

# THE LITTLE LOG HOUSE IN THE WOODS

*J. W. "Bill" Firey, Jr.  
Written in 1992*

It was somewhere in the late 1930's. Andrew Edwards and his son, Charley, built a log house on the back side of some of Dad's land. They had no money in those days and times were very hard. About all they had was an ax and a good crosscut saw. So with Dad's permission, they went back into the woods and built a little log house there. Mr. and Mrs. Edwards and son, Charley, lived there about three years and then moved away. Our uncle, Earl Firey, lived with us in those days. Brother Kenneth, Uncle Earl, and I started sleeping in the little log house throughout the summer months. The little log house sat on the side of a small hill. It was very quiet and peaceful there at night, with only the call of a lonesome whippoorwill now and again. We soon referred to it as the little log house in whippoorwill country. We would come in from working in those hot, dusty fields all day - tired, sweaty and dirty. After we did all our chores, we would head for the old swimming hole. Most times it was always after dark. The snakes would just have to get out of our way and make room for us for we were coming in. That was so refreshing to us. We felt much better after a good swim. We would go by the house and eat our evening meal. After eating, we would head over to the little log house in the woods on the side of the hill for a good night's rest. John McCord lived with us quite a lot off and on in those days. We had three full size beds in the little log house. We had plenty of room when our friends would come to visit us and spend the night. The little log house sheltered us from many wild and raging storms through the dark hours of the night. We did realize that we could be scattered out all over the hillside in a bad storm. Many times, the next morning after a storm, we would find big tree limbs scattered all

around. But we were always safe inside the walls of the little log house. When the weather started getting cold, we would leave the log house for the winter. But early next spring, we would come back to our little log home. One year, I spent the entire summer there myself. Kenneth was working for Granddad that summer and Uncle Earl was working for Mr. Stoneman, so I had it all to myself. I didn't seem to mind. I was thirteen years old at the time but I wasn't afraid to be alone at night. There were only two windows in the little house. They had wood frames with glass in them and opened with hinges. We always kept the doors and windows open and there weren't any screens on them. We would close the windows only when it would rain or storm. One morning around 3:00 a.m., I woke up and slowly opened my eyes. There was a big black cougar, sitting in one of the windows. He just seemed to be looking things over. I don't think he was planning to jump on me or do me bodily harm. I think he just wanted to see what was going on inside of the little log house - just a bit curious, I suppose.

I watched that big cat for quite some time. After a while, he jumped out of the window, then disappeared into the dark of the night. Now I'm sure the cougar had probably looked us over many times that we weren't aware of. One morning we woke up and one of our work horses was standing between the beds, just looking around. Our biggest problem was with the little fox squirrels. They wanted to live in the house with us. There wasn't any ceiling in it which gave the squirrels a lot of room to run all over the place and bark at us. Many times they would wake us up barking and raising cane. One morning we were getting up and John McCord was sitting on the side of his bed still

about half asleep with his bare feet on the dirt floor. Kenneth said to John, "Don't move - just stay like you are!" Kenneth went outside and got an old fencepost, then came back in and whopped it down hard on a big copperhead snake coiled about nine inches from John's bare feet. Kenneth killed the copperhead with the first blow, then took it outside. It was cool that morning and the snake wasn't very active or he would have bitten John for sure.

Now a lot of time has passed and many pages have turned since back then. Today, there are only a few old rotted logs left showing where the little log house once stood in that peaceful spot on the side of the hill. The memories are all that remain of what used to be long ago. Mr. and Mrs. Edwards have been dead for many years. Their son, Charley, died about six years ago. Uncle Earl has been dead for a long time. My brother, Kenneth, has been dead just a little over three years. John McCord died last summer. I was the youngest and am the only one left. I sometimes get to thinking how fast the years have slipped away. So many of my goals in life, I've never reached. There are many sights and wonders in the world I never got to see. Now I know that time is running out for me too. For God will call me home one of these days. But I am very grateful for the time God has given me to live on his beautiful green earth.

Now this is how it happened in these old hills of Oklahoma long ago. Out where the whippoorwills call and the fox squirrels bark and a young boy wakes up wide-eyed on a warm summer's night.