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BIOGRAPHY OF: Mr. Otus Allstott  
Pauls Valley, Oklahoma

BORN: July 8, 1877 in Oregon

PARENTS: John Allstott, Indiana  
Elizabeth Love, Missouri

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Mr. Otus Allstott, born July 8, 1877 in Oregon.

When the Civil War closed my grandfather, Robert Benjamin Love, was left with one son and one daughter, R. J. and Elizabeth. These children in their teens with their father made a wagon trip from Phelps, Missouri to Sulphur Springs, Texas. On reaching the Indian Territory, on one occasion they came near leaving their driver on the spot. It was cold, chilly spring weather and grandfather would make R. J. go out in the heavy dew and hunt the mules each morning. R. J. had been chilling, a common illness in that territory during the early days, He failed to find the mules and when he returned to camp wet, cold and chilled to the bone, his father gave him a good warming up with the bridle reins. The next morning about the same thing was going to happen again, but just at the end of the wagon tongue, grandfather heard the click of a forty-five and turning found himself looking into the muzzle of the gun held by his daughter, who with fiery eyes was begging him to hit just one lick. So we see that people of those days had their trials and tribulations. My grandfather, Robert Benjamin Love, was killed in an encounter with the Comanches Indians in 1865, as my

mother has told me. She did not stay at Sulphur Springs<sup>226</sup> very long. She went back to Missouri where she married my father, John Allstott.

One brother, Bob, and one sister, Laura, were born in Missouri but R. D. and I were born near Salem, Oregon at a little town called Shedstation Post Office. At this date it was Oregon Territory and pretty fresh in wild life, so I found. I can remember pestering the wild pheasants and grouse in setting-time to see them peck, flop, and fight.

One early Sunday morning dad and mon had dinner all fixed for a trip to the Willamett Valley for raspberries and plums. We all got in the log wagon and as we lived pretty far up the slope, my dad had two old mares hitched on, no belly bands, just tug-back bands and collars were all the rigging. When we got to the steep slope of the river bottom we stopped and begin to see if we could make some kind of a brake for the wagon. Dad said, "Now Otus, you get a-straddle of the brass wash boiler and don't let it rattle or those mares will run away." I put Bob in the tub to hold it down and we started down the grade. We had not gone far when the wash boiler bounded me over the side of the wagon bed. My foot caught somehow in the standard and my head nearly dragged on the ground, bumping against the spokes. When Dad got stopped my mom squalled, "where is Otus?"

Bob said, "He's in the wheel." So out they come. I couldn't speak but I could hear them. I was out of breath, ~~and~~ scared dumb. one of the two.

They finally got my foot from between the standard and the wagon bed and found me unhurt, but minus some hide on my rib-bones where the spokes had played "YankeeDoodle" down grade in about a half-mile runaway. I never will forget the hut where we stopped to gather berries and eat dinner. It was empty.

When we got out of the wagon there was a bush of big blue plums. Dad says, "Liz, if you want to know whether Otus has the mumps or not, get him one of those plums." She handed me one and I cracked down on it. The pain locked my jaws so that they had to pull that plum out of my mouth. That wagon-wheel beating was fun by the side of this lock-jaw. Dad says, "I told you that boy had the mumps!"

My dad finally decided to move up a little higher and a little nearer to the Ciscue Mountains to a new prospecting camp. That put a stop to we children's out-door play because this place was inhabited with many wild beasts, mostly bear and cougars. It was up a rocky slope from our newly built log shack to the spring where we went for water. When mother and I went for a bucket of water she stopped and whispered, "Listen Otus!" I could hear something go flop, flop, then stop and go again the same way. My mother could see it. She hollered and flopped her apron and hit the bucket. A cougar with a tail about twice as long as its body split the ferns and hazzlebush. My parents did not like the location so it wasn't long until we moved.

We left by train to Sacramento, California, took a steamboat to San Francisco and a train from there to El Paso

Texas, then to Gainesville, Texas. At Gainesville Dad bought a new wagon and a span of black mules and left there for Criner Creek where my Uncle, R. J. Love lived. My uncle had settled in the Indian Territory, Chickasaw Nation in 1876. He had thirty-two head of cattle and two saddle ponies. He settled on Beef Creek, southwest of Purcell and lived there until 1896, then he moved to Purcell and lived there until his death in January 1898.

