

CHAPTER 6: FAVORITE STORIES OF FAWCETTS AND RELATIVES

Grandpa Elder (as told by Truman and W.B. Fawcett).

Philip Elder, when in his 80s, came to Johnson City to visit the Fawcetts. He and Lillian Fawcett, then only a child, played checkers. He said "He thought he could beat her if the others didn't help".

In the 1920s, Grandpa (Philip T.) Elder came to visit L.C. Fawcett and his family in San Antonio. Like, Frank Fawcett, he would say he was going to stay for a month. Within a few days he would begin to worry about his farm. Each morning, he listened to Kallison's Farm Report on the radio, while he sipped his coffee through his beard. Grandpa Elder fought in the Civil War. The children could feel the bullet still in his leg.

Rev. William Benjamin Bloys and Isabella Yeck Come To Texas (as told by Estelle Bloys Fawcett).

After an engagement that spanned almost a decade, William Bloys married Isabella Yeck in Flora, Illinois on May 22, 1879. The Rev. Bloys was rejected as a missionary to India due to his poor health. Instead, later the same year, he boarded a stagecoach in Flora with Isa, and together they road to Coleman, Texas by way of Denison. Isa was so afraid of Indians that she could not sleep on the trip. She imagined that tall grass waving in the wind was the feathered head-dresses of savage Indians that were about to attack the stage. Her imagined Indians never attacked, and they reached Coleman safely. Later, they moved to Fort Davis. William and Isa Bloys were never attacked by hostile Indians at either place.

Estelle Virginia Bloys Plays Hooky School (as told by W.B. Fawcett Jr.).

Estelle Virginia Bloys was the daughter of William and Isa Bloys. She grew up in Fort Davis, Texas. One day in about 1900 she and the other children who attended the local one-room school decided not to attend school one day. The day was warm and bright. It was too nice a day to be in school. So without telling the teacher, they went on a picnic. They climbed up on Sleeping Lion Mountain which overlooked the school. Estelle and her friends had so much fun playing among the rocks and eating there lunches.

After awhile Estelle looked down from the mountain and saw her father driving towards the school in his horse-drawn buggy. She knew she would be in trouble if he found out that she was not in school. So she ran down the mountain. She thought that if she could reach the school before her father, then she could pretend to be the one good student who did not play hooky.

Estelle ran very fast. She reached the school before her father, but could not get in. The teacher had locked the door and gone home, after the children did not appear in the morning. Estelle was setting on the porch when her father arrived. She had to explain why she was not in school, and about the picnic. Her father was very angry with her. He told her never to do such a thing again. But, he was also pleased that she had told him the truth.

Estelle Bloys Learns To Shoot A Shot Gun (as told by W.B. Fawcett, Sr.).

Grandmother grew up in Fort Davis. She and her brother Herbert were great pranksters and loved to tease. One her brothers told her she could shoot their double barrel shotgun. She had little experience with guns, but did as she was told and pulled the triggers on both barrels at once. She fell back, bruising her bottom. Her parents scolded her for being unlady like, and her brothers for putting her up to this.

Estelle Bloys Marries Leslie C. Fawcett (as told by W.B. Fawcett Jr.).

After growing up in Fort Davis, Estelle Bloys obtained a teaching certificate from Southwest State Teachers College in San Marcos. At college she met Leslie C. Fawcett. They graduated after two-years, and then taught school for another two-years. He in Leander and Johnson City, and she in Brogado and Balmorhea. Estelle coached the girls basketball team. L.C. Fawcett stayed with his brother, O.Y. Fawcett's family in Johnson City. Lorene, Lillian, and Truman--the children of O.Y. and Melissa Fawcett--wanted Leslie to marry Estelle, because they loved her name.

Estelle wanted to be married by her father, the Rev. William Benjamin Bloys, on her birth day in August 14, 1916. Unfortunately, the train bringing Leslie C. Fawcett from San Antonio to Alpine was delayed. Her brother, Arthur,

met Leslie at the train station. Leslie had never met any of her family. Arthur pretended to be a hired hand, and refused to talk while they rode to Fort Davis in his horse-drawn buggy. Only when they reached Fort Davis did Leslie learn that Arthur was Estelle's brother. Arthur this was a great joke!

Leslie and Estelle were married on August. 16th by her father in the Fort Davis Presbyterian Church. Her brother, Herbert, took them to catch the train. The train was delayed for a day by a wreck in Valentine, so they spent the night in a hotel in Marfa before catching the train to San Antonio at 2:00 p.m. on the 17th.

They soon settled in Bandera, where L.C. Fawcett taught school for several years. In 1921 they moved to San Antonio, where he and his brother Ralph founded the Fawcett Furniture Company. Leslie died fairly young, but Estelle lived to be 102.

J. Curtis Fawcett: Cowboy and Horse Trader (as told by R.B. Fawcett).

J. Curtis Fawcett came to Gonzales County, Texas with his parents and brothers and sister in 1868 from Mississippi. Both of his parents died soon after this. Curtis became a cowboy. He and other cowboys rounded up the wild cattle in south Texas and drove them to Kansas. To drive the cattle this far took many months, but Curtis was very good at roping cows. Unfortunately, he was epileptic. The attacks of this disease came unannounced, and made him shake and fall-down. His attacks scared people. Some people thought Curtis was crazy.

Later, Curtis became a horse trader. He bought and traded horses, mules, and other cattle that were needed for transportation and farming. Once he got a winded, broken down, horse in a deal. Soon a man came to Cheapside. He needed a horse. The man offered to trade Curtis a buggy, for what Curtis said was a terrific horse. Curtis accepted the trade, and the man rode his new horse out of town. Before he had gone far, the horse died. This made the man very angry. He returned and demanded that Curtis return his buggy. Curtis refused. The man went away very unhappy, saying he would never do business with Curtis again. Curtis was often not a very nice person.

J. Curtis Fawcett lived with Brancie and John William Carson after Frank Fawcett and his family moved to Johnson City in 1920. The Carsons lived about a mile east of Cheapside, on the north-side of Gonzales County Road 332. Curtis Fawcett was a good roper, but people were afraid to hire him as a cowboy due to his epileptic fits.

One day while out on the Young place, just north of the Cheapside school, Curtis chased some boys around a pasture trying to rope. They had teased him. The boys kept trying to hide behind trees. Curtis charged in close to each of them with his horse while twirling his rope. The boys fled the pasture.

A few years later, Curtis could no longer take care of himself. He had weekly epileptic attacks. So Curtis entered the State Hospital in Abilene. Few people came to see him there.

Bob Fawcett Is Shot (from newspaper accounts).

Uncle Bob (Robert Fawcett) farmed with his older brother Frank. He never had his own land [Actually Bob owned land near Hamon and Wrightsboro]. He was often in conflict with his wife [Elizabeth Aldridge], and her brother [William]. After he sold his cotton crop in 1900 her brother tried to take the money away at gun point and wounded Bob in the process. Soon after [1902], Bob and his family moved away to a ranch near E. Keyes Fawcett ranch in Val Verde County, Texas [It is also possible that he simply replaced Willis A. Fawcett as manager when Willis left for Kerrville in 1904]. He had troubles with his wife and eventually lost the ranch [or left when Keyes' sons were old enough to work the ranch by 1920]. Later they moved away to Sanderson, Texas where he ran the water-works. Uncle Bob had two sons, one of them named Arthur [Fawcett].

