



Tales from Two Rivers II

Tales from Two Rivers II

edited by Jerrilee Cain, John E. Hallwas, Victor Hicken

A Two Rivers Arts Council Publication
College of Fine Arts Development
Western Illinois University
Macomb, Illinois

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Tales From Two Rivers I

Tales from Two Rivers II

is published in answer
to public demand

Reviews in regional newspapers and journals had this to say about *Tales from Two Rivers I*:

"The competition was designed to elicit the social history experiences of senior citizens throughout western Illinois and the project was clearly a success. The narratives contain an incredible range of insights and recollections . . . the net affect of this collection is . . . 'as thrilling as who-done-it and as unforgettable as a first love.'"

*Journal of the Illinois State
Historical Society*

"They [the stories] are small memoirs, like flowers pressed between the pages of a book."

Jerry Klein, Peoria Journal Star

"For those readers of this column who enjoy 'nostalgia,' and we assume our readers do if they read this column, we would like to recommend a new paperback book on the market called *Tales from Two Rivers I*."

Carl Landrum, Quincy Herald Whig

"Above [a] flood of commercially cute and predigested oldtimeyness, *Tales from Two Rivers I* stands out like a beacon on the high ground of reality. . . . What these tales offer is a plain, unvarnished glimpse back into time. . . . We can't go back to those times. We'd regret it if we could—and it is the supreme virtue of this collection that makes plain the good and the bad together. . . . We need to be reminded—or told for the first time—both what we've gained and what we've lost. What better gift for the future than the past?"

Herald Henderson, Illinois Times

The Illinois legislature has recognized the value of *Tales from Two Rivers I and II*:

“RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE EIGHTY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we do hereby recognize, applaud, and congratulate the Two Rivers Arts Council for preserving the history of Illinois through *Tales from Two Rivers I . . .*”
House Resolution No. 688
Offered by Rep. Charles Neff
Adopted March 3, 1982

“RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-SECOND GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we commend the TALES FROM TWO RIVERS I contributing authors, the Two Rivers Arts Council, the Illinois Humanities Council, the Illinois Arts Council, and Western Illinois University College of Fine Arts Development for producing this book that will serve as a record of Illinois rural history; that we express to those individuals who were involved in the project our deep appreciation and thanks for their inspired and fruitful efforts, and that we wish for them continued success in their latest endeavor, TALES FROM TWO RIVERS II . . .”

Senate Resolution No. 441
Offered by Senator Laura Kent
Adopted March 31, 1982



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President's Message:

There are many ways to preserve our heritage. The ones we think of most often involve restoring old buildings or other landmarks. This, of course, is good but our real heritage is *the people and the stories the people tell*.

How often does your mind, with strong nostalgia, turn back to the days of your youth when you walked barefoot up a country road, or knelt to drink clear, cold water from a spring, or stubbed your big toe while carrying water in a brown jug to threshers? You can teach by *telling* or by taking people to *see*. These stories do both and through them places and times like these come alive.

There is a whole generation right now that never tasted sorghum molasses, chopped wood for the kitchen stove—or walked to school. You, the authors of these stories, are the core of the real America and your stories will help keep our heritage alive. Americans must rediscover this heritage and the basic values upon which your country was founded.

Thank you for sharing your stories and for permitting us to enjoy them with you. You have enriched our lives, for you dare not, nor wish to, forget.

Sincerely,
Jerry Tyson, President
Two Rivers Arts Council

Jerry speaks for all of us when he articulates the warmth we feel for the authors who have become a part of our lives because they have shared the dearest memories from their life experience with us at Two Rivers Arts Council and Western Illinois University College of Fine Arts Development. Because they did, *Tales from Two Rivers II* is now in your, the reader's, hands.

Besides collecting the stories, there is a prodigious amount of work involved in making *Tales II* a reality. The

manuscripts must be xeroxed and edited, typed and retyped, and then organized into categories to create the different themes of the book, then the memoirs are printed, galleys read, and photographs selected. Along the way many planning meetings are attended. Many people donate countless hours to get *Tales II* off the press. We do it with a great amount of love and dedication to the essence of what it means to be an Illinoian. As Jerry says, we should not forget.

Our thanks must go to many people:

To the people who wrote the stories. Although there was not enough space in the book to include all of the 600 stories received in the 1981 and 1982 Tales from Two Rivers writing contests, the names of all the contestants for those years are recorded in the index of this book. Each contestant contributed to the preservation of our Illinois heritage and all of the contest manuscripts have been placed on file in the Archives and Special Collections Department of the Western Illinois University Library where they will be made available to future generations of researchers, historians, and students of Illinois history.

To President Leslie Malpass, Western Illinois University, whose dedication to this region has resulted in the university support necessary to the publication of *Tales from Two Rivers II*.

To the Illinois Arts Council and the Illinois Humanities Council for funding that made possible the writing contests from which these stories are drawn and the publication of this book.

To John E. Hallwas and Victor Hicken for their enthusiastic help and advice and hours of labor directed toward editing, screening the galleys, and contributing invaluable help to make *Tales I* and *II* successful.

To Nancy Butler, Terri Garner, and Carol Yeoman who translated illegible editorial notes, manuscripts written in long hand, and unfamiliar jargon into neatly typed master copies of the manuscript for *Tales II*.

To the following banks, community organizations, and businesses that contributed to the writing contests: Avon Public Library; Church of the Good Shepherd—Avon; Avon Nursing Home; Avon Junior Women's Club; Avon Businessmen's Association; Avon Unit HEA; Neff Co.—Avon; Lucile Wilson—Avon; Tompkins State Bank—Avon; State Bank of Augusta; Bowen State Bank; Biggsville Community Federated Church; GFWC Biggsville Community Club; PLM Corp.—Bushnell; Midwest Control Products, Corp.—Bushnell; Farmer's and Merchants State Bank—Bushnell; Farmer's State Bank of Camp Point; First Federal Savings and Loan Association—Colchester; First National Bank of Carthage; Marine Trust Co.—Carthage; Hancock Co. Historical Association; Dallas City Bank; Gladstone Lions Club; Colchester State Bank; Farmer's State Bank of Ferris; Parish Fertilizer—Fairview; Golden State Bank; Spoon River IOOF; Security State Bank of Hamilton; Ipava State Bank; Calhoun County Historical Assn.; Galesburg Community Arts Council; Modern Manor—Mt. Sterling; Brown County State Bank;

Farmer's State Bank and Trust Co.—Mt. Sterling; Clay Edwards; Gary and Nancy Aleff; Edward D. Jones & Co.—Macomb; Student Prince West—Macomb; McDonough Farmer's Supply; Macomb Kiwanis; Union National Bank—Macomb; Jomlee Corp.—Macomb; HyVee Foods—Macomb; Macomb Beautiful; Citizen's National Bank—Macomb; Mr. and Mrs. George Lewis; Tomlinson Real Estate; Schuyler State Bank; Snyder Vaughn Haven, Inc.—Rushville; Henderson County Arts Council; Twentieth Century Club—Mt. Sterling; Raritan State Bank; Warren County Historical Society; LaHarpe Arts Council; State Bank of LaHarpe; Security Savings and Loan —Monmouth; State Bank of Nauvoo; Meiss-Burton Sundries; Plymouth Business Association; Table Grove State Bank; Acorn World—Stronghurst; Chapter PEO Sisterhood—Vermont; Vermont State Bank; and Hill-Dodge Banking Co.—Warsaw.

To all of the groups and individuals who joined with us to bring *Tales from Two Rivers II* to you!

Jerrilee Cain, Coordinator
College of Fine Arts Development
Executive Officer, Two Rivers Arts Council

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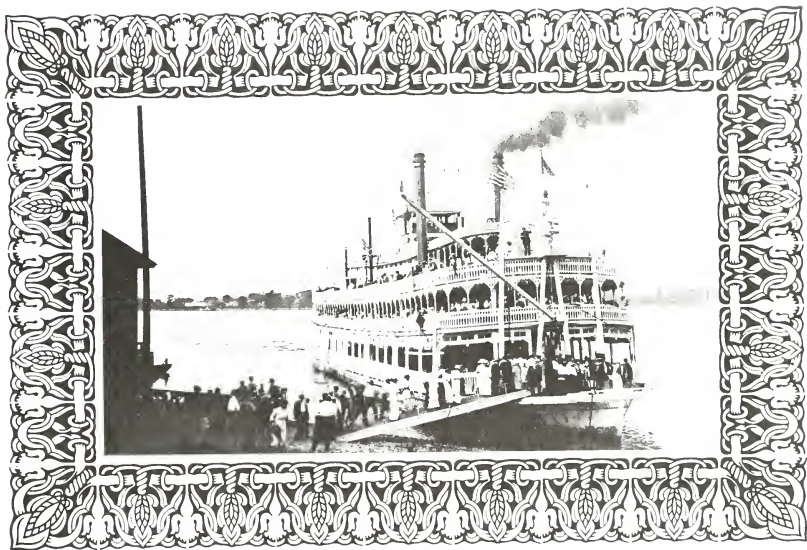
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"The Two Rivers Arts Council [has] looked around to find what was most appropriate to their communities. . . And within a maze of sometimes rigid guidelines and bureaucracy, they have maintained a vestige of ingenuity, common sense, and self-sufficiency. . . Here, as perhaps nowhere else in this country, the arts have been encouraged to grow from roots thrust deep into their native soil, and they have made a difference in their towns."

Nan Levinson - *The Cultural Post*
National Endowment for the Arts
Washington, D.C.



TRAC Executive Committee Left Front Counterclockwise: Nancy Butler, LaHarpe, Secretary; Carol Yeoman, Avon, Treasurer; Mary Graham, Biggsville, Vice-President; Jerry Tyson, Rushville, President; and Jerrilee Cain, WIU, Executive Director.



I Traveling In Days Gone By

TRAVELING IN DAYS GONE BY

Virtually everyone would agree that contemporary American society is dominated by the automobile. We are so well aware of what we have gained by that one transportation development, and so sure of its importance, that we seldom consider what we have lost. And it seems odd—or even perverse—to reflect that today’s senior citizens knew a richer, more diverse era of transportation in western Illinois several decades ago.

After untold generations, man’s dependence on the horse finally came to an end—at least in North America—during the early twentieth century. It is hard to realize now that the relationship between man and horse which had once enriched the lives of millions of people also virtually disappeared. Laurence Royer’s “More Than Just a Horse” is a poignant testament to what has been lost. The other two horse-and-buggy memoirs, by Charles H. Krusa and Alice Krauser, depict local travel as a much more humanistic process than our automobile culture allows.

It is also difficult for us to realize the importance of “hard roads” to the small towns of many years ago. Local residents saw in them, quite rightly, the end of community isolation—as well as the end of perennial battles against mud—and so it is not surprising that celebrations often followed the completion of the pavement. But better roads commonly promoted the economic decline of a town, for they allowed people to shop in larger, more distant communities. And according to geographer John A. Jakle, in *The American Small Town* (1981), paved roads, or highways, also caused decentralization. That is to say, towns began to develop an outward focus, and the local sense of community diminished. Hence, there is a certain irony in the celebration of Old Man Dirt Road’s demise, as depicted by Marjory M. Reed, and in the “Easter parade review” of cars on the newly paved streets of Rushville, mentioned by Paul Sloan.

The early twentieth century was also the twilight of the steamboat era. In western Illinois, that era began during the late 1820’s and reached its peak in the pre-Civil War years, before the railroad had its awesome impact on travel and shipping. The essay by John F. Ellis evokes the colorful world of river travel that came to an end when he was young.

He mentions the Eagle Packet Company, which has a significant place in the business heritage of western Illinois. That enterprise began in Warsaw during 1861, when two young German immigrants, Henry and William Leyhe, constructed *The Young Eagle*. The small sidewheeler was put into operation between Warsaw and Keokuk. In 1865 they built *The Grey Eagle*, and as the years passed, several other boats were added to the Eagle line. The company offices were moved to Alton in 1873 and to St. Louis in 1891. Long before the turn of the century, Eagle steamboats were a familiar sight on the Illinois and Mississippi rivers. But tragedy struck in the winter of 1918, when four of the boats were crushed in an ice jam on the Tennessee River. The company never fully recovered from that loss. The last boat in the line, *The Golden Eagle*, continued to operate on the Illinois River until after World War II. It was the only overnight packet boat in this part of the country. When it ran aground and broke up in 1947, passenger boat operations from St. Louis came to an end.

The railroad is still with us, but it no longer has such a large impact on our lives—or our towns. As Kenneth Maxwell Norcross says in his memoir, “Back at the turn of the century, the railroad was extremely important to the community. Life sort of revolved around it.” Indeed, when the railroads came through in the 1850’s and after, some towns (such as Bushnell and Prairie City) were founded on that premise alone, while others that lacked rail connections (including Fandon, Birmingham, and Fountain Green) went into permanent decline. Pilot Grove Corners, in Hancock County, was so desperate to be on a railroad line that when

the route of the T. P. & W. was established two and one half miles away during 1867, local residents simply moved the town next to the tracks. The re-established community then changed its name to Burnside.

Of course, the local depot was the point of contact between each community and the greater world that lay somewhere in the distance. As such it symbolized the escape from small-town confinement that many villagers yearned for in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Carl Sandburg—who was raised in the pre-eminent railroad town of western Illinois—understood that yearning and expressed it in one of his *Chicago Poems* (1915): “Mamie beat her head against the bars of a little Indiana town and dreamed of romance and big things off somewhere the way the railroad trains all ran.” More recently, Richard Lingeman, in *Small Town America* (1980), refers to the depot as “a place of dreams of distant places and banshee train whistles in the night, the steady roar and clicking of the wheels, the pistons chanting ‘You are missing something missing something missing something . . . something . . . something. Out there.’”

Of course, the railroad also brought the larger world to the small town, and so depots were also where politicians spoke, lecturers arrived, and circuses unloaded. When President Hayes stopped at the Macomb depot in 1879, to speak for just five minutes, 4,000 people attended. When

evangelist Billy Sunday arrived at the same depot in 1905, he was met by local dignitaries and a brass band. The depot was, then, a sort of parlor for the community—a suitable setting for special occasions.

But the everyday activities at the depot were also important to the life of a small town. No wonder, then, that local newspapers commonly reported the arrivals and departures of community residents, and idle men and boys lingered there to watch the railroad agent conduct his business and to see the people come and go.

Depending on the individual’s experience with it, the depot also frequently developed personal meaning. With regard to the little girl in Bernadette Tranbarger’s memoir, it was her lack of experience with the depot that gave it significance which only a child’s mind could devise.

In general, the various memoirs in this section remind us that if travel was slower and more unpredictable years ago, it also allowed for more interaction with the landscape and other people, as well as more time to reflect on the experience of traveling. In that respect, too, the coming of the modern automobile and paved roads—not to mention air transportation—has paradoxically diminished our lives even as it has improved them.

John Hallwas, Editor

THE HORSE KNEW THE WAY

*Nina L. Vortman **

The girl I knew and hoped to marry was teaching school in a very rough, rural community in Scott County, twenty-two miles from my bachelor farmstead.

About every two weeks her parents drove to her school, Sugar Grove, and brought her home for the weekend. In 1909 that meant a long drive with horse and buggy, which could make about five miles an hour, depending on the roads and weather.

It was my pleasure to return her to her home near the school on Sunday afternoons. I'd hitch Doll to my buggy, drive the three miles to Ina's house and eat dinner with her family. We'd leave about two o'clock for the long drive back to the Smothers', her home away from home.

We enjoyed the leisurely hours of companionship and the beauty of the changing countryside from summer to fall to winter. Those drives gave us a chance to share anecdotes about her school and my hopes and plans for the farm I had rented. Those were pleasant days, especially when the weather cooperated.

My buggy had side curtains for rainy and cold days, and we had a lap-robe to help fight the elements. However, a several hour drive in severe weather became pretty uncomfortable.

Doll was one of my work horses, as well as my driving horse. She was a mean horse if she wasn't working every day. A few days of rest and she'd balk and be just plain ornery. I really worked her that winter. I used her every weekday to shuck two big loads of corn and then drove her on the long Sunday treks. She needed to be shod three times for her travels and didn't have time to be mean.

Doll was a good road horse. Give her her head and she'd take you safely over the road, night or day. On those long,

dark, and lonely drives home after supper with Ina, she did just that.

One Sunday the weather was especially rough. Lightning filled the skies, flashing vividly, blindingly. Thunder filled the air with startling crashes. Rain beat against the buggy, against us, and against Doll.

On the last miles of our trip, we left the flat land and went into very hilly terrain. There were several unbridged creeks which had sandy gravel beds that had to be forded.

We reached one of those in this terrible storm. It was night by then and we were anxious to get on and out of the storm. Doll balked! She stood, not budging, ignoring my efforts to urge her on. What a time and place to get cantankerous!

After what seemed like ages but was really only seconds, Doll turned and walked along the bank for several yards, then forded the creek, turned knowingly back to the road and on to our destination.

The storm, with its downpour, flashes, and crashes, continued throughout the evening so I accepted an invitation to stay overnight.

Monday morning, on my way home, I came back to the stream. Where the road crossed the creek there was a straight drop to the creek bed below, instead of the gentle slope which had made fording possible. The raging waters had cut away the slopes and left vertical walls.

Now I knew what Doll had known the night before. Her "horse" sense had told her of the danger. She hadn't balked—she had saved us from disaster. I could visualize horse, buggy, and the two of us entangled on the creek bed with water rushing around us.

Doll again moved confidently away from the dangerous precipice, forded the creek farther up, and continued onward. How foolish I'd been to lose faith in my mare that always knew the way!

* As told to the author by her father, Charles H. Krusa

BOUNCE

Alice Krauser

Although I don't remember where he came from or how he happened to be there, some of my most vivid memories of early childhood—pleasurable, exciting, and frightening—center around Bounce. The beautiful, high-spirited bay horse was my father's favorite. I vaguely remember hearing that he was of racehorse stock.

If someone in the neighborhood had cattle to be driven to market (there were no trucks in those days), my father was always called on because, with my father on Bounce, the job was made easier. Bounce was quick to respond to the guidance of the rein and to spoken command. He seemed to understand what the situation required even before a command was given.

In those days, before we owned a car, if my father had errands to do, he would saddle Bounce and gallop off. On rare occasions, if the distance was not too great, he would let me climb up and ride behind him. Clinging there to my father with both arms, I was thrilled as we flew through the air (or so it seemed to me), for Bounce would go into a steady, smooth gallop at a speed that took my breath away.

If the whole family was to go to town, to church, or to visit relatives or friends, my father would hitch Bounce to the road-wagon, a light-weight, one-seated vehicle without a top. And we'd better be ready to go, because Bounce was always impatient to take off at top speed, and he became nervous and fidgety if he had to stand still very long. The four of us managed to fit into the road-wagon—Mother and Father on the seat, my sister Mary and I taking turns, one between our parents on the seat and the other on a small footstool at their feet. I was always somewhat afraid that after untying Bounce, my father might not make it to the seat and get the lines in his hands before Bounce started off, but he always did. Bounce was allowed to go as fast as the condition of the

road permitted until he had worked off some of his nervous energy and was then ready to settle down to a steady pace. All would go well then unless we came to a threshing machine in a field near the road or met one of the automobiles that were just beginning to come into use.

Bounce was terrorized by the smoke-belching "monster" that furnished power for the threshing machine. At the top of the hill on Tower Road, immediately west of the Dexter home, there was a large shed that housed the threshing equipment owned by Charlie Arnold, who then lived on the place that is now Dr. Dexter's. If the engine was out of the shed getting warmed up for a threshing job, and Bounce was being driven up the hill, he could hear, or smell, or somehow sense what was at the top of the hill. His instant reaction was to whirl around, with the road-wagon making the turn with only two wheels on the ground, while the frightened occupants managed somehow not to fly off into space. My father would leap out and grab the bridle and, in spite of Bounce's leaping and rearing, lead him past the engine. Sometimes, simply by holding tight lines, tapping with the whip, and shouting commands, my father managed to drive him by the "monster," Bounce rearing up on his hind legs and the road-wagon with its occupants lurching along.

We went through the same experience, though usually not as drastic, if we met an automobile. When Bounce would start plunging and rearing, often the driver of the car, noticing a woman and two little girls in the road-wagon, would stop his car and jump out to help, adding to the trouble. That terrifying machine standing there so close added to Bounce's frenzy and to my father's fears that Bounce's flying feet might injure a man who did not realize the danger. If we were on the way home from town, boxes and packages might sometimes be scattered on the road but *we* never were. I suppose my mother, Mary, and I had learned how to "sit tight."

Meeting cars eventually became somewhat routine, but

there was one we all dreaded meeting. It was a white car owned by the Gaites family (of the Gaites Studio). It wasn't so bad meeting it in town, but the Gaites family sometimes took rides out in the country. Bounce feared that "white monster" approaching in a cloud of dust with curtains flapping. In fact, all of us feared it, especially if the road was narrow or there were deep ditches along the sides.

But there were happy times, too. I especially remember one Saturday before Christmas when the Illinois Theatre had a movie for children. That afternoon my father and I went to town, and he took me to the theatre, where he left me while he did the family shopping. Later he came back and sat with me until the movie was over. He still had a few things to buy, so it was dark by the time we started home. It was a clear, cold night with a brilliant moon, and we were well bundled up against the cold. The roads were snow-covered but in good condition, and Bounce traveled fast. My father, realizing that the experience of seeing my first movie had left me confused about it, retold the whole story for me as we traveled along, the wheels squeaking in the cold and the moonlight glistening on the snow as Bounce raced toward home.

MORE THAN JUST A HORSE

Laurence Royer

He was foaled the spring that I was four years old. I remember my father bringing old Doll, his mother, to the house one cold March day so that my mother and my sister and I could see the new colt from the window. His mother was a black mare who had always produced black colts before, but this time the colt was a grayish brown that set him apart from the blacks, bays, and roans of the rest of the horses. After a lengthy family discussion, he was given the name of Bob.

It was the custom to continue working the brood mares, so he followed his mother through the routine farm work of his first summer. One incident during clover hulling probably accounted for his total lack of fear around a threshing rig. He found that if he stood just right under the big drive belt it would scratch his back, so each time a load was being pitched off he would find that spot and get a good currying.

By the time I was old enough to begin helping with the field work, Bob was a well broken six-year-old in the prime of life. It was safe to put a boy out with a team because the horses knew enough about the work to go along with very little driving. It was our practice, in making up a four-horse team for the gang plow, to put the lines on three horses, with the outside two tied in to the middle horse, in this case Bob, and the fourth on a jockey stick opposite the furrow horse. In this way, Bob controlled the entire team. On the level ground, where the plow pulled easily, Bob was content to let the others be ahead, but on the hills where the clay was tough, he took the lead and the others had to struggle to keep up.

Bob was quiet but determined. In the evenings, when the horses were loose in the lot with hay on the rack wagon, he wasn't quarrelsome, but he never let any of them bluff him away from his place at the hay. Because of his steadiness, even as a youngster, he drew the job of breaking the colts to work. He never lost his temper with them and never got excited when they acted up. He always worked on the near side so he would be next to anything we met on the road.

His early teammate was a sister named Beauty, who was as nervous as he was calm. She was always prancing and pulling on the bit. My father sold her when there was a demand for horses at the time of the first World War. We led her behind the wagon to deliver her to the buyer in Astoria. As we turned the corner coming home, Bob looked back and saw we were leaving her behind. I will never forget his farewell whinny.

Bob was friendly with all of us, but he had a special affection for my father. I remember one day when we went to the fair in Rushville, a distance of fifteen or sixteen miles. We had taken the team and wagon with feed for the horses and a picnic lunch for ourselves. After dinner we agreed to meet at the wagon at four o'clock to start home. I arrived at the wagon first, and as I waited, Bob whinnied. I looked, and sure enough, there was Dad more than a hundred yards away, but Bob had spotted him among the crowd.

One of Bob's duties was to work in the treadmill which we used to operate the Hinman milking machine. This was a rather primitive type milker that got its suction from pumps on a reciprocating drive rod running along the tops of the stanchions. Each morning and evening Bob was led into the treadmill where he walked uphill until the milking was finished. He didn't seem to relish the work, and while he went in willingly enough, he always seemed glad when it was done. One evening the cord broke which ran from the governor to the brake and which controlled the speed, and the machine started going faster and faster. As I ran from the barn to put the brake on by hand, Bob greeted me with an excited whinny. I'm sure, for that one time at least, he was glad to see me.

In later years Bob was teamed with a bay mare named Daisy. She was clever, and I remember one of the tricks she used to play on him. When we stopped to rest the team on a hill, she would pull her single tree as far ahead as it would go, then when it was time to start the load, all she had to do was set her feet and Bob would do the starting. He was willing and able, and I guess he didn't mind.

When Bob was older and more or less retired, he was the horse my children rode. They were riding him around the barn one day after we had put up hay, and the hay rope was hanging looped down from the hay rack. He was gently enough to be trusted with such small children, but he was also determined to take the shortest route to his stall. That

route led under the hay rope, which was too heavy for the children to lift. They had to stop him or get brushed off. He'd stop, but wouldn't turn from that route, so I finally had to rescue them and let him go to his stall. He thought the game had lasted long enough.

At last, at the ripe old age of thirty years, Bob was turned out to a small pasture near my parents home where my father fed and cared for him. One morning the telephone rang, and my father's message was that Bob was down and couldn't get up. He had gotten thin and his condition was hopeless. As I crossed the little valley to the hillside where he lay, he heard me coming and whinnied weakly. Good old faithful friend. There was one last service I could do for him, and I would not turn it over to someone else. So I stroked his muzzle and rubbed his ears, then fired the shot that ended his suffering.

Many changes have come over the years, and I have welcomed the coming of mechanical power that has taken the hot, hard, grueling work from the horses. But, while a man may be proud of his tractor and thrill to its power, I don't think it will ever be the same as the feeling between a real horseman and his team.

OLD MAN DIRT ROAD

Marjory M. Reed

Shouting, chanting figures moved around a cart. A misplaced scarecrow rested within the vehicle. It had been given a jouncing journey past the village stores. Then, with loud hurrahs, the dummy was torched. In the darkness, it looked as if the Indians had reclaimed Yellow Banks, or Oquawka. The burning of "Old Man Dirt Road" in effigy was a celebration for a won battle.

In the 1920's roads connected villages and homes but the highways of those years are well remembered. Locally, we

did not have "hard roads," concrete highways, black top, or even gravel. Our roads were dirt, sand, or clay. The cars became stuck in them—stuck in the sand, stuck in the mud, or stuck in the snow. Travelers were keenly aware of the area's clay hills and boggy hollows.

Most motorists carried tire chains. In the winter, fingers froze as they fumbled to fasten the links of cold metal. In warmer weather, fingers reached to the depth of mud holes and sought to connect those necessary chains. Oft times drivers scouted for a pry hole to lift and move a wheel forward. More frequently, travelers pushed and shoved to free their mired vehicles.

Roads were flooded when creeks rose beyond their banks. On one such occasion, my father drove south to Oquawka towards Gladstone. Dad went as far as the conditions permitted. Then he transferred boxes of groceries to a rowboat, which was slightly outlined by a kerosene lantern. The food was for a family marooned by the extended creek. The two men had been waiting in the rain for the arrival of the needed supplies.

Political caravans traveled from the community staging their party rallies. The preceding car would disappear in a shroud of dust on those trips. Each car kept in line by following the trail of dust. Patriotic white clothes appeared grey after a short ride.

My father drove grocery routes through the countryside. Farmers requested items beforehand by phone or mail. Supplies were usually exchanged for commodities such as cream, eggs, butter, or chickens. The feet of a chicken were tied together and the cord hooked on a hanging scale to weigh the bird. Eggs were transferred from the farmer's containers into grey dividers of large wooden crates. Empty cream cans were exchanged for filled cans. The route was always planned with strategy for the road conditions. Sometimes we saved time by leaving the main road and the crossing over a farmer's fields, down long lanes of grass.

Then I was the official gatekeeper and opened the gate for entry and secured it behind us. The weather influenced any shortcuts. Dirt roads changed to mud roads too quickly, and a car could easily sink to its axle.

We traveled our area extensively even though the roads were a challenge. We maneuvered the dirt roads on outings, looking for hickory nuts, picking wild flowers, hunting elusive mushrooms, fishing along Henderson Creek, climbing to the top of a hill, or searching for arrowheads near an Indian mound. Today we ride in comfort, but our outings do not surpass those of the Twenties.

As the new concrete road linked Oquawka to Monmouth many years ago, the townspeople of Oquawka torched the effigy. The figure represented all the contempt and frustrations created by Old Man Dirt Road. For the moment, pleasure trips were not remembered and his demise was celebrated.

PULLING RUSHVILLE OUT OF THE MUD

Paul C. Sloan

Today's highways bear little resemblance to old dirt highways used during the turn of the century, when horse-drawn vehicles or occasional horseless carriages resulted in a cloud of dust or a quagmire of mud.

Prior to the building of all-weather roads in the Rushville, Illinois area, heavily traveled roadways or trails were marked with the painting of the telephone poles along the sides of the roadways. The old Waubonsie Trail, for example, led from Rushville through Littleton and Industry to Macomb, and subsequently on to Quincy or Keokuk, Iowa, and was punctuated with bright yellow bands painted on the poles. Townships paid a daily fee to farmers who used teams of horses to drag the roads to level them and to keep roadside ditches open for draining accumulated water.

Travel was generally limited to those so-called trails, and trips to Rushville were confined to necessity purchasing, such as food and other commodities. The Rushville city square was just a quagmire of mud during wet weather, and sidewalks and curbs were constructed high above the street level so people could get in and out of horse-drawn vehicles without plodding through the mud. (The north side of the public square remains today as a reminder of days gone by.)

The state of Illinois was besieged with requests to the state legislators to build hard-surfaced roads throughout the state, for it was far behind many other states in road building. Sometime in the late 1920's or early 1930's, the legislators began paying attention to this situation and took under consideration a 100-million-dollar bond issue. Voters were asked to pass judgment at the polls on this bond issue. It was very controversial. Those for the bond issue naturally made good use of the "pull Illinois out of the mud" slogan, while the "cons" insisted it would bankrupt the entire state with the high costs of roads, bridges, and engineering fees.

The issue was finally passed, and Illinois took the first steps away from being a "backyard" state as the tremendous task of selecting roads to be constructed was begun.

The first hard-surfaced roads in Schuyler County were only nine feet in width, for horse power was still the main type of transportation. The first road out of Rushville was on what is still referred to as "the Macomb Road."

Sand and gravel were hauled along the proposed route and stockpiled by the roadside. When the gasoline-motored concrete mixer was in use, workmen moved the ingredients by means of wheelbarrows, adding cement which was stored in moisture proof containers on trucks or wagons to keep the material dry. The ingredients were loaded into a "skip," an over-sized scoop shovel built on a hinge arrangement. When a sufficient amount of sand, cement and stones were loaded, the skip was elevated by means of steel cables mounted on each side and poured into the concrete mixer where water was

added. When mixed to the proper consistency, it was poured from the opposite side of the mixer onto the previously placed steel forms and prepared roadbed. There it was puddled, thoroughly mixed, and tamped down. Expansion joints were placed at regular intervals to allow for the contraction and expansion caused by weather conditions.

Work was suspended on the Rushville-Macomb Road when a number of dissidents obtained an injunction to halt construction. The problem was further accentuated by the unwillingness of some land owners to sign right-of-way documents. Finally, construction was started on an alternate route leading north on Liberty Street in Rushville. But yet another injunction was issued, halting that construction. The courts finally decided that construction should be continued on the plea that the original Macomb Road was where the road should be completed.

The narrow road width contributed to many arguments. Who might have the right of way? Whatever driver arrived first was assumed to have first privilege, but there were no stop signs or warning signs yet.

Many tales, mostly unsubstantiated, were rampant during the road construction period. Some were of workmen dying on the job of natural causes or from accidents, with grotesque details of their bodies being placed in the forms and covered with the concrete.

Another unconfirmed story was of a car being driven at a high rate of speed down Horney Branch Hill, which was on the Macomb Road just past the Rushville city limits, and jumping the unfinished space where the pavement ended on one side and started on the other. The momentum of the automobile cleared the intervening open space and landed safely on the other side, the car unscathed and the driver with a few bruises and scarcely a scratch.

Other road construction in Schuyler County which occurred in the ensuing years included the Mt. Sterling road, which was built by Negroes driving mules, the Beardstown

road, which led through Pleasant View and Frederick and crossed the river on what was commonly referred to as the "wagon toll bridge" (opened and closed by man power), and the farm-to-market roads, including the Camden road and the Sugar Grove road.

At about the same time but independent of the aforementioned bond issue passage, the Rushville city fathers awarded a contract to the Tiernan Company of Macomb to install paved brick streets on all the main thoroughfares within the city limits. The bricks were laid on a bed of sand by Negroes, who laid an astounding number of bricks in one day.

Upon completion of the city street contract, the few automobiles owned by city residents were driven around the city square in an almost Easter parade review, with the owner-drivers very proud of their motoring on the newly paved streets.

With the advent of newly paved highways, immediately all the towns and villages began the task of interesting manufacturing companies in locating in their towns. Rushville was fortunate to inveigle the Cudahy Company to locate in the defunct Starr Ice and Creamery Company. This was located across the street from the present Rushville Feed and Grain Company. Also, the "Korn Top" meat packing plant was installed on South Liberty Street, conceived and put into operation by the late Howard Bartlow. Other businesses were, at various times, begun within the city limits and had limited life spans. Among them was the Glad Acres Manufacturing plant at the north limits of Macomb Road Street. This company manufactured tool kits for the Model T Ford cars, with salesmen operating throughout Illinois and Indiana.

One thing which had failed to keep pace with the paved streets was the street lighting. Previously installed ornamental lights on each corner of the square with wiring under the sidewalk were so outmoded they gave a feeble

glow, which had about as much illumination as oranges. The entire city council and the mayor drove to the town of Pleasant Plains in Cass County to observe the latest in street lighting, which they had installed: gas mercury vapor lights. A short time later, the Rushville City Council passed an ordinance for the purchase of aluminum light poles and sufficient wiring, and after some delay, work was commenced on the new fixtures.

A large contingent of local residents turned out to witness the first lighting of the new mercury vapor lights. A switch was installed on one pole near the rear outside entrance of the present Wheelhouse TV store on South Liberty Street. Those lights were controlled mechanically and connected to clocks which automatically turned them on and off.

The new lighting system gave the business section a modern look. Additional street mercury vapor bulbs were installed at later intervals. The positive response to those lights resulted in the council members being swamped with requests for additional lights at various places. Residents cited the need for more efficient lights in order to discourage possible burglaries, etc.

With the construction of paved roads in Schuyler County and Rushville, the area was truly made part of the big effort to "pull Illinois out of the mud."

A MEMORABLE JOURNEY

Marie Freesmeyer

"All hands on deck!" That was Papa's way of waking up that August morning in 1914. It was an expression common on the steamboats, and citizens of Calhoun County were familiar with everything pertaining to steamboats as they all lived near either the Illinois or Mississippi River.

"Roll out!" Papa called again, and we did, remembering that this was the big day which had been marked on our Cordui Calendar as the day to start our long journey north to visit Mamma's sister.

Our Empire touring car had been washed and polished the previous day until its black surface shone like a mirror. The presto tank had been checked and an extra spare had been strapped on. Mamma had been busy the past week making preparations for this extravagant adventure. Our one suitcase had been packed and its bulging sides well strapped for a rough ride. Boxes of food had been prepared for the two-day journey, for who could tell whether we could ever find nourishing food along the way! Mamma surely wasn't taking any chances.

Besides Papa and Mamma, there was my sixteen-year-old brother, Otto, who was to be the sole chauffeur for the trip (Papa could not drive as he was crippled, and besides he thought at age fifty he was too old for such new-fangled ideas); another brother, Percy, fourteen, who had the honor of sitting in the front seat as he was to serve as lucky boy for the trip; a sister nearly five, and myself, a girl of ten.

Our route, which Papa had worked on for weeks with the aid of an old wall map of Illinois, had been plotted, and all the towns through which we were to pass had been listed. It was to start at our home village, Hamburg, on the Mississippi River, go from town to town up between that river and the Illinois to Tiskilwa in Bureau County. Papa was co-pilot, and it was back seat driving all the way, with no complaints from the boys for they had no knowledge of the route or any way of determining it.

We chugged over the ratty, dirt roads to the main road, which was very little better, through Hamburg, which had not yet begun to stir, and on north following the river road. The river hugged the bluff so closely that at places the road was carved out of the rocky cliffs. One mile known as "The Dug Road" had always frightened me when we drove over it with

horse and buggy. My one wish this morning was more like a prayer: "Dear Lord, please let us get over that dreadful mile without meeting anyone." Luckily, we made it.

We had nearly reached the Pike County line when, with a sudden jolt, we came to a halt. The roads in those days had a high center because the wheels of the vehicles and the feet of the two-horse teams pulling them always used the same tracks in the narrow roads and kept them worn down. The center at this particular spot was a little too high for our car, which by today's standard was high indeed—even the running boards. But the "pumpkin" had dug into this center ridge and had wedged solid, thus preventing the car from moving either forward or backward.

Papa could not drive the modern contraption but he was quick to realize our predicament and had the immediate solution. "I'll go back to that house we just passed and get a spade," he said, and was off at a good clip in spite of his limp. He soon returned with the necessary tool, dug out a few spadefulls of dirt, enabling the car to be backed, and we were soon on our merry way again.

It was not a comfortable ride by today's standards, and occasionally bugs hit us in the face, to say nothing of the heat as the day progressed. But no one complained, as were adventurous souls just starting on an expedition which very few of our acquaintances had ever dared.

The route now took us over near the Illinois River where the roads were quite muddy, and the creeks we forded were swollen from the recent rain. In one such stream the motor died and that presented another problem. It was really quite humorous for all except the younger brother who had to crank the engine. He shrugged his shoulders, then proceeded to pull off his shoes and socks (no pant legs to worry about as he was still wearing knickers). He climbed around the windshield, on to the hood, then out to the protruding springs. By standing there like a giraffe he was able to give the crank a quick jerk and the motor took off. He didn't even

get his new knickers wet, but it was fortunate that the water wasn't any deeper than it was.

Finding our way from one town to the next was not always easy. We usually tried to follow the best traveled road, but frequent inquiries were necessary or at least expedient. When Papa saw that we were meeting someone, he would tell my brother to slow down (imagine, if you can, slowing down from thirty miles per hour) so he might inquire the way. Papa's numerous queries were most amusing to the rest of us, who were really needing some diversion. "Is this the way to Versailles?" he would shout. Or maybe it was Rushville or some other name that we had never heard. As the evening sun sank low, we were on a long, straight stretch of road which would take us into Table Grove, our destination for the night.

After our hunger was appeased at the hotel dining table, the boys went out to explore the town. We girls were sent down to the little room at the end of the hall, which we thoroughly explored, and then we were put to bed. Tomorrow held the promise of being another long day.

On the second day we found better roads. Some had a hard black surface different from anything we had ever seen. But there were still those square turns which had hindered our progress the day before. One could walk around them as fast as Mamma wanted him to go. Usually a hedge fence or tall corn prevented one from being able to see around them. But that is why the Empire was equipped with that bugle-and-bulb contraption. The driver was supposed to squeeze the bulb, which produced a ho-on-n-k that would warn anyone approaching around the corner or even a mile away. That horn was my delight, and I urged him to blow it whenever there was a chicken or other animal near the road. He soon learned better than to blow it when approaching horses as they were not yet accustomed to the noise and might give the driver a difficult time. Then the driver was apt to have a few choice words for us.

For a while this second day we followed the "Cannonball Trail." Then all eyes were glued to the telegraph poles, watching for the marker, which was a white band painted around the pole with a black ball in the center.

A couple times each day while passing through a town we would pull up to an imposing-looking structure, usually with a large red crown on top. It was a general merchandise store, and the proprietor would come out wearing his white apron. He would turn a crank, thereby filling the glass compartment at the top with an ill-smelling fluid which was the all-important fuel for those newfangled carriages.

We finally arrived in Tiskilwa and Papa told us the history of its name. We were greatly amused and I kept repeating the facts: "Tis and Wa were Indians. Tis killed Wa. Tiskilwa!"

After more inquires we found our way to the Hennepin Canal and to our aunt's house. Their home was near the canal and my uncle tended one of the locks so we had the opportunity to watch as he opened and closed the gates, thus raising or lowering the water. Many and various type boats used this canal to go from the Illinois River to the Mississippi or vice versa.

After a week's stay, we set out for home by a route which took us to Peoria. Here Mamma and us girls took the steamboat down the river to Kampsville. The long trip home was thought to be too tiring for Mamma. Though we went by a more direct route, they, having a half-day's head start, were waiting for us when the boat docked.

The last lap of our journey was a short one in the dependable Empire. But, needless to say, our chief topic of conversation with my older brothers and the neighbors was our memorable journey upstate.

STEAMBOAT A' COMIN'

John F. Ellis

My grandfather brought his family across the Illinois River in 1880 and settled in Naples, a town that depended on the river for its livelihood. The river had to be treated with respect. Its high water took personal property many times, and it claimed the lives of some of the town residents. The area looked good to my grandfather because he wanted to establish a wholesale-retail fish business, and so he stayed and dismantled the covered wagon that had been ferried across the river.

There was a good deal of river traffic in those early days. There were marker lights both north and south of Naples. My mother, as a young girl, and my grandfather had the chore of tending those lights, which were powered by kerosene. It was necessary to have a horse and a reliable boat to reach the markers, and it was a rough job, as the river could often be a challenge for a rowboat. The job was a political one and so was lost to my family when the administration changed in Washington.

The government had two stern-wheel steamboats, the *Lancaster* and the *Comanche*. Laurence Quintal, a classmate of mine, was an officer on the *Comanche* before it was retired from service. Duties for those boats included furnishing supplies for the marker lights and patrolling the river. The patrol duty was an attempt to keep the fishermen honest. Fish nets, seines, and baskets had to have tags in order to be legal. If equipment was found without a tag, it was destroyed. The patrol was also to discourage fishing during the closed season.

The *Lancaster* was noted for the size of its wake, and wave riding was considered to be quite a sport. One day my uncle and cousin caught the second wave behind the *Lancaster* wheel. The wave broke and filled the boat. Their yells brought Fred Mann with a rescue boat. Cousin Rip Six

could probably have made it to shore, but Uncle Esaw probably would have had trouble.

Naples had a large river-rail freight business. Their sizable fleet of stern-wheel steamers included the *Bald Eagle*, *Gray Eagle*, *Eagle*, *Spread Eagle*, *Golden Eagle* and a later boat, the *Peoria*, which was larger than the others. Wally "Cotton" Hatfield was the local agent.

Much livestock was moved to the Peoria and St. Louis markets. The company's mate was cruel to the black workers, and would often bring a heavy stick across their backs when they did not move fast enough. This infuriated me, and I would yell at him and threaten to report him to the sheriff. A stare was all I received in return, as he was not too concerned about a small boy's complaints. It was said that he never ventured from the boat when it was docked in St. Louis.

Before the Volstead Act, liquor was sold on all boats, except when Naples was "dry" and the stage plank was down. At those times, the packet would have passengers to the west side of the river. They would make their purchases and a friend would come for them in a motor boat. Farmers on the west side of the river brought their stock to the landing for pick up. It was a sad day when the entire fleet belonging to the Eagle Packet Company was lost in an ice jam.

My uncle, Charles Waters, did river barge work on a smaller scale. In addition to his fish market, he operated and owned a small excursion boat. May dad and Uncle Esaw ran the wholesale-retail fish market in Naples, and Uncle Will Waters had a large motor boat. At times I was allowed to be his pilot, which filled me with mixed emotions. I was elated with the job but afraid that I would do something wrong as Uncle Will had quite a temper.

The excursion boats were enjoyed by many people. The Swain family of Beardstown had a fleet of excursion boats that they named for their children. The list included the *Julia Belle*, *David*, and *Percy*. They also had an excursion barge. All of their boats were side-wheelers, which were more easily

handled on the river. The *Columbia* sank during a moonlight trip on July 6, 1918, with a large loss of life. I was among the 1200 that were on board two days before on a trip from Kampsville to Beardstown.

The *Columbia* had a whistle that was called a "wildcat." The first time that uncle Benny Eckles heard the blast, he was on the west side of the river in the woods. He thought it was for real and hurried back home, saying, "That's the first time old Benny Eckles ever backed out of the woods with an axe in his hand."

The sound of the calliope brought excitement to Naples because it meant that the showboat was coming to town. River people always pronounced it "cally-ope." The showboats were a source of much pleasure to me. Writers do an injustice to them in the way they are portrayed, both in words and in pictures, by indicating that the showboat was a single unit. This is not true! All, at that time, were towed by steamboats.

Naples was a stop for both up and down trips. The list of showboats visiting our town includes the *Golden Rod*, *Cotton Blossom*, *Hippodrome*, *Sunny South*, *American*, and *French's New Sensation*. The *Golden Rod*, which is on a new barge, is now docked at St. Louis. It is a dinner theatre showing old "mellerdramers," complete with heroine, hero, and villain. I attended a performance there recently with my family and sat in the same 35¢ seat of years ago. Back in Naples as a boy, I usually had an earned "Comp" (complimentary ticket) because I had helped the advance agent post his bills. After a band concert advertising session in the streets of Naples, the band would often travel to Bluffs on Henry Hyatt's hay rack, and there would be another concert atop the boat before the performance. My grandmother never missed a show, and she always had the same seat: third row, center aisle on the left side. The performers expected her to be there and she always was.

While the Illinois River furnished much pleasure for boating, swimming, and fishing, it was also reason for sorrow. Three of Naples' sons drowned in it. Uncle Eddie Waters lost his life in an attempt to save a friend's life when he fell from a boat on the return to Naples from Meredosia, where they had been in a baseball game. The victim got a death hold on Uncle Eddie and they both went under. Joe Hatfield and Joe Welch drowned when they were lost from fishing boats. Brothers of the victims dreamed of the place where the bodies would be recovered and the dreams came true.

Naples has also suffered much damage from floods. An early one in 1913 was caused by a break in the levee. The river was near the top of the levee in 1922, when a cut was made on the back water side to ease the pressure. The 1926 flood was caused by a break in the Jacksonville reservoir. In 1943 the Smith Lake levee broke, flooding Naples and hundreds of acres of farm land. That was a record high crest for the river.

To cope with high river stages, it was necessary to continually build better levees. In 1915 a new one was built by the Murphy Construction Company. It was built by using horses and mules with slip scrapers and wheelers. Townspeople were needed to furnish the "mule skinner." A large tent served as a barn for the animals. The present levee was built under the supervision of the Army Corps of Engineers in 1935. The entire length of Front Street was used for the right of way. Our family home and the Chris Dunaway home were moved to the street that now crosses the levee to the Boatel operated by Bill Saylor.

It was at this time that I was guilty of "bootlegging" ice water. The contractor for the job had failed to provide water. Frank Davis, superintendent of engineers, employed me to deliver good drinking water to the construction site of the 1935 levee job. He told the contractor that the cost of this would be deducted from his fee. The contractor then told his workers that they would be discharged if they drank the ice

water. They would come to me while I waited out of sight with a large thermos jug.

This concludes my memories of the Illinois, a river that saw many changes over the years. The boats of the early part of the century were of several different types and were far more interesting than those that use the river today. Commercialism seems to be almost the sole theme of today's traffic on the Illinois. The memories, however, are still good.

THE RAILROAD IN ORION

Kenneth Maxwell Norcross

My father, Maxwell Norcross, was an employee of the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy Railroad Company for fifty-five years. He was Station Agent at Orion in Henry County, Illinois, from 1918 to 1956. I was thus reared in a railroader's family and naturally spent many hundreds of hours at the Orion station with my father. I became quite familiar with the daily operation of the railroad.

The old depot was razed in December, 1973, and thus ended an era in Orion that the children of today can never experience. My father passed away a few years prior to the date the depot was destroyed, and I know he would have been sad to see it suffer such an ignoble ending.

The announcement that the "Q" depot was scheduled to be razed came as a shock to many of us old-timers who were kids back about 1918. That old building was a part of our lives. It had been there longer than any living resident. True, it hadn't served much of a purpose for the past decade, but it was always there to remind us of the wonderful days of railroading when steam was king.

Back at the turn of the century, the railroad was extremely important to the community. Life sort of revolved around it. Just think! We could board a train in Orion and travel to almost any spot in North America. How happy the

early settlers must have been when the first engine reached our village in October of 1870! The train brought in the comforts and luxuries of life and carried out our produce. Newspapers were then received the day following publication. The Western Union telegram arrived with the rails and brought instant communication. The price of land increased in value. Mail was received several times daily, and we had excellent mail service in those days.

The ever-present village loafers had an interesting place to spend their time and met every train. The arrival and departure of patrons was carefully noted and somehow reported to the editor of the local newspaper.

The melodious blast of a whistle sounded from around the bend, and the 8:15 pranced up to the platform. A salesman or two hopped off and rushed to claim their baggage. Aunt Lucy was assisted down the car steps by the brakeman and into the hands of her waiting relatives who hoisted her into the family buggy. Trunks, milk cans, mail, and other items were divested from the cars. A few minutes of great commotion prevailed and then the train was gone, leaving behind the pleasant odor of coal smoke and steam.

It was quite convenient for shoppers to board the train for Moline at 10:00 a.m.—about a twenty-mile ride—and return on the 3:00 p.m., which gave them about three hours to shop and eat. The depot "waiting room" could seat about fifty patrons. A black bulletin board listed all the passenger trains, their arrival and departure times. A large pot-bellied stove kept the room comfortable during the winter months. I remember the section crew coming in to get warm after riding several miles on the open-air section car. They would stand close to the stove and pick the ice from their moustaches that had collected during their cold ride.

The spacious "freight room" always contained a large quantity of empty cream cans of five- and ten-gallon size waiting to be claimed by their owners. The farmer's name was painted on the can. I recall most of the cream was shipped by

express to the Pioneer Creamery Company, Galesburg, Illinois. Glancing around the room you might also see a few bags of feed and perhaps a piece of furniture waiting to be picked up. The walls of the freight room were decorated with the initials of many Orionites. For example: "Gone to War - 1918 - R.K.D." A few were hard to decipher as they had faded with the lapse of time.

The office was located between the waiting and freight rooms—sort of in the middle of things. Through the open door you could hear the phone ring, the clinkety-clack of the telegraph instruments, and smell the unforgettable odor of the lighted kerosene lantern, meticulously clean, sitting on the counter. The office had a small pot-bellied stove, a desk or two, a small safe, a hand press for records, and a small wall-hung cabinet containing several rows of train tickets. There was a regulator clock, kept absolutely accurate, hanging on one wall. In one corner of the office two large handles protruded from a large black box. The handles operated the semaphore just outside the office window. Hanging also on a wall were several "hoops" shaped like the number "9." Those were used by the agent to hand train orders to the engine men as they passed by the depot.

The old station had seen many changes in her five score years. The original color had been a dark red. About twenty years ago a crew painted the depot white. Somehow it never seemed the same after that. Once a brick platform extended half a block in each direction from the depot, but it was removed many years ago. Everything used to be well-maintained, but at the time of its demise, the depot and grounds cried from neglect.

The rails had reached Orion in 1870 under the name "Rockford, Rock Island and St. Louis Railway Company." A few years ago, as the result of a merger, the name became "Burlington-Northern."

At one period, several "railroad families" resided in Orion. Three men were required at the depot and perhaps

eight on the section crew. The depot was open twenty-four hours daily and each man worked an eight-hour "trick." The section crew was responsible for the maintenance of ten or more miles of track. Just about every town along the route had a section crew.

Five days each week the "local" would make a round trip from Galesburg to Barstow. The "local" was a small freight train consisting of five to ten cars and a caboose. It stopped at every station along the route to pick up and set out cars and to unload and pick up freight items. On a typical day, the "local" might set out several stock cars on the siding—maybe a car of lumber or coal for the lumber yard; a car of poles for the power company; or maybe a tankcar of road oil. I remember seeing the local car dealer unload Model T Fords from a box car!

Upon arriving in Orion, the "local" would detach a car immediately in front of the depot. This car contained freight destined for local merchants. While part of the train crew unloaded freight the remainder would proceed to do the switching. It was common to see a hundred boxes of dry goods, nails, bolts, etc., deposited on the platform daily. The old depot was indeed a busybody!

Having completed its business in Orion, the "local" would proceed down the track to the next stop. The agent would then check each item received against the waybills to make sure there were no shortages. The drayman would next back his protesting Model T truck up to the platform and begin loading the freight which he would deliver to the proper owners.

Throughout the day, farmers would come to the depot with fresh cans of cream to "express" to the creamery and to claim their empty cans. During the day the manager of the local Livestock Shipping Association would be busy loading cattle or hogs into the stock cars at the stockyards. The "local" would pick up these cars on its return trip to

Galesburg in late afternoon. From Galesburg the cattle cars would be forwarded to Chicago.

In 1926 there were three passenger trains north and the same south. On October 1, 1928, one of the passenger trains was replaced with a two-car, gasoline-electric type. That was the beginning of the end for the steam locomotive.

One by one they have passed into history. On Saturday, January 14, 1961, the last regularly scheduled passenger train stopped at Orion. The era of passenger train service in this community spanned a period of just over ninety years, from 1870 to 1961. The business, as such, began to die when a paved road, Route 80 (now Route 150), reached the village in 1930.

"Number 48" was considered a plush train in her day. Forty years ago, had you visited the depot to watch her proud arrival and haughty departure, you might count a mail car, an express car, a baggage car, two coaches, a diner, and a pullman car. She was a super train, operating between St. Paul, Minnesota, and St. Louis, Missouri, with one train daily in each direction. During the Christmas season and other holidays, old "48" would be loaded to capacity. Frequently, men had to stand so that women and children might have a seat.

Yes, "Number 48" made its farewell visit to Orion. Gone also are those mammoth engines, such as the 5615 and the 6300, which seemed to take a particular delight in shaking every building as they thundered through the village. You could identify the engineer by the way he manipulated his whistle. And you knew how cold it was by the way it sounded.

The children of today are well-acquainted with the smell of burned diesel oil emitted by the "eighteen wheelers." They will never know the smell of fresh coal smoke and moist steam. They've never heard the rock-and-roll of a steam whistle in the hands of an expert, nor got a cinder in their eye. Yes, sir, we had it real good when we were kids and had a real railroad to keep tabs on!

Farewell to an era.

FARMINGTON DEPOT IN THE TWENTIES

Everette Wilton Latham

Farmington, Illinois, in the 1920's was a coal mining town twenty-one miles west of Peoria. It was served by two railroads, the Chicago, Burlington and Quincy (C. B. & Q.) and the Minneapolis and St. Louis (M. & St. L.). There were two railroad depots in Farmington. The one with which I was familiar was the M. & St. L., located at the foot of the hill on south Main Street. It has been torn down long since, and the tracks taken up. Nothing is left to me now of what was once a familiar environment but memories.

The depot was a rambling, wooden structure painted red. "Depot Red" we called it. Later it was re-painted green. And we called that color "Devins Green" after Johnny Devins, the then Vice-President and General Manager of the railroad. He had had the depot all along the line re-painted this medium-dark shade of green, his favorite color.

The building was well constructed. It divided naturally into three sections—a waiting room, an office, and a freight room. The platform, or track, side of the depot faced the north. The tracks ran east and west. A brick platform extended from Main Street eastward past the station building and on down a hundred and fifty or two hundred feet, perhaps. A painted yellow line some two or three feet back from the edge of the platform paralleled the main track and the platform's edge along its entire length. It was designed to discourage passengers from standing too close to approaching trains. Telegraph operators used it as a guide for placing themselves when handing up train orders to passing trains.

The waiting room, intended for the accommodation of passengers waiting to board trains, was at the east end of the depot. Rows of wooden seats graced the walls on three sides. There were two doors, one on the track or platform side, the other directly opposite and facing the south. (The ground

under the building sloped slightly to the south so that the south side of the structure rested on pilings several feet in height.) The door on the south side of the waiting room opened onto nothing more than a rather steep drop-off. We dumped the ashes from the two "cannonball" stoves out this door all winter long. Available wall space was taken up with posters, advertisements, train schedules, and tariff regulations.

The office was smaller than the waiting room but still quite large, as depot offices go. It sported a full-length bay window on the track, or platform, side. The telegraph desk stretched the length of the bay window. Drawers at each end were the receptacles of miscellaneous odds and ends, personal belongings, dust cloths, etc. Through the bay window the telegrapher on duty could see approaching trains from either direction. The telegraph instruments were fastened to this desk. A tiered or "pigeon-holed" box held train order blanks, carbon paper, and clearance card pads. At night red and yellow lighted lanterns gleamed from the pegs where they hung near the telegraph desk. Train order hoops (used for handing train orders to passing trains) hung nearby. The agent's desk and filing cabinets occupied positions near the south window and within a few steps of the ticket window. The cash drawer was under the ticket window shelf. A ticket case stood on the shelf. One of the "cannonball" stoves heated the office; the other heated the waiting room. A small door, near the door leading to and from the freight room, opened into a small, neat stationery supply room, lined with shelves. Fuses, torpedoes, and other emergency equipment were stored there.

The freight room at the west end of the depot accommodated two large, four-wheeled baggage trucks with room to spare. Some of the extra room was devoted to the storage of records. The freight room had a coal bin partitioned off in one end. With the gradual, and final, discontinuation of passenger train service, the freight room

was not used extensively, except as a means of entrance to and exit from the office.

The station force was not large. It consisted of an agent-telegrapher and three round-the-clock telegraphers. Forrest "Shorty" Tonkin was the agent. Emil Hassman held first trick as telegraph operator; Ralph Mason was the second trick telegrapher. I filled the third trick telegrapher position. My hours were from midnight to eight in the morning daily, except Sundays. The janitor work fell to the third trick telegrapher. The waiting room and office were swept every night. Well, almost every night. A light sprinkling of kerosene on the floors helped to keep the dust down while sweeping. I can still smell that pungent, clinging kerosene odor. It was a clean sort of smell, not at all unpleasant. Occasionally it became necessary to use water in lieu of kerosene, when the kerosene supply ran out, but this emergency substitute made more dust than it settled.

With the coming of the strip mine the deep shaft mines were gradually phased out of existence. As the deep shaft mines closed down the telegraph positions would be abolished. Eventually all were abolished and the station closed. Later the building was torn down and the tracks dismantled.

Many memories come racing back into my consciousness as I write these brief reminiscences. Memories too profuse to be set down in such a short space. Now, driving down Main Street past the site of the old depot, I see in my mind's eye what is no longer there. All is gone now. Depot, tracks, platform, everything.

RAILROAD DAYS IN ROODHOUSE

Eva L. Sullivan

The fire siren wailed loud and long the night of July 20, 1980. It could be clearly heard all over town. Soon the

townspeople, aware this was no ordinary fire, stepped outside to look around. It was 9:00 p.m.

Over the southwest part of town there were lots of smoke and a red glare, soon turning to scarlet as flames shot high into the sky. Could this be the depot on fire? It was, and it was burning so fast that it could not be saved.

Those of us sixty-five and older felt a lump in our throat, and our eyes grew misty. We knew a vital part of our history was burning, never to return. In its hey-day it was the hub of the town.

This once lovely, and still structurally beautiful, two-story depot of stone and slate will ever live in our memories. It was built in the late 1890 after the first small depot burned, and was occupied on January 1, 1891. It had an unusual design and many rooms. It was one of the finest depots between Chicago and St. Louis. It was modern in every respect, including plenty of water-closets. It was wired in every room in anticipation of incandescent lights, not yet available. Inside, the wood was of the finest Georgia pine, with a natural finish.

It had two large waiting rooms, one on the North and one on the South, with a large double door between them. Each had an outside entrance.

The ticket office was an octagonal room on the west, and had a ticketwindow into each waiting room. The comfortable seats surrounding the walls were of fine wood, with curving ornamental wrought-iron arms.

There were many windows and a very large flat-topped circular radiator in each of the two rooms, unlike any I have ever seen before or since.

The depot was steam-heated throughout. A large clock, keeping perfect time, hung on the wall; its ticking sounded loud and cheerful during the rare quiet moments.

East of the waiting rooms and connected to them by swinging doors into each room was a fine diner and lunch room. It was a busy place, and the odor of fresh brewed coffee

and good food wafted into the depot with each swing of the doors.

East of the diner was the baggage and express office. On the second floor above the ticket agent's office, was the superintendent's office. There were rooms for the train-master, road-master, dispatcher, conductors, and others. The telegraph office was on the second floor also.

The stone basement contained a heating apparatus and many storage rooms. This magnificent depot was 52 feet wide and 130 feet long and it cost about \$30,000 to build.

Early citizens, notably John Roodhouse, E.M. Husted, J.M. Armstrong, G.W. Thompson, P.A. Rawlings, Mr. Simmons, Mr. Cobb, and others, put forth a very great effort to secure Roodhouse as the terminal town from the Chicago & Alton Railroad Company, when it seemed certain that our rival town of White Hall would surely get it.

The first three gentlemen once took a hand car as far as Jacksonville, to catch an earlier train to Chicago, to consult with Mr. Blackstone, the president of the road, thus beating White Hall there. Mr. Blackstone was so impressed that Roodhouse, after meeting certain conditions, was given the terminal. Many of their descendants still live here.

It made our town prosper immensely. Our population soon doubled, and, before many years, tripled as a roundhouse and rip-track were added here. In 1919 our population was 2,755 people. We were, and are, an important junction between Chicago and St. Louis, and between Bloomington and Kansas City.

There were 25 switches within our city limits and an average of 25 trains made up here every 24 hours. There were many passenger trains as well. A 1919 time-table lists six passenger trains north, three south, five west in a 24-hour period.

There was scarcely any time day or night when trains were not whistling in or out of Roodhouse.

Most of our fathers, brothers, friends, and acquaintances were railroaders. We were proud of them and our town.

The railroad changed ownership and names several times: from Chicago & Alton to Baltimore & Ohio, to Gulf, Mobile & Ohio, to the present Illinois, Central, Gulf.

During the Depression the railroad went into a great decline, with many men laid off. It quickly recovered during World War II. Afterward it declined again, never to regain its former glory, due to bus service, and large transport trucks, and later jet travel. However, it was still busy.

Among the notable events at the depot were the great trainloads of servicemen traveling through during World War I. That was repeated with another generation during World War II. Trainloads of German prisoners of war came through here.

In 1897 William Jennings Bryan spoke here. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt's train stopped here during World War II. That was a big thrill for our town, and for my father in particular.

Circuses and carnivals used to travel by train. How exciting for the children! I have many personal memories. I am the child of a railroad car-inspector, and the sister of an engineer, fireman, and brakeman.

It doesn't seem so long ago when my parents and my brother and I were sitting in the waiting room, waiting for the train that would take us to some new wonderful place to visit, cost free, on one of the three foreign passes allowed to eligible employees yearly. In addition, wives were given an annual pass to use freely on our own lines.

I used to wonder who the people were, and where they were going.

The large radiator gave off a comfortable hiss of steam in winter; the clock on the wall ticked loudly. The green-visored ticket agent, Charles Wilkerson, always seemed very busy. From overhead came the click, click, tap, tap of the telegrapher's key. Soon, in the distance a train whistled.

Activity quickened. People rounded up their children and gathered up their luggage. Outside, with a great clatter, the tall baggage wagon, looking like a giant flat-topped coaster-wagon with large iron wheels, was pulled out. It was just the right height to roll beside the baggage and express coach.

The train arrived. The lunchroom did a booming business. Soon the conductor called: "All-ll aboard!" Then the train departed, whistling as it left. Quietness descended for awhile, but in a few hours the cycle was repeated.

Now, the only thing that is left is the stone skeleton of the depot. I have a dozen large, square-headed nails, salvaged from the ashes.

Souvenirs of the past.

COPING WITH "THE DEEP HOLE"

Bernadette Tranbarger

Sixty years ago this year two exciting things happened to me. On a bitter January night a baby brother arrived. My first glimpse was of the unexpected new arrival lying in his lace-trimmed and gently rocking bassinette.

For 13 days Mother stayed quietly and dutifully in her room, and a nurse-housekeeper saw to the household. Several days later, Gramps and Gram, on my father's side, came with gifts for the baby and something for me, too, which made me very happy, as I was feeling a bit left out of things.

On the morning of the 14th day, mother discarded her robe, dressed herself and the baby, and ventured downstairs. This was just what I needed, as I had missed my mother's overseeing the boiling pans on the big black range and presiding over the dining table. Mother was once again in charge, and all was well.

The astounding news came on the 15th day. Mother announced the family of four was now going to visit Grandma

and Grandpa "on my mother's side." My father had little to say about this, as Mother had had 14 days in which to plan every detail.

January was a typical Illinois winter month, with bone-chilling winds and a sprinkling of snow. We had to go properly prepared, and I was to pack my suitcase and not to bother Mother with unnecessary details. My parents' needs were all packed in the big travelling bag. The most impressive of all was the bright new pink suitcase for the baby.

I was thrilled to be going to visit my maternal grandparents, but when I learned we weren't going in our familiar Model T but taking the train instead, that was really shocking news.

I truly wanted to ride on a real train, and later to show off my new brother. And I wanted to carry my new fur muff. But to get to our point of departure, I also knew we had to go to "The Deep Hole," and that frightened me. Everyone was so busy, there was no one aware of my problem.

My father had already cranked up the big wooden wall telephone and talked to someone at "The Deep Hole!" The answering voice assured him there was plenty of room for four, and we would be comfortably seated. I pictured us like the train passengers in my picture book, resting on soft green velvet. It was queer that my father had asked specifically about seating. Better he should have contemplated "The Deep Hole" that had to be negotiated some way before boarding the train.

Soon Gramps arrived in his shiny Model T with its carefully snapped side-curtains. I loved to peer through the isinglass peep holes as we started off.

My father set up front with Gramps, and Mother and the wooly-wrapped baby and I occupied the back seat. I gripped my fur muff very hard and thought of the first obstacle to be overcome on the five and one half mile trip to Mother's home town.

At last Gramps pulled up before a neat gray frame building with white trim that had a big bay window jutting out in front, just like the one in Gram's parlor, and all glass enclosed. I looked anxiously around. There were no other passengers to be seen.

Gramps lifted me down from the high seat. We hurried to enter the building, and inside was the coziest, queerest room—two rooms, really. One had rows of wooden seats, and on one wall hung a big sign all chalked with numbers opposite names of towns. One man sold my father three tickets—the baby didn't need one. Then Dad spoke to the man in the glass enclosure who talked to a busily chattering box by pressing some mysterious little keys. Da-dit-da-dit. It assured us train Number Nine was on time and there was ample room.

Mother and the baby stayed comfortably in the waiting room, and Gramps and Dad placed the suitcases on a raised wooden platform. Below this platform and running parallel to it were long steel tracks. Surely the train would eventually come along here.

Finally, Dad and Gramps came inside again, and I was told the meaning of telegrapher and code-words. Miraculously, we still had not come to "The Deep Hole." I decided to let well enough alone and not ask about it.

Soon a whistle sounded, and I caught my first glimpse of Number Nine. It was a small but very shiny little engine with a glowing headlight and only one smokestack. As it puffed into the station, it omitted a sharp little whistle. The engine pulled a small coal car and two other rattling cars, the first appearing as a huge box on wheels, its high sliding door closed tightly to protect its contents. I was told this was indeed a "box-car" and it carried all kinds of merchandise. The second car seemed barely held together with slats. There was no mistaking its cargo. It was full of smelling, squealing pigs all trying to find a way to escape.

Bringing up the rear was a dainty wooden car which resembled my playhouse. It was painted a bright orange, and

on its window-sill sat a gay red geranium. There was a little pipe extending through its roof, and billowy white smoke rose from it into the cold January chill. Three steps led up to a little porch. It seemed to me the train was carrying along a little house as an after-thought. Nowhere in my picture book had I seen such a car as this. It had shown big, two and three stackers belching great columns of smoke, brilliantly painted dining cars, passenger and sleeping cars, parlor cars. But no little house-on-wheels.

Things happened fast now. My family quickly climbed aboard the porch and stood waving to Gramps, as the little engine, whistling and clanging its bell, slowly picked up speed toward its next stop.

It was warm and comfortable inside the little house-car, and there was a hard, straw-like seat for each. In one corner stood a glowing, pot-bellied stove generously giving such welcome warmth, and on its top sat a busily boiling coffee pot.

I loved watching the changing landscape, hearing the clakety-clack of the wheels and the squeeling of the pigs.

We had gone little less than a mile when Mother's frantic voice cried, "Fred! Fred! Stop the train immediately!"

Fred was the conductor and a very close friend of my parents. Our two families had often visited in each other's homes.

Fred and Dad just stared at Mother.

"Stop this train!" Mother demanded. "We've got to go back. The suitcases are sitting back there on the platform."

Fred attempted to explain that trains have to meet schedules and can't go forward and backward at will. This made no impression on Mother. "The baby must have his necessities! We must go back!"

And we did. I had noticed a decrepit-appearing rope hanging from the ceiling, and I had wondered why it was there. This rope was suspended over a battered and littered desk where Fred transacted all his business, such as delivering pigs and people and other merchandise to their correct destinations. But the awesome power of that rope became apparent when Fred, frowning severely, gave a huge tug, and that little rope caused bells to ring alarmingly, steam to hiss, brakes to shriek, and the entire train to lurch and shudder and finally stop all alone in the middle of nowhere.

Out of the window I saw brown shivering cornstalks swaying in the January wind, and beyond them a huge pine forest, its glossy needles gleaming in the pale sunlight.

Fred communicated by phone with the engineer, there was a repeat sound of bells, whistles, hissing steam, and groaning wheels, as old Number Nine started itself, and once again we were clakety-clacketing back to the station, in reverse all the way.

Mother thanked Fred for his kindness. He shook his head and gave her a forgiving pat on the shoulder.

When we slowed at our home station, Dad quickly put the suitcases on board, and after a little toot, old Number Nine took off forward again.

Grandpa on my mother's side was proudly waiting in his Model T for our arrival. This time I was allowed to sit up front, and how happy I was when we pulled alongside the big white house, and there was Grandma standing on the porch with out-stretched arms as I began hurriedly to tell her all the splendid things a real true train trip affords.

I was so glad that we had somehow managed to avoid "The Deep Hole."



II Country Stores

COUNTRY STORES

In his book, *Main Street On the Middle Border*, historian Lewis Atherton paints a graphic picture of the "general" or country store. Most of those emporia consisted of only one floor, though a false facade on their fronts led one to believe there were two. Quite often, slightly to the rear of the middle of the building was a potbellied stove, the gathering spot for gossipy older men who occasionally drifted off into hot discussions over the merits of Ty Cobb or Tris Speaker, the leading baseball players of the time. Hence the term "hot-stove league"—the time of the year when winners were picked and possible trades made.

On sunnier days, the front platforms of the buildings, generally made of rough planking and covered with a weather roof, became part of the store itself. Racks filled with brooms or rakes, various stocks of vegetables, or seasonal items were placed on the outside. As Atherton points out, the emphasis seemed to have been upon the range of stock rather than upon its quality.

The interiors of the stores were darkish and quite poorly ventilated, though one familiar with the type of store could be blindfolded and yet find his way from item to item. It was a matter of odors. The aroma of fish indicated the location of barrels containing salted herring or, in the case of busier merchants, an oyster barrel. Vinegar was kept in spigoted barrels, waiting to be drawn into bottles or jars brought into the store by customers. One of our contributors here tells the story of one grocer's horrific mistake—placing kerosene into a bottle meant for vinegar. Peanut butter, when it came into general acceptance, was also kept in barrels and, since it was not hydrogenated or treated in any other way, the top two inches of each barrel consisted solely of oil which had floated to the top.

In each country store there was always a "whatnot"

section. These were items which, by necessity, were thrown together with no thought as to organization. Straw hats, much needed on the farm, were hung here. There were pencils, writing paper, work clothes, shoelaces, and dozens of other necessities needed on the farm. To the rear of these was a rudimentary meat counter—a single case filled with cheeses or meats which farmers did not usually produce at home. On one side of the store were canned goods and, on the other, the candy counter. It was this last which is remembered by an oldster whose parents ever patronized a country store.

The reason is obvious. When a bill was paid, the merchant quite often offered the accompanying child a "nickle's worth of candy." What a choice! There were jelly bellies, licorices, chocolate bars, bubble gum, and peppermint sticks. There were "Mary Janes," jawbreakers, "all day" suckers, gum drops, and baseball cards. There were also wax candies, little figures of soldiers or animals filled with variously colored sweet liquids. In any bag of candy, these were consumed last. It took a special art. A small hole was made in the wax and the liquid was then sucked out. The wax was then chewed all day afterward, when dusk came on, it was rolled around a piece of ordinary string. Then it was a homemade candle to be burned as final tribute to one of those special days which one promises to remember forever and ever, but never does.

Down in the village of Witt, in Montgomery County, there was a marvelous country store operated during the 1920's and 1930's by two brothers named Lee. Every day, one of the two men loaded the bed of his old Dodge truck with items which he knew would be needed by farmers along his route. He stopped at each farm house along his way, exchanging pleasantries and gossip, and eventually trading off some of his goods for eggs or chickens. Once loaded, he headed back to the store, where he placed his poultry and eggs in transit for another destination. Everybody for ten miles around knew the "Lee Brothers Store" and, on

Saturday night, scores of farmers with their wives and children came under its roof to exchange gossip and to buy candy or other items for their families.

Deep in southern Illinois, at a town called Winkle, two elderly people kept a small country store in operation right through the Depression. The town was distinguished, so it was said, for not having a single employed person within its town limits. Relief checks and barter kept both the store and the people going. When World War II came along, a most strange development occurred. Everybody but the operators of the country store left for other parts, some tearing their houses down, others simply rolling them off to other villages. By 1965 the only structure left in Winkle was the old store, still optimistically operated by the old couple.

By that time, "Antiques" and collectibles had become a national rage, and the store was simply filled with them. There was Log Cabin Syrup in original tins, Champagne Velvet and Highland beer in cans (both firms had ceased to exist), and scores of other remnants of the past, including some old Lucky Strike cigarettes in the now famous green packages. At last the store had become a source of wealth to two gentle old people who had kept the faith. When everything had been sold out, the store closed and, as Abe Lincoln had said of his own establishment at New Salem, the Winkle country store finally "winked out."

Victor Hicken, Editor

GRANDPA'S COUNTRY STORE

Beula M. Selters

As soon as I could get my chin above the counter, I began clerking in Grandpa's country store in St. Mary's, Illinois. My father was part owner of my grandfather's store, but three days a week he was gone on the delivery route. Therefore, it was decided that I could be most useful by helping Grandpa in the store.

The country store was the lifeline of the surrounding prairie. Farmers from miles around traded at our store and found us always at their service, almost day and night. Many times, if we had not opened the store before 6:00 a.m., a farmer could come to Grandpa's house, just 30 feet away, and knock on the door pleading, "Jim, I gotta have some coffee for breakfast." Grandpa would grab his pants from the bedpost, walk across the yard, and open the store.

Then often times the man would add, "Just some chawin' tobacco, too, before I go to the field. Put it on the books, Jim."

Our store also had the first drive-in service. Many a man would ride up on horseback and yell, "Beula, bring me a cigar."

The store and the house still stand on the hill of the little hamlet, just west of where the Lamoine Valley Lake is planned. However, they are a sad picture of what they were when I was a child. The false front of the store was then brightly painted with the lettering "Lewis and Son—General Merchandise," and the eight-room white house was surrounded by a white picket fence, with morning glories, and with a yard full of flowers in the summer.

Our store was divided into four parts. One side of the front was for groceries and the other side for drygoods. The back part contained hardware and farm equipment, with one corner reserved for the post office and Papa's desk, where he conducted his Justice of the Peace duties. Then, of course,

there was a storage room, one small lean-to for a 500 gallon tank of coal oil (kerosene), and an ice house behind the store.

The store was perhaps quite typical of the nineteenth-century country store. We sold everything from food to gasoline at 10¢ per gallon. Nothing was prepackaged. Everything was weighed on the scales at the end of the counter and wrapped with brown paper or put in pokes. At one end of the counter was a huge roll of brown paper and a cone shape ball of white twine on a revolving spindle. On one counter was a big 24-inch coffee grinder, which I couldn't turn. Fortunately, most people preferred to grind their own coffee beans just before making the coffee. It was fresher and more savory, they thought.

Most of our merchandise came in wooden containers. Crackers, sugar, pickles, peanuts, and salted herring were in barrels. Candy was in big wooden buckets. Oranges (the few we bought) were in crates. Flour was in one hundred pound muslin sacks, with lovely prints, which women used later for bloomers, shimmies, curtains and dishtowels. It was a treat when a stock of bananas, weighing at least 50 pounds, arrived and Papa hung it on a special pulley from the ceiling. We would cut off the bananas with a sickle-like knife and sell them for 1¢ each. But we always checked for tarantulas, which sometimes came with the bananas.

Under the counter was the cash drawer. When one reached under and pushed the right keys, a steel gong sounded—to make sure that no one except the clerk opened it.

