AN UNCERTAIN ODYSSEUS:  
THE SPIRITUAL JOURNEY OF BEVERLY ALLEN 
GARNA L. CHRISTIAN

The news item reporting the wedding of a prominent young couple in East Texas on November 2, 1900 varied insignificantly from countless others of its genre before and since. Miss Lillian Rawls, daughter of a local physician, impressed the Buffalo Banner with her "rare virtues and superior feminine attainments." The Reverend Beverly Whipple Allen was the "energetic and faithful" minister of Oakwood Methodist Church. The groom's father, the Reverend Frederick Lowery Allen, solemnized the union. This accurate but typical society page account ironically contained an insight meaningful only to the few most intimately acquainted with the young man. In his two-year ministry, noted the reporter, Allen had "conducted himself well." This innocuous statement unknowingly signaled the successful completion of a spiritual journey which had transported the youthful minister across the expanse of Texas and through the deepest misery of his being.1

Only a few years earlier his loving but despondent mother had admonished him:

If ever there was anything on the face of the earth that does worry me it is to see a full grown man that can't tell what he wants to do next ... I cannot pay your expenses this year, or any part of them. I have denied myself until it is painful. ... Now I want to hear immediately if you have any manhood. Tell me what you are going to do.2

Though slight of stature, Beverly Allen appeared early in life to possess resources adequate to life's challenges. Hailing from a long line of frontier clergymen, Allen counted among his ancestors heroes of the American Revolution and Civil War. A great-grandfather, William Allen, suffered mortal wounds at Yorktown. His father attained a captaincy in the Third Georgia Cavalry in defense of the Confederacy. Methodism, a vital force in western and rural America, undergirded family life. Frederick Allen's commitment began at age four during a religious revival in his native Fayette County, Georgia. The elder Allen entered the ministry in 1865 and traveled to the Winchester Circuit of the Texas Conference, commencing a thirty-five year career in the Lone Star State. He married Celinda

1Buffalo Banter, November 2, 1900. 
2Celinda Whipple Allen to Beverly Allen, Rockdale, Texas, April 3, 1894, Beverly Whipple Allen Papers, Correspondence 1892-1900, Box 2A132, Barker Texas History Center, Austin.
Whipple in 1868 and saw the birth of his first of three children the following year at Bastrop.3

Beverly Whipple Allen demonstrated a bright youthful mind. His report card from a Huntsville school in 1882 indicated high marks in all courses, with perfect grades in reading, geography, and deportment. His teacher, Ella Smithers, presented the twelve year old student a merit award for recitation delivered on the last day of school. Beverly continued his education at Southwestern University in Georgetown. Despite numerous family role models in the pulpit, Allen decided to study law with the Georgetown firm of Fisher and Ward. After admission to the bar in March, 1891, however, he changed directions and acquired a newspaper in far western Sweetwater, Texas.4

Allen’s brief journalistic venture resulted in much personal and family grief. In the mode of frontier newsmen, Beverly filled the roles of publisher, editor, reporter, and business manager of the Nolan County Record. Immediately consumed in debt, he apparently sought diversion in an active social life and, by his own admission, excessive drinking. Allen sought to correct his financial imbalance by obtaining advertisers as far away as New York City with items ranging from Masonic notices to Winchester rifles. But his records show difficulty in collecting full payment from some clients, with others contributing in kind or services, and that most accounts turned only modest sums. Such accounts and a circulation of 600 failed to cover the initial and operating expenses. When Allen closed shop and returned eastward in May, 1892, he owed board to W. V. George at Eskota.5

Although Allen told friends and debtors that he would join his parents at Rockdale, he took up law practice at Austin with the partnership of R. H. Ward and J. J. Faulk. In many ways his new location offered an inviting picture to an ambitious young man. Clearly a city on the move, the Colorado River community of 20,000 had recently received a modern statehouse and university and awaited the completion of a dam which promised extensive investment, recreational, and commercial opportunities.

