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Reminiscences of My Home

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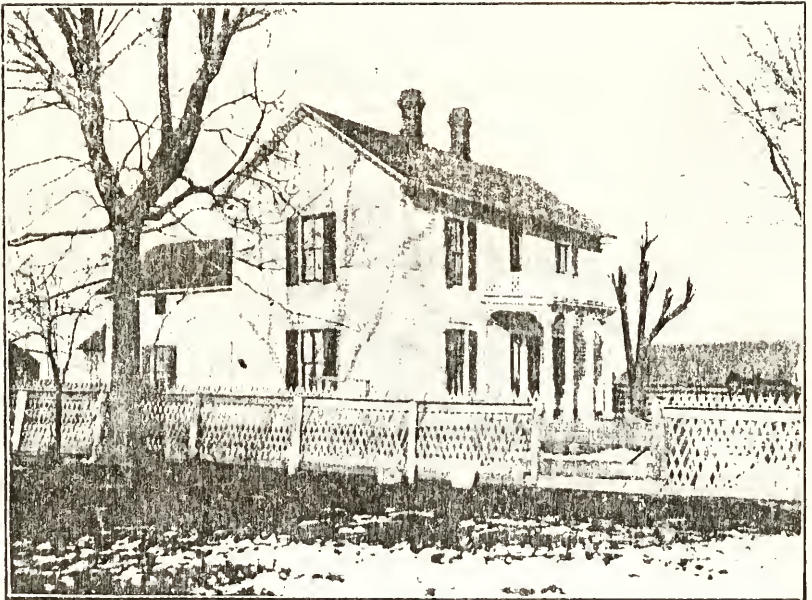
The Family Re-Union,

February 18, 1902.

11 Martin

The Fiftieth Anniversary
of the Marriage of Father and Mother.

1950195



"HOMESTEAD."

Back row 7 8 9 10 11 12 13



Front row 6 5 4 + + 1 2 3

Family Group.

Taken in year 1902 and numbered in order of their birth as follows:

+	Father.	+	Mother.	9	Joe
1	Mollie.	5	Willie.	10	Luther.
2	Ida.	6	Dick	11	Florence.
3	Ellie.	7	Hannah.	12	Omar.
4	Laura.	8	Mat.	13	Forest.

INTRODUCTION.

You who are assembled here today, listen to me and I will a tale unfold. Not the story of The Chuzzlewit Family, nor the history of Swiss Family Robinson, but the story of a simple, peasant life, the history of a family reared amid rural, country scenes.

A Remarkable Family.

This is a remarkable family from a numerical standpoint, there being that awful, mysterious, superstitious, dreadful number 13 children. Many curious stories are told about this number. During the late Spanish-American war it is said that the soldier, in many of the companies, wearing the number 13, was killed. A young man who formerly went to school to me was one of the unfortunate ones. He was the 13th in his regiment. A recent railroad accident occurred 13 miles from a certain town, the bridge that went down had 13 spans in it. The number of the train's crew was 13. The number killed in the wreck was 13. And so these instances might be multiplied, but, suffice it to say, that there are many today who fear the number 13 as they do death. But with all the superstitions that cluster about this number, and with the long train of attendant evils connected with it, I yet believe it still has vir-

tue. Did you ever stop to think how many things this number suggests? The sum of the digits multiplied by the right hand digit gives 12 and the difference of the digits multiplied by the right hand digit gives the half of 12 or 6. The same relation is true with the number reversed. For instance, the number reversed is 31. The sum of the digits multiplied by the right-hand digit gives 4, and their difference multiplied by the right-hand digit gives the half of 4 or 2. Then, again, the ten added to the number obtained by multiplying the right-hand digit by the difference of the digits and this sum subtracted from the number reversed gives 15, the total number of this family.

The right-hand digit of this number is connected with the most wonderful problems of geometry, the problems of the triangle. The triangle has three sides and three angles. There are three kinds of triangles. The sum of two sides of a triangle is greater than the third side. The difference of two sides is less than the third side. The sum of the three angles of a triangle is equal to two right angles. Triangles are equal when a side and two adjacent angles of the one equal respectively a side and two adjacent angles of the other, when two sides and the included angle of the one equal respectively to two sides and the included angle of the other, and when three sides of one equal respectively to the three sides of the other, and so on until we reach the prettiest problem of the triangle, commonly known as the 47th problem of Euclid. Thus it is seen that in each of the above problems three things are mentioned, and three is an important digit in the number 13.

The left hand digit of the number is the beginning of

all mathematical enumeration. There must be a *one* before there can be a *two*. There must be a *one* hundred before there can be a *two* hundred, a *one* thousand before a *two* thousand and so on infinito.

The number 13 has a scientific value. It introduces us, at once, to the study of the fundamental of the physical sciences, chemistry. There are 13 of the non-metallic elements from which all the gases and acids known to human agency are manufactured. Acids used in assaying and as dissolvents, those used as medicine and as disinfectants. Gases, we inhale and exhale, those we burn and those used by the medical profession.

Then this number is indirectly, if not directly, connected with the study of astronomy, for the various phases of the moon in its revolutions has given rise to the 13 lunar months in our calendar year. It was the absence of moonlight that caused those Chaldaen shepherds to make observations and to fix many of the relations now believed to exist between the stars and planets of our Sidereal system. The Great Dipper and its position with reference to the North Star, the constellation known as the Seven Sisters and others are matters now of common belief. But the Great Dipper is made up of seven stars and so is the constellation of the Seven Sisters: hence the number 13 is closely related to and connected with that famous, biblical number, 7. Who has not heard of the virtue of the number 7? Seven times around the walls of Jerico caused them to fall, seven dips in the river cleansed of the leprosy, the seven fat kine and the seven lean kine indicative of the seven years of plenty and the seven years of famine.

But this not all. The number 13 has a valuable historical connection. It will encompass the greatest men of military fame. Joshua who commanded the sun to stand still until he could whip the Phillistines. Alexander who cried because there were no more worlds to conquer, Xerxes who crossed the Hellespont with the largest army known to human history. Caesar who conquered Rome in sixty days after he crossed the Rubicon, and who penned the laconic dispatch, "Veni, Vidi, Vici—I came, I saw, I conquered." Napoleon who revolutionized France and made himself master of the French people in a few brief years. Bruce who freed Scotland from British invasion. Wellington who saw Napoleon's star of destiny set at Waterloo. Washington who freed the American colonies from the tyranny of British oppression, and who was first in war, first in peace and first in the hearts of his countrymen. Jackson who was known as the hero of New Orleans. Scott of Mexican renown, Grant the great Union general, Lee the famous confederate general, and Dewey the hero of Manila. Moreover, the United States consisted at first of 13 Colonies which have since increased and expanded until they now number some 45 or 46 states. So with this family; it has increased until the number including the children, the grand-children, the great grand-children, sons-in-law, daughters-in-law is now 46. Concerning the colonies, Washington once said, "We are one nation today and thirteen tomorrow." So with us, we are one family today but practically thirteen tomorrow. So after all, I am disposed to believe that those who look upon the number 13 with such dire superstitions and forebodings of evil, may

be mistaken. For certainly it would seem so when applied to this family.

