

Notes from Two Recorded Interviews with Clayta Harwell  
In 1988 & 1989  
Interview by and Notes Prepared by Wheelice Wilson, Jr., in 2009

*(The main reason for the second of these two interviews was to gather information that would help me write a story about a day in the life of Clayta Harwell, which I did write, and which was published in a special edition of The Citizen's Advocate. Although Clayta's memory was very clear, she sometimes would have minor difficulties identifying dates. For instance, when I asked her about the car she and Floyd had, she had some difficulty remembering when they had different cars. Living in Coppell all her life, she would have to think hard to remember if a building were present in the 1930s or the 1950s.)*

Clayta's Family:

Clayta was born June 1, 1908, in Coppell, TX.

Her parents were Claude and Bessie Plumlee. Her sisters were Cleo and Willie B. Her brothers were Weldon and C.L.

Clayta's mother and father sacrificed other luxuries in order for her father to have a newspaper to read.

They subscribed to a daily paper, probably a Dallas paper.

She married Floyd Harwell in 1927.

Her only son, Bill, was born in 1931.

The house she was born in was located on what used to be called Bethel Road. From old downtown Coppell, Bethel Road now travels east and connects directly with Denton Tap Road. In earlier years, Bethel Road turned north before it reached Denton Tap, just before crossing the creek. It went north about ¼ mile, then turned back east at what is now called Bethel School Road and connected with Denton Tap at the intersection where the current post office is located. Clayta's family's home was on the west corner where Bethel turned east again.

Clayta's father was a truck farmer, sharecropping on land on both sides of the railroad that belonged to "Grandpa Harrison." They raised watermelon, cantaloupe, peanuts, etc. Her father would take the items into Dallas to sell on Market Street.

Clayta's grandparents lived in a large house on the east side of S. Coppell Road, just south of the present rental house owned by the Wilson family. After her grandparents died, Clayta's parents bought and moved into the house.

Work with the Railroad:

Clayta went to work for the railroad in 1941 as Express Agent. Her duties involved handling the small items that were delivered to the Coppell depot by train and shipping out similar items.

She worked for the railroad for 14 years, till 1955.

Mr. Cooper trained her on the new job. He had been Coppell's depot agent previously, and he had been promoted to a position in Carrollton or Grapevine.

After Mr. Cooper worked in Coppell and before Clayta took over, Clayta's aunt, Myrtle Hurst, did the job that Clayta would be doing. Myrtle got the job after her husband died. While Myrtle worked for the railroad, regular mail was delivered by train. Myrtle would pick up the mail at the depot in a little red wagon and deliver it to the post office in Coppell. Eventually, she moved to Caddo Mills. Mail ceased to be handled by the railroad shortly before Clayta took over.

When Clayta took the job, the railroad was in the process of moving the handling of major freight away from Coppell and giving it to Grapevine and Carrollton. The Coppell depot was soon to handle only small items, called “express” – items which were transported on passenger trains rather than large freight trains.

Clayta handled shipments of cotton and other large freight items for only a short while after she was hired.

There were two trains a day that would stop at the Coppell depot, either to drop off express or pick it up. Other trains, freight trains, passed through but did not stop. Clayta would stop by the depot and take inventory of items that had been delivered. If the items were perishable, she would telephone the customer and make arrangements to be at the depot when they could pick up the merchandise. If the merchandise were not perishable, she would mail a postcard to the customer. She would use a telephone in the principal’s office of the school where she also worked, or she would stop at one of the stores along the way and use its phone.

It was not uncommon for customers to stop at the school where Clayta also worked and get her to stop what she was doing and go with them to the depot to pick up items.

Twice a month (at one point, Clayta says, once a month), she was required to file detailed reports. She would spend about half a day at the depot, making out each report. Then she would put it into the railroad mail, which would be picked up by the next train to stop at Coppell.

When she had express to pick up or mail to send out, she would put out a flag, and the train would stop. On other days, she rarely spent more than one hour a day inside the depot.

When she worked for the railroad, there were essentially no passengers stopping in Coppell or getting onboard in Coppell. In the rare instances where someone did catch the train in Coppell, apparently the rider would purchase his ticket from the conductor onboard. Clayta did not sell passenger tickets.

Clayta remembers deliveries of shrubs, trees, baby chicks, and even hunting dogs.

Prominent in her memory is when she would have to ship out luggage and clothes to men who had gone to World War II; they were allowed to receive more items than they could take with them initially. Sometimes they would ship back clothes that they did not need.

