

## GEORGE NEWTON BURKETT AND HIS CHILDREN

I, George Newton Burkett, was born September 5, 1884, at Williams Ranch, a small town three miles southeast of Mullin, Texas. I was the second child and first son born to Joseph Lafayette and Della Catherine Pyeatt Burkett. I moved to Mullin at the age of four, the year 1888, with my parents.

All my school years were spent in the Mullin School. I started to school at the age of seven years. My first teacher was Miss Dollie Burton. I lacked only four months finishing high school.

As I grew up the usual things happened to me just as they do to any normal child while he is growing up. There are a few "special" things I remember in particular. When I was eleven years old, Pa let me go with him to East Texas, taking a bunch of horses to sell. I thought it was an unusually big world as we went all the way to Milam County, a distance of one hundred and thirty five miles. We went in a wagon; but on our return home, we stopped at Temple, Texas and while we were there Pa bought me a brand new saddle, paying the whole sum of eleven dollars for it. Needless to say that I did not ride back home in the wagon with Pa. I soon outgrew the saddle and it was given to the next brother, Edgar, and on down in turn to the other younger brothers as there were four brothers younger than I.

I had a rather steady habit of sleep-walking while I was young. Pa woke one night to find me leaving the house with a pillow tucked under my arm. I walked toward the large Mesquite flat in front of our house. Pa followed me for awhile to see just where I would go. After walking some distance I was laying my pillow at the foot of a large tree as if ready to lie back down, when Pa said, "Where are you going, son?" I suppose that I thought I was herding cattle because at that time there were very few fences and none at all in some places.

One evening when I was about ten years old, Mother sent me on an old grey pony to drive the milk cows home. After I left the house a terrible sand storm blew up causing me to be gone so much longer than Ma thought I should be that she became quite worried. She was outside looking to see if I were coming when I rode up. At that moment she noticed my hat was missing and she asked, "Where is your hat, son?" I answered by saying, "It's in my belly, Ma." Meaning that I had stuck the hat inside my shirt bosom.

It was my job to rope the calves while Ma was milking the cows. One day I was standing there playing with the loose end of the rope and tied it in a hard knot around my waist, not thinking of the big yearling calf, and away went all of us---the calf, rope and me. Quickly the whole herd of cows, ten

or twelve joined the race, which this time had formed a huge circle. Finally Ma rescued me by turning the cows in the other direction, and getting the rope off me. After it was all over and Ma found that I was not hurt, the incident seemed very funny to her. She would laugh until she cried and tell it on me for years.

At the age of twenty one, I married Clementine Elizabeth Vann. She is better known to relatives and friends as "Lizzie". She was the oldest daughter of Thomas L. and Frances Artelia Vann. The Vann family lived in the small community of Blanket Springs, eight miles west of Mullin, Texas. We eloped because Lizzie was not of age (13).\* We drove to Chessar Valley to the home of Reverend E.P. Harris, a Methodist Preacher, and were married, at five-thirty P.M. Sunday afternoon, January 7, 1906, as we sat in the buggy. The buggy was pulled by "old Grey" the favorite horse of the Burkett family. Our marriage was witnessed by the preacher's wife and a family friend, Will Chessar, who happened to be there at the time.

Our first home was on my parent's farm two miles northeast of Mullin. The house had two rooms; and our entire house keeping outfit cost seven dollars and seventy-five cents, including a wash-pot, rub-board and other items as well as furniture.

Our first child was born at that place, on December 10, 1906, which was a very happy and gay day for us as we were parents of a baby girl to whom we gave the name of Lois Elva. Pa gave her the nick name of 'Doll' and always called her that as long as he lived. Lois was a very talented little girl. When she was only five years of age, we were at Pa and Ma's house and heard someone picking out a tune on the piano. We knew that no one else was on the place except Lois and we older folks; still we could not believe our ears as she had never been around a piano before. We investigated and sure enough it was Lois playing the piano. Later we got her an organ and she learned to play any tune she heard. She had never taken a piano or organ lesson; but she was our church organist as long as she lived, which was a very short eighteen years. Lois passed away July 6, 1924, and we laid her to rest in the cemetery at Zepher, Texas. She had been married to Rufus Davis almost two years, who lived near Zepher. They were married November 30, 1922 at the home of and by Reverend J.P. Beaty, who lived east of Zepher. No children were born to Lois and Rufus.

Our second child, a boy, was born also while we lived on Pa's farm. He was given the name of Stephen Lafayette, being named for Pa. The boy's birthday was October 25, 1908. He lived to be twenty months old, when death took him from us June 25, 1910 and we buried him at Williams Ranch.

In the fall of 1908 we moved to Caradan community where we lived one year,

then moved back to my father's farm in the fall of 1909. He built a new three bedroom house for us to live in. That was the house where our third child, another girl was born, October 2, 1911. We named her Leona Statyre, for two of my sisters, Birdie Leona and Mae Delle Statyre. While our daughter, Leona, was a child, she aquired the nickname, "Bunk" and even now is quite often referred to by this name. We left Pa's farm about Thanksgiving, 1911, moving to the Harris lease in the Pompey community where we lived until the fall of 1912. At that time we decided to take a big step in our lives. On or about November 24, 1912, we hitched 'Old Grey' and 'Old Rhodia' to a covered wagon which was equipped with a fairly comfortable living and camping outfit and started for New Mexico to take up a homestead.

We traveled for thirty days, arriving in Elkins, New Mexico, December 24, 1912. During that trip we had traveled for days and days in the snow. Two days and nights we were lost due to a heavy snow storm and traveled without knowing which direction we were going. Finally we met another family also on their way to Elkins; and we traveled along with them into the town, arriving there about midnight. As we were all going along toward Elkins, the other family traveled on the right side of the railroad; where as we stayed on the opposite side where there was no road, until arrangements were made for us to get over on the right road. That was done when our traveling friends, with the help of Lester Vann, Lizzie's brother, who had gone along on the trip, cut the wire fences on both sides of the railroad, opening the way for us to cross over to the right road. Besides cutting the fences, we carried the wooden braces along with us for firewood, as wood was very scarce in the country, especially with the heavy snow on the ground.

Through the kindness of a good-hearted man named Mr. Cooper, who was a real estate agent, our first home was provided. He let us live for a few days in one of his houses. Then we traveled on to Illinois Valley, New Mexico, and settled on a 160 acre tract of land. While there we endured many hardships, such as shortage of water and wood. We often had to burn dried cactus, roots, as well as dried cow chips for wood. There were many large rattlesnakes with which we had to compete, among other hardships, I developed a very painful tooth ache. Picking up a pair of pliers, I jokingly said to Lizzie, "Pull that thing out". She said, "Open your mouth," and so I did--- well she reached in with the pliers and out she came with the tooth.

We were gone from Texas seven or eight months. In spite of the many difficulties that we encountered, we enjoyed the trip and liked to live in New Mexico, but we were forced to return to Texas because the climate was too high for Lizzie's and Lois' health. Leaving the New Mexico place about June, 1923 we spent another thirty days on the road back to Texas. We settled again on the Harris Lease in the Pompey Community northwest of Mullin, Texas. We stayed there

approximately eighteen months. During that time our fourth child, Chlotilde Irene was born February 12, 1914. She was named for Lizzie's sister, Artelia.

In December, 1914, we moved to Lizzie's old home place in the Blanket Springs community west of Mullin, about two years later, 1916, we bought the Vann homestead and lived there for eighteen years.

August 10, 1917, our fifth child, Frances Katherine, was born. She was named for her two grandmothers. Within the next five years, we lost two baby daughters at birth. Both are buried at Blanket Springs.

Floretta Natoma, our eighth child, was born August 27, 1922. On December 20, 1924, our ninth child, Evelyn Estelle, was born. She was named for her Aunt 'Dovie', my brother Edgar's wife. Evelyn Barton and for a very close friend, Estelle Cornelius.

Enza Dell, the tenth child was born March 5, 1927. \*I was named by my Aunt Gladys Burkett, for a school teacher and my grandmother Della Burkett\*. (Added by E.D.W. in 1995)

Four years later to the day, on March 5, 1931, our eleventh child, Verna Bess, completed our large and wonderful family.

