*Gone to Texas*  
  
by  
  
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The following is a story of the events, as best I can connect them, occurring during a period in the history of the Marshall E. Vardaman family about which we know very little.  This is the ten-year period from ca. 1893 through 1902 when Marshall moved his family from Coosa County, Alabama, to Texas -- many different places in Texas -- and subsequently back to Coosa County, Alabama.

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PROLOGUE

On Saturday July 19th, 1851, Brinson Ross White, son of Gabriel and Elizabeth White of Coosa County, AL, married Lucy Ann Elizabeth Carlisle, daughter of Elder Robert W. and Clarissa (Owens) Carlisle of Tallapoosa County, AL.  They were married by Rev. James G. Eden in Coosa County, AL.  At that time, the bride's father, Elder R. W. Carlisle, an ordained Minister of the Gospel, was the pastor of the Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church located in Youngville (later renamed Alexander City) in Tallapoosa County, AL.  
  
A little over two years later, on Friday, Dec. 22nd, 1853, Lucy Ann’s brother, John Bunyan Carlisle, married Nancy Harris Craddock, daughter of David and Sarah (Dendy) Craddock.  They were married by the groom’s father, Elder R. W. Carlisle at the Fellowship Primitive Baptist Church in Youngville (Tallapoosa Co.), AL, where Eld. Carlisle was the pastor at that time.  
  
B. R. and Lucy (Carlisle) White would have 10 children, 6 daughters and 4 sons,  
who, with the exception of one daughter who died as a young child, reached adulthood, married, and had families of their own.  Several of these families would later move to Texas.  
  
John B. and Nancy (Craddock) Carlisle would have a total of 9 children, 6 daughters and 3 sons, all of whom reached adulthood, married, and had families of their own.  Their sixth child was daughter Clara Owens “Odie” Carlisle who married Marshall E. Vardaman, son of John F. and Julia (Flynn) Vardaman, October 22, 1887, in Coosa County, AL.  They were married by Odie’s grandfather, Eld. R. W. Carlisle, M.G., at her father’s home in the Mt. Olive Community of Coosa County.  
  
In 1891 times were hard in rural Alabama and good jobs not available.  At this time, one of Odie (Carlisle) Vardaman’s first cousins, Robert Gabriel "Bud" White, the oldest son of Odie’s aunt and uncle,  Brinson Ross and Lucy Ann Elizabeth (Carlisle) White, went to Texas to "check it out" as he and some of his brothers-in-law were having a hard time providing for their families in Coosa County.  He came back to Alabama with such glowing tales of Texas, "land of plenty", that four of his brothers-in-law (Asa Blackman who had married Clarissa Ann White, Clem Busby who was married to Lucy Ida White, Jim Cotton whose wife was Bethenia Virginia “Jenny” White and Robert M. Carlisle who had married his first cousin Martha Olive “Ollie” Paralee White), husbands of his sisters, decided to move their families to east Texas also.  This was in 1892 prior to the Texas oil boom which did not begin until ca. 1900.  All of the White girls mentioned above were, of course, Odie Vardaman’s first cousins.  
  
Incidentally, Ollie White’s husband, Robert Marion Carlisle, the son of Edmund Jefferson and Martha (Gilliland) Carlisle, was also a first cousin of Clara “Odie” (Carlisle) Vardaman.  Edmund Jefferson Carlisle was a son of Rev. Robert W. Carlisle and a brother of Odie Carlisle’s father, John Bunyan Carlisle.  
  
Also, Jenny White’s husband, James Weaver “Jim” Cotton, was a son of John Weaver and Maria (Hindsman) Cotton and a brother of William Cary “Bunk” Cotton who married Odie’s sister, Annie Elizabeth Carlisle (more on this latter couple later in this document).

TEXAS ADVENTURES

While the Marshall Vardaman family had remained in Coosa County during their early married years and through the birth of their first three children, there is no doubt that Bud White's stories of Texas were not lost on Marshall Vardaman and, in fact, appealed greatly to his wanderlust.   It is my understanding and belief that this provides the background for the Marshall Vardaman family's trek to Texas where he probably felt that he would find much demand for his skills as a master carpenter and mechanic.  
  
