

I was borned<sup>1</sup> near Birchwood, Tenn., in Hamilton Co., Oct 7, 1865. My earliest memory when I was three (3) years old: I fell off of a horse named Fan. Then I remembered crying for whiskey and Father said to Mother, give him some and stop his mouth. She gave me a tin cup full full and it strangled me. A family name of Roark raised Mother. We children loved to go there. They <peted ?> us and seemed like grandparents to us.-Father sold our home to some people named Stulce. In Feb 1871 left for Mo. We went part way by train & part way by boat. A Mr. Block ferried us across to St. Louis, Mo. and got a team & wagon to take us within eight miles of Bolinar to my oldest sister who lived there. Her husband was sick with TB and passed away in April. We stayed a year and made a crop, sold it and moved to Ark.

Starting about the 20<sup>th</sup> of Sept 1871. Moved in a tur horse wagon. There were thirteen of us. Mother drove. The three youngest one rode with her & the rest walked. We never drove on Sundays or rainy days. Stayed two days at Mammoth Spring, Ark, and two days at Cross Hollow, Ark, arriving in Crawford Co. Oct 12, 1871, on a farm near Jack Foster's Ford on Lee Creek. Our first work was picking cotton and it was the first we had ever seen growing. They paid \$1.00 per <hundred?>. We then picked a crop for a man named Calahan where the Mo & Pacific shops are now located. We then picked another crop in the river bottoms & went back to Lee's Creak to our own crop in Jan-Feb, 1872. We planted corn and cotton, which was our first cotton to cultivate. In chopping cotton I cup up some. Father said of I did it again on purpose he would whip me. I never did it again but my brother Bill did & told Father I did it, causing me to get a whipping. When I got big enough I whipped Bill for storing on me.

Next year 1873 we moved to the Richmon farm, located on the old wine road & dripping spring road. I had never been to school or anything except to funerals at the <pearly?> house Cemetery. The 4th of July Father told us to hoe cotton until noon. We could go to a picnic at the Jack Foster Ford. Bro. Bill and I went and there was a dancing platform. There was a red headed, six year old girl dancing. Her hair was curled and hanging to her shoulders. Mr. Killgore and Dick Miller got her to dance by giving her candy & lemonade. She came by me with a bag of Candy. I ask her, her name. She said Sis. I ask her Sis who? She said the neighbors & folks at home call me that and it's enough for you to know- I then ask her where she lived. She said on Cedar Creek. I then ask her where Cedar Creek was as I had never heard of it. She told me go out the wire road to Figure 5 and take the road to the right that went to the Gooding mill. They live 1 ½ mi below it. Then she asked me if I didn't know anything. When I got home from the picnic Mother ask me what I saw. I told her I saw the first pretty girl I'd seen in Ark & she was dancing. Mother said you are like King <Harold? Harod?> to fall in love with a pretty girl because she's a good dancer. I told her no I wouldn't cut off any one's head to please her. When I told Mother she lived by the Gooding mill, she wondered if it was the Gooding she knew in Tenn. & that he was the only person she ever hated. I ask her why. She said we dropping the handkerchief at school. He came up behind her, hugged & kissed her. We found out later he was the same man.

We lived four spears on the Richmon's place. I went to school 8½ days at Log Town to Mr. Les Neal. I went to sheep. He made me stand up 2 hrs & I never went back. The next school I went to Mr. S. P.

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<sup>1</sup> Some of the original misspellings, e.g., 'borned' vs. 'born, have been left in place. Others, such as place names, have been corrected, e.g., 'Cedar Creek' vs. 'Ceder Creek'. Several illegible (handwritten) words are enclosed in angle brackets, i.e., '<' & '>'.

Brown 3 months. Father told him I would go to sleep after lunch. He said as long as I knew my lessons, he would not whip me. Everyone had to say a speech Friday afternoons. The title of my first speech was (when the girls were 16).

The last of school another boy & I were in a dialogue. Title: How big was Alexander? Xmas day 1876 we moved to the farm on Cedar Creek. While Father and my sister set up the beds he told we boys we could go get acquainted with bar neighbors. That was the first time since the picnic that I had seen Sis. She came down the steps with her brass toe shoes & knit stockings. She said I know you are looking at my American stockings, which were red, white & blue. I ask who knitted them. She said she did and had knit enough the year before to buy her clothes and could. knit 3 stockings a day. She was 8 yrs. old when she began knitting.

