

a distance of several feet. Our "game" was to climb to the top of one of these and begin swinging back and forth always directly toward another small tree near by. When we had attained sufficient sweep to come very near this tree, catch onto it letting go the first tree. Our "goal" was to see how far we could travel in the tree tops.

Dangerous? Yes. Sometimes we would bend the trees over to the point where we could hear them crack under the strain and just a little more and the tree top on which we were clinging would have snapped off and down we would have come tumbling to the ground.

Did this ever happen? No. The Guardian Angel was evidently hovering over us.

RIDING THE HORSES

While we lived at old Concord and while I was not yet more than seven years old, our water supply became temporarily exhausted. I don't recall whether our well went dry or caved in or what happened. But for some days we had to take our horses to the "pool" to water them. This pool was about a half mile away. It was near the church and its source of water was a spring which kept it full of water. It was built for baptismal purposes.

I don't recall how many horses we had at the time. I remember the names of only two. They were "Mollie" and "Eula." However, many there were, there were plenty of boys to ride them to water and what a delight it was!

Old Mollie was an old gray mare well advanced in years and very trustworthy. I was the youngest of the boys at that time and being only seven years old, "Old Mollie" was the only one I was allowed to ride. It was much fun to ride the horses at any pace, but we found that the faster we went the more fun it was, so when we came to a smooth stretch of road we would kick them in the sides with our heels and urge them on into a run. This was not according to orders but the practice was very general among us nevertheless.

Mollie was old and very much opposed to going so fast. But repeated kickings in her sides would cause her to quicken her pace. But the old mare had lots of sense. I don't know how she got the idea, but she came to know that if she would stop right suddenly and throw

her head down, I would slide off down her neck to the ground. I would fall right in front of her and if she had taken another step or two she would have stepped right on me and her weight on my small body would have most killed me. But she took not another step, but stood perfectly still while I got up from the ground and climbed on her back again.

She was so large and I was so small, I could mount her only by being assisted by someone or by leading her along side a rail fence, a large log or a high stump of a tree. Fortunately there were some of these always not far away.

This thing happened so many times I finally decided it was not safe to run "Old Mollie," so had to content myself to ride her in a walk or at most a slow trot.

The fact that I was never badly hurt bears out further the Guardian Angel theory.

MORE FUN IN THE TREE TOPS

In our pasture where we lived at a certain place were two trees standing side by side close together and so literally covered by mustang grape vines that we boys could get on top and lie down or sit down on the mass of vines like a carpet. It was fun to climb about on these trees.

One of the trees was ten or fifteen feet taller than the other. We first climbed out on top of the lower tree. It was comparatively flat topped. Then we decided to climb over the vines to the top of the taller tree. Having done this, we exulted in the fact that we were "Sitting on top of the world" so to speak, as far as trees were concerned. What would we do next? We had reached the heights.

Someone suggested it would be fun to jump from the top of the taller tree down on top of the lower tree, letting the vines bear us up and keep us from falling to the ground. It took considerable courage and a little daring one another but finally one of the boys took the leap. We all held our breath as the first pioneered the way, but when we saw that he had made the landing successfully, (we didn't count scratches and bruises) we began jumping like grasshoppers down to the top of the lower tree.

The fun was boundless until one of my brothers