After leaving our old home place at Blanket Springs in 1932 we lived during the next six years in and near Mullin. We lived on the Jack Cox place east of Mullin, then on the old Fisher place west of Mullin near Blanket Springs. We lived next on the Vines lease north of Mullin. Leaving there in the early fall of 1939, we moved to Proctor, Texas in Comanche County, where we stayed until 1942. At that time I was working with a construction crew on a government camp and being transferred from Camp Bowie, Texas to Lake Charles, Louisiana, in 1942, I took my family with me. We returned to Comanche in the early part of 1943 and bought a home where we still reside.

My own life-story seems incomplete without some information about my wonderful daughters and their families. Having already related some pertinent facts about Lois who passed away in 1924, I shall proceed with the other girls.

Leona married Kenneth Word Coleman of Mullin, Texas December 15, 1928 at our home in Blanket Springs. They were married by Lizzie's uncle, Reverend L.J. Vann of Mullin. Two children were born to Leona and Word. Their first child, a girl, Patsy June, was born June 14, 1932, in our home at Blanket Springs. Their second child, a boy, Kenneth Wesley, was born on August 13, 1934, also in our home. At that time, however, we lived east of Mullin on the Jack Cox farm.

Patsy June Coleman, our oldest granddaughter, married James G. Smart of Comanche, Texas at her parents home in Comanche. Patsy and James have three children, Patricia Darlene, born March 5, 1950, in Denver, Colorado; James Keith, born July 4, 1951, at Holliman Air Force Base Hospital, Alamagordo, New Mexico; David Alan, born July 24, 1953 at the same hospital.

Kenneth Wesley, our second grandson, lives and works in Dallas, Texas.

Chlotilde, our third daughter, married Raymond D. Swinney of Mullin on Februray 19, 1933, at our house on the Jack Cox farm east of Mullin. She too, was married by the Reverend L.J. Vann. Two children were born to this union; a boy, Clifton Eugene, January 17, 1934, and a girl, Elizabeth Ann, December 20, 1937. Eugene, our oldest grandson married Ila Mae Word of Brownwood, Texas, on May 28, 1954. They had three daughters; Sabrina Diane, born October 17, 1955, Fort Worth, Texas; Tammy LaJuan, born January 4, 1958 at Fort Stockton, Texas; Teresa Vernell, born May 9, 1961 at San Saba, Texas, who passed away at the age of five months on October 5, 1961. She is buried at Mullin, Texas. Elizabeth Ann Swinney, our second grand daughter, married T.J. Tupin of Comanche, Texas, on April 17, 1954 at her parents home in Brownwood, Texas. To this union was born three children; Terry Glenn, November 10, 1957; at Alamagordo, New Mexico; Linda Lois, December 7, 1958 at Comanche, Texas hospital; Gary Lynn at the same hospital, June 13, 1960.

Katherine, our fourth daughter, married Alva A. Swinney, of Gustine, Texas on March 8, 1941. His father performed the ceremony at their home in Gustine. Katherine and Alva had two children, both boys; Fred Newton, born February 22, 1942, at Gorman, Texas hospital; Richard Wayne, born also at Gorman, February 1, 1944. Fred is attending college at the present time in New Mexico. Richard Wayne married Dianne Dorsey of Roswell, New Mexico. They have two sons; Gregory Wayne, born June 30, 1960 at Roswell, N.M.; Michael Allen, born March 9, 1962, also at Roswell, N.M.

Our seventh daughter, Floretta, married Henry F. Chambers of Comanche, Texas, at the home of and by Reverend Short of De Leon, Texas, May 31, 1941. Floretta and Henry had two boys and two girls; Glenna Natoma, born July 14, 1942 at Gorman, Texas hospital; Sherry Elaine, born September 8, 1948, at Shreveport, Louisiana; Randall Wayne, born September 11, 1956 at Fort Worth, Texas, and Daniel Lynn born August 17, 1958, also at Fort Worth, Texas.

Our grand daughter Glenna Natoma Chambers, married Jerry Earnhart, of Fort Worth, Texas June 14, 1960. They have one son, Gregg Lee, born March 27, 1962.

Estelle, our next daughter, married Charles Bouquet of Port Lavaca, Texas, on March 8, 1941, at Comanche, Texas, by Judge Homer Lockridge. To this union was born three sons; George Edward, October 16, 1941 (George was born three months early and weighed only one and a half pounds) at Port Lavaca, Texas. Tommy Elton, March 32, 1944, at Gorman, Texas hospital. Jimmie Naymon, September 26, 1945, Gorman hospital.

Our grandson, George Edward Bouquet is serving at the present time in the U.S. Navy. Another grandson, Tommy Elton, Bouquet married Marilyn McKinzie, May 28, 1960, in the home of her parents in Comanche, Texas. They have one son, Theron Elton, born May 27, 1961, at Hamilton, Texas hospital. He is called 'Rocky'. Tommy is also serving in the United States Navy..

Estelle and Charley were divorced. Later she married Eddie C. Dueboay of Houston, Texas, August 13, 1947. To this marriage were born two children, a girl and a boy. Janis Elan was born December 31, 1948 at a hospital in Houston, Texas. The boy, Stephen Marcus, was born June 24, 1958 in Abilene, Texas hospital.

Enza Dell, our tenth child, married Sergeant Alfred E. Wilson of Sulphur Springs, Texas on July 10, 1942, at our home in Proctor, Texas. Reverend Hornburg of Proctor performed the ceremony. Enza Dell and Alfred had five children; four boys and one girl. James Alfred, born August 10, 1944, Gorman, Texas hospital; Ralph Dwight, born March 12, 1946 at Gorman, Texas; Brenda Doreen, born July 11, 1949 at Madigan General Hospital, Fort Lewis, Washington, (Tacoma); Mark Burkett, born September 17, 1956, at Baylor Hospital, Dallas, Texas; Philip Micheal born June 17, 1959, also at Baylor Hospital, Dallas.

Verna Bess, our eleventh child, was married to Jim Collins of Kemp, Texas, October 4, 1945 at our home in Comanche by Reverend Gregory. To this union were born four daughters; Linda Lavern, January 13, 1949, at the Gorman hospital; Cheryl Lamon, January 15, 1952, also at Gorman; Debra Lois was in a slight hurry as she was born in a green Ford automobile at the emergency entrance of the hospital in Corsicana, Texas, November 30, 1955; Karen Lea arrived February 15, 1959, also in Corsicana, Texas hospital, but she made it inside the door.

While Lizzie and I were rearing our large family, we had our usual share, as everyone does, of sorrows and joys. We had many humorous incidents and excitements as well. One of the most exciting experiences I had during our family rearing, occurred when Verna Bess was born. Lizzie got me up shortly before dawn and told me to send the children to our cousin Zora Phinney's house and have Zora come quickly. Zora cranked the 'Old Ford' and headed for our house. I had already called Dr. Jones of Mullin to come quickly because the baby was already making her appearance. Then I walked the floor, looking up and down the road both directions for Dr. Jones and Zora. I was excited to death even after having had a large family. Finally Zora arrived but she was so excited that she was no help to me. After both of us walked the floor a few more rounds, I finally spied Dr. Jones' car coming. Never have I been so glad to see anyone in my life. While Zora and I calmed our nerves, Dr. Jones attended to Lizzie and

the baby. I'll never forget this experience. We could very well have used some 'nerve medicine' ourselves, Bess as we call hr, almost overloaded the doctor's scales, pulling them down to twelve pounds. Two of our girls, Kay and Flo as they are now called, were four or five pounders. The other girls were of average weight.

We had another very tense period in our lives at the time Chlotilde had pneumonia. She was about four years old when she made a trip into Zepher with me on a cold, misty day. By the time we returned home, Chlotilde had a very high temperature. We immediately started our proven home remedies which seemed to fail us this time. We called Dr. Jones who confirmed that we had a very sick child, ill with double pneumonia. We sat over her nine days and nights with hardly a wink of sleep. She finally recovered, but was a very weak child for quite sometime.