While we do not know for certain exactly when Marshall's footloose career took him and his family to Texas, it was after the birth of his third child, daughter Ada Myrtle, on Christmas Day, December 25, 1892, near Goodwater in Coosa County, AL, and before the birth of his next child, daughter Annie May, February 22, 1895, in Texas.  I believe that available evidence places this move as having occurred sometime during 1893 or 1894 which would support the almost certain conclusion that Marshall Vardaman was another of the family members to be swayed by Robert White’s enthusiastic account of the opportunities to be found there.  
  
Also, it is not clear as to where in Texas the Vardaman family first located and where daughter Annie May was born.  The next child after Annie May was Marshall and Odie’s third son (fifth child), Jesse Harris Vardaman, born Christmas Eve, December 24, 1896, in Wood County, in northeast Texas.  
  
To my knowledge, only one of the five White related families, who moved en masse from Coosa Co., AL, to Texas, settled near Wood County, that of Asa M. Blackman and his wife, Clarissa Ann White.  The Blackman family first settled near Lindale in Smith County, which is adjacent to Wood County to the north.  The Blackman family is also reported to have lived in the vicinity of the town of Mineola in southern Wood County.  The other four White related families who moved together from Coosa Co., AL, to Texas (those of Jerome “Jerry” Clem Busby/Busbee, Robert M. Carlisle, James W. Cotton and Robert G. White) settled in the counties of Leon and Limestone.  These two counties are located some 185 miles to the northwest of the city of Houston and east of the city of Waco but much closer to Waco than to Houston.  Although located in east-central Texas, Leon and Limestone Counties are over 100 miles south of Wood County  
  
It was always known to me that my father, Jesse Harris Vardaman (Sr.), was born in Wood County, TX, and that the next child of the Vardaman family, another son, John Eugene Vardaman, was born further west, probably in either Knox County or Fannin County, TX, October 29, 1899.  I was also aware that, in addition to my then living paternal aunts and uncles (sisters and brothers of my father), there was another daughter, also born in Texas, who died while still an infant.  This was Annie May Vardaman mentioned above, the child who preceded my father.

ANNIE MAY VARDAMAN

Annie May Vardaman was born in Texas, February 22, 1895,  and died there as an infant, August 4,1895, when she was only a few days over five months old.   
  
I first learned of Annie May’s birth and death dates from the records in the Bible of my grandmother, Clara “Odie” Vardaman, of which I have long had copies.  These same dates were also cited in the Bible of my grandfather, M. E. Vardaman, copies of which only recently came into my possession.  The M. E. Vardaman Bible records contain additional information not found in my grandmother’s Bible, including Annie May’s place of burial clearly identified as “Good Hope”, TX.  This was, presumably, also the place of her death.  
  
I have been able to locate only two “Good Hope” communities in Texas.  One, still in existence, is in the southern Texas County of Lavaca, an area far distant from any other recorded location of the family in Texas.  This Good Hope is located about half-way between Houston and San Antonio to the west on Alt. US Rt. 90 about 5 miles east of the town of Hallettsville.  This location is some 150 miles to the south of the area of Leon and Limestone Counties where four of the five White related families located and 250 miles south of Smith and Wood Counties where the fifth White related family settled and where the Vardaman family was known to be located in 1896.  While the areas where the White related families settled and the Lavaca County area where the Vardaman family may have first settled are not close, there is nothing to preclude the M. E. Vardaman family from having originally located in the Lavaca County area before later journeying further to the north to Wood County.  However, I seriously doubt that this is the case.  
  
The second “Good Hope” community, and the one more likely to be the “Good Hope” referred to in Marshall Vardaman’s Bible, is now defunct but was originally located in Denton County, TX.  Denton County is located just north of the Dallas-Ft. Worth area and is separated from Fannin County (to the east) by only the small county of Collin.  The Good Hope (Denton County) community was situated about 15 miles east of the city of Denton (the county seat of Denton County) near the present community of Parvin.  “*The Handbook of Texas Online*” furnishes the following information about this Good Hope community and I quote in part:

“Good Hope, Texas (Denton County).  Good Hope was on Doe Branch at the intersection of Good Hope Road and Prosper Road between Farm Road 1385 and the Collin county line fifteen miles east of Denton in eastern Denton County.  The original settlers … included the families of Jacob and Lewis Rue … who settled at the site then called Rue Settlement … Ben Rue sold his land before he moved to Fannin County but saved four acres, which he donated for a church and school.  The Cumberland Presbyterian church was founded in Rue Settlement about 1854 and was active until 1925.  Good Hope Baptist Church was established in 1875 and used on alternate Sundays for Presbyterian and Baptist services.  The community was thereafter called Good Hope.  In 1878, when a storm destroyed the building, the church was moved to Parvin, less than a mile away …… Burials had taken place in Good Hope Cemetery by at least 1870 and probably as early as the 1850s.  In order to preserve this early cemetery the Good Hope Cemetery Association was founded in 1903.  In 1904 Ben Rue officially gave the land to the association and a state historical marker was erected at the cemetery in 1986.  The cemetery and burial association remained active in 2002.”