Sometimes Grandpa left me alone in the store. Of course, I made many mistakes. One time a drummer (salesman) talked me into buying \$50.00 worth of buggy whips just when cars were becoming popular. The whips hung from the ceiling unsold for years. However, my most embarrassing mistake was when Mr. Beadles came in to buy white sugar. The barrels of white and brown sugar sat side by side, with a scoop in each, and since I couldn't find the scoop

for the white sugar, I took the one from the brown sugar barrel and scooped the white sugar in the sack. Later Mr. Beadles came rushing into the store shouting, "Jim, I want a new batch of sugar. There's brown lumps in this poke of sugar. Those darn fellows a spittin' tobacco juice all around."

"Now, now, Orville, calm down. We'll see what's wrong," said Grandpa.

Then Grandpa turned to me.

"Beula, did you wait on Mr. Beadles?"

"Yes, Grandpa, I couldn't find the scoop for the white sugar, so I used the one in the brown sugar barrel."

It wasn't always pleasant to be left alone in the store. There was a farmer nearby who was a drunkard. When he got tipsy he hitched his horse to the buggy and came racing down the road, yelling like an Indian on a war path. He had a heavy black beard, often times streaked with tobacco juice. When I heard him coming, I hastened to lock the store door and hide.

I loved to work on the drygoods side of the store. The scents were so nice there—talcum powder, sachet bags, and toilet water. The shelves were full of bolts of calico, muslin, and gingham. Bib overalls of blue denim sold for \$1.00, shoes \$1.50, straw hats 25¢ and calico 5¢ a yard. I remember a red pleated calico dress that Grandma made for me which cost only 25¢. Many small articles like thread, buttons, combs, hairpins, and safety pins were sold for a nickel a card.

A nickel also brought a man a good cigar, or he might even get it free if he wanted to gamble with the big wheel above the cigar counter. When he put his nickel in the slot, the wheel spun around, and if it stopped on "free," we gave him a cigar.

One day Mrs. Gohagen came in to buy some gingham. She found a pretty bolt of blue gingham, but I couldn't find the yardstick to measure off the ten yards that she wanted. She said, "Oh shucks, Beula. I can measure that gingham." So she took the bolt, unwound a long strip and stretched the material from the tip of her nose to the end of her

outstretched arm. "That, Beula, is one yard," she said, as she proceeded to measure the rest.

I tried to do it, too, but found that my material was three inches short. One had to be a grown person to stretch 36 inches from nose to hand.

One job that I didn't like was to candle the eggs that farmers brought in to exchange for groceries. In a dark place in the storeroom the candle box set on a table. I would often check 12 dozen eggs by placing them, two at a time, into the bright holes on the tin box surrounding a bright light. If there were dark spots in the eggs, they were rejected.

On each side of the store was a telephone, each owned by a different company. Some people called us on one phone while others belonged to the second company. We had a different ring on each phone. On one phone it was a short and two long rings. On the other, the ring was short, long, short. It was my duty three days a week to listen carefully for the farmers' calls and take their orders for groceries, which Papa would deliver.

Each day Papa took a different route, carrying groceries in exchange for eggs and poultry. He loaded his Model T truck with egg cases, full of groceries, and chicken coops for the chickens that he would take in exchange for the groceries. Usually 30 dozen eggs came back in each egg case, and full chicken coops were taken to the Augusta packing plant, where the chickens were processed and canned.

Grandfather was one of the first rural postmasters. The license, hanging over his desk, had President Grover Cleveland's signature. Prairie farmers at first came to the store for their mail and to mail letters with a two-cent stamp. However, in 1896 Rural Free Delivery (R.F.D.) was established, and the mail was delivered to their homes.

The most popular place in our store was in the center, where a potbellied stove sat in a five-by-five-foot box of sawdust. Grandpa cleaned that box of sawdust every morning because the men sat there on nail kegs and spat

tobacco juice into it. This was the men's club of the community. Here one learned the latest news: the arrival of new babies, what boy was courtin' which girl, politics, and news of World War I. Usually a game of checkers was also in progress. Sometimes a drummer (salesman) would join them, with jokes and news of other communities. Then he would leave trading cards, colorful posters, and almanacs for our customers to take home.

One cold morning Jake Wilson came rushing into the store with a big frozen rattlesnake in a bushel basket.

"Look fellows, see what I found down by the crick," he exclaimed.

"By jimminy, it's a big one with six rattles," whistled Jeff Cloud as he moved another checker on the board.

After everyone had a good look at the dead snake, they went on talking and forgot about it, when suddenly the basket tipped over, and the snake crawled out. Then there was plenty of excitement, with some men hunting for weapons and others climbing up on the counter. At last Papa took his revolver from the desk drawer and shot the rattlesnake. The men learned that a frozen snake is not a dead snake when near a hot stove.

There was also lots of talking and enthusiasm when oil was found at Colmar in the summer of 1914. The big oil boom brought thousands of tourists to our area. After Peter Hamm's gusher came in, the men began talking of having an oil well on their own land, even in their backyard if necessary.

Some of the men around the stove had gone with General Sherman on his march to the sea in the Civil War. During World War I they relived their Civil War experiences, spending hours reading the papers and telling stories of their years in the Civil War with General Sherman. They loved the general, who had been hated by the South. He was "Uncle Billy" to his soldiers. It was there that I heard the following stories.

"Boys," said Sam Babcock, "We had a hard life those

four years, but old Uncle Billy was the bravest of all. Once I saw four horses shot out from under him, and he never flinched. It was during that terrible battle at Shiloh! I'll never forget the surprise attack and the great hurly-burly one early Sunday morning. Many of us were still in bed. Suddenly we heard officers shouting, "Fall in! Form a line!" Soldiers were running in all directions, putting on their pants and boots. General Sherman was on his horse instantly, paying no attention to the bullets flying all around. When the horse was shot, he quickly mounted another. That was four hours of hell, and we lost many good comrades. But after the victory the soldiers placed their hats upon their bayonets and cheered Uncle Billy. Then there was a torch parade with everyone singing Uncle Billy's favorite song—"The Blue Juanita." Camp after camp took up the song until the heavens rang!

"We darn near starved to death on our march to Atlanta," said Jeff Hitz. "Our supplies were cut off, and for nine days our rations were one ear of corn a day. If we ate anything else, we had to take it from the Rebels. Many times, though, we camped on the plantations of wealthy Rebels, who had fled. We found their granaries well filled and some food buried in the ground and in wells. We covered about 15 miles a day, foraging and plundering along the way. One day about noon we entered a barnyard full of fat little pigs. I spied a succulent looking one and went for it. Just as I grabbed, the pig slipped out of my hands, and I went face down in the mud. As I lifted my head, I spied a pair of tall boots beside me, and looking up, I saw General Sherman. 'Better luck next time, soldier,' he laughed."

On the morning after Easter Sunday in 1918 the men were gathered around the stove as usual, and Grandpa told them about a dream he had had during his afternoon nap on Easter Sunday. He had always been fascinated with the first airplanes that were used in World War I, and he had dreamed that he was a pilot, shot down over Germany. In his dream he

saw himself taken to the Kaiser. During his interrogation it was decided that the war must end between the tenth and fifteenth of November, 1918.

"Ah Jim, that's hogwash," teased the men. But when the Armistice was signed on November 11, 1918 (eight months after Grandpa's dream), the men had more respect for his prophecy.

The farmers took it for granted that they were welcome to socialize at the store and even help themselves to bits of food. Grandpa always had a full coffee pot on top of the stove, and he never complained if someone reached into the cracker, peanut, or pickle barrel for a handful, or even when they raised the glass lid over the big round cheese and sliced off a piece.

Saturday night was always a gala time. Farmers came from miles around, bringing eggs, cream, or chickens to trade for merchandise. The men would congregate around the stove or on the front porch while the women shopped.

Many of the men chewed tobacco, and if they couldn't spit in the sawdust around the stove, they spit off the porch. Sometimes they had a contest to see who could spit the farthest. I remember one time when they raised Grandma's ire. Noticing the white picket fence nearby, two fellows decided that it would be fun to see whether they could spit through the pickets. When Grandma caught them, there was considerable excitement for a while. The crowd, of course, enjoyed seeing her anger and the men's frustration as they washed the fence.

The store was usually open until midnight on Saturday night. Papa sometimes made several gallons of lemonade in a big stone jar, and everyone drank from the tin dipper.

Sometimes Sim Palmer, the blacksmith, brought in his victrola, with the big horn and hollow cylinder records, encouraging a little dancing between the counters.

Coal oil lamps in brass baskets on the walls lit up the store at night. It was my job to clean the chimneys, trim the

wicks, and fill the bowls with coal oil. How happy I was when one day Papa brought home two beautiful Aladdin lamps. What a beautiful white light, turning night into day! Such a change from the tiny ribbon flame of the coal oil lamp! The Aladdin lamp had a big shiny chrome bowl and white crystal shade, set in a steel frame. The finger-shaped filament had to be primed with gasoline and filled with air by a little tube pump, like the one Brother used for his bicycle tires. It was too dangerous for me to operate, so the lamp chore was turned over to Papa.

Watching the men store the ice in the depth of winter was a treat. I never saw them cut it out of the lake, but when they brought the huge blocks home in a wagon, I was there to watch them store the ice in a shed behind the store. The shed was over a pit lined with straw. Large blocks of ice were slid down a tin ramp into the shed and then covered with sawdust. Layer upon layer of the big blocks of ice were finally stored for summer use. I watched and dreamed of the hot summer days when I would spend hours in that ice house reading my favorite book. Also, my mouth watered for the good ice cream Grandpa would make. Having the ice made it possible for us to have an ice box in the store and enable us to sell ice cold pop. Also, we no longer had to store perishables in the cave or well.

However, that pan underneath the ice box, for the melting ice, was a nuisance. It filled so quickly that we often had a wet floor when we forgot to empty it. One day Papa attached a hose from the ice box to a hole in the floor. Then the water dripped onto the ground underneath.

One of my most vivid memories of the store is of listening to the first radio, on the election night of Warren G. Harding. A large crowd had gathered to hear the election returns over a crystal set that Grandpa had purchased. Everyone took turns listening on the earphones and reporting the results to the crowd. I almost jumped out of my shoes when I first heard that voice from across the country.

What a wonderful time I'm living in, I thought, as I watched all those amazed faces that night in Grandpa's country store.

MABLE*

Iva I. Peters

The era ended on a windy sub-zero night in February, 1962. Young Jim McQuaid was alone in his parents home, formerly the old Mable store, when he escaped from the wild raging fire. In the frigid gray light of the dawn, the only remains of the old landmark were the smoking ruins and a few charred trees.

My memories of the little country store begin around 1918 when it was operated by the J.C. Davis family, who had been there since 1906. They had succeeded a Mr. Wynecoop who, in the late 1800's, had moved the building from a location less than one mile east, to a corner on the farm owned by a community spirited gentleman, Mr. Levi Marlow. Mr. Marlow was an ingenious man, who, in his lifetime, had already had a hand in the erection of a church and a new school house, moving and remodelling the old school into a lodge and community building. These four buildings were all situated within one half mile of each other, and all within the boundaries of his farmland. The addition of the store made the lively community even more thriving. It was in 1900 that he arranged for a post office to be established at the store, and at his suggestion, the postal department called it "Mable," named for one of Mr. Marlow's small granddaughter's, Mabel Calvert, age six. And so it was that the rural community became officially know as Mable.

Mable was more than a store and post office. Maps of the area show it as a small dot about ten miles west of

Rushville, with a population listed at 90 persons. Although the boundaries were undefined, it was an interesting, lively community, composed of an unusual number of well known landmarks, all within the space of one mile.

Besides the store and post office, there was the lodge hall (the old Davis school building), located across the road from the store; close by was the Union Chapel Church, the Marlow Cemetery, the Lawson blacksmith shop, the Davis sorghum mill, the new Davis School (district 57), and the beautifully wooded six acres known as Marlow Grove, famous for its annual picnics until 1927. A short distance north of this clump of activity was Wild Cat Slough, the recreation area of the community.

This happy combination of activities offered me a most pleasant and wholesome place in which to grow. I was born in the first house east of the store during the time the Davis family was operating the store. The post office occupied a space just inside the door, and was in operation from 1900 to 1913, when it was closed and rural delivery began with the luxury and convenience of a mail box by each gate.

In 1918 the Davis family left the store to operate the sorghum mill, and they were succeeded by the young Harold Milton Cady, who had married Mable Calvert, for whom the community had been named. They lived in a small house immediately west of the store, and by now, the old lodge building had been moved again to provide storage back of the store. Connecting the two buildings was a covered area where Mr. Cady did car repairs and also stored his own handsome Oldsmobile truck, in which he made home deliveries and did commercial hauling.

Mable store was a wood frame building built close to the ground, unpainted, as I recall. There was a porch the width of it on which sat simple wood benches for "the loafers." Inside were more benches close by the counter for cold weather visitors. There was a large potbellied stove in the rear, a cream testing area and a place to candle eggs. The floor was

* Spelling as appears on early maps. Sometimes spelled 'Mabel'.

of very wide, slightly curved, but smooth boards, and I recall seeing the owners apply a red sawdust-like material to the floor before sweeping, giving the place a fresh cedary smell. This fragrance remains vivid in my memory as it mingled with the smells of rope, cured meat, apples, bananas, and kraut in barrels.

I was delighted any time my mother gave me a nickel to go shopping for a loaf of "Bakers Bread," which was a rare treat in the Ingles household. It was unsliced and wrapped in wax paper and seemed to me to be food for angels—an idea that soon faded with the years. It was also a joy to visit the store to see the candies and watch the salesmen come and go—all glamorous people driving in from somewhere beyond the boundaries of Mable. The Cady's, as well as all their successors, "waited on" their customers, handling each order on an individual basis. My mother never used the word "shopping," but rather, she would go "trading," which, indeed, she did do, when she took the thick cream and cases of brown eggs to be exchanged for the commercial items she needed. The store was open for business every day and evening except Sunday, and Saturday nights were the highlight of the week. Especially in summer when the cars or buggies were parked all around and while the adults traded and visited, we children romped among the buildings and trees.

The lights at Mable were gasoline lanterns with fragile white mantles hanging down, and when they were lit they hissed soft little songs as they burned with a fierce white light.

The Cady children usually walked to school with us and were quite constant companions until their father entered the Methodist ministry and they moved away in 1927. They were succeeded in the store by John Lee, who later moved to Rushville to practice veterinary medicine. George R. Davis managed the store for a short period, then it was purchased by the Julian Unger family. Many changes took place at this

point, because the Camden-Rushville road was straightened and gravelled in 1935, cutting across the Marlow field, leaving Mable store off the highway. The Unger's found themselves coping with this inevitable change by once again moving the old store building a few rods south until it was adjacent to the new highway. The old house and schoolhouse were left behind, and they erected their home east of the store and annexed the two buildings as one unit. The sides of both were covered with dark green shingles, the lawn was landscaped, and little resemblance remained of the old Mable. It was a great improvement and for years it seemed as if progress had finally come to benefit Mable, the tiny dot on the map.

In retrospect, however, it was the end of an era, and the beginning of the demise of a small country store. No longer were the roads impassable with mud, and somehow the cars ran faster and it became easier and easier to drive by to larger selections in bigger towns. However, Mable did not die without a fight, because it would be over 20 years before the final gasp.

The Unger's ran a bustling business and in turn were succeeded by Roy Baskett, Roy Ramey, and Ray Artis. In 1957-1958 the road was once again straightened in certain places and covered with a black surface, and almost simultaneously the store closed its doors—a casualty of better transportation and the more sophisticated tastes of the post World War II era.

In the mile or so of landmarks so memorable to my childhood, only the big rocks at "Wildcat" and the whispering cedars and sad stones of the Marlow Cemetery remain. It seems incredible that in my lifetime so many well known places have completely disappeared.

The clanging sounds of the blacksmith's anvil were long ago silent; the steam of the vats and the fragrance of the sorghum mill wafted away at least 50 years ago; sounds of children's voices and a ringing school bell were silenced in

1949 when the building was torn down and the lumber used at the Camden School; the last hymn was sung at Union Chapel in 1939, and the building moved away and remodeled into a residence; the Levi Marlow buildings were all replaced by more modern ones, and the lovely Marlow Grove has been in cultivation for many years.

Mable, the store, is gone, and Mable, the community, is no longer even a dot on a map. It is just a memory, and memories are landmarks only to those who have lived them.

HAMBURGERS, MILKSHAKES, AND COLLEGE STUDENTS

Katherine Z. Adair

The building is still there. I don't know what it's like inside or what changes have been made to the outside. I haven't been back. When mother sold the business to Perry Hay in 1952, that part of my life was over.

Since I lived there from 1924-1944, I would say that College Hill Grocery and Confectionery was one of the most important factors in my life. I learned how to meet people and take responsibility, how to deal with all kinds of situations, how to do menial tasks in a proud way and how to plan my time so that I could get everything done when it should be.

My father, Fred Zimmerman, had been an insurance salesman for years when he was offered a chance to buy the business in the 300 block of West Adams. The building was not very old and had an apartment over the store where we could live. Since there were only three of us—my mother, Dad, and myself—it was adequate. It wasn't exactly what we were used to, but it seemed a good opportunity.

I was a freshman at Macomb High School when we moved to the store. I wasn't part of the "in" group so I especially enjoyed the contact I had with the College boys

and some of the faculty who came in for groceries or the ones I met when helping mother when she did catering.

We worked hard—long hours, seven days a week, very few vacations. We had the help of the Zimmerman family. My dad was from a family of ten. All of the ones near there helped at one time or another with money, encouragement, and actual purchases, but we were the ones who washed the dishes, swept out, dipped the quarts of ice cream, fried the thousands of hamburgers, served the milk and caramel squares for breakfast, and listened to the occasional tales of woe. Remember: we went through the Depression years and war times as well as the good times.

When I look back over the *Sequels* (yearbooks) of the 20's and 30's, I see many names and faces that were familiar to us at College Hill. Many of those students went on to successful careers as farmers, teachers, scientists, businessmen, athletes, politicians, even college presidents. Harry Newburn was a regular customer—played football and slept through many of Professor Seal's early morning history classes.

We had very little rowdy behavior. Dad would have asked them to leave and they would have. We had practically no instances of non payment. The students charged, but with the definite understanding that they paid when Mr. Z said they were to do so. Our only real difficulty was getting them out at 10 p.m.

I think Dad must have advertised some in the Courier (the college newspaper). When he died, the students published a lovely tribute to "Mr. Z." After all, he was College Hill—the man who made that location a special place.

THE HUCKSTER WAGON

Louise Krueger

Anyone who has lived in a rural area during the horse and buggy days still remembers the thrill when during the summer months the huckster wagon would pull up in the driveway. These memories carry me back to my early days in the rural area of Altamont in Effingham County, about 65 years ago. The huckster in our area was none other than my father's brother, Fred Krueger, who later operated a general store at Gilmore.

The huckster had five routes in the area, one each day of the week, keeping a close schedule at each customer's home. He was well acquainted with his patrons and could stock his wagon each day according to their weekly needs. At our home, the huckster wagon arrived every Monday around 11 o'clock. It was wash day. Our goal always was to have the wash out of the way and the clothes on the line in order to be ready to do the trading when the huckster arrived. Eggs and young roosters were always traded for the household items we purchased.

The huckster wagon was a large farm wagon drawn by a team of horses. It was stocked with the most useful items a housewife needed, such as flour, sugar, spices, canned goods, yard goods, sewing items, men's overalls, tobacco, candies, etc. Instead of the regular wagon bed a large cabinet-like structure was built to the size of the wagon with shelves and doors on either side. The back end had a large let-down door which served as a table to measure off yard goods stored in the back area. The chicken coops were on the very top of the wagon, the egg cases underneath in order to be kept in the shade.

This method of selling wares from place to place was indeed a profitable business for the seller and a service as well for the farmers. The farm horses were in the fields from morning till evening and much too tired to be driven miles for

what could be purchased in this manner. Messages and news of concern could be carried from family to family, which was appreciated.

The housewife usually had a few cents left over from her egg and chicken money and would then buy a few sweets for the youngsters who were always standing by.

MEMORIES OF WAYLAND

Lillian Elizabeth Terry

In the late 1800's, there was no rural mail delivery. At that time the federal government officially designated that the incoming mail would be placed in homes or stores and kept until individuals could call for it and the outgoing mail would be held for the postal service to pick up and take to its destination.

Wayland store became one of the first post offices in Schuyler County, being situated at about an equal distance for the inhabitants of Littleton, Brooklyn, and Camden townships to pick up their mail, some of whom walked or rode horseback to get it.

I have no official records, and Wayland is only remembered by those who are four score years or more. My husband's father, John Terry, told me that many a time when he was a young man he rode horseback to Wayland to get their mail. He was born in 1875, and their home was in sections 30 and 31, southwest of Littleton.

Wayland was a small, one-room weather beaten building, situated in a corner of three roads. One went south, one east, and one west. Several dwellings also were close by.

Flora Polson was one of the first post-mistresses at Wayland and also the storekeeper, and at that time, everything that folks needed was kept there.

Frank Woods, who lived in Augusta, Illinois, delivered oil and groceries to Wayland with a four-horse team, as he did to all the small stores.

In the year of 1908 my family moved from Rushville, the county seat of Schuyler County, to a small farm about one half mile from Wayland store, and at that time there was a mail route, and Sally Chockley was the storekeeper.

I remember just how the store looked, at the age of eight years. Mother would put a basket of eggs in our little wagon and send my brother Edwin, age ten, and I to the store for supplies in exchange for the eggs: usually some sugar, coffee beans, matches, and maybe some kerosene. When we left, Sally always treated us to a stick of candy or a long stick of paraffin gum, neatly wrapped in cream colored paper with little yellow flecks. What a treat! We were so proud and happy to get it.

I remember how the building looked on the inside and out. It was weather beaten, built from wide lumber siding, had no paint, was gray with age, and probably the roof was covered with hand made shingles. Also, there was a little front porch of wide planks, elevated on some kind of a foundation, making it higher than the ground level.

At the entrance there was a wide high counter to the right, which was almost the length of the store. On top of the counter was a coffee mill, some old-fashioned scales, and some large glass jars with glass stoppers, which were filled with candy or paraffin gum. Back of the counter were shelves with a variety of things customers usually needed.

The floor was also of wide planks, gray with age, but always swept clean. Sally kept her eggs in the back, and we children always went with her to count them. She would put one dozen here and one there, before she put them in her case.

There were several chairs for the customers to sit in and exchange the latest gossip and also for the neighbors who lived close by.

In 1908, I remember seeing Coxey's Army, which was

marching through the country. I think they were campaigning for the Socialist Party. There were about one dozen of them, along with their leader, who was William Hill.

One evening they stood on the little porch at Wayland store, and Mr. Hill gave a speech. The neighbors gathered to hear him, and stood in the road. I remember standing to the left of the crowd. I do not remember anything he said, but I do remember just how he looked. He had on a close fitting top coat that came to his knees and also a stove pipe hat. He reminded me of the picture of Stephen A. Douglas when he debated with Abe Lincoln that I once saw in a history book. It is said that Mr. Hill carried a torch when he marched.

Wayland store caught fire at one time, due to a threshing machine that belonged to John Day, that had stopped by the store. Sparks from the engine set the roof on fire, and had it not been for the water tank, it would have burned.

Sally gave up the store sometime before 1916, and there seems to be no pictures of it that can be found, and so when the little store and former post office was torn down, and the little plot of ground was absorbed by the surrounding pasture, and the memory of it almost disappeared as well.

Sally was a striking woman with dark sparkling eyes. She was tall and slender, her hair pinned high upon her head. She dressed plainly, always wore a dark print calico dress, with long sleeves, and high neck, and a long apron of white or light colored material tied around her waist. And she was always kind and gentle to whoever she was near.

Sally was not literate enough to be the proprietor of a business, but through her accomplishment, she expressed a part of the heritage of earlier America. She enjoyed the remainder of her life doing some gardening, caring for her flowers, and with her husband raising some livestock and poultry.

She also pieced quilts, and she never forgot me as a child, for she gave my husband and I a beautiful quilt for a

wedding present, the pattern being "The Broken Dish," which I have had now for over 60 years.

THE GIN RIDGE STORE—NOT A MYTH

John C. Willey

In the very late 1800's and early 1900's, in the southwest part of the Township of Bethel in McDonough County there was a general store. This place was located near the road which separated McDonough and Schuyler Counties. The business was started by Andrew and Rachel Stoneking in their home. The people around the area were largely self-sufficient, but there was still desire for various "store-bought" articles. And since the nearest towns were Plymouth, Industry, and Macomb, other stores were a distance of 12 to 18 miles.

Andy (or Andrew) ordered the merchandise and had it shipped to him by rail from more distant places. That merchandise, of course, he would sell at a profit. Having it come by rail meant that he would have to take a team and a wagon to Plymouth to the depot and pick up his supplies.

In the early 1900's business was getting very brisk and, having a family, he needed more room. He had some husky sons, so he put them to work at building a special building for the store. That place was then called the "Stoneking Store," or more often the "Gin Ridge Store." As time went on, the one son, Jesse, began to run the store while another, John, opened a store in Doddsville. A third son, Ernest, was a farmer in the community.

This general store was set up to buy and sell the produce of the local people, as well as the items brought in from the outside. They bought cream, eggs, and poultry from the farmers and in turn sold to them such things as yard goods, thread, tobacco, and tools.

At that time there were lots of underground coal mines in the area. It was at the store that the miners bought much of their carbide for the miner-lamps, along with picks, shovels, wedges, and other tools.

This general store was also the gathering place of gossip and news—a place to talk and have fun. It was common joke that there was more coal mined and more farming done in the store than any place else! It ever was a place where the older men held checker tournaments and the board was never put away. They would sit around the old potbellied stove to while away the time.

There were also a couple pairs of boxing gloves hanging there, where any newcomer had to prove he was good enough to hang around. If you would not put on the gloves and give it an honest try, you might as well leave and never come back!

As time went on, the automobile became popular enough to warrant a gasoline pump. This pump was red in color with a long handle on one side with which to pump. The gasoline went up to the top and into a glass container, which was round and tall. It would hold ten gallons of fuel and had marks on it to indicate the gallons, numbering from one to ten. Gasoline at that time was low octane and was priced at five gallons for one dollar. It was unleaded.

It was, I think, in the late thirties when the store closed down. Even the building is no longer there. The Freeman Coal Company now owns the land and all the surrounding area. All of that land will be turned upside down, and there probably will not be a landmark left to show where the store was located.

EGGS, APPLES, AND CONSCIENCE

Mildred M. Nelson

In the early 1920's, the Old General Store in Tennessee, Illinois was located across the road west of the Tennessee Park. The two-story building was sandwiched in between the blacksmith shop on the south and the old Odd Fellow Lodge Building on the north. Ed and Grace Pittenger were the proprietors of the store.

Like most of the general stores of this era, the Pittenger Store had quite a variety of merchandise. You could buy overalls, shoes, dress material, kerosene, chicken feed, and hardware items in addition to food products. Most of the food products were shipped to the store in bulk quantities. Flour, coffee beans, apples, etc. came in wooden barrels, while other items, like dried fruits, came in large wooden boxes. You could buy any amount you wanted. Very few items were pre-packaged. It always seemed to me that the storekeepers put most every purchase in a brown paper bag, twisted the top, and tied it with a string.

On Saturdays, the farmers of the area hitched up their horses to a surrey, buggy, or wagon and headed for town. A few people drove their Model T's to town, if they were fortunate enough to have one. They brought chickens, eggs, cream, and butter to trade for items in the store. Farmers were usually allowed a slightly higher price for their produce if they traded for items rather than sold the produce for cash. This is how the phrase "going to town to do the trading" originated.

During the spring thaw-outs, business would slack up. The streets in Tennessee, as well as the country roads, became almost impassable because of the mud. In dry weather there would be two or three inches of dust from the dirt roads to contend with.

I was about six or seven years old when the events in this story took place. My parents resided in Tennessee. Since

my father was one of the proprietors of the nearby blacksmith shop, I was a frequent visitor of the old store.

The candy case in the store was a big attraction for all the children. By standing on my tip toes, I could see the peppermint sticks, licorice, the colorful hard candies, and the "dog tracks," as Mrs. Pittenger called the chocolate stars. Mrs. Pittenger was a very kindhearted lady and always gave the children a generous amount of candy in return for their pennies.

In the fall of the year the large apple barrel in the store was filled to capacity with the beautiful red and yellow apples from the nearby orchards. Those apples were always so tempting, especially to a child. One day when Mrs. Pittenger wasn't looking, I backed up to the apple barrel. With all the skill of a professional shoplifter, I took one of the apples. I then did a fast disappearing act from the store.

When I was a safe distance away, I took my first big bite from the succulent apple, I even commended myself on "swiping" the apple without being seen. Then I remembered something my mother had said: "God sees and knows everything you do." Fear gripped me. I had been seen after all. God had seen me steal that apple!

I ran as fast as I could back to the store, and I placed the apple with the large bite out, right on top of that barrel of apples. Thus, I learned lesson number one from the old general store. Even though the storekeeper did not see me take the apple, there was someone who did.

I loved dried fruits that the general store kept in stock. My favorite was dried apricots. One day when my mother sent me to the store to purchase some apricots, temptation got the best of me. On the way home, I removed the string from the brown paper bag and had quite a feast. Somehow, on this day, the dried apricots seemed more moist and more juicy than ever. After I had eaten my "fill," I tied the string neatly back on top of the bag and proceeded home.

My mother poured the fruit into a pan and I noticed her

peering very closely at the apricots. Then she put the fruit back in the bag and said, "You take these right back to the store and get my money back. They are just full of worms."

I suddenly felt very sick. Goodness, how many worms had I eaten? That was lesson number two that I learned from the old store: never get into the groceries on the way home!

A portion of the old store is still standing today. It has been made into a small residence. Someone has said that this is the section that had once housed the shoes.

Mr. and Mrs. Pittenger passed away long ago. The old general store is gone, but the memories and the lessons I learned were not forgotten.

SELLING AND TRADING IN BEARDSTOWN

Nellie F. Roe

The moment had finally arrived. It was June 28, 1979, and after years of planning, working, and waiting, the Beardstown Plaza Shopping Center was a reality, and our new supermarket, Roe's Eisner Agency, was ready for its Grand Opening. A myriad of gaily colored balloons hung from the ceiling. The mayor had arrived to cut the ribbon and the press was ready. My husband was beaming and showed no signs of the frantic pace of the past few weeks and three hours of sleep the previous night. This was a dream come true but no one knew it better than I.

I glanced at the row of carts lined up alongside the five checkout counters, each equipped with an electronic cash register and a belt that moved forward at the touch of a button with the foot. I noticed the shiny waxed floor and the wide aisles between the row after row of shelves stocked with thousands of items. The refrigeration units were gleaming—the meat counter, the frozen food counter, and the dairy counter—all filled to capacity and brightly lighted. The

produce section was a sight to behold and piled high with fruits and vegetables, some from half-way around the world. The "deli" section was waiting, with its mouth-watering treats. The store decor was eye pleasing and there was soft background music. I heard my husband explaining to the press how the newly-installed "heat-reclaim" system would save energy and how it was possible to get 24-hour delivery from Champaign by hooking up the computer to the telephone.

Suddenly, my thoughts turned to another store and another time. It was April, 1941 when I came to Mt. Sterling (population 2,100) as the bride of Bill Roe, age twenty four, manager of the local West Food Store, then part of a chain of about 30 small-town groceries in west central Illinois. Where had the years gone? When did the Thirties and early Forties become the "good old days?" My thoughts were interrupted with the opening of the electronic doors. No more time for day-dreaming.

That evening, as I drove the short distance to our home in Mt. Sterling, I resumed my reverie. I could picture in my mind that small store on Capitol Avenue where the Senior Citizens now meet. And small it was! About the width of the average-sized living room of today and about three times as long. Most merchandise was on shelves that lined both walls with a couple of displays in the center. A service counter was at the left as you entered, and next to it was a candy counter with penny candy and nickel candy bars. America was just emerging from the "ice-age," and a small refrigerated meat case had just recently replaced the ice box across the back. The store was heated (somewhat) with a potbellied stove in winter and cooled (somewhat) with a ceiling fan in the summer. The inventory, which consisted mostly of staples and sugar, beans, prunes, rice, and cookies, came from the warehouse in bulk, and had to be sacked up at the store. Brown County is a farming area, and most people had gardens, so produce was limited to basics such as cabbage,

celery, lettuce, and bananas, which were carried to the back room each evening and put on ice. Most meats were brought at the meat market down the street, but we carried a small variety: bacon, pork chops, and baloney (sliced upon request). If you wanted cheese, you had your choice of Longhorn or Longhorn! I soon learned that hog jowls (or "jiles," as it was sometimes pronounced) were just that, and "egg mash" was chicken feed.

Dry cereals were limited to two or three old stand-bys, such as Post Toasties and Shreaded Wheat. Soap products consisted mostly of bar soap and soap chips. Toilet tissue and waxed papers were about the only paper products sold. There was no pet food on the market at that time—Fido ate scraps! Frozen foods were unheard of and there were practically no convenience foods.

Peanut butter and lard were weighed up in lard trays. Oleo was pure white and contained a small package of coloring to mix in, usually with hands—a job children loved. All milk was in glass bottles and the cream would rise to the top. You could pour it off and have cream and low-fat milk or shake it up and have whole milk.

Vinegar and kerosene were kept in the back room and you brought your own jug. My husband still likes to tell about the man who handed him a new jug and told him to "fill it up!" The next day his wife was in, very upset. She had poured kerosene over her pickles before she realized there had been a "lack of communication" at the store level. Very few non-food items were sold in the grocery—a few brooms, wash tubs, wash boards, and tin pails. Plastic had not yet been invented.

Saturday was the big day. The farmers all came to town to do their "trading," bringing their cream and eggs to sell. The grocer bought eggs and it was not uncommon to owe the customer money after he had bought his groceries. The eggs were then shipped to larger cities. A larger percentage of customers bought on credit. At that time, the grocery store

was about the only business that gave credit now it's about the only one that doesn't.

Self-service was in reverse. The grocer gathered up the items and brought them to the customer. Before filling the sack he used it to figure the total cost. Many left their orders to be filled and picked up later. On Saturday nights the store would be full of sacks of groceries until the "picture show" was out. Each Wednesday my husband would write on the windows with poster paint the specials of the week, such as: bacon—17¢ a pound, coffee—3 pounds for 37¢, and oleo—3 pounds for 25¢.

Hours were long and pay was short. Clerks received 25¢ an hour with no fringe benefits, and no one left until the work was done. It was sometimes midnight on Saturday before the wooden floor was spread with oil to keep the dust down and the door was locked until Monday morning.

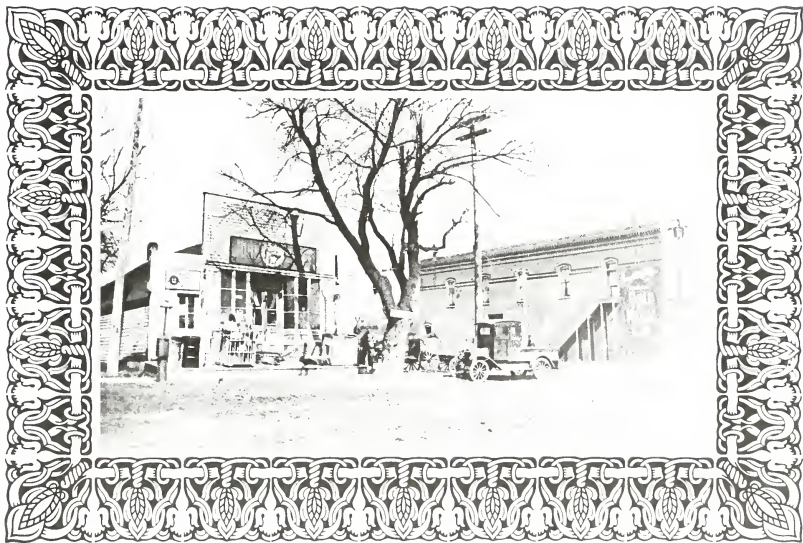
In 1942 West Food Store moved to larger quarters on Main Street, where the Farmer's State Bank is now located, and opened up the first self-service store in this area. A service counter was maintained in the back for a few "die-hards" who resisted the change, but most customers enjoyed browsing and dropping their purchases in a basket held over their arm, so the idea soon caught on.

It was a far cry from the supermarket of today, but it was the "beginning of the end" for the small-town store and the first in a succession of events that led to the present corporation, with stores in Mt. Sterling and Beardstown and a full-time partnership with Darell Perry.

Next year, my husband will celebrate 50 years in the grocery business, having started at age 15 in the old West Food Store in Beardstown, and he has seen many changes. Although he has no desire to go back to building a fire when it's ten degrees below or using a board and overturned box as an office, progress does have a few drawbacks. Some of the personal touch between personnel and customers has been lost, and all the calculators and modern office equipment in

the world can not keep up with the mountain of paperwork that seems to grow with each passing year.

However, some things never change! The hours are still long, and if I complain, his answer is the same as it was 40 years ago: "Well, honey, you married a grocer!" He is still "going strong" but when the "Grim Reaper" finally catches up with him, I have a suggestion for his epitaph: "Old grocers never die, they just pass through the check-out lane."



III Small Villages

SMALL VILLAGES

"There is a need for intimate human relationships, for the security of settled home and associations, for spiritual unity, and for orderly transmission of the basic cultural inheritance. These the small community at its best can supply. Whoever keeps the small community alive and at its best during this dark period . . . may have more to do with the final emergence of a great society than those who dominate big industry and big government."

*Preface, St. Johnsbury, Vermont
Town Plan, 1970*

For the past one hundred years, populations moved rapidly away from small towns to support, man, and make viable industrial cities like Detroit, Akron, Pueblo, Chicago, and Cleveland. Urban centers burgeoned as, one by one, people of small towns, such as those described in the following section, abandoned their stores, churches, and homes and left the village to decay and disappear.

But, according to the 1980 census, this population shift has reversed and for the first time since 1900, cities are losing population while small towns and rural areas are gaining people.

That shift is too late for Middle Creek and Mabel. And, perhaps, also for Camden, Table Grove, Burnside, and other small villages described in this section. But the way of life like that once experienced in Middle Creek and Mabel is the beacon that is currently drawing people back to live in small towns.

The town plan of St. Johnsbury, Vermont, declares that in the present era there is a need for intimate human relationships. Ruth Kearby writes about this when she describes the little town of Camden as it exists today: "People come and go, but if you'd ever chance to stop by, you would

find them friendly and eager to sit and visit with anyone that passed their way." Marguerite Foster writes of Table Grove, "We now have a new park at the west edge of town. Ball games, family dinners, reunions, etc. Really nice . . . I don't have any relatives outside of Chicago. So have been blessed with good friends and neighbors." Ruth and Marguerite articulate the close human contact apparent in small communities, and it is in search of such warm interpersonal relationships that families leave the impersonal environs of large cities to return to places like Rushville, Farmington, and Table Grove.

These same city migrants also look for "spiritual unity, and for orderly transmission of the basic cultural inheritance." Beulah Jean McMillan speaks of this when she writes of her childhood in Camp Point: "Our parents were strict, but we were a very close family. At Christmas we did not have a Christmas tree. At breakfast father hid a coin under our plates which was usually added to my bank. All meals were eaten together. After breakfast we had family worship consisting of Scripture, a portion read by each, a hymn sung a capella, and prayer on our knees. If company came, they were invited to join us before their errand was taken care of." Over and over in the following stories one hears of a strong belief in God and in church attendance, of frugality, of concern for one's neighbors, of loyalty to one's country, and of respect for schools and education. All of these things provided for an orderly transmission of basic cultural values because in these small villages there was unanimous, unspoken acceptance of such values and support for the social rituals and institutions that promulgated them.

Small villages of yesterday provided a nucleus for the farming communities around them and, together, the village institutions and businesses and the nearby farms formed a self-sufficient unit. Even tiny Mabel provided almost every service needed by the citizenry. Mabel had a general store where cream, eggs, furs, and poultry could be sold by people

who, in turn, could buy dress goods, groceries, fuel, stationary, gas, and sundries. The store housed a justice of the peace and a post office. It provided a social gathering place for the community. Mabel also had an opera house, a cider mill, a sorghum mill, a church, cemetery, park, blacksmith shop, and a school. The story of Mabel ends, "All of those old places have gone by the wayside but lots of memories linger."

In 1977 Wendell Berry wrote in *The Unsettling of America*, that, ". . . as a society we have abandoned any interest in the survival of anything small." Four years earlier a British economist, E. F. Schumacher, had written a book, *Small Is Beautiful*. He saw even then that the fundamental task for a world society that emphasizes ever larger organization is to "achieve smallness" because ". . . the only effective communication is from man to man, face to face." And Alvin Toffler, in 1980 wrote in his book, *The Third Wave*, that deep societal value changes are presently influencing a basic shift in attitudes and this shift is resulting in a new desire on the part of the people for small town and rural life with an emphasis on family and community

interdependence. In effect all these writers foresee a reawakening of small towns and the life style they make possible.

It is for this reason, perhaps, that the reader should study this section of *Tales II* carefully in order to understand what made the Mabels and the Middle Creeks vital. What were the institutions, now gone, that drew people together? Should some of those institutions be reestablished? For recreating the intrinsic worth of the small town of fifty years ago may require more than renovating one of the still existing houses, it may mean reactivating the opera house, the churches, or the horse shoe game every evening in the park!

Mrs. Clarence Beck echoes this in her closing paragraph about Saline. She writes, ". . . in spite of hard work and deprivation (by today's standards) people lived full, rich lives, with high moral standards, a sense of duty and love of their fellow man which seems to have been lost. Perhaps as more people are searching for their "roots" they will also unearth these lost traits of their forefathers and the world and everyone in it will revert to higher standards of 'the good old days.'"

Jerrilee Cain, Editor

MIDDLE CREEK: ONLY MEMORIES REMAIN

Lena Aleshire Boos

I was born and reared in the small, but interesting community of Middle Creek, Illinois. The early settlement of Middle Creek was located in the southeast quarter of Section 36 at the extreme edge of Harmony, Carthage, and St. Mary's townships. The business houses and homes were on both sides of the road, which ran east and west.

Middle Creek, as I remember, had a Methodist church know as Elm Tree. Directly east were homes of the villagers, and then the home and shop of the village blacksmith, Uncle Bill Earl and family, who made caskets for the deceased. Uncle Billy Earl, besides being the blacksmith, was engaged in different enterprises of the day, especially harvesting ice from ponds and packing it in sawdust for summer sale to the community.

Next door was the general store of Ira Ross, not in use in my time as no one took it over after his death. On the south side of the road, or street, various residences were located. Next was the two-storied general store. The upper story was the Woodman Lodge, also used as a recreational hall. The next building west was the telephone office, followed by a doctor's office, then another small building that was the second grocery store, run by William Mosley. The general store's co-owner, Mr. William Smith and family and his brother Claude, generally known as Ty Smith, made up the other half of the once thriving business. Ty and his team of white mules were a welcome sight for the children along his route where he traded his calicoes, coffee, tea, sugar, flour, and cornmeal for the housewives' butter, eggs, and an occasional old hen or rooster.

As a small girl, I attended Elm Tree Sunday School. My teacher was Miss Minnie Reed, who was later Mrs. Lee Boyd and was always my good friend. Revival meetings were held at the church, where students from Carthage College preached all week.

The tent shows in the summer were a great lot of fun and entertainment. Jack Kinnebrew from Plymouth was the star performer and owner of the main show that came each year and also sold patent medicines that cured everything from snake bites to broken hearts. They were called the "Phila-Ma-Tootsie" shows.

Next in line was the children's day program given at Elm Tree Church. Needless to say, practice for this event was enjoyed, along with the opportunity to play with our neighbors.

The men gathered around the pot-bellied stove, where a music fest was always in full swing. Charlie Keegan was the master of the cigar-box fiddle he had made himself. Today his oldest son owns the ancient, but novel instrument. Then came Minor and Merrill Porter, with their banjo and mandolin, and Mrs. Merrill Porter on the organ. Many other neighbors joined in to display their musical ability. There was always a grateful audience, and many joined the fun singing along with a square dance on Saturday night. People always had time to fraternize with their friends. Now, who would dare say things were dull in the good old days? There were the Woodmen's monthly meetings. Two wall lamps with real mercury reflectors, purchased from the general store for perhaps fifty or seventy-five cents, provided brilliant lights. Now they are selling at \$125.00 or more, if there are authentic mercury reflectors obtainable today.

Unlike most small inland villages, Middle Creek had no village school house where the three R's were taught. Valley Dale School, one mile west of the village, was the local educational facility, as it was near the first Primitive Baptist Church and cemetery, named by the pioneers "The Old Brick Church and Cemetery" in 1832. It was not used after 1892. The church finally fell into ruins, and nothing is left except the well-kept cemetery to preserve the history of those early settlers.

As in all the "Once Upon a Time" stories, all that is left of Middle Creek are abandoned buildings, as the big store burned in 1932. The rest are falling into ruins, and the town is now called "Frakesville," as William Frakes owns all the acreage except the residence of Julius Russell, built where Elm Tree Church once stood. William and Grace Frakes live in the old Earl home, and a son lives where William Smith lived. All else is now a ghost town. Only memories are left of a once thriving community.

MABEL: ONLY ON THE OLD MAPS

Alline Lawson Armstrong

I would like to reminisce about the small hamlet of Mabel*, Illinois, which was once on the map with a post office exchange. I have a card in my possession that was addressed to my brother while he was visiting my grandparents there around 1914. It was addressed to "Mabel, Ill." and postmarked.

Mabel was located about three miles east of Camden. There was a general store called "Mabel's Store." It was so named by the owner of the store, Levi Marlow, who was the justice of the peace, and the grandfather of Mabel Cady, who with her husband Milton operated the store, after it had closed by the Kelly Davis family with an auction. My mother came home from the auction with a small package. We asked what it was. She replied that it was what they used when she was a girl to fasten their skirts. She wanted it for a keepsake. Little did we think that hook-and-eyes or snaps would ever give way to the zipper.

A gas pump stood in front of the store. One could fill up with gas, even self-service if desired, and also purchase a supply of groceries and leave produce all at the same time.

* Sometimes spelled Mable.

The produce might be eggs, cream, or live poultry. An egg candler determined the good eggs from the bad. A scale was used to weigh the cream and poultry. The cream was tested for butterfat.

During cold weather furs were accepted from trappers in the community. They were kept locked in a store house back of the store.

A large pot-bellied stove was used to heat the building in the winter. And on the long winter nights, some of the neighborhood fellows would gather around to discuss the issues of the days.

An opera house once stood across from the store on the south.

West of the store a short distance was Union Chapel Church, where Sunday School, preaching, and lots of revival meetings were held. Back of the church and a little to the west was the Marlow Cemetery. Across from the cemetery was the home of the Justice of the Peace, Levi Marlow. Joining his lawn on the west was a shady grove, called Marlow's Grove, where every year an annual picnic was held in August for all surrounding communities. It was an all day affair with lots of good food and an afternoon program. Many people attended.

Across the road north from the grove was a sorghum mill operated by Kelly Davis and his brother Edgar and families. This was a big seasonal business as people came from miles around to get their cane made into sorghum. One needed a barrel or two of molasses for a winter's supply.

The mill was turned by horse power, the horse making a track by going around and around the mill many times a day to grind the cane into shreds and extract the sap. The sap was then boiled down to a golden brown to make sorghum molasses. Good sorghum was determined by the kind of cane used and the temperature and time of cooking.

Next to the mill a short way west was a cider mill, owned and operated by my father, Walter Lawson, who also operated

a blacksmith shop next to the cider mill, during the time he could spare from farming.

The shop was built by my grandfather, Joe Lawson. I spent some interesting times watching both of them as they fired the iron in the hot flame of the forge, kept hot by the wind created by the large billows above. After heating the iron to a red hot piece, it was dipped for a short minute in a wooden tub of water, then it was shaped into shoes on the anvil by hammering it into shape to fit the hoof of the individual horse. Sometimes I was allowed to hold the halters of horses as the shoe was being nailed to the hoof. I felt as if I was a big part of the operation. Plow shares were also sharpened, and the shop served as a fix-it place for many things.

Across the road from the shop stood the Davis School, District No. 1, where I acquired my elementary education in the seventh and eighth grades. I also learned how to get along with my peers, and to respect and work and play with the younger children, and enjoy them.

My home was next to the shop and across from the school. The house and buildings were built by my grandfather, and are still standing. This now is the home of Mr. and Mrs. Merle Lantz.

North of my home one-half mile was "The Wild Cat Slough," which was quite a large body of water surrounded on the south by large rocks rising to a height of thirty or forty feet, serving as a good protection from cold in the winter when many people congregated to ice skate. A large fire was made near the rocks, making it a cozy place for putting on your skates or to warm your shins by after skating for a while. In the summer the slough was a good fishing spot. A coal mine, known as the Reeder's Coal Mine, was located near the slough.

All of these old places have gone by the wayside, but lots of memories linger.

CAMDEN AND THE LITTLE GEM THEATRE

Ruth A. Kearby

I was born on my Grandfather Agans' farm in Camden Township, and lived there until I was about five years old. Then my father, mother, two brothers, one sister, and I moved to another one of my grandad's farms in Huntsville Township, where I grew up and lived until I was married. That was when times were hard and there was not much money to go places or do anything out of the ordinary.

But as we grew up, about every Saturday night Dad and Mom would take us kids to the little town of Camden, since it was only about five miles away.

It was an interesting little place, as everybody, it seemed, always went to Camden on Saturday night to do their shopping and go to the picture show. I remember some of the very interesting places in Camden where we always went.

First it was at Davis's Cream Station, where we'd take our can of cream to be tested and receive our money so we could buy our groceries and go to the show.

There were three grocery stores in Camden: the Daly, the Dorsett, and the Brooks. These stores carried all kinds of merchandise, from soup to nails, or dry goods to canned goods, or most anything your heart desired. They were places where friends, neighbors, and other people gathered to visit, hear the news and also gossip a little.

One of the main highlights of the Saturday night trip was the Little Gem Theatre that was run by Bill "Dad" Daly. He had a building across the street from the Camden State Bank and grocery stores. It was built of concrete blocks. I suppose it would seat about fifty or sixty people. It had a piano, which was played by a local girl during the picture show. It also had a big pot-bellied stove that was heated by coal. It was located just inside the room. When the picture was being shown, people who got there first had a seat to sit

in, but after all the seats were filled, the others stood around the stove to see the picture. On cold winter nights when the fire was going strong, you would burn on one side while the other side was cold. But come what may, people came to see the picture, and it often was a continued serial. One could not bear to miss one of the pictures. At that time there were no sound effects—no sound at all. So you had to read what was flashed upon the screen. But if you couldn't read, there were always a few people who read everything out loud, and who could be heard all over the room. I guess that was fine for those too young to read or those unable to read, but it was a little annoying to others who could.

The movie camera wasn't run by electricity but by a motor that was generated by a gasoline engine. We could hear the motor pumping away, as we sat there engulfed by the scenes being flashed upon the screen. But when the picture was about finished, something always happened that left you hanging in suspense, until the next week would roll around and you'd come back to see what happened.

There were other places of interest, too. Two blacksmith shops were located in Camden. One was operated by Edd Estes, the other by Joe Black. They made everything from horse shoes to plow shares, wagons, and buggies. Those folks lived and raised their families, and have long been gone from their places, but they certainly left a memory of how a man could live by the sweat of his brow.

It was so interesting to go to their shops and watch them fire the furnace and pump the bellows to brighten up the coals. They would heat a piece of iron until red hot, then shape it into different objects. It made you think of the poem "The Village Blacksmith" as they labored and toiled from morning until night. But time passes on, and no more do we hear the ringing of the anvil or see the flaming forge, for they are gone forever.

At one time Camden was a thriving little town. It could boast of having three doctors: Dr. Horner, Mary Ward Mead, and Dr. Frank C. Hayes. They lived and practiced during the

horse and buggy days. It was never too hot or too cold or the roads too bad for them to come if they were needed. Those times have gone, too.

Camden is still on the map, with a population of about 100. It has a grade school, two churches, one grocery store, a post office, a town hall, and a new Masonic Hall.

People come and go, but if you ever chance to stop by, you would find the local people friendly and eager to sit and visit with anyone that passed their way.

I SURE MISS THE WHISTLES

Marguerite Foster

My home of 60 years, the original town of Laurel Hill, was laid out in 1838 by James Spicer. However, the village did not come under any formal organization until June 6, 1881. At that time the name "Table Grove" was adopted. The reason for the change was that another "Laurel Hill" already existed in Illinois. The village remained dry until 1933. The first saloon license was then issued.

Our little town sits on a mound. At one time, we had a beautiful town park in the middle of the square. A hitching rack was around it. The Universalist Church had a steeple with a light that could be seen in any direction coming into town. There is no light any more, but one can see the steeple in the daytime. At one time, we had four churches: Catholic, Presbyterian, Christian, and Universalist. In 1931, all combined, and in 1979 the building was named to the National Historic Register. As you go through town, the church is on the highway. In 1879 a hotel called the Kelly House was built to accommodate travelers and salesmen that came by train. We had four passenger trains a day, also long freight trains. Now everything goes by trucks. There is no depot. I sure miss the whistles.

There were so many beautiful homes in the days of my girlhood. We had a hotel, drugstore with a soda fountain, a jewelry store, and four dry goods stores. We had our own weekly paper, *The Table Grove Herald*. The variety store had the most beautiful hats and dishes. A few would still remember Millie Hill, who operated the store. We had a harness shop and shoe repair place, two doctors, a dentist, a beauty shop, two barber shops, two banks, a veterinarian, a post office, two taverns, two undertakers and furniture stores combined, and a lumber yard. We also had Keach's harness shop and Notson's watch and repair shop. Oldnow's ice and butcher shop put up its own ice from a pond near the slaughter house. There was a skating rink on the south edge of town. All enjoyed it, for there was no TV at that time. There was a dray to bring freight from the depot, too.

Our light plant turned off the lights at a certain time of night. The telephone switch board was in a home. We had several oil stations. There was also a grain elevator, a TV man, and two restaurants. We even had a horse-drawn hearse. You wouldn't think of a hearse as being beautiful, but it was. It had windows on each side, with red plush tie-back curtains.

Also, we had an ice house. When they went out of business, the lumber yard had ice shipped in. My husband delivered ice to homes, stores, etc. Many people made ice cream in those days. We all had wooden ice boxes. We would be up town to a picture show and would hear the train backing a box car onto the siding. My husband would have to leave. At two and three in the morning, he'd come home frozen. My husband ran the lumber yard for nearly forty-seven years. He couldn't compete with larger yards, so the company had to sell out.

Everyone enjoyed the free shows and plays. The Gardiners from Bushnell played "Uncle Tom's Cabin" when I was young, and I have never forgotten that play. Prudence Berry erected Progress Hall, now known as Odd Fellow Hall.

She was an invalid in a wheel chair. Her home was called Sunshine Corner. She was a wonderful woman. We were neighbors for several years. Many a girl stayed there to go to school from the country. At her death her home became a parsonage, which it still is.

Then in 1940 Camp Ellis came to our back door. I read an article a few weeks ago, which said Camp Ellis was a boom for Ipava. It sure wasn't for Table Grove. The wealthy boys went to larger towns over the weekends, and poor boys were left for the closest little towns. We had a U.S.O. We tried to do what we could for the soldiers. People were good to open their homes to them. Many married ones rented rooms. And we had single ones for Sunday dinners. North of town some beautiful homes were destroyed when the camp came. Some people wanted their open stairways and old cupboards and had to buy them back. The houses were of walnut inside. Their parents had cut and seasoned their own timber. It seemed a shame to destroy them for only five years of camp operations.

Also, there was so much camp garbage. The farmers would haul it to the hogs. Some folks were terrorized because the camp was also a German prison of war camp. However none escaped. We had several nice soldiers for Sunday dinners. At that time, my husband did lots of pheasant hunting up around Pontiac, so we fed them pheasant dinners. All that is past now, and I look to the future.

Foster's Garage upstairs was used for many activities like church bazaars, card parties, etc. Billy Foster taught dancing. The Masons and Eastern Star were going good. Also the Rebeccas and Odd Fellows.

In 1936 the hard road was constructed through the park. So that took a lot of people out of town to trade. We had a big celebration, with a parade of floats, etc., when the hard road was finished. Also, we celebrated when Gary Sigler came home from being a prisoner of war for three years or more.

During Camp Ellis the world's largest clock factory was on the corner of the square. (Anyways, that is what it said on

the building.) Wherley's Dairy delivered milk and cream. I would get a crock of cream and could cut it with a knife and use a spoon to make butter. It was wonderful. Then came uncolored oleo. You had to squeeze out the yellow liquid into the oleo and mix it.

We used to have lots of tramps. I think they had the places marked for the next one, where they got food.

During the war the elevator had a light atop it. Would you believe, when it was finished, a group of young folks went to the top of it? It had an elevator so far and then a ladder the rest of the way. I was one of the group. However, we were supervised.

I remember early life in town. Ladies dressed up when going to church. They wore beautiful white dresses, gloves and shoes. Lots of white was worn at that time. We'd go calling with calling cards, and if no one was home, we'd stick a card under the door so they would know they were called on.

We now have a new park at the west edge of town, for ball games, family dinners, reunions, etc. It's really nice. I have seen a lot of changes. I don't have any relatives outside of Chicago, but I have been blessed with good friends and neighbors.

This is my life of sixty years in Table Grove, Illinois.

"US" WAS WRITTEN ON THE CARS

Vera V. Chenoweth

It started in the spring of 1941. We would see strange cars going up and down the road. Some of our neighbors said they saw "US" written on the cars. This went on all summer, and we all passed anything we heard back and forth. Then in the fall, we saw men surveying for the roads and the sewers that ran under the roads. But you couldn't get anything out of those guys. They wouldn't tell you anything. Then one day, Elzie went to bale hay at the neighbors, and he told everyone

that he'd heard we were going to get a camp, because he'd seen them unloading cats. Well, everybody thought he meant "Cat" tractors, bulldozers, but after they questioned him, he jokingly said it was "tomcats."

Next thing, those men came to our house and asked Elzie to walk the farm with them. They'd ask different questions, and every once in a while, they'd scribble something down, but they wouldn't tell anything either.

By the Spring of 1942, we had rented a Macomb farm, afraid they'd build the camp and we wouldn't have any place to go. Then we saw water towers being built between Ipava and Table Grove. We'd get up to milk in the morning, and we'd see the lights over by the water towers where they were working. Then they started building some long storage sheds, and by September, the government had purchased 8,500 acres of surrounding farmland. By the 10th of September, before the corn had even matured, they brought in bulldozers and plowed up the fields, corn and all, and were getting it ready for building.

We got a notice on February 1, 1943, that we had to be off our farm by March 1, 1943—a month from then. We didn't know where we were going to be. So we had a sale. Our sale was on Friday, February 26th. Things sold well. People came from everywhere, because all the neighbors had to sell out, too. We had a rubber-tired flat rack, built for us by Cecil Wright for \$65 early in the year, and it sold for \$200. Woven wire fences went for \$1 a rod. We had to get our hay and straw out of the barns, because they were going to tear them down. On Saturday, the 27th of February, one day after our sale, we had real bad weather, a blizzard. We had planned to move that day, but didn't know what to do. Our boys weren't old enough to help a lot. Our oldest son was only twelve. But Elzie's brother and Oliver Smith came and helped us move that day to Macomb. On Sunday, the government workers were in, tearing down our barns and letting the boards fall on our horses and tractor that we didn't have moved yet.

While it was going on, lots of newspaper men came in to do stories on the new camp. People in Macomb thought it was great. It was going to improve business for them. Everyone around us told us to fight it, but we went to Illiopolis, and talked to them and decided it wouldn't do any good; just one man fighting the government.

When we were moving, it was every neighbor for himself. Normally neighbors would help each other, but all of us were moving. Some folks closed up farming; some went to farm somewhere else.

On July 4, 1943, they had an open house at Camp Ellis. They said there were 8,000 soldiers at the camp . . . on land that used to belong to us and our neighbors.

BERNADOTTE: THE TOWN THAT WAS, AND WAS NOT, BUT NOW IS

Harvey S. Bubb, Sr.

Memory takes me back "three score and ten" to a time my dad took me on a ten-mile trip to a gristmill on Spoon River to get some grain ground into meal. It took nearly all day, with two horses and a box-wagon. There were both wheat and corn in sacks. We used gunny sacks (burlap) for corn and grain bags (duck or canvas) for wheat, about ten of each. Some of the wheat was to be ground into flour.

The gristmill was at Bernadotte, a small town north of Ipava on Spoon River. It was built about 1826 by a Solomon Sherwood, and later rebuilt in 1844 by Joseph Coleman because of some damage. There was a log dam constructed across the river to deepen the waters. It was arranged so that water would go down through a sluice-way to turn the big mill wheel. Most mill wheels were set vertically, but this one was set horizontally. With the uprights, water would turn the wheel as it spilled over the top. In the Bernadotte mill, water

was made to go down and "around" the wheel by going back into the river.

A large shaft extended upward through about three stories, and various "take-off" gears were connected to run the different machinery. I don't remember much about this mill. Some years later when I told Dad that I remembered, he said, "Well, I guess you do after all."

Some years later, as a teenager, I swam in the waters below the dam. I remember how we boys liked to crawl along the logs and get in under the spilling water. We had lots of fun there. And there was also a covered bridge nearby. I remember how we boys played Hide-N-Seek in the timbers of that bridge. People who went north out of Bernadotte came and went through that covered bridge. It was a time when covered bridges were built across rivers in both Illinois and Indiana. I am quite interested in visiting them. There are still thirty-nine in one county in Indiana.

How did Bernadotte get its name? Thereby hangs a tale! The little village was known as Fulton before it was called Bernadotte. A disgruntled general in Napoleon's army defected to the U.S.A. He worked his way westward until he arrived near what is now Smithfield, where some of his relatives lived. His name was General Bernadotte.

As he stood on the north brow of Spoon River valley, he looked down over the area, admiring it, and said, "This is my town." What he really meant was, here was a setting which appealed to his nature, and he aimed to make his home here. It was only a matter of time until Fulton became known as Bernadotte.

I can recall many things about Bernadotte from about 1915 until Pearl Harbor in 1941. But the scene changed a lot after we declared war on Japan. The U.S. Government decided to build a military installation in the area between Ipava, Table Grove and Adair. They bought up 17,800 acres of farm land, which included the area of Bernadotte. When the U.S. engineers went to work on this project, they "brutally"

destroyed Bernadotte. Only one building was left—the brick school house, which was used for an administration terminal. The whole town of Bernadotte was “cleaned out.” The dam was replaced with a concrete structure, still there. The mill became the site of a pumping station, giving water for Camp Ellis. There are two million-gallon water towers still standing in the camp area, reminders of that era. There are some other remains of camp days. It all came about because of a Satanic blow by the Japanese in 1941.

Before Pearl Harbor I was Principal of Bander Grade School and deferred in the draft. But when school was out in June, 1943, I was reclassified, and it looked like I might be called right away. So I went to Camp Ellis and offered my services. Right away I had something to do with the whole installation.

They first made me Fiscal Officer for the post engineer. That meant my job was collecting information as to how much it would cost to run Camp Ellis and get an allotment from Washington for each quarter. That fund had to be “obligated” for each purchase—approved by me.

Lieutenant Colonel Robert C. Edgar was the post engineer. It was his duty to construct, maintain and repair the camp facilities. He must have liked my work because in July he made me Chief Clerk of his whole outfit, the top civilian of his 540 employees, under his management. Having had so much to do with the place, what I say here can be regarded with some degree of reliability.

Camp Ellis was designed to train three branches of the military: the engineers, the quartermasters, and the medics. All draftees had to go through about 120 days of training here before they were shipped overseas. Part of this training included going through the Infiltration Course and the Obstacle Course. They were life preserving courses.

At the peak of the Camp Ellis efforts, there were 44,000 trainees encamped there. That may give you some idea of the

vastness of the operation. That is why Colonel Edgar had to have over 500 employees under his jurisdiction.

There was one “special” project of training that I must note here. Up one of the hollows from Spoon River, the post engineer built a small village called “Little Tokyo.” In Japan, there was one corner of Tokyo that the military wanted to destroy. In order to train the boys how to attack the place, we built a replica of that corner in a hollow on the back side of Camp Ellis. It even included some plate glass in certain windows. A certain “detail” of military men were trained how to destroy Little Tokyo. Thank goodness, the project never came off. The A-Bomb put a stop to that.

I remember one thing. Colonel Edgar came back to his office one day all muddy and wet. It had been a rainy day. The first thing he said to me was, “Those men now know how to throw a ‘flotation bridge’ across the river.” He had been down in the Bernadotte area with a group of trainees showing them how to bridge a river.

As you know, we won the war. There was V-E Day, for Victory in Europe. Later there was V-J Day, for Victory in Japan. With Colonel Edgar, I attended a meeting on the procedure for closing down Camp Ellis. On V-E Day plus ten, we would do certain things. On V-E day plus thirty, we would do other things, and so on until the installation got deactivated. My job of helping Colonel Edgar grew down until one of the last things I did was to inventory the 208 mess halls.

Well, Camp Ellis came and went. It’s all a memory now in my mind. The farmers, most of them, bought back their land, and it is much the same farming area as before the war. Those people who worked at Camp Ellis during the war and had been residents of Bernadotte prior to the war, had great desire to relocate back in their old home town. Accordingly, some of them purchased the surplus buildings on Camp Ellis, moved them to Bernadotte, and made new homes for themselves. Little by little, more and more homes were made

and the place became a village again. One lady built a more or less permanent home for retirees, and Bernadotte sprang to life anew. Today, it is a lively center in somewhat of a sportive way. You can camp there, fish, swim, have picnics, etc. You may even wish to make your home there once you familiarize yourself with the place.

Those of us old enough to remember the original Bernadotte will always miss the old dam and the gristmill. We'll also miss the covered bridge. Otherwise, we'll continue to enjoy Bernadotte—the town that was, was not, but now is.

CAMP POINT: \$1000 AND A MANSE

Beulah Jean McMillan

We lived in Camp Point, Illinois, from February 12, 1916, to December 20, 1917. My father, Rev. Albert George Parker, was a minister of the Presbyterian Church. Our family consisted of parents and four of their nine children: Donald, Elliott, Neil and Beulah. We were met at the train by several members with a sled, and driven past our church and the Maplewood School to a temporary home. We had a late dinner at banker Francis' home across the street.

It was a thriving church until several influential families moved to California. Besides the banker, the undertaker, Will Liggett, and a number of farmers were faithful members. The salary was \$1000, a manse, and a month's vacation.

There were two other churches, a Methodist and a Christian. The Masonic Lodge was prominent, and frowned upon by father. Stores were a block long on both sides of the railroad tracks. There was a small library on the second floor of one store. On another upstairs floor was a sizeable room where community entertainments took place. The ladies of the church had an annual bazaar and chicken pie supper in another.

On Valentine's Day I was enrolled in the fourth grade of Maplewood School. I was surprised to receive some Valentines. I was moved up half a grade. That was disastrous only for Arithmetic, as I was too shy to ask for help on long division. The three-story brick building was located in the center of a full block. In winter low spots frozen over were good for recess sliding. In warmer weather Prisoner's Base was a popular game with our grade. I loved the teeter-totters and swings. There was no athletic program.

We had a Maypole Dance one year: "Heel, toe, one, two, three," we danced, accompanied by Rubinstein's "Melody in F." The next year I was the Good Fairy in the play "Pandora's Box," which we rehearsed in Bailey Park. Coming back my special friend Robert Garrett heroically killed a blue racer snake. One day when we were correcting spelling papers for each other, I gave him 100, although he made several mistakes. In high school, he was blinded in one eye by a baseball.

Sometimes I went home with Caroline Pittman, daughter of the doctor. Her mother would fix bread and butter and sugar for us. She later taught school there.

Neil was older than I. One day his teacher left the room for awhile, and a girl kissed him. He was so embarrassed he went right home, and did not go back until the next day. He avoided her like poison ivy thereafter.

Before we left Camp Point, the High School had a Surprise Farewell Assembly for Donald and Elliott. I sang also in a "Silent Night" duet with a classmate. One feature was Riley's "That Old Sweetheart of Mine." Already scheduled for demolition, the school burned on July 16, 1975.

Camp Point had a big Chautauqua every summer in a spacious open air auditorium roofed for protection from sun and rain. My brothers earned money helping to erect tents which many families used all week. My parents visited parishioners there. The boys also waited at the counter of the screened-in concession. They kept the grounds cleaned up.

When no program was in session my friends had exercise scrambling over the inclined rows of seats, or "skinning the rabbit" over bars. We enjoyed the humorous and the musical, but skipped serious lectures. There was a story hour for children on the grounds in the afternoon. Father spoke at a Sunday meeting. Malcolm, Kenneth, Donald and Elliott gave a musical program when the regular performers did not appear. Walking home one night, mother pointed out the Milky Way. We did not have street lights to obscure it.

One time a large tent was put up in the vacant lot across the street. I was allowed to go to see a presentation of "Uncle Tom's Cabin."

Our parents were strict, but we were a very close family. At Christmas we did not have a Christmas tree. At breakfast father hid a coin under our plates which was usually added to my bank. All meals were eaten together. After breakfast we had family worship, consisting of Scripture, a portion read by each, a hymn sung a capella, and prayer on our knees. If company came, they were invited to join us before their errand was taken care of. A kiss for each one of us was given by father and mother.

We were coaxed to eat carrots because they were called "golden dollars." Mother parcelled out chores saying, "I want so-and-so called." Thus, I shelled peas and prepared green beans. I did not need to be told to keep my shoes white with Bon Ami. Mother trimmed all the boys' hair. She gave me a bath in a wooden tub in the kitchen. I dreaded to go to the out-house in the fenced-in chicken yard because the rooster always attacked me.

I had a ride in a car for the first time. It was a large, open, seven-passenger car. Buggy riding was almost as rare. I went in a buggy to a country home for an over-night visit. They served tapioca pudding for dessert, which I did not like, as our family called it "fish eyes." But I did enjoy the kittens on the farm and being a special guest.

One winter night a mouse scampered in the living-room. After being chased by the older boys, it scooted up Donald's pant leg and was captured.

Our third move came in September, to a house near Bailey Park. We were in time to enjoy a good grape year. It has been told to me that it took fourteen loads to move us. I was quarantined for a few days with the measles. I remember being "cock-eyed" from looking at the ceiling.

Three months later, we moved to the Camp Creek Church near Macomb by freight, and the boys rode in the caboose to save fares. Our life in Camp Point was all over.

CROOKED CREEK AND COOPERSTOWN

Ellen Fry Baldwin

Brown County is coursed by the winding and sometimes turbulent Lamoine River, more commonly known as "Crooked Creek," and its tributaries. This fact offers both good and bad to the county's residents and especially to those who live in Copperstown Township.

This tale deals with three special places along the named waters and the favorable things received from them. It concerns Greenwell's Mill, Rocky Branch, and Star Bridge. In the late 1800's and early 1900's all three of them played an important role in the lives of the people living near them.

The first one I shall attempt to describe is Greenwell's Mill. It was a grist mill built on the Brown County side of Lamoine River and near a bridge crossing, which made an ideal location for the mill, so it might serve the people of Schuyler County as well as those of Brown County. It was also only about two miles southeast of the village of Ripley. This village had several potteries at that time, and so the location of a grist mill nearby was quite a convenience.

The name of Greenwell's Mill was derived from the name of the family who owned the surrounding land. The

Greenwell family was also instrumental in getting the mill built in the year 1853-1854. Of course the power for the mill was simple because it was provided by the natural flow of falling water. Thus the expense of operating the mill was nominal.

Many farmers who needed grain ground either as feed for livestock or for the table use would haul their homegrown grain to the mill in wagons and either wait for it to be ground or make a second trip when the finished product was ready.

The second much appreciated place goes by the name of Rocky Branch. This much smaller stream is a tributary of Crooked Creek and is located about two and half miles (by road) further southeast from Greenwell's Mill. It is also about one and a half miles from my home. This stream has cut its way through the rocky limestone cliffs and has washed and hollowed out places which are quite deep. In most areas the bottom is solid rock.

I well remember one hole in particular. When I was a child it was about twenty by thirty feet, and the water stood four or five feet deep. Since the bottom was of solid rock, it made an ideal swimming hole or a natural baptistry.

Our family attended a little country church in the village of Cooperstown, and this place was always used for baptizing. The beauty of its wooded surroundings and the solitude of the out-of-doors, mingled with the sound of falling water, made a perfect setting for a very impressive ceremony. When the congregation raised its voice in "O Happy Day" and the preacher prayed, it was extremely touching. I might add that it was used in both summer and winter. During winter's icy blasts they just cut the ice and went ahead. Blankets were wrapped around those who were baptized, and they were taken either by sled or buggy (later perhaps by a Model T) to a nearby farm house, about a quarter of a mile away, where they could change into dry clothes. I can well vouch for the truth of this statement because it was my privilege to be one of the converts when the ice was from an

inch to two inches thick. I might also add that never did I know of anyone taking cold or being sick from the baptismal experience.

Besides serving in this act of Christianity, the people both young and old from miles around traveled to this hole and used it. They either went for entertainment or for just plain bathing. There was nothing so refreshing after a hard day's work in summer as a bath in the cool clear waters of Rocky Branch. Today one might think it was unsanitary, and maybe it was by today's standards, but in those days it was as good as could be found and was extremely soothing. It was fed by a few springs up and down the branch so it was not all drainage water.

The wooded area bordering Rocky Branch was also attractive to those who wished to have picnics, fish fries, weiner roasts, etc. When we as children or young adults wanted something to do, we took off for Rocky Branch, with its beckoning call for an afternoon or evening of good clean fun and entertainment. We might even decide to wash the buggy while we waded in the branch. There were several places where we could drive the horse with buggy attached right into the branch. The water would be twelve or fifteen inches deep and we would still be standing on solid rock. I'm sure this would thrill the kids of today equally as much as it did us.

The surrounding land is still owned by the same family who owned it long ago. The members of this family plant turnips in the fields nearby and each year have a turnip festival for a family reunion. Young and old look forward to going back to the festival and once more enjoying a day at the old familiar Rocky Branch.

The third part of this story is about Star Bridge. This place is farther east toward the Illinois River, or about six or seven miles in a southeasterly direction from Greenwell's Mill. It is also on the banks of the Lamoine River.

In the days of my childhood there was a covered bridge across the creek at this point connecting Schuyler County with Brown County. This bridge was built about 1904 and replaced a former covered bridge which had been built in 1879. Near this bridge on the Brown County side was a grain elevator which served the surrounding farmers as a place to market their products. Wheat, corn, and hay were the chief commodities.

The first elevator built at this point was a small one erected in 1901 and the produce was barged to Havana, Illinois. But after 1905 a larger elevator was built covered with corrugated tin. This is the one I remember. It was owned by the Schultz and Baujan Milling Company, who owned and operated an elevator and flour mill in Beardstown. They barged the products to Beardstown. The hay was used in the livery barns and the grain went to either their mill or to St. Louis or Peoria.

Across the road from the elevator was a house and country store. This provided the operator of the elevator with a nearby home and an opportunity to add to his income by running the store when there was no business at the elevator. He could either hire someone to help during the harvesting season, or perhaps his wife and family could pinch hit for him. Believe me, he needed additional income, for I was told today by Richard Woods, who ran the elevator at one time, that he was paid a cent and a quarter a bushel for all the grain he loaded out.

A man Curtis Logsdon operated a barge line from Beardstown. During the harvest season he made regular trips to and from Star Bridge to haul the farmer's grain and hay.

The first Manager I remember was a man named Buford Gollither. He had a wife and three children. The family members helped anywhere they were needed and helped make anyone's trip to Star Bridge an enjoyable and convenient experience.

Again, this story is not second hand, for I remember full well getting up early and going with my father on one trip after another with wheat to the elevator. Of course, it took lots of time, for the wheat was threshed by a steam threshing machine and the distance one way was about three miles. We got tired, yes! But my! the reward was great. We would go into that store and Dad would buy either sugar or sticky candy and maybe even some jelly beans. Oh! How good! But I could not eat them all. I had to leave some for Mom and whoever else might be at home when we returned.

If one had time to fish, there were plenty of places to do so and picnic grounds were available, but rarely did we ever use either of them. No one had time for that type of recreation. If one had wished to go, the Illinois River was a mile farther east, where the creek empties into the river. Not too far away was the LaGrange Locks, where other scenic places were located. But that was just a little too far away for busy people with a team of horses.

The appearances of these three places today are somewhat different from the above descriptions, but they are all remembered in the county for the former purposes served by them. Of course, the mill at Greenwell's Mill is gone. The bridge still stands but can't be used; the land on which the mill stood and along the banks of the creek is all under cultivation, and so about all there is left is the memory of what once existed.