One morning while Lizzie and I were out milking, the older children went to school, leaving Estelle and Enza Dell in the house. Suddenly we heard Estelle screaming, "Mama, come quick, Enza has fell in the fireplace."--or at least that's what we thought she said. Knowing that we had left a big fire in the fireplace, Lizzie and I both, with our buckets full of milk ran toward the house. Lizzie threw her bucket over into the sheep pen, but I held my buckets, jumped two rail fences, not spilling a drop of milk. When we were almost to the house, Enza Dell peeped out at the back door, her face as black as tar. Lizzie screamed, "oh my God! She's burned to a charcoal." Enza had merely spilled black shoe polish in her face when she climbed upon a chair and reached the polish on the mantle, tipping it toward her face. The polish covered her face. Of course Enza was screaming at the top of her voice because the polish was burning her eyes, also because she was afraid of getting a whipping, as the children were always instructed cautiously not to meddle in things while left alone. After getting over the terrible scare, we continued the morning chores. In later years when we all get together, we have many laughs over that and many other funny incidents.

One morning Charlie Forsythe, a cousin of Lizzie, came on horseback from his nearby home and we were standing close to my woodpile talking. Lizzie was working in the house, excitement started when Leona stuck her foot, shoe and all, into a half-gallon syrup bucket. She could not pull her foot out of the bucket because it had a rim which extended inside the bucket, causing the shoe sole to hang on the rim. Lizzie told Leona to go where I was and let me get the bucket off, well, I could not pull the bucket off, so thinking about having a little fun, I picked up the axe and told Leona, "I guess we will have to cut the whole foot, bucket and all, off." Leona began screaming bloody murder while I would say, "Stand still" and try to walk behind her to make her think that I really intended cutting off her foot. I never quite got behind her. Charlie joined in the fun.

Lizzie was standing in the kitchen door telling me to stop teasing Leona, also telling Leona to stand still that I was cutting only the bucket off her foot. Finally Lizzie got tired of my teasing Leona and told me definitely to stop it. The joke had gone so far that it was very hard to convince Leona that I was merely going to split the bucket. Charlie had to hold her while I removed the bucket.

Katherine was just learning to drive the old ford. One morning I cranked the car and told her to drive it from the barn to the yard fence so that I could put water in the radiator before the girls started to school. With a bucket in my hand, I started toward the fence when I heard Katherine coming rather closely. Looking behind me, I saw that she was right on my heels; so I kept getting faster and faster. Katherine did too. I had intended for her to follow the road, but she was watching me and not where the car was going. I saw that she was scared and was going to run over me; so I jumped the bar ditch which was about waist deep along the road. Katherine drove right after me standing the car on it's front end. To this day she will hardly drive a car.

My having to work away from home a great deal caused most of the chores around the place to fall on Lizzie and the girls. One morning Lizzie took Chlotilde with her to feed the hogs. Chlotilde was to knock the hogs away from the fence with a large stick while Lizzie poured the slop into the trough. As is natural with a small girl, Chlotilde was afraid to hit the hogs; but after several admonitions from Lizzie, she decided to give them a good whack. She missed her target and hit Lizzie right on top of the head, almost knocking her out.

Once when we were living on the Vines lease, Lizzie was plowing in a field northwest of the house. Chlotilde had walked across the field to where John and Merle Burkett lived. As she was coming back across the field she heard Estelle screaming something which sounded as if Estelle were saying, "Eugene has fallen in the tank." He was only a small child then, about three or four years old. As Chlotilde was leaving the house the children wanted water to play with; so some of the larger girls had gone with the smaller ones to a deep tank below the house for water. Wesley was there at the time also. Naturally each child wanted to carry a bucket of his own. As Wesley stooped over to dip a bucket of water, he lost his bucket in the tank and began crying, just scared to death because the larger children could not get the bucket and because he was afraid his Grandmother would whip him. After that incident, Eugene decided that he would go across the field to his mother, Chlotilde. Trying to keep him from going, Estelle was only calling to him "Come back here." Meanwhile Lizzie and Chlotilde did not see Eugene coming toward them in the field, but could only hear Wesley still crying about his lost bucket. Chlo started running and got so excited that she could not run anymore but yelled to Lizzie, "Mama hurry!". Lizzie raised the plows from the ground and started whipping the horses into a high run straight across



the cotton rows where she had been plowing. While Estelle was following Eugene, calling him to come back, she looked up and saw the horses running full speed across the field. Then Estelle was scared as she thought the horses were running away with Lizzie. It was hard to tell who was scared the most Lizzie, Chlo or Estelle.

Floretta being a very quiet child, would hardly make a noise when she cried, just go off and sob quietly to herself. On day Word Coleman and I were clearing trees from a piece of ground that joined the back of my field. We were using his father's stump puller which was drawn by horses. Attached to the stump puller then around the tree was a large wire cable which became tighter and pulled the tree from the ground as the horses were driven in a large circle in order to tighten the cable. The horses were hitched to an elm tree, lever braced by iron. While Word drove the horses around the circle, the lever broke, came back full force and hit him just above the knee, breaking his leg, of course. Lizzie and Leona had been taking turns driving the horses in the afternoons, If one of them had been driving perhaps the blow would have killed her because neither one of them being as tall as Word, might have been hit in the stomach. Word and Leona were not married at the time. We finally got help, Word's Dad came in his car and took Word to the hospital. They stopped at our house for quilts and pillows to make a bed in the back seat of the car. As they were leaving we missed Flo who was only two or three years of age, We called and hunted for her but she would not answer. At last we found her behind the dresser crying and barely peeking out the window toward the car as Mr. Coleman and Word drove away. Flo thought that Word's leg had broken completely off and was left in the pasture where we had been working. We couldn't convince her that Word's leg was not in the pasture until we took her to the pasture and showed her that the leg was not there Flo would hardly look after getting there.

Enza Dell, four years to the day older than Bess, thought she could still be the baby and was very much upset when she had to give up sleeping with Lizzie and me. She cried because she had to sleep in the bed with Chlo; but finally she stopped crying and sobbingly said, "Well, if I've got to be grown, I just as well paint and powder my face and get me some high heel shoes and a corset to wear.

Verna Bess, being sick until she was two years old or older was humored and spoiled, more or less, by the whole family until she thought that she should have everything she wanted. One night when we had pie for supper, Bess decided she wanted pie first and nothing else to eat. Wanting to bring her up right, I would not let her have pie first. Finally I had to visit the mulberry tree, bring back a limb from it and give Bess a good switching. The whole family left the table so that she could not see them while they had a big cry themselves. Bess

ate some supper, however, she lost her taste for pie and was not going to eat it. Then I had to make her eat the pie anyway. I'll have to admit that it hurt me so much to have to whip Bess, but I wanted her to be brought up in the same manner we had tried to rear our other children.

While we were living on the Cox place east of Mullin, I decided one Sunday morning to walk into town to get our mail from the post office. Just as I started back toward home, Floyd and his two small children, Wanda Zell and James Floyd, drove up in their old model '34 Chevy car'. Floyd asked if I were going back home; since I was, Floyd told me to get in and ride for he was going out that direction to see after some sheep which he had in a pasture. While I was getting into the car the children said, "Uncle George, there is a snake in the car." I asked "Where" They said, "In that front seat cushion." Well, we went on and I forgot all about the incident, however whenever I got into the car, I had noticed that Floyd had a rope laying on the floor between the seats. I was always picking and playing with the children so I thought perhaps that one of them had picked up the end of the rope and was tickling my neck when I felt something crawling and tickling me on the neck. We were crossing on a small culvert over a narrow, deep ravine, almost home, when I felt that crawling sensation on my neck. I reached back over my left shoulder thinking I would catch the rope and pull it across my shoulder. When I pulled the 'rope' far enough to see it, I noticed it was really and truly a snake. Pulling it across my shoulder, I threw the snake on the floor board at mine and Floyd's feet. That scared Floyd so much that he began slinging his hands, kicking his feet, and hollering, "Get that thing out of here." all the time trying to climb over the door to get outside the car. Meanwhile the car headed off the road into the ravine which was about thirty-five feet deep. I was not too happy about having a snake crawl around my feet, so I began trying to get the door open. Finally I succeeded and kicked the snake out just as we were about to go over the cliff, it dawned on me to put my foot on the brake and stop the car, which I did just in time. Floyd finally regained his composure enough to get back down inside the car and take hold of the steering wheel and brake. Safe and sound, we continued on home, but we were a bit shaken up.