5Beverly W. Allen, “J. H. Wiseman’s Vindication,” Austin, Texas, July 5, 1938, Allen Papers, Miscellaneous, Box 2A133, Barker; Nolan County Record Book, Allen Collection, 2-23/1060, Archives; W. V. George to Frederick Allen, Eskota, Texas, May 24, 1892, Correspondence, Barker.
Designated the state capital in 1839 because of its advantageous and attractive setting, Austin impressed newcomers with railroad connections, an electrified streetcar system, handsome buildings, and cultural facilities which included an opera house, theater, and various social halls.6

Indeed, perhaps too much social stimulation beckoned a young man susceptible to distraction. An admiring observer remarked, "Standing at the head of Congress Avenue the eye takes in about eleven different saloons... Some... will compare favorably with those of New York." Other unsavory aspects of the city included alternately dusty and flooded streets, tightening financial conditions despite community boosterism, and flurries of smallpox, diphtheria, and scarlet fever. While Austin embraced an array of churches and God-fearing people, the crimson temptations and dangers surely disturbed Allen's devout parents in rural Central Texas.7

Rockdale, 63 miles to the northeast, was not the complete antithesis of the state capital. In fact the smaller town owed its existence to the extension of the International and Great Northern line from Hearne to Austin in 1873 and had witnessed excesses common to a nineteenth century railhead. The Galveston News, a seasoned judge of vice, ran a series of news items in 1875 describing gambling, violence, and police corruption. As tents gave way to wooden and brick structures and the terminus moved westward, a more wholesome atmosphere prevailed along the San Gabriel River. In 1876 various denominations erected a union church building, followed in short order by separate facilities for Episcopal, Presbyterian, Christian Church, Lutheran, and Methodist congregations. In 1893 a Rockdale businessman proclaimed his community "the best town of 2,000 people in Texas," resting on an economic base of cotton, lignite, banking, and retailing.8

While Rockdale was home to Beverly's parents and his brother and sister, it was for him only another station in his father's itinerancy. Fred-

---


7"Austin, Texas," Texas Siftings, January 9, 1886 (quotation); David C. Humphrey, "Prostitution and Public Policy in Austin, Texas," Southwestern Historical Quarterly, LXXXVI, no. 4 (April, 1983), 480; Austin Daily Statesman, April 14, 1891; November 11, 1891; December 8, 1891; July 28, 1892; August 14, 1892.

erick Allen drew assignment to the Cameron District in 1891, which the younger Allen spent in Georgetown and Sweetwater. The veteran minister reached Milam County at age 56 in declining health, following a quarter-century of service that had taken him to Winchester, Webberville, Cedar Creek, Bastrop, Austin, LaGrange, Huntsville, Calvert, Bremond, and Danville. Limited income, necessity of travel, and family expenditures that included supplementing Beverly’s losses and rent bore heavily on the self-reliant couple. Mrs. Allen resorted to teaching, offering piano lessons, and taking in boarders as the economy teetered on the brink of panic. To young Allen, Rockdale represented church and family, perhaps a loss of independence and admission of failure. Austin was future and possibility.9

If by leaving West Texas Beverly had hoped to escape his problems, he found the past a tenacious pursuer. Within days of his arrival at Austin, a letter from Allen’s landlord reached his father in Rockdale. An apologetic W. V. George enclosed the rent bill with the statement that Beverly had failed to send the money as promised. In truth the young man was flailing about to extricate himself from the morass. From Sweetwater he had written attorney George W. Allen in Austin for introductions to potential clients. The respondent offered access to the district attorney and several judges, conjecturing guardedly, “I think you can make a living.”10

Tired, ill, seeing no positive results from Beverly’s move, the senior Allen dashed whatever optimism the son had retained with a withering condemnation of the young man’s indebtedness: “Have you lost your sense of honor[?]” Less stridently, he volunteered to pay Beverly’s first month’s board at Austin, though not his debts. The minister suggested several cheaper lodgings than the current quarters commanding twenty dollars per month and implored him to “write for your church letter at once and identify with God’s people. See if you can get along this month without spending before you get it . . . Mama will finish.” Mrs. Allen continued the combination of rebuke and advice: “I think if you will attend strictly to business and let other people’s money alone you ought to do well.”11

That missive of May 27, 1892 exemplified the stern but compassionate reaction of Beverly’s parents to their worrisome son’s actions over the next two years. Convinced that he lacked mental and financial discipline, that he vacillated and squandered resources while rushing into ill-conceived schemes, that he, in short, did not comport himself as his frontier-tempered parents expected of a first-born son, they alternately scathed and encouraged young Allen. Beverly’s occasional flashes of success or promise earned

9Annual of 51st Session, 57; C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, December ____, 1893, Correspondence; F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, March 2, 1894, Correspondence.
10George to F. L. Allen, Eskota, Texas, May 24, 1892, Correspondence; G. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Austin, Texas, May 20, 1892, Correspondence (quotation).
11F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, May 27, 1892, Correspondence.
lavish praise. At length the prodigal would vindicate himself by choice of career and impeccable decorum, but only after long months of desperation which seized family members with the vengeance of a biblical plague.  