Considering the above information, and bearing in mind that Annie May Vardaman died in 1895, I believe that it is very likely that this may be the “Good Hope” where she died and is buried as cited in Marshall Vardaman’s Bible.  In addition to the above it is very interesting to note that the town of Leonard in Fannin County, where we know the Vardaman family to have been located ca 1900 to 1902, is only about 40 miles northeast of the location of this Good Hope community in Denton County.   
  
In addition, I have also noted the town or community of ***New*** Hope in southern Wood County, TX.  It lies just off of US Rte. 80 near the border of Wood County with its southern neighbor, Smith County.   
   
“*The Handbook of Texas Online*” furnishes the following information about the New Hope community of Wood County and I quote in part:

“New Hope, Texas (Wood County).  New Hope is on Farm Road 1801 four miles east of Mineola and a mile north of the Missouri Pacific line (formerly Texas and Pacific) in southern Wood County.  The community apparently moved north to this site from an earlier location as there is a New Hope cemetery just south of the railroad line and about a mile south of the present location of the New Hope Baptist Church… By 1917 a Baptist Church, originally founded in 1864 in nearby Greer’s Neighborhood (later known as Golden Rule), had, after several moves and name changes, established itself as the New Hope Baptist Church at the second, more northerly, site of the community."

Considering the cemetery information mentioned above and the fact that the Vardaman family was known to be in Wood County as early as 1896, and notwithstanding the slight difference in the name, this would appear to be a promising location for the death and burial of Annie May Vardaman.  In addition, it is also known that the family traveled to and from Texas by train, and the presence of a railroad through the New Hope community could be an added clue as to this location.  Of course, the community of Good Hope in Denton County as well as the Good Hope community in Lavaca County could also have been near a railroad, although I do not know this.  
  
The above information is very curious and the similarity of the names (Good Hope and New Hope) raises an interesting question, to wit:  Is the Bible record in error and this community of New Hope in Wood County the last resting place of Annie May Vardaman or is the Bible record correct and she died and is buried at Good Hope, most likely in Denton County as previously noted, or even in Lavaca County far to the south?    
While this is a moot point at this writing, I believe that without some further clue or information, we must respect and accept the Bible record name of Good Hope as being correct.  
  
In any event, the Wood County, TX, tax rolls confirm that Marshall E. Vardaman was there in 1896 and 1897, although he does not appear there in prior or subsequent year records.  Based on our extremely limited data, I believe that the Vardaman family probably made the move to Texas in either 1893 or 1894 and, based on the aforementioned Bible record, settled in northeast Texas, probably in the vicinity of either Denton or Wood County before subsequently moving further west to first Knox County and then to the Fannin County area.  It is quite possible that Marshall Vardaman originally journeyed to Texas by himself and either returned later for the rest of his family or sent for them to join him there.    
  
Marshall and Odie’s fifth child and third son, Jesse Harris Vardaman (my father), was born in Wood County on Christmas Eve, Thursday, December 24, 1896, during the second term of President Grover Cleveland.  I believe that the name "Jesse" was probably one of Odie's favorite names from the Bible, while the name "Harris" was either after Odie's brother-in-law, Osborne N. ("Os)" Harris, husband of Odie’s favorite older sister, Annie Eliza Carlisle (more on the Harris family below) or, possibly, after Odie's mother's middle name (she was Nancy Harris Craddock).  We have no information as to the origin or significance of Nancy's "Harris" name.  
  
Here I will digress somewhat to provide some explanation for the next moves of the Marshall Vardaman family.