We have had very few differences in our family. I know we have a very close and wonderful family, despite all the hard work and worries. I would not exchange my wife and family for any other, for I have wealth in my fifty-six children, grand-children and great-grand-children which I will not attempt to price.

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This story of my life was compiled in latter 1961 and early 1962 by my daughter, Leona Burkett Coleman, in collaboration with and for me.

G.N.B.

STELLA MAE BURKETT MASSEY

and

HER CHILDREN

Stella Mae Burkett, third child of Joseph Lafayette Burkett and Della Catherine Pyeatt Burkett, was born at Williams Ranch community, Mills County, Texas, January 5, 1887. The attending Physician was Dr. Jim Kirkpatrick.

Williams Ranch was a thriving community three miles southeast of Mullin, Texas. In 1885 it was known that a railroad was coming through Mills County, but for some reason it would not come through Williams Ranch. It would come through Mullin; therefore the people in Williams Ranch began moving to Mullin which became a nice little town almost over night. Grandpa Burkett moved his blacksmith shop from Williams Ranch to Mullin in 1886. He rode horse back from Williams Ranch to Mullin to work in his shop until he moved his family there in 1888.

Mama started to school at Mullin and continued until she finished all the grades taught in Mullin at that time. She then taught a kindergarten school for three or four years. Some of her own brothers and sisters went to school to her. I remember hearing Mama say that Grandpa Burkett made Mama understand that she must make them mind her as well as the other pupils did, and if they didn't they would receive the same punishment the others did.

Mama was unusually good in 'figures and speech'. She was called on often for a 'recitation' or 'speech' on Friday afternoons when they would have their "Literary Society." I've heard Mama's brothers and sisters say they dearly loved to hear Mama get up and recite "Mr. Brown got his hair cut--" as well as many other speeches.

Mama worked in the Mullin post office when Mr. Sid J. Eaton was postmaster. She enjoyed book work, and often brought her office books home with her at night and worked on them later into the night; as she had all her monthly and quarterly reports to make by hand, instead of having the modern adding and posting machines we have today.

After working for Mr. Eaton for a number of years, Mama also worked for the new postmaster, Mr. J.A. Clark, who was appointed when the administration changed.

Later Mama was offered the position of manager and operator of the telephone company which she accepted. She soon learned she would need some help as she was required to operate the switch board day and night as well as keep the books. Mama soon taught her sisters, Aunt Birdie and Aunt Mae Delle how to operate the switch board; so all three of them worked together for the telephone company for several years.

While Mama was keeping books for some of the stores in Mullin, a mercantile store was going to give a piano to the most popular young lady receiving the most votes. The store gave votes with the goods they sold at a penny a vote. The contest ran several months, through the course of that time several young ladies entered the race; but during the last few weeks before the contest ended, there were only two of them remaining in the race, My mama and Miss Gertrude Chancellor, Mama told me it was quite exciting at times, as one of them would be in the lead one day, and maybe the next day the other one would have the most votes. On the last day of the contest when the votes were all in and counted Mama won the piano.

Mama married Daddy, Arthur Tennel Massey, April 27, 1919. They were married at the home of Reverend and Mrs. A.S. Bradley, a Church of Christ minister in Mullin, Texas.

The first child born to Mama and Daddy was Burkett Edison Massey on February 13, 1920, at Mullin, Texas, on Grandpa Burkett's place two miles northeast of Mullin. Dr. R. H. Jones was the attending physician. Burkett started to school at Mullin. Mama has told me that she gave him the pet name of 'Baby Ray' from his first Baby Ray Primer'. Burkett married Mildred Irene Huksey of Calvert, Texas, August 17, 1939, at Goldthwaite, Texas. R.J. Gerald performed the ceremony. Mama and Juanelle Burkett, Uncle Edgar's daughter were the witnesses. Burkett and Mildred have two children, Della Rose and Bobby Gene. Della Rose Massey was born May 26, 1940 at Goldthwaite, Texas. Burkett named her 'Della Rose' because that is the name Grandpa would have given her if she had been a girl. Instead Grandpa called her 'Burkett' so that the Burkett name would be carried on. Bobby Gene Massey was born September 15, 1946 at Calvert, Texas.

Burkett joined the navy October 12, 1942 and was discharged October 11, 1945. He served twenty-four months of this time in the South Pacific and was on every battle front. He spent most of his time aboard the ship U.S.S. Draco A K 79.

Burkett re-enlisted in the navy January 11, 1956, going into the reserves for a year. In February 1957 he joined the regular navy. His family remained in Waco from February 1956, until August, 1959, for his daughter, Della Rose to finish high school; Della Rose married William Gaines Wetterman on March 14, 1959. Their son, W. G. Wetterman, Jr. was born July 27, 1960. Since Burkett is still in the navy, he is hoping to receive orders soon for shore duty in Texas so that he can be near his family.

Burkett has done exactly what his Grandpa Burkett said he would do, make a mechanic, and he truly has, Mama has told me many times that when Burkett was small, he tore up everything he could get his hands on just to see how it was made; then he would attempt to put it back together after tearing it down and scattering the parts everywhere.

After World II, Burkett taught Ex G.I.s mechanics and welding. Now he is air-conditioning and welding.

I was the second child born to Mama and Daddy. Because Daddy wanted me to have Mama's name, I am Stella Mae Massey, also. I was born December 1, 1924, at Mullin, Texas. When I was quite small, I had curley hair; but it was not very long or very thick, either. Daddy wanted it to be longer so I would not look so much like a boy. One day he took me to the barber shop and had my hair clipped, thinking it would make my hair grow longer. Mama was such a kind hearted, smooth-tempered person she would not say anything when Daddy brought me in with my hair cut. I suppose 'all's well that ends well' for my hair soon grew out and looked better than it ever had before.

I went to school in Mullin most all my high school days. During World War II, we moved to Waco, Texas, where there were plenty of good jobs for everyone who wanted to work. Daddy, Mama and I all worked there several years. I worked at Clifton Manufacturing Company, making army shirts and at Owen Illinois Glass Company, making bottles.

On August 17, 1945, I married Nicholas Kordash. We were married at Waco, Texas, in the Herring Avenue Christian church, by Chaplain D.E. Casey. Nick was in the army at the time we married, having just returned from the Aleutian Islands. We had a church wedding as that was my mother's wish. Even though she was sick, she was able to attend the wedding. I am happy that I was able to fill one of her last requests. We have two children, Alan and Karen. Allen Richard Kardash was born in Waco, Texas, October 2, 1946, Karen Leona Kardash, named for Aunt Birdie Leona Burkett, was born May 29, 1948 in Dallas, Texas.

The third and last child born to Mama and Daddy was Joe Oliver Massey. He was born December 23, 1926, at San Angelo, Texas. Aunt Mae Delle tells me Joe has been a live wire every day of his life. Even when he was a baby crawling on the floor, Mama would take him with her to Grandma Burkett's house where she would go to help Grandma with her daily chores and Joe would get into more things while they were working than they could clean and straighten up at the end of the day. He dearly loved to get into Grandma's kitchen cabinets and scatter her pots and pans all over the house, and even out in the yard. Really I don't think he has ever gotten over that. ~~yet. Joe attended school in Hearne, Texas, also Mullin~~ for a while. He volunteered into the navy while he was very young, even before finishing high school. He entered the navy September 9, 1942 and discharged March 3, 1946. He served in the South Pacific the same as Burkett did. They just happened to meet up with each other only twice while in the South Pacific. Joe was on the U.S.S. T. O. G. 42.

