

This is a letter written by my grandmother, Mary Oleta Simmons White (known as Nanny) to my daughter Bethany Marie White. It was written in response to a school assignment to learn about family history. Nanny was born in 1921 and was 85 years old when she wrote this to Bethany, who was 14 at the time. It concerns her remembrances of growing up on a farm in Childress County in the 1920's and 1930's. For additional information, see the document titled "Mamie Mae Hardin Simmons Diary", written by Mary Oleta's mother in 1928 - 1929.

Nov. 6 - 2006

My Dear Bethany  
It was so nice to get your letter. It made my day. Hope all is well with you. I am doing pretty good getting ready to move. I hope you can use this.

Thinking back on my childhood, we lived on a farm southwest of Childress, Texas. Daddy "Thomas Jefferson Simmons" raised corn to help feed us & the farm animals. He would also raise maize in the fall of the year but this was just for the animals. Had ever, all of the Simmons enjoyed the peaches from the small orchard on our farm.

Daddy raised cotton as his "cash" crop. This cotton was raised in the dryland method and the cash we received from it helped to pay our bills, taxes and seeds for next year. Anything left over went to buy other necessities for the family such as flour, sugar, and material for clothing and tools.

I can remember as a young girl getting up very early to pick cotton. I would get from sunup to sundown stooping over to get every scrap of cotton. This sure was hard on your back. At this time I got to wear bibbed overalls to protect my legs, but even with gloves on my fingers and hands were picked & scratched & sore at the end of the day. I dragged a white ducking sack behind me and worked as hard as I could. While

my older cousin "Finis Dabbins" could pick a bale a day, my personal best was just two hundred pounds. Sure takes a lot of cotton to make two hundred pounds

For all this hard work I received 25¢ for every hundred pounds  
Fifty cents was a lot of money for a small girl.

Daddy always allowed us kids to keep what we earned he also allowed us to spend it the way we chose. I usually bought ribbon for my hair, material for a dress and shoes.

I was born on this farm in 1921 we lived there until I was 16 years old and we moved to town. While times were hard and we worked hard. I have fond memories of my family and the farm

I love you  
Nanny



Mary Oleta Simmons White



Bethany Marie White