

## EARLY DAYS IN MEERS

*By Iva Williams Allen\**

I have been asked to tell the story of early days at Meers. I do not feel that I am capable of writing history, but I shall write some of the memories I cherish of the life I knew there; of the friends I knew and loved who have gone, some of them to the Land from which no traveler returns, others to far places, and I know them no more.

In the summer of 1901, thousands of people came into the Comanche-Kiowa-Wichita Reservation in Oklahoma Territory, seeking homes. "Uncle Sam" was giving away land, and we hoped to be among those who were fortunate in getting 160 acres each, of that free land. Of course, there was not enough land for everybody who asked for it.

Many of the strangers bought lots in the new towns of Lawton, Hobart, Anadarko and made their homes there. Of the disappointed ones, some drifted to the Wichita Mountains, lured by the tales of valuable minerals believed to be hidden in those rocks.

On August 5, 1901, George W. Horne and family camped by the big spring just north of Mt. Sheridan. The William McDaniel family were already living in a little cabin there and the spring soon became known as the McDaniel Spring, and I believe it still bears that name. These were probably the first two families in what later became Meers Mining Camp.

The historian would tell of the rapid increase in the number of people who gathered there; of the excitement of all, when one would get a promising return on a piece of ore sent to some assayer, and we did get encouraging reports from different assayers; and people worked and hoped. Moneyed men from other places came, looked around and were convinced and invested money to keep the work going. Of course, when, two or three years later, the United States Government sent a geologist, a Mr. Eain, to search out the land, and he reported "no worth-while minerals in the Wichitas," hopes were blasted and people drifted away. And yet, who knows but that the time may come when mineral, in paying quantities will be found there, and those early assayers will be justified.

The historian would tell of the Minnie Lee Mining Prospect where S. P. Iles, backed by Kansas City men, went deep into the

\* Iva Williams Allen here gives her memories of the old mining camp of Meers north of the Wichita Mountains, in Comanche County, Oklahoma. She was married to W. O. Allen in 1906. They reared their family and continued to live at Meers until 1917. Their four living children are Flora (Mrs. Floyd Stone, Meers), Margaret (Mrs. Roy W. Endley, Blythe, California), and two sons in California. Hugh Allen of Stockton and Bill Allen of Hawthorne.—Ed.

earth near Meers; how they installed machinery and continued digging for gold; he would tell how the Indian Agent and Indian Police came from Anaderke at a time when Mr. Hes was away, and announced their intention of destroying the machinery because the land belonged to an Indian, and they said no man had the right to mine there. He would tell how the miners met them, guns in hands, and told them the machinery should not be destroyed; they said there were courts where the rights of the Indians and the miners could be determined. The Agent had the good judgment to go away, leaving the machinery intact and no blood was shed. There was the Mary Jane prospect where W. O. Allen and Iowa friends, kept a crew of men digging day and night, until they too, were well down in the earth; he would tell of the deep hole where Dr. Salem Hardin's company hoped to find wealth, and many others some of them very promising.

My memories of the history of mining operations are dim. I know little of mining laws and of miners' rights. I remember much more clearly, the social life of Meers, the friends I knew, the kindnesses shown to me and the fun we had.

When Sam Remer put in a small smelter at his prospect, all the men of the camp were so excited, but I remember more clearly the incident when he sent little Sam, his son, on a burro to borrow some cyanide potassium from a neighbor. Now cyanide is a deadly poison, and, as little Sam was returning home, the cyanide in a sack hanging from the saddle horn, a shower came up. The rain washed the poison down on the donkey's shoulder, and to ease the burn, the animal gnawed it, and dropped dead. Little Sam was left by the roadside with saddle, bridle, sack of wet cyanide, and a dead donkey.

