Tales from Two Rivers IV

Tales from Two Rivers IV

Tales from Two Rivers IV

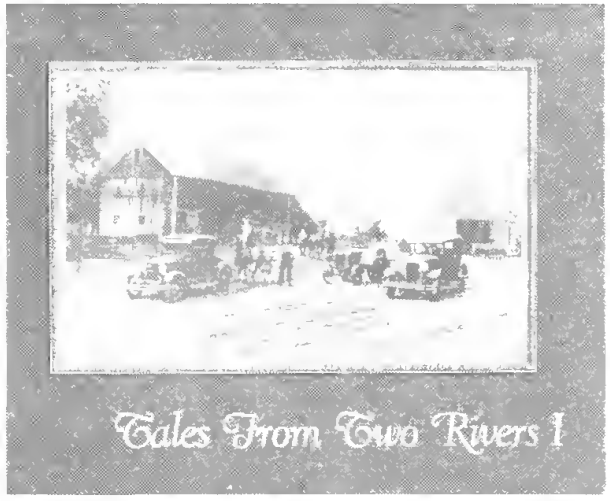
edited by John E. Hallwas, and David R. Pichaske

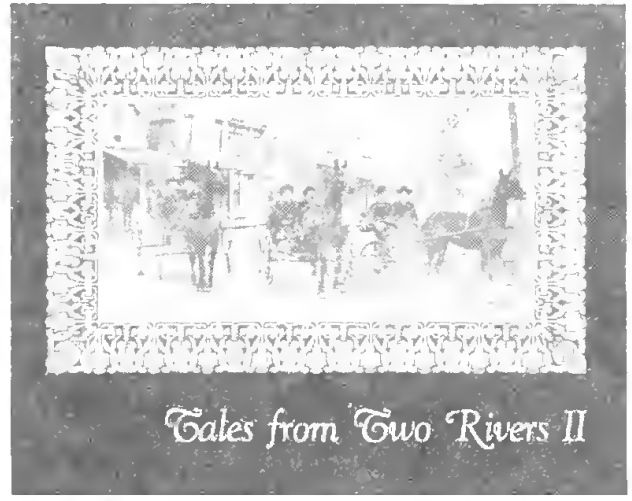
A Publication of

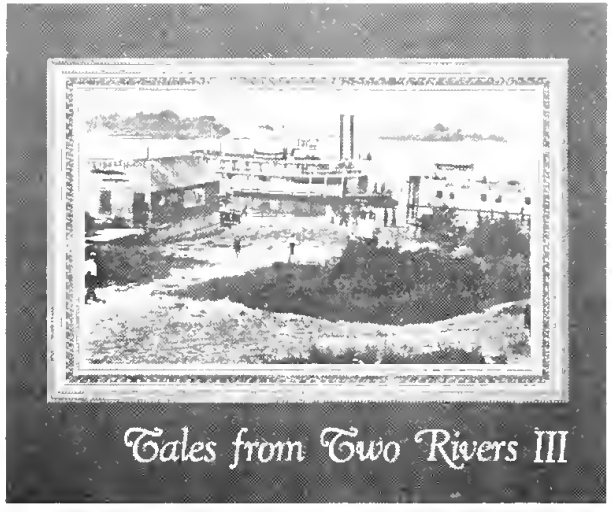
Two Rivers Arts Council
College of Fine Arts Development
Western Illinois University
Macomb, Illinois

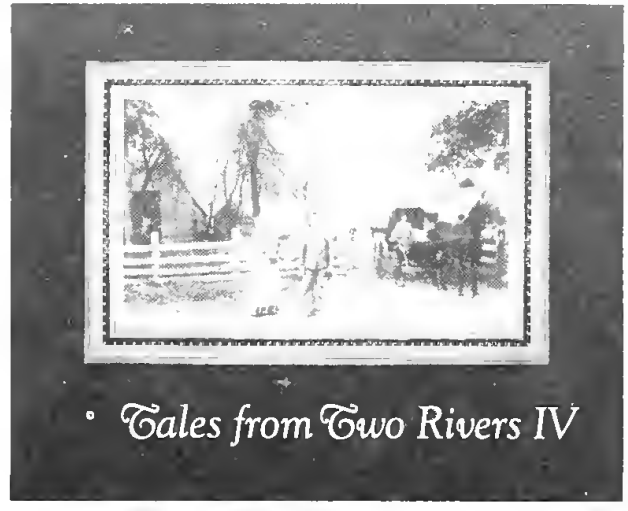
Library of Congress Card No. 81-51362

The cover photograph and all other photographs in this book are courtesy of Archives and Special Collections, Western Illinois University Library.









The stories contained in *Tales from Two Rivers I, II, III and IV* were gleaned from manuscripts submitted by Illinois authors, over sixty years of age, to annual Tales from Two Rivers Writing Contests. They are the documentation of real life experiences and are not the result of laborious research into the works of other documentors. Therefore, these stories constitute an original social history of Illinois in the early decades of the 20th Century.

TWO RIVERS ARTS COUNCIL

Jean Akright
Mt. Sterling, Illinois

Sue Anstine
Macomb, Illinois

David Badger
Havana, Illinois

Rossann Baker
Avon, Illinois

Jane Boyd
Rushville, Illinois

Nancy Butler
LaHarpe, Illinois

Burdette Graham
Macomb, Illinois

Mary Graham
Biggsville, Illinois

Sharon Graham
Biggsville, Illinois

Carolyn Hamilton
Augusta, Illinois

Pat Hobbs
Macomb, Illinois

Pam Allen
Carthage, Illinois

Ann Johnson
Carthage, Illinois

Pam Johnson
Macomb, Illinois

Audine Jung
Bowen, Illinois

Yvonne Knapp
Raritan, Illinois

Teresa Melvin
Blandinsville, Illinois

Dorothy Musick
Augusta, Illinois

Jim O'Toole
Macomb, Illinois

Betty Redenius
Carthage, Illinois

Randy Smith
Macomb, Illinois

Diane Snyder
Rushville, Illinois

Bill Wallace
Monmouth, Illinois

Carol Yeoman
Avon, Illinois

Ex Officio:
William Brattain
Macomb, Illinois

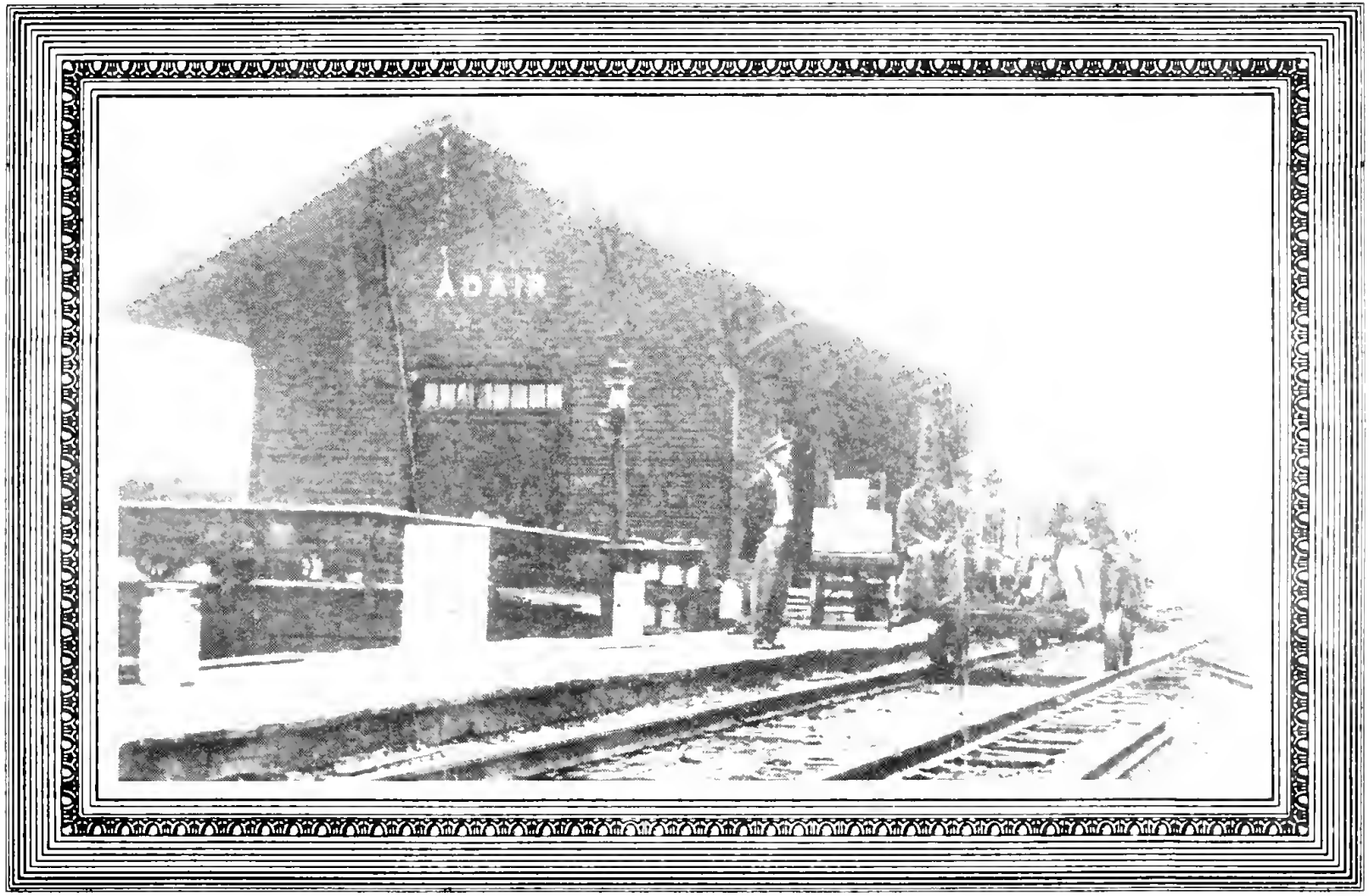
Jim Butterworth
Macomb, Illinois

Gene Kozlowski
Macomb, Illinois

Forrest Suycott
Macomb, Illinois

Tammie McCormick, Sec.
Vermont, Illinois

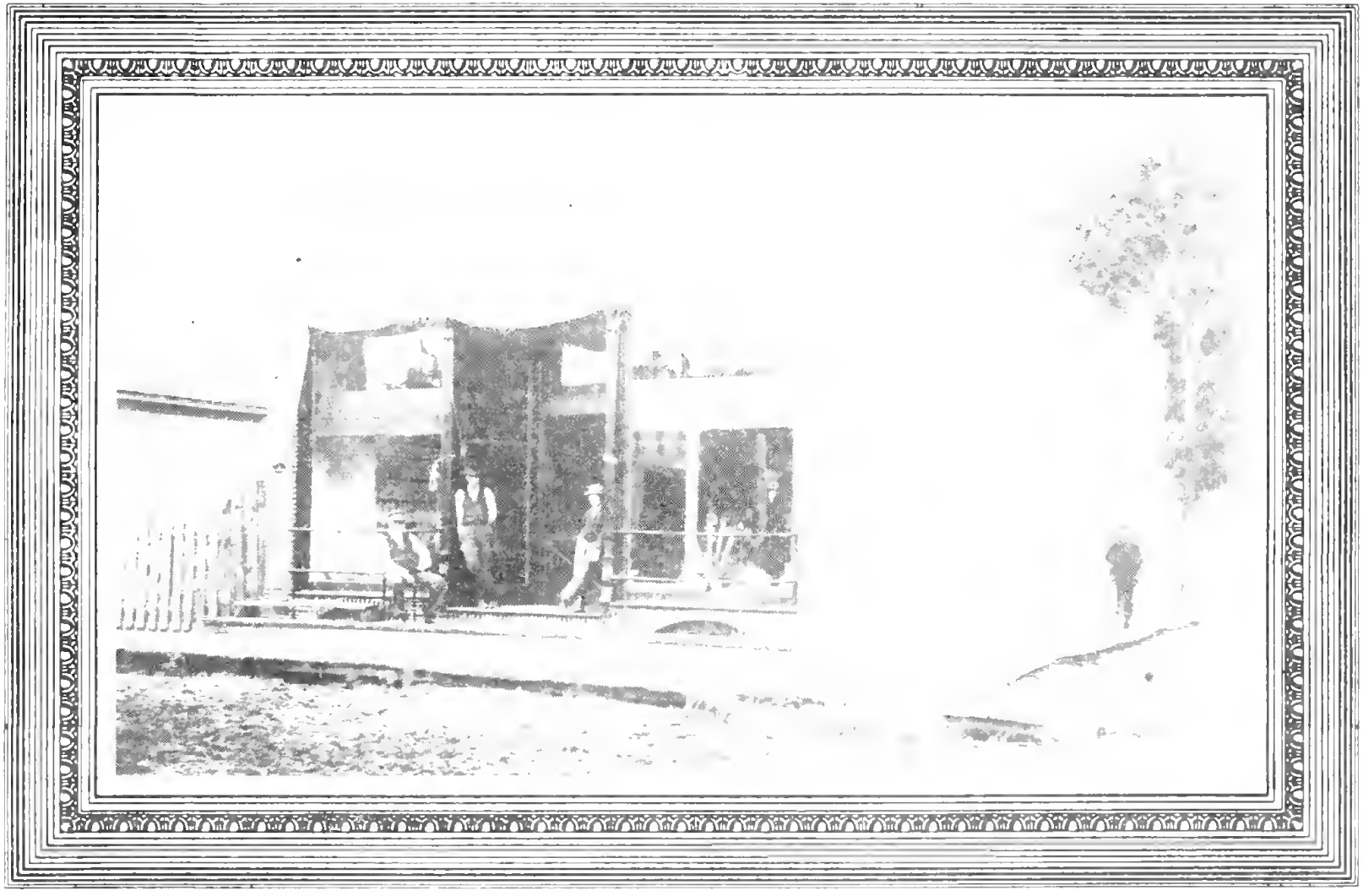
Helen Thomson, Ex. Dir.
Table Grove, Illinois


ADAIR

Contents

"One of the most moving aspects of life is how long the deepest memories stay with us."
Laurens Van Der Post, *The Lost World of the Kalahari*

"The next thing like living one's life over again seems to be a recollection of that life . . . made as durable as possible by putting it down in writing."
Benjamin Franklin, *The Autobiography*



1 *Small-town Stuff*

SMALL-TOWN STUFF

There are people to whom place is unimportant, but they are rare—and probably unhappy. As philosopher George Santayana once said, "The human heart is local and finite; it has roots. . . ." And, in fact, a person's sense of identity springs from the place where he lives, or used to live.

