My Remembers
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Hunting Wild Animals

Mother would ask which way are you going? Don’t go off and stay till dark, and stay out of them thick woods.

This brought up the question of where I was to go hunting. They ask me had I ever been hunting in the wooded bottom west of the Shepton School and Church. I tell them no lie. I said yes. And they were furious and told me I was never never to go beyond the school hunting. I ask why and said I can all way kill some rabbit down there, referring to, as they call it, the bottom or the Jungle Bottom. Dad said that place was so thick you could get lost or tangle up in the thick brush and could not find your way out. He told me that it had wofes, black bear, bob cat and black panther and God knows what else. This was back in the thirties and the bottom was a untame jungle. They said that even deer had venture in there also.

The creek which was name White Rock Creek started far up north of us and run along Preston Road criss crossing Preston some place as far as a cupple of miles one side east or west of Preston and run down into Trinity River. In some place along White Rock Creek the wood was like a jungle and in some places still is. I remember men use to come by the little road behind the school and rock pit going down in the bottom to trap and hunt. I also remember that we were taught in school not to go down that road by one self. The teacher would take us on a field trip down that road but never over a hundred yards. Even in the brightest part of the day the further you go down that road the darker it got.

It was in the late thirties a dress up man came to our house and talk to Dad about cleaning some of the bottom out. It was some Doctor out of upstate or Dallas. Anyway Dad told him if he could get some help he would. He told Dad he would pay him for his work and the others. During the winter month whin
work was lay by on the farm Dad got Uncle Ronney and Tank and some time Mr. Hen to help. I remember very well when they first went down there they were really scared. Even the team of horses were skiddish so automatic that made Dad and them some what scared. They had never hunt that part of the bottom. It was dark and dreary during winter month and Dad and them would go carrying the dogs and guns, saws, ax, karseen, plenty of matches. First they would secure the team of horse, build a fire and began thinning out brush. There were one thing they did. There would be one of them stood guard with shot gun ready while the other two or three work. I would stand around the fire keeping it burning as they begin to inch back through the thicket cutting, trimming and stacking wood. Brought out a wagon load every day, and once a month they would hall to town the wood they got and sell it.

The Doctor came out one day and lay out a plan of what he wanted. Also brought out barb wire and gate fence post. He wanted enough land cleared to build a small barn and a fence in place to put some horses. He paid them and I my self don’t even remember seeing him again but as they clean the land they began to build the fence. And I suppose he told Dad when ther money would be there and it was. Every week or so or a month the can nailed to the fence post had some money in it. I don’t no how much but they all seem happy about it. Plus they got the wood free, kill some big swamp rabbit, squirrel, and possum.

I don’t no what happen but they laid out a few day. If I can recall they had see some thing they did not like. I think they said it was a panther, a big black long tail. They had all way seen the bob cat, and had kill one and got a bounty for it. Whin looking at a movie of the jungle and swamp that is what that place remind you of. They could have said Big Foot live down there and people would have beleave it. I do no that they had
track some prisoners up through there because they had the state police come by our house and ask and warn us about the escape prisoners. That within itself was frighten especial to Dad and them others.

Dad then clear bottom land during winter and rainy days for three or four year. They got the first cupple acres cleared and a fence around it and the Doctor brought four horses out there and stack hay outside the fence and "Horse and Mule Feed." Dad would go feed them, and sometime send me to feed them.

I all way like to go down there to feed them. I would take my gun and kill me a rabbit or two. As time roll on more and more hunter and horse back rider began to venture back down that little trail or road. It finally come to the creek and I think Dad and them was a bit suprise to see that there were a old bridge across the White Rock Creek. Also a fording place. I suppose it had been there for years but had not been use.