This is a remarkable family in that, of all this number, none have become famous, nor have any as yet become infamous. We have not heard of a single one who has become one of the world's money changers, who has played upon the Board of Trade and cornered the grain markets of the world, who has yet become a railroad magnate, a cattle king, or the merchant prince of his day. Nor have any accumulated any great amount of this world's goods, unless it be some of the girls who have married, as Josh Billings says "Outside of the family, and thereby acquired the means of which they do not have full possession." Nor have we heard of any great statesmen, mathematicians, scientists or literary celebrities coming from this family. No authors, no poets, no orators—none who are likely to write their names on the scroll of fame.

But we are glad to record the fact that all are respected in the communities in which they live, that they are honest, upright, industrious, useful citizens and good neighbors. To me this is far better than all the accumulated wealth of the past, the gold of Ophir, or the diamonds of Golconda.

Yet there is another remarkable thing that exists in this family. Of all the children, reared as we were on this old farm, surrounded by the scenes of country life, educated and trained in the duties and labors of the farm, there are only two of all this number who really can be considered farmers. Of the six boys only one remains to tell the story of the farm, and I understand that he is ready to leave it as soon as an opportunity presents itself. The

others have left the quietude of the farm for the noisy, busy life of the town or city. Yet there may have been a well founded reason for this; for to have given each of the 13 children a farm, such as a farmer of today should have, meant a distribution by long division. But how many men in Randolph county own enough land to give each of thirteen a farm of 160 acres? Or granting that the girls married men who own their own farms, how many men would have been able to give each of six boys a farm of the above number of acres? To each of the above questions my father was not able to give a favorable response. But there may have been another reason for seeking the urban life; being at all times a very large family, our social natures must have been highly developed. We loved each other then, as we do now. We played together, we enjoyed each other's society and we always had a good time. But, as the older members became of age and either married or left the homestead, the others naturally sought that society, joy and pleasure to which they had been accustomed. Not finding this on the old farm, they very naturally drifted away from it into the towns and cities. But this condition of affairs is true in a great many families of the present generation. Everybody is trying to get into the towns and cities, and so congested is the urban population of today, that the condition arising therefrom constitutes one of the greatest social problems of the age.

Something must be done to keep the boys and girls on the farms, and I am truly sorry that more of our family, especially the boys, are not farmers. The cities must look to the great agricultural districts for support. As the great

Silver champion said in his famous Chicago speech: "Burn down your cities, and your cities will spring up again as if by magic; but destroy our farms and the grass will grow in the streets of every city in the country."

Again, this family is remarkable in the depth, power, strength and intensity of the family tie. We are brothers and sisters today as much as we were in the days gone by when we were children around the same fireside and at the same family altar. Time; distance, change of scenes and of interest have not weakened, but have strengthened this family feeling. How blessed it is that brothers and sisters can dwell together in unity, that with the diversity of interests and with the multiplied responsibilities of life, that with our own families and the pleasures and duties arising therefrom, we have never yet lost the love, the feeling and the interest in the home of our childhood days.

I venture the assertion that should calamity befall any member of this family, the others would move as if by magic to his relief and would contribute of his means even to the division of his last penny. I trust that it may never be otherwise for this is the kernel, the power and the secret of our family unity.

But the most remarkable thing connected with this family is the fact that the destroying angel, death, has not yet invaded its ranks. Where on the face of the green globe would you go to find another family so large and so fortunate? Certainly, the Giver of all good gifts has poured out his richest blessings upon us in the nature of life, health and happiness.

We have all passed through the period of childhood

and youth and many of us far into manhood and womanhood. Some already have the snows of many winters sprinkled about their brows. They now have children and grand-children of their own, and so the family has grown until it now consists of four generations. I believe that this condition is sufficient to challenge the admiration of all mankind.

My Recollections of the Different Members of this Family.

My earliest, positive memory of sister Mollie dates back to my first day in school, though I am not sure but that she had spanked me many times before then. It was in the Spring of the year that I followed her to school to meet, for the first time, that awful specter, the "skule marm."

Mollie was a beautiful girl. She had a gentle nature, a modest and retiring disposition. She was studious, thoughtful, obedient and popular with her schoolmates and her teachers. She was always very solicitous about the other children of the family, caring for them and looking after their interests at school as Mother would do at home. She would spread the noon day lunch and apportion the same with great care among us. We all carried our school troubles and grievances to her for adjustment and to this day, I look upon her as my foster mother.

I remember distinctly the day she was married. It was a keen, sharp, frosty morning. The sky was clear and early the invited gusts began to arrive. I hung around the

front door steps in the sun to keep my feet warm and to watch the arrival of relatives and friends. I stood at the front door by the side of my father while the ceremony was being said, and I shall never forget the impression that scene made upon me. When I saw her leave the house by the side of the one she had chosen as her life companion, the feeling of sadness and sorrow which came over me will follow me to my grave.

But after Mollie left, sister Ida became the leader and the one to whom we, as children, naturally turned for counsel and guidance. She was fully equal to the responsibility and filled the vacant place with much satisfaction to us all, though it was a long time before we could accustom ourselves to the continued absence of Mollie.

Ida was always of a jolly, happy nature, full of life, merriment and fun. She believed in a good time and always had it wherever she went. She seemed to be perfectly at home in any thing and everything she undertook to do.

At all gatherings where conversation and play of any kind were the leading entertainment and amusement of the hour, Ida was always mistress of ceremonies. She was one of the best actors in a charade I ever saw, suiting the action to the word and the word to the action. In addition to this, she recited well and her interpretation of pieces was most excellent.

I remember that I was somewhat slow to recognize Ida's supremacy in matters pertaining to the children. But one little incident which I shall here relate served to settle this question and to put to rest forever any doubt in my mind as to her authority.

It was part of our daily duty to help Mother milk and to each was assigned a certain cow. I was to milk old Rose, as we called her, and Ida was to milk old Liz. One cold morning just after a snow, I happened to be the first one to reach the milk pen and finding Ida's cow at the place of milking, I decided to milk her rather than trudge through the snow to drive up my own. I had hardly commenced the task when Ida appeared upon the scene and immediately began to interrogate me as to why I should be milking her cow. I replied that I was cold and that old Liz was the first cow I saw in place and I had decided to milk *her*. She reasoned with me and tried to show me that I was wrong, but I was in no condition at that time to be convinced. Finally, she demanded of me that I should go get my own cow. I positively refused to comply with the demand. Now, I shall not relate what took place there and then, but my coat received a thorough dusting that morning and I finally went after my own cow. But not being satisfied with Ida's adjustment of the case, I carried the matter to Father and Mother for final settlement. They decided that Ida was right. I do not believe that I ever questioned Ida's authority after this incident.