Erasmus Keyes Fawcett Drives Sheep to West Texas and Lives in a Cave.

[Erasmus] Keyes Fawcett left in 1883 at age 17 with some men herding sheep [from Yorktown] to the Devil's River. For five years (1883-88) he lived in a cave and began to homestead, eventually acquiring 117 sections of land [and building a house in about 1900 and marrying "Frankie" Baker in 1902. Willis A. Fawcett worked on Keyes' ranch from 1897-1904]. In 1983 Ralph attended the centennial celebration organized by Keyes descendants. But over the years there has been little contact between the Del Rio Fawcetts and the others from

Cheapside.

E.K. Fawcett Got Supplies from the Schreiner Store in Kerrville.

Charles Schreiner of Kerrville encouraged folks, like E.K. Fawcett, to go into sheep and goat ranching by advancing them supplies and stock. He sent his wagons around once or twice a year to pick up wool and mohair, and to deliver supplies.

As the wagon drivers crossed the draws east of the Headquarters they could be heard whipping their mules. Once when they arrived in the fall loaded with Christmas presents the Fawcett children crept into them and went through all of the packages, unwrapping and rewrapping them. Some confusion and mix-ups occurred, because when the driver reached the next ranch he had a hard time finding the right packages to leave.

Once a year E.K. Fawcett loaded up his wagons and took his family to Del Rio. They would camp over night at Two Tanks, now near the intersection of US 277 and 377.

Mini Williams: Former Slave (as told by Ethel Duderstadt & R.B. Fawcett).

Aunt Mini Williams, a freed-slave, joined the Frank and Emma's household because she had no place to go. Ralph remembers her from throughout his childhood. She slept on a mat by the wood stove in the house, and served as the midwife for the birth of all of Emma's children. Mini didn't know her age but always said it was nigh on 100. She must have died by 1900.

Emma (Elder) Fawcett was active in church work and community clubs. While she was, away Aunt Mini was in charge. One day Mini baked cookies and stored them in an old lard can. Ralph was caught stealing some of them. Mini spanked him. On Emma's return he complained to her about Aunt Mini's spanking. She responded that Ralph needed it.

Frank and Emma Fawcett's Farm (as told by R.B. Fawcett).

Frank and Emma's farm was one mile north of Cheapside, Texas on Fulcher Creek. Frank bought almost a square mile of land in 1875. Their 14 children were born in the large two-story wood house. Several barns and a windmill stood next to the house.

At first Frank t raised sheep. The land was not fenced around Cheapside, and Frank and his sons grazed their 2000 sheep on the empty land. The sheep were sheared twice a year--once in the spring and again in the fall--by men who were paid a nickle for each sheep that they sheared. On son, Ralph Fawcett asked his father if he would pay him a nickle to shear a sheep. After working all day Ralph sheared 20 sheep and earned a dollar. Shearing sheep was hard work!

By 1890 Frank switched from sheep raising to cotton farming. When the cotton began to open in late June-early July the picking was done by workers paid 50 cents for each 100 pounds of cotton that they picked. His children were paid half that amount. Frank and Emma's children used the money that they earned to buy clothes.

Once the cotton was picked, it was taken to Poole's Gin at Cheepside to be ginned and baled. The cotton bales were placed in a horse-drawn wagon and hauled to Cuero. The trip from Cheapside to Cuero took all day. On one trip, Ralph was riding on top of a wagon loaded with three bales. Halfway to Cuero, his father lost control of the wagon. The wagon got in the ditch and flipped over. Bales went everywhere. Frank jumped, but Ralph was trapped under the wagon. It was a miracle that nobody was hurt! Other men helped them to load the bales back on the wagon.

Twice a year, Frank, Emma, and some of their children traveled the 15-miles to Cuero in their wagon. In Cuero they bought barrels of flour (each barrel contained four 48-pound bags) for \$4.50. They also bought barrels of sugar and other goods.

When Ralph turned 13 years old in 1906 his father walked with him down to the three or four acre hog pasture. Frank provided his son with seed and equipment. Ralph plowed the land and planted his cotton. He worked very hard to raise a bale of cotton. Ralph sold his bale in Cuero for \$50. His father suggested that he put the money in the bank, but instead Ralph spent all of his money by Christmas. Frank usually gave each child thirty or forty cents to spend on Christmas presents. This year, he refused to give Ralph any money but

a loan since his son had spent the money he earned so foolishly. Later, Ralph spent a year growing 60 acres of cotton, from which he earned \$250. He worked harder to raise this crop than on any other thing in his life! Frank and Emma continued to live and farm at Cheapside until November 1920. Before he retired, Frank said that each crop was his last. He just did not want to stop.

Wood/Allert Gun Battle (as told by R.B. Fawcett and Byrta and Keyes Carson).

Mr. Wood was killed in a gun fight in Cheapside, Texas. He was the mail carrier between Cuero and Cheapside. Mr. Allert, the town blacksmith, had a Persian horse. This horse ran loose along the road through town. Mr. Wood's children got their dogs to chase the horse. When Mr. Allert heard about this he was angry. He yelled at the children, He told them that if they did it again, he would shoot their dogs. The children went and told their father that Mr. Allert had threatened to shoot them--not the dogs. They lied to their father.

The next morning Mr. Wood took his pistol to the blacksmith shop and shot Mr. Allert. He was only hurt. More shots were fired. Mr. Allert killed Mr. Wood with his rifle. Mr. Allert was put in jail. At his trial in the courthouse at Gonzales, Frank Fawcett told the people what a fine person Mr. Allert was and that he let his anger get out of control. He did not plan to kill Mr. Wood. The court decided Mr. Allert deserved another chance, and he was set free.

Willis Fawcett Comes to Kerrville, Texas (as told by R.B. and W.B. Fawcett).

During the 1890s Willis A. Fawcett, the oldest son of Frank and Emma Fawcett, completed two years of college at Trinity University in Tehuacana, Texas. Between the two-years at college he returned to farm with his father at Cheapside. He earned the money to pay for his college by working for his father.

After college, Willis worked on the sheep ranch owned by his uncle, Keyes Fawcett, on the Devils River near Del Rio, Texas. Willis helped his uncle with the sheepherders and the thousands of sheep on the ranch.

After a few years, Willis went to Cheapside to visit his parents, brothers, and sisters. While he was there he also visited the Bakers who lived across Fulcher Creek from his parents' farm. Cornelia Peterson was at the Bakers on a visit from Kerrville. Willis and Cornelia fell in love. They were married in 1900 at her parents' farm. They returned to Uncle Keyes' ranch. Their sons W.C. and F. Scott Fawcett were born on the ranch. Willis' brother, Oscar Young Fawcett, also worked on the ranch for a few years, before he opened his drug store in Johnson City.