After leaving the service, Joe went back to school and graduated from Mullin in May 1947. In November 1946, he was married to Tommy Lou Sutton at San Saba,

Texas. They had two children, Cheryl Amelia Massey, born October 4, 1948 at San Saba, Texas. Little Lou Massey was born July 31, 1952, in Fort Worth, Texas. Joe's first wife, Tommy Lou, died August 7, 1952. In March 1955, Joe was married to Mary Jo Cox. In December 1955, Dwight Alan Massey was born to them. Dwight was named for our son, Alan.

Joe Massey married Barbara Bookout May 12, 1961. They now live in Fort Worth, Texas, where Joe is employed as secretary-treasurer for AlSCO.

The highest compliment I've ever had from my husband of sixteen years is that he says I have traits and characteristics of my mother.

One thing that has worried me is that Mama did not live long enough to see and love her grandchildren. I am sure she would have spoiled each one of them and just known they were all the smartest grandchildren anyone ever had.

Nick, my husband is in construction work, and if I do say so myself, he is very good at it. I would like to add that I married a 'New York Yankee', but now he is a 'converted Texan'. He just could not be anything else with a Texas wife and two Texas children. At one time he did not know what a 'pallet' was, but he soon learned when all of us got together for the night.

I work for the Irving Public Schools and enjoy it. I suppose Mama passed on to me some of the pleasure of working for the public.

Mama was dearly loved and respected by everyone who knew her. She was good and kind to the young and old. She did more kind deeds for everyone than anyone else I have known. Along with her goodness and kindness, she practiced each day of her life, the 'Golden Rule'. "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you."

Along with the good Christian life she lived, Mama also had a sense of humor. She played practical jokes on everyone. Sometimes she would dress up in men's clothes, at other times in women's clothes, take a bucket and some paper sacks and go to the neighbors back door and beg for milk, flour, meal, bacon, beans or just anything to eat. Later she would return it and everyone enjoyed the joke as well as Mama.

Aunt Annie wrote me about Mama playing this joke on her; "One time when we were girls at home, Mother was busy sewing, and we heard the most terrible noise of falling pans and rattling in the kitchen. She told me to go see what all that noise was about. When I got to the kitchen door, there stood a big black negro woman. There were not any negroes in the county at that time, so of course I was scared. I screamed and almost fainted. Just in seconds, however, I realized it was Stella dressed up like a negro. She was rattling those pans to get me to come into the kitchen where it was darker so I would not recognize her at once. Mother might have been in on the joke. Any way after I got scared, Mother and Stella both began saying, 'It's Stella, it's Stella.'" Then we all had a big laugh.

After we three children were gone from home, Mama and Daddy continued to live in Waco where they worked. In 1945 we learned that Mama had cancer, and had only a short time to live. The year she was in bed she was still kind and patient and bore her suffering in silence. As I grow older, if I can have just a few of Mama's good qualities, I can think life has bestowed upon me some very rich blessings indeed.

I can think of no better way of describing Mama than the way a dear friend described her in another chapter of our little book which I hope all of you will read. I am sure all of you will think she has described Mama well.

Mama passed away in Waco, Texas March 14, 1946. We laid her away to rest in Oakview Cemetery, Mullin, Texas, Mills County.

I feel that Mama's history would not be completed if I did not pay tribute to my Aunt Birdie (Burkett) Chambers. I lived with her and attended high school. She did so many nice, kind, and thoughtful things for me. I can't take time or space to mention all of them. I can only say that I feel very lucky, indeed to have had two 'mothers'. Since Mother has gone, I've never felt alone, for I still have Aunt Bird. I can go to her when I feel like I need someone to unburden my soul to.

I, Edgar Burkett, the fourth child of Joseph Lafayette Burkett and Della Catherine (Pyeatt) Burkett, was born May 28, 1889, in a log house at Mullin, Texas near the present home where my sister, Birdie Burkett Chambers now lives, 1962. The attending physician was Dr. Jim Kirkpatrick of Mullin.

My parents continued to live on the same lot where I was born but in a house built of finished lumber until Father's death October 27, 1920. A few years later Mother had a new house built very near-by--just a few feet away--and lived there until her death June 11, 1937. Both of my parents are buried in Mullin cemetery.

I have many pleasant memories of things that happened in my life. Among those memories is an incident during my attendance of an old time camp meeting at Chessar Valley six miles from Mullin. I, still wearing a dress, was left asleep in the wagon. (It was customary for boys to wear dresses until they were about four or five years old.) When the shouting began, I awoke frightened. Mr. George Williams, a very friendly man, who was under a shade tree nearby, came to the wagon and consoled me.

Although I was too young to know much about that particular camp meeting I do remember hearing that all denominations were represented and that Black Joe Davee was the main preacher. I remember hearing, also, of an amusing, yet rather sad experience that he had awhile later. He was called to preach on a Saturday night and Sunday in a nearby community. The grown boys of that community being accustomed to playing pranks, got a pint of whiskey, way laid Davee on Saturday evening and poured all the contents down him. Needless to say he was unable to attend services that night.

Many little, unimportant things happened in my life; but some impressed me more than others. One happened the morning that my oldest sister, Anna, started walking with me to school---the first year that I attended. Our fighting milk cow, named Lucy, spied us and charged us. Anna was thrown high into the air but fell on a sand bed and was not hurt very much. I was not hurt at all but very badly frightened. We proceeded to school the back way. That was in the fall of 1897. I completed one grade each year until 1908 when I finished all of the eleven grades taught in the Mullin Public School at that time.

I do not remember all of my teachers' names in the correct rotation, however some of them were; Miss Elma Burks, Mr. Dan Shiply, Miss Myra Prator, Miss Dere Humphries, Miss Maude White, Miss Sivalls, Mr. Sam Fisher, a Mr. Williams, Mr. and Mrs. Brice Stephenson. Now in my declining years I often think of the many good deeds each of my teachers did for me, giving lectures and informal talks filled with constructive knowledge and advice all of which I willingly accepted and appreciated at that time, but even more so in later years. I still have a warm place in my heart for all of my teachers. Nothing of importance happened to me through my school years, yet I recall especially that our entertainments were spelling



matches, speeches, dialogues and debates. I enjoyed the debates more than anything else. When a subject was chosen, my partner and I would take the affirmative side; then challenging our opponents, we took the negative side and usually won both debates, perhaps that is why I like to argue.

My parents told me about an unusual event which has always interested me very much. They said that on the night that I was born a big dance was being held at the Florida Hotel in Mullin. While the dance was in full sway, a disturbance arose and a free-for-all fight followed. My father, being the peace officer, was called in to stop the disturbance. After arriving and deputizing several sober men to help him, Dad pointed out one drunk person for each deputy to manage. After much scuffling the disturbance grew worse and the six shooter began to bark. During the fracas some pranksters cut the stairs down and removed them from the building. As was customary in those days the stairs were built on the outside. When shooting started, everyone ran for the stair steps, not noticing the steps were gone; of course all landed in a big heap on the ground. No one was seriously hurt physically. Dr. Jimmy Kirkpatrick had brought two girls, Hallie and Willie (Bill) Hutchinson to the dance. They were the first to run out and hit the ground below. After getting the girls and himself from under the other persons, Dr. Jimmy saw William Cox looking around the corner of the house and laughing. At that moment someone asked the doctor if he were hurt. His reply was, "Nothing but my pride and feelings." If William Cox had not been so swift on foot, another fight would have started. After the dance was over, an inventory showed no serious trouble had occurred. My Dad had a 45 bullet hole through his hat. Deputy Horace Butts, a very small man, had whittled his extra prisoner down to his size so that he could handle him.

April 20, 1910, I was married to Evelyn Barton at her home nine miles east of Mullin. Reverend L.J. Vann, a Baptist minister, performed the ceremony. Two years later, April 14, 1912, our first child, a boy, was born on the Joe Burkett farm, two miles northeast of Mullin and died April 18, 1912, living only four days. He is buried in Mullin cemetery.

Blanche Katherine Burkett, our third child, was born November 16, 1914. Dr. J.W. Campbell was the doctor. At that time we lived on our own farm which had been a part of the Barton place nine miles east of Mullin.