Ida was married in midwinter. It was one of those old fashioned, cold winters when the snow not only lay deep on the ground, but was piled in great drifts here and there that blocked all passage. I remember this well for I had grown sufficiently to be general lackey boy and did special service on this occasion. I was sent out to buy eggs to make the cakes and eggnog for the coming event. It seemed at this time that the old hens had gone on a

strike, for eggs were very scarce and the price was unusually high. It took me several days to procure the required number, but I finally did so.

The wedding was a very large one, despite the extremely cold weather. It seemed to me that everybody was there. Ida was the very picture of beauty and hope to me, as she stood before the marriage altar. How earnestly she took the marriage vows and how firmly she has kept them. Much of the sunshine of our home went out when she was taken away.

I now step more into the domain of actual experience when I take up Ellie and Laura, the two sisters who jointly succeeded Ida. They understood each other perfectly and were the most devoted sisters then and are now that I have ever seen. They were always together. One would not go without the other. What one desired the other wanted, what one said the other sanctioned, what one did the other approved, and about the only difference of opinion that ever existed between them was in the selection of their husbands. They did marry different men.

I went with them most everywhere, not as a page but more as a companion, for I had now grown old enough to stop riding behind and to take a horse for myself. We went visiting together, we went to picnics and parties and to church together. From these common experiences there sprang up a companionship akin to admiration. We told each other of the nice things that were said. I reported to them about the boys and they to me about the girls. When about the house, I was with them at their work, either discussing what had taken place on some previous occasion or what we would do at some future time.

Ellie was one of the handiest persons with the scissors and needle I ever saw. She could cut, fit and make most anything in the way of clothing she desired. Her clothing always fit as though they had grown on her. She had excellent judgment and taste. It was to her I usually went to advise about my own clothing, collar and tie, hat, coat, vest, pants, etc. Her approval was sufficient. Her advice final.

Ellie was an exceptionally good little girl I am told. It is said of her that she would play for hours alone, that she was never contentious and that she was easily pleased and satisfied. I know that she was a good girl at school and a hard student. The subject of arithmetic was always difficult for her. It was the bugbear of her school room existence. I have seen her many a time go to sleep over this lesson at night. But she never gave up, she would nod awhile and try it again. She always appeared easy and natural in conversation and manner at home and in society. What she did and said seemed to be the most natural thing to do and to say, and best of all she has ever been willing to assist the younger children in their attempts to get a start.

Laura was naturally endowed with a strong intellect and a brilliant imagination. She could plan a narrative with correct proportions. The characters and scenes would blend in perfect harmony. So complete the plot, so well did the characters act their parts, so natural and well suited the scenes that it was indeed difficult to believe the story to be fictitious. She seemed to think the narrative through and to know where and how to bring in the parts in order to give the story complete unity.

She was gifted with a melodious voice and could sing most anything that she had ever heard sung. With the strength, compass and command she had of her voice, I believe, if trained, she would have made a great singer. I speak tenderly and compassionately of sister Laura because of her early affliction. I painfully remember when she had to be kept in a dark room on account of her afflicted eyes. Those of us who were then in the family vied with each other in paying our devotions to her, and words fail to express our joy when we realized that her eyesight would be restored.

I remember that I once stood on the bank of an excited, swollen stream, just after a big rain, and saw Laura fall in. She sank twice out of sight and was about to sink the third time, when, as I believe to this day, it was by a stroke of providence she was saved.

Laura is a person of the very tenderest sympathies, and in the power and strength of her devotion to the family she excels us all. Ellie and Laura, as was Mollie and Ida, were both obedient, good girls and genuine, true sisters. They were my first real companions and, looking back to that period, I believe now that I was really devoted to them.

I would do violence to the story, at this point, were I not to mention what seems too me to have been the adopted member of this family, Noah Birkhead. Noah was an own cousin who had come to board with us, but from the first was treated as a member of the family. He was one of the purest boys I ever knew. He was honest and upright in all his dealings. Noah joined our circle and there were four of us, instead of three, to vie with each other in the

good times we then had. He most always went with Laura and they always appeared to have a great deal to talk about. He would consult Laura about matters as I would Ellie, and so nothing was ever thought of the attentions he paid to her. I noticed, however, that Noah was a little slow to pay attention to other girls. His first consideration was for Ellie and Laura, but when sifted to its final analysis, it was always for Laura. He had the tenderest solicitude for her, careful and thoughtful of her interest and pleasure. When Laura was old enough, they were married. No one could have objected to this match, though related as they were, for it was the result of love pure and simple. As I view it now, it seems to me that Noah and Laura just grew up together and were mated. Noah was one of the truest friends I ever had, and I can never look upon him in any other light than that of a real brother.

I come now to one of the most energetic, hustling, stirring members of the family, commonly known as Little Dick. Dick was a very fat little fellow and could sleep longer and oftener than any of us. He was very hard to waken of mornings. He went to bed early and got up late, and, if he had half a chance, would sleep some during the day. But this seeming inactivity was nothing more than a matter of latent energy or pent up force which has given vent in later years to a most active, business life. Dick was always an interesting character to me because of his individuality. He thought for himself, made up his own mind about matters and things, acted on his own judgment, and kept his own counsel.

His first day in school was characteristic of the boy. At noon as Uncle Dick Martin who was hauling rails from the "big woods," passed by with a load, Dick hopped up on the wagon and went home. When he reached home he was asked why he came home, and he said 'because he had learned all that teacher "knowed" and he thought he might as well come home.' Dick had little fondness for books and he acted as though the school was too little a thing for him to fool with. His thoughts were more of a practical, business nature.

He and I have done many a hard day's work together on this old farm, but Dick was always too slow for me. I could never get him to hurry unless we were finishing up a piece of work. He would then increase his speed and both of us would strike up a whistle. Father used to say that the whistle was an unfailing sign of a task finished or a piece of work completed. But one thing was noticeable. When Dick was through with a piece of work it was well done. This was not always true of my work. I was generally in a hurry. I believed in quantity rather than quality. I had exalted ideas and was somewhat of an expansionist, as one little incident will show. When mother had decided that I should wear pants instead of dresses, I insisted that she should cut my pants out by Uncle Dick's pattern.

Dick could handle an ax with apparent ease. He was a good hand to chop down trees, cut and split rails. He knew how to set the wedge to split the log with the grain, and he could lay as pretty a fence worm as I ever saw. In addition to this, he was a masterhand with the cradle. He

could swing it with perfect freedom and to follow him all day in the wheat or oat field was no easy task.

