

Letters from Brazos County – 1896-1899

Compiled by Bill Page

Dear Aunt and Cousins: Here I come again to spend a little while with you this evening. I have just got home from school and I have not long to stay. I am going to a private school this year. Aunt Sallie, there was a big show on the 30th of last month. Mamma and I went and the acting was pretty good. Aunt Sallie, I have three pets. I have a squirrel, a cat and a horse; and my squirrel is the playfulest thing you ever saw. We have moved back to Bryan to stay this winter in order for Papa to attend to his business. I guess we will go back to San Antonio next summer, because San Antonio is a delightful place to live. I have a few questions to ask: Can you tell me what become of John the revelator? We know that John the Baptist was beheaded. If you can, tell me the chapter and verse. Where did the Negro start from? The Bible says, when the flood came there were only eight souls saved. Has the sealed book ever been restored to the earth yet? I have asked smart Bible readers these questions, but they have not answered them. I would like to hear some one answer and explain them. I read my Bible a great deal. I read a chapter every morning. I can't find the answers to these questions. I am going to start to Sunday School next Sunday. I delight in going to Sunday School and to preaching also. George Franklin

[I am sorry that I am not able to answer your questions, George. The two first I have heard discussed, but never satisfactorily answered. You will have to seek the answers from some one wiser than I. San Antonio, I should think, would be a most delightful city to live in. – Aunt Sallie.] **Texas Farm and Ranch**, 4 January 1896, pages 16-17

Lucile Wyse, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: I have been reading some of the cousins' letters and like them very much. I go to school and study the third reader, geography, arithmetic and spelling. I like to go to school. I have so much fun playing, "Fox" in the morning. I am sick so much I have to miss a great deal of time from school. I am just getting over a spell of sickness now. School closes Friday for the Christmas holidays. I had a Christmas speech: "Santa Claus on the Train." I have six dolls and like to play with them very much. My father has been a subscriber for *The News* for about fourteen years. Irene Keeling and I go out hunting pretty rocks every now and then. I am 9 years old. **Dallas Morning News**, 5 January 1896, page 14

Adelia Tabor, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex. – Mr. Big Hat: Am I writing too soon? I hope not. I am glad you and Cousin Ludie liked my first letter and hope you will like this as well, if not better. I think all of the cousins write such nice letters. Since I wrote last Grandma Wilkinson has "gone home to rest." She died Nov. 21 at the age of 75 years and 11 days. She was the best Christian woman I ever saw and was perfectly willing to die. We miss her very much and will do all we can to keep grandpa from missing her any more than possible. One of the cousins asked how many of us could piece quilts. I am piecing a silk one now. I have enough pieces to make it, but if any of the cousins want to help me with it they can send me colors of silk thread to work it with. I would be very much obliged to them. Cousin Mary H-----, you are 12 years old. If I knew what day was your birthday I could tell what day you were 4345 days old or vice versa. Adam and Eve died but were not born and Elijah was born, but never died. Who was the other person, Norman? I will ask a few questions: How did Elijah go to heaven? Who saw him, and what happened to that person? **Dallas Morning News**, 5 January 1896, page 14

Henrie Wilson, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex. – Little Mr. Big Hat and cousins: Is there room in the Cozy Corner for another little girl? I have had a merry Christmas and I wish all of you a happy New Year. I am in the sixth grade at school. My best friend is Mamie Parks. I like to read the letters the cousins write. We are having two weeks holiday. I think it is so nice in you to give us a whole page for the cousins' letters.

Dallas Morning News, 12 January 1896, page 14

Lucy Wilson, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: Here comes another little girl asking admittance to your Cozy Corner. I am 10 years old, and in the fourth grade. I study language, arithmetic, geography, spelling, reading and history. I have two brothers and one sister. I like to read the page for "Little Men and Women." We did not have a Christmas tree this year, but we had a party for our church. My best friend lives next door to me. Her name is Jessie Garth.