I do have a postcard picture of the mill and a large oil painting which was painted in 1896 by Margaret Alexander, a cousin of my mother's. Both of these I treasure very highly. I also taught my first school at Fagan School (also called "Calf Pen") which stood about a quarter of a mile from the site where Greenwell's Mill stood. In that year of 1925-1926 the school children and I did quite a lot of coasting and skating in the area, so those memories are also outstanding.

Rocky Branch flows freely and the banks are still scenic and beautiful. Just to the west of the swimming hole the cliff

has been blasted and crushed rock taken out, so the old swimming hole is somewhat marred and changed, but even so, some of us who are older still cherish the memories and prize the joy and entertainment which it once provided, with all its splendors of nature.

At Star Bridge the old covered bridge is long gone and has been replaced with a steel and concrete structure. The elevator exploded and burned in 1931 and was never replaced; the house burned in 1970 and the store was allowed to fall down. There is still a picnic ground, and areas for fishing are provided. But most of the activities once found there have been moved to other locations. I know such things must happen in order to have progress, but even so, it is saddening to those of us who lived earlier and were able to enjoy the usefulness and services rendered by the existence of such landmarks.

Many of the blessings bestowed by the flowing waters of "Crooked Creek" and its branches upon the quiet and peaceful population of Cooperstown Township must now be listed among the fond memories of a delightful, comfortable, and enjoyable past.

LA CROSSE: A FEW HOUSES AND ONE OLD STORE

Laurence G. Anderson

La Crosse, Illinois, in Hancock County and Pilot Grove Township, is on the T. P. & W. Railroad, between La Harpe and Burnside. It used to be quite a community center for the area. There was a depot, two general stores, the Christian Church, a blacksmith shop, an elevator, a stock yard, a doctor, a cement factory, and eight or ten houses. How old the village is I haven't been able to learn. But my Grandfather was married on September 20, 1868, and moved on a timber farm one and a half miles northwest of La Crosse, and got his mail there. It was his nearest town.

Doctor Tadlock had an office there, and my mother was one of his patients. And I was born January 28, 1902, about three miles southwest of La Harpe. How much longer the Doctor was there I do not know.

A. J. Dunham was the operator of the depot. He was crimped and used crutches, and hauled freight around and mail bags. He was telegraph operator, ticket taker, everything about the depot. (The post office was in the general store, and the store keeper was the postmaster.) He lived about a block west of the depot in a house on or near the right of way. It was a familiar sight to see him hobbling along on his way to and from work. There were four passenger trains daily, two each way. You could go west to Keokuk or east to Peoria, and the trains were usually on time. Also, the people depended on the railroad for shipping in and out livestock, grain, and coal. People used to move great distances by rail. They would charter a car and load all of their possessions, the stock last, with feed and water, and provisions for the man who went along to care for the animals. (He had a bunk in the car, and could also ride in the caboose.) When they arrived at their destination, they would unload and move to their new home. Burnside was our voting place, and when the roads were bad a group of men (women could not vote) would go to Burnside on the train. So the railroad was the lifeline to the outside world. There were not any cars until the later teens. Emmet Sellars was about the first to buy a car. He bought a Model T about 1914. I believe it cost about \$295.00 (a lot of money in those days). Later on, George Butler bought a big car, a Chandler, or something like that. They thought they were really extravagant when they bought five gallons of gasoline at a time. By the late teens there were more cars, but no roads to drive them on, but we drove them anyway. Roy had a Model T that he drove very carefully. He kept the side curtains on, winter and summer.

There were two general stores, one owned by Willis Wright, and one by Mr. Barr. The store was also the

assembly hall for the men. A lot of world problems were solved there as well as the local. The men would hurry up with the chores and get to the store for those sessions. If anyone missed out on something, there was always someone to see to it that they caught up with the news. The blacksmith shop was owned first by Babcocks, then by Ed Starky, and he kept plenty busy with wagon and buggy repairs and horse shoeing, besides a lot of other jobs.

The grain elevator was operated by Ed Smiddy. He built a new house, and my father hauled lumber from Dallas City for it. It was of concrete blocks, perhaps made in the cement factory in La Crosse. He bought grain and sold coal and fuel, which was shipped in or out on the railroad. So that made up the center, which was of utmost importance to the community.

Of course, the country's main business was farming, which was done with horses. Tractors came along in the late teens. Bert Merriweather was about the first to own a tractor. He got a Titan tractor, and of course, there was a lot of comments on that, pro and con (mostly con).

Grain threshing was an annual event. There was a story about when they had shut the machine down a short time for repairs. When they were ready to start up again, Orbin Andrews' wagon was needed under the grain spout, but he was not right there, so another man said he would back Andrews' wagon in. Mr. Andrews was deaf and had his own way of speaking to his team. So the man could not get the team to move. About that time Mr. Andrews came in sight and saw what was going on, and he shouted a few times to his team and backed the wagon in without going near the team. That story was repeated many, many times.

News was scarce in those days and had to be given proper attention. We seldom had a murder in those days or even a shooting. But we had a shooting once. Walt Boyd and John Whitaker once had a disagreement of some kind, and Boyd got a court order and he went over to Whitaker in his

wagon. He stood in the wagon and started to read Whitaker the court order. Apparently Whitaker did not care for that, and he pulled out his gun and shot Boyd. Boyd fell down in the wagon and the team ran off. Well, he got home and they took him to the hospital in La Harpe on a railroad handcar, as the roads were bad. It turned out that he was not badly hurt, but it was bad enough, of course. The sheriff came out from Carthage and took Whitaker to jail. At the trial, Whitaker was asked if his son took the gun away from him. He replied, "Sure, I was done with it." I don't think much of anything ever came of it. Later Whitaker moved to Wisconsin.

In those days people had ice houses and every winter there was ice cutting and storage in the ice houses. They would get enough to fill one ice house, and then in a couple of weeks they could get another cutting for another ice house. There was a sawmill for several years in the neighborhood, and logs were sawed into lumber.

The young people always had a lot of fun in the winter, skating and sledding. We made a bonfire to warm up by when we had skating or coasting parties. Hunting, trapping, and fishing were popular, too. We thought "those were the good old days."

So things pass, La Crosse has a few houses and one old store building. Now all else is gone, and so are most of the people.

BURNSIDE: MY OLD HOME TOWN

Neoma Ewing Steege

How appropriate the name of Burnside is for the little hamlet in Hancock County, as you will find out later.

My earliest memories of it are when my parents, who lived in "Shake Rag," an area four miles east of town, would attend the band concerts on Saturday night that were held on the upper deck of the town's barber shop on the south side of

the main street. (Shake Rag got its name from the local eight grade country school by that name.)

The city park with its pagoda was the playground for many of the children. On a hot summer afternoon in the very early 1920's, a group of us were having our playtime there when we noticed quite a commotion down the street, where the barber shop was on fire. The fire was obviously started by a spark from the locomotive on the T. P. & W. Railroad, which passed along back of several buildings. A bucket brigade was formed, to no avail, and most of the south side of the town was consumed by the fire. Besides the barber shop, a garage and blacksmith shop were consumed.

The school of eight grades was housed in a two-story frame structure on the west side of town. The first four grades were downstairs; the last four were upstairs. When I was upstairs we upper classmen purchased a lovely piano for \$100 from savings from various local functions. It seems so many good things come to an end, and the old Burnside School (District 87, I believe) was no exception. In early 1923 the building burned and our beautiful piano went with it.

The opera house, located over Hull's Store, was a joy to the whole community. It had a large stage and several dressing rooms, making it quite adequate for most any kind of entertainment to be held. Medicine shows were quite popular in those days, and because of the above facilities Burnside got its share of this type of entertainment. Our class plays were held there as well, since our school did not have a gymnasium or auditorium at that time. Many other local functions were held, and I think the one that stands out in my mind most was the "Community" gatherings once a month. Local talent and also talent from the surrounding towns performed as well.

In August of 1928 most of the other side of Burnside went up in flames. The opera house, the unoccupied hotel, and a barber shop were total losses.

Since the Burnside schools closed in 1978, a reunion was held that year for all students who had attended the high school, along with their teachers. Almost 100 came to enjoy the program and visiting. I shall always remember that get-together with joy and, of course, some sadness.

NAPLES: 12^c UNDER THE BOARDWALK

John F. Ellis

Located on the east bank of the beautiful Illinois River is the town of Naples, which was my home for the first twenty-three years of my life. The following are some of my memories of people, places, and things in Naples in the first years of this century.

Business places included stables, elevators, warehouses, hotels, stores, ferries, fish markets, and broom and button factories. One of the business buildings served first as my mother's ice cream parlor, and then Dad and Uncle Esaw used it to store barrels and boxes for their wholesale and retail fish market. North of the market was a river-served grain elevator. Most grain was handled in sacks at that early time. My mother mended these and received one penny for each sack.

The Wabash Railroad served Naples with four passenger trains each way. The first depot was destroyed by fire and the second was torn down to remove it from the tax rolls. The spur from the Wabash main line served the river railway house. A terrific amount of freight loading and unloading took place on this spur, and it was often used for river-rail excursions.

An elevator here was saved from the Front Street fire that destroyed so many business places in February of 1917. The vacant lot between the fire and the elevator saved it from the flaming fury that started in a home harness shop. The

elevator office was the village voting place, and it was here that I cast my first vote.

Another elevator in Naples was the Smith-Hippen, which had barges handled by the steamboat *Ebaugh*. Some of the elevator employees boarded at the Bagby Hotel in town. A favorite story there concerned the owner of the hotel. Mr. Bagby was never in a hurry and was late getting to the table for a meal one day. By that time, the gravy bowl had been passed and ended up on his plate. He promptly broke crackers into it and ate it for soup.

A vacant house just to the south of the business section was the scene of one of my greatest frights. Fred Mann entered the deserted house when he saw me approaching. As I walked by, he let out weird yells as he beat on the wall. Checkers could have been played on my coat tail as I flew home.

Another time occurred when I thought the "old devil" had me. Just before daylight, I had the urge to visit our chick sale. A rooster raised up in our lilac bush, letting out a blood curdling crow as he loudly flapped his wings. I shouted, "He's got me, he's got me!" as I flew back to the house. This adventure was good for a big family laugh when things settled down.

A large building on the inside of the early river levee was known as "the Brick." The ground level housed several business places. One of these was the first post office that I remember, with W. G. Pine serving as postmaster. Later postmasters were Joe Mayes and Charlie Quintal. Each of these gentlemen had a general merchandise store where they handled the postal business. Joe served when the Washington administration was Democratic, and the post office moved to Charlie's store when the administration was Republican.

The second floor was a hotel operated by the Wallace Hamey family. In later years, my folks ran this business. The third floor of the Brick was a large hall, or opera house, with

raised stage and dressing rooms. It was used for dances, suppers, medicine shows, and all local entertainment. During one of the medicine shows there, Clarence Hyatt was heckling the performer-salesman. The salesman quieted him when he told him to be patient: "the worm medicine would go on sale next." Wanting to be into all things, Clarence volunteered for the card trick. He drew a card from the closed deck and violently insisted that it was not the seven of spades. The performer then showed the audience the entire deck and it consisted of 52 cards, each being the seven of spades. Clarence was shot down again. Other entertainment that came to Naples included showboats and a traveling Dog and Pony Show, which was held in the town park.

In the south part of town was a slaughter house and dance hall operated by the Kite family. The couple and their three daughters had their home there, and all worked hard at the family business. One time they advertised, "Free Dances at the Kite House." The village cut-ups changed the sign to read, "Free Kites at the Dance House."

Saloons, which were licensed by local option, were both good and bad business for Naples. License revenue kept streets and walks in good condition, but local police often had a guest in the calaboose, as clannish fights were not too unusual. I recall one time that Dad sat on Uncle Esaw to keep him from one of the big fights. This action did the job since Dad weighed 225 pounds at the time.

When revenue allowed for the removing of the old wooden board walks, William Hayden was foreman for the job. He promised me all the money found under the walk in our block. I was happy with the 12' that I found.

A landmark in Naples was the Illinois Hotel, which was located to the far north on Front Street. It was a large brick building and an overnight stopping place for west bound travelers. The business was in existence as far back as 1821, which was before Naples had become a town, and it served as a stopover for two stage coach lines.

Services continue today in the Naples Methodist Church, which is 120 years old. My membership dates back to my youth when the church was the center for many of the social activities of the town. Reverend Goldsborough, who now presides every Sunday, has served the church longer than any other pastor.

A sad thing, especially for us of the older generation, was the tearing down of the school building which was built in 1865. It served several generations. On the Sunday before Labor Day each year, students who attended the Naples School meet in Naples to share a meal and to reminisce. In 1981, four members of the class of 1918 were in attendance.

Naples was and is quite a town. Stories of the people, places, and events there will continue as long as there are those who remember.

SALINE AND DIAMOND MINERAL SPRINGS

Mrs. Clarence Beck

Encircled on three sides by Silver Creek is the small country village of Grantfork, Illinois, in Madison County. Main Street separates the south half of town in Saline Township from the north half in Lee Township. In about 1905-1910, when my parents were growing up in the Fairview school district, three miles east, the town, however, was known as Saline. The name was derived from a not-too-successful salt mine or well, sunk earlier southwest of the village.

Seventy-five years ago Saline boasted of two churches, the German Lutheran, (now United Church of Christ) and St. Gertrude's Catholic, as well as a two-room school. Coincidentally, all three were built in 1872.

German was still the favorite language of much of the community, but in 1916 Rev. Arnold Klick introduced English services to Saline Lutheran Church at Locust and

Sylvan streets. In 1901 a small schoolhouse was attached to the east side of that church, and religion and regular school subjects were taught to Confirmation-age students, generally twelve to fifteen years. The minister, of course, was the school master. A parochial school was owned by the Catholic Church at Locust and John streets and St. Gertrude's Hall was used for programs, school plays and meetings.

Saline was on the map with a post office, although Grantfork was sometimes used to designate the village as it is today. The General Mercantile Store, owned by Arnold L. Hitz, at Main and Locust, housed the post office and Mr. Hitz was postmaster. East and connecting to the store, was a saloon, then a residence, another saloon, and a saloon and dance hall. In fact Saline had seven saloons at that time! Continuing east on Main were old barns and sheds of the Ryan Brothers at Main and Mulberry.

East on the second block of Main was the large, two-and-one-half story brick, Helbing Saloon, which today is converted into a residence. As was the custom in those days, free lunches were served to anyone who purchased beer or other beverage, for five or ten cents!

Crossing the street to the north side of Main, the first establishment was Sylvester Leef's sawmill. Next west was the large blacksmith and wagon shop of Nick Mollet, where he started in 1867. His residence was on the south side of the street by Helbing's Saloon.

P. F. Schwartz operated a hardware store on the northeast corner of Main and Mulberry. Northwest of that was Ernst Salzman's Saddlery and Harness Shop. Going back to Main and west was another saloon, operated by Ferdinand Kaltenbacher, which had the sign reading, "Kaltenbacher's Wine and Beer Saloon." That is a residence now.

If you had returned to the southwest corner of Locust, you would have found a large two-story brick building (still standing as a residence) in which Stephen Bardill operated a

hotel and saloon. Connected by a covered walk, to the north, was an inn with dance hall in back, owned by Stephen Bardill.

As we continue in memory south on Locust, we find a livery stable just south of Bardill's brick hotel. Further south, on the southwest corner of Locust at Sylvan, was a large creamery. Farmers brought their milk to be sold and separated and the cream was made into high grade butter, the pride of the area. For a small charge the farmer then received the skim milk to feed to his hogs and chickens.

In the valley south of the creamery was a slaughter and smoke-house, operated by Friedlin Landolt. The cool spring running nearby furnished an easy method of refrigeration. Unfortunately the spring-house has tumbled down.

Many homes had white picket fences surrounding the property, and the Lutheran Church and parsonage to the south were thus completely surrounded. On the west side were plank sidewalks with hitching racks, as cars were not yet popular so travel was by horse and buggies, surries, or spring wagons, or by horseback. Hayrides were popular activities for young people.

It seems odd that the Protestant cemetery was located northwest of town, nearer the Catholic Church, and the Catholic cemetery was situated in the southeast portion of town, near the Lutheran Church. In the early 1900's the main road toward Highland went south on Mulberry and crossed the creek below the Catholic cemetery. The bridge east of town was not built until 1908, so the road angled southeast off Main and crossed the creek up to another popular spot, known as the Sharpshooter's Park and rifle range on the hill overlooking the creek.

The Sharpshooter's Society (or *Scheutzenverein*, as the Swiss founders called it) was organized by my great-grandfather, Anton Beck, in 1866. It had a large hall for bowling and dancing, and regular shooting matches were held. Each fall an annual festival, which may have been the fore-runner of present day homecomings, was presented.

The road north toward Alhambra, seventy-five years ago, took Locust Street and angled off northwest. West of Saline was a bridge crossing the creek, but there was no north and south road as we know Route 160. Instead, below the hill west of town was a picnic area and park which was part of Diamond Mineral Springs.

The beautiful, imposing Windsor or Diamond Mineral Springs Hotel, overlooking Saline from the west, was built in 1888 by John Zimmerman, a talented carpenter who lived with his family at Mulberry and John Street, north of the public school. Many of the fine old homes and large buildings of this area were built by him and his sons. A. J. Kraft hired Zimmerman to build the huge two-story frame hotel, which contained thirty rooms for guests on vacations or in search of comfort in the soothing baths of mineral water. The high mineral content had been discovered earlier when Stephen Bardill was excavating his stone quarry. Mr. Kraft widely advertised his hot and cold mineral baths, and many patients came to receive health-giving benefits. A windmill and water works were erected which provided running water for the establishment, and two large ice-houses were filled during winter to provide simple refrigeration in summer. A. J. Kraft also had a forty by eighty foot entertainment hall built near the hotel, where guests could enjoy free billiards and pool, or bowling with wooden balls with no holes. Dances were provided frequently. Shaded and flower-bordered paths added to the beauty of Diamond Mineral Springs Park and a large artificial lake allowed boating and fishing. Regretfully the Hotel was razed in 1957.

Brick sidewalks were just entering the scene seventy-five years ago, and one extended along the north side of Main Street for a couple blocks. The rest of the important streets had plank walks about three feet wide. Some macadam roads were being constructed of local gravel and this helped make streets more passable in muddy seasons. The work was done by farmers donating their team and themselves for a day's

work at \$1.50 per day, with very rustic tools. Often the workers used these wages to pay taxes.

Saline had a make-shift fire department, and a small fire engine offered some assistance in fire fighting. Two men were in charge of the equipment during the winter season for a meager fee. A cistern at the corner of Main and Mulberry had been built in 1901, and another near the Catholic Church, and one at Main and Locust, to collect water for fire fighting.

Telephone lines were just being erected in the early 1900's to aid in communication, and in 1907 the Grantfork Mutual Telephone Company was incorporated.

Penny postcards were another quick means of communicating and young people sent cards to make plans for coming events, to send greetings, or just to present their latest photo.

Only the very privileged went to high school, but many of the young people took extra courses at the country schools or in Saline. Work was the rule for young and old, and nearly everyone had "chores" to do, which gave young people an early sense of responsibility, so vandalism and crime were scarce.

A strong faith in God was another important part of life, and in spite of hard work and deprivation (by today's standards), people led full, rich lives, with high moral standards, a sense of duty and love of their fellow man, values which seem to have been lost. Perhaps, as more people are searching for their "roots," they will also unearth these lost traits of their forefathers, and the world and everyone in it will revert to higher standards of "the good old days!"



IV Those Country School Days

THOSE COUNTRY SCHOOL DAYS

Perhaps no aspect of Illinois social history is so full of nostalgia for so many people as country school days. Of course, there were once thousands of rural schools in the state—usually scores of them in a single county—and so, many senior citizens, and younger adults as well, recall that kind of educational experience. Because the one-room schools in Illinois were all closed during the consolidation movement after World War II, the memories of former students, and fading photographs of unsophisticated youngsters in front of unadorned buildings, are all that is left of the school life which was once commonplace in rural culture.

Most former pupils are defensive about the country schools, in spite of their obvious drawbacks: inadequate buildings, poorly paid teachers, and shortages of textbooks and other materials. All of these problems were related to the limited financial capacity of rural school districts, a factor which could not be dramatically changed. But it should also be recognized that there was a significant improvement in the country schools throughout the first half of the century. The educational requirement for teachers increased; better instructional methods were developed, and of course, the buildings slowly conformed to a higher standard of adequacy. But regardless, the one-room schools were no match for larger ones in the towns and cities, by any objective measure of facilities and personnel. What, then, did the rural schools have that made attending them such a positive experience—and later memories of them so nostalgic?

Without question, there was a vital sense of community about the typical rural school. The teacher and students knew each other very well, and they regarded themselves as part of a distinctive entity, not just a section of some larger institution. In short, each school was a kind of micro-world, characterized by extensive personal contact among the members but geographical and cultural isolation from the

rest of society. And since the schools were not large, and some activities involved all the students of whatever age, no one felt lost or left out. Such a situation naturally created a sense of belonging and security for each pupil—which was not only conducive to learning but fostered the later nostalgia.

The local landscape, too, became very familiar to country school students, who generally had to walk the proverbial long distances to and from the schoolhouse. Such repeated contact with the natural environment—fields, woods, lanes, etc.—also contributed to the sense of belonging that was a hallmark of the rural school, especially since at the other end of those long walks was home itself. If the cultural landscape of the countryside was much less complex than in communities, the two central aspects of that landscape (home and school) were all the more deeply experienced.

There was also an intense awareness of family membership among country school children because siblings of various ages attended together. In fact, a youngster often made friends with an entire family of fellow pupils. That, too, fostered an intimacy which is not possible in larger institutions. Whatever qualities the country schools lacked, meaningful social interaction was not among them.

Of course, the schools were also social centers for the districts, or rural communities, in which they were located. Holiday programs, box suppers, civic meetings and other activities drew the parents together as well as the children, which naturally made school seem even more closely related to home life. It is not surprising that when consolidation forced the closing of rural schools, parents were often upset for non-academic reasons. The abandonment of a country school commonly meant the end of that community interaction which had centered around it.

All the memoirs in this section are united by their positive view of the country school experience—even "A Bull in the Classroom—Almost," which, after describing terror

and pandemonium, ends happily, with the students as heroes of an exciting story that was “widely circulated (and embellished) around the district.” “Ghosts by the Side of the Road” and “Epitaph for a Country School” are particularly fine memoirs, revealing as they do the very basis for the rural school nostalgia of Eva Baker Watson and Robert T. Burns, as well as many others who shared their experience.

The brief discussion of the school name which opens the Burns piece suggests yet another factor that has made country schools seem so attractive when compared to larger, more complex institutions. How could school days have been anything else but idyllic at a place called “Pancake,” or for that matter, “Lone Oak,” “Frog Pond,” “Gooseneck,” “Mud Acre,” “Cane Patch,” “Long Nine,” or “Pilot Knob”—to

name but a few of the one-room schools that have disappeared?

As these quaint names suggest, in a twentieth-century world that was moving rapidly away from rural simplicity, the country school was one of the last assertions of our mythic national innocence. Life there was pure, close to nature, and uncorrupted—not to mention infused with patriotic and Christian values. Thus, the nostalgia that so many feel for those country school days is, after, all, but a variation of our common longing for an idealized American past.

John Hallwas, Editor

GHOSTS BY THE SIDE OF THE ROAD

Eva Baker Watson

As I drive up the steep, winding road I see it perched on the rocky hillside, its walls gray and dilapidated, its windows staring sightlessly. If I were to stop the car, to go and climb that weed-concealed path, to push open the weatherbeaten door and step inside, I know my senses would be assailed with the never-to-be-forgotten smell of the schoolroom.

Consolidation, that caused the abandonment of one-room rural schools in Pope County, cannot erase the memories nor exorcise the ghosts that roam within their walls. Several such schools have been remodeled and are now used as homes. But no amount of paint, no carpenter's skill can ever completely disguise that telltale architecture. The ones that have been left to stand as they were, to be assaulted by wind and weather and slowly deteriorate, have become museums of nostalgia for us who once attended them.

I have only to see one of those old hulks to feel myself wafted almost bodily into the past by the pictures they evoke. I see again the kids I played with and the courageous teachers who coped with us (and coped with many other things) some sixty years ago.

My mind's ear hears the ding-donging of the first bell. If I'm not on my way to school or just about ready to start by the time it rings, I'd better be. Sometime later I hear the five-minute-bell—a few warning taps that signal us to make a last visit to the pump out front or the little house out back. And be quick about it. Then the last bell. One tap. Final as judgment. If the current teacher is one for ceremony, we line up outside and file in through the front door in orderly fashion. And then we're in our seats and quiet—if we know what's good for us.

The day would not begin without the "opening exercises"—singing or marching to a martial tune wheezed out of the organ by a talented older girl. In a more sober mood

the teacher had, the day before, asked us to be prepared to give a wise saying or Bible verse. (No one would have dared a blasphemous opposition to this.)

Apple polishers courted teacher's favor by memorizing long verses. But there were always those who took the effortless route and re-quoted "The Lord is my shepherd," "God is love," or some of the "Thou shalt's." Some even resorted to the brief, "Jesus wept." This, of course, branded them as too lazy to learn less familiar passages, but the sheer repetition of old standbys probably had merit. Parents did not fear that their children would be brainwashed by exposure to the Holy Writ in public schools. In fact, some teachers even read a chapter from Psalms or Proverbs, now and then, with no question as to authenticity. It was the Word of God and that was that. And God was alive and well and living in Pope County.

Opening exercises done with, I hear a down-to-business voice intone, "Eighth Grade Arithmetic, rise, pass, sit!" The moment of truth is here and we must go, prepared or not, to sit on the recitation seat smack under the teacher's nose.

Later I hear the welcome reprieve: "Reee-cess!" What a lot of freedom was squeezed into that quarter hour as we raced through stink base, hopscotch, marbles, and ball. Not softball or baseball. Just ball. I remember an old tennis racket someone brought. The girls found it much better than a bat to use for whacking the ball. Rules were flexible. And teacher got right in there and played as hard as we did, with no grumbling about playground duty.

A little side skirmish took place from time to time when the boys experimented in girl-chasing and kissing. The girls experimented in shrieking and outrunning them. Eventually the girls learned how to run more slowly.

I close my eyes and feel again the soft crunch of snow under my feet as I walk to school. There will be fun today, for the teacher probably will put aside assigned lessons and take time out to read "Snowbound" to us. Also we'll be allowed an

extended noon period for sledding on the hill back of the playground.

Later in the day, I see a girl from an upper grade sitting with a younger one, helping her with her lesson. Several others, also, are being tutored by these early teacher's aides, while another class is reciting.

My mind's eye moves on to an exciting day—and I smell smoke. I see again the teacher's white, tense face as he instructs us to march outside: "Quietly, no running! The schoolhouse is on fire." The bucket brigade quickly forms a line from pump to roof, where orange flames are licking.

"Well, I guess it's goodbye old schoolhouse!" said one small boy, delightedly. That was one disappointed little fellow when the fire was put out.

I travel on to another picture: I see myself wearing a new dress and sitting two-in-a-seat, for there are visitors. It's the last day. That morning the mamas had come carrying basket dinners. The papas laid boards across desks over which women spread snowy table cloths. Certainly the schoolroom had never looked so ravishing. With mouths watering, we sniffed the heavenly blend of golden fried chicken, hard cooked eggs pickled-pink in beet vinegar, mounds of potato salad, mile-high angel foods, layers and layers of all kinds of cakes, and pies, pies, pies. It was a delicious climax to the school year.

Remains of the dinner cleared away and order restored, now I see guests seated while pupils entertained them with a last day program—songs, dialogues, and "pieces." At the beginning someone recited a welcome address, and at the end another gave a farewell poem—usually sentimental.

Parents were invited to "speak a few words" and some responded, mostly the fathers, but now and then an aggressive mother would rise to the occasion. They praised the fine teacher, and talked about how much Johnny had learned. Report cards and spelling and attendance awards

were distributed, the teacher "treated" with peppermint candy sticks, and then it was over.

All but the tears. I was fascinated with the emotional older girls who cried. I could hardly wait until I'd be sophisticated enough to weep so daintily because school was out.

There was such warmth, such strong ties-that-bind in those little schools. Today as I see them crumbling, clinging to rocky hillsides over-grown with vines and brush, I recall how the more progressive parents used to complain that schools were built on land not fit for anything else. They grieved because there was no money to provide better recreational equipment for us. And so we envied the city kids with their smooth, level playgrounds, their slides and swings.

We didn't realize that we were the lucky ones, to have that abundance of natural playground potential lending itself so beautifully to our whims.

I remember a branch of water running along the side of the school. It became a rushing river when it rained, thrilling to wade in or watch as our paper boats ran the rapids. Other times it had clear, quiet pools with only a trickle of water linking them. Sometimes the boys would catch "crawdads" to scare the girls with. In time of drought the brook became a canyon to explore, with smooth, flat rocks, perfect for playhouse floors which we carpeted with moss dug from around a nearby tree. These we furnished with tree bark chairs and tables set with acorn dinnerware. An ideal environment for sparking the imagination and creativity. How could we have felt deprived in the midst of such wealth?

Consolidation has laid to rest the little one-room schoolhouses, and those "ragged beggars" are sleeping their final sleep. They've had their "last day." But they will forever be attended by the friendly ghosts that live in the memory of us who spent such happy years there long ago.

FAIRVIEW SCHOOLHOUSE

Marjorie Downs Byers

Fairview Schoolhouse sat on a grassy knoll, fenced in on two sides from fields of hay, corn or wheat, and on the third side, from a wooded pasture. It was located in Birmingham Township, between the villages of Brooklyn and Huntsville, in Schuyler County, Illinois. The schoolhouse was a small, white frame building with a fairly steep shingled roof and brick chimney. There were three sets of tall, large-paned windows on the two long sides of the building. The high concrete stoop was covered by a small overhang and the large door opened directly into the back of the schoolroom.

It was not until I became familiar with other one-room country schoolhouses that I realized ours was unique. First, it was smaller than most, and could not even boast of having a cloakroom which most other schools had. It was, literally, one room. Secondly, other schools had single desks. Ours were the old-fashioned double kind—two students per desk.

I recall quite clearly the first time I saw the building. It was fifty-four years ago, in, February, 1928, and I was in the second grade. Our family had moved to a nearby farm. I had previously attended first grade and part of the second grade at Beard School in Beardstown, Illinois. What a change for me to come to this small room with children of various ages from five to fourteen, from a roomful of twenty or thirty children who had all been my own age. To accommodate the various sizes of the children, the desks were of varying sizes. The tiny desks were in the front in the two rows on the left and graduated in size toward the back of the room. The third row of desks on the right were large ones. They were all double, though, and we learned to share space inside the desk as well as the writing and seating space. Some years, depending on the enrollment, one might have a huge wide space to oneself, the sole occupant of a desk. The desks were of thick heavy wood with many initials carved into them.

Inkwell holes were in the larger, under which a small shelf held a bottle of ink. With straight nib pens we practiced the "Palmer Method" of penmanship.

I have such vivid impressions of that room in which I spent six and a half years, I graduated from the eighth grade there in June of 1934.

There was a small raised platform in front of the room, on which stood the teacher's desk. This desk was actually a high rectangular table. Later this table was replaced by a modern desk which the teacher placed near a sidewall. We, then, used the platform for recitations. There was a long shelf along the back wall for our lunch boxes. Underneath the shelf were hooks for our coats. In the winter our overshoes and galoshes were lined up beneath our coats.

The other corner of the back of the room was occupied by a stove which the teacher stoked with coal when the weather turned cold. Usually, one of the larger boys would bring coal in from the shed and sometimes even arrive early and start the fire. A bucket sat on a small table near the door. A water dipper floated in the bucket. We all used this common dipper from which to drink, but later a teacher encouraged us to bring our own cups. (I rather envied a girl who had a lovely telescoping cup of metal which she kept in her desk.) On the table with the water bucket was an enameled washpan and soap dish. Nearby hung a roller towel. These amenities, along with two outside toilets, seemed to be adequate for our needs.

Our library consisted of a hodge-podge of books on several shelves in the left corner in the front of the room. I had read them all by the time I left there. Some books were very old, especially the fiction. One book, which I read several times and found fascinating, was the story of a teacher in a country schoolhouse at the turn of the century. The description of her clothes (floor length skirts, shirtwaists, and high shoes) were of outmoded styles, but the schoolhouse described in the story could have been ours.

An old set of maps was replaced one exciting day by a new set with a case which hung on the wall. One could pull down different maps. They were so brightly colored (all of the pink belonged to England), and we learned the names of continents, states, rivers, lakes and mountains, as well as how to locate them. We found the temperate zone in which we lived and located other lands. My concept of the world grew. Shapes of continents became familiar and a desire to see all these lands seemed perfectly reasonable. My ability, as an adult, to orient myself wherever I have lived or traveled seems to have been rooted in a basic understanding of geography which I acquired in those long ago days at Fairview School.

The front wall was covered with three sections of blackboard. On certain holidays appropriate designs in colored chalk decorated the upper left section—pumpkins and cornstalks at Halloween, Pilgrims at Thanksgiving, Santa in his sleigh at Christmas and red hearts at Valentine's Day. Valentine's Day was so special. We worked for weeks, making valentines for the teacher and for our classmates. Bright construction paper was furnished, as well as paste and scissors. Old magazines were brought to school and pored over for pictures. The large valentine box was a work of art. We all contributed to it, with help and suggestions from the teacher. What joy when the box was opened and the valentines were distributed. The word "love," on certain ones, caused the heart to beat faster!

But to get back to the blackboards which were usually the focus of our attention: assignments were to be found there, and in class we wrote our spelling words "on the board," parsed sentences on it, and learned to "do decimals" there. Punishment by the teacher was sometimes to write a penitent sentence one hundred times on the blackboard. It was an honor to be allowed to erase the board and to dust the erasers. One stood on the outside stoop and clapped two erasers together until no more chalk flew. On Friday

afternoon we washed the blackboards clean in readiness for Monday mornings.

Friday afternoons were special times. We might have a spelling bee, with words tailored to the various ages. Sometimes the young children would be allowed to color with their crayons while the older ones competed to see who could make the most small words out of a certain phrase, perhaps "Washington's Birthday." Often the teacher read aloud to us, a chapter a day from some special book, with an extra chapter on Friday afternoon.

On sunny days in the fall and spring we would take our lunch boxes out of doors and eat in some favorite spot. But all year 'round, regardless of the weather, we would play outside at recess and after lunch. We all played together, mostly games which involved a lot of running. I remember Red Light, May I? Hide and Seek, Crack the Whip, and "Tippy Up," a game which required a flat shingle and a ball, and was played over the steep roof of the schoolhouse. The older children were tolerant of the younger ones (sometimes siblings), and great emphasis was placed on "taking turns." There was very little bickering and no toleration of bullies or of poor sports.

Over the years, as I've looked back on this schoolhouse, I realize much credit should go to the dedicated teachers who taught there. How arduous their day must have been! Their physical activities would have been tiring, to say nothing of teaching each of the different grade levels in several subjects. They were inspirational, instilling in one a love of learning and of scholarship, of wanting to excel, to do one's best. Lesson preparation was always meticulous. One might be the only one in that class on a particular day and have to answer all the questions. One studied to the background noise of first graders reading aloud at their "recitation time," or third graders reciting multiplication tables, or, perhaps, an eighth grade class learning Lincoln's "Gettysburg Address." This method of teaching all ages in one room would seem

incomprehensible today, but we did learn. We learned some valuable lessons, too, not found in our textbooks—lessons of independence, of concentration, of toleration and compassion.

My love of reading, of words, and of writing was fostered in that school. My interest in art history was born there. We used to receive little leaflets each month. They were cream-colored with a sepia-toned picture on the front. Inside the leaflet was a description of the picture and a biography of the artist. I remember *The Gleaners* by Millet, Landseer's *Shoeing the Bay Mare*, and many others. We were also taught History, Spelling, Arithmetic, Geography, Civics, Orthography, Language, Nature Study, and Health.

It is a way of life which is gone. I realize that conditions were not ideal. We could have used better facilities, and we had a desperate need for a library, for many more books, but I loved going to school at Fairview Schoolhouse. I feel it shaped my character in many ways and helped me to become a responsible adult with the ability to make the best of a given situation. I am sometimes incensed to hear those old one-room country schoolhouses being deprecated by those who were not fortunate enough to attend one.

BUTLERVILLE SCHOOL

Violet Greenleaf Rose

March 21, 1916, was my sixth birthday and my first day in school. The teacher, Blanche Scott, had told my parents, Joe and Nona Greenleaf, to send me to school so I would get a start for the coming year. I walked the one and three-fourths miles from our farm home to school with my five older brothers and sisters.

Butlerville School was in Birmingham Township, Schuyler County, Illinois. The one room was thirty feet long

and twenty feet wide. Two rows of wooden double desks and seats used most of the floor space. The front of each row was a desk. Back of it was a folding seat fastened to the desk behind it. This was repeated to the end seat. Seat hinges and legs for desks and seats were of iron. All legs were firmly fastened to the floor.

In front of the desks was a recitation bench used for classes. Teacher's desk, built like a high table with two drawers under the top, stood in the center of the space between the bench and front wall. Across the front wall was a high blackboard one yard wide. A big Webster's dictionary was on a low shelf against one wall. A wooden map case, high on the wall, held maps of the continents and the United States. The maps were on rollers and rolled up and down like window shades.

We hung our outer clothing on double hooks screwed into a board on the back wall at one side of the door. Overshoes were left on the floor. A huge furnace, enclosed in a metal jacket to spread heat, stood in the other rear corner.

Sanitation was two outhouses in opposite corners of the school yard. One was for girls and one was for boys.

The first bell rang at 8:30 a.m. School took up at 9:00. First recess was 10:30 to 10:45. Noon was 12:00 to 1:00. Last recess was 3:30 to 3:45. School was out at 4:00 p.m. The school had no bell. Teacher used her own hand bell, six or seven inches long.

Miss Scott wrote letters and numbers on the blackboard and pointed to one with her pointer. She pronounced it and I repeated after her. The wooden pointer was five feet long and tapered from the one inch in diameter end she held to the thickness of a pencil end which touched the board. Also she wrote letters and numbers low on the blackboard, and I traced over them again and again.

Soon I knew my ABC's and could count to 10. I wrote my name, "Violet Greenleaf." Next I learned printed letters and short words, and read in my first reader.

"First Grade Reading," Miss Scott called one day and added, "Violet may come too." I jumped to "Turn . . . stand . . . pass." My cousin Grace, six years old the previous September, had been in school all year. I was happy to join her in classes.

Examinations were given at the end of each month. Later, report cards were given to students who took them home for parents to sign.

Miss Scott had many nice things to keep us busy when lessons were done. We colored with crayons, cut out, drew, and pasted, and then were dismissed early to play outside.

At Christmas time a native cedar tree was cut and stood in a front corner of the school room. It was decorated with paper chains we made and strings of popcorn. Presents were hung on the tree. Teacher gave each of us a fancy cardboard box of Christmas candy and an orange. Stores stocked oranges only at Christmas time. We drew names and exchanged ten cent gifts. Jay Moon gave me a black iron horse bank four inches high and five and a half inches long. "Beauty" was imprinted on one side. It is worth over \$50.00 today.

The John Moon children went home for dinner, across the road. Everyone else, including the teacher, carried dinner in a tin syrup bucket with a tight lid. We ate sandwiches, hard boiled eggs, a jar of fruit or an apple, and a cookie or piece of pie or cake.

Teacher was the janitor. In cold weather she came early to build up the fire with coal she carried from the shed in the yard. She carried a bucket of drinking water from Moon's well. Each evening she scattered sweeping powder on the floor and swept up the dust and dirt. She banked the fire evenings when needed.

Some teachers paid a big boy to do janitor work. Most did it themselves and kept the money. Very few teachers were paid \$100.00 per month. Many worked for less.

Teacher was God at school, with strict rules. During

school time no one talked, whispered, laughed, ate, or chewed gum. We walked on our toes to be quiet and dared not turn a head to see behind us. Playtimes we were not allowed in front of the recitation bench, near teacher's desk.

Rules were obeyed and lessons learned, or punishment was swift and sure. Mild punishment was standing on the floor or staying in at recess or after school. The worst punishment was a "whipping" with the leather strap teacher kept in her desk. I learned easily and obeyed the rules and was not punished. Teacher hated slow learners and whipped them often.

Parents were allies of the teacher; adults were always right and children wrong. Many parents knew their children were beaten unjustly and did nothing. To go to the schoolhouse and talk with teacher about any problem was not done. Once in a while a teacher was so mean she had trouble getting a school.

Women did not vote or hold public office. Each spring the men of the district held an election at the schoolhouse. One director was elected and one retired. The three school directors served three years without pay. They hired the teacher, kept the schoolhouse in repair, and bought supplies. District tax money paid the bills.

A state law had been passed to lighten the work load of teachers. During a school year ending in an even number, even numbered grades were taught. Odd numbered grades were taught odd years. Children were to start to school at age six or seven, the odd year. Most parents refused to understand this law and sent children to school at age six. Teacher taught the first three grades. Any child, ready for the fourth grade in an odd year, took the third grade over or skipped to the fifth, then took the fourth grade the next year, and finished grade school that way. In the Fall of 1916 I was in the first grade. Grace was in the second. Miss Scott taught us together.

Pauline, my oldest sister, was in the eighth grade in

1916. For weeks her class reviewed the year's work. Final examination for the township was held at Birmingham School. Questions were sent by the County Superintendent of Schools, Calvin L. Cain. Test papers were returned to him for grading. *The Rushville Times* published names and grades of those who passed. The pupil with the highest grade in each township received a Lindley Scholarship, giving him or her free tuition to any Illinois State Teacher's College High School for four years. The student with the highest grade in the county was valedictorian of the class. County graduation was at Rushville in June. Our school ended in May with a picnic for the whole family.

In September, 1917, we had a new teacher, a gentle, pleasant, happy person, named Elsie Dean. She liked us, and we loved her. But the end of my happy time at Butlerville School came before the term ended. On March 6, 1918, my parents held a farm sale. We moved to Rushville, and I was enrolled in second grade at Webster School.

EPISODE AT LONE OAK

Marjorie Dawson Davies

"Skeeter Creek" was McLean County's highest land spot—the name being given by my paternal grandfather because of the small pond in the middle of the 100-acre timber pasture which was infested with mosquitoes and croaking frogs, mostly bass singers. The house across the road is where I spent most of my youth. Dawson Township was named after my paternal grandparents, and its neighboring township, Arrowsmith, was named after my maternal great-grandparents.

Because we were a mile from the main gravel road on hills of clay and mud, I spend most of my schooling years with my grandparents in the little town of Ellsworth,

attending the two-story combined grade and high school where my grandfather was the janitor for many years. I still have the big hand bell that he rang every day to call us in after recess was over. I remember too the little ones sitting on the steps that led up to the high school, waiting for my grandfather to pull their boots off.

My mother decided that when I was ready for sixth grade, I should walk to Lone Oak School. And oh, the good times we had there, and how much more I learned in a one-room, eight-grade school.

Lone Oak School is no longer there, but what memories! One in particular stands out for me. When I was a pupil in sixth grade, a boy was always coming around at lunch time and pushing my face down in my food. On this particular day, my mother had put a beautiful piece of butterscotch pie in my dinner bucket. Suddenly I felt my nose being slammed into the meringue and pie. "This is going to stop," I thought to myself. I ran, with pie in hand, caught the boy, got him down, sat on him and smeared my delicious pie all over his face, neck, ears and hair. When the bell rang to go in, Budge sat in the schoolyard. His aunt was the teacher and she asked where he was. "Should I tell her?" I thought. Yes, I did. "We'll leave him out there until he's ready to come in," she said. The two of us still laugh about this whenever we meet at our high school reunions.

EPITAPH FOR A COUNTRY SCHOOL

Robert Taylor Burns

Diagonally across the pasture and a half mile westward along a dirt road stood the little country school with the unique name of "Pancake." Some say it was named to emphasize the flat country of Central Illinois. Those of us who had considerable trouble mastering arithmetic had assumed that the name was derived from the circular, one-

digit shape of grades often imposed upon us by strict and discerning taskmasters.

That little crackerbox of a building, shaded by a couple of gnarled burr oaks, was once the focal point of our existence—in fact, of the whole farm community. It is now gone. Not a trace of it can be found today; it's been entirely supplanted by a few hills of corn in the corner of a fenceless, massive field.

But it still lives in memory—Pancake and thousands of its counterparts. It's a memory of those opening exercises when teacher would read a few pages of a well-selected novel each day, leaving the kiddies yearning for more. It's a nostalgic review of those spelling lessons in which the students learned to spell more words in a week than today's pupils do in six. It's the place where Johnny learned to read—either because he wanted to or he had to. (What's wrong with those two types of motivation? They both worked.)

Under the not-so-critical eyes of our parents and neighbors, we garnered an early-day introduction to acting. Maybe we waved a sock in a Christmas acoustic; perhaps we flubbed so badly that it left an indelible searing memory of a goof. A personal flub was my recitation of the "Night Before Christmas," when the lines "Ma in her kerchief" became "Ma in her handkerchief." That brought down the house and created an enduring vehicle of scornful kidding on the part of older siblings and fellow students.

Then I re-live another deeply entrenched moment in a previous Christmas program when we anticipated the appearance of Santa Claus with a sackful of goodies, the same St. Nick who had never failed us in the past years. Imagine our disillusionment as Santa came in with a few "ho, ho, ho's" ambled over to the tree, and inadvertently tipped his beard into a live candle flame. Mayhem broke out; Santa exuded some lively maneuvers, swift action indeed for such an old gent. Leaping and swatting at the beard now aflame,

unceremoniously St. Nick peeled off his mask, revealing the features of a young man from a neighboring farm.

A near tragedy was averted as the dry conifer also went up in flames. Dad shouted for someone to open the window, then grabbed the blazing torch of a tree and threw it into the yard, burning his hands considerably as the force of the toss drove the flames backward.

That's when the Santa legend went up in smoke; our belief was shattered, at least until innovative older brothers concocted the implausible story that Mr. Claus had shaken himself up pretty badly while sliding down the North Pole and had telegraphed the impersonator to double for him.

As we review those years, we wonder if the educational success of the country school did not stem from its utter simplicity. Take the minutely stocked library. Few books lined the hand-hewn bookcase, but those tomes were gone ones that have stood the test of time—ones we'd probably choose today if we were to be exiled for a long time from today's civilization.

There was the *Bible*, whose King James version then and now gave us the beautiful cadence copied by Abraham Lincoln, John Greenleaf Whittier, and others. Many fine authors have been nurtured on its rhythmic language. No doubt, there was always a life of Washington and a volume or two depicting the rise of the young Lincoln above the poverty and deprivation of his early environment—a man who had become not a dropout but a drop-in during his formative years at New Salem. He'd drop in to the hearthside of teacher Mentor Graham or to the hollow of Jack Kelso for a thrilling communion with books short in numbers but long in literary style.

The maxims of Benjamin Franklin and *Aesop's Fables* could be found in Pancake's tiny library to complement the precepts of *McGuffey's Reader*. From such tomes came an emphasis on principles such as honesty, thrift, perseverance, and the promised rewards of a strictly defined work ethic.

No doubt Henry Thoreau's *Walden* was savored by those country kids of decades ago, who had already learned a great deal about nature first hand. They went afield in spring on short flower walks while basking in the beauties of the season—the trill of meadowlark and field sparrow, the sweet spiced aroma of black locust blossoms, the powerful perfume of choke cherry, the flaring beauty of wild columbine.

Thoreau's seasonal descriptions also enhanced those walks to and from school in autumn, when we had the chance to stroll toward opening day as a September morning lay quiet, and the world was as an inverted humidior under the horizon before a new-born sun had dissipated the shimmering, jeweled droplets from leaves and grass. Then, in later autumn, lanes and roadsides were bracketed with the fiery flame of sumac and Virginia creeper, of golden basswood, redbud and hickory, purple New England asters, and the tropical-like green and gold leaves of the pawpaw, whose sweet and creamy fruit would soon be ripened.

Winter didn't seem long and dreary then: it did imprint upon us an indelible memory of facing a howling northwest wind, its breath seemingly honed on the North Pole, bringing tears and near frostbite to those who must face that wind in traveling to or homeward from the little school. I recall also the all-out snowball battles on milder days when the "packin'" was good, as gigantic forts were erected before the skirmishing began.

Then back into the room warmed by a pot-bellied stove, popping and cracking as caps, jackets, and mittens, rendered soggy by the snow wars, were hung to dry behind that stove, as pleasant though pungent smells of drying wool and leather emitted from the steaming clothing.

Today's schools seem to be veritable palaces compared to those little crackerboxes of the prairies. But youngsters today often find their future niche in life to be narrowed by achievement tests and computerized results. Back then, it was up to the discerning teacher, who taught from the heart

and recognized talent without benefit of impersonal test scores. And despite a dearth of teaching aids and the little remuneration, those teachers, with few exceptions, acquitted themselves very well indeed.

There is no quarrel with today's schools. Their problems are legion, indeed. In today's mobile, concentrated society, the country school was doomed. And yet, since there is no physical evidence remaining of little Pancake, we wonder if a monument to it, along with all other such neighborhood schools, would be its emphasis upon those virtues of honesty, thrift, and perseverance—attributes that rose to the front and ushered our society through such crises as two world wars, a gigantic depression, and other calamities calling for old fashioned grit and determination.

STARTING OUT AT SOUTH LINCOLN

Lucille Herring Davidson

My school attendance began in September, 1914. I was seven years old. Mama's last minute instruction to me and my younger sister, Mamie, was, "Remember to act like little ladies." Papa Henry Herring was waiting with a team of horses hitched to the second-hand surrey with a frazzled fringe on top. We climbed into the carriage and were soon on our way to South Lincoln School, District 60, in Greene County, Illinois.

After more than a two-mile drive from the rented farm, which was located in the peninsula-like part of Woodville Township, the horses pranced across Macoupin Creek Bridge. Less than five hundred feet to the west stood the white frame one-room school. Other pupils were arriving in horse-drawn vehicles and some were walking.

Inside the schoolhouse and behind a desk on an elevated platform was a person who looked like a princess.

Appropriately enough, her name was Miss Norma King. She was wearing a long blue dress with a white high neck lace collar which had bone stays under each ear. This style restricted her movements and caused her to turn her head and shoulders when she wanted to look any direction except straight ahead. From her regal position, she seemed to be aware of each child as she beamed a warm friendly smile to everyone. Desire to please her was an immediate motivation.

For those who had not been to school, reading was taught from a large chart with words and pictures in black and white. On the first page was a little girl with curls, ribbons and ruffles. A little boy was dressed in shoes, knickers, jacket and a white blouse with a ruffled collar. Behind his back, he held a striped stick of candy. Under the picture were two sentences: "I want candy" and "I have candy." When the page of the big chart was turned up and over, the same children were pictured. The boy was bowing and the girl was curtsying. The sentence was, "Here is candy."

Was this what school had to teach? I wondered.

By noon dismissal, as an overly ambitious seven-year-old, I had "shown off" by counting to one hundred and by saying the alphabet forward and backward. Also, I had learned to recite the candy sentences. All that Mamie and the other younger beginners remembered was the word "candy."

Noon hour was a happy time. Big and little girls, with lunch baskets and buckets, sat on the porch and ate fried chicken, cookies, fresh peaches, and other goodies. Boys carried lunches in squares of cloth or bandana handkerchiefs as they ran to a grassy spot behind the wood shed. Soon the playground was the scene of much activity. There were running, jumping, and throwing games accompanied by friendly yelling and happy laughter.

Most of the forty-three students, who looked neat, clean, and well dressed in the morning, appeared somewhat bedraggled near the end of the hour. Even Miss Norma had

removed the stylish lace collar, and she looked more comfortable.

In response to the "Ding! Dong!" from the belfry, everyone lined up to get a drink of water from one of the several tin cups as the big boys took turns pumping water from the school yard well. Then students stood in line to go into the house for another session of learning.

As I entered the school room, Miss Norma said, "Will you please help me this afternoon? Since you know the chart lesson, will you listen while others read? Then you may write on your slate and make pictures and words on some paper." Here was a teacher who was sensitive to and capitalized upon the aggressiveness of a older, first-day-of-school beginner. This type of individual motivation was the trade-mark of Miss Norma's teaching.

After eight years in country schools, under various teachers with above average concern for students, I passed my Eighth Grade Final Examination in 1922. This success qualified me to enter Carrollton High School in Greene County, Illinois.

The four years of high school were strenuous, profitable, and enjoyable. Again there were teachers who brought out the competitive drive in students and encouraged them to face the challenges of the educational advantages at hand, but none were more proficient than Miss Norma. In March, 1926, I passed the State of Illinois Teacher's Examination and was issued Second Grade Elementary Teacher's Certificate No. 59. This document was "valid for two years for teaching in the first eight grades of the common schools."

After graduation from Carrollton High School with the class of 1926, I was enrolled for the summer at Illinois State Normal University. The three months of study in the rural school curriculum was pleasant and satisfying. There was a feeling of humble professional pride in teacher preparation.

I was offered a contract for the school term 1926-1927, at \$75 per month at South Lincoln School, District No. 60.

Thirty-seven children ranging in ages from five to fifteen were present for that first day of the new school term. This time, I was the teacher, in the same one-room school where I had encountered Miss Norma King in 1914.

Now it was my turn to smile.

MEMORIES OF A COUNTRY SCHOOL TEACHER

Eleanor Grant Verene

The most rewarding and interesting part of my life was spent as a country school teacher. One of the big differences between the schools in 1930 and those which came much later was the feeling that the teacher and pupils were one big family. Whenever one child was injured, all were very concerned. Any new equipment was carefully cared for by everyone. Buckets of coal were carried in for the fire and buckets of water were willingly carried for drinking. The atmosphere in the schoolroom was one of helping each other.

One school where I spent four years of teaching was Newman School. I can hardly put into words the joy and beauty of driving two miles to Newman School at 7:30 in the morning. In a Model T Ford, with very little traffic and such a slow speed, I was able to enjoy nature. The different seasons of the year were so delightful. In the fall the goldenrod and purple asters were in bloom along the roadside. In winter everything looked so pure and white with snow covered trees and bushes. Spring and early summer were equally as pretty. There were spring flowers, the singing of meadow larks, and beautiful wild roses. Seeing this on my way to school seemed to begin the day just right for me.

There were many things to do besides teaching. The janitor work was usually done in the hours after school. I very seldom was ready to go home before 5:30. In the morning I had outlines to write on the blackboard and busy

work to prepare for the lower grades as we had no work books. In 1932 I had twenty-three pupils, some in each of the eight grades. Teaching everything in the text books was very important as the final examinations of the year were sent out by the County Superintendent of Schools. We did not know what the questions would be. We also taught music, art, and penmanship.

When we were given our supplies by the Knox County Superintendent of Schools, he included a book on morals and manners. We had a class in that once a week. The children enjoyed it. They entered into the discussion, which was very interesting as there were students participating from the age of six years to fourteen years. In those days, for opening exercises, we read the Bible and had prayer. When all work was completed, the singing of "Now the Day Is Over" was a quiet way of ending each day. At the present time Bible reading is not permitted in school. And now, fifty years later, I am hearing results of this old-fashioned teaching. Some of my former students have thanked me for helping them to get started in the right way of life.

Many interesting incidents happened during those years. One of the families had three little girls in the lower grades. All three rode to school on one horse. Each night I helped them get on to go home, but I was having such a hard time with the horse. It was almost impossible to get them on. I was trying to put the girls on from the wrong side. It would have been much easier to put them on a bus, as they are now doing in 1982.

One morning, as I drove into the school yard, I saw hundreds of bluebirds gathering on the fences across the road. They were gathering to fly south for the winter. It was a beautiful sight that I have never seen again; we hardly ever see a bluebird. People are being urged to put up special bird houses for them as bluebirds are becoming quite scarce.

Many times a country school teacher needed to be a nurse. One of the boys, while playing at recess, fell and forced

his tooth through his lip. Another boy jumped on a nail and ran it completely through the sole of his shoe and into his foot. The boys had pulled it out before they brought him to me. I needed to drive him home to be taken to the doctor. There was no one to leave at school with the children. Giving them a lecture on good behavior and how important it was to get Rob to the doctor, I put the oldest student in charge and left. When I came back, all was in order and written work had been completed. Here again, it showed the feeling of being one big family. I found that students in the 1930's respected their teacher and wished to obey in an emergency.

We began, for the first time, to have community meetings and potluck suppers. Having enjoyed so much the Dramatic Club in Knoxville High School, I decided to try to have the people of Newman School District produce a three-act play. It was fun and also drew the families closer together. Two of the high school students in the district played the roles of hero and heroine. They wanted extra practice on their scene so they came one night after school. They were on the stage hugging each other, practicing the scene, when I heard a man's voice very disgustedly say, "Which one is the teacher around here?" I stepped out from behind the old stove in the back of the room and said, "I am the teacher. We are having practice for a play." You should have seen the look on his face. He thought he had found something going on after school to report to the directors of the district. In those days, this would have been a disgrace. I asked if I could help him. He said he just wanted a bucket to pump some water to put in the radiator of his car.

We received quite a profit from our play, which we used for needed equipment. One thing which we bought was stainless steel tableware. We felt so rich owning it and used it only one time. It was stolen. In those days there were tramps, as they were called, who broke into schoolhouses and spent the night. Sometimes when they left, they took a few things with them. This is what we thought had happened.

I organized the first rhythm band in the country schools. We had rhythm sticks, bells, a drum, a triangle, tambourines and cymbals. It was such an enjoyable treat to practice that school work went much faster on practice days. My mother helped make blue caps and capes trimmed in silver for each student. The parents looked forward to hearing the band at each program.

There were so many incidents, and I have chosen only a few. I am sure that every country school teacher would have fond memories of her school days.

This same Newman School, where I taught those four interesting years, has now been restored by the Retired Teachers' Association of Knox County. The building, which was originally two miles south of Knoxville, was moved into town. It is located at the edge of James Knox Park, on North Market Street. The building has been restored as it was in the 1920's. It represents all of the country schools of Knox County, but for me, it also represents many years of fulfillment as a rural school teacher.

A BULL IN THE CLASSROOM—ALMOST

Leona Tuttle Curtis

You've heard, no doubt, about a bull in a china shop? But have you ever heard, or even dreamed, of a bull in a classroom? I hadn't either, until one never-to-be-forgotten day in late October many years ago, in a small rural school where I was teaching my first year.

The school tempo had gradually slowed as the warm October day had lulled even the most active students into a sleepy stillness of Indian Summer. It was just thirty minutes until dismissal time, and I was very quietly moving about helping with individual problems. (In those days, rural schools used the individual approach, you know.)

Suddenly, the sleepy drone of the room exploded with a bellow which brought everyone to his feet with a half-scream on his lips. My horrified eyes looked up to see a huge, black bull glaring at me through the open window. He even reared up against the side of the schoolhouse to get a better view!

I was so stunned that I couldn't move or utter a sound. My worst nightmare had never dredged up a more frightening sight. Twice in my younger days, I had been chased by, and barely escaped from, a charging bull, and the memories of those encounters had marked me forever as a absolute, cringing coward when near any bovine species. Now my worst fears were to be realized. That big, black monster had materialized out of my fears to get me.

Having always lived in a town or city, I had very little practical knowledge about how one ought to handle a maddened bull. (This information had not been offered in any of my education courses, either.) I turned hopefully for help to my big farm boys. (There were several fifteen-year-olds in the room.) To my despair, they seemed as scared as I was—if that was possible! I saw I would get no guidance from them, so I'd have to be the savior myself. Somehow, I was not in the least surprised when they all tried to tell me, at once, that the bull bellowing outside our window was the very one who had, on two recent occasions, escaped from his pasture or pen and threatened several farm folk.

A sudden, frozen calm descended on me with the realization that not only was there a bull out there, but that it was a renegade one at that. Somehow, I had to do the impossible—outwit him and save us all from his design.

By this time, the bull had started to circle the building in rushing charges, accompanied by fierce bellows and angry snorts. Occasionally, he stopped to paw the ground or banged his great head against the walls. This behavior did nothing to calm the already badly frightened children (and teacher). Frantically my mind explored the possibilities: could a bull plunge through an open, unscreened window? We darted to

close them in the intervals when he was on the side of the building where the windows were much higher up.

Then, as I rushed to shut the outside door, which opened inwardly, a terrible reality hit me. That door would not stay shut without an object to hold it. To unlock it, a chain was used (on the outside), fastened to a padlock. There was no chance of locking it unless I wanted to lock myself out with the bull, an idea which I quickly discarded. The way he was butting against the walls, it seemed only a matter of time before he would hit the door. The boys scrambled to pile desks and benches against the door, hoping a barricade would stop or entangle him should he knock it open.

By this time, I realized that no lucky rescue was imminent, since parents would not be anxious about students for another thirty minutes or more. I knew I had better have an escape route in case the beast got into the room. We built some makeshift steps from desks and chairs, up to one of the high windows on the side of the building nearest a fence. I coached the children how, if the bull crashed through the barrier, they were to go through the window, over the fence and to the nearest neighbor's house. The big boys were to help all the others. Then I had all of them keep perfectly quiet in hopes this silence would discourage any fiendish designs the bull had in mind. I stationed a big boy at one of the higher windows to watch for signs of rescue. Hysterically, I was reminded of a similar watch that was posted in Bluebeard's tower.

A farm truck rumbled by but didn't stop. Another wait during which the bull was challenging the windows, the pump (what a banging it took), and the walls. He hadn't found the door yet! It was now four-thirty, and I desperately hoped some parents would begin to be concerned about their offspring.

Finally, in the midst of the bull's pandemonium, we saw a tractor, a wagon, and a truck with several men, inching their way up the slope into the school yard. We cheered (in a

muted way, in contrast to the bull's excitable temperament) as we realized that rescue was near. The men were armed with pitchforks, ropes, whips and various bull-restraining devices. After some violent bellows, and some very quick retreats by the men, the monster was prodded and driven into the truck and tied up securely. To our great relief, the men assured us that the animal was being taken straight to market and would never terrorize us again.

As for the children and I, we felt like heroes—although very exhausted and shaky ones—as our story of “almost a bull in the classroom” was widely circulated (and embellished) around the district. And, to my secret relief, no one made fun of the “green, city teacher” who had met the challenge of an angry bull and kept him out of her classroom.

FULL LASTING IS THE SONG

Eva Baker Watson

My father probably would not have been able to understand the popularity of the strange sound called rock and roll. And if he had ever gone to the opera, surely the unknown language in which it was sung would have bewildered him no more than its music.

Yet he would have told you he was a music lover. And, indeed, it is his songs that accompany the picture of him that lives in my heart.

I see him in the bleak, predawn winter hours, shaking down the heating stove, taking out ashes, poking to revive the embers and defrost the air so as to lure the rest of the family from cozy featherbed cocoons. All the while, above this banging and clanging, he sang.

Later on, as he stamped the snow from his feet, coming into the house for breakfast after the milking and feeding, his

singing would reach us before he did. Thus he bestirred the blood and ventilated the breathing apparatus. Thus he affirmed his courage and zest for living. Thus he greeted this day that the Lord had made—fresh, just that morning.

He sang a lilting testimony of self-worth. His singing helped him cope with the difficulties of providing for a family in circumstances which were not actually impoverished but were certainly Spartan.

His repertoire, varied and colorful, had church songs as its backbone. These were not hymns, solemn and dignified. Rather, he sang the spirited songs of the congregations of small rural churches of that day—songs of a people who expressed their faith with fervor fortissimo. A man who sat in the pew beside my father remarked, “When Fred Baker sings he makes the seat tremble.”

Around home his singing style was less conventional. Papa must have been like the woman who said she loved to play the pipe organ because it gave her a feeling of “playing the whole orchestra.” He was a one-man quartet, rising to tenor or zooming with ease to booming bass, filling in all the repeats:

When the roll—
(WHEN THE ROLL)
Is called up you—
(DER, CALLED UP YONDER!)

I would listen to see if all these musical gymnastics, this switching from part to part, would cause him to lose the beat. It didn't. He often improvised with startling original lyrics. His imaginative words sometimes failed to come out even with the tune and when that happened he'd just extend the song a few bars. But he always kept the beat.

Papa was an early moonlighter, teaching rural schools during autumn, winter, and spring, then farming the rest of the year to supplement his meager salary.

But the schoolroom was his true love. His two older brothers had left home to study law; other children were also

gone, so it was Papa who stayed behind to “look after Mother”—a widow since he was a small boy.

His yearning to become a teacher was to be answered, though, for he found he could earn his certificate by attending one of the several “Summer Normal Schools” offered at various points throughout Pope County.

These schools were open to eighth grade graduates with teaching aspirations who, like many of that day, could not afford to “go away” to college. They date back as far as 1890 and were still in existence as recently as the year 1916. This twelve-week course was within reach of many ambitious young men and women, who walked, drove buggies, rode horses, or boarded in order to attend.

At the end of the term, an examination (said not to be an easy one) was given by the County Superintendent of Schools. Passing this test would qualify them for either a First or Second Grade Certificate, depending on their test score. And this was how my father became a teacher in the early 1900’s.

The finished product of these schools, the rural educator back then, was an all-purpose package: surrogate parent, first-aid specialist, counselor, recreation director, missionary, janitor, and teacher of the basics (plus music, if he was so inclined).

Papa, so inclined, was happy to include music—singing—in his schedule, not as a formal class, but usually as “opening exercises” or as a special treat, a “change of exercise” on Friday afternoons. With him at the helm the schools sang, because they wanted to and he wanted to. His qualifications for the role of music director were a fondness for singing, and innate sense of rhythm, and the ability to “carry a tune.” For the need then, that was adequate.

He was my teacher for one of the thirty-one years he taught. Here I saw another side of the man whom I’d known earlier only as my father. And I realized (though only superficially) the broader scope of his love for song. For it was

in school that his songs reached beyond temporal and provincial limits and spoke to the world and to the future.

In his schoolroom we sang war songs because we were just a few hurrahs from the time when Johnny had come marching home from World War I. We sang the poignant “Tenting Tonight” because Papa was only one scant generation removed from the Civil War in which his own father had served with the Union Army.

We sang “By the rivers gently flowing, Illinois, Illinois” because it was our song. We sang, with feeling, all the patriotic songs. Then, with his staccato steps leading us around the room, we marched to the rousing “Three Cheers for the Red, White, and Blue!” And we caught his proud possessiveness as we sang “My County ‘Tis of Thee.” Too much flag-waving? He would never have believed it.

That was a primitive era in education here in the Pope County hills. The school world was small, but it was a warm, caring world. What was not apparent to me then is clear now, that my father’s songs were a gentle indoctrination in what he recognized as our national heritage. In those small schools he not only taught but also lived the principles of respect, integrity, obedience. He was concerned with the worth and responsibility of the individual. He shared in the ideals of a nation he was a part of and he sang of those ideals. The songs people sing are the sound of what they are.

Now my father’s voice is stilled. But, like Meredith’s thrush, “Full lasting is the song, though he, / The singer, passes.” I wonder why I waited this long to thank him?

NO-NONSENSE SCHOOLING NEEDED AGAIN

Mattie L. Emery

I lived through a lot of those “good old days,” and I am

glad we do not have most of them any more—washing clothes on a washboard, carrying water in from the well, using an outhouse in twenty degree weather, heating irons on a cookstove fired with wood and coal. I could go on and on.

One thing I think was better in those “good old days” was the attitude, the dedication, and the seriousness of parents, teachers, and children toward education. Of course, there were many one-room schoolhouses, with a single teacher to handle ten to twenty-five children, usually grades one through eight.

I remember how it was with our family; we were quite poor. Five sisters in school. Many times I took potatoes to bake on the hearth inside the furnace door and soup to heat in a half-gallon jar in the water bowl on top of the furnace that provided moisture for the school room. Parents worried about lunches. Often items were traded but very seldom was anything wasted.

Now it's really an eye opener to work in a school cafeteria. Children are allowed so many minutes for lunch. Every year there are thousands of dollars wasted in food thrown out, not eaten. Every mother should have an opportunity to see in what way this is handled. Without lunch bucket supervision from home, kids are spending their nickels, dimes, and quarters on too much junk food.

Somehow, the country school teacher always had time for personal help for any student who needed extra time. You learned phonetics before you learned to spell or to read. You learned your multiplication tables by the fourth grade until you could answer any quiz without hesitation. Spelling bees were a big thrill. We looked forward to one every Friday. Once a year contests were carried on between schools, then at town, then at the county seat, then maybe at Springfield.

One thing was certain: no child passed a grade in those rural schools unless he or she really deserved to.

I do not remember there ever being a serious need for extreme punishment. Sure, someone might have to stay after

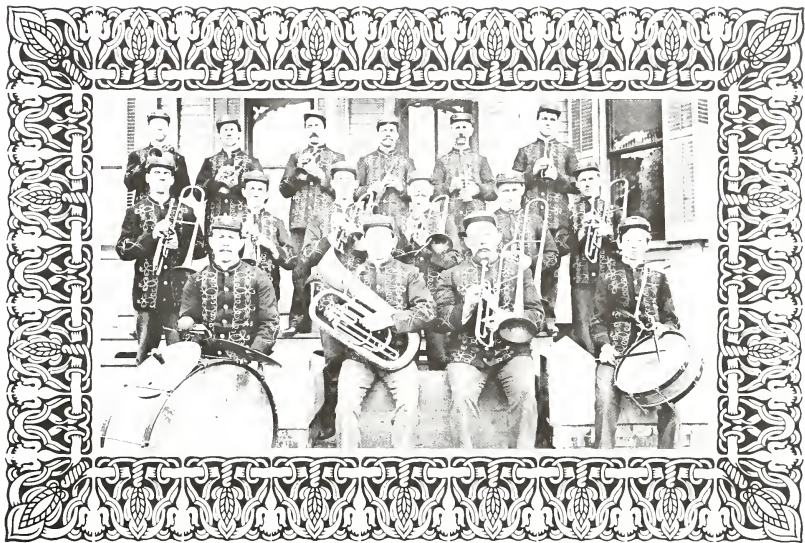
school, or maybe once or twice a year a teacher had to inflict corporal punishment with a paddle, but more often the majority of kids had a healthy respect for authority. Now, it is very risky for a teacher to stand up for his or her rights as a classroom authority. He or she may be accused of infringing on a student's rights. Anything from unruly behavior to an unsuitable type of dress to actual abuse of the teacher is apt to be overlooked today.

Decades ago, at the end of eight grades, there was almost no illiteracy, compared to the high rate now in senior high school students and college freshmen.

Kids who went on to high school had to sacrifice their spare time to work to help pay their way. I think that helped a great number of people realize the importance of an education. Even President Reagan worked some part-time to help pay his way through school. The courses were no-nonsense courses. It would take some of our modern students at least a year to make up what he or she should have learned in high school by that age decades ago.

I think our modern schools would be better off to propose a no-nonsense, no frills, back to the three R's education like we used to have. And maybe it would make a lot of sense to not put such an emphasis on sports. It makes me very sad to read in the newspapers, and see on television, athletes who have been given college scholarships for their ability in sports who can hardly read or write.

More and more parents are getting upset because they are not satisfied that their children are getting a good education. Many parents are enrolling their children in private schools, and some are even assisting teachers. Parental concern is a step in the right direction—a step toward the kind of closeness between school and home that was characteristic of the country school.



V *Pastimes*

PASTIMES

Young people of generations ago most certainly lived by an unwritten code of the times—that which could be expressed best by a paraphrasing of Ecclesiastes. There was a time to be born and a time to die, and there was a time to work and a time to enjoy what life had to offer. With respect to the last, it never took precedence over the necessity to labor; it was that which filled in the chinks of existence, so to speak. Each boy had his chores; those on the farm helped in whatever jobs had to be done; those in the towns mowed the lawns and cleaned windows on Saturday. But there were always times to which one could look forward. The first breath of Spring brought forth a baseball mitt and the first hint of frost produced a football. In between there were the special days and occasions. Beulah Knecht, in her piece below, wrote that "chautauqua was something you started thinking about early in the summer . . ." Bob Hulsen intimates the same about July 4 or Independence Day, though he does not add that almost every small-town boy began to save his pennies early as his own special contributions to the occasion. After all, there were firecrackers to be bought—ladyfingers, one and two inches, Roman candles, snakes and, for the daring, cherry bombs.

Each day of the week had its own special meaning in summer. Monday meant carrying water for the wash. Tuesday was ironing day. Other days of the week were for dusting, beating rugs, cooking, or whatever the needs of the house called for. But Saturday night—that was something else. It was ice cream night, salted peanut night, and flirting night all rolled into one. It was movie night, popcorn night, and "chalk the corner" night as well. Families, like caravans of old, tramped through the streets to the "main" one—father and mother in the van, the rest dressed in their Saturday night best, in the rear. Once the main section of town was reached, there began a ritual almost as old as America itself.

While the teenagers ogled those of the opposite sex, the elders circled the town business section seeking out and talking to old acquaintances and neighbors. Meanwhile, those fortunate enough to own automobiles, sat in them, watching and undoubtedly commenting upon the passing parade. In one western Illinois town, it was said that a particularly affluent farmer brought his Lincoln car into town early on Saturday morning just so he might have a parking place for that evening.

It was so true that each season of the year presented its own illustrations of "belonging to the community," as Lewis Atherton has written. Easter Sunday was a time for wearing a new hat or for decorating a local church with flowers: callas, ferns, glxoxinias, lilac sprigs, or Easter lilies. Memorial Day brought out the local brass band and a display of the remaining veterans of the Grand Army of the Republic. The Fourth of July was welcomed by the booming of a cannon at the dawn's early light. In Macomb, Illinois, the roar of that terrible weapon could be heard at least four miles away. Family reunions were reserved for Autumn, and county fairs followed shortly thereafter. Christmas, the special time, brought forth pre-holiday shopping visits to town and the inevitable Christmas program at church or school. This last was a mixture of holiday nostalgia, flickering candles, evergreens, tinsel, reds and greens, uncles and aunts, and peanut brittle.

New Year's Eve was for the older people. While children fought to keep their drooping eyelids up, their parents sang, reminisced about earlier times, drank cold cider, or sometimes drank elderberry wine or beer. Those in the marrying years occasionally held dances. What a variety! In the flickering light of local opera halls, they could dance a waltz, a foxtrot, or even the more risqué version of the Virginia Reel:

Take a lady by her hand,
Lead her like a pigeon,

Make her dance the weevily wheat,
She looses her religion.

Then, with the New Year in, the parties and the dances broke up. Small children were carried home on the broad backs of their fathers. Young men and women of marriageable age paired off to walk home in drifting or falling snow, frolicking as they went. Many a doubtful relationship was firmied into a 40 year long marriage by such a custom!

The relentless pattern celebrated in Thornton Wilder's *Our Town* passed on. The long cold of winter was broken by Valentine's Day, with its own beautiful country ritual. In small-town schools, someone, the teacher perhaps, always found a hat box. Tricked up with red and white crepe paper, it was magically transformed into Cupid's post office. At the

appointed hour, two or three students "delivered" the colorful symbols of undying affection or unrequited love. But even this had its special moment within the moment. There was always some unpredictable wag in the class who would anonymously forward a crude, and sometimes rude, "valentine" of the comic variety.

Soon the weather warmed with a false spring. Green patched into the countryside and crocuses dotted town lawns. Redbuds and wild plum trees began their annual cycle, and the first robins of April began the furious activity of courtship and mating. The calendar of the Middle Border had moved into another season.

Victor Hicken, Editor

CHAUTAUQUA DAYS

Beulah Knecht

In the center of Forest Park in Shelbyville stands a multi-sided building known to the community as "the auditorium." Built in 1903 for the special purpose of bringing the then popular Chautauqua programs to this area of Illinois, it seated from five to six thousand people, with long wooden benches placed in semi-circular position on a sloping floor. Across the north end is a large stage with a high proscenium, and above it stand three graceful feminine figures representing art, music, and drama. The construction of the roof is a marvel to architects who have visited it. There are no supporting posts to obstruct the view of the stage, but the roof is held by beams and suspension girders.

Chautauqua was something you started thinking about early in the summer—those 15 wonderful days in August which brought entertainment and excitement. If you wanted to save money you bought your season tickets early: \$1.50 for adults, \$1 for children, and 75¢ for teams. These had to be punched at the gate each time you attended. Then there was the matter of clothes: Did you have enough pretty summer dresses to wear? That kept mother busy for a while. When the program books came (each purchaser of tickets got one), you looked through it eagerly to see what was in store. Sometimes there were favorites which came back year after year, such as the Jubilee Singers, the Goodman Band, the Davies Light Opera Singers, the Shakesperian Players. But there were new ones to look forward to also.

There was something going on all day. Classes of various kinds were held in the morning, including physical culture, classes for children, and a Kindergarten. Afternoons brought the cultural programs—lectures by many famous people you had read about: William Jennings Bryan, the silver-tongued orator; the Rev. Sam Jones; Billy Sunday, the evangelist; Carrie Nation, the smasher of saloons—although I

don't remember her bringing an axe to Shelbyville. In the evenings was the music, the dramas, and, to the delight of the young fry, the magicians, and chalk-talk artists. Then, to top it all, a movie, and we had to stay for that no matter how late it made you, walking home half asleep. One way of showing special approval of a program was to give the "Chautauqua Salute." Everyone stood and waved their handkerchiefs in the air, which no doubt was gratifying to the performer although he might have picked up a few germs from it, too. Programs were kept running smoothly by a very capable gentleman called "the manager." Today he would be the M.C. He made the announcements including reports from Europe—victories or losses and casualties of the Allied forces.