During the latter part of 1901 and into 1902, many people came into the Wichitas and camped at the foot of "Baby Sheridan" inside the Forest Reservation. The Camp continued to grow, until late in 1902 when the U. S. Government ordered them out of the Reservation. A few families had camped between Medicine Creek and Blue "Jimmie" Creek, and late in 1902 the families moved from the foot of "Baby Sheridan" and camped at that place, south of Medicine Creek, though there was no bridge there at that time. While in the Reservation, A. L. Kirk and Ed Compton had put up little stores and had sold groceries. After moving, Mr. Kirk continued to keep a store, and a post office was established there and given the name of Meers. Up to that time, we had no post office other than Mt. Scott, several miles away. Henry Thurmond's teen-aged son, Ira, carried the mail from Mt. Scott Post Office on a burro, making the trip twice a week. Mrs. Anna Kirk became the postmistress at Meers.

After my invalid mother died at Marlow, my father, J. Moore Williams, my sister, Tessie and I came to the Wichitas in May, 1902.

We pitched our tent in the area between the two creeks. My sister Mrs. G. W. Horne and family, Carl Rosson's family, the Henry Thurman's and the Garrett Thurman's families were already camped there at that time.

We had lots of rain that spring, and on one occasion, Father went to Marlow, expecting to return shortly; the rains came so strong, the creeks rose so high, he could not get back, and we could not get back, for we could not cross the creeks. We five families ran low on groceries; we borrowed from each other until we were all lacking necessary things. As soon as the creeks ran down a little, George Horne said he would go to the store. Sisters, Ida, Tessie and I had been kept inside by the rain for such a long time, we also wanted to get out. With George and Ida on the wagon seat, Tessie and I in chairs, and a tub in the wagon to bring the groceries in, we went to the store, and then to Mt. Scott for the mail. We crossed the Creeks five times that afternoon, and at each crossing the water ran into the wagon bed from two to seven inches. That was joy-riding in 1902.

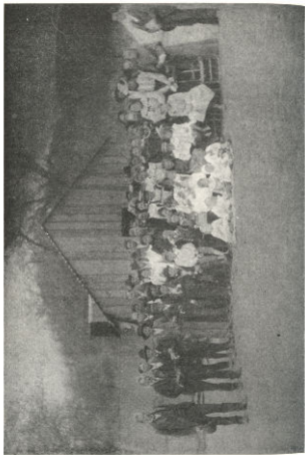
There were many wild animals in the hills at that early date, mountain lions, bears, and others. There was a scope of prairie southeast of Mt. Sheridan where now is the beautiful cedar grove, and scrub trees nearer the mountains. Often there were horses staked out on that prairie. One day a man came, driving a mare, with a young colt following. In the evening there was a commotion among the horses and several men ran out, only to see a lion carrying the colt away as a cat carries a rat. Before anyone could bring a gun, the lion disappeared into the timber toward Roosevelt Mountain.

We often saw coyotes, and once I saw a big wolf. Garrett Thurman had trapped him and then brought him home as he wanted to train his young hounds. The dogs killed him. Many people gathered to watch the fight.

The three Teague brothers went hunting one night. They found two wild kittens. When they caught the kittens they also had the mother cat on their hands, and she was not easily turned loose. The three boys brought home the three wild cats alive. Later they sold them to a saloon keeper at Lawton, and pioneers of Lawton remember seeing them in the windows of the saloon.

And there were the "Biff Bulgers." Once a gullible stranger was asking the local boys about the country, and what animals were around. They named several, and then Lynn Baker said, "And the 'Biff Bulgers.'" The stranger asked, "What is a Biff Bulger?" He had never heard of that animal! Lynn told him it was a medium-sized animal. "He has two short legs on the left side, and two long ones on the right side. Always he walks with the short legs on the higher side of the path. He has a flat tail with which he throws rocks—his only method of defense!" The people of Meers





Sabbath School at Meers, Oklahoma Territory, on Easter Sunday, 1905.  
Meeting in the home of J. Moore Williams.

had many a hearty laugh over Lynn's fabulous animal and for long afterward when anyone heard a far-fetched story, it was called "just a Biff Bulger."