Dallas Morning News, 12 January 1896, page 14

Louis D. Mike, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: I am a new cousin and I don't suppose Mr. Big Hat likes them as well as he does the older ones, but I will try and do my best. I am a little boy and study in the second grade. I am going to try very hard to pass. I have a little pony, his name is Round Rock and he is so pretty. I dearly love him. I passed a merry Christmas and a happy New Year. My mother and I went to Waco to see her sisters and father came after us. I got a violin for a present and I commenced to take lessons on it to-day. My father has been taking *The News* for fifteen years and says he would not be without it for anything. We have lots of game roosters and papa is going to have a fight soon. I do love to see them fight. I am the only child, but I am not a very bad boy. I send 5 cents for the memorial stone of Gen. Sam. Houston.

Dallas Morning News, 2 February 1896, page 14

Rosa Johnson, Macy, Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: It has been some time since I wrote. When I wrote last I was at Madisonville. I am at Macy now, going to school. I am well pleased with my teacher. I am getting along very well with my studies. They are history, grammar, geography, arithmetic and dictionary. Santa Claus came very near not finding us. He thought that we were still at Madisonville and went there first, and some one told him that we had moved to Macy. It took him some time to get here then, as the road was very bad. Inclosed please find \$1 for the Sam Houston Memorial Stone fund. I will send you more soon. I hope the cousins will not become discouraged in collecting for the memorial stone. **Dallas Morning News**, 9 February 1896, page 14

From an adult:

To The News:

It has come to my knowledge that an imposter claiming to be my son has in several instances sought loans of money from my friends in different parts of the state. He is described as a heavy-set young man of fair complexion, about 20 years of age. In some places he represented himself as Frank, and in others as Lawrence Ross. I request the publication of this notice for the protection of friends, and in justice to the good name of my sons.

L.S. Ross.

College Station, Tex., Feb. 10, 1896. **Dallas Morning News**, 13 February 1896, page 5

Nellie Grey Tabor, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: I am very glad

that the cousins are writing to the Cozy Corner again. School is nearly out, and I am not sorry. I wish some of the cousins would correspond with me. I have been wondering what Peggy was, and am very glad that I know now. I can answer Cousins Fernandy H. Pfeffer's question. It is two pigs. It is raining, and has been raining all the afternoon. I wish that all of the cousins would write their name on a slip of paper and send it to me. **Dallas Morning News**, 31 May 1896, page 14

Nonie Adams, Bryan, Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and Cousins: I am so interested in the children's page that I thought I would write, too. I am a little girl 10 years old, and I would like to join your happy circle. I have a nice playhouse in the back yard, under a large apple tree, and a nice bermuda patch in front of it. I have so many dolls and doll boys. I have a beautiful little colt named Trilby. Trusting all my new kin people will like me, I send much love to you and all my cousins. **Dallas Morning News**, 28 June 1896, page 14

Nellie Tabor, Bryan, Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: Here I am again, knocking at the door. It has been some time since I wrote to the Cozy Corner. It has been very dry here. School begins in September. I just got back Wednesday from San Marcos and other points. Mr. Big Hat, have you had any peaches? I have had a few. I wish you and all the cousins could help me gather grapes. **Dallas Morning News**, 9 August 1896, page 14

From an adult:

Bryan, Tex., Sept. 2 – To The News: David Crockett has as one of his mottoes "Nobody's Fido." This was at a period when Old Hickory was worshipped as an idol. Crockett had the independence to oppose a pet measure of Jackson's that Crockett regarded as infamous. It beat him for Congress, but he won the approval of his conscience and expressed no regrets. Crockett said he didn't wear the collar with this brand:

My Dog.
Andrew Jackson.

Crockett was the highest type of individualism and the exponent of the dignity of citizenship. His patriotism is memorialized on the musty walls of the Alamo. "He was a mighty poor scholar, but did his own thinking." "As a man thinketh so is he." Independent thinking means often to be isolated, to be misjudged, to be boycotted. We advocate independence and individualism, and then turn and rend the person that dares to practice it. Independent thought is one of the most hopeful symptoms of this day. In the ratio of the capacity of the masses to think soberly and intelligently will be their capacity for self-government. The substratum of good character is honest purpose and pure motive. These rise the highest in action in the life of the educated, thoughtful man, evolving a Gladstone. It is but an evident fact to declare that comparatively few do the thinking for the great masses. Then it is important for the masses that their leaders have honest purpose and pure motives, backed by experience and competent to grapple with the problem of political economy. It was one thing for Alexander the Great to conquer the world, but quite another to hold the conquered nations in hand and utilize what had cost the blood of thousands to win. All his conquests were dissipated like the frost before the sun. Cromwell could sweep the English monarch from his throne and lead an abused and justly enraged yeomanry to overturn the empire, but it soon regained its seat and