Fifteen minutes before the program started, a very clangy bell was rung, warning you to hurry in if you wanted your favorite seat. If you were small and didn't want to have to sit behind some big adult, you hurried in to get one of the end seats which stuck out past the seat in front—no obstructed view there. A 15 minute intermission took place between the first part of the evening program and the movie. That gave you a chance to stretch your legs, purchase refreshments at Deck Young's ice cream stand or the popcorn wagon, or visit the ladies or gentlemen's buildings placed discretely at the far south end of the grounds.

Forming three sides of a square in the park stood summer cottages with the auditorium in the center. Owners of those cottages often spent the whole summer in them, which made a very convenient place for out of town friends and relatives who wanted to attend Chautauqua, often keeping the housewife so busy that she had few times for enjoying the programs herself. If you were not affluent enough to own a cottage, you could rent a tent for the two weeks—three to nine dollars, wooden floor boards extra. These were furnished with articles from home, the amount of furniture depending upon whether you were going to "camp"

the whole two weeks or just use it for a "day" tent. And if you had neither cottage nor tent, you walked out and back every day. Of course, if you were extravagant you could pay a quarter and ride in Ed Reid's hack, which smelled of horses and old leather, and later in Harry Kerchmeir's Model T taxi. We never considered it a hardship walking 13 blocks to the park every afternoon and back home again at midnight. Of course, there was the picnic basket to carry, filled with our supper, which we ate seated on the grass by the lake. There was usually a friend or relative who had a cottage where one could park the basket during the programs. One also carried a fan—sometimes a palm leaf or the cardboard one the Chautauqua committee had printed with the program on one side and advertisements of local stores on the other. And a pillow came in very hand, also, as the benches in the auditorium became pretty hard after an hour or two. The bench seats consisted of three boards, and invariably the middle one stuck up higher than the others.

There were other buildings on the grounds besides those mentioned. There was a long two-story dormitory where the talent stayed, and a dining hall where you could get a well-cooked dinner for 35 cents. Another was used as the "floral hall" during the county fair times and for classes during chautauqua. There was also a bandstand; and a large cage with two monkeys named Martha and Felix, which were the delight of the children. If you had a nickel to spend, you could get an ice cream cone, or glass of lemonade, or some cotton candy—that sweetened air concoction wrapped around a paper cone—at one of the stands.

Then there was the swimming pool with a bottom so slick with slime that you could hardly stand up in it. The grounds also had a man-made round lake (official name, Crystal Lake) with an island in the center, where for a small fee your best beau could rent a rowboat and row you round and round the island, which was much more interesting than sitting in the auditorium for the program.

Yes, Chautauqua was the highlight of the summer. Hundreds attended each year, camping, driving in, even coming by train, since the C. & E. I. Railroad was right at the edge of the Chautauqua grounds and the trains would stop to let off or take on passengers there.

Chautauqua lasted into the Thirties when cars and hard roads made distant entertainment more attainable, and the radio brought music and talking into our living rooms. The old auditorium has seen some bad days as well as good. It was used at one time for storage, and occasionally for entertainment when a short-lived effort was made in the Sixties to revive the feeling for Chautauqua days. In 1977 the fate of the old building hung in the balance when a heavy snow caved in part of the roof and side. Public opinion raised it's voice—arguing about tearing it down vs. restoration. With the cooperation of the city and state Department of Conservation, the latter won. It is now listed on the National Register of Historic Sites. It stands waiting for other orators and other actors and musicians to replace the ghost voices of it's past glory.

INDEPENDENCE DAY

Bob Hulsen

Mom beamed as she squeezed the big bowl of potato salad into the basket. It was the Fourth of July in the mid-1920's and the family was going to the park. The basket was the biggest we could find and was already loaded with fried chicken, sliced tomatoes, deviled eggs, and sandwiches, along with a big pot of baked beans. Relatives, who were farmers, would bring baked country ham, homemade ice cream, sweet corn, and salsify (which tastes like oysters). The best bakers would bring cakes and pies, and the younger

families would bring lemonade, homemade root beer, and iced tea, along with sandwiches.

By eight in the morning, it was already 85 degrees, and the *Dispatch* predicted a temperature near 100 for the day. We kids had been bathed in the wash tub the night before. Because we seldom wore shoes in summer, our feet were scrubbed with a brush. It tickled when Dad brushed the bottoms of my feet.

Our destination was Prospect Park at 15th Street and Blackhawk Road (we called it "the bottom road" in those days) in Moline. Since we lived in East Moline, six miles away, our transportation was the Tri-City Lines streetcar. In those days, there were the usual enclosed cars with front and rear entrances, but the Lines also ran a sprinkling of summer cars with no sides and no windows. Those cars had rows of seats on each side of a center aisle and no doors. There was a running board along the length of each side of the car and riders boarded or departed all along the side. The conductor patrolled the center aisle and collected the fares. On busy summer holidays, the cars resembled rolling honeycombs covered with bees. People filled all of the seats, stood in the aisles suspended by leather straps dangling from the ceiling, or clung to the exterior from whatever hand or foothold they could find. If there was time, the children always begged our parents to wait for a summer car. It was the most fun. After about a five mile ride, it was necessary to transfer to a Park Car. Kids and parents loaded with blankets, baskets, a box or two, and the baby buggy all piled off to stand at the curb to watch the big July Fourth parade in "downtown" Moline.

The parade was grand! There were baton twirlers, clowns, floats, horses, and an almost endless array of marchers carrying flags and banners. The Elks, Masons, Odd Fellows, and schools had fine bands. Members of almost all formal organizations marched in the parade. Along with platoons of veterans of two wars, I was always impressed by the large number of bakers, molders, machinists, carpenters,

and brick and stone masons. Laborers and craftsmen unaccustomed to marching were always taking little rabbit hops or running half steps trying to keep in step. They often appeared to have two left feet. Police on motorcycles tried to keep the crowds at the curb, but excited kids dashed into the street not only to see what was coming next, but to retrieve candy kisses frequently thrown from floats. What a grand spectacle it was, with bands playing, flags flying, and firecrackers popping everywhere.

After the parade passed, the crowd surged for the cars. Because all could not be accommodated, we often walked a block or two to wait on another corner, hoping for a car with room. Sometimes we groaned as a car passed clanging its bell, signifying it was loaded. Eventually one would stop and we would noisily climb aboard. I can still see Dad shifting the baby from arm to arm while he searched his pockets for the transfers that would pay our fare.

When we reached the end of the line, it was still a four or five block walk through a residential district to the park. As soon as we disembarked, the burdens were all distributed among the children and grownups. Everyone had to carry something. Folks who lived along the route were usually sitting on their porches enjoying the parade of celebrants headed for the park. At times, I imagine this parade was more entertaining than the official parade downtown. I don't believe we ever made this walk without some kid dropping something important, like the baby's potty, or else tripping and falling down and arriving at the park with a tear-stained face, skinned knees, or torn britches.

This was Mother's day to display her brood to relatives and friends. How hard she worked! How proud she was! And yet some one or more of the kids somehow always came up with a moment of embarrassment for Mom. Her eyes flashed and her Irish temper flared when it happened, but she claimed shenanigans were part of our charm and laughed about our misfortunes later.

Upon arrival at the park, we began to search for our scout (someone of the family designated to be at the park at 7 a.m. to assemble a half dozen tables and guard them until we arrived). Thirty or 40 relatives were there or would soon arrive. Some we hadn't seen since last Fourth of July: one of my favorites was a cousin whose birthday was July Fourth. He was an exuberant and reckless lad usually decked out in new birthday clothes. It seemed he was always pursued and frequently overtaken by misfortune. I never remember a time he failed to end his birthday without torn knickers, Orange Crush down the front of his shirt, a toe knocked off a new shoe, and double trouble with his parents.

As we arrived, one of the several bands engaged to provide the music was already playing in the pavilion. After a dinner of every kind of food and drink, except alcohol, it was time for the speeches. (I do not remember ever seeing alcohol served or drunk at a July Fourth picnic. Those were Prohibition days. We sometimes saw a man or two who appeared to be suffering no pain, but they were conditioned elsewhere. Local or state officials were the usual speakers. Dad always paid close attention, but for children the speakers were a painful interruption to a nice day. When the speeches were finished, the fun began. There were games, races, and contests with prizes for children. One or more of the kids in the family sometimes won a prize and became briefly the center of attention. Women's and men's Tug-O-War always attracted big crowds. Invariably, one of the teams would have a huge anchor man weighing something over 300 pounds and preposterously called Tiny. After one of those bursts of effort, the ambulance sometimes came to carry one of the giant tuggers to the hospital.

Daylight fireworks were a special treat. Loud bombs exploded high in the air to release tiny red, white, and blue paper parachutes which drifted across the farmland toward Rock River. I recall being among hundreds of red-faced,

perspiring children running across the fields in 95 degree weather chasing the little parachutes.

On this occasion, the special event for the afternoon was an exhibition of stunt flying by the Quad Cities' own barnstormer, Rusty Campbell. (The present Quad City Airport is named for him.) Airplane pilots were daring and glamorous men, and Rusty was our hero. About mid-afternoon he appeared. The airplane rolled, looped, spun, and completely stunned the crowd when it came down amid gasps of horror in a tree. The pilot was fortunately unhurt. The plane, although tangled in the tree, was only slightly damaged. Plenty of eager spectators were on hand to help our hero to the ground. Although embarrassing, that landing was perhaps witnessed by more breathless people than any other Rusty ever made. The event proved more thrilling than advertised.

Fatigued children and parents longed for darkness and the great fireworks display. Kids in our family were not allowed to have fireworks because as a six-year-old, Dad lost parts of two fingers when a firecracker exploded in his hand. The night display of fireworks was magnificent! In the ensuing years, I can remember no others that thrilled me more. We kids lay on our backs on the grass and oh'd and ah'd with all the others as the Rocket's Red Glare was reproduced. When the last sparks dropped from the fiery replica of Old Glory, signifying the end of the celebration, the tired and disheveled family trudged back to the streetcar.

It was difficult to tell whether the pale faces of the children were caused by exhaustion or an over-supply of ice cream, soda, and root beer. We sank into seats and collapsed. Every child had to be shaken into stumbling, dreamy-eyed consciousness as the car approached our corner. How Mom and Dad made it to the door with the remnants of the picnic and the gaggle of staggering kids is a mystery. The last I remember was Dad over-ruling Mom with "We'll wash 'em in the morning!" It was a great day!

BAND CONCERTS AT WARSAW

Della Radcliffe

In the summer of 1923, going to the Saturday night band concert at Warsaw, Illinois, was almost as exciting and as much fun as going to the County Fair. Situated on the east bank of the Mississippi River and nearly opposite the mouth of the Des Moines River, the little village of Warsaw nestles comfortably in the curve of the great river.

By coming from the west into town by the main highway, a two-lane dirt road which is also Main Street, you would pass the three blocks where all the stores and shops were, proceed on down the steep Main Street hill where all the kids went "sledding" in winter, and end up on the bank of the Mississippi River. Here stood the small, shabby depot with its "potbellied" wood burning stove. Here also could be seen the small rowboats which were used by the fishermen, and the dock where the "Capital" and the "J.S." excursion boats arrived every summer with the never-to-be-forgotten siren call of the caliope loudly playing as the boat landed and departed. From here you could look across the river at the tiny town of Alexandria, Missouri, which at one time was larger than St. Louis. A ferry boat made regular trips across the river between Warsaw and Alexandria.

The other entry into Warsaw was the narrow, ribbon-like River Road which ran at right angles to Main Street. Going out of Warsaw toward Hamilton on the River Road, you passed the huge, mysterious-looking brewery which sat on the river's bank like a castle from the past. A little farther on you passed Crystal Glen, where all the largest and best geodes were found, and then everyone's favorite picnic place, beautiful Cedar Glen. The trolley ran parallel along the River Road, and Tom Dodge, the conductor, would stop the trolley so that you could get on or off any place between Warsaw and Hamilton. You could even go all the way across the river from Hamilton into Iowa for 15 cents.

On Saturday nights, after the chores were finished and supper hastily eaten, we set out from our farm home for the band concert. In my prettiest dress, I rode comfortably wedged between my father and mother on the black, leather-covered seat of the narrow buggy which was pulled by Laura, our faithful, high-stepping mare.

When my father tied the horse to the hitching post, there were already many other buggies there. Main Street was gloriously ablaze with street lights, which resembled huge white shamrocks. The brightly lighted platform on which the band sat was in place in the center of the busiest block in town. People were going in and out of the stores and shops, moving up and down the street or standing in small groups, visiting. Everyone came to town on Saturday night. It was the time to do the "trading," to listen to all the latest newsy gossip, or just to see who else was there.

I was soon joined by a group of my little friends who usually would be waiting for me to arrive. My mother always visited Eyman's drygoods store, where all the dresses, hats, shoes, and bolts of dress material were sold. My father would move on down Main Street in search of some of his cronies. We children had a wonderful time chasing each other around and under the bandstand as the band played. One usual ritual of ours on Saturday night was sampling the horrible tasting water from the artesian well. We decided that drinking a sip of water was a sign of bravery, and the girls were not to be outdone by the boys. We girls declared that the water "tasted like a rotten egg smells." The boy at the popcorn wagon was a budding salesman as he tried to persuade us to spend our nickle for a bag of popcorn instead of a double-decker ice cream cone from across the street at Wepner's ice cream parlor.

The wonderful Dreamland movie theatre with its blinking, blazing lights was an especially popular place for the young men, who were all dressed up in their "ice cream pants" to take their best girls. Some of these young ladies

wore their hair in the daring new “bobbed” style, which was frowned upon by the older ladies and by some of the men.

During the concert, one of the band members usually sang one or two songs. In 1923, the newly popular ones were “Yes, We Have No Bananas” and “You-You-You Tell Her I-I-I Love Her Because I-I-I Stutter Too Much.”

When the concert was over, people lingered in the street to visit a little longer. It sounded somewhat like a symphony with the low murmur of the male voices, the blending in of the higher pitched female voices, the shrill shouts of the children, and an occasional cry of a sleepy, tired baby. The street gradually emptied as people reluctantly drifted away. Before going home, my mother always did our weekly trading at Filtz’s grocery store and Klingel’s meat market. There would be special favorite things in our grocery box, like a string of “weenies,” a pie-shaped piece of punget yellow cheese which had been cut from a large circular one, or a wooden tray of bulk peanut butter. I would always find a sack of candy in the box of groceries. I knew it was candy because it would be in a striped bag.

Laura made soft clop-clopping sounds with her hoofs as she pulled our buggy along the dirt road leading out of Warsaw toward home. We had enjoyed a wonderful evening, and already I was counting the days until the next Saturday night band concert.

SATURDAY AFTERNOON IN TOWN

Helen E. Rilling

My brother, two sisters, and I were dividing up the family keepsakes from the old humpback trunk that held the few possessions my father owned at his death. Among those treasures were the family pictures taken when we were

youngsters. I must have been six years old. The dresses we girls wore triggered memories of some very special times. The happy sounds in the room faded away and once again I saw our old Model T touring car sitting outside the back door on the farm east of Alexander where I was born.

Sitting in the front seat of the car were Mother and Father. We kids were clamboring into the back, pushing and shoving to get a seat on the outside where the wind rushed past our faces as we rode along.

What excitement we felt on those occasions when Daddy would ask, “How would you like to go to town today?” Town, of course, meant Jacksonville some 15 miles away. It was 1920 and life had returned to near-normal after the sad years of World War I.

It was Saturday and Daddy had got up early to feed and curry the horses. He had milked the cows, and it was the familiar whirr of the cream separator in the kitchen that woke us up. Mother had hurried around to feed and water the chickens before cooking us a special breakfast of hot biscuits and fried ham. There was a bowl of red-eye gravy to sop our biscuits in. The morning was spent taking baths and getting dressed. For lunch we had a hurried stand-up meal of milk and peanut butter sandwiches. The hired hand’s lunch was left on the white oilcloth-covered table with a clean tea towel draped over it.

I remember Mother in her white crepe blouse and long fitted skirt. Her hat was pinned to her hair with long pins. Daddy wore his Sunday best shirt with a high collar so stiff he could hardly turn his head. A gold watch chain hung across the front of his vest. We girls wore white dresses that Mother had made. They were trimmed with yards and yards of ruffles. Long white stockings stretched down to the black patent slippers with one strap held by a little round botton. Gosh, those things were hard to fasten. Our shoes shone like mirrors from being rubbed with Vaseline to keep them from cracking. Big ribbon bows, a different color for each of us,

were tied in our sun-bleached hair. We wore long pongee car coats over our dresses to keep the dust off as we rode along. Our brother had on knee pants and long black stockings with his high shoes.

We set off down our lane where grass grew between the tracks. For most of the year the lane was knee deep in mud. Only high-wheeled buggies or riders on horseback ventured down it. But, today was a hot summer day and dozens of grain wagons had churned the ruts into tracks inches deep in dust. A cloud of cinnamon-colored dust swirled behind us as the car flew along the lane at 25 miles an hour. We were used to riding in buggies pulled by one or maybe two horses that traveled at a much slower speed. The car crossed the rattley bridge without a pause and everyone except Daddy flew several inches off their seats.

We settled down for the long ride and watched for neighbor kids to be sure they saw us dressed up in our best and off for a Saturday trip to town. At Alexander, the little town where we did most of our trading, Daddy slowed down and pulled up at the gas pump in front of Beerup's General Store. The clerk, still wearing his apron, hurried outside to help us. He pumped orange-colored gasoline into the glass globe on top by working a handle back and forth. Mother and Daddy had stepped out of the car so that the front seat could be raised. Daddy unscrewed the cap on the gas tank and stuck the measuring stick down inside to see how much gas he had left in the tank. He told the clerk to put in a dollar's worth. It took a little over six gallons, as gasoline was only 15 cents a gallon.

Daddy cranked the car and headed it for Jacksonville. We were now on roads seldom traveled by us, and we had to ask Mother who lived on the farms. Everything went fine until we reached Arnold Hill. It was a steep climb. We held our breath as Daddy pushed in the pedal and held the car in low as it slowly chugged its way up the hill. We kids clutched the seat in front of us and yelled words of encouragement to

Daddy and the groaning motor. At the top we could see the church spires in Jacksonville and our excitement mounted. It took only a short time to reach the brick-paved square. Daddy parked the car along the outside curb. Horses and buggies lined the curb next to the center park.

Father said, "I'll meet you after the show. I have to get some repairs for the mower."

He wanted to visit with the other farmers and talk crops. Maybe they would trade some horses or cows. We took off our pongee coats and mother straightened our hair ribbons. It was too early for the afternoon matinee to start so we walked around the square and stopped to see the shoes at Hopper's Shoe Store and feasted our eyes on the pretty dresses at Waddels. My sisters and I each had a dimc carefully tied in the corner of our hankies. They were to spend at the five and ten cent store after the movie. We walked all the way around the square. It wasn't a good idea to cut across the park in the center because there were many tall trees filled with pigeons and other birds.

Finally people began filing into Scott's Theatre. Mother bought our tickets. Our stomachs were in knots we were so excited about what was to come. The theatre was dark, and we slowly moved down the aisle to some empty seats near the front. We liked to be close to the piano, which was played during the movie.

The music started and the screen lit up. Oh, good! It was a Tom Mix picture. We were in for a treat. We got lots of ideas from these cowboy movies to try when we rode our white shetland pony, Dixie, and the bony old horses that Daddy traded mule colts for with the Gypsies who occasionally camped down our lane each spring.

The tempo of the music followed the action on the screen. It would ripple faster and faster as the villain chased Tom Mix over the cliff. Alas! The movie was over. Tom Mix was left hanging hundreds of feet above the raging river. The

next episode would be shown the following Saturday. We groaned as we'd probably not get to come again so soon.

Daddy was waiting out front and guided us down the sidewalk to Merrigan's Ice Cream Parlor. How cool it was inside with the big ceiling fans lazily turning. We sat at little round tables with marble tops. Our chairs were wrought iron and decorated with lots of curlicues. What a decision to make. It usually ended up being vanilla. Sometimes we were daring enough to order chocolate or strawberry or maybe even lemon. We lingered in the cool shadowy ice cream parlor as long as we could taking dainty bites and scraping our dishes clean.

At last we left to do our shopping at the F.W. Woolworth five and ten cent store on the south side of the square. It was a fairyland of colors, smells and temptations for us. We fingered the celluloid Kewpie dolls with arms strung on elastic and stiff legs. We could always use a new one. If you happened to step on a Kewpie it smashed flat and never recovered. Our brother was looking at pocket knives. He had a whole quarter to spend because he helped Daddy feed the horses. He grinned at us and twirled his quarter for us to see. Drat him! We picked out a Kewpie with painted-on red hair, some perfume, and a book to read. Then it was time to go home. How quickly our Saturday afternoon had slipped away. We'd had a wonderful time and were aglow with happiness.

Mother and Daddy are gone, as are the good times we had living on the farm with those memorable trips to town. The laughter in the room recalled me to the present, where Saturday afternoons still bring back happy memories.

SUMMERTIME IN ILLINOIS

Lucille Ballinger

As money was scarce at our home during the Depression days, there was none for store-bought games or toys. Thanks to our wonderful, loving, and caring parents, we had a great amount of fun when our regular work was done. On, the memories thrill me yet. What fun we had!

Dad, in his spare time in the spring, made maple whistles, for not only us six kids but all the neighboring children. Our home always had a welcome mat out and a yard full of happy, active, and vivacious youngsters. Dad also made kites of unbelievable flying ability out of worn curtain shades. They were flown with twine bought at the small grocery store, nearby to our rented farm. We would talk Mom out of enough of her precious eggs to make the purchase. I feel sure it was a real sacrifice on her part. Dad always planned it that we all got our turn at holding the powerful, yet thin string that so mysteriously allowed it to soar to the heavenly clouds. Dad was a most intelligent man and always tried to explain the project being worked on.

Then, there was the great stilt craze. Dad made them for many, many eager, anxious, and inexperienced walkers. He must have used every loose board available. With much practice, dozens of falls, bruises, and splinters, we became real pros. He always supervised our races, backwards, frontwards, and sideways. Actually, we got to where we almost ran. In case of an injury, it was always treated with an appliance of "Cure All." Cow Teat salve! It was the answer to all ailments, of man or beast. I remember one Sunday afternoon when two beginners met head on at a corner—something they had been warned against—and collided. They fell to the ground, both laid out unconscious. What an exciting time! Seconds later Dad applied a wet, clean wash cloth to their foreheads, and it was not long until

they were up and ready to go back for more. "Experience is the best teacher," my dad told them.

Ball games in the summertime made many a Sunday afternoon a real fun time. It was always planned by Dad that each one present got involved in one way or the other. We played in a small pasture—in fact, the only one we had for our milk cows to graze in. A meddlesome lady once asked my dad what he meant by letting those kids ruin his crop of grass with their weekly troddings. He quickly and most politely remarked that the group of kids would be the best crop he would ever have the opportunity to harvest. I did not know then what he meant, but I do now.

There were gunny sack contests. We would have to get in the narrow, itchy, tightly woven sacks, and walking was a real challenge—let alone running. Turns were taken according to age groups. Sacks were not too plentiful, so only about eight were in each race. Such thrills! Falling down, thrashing, floundering around trying to get back in competition, added to the joys of the game. The non-competitors were always loudly cheering their favorite racers.

The art of making good sling shots came easy for Dad. He would have the group line up and take turns trying to hit a bull's eye, while he kept score. The winner was always assured of a certain refreshment award at the close of the playtime. Jumping Jacks also had their important place in our days of fun. Dad would let each one of us color our own after he finished carving them from the wood. We prized them very highly and, most of the time, applied our name or initials upon them because they were our very own.

My mother was usually kept busy with the younger children, but she was never too busy to prepare a great lunch for the entire group, be it 13 or 30. Homemade goodies of hot cinnamon rolls, doughnuts, popcorn balls, apples, pears, and candy were just a few of the tasty foods she had ready for the hungry to eat. She always had plenty of home-canned grape

or blackberry juice from jars in a gunny sack, tied and hung with a small rope in the big boxed in open well. How wonderful it all tasted! It was part of the marvelous summertime fun at our home in the 1930's.

GERMAN NEW YEARS IN MELROSE TOWNSHIP

Lydia Kanauss

In Melrose Township, it was the custom of the neighborhood to go New Year shooting. The young men would gather at one home for the starting place. We kids would stay up huddled around the heating stove waiting for them to come. They had shot guns and old muzzle loaders, guns in which they would put powder in and tamp it down. I think I can still smell the gunpowder.

All was still before they got to the house. Then the captain of the crew would be at the dining room window speaking the new year wish in the German language and asking for permission to shoot. Then they would come in the kitchen door, wishing us a Happy New Year. Some had on masks, some were dressed like women, and there were always some black ones, or they had black on their faces.

We would stand at the dining room door trying to figure out who was who. There was one man who would play an old time accordian and some would dance. We would always have a lunch prepared for them: bread and homemade sausage, cookies, and cake, apples, cider, or something else to drink. Then they would leave and start shooting again. The next day we would pick up the empty shells. I suppose most of them went to bed after tromping around all night. We went to bed after they were gone.

PLAYTHINGS, PLAYMATES, AND PLAYHOUSES

Eleanor Dodds

Our home, Gladacres, at the edge of Rushville, served well as a location. It was close enough to school and church to walk, yet "almost in the country," too.

We had a cow, horses (left after mail route days), chickens, and many pets through the years.

Neighbors were very important in those days of a narrower circle of living. Laura Mae and Nancy Lou Moore lived toward town where the city limits sign was. Mary Alice and Geraldine Russell were closest—next door, in fact. Those girls had a real playhouse, with fascinating playthings and curtains at the windows.

At the Moore's there was a little stream running through the property with a foot bridge. A swing and a big tree took you high and wide over the stream, if you had a good "pusher."

My sister, Alice, was four years younger than I and didn't like dolls as I did. Mine were all sizes from the little German and Japanese china dolls to a large one that could have worn baby clothes. Those small dolls were 10¢ then, and had moveable arms and legs, fastened on with wires that came undone sometimes.

One favorite summer play place was rather unusual. A rose bush and Japanese quince bush were growing under a wild plum tree in such a way that there was an almost covered-over shelter where some of my housekeeping equipment was kept. An antique stool served as a tea table, and the dishes were a set of grey enameled steel doll plates, with a teapot, etc. They had white squares as a border and I kept a few of them until I had little girls of my own.

The worst thing about the location was that when it rained, I had to run out and hurriedly snatch dolls, covers, whatever being wet would hurt, and take them in. Sometimes this happened in the night.

Alice and I "role played," but we weren't aware of the name. We just used our imaginations. We were Mrs. Armine and Mrs. Thurman, and we went to visit each other, comparing our children's progress, housework probably, and other such "women talk" as we'd heard. We had an Aunt named Thurman, also neighbors down the road. And our dentist's name was Dr. Armine. That family had lived next door before the Russells moved there. (The space between this house and the Moore's home is the present site of Boehm's Lawn and Garden Center.)

My handmade doll cradle was an important possession. I still have it—in pieces, but it could be reassembled. My grandfather Riehl made it for me when I was quite small. Probably my Henrietta doll occupied it. She was called that because I got her from the Henry Field Seed Company for selling ten sets of seeds. She was supposed to be a talking, walking doll—the talking being "Ma-Ma" when bent over, from an easily felt voice box in her back. Her legs were sewn at the hips, and she walked when you walked her!

At other times I had playhouses in the upper attic of the house and in the attic of an outdoor shed. A later playhouse was a covered truck bed, open at one end. Here again, rain was a menace, and ruined some of my things, the worst loss being my last doll, a beautiful bisque-headed one, given to me at 14 (would you believe it?) by my aunts. She'd be an antique and worth money if still around.

Those childhood play days, so vivid now in memory, must have played an important role in preparing me for the myriad responsibilities of being a teacher, wife, and mother.

CHARIVARI, SHIVAREE, OR CHIVAREE

Avis Ray Berry

Back in the early part of the twentieth century in

Liverpool Township of Fulton County, a part of the marriage celebration was a "chivaree." Soon after the couple was married, some evening after dark, relatives, neighbors, and friends assembled with noise makers of any description, surrounded the house, and after a suitable time of ear splitting noise making, were invited into the house and treated by the newlyweds—candy for the women and children and cigars for the men. If a couple was not "chivareed," it was an indication that they were not "well thought of" in the community.

When Ester Berry and Avis Ray were married in 1923, Ester purchased his treats of candy and cigars even before the marriage ceremony took place. But we decided that we would see how long we could evade that inevitable "chivaree." We would go away each evening and stay away until so late that the noise making crowd would see the car was gone and give up for that evening.

Finally, we grew tired of keeping such late hours, so, after dark, we took the Model T car over to our woods and hid it. We sneaked back to the house through a corn field, watched the crowd assemble, and crept into the house through a back door, unobserved by the crowd.

After we were in our room, Ester began to worry that someone might spot the car and tow it away. So he decided to slip back, get a lock and log chain and fasten it to a tree.

While he was gone, I could hear the crowd coming closer to the house; and finally, the awful racket began—tin pans, cow bells, a few shot gun blasts (always in the hands of an older man), anything that would make noise. Imagine my panic! What could I do! Finally I heard my sister say, "I'm going in. I'm just sure they're home." About that time, up jumped Ester onto the porch. He had been helping the noisemakers with their noise! Everyone then trooped into the house. They shared chairs, sat on the floor, ate candy, smoked cigars until the air was blue, and visited. I believe I

was the only woman who was ever "chivareed" by her own husband.

After the crowd left, Ester's mother sighed happily and said, "Well, I'd have been ashamed if you hadn't been 'chivareed.'"

NOVEMBER IN THE PARK

Sara Beth McMillan

Whoever platted Bushnell must have had double vision. There is an East Main Street and a West Main Street, each paralleling the C.B.&Q. tracks which bisect the town. The large Methodist Church is a block and a half east of the tracks, while the large Presbyterian Church is a block and a half west of the tracks. There is an East Side Park and there is a West Side Park, each a block square, and each equidistant from those same tracks.

We were "east-siders." My memories begin from a house on the east side of the East Side Park. It was there that two worldwide events touched my life. The park's big old elms and silver maples sheltered many a game of "All-ee-all-ee-outs-in-free." My big brothers chased each other around the cement basin that circled the iron fountain exactly in the center of the park. Even then the fountain leaned wearily over the old newspapers, leaves, and candy wrappers that filled the basin. As the three-year-old sister, I was allowed there only under supervision, and as a special treat, usually as part of the habitual Sunday afternoon walk. Once in a long while I got to play wood-tag and was always "It" until I learned the magic power of "King's X."

The neighbors were a big part of my life. Over on the north side facing the park loomed the big old Harris mansion, three stories high and rumored to have gold faucets! Next to it was the Frisby house. Mr. Frisby owned the drug store on

East Main Street and won me as a friend by passing out horehound candy each time we visited it. Dr. Duntley's house was next; it took a while to accept his friendship because he was the one who removed most of the Bushnell children's tonsils. The two Pinckley houses, Nell's and Ben's, were next. There was a baby girl in the corner one. On our block, the Korn's lived at the corner, then the DePues, next Bess Dodge and her father, then "Old Mr. Hunt," our house, and the Kimballs. Over on the south side of the park lived the Goeppinger girls, whose father had the C.&G. Bakery uptown. Pauline and Cora were favorites for letting me iron a handkerchief or two with one of the freshly-warmed sadirons from the huge kitchen range. Next to them lived "Link" Florey, the proud owner of one of the few automobiles in town. Occasionally, Dad would hire him to drive us in the big old open touring car to visit grandmother in Carthage.

It all seemed quite idyllic until November of 1918. That was the month World War I ended. My three-year-old concept of war included being admonished to "Finish your crusts, just think of the poor starving Armenians," of knowing a song called "Over There," and of trying to learn a mysterious chant that even had domination over "King's X"—that refuge from brotherly pranks. There was no retreat from their shouted "American Eagle, Liberty Motor, NO CHANGES!"

One cold day in early November I heard loud music blaring ever closer. I saw what to me was a huge crowd filling the street behind Mr. Jackson's brass band. They marched past the Korn's, Depue's and Hunt's, toward me. And most terrifying of all, at the head of the parade they carried a stuffed figure in a German uniform with a spiked helmet dangling from a high pole. My hasty retreat carried me flying to the farthest corner of my parents' closet, where I could shut out that awful sight. It was my "King's X." But the war was over and it was the Kaiser's effigy they held at the head of that first Armistice Day parade.

Perhaps that childish fright was a premonition of a very real terror that gripped my family, and the world, that same November. It was only a few days later that my mother became very ill. In rapid succession my brothers and I and even my grandmother who lived with us contracted the influenza, that so justly dreaded scourge of 1918. Dr. Roark came every day to try to help us. Baird and I weren't very sick, an my mimicry of the doctor's pursed-up lips seemed to lighten the gloom that descended on the family. There were no miracle drugs then, and the whole population was fearful of contagion. People were afraid to ride a train, to go to church, or even to gather in stores, so it was little wonder that my father's desperate plea for nursing help went unanswered for many days. Finally, his sister from Carthage came to help for a weekend. His greeting to her was "Oh, Stell, my family's dying off like flies!" Loring had double pneumonia and was by himself in a small upstairs room. My mother had the larger front room upstairs, and she, too, had developed pneumonia. Baird and I were in the same room, apparently to isolate the illness to the upper floor. It was on Thanksgiving Day that mother died.

Well, the rest is remembered in disconnected snatches. The rest of us recovered, though Loring's life was in danger for several days. I remember an afternoon at "Grandmother Barber's." It must have been several weeks later, for both my brothers and I were there. She served us hot chocolate with marshmallows in dainty blue and white cups. We played table croquet on a green felt pad with dainty mallets and cherry-sized balls.

It was many years later that my second mother, Zoe Helfrich, told me who had answered Dad's plea for help for his sick family. Dad's law office was above Lute Barber's clothing store and he and Lute had become good friends in the three years we had lived in Bushnell. When Lute's wife, Maud, heard of Dad's dilemma, she said, "Well, the good Lord

didn't see fit to give us children, so maybe this is what He's saving me for. I'll go nurse George's children."

It was in 1977 that Pete Weber told me how, as a very young man, he had driven the hearse to Carthage for my mother's burial there. It was probably the day of our visit to the Barbers.

Perhaps, like Bushnell's planners, our memories have double vision. The East Side Park is still there, as are most of the houses I remember. But the old trees and the fountain, and the people are gone, as is the terror of that November. Just in my class at the Bushnell schools, two others, John Ball and Harold Hall, had also lost their mothers in the flu epidemic of 1918. That November changed our lives. There was no escaping it—no King's X—for any of us kids who lost family members during that time.

TENT SHOWS IN THE TWENTIES

Genevieve Hagerty

Oh, the pure delight of childhood summers in the twenties! In Woodhull, Henry County, we were overjoyed with vacation, which started in early May so the school children from the country could help farm.

We town kids followed the ice man around. When he stopped by a housewife's sign in her kitchen window marking how much ice she needed for her ice box, he chipped the exact measure from the huge cakes wrapped in gunny sacks and sawdust. While he carried it in with his ice tongs, we grabbed the scattered chips and sucked in ecstasy. On other days we followed the oil truck around town as it sprayed tar on the dirt streets. On those nights we had to suffer a kerosene washing of our black bottomed bare feet. Mixed in were swims at Alpha Lake, making ice cream, and going up Main Street to watch the men spit tobacco juice while they

swapped stories. But all of that paled in comparison when the tent shows came to town.

The elite were the Chautauqua programs, which sprang from a minister and a Sunday School teacher in the East, so most of the town knew there was nothing to corrupt our morals. They set up a huge tent and had a different program each night for a week. Many were educational, and some just for entertainment, but whole families attended together. The best part for us Cowles kids was that the tent was pitched in the school yard. Only our garden separated it from our house, so we watched the roustabouts set up. One year, when he was about six, my brother Raymond ran in front of a workman unloading the tent poles. The spike in the end pierced his forehead, and the blood and cries sprang forth. We were proud to be able to say the closest doctor was across our garden, and we formed a guard unit to protect our fallen brother. We were amazed to see the man who was carrying Raymond reach down and pick a large lettuce leaf to cover the wound. He was not seriously hurt, he wore his bandage like a badge of honor, and Daddy perpetuated the story of the dirty lettuce leaf.

Another memory is just as offbeat. Daddy came home one day, fighting mad. A group of black gospel singers were scheduled to appear, and they were told they would have to sleep in the schoolhouse. Until then, I can't remember hearing anything, good or bad, about blacks except that there was a "Nigger heaven" in the Orpheum Theatre in Galesburg. I assumed it was a derogatory term.

Daddy marched over to the school and brought home two of the blackest, most beautiful women of any color that I had ever seen. Because we had seven kids, there wasn't room for the two men. The ladies were settled in our spare bedroom, downstairs. We kids hung around, absolutely fascinated by the singers—their white teeth, ready smiles, southern accents, perfumes, hair pomades, buxom bodies, and their obvious friendship. We had a baby grand piano

(Daddy and his first wife had been in a church quartet), so much time was spent in the parlor. Kathleen and I both had jealous eyes on the end of the piano bench, where there was barely room to squeeze in. If I went to their show, I don't remember it, overshadowed as it was by the prelude.

A different type of show set their tents in a pasture over near the waterworks. They were vaudeville types of one-act plays, complete with heroines and villains. We didn't usually get to go because Mama called them risqué, whatever that meant. But one night when I was about nine years old, we were allowed to attend. By then we had a family orchestra, the Cowles Harmony Five, and the show was to be given by a similar group.

Finally, on the appointed night, the five of us were all bathed, dressed, and even had on our shoes. Mama was getting Quentin, the current baby, and Bobby into their nighties for Daddy to watch. He gave us a long list of instructions because we didn't usually get to go on the streets after dark. Kathleen, John, and I stayed close to Mama, and Gerald and Raymond walked in front as Daddy had told them. Gerald would much rather have run ahead with his friends, but obedience was expected.

It was so exciting to be out at dusk, and to see the people walking from all over town. Some near by had cut their grass that day, and it smelled so good when we walked by because of the dew, Mama said. Old Mr. Watkins was smoking his smelly cigar, but I'd rather breathe in the cigarette smoke when the young men went whistling by us. I could tell Gerald liked it too, being thirteen, but Raymond thought it was more fun to step on the glowing cigarette butts that were tossed on the sidewalk.

We all cried out in delight when we rounded the corner and had our first glimpse of the big tent and the gay string of lights. There were other kids like us with their parents, a lot of older boys by themselves, and also the lovers. I'd heard Mama and her friends whisper about how shameful they

were, petting right in public, so I was anxious to see them. And it was true! They were hugging and laughing, holding hands and giggling in public!

The lights blinked and one of the showmen came out. He was wearing a red and white striped shirt and pants, red suspenders, and a straw hat. He had red silk garters on his sleeves, and he stood in front by the lovers. He called out, "Salt Water Taffy! Only 25¢. Get your Salt Water Taffy here. A prize in each and every package. Come on, fellows, buy your girl some kisses."

Oh, how I wished for a box, even though I didn't like taffy. But I knew Mama wouldn't buy boughten candy, except for a box of hard Christmas candies each year. The showman took a quarter from some girl's beau, but before he gave out the box, he held it high in the air and said, "See here, ladies and gentlemen, this lucky lady has received a lovely prize." And he pulled out a pair of very large, bright red bloomers! The young boys whistled and all the couples hooted and laughed. Most of the mothers looked embarrassed like ours did, and those who had brought fans to wave the heat away from their faces, now hid behind them. Kathleen and I started to laugh, but Mama said, "Don't laugh! It's not nice." I decided right then that that must be the risqué part!

After that it only took a few minutes to sell the candy, but all the other prizes were little ones like those in Cracker Jack boxes. Then they blinked the lights again and pulled the curtain. The six Musical Moores, including mother and father, took a bow. The star was six-year-old Jimmy who had yellow, curly hair. He sang loud! We clapped him back for an encore, and he sang, "So I Took the \$50,000 and Bought My Girl a Ticket to the Show." His neck veins got bigger and bigger with every chorus.

After the show, we went back and talked to Mrs. Moore. Then we walked home together until we reached our yard. We raced to see who could be first to tell Daddy all about the

show. Tent shows were like ice cream and candy. Sharing made them special.

CREAM AND CREAMERY PICNICS

Minnie J. Bryan

The coming of 1900 found farmers of our area of Illinois still with the problem of what to do with the family surplus provided by the dairy cows of their farm.

A piece of clean white cloth was used to strain the milk brought to the house and poured from the pail to containers prepared to receive it. The pitchers of milk for immediate use were placed in cold water for quick cooling. Other containers were covered and allowed to stand for the cream to rise to the top, to be skimmed from the milk with a large spoon. Milk not used for drinking or cooking would be fed to pigs, chickens, or other farm animals. Some of the milk would be allowed to sour, then scalded, and the whey was drained away through cloth or cheesecloth bags for the making of cottage cheese. Sometimes these bags were hung outside to drain, tied to the clothesline. When the curd was well drained, it was placed in a crock. Sweet cream, salt and pepper (and sometimes a little sugar) was stirred into the cheese. No one was counting calories then. Cream was served at the table, used in cooking and baking, or churned for the butter supply.

The churns were dasher or wooden barrel type or just a large glass jar with a tight fitting lid. The buttermilk would be drained from the butter, the butter washed with cold water and then worked with a wooden paddle to remove the water, and formed into rolls or pressed into wooden butter molds. Salt was generally added during working. Some people had city or town customers for their products. Neighbors would share milk with each other if one family did not have a dairy cow in production.

Ice cream was a favorite desert. Ice for freezing was stored in specially built ice houses with double walls and doors. Saw dust was used for insulation. The ice was carefully cut and stored inside during the winter months.

Summer heat and fly time made the labor of caring for the milk products even more tedious. Lucky was the household with a good cool cellar or cave. Some of those cellars or caves had a spring of cold flowing water. Some people used well coolers, but with them came the danger of a spill polluting the water supply. Some simple cold water separators were used. Then cream separators were invented—manufactured and placed on the market for farmers interested in marketing cream.

The first shipment of cream from Bardolph, Illinois, was made in February, 1905 by Phillip Doll and L.J. Spangler. Its destination was a creamery just opened by N.O. Crissey of Avon, Illinois. Five gallon cans were furnished by the creamery for the use of its patrons. These cans were similar to the cans used by modern dairies. They had tight fitting lids with holes matching ones on the cans through which the wires were run and twisted tightly. Printed tags were fastened to the lids with the needed addresses. Delivery of the cream was made each morning to the C.B and Q. railroad depot by horse drawn buggy or wagon. The empty cans would be returned washed, but more rinsing, draining, and airing was necessary. The cream was tested for butterfat content. Checks were mailed weekly to the patrons for the cream.

By 1906 the patrons from this area had increased to 12. Mr. Crissey wanted to reward them and bring them together for a social time. He would furnish all the ice cream they could eat and more. On August 15, 1906, the patrons and their friends came together in "The Spangler Grove" northwest of Bardolph for their first Creamery Picnic. Well packed freezers of ice cream came on the morning train from Avon. They were loaded on the Spangler low wheeled wagon

and pulled by a team of beautiful black horses to the picnic site. People coming from Avon for the picnic rode on the same wagon. Spring seats seated the ladies. The patrons and friends arrived by wagon, surrey, or buggy. The horses were tied to nearby trees. Contents of well filled picnic baskets were placed on tables made of boards laid on sawhorses built for the purpose. The people sat on boards that were placed on large pieces of sawed logs. The event was such a success that a second Creamery Picnic was planned for the fall of 1907. Then the number of patrons had grown to 23.

In 1909 the third picnic was held in the same location. There was an increased number of patrons, a wonderful dinner, and an oversupply of ice cream from the Creamery. A program had been planned to follow the dinner. Mrs. Crissey entertained with several readings, there was a singing and several with musical instruments entertained. A decision was made to organize into an association. Mr. Spangler was elected president and Mrs. D.S. Heck, secretary. Committees were appointed for the coming year.

In 1910 Mr. Crissey issued invitations to other areas. Some cars were coming from a distance. Large crowds were attending. Programs were interesting and well presented from a stage. Mr. Crissey gave talks on selling cream, labor saving, and money making. The Creamery Picnic had become an annual affair.

When the World War came, the dreaded Hoof and Mouth Disease started in herds of cows. Government Inspectors came to the farms to inspect each cow or calf. Our herd of cows was condemned on their third inspection. The cows were driven into a huge trench dug on the farm, slaughtered, covered with lime, and buried. The farm was placed under quarantine. No new cows could be brought in. The Creamery Picnic ended and never resumed. Other cream buying stations had started and cream was shipped as far away as Chicago.

LONG AGO AND FAR AWAY

Herman R. Koester

Camp Ellis, located between Macomb and Havana, was the site of a staging area for army troops destined for overseas duty during the Second World War. The camp housed 15,000 plus troops at any given moment and had over 40,000 there in the summer of 1944.

To those of us who had lived in perambular tents and trained in the Mohave Desert for nearly a year, Camp Ellis presented to us a first impression of being a military paradise. There stood barracks buildings instead of tents, hard surfaced roads instead of ruts and mud, electric lights instead of candles and lanterns, beautiful green grass instead of drifting sand. Not only did those buildings look solid but the array of brick chimneys meant they could be heated during cold weather, a sign of true luxury.

The Post Exchange held frequent social events, including dances that were attended by capacity crowds, which were divided equally between visiting civilians and the resident GI's. Those events temporarily alleviated the boredom of camp confinement. When the opportunity to leave camp came, a choice of Havana or Macomb as a destination was offered with army transportation furnished. Everyone I knew accepted. Macomb was my choice by chance, and I climbed into the army truck that was filled to capacity with GI's who had made the same choice. The ride seemed to take an eternity since the only view was through the rear of this canvas colored vehicle. Only a fleeting glance of such unfamiliar places as Ipava, Table Grove, and Adair were available before we finally stopped in front of the Macomb USO.

Everyone who disembarked from the truck did not head for this impressive building. The red brick three-story edifice that housed this serviceman's center was located one-half block east of the city square on East Jackson Street. The

building was, at one time, an elegant residence that had been donated by the owner to the city for community use. The entryway was impressive from an architectural standpoint, as was the manicured front lawn which set it apart from the adjacent building that abutted the sidewalks.

We were met at the door by community volunteers who escorted us into the sunken room which could have been a living room or a library. The hardwood floor glistened and the ceiling beams cast their shadows against the magnificent wall panels. Although the temperature did not permit the fireplace in the north wall to be lighted, the friendly faces of the volunteer community folk supplanted the warmth and glow of burning logs and made us welcome and comfortable. They introduced themselves and acquainted each of us with what the center had to offer. I chose to enter into a card game and was escorted to a second floor room where several games were in or about to be in progress.

My name was given to a group of three young ladies from Western Illinois State College who were a delight to a lonesome soldier. Each of the young ladies introduced herself and we proceeded to play a game of "I Doubt It." The game and its participants removed any doubt I may have had about enjoying my evening in this most charming USO building. To say that the young ladies were delightful is really putting it mildly, since one of them became my wife two years later when I returned to Macomb. Our wedding date was April 11, 1946.

The impressive USO building still stands, and it serves as the Macomb City Hall. I now have the honor and privilege to be serving as an alderman on the Macomb City Council. And so the lovely City Hall continues to add to my memories.



VI *Pure Nostalgia*

PURE NOSTALGIA

According to Webster's Dictionary, the word 'nostalgia' means "... a wistful or irrecoverable condition" and so the editors, who had to choose between innumerable stories that were just as diverse as they were wonderful and that could not be subsumed under one theme, decided to gather a selection of them under the title "Pure Nostalgia."

In this section are stories about the long remembered and often written about one-room school; about that epitomy and symbol of the family at its best, the Victorian clapboard house; about that *mother*—the woman whom everyone knew before Paul Gallico and E.R.A.; about the most American of traditions, the Decoration Day celebration; and about so many other things that have been eulogized and mythologized as part of a perfection that existed in "the good old days."

Beulah Jean McMillan, for example, tells about the time when children put a plank across the parlor organ stool and used it for a merry-go-round; when children were to eat everything on their plates in diffidence to the "starving Armenians," and when women were expected to be delicate and lady-like.

Harriet Bricker recalls the 1920's celebration of Memorial Day as steeped in the fragrance of buckets of peonies, carried in the back seat of a car to the cemetery, to be used as grave ornamentation. Leta Rogers Spradlin remembers how the men, using scythes and axes, cleared the gravesites of overgrowth while their women spread out table cloths and then covered them with picnic food. After the picnic, she writes, the flowers were arranged and placed on graves: "Children helped with the flowers, too, but they were warned not to speak loudly, laugh, or step on graves. A reverent attitude prevailed over the little burial ground; it seemed a hallowed place." It was a time when people still

believed in their rituals and found meaning in them, for years ago paying homage to the ancestral dead provided people with a sense of who they were and from whence they came.

One of the images popular to themes of nostalgia is the Victorian home—always remembered as painted in pastels with white gingerbread trim, porches, shingled dormers, and gables. This symbol of the stable family and the good life appears over and over again in today's media, on postcards, calendars, and notecards. It is not surprising to find Doris L. Chiberg devoting an entire story to just such a place, her grandparents' home.

No less a symbol of those times, and remembered with nostalgia is the then always present "mother." Memories of the mother of the turn of the century are not made up of elements considered admirable to the contemporary, mid-twentieth century E.R.A. supporter; that suited professional woman who dashes briskly to her office after serving powdered orange juice and frozen, toasted waffles to her family for breakfast. The mother everyone remembers is the one portrayed in Blanche Harrison's story, "Truth and Justice," the archetypal mother, a person who "caused everything to be right in my [own] small world." Mrs. Harrison writes, "Her presence meant comfort, warmth, love, and good food when you were hungry." The turn of the century mother was always there—waiting when you came home from school, ready with Mercurochrome when you skinned your knee, and constantly cooking good things for hungry children. This was a mother who seldom had a "baby sitter." She is the old fashioned mother of all our dreams.

Charles P. Oberling completes this section with his memories of what was once his own small family farm. That was a time before hundreds of Illinois acres were combined into corporate farms to feed the Del Monte, Heintz, and Campbell's canneries. Oberling writes, "I remember each hickory and walnut tree in the south pasture. I remember the bittersweet growing on the fence row, parts of which came

home in my hunting coat for a winter bouquet. I can see bob-whites strutting along a fence line. I can see the catfish, schools of minnows, frogs, and watersnakes that co-existed in McGee Creek. . . It taught us that beauty can be a sunset . . . ”

Some people feel that nostalgia is not only a yearning for an irrecoverable time but, also, an idealizing of times past . . . a romanticizing of a period which may or may not have been as wonderful as our memories would indicate. Is it that

the authors idealize the past, remembering only the good times? Or might it be that during the first half of this century people accentuated the positive aspects of their lives instead of the negative? If that is true, perhaps it would be wise to take a lesson from these earlier decades.

Jerrilee Cain, Editor

THE BERLIN SCHOOL

Ruby Davenport Kish

Sixteen miles west of Springfield on the Old Jacksonville Road and a block off the road at the north end of Berlin sets the most beautiful little school and grounds in the State of Illinois.

In 1923 my mother said that I had to start to school as I was past six years of age. I had a little red sweater and a big red pencil that day I started school, and I thought that I was the richest person in the world.

The present school house was built on the same spot in 1901. The new school was a white frame building with three rooms with a long hall in the middle. We had coat racks in the hall and we left our boots and umbrellas out there. At one time there were three teachers, but we usually only had two. Each teacher took four grades. The roof of the school is gabled and has a beautiful bell tower. The bell could be heard all over Berlin. At first we had outside toilets and went outside for drinking water, except in winter when they brought a bucket of water in. When my father, L.B. Davenport, John B. Ruble, and Joe Burger, Sr. became school directors, they put a basement under the school and inside chemical toilets. A steam furnace was installed and the school house was wired for electricity. The janitor took over the stoking of the furnace. Before the furnace each room had a coal burning stove, and the older boys helped the teachers with the fires. In later years drinking water was run in and a kitchen installed to prepare and serve hot lunches in.

The school yard has five rolling acres and through the schoolyard runs a little branch. Over the brook they built a 25 foot long foot bridge. Little children loved to run and walk across this bridge as it made a hollow clacking sound. The yard was covered with beautiful shade trees, and in the fall of the year we would rake leaves from these trees and make rooms under the bridge partitions. In the spring of the year

we would wade the branch and sail our little homemade boats on the water. At the back of the schoolyard wild flowers grew in the spring. These we would gather for bouquets for the classrooms. Sometimes at recess we would be brave enough to venture over in the timber at the back of the schoolyard. We found many arrowheads there as a tribe of Indians had camped there in the early days of Berlin. When the recess bell would ring and we were caught barefoot, we'd grab our shoes and run back to the schoolhouse on time. In the winter time we used the large hills for sledding and sometimes skated on the ice in winter. We had plenty of sidewalks for roller skating, jumping rope, and jack playing.

Every spring a Civil War Veteran by the name of Jake Knouse would don his old uniform and come to the school and give a talk on the Civil War and patriotism. He died in the middle 1930's.

We had a study of nature first hand at Berlin School, for the schoolyard was alive with birds, squirrels, snakes, skunks, rabbits, and sometimes an occasional fox. Is it any wonder that one of the graduates, William B. Robertson, Jr., has a Ph.D. in biology and is an authority on plant and animal life at the Florida Everglades?

In the spring of the year when the days began to warm, the grass grew green, trees and flowers began to bloom, and birds began to nest and sing, this was the hardest time of the year for me to knuckle down and study as I longed to be out in the lovely little schoolyard playing and communing with nature. I've always had a little of Thoreau in me. It was just such a beautiful spring day that the principal of the school walked by my desk and saw me gazing out the window. He hauled off and slapped me on the side of my head so hard that it felt like he knocked my head off and it went rolling clear to the back of the schoolyard. He hollered, "Get to work!" I didn't get much work done the rest of the day, for I couldn't see through the tears.

It never occurred to me that every child might not have

a school and yard such as mine was. One day in later years, I stopped to watch children playing on solid concrete and my eyes filled with tears. My heart cried out to them "Oh! Little ones if you could know that little school yard of long ago." Every child should have a school and yard like the one that I had.

Our school was one of the first integrated schools in the state of Illinois. Our one black pupil was Leonard McDaniel. He was a quiet little boy and easy to get along with. Colonel Henry Yates had brought his grandfather back to Berlin after the Civil War. Leonard's parents and his two uncles died when he was very young, and he was raised by his aunt Nell. Leonard still lives in Berlin and has the respect and love of everyone in the community and surrounding countryside. Wouldn't it be nice if we could all be that fortunate?

In a small town all the social life is associated with the school and church. We had Christmas Eve programs, potluck suppers, and box socials. At the end of the school year, we had a picnic and our families came and participated.

In every student's life, one teacher stands out. The teacher in my life who emphasized the study of poetry and insisted that we memorize some of Longfellow's and Vachel Lindsay's probably instilled in me the love of poetry. W.B. Robertson is still living. Alfred Tennyson's, "The Brook Song," had a special meaning for me because of the brook that runs through the schoolyard.

When Berlin School closed its doors something very wonderful and worthwhile was lost to Berlin children forever.

WHAT ARE TOMBOYS MADE OF, MADE OF?

Edna Trovillion Baker

I have checked the dates of a number of occasions I'm sure I remember, and they support my belief that my

memory reaches back to 1888 when I was two and a half years old.

I was number two of eight children of Ferres and Carrie Clanahan Trovillion. Number one, Maude, was 22 months my senior. We lived on a farm located two miles from the village of Columbus (now Brownfield), Illinois.

When Maude was only 14 months old, I alerted Mama of my impending arrival, delivery to made in about eight months. This was alarming to Mama because it meant weaning Maude, which was something mothers would not think of doing to a baby under two years, except in emergencies such as this.

But my parents braced themselves against possible hazards and went to "town" (Golconda) to buy a nursing bottle—a nursing bottle—for the baby who was thus relegated to the status of "first child."

It was slim-mouthed bottle fitted with a cork through which a glass passed, reaching to the bottom. On the outside there was a small rubber tube eight to ten inches long, at the end of which was a rubber nipple, not removable.

It was through this medium that the little pushed-aside firstborn learned to take nourishment—cow's milk—until she grew enough teeth to chew solid food.

There followed anxious months for my parents, for their little Maude grew thinner and thinner, often having stomach upsets and fever. Fearing she would not live, they took her often to the photograph gallery in Golconda to have her picture taken. (Maude lived to be 89.)

She finally adjusted to her diet and by the time of my advent she had a high chair and sat at the dining table for her meals. She knew she must be a big girl now, since "sizzer Baby," as she called me, was here. There was not room on Mama's lap for two.

For Maude's birth they had called the doctor, realizing this was the safest thing to do. His fee was \$5. That was in 1884. However, since Mama had made it just fine with the

first one, they figured there was no point in being extravagant with the second one. They engaged "Grandma Franklin" (not our real grandma) to come and see that I arrived in good condition. She charged only \$1. Besides this economy, she came back for about a week, every day, to bathe and dress me. All those services were included in the initial charge.

There was only one hitch. I was a duplicate of number one, and all the while they had counted on the other gender.

But my parents took the disappointment like real soldiers and I'm sure they loved me and never neglected me. As time went on, though, and before grownups were aware that I was listening, I got the message that I was a misfit. I said nothing. This would be my secret forever, I decided.

They named me "Edna," but soon changed it to "Eddie." This confirmed my suspicions that they must have wanted a boy, to be named "Edward."

As I grew up I was a happy-go-lucky child. Only two things distressed me: I was afraid the world would come to an end and I was afraid Mama would die. (She did—at 84.)

I loved the outdoors, and could run like a deer. I used to like to run in the wind and to feel it blow my hair and clothes—which reminds me of another one of my imperfections. Nature had given me crooked feet, which made me run my shoes over. In an effort to straighten those rundown heels, Mama would have me switch the right shoe to the left foot and the left to the right. I wore buttoned shoes and they looked crazy that way. I was fond of schoolhopping the length of our yard and then looking down at my shoes on the wrong feet, which gave me the feeling of being crosseyed. Having such fun was all the good that the shoe-switch did, for I still have crooked feet and run my heels over.

On days when the sky was overcast with billowy white clouds I loved to lie back on the grass and imagine I could see fleecy baby lambs and curly-haired white dogs. If I watched closely in the slowly moving clouds, I could figure out the

head and face of a man with lots of snowy white hair and face surrounded by a thick long beard and very beautiful. I thought it was God, for I could always see it if I watched long enough. So it had to be God. He was up there somewhere, because heaven was up there, I reasoned. I told nobody of this, for I knew the Bible said no one could look at God or they would die. But since He was so far away, I wasn't afraid to look.

Mama often said to me, when I was too noisy around the house, "I wish you were a boy!" So did I—but what was there to do about it?

From my early years all the earmarks of "tomboy" were showing up in me. It wasn't complimentary, for in those straight-laced days little girls were said to be made of "sugar and spice and everything nice." My sister, Maude, was that. I was not.

As I write this at the age of 90 I recall the things that characterized my boyish behavior, such as that I was always the one who turned the grindstone crank for Papa as he sharpened his axes, mowing blade, and plow points. It was I who was always ready to go to the barn with him after supper to shuck corn, then back the next morning to turn the crank on the big corn sheller in preparation for making meal and cow feed.

Also, it was I who held the sacks while he scooped the wheat into them to take to the mill in Golconda to be made into flour. And then it was I who rode into town with him, that jolting eight miles in the farm wagon. That was sometimes in the coldest days of winter, so cold that Mama would heat a brick for me to take to keep my feet warm.

My mature years have given me a different perspective on what motivated my boyishness. I truly believe it was a quirk of my subconscious in an effort to please my parents and make up to them for my not having been a boy.

A STREETCAR RAN IN FRONT

Beulah Jean McMillan

We moved from Olney, Illinois to 534 Lincoln Avenue in Peoria in a working-class neighborhood. There was a saloon directly across the street and several others not far away. A streetcar ran in front, and I spent Sunday afternoons counting the cars going by.

My brother Neil and I attended Webster School. I soon learned not to talk and giggle, as the teacher sent me back to the first grade until noon. But the teacher later gave me the responsibility of taking a girl home when she got sick. I had a favorite baby-doll which I took to school, and someone took it. A girl taught me to waltz in the restroom, which my parents opposed. The teacher called on my parents one evening after I had gone to bed, and I was called down. My bed was a cot in my parents' room. I woke up frightened because I thought the clothes-tree was an Indian.

We had two fire scares with the chimney flames that brought the fire department. Mother learned to throw salt in the furnace when threatened.

After a big snow I begged mother to let me play in it. I did not get much farther than the back steps before I was ready to go back in. They pulled me on a sled to church, which was 12 blocks away.

Grandmother sent Christmas boxes for the family and I had a doll bed and doll, and mother made covers for it. The rest of the family were older boys, so I usually played alone. I was allowed to play with the girl next door. I did not ask to play with a girl about a block away, and when I came home I received my last spanking with a hair-brush in the pantry.

We put our revolving organ stool in the kitchen with a board across it for a merry-go-round. Kenneth was lying on it one day and I piled on his stomach, at which he protested. But I said, "It's good for your liver."

Father used a straight-edged razor and leather strap. I

was warned about touching its edge, but had to try it, and I cut my finger.

Father took me on many of his walks. On Adams Street we saw a lady driving an electric car. We saw a man injured riding a motorcycle. We visited a man from the church whose business was grinding coffee, and enjoyed its distinctive aroma. Father took me on an excursion boat ride up the Illinois River.

We moved April 16, 1914, to 517 Hecox Street (now Garden Street), only three blocks from the Bethel Presbyterian Church. It was a large frame house with four rooms downstairs and four bedrooms and bath upstairs. It had two indoor stairways and one outdoors.

The small front porch had a lattice wall underneath. We used the wide side porch leading into the dining room. A cement platform held the double lawn swing. A coal furnace was in the basement. Father would buy bananas by the bunch and hang them there, apples by the barrel, and a 25 pound turkey. Ice cream was frozen there for a special treat.

Our yard had catalpa trees that made a big leaf-burning fire after we had lined playhouses with them. I was at a stage where the low wall in front was fun to keep my balance on. When it rained, we enjoyed wading in the deep ditch in front. Games we played were Statue, Jacks, Hop-scotch, Jumping Rope to a Rhyme, and trying to Jump Rope 100 times without missing.

The boys hung a big swing on a high limb, and I learned what the world looks like upside down. I liked to sit on the outside stairway and play school. Father would make out a set of Arithmetic problems for me to solve. We also played school bouncing a ball to go from one grade to a higher one, on the steps.

The side street around the corner slanted up to Western Avenue and was a favorite place for skating on my wooden skates. Behind us on Western Avenue lived my best friends, Dorothy and Harriet Maxwell. I was allowed to play there an

hour at a time. Their attic was a playroom where we played house and dressed up in costumes. We each had doll buggies and took the dolls on the sidewalk at times.

At Blaine School just before noon a girl ran a crochet hook into her stomach, and was in great pain, scaring us all. One activity there involved an exercise in the aisle, and my partner was a black boy named Sonny. He followed it up by giving me a sack of candy. That was enough for father, and he enrolled us in Garfield School. I liked the handwork there, especially weaving paper for a lantern. I had two mishaps in that school. At recess I fell on an ash pile and skinned my knee so badly I stayed home a day or so, sitting in the Morris chair in father's study. Another time I mashed my finger in the hinge side of the toilet door, and had to go home.

I picked some petunias on a nearby lot going home one noon, and was told I should not have done it. Across from the petunias I saw a white wreath on the door, and learned a little girl had died there.

Mother raised chickens, and a fence was relocated to keep them in. When the rooster got loose, my brother Elliott was asked to get it in. After chasing it unsuccessfully, he threw a rock at it and killed it. For punishment he had to stay in his room when a church youth party was held in the yard. A picture shows him with his face pressed against the window.

Mother's dinner-bell called us to meals. I sat next to father, and he cut my meat in quarter inch squares. I liked liver best, which he often got free. When we were picky we were told, "Remember the starving Armenians." And when not a morsel was left, Mother would say, "I judged your appetites." Donald bought three packages of gum for 10¢ and sold to the rest of us for 5¢ a piece. Hucksters going through the neighborhood chanted, "Rags, old iron, old copper, and old brass." Another said, "Bananas—10¢ a dozen." We took the Peoria newspaper, but on Sunday the Comics were hidden away until Monday!

My parents had their 25 wedding anniversary in 1915, and my older brothers gave them a monogrammed silverwear set, which we used only on Sundays. We had individual small plates, cups, and saucers for Sunday supper of homemade peanutbutter sandwiches, cocoa, and cake. Cake was served on a big plate, going back and forth by ages to all at the table, giving me the last piece.

At Christmas father bought a five pound box of chocolates which he doled out one piece at a time around the family. Mine were put on a high shelf so I had to ask for a piece.

The Sunday school had a picnic in "South Park." In the afternoon mother had a heat stroke and was brought home in an ambulance.

My hair had a "cow-lick." After a Saturday shampoo mother tied it up with kid curlers, and I would sleep uncomfortably on it. It would be curly all week. At school it became infested with lice, and mother got a very fine comb to get the gnits out.

My first movie was *The Birth of A Nation*. The scene of the negro chasing the little girl haunted me for years. Father took me to a Charlie Chaplin Comedy on Adams Street, and after a few minutes I made him leave because I thought it was too silly.

Beckers had us for supper just before we left Peoria, Kenneth and Eleanor were good friends. Coming home at night down a hill, father carried me on his shoulders, though I weighed 48 pounds.

PEONIES ON DECORATION DAY

Harriet Bricker

In the twenties, Memorial Day, or Decoration Day as we called it, was one of the high points of the year, a mixture of

solemnity and holiday mood. Discussion of whether the peonies would be "right" by May 30th began at least two weeks before the end of May. Would they be in full bloom or, in view of delayed warm weather, be green buds? Just to think of Decoration Day brings the aroma of peonies!

Well, before May 30th, communications flew back and forth from Bushnell and Chicago to ascertain whether my Aunt Sadie and cousins would be coming and join in the festivities and the general family get-together. And most years, word arrived that indeed they would come, which added to the general excitement, especially for me as I could expect with certainty that my dotting relatives would bring me a present! Maybe the red glass elephant candy jar, the pink silk parasol, or the black pottery kitty with green eyes which curled up on an old braided rug in my bedroom 55 years later! The parasol is preserved in a photograph, and also, the elephant lasted until the early years of my marriage when I broke it one sad day.

If the Chicago folks drove down, they'd arrive the day before, and they had likely stopped along the way to buy some peonies "to help out." What with the blooms we already had picked and put in buckets of water, the cool back porch smelled mightily of peonies and iris and lemon lilies. If they came by train, it would be on the "Eli," the 11 o'clock train. I always made up my mind I'd stay awake until it steamed and chugged into town, and sometimes I did!

The first thing in the morning, Grandpa put up the flags in his yard and our yard. He'd made the flagpoles, and to top them, he took—took without a word—two of my croquet balls, gilded them, and fastened them, irretrievably but effectively, on the poles! That played havoc with my croquet set.

Breakfast was over in a jig time so the cemetery trips could be organized and we'd have time to arrange the bouquets for all the dear departed. Also, the schedule included Aunt Grace in Bushnell, who was very diligent in remembering every known relative which turned the occasion into a

really monumental task. It also necessitated absolute cooperation with Dad and Uncle, as they had to chauffeur the women, kids, and flowers. So, our big, open Packard touring car was filled up with containers of flowers, an extra bucket of water and the women in hats. And Uncle Charles drove his smaller Hupmobile filled with the same.

It seems, in retrospect, that Decoration Day was always hot, and often windy. And such atomospheric conditions were emphasized in those open cars! The ladies hung onto their brimmed hats with one hand and steadied the blooms with the other; the flowers threatened to blow to pieces if not completely out of their containers; water splashed and sloshed on our feet, and the driver patiently followed all the directions, like "Go slow around the corner!," "Oh, do try to miss the holes!," "Stop here! No, go on a bit further!," and "This is fine. Now, let's see, we'll take that one first. No! **That one!**" I loved it.

Visiting the Bushnell Cemetery was relatively simple, being a short trip, and, in those days there were not too many graves to visit. But Aunt Grace would have a special bouquet for each individual in-law, and she'd trot here and there remembering each and searching for an occasional unmarked lot. In not too many years, her Charles would be there and the Hupmobile long gone.

But the visit to Oakwood in Macomb was different. That was retrogressing back into times long, long ago, and as a child, I felt it. First, there was Uncle "Paint" (Painter), whose only claim to fame was that, as a photographer in Macomb, he took an ambrotype of Abraham Lincoln in 1858. He returned safely from the Civil War and, ironically, was killed driving a fractious team of horses home from a funeral in this same cemetery! They ran away, throwing him in the ravine along the then narrow road. And I'd always wander to the foot of the sloping lot to the grave of poor, disgraced Cordelia, the divorced wife of war hero Louis Waters. Why

divorced? I was never told. I was only a child in the twenties, and it never was mentioned later.

There was always a discussion about the big oak tree on the lot, threatening to turn the family stone with its spreading roots. I visualized old coffins being pushed through the sod! But nothing so dire ever happened. The great grandmother here was buried soon after the Civil War but great-grandpa had been left in Pennsylvania years before—a sheriff, a storekeeper, representative to the State Legislature and “mysteriously” murdered. How intriguing!

And so the women wandered about, visiting with friends and viewing other old lots where familiar names were recorded. It didn't seem to bring sadness as much as satisfaction and a sense of peace.

Old stories were told and re-told, many which I remember. I gained a sense of family continuity, and now it's good to remember.

Today there's no group to accompany each other. I take peonies to those who led me around through family history so many years ago. “Sally,” “Uncle Newt,” and “little Eugene” lie in unadorned graves, but are not forgotten—yet. My grandchildren may come some day, seeking ancestors along with their mother, who's not unfamiliar with the old names, just temporarily removed! But those graven names will never come to life as they did for me. They will never be surrounded by those who knew the long-gone ones as parents, grandparents, aunts, and cousins.

It makes me feel odd to realize I'll be an ancestor some day! “Here's the peonies for Grandma Bricker!” That old family continuity! I hope it is carried on with the peonies on Decoration Day.

DECORATION DAY AT THE CEMETERY

Leta Rogers Spradlin

In the second decade of the twentieth century, nobody I knew ever said “Memorial Day.” To us, it was Decoration Day because it was the time we expressed respect and remembrance for our dead loved ones by decorating their graves. Each May 13 the descendants of my great grandparents met at their burial site, the little country cemetery known as Davis's. Located near Clements Station in Morgan County, Illinois, it was a small fenced area set in a big pasture. Its big shady oaks and elms provided an ideal spot for our observation of the Holiday, for to us Decoration Day was not merely the trimming of graves. Though that was important, as was a day away from homely duties, it was most highly anticipated as a once-a-year time to reunite with kith and kin.

I lift forward one of those treasured occasions.

Very early on Decoration Day, Mama began fixing her basket dinner of the choicest foods she could layhands to: baked country ham, sliced and sandwiched by her home baked bread, cottage cheese, deviled eggs, baked beans, and a huge bowl of leaf lettuce for starters. Crisp red radishes and tender green onions all scrubbed and garden fresh that very morning. Then there was the very peak of Mama's pride, a gallon milk crock heaping full of ripe strawberries, frosty with sugar. I couldn't resist borrowing a couple when Mama wasn't looking! All of those foods were of our own production, minus the flour and sugar used.

While Mama was thus engaged, Papa did the chores, then stripped our yard of every available blossom. Mostly they were roses, peonies, and flags (Iris to you moderns). Papa got a bucket of cold water from the well and plunged the flowers in half way up their stems to keep them fresh during their ride. Then he harnessed old Bill and Dolly and hitched them to the farm wagon, putting in plenty of feed for their

dinner. Also, he loaded his long crook-handled scythe, axe, and other tools the men would need when clearing the gravesites.

The buggy would have been a lighter vehicle to use on the road, but it wouldn't accommodate our cargo. Preparations being finished, we each took a turn bathing in the galvanized wash tub behind the kitchen stove and dressed for a day of outdoor activity.

Mama wore a blue checked gingham dress with a wide white collar and full gathered skirt which extended to the tops of her laced shoes. Also, she wore, as would most of the other ladies, a big white apron. Her long red hair was twisted into a "bun" on top of her head.

Papa wore a sturdy "hickory stripe" shirt with his bib overalls. His shoes, a brand made famous by Montgomery Ward, were known as the "Six Month Guarantee" work shoe. In plainly stated words, the company promised right there on the catalog page, to replace any shoe which failed to last that long, even against the rigors of manure and soil acid. They were expensive—three dollars and 49 cents plus 12 cents postage—but worth every dime because of their durability.

My cotton-like hair was usually in braids, but for this important day, Mama had the night before "done it up in rags" to produce banana curls. My dress was red checked gingham, made with a dropped waist line, a full gathered skirt that came exactly to the middle of my knees. I proudly wore the newly popular half socks with my black two-strapped slippers. Underwear consisted of a cotton underslip and panties which buttoned on to a waist. I envied my friends who had fashionable black sateen bloomers with convenient elastic at waist and knee but, alas, Mama was of the opinion that elastic was damaging to one's blood circulation.

Finally, we began our seven mile journey. Even anticipation of the reunion could not overshadow the inspiration of the sunshiney surroundings as we passed lush

pastures populated with grazing livestock and new corn sprouting up from rain-freshened earth. Birds sang as they flitted between hedge-rows and the continuous search for food, while wild flowers bloomed in profusion in many roadside areas. Spring was so much in evidence that it demanded our recognition and gratitude.

Driving past the homes of friends, Papa would call out, "Whoa there!" and we'd pause a few minutes to greet anyone who chanced to be out in their yard. Friends met in the road got the same courtesy.

At last we sighted the tall Clements grain elevator, then the grocery store where folks could trade farm produce for groceries or cash. Nearby were the stockyards and the railway depot where the chuffy big locomotives stopped their trains of cars to exchange passengers, livestock, freight, or whatever. Around a corner of the road and we saw the big reservoir where those engines slurped up water for their steam chests. Up one little hill and there appeared tall gravestones, indicating that our destination had been reached.

Papa drew our team into the line of shade at the side of the cemetery and hurriedly unhitched them from the wagon, tying each securely to the back axle. There they would have all day to munch hay and switch flies with their tails. Then Papa joined the men already busy at clearing the graves of a year's rampant growth of weeds and brambles. Mama, with her precious load of food, went to help with the organization of dinner. I went to look for kids.

This was a day for comparison, at our tender ages. A year's growth makes a lot of difference, taller and heavier being the coveted achievements. We held foot races, broad jumps, hide-and-go-seek and darrer's base contests, and then as our energy waned we played mumblety peg, marbles, and jacks. All those attractions paled in interest as the sights and smells of dinner turned on our hunger pangs.

Table cloths were spread on the grass, which was so tall

it had fallen over, making a soft springy place for sitting around the feast. Each arriving family added to the bountiful supply of food to be placed on the ever-growing line of colorful cloths. Ladies hurried here and there, arranging the delicious outlay, praising elaborate cakes, clucking over the inevitable spills as they sought the most advantageous way to feed the hungering crowd.

All was in order. The men had finished their work, dinner was announced, and the oldest great-aunt was asked to give the blessing. Irreverently, I hoped she'd be quick about it as I knew I was starving. That was a short-lived hope, for Aunt Mary picked up momentum as she continued on and on. My stomach began to growl so loudly that the cousin sitting next to me heard it and elbowed me hard in the ribs. At long last, amens echoed around the banquet and we could dig in! M-M-M-M, I'll never live long enough to forget that meal. Ambrosia! Each cook had expended every effort to make the best possible impression. A friendly rivalry it was, but very high satisfaction belonged to the lady with the most requested recipe. It was a long and leisurely meal during which we pretty much ignored whatever etiquette suggested eating lightly. We really stocked up.

While the ladies cleared away the dinner, the men carried out the waiting buckets of flowers, and then everyone set to work making the arrangements. Those graves which had not a family representative there were put in order and decorated anyway so they wouldn't seem neglected. Children helped with the flowers, too, but they were warned not to speak loudly, laugh, or step on graves. A reverent attitude prevailed over the little burial ground; it seemed a hallowed place. Even we children felt that atmosphere as we read the stories the gravestones had to tell. Many babies and children our own ages were there and young adults, especially mothers. It was a sobering experience.

After the labor of love, we children, seriousness forgotten, ran off for a final romp on a grassy hillside. The

adults settled in the shade to rest and finish catching up on each individual's adventures since last year's gathering. This peaceful pastime continued until the sun began to slip downward past the trees. In those days, we didn't try to work many appointments into the same day, but savored our time together. The good-byes were put off until the last possible moment of departure that would allow chores being finished before dark.