Perhaps no American book conveys that better than *Spoon River Anthology*. Unlike Dante, who put his dead in Hell, Purgatory, and Heaven, Edgar Lee Masters left his departed villagers in the local graveyard. And as their voices whisper from the grass, they still view themselves in relationship to the community. Like the living, they are doomed to memory.

There is something about the small-town experience that makes it especially memorable. Perhaps it is the sense of rootedness in a complex but fully comprehensible human reality, or what Helen Sherrill-Smith calls "the daily contact and involvement with those who live around us," in her memoir about Browning. After all, the small community offers the opportunity for people to interact with each other in a full and meaningful sense, to know each other as individuals, for they work, shop, socialize, worship, and raise children in frequent contact with each other.

Today's senior citizens can recall when small towns were vital economic centers for the surrounding countryside. Local culture thrived—at the opera house and the band concerts in the park. And every Saturday night was an occasion for socializing, as Burdette Graham points out in his memoir on Table Grove. Each town was a little world, isolated by distance from the rest of America and rather self-contained. The community was like a huge, complex family in that most people knew everyone else, and there was a sense of interdependence. Such is the stuff of memories.

But decades of economic difficulty and outmigration of young people have made a profound difference. Now there is a sense of emptiness in places like Bernadotte, Colchester, Kirkwood, Nebo, Plymouth, and Versailles. Although county seat towns still do fairly well, the villages around them have declined significantly. In much of Illinois the small town is an endangered species.

Ironically, even towns that are maintaining their economic base and retaining their population are often losing their sense of community. Helen Sherrill-Smith makes that point explicitly in "The Way It Was in Browning," and most of the other memoirs in this section imply it.

With the coming of automobiles and technological advances, mobility and individual self-interest have grown, while face-to-face contact and community orientation have diminished. It is now fairly common for people to live in a town but not be engaged with it. That would have been unusual, if not impossible, decades ago.

In Illinois there is a need for public attention to the plight of the small town. We must encourage renewal. Vacant buildings should be advertised, small businesses should be founded, and community-wide activities should be developed. In general, we must increase our appreciation for community life, regardless of the economic reality. Our small places are too important to the lives of their residents. Towns that offer meaningful interaction with other people are, after all, the very crucible of human selfhood.

Masters learned this for himself. He published several unsuccessful volumes of verse and prose before he started writing his famous *Spoon River Anthology* poems in 1914. It was not until he turned to his Illinois memories and started singing the specifics of his own past in Petersburg and Lewistown that he became a good poet—which is to say, a good reflector of the human circumstance. He learned, as many other authors have, that the universal is rooted in the particular, that there is no poetry of man, only poetry of individual men and women in a certain time and place.

In other words, the famous poet learned that to be

human is to have context—a place that means something, people who matter. And once established, that context functions within us throughout our lives, as did the small towns of Masters's early life. In a sense, the authors of the memoirs in this section have provided us with images of themselves through their recollections of the places that shaped their lives.

John E. Hallwas

THE WAY IT WAS IN BROWNING

Helen Sherrill-Smith

The greatest cost of progress in our small town seems to me to be the loss of the sense of community, the daily contact and involvement with those who live around us. We cannot stop the world from moving steadily on, nor would we really want to do so. But the invention of the automobile and the increasing ease of access to electricity and to natural gas changed our lives immeasurably.

In those early times, when few people had cars, we walked. Going to the store meant seeing, and talking with, and observing what was happening to the people of our town. We noticed that Aunt Polly had laundry early on the line, so her rheumatism must be better today. Mr. Waters is working over his potato patch, so he's back from visiting relatives down at Pear. Bee is on the front porch, rocking the baby, and I ask if he is still cross with teething, and suggest a simple home remedy to ease the fever and stomach upset. Walt Dosier is turning his team into Aunt Mollie's pasture; we talk about the weather, crop prospects, and when the blackberries will likely be ripe.

Once downtown, I might look at Ed Stambaugh's store for yard goods and thread for a new dress, then cross the street to Mr. Trone's for meat, coffee and sugar. We bought few fruits or vegetables, they were at home, in the garden, the yard, and the cellar. Our bakery was our own kitchen, and milk came from a nearby farm, so we didn't carry many bags of groceries home. Now we go to the supermarket often and come home heavily laden.

The post office was a daily stop, sometimes more than once, since passenger trains with mail aboard stopped six times daily then. We kept in touch with out of town friends and relatives by letter; telephone usage was limited; visits were few and far between. Much of our shopping for coats, sweaters, things the women of the family did not turn out by use of the trusty Singer sewing machine, were ordered from a mail order catalogue. These came to the post office too. Waiting for mail was a kind of village ritual, with much friendly interchange of bits of interesting news items—and sometimes a little gossip—from all over town.

In every season except Winter, much of our time was spent outside the house while doing our daily work. To do the laundry meant carrying in coal and kindling to heat the water, which had to also be pumped and carried. Wet laundry was taken outside and pinned to the lines, carried in again when dry. Work was done in the garden daily, the chickens tended, yards mowed, walks swept. When there was a break in the work, we sat on the shaded front porch. What an important part of life was that porch! We sat comfortably there, protected from sun or rain, shielded from insects by screens, yet with the pleasure of being outside and in touch with the neighborhood. Wilma from next door might bring over a new cutwork design she is using on a tablecloth she is making; across the street, Bobby Waters might have a net stretched for patching in the shade of the old plum tree in the back yard; further down the street, Daddy Carpenter might be trying out one of the Mallard duck weathervanes he carved so well. All very casual and low key, but such was the involvement and relationship in the daily activities of friends and neighbors.

In the evening, girls went "walking," stopping often along the way to chat with people sitting outside, enjoying the coolness. The Beddow family owned a boarding house (owned by the Allenbaugh's at an earlier time) which sat near the walk, and it had a long open porch where someone was nearly always sitting. Grandma and Gladys Beddow were friendly folk and we always stopped for a chat. We walked through the downtown, but didn't linger there; the men of the town gathered there in the evening, sitting on the steps in front of the Bank, exchanging news and opinions. This was a ritual with them, just as the evening stroll was for us.

The young of all ages gathered often at the Railroad depot; it had a large brick-paved, lighted area, with steps, a

loading platform, and several baggage wagons. It was a good place to sit, talk, sing; in winter it gave us a warm meeting place inside with long benches for sitting, a warm fire in the pot-bellied stove, and a friendly station agent who tolerated a reasonable amount of noise, but no horseplay or rowdiness.

Now few houses are built with porches; like sidewalks, their usefulness in residential areas is almost gone. Who walks, who sits outside? We use the car to go a few blocks; we sit inside a house with windows and doors closed, keeping in warmth in winter and air conditioned coolness in summer. We don't have time to chat. Spare time is spent in front of the television; instead of sharing the life in our community, we wrap ourselves in the fantasy lives of "All My Children" or "General Hospital" which require no real involvement or little thought from us.

We would not want to, nor could we, go back. Life must move forward. But let us recognize that it has not all been gain; some things of great value have been sacrificed along the way. I see no way to reconcile the deeply rewarding daily involvement of small-town life of sixty years ago with the detached and uninvolved life style resulting from the progress we have made in the intervening years. While we have gained much in material things, we have lost so much in real values.

This generation wonders how we ever survived such a desolate life. Cars, if any, were used for business purposes, not as teenage toys. There was no such thing as television, no running water, which meant no indoor plumbing. Parents expected you to earn spending money. At school poor grades were to be ashamed of, rather than the 'in thing.' No stereo, no tape players, no M.T.V.! But their surfeit of pleasures robs today's youngsters of the joys of anticipation, the pleasures of remembrance, the satisfaction of sharing. Nothing on television could compare to the thrill back then of waking in the early morning to the lilting sound of the calliope from the river, telling us the long anticipated showboat was at the landing!

Perhaps we had small pleasures and lived a more limited life. But we were totally involved with our family and our community. We lived a lifestyle which taught us to share, to care, and to be aware of the others in our world.

LIFE IN CHECKROW

Louise E. Efnor

Moving day was a day of excitement and joy for my husband and me. We had long anticipated moving to the country, and now it was reality—a home in the farming community of Checkrow. I noticed a church and a school as we drove along, two very important places for a family, and we were to be family in just a few short months.

Checkrow proved to be a friendly community, and I soon became acquainted with many of the ladies at a "pink and blue" shower for the pastor's wife at the home of Aunt Mary Smith and Uncle Dorie Leister (they were aunt and uncle to most everyone in the community, a very kind and caring brother and sister team).

Several weeks later I met the Pastor of Checkrow Church in rather unusual way (or so I thought). The Ghiglieris, former owners of our home, had left two sheep for us to look after until they could get them moved to their new home. The country and most of its critters were rather new to me. Although I had grown up in a small town, I knew very little of country critters, especially those woolly ones! So, it was with much apprehension that I approached those two sheep one day to drive them back into their pen. The more I chased them, the more obstinate they became and just couldn't see the gate. As my Dad used to say, "they were blind in one eye and couldn't see out of the other." Finally, in desperation, I remembered my neighbor across the field, and I sped in the house to our old

crank telephone and cranked out her number (a number in those days was so many longs and so many shorts). Our neighbor lady's welcome voice answered, and she asked if she could help in any way—she must have heard the desperation in my voice. I asked if either her husband or one of her boys were home and could possibly come and help me get the sheep in. "No," she replied, "but the preacher is here and I'll send him over to help." Well, the pastors and preachers I had known usually wore their Sunday-go-to-meetin' clothes every day of the week, and they knew nothing about these kind of sheep! Needless to say, I was very much surprised when this man, very large in stature, wearing bib overalls, came in the yard and said the neighbor lady had told him I needed some help. He could tell I needed help, no doubt, because I just stood with my mouth open and kind of pointed to the sheep. Sizing up the situation at hand, the pastor told me to shut the gate to the sheep pen, and he would take care of the wandering sheep—and he did. Walking up to each one, in turn, he quickly picked up those fat, woolly bodies and lifted them up and over the fence and sat them down in their pen. I'm sure the sheep were as equally as surprised as I was. This pastor not only knew the sheep of his church fold but knew these critters as well!

My first look at Checkrow Church was just as surprising as my first meeting with its pastor. I rejoiced to find fellowship of like faith, but no one had prepared me for that first visit to the church. The first thing I saw as I entered the church was a big, pot-bellied stove right in the middle of the aisle of the church. In attending church there you soon learned to be one of the early-birds and get a seat next to the stove, if you wanted to be warm! Now don't get me wrong. The churches I had attended were not all that fancy, being small-town churches, but they did have furnaces and indoor plumbing. The heartfelt warmth and fellowship of those dear Checkrowites more than made up for the lack of warmth in the building, and the Word of God preached there made you all nice and warm on the inside, so what more could you ask for?

Services at Checkrow were (and still are) every Sunday morning and evening, with prayer meeting during the week, usually on Wednesday night. Prayer meeting at Checkrow proved to be just as warm and friendly as the other services, and I found my self going often and liking it, too. In those days the service was held in the homes in the wintertime. The adults sat on whatever chairs were available and the children sat on the floor, more often than not falling asleep before the service ended. For prayer time we knelt beside the chairs (or if in church by the pew), and it seemed like we were just closer and nearer to God that way and we really meant business getting our petitions Heaven-ward.

Since then our church has had many "face lifts"—there's carpet on the floor, furnaces, Sunday School rooms, a basement and kitchen, and oh, yes, indoor plumbing. But there are no longer the lovely shade trees around the church. The weather has taken its toll on them, but the long sliding-bank for the kids is still there (and is still a worry for the mothers!). Though the church has changed in all these ways, the people who make up the body of it have not changed and neither has the doctrine changed. God is still open for business at the little church on the corner in Checkrow.

A few years after our move to the Checkrow neighborhood, our little country school became consolidated with other small schools in the community. A nice brick building was built, just north down the road from the one-room school, housing all eight grades and a lunch room. Everyone in the community pitched in and helped with this project. The ladies soon formed the "Mothers Club," and with this organization the first hot-lunch program was begun. Our school was the center of the community activities for many years. The children not only were educated there but the parents as well. They worked with one another in organizing family nights, chili suppers, ice-cream socials, wiener roasts, etc.

Just nine years later we were told that it was no longer feasible to keep Checkrow School open. Among the many rea-

sons were that it was difficult to get teachers to come to the country to teach, the country children were missing out on many of the activities available in town schools, and the expenses were just too much for the school district to handle. One remark, that still sticks in my craw (if you'll excuse the expression), given by one of the school officials, was: "That's progress." I'm not sure it was.

Many changes in our community have been made, new homes have been built, others have had "face-lifts," and some people have moved on and others moved in, but the friendliness and the caring for friend and neighbor still remain.

MEMORIES OF CORNELL, POP. 500

Mildred Norton

Before and during the twenties, the very small towns in central Illinois were thriving communities. The little town of my youth boasted a bank, a hardware store, a dry goods store, two or more grocery stores, a meat market, a blacksmith shop, three churches, a dentist, a doctor, a weekly newspaper, a grade school, a two-year high school in the same building, and my Uncle's ice cream store and restaurant.