pursued the even tenor of its way. Cromwell had an outraged and a misgoverned people at his back and a just cause. There is no parallel in his case and the present crisis in this country, for the latter can not make good a similar grievance. The iconoclast is rarely ever a builder. The destructionist is seldom ever a constructionist. This country is threatened with two deadly isms – Bryanism and McKinleyism. The condition is a Scylla and a Charybdis. The conservative patriot will have to steer carefully to pass between the two, or, to change the figure, these two leaders may be likened to two mogul engines heading for the white house and colliding on the main track. It is a dangerous thing to ride in either train. Both of these leaders are extremists and one-idead. If thought could rise above passion, prejudice and partyism, both of these men would be relegated to private life. Geo. E. Clothier. **Dallas Morning News**, 7 September 1896, page 6

Dear Aunt Sallie and Cousins: If you will allow me to call you so, as I am a newcomer. Aunt Sallie, that piece of slang expressed my sentiments exactly. I don't think it is either nice or becoming in boys, and especially in girls, to do such. It is not only degrading, but it corrupts the mind, and some times comes to worse than either of these. And these little by-words that you use are nothing more than slang and it is nothing more than a habit, which we all should try to break. Talking about reading books, I think it is the most profitable way we can spend our time and helps us get an education. I don't mean 25-cent novels; they will ruin one's mind quicker than anything. If we persist in reading them we will get so after a time that we cannot read anything else. Read standard authors, such as Dickens, Scott, and other writers of fiction. I have read a great many books, but not as many as I should have read. Auntie, as this is my first and I hope to see it in print, I will close, with best wishes to the League. I remain most respectfully. Little Jerry, Bryan, Texas

[Little Jerry, I am sorry your first letter has been so long unpublished. I do not remember the slang to which you refer, but the use of slang, while so common, almost universal, is a very senseless and inelegant practice, which I wish our young people would cease to indulge in. Your letter is quite a good one. Come again. – Aunt Sallie.]

Texas Farm and Ranch, 19 September 1896, page 16

Dear Aunt Sallie and Cousins: Will you allow us the pleasure of chatting with you and the cousins a few minutes? Papa takes *Texas Farm and Ranch*, and likes it very much. He has been a subscriber for a long time. We read the Cousins' League every time it comes, and like it splendidly. The question has often been asked: Which causes the most misery, whisky or war? I believe whiskey does, but Clarence Webb says war does. I don't know, though, one is about as bad as the other. I think if the boys and girls would quit disagreeing, the League would be much pleasanter; because we are saying this don't think we are giving too much advice, but I think Aunt Sallie would enjoy the letters more. We should try to be more peaceful, as Aunt Sallie is so good to take an interest in us. Well, as this is our first attempt, we must not stay too long. Tom Sawyer, come again; your adventures are very interesting. We will correspond with Bertha Parker, if she will write first. Success to Aunt Sallie and cousins. Your new friends – Mamie and Kitsey Sims, Bryan, Tex.

[Glad to have you, Mamie and Kitsey; it is pleasant to have two sweet young girls call together. The "tempest in a tea post" has cooled down now, and I think hereafter we will have peace. Come again. – Aunt Sallie.] **Texas Farm and Ranch**, 10 October 1896, page 16

Mary Hester, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex. – Dear cousins: I have been thinking about writing to the Cozy Corner for some time, and, as my friend, Laura Presnal, is writing, I thought I would try, too. Our school begins next Monday. I will be so glad. I like very much to go to school. Protracted meeting begins here to-night. I hope the white rose will win in the flower contest, as it is my favorite. My age is 14 years.