Bill and Dolly stepped at a lively clip going home, being anxious to get their harness off and have a relaxing roll in the barn lot dust to dry the sweat of travel. We concluded it had been a wonderfully enjoyable day, yet how good it was to be home and kick off my unaccustomed shoes. Home really was best, even with water to pump and eggs to gather.

Having failed to make a good showing in the taller and heavier competition, I determined to begin eating a lot more in preparation for the next Decoration Day. That decision was very easy to come by, for I was sure that crock still had some strawberries in it.

FRESH AND LASTING

Dorothy Green Liehr

Whenever the winds of spring blow softly across this valley of the Illinois, I remember again the spring of 1947 and the Memorial Day weekend observance in our town.

Here, in Perry, where family ties are strong, the commemorative holiday is, traditionally, a veritable homecoming and a time of family reunions.

As usual, several weeks of work and preparation had preceded the great weekend. While lawn mowers had hummed around the hilltop and over the steeply sloping sides of the Perry McCord Cemetery, many of the townspeople were busily tidying up their family plots. And, at the same

time, members of the Perry American Legion Post (originally called the "Edward Crippen Post") were carefully searching out the graves of every veteran, marking each with a small American flag.

Rue Witham, veteran of the First World War, had always made it his personal responsibility to see that no veteran's gravesite was overlooked. Now, on that memorable weekend in 1947, he was walking around the cemetery with other Legion members, occasionally pausing for a while at some veteran's grave. Often, there was a personal reminiscence to relate, or a notable story to tell.

One grave receiving Rue's special attention was that of Edward Crippen. The headstone, at this time, was standing upright, and the inscription was legible. The four line verse inscribed on the stone were the words written in Crippen's own hand, and found pinned to his uniform:

EDWARD W. CRIPPEN

Color Bearer

28 yrs. 10 months 9 days
 Farwell my wife and children all.
 From you a father Christ hath called.
 Mourn not for me; it is in vain
 To call me to your side again.

A few more words, concise, yet eloquent, complete the epitaph: "Mortally wounded at the Battle of Missionary Ridge, Nov. 25, 1863."

The cemetery having been satisfactorily prepared for Memorial Day services, attention now turned from the dead to the living. By two o'clock, the whole town had turned out, filling Main Street, many in their cars, waiting for the parade to the cemetery to begin.

Vivid memories in profusion vie for my recall of that moment: returned servicemen ("our boys") representing the Army, the Navy, and the Marine Corps, looking very neat, very trim in their uniforms . . . combat ribbons . . . the knowledge that here among these 30 plus young men were

recipients of bronze stars, the Croix de Guerre, and a purple heart . . . the solemn expression on the faces of the older World War One veterans . . . veterans of both world wars marching four abreast, shining rifles aglint in the sun . . . and just enough breeze to ripple "Old Glory."

Heading toward the cemetery, the townspeople following at a respectful distance in the rear. The veterans had difficulty keeping in step. That would not do! What was needed here was "cadence count."

"Had a girl in Baltimore,
 Streetcar ran right past her door!"

"Sound Off!"

"One, two,"

"Sound Off!"

"Three, four"

"SOUND OFF!"

"One, two, three, four.

One, two . . . THREEFOUR!"

Smartly now, all marching in unison, the veterans wound their way to the top of the cemetery hill.

Now came the townspeople, quite a crowd, to find their places; it was time to begin.

The speaker for the afternoon was the young theological student, Leon Wilder, who came down to Perry every other Sunday to fill the pulpit at the Presbyterian Church. Inspired and inspiring, his speech reflected the altruism and patriotism of the day.

I remember Leon quoting, "No more shall war's fierce cry sever, Nor winding rivers be red . . .," but what comes back to me most poignantly of all, is the memory of little children around five and six years old and under the supervision of Genevieve Brim, very quietly so as not to disturb the speaker, placing bouquets of fresh flowers on each veteran's grave.

The speech being over, the time had come to fire a three

volley salute over the grave of the veteran who had most recently died.

The echoes of the shots died away; then came the playing of "taps."

The observance had come to an end, but people were reluctant to leave the beautiful tree-shaded cemetery in their old town.

Back at the American Legion Building, veterans divested themselves of their rifles, and made sure that the American flag was secure in its holder. On the wall, a framed Civil War sketch of a young man stared resolutely ahead—Edward Crippen, who would be forever young at the age of 28 years, ten months, and nine days.

In our town today there are, to be sure, Memorial Day observances, but they are quite different in many ways than that very special day in May in 1947.

Looking back, I am grateful to have experienced this stirring day, and know it will remain (as Shakespeare said) "Fresh and lasting . . . in remembrance."

THE QUARANTINE SIGN

Martha K. Graham

In the early 1900's little was commonly known, or at least practiced, about disease immunization. Children routinely contracted measles, chicken pox, mumps, and whooping cough. Scarlet fever, smallpox, and other dreaded diseases ran rampant through families and whole communities.

About 1920 old Doctor Clark gathered all the Roseville people who were willing, or could be coerced, into his office which was in his big square house on North Main Street, and, for the first time in that community, he administered smallpox vaccine.

Horror stories about the possible results of such a vaccination had circulated: vaccination gave one smallpox; the process was so painful that grown men screamed; one's arm swelled and ached unbearably for days; the vaccination should be done on the arm one used least for writing, etc., because blood poisoning often set in, requiring amputation of that arm.

In spite of all the stories, my parents believed in smallpox vaccination, probably because they believed in old Doc Clark, so our whole family was immunized. It was a frightening experience. One at a time we were taken into the inner office where the upper arm was scratched in a small screenwire-like pattern, and the vaccine was applied on the bloodied place. Then a thick circular pad, open in the center, was applied around the spot and bound with gauze. We were cautioned not to bump that arm, not to wash the spot, not to bother the scab when it formed, even though it would itch, and to come back after the scab (a horrible looking thing) had fallen off.

None of the horror stories proved true, and we were no longer afraid of smallpox.

When I was about ten years old, Mother called Doctor Clark to see about my sore throat and fever. When he saw the red rash on my chest, he sprang into action, as did the rest of my family, for I had scarlet fever. (Now children may have a slight indisposition called scarletina, which the killer-and-maimer, old fashioned scarlet fever, has become.) A sign saying "SCARLET FEVER, KEEP OUT" was tacked beside the door, and no one was allowed to enter or leave without the doctor's permission.

My whole family was in the house, and so were exposed to the disease. My father needed to get out to work; my older brother needed to get to high school. Doctor Clark decided to release them if they would follow his directions to the letter.

They were to take clothing they would need, and bedding that had been shut away in drawers, out to our

garage. There they must take an antiseptic bath and shampoo, and have clothing and bedding fumigated in the garage. If, after two weeks, they showed no symptoms of scarlet fever, they could consider themselves free. They were to have no contact with the quarantined ones in the house.

I wondered, and still wonder, why old Doc Clark could continue to come and go, ignoring the quarantine sign. The only precaution he seemed to take was a thorough hand washing every time before he left us.

The quarantine was to last six weeks, but my five-year-old brother contracted a light case and extended the imprisonment another two weeks. My father and my older brother showed no signs of the disease, so my brother was free to go live with my aunt, whose home was only a block away, while my father continued to live in the garage so he could be as close as possible to help us in any way he could.

He installed a long thin pipe between the garage and the house, connecting them, and he and Mother conversed through it. She would let him know what groceries and other supplies she needed, and he would bring them home and leave them on the back porch for her to bring inside. My brother would often stop by and talk to Mother on the speaking tube, and on her way home from work as a clerk in Bennet's Dry Goods Store, my aunt would stop and let my mother know all the town news and gossip she heard in the store.

Even with those breaks in the routine, mother must have almost gone out of her mind with two children sometimes out of their heads with the high fever of the killer disease. But she did everything she could think of to keep us as comfortable as possible. She put cool cloths on our heads and bathed us to reduce fever, brought trays of food to give us strength, and even helped us cut pictures from the catalog and made flour-and-water paste so we could make scrapbooks. She read aloud innumerable books: *The Five Little Peppers and How They Grew* and other books in the series, *Little Lord Fauntleroy*, all the Mother West Wind

stories we had, *Elsie Dinsmore*, and many others. I wanted to read, myself, but was not permitted to use my eyes in such a way because scarlet fever sometimes "settled in the eyes."

Doctor Clark continued to visit us, examining us and bringing medicines and good cheer. His routine never varied. He would come bursting into our room, fix us with a penetrating stare, and say, in his British accent that turned r into uh, "You dirty pups!" Then he would turn, all the professional physician, to Mother, and say gravely, "I need a glass of water, please."

Finally Dr. Clark came with the good news that the seige was over. He ordered our bed linens burned (we had "scaled off" on them), ordered all of us to take antiseptic baths, and fumigated the whole house. The quarantine sign came down.

GRAY WITH WHITE TRIM

Doris L. Chilberg

My grandparents' house stood on Main Street in Orion, Illinois, where the State Bank Building is now located. It faced the east and was built before the turn of the century by Henry Wilson, and he in turn sold it to Walter Blodgett, and then my grandparents, Andrew and Louise Chinberg, bought it and moved in from the farm in 1908.

It was L-shaped with a porch across the front and much "gingerbread" for trim. The porch was always painted gray with white trim. Many times we sat on it and listened to the band concerts being played in the village park. A trumpet vine grew up on the south end of the porch and Grandma took pride in her purple clematis that grew beside it. In the summertime, Grandpa had a hammock in this area, which I also enjoyed. At one time, a huge maple tree grew in front of the house near the main sidewalk, which curved around the

tree. Grandpa planted moss roses at it's base, which provided color in the summertime. The hitching posts for the horses came down as far as the tree.

This house consisted of a kitchen, dining room, sitting room, parlor, sewing room, and a front hall with an open stairway down stairs. Upstairs was a hall, a small den or office, and three bedrooms, plus a small sitting room. A door from this opened out on the upstairs porch, which was enclosed with a railing.

Starting from the left downstairs, the one window was in the sewing room where Grandma spent a lot of her time. Many times I saw her at that window, piecing quilts, knitting, sewing, or crocheting with the curtain drawn back so she could have better light but also could see what was going on on Main Street. Grandpa had a cot in this room and he spent a lot of time reading as there was a window on the south of which afforded him better light. There was a floor-to-ceiling cupboard where a lot of "goodies" were stored. The button box was my favorite.

To the back of this sewing room and to the west, was the kitchen with a dark pantry off to the side. Rain water was piped into the kitchen from the cistern, and there was the conventional sink with a small pump on the west wall. Grandma's stove always fascinated me—it was a cook stove, wood burning, and stood on legs. The stove pipe for it went across the ceiling to the chimney. A reservoir was at the end of the stove, and water was poured into this and was heated for use to wash with and to wash dishes. A wood box stood nearby, where they kept an ample supply of chopped wood to keep the fire going. The open draft on the front of the stove provided a cheery sight on a cold wintery night, to see the glowing embers. The oven had doors on both sides, and many a "goodie" was taken from there. The smell of bread baking was my favorite. The kitchen was large enough so they could eat there and to afford more light, a window was in the east wall which looked into the dining room.

The dining room was the second window from the left in front. A door from the porch opened into this room. The front door was on the L. Frosted glass panels decorated this doorway and door, and it had a "gong" type doorbell. We grandchildren were allowed to ring it just once. This doorway opened into a hall with an open stairway. Many a time I played here—pretending it was my house or I was driving horses or riding trains. The stair carpet was green with red and pink roses—to me, so beautiful. At the end of the hall and off the kitchen was the sitting room with the organ, comfortable rocking chairs and a fainting couch. In this room under the stairs was a closet. I think at some time I dreamt that I was locked in there as it always held a horror to me if the door was left open.

From the sitting room into the parlor were open double doors from which hung the green plush rope portieres. There was also a lot of bric-a-brac in this doorway—lovely to look at but Grandma complained they were nothing but dust catchers. In the parlor were several rocking chairs and a center stand which held the family Bible and album. On the walls hung the family portraits. In front of the window to the right of the front door, Grandma had a pedestal which held a jardeniere from which a Boston fern grew, to the envy of everyone. In the winter, one could always see her Christmas cactus full of blooms, and many stopped by to admire it. Some of the rooms had handwoven carpets, but in the sitting room and the parlor there were rugs.

The house was heated by a steam heat furnace, and to come in on a cold night and hear the hissing of the radiators gave me such a warm feeling.

After Grandma and Grandpa moved in, an electric light plant was established in Orion, and since Grandpa loved progress, he was one of the first to have electricity in the house. The wiring facilities left much to be desired, but they had the "Edison" light bulbs, and they were far better than the oil lamps. My aunt had one of the first electric irons, and

those could only be used certain hours of the day as they took so much electricity.

The back door was out of the kitchen to the west, and there was a long narrow porch which led into the summer kitchen. This was a small building used in the summertime for cooking so as not to heat up the main house. In there was a cook stove and laundry area. Near the back porch was a well with the windlass and the old oaken bucket to draw water up from the well. There was a cover over it, and it was fascinating to see either Grandma or Grandpa draw up a bucket of water and pour it into the wooden spout to the drinking water bucket. In the summertime, it served as the "refrigerator" to keep the butter hard and the milk sweet. Grandma let these down on little covered buckets by rope almost to the water's edge. Those ropes were fastened to the inside of the cover by hooks.

Down at the end of the sidewalk was the privy, which was hidden from sight by hop vines. In back of it was the wood shed. At the end of the lot near the alley and to the left, was a barn which housed Grandpa's driving horse and buggy. One time the post office was robbed and everyone was very concerned because they blew up the safe and nobody heard it. When Grandpa went down to take care of his horse, both horse and buggy were gone. It was assumed the safe crackers had spent some of the day and night in the hayloft and had Grandpa's horse ready to make a getaway. His horse and buggy were found down at the livery stable in Milan. The safe crackers made a getaway on one of the many trains that went through Rock Island.

I spent a lot of time at the house. To go into Orion and not stop at Grandma and Grandpa's made the trip meaningless to me. Their home has always held a special place in my heart. Grandpa passed away in 1928 and Grandma in 1934. My aunt and uncle bought the house, modernized it, and lived there until their death, and then their daughters lived there until the house was put up for sale

when the bank was built. Quentin Stromquist bought it and had it moved to another location. A lot of memories went with it. However, I am so thankful that it was moved and not torn down. My heart would have been torn, too.

TRUTH AND JUSTICE

Blanche M. Harrison

From my viewpoint as a child, still clearly recalled and etched deeply in memory, my mother was the greatest, most wonderful, and best loved person in the whole world. Her presence meant comfort, warmth, love—and good food when you were hungry. She caused everything to be right in my small world. Also of great importance to me was home, the place where all five of us children were born between the years of 1894 and 1904. We were all home-loving. I am sure Mother had something to do with that, for the influence of a good mother and love of home just go together naturally.

My mother was constantly busy. There was much to be done, living on a farm with no modern conveniences and caring for a family of seven. Cooking took a great deal of her time. She never neglected that part of her work. She baked bread, churned butter, and made delicious pies with tender flaky crusts. I never did see her measure the ingredients. Out came the bread board, rolling pin, a bowl in which she placed flour, and then swiftly her hand moved from salt jar to lard container, deftly working these into the flour. She added a little cold water, still using her fingertips to mix. Quickly the dough formed a ball, which was rolled out smoothly to fit the pan in an unbroken circle. Before you knew it, her pies were scenting the kitchen with tantalizing odors from the oven of the wood-burning cook stove. The shiny teakettle sang while steam emerged from the spout,

providing humidity to us and Mom's house plants which stood in a row on the window sill.

But getting back to the pies, my mother made many kinds, all beautiful to see and delicious to eat; but she also had a few special ones, such as dried apple. In the beginning she prepared the apples, then dried them. They were placed on screen wire framed in wood. All of this was no small chore. Every day those frames, covered with apple slices, were placed on the pantry roof in the sun. The fruit was covered with cheesecloth netting. Everything was fine until a rain came up. Then everyone scurried to help get the apples in. If ever you had a taste of this delicious treat, you would agree that it was worth the effort to bring about the finished product. My mother was also a master hand at Custard pie. Hers were deep, quivery, and golden yellow from country eggs, the surface flecked by hand-grated nutmeg. Beautiful to behold, out of this world to sample. Another very special pie, and my father's favorite was a French Cream pie, unlike any most people have ever tasted. It was made with real cream and was very delicious.

Beside the housework, cooking, and laundry, my mother had lots of outside work, especially in the summertime. One such task was caring for the chickens. She set the hens, fifteen eggs to a setting, as I recall. I liked to go with her when she "took off" a hen and chickens. I loved to see the fluffy little baby chicks. I soon was quite a bit of help in putting them up in the evening, getting the right hen in the right coop. My oldest brother was very good at that before me. Mother said he could always remember where each hen belonged. I loved to watch the little chicks after their evening feeding, tired no doubt, after the long trek on their short little legs, following their mother wherever she led and now back to the coop and supper. Then to see them snuggle under mother's feathers, safe and warm for the night—a satisfying picture. That is something you never see now.

If I was to write all the things my mother did, I would

have enough material to fill a book. For there was a garden, all kinds of vegetables, a large strawberry patch, rhubarb (we used to call it "pie plant"), and fruit trees (peaches, apples, plums, and pears). Then, in our timber were wild gooseberries and blackberries. Mom canned and made jellies, butters, and preserves all summer and fall. There was also the homemade catsup, chili sauce, relishes, and finally, a big jar of sauerkraut.

She trimmed her boy's hair and made most of our clothes. She made her own bed sheets, pieced comfort and quilt tops, and then quilted them. She would also crochet and knit. She made lots of socks that were sent overseas during World War I. One of her sons served in that conflict.

She taught us truth and justice, not only by word but by example. She encouraged us to go and also accompanied us to Sunday school and church.

My mother was a quiet, home-loving woman, seldom leaving her own community, but when there was sickness or death in a neighbor's home, she was there quietly and efficiently doing what was needed, bringing help and comfort to the family.

The Bible says, "The price of a virtuous woman is far above rubies." Part of another verse states that "She worketh willingly with her hands." Yet a third verse implies that, "She eateth not the bread of idleness." All these things are true of my blessed mother. How I miss her!

I sometimes dream of that faraway time when God is allotting us our places, hoping that He just might resurrect that little white cottage where the big elm grew beside it. High up in its branches an oriole's nest made of hair from the manes and tails of horses would sway lightly in the breeze, and God would look at me and say, "Blanchie, here's your mansion. Go and help your mother put the chickens up."

“BOOZE”

Eunice Stone DeShane

I was browsing in the hardware store last fall, just looking around. When I went down one aisle, I stopped short. I couldn't believe it—right in front of my eyes was a machine or device set up to make fuel or alcohol for your car! It was nothing but a “still!” A few years ago you could have been arrested—maybe even sent to prison just for having one in your possession. Information on the still was available right there, and a demonstrator was coming back in a couple of hours to show how simple it was to make alcohol!

I didn't stay for the lesson, but it sure did make me recall an incident that happened during the 1920's in our neighborhood. We lived on the south edge of Moline. There were small farms all around us. We didn't even have electricity. There were some people who lived about half a mile south and west of us. They entered their place off of Sixteenth Street and about Twenty-Eighth Avenue. My father and other people knew they were making “booze.” Everyone referred to them as “the bootleggers.” We could all smell the rubber they would burn to kill the “booze” odor while it was cooking.

I don't remember exactly how long they lived on the place without incident, but when my father went to shred our corn shocks, we got a surprise.

Shredding the fodder was what every farmer did at that time. It was a process by which the corn shocks were dried in the field and then hauled up to the barn on a hay rack with horses. The corn was husked out as it was shredded and then blown up in the barn by a big fan that was powered by a tractor and belt. This was far better than leaving the corn in the field to haul up when the snow was deep. The farmers helped each other. It usually took three or four teams to work smoothly. Mr. Larson owned the tractor and shredder and he stayed with the machine while the man hauled up the fodder

to him. The ears of corn were bent out or rolled out into a container that was emptied in the corn crib by hand.

As the men got out to the edge of the field, they found jugs of liquor hidden in the shocks. Someone must have tipped off the bootleggers that there was going to be a raid. I guess they figured the corn shocks would be a good hiding place. Everyone divided up the “booze” and took it home with them.

When the crew of men got done with our corn, they went to the farm of Mr. Ericson the next day. There were car tracks all around his corn shocks where the bootleggers had picked up their products over night. They weren't about to let any more of their “booze” in the cornfields be discovered.

MY TIN DINNER PAIL

Fannie Lewis Lynn

In 1891, when I was six years old, I attended Pontiac school, five and one-half miles east of Chandlerville, Illinois. The building is in very poor condition now but still standing.

Each time I hear the radio and read in the newspaper the menu for the hot lunches at the schools, it brings to my memory the lunches and lunch pails we carried. Our lunches were not hot, not even warm. Early in the morning our mother prepared the food and packed it in our lunch pails, and we carried them from our homes to the school house one and one-half miles away.

With my two brothers and a sister, we joined other children along the country road. The group looked like a bucket brigade.

Most of the pails were tin. We called them “dinner pails.” They had a lid that fit down into the top of the pail. Sometimes we used quart syrup buckets. Some of the

children had lunch boxes from the store. They were usually reddish color and made from material like heavy cardboard. Very few could afford that kind.

When we got to school, we placed our dinner pails on the floor in the back of the school room just below a hook where we hung our coats. We always wanted to get our coats hung up and our pails placed before the teacher went outside in the school yard to ring the tardy bell. One time I remember we heard the tardy bell, and we were close enough to see the school, but my brother Andrew wouldn't let us go in because we were tardy. Andrew was four years older than me, and he sorta looked after the other three of us. He wanted to do everything just right, and he explained to us that we would wait outside until recess and then go into the school and eat with the other children. This might have been a good working plan, but it was a very cold winter day, and we got so cold he said we had better go home. When we got home our feet were so cold our mother got pans of snow and placed our feet in them to get them warm.

We had recess, but no one opened a lunch pail then. However, when noon time came we really scurried to get our own pail. We sat with our favorite school mates and ate our lunch. Most of the time we ate in the school room at our desks, and the teacher sat at her desk and ate from a dinner pail also. If the weather was warm, we went outside and sat on the ground to eat.

There was an old pump over a well in the school yard, with several rusty tin cups hanging on a wire by the pump. That is where we got our drink.

There were some big boys that were always getting into trouble and fighting, but I can't remember a time when someone took another one's dinner pail. Sometimes on the way home from school the big boys would fight and use their dinner pails to hit each other with.

I'll never forget the aroma that came from those pails as we lifted the lids. Perhaps there would be a sausage cake

between two crusts of homemade biscuits, a cookie and an egg, and maybe a shiny apple. At butchering time we had tenderloin or other choice meats between the biscuit crusts. It was a real surprise to find some home canned fruit in the pail. If someone went to town to the store, they would bring oranges back, and those would be put into our pails. But that was a rare occasion.

My mother made something she called "Marguerites." This was made from beaten boiled egg whites and sugar and placed on a cracker and browned in the oven. One time I traded a Marguerite for an olive. I had never seen an olive before, but my friend assured me it was as good as it was pretty. I sure didn't like the taste of it, but I didn't want to hurt my friend's feelings so I hid it in the bottom of my dinner pail.

Perhaps our lunches would not have been called a balanced meal, but we had plenty of energy to finish the day's lessons and walk home from school, swinging those dinner pails freely now as we knew there was nothing left in them to spill.

SPINACH, EPSOM SALTS, AND THE CHURCH

Don Parker

I think I might have had a happy childhood if it hadn't been for spinach, epsom salts, and the Chili Presbyterian Church. It's not that I mean to be sacrilegious or anything, but from personal observation, I have found few young boys who were enthusiastic about church services. And when I grew up, it seemed to me that if something tasted bad, smelled bad, or made a fellow uncomfortable, it was good for him and would build body and soul. To me, spinach was bitter and gritty and not at all to my liking, but it got more promotion than it deserved. Also, as a child I had more than

my share of colds and sore throats. The family doctor was a firm believer in the idea that a strong laxative would cure anything that could go wrong with a boy's innards, and epsom salts was one of his favorite purgatives. Anyone who has taken a heaping spoonful of epsom salts in half a cup of warm water knows how bad it tastes and that it is a strong laxative—but "into every life a little rain must fall." It builds character, I guess.

On Sunday morning, it wasn't just a little rain. It was more like a cloudburst when I, a "barefoot boy with cheek (and toes) of tan" tried to squeeze my feet into a pair of polished shoes, which were new except for previous trips to Sunday school and church. They were reserved for that purpose. Going barefoot was not only fashionable for country boys but comfortable and also economical, a fact which kept parents from discouraging the idea. To add insult to injury, I always had to wear a tie because it wasn't right to go to church not properly dressed. It didn't do any good to fake illness because that would bring on the epsom salts treatment, which was as bad as going to church.

Sunday school wasn't too bad, except for the pinched toes and hot tie, but the church service seemed to drag on and on and had little redeeming value as far as I could see. The prevailing theory was that children should be seen and not heard, and no place was that more strictly enforced than at church. Every time I moved it seemed to create a noise that reverberated throughout the church. Gum chewing, reading a book, or whispering were all considered disrespectful, and I, of all people, should show respect, for my great grandfather had helped build the first church in the community in 1843, and from that time on, the family had been active in its operation, a fact that didn't exactly thrill me at the age of eight. Furthermore, in 1867, he had helped build the structure we were using. The logs had been floated down the Mississippi to Warsaw, where they were sawed, and he had helped haul the lumber to Chili with a team and wagon.

The building was 32 feet by 44 feet with a 14 foot ceiling, but it seemed as big and airy as all outdoors to me. There were four tall windows on each side, a double door in the middle at the east and opposite to the pulpit. A partition down the center of the church segregated the men from the women. There were two rows of pews on either side with a few pews missing on both outside rows to make room for coal and wood-burning stoves. A stovepipe went out of the top of the church well over the heads of the congregation to a common flue. Six kerosene lamps with white glass shades hung on rods from the ceiling and lighted the building some for night meetings.

By the time I came along, the church was pretty much as built, but the congregation was no longer divided by sex—no doubt a change brought about by a revolutionary younger generation, which had little respect for tradition or God. The town of Chili had diminished in size so much that the congregation was too small to afford a full-time pastor. After years of sharing ministers with another church or group of churches of assorted denominations, a retired Presbyterian minister moved into Chili and offered to serve the church for the small salary the group could manage.

Now I liked Reverend Chapman, most of the time. He was a kindly old gentleman, but he was definitely from the old school of preaching and would pound the pulpit and shout his glowing description of the fiery coals of hell in such a way that even I, as a child, could see the need for changing my ways. It was enough to give a fellow nightmares—at least it did me.

Each holiday called for a special program—Easter, Mother's Day, Children's Day, Thanksgiving, and Christmas—and that meant each child had to learn and recite a poem that fitted the occasion. Memorizing wasn't difficult, but reciting in front of a group terrified me. I dreaded those holidays with a passion, but the preacher said it wasn't easy

being a Christian, and I reckoned it was the only way to escape the glowing coals.

The heating stove on the north side was the only one used most of the time, unless a larger crowd than usual was expected, or on extremely cold days, both stoves were used. One time the congregation was looking forward to a series of night meetings to be conducted by a visiting singing evangelist, Miss Davie Gladstone—the first lady preacher in the church. On Sunday morning, the lady evangelist and a two-burner cold snap arrived at about the same time. I caught a glimpse of her seated in the congregation as I was marched in between my folks that morning, and as soon as we were seated, I turned around for a better look but was quickly corrected. Church was not the place for gawking, but I had seen enough to know she was pretty, slender, blonde, and wore a bright green dress—boy, was she pretty! She looked to me as if she might have just stepped out of one of those slick color pages in a Sears Roebuck Catalog.

That morning, just as the preacher reached a pulpit-pounding crescendo, a wire that held the horizontal pipe from the north stove broke, letting the pipe sag enough to spew soot down on the congregation, including the guest, and her pretty green dress. That was one of the shortest sermons I recall ever hearing at Chili, but still my day was ruined. We were supposed to have gone to my grandparents' house for dinner that day, where my favorite cousins were visiting, but we had to hurry back immediately after eating so my folks could help others clean the church for the evening service.

Every summer the church held one or more ice cream socials to help raise a few dollars for maintenance. Members brought home-made ice cream and cakes with thick, finger-licking good icing. There was a family that lived a mile and a half north of town who always brought ice cream. She was known for her ability to cook, and he was known as a financially conservative man who was not fully sold on the idea that "it is more blessed to give." He'd never get their

freezer out of the car until dark, and then would place it behind a tree or some place where it wouldn't be noticed until after the social was over. Then he could take his freezer full of ice cream home to enjoy. One night a couple of the older boys kept an eye on him and saw where he hid his freezer. A little later, they took it out behind the church where several of us boys enjoyed its contents. When the family was ready to go home that night, he couldn't find his freezer and created quite a commotion. I thought the whole episode was funny and didn't feel the least bit guilty about my participation in the crime until that night, when I had another nightmare about the "fiery coals of hell." Since that time I have never participated in the theft of ice cream, nor do I have any plans for doing so in the future, but it's plain to see that without the strict up-bringing of the Chili Presbyterian Church, I might have continued in a life of crime. Perhaps it did help build character and soul, you know, but I'm still not convinced that the spinach or epsom salts ever did me much good.

A DAY OF QUESTIONS

Lillian C. Peterson

On this cold February morning I jumped out of bed in our unheated, upstairs bedroom and quickly reached for my black cotton stockings. After folding over my long winter underwear I carefully began pulling up the stockings, when I discovered a familiar hole by the big toe. Of course, my high shoe would cover it, as it had many times in the past, but I took a chance and called down the stairs to mother. "Mama, there is a big hole in my stocking. Should I wear my Sunday school stockings to school today?"

To my bewilderment the voice of Aunt Anna answered, "Yes, put on your good stockings."

Two things were obviously very wrong. First, there was no way that mother would really want me to wear my good stockings to school. And second, what was Aunt Anna doing in our house at this time of day?

I quickly pulled the old stockings up, fastened the garters, and slipped into my black shoes that easily concealed the hole. In no time at all I was into my cotton slip and school dress which had one more day to go to finish out the week. By this time, my little four-year-old sister, Elsie, and six-year-old brother, Arthur, were dressed and on their way down the steps ahead of me.

When I came down, my older sister, Alice, was at the kitchen cupboard busily packing homemade bread and jelly sandwiches in four tin Karo syrup pails, for our school lunch. Freddie, my older brother, was out helping Pa with the morning chores.

Aunt Anna was busy at the cook stove, fueling the fire with corn cobs and sticks of wood. She had oatmeal ready for us three smaller children. And then there was mother, obviously very sick, in bed in the guest room. The atmosphere was indeed strained. Early in our lives, we little ones learned not to ask questions when the situation seemed serious or troubled. We knew that we might find out what was troubling our folks if we just kept our eyes wide open and listened with big ears!

After we quietly ate our oatmeal, the clock showed that it was getting close to school time. We hurried into our homemade coats and stocking caps. Aunt Anna said that Pa would drive us to school this morning. This was something that seldom happened. We usually walked that long mile to our one-room school, all the time looking back for a friendly car to stop and give us a lift. There was never a question of our safety. With delight we jumped into any car that stopped. Most of the time, we had a late start, and by hurrying we suffered side aches. It was considered a horrible disgrace to be late for school.

But this was a different morning. As we were about to leave, Aunt Anna asked Artie and me if we wanted to see the baby. She led us into mother's bedroom and took us to the foot of the bed. Here she lifted a little blanket and showed us a tiny baby. Mother watched us sadly but said nothing.

Aunt Anna asked, "Isn't it cute?"

We nodded our heads. The blanket went down again over the baby's head and we were taken out. Then the four of us were whisked off to school in Pa's Model T Ford.

Usually, upon arriving at school, the children would run to meet us, and we would be swept up in the early morning activities. This morning, as we entered the classroom, the children all stood back and quietly looked at us with a "what should we do?" expression. I had no way of knowing that early that morning Pa had gone to the phone and had rung a long, a short, and a long ring to get his brother on our 15 party line. Many receivers went off the hooks as the neighbors listened in to news of the expected arrival at the Schick's house.

The teacher rang the bell. We took our seats and school went on as usual. Except for my little chum whispering to me, "We didn't think that you would come to school today," nothing was mentioned all day long.

As classes were called and the children took their turns at the recitation bench, I wondered and worried about what had happened. I thought of Mama lying so sick in the guest bedroom. I pondered over why someone had put big loops of rope on both sides at the head of her bed. I was hopelessly wishing that things were not what they seemed to be. It would be such a joy to have a new baby at our house. All day long that little bundle at the foot of mother's bed remained on my mind. At our house the doctor brought the babies. But why would he bring a dead baby? At the age of seven I wasn't to be told that a country doctor, in 1919, had no way of saving both a mother and her breech baby all by himself in a farmhouse bedroom.

At the end of the school day the lower grades were excused early, and Artie and I started off for home by ourselves. As we began talking about what had happened, Artie seemed quite happy and anxious to get back and see the baby.

Finally, facing reality, I spoke those dreaded words: "I think the baby is dead."

Surprised, he answered, "Oh, I don't think so."

"But Aunt Anna put the blanket over its head," I reasoned.

We trudged along the rest of the way with heavy hearts. When we arrived at home, there was no baby. No one said anything about it. Mamma was still in bed. Aunt Anna, the practical nurse that went on baby cases, was still there. Little Elsie whispered to us that Pa had gone to town and had come home with a little box. The baby had been put into it and had been taken away. We asked no questions because it seemed that no one was ready to talk about what had happened.

Shocking as this experience was to us little children, it was even more so for mother, who had easily given birth to five babies before and who took months to physically recover from this tragic pregnancy.

Years later, a little granddaughter ran into Mother's house to show off her new "sleepy-time" doll with its eyes painted fast asleep.

Mother took one look at it and said, "I don't like that doll."

It reminded her of the little baby so long ago that never opened its eyes.

THAT HORSE ISN'T SAFE

Ruth (Poiset) O'Donnell

I was born on December 8, 1896. My grandparents on

both my mother and my father's sides of the family came from France. They all settled in the little village of Avon, which had other French settlers. When I was very young my mother and grandmother went to visit relatives in a sleigh led by a very frisky horse. When we were almost home the horse got scared and upset the sleigh. I landed in a snow bank. Grandma grabbed me and began moaning, "She's dead, she's dead." But I wasn't, of course. I never even let that excitement wake me up!

Then when I could toddle around, I decided to roam a bit. The family thought I had drowned in the cistern. I was so tiny, like a minnow, it took them awhile to realize I wasn't in those gloomy depths. They must have looked everywhere. Finally, they found me peacefully rocking on Ida Schultz's lap in the tenant house.

I was about three or four when I had another interesting experience. It seemed that when a neighbor came over, my grandfather Poiset would take him down to the cellar for a drink of cider. I always went along, and I got so I just loved the stuff. One day my mother was making mince pies and had a big glass of cider to put in them. I can remember taking a drink and gazing peacefully out the screen door. Occasionally I'd take another drink. Finally, I started into the dining room and fell against the heating stove, which was cold. Mother was horrified as I went down like I'd been hit with a club. In perfect health one minute and dead the next. She ran for reinforcements, and as some of the rescuers sailed through the kitchen, somebody noticed the empty glass. So there was nothing else to do but let me sober up. Things soon got back to normal.

The most exciting episode of my childhood happened a few years later. It took a lot of horses to keep everybody happy on that farm. Grandpa had to have his saddle horse; the hired hand's wife had to have one at her disposal when she had to go to town; Mama needed a horse; and we kids also wanted a horse. So one day, sad to say, when there was no

horse for me, I decided I'd go out in the pasture and get an old horse that had been retired as being too old to work. He was the ugliest horse in the neighborhood. He was so swaybacked that Grandpa said he'd made a good calvary horse because the enemy could only shoot the soldier from the side. Oria Shultz and I hitched him to that awful old creeky buggy and rode merrily off to town. I'd be ashamed to be seen in that outfit now. We soon found out he made a wonderful race horse, and we raced all the neighbor kids. He was too lazy to hold the buggy back going down hill and so would run. We would laugh and yell and he would just run harder. One day we were going around a corner by Tick Wood's, pell mell, and they had put a new sewer pipe in and left a big hump. Too late to stop so we went over it on high and broke the dashboard off of that old buggy. Our fun soon ended as other members of the family began driving him. When he started running down hill they tried to stop him, which made him mad, and he would break the buggy.

After Ida, Mama, Uncle Jacob Hovell, and Grandpa all had a castastrophe with him and all but one of the buggies were broke up, Papa would always say, "just another old woman driving; wait until I get a hold of him." These words and gruesome tales were discussed at the table. I don't know how I kept a straight face. Why somebody didn't ask me why I didn't get run away with, I don't know, but maybe they thought breaking the dashboard off was enough.

So, the day came when Papa drove him. And sure enough, going down the hill by Avondale Lake, the horse started to run. Papa grabbed the whip and whipped him, instead of trying to stop him. As he started up Mallaird Hill, Jim Standard came over the brow leading an old cow. Papa yelled at him to get out of the road and kept on traveling full speed ahead. Then, all of a sudden, a freight train passed on the crossing and the race was over. Papa said he had intended to run him until he would never want to run again.

The bad news came at the super table. "That horse isn't

safe for anybody to drive. He's going back in the pasture and stay there." Well, the news could have been worse.

BEAUTY CAN BE A SUNSET

Charles P. Oberling

Ninety-one years ago, and weighing only three and a half pounds, I arrived in this world. My home was a log house in Columbus Township in Adams County. It had one room upstairs and two rooms downstairs—a gray log house with plaster to fill the cracks. Babies were born at home with no incubator or registered nurse on hand in those days. It was a bitter cold January 14, 1891, when my Uncle George rode his horse to Coatsburg to get the doctor. The horse was white with frost when he returned.

Papa later built a better house, but on October 12, 1902, it was put to the test. It was on a Sunday evening between seven and eight p.m. when the tornado hit. I'll never forget it. Mama was fixing a pallet on the floor for us boys to sleep downstairs since it was so stormy. Before I knew what was happening, windows were being blown in, my bed upstairs was smashed, and the house was moved off its foundation about three inches. The tornado killed our turkeys. A piece of glass cut my foot. I still have the scar today. That storm made a direct hit on our neighbor, Mr. Longlett's, house. He said in his German accent, "Der boom, der rattle, der bang—and I was sitting in der kitchen vit no valls."

How does a farm boy spend his time in the late 1800's? When I was eight years old I herded our seven milk cows along the public highway, as we had no pasture land. Even on Sundays I herded cattle. I went barefoot from early spring until late fall. Oh, how I hated that itch weed. It would cause your feet to break out and itch. To help time pass, I'd make willow whistles, smoke grapevines and dry elm root, eat red

haws, and swing on vines. Sometimes I'd skinny dip in McGee Creek.

When it was time to go to school, I still had to work mornings. Then I'd run the mile to school so I could have ten minutes to play with the other kids at noon recess. I had some good teachers. Most of them worked for \$20.00 a month. I always liked cipherin' matches, but I hated spelling bees. I remember going down once on the word "ache." I spelled it "ake."

Occasionally Italian peddlers with back satchels would stop by our house. They'd sell socks, ties, and trinkets. Salesmen from Harper Brothers in Chicago also came by to take grocery orders, which were later mailed to the householder.

I can remember traveling with Grandma and Grandpa Senner to Quincy. We'd travel the 12 miles by horse and buggy. Grandma would take butter, eggs, cottage cheese, dressed chickens, and garden vegetables to sell to the stores. I can remember that when we'd get to downtown Quincy, I'd wonder where did all that cement come from to make all those sidewalks in front of those buildings.

My Uncle Willie McNeal used to run a store in Columbus. He'd go to the wholesale houses in Quincy to get supplies for his store, and sometimes I'd get to go along. We used to eat at the Franklin House. That was a restaurant in Quincy where you'd sit at a big table, and they'd serve you a meal of beans, potatoes, bread, butter, slaw, and custard, all for 25¢. Prices were a lot different then. You could buy any shoe in the Good Luck Shoe Store in Quincy for \$2.50, overalls for \$1.50, a shirt for 50¢. You could buy a straw hat for 25¢. One hundred pounds of sugar sold for \$5.00, a ton of coal for \$5.50, a cord of wood for \$4.00. A pound of Arbuckle coffee beans sold for 10¢. Of course, wages were low, too. When I was in my teens, I worked out for other farmers for \$18.00 a month. The hours were 4:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m., and at

the end of the month, I turned over all the money I earned to my dad. I didn't get to keep any earnings until I was 21.

I married Eunice Leach on May 15, 1912. She was a pretty young teacher who came to teach at Hazelwood School and boarded with my uncle. With her savings from three years of teaching, she bought a woodburning stove, a table, a pump organ, and a dozen hens. I had a horse, cow, low-wheeled wagon, walking plow, cultivator, and harrow. We settled on a 40 acre farm along McGee Creek and labored side by side for the next 47 years. We lost one son at the age of 18 months with pneumonia, but we had another son and two daughters. They are all grown, married, and have given us eight grandchildren.

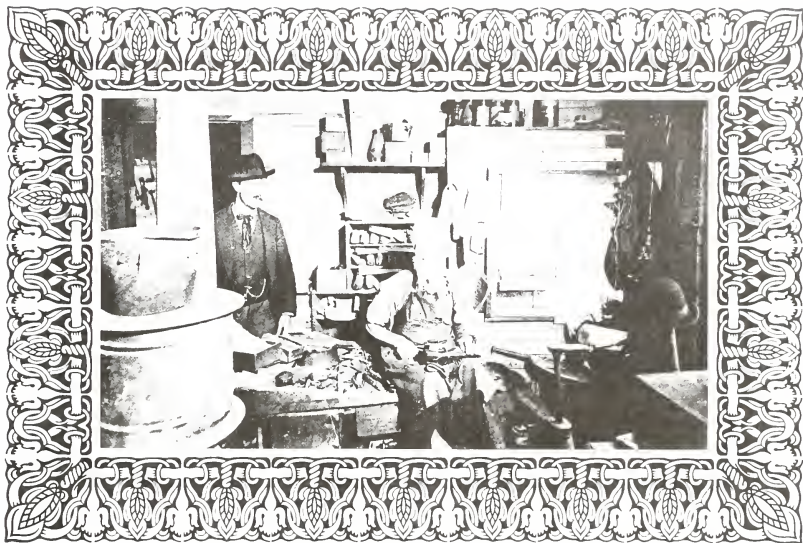
Neighbors needed each other in those days. We maintained our own roads. We walked and repaired the telephone line. We threshed and harvested with everybody furnishing teams, wagons, and labor. Butchering was another community effort. I moved up from shooting and cleaning the hog, to rendering the lard in those black iron kettles, to becoming chief sausage maker. That last job was almost an art. You'd be mixing the sausage for a family to eat all winter. You didn't dare put in too much salt, pepper, or sage, or your reputation was done for.

I'd like to see all the corn I've picked in one pile. I got paid 3¢ a bushel plus my dinner when I worked for others. Several times I shucked 100 bushels a day. My weight got down to 125 pounds because I'd sweat so much. Sometimes I was so weak I'd weave when I walked.

I've only owned three cars in my 91 years. My first was a black Overland. It had black snap-on cloth curtains with ising-glass windows. It got me over the muddy, rutty roads. If it got too bad, I'd just hitch up a team of horses to the spring wagon, and if the whole family was going, set in some kitchen chairs so we could get to the school socials and not get stuck. I later owned a 1947 Chevy. My last car was a 1958 Chevy. I just sold it last month.

About 20 years ago I sold the farm, which had grown to 120 acres. Eunice and I retired to Camp Point, Illinois. We enjoyed our home, children, grandchildren, and our community. Eunice passed away two years ago, just before her ninetieth birthday. We used to ride by the "home place," and we noticed that it began to change. The house is gone. The garage, granary, outhouse, barn, cow stable—all are gone. Only the machine shed remains. The willows are choking McGee Creek. Fence rows are hard to find. The lane to the mailbox is unused. It is no longer a family farm home. It is investment acreage for someone else now.

Sometimes as I sit and puff on my pipe with my eyes closed, I can still see my McGee Creek farm. I wish I could paint all those pictures I see. I remember each hickory and walnut tree in the south pasture. I remember the bittersweet growing in the fence row, parts of which came home in my hunting coat for a winter bouquet. I can see the bob-whites strutting along a fence line. I can see the catfish, schools of minnows, frogs, and watersnakes that co-existed in McGee Creek. That same creek that rolled over its banks in the spring and flooded the bottom fields and then turned quiet and scummy green in late August. And the miles of fresh-turned furrows of soil, field after field, year after year, all representing lonely, hard work. However, it supported the dreams of husband, wife, and three children. It demanded enough to make us rise each morning for work. It tired us enough to sleep peacefully each night. It taught us that beauty can be a sunset, a fresh-grown radish, or a loaf of home-baked bread. And it nourished a family's love, which survives to this day.



VII *How It Was Done*

HOW IT WAS DONE

When these senior citizens were young, the United States was much closer in a great many ways to the American frontier than it was to the world which now exists. To look into any geographical atlas in 1925 was to find most of the lands of the earth colored pink—possessions of the British Empire, upon which “the sun never set.” It is true that the automobile, best exemplified by the Model T Ford, was found everywhere, but then so were horses and buggies. There was space between the towns—between Baltimore and Washington, between St. Louis and the villages later to become suburbs—and the population was probably 100 million less than it is today. While most houses in cities were electrified, a great part of the nation was not, and one could stroll out dusty lanes into the countryside at dusk and see, one by one, farm houses illumined by the dull light of kerosene lamps. The leading publisher of children’s school books, Scott, Foresman, and Company, still emphasized in its readers the virtues of good citizenship, group cooperation, honesty, bravery, and initiative. Schooling was available for all those who aspired to success, but the size of a high school freshman class was usually considerably greater than it would be on graduation day four years later. That, in itself, was a sign of the rigor and common sense of the earlier years. In other words, it was a long way from the “Dick and Jane” stories of the post-World War II period.

A great many things were done differently in 1925. A family lucky enough to have a telephone was usually on a “party line.” The recipient of a phone call was given a certain predefined ring—three shorts and a long, for instance. As one of our contributors (Eva Baker Watson) points out, it was pretty much accepted that anything said over a telephone was fair game for anyone else on the party line. It was, as she so aptly writes, part of the spice of life.

The 1920’s was a decade in which one still found wooded

areas to cut, blacksmiths who made a living from the horse trade, and hired men who wandered by in the Spring and stayed until Fall. Robert Frost celebrated these wandering laborers in his marvelous 1914 poem, “The Death of the Hired Man.” Frost saw them as the driftwood of civilization: “Nothing to look backward to with pride, And nothing to look forward to with hope.”

The counterpart of the hired man was the girl who worked out. Louise Anderson Lum tells her own story of such employment in her youth. Hired girls were different, however; theirs was seldom a lifelong career. They were to be found in every medium-sized midwestern town, of course, but such work was only a transitional phase in each girl’s life until marriage or another job. And as Sinclair Lewis’s *Elmer Gantry* described the techniques of pastoral visitation, “Don’t neglect hired girls; be cordial.”

Each of the senior citizens below relates a fascinating story of “how it was done” in the past. Elma M. Strunk was a dowser; she learned the art from her father. Burdette Graham describes the making of a farm fence, and Edna L. Thompson tells of the intricacies of making apple butter. Albert Shanholtzer narrated a marvelous story about his training as a “printer’s devil.” There were countless chores to be done in each season of the year. Geese needed to be plucked, horses to be broken, and housework to be done. Talents and skills were passed from generation to generation, grandparent to grandchild. It is not hard to moralize about all of this—the arts which have nearly been lost, the drives to conquer whatever life had to offer, and the diminishing place of grandparenting in modern society. It is true that a mind is a terrible thing to waste, but that argument can be applied to the old today more easily than to the young.

The frankness with which the old talk about the facts of life as they were in the past is refreshing. The rural or small town outhouse was one of those hard facts. As a type, the structure had been in use for centuries. But one finds no

reference to it in Bartlett's *Familiar Quotations*, a compendium of information covering a great span of British and American literature. Lew Atherton makes no reference to it in his *Main Street on the Middle Border*. Yet, in the span of time covered in Atherton's book, the United States went from a period in which outhouses were far more common than flush toilets to an era in which the reverse was true. As Keith L. Wilkey points out in his illuminating (and obviously pioneer) piece on the family backhouse, they ranged from fancier vine covered structures to termite eaten shacks. They were, as Wilkey and other contributors have noted, fair game for the neighborhood boys on Halloween. Many of the

structures only survived that night because of an all night vigil kept by members of particular families. In time and through a kind of progress, the outhouse disappeared—mainly because it was considered a mark of indigence, slovenliness, and sloth. Now, parts of Illinois and the rest of the old Middle Border states are being doused almost daily with “treated” sewage from the larger cities and towns. It is a privilege that comes with age—the right of one to say that the more things change, the more they remain the same.

Victor Hicken, Editor

MOTHER'S GEESE

Lydia (Barton) Waite

One of the first things in my life that I remember was a basket with a soft cloth lining sitting on the open oven door in the kitchen of our farm home. In the basket were several little goslings, and my mother was trying to satisfy their appetites with a pan of bread soaked in sweet milk. When I grew older, this scene was repeated several times each year until the flock sometimes numbered nearly one hundred. Also included in their diet when they grew older was the abundant supply of lettuce that grew in the garden.

Those goslings were a hardy bunch of little rascals and were always ready for something to eat. It was very important to see that the garden gate was never left open.

As I grew older, I was entrusted to watch over the young goslings. When a thunderstorm threatened, they had to be herded immediately into shelter. If not, those silly goslings, until they got feathered out, would stand out in the rain with their heads in the air and drown themselves.

We always had an enclosure to keep them in, but sometimes they would get through the fence and wander off. Often they would get in the road that ran by our home and no telling where they would go. We were fortunate to have neighbors to tell us when and where they saw them. On one occasion, they wandered over a mile away. Another of their favorite spots was the spring branch down below the barn. Quite often, if we did not find them, snapping turtles would have a goose for dinner.

It was also my job to take the goslings out and watch them while they ate on a new patch of grass which, as they grew older, was a main part of their diet.

At an early age I began to help my mother "pick the geese." As soon as the old geese stopped laying, they were relieved of their feathers. We would herd them into a shed and, following close behind, we would fasten the door

securely from the inside. Inside this shed we had previously placed our stools, copper wash boilers (now valuable antiques), sacks and stockings. First, each of us, my mother and I, would grab a goose by the neck. Being careful to avoid the vicious strokes of the wings, we placed a stocking over its head and neck to prevent its beak from biting our arms. Now, while sitting on the stool, the goose on its back in our lap, its head and neck under our arm, and with boilers held securely between our knees, we proceeded to remove the feathers, beginning at the neck and working downward. It was through experience that you learned to remove the feathers and down with a rubbing motion without tearing the skin. If the geese cooperated, which they seldom did, it took about ten minutes to finish each one. When the boilers were full, the feathers were emptied into white muslin sacks. The operation then continued until all the geese were picked. In six weeks the geese were ready to be picked again. In the Fall when we also picked the young geese, which were full feathered, it would take us all day to get done.

A few of the geese were sold to the neighbors for Thanksgiving or Christmas, but mostly the local store took a good part of them in return for provisions to be used during the Winter. We did, however, always have a goose for Christmas dinner. Mother was always careful to save the excess fat, which she mixed with turpentine. This mixture was her favorite remedy for croup. It was applied to the chest of a child and then covered with a flannel cloth.

Those feathers that I helped harvest were most welcome when I chose to marry a young share cropper in the community. Where most young farm brides used a tick stuffed with straw. I was fortunate to have two feather beds and pillows for each.

It was quite common in those days for share croppers to move from farm to farm on March 1, trying to find a more desirable location. Then those feather beds were used to

protect the mirrors, clocks, and other fragile pieces of glassware.

Now, fifty-five years later and after serving through six different moves as share croppers, during which time we experienced several crop failures due to droughts and floods, as well as the Depression, those feather beds have been retired. They no longer are needed in our centrally heated home.

GRANDMA'S RECIPE BOOK

Louise E. Efnor

Cleaning and Polishing Stoves, Dishwashing. Care of Kitchen Ware, Care of Glassware and Cut Glass, Steel Knives and Forks, Care of Silverware, Care of Sinks and Disposal of Garbage, Chamber Work, Care of Lamps—these were all topics discussed at great length in “The Day’s Routine” in Grandma’s *Household and Recipe Book*. A recipe in Grandma’s time was not just in connection with food preparation; said recipe might be a “Better Way To Black a Stove,” “How To Make a Stove Holder” (the early version of a potholder, made by putting a piece of asbestos between two heavy pieces of cloth), or “The Best Way to Soften Hard Water.” One recipe for the latter required you to place a quantity of wood ashes into a tightly closed woolen bag, and then immerse the bag in a tub of water—the required amount of ashes being ascertained by experiment!

Many of the first recipe books were family Bibles, and Grandma used her Bible in this fashion, filing among the pages of her precious Scriptures favorite recipes of neighbors and loved ones and little mementoes of by-gone days. Grandma used her Bible daily, so what better place to keep her prized recipes?

The daily journal, a big thick book with lined pages, was

also handy, especially to write recipes in. Along side of the recipe might be written the name of the household or person’s name who gave the recipe. Other pages would no doubt tell of baby’s first tooth, Uncle Joseph’s death, the breeding dates for cows and sows, how much corn to plant, and a list of all the butter, eggs, and other produce sold during the year. Grandma noted that “My chickens are going into stew pot; I’m not selling anymore at such a give-away price,” or, “made this cake for Pearl’s wedding. Needs more flavoring.”

No time or temperature was given in Grandma’s recipes—nothing telling how long to bake the product or how hot the oven should be. They usually read, “cook until done,” “bake ‘til it springs back when touched lightly” (this one is still in use yet today), or “boil down ‘til it is thickened.” Proper doneness was determined according to color—light, medium, or dark brown! If a recipe failed, perhaps it was the fault of too big a “pinch,” too small a “smidgen,” or the “butter the size of a walnut” being not the exact size of the person giving the recipe to you. How do you measure a “dollop” and how much does half an egg shell hold, were questions only to be answered by the person making up the recipe. Even when teaspoons and tablespoons were used in Grandma’s measuring, they could be different in size from those of a neighbor because all were not manufactured or made the same size. Grandma’s old stoneware coffee cup was used to measure flour, sugar, molasses, milk, or vinegar; a neighbor might measure these ingredients in a dainty china teacup. Small wonder the finished product never quite measured up to Grandma’s!

Grandma’s first real cookbook (she still referred to it as her recipe book!), was from the Warsaw Milling Company at Warsaw, Illinois. They recommended the use of Grace Mills Flour, which product they manufactured. They also sold other brands which they made, such as: AAA 1 Patent, Red Cross, Purity Patent, Spring and Winter Patent, and Eclipse, all made from the best of wheat. The recipes were compiled

(for the benefit of the Warsaw Free Public Reading Room) by the Women's Club, whose president was Donna M. Parker, M.D. The publishing date reads April, 1900, and the price—fifty cents.

Enjoyment could be found in reading the advertisements in Grandma's book. Walter Baker and Co., Ltd. of Dorchester, Massachusetts, advertises Pure High Grade Cocoas and Chocolates; no chemicals are used in their manufacture. Baron von Liebig, one of the best known writers on dietetics, says: "Cocoa is a perfect food, as wholesome as delicious, a beneficent restorer of exhausted power . . . It soothes both stomach and brain, and for this reason, as well as for others, it is the best friend of those engaged in literary pursuits." Other advertisers must have let their products sell themselves; they wrote their ads very simply: Rumford Baking Powder, Dwight Cow Brand Soda, Arm and Hammer Soda (Bad Soda Spoils Good Flour); Frank H. Jones—Shirts Made to Order; J.A. White—Stock and Windmill Tanks; Northwestern Yeast Company and Health Yeast, Perfection Starch, Eagle Health Pepsin Gum—all made by the Ralston Yeast Company. If the recipes made you ill, you could always call H. Carnes, M.D., who also had an ad in a very prominent place in the book!

"Too many bitter herbs spoil a stew" is found under the heading of SOUPS. Vegetables are very pleasantly introduced with this couplet:

"Vegetal wealth a luscious hoard,
Within our garden's bound are stored."

Such niceties are found throughout Grandma's book and gave her a "lift" as she toiled over the recipe. You could always tell which pages she had enjoyed most by the well-worn, smudged recipes!

Grandma's "recipe book" and her Bible (with all of its memorabilia) played a very important role in her life—one providing food for the body, the other food for the soul. As much as she used and enjoyed her recipe book, she used her

Bible more. It was her "recipe book" for daily living. Her favorite quote from the precious Book would surely have been: "O taste and see that the Lord is good. . ."

SAWMILL MEMORIES

John P. Kramer

In September, 1921, Clark Cox moved his sawmill to my father's eighty-acre timber. This was a dense timber because my grandfather had never allowed anyone to cut trees unless they were dead. Timberland was as valuable as level farm land when my grandfather purchased that timber in 1897.

Since there was no running water, it was necessary to dig a well. Mr. Cox and his helpers, Mr. Phillips, a saw mill operator, and Mr. Smith, a steam engineer, chose a spot in a ravine where the soil was very mucky. They were thinking they would have a shallow well. They spaded and shoveled a hole six feet in diameter and eight feet deep. This type of work was new to them. They had had plenty of experience digging trenches while serving in World War I. They built a windlass with three poles, six inches by six feet, bolted together at the top. Two poles that supported the hand crank shaft were set closer together so the rope on the shaft that lowered and raised the buckets could be cranked at a standing position. After digging a hole eighteen feet deep and still finding no water, they reduced the diameter to four feet, which was the size of most wells. After digging another twenty-two feet they hit a small vein of water. Then they bored a six-inch hole ten feet deeper and hit a gusher. A pump operated with a gasoline engine and a pump jack working for several hours did not pump it dry. Mr. Cox offered to wall the well with bricks if my father would furnish them. Since it was so far from our home, my father did not see a need for it. He later regretted his decision.

Assured of an adequate water supply, the next task was clearing a road wide enough for the saw and a single cylinder "Buffalo" steam engine. It was necessary to cut the tree as close to the ground as possible. That was a very difficult and back breaking job, using a cross cut saw and axes. By going around the larger trees, they ended up with a very winding road. The work took longer than they had expected. They were anxious to get a clearing made east of the well on a south slope where the mill would sit.

Mr. Cox had a team of Percheron horses that he used to snake the logs from the roadway to the mill site. On Saturdays they stopped working in time to hitch the horses to their carriage, drive to Avon, leave the horses at the livery barn, and catch the train to Galesburg. They returned on Monday morning with their provisions for the week.

When they had finished clearing the road and mill site, they had enough logs cut for two cabins, two barns, and a lining for the well. They used sugar maple for this lining because some kinds of wood would color and flavor the water.

They were ready to set up the mill. They dug a hole four feet square and three feet deep. The saw blade was to be placed over it. The dirt from the hole was used to level the ground that the mill frame was to be placed on. Then they lowered a belt conveyor into the hole to carry the saw dust to the south side and set the steam engine near the well. The logs were piled on a slope north of the mill, which made it easier to get them onto the table that moved back and forth by a reversible winch that it was cabled to. They used cant hooks to roll the logs and to turn the logs as the slabs were sawed off.

When the sawing began, Mr. Cox hired two Harvey brothers from Kirkwood to do the off bearing, that is, piling lumber and slats. As soon as they had enough boards sawed, they began building two cabins. By this time, it was getting too chilly to live in a tent as they had been doing. The first cabin was sixteen feet long, fourteen feet wide, and nine feet

high, with a door and a small window on the south side. The north side was seven feet high. The frame was constructed of two inch lumber. The siding and roof were made of one inch lumber. All of it was covered with black tar roofing paper lathed every three feet. The floor was also of rough sawed lumber. There were two built-in beds along the north side. There a small table and nail kegs served as chairs. The stump burner stove would hold twelve inch chunks cut eighteen inches long. They heated water and did some cooking on top of this stove, but did most of it on a two burner kerosene stove. Kerosene lamps and lanterns were their sources of light. Mr. Phillip's cabin was similar to the first one but much larger because his wife and two sons planned to join him in the spring.

Two barns were constructed similar to the cabins. The cracks were covered with narrow strips of boards. There were two double stalls and a small bin to store feed. One half of a hollow log served as feed trough and the other half as a watering trough. The ends were boarded and puttied with blue clay secured from the well digging.

With their building project completed, they began sawing logs which were to be made into railroad ties and hauled to Youngstown, a distance of six miles. When they had to drag logs farther, they used an A-shaped skid made from the fork of a tree.

After they had enough ties sawed, Mr. Cox hired three teamsters; Sam McCracken of Abingdon, with his Belgium team, Edward Kissick and his son of Roseville, each with a Percheron team. They had heavy breeching brass mounted harnesses much heavier than that used in farming. The teams were sharp shod. The shoes had to be reset and sharpened every three weeks. The blacksmith was the busiest place in town. It was a good place to get the news and swap stories, for it was first come, first served.

The ties were hauled on the running gears of a high-wheeled wagon. The number of ties hauled depended on the

condition of the road. If the road condition was good, the average haul would be sixteen ties. Riding back to the mill by straddling the coupling pole on the hounds that were two-and-one-half-inch wooden pieces and shaped to the rear axle would make riding a mechanical bull child's play. It was a very rough ride when the roads were frozen and very dirty when the mud splattered in the driver's face.

Mr. Cox hired a local boy, Forrest "Shorty" Long, to haul lumber for the frame of a large barn still standing on the Willis Chase farm located three miles north of Bushnell. He used a high wheeled wagon gear with coupling pole extended, for he was hauling lumbers more than twice as long as ties. He also hauled planks to be used for bridge floors. He drove his father's span of large sorrel mules.

The more sawing they did, the larger the pile of sawdust the Phillips brothers and I had to play in. Farmers who had ice houses came for sawdust which they packed around the cakes of ice. It was used for paths, banked around the cabins and barns to keep out the cold and for bedding in the barns.

I remember getting home from school, filling the wood box, gathering the eggs, and hurrying to the timber to see what progress had been made. We boys picked wild flowers, swung on the wild grapevines, and chewed slippery elm.

I was fascinated with all the activities during those two and a half years. I remember how sad I was when they moved out of our timber and I heard the whistle of the steam engine for the last time.

THE VILLAGE BLACKSMITH

Louise Parker Simms

My father, James Parker, was the village blacksmith in the town of Abingdon, Illinois, for nearly fifty years. As far

as stature was concerned, he in no way resembled the "village smithy" that stood "under the spreading chestnut tree" in Longfellow's poem. He was a small man, like his father before him. He stood scarcely five feet four inches tall. But he did a big man's work—work that required muscle and strength—and he did it well.

In addition to the usual blacksmith work, he was also a horseshoer. Many times I have seen his strength challenged by a huge team of horses he was fitting with shoes.

Dad's blacksmith shop was a one-story brick building in the first block of East Martin Street. Many years ago, in the early part of this century, there was a livery stable next door, with only an alley separating them.

One side of the shop had a floor of thick wood planks over the concrete. This is where the horses stood while being shod. The adjacent wall held heavy metal rings to which the horses were tied.

The exposed rafters overhead held horseshoes hanging in pairs on nails. They were secured with the aid of a long slender pole with a hook on the end. The straight ends of the shoes had to be heated in the forge until the metal was pliable enough to be hammered on the anvil and bent down at just the right location. This was determined by "fitting" the shoe to the horse's hoof before the shoe was heated.

During the icy winter months often a shoe called a "never slip" shoe was used. This had special tips applied to the ends, making the shoe easier to grip the ice without slipping.

After the shoe was nailed to the horse's hoof, the nail ends were cut off and then filed down smooth along the side of the hoof. Any ragged edges of the hoof were neatly trimmed. This worried me when I was a child until I learned that shoeing the horse and trimming the hoof didn't hurt any more than it does to trim the cuticle on our fingernails.

During the summer, when the big wide doors were open, there was usually an audience of curious children standing in

the doorway, watching the horses being shod. This didn't bother Dad, for he loved children. His only concern was that they did not get close enough to be hurt.

In warm weather the horse's owner or someone would use a special brush to keep flies from bothering the animal. The brush resembled a horse's tail fastened to the end of a stick. This method usually kept the horses standing still while being shod.

My father had little formal education. He had learned the blacksmith trade under a man named Tom Austin, who had a shop in the first block of East Pearl Street. Dad opened his first shop across the street from the location where he worked for the last thirty-three years of his life.

Dad was an ingenious man who learned many things on his own whenever the need arose. I never remember anything which was brought into my dad's blacksmith shop which he couldn't figure out a way to fix. Farmers depended on his skills to keep much of their machinery operating. And eventually "Jimmie" (as his friends knew him) sharpened their plows and discs.

All the horses to be shod were not work horses. Some were riding horses or horses used to take the family to town and to church in a buggy or surrey (if the family was very large). Dad had a rack of buggy whips for sale. They were displayed on the partition between the large front work shop and the smaller "back room."

In this smaller room he painted buggies—first with a brush and later by spray painting. The finishing trim on a buggy consisted of a fine line of contrasting color outlining the body and accenting each wood spoke of the wheels. This took a steady hand and a good eye—something which became more difficult as Dad grew older.

But the time soon came (around 1920 or before) when buggies were replaced by the automobile, and tractors were introduced to replace the horse. Consequently, there were not as many horses needing to be shod nor buggies in need of

paint. So Dad started painting automobiles and lettering trucks.

After automobiles became more numerous, he added equipment to vulcanize tires, learning this trade on his own. That was when every tire had a "casing" (the heavier outer tire) and an "inner tube" (the inflatable rubber ring which fit inside the casing). The inner tube could be cold patched (much like applying a band-aid) or it could be vulcanized (which involved the application of heat, but lasted longer). Vulcanizing a casing which had "blown out" involved cementing a patch on, then placing the injured section of the tire in a special mold which was then heated.

Sometimes the tire was so badly damaged it wasn't worth the cost of repairing. So Dad added a line of new tires to sell. I remember they were U. S. Royal Cord tires and were considered to be the top of the line.

During slack times in the winter, the old pot-bellied stove in his blacksmith shop was a favorite gathering place for many of his farmer customers and friends—much the same as they would gather now at a local coffee shop to discuss local and world affairs. "Kangaroo Court" they called it. I am sure a diversity of opinions were expressed by the circle of men around that stove!

Dad sort of rolled with the punches and flowed along with the times, making changes in his line of work whenever changing times dictated it. He never made a fortune, but he provided for his family of four with honest labor.

DELIVERING MAIL ACROSS TROUBLESOME CREEK

Addra Icenogle Graham

"Thunder, lightning, rain, mud, and Daddy!" announced my four-year-old brother, Homer, as he was looking out the

window one black, miserable evening. It was eight o'clock and we had been anxiously waiting since before six for some member of the family to spot the old mail wagon pulled by "Jack and Jenny," the two faithful mules that would be bringing my father home from an all-day's drive over twenty-five miles of muddy mail route.

My mother started towards the kitchen to move supper to the front of the wood range; my brothers, Elmer and Clement, jumped up and put on their overcoats and boots to unhitch, feed and groom the team; and everyone else quit all the bickering and worrying because "Daddy" was home. Here he come into the kitchen, dog-tired, wet to the skin, carrying his old kerosene lantern and dinner pail. Nobody was left out, though, as he greeted everyone with a hug and a kiss before taking off his dripping sheepskin overcoat and boots and dropping into a chair.

The life of a rural mail carrier in the twenties was far from easy. He had to arise winter and summer—fair weather or foul—at 5:30 a.m. to do his chores and get to the post office in time to case the mail and be ready to start out on the route by about 8:30 a.m. All the roads in summer were dusty dirt in good weather and muddy to just a slough in bad. In the winter they were frozen rough ruts or drifted full with snow, but most people expected the mail to be delivered even if they couldn't get to town themselves.

My father, after trying to make a living for his family of nine working at the potteries in Macomb, decided in 1918 that he would take the civil service test which all candidates for the rural carrier jobs were required to pass before they could qualify. I can remember hearing about how my mother quizzed my father in math, place geography, and grammar in preparation for taking the exam and how elated they were when he finally received word that he had been hired to carry the mail on old Route 4 south of Macomb.

That route went south of the post office on Randolph Street to Grant and then east to Maple Avenue, south the

length of that road, east one mile past the county farm, on south across Troublesome Creek to Ebenezer Church and to Camp Creek Cemetery. Then it went east to Route 67 down Baumgartner Lane, then north to Camp Creek Church and one mile east to McMillan Lane, back to Route 67. Then it went back west to Frank and Charlie Patrick's to Fairmont School, and then past Tom Cash's house and west on Grant to Randolph and back to the post office.

The first thing my father had to do was to get horses to pull his mail rig. I have been told that his first team was "Ole Topsy," a bay that weighed about 1800 pounds. She dragged one foot, but she could pull well. "Nellie," an almost black road horse that weighed only about 700 pounds, was the other half of this team. When they were working together, it looked like "Topsy" was pulling "Nellie" as well as the wagon, and my older brother and sisters used to laugh and say, "Here comes the elephant and the mouse."

One can just imagine what it would look like to see those two horses pulling the old green mail wagon. And what a wagon it was! There has never been one like it before or since because it was fashioned by my father, Elmer C. Icenogle, to his individual specifications. It was built with pine lumber on a buggy chassis in a box shape about four feet by three feet—barely big enough for my dad and the mail. He cut two holes in the front for the reins to go through, to eliminate frigid air from getting in. He made a glass "windshield" which could be raised and hooked to the ceiling for fresh air in warm weather. There were two small doors about 14 inches wide on each side and glass windows that slid in a groove from the back across those doors to make the wagon as snug as possible. My father often took heated bricks and put them in a blanket or rug, in which he then wrapped his feet to keep them warm. Also, the kerosene lantern was kept lighted in the winter for warmth, but it was considered dangerous because of its fumes and because of the hazard of fire in case of a runaway. When the bricks had cooled off or when the

glass "windshield" would get frosted over from his breath, my father would get out and walk along, driving the team and keeping warm through exercise. Sometimes in freezing and thawing weather the mud would collect on the wheels until they wouldn't turn. Then he would have to clean the freezing mess off the wheels before he could go any further.

What an impression all this must have made on a four-year-old to prompt my little brother to connect bad weather with the coming home of our father!

THE DURHAM TOWNSHIP WOLF HUNT

Robert R. Wagner

During the mid-twenties, several farmers in the north part of Hancock County were losing young livestock due to wolves in the area. For two years a man reported to be a government wolf hunter was in the area to try to eliminate them. I do not know if he caught any or not, but I am sure several stray dogs disappeared.

In the winter of 1928, the Hancock County Farm Bureau decided to sponsor a wolf hunt in Durham Township. There were several reasons for selecting that location. It was a square township easily identified by roads around it, and there were no towns or villages that would bother the drive. The east side encompassed Lamoine River, then known as Crooked Creek, and the northwest part of the township had Camp Creek. Both areas were known to be the habitat of wolves. The center of the township was level land where the hunters could see any wolves that would be within the drive.

The date for the drive was set for February 2, 1928. The problem was that the weather did not cooperate very well. The temperature was ten above zero, and it was snowing. The winds were pretty sharp. They stationed men all around the township—eight per mile. Not more than every third man

was allowed to carry a gun for fear someone would be accidentally shot. As the township is six miles square, it took about two hundred volunteers to start the drive. At nine o'clock a.m., everyone started to walk toward the center of the township. I was attending grade school at Bross School, and I remember seeing two men cross our school yard about 10:30.

At about 12:00 noon, they all converged on a square forty-acre field on the Bartlett Farm southwest of the Durham Church, and in the center were two wolves. The field was a pasture where there was no place for the wolves to hide, and it sloped slightly to the northwest. By that time, the snow was blowing so badly that the hunters could barely see across the field. The wolves kept circling inside the field just out of gun range until finally they decided to make a break to the northwest, or low corner of the field. As they approached the corner, hunters on both the north and west sides began shooting pretty much toward each other. The wolves actually made it through the line, but those in the hunt said they thought they were actually hit before that but sheer determination and speed carried them through. Then they died.

After the hunt, the ladies of the Durham Church served soup and sandwiches to some two hundred and twenty men who participated in the drive. The next day my parents took me to see the wolf carcasses. The male wolf stood about four feet tall and the female was about the size of a German Shepherd dog. Although there was some disappointment that there were only two wolves killed, that seemed to end the problem of the livestock disappearing.

HE WAS A DOWSER

Alma M. Strunk

Yes, he was a dowser, and I am a dowser, too.

What is a dowser, you ask? Well, a dowser is a person who has mystical powers, or you might call it a "gift." Not much is required of one to be a dowser. My father was one and a very good one, I should add. He wanted his sons to follow him in that, but it was his only daughter, me, who could dowse.

You just need a forked stick, preferably one cut from a young peach tree. Leave the bark on if you really want something strange to happen. The bark will peel off the ends of the stick where you are holding it as well as the skin off your thumb and finger. You can't keep it from doing this. But a green peach stick isn't really necessary. Any forked branch will do, even baling wire will work as well. We still have the wire which Dad used in later years. It is in his trunk, stored with many other memorabilia. You fold the wire into a V shape with each side about fifteen inches long. This will work as well as a stick but it is still just as hard on the thumb and finger, if you grasp too hard.

Maybe it is time to tell you what "dowsing" is. A more common name for a dowser is "water witch." Witching is trying to find an underground stream of water where people can dig a well and be sure to get water instead of a dry hole. When we lived at Dow, Illinois, we had one such well, completely dry, but it was a grand place to hang cream, butter, and such to keep them cool. My first little China tea set is in the bottom of that twenty-foot well. I threw them in there in a fit of anger. My cousin wanted to play with them and I didn't want her to. Well, needless to say, she didn't play with them, nor did I.

Anyway, Dad witched for another well and found a stream about twenty feet away from the dry one, where they dug, and that new one couldn't be pumped dry.

People from miles around would come to get Dad to find the best spot in which to dig a well. He would take his "witch" and say, "Elma, come with me," and we would go to where this particular person thought he wanted a well. Sometimes it was in the barnyard for watering stock, or maybe near the homestead for family use. He would begin to walk over the terrain in different directions to see where he could feel the most pull on his "witch." He would grasp his forked stick with both hands, thumb and first finger holding the ends with the V up. If he was near the underground stream, that stick would begin to turn downward, turning toward the body and, as he came near to where the stream was, and as he crossed it, the "witch" would point straight down and no amount of trying could keep it upright. If you grasped too hard, it would pull the skin right off your thumb and finger. At the point where the witch turned straight down was the right place to dig. Often I was elected to stand on that spot while Dad tried other places. I wasn't always the best marker, as I moved a lot. However, when he was sure he had found the strongest spot, the next step was to find how deep the stream was below the surface of the ground. The depth was determined by the number of feet from where you felt the pull on the "witch" to the point where it pointed straight down. Dad was quite successful. He had only two failures that I know of, and for no reason that he could determine. His services were sought after for miles around, maybe because they were free, as he never charged. He said it didn't cost him anything to get, so why charge for a God-given gift.

How did I become a dowser? As I said, Dad took me with him quite often, and he would have me use the "witch" too. (Later I had a little one of my own.) I guess he just wanted to prove to people it worked for someone else beside him. So I learned from experience. I had many a sore thumb and finger before I learned not to grasp so tight. It does pull on your shoulders and arms and they become tired and sore if

you work too long. It took me a long time to really believe I could do it. But after seeing positive results of water in the holes that were dug, I believe.

Dowsing is a real gift and is authentic, and my dad was a good one.

GRANDMA'S SPRING CLEANING

Beula Setters

"Wake up, Beula, we clean the west bedroom today!" Grandma called. "Grandpa has started the fire in the summer kitchen and brought in a fresh ham from the smokehouse. You can start breakfast while I milk old Betsy. I'll make the biscuits when I get back. we must have a good breakfast today for we can't stop long for dinner. I'll put the soup beans and a ham-hock on the back of the cook stove to simmer."

That's what I heard at six o'clock on a bright May morning back in 1912.

We all had our work to do before breakfast. Grandpa opened, swept, and cleaned his store, which was next door, Grandma did the chores, and I cooked the breakfast.

When Grandma came back with a two gallon bucket of warm milk, she took the fresh strainer rag from the kitchen cabinet, strained the milk, and placed the crocks of milk on a side table. We called Grandpa and sat down to a breakfast of fried ham, eggs, potatoes, gravy, hot biscuits, coffee, and postum for me. Also a covered honey dish with a comb of honey was a permanent fixture on Grandma's table.

After breakfast Grandma said, "Beula, you can clean up the table and do the dishes while Pa and I move the furniture out of the bedroom. Then it will be ready for you to take up the carpet."

Soon my father appeared to help Grandma take down the little box stove, a small rectangular iron stove with a door

in front through which one could place a good sized log. It wasn't as hard to move as the big pot-bellied stove in the sitting room, but it did take two men to move it and to take down the stove pipe.