Cornell had a population of only five hundred, but drawing from a prosperous farm area, the village was the hub of social and cultural life. The finest homes were owned by the doctor, the dentist, and the banker. The banker's children, especially, wore more stylish clothes and seemed to have different mannerisms than us farm people. We knew their parents were college educated. Perhaps we were a little in awe of them.

At the west end of main street stood the Wabash Depot. Passenger and freight trains came daily, with enough business for a full time station attendant. Every fall my Uncle Frank contracted for a carload of Roman Beauty apples from Ohio. They were shipped in barrels, and were sold that way. I remember as a child going with my father in the wagon to get the barrels he had ordered. Four or five were to be put in our cellar.

The blacksmith shop, with its every glowing anvil, was where the farmers brought their wagons to be repaired, their plow blades to be sharpened, and their horses to be shoed. There they discussed their crops, the weather, and politics.

On Saturday nights, farmers would bring their eggs and farm produce to trade in the grocery and dry goods stores for their needs. My mother took care of payment for all our dental work, with home-made butter, delivered regularly to the dentist, where credit was noted on the books. No cash was ever exchanged.

It was in my Uncle's ice cream store that I received my extra-curricular education, not found in any school. When I finished eighth grade, I did not graduate, because it was a one-room country school. We lived several miles from town, and my aunt and uncle, who owned the ice cream store, suggested to my parents that I come and live with them and be their "girl" (they had two boys) and go to high school. Here I learned to clean a soda fountain till it gleamed, waited on tables, and met the banter, the rudeness, and the kindness of people, thereby learning to judge the difference. Aunt Eva and Uncle Perry always made sure I had time for study, and for school activities.

My uncle made his own ice cream. Never since have I tasted ice cream such as Murphy's. A self-made business man, Uncle Perry worked from five a.m. till ten p.m. weekdays.

Saturday night was the big night. The farmers and the townspeople all "went to town" on Saturday. Farmers came in their carriages and wagons. Main Street became alive and

Murphy's was the "hub." Young folks brought their dates for ice cream sodas and sundaes—heaped high with nuts and real whipped cream. Mrs. Jones, Mrs. Smith and other ladies from the sewing circle met for a sundae and to visit. On Saturday nights my aunt and I were waitresses, and we would serve till midnight. Basketball games were "played again" over the fountain bar. A player piano in the rear was fed a nickel for two tunes. It made a festive evening for all, and business thrived.

Our little town was not without culture. Tent shows came in the summer. "Uncle Tom's Cabin," "East Lynn," and others which I can't recall were performed. I always fell in love with the leading man.

A big event that was planned once a year was the Old Soldiers Reunion. Four days and nights of carnival excitement. Civil war veterans and their families came from far and near. The town park became a city of tents and sparkling lights. People rented the tents and camped the entire four days. We had speakers, good lectures, bands, and entertainment both afternoons and evenings. Even a merry-go-round, a ferris wheel, and a midway.

Our town had its characters, such as the lonely widow who, it was said, marked her calendar for every wedding in town, counting the months till the first addition to the family. National and state elections were a cause for celebration. A screen would be erected between two buildings, where the election returns were flashed by the same camera used for the five-cent movies in the town hall. When the farmers came to town, there were a few model T Fords, but mostly wagons and carriages.

High school was on the second floor of the grade school building, and that floor held the entire enrollment. One teacher taught both freshman and sophomores, and was also the principal. After those two years, I received an invitation to finish school from another aunt and uncle who owned a hotel in Pontiac, Illinois, where there was a four-year high school, but that is another story. With the advent of the auto, the demise of the self-contained small towns began. They provided a unique way of life, and now they are gone.

SATURDAY NIGHT

Burdette Graham

An institution of several hundred years passed during the nineteen twenties, with the coming of the automobile to almost every farm family. That institution was Saturday Night. For some it was a time to get ready for Sunday, but for many others it was different things.

First, for all it meant having a boiler of hot water on the old kitchen stove and an old galvanized wash tub in the middle of the kitchen. In our home first the hired man got his turn and got cleaned up and dressed up for his trip to town, or to see his girl friend. He always tried to "get off" work by five so he could be on his way before six. He either drove away with a nice horse and buggy or in many cases a good used Model T car. On his way he usually picked up a few other hired men or neighbor boys who needed a ride to town for Saturday Night.

Next came the older boys, of which I was first in line. I might use the same tub of water which the hired man had left, especially if I was in a rush to get the bath, wanted to ride to town with the hired man or catch the next man coming by from further down the road. My folks never got the rest of the eight kids their baths, and the other chores done, to ever go to town on Saturday Night.

Our Saturday Night town was Table Grove, even though we were about the same distance from Adair or Industry. Most of the going to town took place in about seven or eight months, as the colder months limited what was happening. We tied the horse as close to town as possible, but usually within a block of

the square, so we did not have too far to carry supplies which we were to sell, like cream, eggs, and butter, and not too far to carry the things we had to take home. If we had a lot we could drive up to stores to unload or load.

The square at Table Grove had several grocery stores, including Haists on the south side, and Frederick's in the southeast corner, and a Red and White on another part of the square. On the east side was Kirkbride's Clothing Store; on the northwest corner was Charley Cox's Shoe Store, and on the northeast corner was Keoler's Drug Store and Ice cream Parlor. We had business in most of these almost every week. There was a furniture store on the south side, but I never remember buying anything there. Usually the hardware store was visited too, but I can't remember the name or location. Sometime before going home, after selling and shopping, a visit was made to get some ice cream.

Usually on Saturday Night a movie was shown in the park, or sometimes a play put on by Minor Brock and either his own players or a community group he had trained. Sometimes a special was presented on a Thursday night, but usually one night a week was all anyone could "waste" away from home and work. Sometimes community musical groups made up a home talent show, and I appeared on one of these after 1933, singing cowboy songs.

But as soon as people got better cars, and better roads, the small town of Table Grove lost out to towns further away, and stores began to close. Fewer people came, so the fun of Saturday Night gave way to more time on the road and excitement further away from home.

Something happened when we got further away. We had known the store owners and had visited with them, and many people refused to leave for the bigger towns. They still did their shopping during the week in the small town when they had other errands in town. But when you do not see people, you cease to know much about them, and really, I felt like I had lost a friend when I could not talk with Charlie Haist, or Charley Cox, or Mr. Keoler.

In 1922 I started to high school, but our home was on the side of the road, which put us in the Adair District, so Table Grove became a strange town for me. Since I was in Adair for school, I could take produce to town to sell and bring home supplies, so I got friendly with the Herndons, for groceries and hardware, and the Oldfields, for groceries and some clothes, and the mail carrier, Joe Dunblazier, who carried the mail down our road. I took cream and eggs to Elzie Walters, and some chickens to be picked and packed and shipped on the train to Bushnell or Chicago.

I had known all the homesteads on the five mile trip to Table Grove, so now I became acquainted with everyone on the road to Adair. I was still driving the road in horse and buggy as we did not get a car until 1926, the year I graduated from high school. Adair had band concerts on a week night, but I do not remember anything about Saturday Night in Adair. For me, Saturday Night will always be associated with Table Grove.

UNCLE JOHN'S STORE IN TABLE GROVE

Esmarelda T. Thomson

The "Cash Book" in front of me rests as evidence that the store was real. One of its pages shows an 1897 entry about contracting with the Willis Brothers to build it. I can go to the Table Grove Square any day to see the old building remodeled as a Post Office and know that on that spot, in that same brick building, a merchant's stock and treasure once existed, and for a time, it was a stroke of fortune for its owners. Later, it was a place of magic for the grandchildren of the family.

The stroke of fortune was disappearing as the magic set in. The children knew there were some parts of the place where the merchandise didn't move, but those were toward the back. The coffee grinder was silent with the brass catcher pol-

ished and the big wheel poised to go around. One could detect a whiff of ground coffee if you gave the wheel a spin, which I often did. It smelled the same as my grandmother's small hand-grinder, used in her kitchen with Arbuckle's Brand: a dry, brown aroma, related but separate from the breakfast drink. The spice jars were glass measuring cups topped with tin lids; buy a glass of spices, get your measure cup free! The blue label on the the side spoke of faraway places and showed people in coolee hats. Ceylon beckoned and I smelled the tea served at supper, a delightful fragrance.

One entered the store from a patterned, brick sidewalk onto a cast iron platform which separated the front show windows with displays for both men and women. Heavy iron bars were constructed in front of each window around the basement window wells. These bars were natural exercise enticements for children, who climbed them and also sat either on the first or top rungs. It was a rule to not throw paper into the wells, though leaves blew in.

The women's offerings included carefully draped bolts of fabric, lace, gloves, ribbons and umbrellas in a fan-shaped holder at the back. Men's furnishings showed hats, caps, gloves, shoes and a sign urging the purchase of tailor-made suits. No prices cluttered these displays! The quality of the articles spoke for themselves. As the store faced the West, the heavy, green roller curtains installed inside the broad front windows were important to shield the rays of the afternoon sun and its damaging effects on the merchandise. Each shade displayed the name HUNTER'S, lettered in large, gold print and visible to the outside when lowered. My Uncle John carried out the curtain-lowering with ritual precision to guard "the stock."

The front door was heavy with a plate glass window and an ornate brass lock-plate with a curved handle and thumb rest on the right side. A favorite child-thing to do was to go to the front of the store and peer in the door window to catch a glimpse of the interior with the long counters, the glass cabinets, wooden cases, and the shelves and boxes all in semi-gloom with the three light cords and shaded bulbs spaced and hanging from the ceiling, equipped with separate switches. The silhouette of my Uncle John's rotund figure, dressed in grey trousers, white shirt and grey sweater, coming toward the front, looking for a customer, is etched in my memory. He would welcome me in, either singly or with my sister, brother, and cousins, and if there was sufficient time he would show us the ribbon case where ladies jewelry was kept, a man's sailor straw hat, maybe a colorful bolt of silk or possibly a pair of white suede pumps with bows edged in black! We could even try these on and walk along the shelves—but not on the floor—to keep the soles clean. Magic!

My uncle grew up in the business, as did his brothers, though they went to Chicago to expand their horizons. He learned merchandising from his father at a time when Chicago wholesalers were the same men whose large retail stores opened onto State Street in that city: the companies of Marshall Field, Carson, Pirie and Scott, and Charles A. Stevens. A dealer went to the city market and also made purchases from traveling salesmen. Stock was freighted by railroad, received, priced, tagged and placed on the proper shelves. Trade was brisk when John was a young man; he saw the new store built in 1897-99. He helped take the contents from the old wooden building moved northward on the square for "business as usual" during the making of the new location. He stoked the large, new stoked the large, new basement furnace and enjoyed the central heating which emanated from the enormous round iron floor register, with its intricate patterns, in the center of the new store. He saw the placement of the full-length mirror set in the east wall, ready for customers to view their coats or suits. The store opened for business at seven in the morning, closed for one hour periods at noon and the supper hour, and resumed trade until eight-thirty to nine p.m. Business was integrated into life-style with home a short walk away, out the store's rear door. There was a discipline in

the system with regular times for the year's cycle of purchasing and selling, inventorying the merchandise, paying bills and tending the store. Other merchants on Table Grove's Square also knew the ways of marketing dry goods to turn a dollar. Customers came from the village and the surrounding countryside.

The cash register was a marvelous ornate brass box, high at the back facing the customer, and graduated down on the front with its rows of punch keys to ring up a sale. A bell sounded as the drawer opened and one could see the wooden cash box with many concave circles for holding change and rectangles for bills. The secret of opening the register was known only by the storekeeper, and even in the days of no cash in the till, the code was guarded. The Day Book was kept in the office and showed the record of day to day sales, with an occasional comment. Toward the end of the store, the book held many notes about the family and the town but few transactions. The "hard road" built through the town (in 1927), the paving and curbing of the square, and the encroaching Depression depleted the business.

The office was an open room at the southeast corner of the store, separated at the top of the entry space with decorative spindles of wood, painted the same as the building's all-over interior, an off-grey. The substantial furnishings were an enormous iron safe with a colorful patriotic transfer painting on the front and an oak roll-top desk which matched its size. A large swivel chair on rollers completed the arrangement with a continuation of shelving at the back. This shelf counter of maple was a convenient place for Uncle John's encyclopedias, books and magazines. High above the desk was a very large, framed photograph of my grandparents, flanked by American flags, one with 13 stars and the other with 48. Below the picture, hung horizontally, was my grandfather's Civil War musket.

This was the place where the grandchildren gathered. This was the place of magic! My uncle was a natural at the royal entertainment of children who, being restless at the house, went to the store for action! The typewriter on the desk with its half-circle bank of letters and ruinous purple ink could be tried. The adding machine was available for a column or two. The desk drawers held 2¢ stamps and an array of unique pens and pencils. On the well-used advertisement blotter pad lay a letter opener with a celluloid Japanese lady's head, a magnifying glass for close inspections, and a brass hand telescope was in one of the desk cubby holes. *The National Geographic, Scribners, The Saturday Evening Post* and the *Chicago Tribune* were there for viewing; and looking out the big window with casual visits to passersby below made a continuous stream of interest. Sometimes Uncle John told stories of going to McKinley's Inauguration with his father or seeing a parade of the Grand Old Army at a reunion in Louisville's Cave Hill Cemetery. One also hoped for the high moment when either my brother or my cousin Freddie would be dispatched to the drug store with the proper change for a pint of ice cream. All present were given store tags which we deftly bent into little scoops, and with our Uncle John we learned sharing as we dipped into our common treat.

These were the lovely moments before a familiar feminine voice from the back door called in saying, "John, do you have the children?" And we hastily put the used tags in the ice cream bucket with its wire handle and fold-down lid, licked our lips and smiled at our uncle who returned the smile, creating a never-to-be-forgotten bond of family fun and collusion—magic—for us children!

MEMORIES OF A VILLAGE EMPORIUM

Wilson M. Baltz

Relentlessly pounded and hammered by the brutal wrecking ball of progress, the Philip Baltz General Mercantile Store stands no longer. Its absence awakens poignant memories of my childhood in a rural village.