Another thing about Dick. He could make a dollargo further than any body. We could be given the same amount of money, Dick would always buy more and have more left than it was possible for me to do. In this he gave evidence of what, in later years, has developed into a successful element of a good merchant—that of being a good buyer. I am more convinced of this now from the following incident: I was on the train not long since and happened to sit down by traveling man. Pretty soon after being seated, we began a conversation on the effects of the dry weather as to the sale of goods. He said that he had noticed but little difference, that merchants were laying in about the usual amounts. After discussing the pros and cons of the situation, the conversation turned on what constitutes a successful merchant. We both agreed that the first element of success was to be a good buyer, that the second element, was to know the demands and needs of your customers, the third, not to overstock this demand, fourth to be a good seller, and fifth was to be a good collector. The next point in the conversation was on the ups and downs of the merchant in the smaller towns and villages, and so the conversation continued from one topic to another along this line, until, finally, we began to discuss individual merchants. By this time I found out that he was a traveling salesman for a clothing house, and so I asked him who were some of the successful clothing merchants in Moberly. He mentioned a number but finally said, "There is one of the most hustling, pushing, little clothing merchants in that town I

know of anywhere. He knows how to buy. He knows what his customers need, and he knows how to sell." "Now," said he, "if he is a good collector, and I believe he is, he will one day be the merchant prince of that town." I said, "to whom do you refer?" He replied, "to little Dick Martin of the Little Dick Clothing Company. He knows how to work up trade and he knows how to hold it, when he gets it." I inquired if he always met his bills promptly. He said "Yes," that Little Dick always discounted his bills. "Then," I asked, "is he honest and upright in his dealings?" He said, "yes, he is as straight as a string. I would sell him any amount of goods-" "Well," said I, "I am very glad indeed to hear this, Little Dick is a brother of mine." "What!" said he, "a brother of *yours*?" I said "yes, he is a brother of mine." "Well," he says, "you don't look any thing alike, there is no more resemblance between you and him than there is between you and me." "I can't help that, he and I are brothers," I said, "and we have done many a day's work together." "Well, that beats me," he said, and giving me his hand, he added, "If you are as well up in your business as Little Dick is in his, you are a dandy."

I hope that all the gentleman said about Dick in this conversation is true, for he certainly deserves the highest measure of success. One thing is certain, that no member of the family has done more to keep up the family tie than Dick. He has always borne more than his share of the expenses of our meeting, and has ever been the moving spirit in this direction. The meeting today is due more largely to his efforts than to the efforts of any other member of this family.

There are, in most families, some necessary adjuncts which form an incidental part of their history. Our family is no exception to this rule. So far in this story those of us mentioned, remember, no doubt, old Spencer and Phoebe the family horses, and old Ring the family watch dog.

Spencer was the horse that Grandpa Davis gave to mother when she was married. He served our family for many years. I think he was about 30 years old when he died. He was a beautiful bay horse, neat and trim in build and fleet of foot. Spencer was gentle and well dispositioned, a good work horse, and a splendid saddle animal. In his old days it was impossible to keep him fat, and as a result his bones seemed to protrude. I have a very distinct and painful recollection of his sharp back bone, for at that time I was at the right age to ride behind, open gates and hitch horses.

"Old Phoebe," as we called her, was a little chestnut sorrel nag, compact in build and very easy to keep. She was what we usually termed a very hardy animal, but in many respects, the meanest nag I ever had any thing to do with. Many a time has father sent me to the pasture after the horses when Old Phoebe would run me out. But I soon learned that she was a coward, that if I would take a whip or a club and stand my ground, Old Phoebe would let me severely alone. She would balk on all occasions without provocation or warning, and no amount of whipping would induce her to move, but if you took her by the bridle bit, you could easily lead her to pull a tremendous load. With all her mean traits, she was a valuable animal in that she was a magnificent brood mare.

Phoebe, like Spencer, lived to a ripe old age, and when far along on life's journey, they were given their freedom; that is, they were not used as regular work horses, but more to do what might be termed chores about the farm. For instance, on hog-killing days they were thought safe to use in as much as they would not scare at the dead animals. However, we were all mistaken in this. On one of these delightful occasions, at noon when the hogs had all been killed, scalded, scraped and put on the sled to be hauled to the smoke house, mother announced the dinner hour. Father thought it perfectly safe to leave the sled in care of Phoebe and Spencer while we ate our dinners. He did not think it necessary to even drop the traces of these old, gentle horses. But to our surprise, for some reason unknown to any one to this day, Old Phoebe and Spencer did get scared and ran off with that sled of hogs. They scattered hogs from the yard fence to the back side of the field, but when found, neither of them was hurt and both were ready to retrace their steps and to stop at intervals to get the hogs scattered along the way. This amusing incident taught us a lesson that it is better to be on the safe side and always drop the traces.

I take pleasure in paying my respects to Old Ring, for he was in no way a harmful dog. He was fond of the children and would let us ride on his back and play with him for hours at a time. He would take hold of one end of a stick with some of us at the other end, and would trot across the yard in an attitude of seeming joy and delight. He would catch us by the hand and no matter how exciting the game he never so far forgot himself as to leave even the

prints of his teeth. We could leave our coats and hats or anything, as to that matter, in Old Ring's care and he would never leave them until we returned. He was faithful to his master. When father would be away at nights, Old Ring would take his stand on the clay bank and would howl at intervals during the night. He always made it known when a guest or a stranger arrived, though he was never vicious nor dangerous. As a hunter, Old Ring was a signal failure. I doubt if he ever caught a rabbit in a fair-square race. However, he served the family well and lived to a good ripe dog age.

Now I turn my eyes down the family line and write more from memory than from actual experience and association. The second division of this family, like the first, begins with girls.

Hanna and Mat were like Mollie and Ida in nature, disposition and tastes. Hannah being of a modest retiring disposition, while Mat was more of a happy, jolly nature. Hannah was conservative and slow to act and speak, Mat was aggressive and quick to act and to express herself. Hannah would weigh and consider, Mat would make up her mind, act and pass on. Hannah was old in ways before she reached womanhood, Mat bid fair to always be blithe and young.

But with all their natural differences they were happily suited to each other. Hannah constituted the balance wheel, Mat the moving force. Hannah would take much and say little, Mat would say much and take little. Hannah was easily imposed upon, Mat would stand her ground and contend for every inch of it. Each acted as a check to the other.

Back row 6 1 10 3 4 2 5 9



Front row 7 11 + 13 + 12 8

Family Group.

Taken in year 1886 and numbered in order of their birth as follows:

+	Father.	+	Mother.	9	Joe.
1	Mollie.	5	Willie.	10	Luther.
2	Ida.	6	Dick	11	Florence.
3	Ellie.	7	Hannah.	12	Omar.
4	Laura.	8	Mat.	13	Forest.

They were both good girls at school, Hannah one of the best and Mat, one of the wittiest. Mat was not afraid to venture an assertion, and to argue the point. She was positive, vivacious and enthusiastic in a recitation. Hannah would never recite unless called upon. She never spoke unless spoken to. She was unassertive, even as to her own rights.

They came upon the scene of action when their help was most needed. Mother had reached that period in life when the heavy work of previous years was already telling on her. But Hannah and Mat were fully equal to the situation and took hold of the work in a telling and satisfactory way. They soon gave evidence of their willingness and ability to do. They took great interest in the affairs of the home and, although directly opposite in their dispositions and natures, they were perfectly harmonious in their associations and labors. They were good girls, high minded and noble, obedient and useful.