"Now where did we store that flu-stopper last fall?" Grandma asked.

The flu-stopper was a carved brass plate, with a pretty picture in the center, which was placed in the round hole near the ceiling when the stove pipe was removed. This was necessary to keep the soot from coming into the room in stormy weather, as well as chimney swallows that often built nests in the chimney in summer.

The heavy mahogany wardrobe was the biggest problem, but it had to go outside the room, so the wall to wall rag carpet could be taken up. We had no closets built in the house in the early days, so this six foot piece of furniture with double doors, shelves, drawers and hooks inside was used for our clothes. Also the clean chamber pot was stored in the wardrobe during the day. The chamber pot was a pretty white pottery vessel with a lid, kept under the bed at night for one's convenience when the call of nature came during unfavorable weather.

The bed was taken apart, the featherbed placed on the clothesline to air, the straw-tick (used in place of springs) was laid on the grass, the wood slats were washed and placed in the sun to dry.

Grandma and I moved the smaller pieces of furniture. Very carefully we carried the little commode with the large china bowl and pitcher into the parlor. If one remembered to fill the pitcher at night there was warmer water to wash with in the morning. Then there was Grandma's platform rocker, in which she always sat by the window to relax and sew quilt blocks.

After all the furniture was out of the room, we removed the pictures from the walls, such as the framed motto "Home

Sweet Home," a sampler embroidered in wool and human hair.

"Here's Grandpa's wild west picture," said Grandma as she handed it to me. "It always reminds me of the time Jesse James stayed in St. Mary's at Mrs. Morris' house."

"Grandma, when I was little and Mama left me with Mrs. Morris, I always took a nap in her spare bedroom. Do you suppose I slept in the same bed that Jesse James slept in?"

"I reckon you did. She only had two bedrooms," Grandma replied.

"Ah! how awful," I exclaimed.

"Now let's get busy taking up this carpet," Grandma said impatiently. "You can take out the tacks around the wall. My rheumatism talks to me when I stoop."

So with a tack remover I settled down to an hour's work of pulling out tacks. When I had finished, we called the men to put the carpet on the clothesline and beat it with a carpet beater, which was an oval wire contraption with a handle, somewhat like a tennis racket. All day long we took turns beating the dust out of that carpet. The straw that had been on the floor under the carpet was picked up to burn.

While I was taking out the tacks, Grandma took down the lace curtains and green blinds. She dusted the blinds inside and out, washed the lace curtains and pinned them on the curtain stretcher frames, a rectangular wood frame with small nail like projections every two inches on which the curtains were stretched and pinned. These too were placed in the sun to dry. She then ripped open the pillow ticks and threw away the feathers, washed the pillow ticks, and later filled them with fresh goose feathers.

After the carpet and dirty straw were taken out of the room, my job was to wash the windows. Grandma gave me a cake of Bon-Ami. I had fun rubbing the white paste on the window—and drawing pictures when Grandma wasn't looking. Suddenly I heard, "Now, Beula, no foolin' around,

take that dry rag and shine those windows. We want to finish this room before dark."

Last of all we cleaned the rose covered wall paper with a special dough that Grandma had mixed. The dough was kneaded like bread dough as we wiped downward to clean the wall. The woodwork was washed with ammonia water.

When we had finished, Grandma scrubbed the pine floor with lye soap until it gleamed. After the floor had dried, we put down fresh straw, and then began the long hard process of laying the well beaten carpet, stretching and tacking it wall to wall. Then all the furniture was carried back into the room. If we finished before dark we were lucky.

Oftentimes, as soon as the bed was set up, I would drop into it, exhausted, reveling in the fresh aroma of the clean room.

FEATHERWEIGHT MEMORIES

Zella Sill

Our Grandma McMeen raised poultry—not just chickens, but geese, ducks, guineas and turkeys, and more of them than ever in the summer of 1918. She was doing her part at home, as their youngest son was over in France and a World War I star hung in the parlor window.

When we visited Grandma on her farm northeast of Canton, if we children were very quiet, we could go into the part of the chicken house where the setting hens nested. Grandma knew just which day each nest of eggs would hatch. What fun it was to carry the tiny chicks into the summer kitchen and put them in a box by the big old range to keep them safe until the whole setting was hatched. The next day the hen and her brood were taken to a little coop in the orchard. The hen was shut in, but the chicks would come in and out, until they were old enough to keep up with their

mother as she foraged all over the place. But she knew her own coop when bedtime came.

Big pans of skimmed milk were set on the back of the range, and the clabber was fed to the young poultry or finished off into cottage cheese for us. The goslings and ducklings liked bread and milk. They made a lot of noise and nibbled your bare toes if you got too close. I was afraid of the big geese and turkeys.

I don't think that Grandma had any commercial feed, just wheat, oats, and cracked corn, and lots of fresh water. No fair dipping it from the horse trough, though. We had to pump and pump. That was hard work for a ten-year-old. Then we ventured out past all those noisy birds to fill their water pans. The ducks were experts at getting the water dirty, but if we could get out there while they were at the far corner of the orchard, that gave the other birds a chance.

One time I walked into the summer kitchen and found Grandma plucking the down off the old geese. They didn't need it in the summer time. Grandma had a big piece of canvas stretched over her lap, and held the goose over a big tub as she plucked the down. She held the goose's head back under her arm to keep it from biting her. The geese didn't seem to mind, for they didn't struggle much while she plucked them. She made pillows and feather ticks for all the family with a mixture of the down and feathers.

One hot night the thunder began to rumble and Grandma hopped out of her bed, threw a shawl around her shoulders, and lighted the lantern to go check on the coops of roosters she had shut up to go to the market the next day. She put some heavy planks over them to protect them from rain and wind, and then hurried along, stopping at the back house. From that shelter she could see the many small coops that were staked down. Satisfied that they were all secure, she went back to bed. Then came the gully washer and the next morning the coops and roosters were all gone. It had

been real handy for someone to carry them across the orchard to the road, and their tracks were all washed away.

I don't know whether Grandma was more angry at her loss or more frightened at the thought that those fellows might have been lurking in the shadows as she tended her flock.

After the Armistice was signed, it was soon Christmas and there was a big celebration with all of the families there to welcome Uncle Elmer home from the war. We grandchildren were called into the kitchen to see the roast turkey, the goose, the ducks, the guineas and chickens, and the big kettles of other things, and then we were shown the long dining table set with her finest linens, china, and silver.

After that, the youngest aunts took us into Grandma's bedroom. It looked strange in there. The furniture had been removed, except the big round stove, and there was room to play games. Hidden behind bedsheets was a Christmas tree that reached the high ceiling, but we couldn't see it until we had eaten at "second table."

I'm sure Grandma made many of the small gifts that hung on that tree, and Santa came in time to see us get them. I think our little cousin, Guy McMeen, was the only one who talked to him. He wanted to know why Santa had boots just like his daddy's.

BUILDING A FARM FENCE

Burdette Graham

The pioneer farmer came to a new era and new home and usually brought along some farm animals, or acquired some soon to provide power and food. Also, a garden and some crops were necessary, but the animals and crops could not be allowed together, so farm fences were a next step. These fences had to be built out of materials at hand, as money was

scarce to buy lumber, or wire. So the fence which required nothing except wood and labor became common on most farms. The fence which could be built with nothing but wood was Split Rail or Zig-Zag Fence. Instead of being built on a narrow, straight line, the rails zigged back and forth over the line and made a fence taking up about six feet in width. As years went on, and land became more valuable for growing crops and the chore of keeping weeds down along this fence required too much wasted time and labor, the zig-zag fence was replaced by another rail fence called the Straight Rail Fence.

To build a rail fence required rails, which were split from logs usually about ten feet long, but they could be any desired length. I missed most of the labor in the timber because it was a winter job done by Dad and the hired man while I was in school, but a few times I was able to go along and see how things were done.

The common tree used for posts and rails was White Oak, but others could be used. Felling a tree was not much different than today, except for using hand tools instead of chain saws. First a notch was cut, usually with an axe on the side in the direction the tree was to fall. Then sawing from the opposite side was done with a two man saw. If only one man was available, the axe was used for this cut, too. Once the tree was down and trimmed up, it was cut into lengths of logs desired for the rails needed. Ten-foot rails were used for the lateral part of the fence and six-foot rails needed for posts or props.

Splitting was done with a mall or sledge and steel wedge. Sometimes wedges made from elm were used, called gluttons. They had a tendency to bounce back at the woodsman after being hit with the sledge.

Rails were usually hauled to the fence site on a sled, but if no snow was on the ground, wagons were used. Rails were piled in bunches along the fence line ready for fence building

as soon as the frost was out of the ground to allow for setting end posts and brace rails.

To begin building a rail fence, two posts were set where the end of the fence was to be, either at a corner or gate. These two posts were set beside each other and about four inches apart to allow rails to be inserted between. The two posts were fastened at the top with wire or an iron loop to keep them from separating.

Next the laterals were laid. Instead of being laid directly down the fence line, they were laid to cross over the line and form the zig-zag to hold the fence up, much as we see today in a folding screen. First, a rail was laid with one end between the two set posts, and then the rail was moved at the other end about three feet to the right of the direct fence line, this making the first zig. Now another rail was laid with one end on top of the first rail, and the other end zagged across the fence line to about three feet, where the third panel was begun with a rail being placed on top and zig-zag back across the fence line. This process could now be carried out as far as desired, but after a few panels were started, the second rail could be added. To begin, a foot long piece of rail was laid between the two end posts, on top of the first rail. The second rail was now laid on top of the spacer and zig-zagged across the fence line above the first rail, and the end of the rail of the second panel became the spacer. The second rail was now laid on all but the last starting panel.

The third rail was laid in the same manner, and as many more as desired, usually six high. This was followed to the end, which was finished up as begun with two end or gate posts.

Now the brace rails were ready to be set up. This part required digging a hole about a foot deep on each side of the zig and about two feet from the rails. The braces were then leaned over the top of the zig from both sides. To anchor these at the top required the seventh rail, called the key rail, which was laid in the notch formed by the brace rails at each

zig or zag. When the key rail was laid on top of all panels, the fence was done. These brace posts caused trouble because animals ran into them and field equipment would hit and break them. Some less strong braces were used by making the braces longways with the fence, but these did not offer much side bracing and animals could more easily push the panel over.

An improved method of building a rail fence allowed a narrow straight line, and was usually used along lots. To make this straight rail fence required using two posts, the ends of the rails of each panel serving as spacers for the rails of the next panel. This required wire or metal loops at the top of each panel, and this wire or iron had to be purchased with dollars which were not always available. This got rid of the weed patches, and allowed more land to be used for cultivated crops, but this was the beginning of removing sheltered places for wildlife.

Some farm fences were built by piling up stumps, but I never saw one of those, probably because our farm was too far from the timber, and hauling stumps was almost impossible, while rail hauling was easy.

Some parts of the country built fences from rocks which had to be hauled from the fields, but we had no rocks in Illinois prairies.

Many farm fences were built from sawed lumber, but this was usually seen around the farm house, and came after a number of years of farming and money making.

Another fence was very popular because it cost nothing, except labor in planting and trimming. That was the Osage Orange hedge fence. Many farms were fenced by hedge. It required a few years after planting before it could serve as a livestock fence, but thousands of miles were planted on field and farm boundaries. Much of it was planted by contract fence planters, but that required cash outlay so many were planted by the farmers.

Hedge balls were gathered in the fall after they had

fallen from mature hedge trees. These required about four months of dormancy before the seeds would sprout. Many times the hedge balls, or hedge apples, as some called them, were placed in a sack and suspended in a pond or creek until spring. At that time they were decomposed, and seeds could be separated from the pulp and planted. Some people plowed a furrow along the fence line with a walking plow and after scattering the seeds along about one foot apart, the furrow was closed or covered by another trip with the walking plow, moving the plowed soil back over the seeds. Others used a spade and made a hole six inches deep, dropped the seed in, and filled the hole again.

In about four years the fence had to be trimmed and could be used, but it did not yet make a good fence until a few more years of growth and trimming.

Trimming was a spring job and usually one when too wet to do other things. The hedge knife was about three feet long with a foot long handle and a hook at the end of the handle to prevent the knife from slipping out of the hands of the trimmer and striking the other trimmer, who was on the other side of the fence. If the trimmed brush was left, it provided an excellent place for wildlife. Many times it was piled and burned.

I did not have the opportunity to plant any hedges, but I have an Osage Orange tree in my back yard, which was left when the old Currens Farm was turned into a housing area. We still gather hedge balls, usually disposing of them, but we always have a few which decompose and start new hedge trees. I have been on several farms which have pastures which have been neglected which are almost solid with hedge trees.

My main memories of the hedges in our community are of the walks to school along the hedge rows. Just about every kind of bird could be found there, with their nests, songs, and little ones. The brown thrashers, and doves, and many others were down low, while the crows and jays were up higher. I

remember the workers pulling the trees down by using some of the bigger ones as anchors, and employing chains and pulleys and a team on a windlass or tree puller. Workers then worked the down trees into posts, and fire wood and piled the brush and burned it.

Then a new metal barbed wire or woven fence took the place of the hedge and the birds, and now a crop could be grown right up to the fence and the weeds mowed so no wildlife could exist.

WORKING WITH HIRED MEN

Arthur Bowles

My Dad farmed a large acreage of ground, most of it in the Mississippi bottoms three and a half miles northwest of Quincy. We farmed with horses and mules—no air-conditioned tractor cabs in those days! Dad had a lot of different hired hands. He would hire about the first of March for the season's work. The pay was about \$30.00 a month, including board. Then, when the wheat harvest started, he would hire a couple more hands, but only by the day. He paid \$2.00 a day for hay and wheat shocking. The day workers would go home each evening, as most lived in bottom lands in log shanties. They were old bachelors, or they sure seemed old to me. When threshing started, there were more men hired, but they were never hard to find as they followed threshers from place to place. They were called "the old steam threshing outfits," and it took a lot of men to keep them going. These men ate their meals where they were working and slept in a hay loft. For several years I remember the same men showing up each season. There was a man known as "Iowa Slim." No one ever knew his real name. Some men never told their real names or where they were really from. "Iowa Slim" wrote his name on the inside of the big

sliding door on our big red barn. He had the neatest penmanship anyone ever saw. That was about 1916, and it was still there when the barn was torn down just a few years ago. If I had known this, I would have gotten the board with his name on it.

There was also a man called as "Jimmy the Pig." He did say he had just come over from Ireland, but that was all he would tell us. He and I got along very good. One day he made me a rubber shooter, and I kept it for years. When they got through threshing at our farm and Dad was paying with checks, he asked Jimmy what his real name was. He told my Dad just plain old "Jimmy the Pig" and it came back from the bank endorsed just that way. "Iowa Slim" would not take a check but insisted on cash. Then there was "Dude Armour"; he was a little older than Jimmy or Iowa Slim. He was a very clean cut, courteous man. He always wore a derby hat and shaved each morning, putting on clean clothes each time. He washed his clothes every evening at the pump.

One morning, Seeley, a neighbor to the west, called and wanted to know if Dad needed any help. He had run onto a boy in Quincy that wanted a farm job. Dad hired him and he worked several days. Dad said he tried hard but didn't have much experience. Two days later the sheriff called and asked if we had a seventeen-year-old boy working for us. Dad told him yes, and he asked Dad to let the boy ride to town with him the next day and go by the courthouse. The sheriff was waiting and took him into custody. "He was a Girl." She had run away from Kansas City and was posing as a boy. In those days, the teenagers didn't wear tight clothes, only levis or jeans and a sweater. It was easy to make that mistake.

There was also a one-armed man. He could drive a team with the lines around his waist. He could not shock wheat or do any shoveling or forking. He was always the wheat binder driver. There were four horses "abreast" on the binder. When people asked him how he lost his arm, he would tell them he was cocking a cannon in the Civil War and it backfired,

taking his arm off. The truth was, he was laying at the side of the railroad drunk with his arm over the track and a train went by and cut his arm off.

Dad employed a multitude of hired hands and I overheard several of them saying, "You don't go to bed at Bowles'. Just lean on that board that is leaning against the barn to get a little sleep." I gathered that Dad was a little hard to work for. One old fellow came to work for him. They had supper that evening, and the next morning Dad called them to breakfast it was still dark. The old fellow ate and pushed back from the table, saying, "'Tis is a fine place to work; two suppers in one night, and now for bed again!"

APPLE BUTTER DAYS

Edna L. Thompson

Apple butter making was an annual event, an enjoyable, hard working, two-day job, in the fall after the apples had been picked.

It took place on the J. G. Thompson farm, in the back yard, in Fall Creek Township, Adams County, Illinois, about two and one half miles west of Payson, Illinois. I went there to live in 1918, after I married J. Ben Thompson, son of J. G. Thompson. The first day, in order to get ready to make apple butter, we had to clean the forty-gallon copper kettle. It had been stored in an outside building in the back yard. It was just dusty, as it had been scoured bright and shiny outside and cleaned on the inside after the last using. There were about three bushels of apples on the back porch to be washed and cored and cut into fourths, and then cut in two again so they would cook up faster. Those apples had been grown in the orchard right on the farm where we lived. They were drops and other apples that were not salable. The good ones

were stored for winter use and, so, were sold. We cut out all bruises, worm holes, and little rotten spots. There were Jonathans, Roman Stems, and Minklers.

They were prepared the day or evening before the cooking outdoors day. My good friend and neighbor, Mildred Dunn, lived on the farm next to the Thompson Farm (down a hill and up a hill away) and was always on hand to help, whether it was apple butter making, threshing dinners, butchering day, or paper hanging. She was there with her smile and enjoyable sense of humor, along with her helpfulness.

The next morning Ben, my husband, fixed a wood fire, and then left the rest of the job to us women. There was an iron frame that the forty-gallon copper kettle rested on above the fire. About two gallons of water was heated, and the sliced apples were put into the kettle and cooked, and stirred and stirred until soft enough to mash with a fork against the side of the kettle. The apples were then taken out and run through the colander. This was a boring job, but there wasn't any short cut. We all took turns. This colander was made especially for apple butter cooking out of doors, on a big scale. It was about thirty inches long and twenty inches wide or so. It was platter shaped, made by a tin smith. It was studded metal and was an important piece of equipment. The holes were larger than an ordinary colander. This was put on top of a huge dish pan or small tub. The apple sauce was rubbed and pushed around until only the skins were left in the colander.

The next step was putting all the apple sauce into the copper kettle, and the stirring began again and it never stopped until the apple butter was ready to can.

The wooden stirrer was quite a thing, one of the most important pieces of equipment. It was made of hard smooth wood, probably five and a half by six feet long. Long enough that one could stand back from the fire and stir and stir and not be too uncomfortable. At the end of the stirrer, at right

angles, was a piece of smooth wood ten or twelve inches long and four inches wide, with about three or four holes, close to the edge, holes big enough to poke clean corn husks three inches long into them and tie snugly there with heavy string. This kept the apple sauce from sticking to the bottom of the copper kettle. Also, two or three silver dollars were scoured clean and put into the apple sauce loose. They also kept the apple sauce moving, so it wouldn't scorch. I have never tasted scorched apple butter. It never happened to us because we followed carefully the plans and directions of our mothers and grandmothers.

This cooking and stirring went on and on, with no rest for the stirrers. They kept the silver dollars moving in that sea of apple sauce.

The firewood was there handy and was replenished as needed. The fire was not a brisk one—just enough that the apple butter kept cooking and kinda slowly bubbling (a lovely sound).

The sugar was added gradually, three or four cups at a time, and the stirring went on and on, and you added more sugar to taste—not too much.

When it thickened up and got a good reddish brown color, you put a spoonful on a saucer, let it cool, and put your finger in it to taste it. Then you got everyone to help taste and give their opinion. But since it was your apple butter, you had the final say so.

When it was cooked enough to have the right consistency, it was tasted again. No one ever made a sloppy, juicy apple butter. It never happened. Using a knife, it will "stay put" on a slice of bread and butter and not slide off.

One time I helped make eighty-three quarts of apple butter, and we finished canning at 9:00 p.m. by lantern light. That was for two families and gifts for friends.

Now the clean up time. The copper kettle had to be scoured bright as new on the inside and out. It had been blackened with the smoke of the fire, but the lady (my

mother-in-law) who owned the kettle insisted it must be polished, and it was put back in the shed until next year. I didn't see the need to scour the outside (the inside was always bright and shining). Of course, it was black, but it would get black again when used next year. But my mother-in-law was the owner and the ruler of the copper kettle, so of course I scoured it, but my heart wasn't in it. I used brick dust and ashes for scouring.

Many years later the copper kettle was sold on the farm at an auction.

MEDICINE MAMMA'S WAY

Clarice Stafford Harris

When springtime arrived we were dosed with either sulphur and molasses or sassafras tea to thin the winter blood. Lucky for me, my folks preferred the tea, and though it lacked its supposed power, it was a very good beverage that I still love to this day. Spring was the time to be wormed, need it or not, and so we were dosed with a patent medication called vermifuge. This wasn't too bad, so we didn't mind taking it, and would probably have taken more if allowed.

If a tummy ache was the problem, Mama mixed one drop of peppermint oil, two teaspoons of sugar in a cup of hot water, or two tablespoons of vinegar in half a glass of water, adding half a teaspoon of baking soda, and stirring to a fizz much like the seltzer of today.

To warm the insides and stop cramps, one fourth teaspoon of ground ginger spice, and sugar to taste, in a cup of hot water was surprisingly effective. One had to stir between sips to keep the ginger from settling to the bottom of the cup.

Crushed catnip leaves were bandaged on the affected area for poison ivy cure. I was the victim of the ivy plant

every year, come berry picking time, and spent hours quietly on the couch bandaged to the neck in wet, soggy catnip. Cloverleaf salve was a must in the medicine chest and used for anything and almost everything.

A weak solution of warm salt water was good for bathing the eyes and could be sniffed up the nostrils for sinus. This was prescribed many years later by an elderly doctor when I was having a sinus problem. It was a surprise. Tobacco smoke was blown into an aching ear, and if that didn't work, warm sweet oil was dropped into the ear and a wad of cotton inserted to keep the oil from running out.

A makeshift hotwater bottle substitute was an eight-inch square bag, stitched from closely woven material and filled with salt or clean sand. This was heated in the oven and held the heat for quite a long time. This helped many a tooth or ear ache and soothed many sore muscles at our house.

Sore throats were swabbed with iodine and a dirty sock was pinned around the neck. That was unsanitary, I know, but then again, the asafetida bags that hung around our necks to keep illness away was worse. The odor alone was enough to discourage any self respecting, stray germ that might venture near.

Mama concocted a cough syrup of sugar, vinegar, and margarine boiled to a thin syrup. Sometimes she got carried away and added an onion to the mixture, but that left much to be desired.

One old time remedy that I know of saved many small fry from a death of strangulation. This consisted of one or two drops of kerosene on a teaspoon of sugar. This sounds terrible, was poison, and probably tasted horrible; however it brought up the cause and cured the croup. The best remedy, at least to me, was honey in the comb. There was never any objection when I had to take it.

Chest colds were treated with many kinds of strange rubs: warm goose grease, saved from a Christmas goose, and onions fried in lard using the strained and potent grease. Also

Vicks Vaporub, musterole, mentholatum and mustard plasters—to name a few bought at a drug store. Any one of these might be spread over the chest, and perhaps the back and soles of the feet and soft flannel cloth over all. The fumes were overpowering, and bundled as we were, it was harder to breathe than from the cold.

Since we didn't possess a vaporizer, a steam tent was used. We sat on chairs circled around a stool that held a pan of hot water. A spoonful of vaporub was melted in the water, and a blanket was draped over like a tent. Sometimes Mama had to sit with us to hold the youngest. The hot vapor fumes were very effective, for we coughed and blew our noses and wiped away tears, hopeful that our ordeal would soon be over.

It also was surprising what Mamm's Kiss could cure.

MISS ADA AND HER NIMBLE THIMBLE

Ardith E. Williams

The sun is just showing itself over the barn. Morning chores done and breakfast under his belt, Pa hitched old Dick to the buggy and went off to town to fetch Miss Ada.

Miss Ada, the town dressmaker, was coming for her twice a year sewing stint, so the family would be presentably dressed for the coming season.

What a flurry of cutting, basting and pressing! Lengths of cloth everywhere: dimity, percale, muslin, and voile for summer. Alpaca, foulard and gabardine for winter. Black silk for that one really good dress.

Miss Ada slept in the spare room and ate at the big table with the hired girl, the hired man, and the rest of the family. Cornbread and sorghum, fried chicken and scrapple, biscuits, honey and garden stuff were typical fare for a growing family in the year 1907.

She stayed for several days or a week, or more if there happened to be a wedding or a graduation in the offing.

First to be served were the ladies. There was much studying of pattern books, decision making, and laying out of patterns, everything tactfully maneuvered by Miss Ada. Such tucking and ruffling, laughing and gossiping! Such standing on chairs to have a hem hung! Miss Ada, her mouth full of pins, reigned supreme.

Pa was not forgotten. Just get the unbeached muslin and run up some undershirts and drawers. A length of cotton flannel for a warm winter nightshirt and work shirts of chambray. The girls helped with the basting and the buttonholes.

Outgrown or worn clothing, previously ripped apart and carefully washed and pressed, was fashioned into clothes for the younger ones. A plaid wool with new velvet collar and cuffs for little sister. New knickers for Junior out of Pa's old Sunday pants. Patterns were turned and twisted to miss worn spots.

Miss Ada, seamstress, was a town fixture, a helper in need, a life saver for the ladies *not* "handy with a needle." She was a maiden lady, plump and pleasant, with her graying hair in a knot atop a head full of current styles. She had ways to make ample ladies look slim and methods to pad up the skinny ones. She was a bringer of neighborhood news, a lover of people and life, and a friend.

Having no family of her own, she was a lover of all the little ones who passed through her life, and was known to put a secret pocket in the seam of a dress to delight a little girl.

But time moved on, and with the advent of the Sears Catalogue and department stores with their ready-mades, another tradition passed. Miss Ada stayed in her little home in town, and the ladies came to her in their "Fords" and their "Maxwells" to have a hem adjusted or a seam let out and to have hand-me-downs made over (much to the disgust of the

recipients). Wouldn't she be amazed at the billowing wave of sewing covering the country today?

THE LEGEND OF THE BACKHOUSE

Keith L. Wilkey

The backhouse was a basic fact of personal family living from the time of the first settlers until the Era of Gracious Living, beginning in the 1950's and 1960's.

Today folks may speak as casually of "going to the bathroom" as they would of going to any other room in the house. But there was a time—a long period in the history of Western Illinois—when any reference to a "body waste elimination station" was referred to in discreet language—perhaps with guarded words.

But when company was not present, most families referred to the little upright rectangular structure, usually located about seventy-five to one hundred feet from the house, by a variety of names. Some of the more common were: privy, outhouse, backhouse, out-back, little shanty, doolie, and simply "the can."

Somehow it was always just there. It defied the endless changing of the seasons and paid little heed to the ravages of time. Though buffeted by the elements, through summer heat and winter snow, it somehow didn't completely wear out. Actually, I don't ever recall our family or any of the neighbors ever having a brand new one.

There were two basic architectural designs—one with a gable roof and the other a slanted roof. There never seemed to be any dead right or absolutely wrong way to build one. Most were about six feet by six feet wide with seven or eight foot sidewalls.

The bench type seat was about eighteen inches above the floor and eighteen or twenty inches wide. Two holes, eight

to ten inches in diameter, had been cut in the seat. But there were variations; some privies had only one hole, then there was the type with a child's seat. It was only about half the height of the full seat, with a smaller hole to sit on. These were most often found in public places, such as the school, the church, the railroad depot, etc.

The outhouse floor was usually about six or seven inches above the ground, though some older buildings, perhaps never too well constructed in the first place, had sagging floors not more than two inches above grade level.

In one corner of the building was a box, or old nail keg or some similar container containing lime, which was used as a deodorant. Either a screen door hook, or a home made one fashioned from No. 9 smooth wire, was used to secure the door latch. Some doors swung inward while others swung to the outside.

Directly beneath the seat was the pit, about four by four feet, or whatever requirements corresponded with the seat. This was periodically cleaned, usually by itinerant scavengers.

The outward appearance of most rural backhouses corresponded with the general demeanor of the rest of the premises. The neat and discriminating homeowner usually painted his doolie the same color as the house, barn and other outbuildings. Seldom indeed was the inside ever graced by paint.

Frequently a lattice-type trellis would be constructed in front of the can by the owner, and embellished by the housewife. Morning glories, rambler roses, trumpet vines, honeysuckle, and other types of flowering vegetation all but camouflaged the building from general view.

So much for the physical description of this personal habitue. It was the outhouse; it was always there. Distance sometimes made it an inconvenience, but it was accepted as a way of life. Everyone had a backhouse. What was so funny about that?

During the pleasant days and long summer twilights, members of the family went to the backhouse with no thought except for the physical relief if afforded. In the early spring, when robins sang and bluebirds nested, and in the autumn time of red and yellow leaves, it was "no big deal." But it was a different story when the north wind howled, the snow swirled, and sleet and freezing rain filled the atmosphere.

And there were those times when low, gray clouds scudded across the sky bringing rain, first in big drops, then settling in for a steady downpour. During such a time, the person leaving the house for the privy had to wear a raincoat, rubbers or galoshes, a headgear and frequently an umbrella. When the snows of January blanketed the landscape, a snow shovel was always kept in a handy place.

Unfortunate indeed was he who "got caught" in the backhouse during a thunderstorm, unprepared for such a turn of events.

After darkness, the preparation included a flashlight or a lantern. Not only did the kerosene lantern assure good footing, but once the destination had been reached, it seemed cozy, snug and warm inside, with the friendly rays of the lantern beaming against the interior walls.

Before toilet tissue had become such a commonplace item, this requirement was met by last season's catalogue and outdated newspapers and magazines.

In the north temperate zone the weather was hospitable most of the year. Summer time, however, presented its hazards. Wasps and mud daubers found the inside of the backhouse just the place to build their mud cells and nesting places. No question about it, a sting from a wasp was an occupational hazard.

I once heard a story concerning a neighboring housewife who entered the privy after a quick dash from the kitchen, leaving her housework, and discovered a blacksnake lazily reposing on the floor behind the inward-swinging door. She

still has little enthusiasm for certain experiences of “the good old days.”

At any time during a warm, summer day there was always the possibility of a wandering honeybee or yellow jacket entering the can for a look around. Flies could be heard, with their monotonous buzzing sound, as the rays from the summer sun penetrated the cracks in the sidewalls. As the poet Thomas Gray once said, “All the air a solemn stillness holds, save where the beetle wheels his droning flight.”

The backhouse, like its successor, the bathroom, provided the dawdler with a refuge. The teenage boy who had weeds to cut on a hot afternoon could find it easy to spend a great deal of time loitering in the outhouse.

For many decades the backhouse was the prime target for Halloween pranksters. Most cans were placed flat on the ground, or perhaps a two-by-four foundation, without anchorage. Two or three boys could push on the back side, and soon the little house would be lying horizontal, with the door down. In most localities in the old days, it was hard to find an upright privy anywhere in town the morning after Halloween.

As part of the New Deal rehabilitation during the Depression years the rural outhouse underwent its most radical change since it first came into being on the North American continent. Privies were now constructed with concrete floors, a concrete pedestal-type seat and an overhanging roof, which provided ventilation as well as being screened against insects.

They were constructed of good quality tongue-in-groove lumber, and the interior as well as the exterior was painted with several coats of enamel finish white paint.

The backhouse was once the sole facility of middle and lower class Americans, and even some of society’s “better people.” Even today in isolated places, the old backhouse is still being used, but their numbers are decreasing rapidly.

For most the old outhouse has gone the way of the horse and buggy, the threshing machine, three-legged milking stool, and other accouterments of life in the past. But the remembrance of the old backhouse lives on and remains a vivid memory to many residents of West Central Illinois.

REACHING OUT AND TOUCHING—CIRCA 1920

Eva Baker Watson

When I was a child we reached out and touched somebody every day except Sunday, all day long, from six in the morning until eight at night. And even on Sunday we did—and in the night, too—when the “distress ring” sounded. Five ominous longs.

The phone that hung on the wall of the living room was our link with the outside. The Illinois Central Railroad brought the mail and daily paper into the village of Brownfield but the telephone gave us social intercourse, real back-and-forth communication. Our family lived on a farm in the isolated hills of Southern Illinois and the ringing of the phone was a welcome interruption to whatever we were doing. Mama always ran to answer it. I can’t recall ever seeing her walk calmly when it rang.

It was a miracle in the days before electronic miracles had become commonplace. It held us together and at the same time allowed us to reach out. It kept us in touch with the scattered community that was my world back then.

We were on a party line. Everybody was. We were served by the central office located in Temple Hill and operated by a Mr. Slankard and his family. When they were in the house, that is. We forgave their absences for we understood that the garden had to be tended, the cows must be milked, the stock and chickens fed, the eggs gathered.

When we rang Central we would never be so formal as to

say "Operator." We'd either say "Temple Hill" or simply "Mr. Slankard." Or "Thelma"—or whoever. Sometimes "Central."

To me Mr. Slankard was just something that went along with the telephone, a remote voice associated with a strange apparatus I'd heard about called a "switchboard." It came as a shock when one day I saw him in the flesh and realized he was just a ordinary-looking man, old—probably 35 at least—a familiar voice in a strange body.

He was an integral part of our lives, serving as liaison person between all residents of village and countryside, and also with far away places whenever there was a death to be reported. Long distance calls and telegrams usually meant trouble.

When my father wished to call someone on another party line he always first chatted with Mr. Slankard just to be friendly and to catch up on local happenings—if there were any new cases of diphtheria, what family had moved into the old Smith place, or if the Bay Bottoms roads were flooded. (We knew he monitored most phone conversations, so he was a reliable source of information.) Only after these amenities were disposed of would Papa say who he was calling.

Most of the time we didn't bother to give numbers. Oh, of course everyone had a number. And it was in the phone book—wherever that was! But why confuse Mr. Slankard by rattling off a bunch of digits when we could cut through the red tape and say in plain English who we wanted? "Ring McClanahan's Store, please, Mr. Slankard."

He knew everybody and what was even more helpful, he recognized everybody's voice. Once a woman who didn't have a phone came to use ours to call her father. She rang central and without identifying herself said, "Hello, Temple Hill, ring Papa, please!" And Temple Hill rang Papa forthwith.

It was an all-purpose answering service, many times going beyond the call of duty. If the party we were trying to reach didn't answer, Mr. Slankard was often able to let us

know it was useless to try anymore until late, for he'd seen them pass his house going to Metropolis and they hadn't had time to be back. Now and then someone listening on the line would break in to tell us why the party didn't answer, where they'd gone and why, and about when they'd return.

Each subscriber's ring was a different combination of longs and shorts. Bad weather seemed to foul up this functioning and the rings would be garbled. At these times, if we weren't sure the rings were our "four shorts" we felt justified in lifting the receiver and asking, "Did 'ja ring Baker?"

Then if the call had not been for us, we might just stay on the line, anyway, if it sounded interesting. "Listening" was a popular pastime back then before soap operas. But Mama told us never to do it. Told us it was rude, nosey, and none of our business. Besides, she was embarrassed because it was almost impossible to keep my little brothers quiet enough so people couldn't recognize us as the eavesdroppers. I never did eavesdrop except when I could beat my sister to the phone.

There were some who weren't so inhibited as my mother. And if they had trouble understanding what was being said, they didn't hesitate to break in with "Pardon me, Mary, but who'd you say got married?"

Eavesdroppers, though, were not necessarily a nuisance. Early phones weren't the smoothly efficient instruments we know today. Often the "audio portion" was a mess. This was complicated by several receivers being down. The caller would know this and, being good natured, would simply ask, "Will someone listening please repeat for me?"

There was one time, however, when everybody admittedly and unashamedly eavesdropped and that was when, during off hours, the distress ring was heard. Off hours were after eight at night, before six in the morning, and on Sunday. And if the midnight stillness or the Sabbath peace were shattered with those five long rings, not only Mr.

Slankard but everyone on the line would jump out of bed—or up from Sunday dinner—and every receiver would go down.

This was a well-oiled alarm system for it alerted the community when someone needed help. Regardless of the reason for the call, all neighbors stood ready to do what they could. The phone was the neighborhood hot line.

When the telephone first made its appearance in our community, to many it seemed a strange gadget requiring some skill to learn to operate. One man, though, announced with pride to his cronies sitting on the store porch that he had mastered it and it was simple:

"All you have to do," he told them, "is wind up the bell, take down the deceiver, and holler, 'Hello, Sentinel!'"

And holler they did. People were a long time realizing they didn't have to shout and turn the crank hard and long to get results. One woman was notorious for her shouting into the transmitter. During a lengthy phone session she sometimes turned aside to say in a low tone, "George, go set the beans off the fire!" She never knew that these asides to her husband carried better than her hollering.

When it was very cold the telephone wires strung from pole to pole would begin to hum. This humming on a cold night would tell us we were now in the dead of winter. And in the coziness of home and fireside, one of the family would always say, "I'd hate to be a poor tramp out on the road tonight!"

Those early years saw in me the beginning of a dependence on the telephone that's almost frightening. Today I live in a small town surrounded by friendly neighbors; the sheriff's office is just across the courtyard. I can see our doctor's home down the street. Two blocks in another direction lives a veterinarian, and my husband's business is within sight. If I opened my front door and simply raised my voice it would be easy to summon all kinds of help. Yet in this pampered age (and probably because of early conditioning) if I lift the phone and get a silence instead of a

dial tone, I'm panic-stricken. Here I am, I gasp, stranded with a dead phone.

For me, no computerized service today can equal what Mr. Slankard gave us back then. And no fancy color-coordinated phone sitting on my desk can compare with the one hanging on our living room wall that served as the "backyard fence" across which we reached out and touched our friends, near and far.

HIRED GIRL

Louise Anderson Lum

I was fifteen when I first went to work as a hired girl. It was in the little town of Niota, Illinois, population 200. The year was 1937. And I would earn \$3.00 a week—an unbelievable amount, a fortune! Of course I knew that every cent of what I earned would have to go for groceries, but that once in a while Mom might get us each a banana, or maybe some green grapes, or the very best treat of all, a loaf of soft-as-cake Sweetheart store bread. It was exciting to have something to look forward to.

I would work for the Roofs from 7:15 in the morning till 6:30 at night during the week, and until about 1:30 on Saturday.

Vera worked across the river at the Shaeffer Pen Company in Fort Madison, Iowa. Her husband, Blondy, was gone all week as he worked for the Bridge and Building Department of the Santa Fe Railroad. I would be keeping house for Vera and their two little girls.

Smiling with high hopes I walked the block and a half to the Roof home to arrive at 7:00 Monday morning. The two little girls were not old enough to be in school, and hovered about while Vera told me what to do. There was a bushel basket full of mostly starched clothes to iron. The wooden

kitchen table and four chairs were to be scrubbed, and the children's shoes polished, and the usual routine household chores to be done. I listened intently and stood a little taller because she talked to me as if I were grown up.

Then she showed me around the house and said to have supper ready at 5:30—just whatever I wanted to have. If I needed any groceries I should charge them at Shaile's.

Smiling, she walked off to catch her ride. She was stylishly dressed, wore rouge and lipstick, and as always, looked real fixey.

That first morning I pumped water and did the dishes, scrubbed the table and chairs, ran the carpet sweeper, swept the kitchen floor, and tidied up the house. Then I sprinkled the clothes, rolled them tightly, and put them back in the basket to draw through.

For dinner I made potato soup. When we'd eaten it, I flaked a small can of salmon with rolled crackers and an egg for salmon cakes and put them in the ice-box ready to fry for supper.

Wanting to make a good first-day impression, I decided to have a fancy dessert. There was a cookbook in the kitchen cabinet which I could have spent hours perusing since I loved to cook. Mom thought cookbooks were a waste of money, so I too cooked "by guess and b' gosh." Thumbing through the book, I found a recipe for Rich Blancmange, which I stirred and left on the counter to cool.

By then it was hot in the house, so I walked the girls a half mile north to the river to stand on the levee and gaze at the bluffs across the Mississippi. Water lapped softly at the shore, and since our town is in the path of the westerlies, there was a daytime breeze to flutter the cottonwoods. I sat on the grass and dreamed long dreams of being rich and important.

When we got back to the house I started ironing. The clothes had been starched with Satina and smelled like wind off the plum blossoms. The five white shirts out of the way, I

ironed the other things including the sheets, pillow cases, and tea towels. The girls' fourteen dresses I had saved until last. I enjoyed ironing every ruffle, bow, and ribbon. After ironing the puffed sleeves dry, I laid them flat and ironed around them in almost a circle so that they stood up sharp and perky.

By then it was late afternoon and water had to be heated in a huge pan to bathe the children. I put a towel on a kitchen chair, stood the youngest on it and soaped her. Then she sat in the pan on the floor while I rinsed her by dipping the water up in a pan and pouring it over her. When she was dried and dressed, I emptied the water on the hollyhocks and refilled the pan for her sister. Clean and starched, they had to stay inside and play with dolls while I fixed supper.

I had found some shelves in the basement with a few jars of home-canned fruit and vegetables and took up a jar of snap beans and a pint of beets. I peeled potatoes and put them on to boil.

Vera was home soon, looking tired and shopworn. By the time she had put her things away and washed, supper was on the table and her two soap-scented daughters were at the table clamoring for food.

The table did look nice. The old bean jar filled with wild flowers made it seem like a special occasion.

I mashed the boiled potatoes with a little butter and salt on each girl's plate. The salmon cakes were brown and crispy, the pickled beets just the right accent. There was cream from the top of the milk to put over the Rich Blancmange. I held my breath when Vera poured some on hers and tasted it.

"My," she exclaimed, "this cornstarch pudding is delicious." So much for my Rich Blancmange. "And," she continued, "this house has never looked better. And the girls are so clean they look like they've been licked. And you didn't even charge anything on the store bill!"

She told me that some of her hired girls hadn't done

much of anything but sit around and read *True Stories* and eat cookies they'd bought on the bill.

After supper I washed and dried the dishes and put them away, and swept the kitchen floor.

Before I knew it, it was Saturday. When dinner was over and I had swept the floor, Vera came to the kitchen carrying her pocket-book.

"I guess you feel like you've earned this," she said counting out three one-dollar bills. "I'll see you on Monday."

The little girls coaxed to walk down a piece with me, and she let them. As we started down the dirt path toward home, tears stung my eyes. This was the beginning, but of what? I thought about Vera's faith in me, her patience, understanding, and good humor. It made me determined to be the best hired girl she'd ever had.

THE WAY OF A MAN WITH A HORSE

Newton E. Barrett

A forceful maiden lady of unspecified age, named, by a strange coincidence, Agnes Ryder, owned a family farm some four miles east of Geneseo, Henry County, out on the Blue Mound road. A trusted Swedish immigrant, Nels Anderson, served as general farm hand. She had determined to move to the city, and leave everything to him. Through Mark Hosfold, a leading real estate figure there, she had bought a residence from Hugh Cole, recently widowed, who was moving in with cousin Glen.

The property, typical of the time, anyone today would find entirely lacking in much that we consider indispensable. Instead of gas and electric lights and appliances, there were kerosene lamps, with ornamental translucent shades, containers for the oil, and wicks of soft weave reaching from a burner down into it, ignited by a sulphur match, and giving

forth a dim yellow light. And candles, formerly of tallow, later of paraffin, could be carried to dark corners. Barns were dependent on lanterns; lamps with enclosed flames not extinguished by the wind, could be carried about by a bail, and hung on a nail. Food was cooked by a wood fire in an antique stove. Agnes found a few sticks of oak wood in the back yard near the pump, which provided the drinking water. By one corner of the house stood a large barrel to catch soft or rain water from the roof.

She walked down to the barn, which resembled the house but which was smaller; and which was entered by a large carriage door. The interior was divided into several sections: two stalls large enough to stand in (horses rarely lie down, even to sleep); a half closet for curry comb, axle grease, etc. and the rest of the space for a carriage and a cutter, or sleigh, for use in winter's snow. From a wall projected pegs on which to hang harness. A rough stair led up to the second floor or mow, entirely designed for a year's supply of hay. This was pitched down through a chute or hole in the floor above each stall to a manger, which contained a feed box for oats. A rear door led to the barnyard adequate for a horse's exercise, and for the manure pile which would grow until it could be forked into a spreader and hauled to a garden plot or field.

Just at this time a young man named George Ammerman appeared in town, seeking contracts to break horses for riding and driving. He had already had an adventurous career with them, for which he cherished a deep affection, and possessed an instinctive understanding. Thrilled at the exploits of the great Buffalo Bill Cody, he applied and was admitted into the exciting cast of his Wild West show.

Then, four years before the time of our story, when the Spanish-American War broke out, he was electrified by the news that Teddy Roosevelt, already widely known, had organized some buddies into a cavalry troop, called the

Rough Riders. Through his friend, General Leonard Wood, they were enlisted, George among them, and sent to Cuba. There they became famous and adored when they stormed up San Juan Hill near Santiago, and dislodged the strongly fortified enemy. Inevitably they suffered heavy casualties, including George, whose skull was creased near the right temple by a Cuban bullet, which left him unconscious. Soon a couple of clean-up men saw him lying there; and one cried, "Oh, there's Ammerman!" "Too bad!" cried the other, "He was a good man." But, surprisingly, almost awake, with a supreme effort, he gave a feeble kick. They carried him to the base hospital where he soon recovered.

He was a deeply tanned man of medium height, tremendously strong, and wearing a stiff moustache. He sat his mount as though he had grown there, being reminiscent of Bellerophon on Pegasus, in Greek legend. Distinguishing him was a livid scar on his temple—a grim souvenir of his war experience. He recalled Buffalo Bill's enthusiastic comments about Genesee. Being born just across the Father of Waters, near LeClaire, he knew it from visits to the Henry County Fair in Cambridge, where their horsemen won many blue ribbons. Hence, George came here to practice his trade.

Introduced to Agnes, he agreed to condition her horse Cady for riders on either regular or women's side-saddles. At the appointed time, Saturday morning, they met at the town house, accompanied by a small crowd of men who had heard about the event, along with a delegation of us boys.

Anderson hadn't ventured to break Cady as a yearling, as was the custom, and by now he had matured into a full-grown, perfectly developed lustrous chestnut gelding, with a white spot on his forehead, which friends insisted was a star. He was 16 hands high and nearly 950 pounds, a rare specimen of equine power and beauty.

Nels led him out into the wide, dead-end street, with no picket fences on either side, as was common nearer the center of town; and he held him while Ammerman threw his saddle

over him, and firmly tightened the belly-band. With everything secure, he put his right foot into the stirrup, swung his left leg over to the other side till that foot slipped into its stirrup, and he was ready. "O.K.!" he called. Nels released the horse, and the battle was joined.

Surprisingly, instead of tearing off down the road, Cady, frantic at the unaccustomed sensation of a burden on his back, bolted to the left, across Mrs. Merriam's yard. Though the universally observed wash day was Monday, she had hung a wet sheet and some small pieces, now flapping wildly in the stiff breeze, on her heavy wire line. Now Cady's fright was added to his fury. Ammerman, seeing himself hurling toward the barrier, braced himself, preparing to break off the line with his chest. But some artisan had done his work well, and, in football parlance, the line held. As Cady lowered his head and dashed under it, the rider was stopped dead, was torn off the saddle, and thrown to the ground. Fortunately, instead of a hard road-bed, he landed on a soft lawn, and was unhurt.

Instinctively, as a matter of course, he kept a tight hold on the reins, and was dragged several yards, until the maniacal animal slowed.

Ammerman pulled himself to his feet. Undeterred, he led Cady back into the road, coddling him with a few strokes on his muzzle, and soothing him with reassuring words. The conflict, however, wasn't so quickly won. Skittish and straining at the bit, the nervous animal sidled and pranced, yet he made no serious effort to free himself from the exasperating restraint. Ammerman remounted, and by slow and painful degrees, Cady ventured forward, responding to the gentle but firm directions conveyed by pulls on the lines. Step by step, then cautiously breaking into a trot, up and down the road the pair moved, until in perfect accord they proceeded.

Cady was broken to a greater and nobler freedom.

I WAS A PRINTER'S DEVIL

Albert Shanholtzer

As a boy I was an avid reader, impressed with the impact the printer and his newspaper had on the community. The earliest newspaper in Coatsburg existed in the decades before the turn of the century. It was named "The Adams County Review." The "Community Enterprise" came next, edited and published in 1915 by Rolla Stokes. The shop had a large front window near which a lady typesetter spent long hours on a high stool before the type cases, setting type. This caught the eye of passing school children (including, on occasion, me) who would stand on the sidewalk and watch. With nimble fingers she placed letters in the composing stick setting line after line of news. The press was in the back, out of sight, we could hear its rumble on press day. Exhaust from the gasoline engine emerged from a pipe through the wall in odd puffs as the engine fired unevenly.

In June, 1917, my father began a long Civil Service career as a Rural Letter Carrier at Loraine, Illinois, where we moved. The Postmaster, Roy Adair, was also owner of "The Loraine Times," a weekly paper. His printing plant occupied all of the building except a small front room used as the Post Office. Roy, a genial man, was a friend to all children. When my dad mentioned my interest in printing, he suggested I come by on press day and he would "show me around."

The following Thursday I arrived before press time, and met the Linotype operator, Ray Gibson, about twenty-three years of age, a young man capable of doing every job in the shop. He and Roy finished filling the four page forms on the imposing stones, took a block of hard maple and mallet to plane down the forms and lock the pages each in their own chase with several sets of Hempel quoins and the special key; carried each to its proper place on the Campbell cylinder press, securing all with locking devices built in the press bed. They explained every move and patiently answered every

question I asked. When the stack of newsprint was placed on the feed-board which sloped slightly toward the press cylinder, they showed me the four pages already printed had articles of general interest, even a cartoon, and some national advertising. Roy explained it was "WNU" print, and weeklies bought it at a reasonable price since the Western Newspaper Union in St. Louis merely put the paper's name slug at the top of each page. In addition to what the printer paid, they received advertising compensation from the national advertising. The several ink rollers were lowered to contact the ink plate, the pressman mounted the steps to the feed-board, grasped the corner of a large sheet and with a flip of the wrist floated it down on a bubble of air to rest on brass stops at the lower edge. The electric motor was turned on, the belt shifted to the drive pulley and as the cylinder turned contra-clockwise a row of small curved clamps emerged from the cylinder, grasped^d to the drive pulley and as the cylinder turned contra-clockwise a row of small curved clamps emerged from the cylinder, grasped the paper smoothly and securely, and paper and inked form met as the cylinder turned. Quickly the belt was shifted to the loose pulley and the press halted with a hardly a touch of the brake, so the first copy could be rechecked for accuracy. When the run began for completion I was intrigued by the way the printed copy slid freely onto the set of smooth oak fingers which laid it gently on the delivery table. The sheets were run through the folder, emerging folded and trimmed.

Upon arriving home I said, "I'd like to work in a shop like that." When my dad told Roy about this remark, he suggested, "Have him stop and see me." I did. His opening remark was, "I can use a little extra help at the print shop. Would you like to work on Saturday mornings and a couple hours after school?" Breathlessly I replied, "You bet I would!" He suggested, "You can start right now. Sweep out and burn the paper." Gratefully I replied, "Thank you, Mr. Adair, I'll do that!" The push broom stood in a nearby corner.

I seized it and got busy. "Your pay," he said, "will be a dollar a week." Looking back on how I quickly absorbed a lot of learning about the printing trade, I realize this was a bonus, for it was the least costly, most enjoyable education a tall skinny twelve year old ever had!

For two years as a printer's devil I progressed from one skill to another, setting type for sale bills and other forms, feeding the Gordon job press, using the paper cutter, finally mastering the Campbell, and floating the big sheets down on a bubble of air. Cleanup after press day included putting used lino slugs in the hell box, disributing display type from dead advertising, putting six point slugs, two point leads and wood reglets up by lengths.

At the end of two years dad transferred to a better route in Coatsburg, moving back to our former residence. I reluctantly bid my first "boss" farewell.

The skills I had gained, plus a \$35 investment in a Baltimore handlever press with some type gave me a "bedroom" shop of my own printing small jobs. Completing high school at Camp Point Community High, I worked for the "journal" two summer vacations and part time after school for 20 cents an hour. With graduation my second newspaper job ended. Opening the "Coatsburg Printery" I began replacing my equipment with better machinery, gradually.

On Tuesday the "Clayton Enterprise" called, asking help to get the weekly issue off the press. Their printer had quit! It was a challenging job! Their old Campbell sat on a wood floor; vibrations when running mandated frequent stops to keep leads and slugs from working up and printing. Their lady typesetter composed the news, all else was my obligation. Meeting the challenge for three months, I had to return to my own increasing business.

From hand set to machine set we owned first a used Linotype, then a rebuilt Linograph vertical magazines, finally an Intertype. Our odd jobbers were replaced by newer;

our shop was the first in rural Adams County with a Kluge automatic. A power cutter, drill, folder, metal saw, binding equipment, wider selection of display type and a second Kluge automatic was a giant step from the old newspaper shops. But a new trend developed—from letterpress to offset!

Purchasing an eleven by fourteen AB Dick with platemaker, soon eighty per cent of production was by offset, produced in less time! The old days were fading away.

Before retiring we bought a larger offset press—but kept our letterpress equipment. The business continues to grow under new management, building and equipment being leased. We reserved the privelege of doing occasional small jobs for ourselves, on letterpress. It's hard to keep printer's inkstains off an old printer's hands! Only a few are left who learned the craft as a printer's devil.

Thank God, I had the chance!



VIII *People of the Past*

PEOPLE OF THE PAST

To write about the people of western Illinois—especially people who lived decades ago—is to depict small-town folks. Thus, so many of the memoirs in this section characterize individuals against a background of village society, or community life on a limited scale.

Of course, the most famous book based on the region, Masters' *Spoon River Anthology*, does exactly the same thing, but it is interesting to notice the contrast between the poet's perspective and the collective view expressed by these senior citizens. Here is no "revolt from the village," no sense of the small town as a repository of frustrated and broken lives, no exposé of midwestern narrowness and provinciality.

On the contrary, although no author explicitly refers to it, there is an underlying theme in many of these memoirs: the positive nature of community life. Hollis Powers' "The Folks in Petersburg" is particularly interesting because his subject is Masters' home town—albeit several decades after the poet lived there. His characterizations include such good people as the female high school principal who encouraged her students, the banker who had faith in his fellow men, the newspaper editor of firm principles, and the physician who urged people to get well.

As his memoir also suggests, the small town was a special world of its own, a place where residents came into close and repeated contact. From that experience, townspeople developed an interest in each other's lives, and a concern for local people, which was not unlike the attitude of family members. As Lillian Nelson Combites mentions at the end of her memoir about Uncle Harl Robbins of Good Hope, "Uncle Harl wasn't my uncle. Mama taught each to us to call all our elderly residents Grandpa, Grandma, Uncle or Aunt. We loved them that way, too. . . ." And her characterization also reveals that the deep sense of community in small towns often extended to former residents who lay buried in the local

cemetery—the people for whom Uncle Harl frequently erected gravestones.

Indeed, it is clear from several of the memoirs that small-town people were bound together by their common memories of former residents. Although "The Life of Louis Silberer" was written by his son, that biographical sketch closes with local tributes to the man, which reveal his impact on the community. Likewise, Earl F. Carwile's memoir portrays Monmouth auctioneer Faye Houtchens as he must have appeared to the entire town, and the author closes by asserting that "He was a good friend of many and is remembered by all."

The two pieces which focus on doctors—both tributes by admiring daughters—indicate that the small-town physician of years ago was not a professional in some medical office or hospital. He was a neighbor, involved with and aware of the lives of local people. Even when the physician's practice included more than one town, as in the case of Dr. Cowles of Woodhull, it was carried out with consideration for the social context: "Dad's practice extended from Woodhull to Alpha, New Windsor, Rio, Opheim, North Henderson, Oneida, and the adjoining countryside. He saw each patient as an integral part of a family, and each family as part of a community."

Certainly one of the most remarkable memoirs in this volume is Hazel R. Livers' characterization of Lyle Tricky, "the town idiot" of Ipava. She handles with great sensitivity a subject which few people have ever written about, demonstrating in the process that even the mentally retarded had an accepted place in the small town of many years ago.

With the possible exception of blacks, the only people who did not fit into midwestern village life early in the century were those who did not want to. Beula Selters depicts such a couple in "Queer Folks." Her presentation of Rufus and Sally Wiggins through the limited experience of another local couple, her grandparents, is an ideal technique, for it

emphasizes the isolation of that strange couple from others in the village of St. Marys. At the same time, the author demonstrates that those queer folks did become an aspect of community life—if only through local talk, speculation, and folklore.

Other memoirs in this section focus on people who were not community members but transients. Perhaps the most surprising pieces for the modern reader are the Craven G. Griffiths and Everett Trone characterizations of hoboes they knew many years ago. At that time, such men were common, and they were not viewed with the kind of fear and suspicion that surrounds homeless outsiders today. The hobo jungle, too, was a more or less accepted aspect of many communities.

While most western Illinois residents still live in small towns, individuals and families are no longer in close and continual contact. That is both good and bad. The gradual opening up of such communities has brought more individual fulfillment and less pressure to conform, but it also diminished the deep sense of closeness that was once the very essence of small-town life. Most of the people described in this section of *Tales from Two Rivers II* were not significant or memorable because of their achievements but because they related well to the people around them. Therein lies a challenge to members of our present-day communities, of whatever size.

John Hallwas, Editor

GYPSIES

Enid Woolsey

"The Gypsies are camped in Lover's Lane." So announced an arriving neighbor on a summer morning in 1928. Our family lived on a farm two miles north of Williamsfield, Illinois, in Knox County, at that time. Lover's Lane, not a well-cared-for road, was then a short stretch of often-impassable narrow lane, bordered by brush and shade trees. The Gypsies camped near a little stream. It was very near our small town and was the sort of place we believed Gypsies liked: lonely, wooded, water conveniently near, and rather pretty.

Word of the arrival of the Gypsy caravan spread rapidly through the community, and the real or imagined doings of those temporary visitors was the favorite conversational topic for several days. Many people feared and distrusted the Gypsies, believing they might steal livestock or even children. Prejudice, although most of us didn't use the word at that time, was our response to most of the people we knew little about.

This Gypsy caravan consisted of several horses pulling wagons covered in various ways. There were dark-skinned men, and women with colorful skirts, sometimes made of many pieces of worn material sewn together, and often consisting of many layers. The women's legs were not to show and they usually wore heavy earrings. Children and dogs completed the groups and all seemed dirty and mysterious. Food was cooked over open fires, there was singing, and no one in our family ever saw the caravan traveling. Although Gypsies arrived several different years, their arrival and departure always seemed to be in the night.

We heard many tales of the horse trading the Gypsy men did at the surrounding farms. Although most of the farmers believed the traders could not be bested, it was a challenge to try to do so. Care and treatment of horses was

very important to those travelers, and the men did seem to excel at curing sick horses. They could trade for horses that seemed less healthy, collecting money for the difference. By putting a horse into good condition, they could later sell or trade it to their advantage.

Apparently, most Gypsies were illiterate, and they saw nothing wrong with petty thievery, such as grass for a horse, wood for fires, etc. The robberies did usually seem to be out of need. Some people believe Gypsies will not steal from each other.

More interesting stories concerned the activities of the Gypsy women, who were considered to have magic powers. They did fortune telling by reading hands and tea leaves, and by analyzing dreams. Some of us girls were excited by the possibility that the Gypsy women possessed the evil eye or love charms or magic cures. Some of the women were beggars and seemed to present themselves as ill, sometimes coughing and being so unattractively dirty that one would want to get rid of them as soon as possible. That may have been a deliberate ploy.

What excitement the arrival of the Gypsies provided in those rather quiet times of long ago! Their freedom and lack of concern for the things we believed to be important seemed rather glamorous, and we wondered if we would like to travel with them. What did they do about school and real livelihood, we puzzled.

In later years, we saw Gypsies who traveled in big cars, but that was not nearly so interesting. I know that World War II, the draft, social security, welfare, the movies, television, and desire for consumer goods—all have contributed to a change in the Gypsy lifestyle. On the rare occasions when I have seen Gypsy women begging in cities, I always think of those who camped in Lover's Lane and wonder if those city beggars might have been children there.

THE HIRED MAN

Burdette Graham

March the first was for many years the time of change on the farms of most of the country, and especially in the corn and oat growing area of the Middle West. If a farmer was moving to another farm or renting more acreage, or if he had become anew owner, the time to move was March the first. Leases all read "March the first" as possession time. This date was picked because weather sometimes permitted field work, while being cool enough to get the horses and mules toughened up, and many spring jobs could usually be done during March, so as to be ready when field work began in earnest.

Jobs which could be done on our farm included scattering oat seed over the standing corn stalks, disking the seed and stalks, harrowing to level the stalks, and covering the seed and leveling the disked soil. This many times was a very cold job, with brisk winds and cool temperatures making it necessary to walk behind equipment just to keep warm.

Other jobs included repairing fences, nailing up loose boards, and putting new staples in wire fences, and when the frost got out, setting posts for new fences. Also, all the harness had to be cleaned and dipped in a vat of harness oil and allowed to drip and dry. Newly oiled harness always strained hands, gloves, and clothes which had to come into contact with the harness. On warmer days, machinery had to be repaired and broken parts taken to the blacksmith shop for welding or making new parts.

Late in March the cattle and horse drive took place. About a dozen horses and 20 or 30 head of cattle had been on winter pasture on a hillside farm four miles northeast of Adair. They had wintered there on tall grass that had not been pastured during summer. They drank from a spring that never froze. We had to take them salt about every two weeks and check to see that they were all there and in good health.

When we went to get them, they were fat as butter balls from the good grass which they could get by breaking through the snow. They had had good wind protection by getting in the gullies. They had become somewhat wild during this period of having few people around, so a good force of drivers was needed to keep them on the right road and out of farm yards and gates which might be open.

All of these jobs and many more around the average farm required more help than the farmer himself could provide, so until the children became old enough to help, the hired man was a necessity. The hiring of those men took place anytime after the crops were harvested the fall before. Some men hired on with the same farmer year after year, and some stayed around all winter, doing work for board and room. A few farmers had enough work with livestock to employ them the year around, this being more likely if a tenant house was available. Usually the year-around man was married, and lived in the tenant house and was furnished one cow, and feed for the cow, a flock of chickens, and at least one hog to butcher.

If the hired man was single and lived with the farm family, some special arrangements had to be made when he came. Unless the farmer had an extra bedroom available, as was not usually the case, someone had to give up a room, and that meant one of the kids or maybe more had to move in with someone else. One year, we had a hired girl also to help when a new baby came in March. This time the hired girl used a folding bed in the living room, and when the hired man came and pushed me out of his room, I ended up with the hired girl. I remember she had long red hair, but I also remember she brought us head lice, and we all got the head dip in Black Leaf-40 or tobacco juice. I think I was six years old.

One of the goals of the hired men was to be on their own in a few years. They saved their money and developed a reputation in the community as to character and ability to farm, and when some farm became available, if they had

saved enough to buy a team, a plow, and a cow and sow, and could borrow seed from some neighbor, they became full fledged farmers. Jess Castor and Ben Hopping and Ralph Foster were three who started this way. They were all fine gentlemen who helped supervise us kids just like we were their own.

There were many who came through the country, usually walking and looking for a job. Usually we did not hire any of those, but we did get one during World War I, a Mr. John Snyder, who had left Poland because of not liking the coming war in Europe. He was a big man, with the biggest feet I think any man could carry—and also the dirtiest. He was very odd in many ways. He would get up early before daylight and go to the cornfield. One day he drove over a line of new small fenceposts which had just been set to allow early pasture for the first picked rows. Those all had to be replaced. Another time, when Dad got to the field, he could not find which rows John was picking. When asked, John said, "I'm just taking a wide swath." The usual number was two rows, or maybe three. He was taking from two to six, so it was hunt and seek to follow him.

Another hired man was a young fellow from Gin Ridge who dressed like a millionaire, and who told us kids so many stories that I have heard few new ones since. He was nice to us and took us with him on Saturday nights to Table Grove, but he was not one to work after a certain time, even if some hay was still in the field. He also had the most beautiful pair of brown dress shoes, which he had shined each time he went to town. When he left us, he came to Macomb and worked in a bakery. His name was Buck Runkle.

An older gentleman, Mr. John Pearce, was a good but slow worker and a pipe smoker. We usually did not allow smoking because of the danger of fire. He came back to visit one Sunday afternoon and, while at the barn, lighted his pipe, and that night the barn burned, but of course we never knew why it caught on fire.

I am not sure of the wages these people earned but I think they got from 30 to 50 dollars per month, plus their keep, and usually a horse and buggy. If they had their own horse and buggy, a place for it and feed were furnished.

After chores and supper, we usually went to bed, but sometimes, when weather was bad outside, and we got in earlier, story reading, or card playing, and sometimes singing around the piano took place. Also sometimes some of us would go to neighbors to visit or play cards, or maybe neighbors came to our house.

The hired man became one of the family and helped to take the kids to school or get them, or bring groceries from town, or even deliver the cream and eggs. As we children got older, we began to take the place of the hired man in doing chores and some of the field work, and eventually some of us got through high school, and the hired man was not needed. Also, machinery began to change as tractors took the place of the horse, and a whole new breed of hired man came along. Then he was the mechanic in town who came out to the farm when you broke down. He was needed, but he was no longer part of the family.

SAM, THE HOBO

Craven G. Griffiths

It was spring, and dusk of the evening had settled. I could see the flicker of a campfire about quarter of a mile away. I knew that the hoboes had started their campfire to keep away the spring chill and to cook their mulligan stew.

I was about ten years old. It was 1913, and we lived in Roseville, Illinois. Our home was at the southeast edge of town, just a short distance from the C. B. & Q. Railroad track. Hobo Jungle was located about a quarter mile down the

track. The hoboos had two or three small shacks built there. They were made from cardboard, bits of tin, or just about anything that they could get out of the dump that was close by. In a small clearing, they had their campfire, and each hobo would contribute something for the stew. Someone would have a big soup bone that had been begged from the local butcher shop; others might have some sort of vegetables they had been given. They have been known to help themselves to garden vegetables when they were available. Even chickens from neighbors' chicken houses found their way into the hoboos' stew.

My father had told my brother, Dave, and me to keep away from the camp, but the stories that these men would tell would bring my brother and me back time and time again, whenever we could slip away. Those men would tell of their travels across the country—walking, and riding freight trains, always carrying their worldly possessions in a sack flung over their shoulder. From the East Coast to the West Coast, they knew where every Hobo Jungle was located. They knew which houses along the way they could stop at and usually get a handout. The way they knew where to stop was by markings that hoboos before them had left. On a post out front, on a tree, or maybe on a barn nearby, would be this mark or sign. I still remember some of the signs: ☉ meant very good, ☹️ meant bad dog, and ⚡️ meant safe camp. There were several others that I cannot recall.

My brother, Dave, and I always looked forward to spring and the possibility of seeing our friend Sam again. Sam was just one of the many hoboos we had talked to, but Sam was different. He always seemed as glad to see us as we were to see him. He would always give us good advice. Sam would come to camp early in the spring and usually stay till fall. There were always hoboos coming and going, and usually they never stayed but a few days at a time. Some hoboos would look for a day or two of work; most of them wouldn't. Sam would always manage to find a little work, and one job

was carrying in the wood for the local bakery shop that Doc Tinder operated. They heated their ovens with wood. Sam was able to keep himself in smoking tobacco and a few of the necessities. He was a big man, always shaven, and he tried the best he could to keep clean.

One day when Dave and I were to have been hoeing the garden, we slipped down the track to visit Sam. He was preparing to shave. He had one razor blade that I'm sure had been used many times. He showed us how to sharpen a blade. He took a drinking glass, put the blade inside, and with his fingers slid the blade back and forth. In fact, in later years I tried this and it certainly worked. One day Sam was going to shave and he couldn't find his razor; he was sure one of the hoboos that left camp during the night had stolen it. Anyway, that didn't stop Sam. He walked to the trash dump that was close by and came back with a broken window glass. He lathered his face with a bar of soap, got the piece of mirror, and shaved with the straight edge of the window glass. I never did try that trick.

There were times that we would play hookey from school, and Hobo Jungle was a good place to hide out till time for school to be out, and then we'd stroll home. There were several times that we were afraid of some of the hoboos, but Sam would warn them not to bother the boys.

He was very artistic, too. From the dump he would find buckets with a little paint left in them, and on a piece of tin or wood he would paint beautiful pictures. One picture in particular that I remember was painted on a tail vane from an old windmill. He had a package of Bull Durham smoking tobacco, and on the front was a picture of a bull. He looked at the package and painted the bull on the weather vane. I wanted that picture so badly that he gave it to me. Knowing that I couldn't take it home, I hid it in a cornfield nearby, coming back occasionally to look at it.

As fall approached and not many hoboos were coming into camp, we knew it would soon be time for Sam to leave.

One evening, Dave and I went to the camp and it was deserted; everyone was gone, even Sam. As we walked up the tracks towards home, we pulled our coats a little tighter around us to keep out the chilly wind. Our hearts were sad, but we knew, come spring, the hoboes would be back, and hopefully our friend Sam.

THE SWAN CREEK HOBO, SELDOM SEEN

Everett Trone

It was a snowin' and a blowin' wintery day when Seldom Seen got off the freight at Swan Creek, Illinois, in 1914. He stopped at the blacksmith shop and asked if he could stay overnight. The blacksmith, feeling sorry for him said, "all right." Seldom's only visible possessions were the two bed rolls that he was carrying made from box car paper sewed inside burlap sacks. He would use one as a mat under him and covered up with the other one. This was the way he was to sleep on the wooden floor of the blacksmith shop that evening.

When the blacksmith came to work the next day, he found that Seldom had swept and cleaned up the shop. The blacksmith was impressed and told him he could stay as long as he liked. Seldom remained at the blacksmith shop for a couple of years. He later moved to the pool hall and slept on a cot at the rear. He remained around Swan Creek for five or six years, until after World War I was over.

Seldom stood well over six foot six inches, a very tall man for that day. He wore a white sailor hat sometimes, which made him look even taller. He was not bald but had extremely thin black hair that was slicked back. He was not handsome, yet he was always clean and well shaven. He was not one to gamble or drink, but he did carry a wad of snoose

in his lower lip most of the time. Oh, I suppose he had a drink now and then, but he was not really a drinker.

I doubt if he had much book learnin'; however, as a young lad, I thought he was quite intelligent. You could mention any town of any size and he would tell you the railroad that went through there. He rode them all. I think the reason he showed up at Swan Creek was because they were cracking down on hoboes due to the coming of the war. They were getting tough about riding the rails, and he decided to sit it out in Swan Creek until it blew over.

Of course, it was not uncommon for a little branch line that ran up through Swan Creek to have four or five hoboes sitting in the open door of a box car as they went through town. It was different in the larger towns, for they would have to duck out of sight or be apprehended by the railroad authorities.

Seldom was a good worker. Many housewives around Swan Creek, and especially at Monmouth, relied on him to do their fall and spring house cleaning. He beat rugs and draperies and washed windows. In fact, he cleaned the whole house from top to bottom. The women did not have to do a thing except to tell him what they wanted done. His reputation followed him that way from place to place. When they would not let anyone but Seldom clean, you know he was doing the job about right.

Seldom also did gardening and was hired by a few of the Swan Creek townspeople to take care of their gardens. He charged 30 cents per hour. He knew quite a bit about plants and always raised productive crops.

Seldom was an artist, too. He did sign work on store windows or fronts, not only in Swan Creek but surrounding towns. I recall that he drew a detailed picture of Swan Creek in pencil and then colored it in with crayons. It was almost perfect, with the stores and other buildings in their proper places. It hung in a prominent place in my dad's grocery store for a long time. I wish I knew what became of it.

We had a preacher fella come to town one day, who took to preaching on the street corner. He was an ordained minister. He attracted a small following around him and soon began talking about having the drinkers and gamblers arrested. Of course, this did not go over with the local boys.

He was having one of his evening gatherings on the corner, and after it was rollin' pretty good, some of the older men around town decided that if he could preach on one corner, they could sing on the other one. So they did. The preacher became irritated, had them arrested, and they were hauled up to Monmouth for the trials. Of course, the little congregation appeared with the preacher to witness against the guys. It seems that Seldom knew this preacher from some other towns he had been in, so they got him to appear as a witness for them. When Seldom got on the stand, he told the judge where he had been and what the preacher had done in the other towns, and the judge dismissed the case. The preacher never returned to Swan Creek—he just kept right on going.

Nobody in Swan Creek, that I know about, ever knew that Seldom had a different name. He was just known as Seldom Seen. One summer when I was stayin' at my sister's at Knoxville, Illinois, Seldom shared his real name with me. He was cleanin' my sister's house at the time. We were sittin' out under the tree when he said, "Everett, I never did tell anybody in Swan Creek my real name but since I'm leavin' I'll tell you. Do you notice the three M's carved on my tool box—the large one and the two small ones? They stand for Marvin Max McShea."

Seldom wrote to a person called Often Seen several times and received letters in return. We never saw a return address on the envelope but thought it was from Often.

Seldom left Swan Creek and I did not see him again for fifteen years. I was married at the time and lived at the edge of town. I was walking up town one day and noticed Seldom

sitting on the store porch. I sat down beside him and struck up a conversation. He appeared happy that I recognized him. I asked him if he had been back before, since it had been a long time since I had seen him. He said that he had gone through on a freight a time or two. One time he said, "I stayed all night outside of town. Jack King had some oat shocks, and I carried four or five of them into the box car and had a good night's sleep."

He had begun to look pretty seedy. I would say he was probably around 65-70 years old at the time. I told Henry Sands that I had seen Seldom, and he said that they had had him over for dinner. I know Seldom liked that since Henry's wife was a good cook.

Sittin' and talkin' with Seldom on the porch was the last time I was to see him again. He told me he was leavin' to go back to California, where they were building glass rails a mile long. He said, "I want to go back out there to ride them rails."

THE PEDDLER

Vernice Morrell Dees

There were many peddlers on the dirt roads of Illinois during the summers of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Most walked, although some drove horses, usually bony plugs, hitched to carts or wagons.

They sold a variety of things, ranging from books and subscriptions to magazines, to orders of enlargements of family photographs, patent medicines, remedies for animal ailments, and an occasional wagon load of fish (supposedly caught the night before from the nearest river). There was also the egg man, who made his rounds once a week to collect the farm wife's cases of eggs and to leave empty cases for the next week's collection. The egg man drove a horse-drawn

wagon with a cover over it and carried a supply of staple groceries, candy, and chewing gum, which were to be bartered for eggs and poultry. At times, there would even be a salesman driving a fancy-looking automobile and trying to sell stock in the company which manufactured it.

Although there were many peddlers on the roads, Joe was the most interesting. My family had known Joe since he first began to peddle. He was very young then—perhaps in his late teens and perhaps new to Illinois. When I first remember him, he was probably in his early 20's, although he seemed much older to me. He was dark and handsome, with black curly hair and dark eyes. He was tall and very strong. Joe was from one of the Middle Eastern countries and, judging from his name, was probably Lebanese. If my family knew, they did not say.

Joe lived in Peoria, so he must have come to Rushville by train. He may have had an arrangement for storing merchandise at some convient place in Rushville. He always arrived at our place in the late afternoon and spent the night with us.

I was about seven years old at the time I remember seeing him for the first time. Our family had moved from where they had first known him, and he had lost touch with them until that summer, but they seemed happy to see each other again. Joe had learned to write English, but was having some trouble with some capital letters, and I remember helping him with them. From that time on for several years he made his rounds and spent a night with us each summer.

Joe's pack was a carton made of a very strong compressed paper material. It was maroon in color and about two and one half feet in width, height, and depth. It had a cover of the same material and dimensions which fitted snugly over the bottom. The two parts telescoped so that when there was more merchandise than the top could hold, the pack could be expanded. The carton was held together by heavy leather straps and also had straps attached to fit over

the shoulders for carrying. That was before the age of plastics.

Besides the pack, Joe carried a small, black, leather-covered case, which was fitted with compartments for storing and carrying all kinds of small articles of household use. In his case would be needles, papers of pins, thimbles, and a few pairs of scissors. There would also be razors, neckties, hair ribbons, shoe laces, button hooks, etc. Usually there were several pieces of jewelry, as well as hairpins, combs, and other small articles of interest to a family.

It was not until after he had spent the night and had breakfast that Joe opened his pack to show his wares. It was mostly filled with linens. There were beautiful scarves, table clothes, pillow cases, doilies, and other household items. Most were in linen and embroidered and lace trimmed. If there are any left today, they are collectors items. I remember one particular white Irish linen table cloth which was embossed with an antlered stag in the middle. It was banquet size and very colorful. Other things were just as elaborate. They were the type of things which we did not see often and which, for the most part, we had little use, but my mother did buy some of the plainer things.

Before leaving, Joe would give my mother some piece of merchandise in gratitude for his night's lodging. He would not have been allowed to pay otherwise.