Clayta did ride the train once, although it is not clear if she boarded it in Coppell. She rode to Caddo Mills to visit her aunt Myrtle Hurst.

Clayta remembers that the men who rode the trains were extremely courteous and friendly. She would occasionally talk to them if she were at the depot when the trains stopped. There were the engineer and the conductor (the man who rode in the caboose) and a number of others.

### The Railroad Depot Buildings:

When Clayta went to work for the railroad, she worked in the original depot, the large one that had been constructed in about 1890, with a sign that read, “Coppell.”

It was on the north side of the railroad, facing south, near the present intersection of Southwestern Boulevard and S. Coppell Road.

There were large windows on both the north and south sides, which made the building cooler in the summertime.

The express items that Clayta dealt with were placed in the left side of the building, the west side.

Earlier, when large freight was delivered, it was placed in the right side, the east side, behind large sliding doors.

There was a large coal-burning stove in the middle of the depot.

There were benches in the west side, provided for waiting passengers.

There was an office near the center of the building.

Behind the depot was a small building that contained coal.

Also behind the depot was a small building that housed a railroad handcart.

The original large depot was torn down and replaced with a much smaller depot, called a “substation,” while Clayta was working for the railroad. Since this change was apparently participated by the change in handling large freight in larger towns only, the original depot may have been replaced shortly after Clayta started work for the railroad. Clayta does not remember a date.

She handled express in the smaller depot just as she had before.

She always drove her car to the depot and to school.

While Clayta was working for the railroad, Coppel’s post office was located in Minnie McGee’s drugstore.

The smaller depot was abandoned by the railroad in about 1955. Clayta attributes this to the fact that more and more shipping was being handled by over-the-road trucks instead of trains.

It was probably shortly after 1955 that the smaller depot was sold. It was purchased by Hubert and Laura Kirkland and placed on a chicken farm about one mile west of downtown Coppel.

### Work with the Schools:

The first job Clayta ever had was with the railroad. But all the time she was working for the railroad, she was also employed as a cook for Coppel School.

She would stop at the depot to check shipments on her way to school each day.

Her son Billy would ride to school with her.

There were always two cooks. Catherine Parker started working at the school at the same time as Clayta. Later on, Mrs. Hulen Scott worked with Clayta.

There were 89 students when Clayta started cooking at the school. At another time, Clayta says she cooked for 70 students.

Students ate lunch at noon. By 1:30 each day, lunch was finished, and dishes had been washed. Clayta states that there was plenty of time during the day to rest, talk and go with customers to claim express at the railroad depot.

The original Coppel School, a brick building, burned (in 1949) while Clayta was working as a cook. It was rebuilt the next year.

The first lunchroom was inside an empty classroom inside the original brick school, the forerunner of present Pinkerton Elementary School. The cooks prepared meals at one end of the room and students sat at desks on the other end of the room to eat. The room was not needed for classes because there were so few students. Only when a class needed room to spread out or when students needed a quiet place to do individual work did anyone use the lunchroom for anything else.

Within the first two years of Clayta’s employment, a new lunchroom was constructed. It was a separate wooden building located behind and only a few yards to the east of the school building. It would hold about 100 students at tables and benches. It had a large kitchen and a large storeroom.

It was two or three years after Clayta started work that they got running water inside the lunchroom. Before then, there were faucets outside the building.

They would heat water in a large kettle and pour it into the same tubs used to cook food and wash the dishes. They always rinsed the dishes in water that was heated just shy of boiling.

Most of the food served was supplied by the state – commodities such as sweet and Irish potatoes.

Milk was served mid-mornings as well as with lunch. The milk was supplied by Sammy Lesley's dairy, at first in cans. It was poured into regular drinking glasses from pitchers that were kept in a large refrigerator. Later, milk was delivered in small individual bottles with round cardboard stoppers. The glass bottles were returned unwashed to the dairy. Lunches cost 10 cents or 15 cents.

#### Coppell School while Clayta Worked There:

Ray Hand, who was also the pastor of the Coppell Baptist Church where Clayta was a member, was principal of the school when Clayta started working there. He was principal for only a year because members of his congregation resisted his working two jobs. They wanted him to work exclusively "in the field" for the church, although the church could not pay him an adequate salary. He did continue to work at the school as a substitute teacher from time to time.