Willis was planning to move to Arizona. He wanted to start a ranch there. He came to Kerrville to visit Corenlia's parents. Her father, William Caswell Peterson, helped Willis to buy the Household furniture store in Kerrville in 1904. Willis had never before sold furniture. He called his new store, W.A. Fawcett & Company. His younger brother, Ralph, bought W.C. Peterson's part of the store in 1915.

Willis and the others at the Kerrville store sold lots of furniture. They stocked many of the hunting camps with metal beds and other furniture. They also sold more expensive furniture. When the Store was full, Willis would tell salesmen that he was using skyhooks to hang all the goods from. His store sold furniture to people who came from as far as Rock Springs. Several men worked all the time putting down rugs and linoleum. Willis hated to see another furniture store's truck in Kerrville.

O.Y. Fawcett Opens a Pharmacy in Johnson City (as told by his son, Truman Fawcett).

In 1904 Willis Fawcett told his brother Oscar that the people at Johnson City needed a pharmacy (drug store). After riding there on his horse, O.Y. Fawcett talked with the town doctor, Dr. Barnwell. Melissa Johnson came in with a sore throat. Oscar married her in May 1906. Willis A. Fawcett provided money to his brother to help pay for the building and the goods to stock the drug store.

Dr. Barnwell wrote many of the prescriptions for the residents of Johnson City on the steps of the Drug Store. He was a close friend and hunting partner of O.Y. Fawcett.

O.Y. Fawcett usually started work at 5:00 in the morning, after he milked

his cows. He made 5 gallons of ice cream every day with the milk. The ice needed for making ice cream came from Austin. It was stored in a special building where it was covered with sawdust.

Only a few drugs were used. Oscar prepared most of them by hand, grinding and mixing the various chemicals. Forty of his hand packed pills sold for fifty cents to a dollar.

The City or Fawcett Drug Store had one of the first radios. People gathered around it in the Store to listen to the news, sports, and various entertainment programs. Oscar's son, N. Truman Fawcett, joined his father at the drug store in the 1930s.

James Bauerle, a dentist who later served on the Board of Regents of the University of Texas-San Antonio, had his office upstairs, above the pharmacy in the 1940s. The Masonic Lodge met in a room above the pharmacy. A fire broke out in Bauerle's office, while he was away, due to an electrical short in some of his equipment, during the night of December 28, 1948. Fire rapidly spread to the rest of the store. Truman Fawcett rushed to the store. He pushed the huge safe, which contained all their business records, out the back, saving it from the flames.

Ralph Branson Fawcett Serves in Army during World War I (as told by himself).

A terrible war started in Europe. The United States sent soldiers to help fight. Ralph Fawcett saw all of his friends and neighbors signing up for the Army. He decided to also join. A friend told him to join the Navy. Ralph went to San Antonio to sign the papers to join. He was very thin. He was not heavy enough to be a soldier. His 6' body only weighed 142 pounds, about 20 pounds too little. The soldiers told him what to eat so he would get fat.

Ralph went home to Cheapside to talk with his father about joining the Army. Ralph thought his father was the smartest man that he ever knew. His father told Ralph that he must decide what to do for himself.

Ralph returned to San Antonio to become a soldier. He went to Fort Sam Houston. Captain Russell asked Ralph: Did he want to be in the Army, Navy, or Marines. Ralph replied: They were all the same. The Captain realized Ralph was a real country-boy. He gave Ralph some papers to read. Ralph spent the day on a bench outside the Captain's office reading. He then told the Captain: It still looks the same. The Captain asked him what Ralph did. Ralph told the man about selling furniture in Kerrville. So the Captain sent him to the Quartermaster Corps of the Army. The Quartermaster stored and gave out the food, clothes, and other supplies that the Army needed for the war. Ralph was paid \$35 each /month.

During his third day of army training, Ralph's name appeared on a list. Captain Talbert had him figure on the pay for the other soldiers. Ralph did this for several months so he did not learn how to march. The 19th Infantry was getting ready to be sent over to Europe. Just before the 19th Infantry left for Europe, Ralph offered to keep the records about the prisoners.. He worked on this weekdays from 8 in the morning to 5 in the evening. Every other day he got off at 1 in the afternoon. He still did not learn how to march. The Captain wanted to make him a Corporal. Ralph refused.

A few weeks later, about one year after he enlisted, Ralph was sent to Officer Training Camp in Jacksonville, Florida. Two months later the military police came around looking for Ralph because he was absent without leave. Somehow his orders had gotten lost. They thought Ralph deserted!

By the time they fixed his orders, Ralph had missed all but the final two weeks of the three-months of school. When he got to the class, he realized that he knew the teacher. His friend lent him the manual. Ralph taught himself without every attending class. He passed the final examination with a 93!

Ralph then got orders to teach 200 men how to march. But he never learned how to do this himself. He asked for two Corporals and 2 Sergeants with previous military experience among the 200 draftees. He called them into his office and told them that he had never taught soldiers to march. One of them said, that if he had the guts to tell them that, then they would see him through the training of the new soldiers. While Ralph watched, the corporals and sergeants taught the men how to march and the other things that they needed to know to be good soldiers. By reading a book, Ralph taught himself the same things.

From Jacksonville, Florida, Ralph sailed with 3000 other men aboard the Kaiser III, one of 13 ships in the fleet going to France. Ralph was in charge of 55 men. He spent the first few days teaching them how to get on and off the

ship in case if the ship was sinking. His first day out Ralph was sent up in the crow's nest, a small platform 130' above the deck. From the crow's nest he was watching for submarines. For 13 days and 13 nights he was on duty for two hours and then off for two hours, never having time to take off his clothes. They fought off five submarine attacks without any losses. The flu killed some men on another ship during the voyage. Ralph spotted one submarine, which the Navy claimed they sank with some cannon shots.

They landed in France about noon on the 13th day. A net and crane unloaded men into a boat. Ralph did not get off the ship until evening. He had not eaten all day. Once on land, the Captain ordered him to help store the baggage. Ralph became separated from his men. About midnight he finished. He went to a local French cafe where he ate some stew. He slept on the beach that night.

The next morning, Ralph walked part of the three miles to Camp Pelansin before he got a ride in a bus. At the camp, he found his men setting up tents. They were doing a good job without him. He went into one a tent and went to sleep.

Ralph led 50 men to find other soldiers who were lost, killed, or wounded. They worked in groups of 5, scattered along the entire front. On the third day after their arrival they announced the Armistice, or truce.

They did not have to bury the dead. Ralph and his men marked them with crosses. They wrote down information about each dead soldier.

One day they were out in their Ford truck when they ran out of gas. Sergeant Ward said the Germans had lots of gas up on a nearby hill. He and Ralph went up to the hill through the trenches dug in the battlefield. Ward rolled a barrel of gasoline down the hill. The Germans began shooting with a machine gun at them. The bullets hit in the dirt all around them. Ralph and Ward became separated as they crawled back to the truck through the trenches. Upon reaching the truck and finding Ward was missing, Ralph went back through the maze of trenches to look for him. They met halfway. Both had thought the other was killed. They had gone looking for each other. The gas they stole was red synthetic petrol made from sugar beets. It smelled so bad as they drove away that they could hardly stand it, but they returned safely to camp.