In my reverie I remember the times I was sent there on errands, some with dispatch, others with leisure. Its long wooden overhanging porch roof, one and one-half stories high, offered an oasis as I hurried barefoot along on blistering hot sidewalks under the summer sun. It was a refuge, too, for families of sparrows nesting in the corners of the elaborate support beams, voicing chittery, twittery protestation at my intrusion.

I climbed the nine steps, not unlike stone terraces of an ancient citadel. The hemp mat pricked my soft under-feet as I pulled open the screen door, heavy with green paint, its belly bulging as if with child. The shiny brass handle and the time-worn thumb latch of the main door, smooth and cool to my hand, promised greater refuge from the summer's blaze. I'd lean against it. The heavy glass door, armored with scaly paint, would swing effortlessly inward. Overhead, a tiny bell tingled my arrival.

Smooth, oiled pine flooring cooled my scorched heels and toes. The free-playing door, worn in its hinges, would then silently reverse its arc and slam shut on a small boy in his uncle's emporium. My eyes might have been slow to adjust to the dim light, but my nostrils would be overwhelmed by most delicious aromas!

The mellowness of ripe red apples, the delicious fragrance of velvety peaches and the rich, winey bouquet of grapes in purple mounds would tantalize me. Also, soft, yellow-skinned pears wafted their seductive sweetness, and tempted me to possess one at all costs. Aromatic coffees blended their exotic essences with yeasty pastries. Smoked ham and bacon proudly proclaimed their rustic origins as crated eggs stood silent witness and strong cheeses and sugary candies battled to woo the faint-hearted. Treasured spices, individually distinctive, were also part of the sumptuous smells, and the rich, sweet odor of black molasses was evident. Also unmistakeably present was the penetrating cigar smoke of the original and sole proprietor.

Shelves were neatly stacked with canned goods, some familiar, some new-fangled. Slate signs in chalked script announced "Fresh Butter" and "New Cereals." Patent medicines, guaranteed to cure everything and anything, were for the lame and ailing.

The dry goods shelves had the look of a hardwood forest attired in bright autumn fashions. Perky ginghams, bright flannels, bold plaids and sprightly cottons blended hues with the velvets, denims, wools, satins and corduroys in a splendid array of colors.

Passing a display case, I'd look wistfully at the treasure I secretly desired. Oh why, oh why, must I wait until cold winds to possess the black gloves, their fringed, glossy gauntlets emblazoned with a white star?

Overhead, between strands of black wire and pentulant fly-specked light bulbs hung an assortment of tinware, buckets, egg crates, tubs, lamps and lanterns. Lined along a wall, standing at stiff attention like a rabble in arms, were stoneware jugs, some squatty, some lean. Some were short and fat in coats of gray, brown, sombre black or dull white.

The Gargantuan-sized stove, which in season served as a source of comfort, stood near the rear of the store. "Empire" by name, it was embellished with fancy designs and elaborately ornamented. The nickel-silver dome topped by a Romanesque ornament rose high above me. An artistic tile piece, circular, white and fluted, adorned the stove door. To the right and left of the tile piece, mica windows, sooty, peered at me like eyes of a devilish monster. The skirt and legs were fancily decorated with artistic swirls, lines, circles and lacey

complexities.

The foot rests, smooth-worn, showed evidence of long-winded debates by leather-booted debators when the winds of winter stopped outdoor activities. I can hear them now, discussing T. R. and the Big Stick, Equal Suffrage, the Silver Standard. Like a primeval demon, the stove pipe rose and arched and snaked its way across the room to escape into its chimney.

At times the proprietor would startle me and inquire in a soft, kind voice, "What is it you want, Sonny?" A little tweak of the nose, gray eyes smiling behind gold-rimmed glasses, bespoke a gentle, kind man. I would make my purchase and hurry out.

MORE A HOTEL THAN A HOOSEGOW

Wilson M. Baltz

In the early part of this century, police in small towns, not blessed with modern communication systems, relied on their own resources to maintain peace and tranquility. Most small towns and villages had a jail, or, to put it into the parlance of slang, a hoosegow, calaboose, lockup, clink, or cooler in which suspects of criminal acts cooled their heels and tipplers slept off their indulgences.

The jail in Millstadt, St. Clair County, was built in 1905. The small red brick building, now relegated to the unglamorous role of a store room, opened its door to vagrants, drifters and genuine tramps in the late 20's and the 30's to provide shelter, warmth and a hard bed on wintery nights. The "grape vine wireless" in the world of tramps and hoboes worked miracles, and the location of the jail was well-known to the footsore tramp who was "just passing through." The village was sought-out and the jail door was unlocked for respite from fatigue and the harsh elements.

Those who came were appreciative of the hospitality afforded by the village, so no rowdyism occurred for fear that the jail door would, in a manner of speaking, be barred in the future. The guests kept the jail in order by sweeping the floor, carrying out ashes from the coal-burning stove, and properly disposing of litter. No food was served to the guests. But, there was no rule against one cooking his meal with utensils carried in his pack. Lodging was permitted for one night only. It is matter of record that as many as seven tramps stayed in the jail in one night. It was not unusual to hear plaintive notes from a harmonica drifting on the gentle breezes on a warm summer night when a homesick Knight of the Road tried to forget what was left behind.

This writer remembers vividly the time of the Great Depression when tramps begged for food. They came, understandably, at noon time, to the back door. The tin plate, tin cup and cutlery were taken from their place, and heaped high with vegetables, a hunk of meat, a slab of home-made bread, and the cup filled to the very brim with hot strong coffee. Sometimes, dessert was on the menu, too. The hungry man was fed on the porch steps in fair weather and permitted to eat in an enclosed porch in wet and cold times. Then a soft rapping on the kitchen door pane, a nod of thanks, and a wave of the hand signalled a grateful man. Sometimes two tramps came for food at the same meal. One man, huge and heavily bearded, was a frequent guest. However, he refused food unless he could pay for it by pruning grape vines, spading a garden plot, or carrying out furnace ashes from the basement.

Hobo camps were not uncommon. The old brickyard in Millstadt harbored a few men. Some lived in a nearby timber during the spring and summer. One lived for months in an abandoned coal mine. In those days, hoboes were kind, unfeared men who, as God and they knew, met a bad turn of fate. But they got a break in Millstadt, where the jail was always open—for a night.

MEMORIES OF THE ELLISVILLE STATION

Bernice Cooper

I remember the train at the Ellisville Station. Ellisville is in Fulton County, and Spoon River runs gently by the town. However, the station was located about two and one-half miles north and east of where Ellisville is now. The train went through the station two times a day on the way from Galesburg to West Havana and back. The train started in Galesburg and proceeded by traveling south to Delong, crossing Spoon River at London Mills, traveling on to the Ellisville Station and then on to Parville, around by the elevator at Fairview, on to the Bybee Station, then to Fiatt, Cuba, Lewistown, Sepo, and finally ending at West Havana. They turned around, making the return trip to Galesburg the same day.

A hack, driven by Dan Knickerbocker, would carry miners to the train station at Maten (as it was later called). I never rode in the hack, and to this day I wish I had. Dad would bring cream to meet the hack. It was then shipped to Chicago to be made into butter. The cream money was then mailed and we would get it on Thursday. Later, when Dad could afford a car, my family started traveling to Bushnell to sell our cream at Swifts and then buy our groceries.

The miners would walk to meet the hack in the mornings to take them to the mines. Many were too poor to own any means of transportation. Almost every home in Ellisville was a miner's home. Since the mining operation was so successful, the coal company built a dozen homes along the road (for miners families) near the Ellisville Station. The families usually were large, and the homes had a lot of things in their yards, which were unkept. It wasn't long before those homes were known as "The Dirty Dozen." Soon the coal company built six more homes across the road, and they became "The Greasy Six."

It wasn't that many years ago that you could still see the cement blocks left after the homes were gone. The road remains and can be traveled yet today, but the railroad belongs to the past.

WHEN THE CIRCUS CAME TO MACOMB

Lou Gamage

In the early part of the twentieth century the town of Macomb, Illinois, was the typical midwestern county seat, farm oriented, fundamental, and friendly. Roughly two miles across, with the exact center graced by the customary steeple-crowned courthouse which reigned majestically over the green carpeted lawn, Macomb was blessed with a few brick pavements and a multitude of dirt side streets. Around the square, which made up the entire shopping district, the wide concrete sidewalk was lined with two and three story buildings, solid, trimmed with ornate stone cornices, and reeking with dignity. The first floors were occupied by the various classes of merchants, and the upper floors were filled with the imposing offices of doctors, lawyers, real estate agents, and insurance brokers. Third floor lodge halls housed the Masons, the Odd Fellows, the Knights of Columbus, the Modern Woodmen, and the Elks. Around the square and reaching into the edge of the countryside on the main thoroughfares, millions of nine-pound, flint hard, Purington paving bricks resisted the continuous clip-clop of the dray horses. Shipped by rail from the yards at East Galesburg, those bricks also provided the route from the local freight and passenger depots to the county fairgrounds that nestled between the residential section and the fertile farming country along the southern border of town. They still lie beneath the blacktop that now carries the unending stream of modern automobiles. Where the bricks ended, the mud began.

Circus day was the high point of the year. When the advance men for Barnum and Bailey, Ringling Brothers, or

Robinson Brothers began plastering the many board fences, barns, and tree trunks with the colorful and exaggerated advertising posters, we began to get ready for the great day. This wonderful event divided the juvenile population into three classes: those whose parents could afford to pay their way into the side shows and the big tent, those who were too poor to buy tickets but were old enough to "work their way in," and the kids who were too poor and too small to do either. During the years that I was growing from the third category into the second, I had to be content to just watch them unload from the railroad cars and get ready for the big show.

The most exciting spectacle of all was the great elephants and the magnificent horses as they worked together, for they were the prime movers of the gigantic wagons that transported the circus over the two miles from the long private train to the grassy infield of the dirt race track at the fairgrounds. My mother would gently shake me at four o'clock in the morning. Wide awake in an instant, I would slip into my faded blue overalls, having slept in my shirt, and gulp down a hasty breakfast which in my eagerness I hardly tasted, and rush to hold the door open for my indulgent and smiling father. Dad would walk me to the depot, a distance of over a mile, and there I would sit astride his broad shoulders and watch with bated breath as the wonders of the universe began to emerge from the big box-cars. Then, after an exotic chain of wagons, animals, and strange looking people started to string out along Lafayette street, my bare feet would prance excitedly beside the worn and patient brogans of my guide toward the other end of the golden road.

The final block of the route sloped gradually down a hill, across a small stone bridge, and rose sharply up an incline to bring us to the stuccoed ticket gates to the one-day city of Paradise. Here, under the friendly branches of a large elm, I again mounted my paternal blue-clad throne and watched. Down the slope came the wagons, each one pulled by eight of the most wonderful horses I had ever seen. Every team was perfectly matched—grays, bays, and blacks. The dazzling splendor of their harnesses was beyond my imagination. The splendid animals, each one weighing over a ton, threw their tremendous power into their collars and challenged the incline. Although the street was paved, the gateway itself was only covered with cinders, and as the wagons left the solid footing of the bricks, the big steel-rimmed wheels would begin to sink into the ground. The cage wagons that held the wild animals would usually make it through the gateway, but the heavy, compact loads of tenting and other equipment would often bog down.

The circus people were ready, for they were probably the most organized institution in the world. Over at one side, waiting under a second tall elm, was another eight-horse team, and although the horses might be a different color than those that were attached to the wagon, they were all matched. On the right rear horse sat the driver, with an unbelievable mass of leather lines wrapped around his arms. Like the man on the wagon seat, he was a professional. When the heavy load could go no further, he deftly guided his team to the front of the others and a roustabout made the hitch. Then, as one single unit, the sixteen tons of bone, sinew, and muscle laid into their moaning harnesses, and a little boy's heart would pound with the thrill of it as the great monstrous wagon would groan and begin to move forward. Even then the soggy surface would sometimes prove too much of a barrier for such a formidable force, but the circus folks were not to be frustrated. They had an "ace in the hole" in the form of a gigantic gray elephant. On the outside of the gateway the gentle titan stood, slowly swinging his long, sensitive trunk from side to side, occasionally pulling up a piece of sod and tossing it over his leathery back. When his mahout observed that the two eight-horse teams could not budge the load, he led his patient pachyderm to the back of the wagon and directed him to place his enormous head against the tailgate. Together, as one, the horses and the elephant never failed to conquer even the most stubborn of

the wagons.

A few more years were to pass before I was old enough to earn my ticket by joining the crew of clambering kids. Many good memories make those days more precious than material riches, but the best one of all is the image of those sixteen magnificent horses and the great gray giant as they brought the magic of the big circuses through the golden gateway to a child's heart.

WHEN THE MEDICINE SHOW CAME TO TOWN

Mattie Emery

When I was in grade school we moved into a small town. There wasn't much to do for entertainment except go to school or on our twice a week trip to the public library.

Saturday nights were shopping nights. All of the stores stayed open late. People would come from miles around to town to do their trading. Cream and eggs were big items to help buy the groceries. Everyone would walk up and down main street and visit with friends and relatives that you didn't see that often otherwise.

Your could walk over to the park, sit down and fan yourself while listening to the Saturday night concert of the high school band. The smaller kids would chase each other around and around, seeing who could catch the most fireflies.

One of the big thrills of the year was when the medicine show came to town every summer. They would park their wagons in the old seminary yard that at one time had been a school. There was plenty of shade and space for what ever needs that they might have.

People would volunteer to help set up the temporary rows and rows of seats for the audience of the evening. Everyone would get quiet when the barker would start the show. He would tell jokes sometimes a little racey to get the crowd stirred up and laughing with him. Almost always there would be two to four good singers with guitars, banjos, and fiddles.

Then the medicine man took over the show. He had bottles and jars of potions and salves that would cure everything including upset stomach, backache, side ache, or even just the blahs. Then the helpers would pass through the crowd selling, for one dollar to five dollars, a bottle or a jar to cure most anything. Nobody ever complained. They always bought. There were always customers for every night they were in town. Maybe enjoying the show was worth the cost of the cure whether it helped or not.