Joe Lewis Burkett, our next son, was born December 16, 1916, on the Burkett farm two miles north east of Mullin. After eight very short years, Joe Lewis died February 29, 1924. He is buried in Mullin cemetery. Beryl Juanelle Burkett, our next daughter, was born August 27, 1920 on the Burkett farm northeast of Mullin. Dr. Jones attended.

Jake Bentley Burkett, our next son and last child, was born July 2, 1923, on the Burkett farm northeast of Mullin. Dr. Jones attended.

Additional information about our children and their families will be given later in this chapter.

In the spring of 1912, we decided to take the advice of Horace Greely who said, "Go west, young man, and grow with the country." We hitched our horses to a covered wagon and started west joining the wagon train within a few miles. The train left Mullin on March 2, 1912. There being twenty wagons, not much speed was made. We crossed the New Mexico line at Knowles, New Mexico. There the individual wagons angled off in different directions. We went rather farther than any of the others. After looking over quite a bit of country, we decided to return to Mills, County. On May 2, 1912, we arrived back on the same farm, having been gone exactly sixty days and traveled 1760 miles.

Most of my life I have been a farmer; however I operated a grocery store one year, 1925, at Lubbock, Texas. In connection with farming, I've been a stock raiser, dairyman, trader, and service station operator. I have been, also, a committee man on A.S.C. for twenty-seven years.

I suppose everyone has his share of sorrows as well as pleasures. As I have said before, Evelyn and I married in 1910. we had three children to die while they were young. Then in 1953 my wife was stricken with a heart ailment. She was placed in King 's Daughters Hospital, at Temple, Texas, and died two months later. She was buried ~~at~~ 24, 1953. in the Mullin cemetery by the side of our children and where I will be buried when the time comes. She was a true, hard-working woman, obeying the gospel in her early life and continuing in the faith till her death.

The three surviving children are all members of the church. I was baptized in 1957 by Moore Eubank.

I lived with Jake and his family one year after my wife's death. They moved to New York and I have been by myself ever since. During those years I have bought, remodeled and sold two houses in Mullin. I am living in the third house which I bought and remodeled. At this place and the other two where I lived, also while improving them I raised pretty flowers. My friends and relatives visiting me seem to enjoy the flowers as much as I. Along with my reconstruction of houses since 1957, I have been raising some livestock, attending auction sales in various towns and buy and sell a few more livestock, going on business trips for the telephone company-- some of them to surrounding counties---and continuing my work as a committee man for A.S.C. I have not been idle nor entirely dependent on other people while living alone in my declining years. When I become tired of working for a while, or just want to talk to another person, I visit relatives or friends., usually the friends visited are those, who as I do, enjoy sitting at the service station and business places near our home til bedtime. There we spend many pleasant hours talking about present day happenings as well as events of earlier days.

Now to add more information about my children, I am including including mostly their own version of themselves and their families.

I, Blanche Katherine Burkett Britt, was born November 16, 1914, on the Edgar Burkett farm, nine miles east of Mullin, on Trukey Track Mountain. spoken of by old timers as 'The Mountain'. Our farm, was part of the land which my grandfather, A.M. Barton originally purchased from the government about 1888 for one dollar per acre with forty years in which to pay. I was named for my two grandmothers--Blanche Barton and Catherine Burkett. I attended public schools at Lubbock, Midway and Mullin, where I graduated from High school in 1932. Among my memories of school days, I recall that while attending Midway school near the Mountain, I rode a horse which Daddy had to tame every morning before the horse or Daddy would let me mount for the three mile ride. Many mornings Daddy just thought he had tamed the horse because I was thrown off before returning home just before dark--late from walking home after being thrown off by the horse.

My first college courses were taken in John Tarleton College at Stephenville, Texas. I studied other college subjects in Sul Ross, State College at Alpine, Texas. Teaching my first year at Slayden, Mills County, I continued that career for a number of years at Cottonwood, and Denton in Callahan County and AcAnnally Bend in San Saba county.

During the summers if I were not attending college, I worked at various positions until I married Bob Britt of Minco, Oklahoma, October 16, 1939. Having no children, I enjoyed traveling with Bob who was a salesman over several states. While he was in the U.S. Air Force in the States and overseas, I held various responsible positions near the air force base. These included my directorship of the Service Club at Alamogorda Air Force Base, also the office work for the Blue Book put out by Dun and Bradstreet.

My husband, Bob Britt, died January 14, 1961, having been burned to death in his residence in Oklahoma City.

I am now living in Victoria, Texas, where I own and operate an interior design and decorating shop. ---June 1962.

I, Beryl Juanelle Burkett Curtis, was born August 27, 1920 on the original Burkett farm, two miles northeast of Mullin. My brother, two years older, called me Sis and that name has been continued by many relatives. Because milk and most foods did not agree with me during my early life, I stayed under doctors' care, in and out of hospitals, until I started to school. My teacher, Miss Louise Coffman, from Cherokee, was very faithful in administering my medicine every two hours at school. My public school education began that year and continued until I graduated from Mullin High School in 1938, ranking highest of the girls in my class and third highest of all the students in my class.

After graduating from high school, I started attending Brantley-Draughon Business College in Fort Worth, Texas, but lack of money and Mother's illness caused me to return home after four months.. Then I worked in various jobs until I married Alton Curtis of Goliad, Texas. We were married January 20, 1943 at Mullin, Texas in the old Burkett homestead now owned by my aunt, Mrs. Birdie Burkett Chambers. Moore Eubank preformed the ceremony. While Alton was serving overseas, in the U.S. Air Force, I worked in post offices at Mullin, Camp Bowie and Brownwood for two years until his return. We moved to Goliad where Alton bought and operated a service station for several years. As a side business, he raised livestock. At this writing, 1962, Alton is the operator for Goliad Grain Elevator and still raising cattle.

We have three children. Jerry Galyle Curtis was born December 14, 1946, in the hospital at Beeville, Texas. There was no hospital at Goliad at that time. Alton Burkett Curtis was born September 21, 1950, in the hospital at Goliad, Texas. After Alton and I spent eleven years in 'middle age activities' our little girl, Claye Evelyn, was born September 22, 1961.

Our boys enjoy hunting and fishing. They can 'spin' their tales with old timers of those sports. Both boys have brought in their share of deer, javaline, rattlesnakes and fish for boys their age or even older ones.

I, Jake Bently Burkett, was born July 12, 1923, on the Burkett farm northeast of Mullin.

My first school days were in Mullin with Miss Mabel Smith as my teacher. I may have been some what mischievous according to the following story that my sisters tell about me. One day soon after I started to school, Miss Smith asked children why they came to school. She received various answers, of course, but I spoke right up, "I came to sharpen my pencils on that thing at the back of the room!" That may have solved the mystery about my needing two new pencils every morning, though I was just beginning to write. I like to think that I was all boy for I enjoyed playing ball and all rough sports; however I did have to pass the careful inspection of my two older sisters, Blanche and Jaunelle and my mother before leaving for school each morning. I always wore a bow tie and after arriving at school each morning, I reminded my teacher to look under my chin. Later in my school days I did not care so much for outdoor sports, but spent most of my play periods reading. Finally my teachers and the superintendent being concerned about my lack of outdoor exercise and possible damage to my eyes, talked with my parents about my reading so much.

After graduating from Mullin High School, I attended YTexas Technological College, Lubbock, Texas, several months until after the declaration of World War II. I withdrew from college to help build airplanes at Fort Worth, Texas and Spokane Washington. Within a few months I volunteered for service in the U.S. Navy. While

-serving my country, I met and married Vivian Rose Neil of Jeanette, Pennsylvania, May 25, 1945, in Washington, D.C. Vivian as a WAVE was serving her country also. Soon after we married we received honorable discharges and moved to Texas, where we worked a few years before moving to Pennsylvania. Our daughter, Sharon Kay Burkett, was born May 1, 1946 in the Campbell Hospital, Goldthwaite, Texas.

We returned to Texas in 1950. Our second daughter, Debra Ann Burkett was born January 23, 1951, in the Campbell Hospital.