Hannah was like Ellie, she could cut, fit and make most any kind of garment. Mat, like Laura, could learn to sing most any song she heard. I have the fondest recollections of them in their childhood days. They were such clean, neat, nice little girls, and I shall always cherish these memories with pride and satisfaction. They did their part to make this home blessed.

I remember them also as young ladies. They were very companionable with me when at home on my summer vacations. I flatter myself yet that they were glad to see me for they acted that way. We went much together and enjoyed each others society. I soon found myself at a

loss without them. They were uniformly courteous and kind to me and paid great deference to my judgment.

My earliest memory of Joe is connected with rather an amusing incident, though at the time we thought it a very serious matter. Joe had been given his first pair of pants and in his hilarity over the matter was running here and there about the premises having a general good time. One day something happened to get into one of his eyes. We thought it was a hayseed, a fine cinder or some foreign substance. Any way it pained the little fellow very severely. He cried continuously for a day or two. Finally, a physician was summoned, but he failed to find anything and gave it as his opinion that Joe would be all right in a day or so. One thing was noticeable, however, the doctor could not get Joe to open his eyes at all, and he seemed to think that the eyelids on the inside were sore from crying and holding the tears. It was suggested that the eyes be bathed in cold water and that Joe be taken out into the open air late of evenings and early of mornings. This task, or duty, fell to my lot. I see the little fellow plainly now as I would place him in front of me astride of "Old Bet" when we would start out for the ride. I would tell stories about the things I saw, how interesting and beautiful they were, etc., in order to induce Joe to open his eyes, but to no avail. One morning early, while the dew was yet on the grass and sparkling in the early sun light, I started out to take him for his usual ride. It was a delightful morning, I felt good and my imagination was at its best. I proceeded with my story telling. We had gone but a little distance when I saw a beautiful bird in a

tree just a head of us, and I exclaimed, Oh, what a pretty bird that is! Look, Joe! look! It's the prettiest thing I ever saw! Joe raised his head a little and said, "Whey? I don't tee dat bud." I looked down and his eyes were wide open. I was very much gratified, but I was afraid to say anything about his eyes for fear he would close them again. So I continued to talk about the birds, trees, grass, flowers, etc., and finally turned Old Bet around and started back home. We had not proceed far when Joe began to talk, and by the time we reached home, he was talking about everything along the road. I rode up to the front styles and called mother to take Joe down. I wish you could have seen that expression of joy on her face when she discovered that Joe had his eyes open. I shall never forget it.

Joe was a good boy, and always a good worker. He was a great home body and early gave evidence of his interest in and love for the home. He is now the only one of the children whose home ties have never been broken. He has practically always been at home. The burden of caring for the farm has been upon him for a number of years. He was exceptionally good to his sisters, and took pleasure in providing ways and means for them to go, and he enjoyed going with them. This to me was one of his most commendable traits. But above all Joe has been good to his parents. He has never left them and to this day they depend upon him.

Luther was a very delicate, little boy. It was thought for long time that he would never out grow it, but he did finally. He was very slow in learning to talk, and some

of his early attempts at speech were very amusing indeed. Before he had grown sufficiently tall to reach the door latch, and when he wished to pass from one room to another, he would walk up to the door, utter some sort of expression, the phraseology of which no one ever understood, but the meaning of which we all knew, and, if this did not bring some one to open the door, he would then knock with his foot instead of his hand.

Luther was a great person to visit. He enjoyed going to Noah's, Uncle Dick's, Uncle Tom's and around in the neighborhood generally, to stay all night, not occasionally but frequently. He was proud and fond of dress, but as to this affection we can all plead guilty. Father used to say that our pride and love of dress would always keep us poor. I think, we should remember that dress does not always make the man, but that the lack of it sometimes does make the fellow. Luther could keep a suit of clothes cleaner, nicer and for a longer time than any of the boys. He was very particular about how his clothes fit him. This is a very commendable trait in any one, for there is nothing more uncomfortable and annoying than an ill-fitting garment.

Luther was a very slow eater, and this more than any other one thing has been conducive to his good health. What a blessing it would be if more of us were like him in this respect. Business and professional men and those of sedentary habits should take time to eat. They should never eat in a hurry.

Luther was always honest and upright, persevering and ambitious. He was very anxious to do something and to

be somebody; he had high aims and noble aspirations. I am told that he stands well in the community where he lives, that he is trusted and respected by all classes of citizens and that he is a great success at his chosen calling. I am proud of this for he once made his home with me, and I discovered in him then what has since proven to be the mark of a successful man. I am proud of him.

Joe and Luther were good boys to work and the old farm took on new life and vigor under their management. It seems to me that they did more work in the same length of time than Dick and I did. They could not have been better workers than Dick, but they were better equipped for work than we were. They produced more food, they raised more stock, the farm was kept in better repair, and a period of prosperity seemed to prevail. It was during this period that the new house was built and other improvements were made.

I spent my vacations at home then and I had ample opportunity to observe them at their work. They both had the air of business about them. They let nothing frivolous or foolish interfere with their daily duties. They worked early and late, and I thought then as I think now, that they were a blessing and a benediction to this home.

Florence was the prettiest little baby I think I have ever seen. She was a plump, round faced, fair skinned, blue-eyed little girl. I remember very well my first sight of her. I had been down to Uncle Noah Martin's on a visit, and when I returned, I was told that a little visitor had arrived at our house. Of course I was anxious to see who it was. I could hardly wait until I could get into the

house. When I entered, I was told to look at the foot of the bed and to see what I could find there. I turned the covers down and to my surprise, I found the little stranger and guest. I was so animated with joy that I proposed there and then to take her up in my arms, but mother objected and I had to content myself at looking down through the deep covers at the object of my admiration. I was somewhat disappointed when they told me it was a girl for I thought we needed more boys in the family. I know that I shall never forget how she looked, nor how I felt over the new discovery I had made.

Florence was a very modest, retiring, diffident little girl, and very shy of strangers. I can see her now secret-ing herself behind mother, or hiding away when strangers would enter. Her modest air and deportment then, betokened her womanly qualities and virtues now.

One thing that I noticed about her early in life and it is a prominent trait yet, when she undertook to do a thing she never stopped until she had completed it. She seemed to have been endowed from the very beginning of her life with an unusual amount of energy, ambition and determination. She is the only one of all the children who completed a course of study at school. She never quit until she had obtained her diploma and had received the applause, "Well done thou good and faithful servant."

Florence was the seventh girl and therefore by virtue of this fact has a halo of glory about her. She has had the accumulated experience, counsel and advice of six older sisters and the advantages that the progress of the times and the family could give. She has a great future.

Her education and training together with her ambition and industry only await an opportunity. The time is not far when she will be in the front rank of her newly chosen profession

It has been difficult indeed for me to look upon her in any other light than that of a little girl, for it is the memories of her childhood that most fondly cling to me. But during the past year I have had an opportunity to study her in her more womanly qualities. She is scrupulously honest. She is energetic, industrious, persevering and ambitious and one of the best students I ever saw. In addition, I find her worthy and well qualified, modest, upright and honorable. The little blue-eyed, diffident girl has now grown to be the modest, dignified woman, a blessing to us all and a shining mark in this family.