In 1919 Ralph returned from the War with \$500 saved from his Army pay. With his brother, Willis' help, he bought the Fawcett Insurance Company with his savings. In return for a half-interest in the company, Willis let Ralph set up an office in the Fawcett Furniture store. Ralph gave Willis the rest of the insurance business in 1921 in return for the money to buy a home in San Antonio.

In Kerrville Ralph and Gladys Saunders met while both were living at the same boarding house. This was when Ralph worked for the county before the war. They were married in 1919. After living in San Antonio for many years, they returned to Ingram and Kerrville. Ralph lived to be 99 years old.

A Visit to Cheapside, Texas in 1919 (as told by N. Truman Fawcett).

I recall a one hundred and twenty mile trip we made in 1919. This was to visit my grandparents, Frank and Emma Fawcett, at Cheapside, Texas in Gonzales County. We began our journey at daybreak. The roads were rough and muddy. We had to cross creeks without bridges.

Our car had two flat tires. In those days no one had spare tires. My father, O.Y. Fawcett, placed a jack under the car, jacked it up and removed the tire and inner tube. He then patched the tube and pumped up the tire. This process took up much of our time and we arrived about twilight.

We enjoyed the time spent with our grandparents, and aunts Pearl and Delta. Together with some of my cousins, we rode horses and played with my grandparent's pump organ [upstairs in their two story frame house]. They butchered a sheep for our visit and we ate vegetables from their garden. I remember going to Cheapside's only [Freeman-Watson] store. It was an old country store with everything in it.

We encountered more trouble on our way home. While attempting to cross a creek, we became stuck. My father saw a Mexican farmer plowing with an ox and asked him to pull us out of the stream. My sister, Lorene, and I were standing on the bank of the creek. My mother, Melissa Fawcett, was holding my baby sister, Lillian, in her lap. They were sitting in the car. The ox started down the creek and the car looked as though it was going to overturn. My father jumped in the creek and turned him around. Dad paid the farmer a

dollar and we were on our way again. This was all very exciting for a ten year old boy.

Little did we know there was still to be more trouble on our way. Farther down the road near Seguin, we broke an axle in the old Saxon car. The garage had to order the axle from San Antonio. We spent the night in a boarding house. It was the next afternoon before our car was fixed and we arrived home after dark. Dad carried a spare axle after this.

The Carson Reunions at Cheapside (told by Elaine Hohn Pearson).

Because my family lived 'way up on the Plains of Texas', my memories of the Carson family (sons and daughters of Branson and John William Carson) focus mainly on reunion times held at the old Carson home near Cheapside, Texas. This was always a big affair in the spring time or late August. Henry Carson prepared beef and mutton outside in a large barbeque pit. Plus, he took top honors for his delicious mutton stew. Ora--Henry's wife--and the other close-by relatives contributed the platters of fried chicken and all the rest. Maggie Carson was fondly remembered for her jelly cake. Hartwell Carson furnished pecans. Delbert from Houson brought boxes of extra groceries.

The food was spread on long wooden tables beneath a huge oak tree in the side yard. Everyone was able to sit down together. What beautiful memories of the love and fellowship of the day.

Later, after the supper dishes were done, the grown-ups gathered on the front porch to wait for a little bit of coolness to settle in. This was the place that I learned more than the Aunts and Uncles would have ever guessed they were teaching. Talk was on the everyday things of life--what was good and acceptable and of course what was not! The feeling of family love and the caring for one another was the legacy given to the younger generation.

Frank and Emma Fawcett, and Their Daughters (Delta, Pearl and Ethel) Move to Johnson City (as told by Jessie Watson Harrell).

Frank, Emma, and some of their daughters moved from Cheapside to Johnson City, Texas in November 1920. Their older sons offered to take them to Johnson City in their cars. Most of them did ride in the cars. Frank still had his horse-pulled buggy. He liked it better than cars. So Frank drove his buggy from Cheapside to Johnson City. The trip took several days. On the way, a cold wind started to blow. Frank got colder and the wind blew harder. Then it began to rain. By the time Frank got to his new house in Johnson City he was almost frozen. His children put him to bed. In a few days he was well again.

Fawcetts Teach School in Johnson City (as told by Truman and Wilma Fawcett).

One day when Leslie C. Fawcett was teaching in Johnson City (1915-16) he was walking home for lunch at Oscar's house, where he stayed. He met Truman on the way and told him to go up to the school and ring the school bell. Truman told the older boys at the school about this, and they began to ring the school bell and would not stop. Truman was too small to reach the bell. Leslie scolded Truman for ringing the bell too much.

That year, Leslie Fawcett taught Lyndon Johnson. Leslie's sister-in-law, Melissa Johnson Fawcett, said on several occasions that Lyndon was either going to prison or going to become president. He became president of the United States.

Leslie's sisters, Ethel and Pearl Fawcett, both taught school in Johnson City. Wilma Green was in their classes. She later married Truman Fawcett. Ethel and Pearl were very different teachers. Ethel was well liked and friendly. Pearl was more formal and very strict. Pearl once put the name Fawcett on the spelling test. The students kept asking her about what that word meant. She said it was her name, and originated among French Huguenots who fled England when they were persecuted.

Wilma Green spent part of her childhood in Arizona Territory. One day in Pearl's class they were discussing Arizona. Pearl kept talking about the Arizona city of: Tucson. After Wilma corrected her several times, saying it was Tucson, she ended up in the corner. When she later complained to her mother about being punished, her mother said that sometimes being right was important for the teacher.

The Fawcetts Open a Furniture Store in San Antonio (as told by R.B. & W.B. Fawcett Sr).

In the fall of 1921 Ralph and Leslie Fawcett, with the help of their older brother Willis, opened Fawcett. Furniture in San Antonio. Over the years, the furniture store has been in three locations: East Commerce, east of St. Joseph's Cathedral (1921-45), W. Market (later the site of the public library; 1945-65), and 416 Dolorosa (1965-present).

For the first two or three years the brothers worked very hard. They worked 6 days a week from 7 to 7. Often they returned after supper to paint and repair furniture. Metal beds bought for a few dollars would then sell for \$10. Within a few years the Store was doing well. They sold lots of furniture to people from Mexico.

The Great Fall Deer and Turkey Hunt (as told by Ralph Fawcett, Barbara McGee, Truman Fawcett, and W.B. Fawcett).

From the 1920s through the 1950s, the sons of Frank and Emma Fawcett (Oscar, Willis, Leslie, Carl, and Ralph) got together with some of the Duderstadts and Moores to hunt deer and turkeys in the Texas Hill Country. They usually went once in October and again in December or January.