Dallas Morning News, 1 November 1896, page 14

Laura Presnal, Bryan, Brazos Co., Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: There are four of us girls around here about the same age, and we have a nice time. We had a little party at Mr. Hester's about two weeks ago. I have three brothers and two sisters. My oldest sister lives with my grandpapa. I will be glad when school begins. It will open Sept. 21. We have a large school, and we have lots of fun. I am 11 years old.

Dallas Morning News, 1 November 1896, page 14

From an adult:

Bryan, Tex., Nov. 17 – Hon. J.M. McCormick, Dallas, Tex.: Dear Sir: I see in the public press that the friends of Hon. John Grant will urge his name for a place in President McKinley's cabinet, and that a meeting may be held in Dallas on the 19th instant to formulate plans to that end. I will not be able to be there, but please enroll me as one heartily in favor of the movement and ready to do all in my power to make it a success. Very respectfully, A.C. Colwell. **Dallas Morning News**, 20 November 1896, page 8

Pearl Drew, Edge, Brazos Co., Tex. – Little Miss Big Bonnet, Mr. Big Hat and cousins: This is my first attempt to write to your department. I have been going to school, but did not go to-day, because I had to help pick some cotton. My teacher is my cousin (a young man). I like to go to school. I am 10 years old. I am in Texas history. If Peggy does not get this, I will write again, and if he does, I will, any way. I have four brothers and one sister. Have any of the cousins seen or heard of a boy about 15 years old, named Ralf Drew? If so, please let me know, because he is my brother, and I do want to hear from him so bad. He left home last March, and we have not seen him since. My father takes *The News*, and has ever since I can remember. I am glad Ludie Sanders and Herbert Taylor have described themselves. I was tired of hearing the cousins try it. I will not try to write a long letter, because it is my first attempt. I have been going to school ever since I was 5 years old. **Dallas Morning News**, 3 January 1897, page 14

Agnes Higginbotham, Bryan, Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: We have just commenced taking *The News*, so I thought I would try my success with Peggy. I noticed where a boy wrote a composition on girls and their ways. Well, first a boy will grumble about getting stovewood, and then when his sister wishes him to accompany her to visit a friend or neighbor he hums and haws around until it is too late to go. And she will give him plenty of time to get ready too. It is because he is too contrary and wants to have his own way until the very last moment. I don't think it is because he doesn't wish to go, only he wants to aggravate his sister. A boy will grumble about the girls wanting to look neat and nice, and they call that primping. Boys themselves can go and stand before the glass for hours at a time and say they are only dressing. Another thing a boy hates to do it is to open and shut gates. They love to drive a skittish horse, not so much to show off, but so they will get out of opening gates, for of course then some one must open the gate while they hold the horse. All a boy things of is to play marbles, spin tops, hunt and fish. Few boys know how to

behave, for when they go to any kind of gathering, they won't go in and try to be gentlemen. They will stand outside of the door or window and peep behind the curtains and giggle and look at us girls as if we were wild animals – very dangerous things! – and when they go to a dance one won't go and get a partner because the other one won't.

Dallas Morning News, 21 March 1897, page 14

Hosia Clarence Horton, Kurten, Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and cousins: My age is 11. I have been reading *The News* and the cousins' letters for some time, and think them very nice. But never could get up courage enough to write before, and I hope that the cousins will be glad to receive me as a member. My father and brother are sick. I have two brothers and two sisters living. My mother is dead. Papa is married again. Crops are good here, especially corn. I haven't read a book in my life, although I like to read the corner.