Every show had a magician who could amaze and mystify the crowd. One of the favorite tricks was to blindfold the magician on the stage. A pretty girl would pass through the audience asking for articles she could hold up. She would ask the masked man what she had in her hand. I don't know what kind of code they used but, somehow he always guessed correctly, to the delight of the crowd. A big round of applause called for more of the same.

The show would always close with more music and singing, with the audience joining in.

The show would stay in town for three or four nights, as long as the crowd would keep buying. Nobody ever complained. Next year they would be in town again and people would still come to buy and to be entertained.

THE MEDICINE SHOW, AND THE MEDICINE

Anna Becchelli

I remember the first real medicine show I ever saw, which was in Kincaid, Illinois. It was the last one I saw too. In 1935 it was still "hard times," and no one had anywhere to go or any money for entertainment. Kincaid was a coal-mining town.

It was in June when the weather was nice and balmy. It was already dark and there were lights shining when I walked up with my girlfriend. The medicine show had set up on a grassy place with trees, at the edge of town. People walked over after supper. Everybody was having a good time talking and laughing with neighbors and friends. There were old people, couples with babies, young single people, and kids running around in the middle of the crowd.

In the show that I saw, there were six or seven men. They had put up signs and a big wooden platform that they stood on. One young man, about 30 or so, was dressed in Indian cloths with moccasins on his feet. He stood up straight and tall, kept his arms folded and never said a word. He was very muscular and wore feathers on his head. He was there because they said Indians made the medicine. The other men stood on the wooden platform and told jokes and made the crowd laugh. Before they told about how wonderful their medicine was, they had a local amateur show to entertain the crowd. They said, "Anyone who wants to can come up and try their talent."

There was one poor girl who tried to sing a cowboy song. First her voice would go up, then it would come down. She sang high, then low. I had to turn my face to hide my laughing. Others laughed too. Buy, anyway, they let her finish. After her came a couple of young men who played the accordian and sang (better than that girl). Then some other people sang and danced.

After the amateur show was over, they brought out the medicine. They offered three kinds: a glass nose tube for 25¢ or 30¢, a box of herb tea for $1.00, and a bottle of oil for $1.50. They talked about how good the medicine was for anything that ails you, and they sold it like hot cakes. They didn't harm anyone with it, and they knew their herbs and how they worked. Almost every adult there bought something. I bought the nose tube and box of herbs, for making tea.

The herbs were in a square cardboard box about 7-8 inches tall and 4 inches wide. It had writing on it to tell you what it was good for, how to brew it to make a tea, and whether to drink it before or after mealtime. Inside were dried herbs in flakes with little dark seeds like peppercorns, only bigger, like the size of peas. They were juniper berries. I tried it later, but I didn't like the taste. It was strong and bitter. But it did cure my stomachache. It was also supposed to be good for fatigue.

The nose tube had a cork stopper. The tube was 4 inches long and 1 inch around and you were supposed to keep it sealed real good when it wasn't being used. It was filled with chopped and pressed herbs and packed tight with some kind of oil, maybe pine oil. It was for headcolds and to unstuff your nose or for fainting and headaches. The odor was herbal and it gave you tears in your eyes. One whiff and you uttered a cry out loud, "Wow," and you didn't want more than one whiff. The odor was so strong that you felt like you were pushed up into the air. The fumes felt like they went straight up into your brain.

I put it into a drawer, forgot it, and found it about 25 years later. I said, "Oh, I bet it's not strong anymore," but by golly, it about took the top of my head off, still! The Indians sure made that medicine potent.

THE VILLAGE POST OFFICE IN TIOGA

Kathryn Steward Roan

One of the happiest times of the day, in my experience, was when the mail arrived. My daughter, Betty, was the post-

master in Tioga, and the post office was in our home. All the folks who came were cheerful, polite and very patient. Smiles, laughter, sparkling eyes and pleasing gestures told what each had received. Cards, letters, seeds, gifts, and especially mail from overseas—these were all eagerly received.

There is something special about a small village post office. It is the location where one member of each family goes every day. It is a gathering place for one and all, of all ages. The older citizens slowly walk there and exchange news with others before returning home. Weather, illness, crops, babies, weddings, deaths, elections, politics, other subjects are discussed. No matter what the weather is, people do get out. Letters, cards, magazines and the papers are cherished by all.

When we moved to Tioga in September of 1955, Mrs. Lilly Thorpe was the postmaster. The post office was in her home. She held the position for many years. From there it went to Koltzenburgs Store where Mrs. Edna Koltzenburg was in charge. On January 1, 1962 the post office was moved to our home. In a few years it was moved to the store of Ernie and Cora Neil.

Today villages have gone to rural mail boxes. LaVern Keith is still supervisor in charge of the Mendon post office, and Wayne Smith is still our rural mail carrier. These men have served our village for many years.

One sad note: our post office here is gone, along with our school and our stores. The government took away our identity when it closed our post office. It was the last gathering place (especially for the old-timers) to visit, chat and reminisce.

It has been years since we had the post office in Tioga, but I can still hear and see the happy faces, laughter, and smiles of many local folks.

Yes, mail time each day was a happy time.

OUTBACK ACTIVITIES IN BARDOLPH

Louise Young

In addition to businesses and homes, schools and churches, towns used to be dotted with a variety of other small square buildings. These were called by a variety of names: privy, outhouse, can, toilet, and backhouse, to name a few.

In Bardolph, the men and boys seemed to have an overwhelming interest in these toilets, especially during Halloween. On one such holiday evening, corpulant Nancy was "tending to business" in her own small building when it was unceremoniously tipped over onto its front, trapping Nancy inside. She vented her wrath by shouting appropriate invectives out the hole in the seat.

On another Halloween, another group of youngsters, including my cousin Helen Bess, endeavored to tip another such building when Helen Bess slipped at the edge of the pit and fell in, ruining her brand new coat, hardly an appropriate costume for such a foray.

One summer late in the 1930's, my husband and I rented a small house which had the ever-present privy behind it. Nearby was a pile of weeds, trash, garbage, and junk destined to be destroyed; but rodents had another use for it: they ran and played in the pile, and if a person sitting in the privy answering nature's call wanted entertainment, he could enjoy the extra curricular activity of shooting the rats who ventured into rifle range. Many a time we participated in this sport.

Another memory of the backhouse is my mother's attempts at interior decorating. No doubt she aspired to make farmers of the whole family. She "papered" the walls of our outhouse with large picture pages, each one decorated with about thirty pictures of a particular kind of farm animal. These included mainly cattle, hogs, horses, and sheep, with each breed of animal labeled with its biological name. Years later, I astonished the local Agriculture teacher with my unusual knowledge of the many varieties of livestock—due no

doubt to my long sojourns in the outhouse.

On the other wall of the building was a colorful advertisement for a well-known cereal showing a small boy extoling the virtues of Cream of Wheat and exclaiming, "Fe, Fi, Fo, Fum! I smell Cream of Wheat. Yum! Yum! Yum!" In later years, several relatives remarked on the inappropriateness of the advertising boy's remarks in such surroundings.

During the Depression, along came the scientific WPA toilet; and with its advent, creative and artistic originality with respect to outhouses "came to an end," so to speak. These new cement-based, identical, white structures, which allowed for chemical treatment and removal of wastes were too advanced for Halloween pranks and interior decorating.

II Encounters with Death

ENCOUNTERS WITH DEATH

Death is a topic we seldom discuss in American culture. Every newspaper is partly a mortality record of the current generation, but death seldom appears on the editorial page. After all, what importance could it have in a youth-oriented society? Besides, who wants to be reminded of his own mortality?

Death threatens us, so we avoid it, forget it, deny it. But we shouldn't. It is a profound subject that is simply too important to what we value most: living well.

Cultural change has helped to remove death from our consciousness. In the late twentieth century, the dying are withdrawn from us, into the hands of medical science, and death often comes after a long period of institutionalized care. Widely separated family members are frequently not involved in their loved one's last days. No wonder dying is often a lonely experience.

Across the country, high school and college courses in "Death and Dying" have been developed, to acquaint young people with the psychological, religious-philosophical, and cultural aspects of the end of life. Perhaps that is necessary in a nation where death seems so remote and unreal.

But things used to be different. As Martha K. Graham reveals in "A Death in the Family," and Evelyn Korte shows in "A Wool Dress for Ma," there was greater awareness of death years ago because extended families included older members in the home. And beyond that, Eva Baker Watson is surely right: "Funerals Were a Community Affair." Rural and small-town residents were more closely involved with each other than they are today, so the passing of a local person was apt to have community-wide impact, and funerals elicited greater interest and a deeper sense of obligation.

Local cemeteries also received more attention years ago. Memorial Day was a big event in many small towns, and ceremonies were often held in the community cemetery. Also, rural and small-town burying grounds were frequently visited by local residents who felt connected to them. Strolling through nearby graveyards was, in fact, a kind of solemn recreation, which had social, religious, aesthetic, and personal satisfactions.

As the writings by Esmarelda T. Thomson and Al Hartman reveal, there are still those who take an interest in such places. In fact, the rapid growth of genealogy in America during the past two decades has led to an enormous renewal of interest in cemeteries, which are a major source of family information. And there is increasing interest in maintaining old cemeteries, which are important points of contact with local tradition.

Graveyards offer a kind of encounter with death—as a universal reality if not a personal experience—so there are things to be learned from them, aside from genealogical information. As they reveal, life is oriented toward death, so we ought to use our time well and avoid the trivia that too often clutters our days. And like the people who lie beneath the headstones, we too will be remembered. Each of us should ask himself or herself: For what?

Historically, death is one of the two most common topics in literature. The other is love. Perhaps that is no accident. After all, people are precious to each other because they are as mortal as the flowers. In the long history of man, death may be the mother of our humanity. To put it another way, the end of life is important because it prompts us to think, compels us to act, and provokes us to love.

As America's population grows progressively older, as cancer proliferates and AIDS becomes a national epidemic, as medical treatment makes dying a long process, we should become more informed, and more thoughtful, about the end of life. The memoirs in this section make a contribution toward our understanding of the phenomenon of death in our culture, as they allow us to share experiences that were often heart-shaking for the writers.

John E. Hallwas

FUNERALS WERE A COMMUNITY AFFAIR

Eva Baker Watson

Back around 1920, even without TV reporters, grieving people had little privacy. A funeral was a community affair—at least, they were in the southern Illinois town where I grew up. And before the funeral, the home was open to friends, relatives, and curiosity seekers, who came and went, came and stayed, and brought food, sympathy and advice. All the time watching.

This could go on for days, for a hurry-up funeral was disrespectful. Also there often was a long wait for the arrival of relatives from afar. In such event there was some tension on the part of the undertaker about having the body exposed so long, what with early embalming methods. One did not defy custom, but this was exhausting to families.

I remember the drowning death of my Uncle Chester. My Uncle Hosea in Arizona wired, "Hold the funeral. I want to see my brother one more time." The family, already in shock, had a five-day wait.

The wake was held in the home, the body lying in state in the living room—or parlor, if they had one. No corpse was left alone at any time, and it fell the lot of two or three hardy volunteers to "sit up" each night.

Wakes were as much for socializing as mourning, except for the immediate loved ones. Quantities of food were consumed, coffee drunk, stories swapped. A favorite reminiscent theme was, "I well recall how, when Aunt So-and-So lay a corpse—." As the night wore on the talk took an eerie drift and ghostly tales were told of spirits roaming, of "ha'nts."

Contingent on weather, road conditions, and the spiritual leanings of the departed, most funerals were held in the church. Sometimes families simply preferred to have them in the home. This seemed a warm, loving thing to do when the house could accommodate the crowd, for there were crowds.

The first funeral I can remember was held outside on the front lawn of the home. After the sermon the people lined up to go and view the body. Mama held me up to get my last look at this old man I hardly knew. Children may have been shielded from some facts of life in those days, but they were not shielded from the facts of death.

Funerals held in church played to a full house. This production opened well before the actual service. The crowd gathered early. The signal for a this-is-it hush to fall came when the organist sat down and began to wheeze out the first bars of "Nearer My God, to Thee." This always made a cold shiver run up the back of my knees.

That old hymn and the overpowering scent of freshly cut flowers made a lasting imprint on me. When I encounter them even today I'm wafted back into that funereal atmosphere.

Floral pieces were homegrown, and I don't recall ever having seen the abundance of flowers that we see today. If people had flowers in bloom, there were bouquets. If not, no flowers.

When there were floral pieces, women friends were asked to be flower "girls" to carry the bouquets into and out of the church, and then to the grave at the cemetery. This was an honor. But it was quite a workout so only the agile and surefooted were asked to serve in this capacity.

My earliest recollection of a funeral coach was a horsedrawn vehicle, black, with black curtains at the windows, and the processions were agonizingly slow. With the advent of motorized hearses, things moved along a bit faster, though still at a respectful rate of speed.

On reaching the church, the casket was borne to the door by pall bearers chosen for friendship or kinship—and strength. Preceded by the minister, it was then rolled down the aisle to rest at the altar, with the family following to occupy the front pews reserved for them.

Mourning attire intrigued me. I always wondered how the women relatives could appear on such short notice in those black dresses, black stockings, black gloves, black hats and

heavy black veils. Everybody at the funeral wore black, or at least somber colors. As the family were seated, there was more watching and comments were whispered about how key figures were holding up—or "taking it."

People who had what passed for musical talent had been recruited to form an impromptu singing group, usually a quartette. After they'd sung their mournful numbers, the minister read the obituary. This reading was sometimes a fiasco, when it was evident that he was seeing it for the first time. At best, it took a good one not to mispronounce some of the family names. This did not set too well with the relatives.

After prayers and more singing, he got around to "preaching" the funeral. And preach was what he did, usually, offering no brief eulogy to calm and console. Often heard was a full-length sermon filled with warnings about the tenuousness of the life thread, about how it would behoove all to realize they might be struck down next.