July 4, 1902, we had a picnic near the foot of "Baby Sheridan." A brush arbor had been erected there and politicians were there to make patriotic speeches, and to talk on any subject that interested the people. At that time people all over the United States were becoming interested in Labor Unions, therefore the speakers spoke long and earnestly on that subject. People knew that in the cities Labor was organized but little interest had been manifested in the rural districts. Some of the speakers were quite eloquent and could hold the interest of the listeners with their oratory.

A beef, or maybe two, had been barbecued, and at noon we spread our tablecloths on the ground and put out our bread, pie, cakes, salads, and pickles and with generous helpings of the barbecue, we really feasted. After noon there was a baseball game played by the camp boys; there were races for fat men, the greased pig race, where the boy who caught and held the pig was given the animal and ran, or stumbled along toward a given goal, the winner to receive a small prize. There was a platform where there was dancing to music furnished by local fiddlers. Some of the boys rode bucking bronchos for the entertainment of those who enjoyed that form of sport.

Comanche County was so new, there were no school houses, no churches, but we felt the need of a Sunday School. So in that month of July there was another arbor built. It was about half-way between the two camps, just south of Medicine Creek, and a Sunday School was organized. G. W. Horne was elected superintendent, and Miss Maud Robins was chosen secretary. I do not remember any other officers nor who were the teachers, except that I taught the boys and girls of the early teen-age.

In August, the Comanche County Sunday School Association held their first convention and picnic at the foot of "Baby Sheridan." Comanche County was a large county that time, and Sunday School workers came from every part of it. Scores of people came in wagons and buggies bringing camping outfits prepared to stay the entire time of about three days. Mornings there was a Sunrise prayer meeting on top of "Baby Sheridan," when earnest men and women met to seek God's blessings on the activities of the day, and to enjoy the glorious sunrise. Later in the mornings was given over to picnicing and climbing mountains, fishing and hiking. Afternoons were devoted to Sunday School matters and nights we had song service and sermons. There was an organ there, and we had some good singers. We heard some inspiring sermons and learned how other people were meeting the problems that faced us in trying to carry on a Sunday School in this new land. After the last sermon

had been given, the last discussions finished on Sunday night, all the congregation formed a circle holding hands, and we sang "Bless Be the Tie that Binds." We said goodby to our new friends, some of whom are our friends yet, and we parted feeling that we had attended one of the most inspiring meetings we had ever known. We carried on our Sunday School with renewed courage and ideas, realizing that many others were meeting the same conditions that we were facing.

I believe that a Mr. Fuell, Lawton, was president of the Association and that Mr. Stubblefield was secretary. I do not remember the name of the woman who played the organ, nor the names of the preachers who spoke to us. In the summers of 1903 and 1904 the Sunday School convention was also held at that place, and were very inspiring.

Meers had a newspaper, the *Mt. Sheridan Miner*, Frank Davis, editor, that began publication in October 1903. It was a weekly, but during the Sunday School convention of 1904, Mr. Davis printed a daily edition for free distribution among the visitors. The *Daily* was discontinued after the convention was over. The *Weekly* was published for some time.

Mr. F. A. Brown, a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher from Marlow, held a series of meetings under the brush arbor that summer, and organized a church of that denomination, the first church at Meers, and the only one for some time. In October, the weather became too bad for us to continue meeting under their arbor and the Sunday School was moved into our house where we continued to meet for the next seven months.

Uncle Donnell Stockton was pastor of the newly organized church, and he preached once a month at our house. Every Sunday afternoon or night there would be singing at our place. We had many impromptu gatherings and parties there. At Christmas time we had a Christmas tree. We then had a room, that was 16 feet square and a lean-to of about 10 by 16 feet, as well as a tent. In the larger room, we had two beds, dresser, organ, sewing machine, heating stove, book case and stand table. In the smaller room we had a full size bed, a cot, a stand which was made of the stump of a tree, left standing, and the room built around it—a heating stove and a trunk. We cooked and ate in the tent, and we often had boarders and roomers. On Christmas Eve we took the beds out of the larger room and put them outside, placed the bedding in the tent. When we wanted to put the beds up after the people were gone they had been rained upon and were covered with ice. The beds were made on the floor that night.