As a novice attorney in Austin, Allen found prospects leaner than anticipated. His records for June, 1892 indicated receipts of $1.25 for writing deeds, $5.35 in late subscriptions for his defunct newspaper, and $10 from his parents. Money from home also dwarfed legal income of $11.15 in July, with witness fees of $5 the second largest entry. Allen collected commissions of $9.95 in August and September, ironically by forcing other debtors into payment. In one of the larger entries, Allen earned ten per cent on a note of $151.39 owed by W. LeRoy to W. W. Martin. The litigant had cautioned the barrister that the debtor would “be pretty slick. You cannot depend on anything he tells you; but he will pay whenever he finds he cannot put it off any longer.” The tone must have reminded Allen of accusations directed against him by his own creditors, but still he persisted, declining an opportunity to reenter the newspaper business at Granger and to relocate as county attorney of Ector County at a renumeration of $25 per month.

At a time when Austin restaurants advertised “an excellent meal” for fifty cents, Allen’s modest income might have sufficed save for the relentless chorus of bill collectors emanating from his West Texas business venture. If the hue sometimes appeared disproportionate to the sums in question, many of the creditors also suffered badgering over their own debts, while others considered a delinquent note a point of honor. Typically, early reminders took the form of polite inquiries, at times combined with local news, political opinions, or constructive suggestions. A Georgetown proprietor informed Allen of a business investment before remarking, “If you have come into the possession of any spare change, please remember your indebtedness to me. I need it these hard times.” He closed with the news that Allen’s aunt and cousin were visiting. A Chillicothe retailer wished him a successful law practice after asking payment of $7.80. “I haven’t charged any interest,” he volunteered.

---

12 Frederick Allen followed the harsh letter of May 27 with a much softer note, “Write us often . . . Hope you may get off well.” F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, May 31, 1892, Correspondence. Likewise, Mrs. Allen wrote, “What gratified me most is [your letter] . . . has some little essence of common sense in it . . . Let us hear from you very soon.” C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, June 2, 1892, Correspondence.

13 Record Book, June 1-September 20, 1892, Archives; M. M. McLean to B. W. Allen, Georgetown, Texas, July 25, 1892, Correspondence; W. W. Martin to B. W. Allen, Ker­rville, Texas, July 30, 1892 (quotation); Abe L. Whipkey to B. W. Allen, Granger, Texas, August 2, 1892, Correspondence; McLean to B. W. Allen, Midland, Texas, December 1, 1892, Correspondence.

14 Austin Daily Statesman, November 4, 1892; McLean to B. W. Allen, Georgetown, Texas, July 25, 1892, Correspondence (first quotation); A. T. Mann to B. W. Allen, Chillicothe, Texas, August 6, 1892, Correspondence (second quotation).
Initially courteous requests could turn into emotional outbursts as time lengthened and the creditor's discomfort increased. The Chillicothe businessman retained his cordiality in a followup nine days later but added interest accruing since January 1. Allen's former landlord grew steadily vociferous about his unpaid $28 rent. In the May 24 letter to the elder Allen, he begged "not . . . to be considered a hasty person." On July 4, writing to the son, George continued his diplomatic tone: "I hope you will not think me in a hurry to write you in regard to our business. For the fact is I am in a tight and need some money. . . . Please help me at once." He even commented on Governor James Hogg's superior strength at the Roby Democratic convention. By August 29 George shed all decorum: "... you might have respected me enough to have given me a hearing. I have not reached the point yet where I can live without money. . . . It may be that I will before you pay it." The writer threatened to expose the debt to "the firm you are working under and to your friends and relatives." Still no response. The following January 30 George complained, "You never owed a more just debt than this one. . . . There is nothing that will let a man down quicker in the estimation of the people where you live than to beat his board." And again on June 6: "It has been now over a year and I know you could pay it if you wanted to. . . . I believe you don't intend to pay it if you can help it. . . . We are in debt and have been all the time." 15

