

# Interview Essay: Glynn Collier

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By Kendel Hopper

*AUTHOR'S NOTE: It was an honor to get to interview Mr. Collier. He is an amazing man with so much knowledge. He is very kind and patient. My writing skills do not do justice to the wealth of information he has to share. When my parents pray for me, I have heard them ask God to send people into my life who will influence me in a positive way. I think their prayers were answered when I got the opportunity to spend several hours with Mr. Collier. He has made a lasting impression on me, one that I will not forget.*

Our country's twenty-sixth President, Theodore Roosevelt, once said "Every man owes a part of his time and money to the business or industry in which he is engaged. No man has a moral right to withhold his support from an organization that is striving to improve conditions within his sphere." President Roosevelt could very well have used Glynn Virden Collier to exemplify his statement.

Mr. Collier was born on November 23, 1922 in Goldthwaite, Texas to Thomas Jefferson Collier and Martha Bell Virden Collier. Thomas Collier grew up around Center City and Martha lived near Pleasant Grove. She was a teacher and would travel around teaching at different schools in Mills County on different days of the week. It was necessary that schools be within walking distance for children. In 1910, there were fifty-two public schools and sixty-five teachers in Mills County. Martha also attended classes at North Texas University in Denton, Texas during the summer months to further her own education. Goldthwaite had about 2,800 residents at that time and approximately ninety-five businesses. Mills County was just thirty-five years old and boasted a population of just over 9,000 residents. Henry Ford had invented the Model T automobile, also called the "Tin Lizzie", just about a decade before, and his invention was becoming popular in Mills County at an affordable price of \$290 off the assembly line.



Glynn Collier and Kendel Hopper

Mr. Collier graduated from Goldthwaite High School in 1940. Franklin D. Roosevelt was in his second term as President of the United States, the first color television was demonstrated in New York City, and German dictator, Adolf Hitler, was busy invading foreign lands. In Mills County, crop production continued to decline because of droughts and the Great Depression as did the population of the county which was recorded that year at 7,951. Cropland that was once plowed and planted was becoming pasture for the growing number of sheep and goats. Eighteen-year-old Glynn Collier headed off to John Tarleton College and later Texas A&M University where he studied Agricultural Economics. But, World War II interrupted his studies. He eventually received a medical discharge from the Army and returned home with plans to continue his education. However, it was mid-semester and he was not able to return to classes. So, he began seeking employment.

Any story that is written about both Mills County and Glynn Collier would not be complete unless it also included Mills County State Bank. Mr. Collier's career in banking began in July 1943 when E.T. Fairman, President of Trent State Bank, offered him a job at the bank. At that time, the bank was located at the corner of Fourth and Fisher Streets in Goldthwaite. Mr. Fairman told him that the job would pay \$60.00 a month and it would be several months before he was worth that! But Mr. Collier, having grown up during the Great Depression, appreciated the opportunity and accepted the offer. He performed his duties diligently which ranged from hand posting transactions in a ledger to acting as janitor and was promoted through various officer positions of the bank. On January 1, 1952, the Board of Directors of Trent State Bank elected to change the name of the bank to Mills County State Bank. In 1959, Glynn V. Collier was elected to the Board of Directors. The bank moved to new facilities at 1017 Parker Street, in June 1961, where it remains today. Mr. Collier was present in the bank when a robbery occurred in the fall of 1962. He vividly recalls the details of how a nineteen-year-old man from Abilene walked into the lobby of the bank and took approximately \$2,600 in cash and checks at gun point and then fled only to be captured a short time later by a group of law enforcement officers led by Mills County Sheriff C.F. Stubblefield. In 1981, Mr. Collier succeeded Warren P. Duren as President of Mills County State Bank and served in that capacity until his retirement in 1988. He remains on the Board of Directors of Mills County State Bank today.

Mr. Collier has served in many organizations in Mills County. He was a loving husband of sixty years to Oleta Horton Collier and a wonderful father to their two children. He credits his distinguished and successful career in banking to taking care of his own responsibilities and giving top priority to the bank and the community. He has seen a lot of changes in his lifetime but has not let progress come before his commitment to the people of Mills County.