Even when there were eulogies, at times they were so maudlin and emotional that it was an ordeal for all who really cared. One minister I vividly recall was a maestro who played on the heartstrings of his hearers. After one of his funerals, as people did a post-mortem on the affair, someone was sure to say, "When he got through there was not a dry eye in the house." Proof of his expertise.

Besides the tear-jerkers and exhorters, there were the diplomats who could be relied on to usher the departed, be he saint or sinner, straight through the pearly gates and settle him in a heavenly mansion. A few there were, though, who told it like it was and let judgment fall where it might.

A story was told of one such man of the cloth who was conducting the service for a reprobate who had passed on in a state of sinful unrepentance. In a doomsday voice he said, "We're afraid he's gone where we hope he ain't!"

One minister in my memory, a popular one throughout this area, was called to officiate at the last rites for a man who in life had left no doubt in the minds of all who knew him that he had no truck with the church and its ways. Expecting a sermon that would give them a measure of comfort, his survivors were shocked to hear a pointedly judgmental tone and some painfully explicit references as to the whereabouts of the soul of the deceased. Needless to say, they were upset and I was told they never forgave the minister.

After the sermon and another song, the undertaker opened the casket and people left their pews to form a line and pass around for a last look. Sometimes someone in the line would feel moved to shake hands with each mourner on the front seat. When this was started, everyone thereafter would follow suit, causing quite a slow-up in the procession, to say nothing of further ordeal for the family.

Viewers would then reseat themselves to watch as the loved ones said their goodbyes. I always thought this was a cruel, insensitive custom and was glad when undertakers here began directing everyone to leave the church to allow the family privacy in their last viewing. And today there is still more consideration shown when the casket is closed before the service.

As a painful finale, at the cemetery everyone stood and watched as the coffin was being lowered into the grave, remaining there while the dirt was shoveled in.

And yet, with all the bizarre customs and the amusing things that went on the name of honoring the dead, there were, at the center, near the sorrowing, those genuinely caring ones who gave support. And there was much true caring.

I still believe, though, that funerals should not be a spectator sport. Maybe the time will come here that we will accept what I feel would be more comfortable: Private funerals.

All those long-drawn-out community rituals, however, may have had a healing effect that we miss today with our limited wakes and brief ceremonies. They may have helped people deal with death's reality. Perhaps they were therapeutic. But to me, as a sensitive child, they seemed to put an added burden on an already troubled family.

A DEATH IN THE FAMILY

Martha K. Graham

When death came to a resident of Roseville in the early 1900's, when I was growing up, the family had no access to the plush services of a funeral home as we know it today. The sad ceremonies that accompany a death were closely centered in the home and the church, among family and friends.

My mother, Mary King, and my aunt, Millie McCaw, cared for my great aunt, Anna Roseberry, during her last illness. She had, for years, been one of us in our family home.

A few days before her death at age 89, she called her two nieces to her bedside and talked to them about the many events in her life and the lives of her parents, William and Mary Ann (Montgomery) Pauly, both buried in Roseville Cemetery. She gave names and dates for all her brothers and sisters, where they were born, who they married, where they lived and the names of their children. She was the last of her family, and she wanted to be sure that what she knew of them would be written down and kept. Such relaying of family information was often felt by the dying elderly to be their duty to those who would survive them.

Anna Roseberry had planned her own funeral. The only decision left to the two nieces was concerning those who would furnish cars for the funeral procession to the cemetery. Her small tombstone had long been in place, lacking on the date of her death, beside that of her husband who had died years before.

My mother used to say, "Your great aunt Anna would have made a good general." Observing the way in which she planned her own funeral, I could believe it. She had qualities of leadership and decision rare in a woman of her time. During her long life, that thin, active, poker-straight lady had planned and carried out a strategy of living that, looked back upon, was a marvel. She could be the motive power for almost anything she wished to accomplish. She had a real gift for organizing people, without manipulating them, and implementing her sound ideas. If that quality had not been a gift, she couldn't have helped developing it as she took on and discharged the heavy responsibilities that were hers during the early and mid years of her life. Anna Maria Pauly Roseberry always rose to the occasion.

Anna Roseberry dictated her own obituary. Obituaries of that time were very complete, giving cause of death, the degree of suffering, and any last words of the deceased. They gave church affiliation and details of the conversion from the sinful state, and the good deeds of the saved one. They often gave a complete family history and many other details. These obituaries are now wonderful aid to anyone trying to trace his or her family tree.

Dr. Hoyt was called when death seemed imminent, and he remained at the bedside in spite of office work and house calls. It was customary for the family to gather to witness the death of their loved one. When the doctor pulled up the sheet, covering the face of the deceased, it was the signal for the family to leave.

Several days before, my Aunt Millie had made the crape to hang on the front door. This was a long established custom which had its practical uses. It signified that there was a death in the family. It kept unthinking people from noisily entering on frivolous errands, and it alerted friends to the fact that an imminent death had finally occurred and that the family was ready to receive callers.

Anna Roseberry's crape was a wreath about twelve inches in diameter, made of lavender and white silk and white ribbon. In some families these crapes were carefully saved for use in subsequent deaths. Not so in our family. Millie McCaw had made our family crapes since she was twenty and had made her first one for her own mother's early death.

As soon as the crape was seen on the door, friends began to call with condolences and flowers, dishes of food, and offers to help.

The undertaker, O. L. Marston, had brought the body back to our home and placed the casket on its draped carrier in the parlor. Wreaths were placed about it. Cut flowers were in vases about the room. In those days many funerals flowers were from friends' own gardens.

Visitors remarked how nice and how natural Anna Roseberry looked in her gray casket, and she did, indeed. She wore a lavender and gray silk dress with white lace at the high neck and lace extending down the front to the waist. Her snow-white hair was piled up in a bun on top of her head, just as she had always worn it. Her two side-combs and her large hair pins were in place, as usual. Her thin gold wedding ring was on her finger. Her hands were folded, the lace of the cuffs falling down over them. I had never before seen her with folded hands. She had always been busy doing something. My aunt Millie McCaw had made the dress a year or two before, and Anna Roseberry had often worn it to church. But it looked like new, and it was the dress she had chosen for her burial.

In those days there were seldom any designated hours for the family to meet with friends. Visitors called all day and all evening. The two nieces took turns being in the room to receive people. For them it was an exhausting ordeal, but it was expected that the closest family members should be beside the casket at all times. Friends had taken over the kitchen, and they saw the family had hot meals served to them, so the two nieces had nothing to do but keep their vigil beside the casket, and rest when they could.

There were few tears shed by the visitors. Everyone who came knew of Anna Roseberry's long, useful and upright life, and firmly believed, as had she, that the dead in Christ were with Him in Paradise and with the loved ones who had gone before. She had been released from suffering into life everlasting.

Close friends sat up with the dead during the night, giving my mother and my aunt a chance for much needed sleep and rest.

The third day, people called until nearly time for the funeral service which was to be held in the sanctuary of the Roseville Methodist Episcopal Church. Undertaker Marston came with his hearse and the six pall-bearers and took the casket to the church, where they placed it in the vestibule. Flower ladies arranged the floral offerings there. Here people attending the funeral signed their names in a register, passed slowly by the open casket to view the body, and took their places in the sanctuary.

The sexton had tolled the church bell one half hour before time for the service and at the exact time the service was to begin. This peculiar tolling bell sound made all within hearing aware that a funeral service was about to begin. When this sound was heard in Roseville, people often stopped what they were doing and spent a moment in silent prayer. Men often stopped on the street and removed their hats in deference to the one who had passed on, whether or not they had known the deceased.

When the bell ceased tolling, the undertaker wheeled the casket down the aisle to its place in front of the pulpit, and the flower ladies again arranged the floral offerings. The musicians had found their places and the minister was waiting near the pulpit. Last to enter, the family was slowly escorted down the the aisle to the front pews closest to the casket.

After the service everyone except the family was escorted out of the sanctuary to stand outside on each side of the wide sidewalk. So the family, for a short time, was alone with the open casket of their loved one.

This was an especially sad moment, a very emotional time, for it was the last time the family would be able to see their deceased loved one. Details of the physical appearance and the dress of the dear one so recently gone beyond were consciously impressed on the minds of the bereaved. They wanted to remember.

After a time, the undertaker came to close the casket and take it back up the aisle to the vestibule where the six pallbear-

ers would take it past the waiting crowd to the hearse. While the pall-bearers were getting into the next car and the flower ladies with the flowers were getting into the third car, the family was escorted past their waiting friends to the fourth car and any other cars needed to accommodate them. Several cars were waiting to take any friends who wished to accompany the family to the cemetery.

At the grave-site the service was about like it is today. But with the minister's words, "Ashes to ashes, dust to dust," the family could see and hear the clods of fresh earth as they were thrown into the grave, thudding on the closed casket lid. If the mourners had not realized before this, they realized now that their loved one was gone forever from their lives. The family did not leave until they saw the grave being filled in.

The first Decoration Day following Anna Roseberry's death was especially hard for us. We made the sprays of spring flowers to lay on all our family graves, as usual. Anna Roseberry's was a spray of lavender and white iris. Those were the colors we always associated with her. Those were colors of her crape and the colors of her burial dress.

That Decoration day my mother, my Aunt Millie, and I were among the last to leave the cemetery. Other lingerers were gathered around graves that, like Anna Roseberry's, were mounds on which the grass had not yet grown. We knew that they, too, had had a recent death in the family.

THE SADDEST DAY OF MY LIFE

Irene Brei

January 6, 1924, was the saddest day of my life. That was the day my mother passed away. She left behind a husband and five young children, ages four to fourteen. I was fourteen. I remember so well the day of her funeral.

Those days they embalmed the body in the home and then it was taken directly to the church after a few days' stay at home, for the wake and visitation.

The day of the funeral was a sloppy day after the January thaw. We followed a horse-drawn hearse. The hearse had a window on each side where we could see the flower covered casket. We followed in a carriage reserved for mourners. It was a mud road, and the horses' hooves made a sloshy noise as they pulled them out of the mud.

As we approached St. John's Lutheran Church in Flanagan, Illinois, the bells began to toll a slow, mournful dirge. It was so sad, it made me weep all the more.

Mother had requested that her dress or shroud be white, also the casket. It was covered with a clothlike material. She looked like a bride ready to meet her groom. She was only 36.

My aunts' hats were all covered with black veils, and so was mine. They took the purple feather off my hat.

After the service we went to the Center Cemetery west of town for the burial, and then we came home. That was the saddest part, to go home to our empty house. My younger sister cried and cried for her mother; we had a hard time consoling her. She couldn't understand what had happened.

It was up to me to keep the household going, but Father couldn't cope with it. He started drinking, and was always gone. He left us home alone. My mother's folks finally went through court and took us away from him. They put us in an orphanage.

It was a sad day for all of us when we lost our mother.

MY GRANDMOTHER'S FUNERAL

Lilah Peterson

My grandparents were Swedish, and when they came to the United States, they furthered many traditions from their homeland. Vividly in my mind I remember my grandmother's funeral. This was my mother's mother. The body was embalmed and then brought back to the home. The children took turns at the watch so nothing happened to the body at night. The day of the funeral was a lovely day. A Swedish service of songs and prayer was held in the house. Then we left the house and went across the lawn to the cars of 65 years ago. (My parents still had a horse and buggy at the time also.)

The procession to the church began. There was a definite order of relatives—my grandfather first and then the oldest child and the rest according to next of kin of my grandmother. Relatives of the husband who attended were next, and children were last. This was the line up as they entered the church and sat in one section, usually the left side. The minister, however, went in first after the casket, then my cousin and I, the flower girls, followed by the six pallbearers. The casket was not the metal or wooden polished kind of today, but rather that of wood covered with a gray plush cloth. The women wore hats which were veiled. The veil was a large square of thin material that covered hat and face. Weeping was not as noticeable when the veil was worn. The men had a dark band over the sleeve of the coat placed above the elbow. The veil, the band, and wearing of black clothing were signs of deep mourning and respect. Everything was very solemn. The minister read a long obituary and favorite Bible passages of my grandmother. It made me feel very sad.

After the church service the casket, which had been open during the service, was viewed for the last time by visitors present, and finally when all visitors had done so, the relatives again also viewed grandmother. Then when all were quite composed, the undertaker closed the casket and went outside to the hearse. The hearse was a plain, black vehicle with windows large enough so the casket could be seen inside. The relatives then went outside. All of the other people had remained outside and waited while those going to the cemetery lined up. As the procession left the church, the bell was tolled to indicate not only reverence but also the age of the deceased. The cemetery was about a mile from the church.

At the cemetery a tent had been placed over the grave plot. The grave had been dug by hand by a gravedigger. The casket was carried and placed on the grave. Everyone assembled there. Another service with songs and prayer was given at the cemetery. This was grandmother's day and no one hurried the funeral. We saw the casket lowered but the dirt was filled in later. Flowers were left to be placed on the grave afterwards.

After the funeral relatives and friends went back to the house. Much food had been brought to the home by friends and relatives. A bountiful lunch was served, and those present remembered other happy days they had spent in the home.

Thank you cards in black and white were sent to thank for flowers and other favors. Many times pictures were taken of the flowers arranged in designed wreaths. If ribbons were used, they were white and had black lettering. A lengthy account of the funeral was placed in the local papers. It went into detail as to grandmother's place of birth in Sweden, cause of death, accomplishments, and relatives.

A large gray marble stone was placed on the grave plot with the family name on it. Then a headstone for grandmother was also put on the grave. Flowers were later planted, and for many years pink peonies bloomed there on Memorial Day.

Because I actually played a part in grandmother's funeral, I have remembered much of what happened. My mother had definite respect for funerals and felt it was a help to have friends and relatives share the loss with you. To her death was simply a part of life, and my father shared her feelings. My own early acceptance of death paved the way for the writing of this account.