Dallas Morning News, 29 August 1897, page 14

Maude Trant, Bryan, Tex. – Mr. Big Hat and Miss Big Bonnet: It has been quite awhile since I have written to your department, so this beautiful morning I will drop in and chat awhile with the cousins. Nothing affords me more pleasure than reading the letters from the cousins. Some of the cousins are opposed to dancing, but I for one am not. I think it a nice amusement for young people. Well, cousins, I will tell you about a trip I took some two months ago. First I went to Martin's Prairie and spent a few days. I went from there to a singing convention at Lake Grove. Oh, I just had a delightful time. When it was over I went home with my cousin Little Pope and spent three weeks with her. While there she gave me a watermelon party. I think you boys are too hard on us girls. You will all go to parties and stay till 4 o'clock and come home and leave your collars and cuffs and coats on the floor by the stairs for your poor mother or sisters to come the next morning and pick up. And if we don't see the laundry wagon pass you will quarrel because your laundry didn't get out. And when we go to dress for a party you will say it takes us two hours to dress and you spend the time quarreling because the ... brush it wet and primping and shining your shoes. If we are not ready by the time you are you will quarrel at us all the way, and many a time we girls don't get to go on account of our brothers saying they don't want to be around with us. They want to take some other girl and can't take their sisters. Girls have a hard time on account of the boys. I will ask some questions: Where was the first public school opened in Texas? Who was it that cut a tooth on his 100th birthday?

Dallas Morning News, 26 September 1897, page 14

May Lorraine, Bryan, Tex. – Dear cousins, it has been some time since I last wrote to you, so with your kind permission I will write again. What has become of Bob? I always enjoy his letters so much, Bob, write again soon. Cousins, you have an idea how I enjoy the Corner, because I know you enjoy it also. I think it is so nice of *The News* to give us a part of the paper. I am writing on Thanksgiving Day, and think of it – it is just one month from to-day till Christmas. Two of our most popular holidays in a month of each other! I guess we should be thankful that they do not come any closer together. The Bible tells us to “give thanks unto the Lord” – for various things, and I think we should not only thank him on this special day, but on all days. **Dallas Morning News**, 19 December 1897, page 14

Bryan, Texas – Dear Happyhammers: Keep on hammering, so I can slip in. I am a new Hap, but I thought maybe if I could get in I might be able to stay. This is the first time I ever saw the Boys' and Girls' page in *The Post*, as papa has been taking another paper. Sunday when I was reading *The Post* I said: "I don't like this because it hasn't any children's page." After a while I found it, and now I am glad when Sunday comes for that reason. I am sorry to hear of the death of Guy Fagen, too. Thomas Taylor, are you any kin to Herbert Taylor? Herbert is one of the best writers I know. Our school was out the 20th of May and will begin in September. I wish it would make haste and begin. Well Haps, as this is my first letter, I will close, hoping you will let another true Hap in. Your friend, Nellie Tabor. **Houston Post**, 3 July 1898, page 20

From an adult:

Bryan, Texas – Dear Happyhammers: I enjoy reading your letters very much, although I am an old lady. I would be glad if any of you could give me the address of Granville or Tole Wheat, or Henry Haldine or Andrew Haldine. I am anxious to find either of them. Mrs. Maria Rowan. **Houston Post**, 24 July 1898, page 21

Bryan, Texas – Dear Happyhammers: Here comes another little girl who would like to be numbered among your large crowd of young folks. I think Mr. Hap must be very mild tempered to be able to stand so many children. Mamma says sometimes that it puts her through to stand us four. I think the children's page makes *The Post* more interesting, especially to the young. My aunt says she thinks it is so nice for the children to try to help each other by giving things to the little orphans and cripples. She reads all of the letters to her two little girls and says she wants them to be Happyhammers when they are older. One of my cousins, living Bryan, died very suddenly the other day. She had only been sick a few days. I was shocked when I saw the account of Guy's death in *The Post*. I had long ago learned to watch for his nice letters, which were always such a delight to us all. I suppose he had no brother, as I see several of the Haps speak of his mother and sisters. I can fully sympathize with his relatives in their sad affliction, as I, too, have lost my only brother. He would have been 17 now if he had lived. I never attend a funeral nor hear of a death without thinking of him. I hope we will be able to raise a nice monument over Guy's grave. I have a nice time in the summer. I live on a large farm, about nine or ten miles from Bryan, and our house is built in a little pasture, containing three or four acres, on a high hill, which is not far from a thick woodland which lies to the north. To the west we can see prairies and high hills for miles around. In the little pasture around our house are fifteen of the largest red oak trees I ever saw, and nearly every spring the pasture is full of pretty wild flowers. We sometimes have a picnic and invite our little friends out to play with us and we have our summer out under the trees. I wish some of the Haps would come and spend the summer with me. We would have lots of fun. Your little friend, Winnie May Lewis. **Houston Post**, 24 July 1898, page 21

