

Father Says He Also Is 'Gun Fanatic'

LAKE WORTH, Fla., Aug. 2 (AP) — Campus sniper Charles Whitman was "always a crack shot," according to his father, who reared him in a house with a gun in every room.

"I'm a fanatic about guns," added the father, C. A. Whitman, 47-year-old plumbing contractor. "I'm a great hunter. My boys knew all about guns. I believe in that."

Whitman, his dark hair showing touches of gray, faced newsmen's questions for the first time since young Whitman killed his mother and his wife in Austin, Tex., then slew 13 others in a shooting rampage yesterday from the observation section atop the library tower at the University of Texas. Whitman was killed by police bullets.

"He was trying to prove a point to himself," Whitman said. "Why, he was an Eagle Scout at the age of 12—the youngest ever around here. He was a concert pianist. He was a brilliant student.

Standing on the lawn in

front of his one-story, tan-shingled house in a neighborhood where he has lived for 20 years, Whitman expressed sympathy for the victims and their relatives.

"But right now," he added, "there doesn't seem to be anything I can do. I am worried right now about my own problems."

His problems, he said, began five months ago today, when Charles drove from Austin and took his mother, Whitman's wife for 26 years, back to Texas.

"I have spent many a dollar since then on the telephone trying to work out our problems," Whitman said. "I love my wife very dearly."

"There was no animosity," Whitman said. "The only animosity was that I fought like the devil to get her back."

The last time he talked to Charles, he said, was two weeks ago when they were on a telephone for half an hour.

There were no hard feelings," Whitman said. "Not at all. In fact, we set up plans for a hunting trip to Texas and Mexico this fall."

"I told him he was working too hard and he ought to slow down," Whitman said. "He was trying to do the impossible. But he didn't hear me. He was trying to prove a point. I guess we all are."