DEATH AND RENEWAL

Bette Adams

Family funerals stand out in my mind. Deceased loved ones were mourned at home. The big house that was Grandma's made it possible to have the casket in the parlor, with the living room and sitting room offering ample space for friends and relatives.

It was a time for gathering together—tears blended in to laughter and back to tears again. It impressed me, a small child, and while I did not know it then, the experience prepared me for a later realization of how closely allied tears and laughter, sadness and happiness are.

My child's mind absorbed the sad mystery of death. I was used to large family gatherings where laughter and fun dominated. I remember the German songs being led with gusto by a great uncle who had a glorious voice and knew it. He would lead the crowd with much hand waving and chest heaving. Ours was a loving, noisy group. The children would play hide and seek, making full use of the delightful hiding places in the grand old house.

Then the food would be brought out. Long rows of picnic-type tables set up in the basement would be loaded with all sorts of goodies. We all ate together and I remember loving to hear the toasts made to each other for some achievement. How we would clap!

The first time I went to Grandma's house for a funeral I was about eight years old. Great Grandpa Kordt had finally slipped peacefully away after 86 turbulent years. He had been cared for by Grandma for a long time and was absorbed into the household as its senior member. I was afraid of him because of his long beard which reached a length of at least 20 inches. I remember thinking, as I viewed him in his casket, that it was the first time I had ever seen his beard without soup or whipped cream.

It was spooky—we would tiptoe to the doorway and view him long distance; then ever so gradually we walked closer. By the day of his funeral we were walking right up to the casket, trying to understand the great mystery of death.

The wake was held for two nights then; and in between times there would be visiting and reminiscing about all the good things Great Grandpa had done. His feisty ways were not mentioned, as though he had gained instant sainthood by dying. I was hearing respect, but was too young to analyze it at the time.

Custom deemed the family keep an all-night vigil with the deceased loved one, so the men and women would take turns for the two nights. My cousins and I would be allowed to stay up with the grown-ups. That was a treat for one who had a strictly enforced 8 o'clock curfew. I felt so adult. I joined my older cousins on the back stairway and listened to the glorious ghost stories they would tell. I remember the chills up my back as one especially descriptive cousin told the goriest of tales just as the dogs in the neighborhood began howling. What timing! Somehow, it all tied in with Great Grandpa, as though the universe was wailing its sadness to see him go. We progressed on to discussing the gypsies, plentiful in Southern Illinois in the 30's. How they tried to get children, and how they were seen camping not too far from Grandmas. It never occurred to us they were poor and could hardly take care of their own, but the remainder of my young life was spent being careful to stay away from gypsies. I left these cousin conferences amazed at all their knowledge. I believed every word they said and tucked it away for future use when I returned home, putting all this newfound wisdom to good use with my friends.

The day of the funeral brought a sense of relief, as though it was a climax to a play that had been acted out by so many people. We prayed for Great Grandpa and watched as the lid of the casket was closed, forever ending any contact with life. There were no giggles or pranks then, only a sea of somber faces, sad at losing one of their own. Our family loyalty was tremendous. We listened to words of consolation and after

a few more prayers watched as the casket was slowly lowered into the ground. I cried my heart out at that point. I could not imagine anything worse than being in the ground with dirt all over me.

But later, back at Grandma's, the tensions of the past two days eased. Supper was laid in the big room and laughter and noisy chatter was heard all over again.

That was 50 years ago, but the memory remains clear to me. Funeral customs have changed and are now geared to our accelerated life style, but the personal involvment of years ago is missing. Somehow, looking back, I think Great Grandpa's spirit was soothed by our presence.

We laughed; gramps liked to hear laughter, and he had to have jokes explained to him so he could laugh too. We cried; he would have expected it. After all, weren't we family? We visited and reaffirmed our ties to each other, once more shoring up the foundation that was our family. Great Grandpa's death was our renewal.

MY MOTHER'S DEATH IN 1916

Truman W. Waite

It was the conversation in the adjoining room that woke me up early that morning in January of 1916. I was informed that Mother was very sick. The horse and buggy doctor, that my father had called earlier, had arrived. Also Clara Miller had come. "Aunt Clara," as she was known to everyone in the community, was a spinster. Like many other single women of that time, she devoted her life to helping others and was always willing to go to anyone in need.

While mother had not been too well since the birth of my younger sister, I was too young to realize how serious she was that morning. However, I was apprehensive when I observed the doctor referring to a book that he had brought with him that night. The title of that book was "A Hand Book of Therapy."

My brother Ralph, who was eight years old, and I left for school, while my older sister Ursula, age fourteen, stayed home to care for our younger sister Esther, who was only eight months old.

It was near three o'clock when one of our neighbors asked for my brother and me to get home as soon as possible. As soon as we left the schoolhouse I could hear my father weeping in the distance. I had never heard him weep before, and I knew then what had happened. Mother had passed away.

In a short time other neighbors arrived. "Aunt Clara" and another woman bathed my mother's body. A wide board about six feet in length, which was found in the hay loft, was placed in the parlor with a chair to support each end. Upon this board the body of my mother was layed out and covered with a white sheet.

It was a warm day, the snow was melting, and with the frost leaving the ground, the dirt roads became very soft. The undertaker from Mendon, which was eleven miles away, did not arrive until late that night to prepare my mother's body for burial and to make arrangements for the funeral. Before leaving that night, he placed a piece of black crepe on the front door as a sign of mourning in our home.

The funeral was postponed due to the creek overflowing the valley and covering the road to the cemetery. Each day before the funeral, many of our neighbors came to our home to express their sympathy and offer any assistance that was needed. Each evening there was always someone to sit up with my mother's body.

The undertaker arrived the morning of the funeral with the casket in a spring wagon instead of the hearse. There were no flowers on Mother's casket because it was January and the

nearest florist was twenty miles away.

The lay minister, A. C. Ament, who conducted the services, was a neighbor that had retired from farming. He read the obituary, and among the things included was her age: thirty-eight years, eleven months, and eight days. A quartet of neighbors, accompanied on the parlor organ by one of my eighth grade schoolmates, sang two songs. One was a favorite of my mother's, "God Be With You Till We Meet Again."

After the services, the casket was placed in the wagon and covered with a canvas before starting to the cemetery, five miles away.

When we arrived at the cemetery the casket was removed from the wagon, carried to the grave, and set down on two small timbers that were placed across it. After the commital service conducted by Mr. Ament, three heavy straps were placed under the casket with a pallbearer on the end of each strap. The casket was then raised to remove the timbers, and then it was lowered slowly into the grave.

A WOOL DRESS FOR MA

Evelyn Jennings Korte

It was on a cold winter night many years ago, that my grandmother, whom we called "Ma," had come to our house to spend the winter. Our house wasn't home to her, as she had always stayed with my uncle. That is where she had raised her children and where her bed was.

This winter had been one of those 20 degrees below zero ones that we sometimes have in Southern Illinois. On many other nights we had been called to come, when Ma was sick, so Mother and Dad and we three girls would take off in the "Star" car. About thirty miles down there, on muddy roads, was a pretty long trip, with some hazards. When we got there Ma was usually better. So we would have a good visit with our relatives.

One such night we got stuck in a mud hole. The battery wouldn't start the car. Dad jacked up the free back wheel and turned it until it started.

Ma had come in the early part of the fall to spend the winter. We had a coal heating stove so our house was warmer than my uncles. Ma slept all winter on a "cot" in the dinning room where the stove was, and Mother sat by her side many nights in a chair. She told us Ma wasn't going to make it one night, and she asked me if I would make Ma some underwear out of flannelette so we would have something warm to put on her when she died.

By the light of a kerosene lamp I proceeded with the job. I was thirteen years old. I treadled that old Singer with such speed that the lamp fell off the side and broke the stand off. It was later set in a larger can and cement was poured around it to make it secure.

A few days later, about 1:00 a.m., a neighbor came and woke my sisters and I up and told us our grandmother was dying. She thought we should see her. We did, and we saw her draw her last breath. It was a natural thing and not something to be shunned.

Next of course the funeral plans were made according to the normal pattern. The following day we were at the funeral home. I was taking everything in, being a very grown up thirteen-year-old girl (at times). Mother came to me and said, "Will you please make Ma a dress? They have nothing but silk and that is so cold." She bought the wool and we took it with us back to the country.

Then there was the trip to take her back home (to Ma's home). The undertaker drove a horsedrawn hearse with two teams. The roads were almost impassible. On some of the hills large poles were laid across the road to make a bridge to span

the mud holes. We followed in another wagon, wrapped in blankets. It was night when we arrived at my uncle's house. The undertaker spent the night with the family. I took a lantern, went my myself to a neighbor's one quarter mile across a field, and made the dress on their machine. It was grey wool, with a satin cumberbund. (Mother had good taste, even if she couldn't sew a stitch.)

The next morning the undertaker put the dress on Ma, and she was taken to the church for her funeral and then to the cemetery. I always felt good that I could do this for Ma.

When we got back to our own home, we found that the neighbors had come in and cleaned the house and washed all the dirty clothes. The cot where Ma had slept was piled high with clean bedding, etc. That was flowers to us.

LEARNING ABOUT DEATH IN LARCHLAND

Dorothy E. Ray

I grew up on a farm near the village of Larchland, Illinois, which, when the C.B.&Q. railroad was built and a depot and post office established, was supposed to grow into a thriving town. That never happened, but it grew until there was a grain elevator, a good sized stockyards, an icehouse, a general store, where the post office was located, a pool hall, a church, a blacksmith shop, a doctor's office, a schoolhouse, and a number of houses. One residence had a switchboard and telephone operator, after people began to have telephones.

People who lived in such a rural community were good neighbors. When someone was ill, they came bringing food, helping to care for the patient or doing chores, and when a death occurred the same concern was expressed. If a small baby died, neighbor women bathed them in soda water, dressed them, and then the undertaker would bring a small white or gray casket and lay them in it. For anyone older, the undertakers prepared the body in the home, and then the family would go to his office and select a casket, and he would bring it to the home and finish his duties. It remained there, usually in the parlor, until the time of service.

The nights before burial took place, several people would come to sit up all night so that the family could go to bed. I have never known just how this custom started, but I heard people talk about hearing when bodies were left unattended in old houses, rats would come in and eat small portions of exposed flesh. Those who sat up would sit in another room but go in several times to see if all was well. A lunch was prepared for the sitters, and the coffee pot was kept hot on the back of the kitchen range.

Many funerals were held in the home. Furniture was removed from a room or two, and folding chairs brought in. A widow dressed entirely in black, with a black veil on her hat for some time. It wasn't considered proper for her to wear bright colors.

If services were held at the church, a short prayer service was held at home. Just before time for them to go to the church, the procession would drive there, where friends and neighbors were already seated. The pallbearers would carry the casket in to the front and be seated. The family was then brought in and seated in the front of the church. There was always many pretty flowers in the summer, some homegrown or a spray from the florist which would cost seventy-five cents or a dollar. Chosen friends would usually sing favorite hymns of the family accompanied by someone playing a small pedal organ. The minister always read a long obituary of the deceased besides preaching a sermon. Then the congregation passed around the casket and then on outside where they waited for the funeral party to come out. The family had a few last moments alone, then the casket was carried to the hearse

and the journey to the cemetery began.

I remember when hearses were pulled by horses. White or gray hearses were used for children or young people, black for older people. They were quite fancy with carvings on the outside. White or gray horses were used if possible for the white or gray hearses and pure black horses for the black hearses. Usually a very good price was paid by the funeral director for a good team of horses. Sometimes it was found that what appeared to be a solid black team, when they began to shed, might turn out to have some white spots that had been covered with shoe blacking, and some very hot arguments took place.

Caskets were made years ago of wood, covered with a soft material like velvet or plush, lined with silk which was puffed and shirred and quite elegant. The metal caskets came with heavy handles, lined the same way in various colors. All came with a small dainty pillow for the head, and the entire service cost only a few hundred dollars.

When you were driving along the road and saw a funeral procession, you pulled off and waited until they were gone. The men always removed their hats.

Most country churches had a small cemetery. There is one across the road from where the Warren County Farm used to stand, not far from Larchland. Inmates of the home were buried there if they had no money and perhaps no relatives. Also, some farms in our area had a little fenced off place for a family plot.

We had an elderly neighbor and his wife live near us, and they used to walk up the road to spend many summer evenings with us when we were kids. He loved to tell ghost stories, this being one of his best. He told us that one house they have lived in for quite a spell had a family burial ground and that many nights after they had gone to bed they'd hear the back door open. It would be the spirits coming back to where they had lived to wander through the rooms until daybreak. Needless to say, we believed it all, secretly enjoying it, yet scared to go up to bed afterward.

His ghost stories were part of my growing acquaintance with the reality of death in the little village of Larchland long ago.

O. L. MARSTON, ROSEVILLE UNDERTAKER

Martha K. Graham

In the early 1900's, second only to the doctor, the undertaker was called to the scene of death. The preacher somehow knew and came without being called. In a small town these men were usually long-time friends of the family. They felt keenly the death of the deceased and shared the grief of the bereaved.

At the turn of the century, O. L. Marston, as a young man, had established himself as undertaker in the Roseville community, and he continued this service until his later years. The Marstons were good friends of my parents, Mary and Herbert King, who had been among the guests at the Marston wedding in Roseville.

O. L. Marston (Orrin, although everyone pronounced his name "Orn") and his wife, Maggie, their sons Leslie and Vernon (my classmate), and their daughter Helen lived on the east side of North Main Street near the business district in a big white frame house with a huge gray painted porch.

The undertaker was a rather heavily built man, naturally solemn, slow to move and slow to speak. He had a noticeable characteristic manner of walking—a ponderous, bent-at-the-knees gait that seemed to fit perfectly with his profession. His natural solemnity, sometimes relieved by a droll sense of humor, also seemed appropriate to his profession, but was not duplicated in the other members of his family.