She was eating candy & offered me some. I ask her if she was the girl I saw at the picnic. She said yes. You are the boy called <godie>. Then she turned to her Mother & said this is the smart aleck I saw at the picnic. That night at supper Mother asked if I got acquainted with any boys. I told her I met my sweet heart the girl named Sis. We were together on Xmas & 4<sup>th</sup> of July thereafter. On March 17, 1883, I went log rolling. Worked all day to get to dance free that night. It was my first dance and I danced with Sis.- July 3, Bro. Bill & I plowed all night so we could go to the picnic the 4th as it was a rainy season. We had to get the corn plowed. I went to Mr. Phillips to see if they were going to the picnic & saw Sis & her sister tying <vats??> so they could go the picnic too. The next day mother gave me a dollar. I rode a young mule to the picnic and spent most of the dollar on Sis riding the mule swing. We kept company until Dec. 12, 1886 and married. Then she knit my socks and I bought her clothes. We went to Van Buren Jan 3, 1887 & bought our furniture. Moved the 4th in a house on mother's place. In July 1889 the Preacher of the <zone?> church let me know there were three men going to kill me. They came to our house on a Thurs night, called me to come out & I told them to come in & then blew the light out and they ran. They never bothered me anymore and now they all are dead.

This same preacher was preaching in the Indian Territory and one of the church members poisoned him at the breakfast table. She pled guilty and was sent to the pen by the late Judge Parker of Ft. Smith.

We moved four times before we located in Rudy Sept. 1897. I put up a cotton gin in 1890 in Rudy. I ginned my first four bales of cotton on July 29, 1890 in Rudy. On Dec. 29, 1893 I was caught in the line shaft and it tore all my clothes off. I began working for the Amor refrigerator car lines as a car loader in 1900. Afterwards I estimated the crops. I was sent to Vernon, Texas. The growers estimated 300 cars of cantaloupes and only had five on account of the hot winds. On May 6, 1906, Mr. Conley planned to kill me. He came up with a gun behind me. Someone hollered look out Joe. I turned around & the gun was against my head. I took it away from him then beat him over the head with it. He was arrested and pled guilty to assault to kill. He made \$500.00 bond, then skipped out. The bondsman proved him dead- to keep from paying the \$500.00, but he lived many yrs. after.

May 8,-1906. Coming home from Mt. Burg <Mountainburg> I was in a train wreck. The train I was on had stopped at -Lancaster for water, when another train came behind us & ran into the rear killing Mr. W. H. Peters. I was the last one off the train. July 4th the year there was a picnic and baseball game at

Fine Springs. Alma-& Van Buren was playing ball, Van B beating in the game. Alma wanted to break the game up. Deputy Sheriff Cathey Lake shot his gun through the crowd hitting Lee Hinderson. I went up behind him and took his gun when someone hit me with a ball bat.

I was still selling fruit for the fruit growers of Rudy. 1907 I was sent to Macedonia, TX, to estimate a tomato crop. I estimated 75 cars. We loaded out 76 cars June 28 when a big rain came and washed out the track and all empty cars at the roundhouse and all tracks 3 miles-south. July 4 I went Galveston, TX, to spend the day. When I came back to Macedonia I had orders to go to Booneville, Ark. Coming by Shreveport, LA, I had to lay over, so I went to a ball. There were ten couples and all million aires <millionaires>. After loading cantaloupes in Booneville, I came home to Rudy. After berry season was over in 1908, I went to Jacksonville, Tex. to load tomatoes, after that I came home & handled the peach crop. In 1912 I handled 330 cars of peaches, including peaches, berries & cantaloupes. I handled 370 cars for the Rudy fruit growers association. I started to build home Sept 1, 1913. Ate our first meal in it Xmas day. My wife was the former Ara Elizabeth Phillips, daughter of the late Mr. & Mrs. W. H. Phillips of Figure 5 <Figure Five, AR>. We raised eight children, four girls & four boys. She passed away May 30, 1935, and I've been alone ever since. Up to this date Feb. 1954, I have 7 living children, 27 grandchildren, 31 great grandchildren, and 3 great, great grandchildren.

My mother Jennette Clinging Webb was German, but borned in America. She married my father Benjamin Webb April 20, 1844. There was eleven children borned to them. 3 died when babies. Seven lived to be passed 80 yrs. My grandfather Lucian Webb came from Ireland in 1775 with a family of eight. He passed away in my 1871. My Father was borned in Kentucky. He past away July 21, 1881. Mother was borned April 20, 1826, and past away Oct. 23, 1923 at the age of 97 yrs, 6 mos, 3 days.

As told to Bessie B. Webb.