The most poignant story involved a former classmate of Allen's, W. E. Weldon, now a bank cashier at Ladonia. Like George, Weldon had expected to hear from Beverly at Rockdale. "Please write, pay up if possible as it is very hard for me to carry you," he wrote in late May, 1892. "I am deep in debt myself and embarrassed." The ex-Georgetown student urged Allen to have his father co-sign a new note. Allen agreed, but seven months later had not returned it, offering instead some property to cover the debt. Weldon now unleashed his frustrations: "By unfortunate investments I have lost $2500 and . . . I am heavily burdened and pressed with debt. . . . I am sure you want to help me and are not ungrateful for what I did for you. . . . Your truly good friend." The following February Weldon stated exasperatedly, "I have lost $4000 recently and it has nearly driven me distracted" and asked ten dollars on account. "For God's sake attend to this immediately." Yet another month later he lamented, "I have

15George to F. L. Allen, Eskota, Texas, May 24, 1892, Correspondence (first quotation); George to B. W. Allen, Eskota, Texas, July 4, 1892, Correspondence (second quotation); George to B. W. Allen, Eskota, Texas, August 29, 1892, Correspondence (third quotation); George to B. W. Allen, Eskota, Texas, January 30, 1893, Correspondence (fourth quotation); George to B. W. Allen, Eskota, Texas, June 6, 1893, Correspondence (fifth quotation).
been looking for . . . [your letter] every day. . . . I have lost nearly everything on earth I had. Please remit at once.” 16

Weldon’s last plea resulted in uncommon success. When Allen managed to resume payment, his friend’s spirits soared: “I am truly glad you are getting on your feet and proving yourself to be the honorable boy I believed you to be at school.” At best Allen was slow in getting on his feet financially, notwithstanding the string of unpaid debts. He managed to pay some obligations at the cost of extending old notes or contracting new ones. Family generosity remained a staple in his finances, providing means for investments and warding off the more demanding creditors. Allen began reimbursing his friend Weldon only after receiving $100 from his parents. Progressively drawn to real estate as an escape from poverty, young Allen sought more capital from his family than it could provide. At such times and when encountering other reverses, Beverly succumbed to fits of depression or anxiety and neglected his personal grooming. The Allens’ inability to cover Beverly’s debt to Weldon caused the young man acute consternation. 17

Mrs. Allen concealed some requests from her ailing husband, whose ministerial duties took him away for weeks at a time. “I am sorry but I can’t send all you ask for,” she told Beverly on one of numerous occasions, “Your pa is gone. He hasn’t got enough money to keep body and soul together this summer.” Financial demands forced the Allens to hide Frederick’s state of health from his Conference, fearing forced retirement to the travel and duties which contributed to his infirmities. 18

The maturing of Beverly’s younger brother, Wilbur, provided the Allens another source of financial concern. As he approached college age, they considered moving to Austin or Georgetown in order for the boy to pursue higher education. They decided to remain in Rockdale and send him to Georgetown, entailing a significant new expense. “Wilbur is young,” acknowledged his mother, “but I don’t know that we can ever send him if we do not send him now, while Father can work a little.” 19

---

16 W. E. Weldon to B. W. Allen, Ladonia, Texas, May 28, 1892, Correspondence (first quotation); Weldon to B. W. Allen, Ladonia, Texas, December 8, 1892, Correspondence (second quotation); Weldon to B. W. Allen, Ladonia, Texas, February 10, 1892, Correspondence (third quotation); Weldon to B. W. Allen, Ladonia, Texas, March 9, 1893, Correspondence (fourth quotation).
17 Weldon to B. W. Allen, Ladonia, Texas, March 20, 1893, Correspondence (quotation); F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, March 15, 1893, Correspondence; Thurmond and Yantis to B. W. Allen, Sweetwater, Texas, January 31, 1893, Correspondence; S. W. Scott to B. W. Allen, Haskell, Texas, March 2, 1893, Correspondence; C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, September 8, 1893, Correspondence.
18 C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, June 23, 1892, Correspondence (first quotation); C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, August 4, 1892, Correspondence (second quotation); F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, May 17, 1893, Correspondence.
19 C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, December 16, 1893, Correspondence (quotation).
The Spiritual Journey of Beverly Allen

While hard pressed, the Allen family by no means lived on the edge of despair. When discussing their troubles, Mrs. Allen expressed appreciation for their blessings. Both parents exuded confidence in Beverly's eventual success. When Frederick's health and Beverly's actions permitted, the father engaged in lighthearted foolery: "Blow your horn more and your nose less and you will have better luck. . . . If Governor Hogg says anything about me, give him a nickel. . . . [K]eep your face clean and don't say 'hey.' God bless you anyway." The couple complimented Beverly's appearance and behavior during a visit, and Mrs. Allen playfully invited the son to return home to teach Wilbur to milk the cows. Once Beverly brought a pair of prairie dogs from West Texas, who crawled into the organ to sleep. Mrs. Allen frequently asked Beverly to locate used textbooks for her classes. Sometimes tragedy touched their correspondence as when a neighboring house burned to the ground, when Frederick Allen condemned a brutal lynching at Paris, Texas, and when Mrs. Allen tearfully reported the poisoning of Wilbur's dog.20