The last time we saw Joe was in the late 20's. At that time he was driving a nice horse hitched to a covered cart. We hadn't seen Joe for some time. He had married and had started a retail business in Peoria. This last trip was purely nostalgic. He had missed traveling about and wanted to make one last trip through the countryside to see the people he had known, and with whom he had become friends during his years as a peddler.

DR. RENNER OF BENLD

Grace R. Welch

All doctors live on the brink of crisis, but the early horse-and-buggy doctors were pioneers as well, learning not alone from books and predecessors, but also from their own experiences. They were breaking ground, building where nothing had existed before, and when there was nothing to build with, they created—out of their concern and understanding and love for their fellow man.

Such a doctor, my father, came out of St. Louis University Medical School in 1906 to begin his practice in Benld, Illinois. The town was growing rapidly as four coal mines were operating in the vicinity. Most of the land in this area and many of the businesses were owned by Ben L. Dorsey; in fact, the name of the town was formed by using his given name and two initials. Probably there is no other town anywhere using that name.

When the doctor and his bride came to Benld, all of the roads in the area were new and were all but impassable in certain seasons. He was, by necessity, a horse-and-buggy doctor. At times, even the buggy had to be left by the road as he rode the horse through blowing snow or across a swollen creek. Sometimes a farmer met him with team and wagon to take him to a remote residence. He bought a car a few years later, but kept the more primitive means of transportation until he left Benld in 1920 to settle in his hometown of Lebanon, Illinois, where he practiced until 1966.

The early years in Benld were busy ones. His office hours were 8:00-11:30 a.m., 1:00-4:30 and 6:00-8:00 p.m., except Sunday, when he took the afternoon off. Like other doctors of his day, he made house-calls, charging \$1.00 during the day and double for night. Office calls, including the medicine which he provided, were 25 cents to 50 cents. He prescribed a lot of calomel, hinkle tablets, gargle, and cough

syrup—a thick sweet mixture which patients loved, and also more recognizable medicines like digitalis and quinine.

Babies were always born in homes; for “confinement,” as his records listed it, he charged \$10.00. The nearest hospital, fifteen miles away, he used for emergencies or nearly hopeless cases that required nursing, and he usually transported his own patients there. Patients requiring major operations were turned over to a surgeon, but he set broken bones and did stitching he was proud of. Once in a while, he pulled an aching tooth. He was often called back to the office late on Saturday nights when there had been too much revelry, and he sometimes treated fearsome injuries suffered in mine accidents.

By 1916 Benld had a population of 3,500, a mixture of nationalities as the names on his records show: Sakellaris, Dmytryk, Lanfarnski, Firth, MacDonald, Marcacci, Morgan, and Powchick. His daybook held a day’s work on a single page, where he listed, in abbreviated form, the patient’s name, diagnosis, prescription and charge. Each entry was clear enough to be transcribed later to individual cards by his one “office girl” or himself. He had survived sleepless nights, frozen ears, and long hours for ten years without vacation, but nothing could have prepared him for the crisis soon to erupt.

In 1917 America went to war. The other doctor in town was accepted for service, but my father, just a little older, was refused because he would be needed to serve the town. He became chairman of the local unit of the Red Cross, even as he worked longer hours to do the work of two doctors. The pages in his daybook began to look crowded as the daily patient load began to jump to 20, 25, and more. When a strange new illness, influenza, began to spread, the usual page would no longer hold the names, even in his neat, small writing, and he was forced to use the margins and eliminate some of the detail. By October of 1918, the peak of the epidemic, he clipped in extra sheets.

The disease, previously unknown in this country, had come in from Europe on the east coast, and gradually swept the country. Because it was new, people had no immunity built up and doctors had no cures. It could be a killer as deadly as the bullets and gas that husbands, fathers, and sons were facing overseas. Country and city doctors alike could treat only symptoms. In spite of their best efforts, the patients often remained weak for a long time or succumbed to pneumonia and other complications.

Before the month was over, he was going night and day, and finally he had to call for help. Retired doctors who were willing to help in emergencies were registered with the State Board of Health, and two came in answer to his call. Although these men would see patients only during office hours, leaving the night calls still to be answered by my father, he was able to snatch enough sleep to keep going. A nurse who took his temperature at the hospital when he was delivering a patient tried in vain to talk him into staying, but he went on back to the people who were depending on him. I heard him boast, years later, that he had never been ill enough to have a meal in bed.

He was a marvelous story-teller, later recounting his experience by reflecting the lighter side of that stressful period. As he was leaving a household where practically all of the family members were suffering from influenza, a neighbor came to meet him at the car.

She rolled up the long apron in front of her as she asked, "Are the Gaudinos getting any better? My Patrick likes to play with their Tony, and he's always wanting to know when he can see him."

Doc decided to share one of his worries with this kind, concerned woman. "Yes they're improving, but they're not gaining strength very fast because there's no one well enough to cook good nourishing meals."

"Oh, the poor dears! Could I just cook up a pot of nice broth for them?"

"That's exactly what they need. It's good of you to think of it."

"I'll be takin' it over tomorrow."

"Don't go in. Just leave it at the door."

On Doc's next trip to the Gaudino's, he was pleased to learn that the soup had been delivered, but surprised by the recipient's comment about it: "Yes Mrs. Flaherty sent over something she called soup, and she was a very kind lady, but—"

"Didn't you eat it?" asked Doc.

Mrs. Gaudino was flat on her back, but her voice was strong: "It was like eating the dishwater. Nothing in it! She sent over the water she had cooked her meat in."

The Gaudinos recovered, but the Flahertys caught the flu. Mrs. Gaudino decided to return the favor; she felt she could give Mrs. Flaherty a lesson in soup-making. The doctor heard about it when he called.

"Did you ask Mrs. Gaudino to send us some soup?" asked Mrs. Flaherty weakly.

"No, I haven't seen them since they're well."

Mrs. Flaherty raised her head with difficulty from the pillow, but her voice gained strength as she spoke: "She sent over something she called soup, bless her heart, but we had a wee bit of trouble enjoying it. She must have cleaned out her pantry; it had everything in it! Slop, I called it."

Doc lived until 1967, acknowledging many changes in his profession but he never ceased, in sixty years of practice, to make house calls and provide his own medicine. When the town celebrated his 50th anniversary, of both medical practice and marriage, he had delivered more than 3,500 babies. He had also had an enormous impact on the health and well being of the community.

DR. COWLES OF WOODHULL

Genevieve Hagerty

It has been eighty-five years since the handsome young doctor and his bride stepped off the C. B. & Q. "Dolly" at Woodhull, Illinois. But the young wife later died during tumor surgery in their home, and nothing the Chicago specialists nor he did could save her life.

That left the village with an attractive widower, Dr. George H. Cowles, and a ten-year-old son, and it took a woman named Myrtle Tilden, twenty years younger, to recapture his heart. I was one of the nine children of this 1912 marriage, but my earliest realization that he was also a doctor came when he took me into the bedroom on October 20, 1919, to see the newest baby, John. When Dad died in 1936, I was on my way to becoming a registered nurse, so we had talked a lot about the early days of medicine.

When my father first came to Woodhull, old Dr. Lowery already had a flourishing practice. So at least once a day, Dad harnessed a team of horses to the buggy and made a galloping dash through town and out a mile or so. The next day he'd take a different route, and soon the people were whispering about how busy the new doctor was, and that perhaps he could cure their ills.

His offices were two rooms of his large frame home. The first had a table where he did his bookkeeping, a balance beam scale, a huge black safe piled with thick medical books, a rocker, two straight chairs, a large Boston fern in the north window, a rag rug on the linoleum, and his sheepskin and diploma from Rush Medical College and Northwestern University.

The operating room, just off our kitchen, was dwarfed by the long, narrow, wooden table with its thin pad. One wall held a glass-enclosed case of instruments. There hung the shiny bone saw with which he'd amputated "Cap" Clay's leg after a well drilling accident. There was the skull trephine

which dad used at least once. Among his momentos is a picture of the patient, a little girl. He wrote on the back "Abscess of brain operation, April 6, 1898. Successful." There were four forceps he used to pull teeth until a dentist came to town. Also in the case where hemostats, scissors, suture material, needles, catheters, obstetrical forceps, retractors, and other tools of his trade.

A corner cupboard held rubber aprons, rubber sheets, bedpans, urinals, and specimen bottles. Nearby was a commode with pitcher, basin, and bar of soap for the surgeons to wash their hands. As his practice grew, Dad preferred to give the drop (ether or chloroform anesthetic) and let others do the surgery.

Another wall of this room had long shelves to hold the few medicines available at the time. Dad had apprenticed himself to a Dr. Dale in Wisconsin before graduation, so he was able to be licensed by the state. The early physicians were almost hypnotists in their prescribing and dispensing of medicines, willing many people back to health. Dad prescribed fever tablets with the label, "Dissolve ten in half glass of water and take a teaspoon every hour." He ordered syrup of epicac, rather than the old remedy of kerosene and lard, to get the croupy child to vomit the phlegm. Castor Oil was given to young and old, for most diseases. With his pestle and mortar, he crushed tablets; with the tip of his pen knife he measured out the right amount to administer; and with his expertise he mixed gallstone medicine, tonics, cough remedies, and ointments. He had absolutely no use for patent medicines, such as Fletcher's Castoria, Mother Burns Salve, or Denver Mud. He compared the latter to the efficacy of fresh cow dung!

One aid the country doctor had was mustard plasters to treat the deadly pneumonia. My father taught the family how to mix the right amount of flour, powdered mustard, and vinegar and apply as a poultice to the chest. The reaction

brought blood churning to the lungs to hopefully rid them of infection.

The stomach pump was another great palliative. The treatment gave the family something to do for the patient, it focused attention on the sick one, and the sufferer certainly felt better when the treatment stopped. Dad's future mother-in-law was his very first patient when he came to Woodhull (attested to by an engraved gold cross she gave him for a watch fob), and Grandma Katie Tilden always claimed the treatment had saved her life.

Most babies were breast fed in that era, but the few who couldn't were considered starving babies. Dad became a specialist in concocting cow's milk formula for those babies. When one family argued that goat's milk would do the trick, Dad spat, "Hang the goat by the horns and I'll save your baby." And he did.

Other remedies concerned diets for patients suffering from cholera, typhoid, or other gastrointestinal maladies. There was hot milk toast with pepper and salt added, the toast well browned. In more severe cases, flour was scorched in a skillet, salt and milk added to make a thick gravy, and the patient was fed a teaspoon every fifteen minutes.

Dad was one of the first in town to buy and drive a car, but until the roads were paved, he still had to resort to horsedrawn vehicles part of the time. The last Ford he bought was a yellow and blue taxicab. It was easily identifiable, and the patients along the eighteen-mile drive to Galesburg hospitals could flag him down, and save another trip for a house call. Another signal he used was to have the family place a chair in the driveway if they needed him. It stood out like a beacon in the country.

My youngest brother and sister never knew the excitement of the Galesburg surgeons like Dr. Michael Winters, Dr. Moses Griffith, and Dr. Charles Finley, arriving by night train at Alpha and being transported the three miles over snow packed or muddy roads to our home. For them, it

was almost a lark, a night away from the city, and they would operate on the four or five patients Dad had scheduled.

One evening they arrived just as two of our children, Bobby and Kathleen, had climbed up on a dresser on our enclosed back porch. They had planned to get a drink from the tin dipper in the ten-quart pail of well water, but the dresser tipped over. The water, a large crockful of beets pickling in vinegar, and a gallon of milk went with it. As the red and white cascade soaked the children and flooded the kitchen, my mother was in tears, but the doctors waded through and had the best laugh of the day.

I well remember the mixture of pride and fear I felt when Raymond was about five and he was being carried into the operating room for surgery. He looked vulnerable in his pajamas, but it took all the doctors to get him on the table. As they went through the door from the kitchen, he grabbed the two heating pipes to the upstairs, held on with a death grip, and screamed for big brother Gerald to help him.

Most children came for tonsillectomies, and were carried to our folding bed in the living room after surgery. They each stayed about thirty minutes to be sure there was no bleeding, then were bundled up, winter or summer, and taken home to recuperate.

Many more patients were seen in their homes than in the office. Dad's practice extended from Woodhull into Alpha, New Windsor, Rio, Ophiem, North Henderson, Oneida, and the adjoining countryside. He saw each patient as an integral part of the family, and each family as a part of a community. He delivered more than 2,000 babies, usually at home, often by kerosene lamplight. He set broken bones perfectly without X-rays; he stitched up lacerations without blood transfusions. He treated influenza, diphtheria, malaria, whooping cough, measles, and tuberculosis without specific drugs, and he lost as many patients as all doctors did before the advent of immunizations and antibiotics. He thought fever thermometers in the hands of layman, and even the

chicken scales on which the farmers weighed their newborn babies, were unnecessary adjuncts to good medical practice.

But what Dad had that many modern physicians do not have was time—time to listen to the sick, time to be patient for the birth of a baby, time to wait out the crisis of pneumonia, and time to comfort the family at the death of a loved one. The children of Dr. Cowles, as well as his patients during the forty years he practiced, owe him a deep debt of gratitude for giving us those moments and hours of his talent and concern.

WILLIAM H. HARTZELL, TRIAL ATTORNEY

Leon L. Lamet

Before the turn of the century and the wide use of telephones, it was only natural that people would satisfy their curiosity and seek entertainment from court trials. The latter provided local drama and glamorized the participants.

Law schools were few in number, and their location, distance, and expense made them beyond the reach of most young people who had the desire to enter the profession. The accepted method of gaining the right to practice was by becoming a student in the office of a practicing attorney or attorneys who were members of the legal bar. In that way, young men studied the full body of the law and gained guidance in procedures until they were able to demonstrate the ability and show a level of responsibility that justified their admission to practice in our courts. Rare were those lawyers in western Illinois, in those early days, who were admitted to practice by any other preparation.

Into this scene came William Henry Hartzell, a graduate of the LaHarpe Seminary, who found acceptance as a student in the law office of Charles J. Scofield and Appoles

W. O'Hara in Carthage. Mr. Hartzell was born November 8, 1869, one of the sons of Noah and Rebecca Westherington Hartzell, on a farm in Durham Township in Hancock County.

His diligence and determination was such that he was admitted to the Illinois Bar at age 21, and two years later, he was elected State's Attorney of Hancock County in the great Cleveland-Harrison campaign of that year. Between those two notable events, he married Inez E. Charter of LaHarpe. Their home was a happy one, to which there were born six children—namely, Ruth, Eloise, Grace, Lucille (Billy), Phillip, and Franklin.

After dissolution of the firm of Scofield and O'Hara, Mr. Hartzell practiced by himself for some years. For a period, he was associated with William C. Hooker of Carthage and Truman Plantz of Warsaw under the firm name of Hooker, Plantz, and Hartzell. Later, he was associated with B. M. Cavanagh and Edward S. Martin under the firm name of Hartzell, Cavanagh, and Martin.

After Edward S. Martin decided to practice alone, Mr. Hartzell appeared to feel that his advancing years necessitated that the firm name be changed to Cavanagh, Lamet, and Irwin, with him retaining only the position of "counsel." I was the "Lamet" in that firm, and so I got to know him well.

The talent for perception of human reaction is one that Mr. Hartzell developed advantageously and used with impressive results throughout his career. As his ability as a trial lawyer attracted wide attention, his services were eagerly sought by many, especially those who suffered misfortune.

His expertise in cross-examining witnesses was rarely equalled, and his ability to draw from a witness those aspects that were favorable to his client and repeat them by different approaches was impressive. One example that I recall was his cross-examination during a murder trial that occurred in the late years of his practice. The prosecuting witnesses were

young people, who were questioned about their use of intoxicating liquor throughout the evening of the murder. There was no proof concerning the amount of liquor used, nor was it probable that there was much used, but Mr. Hartzell's repetition in the questioning of the occasions where a drink or drinks was consumed was so extensive that on appeal to the Illinois Supreme Court, the Court found that witnesses who had consumed such a quantity of liquor could not be relied upon.

Another of his impressive talents was to leave a witness at a point that the opposing counsel got the impression that the situation was advantageous to him. However, the baited lawyer always experienced disappointing results.

In his cross-examination of witnesses, I was sometimes reminded of the peeling of an apple down to the core. He questioned the witness around and around until he had extracted from him all the knowledge that he had on the subject—and then he would expand his questions in the area of those matters of disadvantage to the opponent, and emphasize them.

Over the years, he developed expressions that made an impact upon the jury. He could reflect joy, sorrow, disgust, suspicion, and other reactions by various arm, hand, and facial expressions. And he seemed to develop, by reason of need, words and phrases that fit the occasion and were lasting to the listeners. In all of this, he had high respect for the presiding judge, avoiding situations that would embarrass the court in any way.

Until the Great Depression of the 30's, Mr. Hartzell was a frequent user of cigars. One could make no mistake about his identity when he was walking down the street thinking about a problem. There seemed to be a puff of smoke from the cigar with every step.

His striking physical appearance was largely due to his deep black hair, less than tall stature, and a heavy black beard. The beard stood out prominently in those earlier days

when shaving was not a daily practice. Perhaps it was the beard that earned him the nickname of "Pig." Although a dignified man, he accepted the title affectionately.

Intoxicating liquors were distasteful to Edward Hartzell throughout his life. He frequently gave lectures opposing their sale and use in every way. In his final illness, at age sixty eight, when the attending physician recommended the use of whisky for stimulation of his heart, he responded that it was his "first taste of the fluid."

Most of the lawyers that have had experiences with William H. Hartzell are deceased. However, those who were his adversaries or had participated with him at the trial table, in their day, expressed the view that his talent as a trial lawyer was unexcelled in western Illinois. He was one of the people who made Carthage a special place many years ago.

THE BARBERS OF RUSHVILLE

Guy Tyson

My grandpa had white whiskers and a mustache. He never shaved. That was the thing I remembered most about him when I was a kid, because he always insisted on a kiss and the whiskers scratched my lips. I didn't like that. The top of his head was bald, and when the hair on the sides and back got too long, Grandma snipped it off with her scissors. When I got older, I noticed that most of the men my grandfather's age wore whiskers and mustaches, but the younger men my papa's age only wore a mustache.

Papa only shaved once a week, unless we were going some place. When he shaved, he would lather his face using a shaving brush and soap. After sharpening his razor on a strap, he would shave off his whiskers then wash his face

with hot water. There was no perfumed aftershave lotion, no hair spray, no dandruff remover, or hair tonic.

Papa would drive the team and buggy to town every Saturday afternoon and buy enough groceries to last a week. He got to going to the barber shop before he came home to get a shave. The barber would tip the chair back, lather his face, and cover it with a hot, wet towel to soften the whiskers before shaving them off. The price was ten cents for a shave and 15 cents for a hair cut.

One Saturday when he came home, we kids ran out to meet him and carry in the groceries, and see if he had brought us a sack of candy. Our little sister took one look at the man in the buggy, ran into the house and told Mama a strange man had driven Papa's buggy home and left Papa in town. Papa had shaved off his mustache. When he came into the house, Mama took one look at him, burst into tears, and ran into the bedroom so we wouldn't see her cry.

There were four boys in our family, and it would have cost too much to have our hair cut in a barber shop, so Papa bought a pair of hand clippers and he cut our hair. I don't remember ever going into a barber shop before I went to high school. When we boys got older, we would use the clippers, a comb, and Mama's scissors and cut each others's hair.

When I went into the army in 1918, my uncle gave me a Gem Safety Razor. It came with an extra handle and a strap so you could sharpen the single edge blade and use the same blade several times before it had to be replaced. It was a wonderful improvement over the old straight razor.

There were twenty-seven barbers in Rushville. They opened their shops at 7:00, seven days a week, and closed in the evening when the last customer was through. Rushville was a Saturday night town. Everyone had cars so they came to town to visit and shop. None of the stores closed before 10:30 p.m. The barbers got lots of customers after the stores closed.

All the barbers had a meeting in the courthouse to talk

about not barbering on Sunday. Some of them said they had to stay open because too many of their customers wanted a shave before they went to church that morning. The others said they could get a shave late Saturday night. They wouldn't agree so they decided to wait a week and meet again. The night group cut their prices that week from 35 cents for a hair cut to 25 cents and took most of the trade that week so they all decided to close on Sunday.

One day two young fellows drifted into town and got jobs in one of the barber shops. Later they married my sister and her girlfriend.

My brother, Lester, never cared much for farming. Our brother-in-law had such good working conditions and made much better money as a barber than farming, that Lester decided to be a barber also.

After graduating from a barber college in Davenport, Iowa, he barbered in Bushnell for a year then came home and got a job in Rushville. The owner collected thirty percent of the money taken in and furnished everything except the tools.

Most of the shops had a shoeshine chair, and a shoeshine boy would shine your shoes for a dime. Some of the shops had a bathtub in the back room where you could take a bath with plenty of hot water, soap, and a clean towel for 25 cents. Not many homes had running water or a bathtub. Most of the better barber shops had a rack on the wall that held fifty or more shaving mugs and brushes. A regular customer could buy his own mug and the barber never used that mug or brush on anyone else.

During the Depression, Lester rented a small building in Pleasantview, and every Wednesday night, and all day Sunday he would barber for the folks in Pleasantview. No barber ever closed their shop until six o'clock or until the last customer was taken care of, so for several years besides working ten or eleven hours in Rushville, he worked till midnight on Wednesday and all day every Sunday.

When the soldiers came home from the Korean War, there were not enough jobs for everyone. Jerry, our youngest son, came home from high school one night and said he had been talking to Uncle Lester and asked what we thought of barbering as a trade.

He liked the idea that a barber was always inside. The work was clean, and when you went home at night your day's pay was in your pocket. All the barbers in town owned their own home and a good car, took a vacation each year, and some of them owned an extra house or farm. We liked the idea, too. He started planning and saving his money toward going to barber school after graduation from high school. Harold, his oldest brother, quit his job, and they both took a thirty-nine-week course in a barber college in Decatur and graduated in 1955.

Before Harold and Jerry graduated from barber college, Lester open up a shop of his own with two chairs, and when they came home Jerry started barbering with Lester. Harold got a job with a barber in Beardstown. After graduation you had to barber two years under a licensed barber before you could get a barber's license.

Times were changing. The law required the tools to be disinfected between customers, and a clean towel for every customer. The customer also liked a neck paper under the hair cloth and a vacuum to suck the loose hair from around the collar. They also wanted a ten second electric massage on the neck and shoulders before they got out of the chair. A few days before Jerry started barbering in Rushville, the barbers all met and decided to raise the price of a hair cut from 75 cents to one dollar. It was the first raise they had had in seven years.

In 1970 the building where they had their shop was sold and they had to move. Lester had been barbering for forty-six years, and his legs were bothering him so he didn't want to start over with a shop of his own. He decided to go in with his

old partner, "Mutt Root," and Jerry leased an empty building and built a new barber shop.

The electric razor was so handy most men shaved themselves every morning, and they had their hair cut more often. They were always in a hurry, which brought on the "appointment" barber shop. Jerry's was the first one in Rushville.

Lester retired in 1976. He had been barbering for fifty-two years. No wonder his legs hurt him.

Jerry bought a building in 1979 and built a new barber shop. The walls and ceilings are covered with old barn siding and old wooden beams are overhead.

A modern barber shop must keep a full line of toilet articles, such as shampoos, dandruff remover, hair sprays, mustache combs, electric massagers, hair curlers, blow driers, wigs, and if they haven't got what you want, they will get it for you.

Now, in 1982, you can get a hair cut for \$4.50, a shave for \$3.00, and a shampoo for \$2.50. If you are getting a little gray, he will tint it for you, or dye it black, red, or any other color you choose for \$10.00. If you don't like your kinks or curls, get them straightened for \$12.50. If you think there is something wrong with your hair, he will test it and tell you if it lacks protein or what will correct it.

There are three barbers in Rushville, and Jerry is the youngest. The other two are getting ready to retire. The old barbers think the law should be changed so that a young man should have to go to school long enough to learn all about the trade, and then when they graduate, they could open up a shop of their own just like the beauty operators do. No barber can afford to hire an apprentice, teach him the trade, and take care of all the red tape required by the government when you are an employer.

Will Rushville be without a barber in a few years? The barbers say, "No, there will always be someone to do the job," but we know several of our neighboring towns who have

no barbers. Maybe some of the young men who are out of work because their factories went broke or have been laid off countless times because of strikes or loss of business by the company, would like to have a trade where you are guaranteed a job every day for the rest of your life at a good living wage, under good working conditions. Also, you have money in your pocket every night, and you're the boss.

Think about it. You might like it.

THE FOLKS IN PETERSBURG

Hollis Powers

Geographically, Petersburg is located in Menard County. One mile South lies New Salem, which was Abraham Lincoln's early home. Petersburg is nestled in beautiful hills that eventually slope into a valley on the east, in which the Sangamon River wanders. Having had Lincoln roam our hills and valleys, and Edgar Lee Masters spend his early youth in town, has given us national recognition.

What follows is my interpretation of life of some of the folks in Petersburg decades ago. All of the events are true. The names of people have not been changed, but I have used their initials only.

In 1916 we children in Petersburg waited for the iceman to come down the road to deliver ice. Julius Mallergren, the son of the owner, always stopped, chipped off pieces of ice, and gave it to us. His dad started the first ice plant that we had. From the beginning, a coal mine was developed and farm land was acquired.

H.A. was a banker, and he was a land owner with many acres. He was genial and friendly. We swell with pride today when we see the sons of his past farm tenants with their own farms, and in some cases, the grandsons are occupying the ground that their grandfather farmed. H.A. was able, with

deft management, to keep his bank solvent during the great Depression. He had office space to rent above his bank on the second story. Once a young professional man in need of this space, and with no finances with which to buy his equipment, approached him in his office. The banker's concerned answer was "the tenant in the office you desire has paid me no rent for three years. Would you like to work for me?" The young prospective borrower explained that he had been educated along other lines and that he knew nothing about the banking business. The ensuing reply was: "If you will bring him into my office, I would like very much to talk to him as I have not been able to contact him." Needless to say, this was done, and without force. Our neophyte received the loan. Our banker got his rent money from the tardy tenant. . . . Some office equipment was obtained in the transfer. Everyone was happy and satisfied. The banker had lost no money and had transferred little. In reference to the past tenant, earlier in the year he had expressed a desire to return to St. Louis, his home.

Jess Ballard and his brother always lived in Petersburg. They made a living by topping trees. Sobriety not being their strong point, they brought all of us much pleasure. Usually, after a sleet storm they would be very busy plying their trade. Jess would squirrel out on a branch to be cut, while his brother was cutting with the saw close to the tree. "It takes the pressure off of the saw," he maintained. On one particularly cold and icy day, they were at a residence close to the high school. Needless to say, the school was alerted. As we watched, the resident of this home came out of her door to admonish Jess for doing this dangerous climbing. Never wearing shoes around home was her trademark. Previously to her upset, at the door, Jess had said in no uncertain terms that he was safer where he was than where she was. The lady was not hurt. Later Jess and his brother were struck by the C. P. & S. L. train as they crossed the railroad tracks in their twenty-year-old truck. Mr. S., the undertaker, was giving

solace to Jess on having just lost his brother, saying: "It was a terrible wreck and we are saddened by your loss." "It could have been worse," was the reply. "How could it have been worse, Jess?" "It could have been me," he reiterated. I might say that all of us were very alert at that crossing after this accident. Eventually a flashing signal was installed.

About 1910 there was a local family named Wood. They lived North of the canning factory. Two children graced their household. The son became the Sangamon County Judge. The daughter, after having graduated from the University of Chicago, became the English teacher and principal of our local high school. She went on to become Menard County Superintendent of Schools. Remember, it was unprecedented in that day (1920-1930) for a lady to extend her career to such a degree. As a principal in our school, she helped to direct the lives of our students. She badgered us to go farther with our education. She gave us encouragement when we needed it. During all this time, she was setting a moral example for all of us to follow.

One of her students was Edward Laning. As a boy, he was our local artist. After a stretch at the University and the Chicago Art Institute, he became very noted in his field. Today his murals grace the halls of the Supreme Court and the Post-Office in Washington, D.C.

Another student, Wood Gray, became a teacher at the University of Illinois. His high school goal was to become the greatest mile runner in the nation. He traversed up and down our hills in winter and summer. He ran, ran, and ran. When his times did not improve because of sore feet, his college coach told him he had ruined his feet in past running, and it would be best to hang up the spikes and concentrate on his curriculum. While being crushed by this statement, he called upon his past training and went forward. As a student in the History Department, he excelled. Later, as a Professor in History he was asked, by the powers that be, to go to Europe and write a history of World War II. This he did.

Around 1920, Mr. and Mrs. Sept Weatherby moved to Petersburg. Mrs. W's father was Dr. Bennett, M.D. He also did some dentistry, having been the first to do so. They were neighbors of mine. In their 90's they still were able to tolerate the neighborhood youngsters very well. The key, I believe, was that they had several grandchildren of their own. One was and still is my very good friend. Upon my desire to further my academic career, they presented me with some ancient dental tools used by the doctor. While cleaning out an old tool box in their shed, they had discovered them. They date back to the time of Lincoln. Rusty and pitted, the story that they could tell would be significant. Considerable time has been spent, both by reading and by research to place these instruments in Lincoln's mouth. Until now, this has been fruitless. We do know, nevertheless, that the New Salem-era Lincoln was young, and the probability remains that he never needed the services of a dentist.

Dinger Darling was a comical character. Innocently making the scene each and every day was his personal pleasure. The two railroad stations seemed to be his favorite milieu around 1920. Upon hearing the train whistle approaching the station, he would dash to the area and, with great speed, sling the ten gallon cream cans that were destined to the creamery onto the baggage car. His obsession with that task would sometimes merit a dime, just sometimes.

The Watkins family had a drugstore. The mother and son were both pharmacists. When Mrs. Watkins died in her 90's, she was the oldest active living pharmacist in Illinois. The family was thrifty. They had a paper bailer in the back of their store. When some of the customers dropped any paper, even a chewing gum wrapper, it would immediately be retrieved and popped into the bailer. This conservatism spilled over and was noted by the general public. In a certain and almost indistinguishable way, they always came to the aid of people that needed help. In 1915, a daughter did social

work in Chicago. A son, Lyle, carried on the business in Petersburg. He had gone to the Culver Military Academy before becoming a pharmacist. Since the family owned almost one half of the buildings around the square, they had many apartments to rent. Many of those rooms were rented to the poor. When those people needed help, Lyle would come to their rescue, giving them shelter. Strangely, however, he lost interest in both the up-keep of the apartments and the renters when they were once on their feet. With dwindling finances, toward the end, he still did his best to put some cover over the heads of the poor. His Masonic membership during his many years was a shining example of devotedness.

In the same vein, allow me to state that this family owned the first car in our town. For twenty to thirty years, people from all walks of life tried to inveigle Lyle to sell. It had the appearance of a buggy with a splash board. He would not sell. Rumor had it that the Studebaker organization would trade him even, giving him a brand new President Studebaker in exchange. Eventually, he sold this car to a man whom we know had the patience of Job and the leisure of Methuselah.

The editor of the *Observer* was a kind and gentle man. He reported the news with carefulness. Some of it was excellent, some borderline, but never slanderous. His knowledge of people was a thing to behold. All allegations were checked out, often with the family of the accused, before the presses started to run the story. That, I might add, took courage. Although he has been dead many years, his nostalgic columns are still being carried in the *Observer*. The future of the paper is assured because the present operating staff is adherent to his principles.

Dr. Wilkins was our physician from 1909 until he died. He was a gaunt and tall man. He made house calls. The oldsters in their last years would call him to listen to their complaints and age problems. He would listen first, then with meticulous bedside manner plead and flatter them to once

again rise and get better. It worked. Many of us believe those people lived longer because of him. His Andy Gump mustache was his trademark.

John Lucht owned a grocery store. In 1916, the children would converge there to buy round jawbreakers at a penny apiece. They came in cinnamon, licorice, and peppermint flavors. They were in a huge jar at the front of the store. Those of us without the necessary lucre were his guests.

Edgar Lee Masters of, *Spoon River Anthology* fame, was claimed as a native of Petersburg, primarily because he still had relations here. I understand that Lewistown likes to share some of the ownership, too. Edith Masters, his niece, was a history teacher in our local high school. On one of his trips from New York to Petersburg to visit with the Masters clan, the school was alerted. Shortly it was decided that I should be the one to invite him over to the assembly hall the next morning to be at opening exercises before the entire student body. On the way home to dinner, I was to stop off at the Masters residence and make this appeal. I knocked on the door and was ushered into the dining room. Edgar Lee looked up and said in a booming voice, "What do you want?" I told him my request. His manner was both gruff and brusque as he retorted, "I never lecture before kids." He continued indulging. I just stood there, hoping to apologize for the erratic timing of this request and for my impingement on his valuable time. The words flowed out rather awkwardly, I know. Excusing myself, I then made a hasty retreat to the door. The report that I made back to the school was disappointing. The next morning, back at school stood a wonderful surprise. There, in person, was our author, Edgar Lee Masters. History now tells that Edgar Lee was a curt and very critical person.

Double E. Brass had a canning factory on the North edge of Petersburg. He canned sweet corn and pumpkin in season. His "Man-in-the-Moon" label was known far and wide. Many large cities stocked his brand. When I was very

young, being a friend of the Brass children, I went to work with them stacking cans that were shunted off on a railroad siding of the Old C&A railroad track at the plant. Conveyor belts carried those empty cans out of the boxcar to the second floor of the factory warehouse. Here they were stored until used. In the boxcar, we had a tool that looked like a short-handled bow rake with the tines on a long axis to the handle. The cans in the car were in solid rows that contained many thousands. The tines on this rake affair were spaced so that one could reach and deliver twenty cans from this stack to the conveyor. From here they were whisked away to the warehouse. There another crew was busily engaged, relieving the conveyor that always seemed to be stuffed full. Then the neat stacks of cans were placed against the wall. The rows were 30 to 40 feet long. The height was as high as we could reach, possible seven feet. The early labels were pasted on by hand. Later, a labeling machine was purchased. Mr. Brass had a keen mind. He was an inventor. Many of his inventions are now being used in factories that do that particular kind of canning. One of the most noted inventions was the "shaker" he used on the cans of corn. Previously, at that time, when the housewife would pour out a can of corn into her baking dish, it was necessary to obtain a spoon and scrape the starch out of the bottom of the can that had settled there. After the innovation, the corn always remained in a homogeneous mixture in the can. Mr. Brass always paid the crew on Monday. He stated that by so doing he was assured of a full crew with which to start the next week.

Preacher Groves was a banker. On Sunday he would venture forth to some neighboring community to read the Gospel. Many stories were related in the early 20's regarding his method of making loans. Most of them were true. One in particular struck my fancy. It might show his faith in his fellow man: A farmer would approach Preacher Groves at the bank to borrow for the operation of his farm for the coming year. Invariably the man was told that the bank did not have

any money to loan at that particular time. "I do, however, have some personal money that I might loan. When can you repay the loan?" The reply was always similar: "Three o'clock on such and such a day." The loan was always satisfied at that time. Binding this contract was a hand-shake at the time of the loan. Today, I am sure with the banking standards now in existence Mr. Groves' way would be frowned upon.

Father Conley had a large dog that he had trained himself. Everyone marveled at his obedience. He taught his parishioners that they too must be trained, restrained and follow his teachings. His masses were well attended. The Catholic church stands today as it did after the turn of the century. The only changes are that the old church school has been torn down, and gold leaf has been added to the steeple.

Sheriff Clary was a good man. During Prohibition he broke many bottles, both on and off the bodies of the accused. Whether the laws were good or bad he taught us to uphold them. The majority did that. He was very busy in his office but not too involved to take his two boys fishing. Having been told by Bill Craig, our local commercial fisherman, that there was a great catfish just below the steep banks of the river, he went forth to catch it. After it broke the tackle many times, it was finally landed. It weighed 48 pounds. The Layman Owens restaurant purchased the fish, serving it to their customers. It was caught at Charter Oaks, the place below the new Petersburg First National Bank, at the bend in the river.

Colby Beekman was everyone's friend. It seems that he was always the Menard County Superintendent of Highways. He was fat and round, with a constant sparkle in his eye. In 1968, in his 90's, he could tell a story second to none. He also was a booster for the young. His road crews were both tough and gentle, but they were dedicated. Howard Bell, one of the gentler road men went forth to become the head of the Menard Electric Cooperative. Gravel for the roads in Menard County would come in on a rail siding north of the first

trestle. One of those dynamic workers, Henry Altig, would start to unload a car of gravel at 7:00 a.m. sharp. His shovel would never stop nor would he stand erect to rest until he had the car unloaded at about 2:30 p.m. I would challenge anyone to break his shoveling record. This was accomplished with sweat, grueling labor, and an intense desire to exceed the work of all the rest of the workmen.

Thus the life in our small community was endowed with people who cared for their fellow man, and for the legal, social, religious, political, and practical aspects of life. The wealthy, in most cases, joined hands with the less fortunate. In turn this elated us, knowing that what we were doing was good for all of us. We in Petersburg do not have to prove that we have been an asset to our state and to our nation. We can see the flag waving every time we recall the past generations in town.

I am happy to have been associated with all these people.

THE LIFE OF LOUIS SILBERER

Howard Silberer

He was a short man, five feet two, with black curly hair and black eyes and dark skin. A man of restless energy, he couldn't sit down without going to sleep, so he kept active. Prone to use far more vigor than necessary on any task, even his speech was louder than necessary. He loved to call the dances in full voice, proud of the fact that Ben Rogers, a farmer south of town, told him that on a frosty night they could hear him calling the dances way out there. Yelling for the kids to come in to supper, he would fill the whole neighborhood with sound. During the week he always wore overalls, and in winter, layer after layer of sweaters and jackets, and a corduroy cap with ear flaps. Dressed thus, he

gave off a sweaty smell. But on Saturday nights he shaved and went downtown to loaf in a suit, shirt, and tie, with a big stick-pin in the shape of a bull-dog. Then he radiated the happy, spicy odor of bay rum.

The decisive event in my father's life happened in 1876 when he was eight years old, in Kansas City, Missouri. He was helping his father, who was a butcher in a packing house. A Kansas rancher drove a herd of cattle to that market. He saw the boy working, and offered the father a sum of money for the son to work on his ranch for five years. That was the opportunity my grandfather was looking for, in order to take his wife and family to Bushnell, Illinois, and set up a butcher shop of his own. So the boy carefully memorized the name of the town, and went off to work on the ranch.

He was on a horse from dawn to dark, herding cattle. If things went wrong, he got a beating. He stayed there for three years, until he was 11. One day, after being beaten, he got on a train and told the conductor he wanted to go to Bushnell, Illinois.

It was a wild and woolly boy who arrived in town. His father put him to work in the shop. He attempted to make Louis go to school, but that was a failure. After his tough life, and with his rough speech, sitting down to learn the ABC's with first-graders was impossible. He never did learn to read or write.

About three weeks after his arrival in Bushnell, a troupe of gypsies came to town. They had a racing horse which they were in the habit of matching with local horses. The Korn family in Bushnell had some racers, so they challenged the gypsy horse. With my father up, the Korn horse won easily. That was the start of his twenty-three years as a jockey. Every Spring John Korn took my father and two or three horses, and together they made the round of fairs and other excuses for racing. They would go down south as far as New Orleans and north as far as Chicago. In the winters, they came back to Bushnell, and my father butchered for the shop.

One night it burned down and my grandfather lost everything. He and his sons were forced to work for other butchers. Because of Dad's illiteracy, he couldn't work in a shop, where he would have to be able to write down customer's names. He worked mainly at the Bushnell slaughter-house, and moonlighted by calling for dances. That was where he met my mother, who played the piano or reed organ for dances. She had often watched him race. She told me he had more personality than any other jockey, and was more aware of the spectators. When he rode out in his black and yellow finery, he would acknowledge the applause by standing up in his stirrups, removing his cap, and bowing right and left.

In 1894 he narrowly escaped death in a race. There was a pile-up of horses; one jockey was killed and several hurt. Several horses had to be shot, including McGinty, my father's mount. Dad's left arm was broken in three places, and it remained crooked the rest of his life. Recovering, he went on racing.

My mother refused to marry him as long as he raced. She insisted that he settle down and stay in town the year round. By the time he was thirty-four, in 1902, he was ready to give up the rough life, so they were married.

Working free-lance at various jobs—butchering, calling dances, farm work, pick-ups in a pool hall, and Schulze's Chicken-house—Dad never made a large living. Yet the family always ate well. He accomplished this by making every square foot of our little property produce: fruit trees all over our yard, a huge vegetable garden, a cow, chickens, hogs, a team of goats and a nanny. The goats were working animals, cultivating the garden, putting up hay, carrying produce in their wagon, etc. No, his early life was not one which would produce a money-maker.

One might conclude that it would also not be good preparation for fatherhood. Yet he was a great father, and an imaginative one. The stories he told us when we were little

always included us as characters. They would begin like this: "Well now, Howard, you and Sissy were walking in the woods when you met up with a big mother bear. She was a friendly bear," and so on. When Dad wanted to go fishing, the whole family went along and fished. We'd go to a creek. Or for a big occasion we'd board the train to Seville, spend the day on Spoon River, and come back in the evening. When the circus came to town, he always found money enough to take us all. His attitude toward his sons was without partiality. He had every reason to prefer my brother to me, because Louis was an athlete, loved to go hunting with him, and was muscular enough to be useful around the place, whereas I was a bookworm and stayed inside to practice my music. But there was never a time when it seemed to me that Louis was favored over me.

In 1917 there was rejoicing when my father got a steady job, a janitor in the West School. He began at \$50.00 a month, but every year he got a small raise, until he finally made \$100.00 a month. In 1938 they let him go, on account of his age. The next two years he worked at the Spoon River Locker, teaching the men how to butcher. In 1940, at age 72, an old rupture brought him down. He could no longer work because he was forbidden to lift anything. A happy retirement was impossible for my father. Forced to stay home and sit around, he went into an immediate decline both physically and mentally. Two years later, in 1942, he died.

After his death two eloquent tributes to him were published. The first one appeared in the Bushnell *Democrat*, written by the editor. It was headed by the title "One of My Boys." I will quote the opening and closing passages of it here: "With the passing of Louis Silberer, known to many people of Bushnell and former grade students as 'Dutch' or 'Cookie,' Bushnell has lost a man many folks could call their friend. He was the janitor at the west side grade school for many years and he watched over his flock of children as if they were his own. If some boy, who had gone to his school,

did something that was worthwhile, he would always tell his friends, "That was one of my boys". . . . Mr. Silberer liked children and they liked him, and many boys now in the service were still 'One of My Boys' to him."

The other tribute was written by Marion Stearns Curry, and appears in her book, "Ballads of Bushnell." It is entitled "Red Men's Hall" and recounts how my father called the dances there. Quoted here are the last two stanzas:

He put a chair right by a post
 An' stood above the crowd,
 An' then he throwed his head way back
 An' hollered good and loud;
 An' ever'body scraped an' bowed
 An' swung into it brisk;
 T'ry t'cross the floor right then
 Was certainly a risk.

The way them folks all laughed and jigged,
 With ev'ry face a shine,
 I said t'mother that I'd take
 A fast square dance fer mine;
 But though I've been t'many a one
 In other fellers' halls,
 The Red Men beats 'em hell-an-gone
 When Louie Silberer calls.

THE TRUMANS OF BUSHNELL

Harriet Bricker

From earliest childhood I recall a distinction about the home. Upon entering the door, a delicious and identifying aroma would greet you—a combination of fresh baked bread, English pipe tobacco, wax, and polish, and if it was

wintertime, of wood burning in the fireplace. There was tasteful order in this home and the antique brasses gleamed either in sunlight or firelight. The pair of hackneys, statuettes, pranced on the mantel, and the silver trophies, trays, pitchers, candelabras, urns, lent their shining splendor to the pleasant atmosphere.

This was the home of Mr. and Mrs. J.G. Truman of the Truman Pioneer Stud Farm, and I remember it as plain as my own. There was tall "J.G." settled in his big chair, puffing on his pipe, his long legs comfortably crossed in front of him, speaking in his unmistakable English accent. And Mrs. Truman, or "Lu" as her friends called her, visiting companionably in her low, throaty voice which often peeled with hearty laughter. And Fanny, ruddy of complexion and smiling of face with her little gold earrings in her pierced ears, ready to pass a tray of sherry accompanied by a plate of her special sugar cookies. Too close to be domestic help, Fanny came over from England at age twenty-three to help Mrs. Truman and became one of the family, staying the rest of her life.

Almost always, before the visit was ended, there was music, Either J.G. and my dad would rollick through a duet or two on the piano, or Lu would accompany her husband while he played his violin. "Souvenir" was one of his favorites. If John Brant was there with his fiddle, or dad with his cornet, the music grew more lively, noisy, and gay, with schottishes and polkas. Mr. Brant wouldn't like to try something new so he'd say, "Let's play something we all know," and strike up with "Turkey in the Straw." Many years later, I, too, got to take part in the music-making in a small way, and I loved it.

If the evening was long and tiresome to me, with nothing but talk, I'd take a nap in the front hall on the "hall-seat" near the huge rosewood desk, converted from an antique square piano, and watch the soft light spread out from under the rose-flowered Tiffany shaded table lamp.

Upstairs I'd take peeks at the great "tester" beds brought from England and wonder how it'd be to sleep in a bed with a roof! With a huge, round rose arbor in the yard, this home was lyrically known for a time as "The Rose Cottage."

John Truman's world was horses. His father had been a great importer of American cattle to England, but when John came over to America as a young man in 1878, he was more interested in horses, especially Shires, which he thought met the requirements of draft horses for American farms. As Bushnell was the junction of three railroads, the C. B. & Q., the T. P. and W., and the Rock Island, he thought it the ideal location, and in 1833 the business was established with the breeding of Shire and Hackney horses. A family business, they also dealt in Belgian and Percheron breeds. The first horse barns and the hospital were under the supervision of his brother, Reginald, a veterinarian. Brother Wright visited almost every country in Europe and Canada to buy the best horses. Horace was business manager, after first managing the branch at London, Ontario. A fifth brother, Herbert, remained in England. Before these men married and established homes, they all lived together! No wonder Lu needed help from Fannie, as these often arrogant Englishmen required service from the womenfolk, including boot polishing!

Mrs. J.G. was not English but an independent-thinking young American from Avon, Lu Tompkins. Once in awhile, the imperious Englishman and the self-confident American clashed. Lu liked to tell the story of an incident when J.G. was courting her. One evening he stayed too long at her home, and she had to tell him to leave. He was so put out that when he got into the buggy, he gave the horse such a smart slap with the reins that she bolted and left him sitting in the buggy, the horse with the front wheels gone—and J.G. sitting in the seat on the back wheels!

It was interesting to hear them tell of their trips home from England, especially the one just before World War I. Their

return was on a camouflaged liner, zigzagging across the ocean and pulling into unscheduled ports.

I well recall when the King of England abdicated his throne for Mrs. Simpson, J.G. could not believe such a thing could happen. And Horace, a stiff-faced Englishman who never became a naturalized American all the years he lived in the States, was certain it was the evil influence of "that" woman!

Another member of the family was a feathered one, Polly, the parrot. Polly could imitate Fanny perfectly, and when I took piano lessons there, often in the middle of the session would come the call "Mrs. Tru-u-u-man!" And Mrs. Truman would excuse herself to see "what Fanny wanted," only to return and say it was only "that parrot!" Polly would spend summer days outdoors on the grass in her cage while cardinals and orioles flitted around the roses and cut leaf birches. She would call the cat, "Come, Tom!" and Tom would lie down by her cage while she played with his tail, which was all right as long as she didn't nip it too hard! It made Polly furious if some man laid his hat on top of her cage, and she'd flash her eyes and say, "I won't stand for it!"

After the barns on Main Street burned, the Truman enterprise bought the Melvin farm on the south edge of town, which was then a fruit farm where there were cherries, apples, pears, and berries of all kinds. That was where the fine barns were built, for the draft horses, the smaller Hackneys, and the brood mares. A score of employees worked there and went on the road, prize-winning horses swept the big shows, and buyers came from all over the nation.

Mr. J.C. Penny bought "Prick Willow of Connaught," one of the statuettes I mentioned, and took him to California. Samuel Insull bought "Queen of Diamonds," the other one, but the outcome was disastrous. A horse of high-strung temperament, she was mishandled. She ran into a barbed wire fence and was so badly torn she had to be shot—a real heart-break.

Recently I was asked to tell "how they felt about their horses!" What an odd question! A family involved for three generations in stock-raising, their horses were of all-consuming interest and, considering the successes and international fame, the object of great pride and care. The Truman Farm was the most famous draft horse farm in the nation at that time, and Bushnell was proud of it, too. I don't recall foolish sentimentality, but they loved their great beasts and couldn't imagine a world without them. But that eventually passed and the days of glory were finished.

The era of the Truman Pioneer Stud Farm was a great time for Bushnell. I hope youngsters of today will be able someday to look back upon something in their early life as having been of significance. Although some of the glitter had tarnished when I was a young person, enough remained to instill a bit of awe in me for those days—and it still does.

FAYE HOUTCHENS, AUCTIONEER

Earl F. Carwile

Have you ever been to a farm sale or auction on a hot and sweaty day? The people stand around growling at everybody else, and even at themselves. Frown and gloom is written all over their faces. Let me describe for you another type of auction—an auction that is alive and kicking, a "Faye Houtchens Sale."

As a small child I can remember Faye Houtchens, the Monmouth Auctioneer, kidding people, laughing, joking giving a verbal gouge in just the right place. People would be smiling back, and they laughed as he pulled his jokes and jibes. They would look at one another with a knowing smile and mutually agree with each other on what he had just said about some third party.

He was a master of crowd psychology. The auction

always started about fifteen minutes late. This got his thinking started. When Faye started the bidding, the first few items went fast and furious and at bargain prices. Everyone got into the spirit and the bidding was lively. He would rear back, wet his lips, spit just a little as he started, and then get on with his sing-song chant. You were never quite sure of the bid unless you stopped him and asked. He would come to a complete stop—look the person that asked him right in the eye, and say, "This is where I am now." Then he would resume his chant and go faster then ever. You also wanted to look around to be sure of the person or persons you were bidding against. It was never unreasonable to think you might be bidding against a ghost.

Faye Houtchens moved to Monmouth from around the Blandinsville area. I don't know the reason for the move, but it was to Monmouth's advantage. He established a very good clientele in both farm-and-livestock and home furnishing sales. He sold a lot of homes and farms, but he was not a licensed real estate broker. He died in 1954, at sixty, leaving behind a very nice wife and three boys. He also left behind a lot of friends that remember his style of auction.

Here are a few stories about him that were left behind in peoples' memories:

One of Faye's favorite things to sell was the porcelain chamber pot. His trade name for this was "bedroom Havilland." If there happened to be a good tight fitting lid, it was always mentioned and commented upon. If there happened to be a shy and bashful, blushing type of person present, Faye was prone to prey on them with the "Thunder Mug" phrase. Everyone would laughingly agree that he or she needed one of these valuable things to use on a cold and dark and rainy night. I remember standing in the back row at a large auction on south Eighth Street in Monmouth. Faye was having trouble selling a large white chamber pot. He had tried to get bids on it for some time, and finally he blurted out, "Sold to Carwile in the back row for a quarter, and you

can charge it to me." At the time I was a young college student. I blushed, I'm sure, and the crowd got a big kick out of it.

Another sale occurred at another place, and it was just about to end when Faye finally said, "There is one more little item—a fine rug still on the floor and we will have to go inside the house." Everyone hurried to get inside to get in on the bidding for the rug. After the sale was all over and people were settling their bills, Judge Loren Murphy came up to the clerk, Raymond Fraser.

Judge Murphy: "You know the rug on the floor in the house that I just bought—it has a hole in it."

Ray Fraser: "I don't know anything about the hole, all I know is that you bought the rug."

Judge Murphy: "I know I bought the rug—but when Fay sold it to me, he was standing on the hole!"

Murphy nevertheless paid for the rug.

Another story is told about Fay at a horse auction at the sale barn north of Monmouth. I said earlier that the auctions always started fifteen minutes late. This particular sale started promptly, and the clerk, Ray Fraser, was about five minutes late in arriving for his clerking duties. His job had been taken over by a local farmer named Lonnie Boswell. Lonnie had written on a slip of paper a few names and figures. Ray took over the slip of paper that was handed to him. The sale went on. It was a very hot day. The perspiring auctioneer sold five more horses and then, to take a little break in his verbal cycle, he stopped and said in a loud voice to the clerk, "How many horses have we sold, anyway?" Fraser, the clerk, looked over his list and Lonnie's list and answered, "Right at 40 horses." "Hell," replied Faye, "That's more horses than we started with!" All of this brought a batch of whistles and guffaws from the crowd.

There are other stories about Fay holding his thumb or finger over a crack or blemish in a plate or dish as he displayed it for bidding. One woman told me that she got a

genuine Currier and Ives framed original print for only 80 cents. She said the only reason she got it so cheap was because the printing had slipped down below the lip of the frame and Fay let it go for the 80 cent bargain.

The sing-song chant of Houtchens the auctioneer—I can hear it yet. I can hear his voice, see his ruddy cheeks—can hear him taking verbal pokes at people, all of them his friends. I can still hear him cajoling some thrifty farmer into a bid of 50 cents more on some mower part. He was a very good friend of many and is remembered by all who ever saw him work.

Fay Houtchens, Auctioneer: "What Am I Bid, Bid, Bid, Bid?"

AUNT PRUDENCE BERRY

Henry Hughes

Prudence was the oldest daughter of Thomas and Nellora Berry. They bought and moved to a farm three miles southwest of Table Grove.

Soon they built a new house, improved the farm, built a new barn, and began feeding large numbers of cattle and hogs. They kept buying land until they had 500 acres. While the new house was being built, Prudence, the oldest of six children, was born. That was in 1853.

When 15 months old, she became paralyzed. The local doctor gave her the best care then known. She regained the use of her arms and right leg, but the left leg remained paralyzed.

When learning to walk again, she had to use crutches. Her father built the crutches, using broom handles and putting a head on them, which her mother padded and bound. She did not have "boughten" crutches until she was 22 years old.

Prudence never allowed her affliction to keep her from

trying to live a normal life. She learned to sew, knit, and embroidery while very young, and she learned to cook, bake, and do other household tasks. She became very proficient, too, in helping to care for the younger children.

Foster Point School was one mile west of her home. She walked this with her crutches, except in bad weather. To continue her education, she attended there until 17 years old. At 19, she attended Lombard College in Galesburg for two years, stopping when her afflicted foot was troubling her.

Her affliction did not interfere with her making many long and short trips with her family. She made one trip to New Orleans, California, and Oregon (by stagecoach), visiting and camping.

After a trip to Texas to visit her older sister, her mother began to fail, dying on January 20, 1879. In November, Mr. Berry married Hannah Beers. Prudence met her stepmother cordially and turned the house over to her.

Prudence, when 16, joined the Universalist Church. This was when the church was being built. Sunday School was being organized, and Prudence was appointed teacher of the young ladies' class. She was very loyal to the church; it became a high priority with her, and she was superintendent several times, filling in also wherever she was needed.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union was organized in Table Grove in 1882, with Mrs. Berry and Purdence being charter members. They also attended state and national conventions of W.C.T.U. Seeing the enthusiasm of the national officers, especially Francis Willard, inspired Prudence to come home and organize a group of young girls into what the W.C.T.U. called a "Bank of Hope." She gave them talks on temperance, then taught them songs and recitations, and put on programs. Soon the name was changed to the Loyal Temperance Union.

She enjoyed working with the girls. So to keep them from disbanding, she decided she would teach them sewing. To raise money to purchase some material, they were taught

songs and recitations for entertainment. Another time they solicited nickels from the people in town.

Prudence taught them to cut out and sew dresses, skirts, aprons, and towels. They then had a fair to sell them, and they auctioned off what was left. After the first year they made dresses and other clothes for smaller children, which Prudence would take to an orphan's home in Peoria as she went to visit her sister.

As she felt they had no adequate place to carry on this work and she thought Table Grove needed a library and hall, in 1891 she purchased the ground for a hall. She started making plans for a first floor hall and interested the Odd Fellows to build a second floor for a meeting place.

This building was built in 1894, being called Progress Hall, and it still carries the name.

She divided the first floor into three parts. The south part was equipped with cupboards, drawers, and tables for a library. The middle had a stage, curtain, table, and chairs. It could be used for plays, lectures, banquets, and voting booths. The back room was equipped with a stove, sink, and dishes to prepare and serve banquets.

This hall became the home of the Loyal Temperance Legion for their sewing lessons. They were taught how to finish a quilt. This building was the home of sewing lessons until 1900, when Prudence sold the building. By then, she had worked with the boys and girls for 15 years.

Her father died May 25, 1899, after being weakened by pneumonia. Since her father had taken her to the hall, and there was no one else to take her, she sold the hall.

The estate was divided as her father requested, with Prudence buying the house and most of the furniture. Mr Chapman, a school teacher, and his wife and two young daughters lived with her for two years, and she enjoyed them. When the Chapmans' left she decided the old home was not suitable for her and could not be made so.

She petitioned the Universalist Convention for a permit

to build a house on the church block, to become the property of the church for a parsonage when she was through with it. When the permit came, she got a contractor to build the house.

She planned it to be all on one floor, with six rooms, and a bathroom, pantry, and three closets, to be heated with a warm air furnace. She later added store rooms and a porch.

She soon had the ground landscaped and many flowers planted. Because she was kind to all, ready to share their joys and sorrows, and always willing to counsel, her home became known as "Sunshine Corner."

She began having school girls stay with her during the school year. I remember four girls from one family and there were several more. She lived alone in the summer, as long as she could use her crutches.

After two falls, breaking a bone each time, she had to use a wheelchair and have a girl full time. She also had ramps built for her house and the church.

She was a charter member of the Ladies Aid Society. Their meetings had been held in the summer in the church because of no heat. At first they pieced and made quilts. Then for a few years they made dresses, skirts, towels, pillow tops for sale at a fair. They soon made just quilts and quilted for others. They moved to Prudence's house in the winter to quilt, and the house became their storage quarters.

After the Heflin Building was built on the southwest corner of the square, with a basement and facilities for cooking, the Ladies Aid served chicken pie suppers, gaining a high reputation. A ground floor entrance allowed Miss Berry to enjoy them. The fees from quilting and chicken pie suppers contributed to the expenses of the church.

Prudence Berry was my Sunday School teacher around 1905, in the Primary Department, and again later for several years. She had the ability to keep her class interested and set high ideals for youngsters to strive for. No doubt her

examples and teachings inspired many to better living and kindled a sincere love for her.

She not only taught Sunday School but lived her religion. She always maintained her interest in her pupils at all times, and knew of their whereabouts.

I feel the love and respect can best be shown for Aunt Prudence by mentioning that Table Grove and the *Table Grove Herald* dedicated the entire front page to her on her seventieth birthday, and again at her death, with tributes and testimonials to her from home people and others. I know of no one else who was given such respect.

I have tried to describe just a few of the philanthropies of this loved and respected lady. However, I should like to use a quote from Aunt Prudence's own "Memory Sketch" to exemplify her true inner quality: "I had a mother's heart and have had beautiful dreams of what I could do for my children and home. That dream did not materialize. So I loved the children of others to fill a void in my own heart."

UNCLE HARL ROBBINS

Lillian Nelson Combites

Living in a small town, I believe we were closer and knew more about one another. I could write a book about all the good people in "Our Town."

The one that left the biggest impression on me was "Uncle Harl Robbins." I guess I first remember him when a little girl. My sister and I used to go to his house on Saturday mornings to buy eggs. As long as I remember he always lived in Good Hope in the South end of town. He was a very good man, an influential citizen, and owned farms around the area. I guess you'd say he was well-to-do. Anyway, it seemed he was rich to us poor folks.

Uncle Harl wasn't my uncle. Mama taught each of us to

call all our elderly residents Grandpa, Grandma, Uncle, or Aunt. We loved them that way, too, and we'd run errands or pick up the mail for any of them. I never saw my dad, nor either Grandpa, so these older folks, like Uncle Harl, filled a big spot for me.

Uncle Harl was hard of hearing and had a hearing aid shaped like a powder horn—an ear trumpet they were called in those days. He didn't use it all the time, and one had to talk quite loud. He was a stocky built man, and wore a billed cap (in style at that time) and knicker pants until styles changed. He drove a touring car, but I don't know what make and am sure it wasn't a Model T. He had a big black and brown dog named Watch that was always with him. I am sure if anyone tried to harm Uncle Harl, they would have been sorry. He had a housekeeper, Aunt Elsie Lovejoy, who lived across the road. I think she was a relative. She was always doing the Saturday baking. She cut scraps of pie crust with a thimble, sprinkled sugar and cinnamon, and baked for us. She made tea and we had a tea party with play dishes and all the dolls. There were relatives that visited so they kept toys for them. Many a happy morning was spent playing there.

Uncle Harl was civic minded and up on everything. When they were building the Lamoine Hotel he made the remark, "Macomb's like Rome. It's going up in splendor." I wonder what he would think if he were living today, with the high rises, McDonough District Hospital, and all the University buildings. At that time only one college building was there. I remember once a year the Elementary and Rural schools of the county held Rural Progress Day there. We were shy and in awe of such a big building. I still have a blue ribbon I won on a booklet on "Dress" over fifty years ago.

One day about dusk we saw Uncle Harl come up the walk. He said the folks from the farm were bringing a load of wood. They had been cutting hedge and the truck was loaded with stove length wood. They dumped it in the back yard and, with some coal to bank the fire, it lasted all winter. Our

dog, Scout, and I spent many happy hours playing up and down that woodpile. He took a load of wood to another widow in town, too. At tax time Mama sometimes couldn't pay on time so she sent us to Uncle Harl with a note asking to borrow the few dollars, and Uncle Harl always loaned it to her. I am not sure if she was always able to repay, but Uncle Harl never required it by asking until she could.

I later went to Bushnell to live, was married, and on February 19, 1937, our Sandra Jo was born. I was in labor so long that she had severe head and brain damage and only lived three days. I know God knew I was not able to cope with Cerebral Palsy, so He took her to Heaven. On a cold, blizzard-type day they buried her, on Mama's lot, we thought. We had our babies at home in those days and I couldn't go, as we had to stay in bed ten days. On the ninth day we had to lay as still as we could so our organs could go back in place, so they claimed. In the spring when the weather was good, we went to Good Hope to the cemetery and found they had buried Sandra Jo on the wrong lot. We had to dig her up and put her on Mama's lot. We saved our dimes a long time to buy a marker and finally had \$19.00 saved. My brother-in-law worked for Earl Smith, the Sciota Township Road Commissioner, and Earl had a farm West of Good Hope. He told my brother-in-law, Sylvia Cogburns, he'd let him have the ground if he'd buy potato seed and go on shares to raise potatoes. My brother-in-law came to us, and we let him have our marker money for seed. We never saved money again for the marker, but all of us had potatoes for the winter.

Years later when Uncle Harl died, in his will he left money for a number of markers for the poor who couldn't afford a grave marker. My brother put our name down, and Sandra Jo now has a marker, and I'll always remember Uncle Harl for that.

One day when my brother-in-law was working with Earl on the road, Earl was pounding with a hammer and the end hit my brother-in-law in the head. Years later, he got severe

headaches and eventually developed bone rot and died. He was one of Uncle Harl's markers too, and so does my father, who died before I was born.

A number of people around Good Hope would have unmarked graves if Uncle Harl hadn't been so generous and cared for others. In a small way, this has been my chance to give a memorial for him.

TRICKY

Hazel R. Livers

Sometimes when our minds get to wandering back to the town where we lived and grew up, we begin to think of the various people we knew back then. In our mind's eye we see the so-called important people of the town—doctors, storekeepers, ministers, beautiful girls, and young dudes around town. But would you believe that the one person who seems to take precedence in my memory over all the others is the town idiot?"

Today such people aren't known as "town idiots." They are called God's Special Children, the mentally retarded, the mentally incapacitated, or sometimes children suffering from Down's Syndrome, etc. Back then, as now, every town had its retarded citizens, some more so than others.

Ipava, I think, had one of the most outstanding, if I may use that word, retarded boy. I'm sure there isn't anyone who was around Ipava some fifty or more years ago who cannot immediately call to mind this boy. His name was Lyle Tricky. Naturally enough, everybody called him "Tricky." He was the son of a local much-respected couple. His mother kept him clean clothed and fed him, but he was a free spirit and roamed the streets of Ipava at will. He did not have the physical characteristics—heavy short bodies, round heads, or awkward gait—of the mentally retarded. He was one of the

most agile and graceful people I knew. He was able to do all kinds of acrobatics, handsprings, somersaults, and what have you. He put the rest of us quite to shame.

Back in the Twenties, before the radio and television, all the surrounding towns, including Ipava, had what was called a fall festival. This consisted of various kinds of events, contests of all kinds, a big parade, and at night a huge pageant. Those pageants were elaborate affairs, and they usually depicted some historical event and included many people. The theme of the pageant was carried out by speakers, singers, and dancers. In this particular pageant I was one of a group of Indian dancers. The director of the pageant, Minor Brock, was taking us through our dance one afternoon without much success. We just couldn't get it. Tricky, who always seemed to be everywhere, happened to be an audience of one at this practice session. He watched us for a while and then, without a word, came up on the stage and proceeded to go through the dance with exact precision, perfect timing, and without a mistake of any kind. And we were the ones who were supposed to have the brains!

Speaking of these town festivals, Tricky always seemed to know what town was having a festival and when. He always managed to get there in some fashion. The young men of Ipava were good to Tricky and many times took him with them to other towns on these occasions. They never forgot him either and always saw to it that he got home. They saw to it that he had something to eat, too. On one occasion I happened to be in the Bon Ton Cafe in Lewistown when Virgil Sowers and several more Ipava boys brought Tricky into the cafe and bought him a piece of pie. Tricky loved to talk and didn't get his pie finished when Virgil yelled in the door for him to get a move on or he would be left. Tricky didn't want that to happen, but what to do with his pie? He solved the problem by telling Glenna, the waitress, to put the pie back, and he said he would finish it when he came back next time.

As I said, Trick always managed to get to the other

towns. He always knew the Ipava girls when he met us. He always managed to make us feel conspicuous in a crowd as he was never hesitant in speaking to us. He would, for example, say to us, "You Ipava girl; me no like Ipava girl; like Cuba girl better," if he happened to be in Cuba at that time.

Tricky was a great show off. He loved to hold forth on the bandstand in the Ipava park. If he had an audience he could go on and on, it seemed, for hours. He conducted his own program, talking, singing, and dancing. As I have indicated, he was very graceful and he would conduct his program with all the gestures, gimmicks, and facial expressions that you could imagine. I loved to watch Tricky go through all these antics.

Tricky also liked to perform and entertain the crowd at the basketball games. He could dribble with the best of them and could plunk the ball through the hoop with the greatest of ease. He would run up and down the court and turn handsprings and somersaults and land on his feet with the grace of an acrobat. These antics were looked upon with indulgence and he was never considered a nuisance or bore.

Years later, after Tricky's parents died, he was sent to the home for the retarded at Lincoln. While he was there, some of his faithful friends, among them Dutch Ebbert and Virgil Sowers, visited him off and on until his death some years later. As I said, he wasn't "all there," but to me, and I think to other people of Ipava, he was a very fine and unforgettable person.

QUEER FOLKS

Beula Selters

"I saw that ball of fire rollin' around the old haunted house again last night!" exclaimed Grandma at the breakfast table.

"Ah, such tom-foolery, Molly! Don't scare the child. There's no such thing as ghosts. It's just your imagination," scolded Grandpa.

"Now, Jim if you'd seen that greenish ball of fire goin' up high and then down low you'd believe me. It was playin' all around last night when you were at the church meetin'."

"Nonsense, Molly! Just because weird old Sally Wiggins died in that house, there's no need to believe that place is haunted."

That morning in 1915 was the first time I had heard the legend of the old haunted house in St. Marys, the village where we lived. After Grandpa had gone to the store, I begged Grandma to tell me more about it, and she told me this story:

Years ago, when a queer couple had moved into the dilapidated old Wheeler house, Grandma thought she should be neighborly, and so one day she baked some cookies and went to call.

As she walked down the weed-covered path she could see that the shutters were tightly closed, wherever they were not hanging on broken hinges. The unshuttered windows were covered inside with newspapers. The paintless weatherboarding was off in many places and shingles were scattered everywhere. Pigeons were fluttering around the shabby eaves.

Grandma walked into the yard of knee high grass and climbed over a fallen tree that seemed to indicate "no trespassing." When she stepped upon the porch a board flew up in her face, and many gaping holes showed other boards missing.

She knocked timidly at first, but louder when no one answered.

Finally a thin trembling voice squeaked, "Who ere ye?" and the tapping of a cane came closer. When the door opened several cats came "high tailin'" out of that dungeon-like room as if the devil was chasin' them.

Now Grandma was sure that she had stepped into the pages of a story book, for there stood a living image of the old witch in "Snow White," with a broom turned upside down for a cane. She was dressed in an old greenish black dress with a dirty rag partly covering her stringy hair. Her cheeks had great hollows and her pointed chin turned up as her toothless mouth turned down.

"What do you want?" she shrieked.

"I'm your neighbor and I brought some cookies," Grandma explained, as she handed her the sack.

The old lady grabbed the sack of cookies and shut the door in Grandma's face.

Grandma told me that the old woman probably treated everyone that way, for no one knew anything about that strange couple. She never saw the old man, Rufus Wiggins, but folks said that he was just as queer as his wife.

One day folks heard that old Sally Wiggins had died in her sleep. No kin or anyone came, but the authorities took her away to be buried somewhere. The word got around that the old man, living there alone, wouldn't let anyone touch her clothes that she had hung on the rocking chair the night she died.

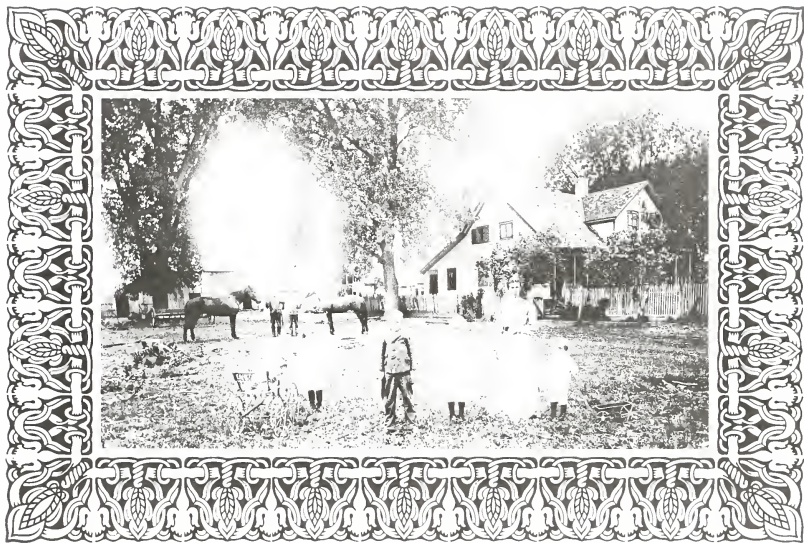
It wasn't long after she died that he walked down the weedy path to the mailbox, and he was lying there dead when the mailman came along the next day.

"Now the old house stands deserted, just like they left it, and folks stay away from it because their ghosts haunt the place, and we see those jumpin' lights there ever' once in a while," Grandma concluded.

Grandma enjoyed watching those balls of fire roll around the haunted house and telling me ghost stories. She never knew of the optical phenomenon called will o' wisp, or ignis fatuus, which is a chemical reaction in low areas, producing a round-shaped phosphorus glow, from the size of a candle flame to that of a pumpkin or washtub.

So Grandma, and others in St. Marys, really did see

those hovering, rolling, and jumping lights, but they were not caused by the ghosts of those queer folks who once lived in the old "haunted house."



IX *Very Special Places*

VERY SPECIAL PLACES

"It's a whole lifetime away, but sometimes in my mind's eye, I see Grandma standing there, with a twinkle in her eye, a warm loaf of bread resting on her clean white apron against her tummy, and a knife in the other hand ready to slice into its warm goodness, and I feel love flowing all around me," writes Kathryn A. Gustafson about a very special place: her grandmother's kitchen.

As one reads the following stories, one senses how significant the places are to these authors who write about and remember them. By reading what they have to say, one becomes a part of the unique qualities that created that significance—for in the early part of the twentieth century, places were still characterized by the individual geographical, cultural, and social milieu wherein they evolved. The repetitive and standard golden arches of McDonald's or the orange roofs of Howard Johnson's had not yet marched around the globe, turning landscapes into familiar homogeneity.

E. Relph writes, in *Place and Placelessness*, "To be human is to live in a world that is filled with significant places: to be human is to have and to know *your* place." Certainly the authors represented here are clearly in touch with and aware of the unique aspects that made the places they describe special; in the first half of the twentieth century, Illinois people were in touch with *their* place.

We recognize this rootedness when Ruth Sorrill Koestler describes her grandmother's farm—a series of sensory glimpses of cows thirstily gathered around a water tank; the gurgle of water; the rubbery smell of overshoes and the damp, musty odor of an ice box on the screened in porch; and a whiff of coal heat from the furnace register. To have a sense of place is to be aware of the sounds, smells, images, spaces, and feelings aroused by a particular location.

These sensations feel *right*. Helen E. Rilling articulates this when she writes, "We were part of everything on the farm," and she voices a nagging doubt about the prefabricated sameness that has moved across her world by adding, "Now, farms look so sterile with their bright colored vinyl buildings . . . Thank heaven I grew up when farmsteads had sheds. Old sheds filled with a myriad of interesting things. Things to remember with affection . . ."

Things to remember with affection! The smell of German coffeecakes in Averyville! The skin tingling sound of a "mighty Wurlitzer" vibrating through the opulent splendor of a big movie palace! The aura of vacation spas that grew up at the turn of the century around "health giving springs." A nondescript little creek that offered nooks and crannies for experiencing! Memories of "place" so clear that, as Glenn E. Philpott reminisces in regard to the Illinois and Mississippi Canal, "At night, if I listen carefully, I can still hear the frogs croaking, a splash from a jumping fish and the cry of the Katy-dids along the canal bank."

The frogs, a splashing fish and the cry of the Katy-dids make up what Relph would call that "special *ensemble*," that is, that special combination of things which distinguish one place from another and which combine to make that place meaningful to us.

But writers and thinkers such as Relph believe that the majority of the population today, instead of having a keen sense of the place they use and inhabit, exhibit a kind of *placelessness*. The same prefabricated house in Aurora, for example, can be found in Belleville; the same fast food purchased in a Kewanee cafe can be bought in an identical one in Carbondale; and the old, twisting, winding roads that once encouraged travelers to slow down and to take in the special aspects of the countryside have been bulldozed into straight, uniformly designed highways where travel is fast and efficient and interaction with the surroundings

unimportant. To Relph and others like him, "places" have become merely "interchangeable locations."

Relph cites a quotation from Robert Cales, "It is utterly part of our nature to want roots, to need roots, to struggle for roots, for a sense of belonging," and Relph continues, "to have roots in a place is to have a secure point from which to look out on the world, a firm grasp of one's own position in the order of things, and a significant spiritual and psychological attachment to somewhere in particular."

Certainly the authors in this section describe the roots, the "places" that have created meaning in their lives. Perhaps these "places" have given them "... a firm grasp of [their] own position in the order of things" and, perhaps, any placeless persons who may read these stories will determine to search out and find a meaningful "place" for themselves. The instant popularity of *Roots*, the book and television

series of a few years ago, attests to the fact that people have begun to question their own mobility and, therefore, the circumstance of placelessness.

Leaving, giving up, our "place" is always a time of sadness. Lucius Herbert Valentine writes, "In August of 1920 we moved from Scott Mill . . . This was a very sad day for me, and it seemed to me even our horses did not want to go either, as they balked going up the very steep hill out of the river bottom. As we went over the crest of Shin Hill, I looked back at the river; then Scott Mill faded into history and my life changed."

Roots may have awakened the placeless people of the United States to their need for "place." It is possible that we will, each of us, begin a search for the Scott Mill we left behind?

Jerrilee Cain, Editor

GRANNY'S KITCHEN

Leta Rogers Spradlin

The little frame farmhouse, home for so many years to my grandparents, was located near the village of Nortonville in Morgan County, Illinois. My earliest recollection of that long-ago home was in 1916. The house had three rooms, but because of its importance to the family, memory of the kitchen is most vivid to me. There was no item of decoration. Each object in the room had a practical function. There were no curtains at the two small windows, only green shades on rollers. The walls had a solitary "adornment," a calendar with inch-high numerals and ads for patent medicines purporting to cure most any disease known to man. Even in its plainness, the room presented a perfect illustration of love and hospitality. It was the most desirable place my four-year-old mind could imagine because it personified Granny and Gramps!