After taking out everything in the room that we could dispose of, we put the organ in the corner and leaving barely enough room for the singers we set the tree in front of it. The rest of the room

was filled with planks laid on blocks of wood, for seats, and they were all filled. All standing space in both rooms was taken up. We had a short program and the gifts were distributed. Everybody got fruit and candy and the children some other gifts. There was no drinking, no rude conduct, nor misbehavior, and we know that even in crude, crowded quarters people can celebrate the birth of the Christ Child and can associate happily together.

At Easter time we also had a nice little program. We had a picture made that day, and we can count fifty-five men, women and children who were present at that time.

In 1902, Mrs. Brass and Mrs. McKnight came out from Lawton and organized Women's Christian Temperance Union which we carried on in regular meetings for two or three years. We also gave frequent parties that the young people of Meers might have good, clean entertainment. There were so very many boys in the camp who lived alone or shared living with other boys and they needed some place to go evenings.

The first wedding at Meers was in August, 1902. Isaac Hodge and Josie Walker were married at Carl Rosson's tent. Mrs. Rosson was a sister of the bride. Many of the campers attended the wedding and Mrs. Rosson served refreshments to the guests. Ike had a tent furnished and waiting to receive his bride. Mr. and Mrs. Hodge lived together for many years. They had four children. Ike died at some place in Texas I believe.

In 1903 or 1904, there was another wedding when Ida Keck became the bride of Tom Thurman. They were married at the home of the bride's father, Wilson Keck. Most of the people in the camp were there. That night we serenaded the newly-weds and then it turned into a "chivari" and the boys called for a treat. Tom answered that he had not prepared anything for a treat, but said he was going to Lawton the next day and would bring out something. He did bring the treat, and that night a large number of the camp boys got drunk on Tom's whiskey. That was the only time, I believe, when Meers had a "big drunk."

In the summer or fall of 1902, a school house was built in our district, but it was so far from our camp that we continued to hold the Sunday School and other meetings in our house, and in May, 1903, the camp bought a big tent and put it across the ravine from our house and Sunday School and church services were held there. We had the only organ in the camp, and after the Sunday School was moved from our house, the boys of the camp would come over on Sunday morning and, leaving the high top of the old parlor organ at home, they carried it across the ravine to help out with the music.

The new school house (Gordon school, located where Meers cemetery is now) was finished in time for school the winter of



1902-03. Mrs. Kirk was the teacher. The next year Mrs. Edwards, wife of Dr. Edwards, taught. The school house stood several years, and after it was burned a new house was built nearer to Meers. Mrs. Kirk's son, Lynn, taught the first term in the new building. That old school house is still standing but is used only as a community meeting place.

The first death at Meers occurred in June, 1903. I forget the name of the woman who died very suddenly one morning. Meers had no cemetery and after consultation, the husband and other men of the camp decided to bury her on a hill near Meers (N.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of Sec. 33, 4 N. and 13 W.). This was public building land, and belonged to the State. A request was made to the State that a small plat of that land be given to Meers for a cemetery. The request was refused, and later land was secured just east of Gordon school house, but not until another grave was made beside the first one. It was made for a tiny baby, infant of Mr. and Mrs. Thurman.

Possibly the first birth in Meers was the son of Mr. and Mrs. George L. Orr. They gave him the name of Robert. He was born in September, 1903.

We had a study club in Meers, "The Pure English Club," and we attempted to improve our language. I was named president of the group. Some of the other members were Laura Decker, later Mrs. William Partain, Lindsay, now deceased; Wallace Stockton, now of Oklahoma City; Dr. and Mrs. F. A. Starbuck, W. O. Allen. The club meant much to some of us.