Joe Pat Burkett, our third child, was born February 22, 1955 in the Childress Hospital, Goldthwaite, Texas. He was named after my older brother, Joe Lewis (called Pat) who had died with mastoid trouble when he was eight years old.

At this time, June 1962, Vivian and I both work for Westinghouse in Lancaster, New York, where we have lived since 1957.

My father, E.L. Burkett, and my two older sisters visited with us in Lancaster when I was very seriously injured in a car accident and not expected to live. That was 1959.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF FLOYD ELI BURKETT

I was born October 3, 1891 and was named Floyd Eli Burkett. Dr. Kirkpatrick, Mrs. Eli Fairman and Mrs. Ben White were with Mother at the time of my birth. As the Fairmans were close friends of the family, I was named for Mr. Eli Fairman.

Dad was a blacksmith by trade. Before I was old enough to go to school, I would go to the shop with him. I was too small to reach the bellows handle, so he would place a keg for me to stand on and pump the bellows.

I started to school in 1899. The building was the old brick two story building in Mullin, and my teacher was Mrs. Mary Tyson. At the age of ten, I stayed with my-oldest sister, Annie, (Mrs. W.L. Jackson) who then lived in the Miller Grove Community. She was teaching there at the time and I went to school to her. My father had grass land leased near my sister's home and I fed the cows for him after school. At the age of thirteen, I was sick with fever more than one hundred days. The doctor called it slow fever. I was so weak and thin as a result, that the children called me, "Ichabod Crane."

One of my most treasured childhood memories of Mother and Dad is that after supper the family would gather around the old fireplace, while Mother would pop pop-corn. Dad would take the smallest of the children on his knee and sing to all the children. One song I always enjoyed but can't remember the title to, went like this, "My mother was dutch, my father was dutch, and I'm a little dutch man , too.

Stella helped Mother to take care of the younger children. So, often while she was entertaining us, she was planning some kind of joke to play on us. I'm sure each of the children can remember many jokes and April Fools she enjoyed so much. I know Edgar will remember as well as I the time she was so sorry for us because we had to drive the calves in. She made us a sandwich that looked so appetizing and met us outside to give it to us. To our surprise and disappointment the sandwiches were filled with lint cotton. Another incident I can remember, is the time all the children were invited to take a lunch and go with the Felix Johnson family to a camp meeting at Chessar Valley. We enjoyed our trip in the wagon and spread our lunch under the brush arbor. At the evening services, some of the ladies were so happy, they began to shout. On returning home Mother and Dad were anxious to hear about our trip. As usual Stella did our talking. She told them about the lunch and who was converted and how happy some of the ladies were. Her way of expressing it was that one of the elderly ladies took it harder than anyone else.

I met Maude Petty in December 1910, at Hemp Pickins' Party. We saw each other often after that at community parties and singings. I bought a new rubber

tired buggy in 1911. After that we went steady until we were married November 12, 1912.

On November 27, 1912, we moved to Dad's farm, three miles north of Mullin, Texas. My father bought us nice furniture for our home, including a bed, dresser, cook stove, table, and four cane bottom chairs and a nice kitchen cabinet. We were very proud of our kitchen sink which was made at the tin shop. We also had running water piped in the kitchen.

We were then ready to start making plans for the future. Our parents furnished two work horses and walking farm equipment, and two durham milk cows. We bought twelve hens to furnish eggs for our own use and we had eggs to sell. My father and I went to the bank and he signed a note with me for \$75.00 which furnished our groceries, clothes, and all necessary expenses. We had more than four dollars in the bank when our first bale of cotton was ginned. Our first crop was twenty-four acres of cotton and ten acres of feed. We ginned eleven bales of cotton, plenty of grain to feed the team and fatten a big hog for the next year.

We stayed on the farm seven years. In the fall of 1919, we moved to Lynn County. We bought 160 acres of unimproved land. We built a house in O'Donnell and spent the winter there. In the spring of 1920 we drilled a well and improved our place and planted our crop on 60 acres of farmland. My father was sick and I spent some time with him.

In October of that year my father passed away. Memories of the thirty day trip my father and I made together, visiting, fishing, hunting and camping out in our covered wagon shortly before his death, gives me lots of pleasure. We made three good crops in Lynn County and were able to buy our first car, a Model T. My wife and I worked very hard for the first 12 or 13 years of our married life. We did try to see at least one circus and Dallas Fair occasionally. Often when we went to the Fair we would get separated however, after I learned where to find her it wasn't so bad. I would go to the zoo and find her at the ape cages.

In the summer of 1923, my wife obeyed the gospel. She was baptized by Bro. Fitzgerald in Lake Merrit. My sister, Birdie and sister-in-law, Ruby Burkett were baptized at the same time.

In the fall of 1923, we built a filling station in Lubbock, five blocks south of the courthouse. It was known then as Hub Service Station.

November 7, 1925, Wanda Zell, our daughter was born in Mullin, Texas. Dr. Brown was the attending physician.

In 1926 we bought 160 acres of Mother's farm. We later bought the Anthony Warren place on Long Hollow Branch.

December 3, 1928, James Floyd, our son was born in Mullin, Texas.

In the fall of 1931, Wanda started to school in Mullin. Miss Mabel Smith was her first teacher. James started to school in Mullin in the fall of 1935. Miss Marsalete Summy was his first teacher.

We often think of the cute things our children said when small. One Sunday morning we were ready to go to church and Wanda called to her mother, "Be sure and don't forget the cookies to keep me quiet." When James was in the second grade, he would feel fine until he would get to school. He would take the headache and have to come home. After he got home, he would feel fine. After questioning him for several days, we found he was afraid of his teacher. When she found out what his trouble was, she was so nice to him, he soon began to love her and his headaches were gone. James also had some of his Daddy's trading ability. His first day at school, I had given him an expensive pocket knife. When he returned home from school, he had a pretty colored marble and said he had traded his knife and pencil for it. As the children got old enough to enjoy going, we tried to go more with them. We would visit the school and school programs, We tried each summer to take them on a vacation trip, such as Carlsbad Cavern in New Mexico, Longhorn Caverns near Burnet, Centennial at Dallas, Prison Rodeo in Huntsville, Dallas Fair, etc. We also enjoyed many fishing trips together.

In 1937 a new highway came through Mullin. We built a service Station and cafe on the new highway. In 1940 we sold the business in Mullin and moved to Seminole. We were partners with Ralph Derrick in building apartment houses. The oil drilling business had slowed down by this time and houses were hard to sell so in the summer of 1940 we returned to Mills County and built a service station and cafe two miles north of Goldthwaite on highway 84.

Wanda and James started to school in Goldthwaite in the fall of 1940. Wanda was graduated from high school in 1943. She entered Texas Tech in September 1943, and remained until January 1945. Stoddard entered the Army Air Corp in February 1943 and was sent to England in May 1944. He was shot down over Germany on his fifteenth mission in July of 1944. He was taken prisoner by the Germans and held for nine months or until the end of the war. He was freed April 29, 1945 and returned home. He entered Texas A & M College in February 1946. Upon his graduation from A& M, he worked with the Texas Highway Department in Bryan. He went from there to Chance Vaught in Grand Prairie. Their only child, Marla Gay, was born January 14, 1955. She started to school in September 1961. At the present time they are making their home in Arlington, Texas.

James graduated from Goldthwaite High School in May, 1946. He entered Texas Tech in September 1946. He transferred to Texas University in September 1947, and remained until January 1949. He was married to Billie Jean Baker on December 26, 1948. She graduated from Baylor University in August 1948. They lived in Burnet, Texas until 1950 when they moved to Lometa to go into the grocery



business there. James entered the Army in March 1952. He was stationed in Virginia and later sent to Fort Sam Houston in San Antonio. Billie fortunately was able to go with him. They returned to Lometa in March of 1954 and James continued to operate the grocery store until January 1959, when they sold the business. At the present time, James is part owner of a Laundromat in Lampasas and is also stock farming near Lometa. Billie is teaching in Goldthwaite High School.