At first they hunted on the Stueben or Fischer Ranch near the headwaters of the Guadalupe River, to the west of Hunt, Texas. To reach the ranch they drove their Model-T cars in the river for several miles. Once, Ralph just reached the river bank before a flood of water swept down the river after a thunderstorm. They camped in a shack, and cooked over campfires and wood stoves. The leased and hunted on the Adam Wilson ranch for 15 years.

In 1945 the Fawcetts began to hunt on Kelly Creek, near Ingram, Texas. Willis and Ralph Fawcett, and Truett Moore bought some land along the creek. By the mid-1950s they hunted on Truman and Carl Fawcett's ranch on Miller Creek, just southeast of Johnson City.

While hunting on Miller Creek, Ernest Elder left his gun behind propped up against a tree. When he returned, he could not remember the location.. The other hunters spent most of a day looking for his gun. They never found it. About a year later, Oscar found Ernest's gun still leaning up against a tree.

Ralph B. Fawcett loved to tell of the time the game warden joined them for dinner. Earlier in the day the Fawcetts had killed a turkey, and Oscar made a stew with it. They did not have a permit to shoot turkeys--they killed this one illegally. At dinner, they tried select parts of the stew to serve to the warden that did not look like turkey. When the warden left he thanked them for the beef stew. Ralph was certain that the warden knew exactly what he was eating--turkey.

Another time, Ralph was asked to serve on a jury, just when he was to go hunting. He told the Judge West how important the hunts were to the Fawcett brothers. The Judge said that "was all true and that besides we hunters need to stick together. Come back and see him in January", after hunting season.

As a young girl, Barbara Moore McGee, went hunting with her grandfather, Willis Fawcett. They had a rifle and from up in a tree were watching for deer. Suddenly, a many wild turkeys came towards them along the trail that passed by their tree. They did not have a shot gun with which to shoot the turkeys. Barbara told her uncle if instead of shooting the birds, she would like to jump out of the tree and scare them. Willis laughed at this. They both jumped down from the tree just as the turkeys passed by. The turkeys ran every which way trying to get away.

Carl C. Fawcett Retires to Johnson City (as told by Truman Fawcett).

Truman Fawcett took the bus from Johnson City to Wylie to drive uncle Carl down to Johnson City. They arrived about 2:00 in the morning. Carl drove the last part. They were in his car, but Carl did not know how to drive. He managed to run over the oil cans in a gas station before they reached O.Y. Fawcett's house. Carl was looking forward to spending lots of time with his favorite brother, O.Y. Fawcett. Unfortunately, his brother died within a few years.

Carl Fawcett bought with Truman a ranch on Miller Creek, near Johnson

City. He lived there until his death in 1959. The people of Wylie gave him a quilt with their names embroidered on it to remember them by. Various doctors, bankers and other folks from Wylie would often stop by to visit Carl when passing through Johnson City.

Soon after he moved to Johnson City, Carl demolished the retaining wall at Truman and Wilma's place with his truck. Their daughter, Julie, often went out to visit the ranch, and Carl insisted on driving her out to the gate. When she got out of his truck she would run to hide behind a tree or bushes before he turned the truck and spun gravel all over her with the wheels. He had a way of gunning the truck when he took off, and it always threw gravel!

Truman Fawcett Stays with L.C. Fawcett (as told by himself).

Truman Fawcett attended Brackenridge in San Antonio during his last year of high school. He lived with his uncle Leslie and aunt Estelle Fawcett at their home on Hammond Avenue (1925-26). Truman can remember a day when Estelle fainted. He placed her on a cot and phoned Leslie at the Furniture store. According to Estelle, Truman told Leslie that she was dead, and he rushed home in a frantic state. Once when she felt bad he cooked for her. The food was horrible.

Truman asked his cousin, Bill, to listen to the radio to find out the baseball scores while Truman was in school. Bill could not write yet, so he would listen to the crystal radio and have his mother, Estelle, write down the scores.

L.C. Fawcett took his family and Truman to the Original Mexican Food Restaurant on Commerce Street. Truman didn't have a dress coat. A waiter made him wear an old one with sleeves that were way too short. Truman was very embarrassed by this.

Truett C. Moore Teaches at Schreiner Institute (as told by W.B. Fawcett Sr.).

Truett C. Moore moved to Kerrville to teach business and math at the Schreiner Institute from 1929 to 1947. He spent his summers on the road recruiting for the Institute. Scheiner was a military school for men that taught both high school and the first two-years of college. Truett visited ranchers of west Texas, trying to convince them to send their sons to Schreiner.

Blacky was one of the students. He knew his parents were coming to visit him. Blacky climbed onto the dorm roof. He hid on the roof for a week, eating cheese and crackers that he took from the kitchen. Everyone looked everywhere for Blacky. They finally saw him on the roof. Another time, Blacky shot a sky rocket along the clothes line between two dorms. Next, he built an even bigger rocket. Truett heard about it. He arranged for all the students and teachers to see Blacky launch it. He fired the rocket down the railroad track. The crowd cheered!

San Antonio Fawcetts Visit Johnson City (as told by the children of L.C. Fawcett).

In 1920s and '30s the children of Leslie and Estelle Fawcett would spend a week at a time during the summer with Oscar and Melissa Fawcett and their children. They liked to visit Oscar's drug store. At the soda fountain in the store they mixed kinds of sodas and ice cream. Oscar's son, Truman, put cow milk in bottles to make customers think it was store bought. The drug store was the only place to get sodas and ice cream in Johnson City. Oscar let them test various acids on the rocks that they found.

Oscar also took Bill and some other children to visit Longhorn Caverns when it was just being developed as a state park. While they were down in the cavern some of the workers set off a dynamite blast that shook the ground. Oscar Fawcett became very nervous.

Lillian Fawcett ran the movie theater for her brother, Truman, across the street from the Drug Store. They showed westerns and other movies that the Fawcett and other children liked to watch.

Detla Fawcett Lives in Johnson City, Texas (as told by Bob Moore).

Aunt Delta was still unmarried and living in Johnson City when she caught a snake in her chicken house one day. She went and fetched an axe.

Delta was a little bit excited. She swang the axe so hard that it not only cut through the snake but also the nest and chicken.

Children enjoyed climbing in the large tree in her yard. On hot days they looked forward to the cool water brought up from her well.

Cornelia Peterson Fawcett Hated Banks (as told by T.C. Moore).

Many banks closed during the Great Depression. People with money in these banks often did not get their savings back.

Cornelia Peterson Fawcett continued to live in Kerrville after her husband died in the 1950s. Cornelia (pronounced: Canill-ya) did not trust banks. One day she decided to have some men come from Fawcett Furniture and replace the carpet in her house. The workers rolled up the old carpe. Underneath, they found a layer of paper money. Lots of money covered the floor under the carpet. Cornelia told the men to go have some coffee. When they returned, all of the money was gone. She put it somewhere else.

L.C. Fawcett's Family Visit Fort Davis (as told by his children).

Almost every summer from 1920 through the 1960s L.C. Fawcett's family would travel by car or train to Fort Davis to visit with their Bloys relatives. They would leave early (4 a.m.) in the morning to reach Fort Davis after 12 hours of driving by late afternoon. They passed through many bump gates as they crossed from one ranch to the next. When his mother drove, she went through the gates too fast, and the swung around and spanked the rear of the car.