THE HARRIS FAMILY JOINS THE VARDAMAN FAMILY IN TEXAS

One of Odie’s older sisters - and her favorite - was Annie Elizabeth Carlisle, born January 22, 1857, who had first married William Cary “Will”, or "Bunk", Cotton, 29 January 1878 in Coosa Co., AL.  This couple had two sons, John William Cotton, born 2 January 1879 and Weaver Allen (or Allen Weaver) Cotton, born 22 June 1882, before Will Cotton was accidentally killed August 19, 1884, leaving Annie a widow.  She then married Osborne N. “Os” Harris, son of John M. and Sarah (Candler) Harris, on December 1, 1887, and had four more children - all this while still in Coosa County, AL.  
The four additional children were Walter M. Harris (born in October 1888), Lera Harris (born January 1891, Leo N. Harris (born in May 1893 and Annie Pearl Harris (born in May 1896).  
  
John W. Cotton is reported to have attended a military school in Birmingham and, after finishing there, joined the Marshall Vardaman family in Texas, ca 1898-1900.  
  
In Texas, Marshall Vardaman had moved his family from Wood County sometime after 1897 and apparently, after first residing in Knox County, was living further east on a farm near the town of Leonard in southern Fannin County, TX, at the time of the 1900 Census (dated 14 June 1900).  During this period, their sixth child and fourth son, John Eugene Vardaman, was born either in Knox or Fannin County on Saturday, October 21, 1899, during the first administration of President William McKinley.    
  
Since the Marshall Vardaman family was not on the Wood County tax rolls after 1897 and were known to be in Fannin County by June of 1900 (date of 1900 census record), I believe that John E. Vardaman may have been born near the town of Leonard in Fannin County, TX.  However, it is also quite possible that he may have been born in Knox Co., TX, prior to the family’s arrival in Fannin County (see the Bible record discussion on pages 9 and 10 of this document placing the family in Knox County in 1899).  His first name, John, was probably after both his paternal and maternal grandfathers (his father, Marshall, also had a brother named John).  I have no idea where the name "Eugene" came from.  During his early years John E. Vardaman was called "Gene" by his family, although in later life he more commonly came to be called "Johnny".  
  
Odie Vardaman’s nephew, John W. Cotton, mentioned above, was living with the Marshall Vardaman family at the time of the 1900 Census.  In addition, Marshall's sister, Maggie, and her husband, Thomas Jefferson “Jeff” Webb, were also living in Marshall’s household in 1900.  I have no information as to when the Webbs arrived in Texas, how long they stayed, or when they returned to Alabama, except that I know that they were back living in Kellyton in Coosa County by 1902.  Incidentally, Thomas Jefferson “Jeff” Webb, husband of Maggie Mae Vardaman, was a first cousin of Odie Carlisle Vardaman.  He was the son of Odie's Aunt, Clarissa Jane Carlisle, and her husband, Charles David Webb.  The elder Webbs lived at Kellyton in Coosa County.  In this case, Jeff Webb was not only Odie’s first cousin but also her brother-in-law by marriage.  
  
Meanwhile, also in 1900, back in Coosa County, AL, Os Harris contracted to buy a house and land in Alexander City, in nearby Tallapoosa County, AL.  In order to complete the Alexander City transaction and move there, he held an auction and sold not only his house and farm in Coosa County but all of his belongings also.  Unfortunately for the Harris family, the seller of the property in Alexander City backed out of the deal leaving them with no place to live.  
  
As a result, Os Harris decided to move his family to Texas just as his wife’s White and Vardaman cousins, as well as his step-son, had done before him.  Since his step-son, John Cotton, was already living with the Marshall Vardaman family in Fannin County that is where Os Harris and his family went also.  Lera (Harris) McCaskill, a daughter of Os and Annie (Carlisle) Harris, remembered well and described to me their arrival at the train station in Leonard, Texas, "on the last day of the last month of the 19th century” (December 31, 1900), and being met there by her Uncle Marshall Vardaman and taken by horse and wagon to his farm.

A ROMANTIC INTERLUDE

During this time, John Cotton had fallen in love with the comely daughter of one of the Vardaman's neighbors and the couple wanted to be married.  The young lady, Nettie Melton, daughter of Andrew and Lucinda Melton, was only 17 years old at the time and, unfortunately, her parents objected to the marriage.  As a result, John Cotton and his sweetheart Nettie eloped and were married in Hunt County (just to the south of Fannin County), 30 December 1900.  They then traveled to Floyd County, TX, far to the west in the west Texas Panhandle area.  They were accompanied on this trip by John’s step-father, Os Harris.  The rest of the Harris family would join them a short time later. Both the Harris and Cotton families subsequently settled in the city of Childress, county seat of Childress County, located northeast of the city of Lubbock, some 300 miles to the west of Fannin County.   Here John and his father-in-law became merchants, establishing a store in Childress. .    
  