As we were coming from Gainesville to Criner Creek we had to cross Red River in a ferry boat. The children played in the muddy water all the way across, over the ferry-boat edge. I can still remember one place where there was nearly no road at all that came off of the mountain near Fort Arbuckle. A wagon had to fall a straight two feet off of a rock on this place and Dad came very near having another runaway, but he had good harness and a good brake to help him this time. He and Mom both held the lines.

We finally arrived at Criner Ranch. I remember mother asked my uncle how they could stand to live in a log-house. He laughed and said, "When winter comes we will chink and dobe the cracks." The winters here were not like the ones in Oregon. Though my uncle lived in a log-cabin, he was happy and the future looked bright to him, but with all the inducements at his command he could not persuade my father to stay there. He could not see a future for Oklahoma. He finally went back to Oregon and prepared a home for us there but my mother would not leave her only brother.

The faith my uncle held in the future of Oklahoma was

right. As for me, when I first came I located for good.

I was deeply impressed with the abundance of wild grapes, black hawes, persimmons, pecans, black walnuts, and other wild fruit all the year round. We caught lots of fish out of the Washita River then, forked-tail channel cats, and the big sunny-side red-fin drum fish. There were wild hogs in the Wild Horse bottoms as well as in the Washita Valley. The prairies were covered with a pretty good breed of open range cattle. Those old 111(three-stripe on the left hip) cows kept getting better as my uncle began bringing us some Texas thoroughbred bulls. It took lots of heaving at fall branding to get some of the left-overs from spring branding bullocks to the ground with the left side up. You had to get hold of them backwards, flanking with the left hand and earing them with the right hand. My uncle talked of changing sides to make branding easier but he never did.

He had some really good corrals put up when he moved over on Finn Creek; split oak rails and three oak trees stood near the place where we built the fires for branding cattle. When a steer got loose, the man who was branding usually ran in between these trees for protection. The trees were scarred with horn marks of the 022 steers, the wildest brand in the country. I saw a man on a fine horse try to pen one of those steers. In the scramble when the steer was making a wild attempt to hook either the horse or his rider, the horse was stopped by a black-jack stump near a small tree. The man was thrown clear into the top of the tree.

When it was a known fact that the Santa Fe Railroad was coming through the Indian Territory the Texas Bullteam, Sod-Splitting Squadrons came; then Missourians with their good mules and gray flat creek mares to lean in the collars; up went ~~boxing~~ stores (logging was too slow) in a number of places. Quite a few of these towns missed the line of the railroad and when the Santa Fe popped through they moved on to the line where the Santa Fe struck Pauls Valley, my home town now. Albert Rennie was the first to sling up mud brick buildings. The future my uncle had foreseen was now making Indian Territory history.

The country changed fast. Wheat, corn, hogs and cattle put Oklahoma on the map, in a commercial way.

When I quit my uncle's ranch work I farmed four hundred to six hundred acres on Finn's Creek and had some cattle too. In 1904 I sold out and started shipping and butchering. At Maysville, Oklahoma, which soon became a good town, I stayed a few years, then to get nearer the railroad I moved to Pauls Valley in 1909. I deal now in livestock and do some butcher work. I own the Allstotts storage building in Pauls Valley.

THE END

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This story of Robert J. Love was told by his nephew, Mr. Otus Allsott.

Robert J. Love, at an early date went to work with the Forsythes in Texas. When they paid for Indian Territory and Texas cattle, the money was packed in steeple kegs in the chuck-wagon. Some of these fellows are still in the



cattle business in Kansas City stockyards. My uncle said that a trail driver got most of his hell on his trip from Texas to Dodge and Honeywell, Kansas. When they hit Wild Horse creek near Fort Arbuckle and Rush Creek and the Washita bottoms near Pauls Valley, full of big grass, polecats, turkeys, and wild Indians that had it in for the cattle drivers and its big bands of sharp-hoof and sharp-horn cattle. The polecats and turkeys would stampede a herd of cattle quicker than a thunderstorm. The Indians were bent on taking the white man's scalp to make them stay out of the Territory. When they got past the Canadian River he said it was nice sledding on up the line.

THE END