Beverly Allen's escalating realty ventures paralleled the mood in Austin. In mid-1893 the Austin Statesman boasted "Austin real estate is getting to be very much in demand." The Colorado River dam, completed in May, capped the land boom, already thriving the previous year. In a typical announcement, the firm of Covert and McCarthy advised readers in June, "If you have a few hundred dollars you want to double within the next twelve months invest in real estate." Two days earlier a news release had mentioned bank failures in New York, Ohio, Kansas, and Montana, quietly signaling falling financial dominoes. Merchants shortly advertised "Panic Prices." By the end of the year, with the Panic of '93 firmly entrenched, Covert and McCarthy pushed their Austin lots at reduced prices to few takers.21

Allen must have felt like a man who had missed the trolley and yet had to pay the fare: the boom had eluded him, but the depression seized him firmly. In early 1893 he threw himself into locating property holders eligible for tax refunds and purchasing land. Beverly's favorable descriptions of his transactions prompted his father to exclaim, "Glad you are booming," but in reality he had not improved his condition. Attempts to trade land for debts attained only limited success. Weldon refused outright some lakefront property and another creditor responded unenthusiastically,  

20C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, June 22, 1892, Correspondence; C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, July 23, 1892, Correspondence; Wilbur Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, August 16, 1892, Correspondence; F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, November 22, 1892, Correspondence (quotation); C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, December 18, 1892, Correspondence; F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, February 13, 1893, Correspondence; C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, April 4, 1893, Correspondence.

21Austin Daily Statesman, June 24, 1893 (first quotation); June 27, 1893; June 29, 1893 (second quotation); December 31, 1893.
“[I] Don’t want them if you can do better, but of course had rather have them than nothing.” Beverly lost his judgment in the eyes of his parents by negotiating a major trade and investment for a house and lot. His father reacted in the strongest language since receiving the George letter the previous year: “In the name of peace what are you thinking about giving $400 in lots and $1200 in notes on long time . . . when you know you have not made your board since you went to Austin [?].”

Driven by panic at the direction of his career and the depletion of resources, Beverly asked his father’s assistance in finding new employment. Mrs. Allen, visibly upset, told him “not to skip out to some region and not write to us for six weeks,” a reference to his Sweetwater experience. “Now if you can’t make a lawyer and can’t get anything to do, you had better pack your things and come home.” Beverly’s father considered him physically incapable of manual labor and doubted he could secure him an acceptable position. “You are old enough now to begin to care for yourself,” lectured the elder Allen, “and I am old enough to quit taking care of you.”

At this darkest moment Beverly revived his plan to enter the ministry. He had broached the subject in mid-1892, eliciting a warm but guarded reply from his parents. On that occasion indebtedness and business prospects dissuaded him. Young Allen’s latest declaration, in May, 1893, brought generous praise, erasing the tension and frustration that had so long burdened the family. “We have always felt that you were cut out to be a preacher,” admitted Frederick, urging the son to return home and prepare for his career. “You have always spoken of the day when I would be proud of you,” his mother reminded. “I think the day has come . . . .” The elder Allen suggested a date for the license, explaining that his pastor would call a church conference to enter a recommendation. But the date passed with Beverly’s expressing self-doubt to his parents and others. “Do you expect to succeed at anything?” his exasperated father asked. “If you do must decide something without asking every fool that may chance to come along as to what you will do.” On the eve of the financial collapse, Beverly remained at his desk in Austin.

22 A. W. Meredith to B. W. Allen, Wills Point, Texas, January 7, 1893, Correspondence; B. W. Allen to Meredith, Austin, Texas, January 9, 1893; Weldon to B. W. Allen, Ladonia, Texas, December 8, 1892, Correspondence; F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, February 13, 1893, Correspondence; McLean to B. W. Allen, Midland, Texas, February 16, 1893, Correspondence (second quotation); F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, April 10, 1893, Correspondence (third quotation).

23 C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, May 16, 1893, Correspondence (first quotation); F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, May 17, 1893, Correspondence (second quotation).