Os Harris and his family would remain in Childress for several years.  He is there with his wife and four children on the 1910 census.  His daughter Lera married Ottis McCaskill prior to1920 and this McCaskill family is found living in Childress on the 1920 census.  However, on the 1920 census, Os Harris is enumerated far to the east in the city of Commerce in Hunt County, TX, residing in the household of his younger daughter, Annie Pearl, who has married Wade J. “Jerry” Debenport.   Os is still listed as a merchant (wholesale grocer).  Information in my records (source not documented) shows that Annie (Carlisle) Harris died June 21, 1912, in Texas.  This agrees with the information that I received from Lera McCaskill that her mother, Annie (Carlisle) Harris, died at the age of 55 in Commerce, Hunt County, TX.  Commerce is in east Texas, far removed from Childress County in the Texas Panhandle.  
  
Cousin Joe Pearce has furnished us with the information that both Os and Annie Harris are buried in Rosemound Cemetery in Commerce in Hunt Co., TX, and that this can be confirmed by visiting that cemetery on the Find-a-grave site on the internet, which I did and found that the birth and death dates that I had for them are in agreement with the dates on their grave stones.  
  
This information indicates that Os and Annie Harris had left Childress and moved east to Commerce in Hunt County prior to Annie’s death June 21, 1912, and that Os was still there and still in business as a merchant at the time of the 1920 census.  It would seem that Os had either moved his business from Childress in the west to Commerce in the east or had disposed of his Childress business and established a new business in Commerce.  In addition, since Wade J. Debenport, was residing, age 15, in the household of his parents, Charles J. and Allie Debenport, in Commerce, Hunt County, TX, on the 1910 census, I am confident that Os and Annie Harris’ daughter Annie Pearl moved with her parents  from Childress to Commerce and that she and Wade Debenport married in Commerce, TX.   
  
Osborne N. Harris died August 19, 1934, in Childress County (Texas Death Index 1903-2000) and is buried with his wife in the Rosemound Cemetery in Commerce, Texas.  I have noted that both the McCaskill family (his daughter Lera) and the Debenport family (his daughter Annie Pearl) are located in the city of Childress in Childress County on the 1930 census.  I could not locate Os Harris on the 1930 census but he, too, must have returned to Childress County since he is reported (Texas Death Index) to have died there.  He is not listed in either daughter’s family.    
  
John Cotton, on the other hand, tired early of a storekeeper’s life, sold his interest in the store to his father-in-law and left Childress to pursue a career in the meat-packing industry which he engaged in for the rest of his life.  After the birth of his first child, son Mark, ca 1902-03, in Childress, TX, he moved his family to Oklahoma where his second child, daughter Goldy, was born ca 1905 and still later to Louisiana where his next two children, son Winston and daughter Johnnie B., were born ca 1907 and 1911 respectively, and where the John W. Cotton family is found in the Shreveport area (Caddo County, LA) on the 1910 census.    By the time of the 1920 census the John W. Cotton family had returned to Texas and a fifth child, son Melton, born in Texas in 1919, has joined the family.  The family is found living in the city and county of Dallas on this 1920 census.  By the time of the 1930 census the family, including both parents and all five children, had moved to San Francisco (city and county), California.  John William Cotton died 14 December 1947 in San Francisco and Nettie L. Cotton died 16 September 1967 at Santa Clara, CA.  Their place of burial is unknown.  
  
Note:  Much of the above family information concerning the Osborne Harris and John W. Cotton families was furnished to me personally via telephone conversations and correspondence in 1987 by Lera (Harris) McCaskill, daughter of Osborn N. and Annie E. (Carlisle) Harris.  Born January 9, 1891, Lera was well on her way to her 97th birthday when I was in touch with her.  She died 17 February 1991 at the age of 100 years, 1 month and 8 Days in Tarrant Co., TX (part of the Dallas-Ft. Worth metropolitan area).

 WEAVER ALLEN COTTON  
(or Allen Weaver Cotton)

In the preceding section we have discussed to a small degree the destiny of John William Cotton, the oldest son of William C. “Bunk” Cotton and Annie Elizabeth Carlisle, but what became of the younger son, Weaver Allen (or Allen Weaver) Cotton?  
  
