolling by and he decided it was time for somebody else to do all the hardwork and he was beginning to have some health problems.

He was classified as 100% disabled y the Veteran Administration and was drawing compensation so it was time to enjoy life more. He bought a new Fairlane Ford sedan, the first Ford since the T model Ford and he and Elva began traveling ore to West Texas, visiting the Talleys, kinfolks all over and friends and grandkids. They bought 2 more houses in Ft. Worth and began spending lots of their time with Dennis and family and granddaughter Judy and Raymond Eilers and kids. He bought him a deer rifle and got interested in deer hunting.

My first deer hunt with him was on the Deep Creek Ranch in San Saba County. We hunted out of my jeep and saw lots of deer and he shot at a couple of bucks but missed. Finally I told him to put on his glasses when he got another buck in his scope and he fired and got him a buck, his first, at about 68 years of age. He got the fever to hunt that day and starting looking for a place to hunt for the next season

Levi got interested in his grandson's football playing which was unusual as he never attended a game while I was playing 6 man football at Copperas Cove. Mama watched all my home games but Dad was always too busy and thought they were a waste of time although he did enjoy son Gilbert's 6 man playing at Melvin Texas school

Levi and Elva came to visit us in the fall of 1963 and Nadine had brought them as Levi had been having some health problems and while they were here he didn't feel real good so we took him, Nadine and I, to see our family doctor, Dr. Childress. The doctor checked his blood pressure and heart and told him that his pressure was extremely high and his heart irregular and that he could have a heart attack or stroke at any time and he prescribed medication and advised him to go to Scott and White for a complete exam. He decided to go to the V.A. Hospital at Temple which was only 36 miles from Gatesville where he lived so he began his trips down there.

He eventually had to enter the hospital and while there had his first stroke. It caused his left arm and right leg to become partially paralyzed, after he awoke from surgery as they replaced some clogged arteries, he was pretty despondent and about ready to give up so I got to talking with him about going deer hunting and that his grandson Gene would be on Channel 25 TV when Dub King would have Gene and his coach appear on his TV show. Gene was selected as the outstanding linesman on the All Central Texas team and Levi did want to watch the show but he said that at that time of day the show would be on, the other veterans liked to watch "Gunsmoke" and they wouldn't tune in to the Dub King Show. The only TV was in the recreation room although they had TV connections in his hospital room. So I told him I would bring a TV and install it in his room so he could see Gene receive the award on the show. Dad had shown lots of improvement and was regaining use of his arm and leg and he had begun to talk about getting

out and in shape for fall hunting. I assured him I would be back with the TV in time to get it hooked up for the special show.

The day of the show, I left Goldthwaite with Gene, Jackie Williams the coach, and the T.V. when we arrived at the VA Hospital on February, 1964, we pulled up to the unloading area and as I stepped out of the car I saw my mother, Elva, and brother Gilbert coming out of the hospital towards us and I knew immediately by looking at Mama's face that something had happened. She told me that they were in the hospital room visiting and Dad was talking and suddenly he began to just fade away. They called the hearse and she checked his vital signs and said he was gone.

His time had come and he was ready he had conquered death before but this time it was final. Jackie the coach said that they would cancel the show since Levi wouldn't get to see it but I told him that Dad would have wanted Gene to go on with it and they did although I know it was hard for Gene to do so.

Levi's body was sent to Briggs-gamel Funeral Home in Lampasas where he had a burial policy for years and where he had "set-up" many a night with a deceased friend or family member. They prepared him for burial and transferred him to the Gatesville Funeral Home or Scotts Funeral Home.

Mr. Scott was a long time friend of Levi's and he told our family the funeral home had long ago discontinued the practice of having family or friends "sit-up" with a body but since Levi had sat with so many people in their funeral home in days past that, that practice would be renewed for him.