After Ray Hand, the principal was Travis Fuller. Apparently his wife, Ophelia, was a teacher at the school, also. The Fullers were instrumental in seeing to it that any student who could not afford a hot lunch was given one free of charge by the state. The Fullers were very diligent about it, even visiting the family involved and filing the paperwork.

After the Fullers, another man became principal and his wife taught with him. Their home was in West Texas, and they drove back there every weekend. During the week, they slept in the auditorium of the school and prepared their meals in the lunchroom.

#### The Barbershops:

Floyd Harwell and his twin brother Lloyd were barbers in Coppell when Clayta married Floyd in 1927. They had a nice barbershop in downtown Coppell, located on the north side of present Bethel Road, next to a grocery store, very near the present *Citizen's Advocate* office. The barbershop had a bathroom in it, the only one in the area. Farmers would come to town for a haircut and bath. A bath cost 10 cents, with towel and soap provided. At one time, Clayta remembers a haircut cost 35 cents. Many farmers would promise to pay once a year. Clayta remembers many accounts were never paid.

Floyd and Lloyd had purchased a "combination" mirror for their shop and had mounted it on the wall. It was the only time that Clayta and Floyd went into debt to purchase something.

In about 1930, the grocery store next door caught fire at 2:00 a.m. and it and the barbershop were destroyed. Men from the town managed to drag one barber chair out of the shop, but the mirror was lost. Floyd had to pay on the mirror for the next couple of years.

After the barbershop burned, Lloyd stopped barbering and started farming, although he sometimes helped Floyd on busy Saturdays. Lloyd eventually started barbering full-time again in Lewisville.

The grocery store next door that caught fire was owned by a Mr. Dickerson. Unlike most businessmen, he could afford insurance. Rumors had it that he started the fire in his own store to collect the insurance. Townspeople noticed him removing groceries from his store weeks before the fire.

Emmett Gentry, who owned a large garage/service station on the southeast corner of Bethel and S. Coppell Roads, allowed Floyd to move his barbershop into the office of the service station.

Cousin Minnie Nix lived in a large house just north of the creek over S. Coppell Road. She owned the small house at the northeast corner of Bethel and S. Coppell Roads, where the first telephone switchboard was located, run by Clara Smith. When the switchboard was moved to the large

house on the southwest corner of present Freeport Street, Mrs. Nix offered the house to Floyd for a new barbershop.

Clayta and Floyd were living in one-half of a rental house owned by Bill Corbin, located on the north side of Bethel Road, just east of the present Wilson house. They could not afford the \$8 rent per month for the entire house, so they were paying only \$4 per month for half the house. Later, this house was occupied by Mrs. Bradshaw, the telephone operator, who was the mother of Ann McNear.

Clayta and Floyd eventually moved into the Nix house to live in the same house where the new barbershop was located, in about 1932.

Minnie Nix insisted that the rent that Floyd and Clayta were paying should apply toward the purchase of the house. Floyd was paying \$5 a month. He doubled up on his payments and purchased the house in two years, for a total of \$300.

The house contained the first cabinet that was ever built by Virgil Grace, a local carpenter. It was the first private house in the area to have its own bathroom. Small rooms that had been added over the years were torn down and others were added. At first both the house and the barbershop had coal stoves. They were soon replaced with wood-burning stoves. Meals were cooked in the house on a kerosene ("coal oil") stove.

Red Stringfellow had also lived in this house when he ran the service station that was located just west of the house.

This brick service station was in full use when Clayta and Floyd moved into their house. It faced southwest (so that the front was visible from both streets). It was owned and rented out by Mr. Carney. There was a small grocery store in the front of the station and two rooms behind. At one time a family of four lived there and ran the station.

State law allowed a business to be in a home, but there could be no direct entrance to the living quarters from the business. Therefore, Floyd's barbershop was in the front of the building, with its own entrance.

When the service station was abandoned and torn down and when the owner died, Floyd approached his widow and offered to buy the land. He purchased it in 1948 or 1949. All that was left of the service station was one concrete column, about seven feet tall, which was on the front of the station. Floyd painted it to look like a barber pole.

Sometime, probably in the 1950s, Floyd purchased a small building from a widow in Auburn (Aubrey?) and had the Hitchcocks move it into Coppell, to his corner, for a barbershop. He barbered there until his retirement.

Floyd's shop usually had two barber chairs. (Wilson's note: I don't remember two chairs at any time except for a short while when Floyd hired a second barber to help him.)