They were staying in the Bloys Home in Fort Davis when the Valentine earthquake occurred on a Saturday morning. The house began to sway about dawn. The Fawcett children (Bill, Leslie, and Catharine) were upstairs. The house shook so much that they could not stand-up. Uncle Herbert Bloys and their parents were frightened. Finally they made their way downstairs. Boulders had rolled down from Sleeping Lion Mountain. On Sunday everyone talked about the quake at church, and the Merrills could not get into town because boulders blocked the road in Limpia Canyon.

In 1928 they drove to Fort Davis and returned with grandmother (Isabella) Bloys. At the Devils River the children stopped to wade. Grandmother went to sleep. Her son, Herbert, moved the car under a shade tree, but she awoke and wanted to know why they were waiting.

Grandmother Bloys (Isa Yeck) made juice with grapes grown on the arbor behind her house. She once got very angry with her son Herbert for giving her grandchildren fermented grape juice.

As each of their grandchildren turned 5, they took us for a visit to Fort Davis. In 1959 Bill Fawcett Jr. and Virginia Benner went with Leslie Sr., and Jr., and Estelle. Virginia was learning to drive a car. We met her parents in Fort Davis. My grandparents had a Plymouth with large tail fins. While Virginia was driving their car she came up behind a slow moving truck. Grandfather instructed her on how to pass the truck: Signal, check to see if anyone is coming, pull-out, and floor-it.

We got up very early in the morning to leave for Fort Davis. In the dark we drove to Junction for breakfast. The pink restaurant is still open near the metal bridge over the Guadalupe River. As he got hot grandfather draped drape wet towels over his shoulders. After his stroke, he only sweated on once side. We reached Fort Davis by early afternoon. At lunch around a large table, Bill complained about the milk. It was fresh from Herbert's cow and had lumps of butterfat in it. The next morning Herbert and Bill milked and fed the dairy cows in the barn behind the Bloys house. We also fed his chickens and gathered some eggs. Estelle showed Bill how to churn butter from the cream. Later he rode with Uncle Herbert in an old pickup to the store. Herbert swapped some butter and eggs for some other groceries. Uncles Leslie and Herbert also took me wading in Lympia Canyon.

Estelle took her grandson, Bill, to a store in Alpine to buy a present. He thought it was for himself. He picked out a canister of small blocks that were gummed so they stuck together. She intended it to be a gift for my brother, Frank. On the way back to Fort Davis, this became clear and Bill threw such a fit that they returned to the store and bought another set of blocks for him. On the trip back to Fort Davis she spoke harshly about his being too selfish.

Later, Estelle took her grandson to see the fort. They also toured some ranches. Bill liked Indians, so they gathered a sotat stalk to make a bow and several arrows. They also visited the camp meeting grounds, and saw the monument to Estelle's father, William B. Bloys. Later in the evening they climbed Sleeping Lion Mountain, behind the Bloys home. The the cave was full of poison ivy, so we stayed out ofr it. Still, we did find some sparkly rocks.

The Benners arrived pulling a trailer with their car. They were going or returning from Philmont Scout camp in New Mexico. Uncle Gus (Benner) backed his trailer into the red slat (snow) fence in front of Roy Bloys' home, across the street from Uncle Herbert's house. Bill helped Uncle Herbert to fix the fence. His reward was the broken wood slats from the fence. With nails and hammer provided by Uncle Herbert, he nailed them together to make an airplane. He rode it like a broom pony.

W.B. Fawcett Works for Bell Telephone (Aug. - Nov. 1945; as told by himself).

After serving in the Army Air Force during World War II, Bill Fawcett returned to San Antonio. He worked for Southwestern Bell. Bill had to strap on special spikes on his boots. They helped him to climb the wooden telephone poles. They put a strap around the pole that they hooked on there belt. By using the spikes and leaning back on the strap, a worker could climb up a pole. One worker enjoyed waiting until another climbed up a pole. He would asked him to reach for some tool or object. This required the worker to lean in on the strap. Often the worker then slid down the pole, getting lots of splinters. Another man was extremely large. One day he crawled under a house to examine the wires. He got stuck. Bill had to dig a hole under the house to get him out.

Stories by W.B. Fawcett and Truett Moore about the Fawcett Furniture.

At one time, the furniture store was located on West Market Street, across an alley from the police station. One day, a gas truck came to the Police garage. The truck driver went for coffee while the gas tanks filled. He was gone a little too long. The gasoline filled the tanks, and then flowed onto the street and into the sewer. A policeman was walking a prisoner to the jail. One of them lit a cigarette and tossed the match onto the street. With a flash of flames the gasoline caught on fire. The driver just turned off the gas tanks before he was badly burned. Another worker dove through the bushes into the San Antonio River. The gas in the sewer caught fire and blew manhole covers in the air all along the street. The back windows on the Fawcett Furniture shook from the blast.

Jimmy Valdez joined Salvador as the workers at the Store who delivered the furniture. Jimmy loved to tease. On deliveries he would stick his head out of the window wearing a lions mask just to scare children in some passing car. He would notice that the person in the car next to him at a stop light was half asleep, and would race the engine to see if they would go through the light.

For a while Mr. Hall repaired refrigerators at the Store. He way fixed refrigerators was to force lots of pressure through gas line until something exploded. Jimmy gave him advice on how to fix refrigerators. He told Mr. Hall that he had gone to radio repair school, but never could find his diploma. One day Jimmy proved to Mr. Hall tha he knew how to fix radios. He showed Mr. Hall a broken radio. Jimmy got it to play after working on it for a few minutes. What Mr. Hall did not know was that the music was coming from a small transistor radio that Jimmy hid behind the larger and still-broken radio.

For many years Fawcett Furniture has attracted people in need of a place to hang out, someone to talk to, and a friendly person to help them occasionally with forms or other personal difficulties. These unique and unusual individuals included Uncle Ben, Menson, and George Kline.

Uncle Ben Briggs, a resident of Lytle, Texas until his death at about age 80 in 1970/71. Truett Moore's mother was a Briggs. Uncle Ben used to drive to San Antonio and hang around the Store, often sleeping in one of the recliners. He drove many different old clunkers, didn't see very well, and sometimes got confused. Once he complained bitterly that a Highway Patrolman chewed him out for going up an exit ramp the wrong way. Another time as he

left the Store he asked Truett: "You do drive on the right side of the road, don't you?". Uncle Ben wasn't entirely sure. Once his headlights went out while driving home and he panicked and plowed into a sign. Another time, he ordered a bowl of chili to settle his upset stomach.

Menson, an out patient from the State mental hospital, would also come downtown in the late 1960s and early 1970s and spend several hours at the Store. He would usually bring the office workers a handful of paper clips and rubber bands that he had collected from the sidewalk and that he knew they could use. Menson liked to help set up furniture. Occasionally he would break something, and would then dash out of the store, saying something like: "I've got to go catch that bus". Sometime in the late 1970s he was found dead in his apartment in San Antonio.