It was a cold day that Monday in Feb 1964 when the services were held at the Scott Funeral Home. It was fitting that Chester Sylvester, a Baptist preacher was in charge of that memorial service. Levi was a deacon at the small country church at Taylor's Creek Baptist when Sylvester, a student at Howard Payne College, Brownwood, came to preach his first sermon there. He was a country boy from a ranch family near Nix in Lampasas County. He showed up that Sunday in the most beat up, rattle trap For pickup I've ever seen run. A bright eyed, always smiling, good looking kid with his guitar in hand he stuttered and stumbled all through his first sermon but when he picked up that guitar and started picking and singing the "Old Rugged Cross" he won over everyone attending. Dad asked him to eat lunch with us and he ate like a starved dog. He was called soon after to preach on a regular basis and Dad urged him to become a licensed and ordained preacher and later was part of the ordination service for him at a small country church at Bee Cave Baptist near Austin. Dad treated this young man like a son and with his help developed into a good pastor and life time friend.

It was also ironic and fitting that Levi's grandson, our son Phil, who was at the time a student at Howard Payne College, and the only grandson to serve his country in the military, sang and played the piano with the beautiful rendition of the "Haven of Rest" Levi's favorite hymn. As Phil ended the four verses and chorus, with the final words "The tempest may sweep o'er the wild stormy deep, In Jesus I'm safe every-more"; There was not a dry eye in that chapel.

Levi's physical life had ended but his spiritual life is eternal as God promised and his memory and influence lives on. The knowledge he possessed was not gained in a school house but in the House of the Lord, that he served all his life. He taught me and many others that a name

was earned, not inherited, a man's word was worth more than a piece of paper, than honesty should not be compromised, and above all practice compassion.

It is my hope and prayer that whatever traits and qualities I possess that are good, the credit should be given to my father and that I may pass these on to my 3 sons and daughter and people that know me.

I could not finish these chronological pages of events without giving credit to my mother, Elva, for all the many sacrifices she made and things she done without, to enrich my life and the many others she touched. The old saying "Behind every good man stands a woman" is true as she was part of the team. Elva lived for 80 years, 10 years longer than Levi but both lived a full life not all good not all bad, but I'm sure glad they lived!

I would like to end this with a poem I wrote in 1976 to her honor

"Our Mother"

(on her 76th birthday)

For our family twelve years now you've been the head
And today Mama we honor the life you have lead.
In 1900 you became just another Coryell County girl
But now Our Mother is the greatest in the world.
For seventy six years you have filled your life
Delivering on occasion as the humble midwife.
Giving to your children as you've done without
Leading them to God there was never any doubt
Return good for evil you always preached
Some made the mark that others never reached.
Singing "Precious Memories" as you made your day
Doing your share there was no other way.
Working in the garden or making up the bed
Everyone should pitch in you always said.
The friends that you've made were not bought with money
Just like life is not all milk and honey.

You've loved all your kids without any favor
Down to the "Grands" with faith that will never waiver,
So we don't know what's in the years to come
But we do know when it's finished you will have won
You'll go straight to heaven, sure as the world is round
Levi you'll see again with his body all sound.
Happy Birthday whether you lose or win.
Things may change on earth, but you're the same to the end!

Family Group Sheet of Julie Ann Cheatham

Husband: Byron Phillip Gilmore

Birth: 07 Jul 1885 in Copperas Cove, Texas
Marriage: 05 Jul 1907
Death: 31 Jan 1968 in Killeen, Texas
Father: George Washington Brown Gilmore
Mother: Chloe Annie Haynes



Wife: Julie Ann Cheatham

Birth: 01 Nov 1885 in Belton, Texas
Death: Mar 1969 in Killeen, Texas
Father: J. R. Cheatham
Mother: Lowella Gould Bean



Children:

1 Name: Annie Lou Gilmore
F Birth: 18 Apr 1909 in Copperas Cove, Texas
Marriage: 15 Sep 1925
Spouse: Edgar Earl Byrd



2 Name: Lewis Robert Gilmore
M Birth: 20 Sep 1912
Spouse: Edna Wayne McMillan



3 Name: Glendell Gilmore
M Birth: 06 Nov 1916
Spouse: Louise Sink



Notes:

November 2019

October 2019

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December 2019

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26	27 Verba L. Byrd Auldrige - 21	28	29	30		

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20 Lewis R. Gilmore - 108	21	22	23	24	25	26
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October 2020

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PHOTO ALBUM

Levi and Elva Auldridge

Truett and Verba Lee Auldridge

Five Generations of the Gilmore Family
(Verba Lee Byrd Auldridge Holding Phil)

Byron Phillip and Julia Gilmore

Edgar and Annie Lou Byrd

Lewis Turner, and Sidney Evans Turner

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