Floyd kept a daily diary. He had plenty of time in the barbershop. In the spiral notebooks, he would record the money he took in (Clayta says there were many days when he recorded zero.), the temperature, and such events as the birth of his first grandson, Mark. These diaries were eventually given to Bill and Shirley Harwell.

#### Clayta's "Briefs":

Clayta had written down some historical items at the insistence of Teresa Eby. The following items are from those writings – what Clayta called her "briefs":

Settlers started homesteading near Grapevine Springs as early as 1830. (Wilson's note: I never heard that settlement started this early. The Parrish family settled in 1848.)

In 1889, the town changed its name from Gibbs to Coppel. (Wilson's note: The railroad did not open till 1890, and the post office officially changed its name in 1892, according to Washington records.)

Coppel was one of the first north Texas towns to have a train making daily stops, delivering the mail. Clayta's aunt, Myrtle Hurst, told Clayta that Mr. Coppel was the engineer of the train that came through the town and that it was because of his efforts to secure the railroad line for the area that the town took his name.

Clayta remembers a letter that was received in Coppel from someone outside the U.S. with a last name of Coppel who wanted information about the town. She and others tried to put together some information. (Wilson's note: In the interview, I mentioned hearing about the letter and that I thought it had ended up in the hands of Mr. Ida Thompson, principal of Coppel Elementary School at the time.)

The WPA constructed Grapevine Springs Park in the 1930s. (Wilson's note: It was in 1937.) Clayta remembers walking down to the park, watching the work being done.

On opening day of Grapevine Springs Park, there were hundreds of people present, including the Thweatts from Wichita Falls, who donated the land, and many relatives such as the Sanders, the Corbins, and the Harrisons. Even the governor of Texas attended and threw out the first baseball at the baseball game, held in the new ballpark on the south side of the land. The baseball game was won by the Coppel team.

Clayta does not remember the date of the opening, but she says that Billy was five or six years old, which would seem correct since that would place the opening somewhere in 1937.

There were picnics and booths set up by people who attended.

There were two entrances to the park. The entrance near the railroad on the north side had two pillars with the name of the park spelled out between and above the pillars.

#### Clayta's memories of everyday events:

Some of the older boys in town were trouble-makers. If you owned a small wagon, it was best to keep it locked up. Sometimes at night, local boys would take a wagon and hitch it to a car and pull it all over town.

Once, at Halloween, someone (supposedly local boys) took the handcart from the depot and rode it up and down the railroad. They abandoned it in a ditch. Clayta, Floyd and some other local men found it and put it back.

Minnie Nix lived in the large house with a sprawling porch just north of the little creek that crosses S. Coppel Road, just north of Floyd's barbershop. Minnie would call out to Floyd in the mornings. Beside Minnie Nix's house, just north of it, lived Minnie's daughter, Clara Corbin. Early in the mornings, Clara would come out in her yard and sing out, "Mama!" Minnie would come out and they would talk. It would usually wake up Floyd and Clayta; they didn't need an alarm clock.

Bill Nix was the first mail carrier in Coppel.

Coppel people sometimes went to the movies in Grapevine. Family night at the movies was on Monday nights. You could take as many people into the movie as you could get into one car for 25 cents. Floyd and Clayta would load up their car with kids from all over Coppel. William Osborne Corbin, the son of Clara Corbin, who was about eight years old at the time, would go with them and help corral the kids.

Nora and Gick Vanbebbber put in the first laundromat in Coppel.

A close friend of the Harwells was Aunt Jenny Kirkland, the mother of Jack Kirkland, who lived with her husband John in the house we now call the Kirkland house, moved and restored by the Historical Society. Her bedroom was in the front of the house. She could always tell if someone in Floyd's house was ill because the lights would be on late at night. She would sometimes come over in her bathrobe to see if she could help. Jenny Kirkland owned and read medical books, and she often served as a midwife and nurse, helping her nephew, Dr. Jesse Bennett. Jesse Bennett had his medical practice in Coppell until he moved it to Grapevine. His house was most commonly referred to as the Coats house, located on the north side of Bethel Road. Most likely, Dr. Bennett built that house.