From sometime in the mid-1960s up almost to his death in 1978, George Kline ("Apple Jack"), another outpatient and WW I veteran, used Fawcett Furniture as a base from which he carted cases of fruit and candy to sell to office workers, tourists, and city employees. George kept the fruit in a closet and the refrigerators at the Store. He spent much of his wealth feeding the pigeons and letting others know how he felt about issues that he believed were important.

After being gassed in WW I, George was at Brookes Hospital, where Sergeant Primmer was his nurse (Mrs. Primmer visited the Store to talk and cash her checks until her death in the late 1960s). After that George lived upstairs at the Sons of Herman Society Hall. When George was sick in the mid-60s, Lucy's (a waitress at Toellers) husband carried George up to his room, though her husband had a heart condition.

Mr. Toeller often fed George in his cafe, but also periodically would encourage him to leave. George's loud voice and vocal opinions began to offend other customers. One day, George saw an ambulance out front, and he told Mr. Toeller that "the food's so bad they're taking them away in meat wagons". Toeller blew up.

George thought nothing of confronting the mayor and other council members, and giving them a piece of his mind. Once he noticed that the City employees who collected the money from the parking meters just left the bags of money around the office. So he borrowed one, and returned the next day to ask if they had missed anything. They said no, and when he returned the bag of change, they wanted to arrest him for stealing.

George was a strict southern Baptist. When NASA sent Apollo missions to the moon, he believed they were staged out at Medina Lake, and not real. Once he came into the Store complaining about the bootleg beer someone was distributing down at the Farmers Market, but then also commented that it sure was good. When Salvo and Jimmy were moving George, one of his dogs bit him and ran away. George chased the dog down the street, swearing at it all the way. He told Salvo and Jimmy not to tell Mr. Bill that he was cussing.

George could often be heard having conversations with the Lord about how much to charge for various types of fruit. After the Store got a new wireless intercom, Bill Flanigan thought that he would fool George by placing the intercom in the storeroom with George's fruit. When George came in, Bill spoke over the intercom: "George, this is the Lord. Charge \$0.10 for apples today." George came around the partition and asked Bill, "When did you get the new intercom?"

When George Kline died in the mid-1970s, Elton Cude (County Clerk) unsuccessfully tried to locate George's veteran records so that he could get a military burial. Finally various downtown businessmen contributed to paying for the cost of Sanders Funeral to bury George.

Some customers were also unusual characters, including Mrs. Quaso, the Alaskan Belle, Mrs. Lenny, Lillian Phillips, and another one of Truett's Brigg relatives. Mrs. Quaso was in her 70s when she died about 1970. She lived in an old shack where her dog climbed up on the table and ate from her plate. One she was repapering the walls of her home but could not get a light fixture down when the Salvo and Jimmy Valdez, the delivermen, came by. So she simply yanked it down by the cord, pulling it out of the wall. Later, her son tried to take her dog away but found the doors locked. As he opened a window, she slammed it down on his fingers. When a salesman persisted in trying to sell her something at her door, she pulled a revolver out of her night stand and fired a warning shot over his head. He ran and dove through

her front hedge and told the next door neighbors, which "She was a crazy women". Once when Mrs. Quaso came downtown to pay her water bill, the clerk refused to help her because she didn't have a copy of her bill with her. Mrs. Quaso banged her cane on the counter and asked him: "Young man who do you work for?" He said "The City". "No", she responded, "You work for me. I pay your salary. Now young man get up and look up my bill". As she left she said, "And remember young man, you work for me".

Mrs. Lenny and her African-American sister both weighted over 300 pounds each. They came in to buy a rocker, and Mrs. Lenny got herself stuck in it. Bill, Sr. had to pull the rocker off. Another time her toilet collapsed under her, and then her bed fell apart. Jimmy Valdez reinforced the bed.

The Alaskan Belle came in to the Store one day have lit on gin. As Truett Moore showed her a refrigerator, she fell back in to his arms as she opened the door on it. She giggled as she left when Truett said they hoped to see more of her. On the way out she offered a stranger on the street a snort, and he accepted. She never returned.

Lillian Phelps, another customer, was known as the cat lady because she had so many cats. She bought a chair for each of them to sit in. Often a neighbor would come by and talk her out of some furniture, and she would come back to the Store to buy more.

A granddaughter of the Bakers at Cheapside used to shop at the Store. She also was fond of gin. Once she ordered an entire houseful of furniture over the phone--over a \$1000 worth of stuff, based on a newspaper ad that she had seen for another store. She want's the same deal on "cheap furniture". She later called in delighted with the purchase. On another, she arrived drunk. T.C. Moore handed her a tooth pick with which to sign the sales contract. And after several attempts to sign the document, she relized the problem and told him that he should be ashamed to taking advantage of her situation.

Some furniture was also special. One old beat up refrigerator was painted blue. Old Blue was sold and resold four times before it got a permanent home.

The Fawcett Camphouse (as told by L.C. Fawcett Jr. and W.B. Fawcett Sr. and Jr.).

In 1947 Leslie and Estelle Fawcett and their sons (Bill and Leslie, Jr.) bought two large lots on the Guadalupe River near New Braunfels, off River or Sadler Road, just beyond the second crossing of the river. They built their cabin with old lumber. Grandmother hammered nails and painted along with her family. Drivers passing by would stop and comment on the "old lady" up on the roof pounding nails. Grandmother loved to paint.

Grandmother was especially proud of the outhouse . She built it the road and painted it red. A half-moon was cut into the wall. The roof was green tar paper, like on the cabin. Her outhouse was later destroyed when a pecan fell in 1960s. The falling tree almost hit the cabin.

The interior of the cabin had exposed rafters and an old wood stove. The two racks of deer antlers mounted on the wall came from one of the fall hunts and represented the first deer killed by Leslie and Leslie, Jr.. At times we enjoyed the light of the kerosene lanterns, and many of the kitchen furnishings were really antiques, including the old toaster.

As a small child, Bill Jr. drove with his uncle and grandfather Leslie and his father in a pickup truck to the Fawcett Camp. He awoke from my nap at the camphouse. They spent the afternoon building a wood dock, to replace the earlier one of cement. My grandpa helped saw and hammer. When he got hot, he went for a swim in the river.

On another occasion we gathered at camp during the summer. Leslie, Estelle, and their son Bill and his family were swinging in the outdoor porch swing and sitting on chairs. Grandpa (Leslie) used his pocket-knife to cut the toes out of some old tennis shoes, converting them into sandals. He did this so Bill Jr. could wear them while wading in the river. Bill was not entirely sure that his cutting-up of the tennis shoes was such a good idea.

The children loved to row in the aluminum boat with their parents and grandparentss. The children splashed as much as the rowed the boat. They collected driftwood, shells, river-polished chert, and other treasures from

the sand and gravel bars. Once our cousin, Virginia Benner, caught a large catfish on a cane fishing pole. She kept it for a day or two in an old minnow bucket.