After we had the big tent, we organized a Literary Society. Almost everyone in the camp, as well as many of the farmer families around there attended the Saturday night meetings, and both old and young took part in making the programs interesting. We had songs, readings, question box with answers, debates, discussions, of many topics of interest to the people of that day. We had a paper filled with interesting bits of news, and many jokes. We had many visitors from Lawton and other places, and any time a visitor came, we of the program committee would invite them to contribute to our program, explaining that as we were such strangers, we did not know who might give us something. We got pleasant responses in many instances.

The Literary Society of Cache became our friends, and we exchanged visits. We have one very unhappy memory of the Cache peoples' visit. They came one night and they brought along a cake to be eaten as they went home. They carefully concealed it in the wagon, so no dog could get at it, nor anybody else except prowlers. Well, the cake was stolen, much to our humiliation. Our people had an idea who were the guilty boys, and although they had no way of proving their convictions, they most emphatically gave those boys to understand that no such thing must ever happen again;

that the good name of Meers as an honest, law-abiding camp must, and would be, upheld. They apologized to the Cache people, and so ended the affair, but it really ended such things, too.

In 1903 and 1904, times were hard among the people of Meers, and there came to be quite a bit of pilfering in the homes. It got so we could not leave our tents but some small theft would occur. Usually groceries were taken. Finally there was a mass meeting and the men of the camp agreed that if, at any time, some thief should leave a clue they would follow it up, and would prosecute him. One night we returned to our tent to see that someone had poured flour from our can into a small square box, and had let the flour spill over, had lifted the box, leaving the print plainly on the floor. The next day, twelve or more men came, saw the imprint of the box on our floor, then followed the traces of flour that had fallen from the box, until they came to the door of a certain man's tent. A little later the man was charged with petty larceny and brought to trial. He was not convicted but that ended that trouble in the camp.

Some years later when we began to grow nice gardens along the highways in that country, people on vacation got to stealing corn, tomatoes and melons from our gardens. Again a mass meeting, and a request for a peace office in our district. Herbert Hodge<sup>1</sup> became constable, and when people knew that they were in real danger of arrest, they desisted. One night several hens were taken from our henhouse and six or eight from Mrs. Kirk's. My father, Mr. Kirk, and G. W. Horne followed them. They came on to the boys who started to run each carrying hens. George Horne was not County Judge at that time, accustomed to sitting in an office all day, but was an active young man and he came so near the boys they dropped the six hens they were carrying. He stopped and picked up the newly-killed hens. Mrs. Kirk recognized them as hers, but there were no deep freezers where she could keep them, so she, the Hornes, and our family each had two fat hens. The men then went near to the home of the boys whom George thought he had recognized, and waited. Long after midnight, those two boys came along. Accosted, the boys said they had been hunting. George told them that he could not swear that he had seen them earlier that evening but if any more chickens were stolen in the neighborhood in the near future, he would swear that he had followed two boys who were dressed as they were dressed until they had dropped the hens they carried. That ended that trouble for some time.

<sup>1</sup> The following notes are on some of the people mentioned in this recollection: Herbert Hodge and his wife, Della, moved to Norman, Oklahoma where they still reside. Mr. Hodge was elected and served as County Judge of Cleveland County. G. W. Horne moved to Lawton where he was elected County Judge of Comanche County, serving in this office until his death. Mrs. Anna Kirk has lived in Rush Springs, Oklahoma, since the death of Mr. Kirk. Mrs. Albert (Tessie) Decker lives in Tucson, Arizona, and Mr. Wallace Stockton lives in Oklahoma City.