I now come to two of the greatest boys in this family, Omar and Forest. Such love and friendship, such confidence and companionship in boys are rarely met with. I know of no greater example in all history and but one incident that in any way approaches it, and this is found in the story of Damon and Pythias. There is no condition in life in which these boys could not be found battling shoulder to shoulder in each others cause. They seem to be so firmly bound and so closely united one to the other, that nothing so far in life has shaken their faith or even loosened the cords of love that bind them. They have never been separated. They played together as children, they worked together as boys, they were playmates at school, they were associated as youths and as young men, and, at

this time, though engaged in different lines of business, they are with each other daily.

I confess that they have been the objects of much study to me. I have tried to find out the secret of their devotion to each other. They are in many respects very different boys. Omar is of a bilious temperament Forest, of a nervous temperament. Omar has dark complexion and dark eyes, Forest, light complexion and blue eyes. They look nothing alike, there is no striking family resemblance between them. They are different types of humanity. And so I have concluded that they are far enough apart in disposition and nature to have no unpleasant disagreements and yet close enough together to love each other dearly.

Omar has been from his early childhood a great talker. He has never been wanting in the power to express himself. When a little boy he evinced a readiness and an eagerness to tell about what he heard and saw. This fact alone has developed in him the power to observe closely and to discriminate accurately. The ordinary happenings of the day would furnish sufficient material with which Omar could entertain the family for an hour at a time, and one might consider himself lucky if got a word in "edge ways." He has always had a great "knack" at imitating. He can represent with perfect ease the speech, voice, facial expression, gesture and attitude of those he imitates. This power in Omar, if it had been trained in the line of sketching, would have made him one of the world's great cartoonists. He was always the life of the family.

While Forest is not lacking in the power to express

himself, he is no match for Omar in a talking contest. When a story or an incident, known to both of them, is to be related he readily defers to Omar.

Forest is the baby boy, and the thirteenth child in the family. He is therefore enveloped in the mysteries of this magic number. Whatever he does, whatever of success or failure he may make, whatever calamity may befall him must be attributed to this fact. But so far in life fortune has smiled upon him. He has been a success and the future for him looks brighter than the past. When a little fellow, Forest was a great boy to do chores for his mother, carry in the stove wood, get the kindlings, draw water and the like. He would hunt the hens' nest in the high weeds and the hay mows and gather in the fresh eggs. He would drive the cows to and from the pasture and "keep the calves off at milking time." He was always his Mama's boy, taking his difficulties, troubles and disappointments to her, and strange to say, he never went away without her consolation and sympathy. But Omar was much the same way in this particular. They both to this day fondle around mother as they did when little boys. They seem to vie with each other in their demonstrations of love for their parents. This is one of their most commendable traits.

Omar and Forest were both good boys to work, happy and jolly, full of life and hope. They were natures real noblemen.

"They knew of the bee's morning chase,
Of the wild flower's time and place,
How the ant digs his cell,

How the ground mole sinks his well,
 How the bird feeds its young,
 How the robin's nest is hung.
 They knew where the whitest lilies blow,
 Where the ripest berries grow,
 They had outward sunshine, inward joys,
 They were nature's real boys."

They⁷ are today about the happiest, most hopeful young men I know of. They see the bright side of life. The sun shines for them, the birds sing in their trees and life is worth⁶ the living. What a blessed condition this is! Why permit the clouds to hover near, when so much sunshine is everywhere?

Omar and Forest quit the farm rather young in life, probably due to the fact that they entered the town schools earlier, and thus acquired a love for city life. They made their home with sister Ida who has been a real mother to them, and has done much to give them the sunshine of life. No one dare make an unfavorable criticism on Ida, or any member of her family, in their presence. They are very devoted to her and they should be. In this connection I wish to pay my devotions again to Ida and Mollie, for I have made my home with both of them. They were always good to me and very much interested in my future.

Omar and Forest are to me great boys and give much promise to their more matured manhood. They are yet young and have many years of usefulness before them. I cherish the fondest hopes for their future.

This sketch would be incomplete without a eulogy on Old Fisher, the family horse, which came upon the scene a number of years after the death of Old Spencer.

Fisher was a little iron grey horse, spirited and gay and gifted with all the gaits known to horseshlesh. He was the most useful horse we ever had. He served in all capacities, in the plow, wagon and buggy and was a magnificent saddle animal. He was game, wiry and long winded, there was no end to his "bottom." He could go all day and never exhibit the least fatigue. He was an ambitious horse, proud, full of life and always in the lead. He has served this entire family, though the older members had left home before the period of his reign. We all claimed him, and when more than one of us wished to go at the same time, the contest was always for who should have Old Fisher to ride or to drive. I know that I was unusually happy when it fell to my lot to use him. In fact I would plan ahead, book dates, trade around and "snitch" a little on the others in order to multiply and increase my chances to use Old Fisher. I remember that I once had him booked for four Sundays in succession. I had used him on two successive Sundays and had him saddled and ready for use on the third, when all of a sudden, it seemed to occur to the others that I was monopolizing too much of his service. They conspired against me and applied to Father for redress of their grievances. Father was standing before the "Big Glass" shaving, and as I passed out to start on my Sunday's trip, he called to me, and demanded an explanation. I told him that I had traded for the use of Fisher and that I thought it was all right to use him. He said to me, that

Fisher belonged to the family and no one had a right to monopolize his service, and that I had better saddle one of the other horses and use it that day. I did so, but it was with the very greatest reluctance.

I recite the above incident to show the popularity of Fisher. He had his faults it is true, but they were so insignificant when compared with his many virtues that I refrain from mentioning a single one of them. Certain it is, that his long and faithful service deserved for him a decent burial and a marble slab erected to tell of his last resting place.

I must not forget in passing to mention "Old Watch" the second "watch dog" that belonged to this family. He was a large black dog, full of life and determination. He could sniff the air and scent a stranger for miles away. He was proud and at times a little boastful, and somewhat ferocious in his nature, for he would bite. No stranger or guest entered the yard without first making his peace with "Watch." I know it used to be a question with me when I would come home on a visit, especially if I arrived at night, just how I should manage "Old Watch." I knew it would never do to fight him for he was a brave dog.

On one occasion I reached home about midnight and it was with the greatest difficulty that I obtained Watch's permission to enter the yard. He evidently had forgotten me, but before I reached the front porch he recognized who I was. I shall not soon forget his demonstrations of joy and delight at this recognition.

"Old Watch" was Mother's dog. She could do more with him than any of us. If trouble arose he went to her

for protection. He would lie down at her feet and seemed to feel perfectly safe in her presence. He was always at Mother's command. He would keep the chickens, ducks and geese out of the front yard for her, and, no matter how eager the chase, when she commanded him, he would stop. He lived to be an old dog and at all times proved himself to be a useful adjunct to the family.

