

a literary life, but he met with no encouragement along this line.

Having arrived at his new home in Indian Territory, he found a new country with no schools, churches or places of public meetings. A paradise for the hunter and stockmen, he himself having served much as a cowboy, enjoyed the wild free life, but his tastes and longings were for a more refined cultured life, where literature might be cultivated and kindred spirits associated with.

The settlement on Cow Creek (this country then being known as the Cow creek country) had become sufficiently large to desire schools and church facilities, and so during the summer, 1887, a school house was built, since known as the Log school house.

The part taken by U. S. Wilkinson in building this house is characteristic of the man. The work of obtaining the material (logs, boards, etc.) being divided up it fell to his lot, together with K. H. May; W. L. Hunter and Joe B. Wilkinson, his brother, now a lawyer at Duncan, Oklahoma. To secure the boards with which to cover the house. One morning they started with three wagons to the Comanche Nation to the Beaver Creek about twelve about twelve miles west where there were some very fine burr oak timber suitable to make boards. "It was unlawful at that time to go to the Comanche Nation from the Chickasaw to get timber, but people frequently did so and as we were securing this for a public school building our consciences did not suffer as we certainly put it to better use than it would ever otherwise have been. We were out two nights and three days but secured enough and to spare. As we went on," continues Mr. Wilkinson, relating the story, "over the green prairies sniffing the pure intoxicating summer ozone, whose denizens at that

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me was the prairie dog, the coyote and other wild animals, native to the country, the long horned cow and occasional cowboy and hunter. We saw large flocks of wild turkeys. That night we determined upon a turkey hunt, and leaving Mr. Hunter with the camp the three of us hunted for several hours under the great trees in the dark bottom, returning to the camp about ten o'clock p. m. When we returned Mr. Hunter suggested that we move the wagons and teams out of reach of a great tree against which he had built a camp fire during the day, which happened to be doughy inside and which he suggested might fall before morning. We at once did so and went to bed. About four o'clock in the morning suddenly a crack! boom! boom! boom! We were standing up in our wagons in an instant, our hair standing straighter up on our heads. The old tree sure enough was falling and soon lay in awful ruin just where we and our horses and wagons would have been, had it not been for the wise and timely suggestion of W. L. Hunter and this story would not be here. It was, as I think, the most exciting experience of my life. As awful as the crack of doom to the damned.

"Mr. Hunter has since died but for him we would all have been left dead or wounded under that giant Burr oak upon that fatal night. We traveled all night and without supper and arose early reaching home about ten o'clock in the morning, hungry enough to do justice to a substantial breakfast. As I remember this is the longest I have ever been without eating."

A day was set and the neighborhood gathered in to "raise" the old house, most of the men assisting for one or two days. The work then narrowed down to four or five men, who continued day after day for more than a month until the house was finished and ready for school. One of these men was

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S. Wilkinson, who although a single man worked day after day during the hot summer months preparing a house in which to educate the children of the others, while men with large families or children preferred to loiter around in the shade, hunt, fish, etc., than render assistance -- "Such is life."

He was employed to teach the first school in the house which was the first school taught in the country. This school began with between fifty and one hundred children of all ages from six to twenty-five years, most of whom never at a school before or knew what a book was for. It continued for seven months and at the close left everyone with a good start for a simple education. During this school it was necessary for him to be armed to protect himself against some lawless characters.

A literary society was conducted during the winter and each Saturday night everybody gathered to hear discussions of some subject by champions on each side.

Mr. Wilkinson taught the first two terms of school in the old log school house, (1887 and 1888) both being very successful and satisfactory to all concerned. This was one of the most useful and interesting periods of his life.

On July 30, 1891, his 28th birthday, Mr. Wilkinson was married in the Chickasaw Nation to Jennie M. Paschall, aged 19. They drove 60 miles to the home of the preacher, C. E. Prichard for the purpose.

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