Clayta remembers a very important event that happened when she was about 14 or 15 years old, which would be in 1922, on a Sunday afternoon. It was common for folk to go to the Carrollton dam east of Coppell on what is now Sandy Lake Road and have picnics and swim. On this day, one of the local, "rough boys," Walter Prater (about 30 years old) performed a stunt that made him famous. He climbed to the top of the bridge; buddies doused him with gasoline, struck a match to him, and he dove into the water below. Clayta remembers the brilliant color of the flames and the colors that the gasoline made when it mixed with the water. Walter came up out of the water and waved. He received either \$25 or \$50 for doing the stunt. Clayta says that the money may have been contributed by some of the spectators. The event was publicized in advance in circulars and maybe even newspapers, and there were hundreds of people there to watch. Clayta's friends who attended with her included Joe Cozby, Bill Cozby, Cleo Hodges, Vera Cozby, Mary Evelyn Cozby Mobley, George Carr, Linda Russell, and Francis Corbin.

Clayta does not remember a local, Coppell newspaper.

In about 1919, Mr. O. A. Cole put in a tent movie house, located where the Ruby Nell Wilson house is now. He showed silent movies on Saturday nights. People came from all around to see the movie – from Bethel, Gentry, and out by the Cribbs. (Wilson's note: The Cribbs family lived south of town, on Hackberry Road.) Admission was 10 cents. There were bleachers in the tent. One night the bleachers collapsed and Gladys McDonald got a broken ankle. Clayta, about 11 years old, at first hesitated to go to the movie since she was considering being converted to the Baptist church. But her older sister was going and their father agreed, so she went. There were subtitles in the movie, and she had a hard time reading fast enough to keep up.

Sandy Lake Amusement Park, near Carrollton on present Sandy Lake Road, was always sort of a resort. Clayta's family went to church at the Baptist church three times a week – Sunday morning, Sunday evening, and Wednesday evening.

When she was little, Clayta's family went to Grapevine to buy clothes and hats at Yates' Store. They went in a two seat surrey pulled by two horses. Six people could ride in the surrey.

When she was a teenager, Clayta sometimes went to parties, held in people's houses. They would play "London Bridge is Broken Down" and sing around the piano, if the host had one. They had refreshments, most often hot chocolate (since everyone had his own cow) and "tea cakes."

Clayta remembers her father always buying apples from traveling vendors. They kept the apples under their beds, where it was cooler. They would have them for snacks after school.

### Schools:

The Gentry school was "on the right." (Wilson's note: This refers to its being on the west side of what is now Belt Line Road, running south from Coppell toward Irving.)

Clayta went to school in the two-story school house located on the south side of Bethel Road, across the street from the Methodist Church, just west of the Baptist Church, and west of the historic Kirkland house.

She started school when she was five years old. The first grade teacher boarded in her parents' house, and she would ride to school with the teacher.

The Bethel School was located on the southwest corner of Moore Road and what is now called Bethel School Road. Beside it (apparently just south of it) was the Bethel Church. They were twin buildings – white frame buildings with one room each. There was a brush arbor behind the church. Clayta doesn't remember any other buildings nearby.

#### Description of buildings along the streets of Coppell:

(Wilson's notes: Clayta's memories of houses and other buildings in Coppell were probably based on recollections starting in about 1915 and continuing till about 1955. There may be some confusion about Coppell Road. Currently, North Coppell Road runs from present Sandy Lake Road [what used to be Thweatt Road] north toward Denton Creek. South Coppell Road is in two sections. The first section runs north from W. Bethel Road in old town Coppell where the Harwell barbershop and Methodist Church were located and dead-ends into present Sandy Lake Road. The second section runs north from present Southwestern Boulevard near the railroad, dead-ending into W. Bethel Road in old town Coppell. [This section is now sometimes referred to as *South South Coppell Road*.] Before development in the 1960s, the entire road, of course, was just considered "Coppell Road" because it was the main road into and through Coppell.)

Starting at the southwest corner of S. S. Coppell Road and W. Bethel Road, there was a lodge hall of the Woodmen of the World, with a store on the first floor. When Clayta's aunt, Myrtle Hurst, bought the building, she ran the grocery store while she was railroad agent. Eventually the building was torn down and she gave the lumber to Albert Hodges.

South of and next to the Woodmen Lodge was Minnie McGee's drugstore. When the McGees ran this store, mail was handled here. (Wilson's note: This store was still standing, although mostly abandoned, when I was young. It was an elaborate building, with large plate glass windows on either side of double doors, with some stained glass surrounding the plate glass. It was quite a long building with a high ceiling. It had steep concrete steps in the front. Not long before the building was torn down to build a small house for Jack Kirkland, the old drugstore was used as a meeting place for the Assembly of God Church.)

South of the drugstore was the house built by Minnie McGee, later occupied by Mary Evelyn Cozby Mobley.