One evening Mr. McDaniel, who lived at the foot of Mt. Sheridan, heard a cry for "Help" from the top of the Mountain. Of course the camp was near the mountain, and we knew that many people climbed it and there was always a possibility of falls, of snake bites, or other accidents. Mr. Teague and W. O. Allen climbed the mountain that night. It was dark, and the wind blew too hard to keep lanterns alight. We had no flashlights in those days, so they cached their lanterns and ascended in the darkness. They reached the top and called. No answer. They passed along the entire length of the mountain, and to "Baby Sheridan," but could find no one. The next day some of the boys from Meers visited the camp of some strangers who were vacationing in the mountains and they laughingly told of the fun they had on the mountain the preceding evening. They said they had called for help, and they wondered if anybody had gone up the mountain so late to help them. The local boys told that the people of Meers were willing to help anybody who needed their help, day or night, but that they did not appreciate having their men risk their lives by climbing the mountain in the dark to give fun for the boys. The visiting boys took the hint and left.

In the days of Camp Meers, we did not have access to a grocery store where we could buy fresh vegetables at any time during the winter as we now have, and when spring came we were so glad to get fresh, new greens, peas, beans, and other fresh vegetables. Before the gardens came on wild greens could be found along the creeks and in the woods, so we women had great times, and lots of fun on our expeditions of gathering wild greens. There were many kinds of them: dandelion, lambs quarter, poke-weed, sour dock, wild lettuce and others. Oh, yes, we knew which weeds to gather, and we and our families appreciated them, too. We also had other foods that are not used in these days. The wild pie-melon makes a good pie when other fruits are scarce. There was a tree that grew near Meers, the leaves of which made a tea that was a good substitute for green tea that we sometimes bought at the store. I have forgotten the name of the tree, and do not know it at all now. Fifty years is a long time to remember such things.

In 1904 Mrs. G. W. Horns bought a croquet set for her own family. She told the boys of the camp that if they would make a ground ready, everybody might use the set. All that year and the next the young people had croquet parties and lots of fun. Several players became almost unbeatable at the game.

I think it was 1904 or possibly 1905 when the bridge was built across Medicine Creek at Meers. Oh, how glad we were to have it! For so long we had forded the creek, and in the rainy season we often could not cross it for days at a time.

In 1905 when the terrible tornado nearly destroyed the town of Snyder, some of our people went there and helped those stricken

people in every way they could, with money and with services. Several articles that were carried by the wind from that area were dropped at Meers.

In 1908, a tornado struck Meers. Mrs. Decker's house fell, and other houses southeast of there but I do not think any lives were lost. A terrible hail storm accompanied the tornado, decidedly the worst hail storm I have ever known. The hail killed orchard trees, and even many forest trees. Gardens and all crops were beaten to the ground. Mr. Gordon had eight head of cattle killed by lightning.

I have never seen so many beautiful wild flowers any place as were blooming around Meers in 1902-04. Through the ages the flowers had bloomed in profusion unmolested by people, just as animals and reptiles had lived there, and raised their young protecting them only from other animals and reptiles their natural enemies.

I have not mentioned the other businesses that were established at Meers, but there were several stores besides the Kirk grocery. Mr. Crompton did not carry on after the camp was moved away from the Reservation, but Mr. Teague and Mr. Bryan kept groceries. Mr. Frank Davis and Dr. Starbuck had a drug store. Mr. Tom Goss and his sister, Miss Tennie, later had a stock of groceries in the building that had housed the drug store. There was a cafe, although we usually called all eating houses "restaurants," as the word "cafe" had not yet come into general usage. There was a confectionary where we could get ice cream and cold drinks.

One night four angry bulls met in the large camp for cattle were running free all through the country at that time. The bulls bellowed and pawed until almost everybody was out watching, lest the angry animals fighting would wreck the place and injure people. John Liverett finally came out of his tent armed with his six-shooter, and after a few shots into the air and considerable yelling, drove the animals away. We could still hear them for sometime, bellowing as they went off to the east.

There were few bridges in Comanche County, even up to 1907, and the mountain roads were rough. Although we had become accustomed to seeing automobiles on the streets of Lawton, it was in the summer of that year that we first saw a car out in our own community. And even then, these first courageous motorists who dared attempt that trip out into the wilds, usually had more or less trouble. Sometimes the water was deeper in the creeks than they had thought, or they had failed to take along extra gasoline, and there was no place where gasoline could be bought, except from some man who might happen to have a few gallons for his own use. One evening three men came to our door asking for gasoline. We had a little but it had been used for some cleaning purposes.