On the 1900 census seventeen-year-old Weaver Allen Cotton is in the household of his mother and step-father, Annie (Carlisle) and Osborne N. Harris, in Coosa County, Alabama.  By the 1910 census he has married Bertha Alice Brown, daughter of Henry and Louisa Brown, ca. 1905, probably in Fannin Co., TX.  Bertha was born 18 February 1878 in Grayson County, TX.  Her parents are located in the town of Leonard in Fannin County for the 1910 census.  Allen Cotton had obviously accompanied the family of his mother and step-father when they moved to Fannin County in Texas at the end of 1900.  It certainly did not take him long to find a wife in his new environment..  
  
On the 1910 census he and his wife are residing in the town of Childress in Childress Co., TX, where he is employed as a baggage man at the railroad depot.  The only known child of A. W. and Bertha A. Cotton, son, Almer G., born ca. 1905-06, has been added to the family.  The move to Childress was, in all probability, the result of his brother and step-father having previously settled there.  
  
The family is still in Childress for the 1920 and 1930 censuses with son Almer age 13 in 1920.  Allen’s occupation in 1920 is listed as bookkeeper for a garage.  By 1920 their son Almer G., now age 24, has married Juanita McCracken, age 19, and they, together with their infant daughter, LaJuana, are living with Allen and Bertha.  Allen is employed in 1930 as a truck driver for an oil dealership while son Almer is listed as a salesman in a drug store..  
  
Sometime after 1930, the Weaver A. Cotton family will move to the San Francisco, California, area where his brother John William Cotton has previously settled.  Weaver Allen Cotton died 22 November 1946 in San Francisco, CA; however, his place of burial is unknown.  Bertha (Brown) Cotton lived for another 22 plus years after her husband’s death, never remarrying, and apparently moved back to Texas during this period.  She died July 16, 1967, in Denton, Denton Co., TX, and is buried in Eastview Memorial Park at Vernon in Wilbarger County, TX.

BACK TO THE MARSHALL VARDAMAN FAMILY

We left the Marshall Vardaman family residing in Fannin County, TX, at the time that the Harris and Cotton families removed to Floyd and Childress County in western Texas.  Since John and Nettie Cotton married in Hunt County (southern neighbor of Fannin County) on the 30th of December, 1900, I believe it is safe to say that the Vardaman family was still in Fannin County at the beginning of 1901.  
  
I have a picture of my Dad, Jesse Vardaman, about five and a half years old, and his younger brother, John Eugene, age about two years plus, standing on the porch of a rural farm house.  On this picture my grandmother had noted:

*Jesse H. Vardaman. 5 yrs old  
Eugene J. Vardaman  
  
Floyd, Texas*

As near as can be determined, based on Jesse’s age noted on the picture and the dress of the two boys (both are barefooted), the picture would appear to be from sometime in the summer of 1902.  
  
But where is this Floyd, Texas?  
  
There is a Floyd County in Texas located in the Texas Panhandle about 45 miles to the northeast of the city of Lubbock and about 95 miles west of the City of Childress.  According to Lera McCaskill’s information, Floyd County is where the Harris and Cotton families first located when they removed from Fannin County and before they settled in Childress.  In view of this, it would not seem unusual for the Vardaman family to have moved to this far west area of Texas also.  However, it is not certain that this is what happened.  
  
There is also a town or community of Floyd in Hunt County, TX, located on US Rte. 380 about 10 miles east of the city of Greenville (county seat of Hunt County).  This location in northern Hunt County is only about 15 miles south of the city of Leonard in southern Fannin County, Hunt County’s neighbor to the north.  In view of the proximity of this location to the known location of the Vardaman family as late as 1901 (Fannin County) and the notation on the picture, I believe that there is a possibility that this might be the Floyd referred to on the picture and the last known location of the Vardaman family in Texas.  
  
For reasons not completely known to us now, Marshall Vardaman, true to his wanderlust, did not stay in Texas but moved his family back to Coosa County, Alabama, possibly in the latter part of 1902 or sometime during 1903.  I suspect that this return to Alabama may have been precipitated by his father’s deteriorating physical condition from a severe arthritic condition which had progressed to the point of confining him to a wheel chair, thereby creating a need for Marshall to return home to help operate the family farm and take care of his parents.

CONCLUSION

Before leaving the annals of the Marshall Vardaman family in Texas, two additional items of interest must be mentioned.  
  