Dear Aunt Sallie and Cousins: Tap, tap; O, here comes Aunt Sallie! We are so glad, as it is so sunny out here. We come this morning to say a good word for the boys. Girls, don't be so hard on the boys; they are just as good as the girls. Get up boys, don't let the girls get ahead of you. I (Alice) would like to exchange the songs "The Dying Californian," "Lost After All," "The Heroes of Texas," for "My Old Kentucky Home," "Kitty Wells," "Sunshine in Paradise Alley," and "Leaflets." I (Anna) want the songs, "The Bonny Blue Flag," "Save My Mother's Picture from the Sale," and "Home, Sweet Home." I will send in exchange, "You Can't Play Mothers with Me," "Little Brown

Jug,” and the “Homespun Dress.” We will close by asking a riddle:

As round as a dollar,
Useful as can be.
It has four eyes,
And cannot see.

Who can guess this riddle? We will say good-bye.

Anna Cooke and Alice Manning,
Wellborn, Texas.

[Glad to have you girls, I hope the boys will show their appreciation of your kindness, in coming back to the League. They surely must be gallant and chivalrous boys in our band, if so they will come trooping to your call. – Aunt Sallie.]

Texas Farm and Ranch, 1 October 1898, page 13

Dear Aunt Sallie and Cousins: I am a stranger to you all, but it seems like I know the Cousins. We take *Texas Farm and Ranch*, and every time it comes I look for the League. I was eleven years old the 2nd of July, and am in the fifth grade. I went away this summer, and so did my sister, but we got back in time to go to school. We have been taking *Texas Farm and Ranch* for three years and I feel like I should write to you and the Cousins. I will bid you goodby. With kind regards and best wishes to all, I am your loving niece and cousin. Bertha Horetzky, Bryan, Texas.

Texas Farm and Ranch, 12 November 1898, page 13

College Station, Texas – Dear Happyhammers: Will you let me in? If you will I will promise to do better next time. The Haps have heard of air castles. Well, I built one once. It was a large castle and floated so nicely in the air, and oh, what a nice time I had. I could look down on everything. I was so far above everybody that they looked very small. I started at a certain point in North America and sailed westward. When I reach the Pacific Ocean the broad expanse of water was a most beautiful sight. I never thought of danger until an awful storm came, and I began to get a little frightened. It grew worse and worse. My castle began to rock, and I thought sure I was gone. I was going down so fast it seemed the ocean was coming to meet me. But before I hit the water the storm ceased and I at last was as high as ever and felt quite safe. But I thought how nice it would be to go to the sun. As I could make my castle go any way I wished I started upward. I kept going up and the climate began to get a little warm. I sat down and began fanning myself, but it was not long before it was rather hot. I went to a window to see how near I was to the sun and when I looked out the top of my castle was on fire. My castle was so large that the top was much closer to the sun than I. So now what was I to do? But the best thing I thought to do was to get away from the sun. I thought it would be a good idea to go down and turn my castle bottom upward in the ocean. While I was studying what to do a rain storm came and put the fire out. So now I felt safe again and went on, but somewhat lower. Next I thought I would go to the Philippines, but when I got there they were not as large as my castle, and so I did not fool any time away with them, as I wanted to make my trip around the world as soon as possible. Well, I went on but went around the Indian Ocean, as it is so noted for its hurricanes, for I did not think my castle would stand another one. I crossed over Asia and Europe, and at last reached the Atlantic. I dreaded to start across it, but as I was compelled to I started and when I reached North America I was so high that I could hardly recognize that the people were of the same race as I, but a terrible cyclone came and that was the last of my air castle. It came tumbling down and I found I was no more than anybody else. I found myself at

home and was the same girl of 15 and was rather glad I was only building air castles instead of being so far above my people when they were the same as I, if my castle was so large. I think it is much better to sail low instead of high, no matter how large your castle is. Well, I will close with love to the Haps, Carrie Carson.

Houston Post, 12 February 1899, page 25

From an adult:

Questions and answers ...

What is this?