Wanda and Stoddard obeyed the gospel in the spring of 1959 at Arlington, Texas. They were baptized by Neil Marshall. In April, 1960, James, Billie and I were baptized in Lometa by Silas Howell.

After Mother passed away the children all decided to have a family reunion each year. We have been able to attend each reunion and enjoy them very much. We are especially grateful to Don and Della Geeslin for furnishing us such a nice place at Lake Merrit the past several years for these reunions.

One remarkable thing about our family of ten children is that we have never lived so far apart that we could not all be together within five or six hours, except for the time Lee was in the service and overseas. We are all living at this time except one sister, Stella, and the third child, who passed away March 14, 1946.

## AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF LEE PYEATT BURKETT

I, Lee Pyeatt Burkett, was born September 7, 1895, to Joseph Lafayette Burkett and Della Pyeatt Burkett in our home which was erected on a lot near the present homesite where my sister, Mrs. Birdie Chambers, resides in Mullin, Texas. I was the sixth child of a family of ten children.

As a child I was ill frequently---subject to spasms and nausea. At that time doctors were not consulted with each occurrence. The condition was more or less accepted. Medical consultations among women (both young and old) of the community was a common practice, however, I apparently owe my cure to their consultations. One of the grandmothers (whether a relative or not, I do not recall) suggested to Mother that she make a medicine of certain herbs; she also told Mother to purchase a certain drug which cured me and started me on a healthier childhood.

When one looks back on his childhood, there are memories that bring forth smiles; however, when these reflections are put into words on paper for others to read, they somehow fail to convey the humor and impact felt by the participant so many years ago. Although the fun of my childhood pranks may seem dull and dry to the present reader, perhaps the recollection of such pranks will indicate something of the period of time when I was a young boy. I remember especially one prank that the Eaton boys and I played. The Eaton boys lived across the street with their grandparents, Mr. and Mrs. Terrell Eaton. We got a billfold, tied a string to it, placed it on the street. (Of course the street was but a dusty road called a street because it was within the town of Mullin and a much traveled thoroughfare) The top layers of sand were used to cover the string tied to the billfold with the other end being held by us in the house. Different persons stopped to pick up the billfold. Some even got down from their wagons. Each time we pulled the billfold toward us, laughing as we did so. Mr Solan Casey drove by several times; the last time he stopped, broke the string, threw the billfold into his wagon and drove off. Although we were somewhat surprised and taken aback by his clever action, this did not stop our fun for the day. We merely searched for a suitable replacement for the billfold and continued our prank for the day.

My school days were spent in the old school building in Mullin, Texas. Two of my teachers were Miss. Nell Kirkpatrick and a Miss Scarborough. I quit school for one year, but through some clever psychology of my dad and our neighbor, Mr. Tip Eaton, my interest was rekindled and I started back to school in the seventh grade. By Christmas of that year, I was promoted to the eighth grade. The following year I completed both the ninth and tenth grades.

It was through Mr. Tip Eaton's encouragement that I attended summer school with him at Southwest State Teacher's College, San Marcos, Texas, usually referred to as State Normal School in those days.

A young man who roomed where Mr. Eaton and I did, had a date with a young lady one night. He decided to use some of my cologne. We were not watching when he picked up the bottle. Instead of cologne, he got some medicine that Mr. Eaton had been using on his head for a dandruff cure, and put it on a nice handkerchief in his shirt pocket. That soiled the clean, white shirt which he had borrowed from Mr. Eaton; so he had to put on one of his own that he had worn to school for two days, as no one had a clean shirt to lend.

The following year I obtained a teachers' certificate and taught school one year at Fairview near San Saba, Texas, before going into the army in 1918. The first time I tried getting into the army, I did not succeed, because it was thought I had a heart condition. Later, however, the discovery was made that indigestion caused what appeared to be heart trouble.

While attending the San Marcos Normal, I had become acquainted with Dr. Bruce, who upon hearing that I planned to enter the army, wrote his brother, Captain Bruce, that I would be in Camp Bowie, Fort Worth, Texas, and for Captain Bruce to pick me up at the bullpen. New recruits were to spend eleven days in the area called the Bull Pen, a fenced piece of land where cots and tents were used until the recruits had received all shots for various diseases. Two or three days before my eleven days ended, Captain Bruce came and asked me whether or not I would like to go overseas. The idea appealed to me, he told me to go to bed, I was sitting in a chair. Captain Bruce then went to my doctor at the Bull Pen and asked permission for me to go overseas as Aide to Captain Bruce. The Doctor sent the Captain to Headquarters of the Thirty-Sixth Division to obtain permission for me to go. Headquarters did release me from the restricted area because Captain Bruce promised that I would stay in bed the required time. It took only about ten minutes for Captain Bruce to get me into his detachment--The Medical Corps of the Thirty-Sixth Division. We left Fort Worth for New York four days after my assignment to the Medical Corps. On the same day that we arrived in New York, we sailed overseas. We were on the boat thirteen days. Some of the soldiers were seasick. We landed at Bordeaux, France, but we did our training about eleven miles from Bordeaux.

After four months training we were moved by train within thirty miles of the fighting near the border of Germany. We hiked until we were within ten miles of the fighting and set up a first aid camp. As the other soldiers drove the Germans back, I scouted for wounded and casualties, administered first aid and carried them to the shelter for further aid. We had been near the front only twenty-one days when the war ended. We walked several miles then rode a train further back into France.

My Captain appointed me to teach school for several months near Bordeaux. I selected eleven more men to help me teach. There were about one hundred and

eighty men under our instruction. One hundred and ten of them could not read or write. We taught until we received word that we were coming home, which was six or seven months later.

After thirteen days at sea, we landed in New York. Two days later I received my discharge., having been a soldier some thirteen months.

At home again, I helped my father with the farm work. One day while we were working in the field, Dad bought some pecans from a passer-by and we sat down to rest and eat them. That was the first time Dad became ill which was the forerunner of our learning later that he had cancer.

I resumed my teaching career soon and obtained a position at Bend, Texas. There I met Miss Ruby Lewis who became my wife on August 4, 1920. For several years I continued teaching.

Our first child, Doye Lorena Burkett, was born August 21, 1924, in Mullin, Texas. She married Captain Robert Wilson of Birmingham, Alabama, on October 5, 1942. They have three children; Delores Anise, eighteen years old, Robert, fourteen years old; Ray Darryl, ten years old. Doye now works for the Army Red Cross in Fort Lewis, Washington. They own a home in the suburbs of Tacoma, Washington.

Our second child, Jack Lewis Burkett, was born June 14, 1926. He married Jeanette Joseph of Austin, Texas. They have two children, Donna Marie, twelve years old; Joseph Lee, ten years of age. They own a home near Austin, Texas. Jack is a contractor-builder. He volunteered for U.S. Naval Service during World War II and was stationed on Guam as a demolitionist.

Donald Lee Burkett, our third child, was born August 17, 1930. He obtained a B.S. degree in Pharmacy from the University of Texas, graduating with highest of honors. Following his graduation, he was Laboratory Instructor in Pharmacy at the University of Texas for more than a year before volunteering for U.S. Army service. During this time he was sent to Germany, which enabled him to visit Belgium, Switzerland, England, Holland and France. After his return home, Donald moved to Fort Worth, Texas, as a pharmacist. There he married Jayne McFarland of Longview, Texas, August 3, 1957. They have one daughter, Judy Carol, who is eight months old.

Bobbie June Burkett, our fourth child, was born July 15, 1932. She received her B.S. degree in home economics from the University of Texas. She has been a home economist for Texas Electrical Company in Washinton State. June taught elementary school for two years in Austin, Texas, and is now teaching home making in Llano High School, Llano, Texas.

I gave up teaching in 1934 at Bend, Texas, where I was Superintendent. We moved to Stephenville, Texas, where I was engaged in various businesses. I was a builder there for some time; then I began working for Pharr's Detective Agency.

After having a light stroke, caused by a brain tumor, I retired and had an

operation at Houston, Texas. Later my case was transferred to Dállas, Texas. In order to-be more conveniently located near the doctors in Dallas, we moved to Fort Worth,Texas. June 1959. We still reside there.