The first involves yet another entry in the Marshall E. Vardaman Bible where it is recorded that Marshall and Odie Vardaman received confirmation into the Christian Church (an affiliation of the Disciples of Christ denomination) in 1899 at “Knox, Texas”.  There is a Knox County in northwest Texas located about half way between the city of Wichita Falls to the east and the city of Lubbock to the west.  The only town or community with the name “Knox” in Texas is Knox City located in the aforesaid Knox County.  Thus it appears certain that the location of the Church confirmation was, indeed, in Knox County.  
  
This, however, would seem to indicate a somewhat unusual movement of the Vardaman family--if it were not for Marshall Vardaman’s reputation for always staying on the move.  If they were in Wood County as late as 1897 and then in Fannin County in mid 1900 (both confirmed and both, more or less, in northeastern Texas), to have also been present in Knox County, much further to the west, in 1899 would have involved, first, a move from Wood County in east Texas to Knox County far to the west, then back east to Fannin County, all occurring during the period 1897 to 1900.  And this would have been in addition to the other potential movements of the family in Texas prior to 1897 and after 1901.  
  
As outlined above, there could have been yet another move even further to the far west from Fannin County to Floyd County in the Texas Panhandle.  Such a series of moves in such a short time frame, even for a man with the wayfaring ways of Marshall Vardaman, stretches one’s credulity.  Nevertheless, the “Knox” reference in the Bible cannot be dismissed, and it is a known fact that Marshall and Odie Vardaman as well as certain of their children (including their son Jesse--my father) were known to be members and supporters of the Christian Church.   
  
The second item of interest involves the birth place of Marshall and Odie’s daughter Maggie Lucille.  She was the next child born to Marshall and Odie Vardaman after their son John Eugene (who was born in Knox or Fannin Co., TX, October 21, 1899), and was their third daughter, seventh child, born October 25, 1902.  While the Bible records of both her mother and father (mentioned previously) are in accord regarding the date of her birth, neither of these records, nor any other official record, provides the place of her birth.  
  
Family members living today have always believed her place of birth to be in Coosa County, AL.  This is her place of birth as known to her daughters and where she personally insisted to me during her senior years that she was born.  For this to be correct considering the dates appearing in the forgoing narrative, the Marshall Vardaman family must have returned to Coosa County, AL, from Texas by the latter part of 1902.  
  
However, on both the 1920 and 1930 censuses, Maggie Vardaman’s place of birth is reported as Texas.  Presumably, the information for these two censuses was furnished by either she or her mother both of whom should have known her correct place of birth.  This does not agree with her place of birth (Alabama) as reported on the 1910 census.  Unfortunately, the places of birth as reported on the 1910 census cannot be relied on and should be ignored as some are patently in error.  On the 1910 census all of the Marshall Vardaman family members are reported as born in Alabama although it is a known fact that at least two of the children (sons Jesse and John Eugene) were born in Texas.  This not only leaves the correct place of birth of daughter Maggie in doubt but also leaves open to question just when the family actually returned to Alabama from Texas.  
  
I have a picture of the entire John B. Carlisle family clan (about seventy individuals) assembled at the Carlisle home in the Mt. Olive Community of Coosa County, AL, taken on the occasion of the celebration of the 50th Wedding Anniversary of Odie’s parents, John Bunyan and Nancy Harris (Craddock) Carlisle.  This would have officially occurred December 22, 1903.  However, since December 22, 1903, occurred on a Tuesday, I suspect that the celebration, including the taking of the picture, possibly occurred on the following Saturday, December 26 (the day after Christmas) or Sunday, December 27, of 1903.  
  
In this picture the entire Marshall E. Vardaman family, including both parents and six of the seven children born to the family up to that time, are present and can be clearly identified.  As noted previously, their second daughter, Annie May, died as an infant in Texas in 1895.  Their last (eighth) child, son Carlisle T. Vardaman, will not be born until 1905.  This picture definitely places the family back in Alabama in December of 1903 but does not negate the possibility of their return somewhat earlier, possibly in the latter part of 1902.  
  
Based on the available information, it is my belief that the family probably did not return from Texas until after Maggie’s birth in Texas in October 1902, the return possibly occurring sometime during the year 1903, and that Maggie Lucille Vardaman may not have been born in Coosa County, AL, but, instead, in Texas, either in Floyd, Fannin or Hunt County.

THE END