The specimen is a ball of hair which is sometimes found in cattle. When cattle are shedding their winter hair, frequently they lick themselves and swallow hair. This accumulates in balls found in the stomach. Frequently the balls pass out of the stomach and do no harm. R.H. Price, College Station, Tex. **Dallas Morning News**, 12 February 1899, page 16

Dear Aunt Sallie: Here I come again. I have written once before with my cousins, of Chapelhill, Texas, and I saw our letter in print. Aunt Sallie, I am a "Christian Science" girl. I have not taken any medicine for nearly seven years, and I have a little sister three years old who has never taken a drop of medicine in her life. My mother was sick for nine years and she took Science treatment and now she is in perfect health, and we are trying to live this beautiful religion that teaches us how we can live up to the "Golden Rule." It also heals sickness and sin; it teaches us how to overcome envy, malice and selfishness. Alice M., why do you not answer my letter? W.E.R., I will send you the "Homespun Dress." My aunt took the book home with her that the song was in. I am twelve years old. With love to Aunt Sallie and Cousins, Anna Hope Cooke, Wellborn, Texas. **Texas Farm and Ranch**, 25 February 1899, page 17

Annie Gerke, Kurten, Tex. – Dear Cornerites: I enjoy reading your many nice letters and would like to come in, but there is Peggie and Piggie at the gate. They seem to be having a fight about a letter, which don't seem right. Then Peggie pulled the stamp off and Piggie licked the gum. Big Hat came a-running to see what was going on, and Big Hat argued with Peggie and Piggie, but they said they never did it, but Big Hat knew better and ran off with my letter and read it to Big Bonnet. I am 12 years old and live on a farm. I have quit going to school, for the schoolhouse won't hold out. I make myself busy at home. I planted a lot of strawberry plants for the Cornerites to help me gather berries.

Dallas Morning News, 12 March 1899, page 20

Pearl Drew, Edge, Tex. – Mr. Big Hat: I have written but once before and that was many years ago. I like to read and have read a good many nice books. One of the cousins said she had read "Thelma" and thought it very nice. I have read it also and agree with her. I have read "The Scottish Chiefs" and think it a nice book for any one to read. I think the cousins' pictures lovely and think it a nice idea to have them in the paper. I don't agree with the cousins on appointing a poet and poetess, because I want them all to have a chance, not that I want to write myself, but for the others' benefit. I like to go to school, but have had to stop now on account of the measles. Mr. Big Hat, you must be kind to Miss Big Bonnet and let her come often. I like her very much and she "draws well." What has become of Trixie Inlowe? (I expect she wants another cigarette.) Cousins, I am so glad that we have so many teachers in our corner.

Dallas Morning News, 26 March 1899, page 20

Roy L. Powell, Kurten, Tex. – Mr. Big Hat: Here comes another 15-year-old country boy to join your happy band. I haven't been reading the cousins' letters but a short while. I have two sisters and four brothers. I haven't been to school any this year. As the cousins are writing on the slang subject I will write what I think. I think it is mighty bad to use slang. I use neither tobacco, slang nor whisky. Eva S., I like to read your letters very much. Do any of you cousins like to ride wild mules? I sure like it. How many of you boy cousins help your sister cook and milk? I help my sister cook breakfast and milk every morning. Well, Egbert Huckaby, I haven't anything to say about the girls curling their hair; it is their business; it isn't ours. Miss Minnie Rogers, I think your picture is very pretty. I would like to correspond with you. Joe Farmer, Joe Dawson, Edmund Taylor, Minnie R., Hugh T. Conway, come again.

Galveston Daily News, 7 May 1899, page 20

Wellborn, Texas – Dear Happyhammers: I live in Brazos County near the banks of the Brazos River. The nearest town of any size is Bryan. The Agricultural and Mechanical College is just six miles from where I live. My father is a cattleman and we live on a ranch. I am 11 years old and have three brothers and two sisters. I am next to the oldest. Papa lets us milk the cows in the afternoon. One of my little calves is called Blossum and my little brother, who is 4 years old, says that Blossum belongs to him. We have a little puppy and we named him Synder. We play with him all the time, but my little brother is afraid of him; when the puppy tries to play brother runs in the house and won't go out until some of us go with him. My mother has been dead for a year and one month. Papa has a lady and her daughter keeping house for him; we like them very much; they have been with us for ten months. My papa takes the *Daily Post* and I take a great interest in reading the Happyhammer letters. Paul H. Douglass, I have the songs you wish and will be glad to trade with you. A new "Hap," Annie Bell Farquhar.