It looked clear and, as it was their only chance, they put it into their car. For three hours they sat by our lamp "cleaning and fixing" things. About midnight they did drive it away, but I later heard they called some Lawton man to take them into town about daylight.

I think it was in 1909 or a little later, that a telephone line was run out to Meers. It was a party line, and we could talk to most of our neighbors without bothering "Central." Miss Maud Robins was telephone girl at a way station at Dr. Hardin's house. I believe the line came out from Cgche.

The Kiowa Indians were living around Meers, and the Comanches were not too far away. It was only 20 or 25 years since these Indians had surrendered and were at peace with the United States Government. Many then living had been on the warpath and on horse stealing raids. Quannah Parker, Hunting Horse, I-See-O, generally known as Tab-Bone-Mah or Tarbone, and others were living, and were interested in whatever affected the lives of their people.

Geronimo and his Apaches had been at Fort Sill only about seven years. They were prisoners of war and they lived at Apache village a short distance northwest of the Fort. They were not given freedom until after Geronimo's death in 1909.

The first Kiowa Indian that was ordained to preach in the Methodist church preached at the Mt. Scott Mission, and we sometimes attended the services there. He preached in the Kiowa language and a young Indian interpreted his sermon, so we could follow it. There was a Baptist Mission at Saddle Mountain, but I do not remember that I ever went there. Few Indians of the region had learned the English language well enough to carry on a conversation, and they had not yet become adapted to white people's ways, so we had little in common with them.

I happened to be at Rainy Mountain at the time a white man accidentally shot and killed Poor Bear's wife. There had been some misunderstanding and discontent on the part of the Kiowas before the accidental killing of the Indian woman. Poor Bear's daughter had married a young Kiowa in tribal ceremonies, and the U. S. Government would not recognize the validity of the marriage, causing resentment among the tribe.

Another time, the Indians had gathered at Rainy Mountain at the appointed hour to receive their government issues, but for some reason there was a delay of several days. The Indians, out of money and low on supplies, had to purchase their meager supplies from Mr. Bok, the licensed Indian trader at Rainy Mountain. The Indians claimed they were compelled to pay much more for their food and goods from Bok, than at Hobart, Carnegie, or other surrounding towns. Trading at the store was done on the "Red Card" system, whereby an Indian might purchase articles without cash but the

amount of the purchases were marked on his "Red Card" and he must pay off such obligations before receiving his annuity payment. Many times the amount of money due on the "Red Card" was almost as great as the amount due the Indian.

Anyway, it was unfortunate that the victim of the accidental shooting, should be the wife of an Indian already embroiled in a disagreement with the whites. It was stated that the accident happened when a man was removing his gun from his wagon, and it discharged, the bullet going through a tent, and killing Poor Bear's wife. The incident provoked a great deal of excitement, and dire threats were made by the Indians against the whites, but sayer heads prevailed, and no blood was shed. After a few hours, quiet reigned, and white people no longer feared.

Meers was a prospecting camp, and mining towns are always supposed to be places of drinking, carousing, and wild parties, but I do not believe that anyone can truthfully say that Meers was in that class during the years of her greatest activity and interest in mining, 1901-1905. There were men there who drank but they seldom drank to excess or staged a wild party at Meers.

Through all the months when my father's house was a public meeting house, everyone showed the most respectful attitude. We enjoyed their company and they seemed to enjoy our hospitality. Everyone was made welcome and the most of the people of Meers did, at some time, come to the services or to the parties. At the Sunday services and at the Literary Society as well as at other meetings the behavior was good.

Meers was a camp of common folks. Some had education, some could barely write their own name. Some were fine characters such as can be found at any place; some were men and women of lower standards but on the whole I think Meers was a respectable place, and we who lived there can be proud to remember its friendly spirit.