Most family routine involved the kitchen in some way. Meals were prepared and eaten there, of course, but so also were the laundry chores done, milk and eggs cared for, canning, sewing, and even bathing accomplished, too. Also it was the center for entertaining relatives and friends. The round oak table stood in the middle of the floor, surrounded by bow-backed chairs beckoning folks to gather around for refreshment and conversation. At nightfall, Granny would light the number-two-sized lamp to shine out all the mellow glory of its carefully trimmed wick and spotlessly polished glass chimney. When eating, reading, or hand work were not in order, number two would be replaced by its smaller counterpart, number one. This was an economy measure to save oil, as in that home it was considered wasteful and extravagant to use more of anything than was really necessary.

Handy to the table was Granny's pie safe. There were kept her dishes and the items, including food, which were

cleared from the table after each meal. Atop the safe stood the Seth Thomas clock which Gramps wound every Sunday morning, assuring himself it would bang out the hours and half-hours for another week.

Against one wall of this vital living center was Granny's cookstove. It dominated that whole room's side, not because of its size, for it was only a "four holer," but its importance gave it stature. It furnished not only a means for cooking and baking, but served as space heater as well. The cheerful glowing warmth so welcome in winter could trickle the sweat down the user's back in July! Except for the swirly blue and white granite teakettle, which was Granny's hot water supply, all her stove utensils were of cast iron. These included skillets, stew pots, a wash boiler, and the fleet of flat irons with which she ironed the clothes.

Granny had a floor-to-ceiling cupboard near the stove; its many shelves stored the groceries and cooking utensils. It seemed to me that she could reach into its depths and find the requirement for anything anybody wanted. If Gramps decided to vary our diet with a squirrel from the nearby timber, then down from the top shelf would come his shotgun shells. A youngster could be pretty sure a candy peppermint stick was available, and a borrowing neighbor found her needs fulfilled, too. Granny kept her big wooden bowl of flour on the handiest shelf. Whether she planned to make gingersnaps, her fairy-light biscuits, or one of those cakes which were the best I ever set a tooth into, she reached for that bowl of flour. She would make a "nest" in the middle of the flour, stir in a couple of handfuls of this, a splash of that, and perhaps an egg or two or a few glugs from the molasses jug. Working in flour from around the edges, she'd stir vigorously and have the product ready to bake. She never had a recipe to her name, and amazingly the bowl of flour looked exactly the same at the end of her effort as at the start.

In a far corner of the kitchen was the washtable with its

cedar water bucket and tin dipper. This water was for all household use and had to be frequently replenished from the well outside. Here also was the wash pan where everyone "washed up." The soapdish there held two bars, one of "Grandpa Brand Tar Soap" for the most resistant soil, the other was "Jap Rose Brand" for daintier requirements. This Jap Rose bar was nearly transparent. So a kid could hold it close to the eye, face the light, and view a world drenched with gold!

Taking this backward glance at Granny's kitchen and its many limitations, one might consider that perhaps one good thing about the "good old days" is that they ARE gone. Well, maybe. But I'm so thankful for all those precious memories!

THE PLACE WHERE LOVE DWELT

Kathryn A. Gustafson

Peering into a kaleidoscope of many remembered memories across the passing years, I have one that never fails to bewitch and delight me—my Grandma's kitchen.

As a child it was my favorite room in the whole world. From it the most enticing smells spread all over Jefferson Street, maybe over all Dutch Calf-Town, and maybe, over Quincy—who could tell?

A black cook-stove trimmed in bright nickelplate dominated the north wall of the kitchen. I remember Grandma working there making pickles, chili sauce, making all kinds of jelly, and canning fruits and vegetables, each in its own season. There was a large warming oven across the back of the cook-stove. It was all shiny black and trimmed in nickelplate, too. The stovepipe ran through the warming oven on its way to the flue, and that's the magic that kept the

meals warm for late comers, and mittens dry and warm for little hands cold from play.

The day Grandma would bake a cake was the most peculiar day of all. Sometimes she would only put one or two pieces of coal in the stove to keep the fire just right for the correct oven temperature. Then we had to tiptoe carefully across the floor so the cake did not fall in the oven!

Grandma had a coffee grinder mounted on the wall near the cook-stove. Sometimes she let me grind the coffee beans, which were stored in the glass well at the top. The beans would jump and dance, as I turned the handle, before falling into the grinder in the middle, and finally turn up all ground fine and smelling fresh in the wooden drawer beneath. Each morning, Grandma made a large gray enamel coffeepot full of coffee. As the day went along, the coffee was consumed, she added more and more ground coffee to whatever remained. Like the Mississippi River, her coffee pot never ran dry!

Saturday was Grandma's baking day. There was a large oval table in the center of Grandma's large square kitchen, and by late afternoon it was groaning with homemade goodies. There were fat loaves of homemade bread, coffeecakes rich in spices and sugar, pies of various kinds; and there were soft, fat, sugar cookies. Just thinking about it, I can almost smell the delicious, yeasty, lovely, fattening aroma of Grandma's kitchen.

And, you know, my Grandma was so wonderful—she never had a failure! No matter how the bread turned out, somebody liked it that way. If it happened to be just this side of burned, Henry like it burned. If it was a trifle anemic looking, Walter liked it exactly that pale. With seven in the family, she never ran out of good reasons why each loaf was exactly the way somebody liked it.

Then the happy moment came when Grandma would finally pick up her knife and slice off a warm crust for me. "Oh, Grandma, may I please have butter and jelly on it!" I'd plead. I always hoped my Aunt Edna wouldn't put in an

appearance. She felt either butter or jelly was enough, that I didn't need both. She'd say teasingly, "You can't have both. Your father doesn't own two houses." I never understood that logic at the time, but Grandma always came to the rescue by saying, "Give the little one what she wants."

It's a whole lifetime away, but sometimes in my mind's eye, I see Grandma standing there, with a twinkle in her eye, a warm loaf of bread resting on her clean white apron against her tummy, and a knife in the other hand ready to slice into its warm goodness, and I feel love flowing all around me. I become a simple child again surrounded by love. That's the operative word, love, because that kitchen was very definitely the place where love dwelt.

FLY WITH ME OVER GRANDMOTHER'S FARM

Ruth Sorrill Koestler

My family had eagerly looked forward to moving to my Grandmother McConnell's farm twelve miles east of Quincy in Adams County. We children thought the house had many "kid pleasing" characteristics. We loved the two screened-in porches, one on the east side and one on the west side. Across the front on the north was a large front porch, great for playing on a rainy day. There were concrete sidewalks all around the house and leading from each porch to a gate in the fence which surrounded the large yard. Naturally, the fence in front was white pickets. Since the house sat on a rise, there was a definite slant to all sidewalks, making them perfect for coasting in a little red wagon, zooming down on a pair of roller skates, or on an icy day, good for a fast sled ride.

There was also a sidewalk leading to a smokehouse just south of the house. This building was used for smoking meat, storing unused laundry tubs, old furniture, and chicken feed.

I remember several occasions when we were sent to get chicken feed and would reach into the bag to scoop out the feed only to feel the smooth skin of a big brown snake. What a horror that was. The smokehouse was about the size of a one-car garage, and the back was about three feet off the ground, making a great hiding place for a small boy trying to escape the watchful eyes of two older sisters.

The sidewalk on the east side led outside the gate to the well, where a horse-watering trough was always kept partially filled. The trough was about eighteen inches wide and twelve feet long. It was mounted on legs about three feet in height. When a herd of thirsty cows were using it, two children were required to man the pump and keep the trough filled. It was great for cooling hot feet on a warm summer day if you could do it without getting caught. On the well platform was a little door that was lifted to lower food, such as milk, butter, meat, and even desserts that needed to be kept cool. They went down in a bucket attached to a long rope. It was here the cream was kept sweet until there was enough for churning.

The sidewalk on the west led to the privy, and even those memories weren't all bad. If you knew a job was coming up that you didn't want to do and you could sneak a good book out with you, it was good for a half hour of quiet, if odoriferous, reading.

South of the house was a large garden. A place we children would have liked to stay away from but nevertheless in which we spent a great deal of time hoeing, weeding, and picking vegetables and fruits.

The inside of the house was enjoyed equally as much. Like many houses of that day, on the front was a large dining room and parlor, separated by a very large hall with a staircase which had a long beautiful banister. It wasn't really approved of but it was great for sliding. The banister ended in a circle of wood that was perfect for a safe landing. There was no problem keeping the banister dusted and polished.

The kitchen, pantry, and storage room were at the back of the house. The kitchen was huge. It would have made three of today's kitchens. It was where the family spent most of their time. At that time, we still had kerosene lamps so the kitchen table was used for games, mending, homework, farm recordkeeping, letter writing, making sausage, 4-H demonstrations, threshing dinners, food preparations of all kinds (especially pie making), and many other things—besides the three good meals a day served to the family. We always had a day-bed in the kitchen, a favorite place for the sick or well. The wood cooking stove kept us cozy in the winter and cooked in the summer. A wood box kept in a closet just behind the stove was kept filled, preferably by the children old enough to carry at least a few sticks of wood. Having splinters picked out was nothing to get excited about in those days. This closet which was always hot was the preferred place for damp coats, boots, and shoes. With the door left open, they dried quickly and were toasty warm when needed.

The storage room on the west side of the kitchen and the pantry on the east side were very useful rooms. The storage room was used to store linens, extra groceries, coats, overshoes, and also for the Saturday night bath or at any time you felt like bringing in water and heating it for a bath. The pantry contained dishes, pots, pans, some groceries and the slop buckets. In the slop buckets went peelings, any leftover food the cats and dogs wouldn't eat, and even some dish water. All of it went to the poor pigs. They seemed to flourish on it so I guess it didn't matter.

There were back stairs leading from the kitchen to the back bedroom, used by hired hands, until we children got big enough to help out. There were four other bedrooms.

The house was heated by a coal furnace. There were registers in the kitchen, dining room, hall, and parlor but none upstairs. The one in the parlor was turned off except when company was expected. There was a ceiling register in

my parents large bedroom. The hall register kept the temperature in the other bedrooms above freezing if we left our doors open, and with feather beds we were not uncomfortable. On a cold winter morning there was a great rush to see who could get downstairs first and get a warm register to get dressed on.

The screened porch on the east was home for the ice box, boots, smelly farm coats, and, last but not least, the spring and summer residence of the wringer washer. The washer was another implement we children were not fond of since if you were big enough to pump the cistern, you were big enough to bring in buckets of water to fill laundry tubs and the wash boiler used to heat water on the kitchen stove.

The west porch was used to house the big black cream separator and a table where, on cool days, crocks of milk frequently sat waiting for the cream to rise. I can still taste the rich cream on a bowl of hot cereal or on a rich bread pudding. The butter churn was also kept on this porch. Churning was another arm-tiring, unpopular, but necessary job. However, the finished product served on a hot slice of just out of the oven bread with a little sugar sprinkled over the top was so mouth pleasing you soon forgot how tired you were.

Today you can fly over or land on Grandmother's farm, but you can't live on it because it was condemned and taken over by the Quincy Municipal Airport Authority. The buildings were all torn down. There were no dry eyes among us six children or Mother and Dad the day the old house fell, but the memories remain.

THE WONDERFUL WORLD OF SHEDS

Helen E. Rilling

How I loved our farm when I was a little girl. It had a very humble house and an old unpainted barn with extensions built on each end. But, under the two huge maple trees and lots of fragrant locusts there were sheds which seemed to grow like mushrooms all around us. Our farm was on the western edge of Morgan County. It was the perfect place to grow up in the early Twenties.

The sheds were in all sizes and shapes. A few wore faded red paint on their wide boards, but mostly the boards were weathered to a soft grey with mossy green edges. They curled at the sides and left long narrow slits we used as peepholes when playing Hide and Seek.

Clustered in a semi-circle about the house were five sheds. They were joined by walks made of two wide planks laid on the bare ground. Rain and frost made them dangerously slippery. They tipped precariously from the uneven ground. To the west of the back stoop was the smoke house. Here hung the hams and bacons, dripping their caramel juices as they cured in dense hickory smoke. These were red-eye gravy hams. Just inside the door was a wooden barrel of salt and several sacks of bran for the mother pigs. We loved to scoop up handfuls of bran and eat it as we romped through those delicious days of childhood. The smoke house was dark and mysterious, and we were warned to never leave the door open lest a cat or dog should carry off some of the meat.

Just a few feet to the south stood a newer shed. It was the wash house and contained the latest double-tub washer run by a gasoline engine connected to it by a long belt. We were warned to stay well back from the whirling flywheel and belt. Mother frantically tried to cope with the new "fandangled contraption" as it erratically ran at full speed with the engine popping and banging every whipstitch. The

wash water was heated in two black kettles sitting over bright red coals just outside the door. A small laundry stove heated the wash house and dried clothes hung on lines in zero weather. This shed served as a bath house for the men of the family.

A few steps from the back door was a shed that leaned into the west wind. It was shaped like the very old houses built on the prairie with two rooms and a loft. We used it to store corn cobs. Coal heating and cook stoves used lots of cobs to kindle fires. The family cats of which there were always about twenty used the cob house to hide in not only from us but from the dogs. They'd sit up there on the corn cobs motionless for minutes and then pounce on an unwary mouse. We learned to appreciate their helpfulness, for we often found a mouse in the bucket of cobs we carried into the kitchen. The kerosene barrels set up on legs were kept there along with buckets, baskets, and a funnel to fill the oil lamps. This shed was a good place to hide. We'd scramble up on the pile of cobs and peek through knot holes.

Directly behind was the coal shed. It had a low roof and one window where the wagon loads of coal were scooped into the shed. Large chunks for banking the fires at night were thrown to one side. Scoops and a sledge for breaking up the lumps leaned against the pile of ebony coal. In one corner you could usually find a coonhound tied up after mother caught it sucking eggs in the hen house.

The newest shed was a shelter over the well. It was called the well house. To us it was just another shed that held many interesting objects. A long wide shelf was filled with binder canvasses, balls of oily-smelling jute twine used to tie bundles of wheat and oats, and all the things not put where they should be. The foot-pedal grinder was a delight to play on. We loved to watch the orange sparks fly off an old corn knife as we ground away. The wash pans and towels for the hired hands were kept along the back side. A cement trough carried the water outside for the chickens.

We'd nail spools on these sheds and run belts of string back and forth. This was our first attempt at automation. Then we'd try to keep turning as many spools as we could at the same time.

Across the driveway was another cluster of sheds. In the center was an old railroad car. We'd hang out the side door and wave an old lantern at an imaginary engineer signaling him to open the trottle and we'd be off to Jacksonville on the Wabash Line. One end was partitioned off for a grain bin. In the rear of the larger part racks held harnesses dripping black oil into old tubs and buckets. We only ventured back there to hunt bird nests. On one front wall hung strips of bronze sleigh bells. What fun to ring them and sing Jingle Bells, be it a hot July or cold December day. A work bench held many tools, a vise, and extra leather to repair the many sets of harnesses. Little hands found hundreds of things to do while precariously perched atop a keg of nails. Saddles hung from pegs along with scoops, pry bars, spades, and posthole diggers.

All around the old railroad car with just a few feet between were sheds that housed a buggy, the extra-long bobsled, and our grand old storm rig with the green felt curtains. A long low shed sheltered the mower, cultivators, and wheat drill. Another lop-sided shed with wide doors protected our Model T along with the necessary barrels of gasoline and oil. In a little narrow shed squeezed in between we played house, after we'd cleaned out the cobwebs and dust. Kittens shared cradles with dolls and the dogs begged for crumbs from our cookies.

We must have had more chicken houses than any other farm in the county. There was a big shed that housed the laying hens. Buckets of hot feed were carried daily to them in cold weather, along with warm purple-colored water to fill the fountains. There was another shed where the older hens and roosters with long spurs sat on oily roosts to keep the mites off them. A squat little shed filled with rows of nests held the

settin' hens whose big eggs would soon hatch little balls of yellow fur. On the roof of this shed we dried apples and in the fall black walnuts after they'd been hulled. A brooder house had little chicks hatched in an incubator and kept warm by a kerosene lamp and hover. Out under the apple trees was a divided chicken shed for mother's Rhode Island Reds that she showed at the fair. A wire pen kept them safe from a chance encounter with an old black and white rooster.

In a cozy little spot down by the creek stood the cow shed with many stalls. At the back hung one-legged stools, and along one wall sat boxes of salve for sore teats. Nearby was a calf shed where suckling calves were shut away until time for them to eat their share of the milk which was usually one teat's worth. Hog sheds lined two sides of the lot and were filled with knee-deep straw where the little pigs snored and suckled fat mothers.

A long machine shed with an open side was filled with binders, plows, discs, and harrows. Space at one end was left for the extra horses to find shelter in severe weather. We loved to peep in the little round holes in the twine boxes on the binders and see the speckled eggs the wrens hid in nests of thorns from the locust trees.

Some of these sheds had a door and window or an opening directly into another shed. They were swell places to hide. You could go from one shed through another and out a window to dash across the yard and hide in another maze of sheds.

Besides these sheds were others, like the lofty picket corn cribs and stout graineries with cupolas. We were a part of everything on the farm. We would fetch any tool from any shed. We took our spankings like a man when we left the good saw out in the rain or, worse yet, left a shed door open.

Now, farms look so sterile with their bright colored vinyl buildings. There's no hog lots or pens for horses. There's nary a scraggly chicken scratching in the driveway. Thank heaven I grew up when farmsteads had sheds. Old

sheds filled with a myriad of interesting things. Things to remember with affection.

EVERYVILLE

Dorothy A. (Smith) Marshall

If you were a child growing up in the early 20th century, without electric lights, gas heat, telephone, radio, TV, or automobiles, chances are you were intimately enclosed in one block area. Now, in the so-called "twilight years," your memories of that neighborhood are more vivid than your present surroundings. So it is with me, having lived in the north end of Peoria, Illinois, where Adams and Jefferson streets merge, bounded by Camblin and Van Buren.

Camblin Street was the official beginning of Averyville, so-named for the red brick factory buildings stretching for about a mile along Adams Street and housing the Avery Farm Implement Machinery factory, later Hyster, and currently WABCO plants. Hundreds of men were employed there, and when the noon whistle sounded, many of them were served delicious hot meals at nearby boarding houses run by enterprising women of the neighborhood, one of whom was my grandmother. What meals I remember served! Huge pots of potatoes, succulent pork roast with beans baked in a large brown crock in the coal cookstove oven, and pies of many varieties, fresh from the oven each day. I was more impressed with the foods than the financing, but I venture to say my grandmother collected less than a quarter per meal and certainly never seemed to have much profit to show for all that effort.

When the new Avery office buildings went up on Camblin and Adams, with its lovely expanse of cement pavement, it was my joy of life for roller skating. Although it doesn't seem steep now, to come gliding and speeding down the hill and making the turn at the bottom, really put any

unaware pedestrian in great jeopardy! Across the street in the triangle where Jefferson and Adams merge, stood no stoplight, but a huge cement water fountain by Easton (several similar ones graced the city of Peoria). A few feet away stood the tiny confectionary and tobacco store run by "Old Mr. Marks." What patience he had with us children when we were lucky enough to have a penny and came to his store for candy! It was no easy matter as we scanned the glass case from top to bottom until our choice was made.

Our block boasted a rare ethnic flavor. My playmates included three little Swedish girls and three whose mother was from the old country. The tantalizing smell of her German coffeecakes baking is still in my nostrils. From the homes of these playmates I learned a few of their native words and songs which I still remember. Next door lived an elderly German couple whose daughter had married and moved across the street from them. She played the piano and sang in St. Mary's Cathedral choir. Although we were not Catholic, I remember a snowy Christmas Eve, when our whole family trekked a mile and a half to hear the Christmas music at St. Mary's midnight service.

In the center of the block and, indeed, the neighborhood, was the grocery store run by Irish M. Delaney and his two sons. No self-service this, but customers went with a list and were waited upon. The merchandise included fresh and canned foods, cookies in large boxes with glass doors or in big bushel baskets. (Quite a bagful cost a nickel.) Coffee was ground from the whole bean, while bulk sugar, flour, dried beans, rice and Imperial Tea were weighed out per order. Unwrapped bread was delivered fresh from the baker each day and cost five or ten cents per loaf. Thread (displayed in a glass case) sold for five cents a spool. Eggs were delivered fresh from the farmer. In the back was the butcher shop with its sawdust floor. Don the butcher always gave the children a Weiner to eat. Thirty cents worth of sirloin steak was an ample meal for a family of four. Lard came in bulk and was

weighed out in small wooden trays, as was peanut butter. Liver was free along with dog bones. The store had a credit system. Your purchases were listed in small individual charge books; on "payday" items were totalled and payment was made in full, with a reward of a bag of mixed candy. I always accompanied my parents to pay the bill!

One of the large houses at Van Buren intersection was of stone and cement blocks. From a moderately large home, it grew and grew each year until it covered the entire lot with its many additions. It stands there today, a marvel of architecture. In mid-block a small inconspicuous house set back in the yard was the home of two maiden ladies and their widowed sister. But, the most prominent and modern house on the block was a large square frame house with hardwood floors and a garage with a driveway. Around 1920, when automobiles were a luxury to own, old Mr. Broadman sported an electric auto—a square affair with facing seats to accommodate four passengers. I would sometimes get to go for a Sunday ride with his granddaughters. The hills of Bradley or Glen Oaks parks were steep for the car with the passengers, so we would disembark, walk up the hill, and meet the vehicle. Grandfather Broadman was superintendent of the Peoria Work House where law-breakers were confined. It was located near the river on Grant Street and next to the Pest House which housed persons with contagious diseases. The Work House covered a large area and consisted of office and residence of the superintendent and buildings where prisoners made brooms, bricks, and had their own bakery. I visited this place often with the granddaughters. Sometimes the river rose into the yards and a boat was used to and from the work areas. At least these men were busy and productive to pay their debt to society! In later years, these buildings were eliminated and the Peoria Baseball Grant Park was located in its stead, later to become Woodruff Field.

Down the street was Central Park, a popular little Sunday rendezvous. There was a circular stone fountain of

sulphur water with drinking facilities. Sulphur water supposedly had a therapeutic value. There were also enclosures for rare birds, such as owls and loons, and another for alligators. Later a public sulphur-water swimming pool was opened and was popular for many years.

Across the street from Central Park was the "Car Barn," a brick building stretching from Jefferson to Adams covering rows of tracks on which street cars were housed when not operating. The street car tracks ran on Jefferson and Adams, so transportation was quite convenient and cost five cents a ride. In summer the regular street cars were replaced by "summer cars," which were open air and cool, somewhat like the San Francisco cable cars.

Common to most of the houses was a wooden porch swing from which the occupants viewed the neighborhood activities. The lack of the automobile was filled by the horse-drawn ice truck, garden huckster, or peddlers of other wares.

Not far from our block on the river were the ice-houses. When the Illinois River froze over, the ice was cut and stored in big ice storage buildings. There were the Woodruff and Detweiler ice companies. Ice was delivered to customers, carried by ice tongs to the back door and placed in the wooden ice box which would have a drain for the melting ice. This dripping water was caught in a dishpan under the icebox and used as dishwater for its softness.

The vegetable huckster would stop his wagon in the middle of the block and the housewives would come out with their change, wearing their large aprons, to choose produce at a very nominal price. It was then gathered up in the apron and carried into the house, eliminating all bags and wrappings. Sometimes a peddler of miscellaneous merchandise would stop his wagon to do business in the same manner before the house-to-house selling became common.

Such was life in the early 1900's when children walked long distances to school, played jumprope, jacks, hopscotch, marbles, and mumbly-peg on the sidewalks of the

neighborhoods and in winter, went sleighing, snow-balling, and coasting down the hill on a Flexible Flyer.

When inside, activities included checkers, rummy, dominoes, and most of all, reading books. If one were very lucky, perhaps he or she had a phonograph or piano and could have music.

I wonder if today's children think we were deprived. Well, perhaps not—just maybe they envy us a bit!

THE CONSEQUENT OF THE MIGHTY WURLITZER

William P. Bartlow

Remember in the 1920's, at the big movie palaces, where in the maw of the spotlight, came a rumbling sound that thrilled the very marrow of your bones as the Mighty Wurlitzer rose into view and you settled back in your seat for an evening in paradise? That was really living! Each city had their favorite theatre organ and organist. In Peoria, for example, it was the Hinners Organ at the beautiful Madison, while Springfield had the big Barton Organ at the fabulous cavernous Orpheum, and in Quincy it was the Mighty Wurlitzer at the Orpheum. Even the small towns had their favorites, such as Rushville's Princess Theatre, which boasted a Hinners Organ. Sadly, by the 1950's, only a few remained, and one in particular was left to be saved, which thereby begins our story.

It was a bright fall night in October in 1958 as my wife Margie and I donned our good clothes to head for Quincy and the Orpheum Theatre on Hampshire Street to look over and start dismantling the Mighty Wurlitzer theatre pipe organ which I had recently acquired.

The magazine article had read "Do It Yourself—Install your own theatre organ." It should have added "dummy." The article made it seem simple enough: "Just be sure it is intact with no water damage or missing parts."

This particular Wurlitzer organ had been installed in the Quincy Orpheum in September, 1924. It was number 910 (the 910th one made) by the Wurlitzer Company. The instrument was used continually until about 1929, when the screen "spoke"; then it fell silent. By 1958, after years of neglect, it was full of dirt, soot, dead birds and mice, discarded candy wrappers, taffy apple sticks, popcorn, chewed gum, and other refuse. It had the famous Wurlitzer horseshoe console with two keyboards and five sets of pipes. The percussion included a Xylophone, Glockenspiel, Chrysoglot, and Chimes. A three-horsepower motor and DC generator supplied the wind and power. The instrument was intact, and there was no water damage, but it was unplayable as the motor was disconnected.

The Orpheum had been built in 1916 as a vaudeville house; thus when pictures came into vogue it was considered a "presentation house" with stage and screen attractions. When the Mighty Wurlitzer was installed, it in itself was an attraction.

That October night in the dimly lighted empty theatre one could visualize the famous stars that once trod the boards of the big stage house and see the figures that played its silver screen and imagine the music that would have filled the room from the Mighty Wurlitzer organ. One could still see the faded grandeur of the once opulent interior. As Margie and I removed the small fragile pipes, our hands, faces and clothes became covered with soot and dust.

A theatre pipe organ can look compact and small when erected, as it does not seem to take much space, but apart it is an endless collection of parts, wind lines, metal ducts, pipes, wires and assorted pieces. As the dismantling continued, the storage areas at home became more cluttered for the garage soon filled, then to the garage loft, after which the house basement overflowed and the balance spilled into the upstairs bedrooms.

A friend told me a Dr. Klein in Muscatine, Iowa, had

purchased an organ from a Huntington, West Virginia, theatre which he reinstated in his home with amazing success. So the very next day I made an appointment with Dr. Klein to see and hear the organ which was indeed as grand as had been said. Dr. Klein, peering down over his dark horn-rimmed glasses, told me very direct that I should hire a good organ man for installation of the organ, and that I absolutely would make a mess of it if I attempted to do it myself, that besides I would ruin a perfectly good organ. And that he had, in fact, a good organ man lined up in the next room, his name was William Hansen, Jr. of Portland, Oregon. I was convinced, and Hansen was hired on the spot.

The next few weeks found Margie working and cooking in the kitchen after Bill, his wife Eleanor, and their new baby moved into an upstairs bedroom. The first thing I learned was that all the pneumatics (air valves under each pipe) had to be re-leathered. Now this is a process of considerable skill, to remove each pneumatic, label it so it could be properly replaced, scrape them clean, cut leather to fit, glue, and replace it. As there were five chests which held some 700 pipes and each pipe controlled two pneumatics, so with pipe chests, percussions, relays and console pneumatics, it roughly was 2500 pneumatics to re-leather.

The work progressed, with re-leathering being completed in the summer of 1959, so the organ was put into storage to await installation. In the meantime we were negotiating for another property which would be the home for the organ (and us too). Late 1959 saw the property purchased and renovations started, so space for the organ began to form. As organ-builder Hansen took off for Portland for a few months, he recommended that we increase the size of the organ from five sets to ten sets of pipes, which would be double.

So an earnest search began for additional parts. I learned of a small Wurlitzer organ in Cicero, Illinois, which had three sets of pipes with lots of additional percussions in

mint condition. It had been originally purchased new in 1927 from the Wurlitzer Company (number 1564) for installation in a music studio to teach picture playing but actually was used very little.

The hunt widened to the Springfield area where I located one poor, down-trodden, battered, beat-up, tired, water-damaged organ in the now demolished Strand Theatre. It was a Wurlitzer organ, number 721, installed in 1923. A fire in the early 1940's put the organ out of commission, for while it had not burned, it had suffered a lot of damage. It was what we needed, so we acquired what was left, hauled it home, and our search was ended.

I mentioned earlier how much space the original dismantled organ required; just think what it was like now twice the size. There were even Diaphones in the bathroom!

By working in "fits and starts," the chambers gradually took shape, with reservoirs, wind lines, blower and motor, chests, tremulants and shutters assembling in their respective places. All chests had been cleaned, re-leathered, shellaced and set in place while the drums and traps were reconditioned. Pipes were washed with soap and water. Cables were reconnected to the relays and switches. The console was cleaned and refinished, with the original colored celluloid stop tabs relettered in the Wurlitzer style. By December, 1960, it was partially playing, and early in the spring of 1961 installation was complete. Its beautiful sound was beyond my fondest dreams.

Today, in 1982, the Old Orpheum Theatre of Quincy is gone but the Mighty Wurlitzer still plays on. We have many visitors who come to see and hear, while other guests are real wizards of the keyboard.

Much credit has to go to my understanding wife who stood by me while the rest of my family was ready to have me committed.

The organ truly changed our lives. Its influence went far beyond our living room, creating dear and lasting

friendships, and opened many doors that widened our world greatly.

ONCE AGAIN, BRIGHT LIGHTS

Alberta Young Stegemann

Nobody could have been happier as I impatiently awaited the opening night of the old Fort Armstrong theatre in 1921. It is again alive and beautiful. The marquee again ablaze with lights, naming the first show, "I Do-I Do."

Sixty years ago the marquee was even more extravagantly bright, with rows of dancing, blinking lights, showing the opening attraction, "A Midsummer Night's Dream," with Conrad Nagel and Conway Tearle. The leading lady I can't remember. I only had eyes for Conrad Nagel—tall, blonde, and oh, so handsome.

Sixty years ago, six of us girls went through the doors long before the public was admitted. We met in the ushers' room for last-minute instructions by Mr. Hopp. We had previously inspected the nursery, which was furnished so cute and comfortable. There were three spotless cribs for tiny ones and playthings galore to fascinate any child: stuffed toys, a sandbox, and large balls. There was also a rocking chair for Mable Swail, who was to take charge as the nurse. The ladies' room was luxurious and spotless.

The six excited ushers, dressed in white organdy, went upstairs and took our stations at each aisle, and the doors were opened to admit the crowd. Eddie Stein at the organ began to play. The lights were on all over the house, showing how beautifully everything blended, in an Indian theme. The seats quickly filled, everybody dressed in their best. Then the musicians came into the orchestra pit, the lights dimmed and the orchestra began, with I. S. White as the conductor. The huge red velvet curtain drew back and the news came on the

screen. The news was always appreciated, as there was no TV at that time. On the spot visual news, that was grand. The whole theatre was filled clear to the top of the balcony. That was the first night, and so went every other night, as such good pictures were shown as "The Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse" with Rudolph Valentino. Then there was "Only A Rose," "The Old West," and Wallace Reid in "Watch My Speed."

That was a wonderful era I so enjoyed. Then I learned a big lesson, a hard lesson. The managers changed our uniforms. We were each issued huge Turkish-like turbans, made of yards of heavy material. We were top heavy, looked foolish, felt foolish, and people laughed. That night at closing time all six ushers, with me as bigmouth, rebelled against our ungainly turbans. I was told I didn't have to wear the turban, and to pick up my paycheck. The others wore their turbans one more night, and then the monstrosities were taken away. I felt my whole world was over for awhile, but the Fort went on.

I hardly realized its decline. I was raising my family and had no time, until a special occasion came up. We went to the Fort. Ye Gods! It had a gaudy popcorn machine, candy counter, and cash register in the lobby. Popcorn and candy wrappers were on the dull carpeting. A mother wandered up and down the aisle in semi-darkness, looking for her toddler way over on the opposite side, hanging on to a bottle, not a bit bothered. The beautiful nursery had long ago gone to wrack and ruin and was used for a stock room. The once lovely ladies' room had water on the floor, lipstick writing on the walls, cigarette ashes everywhere. Upstairs, the house lights went on to indicate intermission but the house lights at best were dim, and no wonder, it seemed they were well ashamed of the so called modern decorating. The walls were painted round and round in wide horrible colors. The orchestra pit was empty, the beautiful organ was gone. As for the ushers, there were none. Once or twice an older man

walked down the aisle to stand near a group of teenagers, trying to scare them into not throwing popcorn, but they didn't scare. The girls they were throwing at giggled, so more popcorn flew through the air while two more girls ran down the aisle, their thong slippers clip clopping, sliding in by the other girls so they too could be targets of the flying popcorn. What had happened to my poor Fort?

But then it fell farther. Later there were no lights on the marquee, as though it was ashamed of the lettering: XXX Rated Movies. The ticket window was cracked and dirty, a large dirty cardboard inside. The lobby doors were covered but somewhere tickets were sold. At times, but few and far between, odd people would sneak in. I didn't even want to imagine what it looked like inside. My poor gracious Fort was dying a horrible death.

When you are growing older, decaying things seem almost personal. Restoration of the old and tired is so much more cherished. Somebody is bringing my Fort back to life. It has to be a tremendous operation. Now the bright lights are on again. The marquee is brilliant. The lobby is filled with gracious people waiting to be seated by six smiling ushers. Although I'm seventy-five, I feel I am fifteen again. I am oh! so happy and feel I have a new lease on life.

OLD SILOAM SPRINGS

Irene Van Ormer Hare

When I was a six-year-old little girl in 1907, I lived with my parents, an older sister, and two younger brothers at Siloam Springs in Adams County, Illinois, about twelve miles south of Clayton.

Siloam Springs State Park is well-known in this part of the state, but old Siloam Springs is just about gone. According to my recollection, the old springs area is just a

few miles east of the park. Leaving the park and heading toward Old Siloam Springs, one had to negotiate rough, hilly country on a winding dirt road. A long and steep hill with a hairpin curve is only one of my many recollections of trips along that road. The rail fence which followed the right side of the road served as a support for the many wild roses which bloomed in the summertime.

The house where we lived was past the foot of the hill and on the left side of the road, nestled where the turn in the road met the Siloam Branch. The branch was shallow, and since it never had a bridge, had to be forded. Because it was spring-fed, the branch never ran dry.

A short distance from our home, on the east side of the road, was the general merchandise store owned by George and Mabel Kiefer. This store was the forerunner of a chain of thirty Kiefer stores, all owned by George and located in Adams and surrounding counties. The store housed the post office on the first floor and a dance hall upstairs. The large room on the second floor was the setting for square dances on Saturday nights. After a number of years, the store burned down and was rebuilt.

The Kiefer store and a few houses filled a small hollow. To the north of the store, a bath house and livery stable were located. The livery stable housed many horses.

There were no automobiles nor paved roads back in those days. People coming to Old Siloam Springs rode in horse-drawn buggies and surreys. I remember watching many of them pass our house on their way to the hotel. Siloam Springs was famous for its large hotel which was three stories high and featured a porch. A circular drive in front of the hotel was lined with little pine or fir trees; in later years the trees were trimmed, making a tall hedge along the drive.

People came to the hotel from near and far, some for the weekend and some for longer vacations. They came to rest and to eat the good home-cooked food, and particularly to

drink the spring water which was supposed to have health-giving properties.

The springs were numbered and some were covered with porch-like structures with open sides and cement floors. One large cover sheltered three springs (I have forgotten their numbers). The thirsty visitor could have a drink of the cool spring water by using the tin cup hanging on the end of a chain nailed to a post near each spring.

My father worked as a grounds-keeper for Mr. Sale Johnson, owner of the hotel. One day Dad took Mother and us kids along in his wagon when he went to pick up a load of sod for the hotel's lawn. While Dad worked, we played; Mother sewed on a cushion top. I can still remember it—little pieces cut from velvet scraps and silk neckties, and each piece outlined with fancy stitches. I treasured that cushion for many years.

My paternal grandfather had a brother named Thomas. Uncle Tom and Aunt Nancy DeJaynes and their six sons lived about a mile from us in a rock house built into the side of a hill. I think some of that rock house is still standing. One Sunday, in the spring of the year, we were going down to their house to spend the day. Along the way, on a hill off to the right, we saw Uncle Tom when he called out to us. He had removed his coat, tied the sleeves around his waist, and gathered the body of the coat up as if it were an apron. Uncle Tom was filling his "apron" with morel mushrooms. We enjoyed eating them later that day at dinner. On another Sunday, my family and I went to Uncle Tom's for a big fish dinner. That day, for the first and last time, I watched my Aunt Nancy cook fish eggs.

McKee Creek is near Siloam and it was a good creek in which to catch fish. One day our family went on an outing to McKee Creek. While we kids played in the sand and water, our parents fished. After a time, Mother called out that she had caught a big fish, so Dad told her to walk backward and

pull it out on the sand. She did this and surprised us all with a fish that weighed six pounds!

North of the hotel, the men of the community had a baseball diamond. On Sundays the men chose sides and played baseball while the women and children watched. I can still remember a man with crippled feet who was a good hitter; someone else always ran the bases for him. I hadn't thought of this person for many years; I believe his name was Flynn.

At some time after my childhood, a large dance pavilion was built on the hotel grounds, and a public swimming pool was built about one-half mile to the south.

On Sunday, in the late Thirties or early Forties, my husband (Ralph Van Ormer, now deceased), our four daughters, plus other friends, went to Siloam Springs for a picnic. It had changed so much. Although interesting to see and visit, it was not like the Old Siloam Springs I remember.

THE WAIT FORD

Truman W. Waite

When the first settlers came to Adams County, Quincy was the point that many arrived and from there they migrated in three directions.

Wait Ford, named for Allan Wait, who operated a mill near the ford, was on the most direct route from Quincy north and was used quite often by the people of the community until the new bridge over Bear Creek was completed in 1928. I remember using several other fords as short cuts to Loraine and Mendon, even after several of the iron bridges were built.

The Wait Ford was near the home of my grandmother, and I crossed it many times when I visited her. During these visits, many times she would take my brother and me down to the ford to fish. Quite often catfish was on the table for supper.

The ford was a shallow place in the creek, but below and also above it the water was very deep. This was the cause of a tragedy many years ago. A man walking down the creek wearing boots and not knowing of the deep hole near the ford, waded into the pool and was drowned in about fifteen feet of water.

Another tragedy happened at the ford in the Spring of 1911. It had been a cold winter with lots of snow and very little of it had melted. One of the farmers who lived near the ford, Mr. Ben Nesbit, took off very early one morning for Quincy, about eighteen miles distant. The creek was low and the ford was frozen over. As it often happens at this time of year, the weather turned off very warm. Nearly all the snow melted that day, resulting in the creek being bank full of water and floating ice. When Mr. Nesbit returned home in the early hours of the following morning, as was his usual habit, he was quite intoxicated. His team, being used to crossing the ford, plunged into the icy flood waters and were immediately swept down stream to their death. How Mr. Nesbit, "Old Ben," as he was commonly known, escaped is a mystery. Some think he got hold of an overhanging tree limb and got out.

A search party found the drowned horses several miles down stream attached to part of the wagon. I remember the incident and of them telling about getting the running gears of the wagon out of the water, cutting the harness off the horses, and letting them float away down the stream.

Sometimes when we were visiting our grandmother, we walked down to the ford to see the baptismal services that were held quite often. There were always many people there, and after the ceremony, they usually went to grandmother's house to change into dry clothes.

The ford was still used as late as the Fall of 1927. That fall I was hired to use my team at the ford to pull loaded trucks of wheat from the threshing machine up the south bank of the creek. As far as I know, this was the last time the

ford was used. The new bridge was nearing completion on Route 96, just a short distance down stream.

Now all the roads leading to the fords have been vacated and many are plowed up and planted to crops. It was the end of an era.

TATER CREEK

Mrs. Garnet Workman

I grew up on a Fulton County farm owned by my grandfather, Lewis Vaughn, and later by my parents Sherman and Gertude (Vaughn) Kruzan.

Through the pasture land flowed a small stream which meandered into Potato Creek, located along the northern boundary of the farm. Members of my family dubbed the small stream "The Branch," and Potato Creek was known as "Tater Creek."

I spent many happy childhood hours wading in The Branch. At one spot in the stream I would occasionally see a water moccasin sunning itself on a tiny island, and I would cautiously keep my distance. As I recall these experiences, I believe my guardian angel was with me.

When picking wild flowers, I would place my bouquet in the shallow water of The Branch until I was ready to go home. I also enjoyed hunting pretty pebbles and rocks along the stream and washing them in the Branch.

Another pleasant memory of The Branch is seining silvery minnows with Dad, which we used as bait for fishing in larger streams. When Dad was working in fields located beyond the pasture, he would stop at a deep hole in the Branch and have a refreshing bath after his long day's labor.

According to a local history book in the Lewistown Carnegie Public Library, where I am employed, Potato Creek received its name from the great abundance of wild potatoes that grew on its banks.

When I was a child in the late 1920's and early 1930's,

Tater Creek was good for fishing, especially bullheads. Mother fried them to a turn and they were delicious. Grandfather Vaughn fished in the Creek during the spring that he reached his eighty-sixth birthday in May, 1933.

A water gap separated our part of the Creek from the adjoining farm. After a heavy rain my father would don his waders and repair the water gap. My brother-in-law, Herbert Beadles, who farms for my sister Irene and me, still has this job.

Father attempted to teach my sister and me to swim in the Creek, but with no success as neither learned to swim.

The C. B. & Q. (Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy) Railroad follows Tater Creek, and one of my pleasant memories is waving at the trainmen as the train sped by.

Potato Creek empties into Spoon River, the river of Edgar Lee Masters' famous Anthology.

THE I. AND M. CANAL

Glenn E. Philpott

There's a lot of people, especially in the younger generation here in Illinois, who have never heard of the I. & M. Canal. It is also known as the Hennepin Canal. This engineering feat in northern Illinois was accomplished about the same time as the Panama Canal—around the turn of the century or shortly there after.

The idea behind the construction of the canal was to make a shorter water route between the Great Lakes and the Tri-city area of Davenport, Rock Island, and Moline on the Mississippi River. Before this construction all water traffic was forced to go south to Grafton, Illinois, to the confluence of the Illinois and Mississippi Rivers. Between 1910 and 1940 there were millions of tons of grain, steel, gravel, coal, etc.

transported by way of this canal. Of course, this held down freight rates on the railroads because of competition.

The canal was dug mostly by hand and by team and slip. My grandfather, Billy Philpott, helped dig the canal and later became a lockman at locks five and seven. It was only natural that my dad, Conway Philpott, followed and became a lockman, too. That is why I grew up on the canal and spent the first 26 years of my life there. In 1948 I became a lockman at the Guard lock at Rock Falls, Illinois. This made three generations of the Philpott family serving on the canal.

The main canal was dug westward from Bureau, Illinois, past the towns of Tiskilwa, Wyanet, Sheffield, Mineral, Annawan, Geneseo, and Colona, to Milan on the Mississippi River—a distance of approximately twenty miles. The channel was seven or eight feet deep.

The water supply for the canal is drawn from the Rock River at Rock Falls. The water flow is controlled at the Guard lock at Rock Falls and flows south through the "feeder section" or summit level to the main canal, a distance of approximately twenty-five miles. This junction is just northwest of Sheffield and is the high point, because the water from here flows east down to the Illinois River and down west to the Mississippi River. There are twenty-one locks going east from here and eleven locks going west to the Mississippi—a total of thirty-two locks.

Each lock had its own lockman who lived in a house provided by the government. Rent was deducted from his monthly pay check.

The lockman was provided an acre of ground for a garden for his family, which was sufficient. My grandmother and aunt lived with us most of the time, so with my three brothers and three sisters and Mom and Dad, it was quite a chore to feed eleven people each meal time. We never missed a meal, and now I look back and wonder how we did it. We ate a lot of squirrel and rabbit in season or out depending on the situation.

The distance between the locks varied considerably—according to the level of the land. Locks Fifteen and Sixteen are only about a block apart, but Locks Twenty-one and Twenty-two are twelve miles apart. During my early childhood, all lockmen were on duty twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week. Each was given fifteen days leave time each year. Of course, later this was changed. He was expected to be available to lock boats through his lock at any time. The government had its own telephone line along the canal, and each lock was assigned a combination of short or long rings. Of course, nature being what it is, each time the phone would ring, practically everyone listened in, so there were few personal secrets. This telephone was used to inform each lockman as to the arrival of the boats and when they were due at each lock.

My father first lived on a houseboat at Lock One. I started to school in 1920 after we moved to Lock Eight near Tiskilwa. The Boushey family lived at Lock Nine and our other neighbor here was the Walton family, as he was the dredge operator. Years later I worked on the old steam dredge *Ledgerwood* with Mr. Walton and on the old steam pile driver with Pat Cooney.

In 1928 we moved to Lock Twelve where I graduated from Tiskilwa High School in 1932. This was during the famous Depression and I remember it well. All my “growing up” on the canal involved no electricity. The old kerosene lamp served us in the evenings while getting our lessons. We listened to our old battery operated radio until the batteries were dead which was quite often. Dad was finally able to get a gasoline powered Maytag washing machine for Mom. As I was the oldest, it was my job to siphon the gasoline out of our old Studebaker car each Monday so Mom could wash. I went to school “half punchy” a lot of times, when the siphoning didn’t work too good.

Most young people today don’t realize how wonderful it is not to have to wrap up in an old sheepskin coat in the

winter and carry a lantern for that pressing trip to the outhouse and another look at the old Sears and Roebuck catalogue. I still remember that the colored pages were the last to go.

During the winter my dad and I loved to trap. We caught a lot of mink and muskrats as well as coon and skunks. Dad was an expert skinner so he did all of that. The winter time also meant filling the icehouse. This was a cooperative effort by several of the lockmen together. After the ice on the canal reached ten to twelve inches thick the boss would assemble the lockmen, and the ice was cut and blocked and put into the icehouse, and covered with peat, for use in the summer. There were very few times that someone didn’t fall into the icy waters.

In the summertime most lockmen were busy cutting grass, or trimming weeds along the canal. This enabled them to be available at any time to take care of the boat and barge traffic. Each lockage through a lock took about twenty minutes. My dad has had thirty lockages in one day or one every twenty minutes for ten hours.

These locks were operated by hand. Valves let water into the locks and wickets let the water out. The old grain boat *Montauk* made a lot of trips from Pekin and Beardstown on the Illinois River up into the feeder section to get grain.

Later the Mechlin barge line hauled a lot of steel through the canal from the steel mills around Chicago to the Rock Island area.

The old canal for its original purpose is a thing of the past. It has been turned over to the state now as a recreational park. There is no more through travel now except by canoe, as some of the locks have been converted to spillways. This keeps a constant flow of water through the canal and prevents stagnation.

There have been a lot of family names associated with the old canal. Of course, some have been forgotten over the years. My other grandfather, George Hand, was a lockman at

Locks Six (where my mother and dad met) and Twenty-two. His sons, Frank and Bert Hand, also lived on the canal. Other names that come to mind are Goldstein, Bales, Weber, Varble, Renoad, Fox, Cannan, Puyear, Jones, Rodgers, Turner, Underwood, Garrell, Goodale, Ill., Charles, Luce, Webster, Madsen, Wagner and Yarrington. Of course, then men only worked on the Eastern section because that's where my time was spent.

Every time I pass a segment of the old canal, it brings back a lot of memories. One evening while living at Lock Twelve, my dad saved a little girl from drowning. I only remember her last name as Hull. She had fallen off the lower gates into the channel while trying to walk across the gates. It was night time and Dad got his pike pole and was able to snag her coat and drag her out. He administered artificial resuscitation, and she was okay by the time the rescue squad arrived.

Mom and Dad are both gone now, but they left me with a lot of memories. Dad was always proud that he was told he had the prettiest lock on the canal by the inspecting mayor. He always had a lot of flowering bushes and moss roses around his Lock Twelve area.

At night, if I listen carefully, I can still hear the frogs croaking, a splash from a jumping fish, and the cry of the Katy-dids along the canal bank.

LIFE IN A FEMALE INSTITUTION

Juanita Jordan Morley

In the fall of 1927, my father, Benjamin Jordan, and I drove from Watseka, Illinois, to Jacksonville, a distance of about 150 miles, to enroll me in Illinois Woman's College. Upon conferring with some of his friends, my father had

decided this was the place for his motherless daughter to receive her education.

I was to find out later that Jacksonville was a very unusual town in that it housed about every institution you could name. Down the street from the college was the Illinois School for the Blind, St. Francis Hospital, now Frank A. Norris Hospital, and the school for nurses. To the other end of town, very quaint and charming, located on a hilltop, was Illinois College. During my four years at college, I was fortunate to be able to attend the 100th celebration of its founding. There was Routt College for the Deaf, a large state mental institution, and Norbury's Sanitarium.

My aunt Martha had packed, labeled, and assembled all the things required for me to take. My personal things were packed in a black, shiny hat box, which over the next few years became plastered with college labels. I believe that little black hat box made it all through college with me and later was used to house our daughters' toys.

Upon seeing Illinois Woman's College for the first time, I wasn't exactly overjoyed. The building I was to live in was Old Main, the first building of the college. It was tall, stern, and drab—very much like our Dean Austin, who was to guide my life. The building was set not far off the street and had a short, winding walk past a magnolia tree to some high steps that led to the entry. Just inside the massive front door was the "desk," where the heartbeat of the college was monitored. To the left was the reception room—a very formal, stiff room with about the biggest mirror I can ever remember. Here you met your guests or dates, but never just lounged. The Social Room, a large room on down the hall to the left, was where our dances, special meetings of the Dean, and school functions were held. Around the walls were oil paintings done by my art teacher, Nellie Knopf, of whom I was very proud. To the right past the desk were Dean Austin's office and other business rooms. At the far end of the hall was the

library. In the basement was the post office and the dining hall, so Old Main was just about the whole college.

I had been assigned a second floor room on one of the wings back of the main facade. It overlooked a courtyard, from which later I was to enjoy midnight serenades by Illinois College boys. The room was dark, tall ceilings with the bare essentials for living—two beds or cots, two dressers, two closets, and possibly a wash basin. One of the first things in getting settled was a shopping trip with your roommate to get bedspreads, drapes, scatter rugs, lamps, and curtains for the windows and closets.

A "big sister" was assigned to underclassmen, and I received a "corker." She was collegiate from the word go. Upon looking at me, she dubbed me "Clara Bow, the Boop-ooop-a-doop girl." It wasn't until Sue Proctor left Illinois Woman's College that my friends found I had a name, and it was shortened to "Nita." Well, I had a reputation to establish to keep up with my new name, and the shy little gal from Watseka "emerged."

In my second year at Illinois Woman's College, I attended a Washington's Birthday Ball staged in the gymnasium. It was a costume ball, and many gathered to watch from the balcony at the back of the gym. There was a photographer on hand to take pictures of the event, which he did from the stage at the front end of the gymnasium. Since the flash made such a smoke, someone pulled the curtain on the stage to keep back the fumes. Before we knew it, the curtain had ignited, and for fear that it might fall on the dancers on the floor, someone pulled it back. The flames immediately licked across the room to the balcony, and you could hear the screams of fear and panic from the spectators. Among those spectators were the President's wife, Mrs. Clarence P. McCleilans, my art teacher, the school nurse, several of my classmates, and many, many more. I particularly remember the President's wife because she jumped from the ledge outside the windows, breaking her hip

and being hospitalized for what seemed ages. The school nurse, whom none of us admired, escaped from the ledge. She may have been a "Wonder Woman" from a previous age. One classmate jumped from the ledge outside the window, striking an iron guard rail and killing herself; another became very severely burned, disfiguring her for life. Some escaped by pulling their coats over their heads and taking the narrow stairs down from the balcony. I was on the main floor and rather calmly made my way out, past the punch bowl, untouched by all save a little colored boy who was sampling its contents, on down the steps, losing and replacing my slipper on the way, to find a roommate outside who was frantic with fear for me.

That night in the dormitory was one I shall never forget. We huddled in each other's rooms, frightened with rumors of the horrible things that had happened that eve. I recall no lights, and only the central switchboard being open. We were reassured, however, that our parents had been called. With the morning light, we were all informed that we were to go home—a very wise decision, I am sure.

Illinois Woman's College was fashioned after Eastern girls' schools, so we had no sororities. Our rules were very strict—student government prevailed. We could go "off campus" only in groups of three; we dared not ride in cars. We signed in and out for whatever we did. Dates had to be approved. There was a "black list" that you dared not associate with. Special permission had to be obtained from the Dean, and it took your greatest nerve to approach her. We attended Chapel every day at ten. We had assigned seats and attendance was strictly enforced. So you might guess that at that time I was "Lifting mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh the Lord" or singing the college song, "By stately elms surrounded, our dear old college stands."

In this same chapel some of the finest Artist Series programs were held, although at the time I was guilty of "cutting" them. I do remember the Russian Cossack Chorus,

Ethel Barrymore, Carola Goya, Tony Sarg's Marionettes, and countless other pianists, sopranos, baritones, etc.

Also, during my second year, I was "rushed" to all the societies (not sororities) on campus. That was quite an experience, and some lovely and clever parties were staged. I joined Phi Nu Society, of which my senior year I was president and influential in founding Society Night, which became an annual affair and highly approved of by the Dean. All in all, there were four main societies, and rooms in Harker Hall were our meeting places.

It would not be right to omit the weekly meetings called by Dean Olive Austin. She was a tall, stern, maiden-lady that made you really wonder at her qualifications for all the "facts of life" that she was to bestow on us. We didn't love her, but rather feared her. But she did bring about development in our lives.

Illinois Woman's College, being a church-endowed school, I am sure needed help. The college was growing. Its financial status couldn't have been good as the Depression was upon us. Some very generous, kind, and rich benefactors came into the life of the college, and although it didn't seem right to us (those in school then) the name was changed to MacMurray. So I graduated from MacMurray College of Jacksonville, still a girls' school. My class was the first to live in Jane Hall, a new residence hall quite different from Old Main.

This spring, God willing, I hope to attend my 50th Class Reunion. I have now reached the age of those charming old ladies I used to watch attending their fiftieth reunions when I was but a student. MacMurray is no longer a girls' school, but coeducational. There was a rumor that the administration approached Illinois College, hoping to join them in order to survive, but the two old schools could not lose their identities. From 1846 to 1981 covers a lot of education.

GOATS IN CHICAGO'S BACKYARDS

Elizabeth Schumacher Bork

Near where I lived in the city of Chicago in the early 1900's there were streets paved with wooden blocks. The wooden blocks were ten inches in diameter. Because horses were used to haul most everything, the wooden blocks got wet as the horses had to relieve themselves on them during working hours. The city had street cleaners, but they could not clean the moisture out of the blocks. The odor was out of this world, especially on hot, steamy summer evenings. For sanitary reasons the city had to remove the wooden blocks.

At this time most people heated their homes with coal or wood. The men working on the removing of the blocks were always glad to have the people carry them away. Friends of our family sent their girl out to get a box of the "used" blocks one day. She was a twin and the boss on the job told her she had taken enough and to go home. She did. But her twin sister didn't know that and she went for a load of wood herself. The man was very angry with her and said, "I told you not to come back." She told him she wasn't there before, and he would not take her word for it. He made her cry. Finally, I explained to him about their being twin sisters.

We had kerosene lamps to light our homes. We children were sent to the store with a gallon can to get it. The can had a spout to pour the kerosene out, so we had to put a small potato in the spout to keep the kerosene from spilling.

Some people raised goats for the milk they used for their table. There was another reason to use goats milk, too. It was for infants that could not take the mother's milk or even cow's milk. It was very expensive per gallon. But the City of Chicago, being so populated, and for many other reasons, passed a law to stop goat raising in the city limits. Goats used to eat people's clothes off their wash lines and eat the newspapers the boys put on the porches.

The silent movies were 5¢ and they had a man or lady

playing the piano. The piano music was very good as it went with the action of the silent movie. Printed words would be shown on the screen, and we used to watch the people's lips. Mary Pickford was the best actress, and Charlie Chaplin was very popular, too. Soon talking pictures came and it was a novelty.

As the neighborhood that I lived in had many vacant lots, there was much home building. One general contractor built a row of buildings a block long! They were two stories high and all alike. In the bathrooms, the floors had little tile squares about three inches square. They were each laid in cement next to each other. When the men went home after 4:30 p.m., we children went over to the buildings and picked up nails and tiles that had been thrown out when the buildings were done. My parents didn't want me to play near those places, and they knew I had been there when I came home with my pockets full of nails, tiles, etc.

We moved to another place in Chicago. It was a very good neighborhood. There were many Jewish people living there who were very religious. They didn't light their gas stoves for certain days. But, if a gentile lighted it, then they could cook. They paid me 10¢ for doing this for them.

I would get up early Saturdays and make my rounds. I came home with at least \$10.00 in dimes. My father made \$18.00 per week as a foreman in the National Biscuit Company. He had 200 girls working for him. One day I came home with \$50.00 in dimes. I heard my mother say that it was more than most husbands earn in one week or even a month.

Mother was always good to me. She always gave me 1¢ out of those earnings for the colored paper lunch bags that the candy store sold. I so loved those bags with the colored popcorn and some small trinket.

There was also a "Public Bath House" near my home. I asked mother if I could go to the Bath House with the other children. She said you have a bathroom in your own house and you don't need to go there.

Well, she let me go anyway. A man would turn on the water, and ask us if it was too hot or too cold. We all said hot or cold, and made a lot of noise until he called a halt to the noise. We had to bring our own towels.

These are just a few of many of my wonderful memories of childhood days. For me they certainly were the "Good Old Days."

GRANDFATHER'S OLD MILL

Albert Shanholtzer

In 1910 the Coatsburg Roller Mill was a thriving business, located on five acres at the south edge of Coatsburg, Illinois. Built on a foundation of native limestone, the rock walls of the basement enclosed the boiler room where steam power was generated. The strong belt extending up from the generator's flywheel turned the pulley of the ground floor lineshaft above. Other belts ran from several power pulley-idler-pulley combinations to selectively supply power to machinery on the third and fourth floor levels. Water for the boiler room was piped underground, the cast iron conduit extending from a screened intake crib in the north edge of the large mill pond some distance away to maintain a constant water supply.

In 1910 my grandfather, Jacob N. Shanholtzer, the mill's owner, was 69 years of age with many years of experience in four other Illinois communities. His eldest son and co-worker, James, was 30 years old and was my father. It was a family enterprise with occasional extra help from three younger boys in the family. One faithful old timer, Joe Brink, was employed to fire the boiler and help maintain some of the machinery. I was born in 1905, and as I heard my parents discuss events at the mill, it became interesting to me. By the time I was five years old, I knew the finest wheat from the

heart of Adams County was hauled in by wagon from surrounding farms, and the milled white flour, shipped out by carloads from the local depot, went by rail to many other places. Also, some stores in rural areas and in Quincy were supplied direct by wagon. In addition to white flour, the mill produced graham flour, corn meal, rye flour for pumpernickel, and "ship-stuff." This, I learned, consisted of siftings and screenings, bran, and bin and shute residues, regularly and thoroughly cleaned out. Customers added this to scraps, potato and apple peelings, with dishwater, stirred into the slop and fed it to several hogs for fall butchering, a custom in those days among most all families in rural communities.

Let me take you on a walking tour of the old mill in action, as I was permitted to accompany my father on his round of inspection. I remember the unusual way it ended once for a tired, happy boy of five.

It was a warm spring day. As operations resumed after the noon meal (we called it "dinner" in 1910), the first stop was the boiler room. The coal burning unit under the boiler was being stoked and the bright glow of the flames were closed out as the door clanged shut, but not the heat. (It was a comfortably warm place in winter, but a hot sweaty place the rest of the year!) The gauges monitoring the water level and steam pressure were functioning properly, and we stood a moment watching the big flywheel move silently and smoothly. I was fascinated by its spinning round and round; Dad was checking the endless belt as it moved through an opening up to the ground floor. Any flaw must be detected and remedied in time, or the whole mill was out of action! We recalled how often Dad remarked: "Steam power, smoothest and most dependable man ever discovered." Our next stop was to look at the pair of imported French buhrstones in the adjoining room. They were not operating today, but I had learned before that they were used for grinding corn meal, graham flour, and rye for pumpernickel. When the mill had been remodeled and newer machinery installed at the turn of

the century, they had been retained just for that work. (Dad had learned the difficult and complicated procedure for "dressing," or sharpening these stones; and he claimed he was the only one in this area capable of doing so, and assumed no one in the community would ever do that work in the future). Going up to the main floor, walking over the scale section and across the grill through which wheat cascaded into bins below when wagon endgates were removed and the rear wheels lowered slightly, we went upstairs to stop on the landing and opened a small door to observe the conveyor belt, whose cups were carrying wheat to machinery above for the initial processing. Following the walkway between the rollers we went up a short open stairway to the top floor. Several drive belts for chutes ended there, and shorter belts returning power to a few machines below could be checked. On a clear day such as this, you could see miles across country from the windows; you could also hold around a support near one opening and peer down through all three floors at the belts and see which machines were idle. As we returned downstairs we passed a unit of rollers and screens and an expanse of fine French silk through which the white flour was sifted. Back on the main floor, my dad went to the bagging chute to complete a skid-load of flour. I sat in Grandpa's "Captain's chair" with the round back (he was probably taking his afternoon nap) and watched how easily the bags were filled. The tops were folded under once and stitched across with a curved needle; an ear deftly twisted at each top corner was wrapped with the twine ends, tied with a "miller's knot," and the wheeled skid, four-bags-high, pushed to the loading ramp door and wheels chocked. The long walk had made me tired and sleepy, so when Dad threw a canvas across the top of the skid of flour, folded a few clean bags, rejected as imperfect, into a pillow, his suggestion to take a nap while he bagged another skid was quickly accepted. I heard the hum of belts powering well-oiled machinery, smelled the aroma of the freshly milled flour, and was soon in dreamland. I little realized then that it was a

time to remember, with much joy, many years later. In this present-day time of restriction, health and safety rules, and government regulation, could a day such as that be experienced by a boy of five? I doubt it!

WHITE OAK JUST FADES AWAY

Vail Morgan

The land was poor, the roads were poor, and so were many of the farm families in the rural school-church district Number 30 in Schuyler County in my grade school years of 1916-1924. It was the White Oak School and Church, located about 50 yards apart, in a white oak grove midway between Littleton and Camden at a junction of narrow rural roads. Despite what we today would regard as hardships, the residents of the White Oak Community enjoyed life as they looked out for and helped each other. They joined together in school, church, and farm activities.

Sometimes I feel that I would like to return to the community to live again those happy childhood days—if the people and the area were the same again. But on a recent visit there I found that the old families and scenes had simply faded away, and the community seemed lonely, quiet, and deserted.

Gone is the old schoolhouse, demolished many years ago after the demise of all rural schools. All that remains are weeds and the vine-covered well platform and pump. Gone is the old buffalo-wallow pond near the school where we skated in the winter, and we waded, chased frogs, and pulled out the tender centers of the calamus plants from the water's edge to eat while watching the many red-winged blackbirds that nested there in the summer. Gone is the shade tree used as first base for our school ball games. Second base was a rock, and third base was a fence post. Since we often had

insufficient players for basemen, we adopted a rule that a runner was out if the ball was thrown between him and the base before he got to it, or if the ball was caught on the fly.

The six foot deep gullies south of the school where we had mudball fights at the noon hour are still there. The blue clay at the base of the gullies was always wet enough to shape into balls for bombardment of the enemy in the opposite trench. Sometimes a boy got a blackened eye if he wasn't quick enough to dodge the missile.

School discipline was strict. One teacher meted out punishment for fighting with a tire pump rubber hose. When being punished the pupil had to roll up his overall pants leg, and the hose was applied across the back of his legs, often leaving large red marks. This was done in front of the other pupils, and the punishment was never forgotten. I remember.

The small schoolroom was heated with a coal stove in one corner of the room. For several years I walked a mile to school early each morning to start the coal fire so the room would be heated by the time the teacher and the students arrived.

My first teacher rode a horse three miles to and from school daily. The animal was housed in the coal shed in one corner of the yard. Outdoor toilets stood in other corners of the yard.

Very few children live in the district now, and they are transported by bus but to town schools. There were up to 28 students in the rural school one year I was there.

There was a hitch rack along the south side of the church as everyone came by buggy, carriage, or wagon, or by bobsled in winter. Sometimes the rack space was so crowded that horses were tied to the white oak trees.

I recall that each summer for many years a black woman, Mrs. Brewington, came to the community and conducted revival services for a week or two. She stayed with a widow woman but often was invited out for meals in homes of the community. She was beloved by the members, and

they always looked forward to her appearance for preaching and singing services.

I remember several church baptisms in the Lamoine River, known then as Crooked Creek. The river was about two miles from the church.

Most boys and girls went barefoot all summer, with the boys boasting they were the first to go barefoot in the spring even when it was too cold for comfort. However, we went to church in our "Sunday Shoes" and dressed in our best attire with red ribbon ties.

But the church, too, is gone. The structure has finally collapsed, revealing the huge hand-hewn timbers that had framed it, lying amidst a rubble of plaster, lath, and wood shingles. Brush almost hides the spot.

One thing in the area stands out and undoubtedly will forever. That is the old cemetery where my great-grandparents, grandparents, and some other relatives were buried along with scores of others from the pioneer community. The cemetery grounds are still kept neatly mowed.

I wandered into the nearby Harrison Woods where a classmate, Francis Harrison, and myself once carved our names with a hand axe in a sandstone rock ledge. The names had faded away, covered by soil that had eroded from above. Those woods and pasture, kept almost like lawns by the constant foraging by cattle and horses in my school days, are now void of animals. They are so dense with briars, brush, and the pesky multiflora roses that it is almost impossible to wander through them as we once did in search of squirrels, arrowheads, berries, and nuts.

Making the district more desolate is the absence of at least nine farm premises with their homes, barns, outbuildings, gardens, and orchards. Five of those homes have burned; some of the others demolished to make way for larger modern farm operations.

Family names in my early days at White Oak included

Harrison, DeCounter, Paisley, Gray, White McClintock, Learnd, McNeeley, Vincent, Ellis, Crook, Lickey, Nelson, Shupe, and Morgan. Today I am unable to locate a single one of these names among the few families in the White Oak District. They just faded away gradually, some by death, but most to richer farm lands or jobs in the city. At least one of the former residents is now a millionaire.

Dad sometimes grew white corn and hauled it in the wagon to the mill at the Brooklyn dam for grinding into meal for mush. He also took along corn to grind for chicken feed. One time we lost a stack of shelled white corn from the back of the wagon before reaching the mill. On the way home we found it on the road, no one having passed that way in the few hours we were away. While the corn was being ground, Dad would drive the team with the wagon into the river to let the water soak the dry wooden wagon wheels.

The old mill and the dam, too, are now gone. White Oak may have faded away but my memories of it have not.

SCOTT MILL

Lucius Herbert Valentine

The place of my birth was known as Scott Mill, located on the bank of the Lamoine River in Brown County of the state of Illinois.

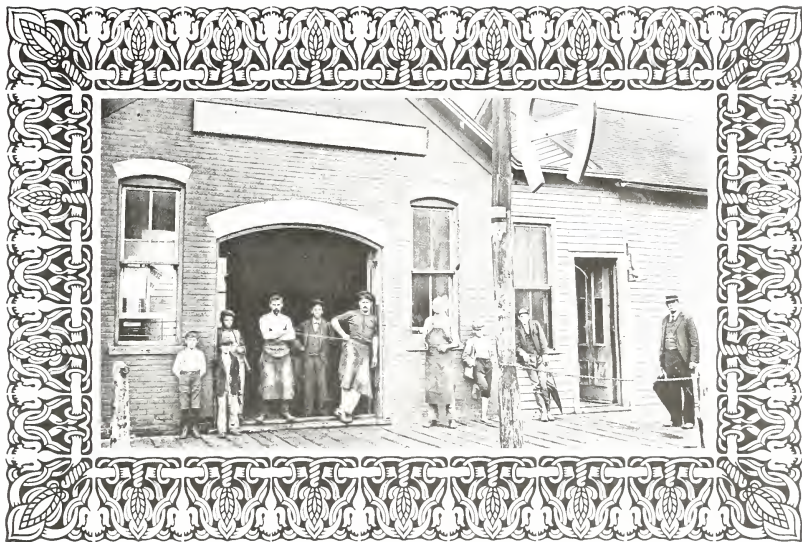
Scott Mill consisted of one large house, one store building, a blacksmith shop, and a huge ice house. My parents operated this business, selling groceries or trading them for chickens or eggs. My daddy first drove a team of mules for delivering groceries through the community, while mother attended the store. Later he was able to buy a truck. This was a chain-driven, high-wheeled truck made by International Harvester Company. It had solid rubber tires.

My parents were loved and respected by the farmers in

Brown and Schuyler counties. One of the most interesting things I can remember was in the winter when they would fill the huge ice house. The ice came from the Lamoine River. They would have around 24 sleds pulled by horses or mules. The ice was cut in large square cakes and hauled to the ice house and packed in sawdust to keep for the summer trade.

The mill had stood on a small curve of this most beautiful stream just above the bridge, where the rocks are still there. Farmers came from every direction for many miles to have their grain ground. Scott Mill played an important role in the development of Schuyler and Brown counties. It remained on all Illinois maps for years, after all the buildings were taken down for the lumber, then it was removed from the map. Now they have the road going west from Route 24 named Scott Mill Road.

In August of 1920 we moved from Scott Mill over in Schuyler County to a farm southwest of Rushville. This was a very sad day for me, and it seemed to me even our horses did not want to go either, as they balked going up the very steep hill out of the river bottom. This hill was known as Shin Hill. The wagon had to be chocked, the horses removed, and other horses hitched up to pull the load on up the hill. As we went over the crest of Shin Hill, I looked back at the river; then Scott Mill faded into history and my life changed. I had been a merchant's son and now I was a farmer's son. Scott Mill never operated again.



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 Helen Starmbough Olson
 Pauline Pace
 Mrs. Leone Patrick
 Grace Payne
 Darlene Ray
 Lyle W. Robbins
 Nell Windsor Robinson
 Helen Boyd Ross
 Beula Selters

Howard Silberer
 Kathryn Smithers
 Mary Cecile Stevens
 Josie Torrance
 Leona Wetzel
 John C. Willey

MENARD COUNTY

Elizabeth B. Canterbury
 Mabel Miller Hinds

MERCER COUNTY

Dorothy G. Brown
 Flora M. Greene
 Fred Lipton
 Edith Nesbitt
 Mae V. Scovil
 Vesta B. Speer

MCLEAN COUNTY

Eileen Smith Cunningham
 Fern M. Downs
 Joseph Paddock
 Neoma Ewing Steege

MONROE COUNTY

Al Hartman
 Elsa E. Schmidt

MORGAN COUNTY

Harvey S. Bubb
 Garnet Valentine Campbell
 Laura Stillson
 Elliot W. Williams

OGLE COUNTY

Jennie Sexton

PEORIA COUNTY

Joan F. Athen
 Bonita Lynn Burgess
 Chuck Burroughs
 Mary Jane Simmone Conlan
 Glenna Howard Lamb
 Dorothy A. Marshall
 Mildred Norton
 Inez Sparks Towers

POPE COUNTY

Edna Trovillion Baker
 Eva Baker Watson

PIKE COUNTY

Genevieve Dorsey Brim
 Owen Hannat
 Ruth Townley Kerr
 Dorothy G. Liehr
 Ruth Lingle
 Dorothy Ottwell
 Helen M. Storey
 Edna Manire Wells

ROCK ISLAND COUNTY

Newton E. Barrett
 Carl Baumann
 Lilian D. Carson
 Signe Evangeline Chell
 Julia J. Clausen
 Doris L. Chilberg
 Frances Wait Danielson

Rev. Carl E. Ericson
 Jadelaine Fluegel
 Julia D. Harrel
 Charlotte Hatfield
 Frances L. Hickey
 Blondelle Lashbrook
 Vivian Lorri
 Ruth E. Pearson
 Robert L. Plack
 Rose Sabath
 John R. Smith
 Alberta Young Steggemann
 Frances Stotts
 Mabel M. Stover
 Florence J. Thuline
 James Russell Vaky

SANGAMON COUNTY

Mary Foster Brinocar
 Florence E. Evans
 Sister J. Deters
 Marie L. Fee
 Sara Feuer
 Irma Johnson
 Laura M. Johnston
 Ruby Davenport Kish
 Louise Krueger
 Matilda Rose McLaren
 Genevieve Keller Murphy
 Frances O'Laughlin
 Ben E. Padget
 Helen E. Rilling
 Ruth Kean Schacherer
 Virginia Schneider

SCHUYLER COUNTY

Alline Armstrong
 William P. Bartlow
 Nelda B. Cain
 Frieda T. Degitz
 Mary K. DeWitt
 Clarice Trone Dickerson
 Eleanor Dodds
 Vada Finch
 Irene Van Ormer Hare
 Ruth A. Kearby
 Vivian Knott
 Marie G. Laswell
 Iva I. Peters
 Robert E. Reno
 Laurence Royer
 Paul Sloan
 Lillian Elizabeth Terry
 Nell Dace Turner
 Guy S. Tyson
 Lorraine Unger

SCOTT COUNTY

John F. Ellis
 Stella Hutchings
 Mrs. Albert E. Powers
 Leta Rogers Spradlin
 Nina Vortman

SHELBY COUNTY

Beulah Knecht

STARK COUNTY

Dorothy M. Robertson

ST. CLAIR COUNTY

Vera A. Niemann
 Grace R. Welch

TAZWELL COUNTY

Ross A. Coil
 Ruth B. Comerford
 Grace Gleason
 Olive M. Gresham
 E. Marek
 Richmond Robison, Jr.
 Arnold Kramer Schoenheider
 Mary C. Stormer
 Lucius Herbert Valentine
 Enid Woolsey

WARREN COUNTY

Earl F. Carwile
 Carmen Johnson Costello
 Hazel D. Frank
 Glenn Guilinger
 John P. Kramer
 Anna Pauline Miller
 Mabelle Shimmin
 Everett Trone
 Omega White

WHITESIDE COUNTY

Clarice Stafford Harris
 Kay Adair Harris
 Frank McFadden

WINNEBAGO COUNTY

Dorothy Van Barringer
 Ruth Fay Bashaw
 Phyllis Wells Pinecombe
 Margaret Potter
 Edith Tollefsrud

WOODFORD COUNTY

Lloyd Dunn

"In 1910 the Coatsburg Roller Mill was a thriving business . . . In addition to white flour, the mill produced graham flour, corn meal, rye flour for pumpernickel and 'ship stuff.' Customers added this to scraps, potatoe and apple peelings with dishwater, stirred into slop and fed to several hogs for fall butchering."

*Albert Shanholtzer
Adams County*

"I well remember one hole [in Rocky Branch]. . . this place was always used for baptizing. When the congregation raised its voice in 'Oh Happy Day' and the preacher prayed it was extremely touching. . . it was used in both summer and winter. . . they just cut a hole in the ice and went ahead."

*Ellen Baldwin
Brown County*

"Finally Dr. Clark came with good news that the siege was over. He ordered our bed linens burned (we had 'scaled off' on them), ordered all of us to antiseptic baths, and fumigated the whole house. The quarantine sign came down."

*Martha Graham
McDonough County*

"There's a lot of people . . . who have never heard of the I&M Canal. The idea . . . of the canal was a shorter water route between the Great Lakes and the Tri-City area. . . The canal was dug mostly by hand and team and slip . . . My dad [a lockman] had 30 lockages in one day or every 20 minutes for ten hours. These lockes were operated by hand."

*Glenn Philpott
Adams County*

"Upon seeing Illinois Woman's College for the first time [1927], I wasn't exactly overjoyed. The building I was to live in was Old Main, the first building of the college. It was tall, stern, and drab—very much like our Dean Austin, who was to guide my life."

*Juanita Jordan Morley
McDonough County*

"Tales is a visit over the farm fence or at the country store. The reader senses the importance of his own roots. As he looks nostalgically at the strong value system of the past, he is moved to re-evaluate his own purposes and direction."

*Junella Leach
The Prairie Star*

"The Two Rivers Arts Council [has] looked around to find what was most appropriate to their communities. . . Here, as perhaps nowhere else in this country, the arts have been encouraged to grow from roots thrust deep into their native soil, and they have made a difference in their towns."

*Nan Levinson - The Cultural Post
National Ednowment for the Arts
Washington, D.C.*

"To the west of the back stoop was the smoke house. Here hung hams and bacon dripping their caramel juices as they cured in dense hickory smoke. These were red-eye gravy hams. Just inside the door was a wooden barrell of salt and several sacks of bran for the mother pigs. We loved to scoop up hands full of bacon and [to] eat it as we romped through those delicious days of childhood. . ."

*Helen E. Rilling
Sangamon County*