Houston Post, 14 May 1899, page 27

From an adult:

Bryan, Tex., July 14 – (To The News) – I have this day received postoffice money order on postmaster of Ferris, amounting to \$28.05, to be given to the flood sufferers. The amount is very highly appreciated by our people in distress, and will be judiciously and carefully placed among those most needy. As their representative, I thank the people of Ferris very much. Cliff A. Adams, Mayor of Bryan. **Dallas Morning News**, 17 July 1899, page 2

From an adult:

Editor Post: I ask your space to publicly express disapproval of the sentiment put forth by one of our weekly papers, of date July 15th instant, which declared in effect that the recent Texas flood was a visitation of divine punishment for recent Negro lynchings there. The paper in question, like the address of the Afro-American Council to the Southern officials, reckons and proceeds in ignorance of the facts, thereby doing both our white and colored citizens great injustice. If this flood is providential punishment the Negroes must have been the greatest sinners, for they are punished much more; at least the greater part of 50,000 must be fed till late up in 1900, as there is no possibility of raising a crop of corn or cotton this late in the year, and there are too many of them to be carried away to other sections to share employments there. The writer lived in this flooded district many years – taught school, farmed, built cabins, schoolhouses, and

churches, and shared in other pursuits there and speaks from experience. Another serious danger is the fearful amount of disease that will result from the decomposition of the vast quantity of vegetation and animals by the thousands. This will fall most heavily upon the Negroes who have their homes there, and who are already returning there as the waters recede. The suggestion that the refuse be burned is not of much moment when one learns of the thousands of lakes and bayous that will hold the bulk of the decaying refuse many months to come.

It is also proper here to say that no people in the South get along better than the people in the bottoms. The white people and colored have learned to depend upon each other so that the latter will never quit the river bottoms and rented lands till death takes them out, nor will the white landlords supplant them with other races.

If the white people who lost heavily by this flood are punished for lynching the very ones are punished who do not lynch. I lived in these bottoms, and the Negroes are well-behaved, and the land-owners I often thought, defended them too much for their real good. Besides, it is next to impossible to lynch a Negro in these bottoms unless the Negroes wanted him lynched. The Negroes themselves lynched six of their own number in these bottoms at one time.

Another thought: The Afro-Americans' address listed Texas as one of the States appealed to do something to stop lynching, in ignorance of the fact that two years ago our Legislature passed a law, very stringent in its character, to suppress lynching, besides having had two Governors as determined as humanity gets to be with one such Governor now with the majority of the whole people backing him, who is determined to make it dangerous for any man or set of men to take the law into their own hands. Dozens of Negroes have been duly tried and convicted and executed for serious murders and outrages during the last eighteen months; and not in a single instance was a change of venue necessary. All Southern Negroes are not angels.

The Negro race of Texas is not held responsible for the crimes of a few, nor do we hold the whole citizenship of the State responsible for occasional violence to Negroes. Our plans are bringing results, and it is the writer's wish, who knows of so many special acts of friendship moving from whites to blacks in our State to publicly give credit where credit is due. In closing, let me say that the white people of Texas will share the last mouthful with the needy Negro.

J.N. Johnson, M.D.
Brazos County, Tex.

Washington Post, 20 July 1899, page 5

Santa's Letter Box ... College Station, Tex., Dec. 18 – My Dear Santa Claus: I am in College Station visiting my cousin, Dug Burns, but will be home Christmas. I live in Colorado, Tex., and want you to bring me a train that will run, a cap pistol, a tin horn and lots of good things to eat. Bring my little cousin, Dug Burns, a rattle and some socks. Am 4 years old. Good-bye, Santa. Henry Clifford Doss.

Dallas Morning News, 21 December 1899, page 10