Granny (Estelle Fawcett) never learned to swim, in part because there weren't any big rivers near Fort Davis where she grew up. Even as an adult she didn't like the water very much. Often we went there in the fall to collect the native small pecans--this was something that grandmother especially enjoyed doing.

The Grandchildren Visit L.C. Fawcett's House (as told by W.B. Fawcett, Jr.).

On a Saturday afternoon, granddad (Leslie C. Fawcett, Sr.) got it in his head that he needed to build a ladder. His grandson, Bill Fawcett, Jr., is not sure why granddad needed to build one, but he helped. It was a very hot sunny day in San Antonio. They got some used lumber, nails, saw and hammers, and set to work in the driveway behind the house. Grandpa explained how they had to angle the boards in from the base to make a stronger and more stable ladder. As they hammered the nails, Grandma stuck her head out of the back door. She yelled: Get out of the sun before you get heat stroke! Grandpa responded: "Pa-shaw woman, leave us alone! We're building". He was stubborn when he wanted to be.

Another time he complained to grandmother about how he wanted to repair the cracks in the concrete of the front porch. He needed sand for the concrete. His son, Bill, was supposed to bring the sand, but he was late. Grandpa threatened to "Get some sod" and use it instead of sand. Grandma scolded him, saying "You know that will never work. It will just crumble. Be patient".

Grandparents Leslie and Estelle slept in the room that later became their TV/family room, off the kitchen. In the winter it was cold in the mornings. Their grandchildren would huddle around the space heaters that grandfather lit when he got up.

The grandchildren liked playing on the sidewalk and drive. They enjoyed playing and riding on the paved surface that they did not have in the country. For hours the grandchildren would drive up and down on the tricycles and scooter, and pull the old wagon. They could not go in the street. They could only go to the end of the block on their side of the street. Estelle insisted that the children share their toys and take turns playing with them.

Their Fawcett grandchildren often embarrassed grandmother because they were so loud. Having grown up in the country, they were used to getting up at dawn. In the country, they could yell and make lots of noise without disturbing anyone else. They brought their own noise to the city.

Grandma served up snacks (often Almond Mounds, cookies and Dr. Pepper) at 10 in the morning and at 3 in the afternoon. Often the afternoon snack was a popsicle purchased from the ice cream truck that drove around the neighborhood, playing music.

Grandmother was a great cook, preparing most meals from scratch according to recipes that she learned in her childhood. Breakfast might include cold cereal (if we wanted some prize out of or off the box) or possibly waffles made on her old electric iron. The corner shelves in the kitchen were crammed with various toys--glass encased snowmen, plastic salt and pepper shakers representing various figures, and other toys that her grandchildren played with while we waited for our meal. Periodically, the old gas water-heater exploded into life making lots of noise.

Some of the relatives favorite meals that Grandmother prepared included corn bread stuffing, candied sweet potatoes, smothered steak, chicken-fried steak, baked hams and turkeys, and her cookies--especially the fudge and chocolate chip.

Sometimes when her grandchildren ran out of things to do, Grandmother would make toys for them: rubber-band and spool windup tanks, spools with nails for braiding string rope, braided hot pads, and rubber-band and wood paddle boats. Other favorite toys included a blue metal scooter (welded on many occasions), a red metal wagon, a large tricycle that was almost as big as a bike, and a box of toys--all usually stored in the garage. On at least one occasion she pulled out some old readers from her childhood for them to examine.

If we were going to town or shopping grandmother and her grandchildren would leave in the morning before it got hot. Sometimes she took them to the zoo, where they got cotton candy and saw wonderful animals. Other times they went to the little amusement park near Brackenridge Park. One of grandmother Fawcett's favorite places to go to was Fanics--a plant nursery. She and the owner were about the same age, and both loved plants.

When it was hot, the grandchildren sometimes filled the old tin wash tubs with water in the backyard under the old knarled china berry tree. They loved to jump in them and splash, while also playing with the rubber duckies. The low branches of the tree made it easy to climb, and sometimes we threw the berries and other times they made bows and arrows from the young sprouts.

In the evening the grandparents and uncle Leslie sat on the front porch in chairs and a porch swing, while the children continued to play. Neighbors would come over and visit. Sometimes the children organized parades for the adults complete with pinwheel and flag decorated bikes, scooters and wagons.

In the evening and on hot afternoons, the grandchildren played games with the adults, including checkers, karems, Bunko, Old Maid, and other games. Grandmother had a stereo viewer. The children looked through it at old photographs of various National Parks and people.

The Fawcett grandchildren and their parents celebrated Christmas, Thanksgiving, and sometimes Easter and birthdays at their grandparents home. Usually these gatherings only included the grandparents, Uncle Leslie, W.B. Fawcett's family, and the Benners. For each celebration my grandmother had special foods and decorations that enlivened the gatherings and to which we learned to look forward. Baked turkey or ham, mashed potatoes, candied potatoes, corn bread stuffing, pies, cakes, cookies, and we ate many other treats until everyone was stuffed and needed to take a nap. In preparation for Christmas the grandparents encouraged their grandchildren to page through the Sears and Montgomery Ward catalogs to pick out what Santa should bring. They also loaded their grandchildren in the car and took us downtown to see the Christmas lights, especially at Joskies where the River Mall now is. There were ornaments--especially the glass lights that bubbled as the heated up--on the Christmas tree that they looked for, many of them being ones from their parents' childhood. After the meals while the adults napped or exchanged the latest local gossip, while the children played board games and baseball or football.

At other times of the year, the living room would often be filled with our grandmother's quilting frame. Like her mother, Isabella Yeck Bloys, our grandmother loved to sew. She had an old foot-treadle Singer machine that she like better than those new fangeled electric ones, although she had them too. She made a quilt for each of her grandchildren.

The Benners often visited at holidays, and as their children (Virginia, Bill, Betty, and Jan) often visited for a week or so like we did in the summer. Bill Benner broke his arm while climbing a pecan tree at the camp, after they warned him about the treacherous nature of rotten limbs on pecans. Another time, grandmother took him to the dentist to have a tooth filled. He managed somehow to jab the novocaine in the dentist's hand (preventing him from torturing other children that day) and inducing the dentist to insist that Bill never return for a visit.

W.B. Fawcett's Country Home (as told by his son, W.B. Fawcett Jr.).

In 1955 W.B. Fawcett moved his family to a new home on 21 acres, a mile east of Interstate 10 and north of FM 1604, about 17 miles north of San Antonio. They lived there until 1976. His parents (Estelle and Leslie Fawcett) and brother (Leslie Fawcett) loved to escape to the cool of the country in the summer. They often came out for dinners on weekends. During their visits the children showed them many treasures--rocks, gardens, playground equipment their father built (an oil-drum train, a crane, sandbox, and tree-houses). They played baseball and basketball in front of the house, ran races, road bikes and horses, and fed animals--chickens, cows, and a pet deer. The deer, named Fluff, especially amused grandpa Leslie. Fluff and Blossom--our collie--would race around the yard. Fluff liked to be petted and would eat from your hand, especially potato chips. He became a party animal--visiting neighborhood parties and mingling with the crowd.