It is hardly necessary that I should say anything much about myself, since so many little incidents connected with my home life are scattered throughout this sketch. Then again the memories of my boyhood days crowd upon me so thick and fast that it would be impossible at this time to record them all. But as I view my early life, I realize more than ever that I was a genuine boy, full of boyish sports and games. I enjoyed running, jumping, wrestling, pitching horse shoes, playing mumble-peg, marbles, town ball and bull-pen. I was fond of the chase and loved the bow and arrow, the cross-bow and the gun.

I had also a peculiar fondness for horses and I took great care of the team I worked or the horse I rode. My team was always curried and rubbed sleek before going to work and this fact often caused me to be late in getting out to the field.

I loved study and got along fairly well at school. There was only one day in all the school year that I could be induced to stay at home with any degree of contentment, and that was "hog killing day." This was to me a great event and I looked forward to it with much pleasure. After I learned how to read and how to get the thought from the printed page, I became very fond of books and

most of my leisure hours thereafter were spent in reading. One little incident in this connection will show my eagerness to obtain knowledge.

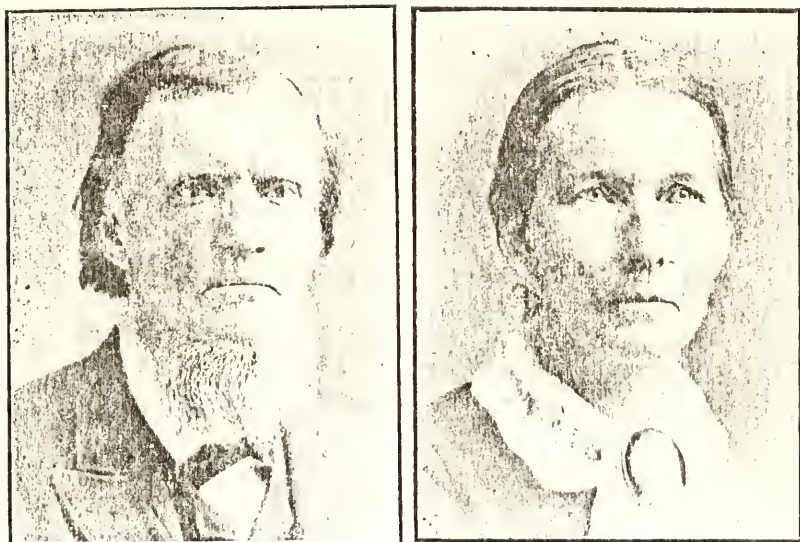
We were short of horses one spring and Father bought one from Uncle Dick. The horse was a little old at the time and subject to what we call "thumps." He could not stand hard work in the summer seasons without being subjected to these spells. Knowing this fact, I chose him as my plow horse. This was somewhat of a surprise, for "Old Dave" as we called him was not a very attractive horse. Then this was an unusual proceeding on my part, for I was always very particular about the horses I worked. I took my book to the field with me, and would plow "Old Dave" just as fast as I could make him go until I would get him to "thumping," then of course I was compelled to stop and let him rest. I would then get into the shade of a fence corner and read while he was resting. In this way during the summer, I committed the constitution of the United States, read the life sketches of Hamilton, Jefferson, Clay, Calhoun, Webster and Benton.

I have always felt a little conscience stricken over the matter, for I doubt seriously whether or not the end justified the means. I remember once buying a book, entitled "Footprints of Time." I think I paid five dollars for this book. I made the money in the month of August digging a pond. I know the weather was extremely hot at the time and I had to work very hard. What attracted me most to the book was the brief history it contained of the Ancient Eastern Monarchies, the Grecian States and the Roman Republic. I knew nothing much of Ancient History, and of

course was very much pleased over my purchase. I took the book to Father. He examined its contents and said, "My son, I am afraid you have paid too much for this book. What it contains can be found in any good Ancient history and the history of the United States." I knew then that Father did not fully approve of the purchase, and I have found out since that what he said about the book is true, but at that time it was a source of much information and inspiration to me. It was here that I first learned about Persia, Greece and Rome, Darius and Xerxes, Demosthenes and Pericles, Caesar and Hannibal. I became very anxious to know more about the history of these nations and the doings of these men. So after all I am disposed to believe that the purchase of this book has proven to be a great event in my life.

And so I might continue, but this is sufficient to show the trend of my early life. As I now look back on my boyhood days, I am sure that I was not always the good boy I should have been, but I hope to live long enough to rectify the childish ingritudes of my earlier years.

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My Father and Mother.

I come now to the most important division in this brief history of the family, that of Father and Mother. In disposition and nature they stand in direct contrast. Father is quiet, unassuming and retiring in his nature, while mother is energetic, vivacious and animating. One represents the conservative, the other the aggressive element in our natures. Father is cool, calm and deliberate. Mother is nervous, excitable and quick. She is the most alert woman I ever saw. Nothing escapes her notice. She

eded only the circumstances in the case to predict with rtainty what we would do. You could not deceive her. Father always waited and with held his judgment and decision until all the evidence, both direct and indirect as laid before him. Had he been a lawyer, he would have made one of the best judges in the world. We usually went to him for advice, but when we wanted anything done we always went to Mother. We generally got his consent through her. She knew how to bring things to pass. She was more easily approached, but more severe in her criticisms. When we were able to reach Father by direct methods, we felt that we had gained a great victory. He always pointed out the danger signals and the possibility of troubles along the way. Mother furnished the enthusiasm and the hope, Father the counsel and the caution. And so every element in our natures is directly traceable to either the one or the other.

My Father is the best man I ever knew. I have always had the profoundest respect for him, and I believe to this day were he to tell me to do a thing, I would involuntarily obey him. He was my first companion in the field of labor and very early in life he began to ask my opinion about the best plan of doing the work. I did not understand then why he did so, but I see now that he wished to develope in me self reliance and judgment. He knew me better than I knew myself, and when he discovered that I was especially fond of horses, and there was any work to do with a team, I was most always assigned to the task.

He was my ideal man. I imitated him in every thing. I would try to chop like him, stand and walk like him, fix

my hat, boots and clothes like his. I would follow after him and step in his tracks. He never punished me but once in my life, and that was for following him. I had the habit of following him every where he went. He did not object to this in and about the home, but he very much disliked the idea of being followed to town. I would follow some distance behind him until he would get to town, then I would run up to him and walk by his side. One day he started to town and left me to do some work while he was gone. I insisted that I wanted to go with him, but he positively forbid me doing so. He had gotten but a little distance when I started after him. When he discovered that I was following, he stopped and waived to me to go back. I stopped and waited until he started on. He did this a number of times, but I did not return. Finally, I lost sight of him all at once and thought that he had increased his speed and had gotten out of sight, so I began to run to catch up with him. Thinking, of course, it would be as it always had been, but just as I was crossing a little ravine, Father emerged from a hazel thicket with a keen switch in his hand and said, "Young man, I have given you fair warning, now, come to me. I intend to put a stop to this." And he did, for I never followed him again without his permission; and what is more, the memory of that whipping, though not severe, bites like a serpent and stings like an adder. I shall not forget how he looked and the way he talked. It was this more than the whipping that took effect. This was the only punishment that Father ever gave me. When I was older and began to assert myself more, Father always spoke to me in such

a way that nothing further was necessary to secure obedience.