24 C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, July 11, 1892, Correspondence; F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, May 19, 1893, Correspondence (first quotation); C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, June 1, 1893, Correspondence (second quotation); F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, June 6, 1893, Correspondence; F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, June 20, 1893, Correspondence (second quotation).
Besieged by creditors, Allen scoured the land and bond markets for quick turnovers. The depression created attractive bargains, many beyond the reach of Allen and his clients. Some of the efforts succeeded; many did not. Beverly obtained $354.24 in leases for a landowner, but failed to collect a debt for an Elgin businessman. Allen represented Rockdale businessman C. H. Coffield on two aborted transactions. "There is no sort of trade in Col. Tracy," the client sighed. "He wanted my place for nothing." A Rockdale merchant declined his services: "I have a poor opinion of Austin property, improved and unimproved, so would not care to invest."25

The new year, 1894, inspired little cheer at Austin or Rockdale. "Worthless tramps still continue to overrun our streets," sniffed a reporter, with "numerous arrests being made by city officers yesterday." Measles threatened the capital from the adjoining countryside, and the tax office notified county tax collectors of numerous forfeitures of school lands for nonpayment of interest. C. H. Coffield, the perfect deal still evading him, refused Mr. Dittinger's offer because "he took me for a fool." An old associate promised Allen several hundred dollars in general fund and jury scrip at seventy-five cents on the dollar. Declining, Beverly lacked money even to pay his rail fare to Rockdale.26

The Allens fared no better at Rockdale. Their condition steadily deteriorated until Mrs. Allen told her son resignedly, "I am sorry indeed that you have no money. . . . I cannot pay your way home." Events escalated out of control. The parents sustained a burglary loss of an irrereplaceable ten dollars. Mrs. Allen received news of her father's death while "all alone, and it was dark and raining." Their young daughter, Mannie, became seriously ill, though her mother prayed "she may live as long as any of us." The father worked only infrequently. Beverly lost seven dollars, which Frederick surmised "is just as bad as if [you] . . . had lost a million." Young Allen applied for a patent, only to learn of "two patents almost identical to yours." Beverly fell ill. In April, utterly exhausted, his mother wrote, "Pack your things and come home. Other arrangements can be made afterward." Finally, irrevocably, with all paths blocked, save one, Beverly returned home. He was licensed to preach, May 19, 1894.27

25 Oscar L. Slaton to B. W. Allen, Snyder, Texas, July 22, 1893, Correspondence; Whitaker and Hodgman to B. W. Allen, St. Louis, Missouri, August 21, 1893, Correspondence; C. H. Coffield to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, September 19, 1893 (first quotation); R. H. Hicks to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, November 22, 1893, Correspondence (second quotation).
26 Austin Daily Statesman, January 15, 1894 (first quotation); March 3, 1894; Financial Papers 1893–1918, Box 2A133, Barker; Henry Whipple to B. W. Allen, Chicago, Illinois, January 16, 1894, Correspondence; A. R. Floyd to B. W. Allen, Clairemont, Texas, February 26, 1894, Correspondence; C. H. Coffield to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, April 22, 1894, Correspondence (second quotation).
27 C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, January 7, 1894, Correspondence; C. H. Coffield to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, November 25, 1893, Correspondence; F. L. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, January 8, 1894, Correspondence (third quotation);
The Reverend Beverly Whipple Allen served proudly in the pulpit until his retirement in 1925. In the Texas Conference he ministered Mt. Vernon, Merriltown, Cedar Creek, Buffalo and Oakwoods, Giddings, Chappell Hill, Wharton, Malakoff, and Mt. Selman and Bullard. Transferring to the New Mexico Conference he traveled to Marfa-Fort Davis and Carrizo. He moved to the West Texas Conference in 1912, preaching at Seguin, Laredo, Flatonia, and Austin. In a heroic decision, he publicly defended a disgraced pastor, while confessing his own misdeeds at Sweetwater. At his death in Austin in 1952 he left four children, a grandson, brother, and sister. “Brother Allen,” stated a colleague, “served faithfully his church and generation.”

Beverly Allen attained his place in life after a veritable ordeal by fire. In the end his God summoned Allen to His call by closing off his options.

C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, January 28, 1894, Correspondence (first quotation); T. E. Cowart to B. W. Allen, San Jose, California, March 5, 1894, Correspondence (fourth quotation); C. W. Allen to B. W. Allen, Rockdale, Texas, April 12, 1894, Correspondence (second and fifth quotations).