Across the street from the Woodmen Lodge, on the southeast corner of S.S. Coppell Road and W. Bethel Road, where the historic Kirkland house is now located, was a filling station/garage owned and operated by Emmett Gentry. This is the station that had an office that Floyd Harwell used for a temporary barbershop after his burned.

South of and next to the filling station was a small "brown rental house," consisting of two bedrooms and a kitchen; the house faced west. Some residents were George and Lucille Crawloy (?) and the Dickersons, who owned the grocery store next door to Floyd's first barbershop which burned.

South of that was the C. L. Plumlee house, where, first, Clayta's grandparents lived, then, later, her parents lived.

There was just a pasture south of that, except that, at one time, there was a small rock house, then a large metal cotton gin, both built by the McFalls. This was the first cotton gin. The second gin was located on the southeast corner of present W. Bethel Rd. and Freeport Parkway. South of the cotton gin was the Hurst house. Clayta does not remember any other buildings south of the Hurst house.

Just west of the Woodmen lodge hall, on the south side of present Bethel Road, was a large blacksmith's shop, run by Ed Hurst (Clayta's uncle).

West of that was a grocery store.

On the north side of Bethel Road, in the area considered "downtown" was a store that sold groceries on one side and dry goods ("piece goods") on the other side, run by Bill Stringfellow.

Clayta's grandfather Harrison had a large two-story store in this location. It was eventually used as an indoor basketball court.

West of these stores was the public well and overhead tank.

West of that was a washeteria, possibly built by Mr. and Mrs. Herman Brown. (Wilson's note: Notice that Clayta earlier said that the laundomat was built by the Vanbebbbers.)

West of the school building, which would be very close to the intersection of Bethel Road and S. Coppell Road, across the street from the Methodist Church land, on the south side of Bethel was Red Stringfellow's house. It was later Grandpa Lockett Woods' house, where he had a minnow business. There was a trough under the shade trees in the front of the house. He started that business in about 1931.

On the southwest corner of Freeport Parkway was a large house where Clayta's mother was born. Her mother's father was Thomas Jefferson Harrison. All the Harrison children got married in that house. The house faced north.

West of the Harrison house was a gin.

Clayta remembers that the road to Grapevine was Bethel Road, traveling west to C. L. Plumlee's big house on the north side; the road then turned left (south) and made its way to Grapevine.

Near the intersection of W. Bethel Road and S. S. Coppell Road, on the northwest side, was the bank. It was a one-story, long building. Clayta remembers there were chairs inside where customers could wait.

East of the bank was the Mitchell house.

East of that house that Clayta and Floyd rented was Maud Standifer's house.

Next was Emmett Coats' house.

East of that, Mr. Cooper had built a small house that was eventually occupied by Bert Parrish.

A house on the creek, on the north side of Bethel was built by Stringfellow Kirkland.

East of that was the Ledbetter house.

Across from the Standifer house, on the south side of Bethel was the Emmett Gentry house.

Across from the Bert Parrish house, on the south side, was a house occupied by Mr. and Mrs. King.

From the intersection of Bethel and S. Coppell Road, going north, was Clara Corbin's house and across the street was the Elsie Parr house (eventually the town's first library).

There were a lot of other houses north on S. Coppell Road.

On Ruby Road was the Lancaster mansion.

On the northwest corner of present Denton Tap Road and Bethel School Road, across from the present post office building, was the two-story Walter Tweatt house.

Heartz Road, at one time, extended all the way to Denton Creek and was the main road to go from Coppell, across Denton Creek, and on into Lewisville, rather than present Denton Tap Road.

Sandy Lake Road was originally Denton Road.

### The Beer Joints:

Along present Sandy Lake Road were a number of beer joints. The biggest one was on the northeast corner of present Denton Tap Road and Sandy Lake Road. It faced “katty-corner” – turned so that its front faced both roads.

Another beer joint was Shot ‘n Elsie’s.

### Telephones:

Clayta’s parents had a telephone in the house where Clayta was born, possibly as early as 1918. There were about eight persons on the party line. One day the phone just rang and rang, and people knew it was a signal that something bad had happened. A canister in the McGee drugstore had exploded and killed Brian McGee.

### Bonnie and Clyde:

Clayta says that Floyd knew Bonnie Barrow. He always said that, before she became famous, he had once danced with her. Floyd claimed that she and Clyde had traveled through Coppell one day, chased by the police. Their car raced past their barbershop and turned north onto S. Coppell Road, swerving into the Methodist Church yard. They got away from their pursuers.