Another thing about Father, he never gossiped, nor did he allow us to do so in his presence. He never spoke ill of his neighbors, nor of any one else, and I have never heard to this day of anyone ever speaking ill of him. If he has ever had an enemy, I have not heard of him. Father stands high not only in this immediate neighborhood, but wherever he is known. When a young man just starting out in life, I was impressed with this fact. I frequently met strangers and would be at strange places, but when it was known who my Father or my Mother was, I always had a warm welcome. This was always a source of great satisfaction to me.

Father was a good story teller and in the winter season of evenings when the chores were all done and supper over, he would gather us about him before the blazing fire place and tell us about the early settlers, the indians and the trappers. He was well posted in the history of the early settlements in this country, of the indian depredations and of the early adventurers. I remember to this day many of the stories he told then. He was our Santa Claus at christmas times and filled our stockings with the things that pleased our childish fancies.

Father was always a hard worker and great home body. His life has been given in the service of his home and his family. He never sought public notice or public honors. He is honest, upright, high minded, noble, conservative, sympathetic and generous to a fault. Such is my

Father and I would give a great deal could I but approximate his character in my own life.

My Mother is the most energetic, persevering, untiring woman I have ever seen. Her constant service, self sacrifice and devotion to this family is to me something perfectly wonderful. She has never had a leisure moment since her first child was born. Toil, care, anxiety and responsibility have ever been upon her. She did her own work and looked after her own household. It is simply a mystery how she has reared such a family of children. We were subject to all the ills and diseases common to childhood; measles, mumps, whooping cough, chills and fever. She has cared for us through all these and has consequently obtained a degree of efficiency in the sick room unequalled and unexcelled. I would rather have her in an ordinary case of sickness than any physician I know of. She has a gentle touch and a most soothing, quieting manner about the sick bed. I know when I was sick no one could attend to me like Mother.

Mother has always idolized her children. She has ever worshipped at the family altar. She has exhibited the greatest ambition for our welfare. There is not a child but that touches a tender spot in her heart. She has a place for each one of us. So thoroughly did she know us and so fully was she in sympathy with every fiber of our being that she even knew when the absent ones were sick or were coming home on a visit. She was very anxious that we should always make a good appearance. She tried to keep us neat and clean and well dressed. I remember once that I mortified her very much. It was on the last day of school and

I was to be on exhibition in oral examination. I went to one of the neighbors from school the night before and wore my every day clothes. The next morning in my hurry to get to school, I forgot to go by home and change my clothing. The pants I had on were patched in the seat and my coat was rather short, and of course when I turned to the blackboard to work, the patches would show. There was a large crowd of visitors at school that day and about ten o'clock some one knocked at the door, I was at the blackboard at the time working a problem. The teacher went to the door and then called me. When I got to the door whom should I see but Mother. She wanted me to go and put on my good suit. I objected on the ground that the visitors had already seen me and I did not care to call particular attention to a change at that time. The teacher helped me out of the difficulty by saying that no one had noticed my patches, that they were watching me, and at noon, I could go and change my suit. While this did not please mother exactly, she finally consented to let me remain.

Mother always encouraged us in our undertakings and helped us to push them forward to a successful termination. She believed in going ahead and in doing something. She looked into the future and observed what would be needed, and then she laid her plans to meet these necessities. She worked all the time from early morn till late at night. After supper of evenings, when the dishes were washed and put away and the kitchen put in order, Mother would sit by the light and darn, patch or "run the new knit stocking heel" while Father told us

stories. She was usually the last to retire at night, but before doing so she always went around to see if the covers were tucked good and snug about us.

As I view her now, I am simply amazed at her fortitude and courage, her patience and endurance. She could not have been anything less than a great woman. Her exhibitions of love, devotion and self sacrifice to this family, her keen and active interest in each of us today are the elements of her greatness. She has ever been the moving spirit in the progress of the family and whatever else I might say of her, the proudest thing to me is the fact that she is my mother.

It is to Father and Mother that we are indebted for our existence. They nurtured us in our infant years and whatever of success or fortune we may obtain, we must at last lay our trophies at their feet. Their term of service is over. Years have crept slowly by and they have moved gradually from youth to manhood and womanhood and thence to age. They have now passed beyond that period of life when they would be expected to aid and assist their children. They have reached a point where they should and by right ought to expect the care and assistance which only devoted children can give. I know I voice the sentiment of all of us when I say that we cannot live long enough to compensate for the trouble and anxiety we have caused them. It is this feeling of indebtedness, this love, respect and admiration for them that has prompted us and has moved us by one common impulse to meet and pay our devotions to them. All honor is due them and we

must never cease in our efforts to try to make their declining years peaceful and happy.

Today they pass the golden milestone on the road of wedded life. This road has not always been a smooth one. There have been many obstacles in the way, but so far they have made the journey successfully.

I doubt seriously if any of us live to be so fortunate, and certain it is that if we do, we will not have such a progeny to assemble to do us honor.

They have witnessed many changes during this time. The wooden mould board has given place to the steel shear, the reap hook to the cradle and this in turn to the reaper and the self binder. Likewise the log house, with its dirt or puncheon floor, has been replaced by the more modern frame, brick or stone. So the ox has given way to the horse and this again to steam and electricity. They have witnessed also the invention of the telegraph, telephone and phonograph. They have seen the prairies fenced and the forests cleared away and made to blossom as the rose. They have also seen the territory of the United States expand westward from the Mississippi to the coast and thence to the isles of the sea, including Hawaii, Porto Rico, Guam and the Phillipines. They have lived through three of our country's wars: the war with Mexico, the Great Civil War, and the late Spanish-American war. They have seen the close of the greatest century of the World's progress, and have witnessed the dawn of the most prospective century since the ages began. How wonderful! Yet more wonderful still is the fact that they have lived to behold the joys of this day. Here gath-

ered around this fireside the entire family for the third time in its history. I think myself that this scene beggars all description and marks a turning point in the life history of the family. We may never all be together again as a family. We should therefore make much of this meeting. Let every moment be one of genuine appreciation for each other. We should gather inspiration from this days association that will point us to higher heights and nobler aims. We are no longer boys and girls. We are men and women, with the responsibilities of manhood and womanhood upon us. Let us meet them bravely, and let us "so live that when our summons comes to join the innumerable caravan which moves to that mysterious realm where each shall take his chamber in the silent halls of death, that we go not like the quarry slave at night scourged to his dungeon, but sustained and soothed by an unfaltering trust, let us approach our graves like one who wraps the drapery of his couch about him and lies down to pleasant dreams."

W. H. MARTIN.

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