Maggie (I never heard her called Mrs. Marston) was a thin, wiry, active woman who seemed perpetually worried that the things she felt responsible for would not turn out right. This concern was reflected in the tone of her voice and in her hesitant, rather drawn-out, manner of speaking. Maggie was a good mother, a good friend, a good neighbor, and the perfect helpmate for O. L. Marston.

There was no funeral home in Roseville, though John Lugg had that new kind of establishment in Monmouth. O. L. Marston owned a brick building at the north end of Roseville's business district, on the west side of North Main Street. To this building a body was taken by hearse and there prepared, by embalming, for burial. In earlier times this preparation might have been done at the Marston home, but not by the time I knew the Marston children, about 1916.

Soon after the preparation Marston brought the body back, by hearse, to the home of the bereaved, and placed the coffin in the parlor, setting it up on a long, folding metal base concealed by a floor-length draped black cloth.

The undertaker employed no assistant, but friends were always available to help carry the coffin into the house. Sometimes his young son, Leslie, helped, probably only carrying in the folded metal base. On one such occasion Marston motioned to his son to direct him, saying, "Leslie, walk this way." Leslie misunderstood. Walking obediently behind his father, he tried his best to imitate his father's rather shambling bent-at-the-knees walk. Poor Leslie finally gave up. "I just can't, Pa!" he said. With the Marstons, even a funeral sometimes had its lighter side.

In those days in Roseville, a funeral was held either in the church sanctuary or at the home of deceased. If it was held at home, O. L. Marston's duties were over after the delivery of the body to the home, until time to transport the coffin to the cemetery. The family had to make all other arrangements, receiving no further aid from the undertaker. Marston was one undertaker who made no attempt to console. He viewed death as an inescapable, however unwelcome, fact of life, and expected people to accept it as such. But he stood by with a quiet dignity that bespoke his dependability. People drew strength from his presence.

At a church funeral Marston was at his best. Solemn and dignified in dark cutaway coat and white gloves, with his bent-at-the-knees gait, he made a ceremony of moving the coffin on its rubber-tired, draped carrier down the aisle to its place in front of the pulpit. After the service he wheeled it back up the aisle to the vestibule where pallbearers carried it to the waiting hearse for the journey to the cemetery.

The hearse was an elegant black limousine, its high side windows decorated to simulate black-tasselled drapery. Most of those, who, in death, were carried in the Marston hearse never, in life, ever rode in such luxury.

To advertise his services, O. L. Marston placed ads in the Roseville *Times Citizen*, the town's weekly newspaper. He chose a small, simple, vertical ad, heavily edged in black and printed with "O. L. Marston, Undertaker." He had the same legend printed in black on palm-leaf fans and placed them in the church pew racks along with the hymnals. People made good use of them during the long, hot, summer church services, and were free to take them home if they so wished. These fans appeared at all kinds of gatherings, especially at the uncomfortably warm summer sessions of chautauqua until the air undulated with palm-leaf fans. They were probably his best advertisement.

O. L. Marston and his family were well-known and highly respected throughout the Roseville community and beyond. He was known through his work, not his sociability. Neither he nor his wife was socially inclined. They did not "entertain" and seldom were present at purely social gatherings. They attended and helped with their children's school functions and those of the church in which they held membership. Their household was plain and frugal and showed no attempt to even approach the sophistication of neighboring households on

North Main Street.

But Roseville families, sophisticated or not, in their darkest hours of trial unquestioningly relinquished their deceased loved ones to the ministrations of the undertaker, O. L. Marston. He was a trusted and respected friend, whose personal dignity matched the solemnity of the service he had chosen to offer people of the Roseville community.

THE VILLAGE OF THE DEAD IN TABLE GROVE

Esmarelda T. Thomson

"Doll, it's six o'clock", said my Uncle John, outside my bedroom door as he made his way down from the third floor. "Come on, we'll get the flowers before breakfast." The stairway sounds had announced early morning movements and I was aware of the light coming through the curtains at the east windows.

It was Decoration Day, 1931, and a vigil-keeping day for my uncle who observed the pattern set by his father, a Civil War veteran of "Sherman's March to the Sea." This was the day of honor for the soldiers who had fought for our country, as started in 1868 after the North-South Conflict. It was the day to go to the village cemetery laden with my grandmother's loveliest blossoms and the large American flags kept for my grandfather's grave.

We picked the huge, marvelously-scented pink peonies and the red and white ones of slightly smaller size with small ants scattering from the cuttings. Square, wooden frames held the heavy heads of these beautiful flowers. Blue iris were cut with the delicate yellow May roses and lemon lillies last; all were placed in water buckets for carrying down the hill. We went into breakfast walking through the dew-covered grass. A warm day was the promise of the sun as we left the flowers in the vestibule and wiped our shoes on the mat.

In our morning talk, my grandmother reminded us of the day's importance when she said, "Papa believed this day should be held just for the soldiers." I looked up to the large framed picture over the fireplace mantel where my grandfather and my mother, as a four-year-old, seemed to watch over the dining room. Both of these loved persons were dead, though the spirit of their presence was unmistakable in the words of our conversation. It was now the Thirties and people were beginning to decorate all of the graves, not just those of soldiers. I knew my mother would have flowers, too, and felt glad.

We talked of the afternoon program to be held in the church. I was to give "The Gettysburg Address" and my thirteen-year-old heart skipped along swiftly as I thought of it and of our family who would come for dinner, stay for the program, and pay a second visit to the cemetery. Thoughts also lingered a moment on my dead great-grandfather, a Quaker believer in peace whom I remembered for his long, white beard.

I loved to walk with my Uncle John. His manner of sharing knowledge with humor and sometimes a bit of satire (for which I did not have a name then) was appealing to me. He used special names for people and places in the town that seemed to fit exactly. He took the lead out of our yard onto John's Street with the heaviest load; I followed with my two flower buckets balanced evenly.

We passed "The Professor's" house and had a smiling "Good-morning!" At the Christian Church corner, we turned east and soon were on the C.B. and Q.'s wooden overbridge where our foot sounds thumped over the sturdy boards above the two rail tracks. At the center of the bridge, it was downhill all the way into the "East End." The "Bert Boy's House" reminded me of the popcorn we bought there and the wallpainting done by one of the men; it showed corn sprouts

and growing green stalks spaced over the whitewashed plaster in ascending and orderly rows. I also liked to look at Mr. Callahan's nursery garden and its weedless black, black dirt. Each bit of space was planted with mint bordering the edges.

We unlatched the cemetery gate and walked into the entry space. The familiar names on all sizes and shapes of stones and monuments gave the place its special feeling of quiet wonder, awe and friendship. The lots had mostly been mowed by their family owners. One towering, gray granite monument stood close to the gate with its high polish shining in the sunlight. Another nearby had been made in Springfield, Illinois of cast cement, fashioned as a rough bark tree trunk with a climbing vine. We passed many flat marble upright rectangles with embossed clasped hands and a few with a pair of doves as decoration above carved inscriptions. Lambs showed on the sad, small markers for infants and children. One imposing and curious monument was made of two large, horizontal rectangles separated by vase-shaped columns. A long writing was carved into the top of this marble, table-like piece. An old stone on the east hill read a death date of 1841. Short and tall obelisks rose from the heavy grass; some were topped with spheres and draperies.

We walked north along the inner drive toward the single tall pine tree and set our baskets down behind the large, heavy, unpolished granite monument with its simple, raised Roman letters on the front and back which said "HUNTER." The simplicity of this family stone held my eyes as my uncle spoke of the military credits marked on my grandfather's matching headstone. To me, the big stone was a connection, a strong remembrance between the living and the dead. It was a reminder of truths to be unfolded. My uncle placed a tripod of flags on our soldier's grave and I arranged the lovely flowers as we became silent.

That afternoon, the haunting notes of "Taps" spread out from a bugle; they sounded from under the large group of knarled pines on the east side of Table Grove's village cemetery. Our white-haired pastor, Reverend Nichols, had given religious inspiration in his solemn prayer before the volley of salute from the American Legion guns echoed over the fields and the bugler called. All our dead soldiers were honored with the others. Many persons had taken the march down the hill from the tall spired church; also cars of people had come. Groups lingered in this village of the dead, exchanging news and comments on the beauty of the flowers and mentioning that "more than ten years had passed since the last war." Some of the children sat happily on the low stones; my aunt, who had been an Army nurse in World War I, cautioned her small son to "never walk on a grave."

I took John's small, restless hand and showed him the cemetery paths shown to me by my uncle. John liked best to find the letters of his name on our grandfather's stone. Although I did not know it then, the chain of remembrance was in motion.

MONROE COUNTY FUNERALS AND BURIALS

Al Hartman

When I was 13 I attended the first funeral that I can remember. Grandpa's funeral was on a warm Spring day in 1930. He was buried in the family plot of the Waterloo Cemetery. Grandpa passed away in his south St. Louis retirement home at the age of 95. My Aunt Lena of East St. Louis had his body embalmed and laid out in a casket by a local mortician. His body was then brought to our farm home east of Waterloo, to lay in state in the front room for a day and a half until the funeral. The Waterloo undertaker handled all the local arrangements.

It was not until 1935-1936 that funeral homes came into general usage locally.

An 1865-1895 business ledger of a Maeystown, Illinois cabinet-maker reveals many aspects of funerals and burials in the late 1800's and early 1900's. I've given the old day book much study. It is written in old German script, with a quill pen and in a beautiful hand. Nevertheless, it is hard to translate. It lists the names of the deceased, the description of the coffin (most entries are coffins), the price, and the family member or person handling the details and payment.

The German word for coffin is "sarg," -with a soft "g." The German words for hearse, grave and cemetery are "leichwagen" (funeral wagon), "grab" and "Kirch hof" (church yard). Our previous minister, Rev. Otto Bassler, who preached German services, called it "Stadt hof" (town yard), since it was a city cemetery for all denominations. Incidently, its location was just about the highest point in the county.

A coffin for infants and small children cost $1.50 to $3.00—$8.00 to $15.00 for larger sizes, and up to $25.00 or $35.00 for large sizes and ornateness. A large coffin with velvet lining and a glass window in the top of the lid cost $30.00. There were also entries in the book as to rental of a horse-drawn hearse from a livery stable—wreaths, gloves, crepe, ribbons, arm bands, etc. An 1881 complete funeral cost $75.00.

The entries, over a period of years to 1895, include:

1 casket, large with velvet box and handles	$15.00
1 casket, small 2′ 3″ and cover	4.00
1 casket, small 2′ 10″ and cover	4.50
1 carpet runner	.50
1 made wreath	1.00

The word "bezahlt" meant "paid." Sometimes payments were made over a period of time, and not always in dollars:

1890-1891 Received in payment

March 24	13 bushels of corn
May 5	25 bushels of corn
July 28	25 bushels of corn
August 29	20 bushels of corn
January 2, 1891	20 bushels of corn

and—sometimes a *barrel of wine* was used as payment!

Each time I study and translate the ledger I find something new. The entries took place over 20 years. My translation might take as long if I'd persist!

The earliest settlers buried their own dead. Sometimes neighbor ladies washed and dressed the dead and prepared them for burial. A home made coffin was assembled and burial was in a *plot* near the home. There ware scores of such cemeteries in Monroe County and occasionally hunters find more by stumbling over a gravestone. Some cemeteries have inscribed stones; others are field stones, marked with a simple "X"—with a variety of "in-betweens." Schroeder Cemetery, northeast of Waterloo, which has 30 or so graves, is composed entirely of field stones.

Ox carts and farm wagons were used to carry the coffins some distance. The wagons were not long enough, so the regular seat was removed from the box wagon, and the driver sat on the end of the coffin to drive the team.

As my Uncle George related, the fence lines of some farms were full of infant burials. The infant death rate, especially during epidemics was very high. The hedge fences (Osage orange trees) were thickly planted and very dense, and with thorns, to keep in livestock. Sometimes they were 10′-15′ wide. Some of these hedge fences were still being bull-dozed out in the past 20 years, with traces of graves still evident.

A historic-minded friend, Bill Oldendorph, was a great hiker and hunter, and knew the county like the back of his hand. He led Alfred Mueller and myself across a field southwest of Maeystown to the old Hesterberg Cemetery. He was 85 at the time.

It was Fall, and the field was full of a white blooming herb, known as "boneset." As we walked across the fallow field Bill extolled the merits of boneset for healing sores and wounds. The cemetery was in a woods corner. There seemed to

be about 100 or more graves, mostly fallen and prone stones, covered with fallen and rotten trees, vines, leaf mold and moss. Most of the stones were broken or partly hidden and hard to read, but a few were clear and distinct. The names were English and Scotch-Irish, like McMurtry and Billon. One Dan McMurtry's epitaph read as follows:

"Remember Friend, as you walk by—
As you are now, so once was I
As I am now, so you will be—
Prepare for death, and follow me."

Bill Oldendorph, added two lines, in rhyme—

"To follow Thee I'll not consent
Until I find out where Thee went."

I've found the same epitaph on newer stones in well-kept cemeteries such as the beautiful Madonnaville Cemetery.

Another epitaph I recall is on Ninian Moore's grave, on the cemetery hill southwest of our home. The Moores were the first American settlers of Waterloo (then Bellefontaine), and Ninian was a second generation son who died at 38. The epitaph is as follows:

"Afflictions sore, long time he bore.
Physicians were in vain
'Til God did please to give him ease
And free him from his pain."

The Moore Cemetery is an unrecorded tract. There is no record of it in the Court House. When we were restoring the stones, inscriptions and sculptural art, we found an Indian grave there, which suggested that it had been an Indian burial ground before the white settlers came.

New Design Cemetery in central Monroe County was restored by the late Baptist minister Rev. L. L. Leininger of O'Fallon. The New Design settlement was founded by an anti-slavery group headed by James Lemen. He, and his friend Thomas Jefferson, developed the "New Design idea" for this "far western settlement." Lemen brought in a Baptist preacher, David Badgely, to found the church in 1796. But alas, the nearness of the slave owners in the adjacent American Bottom drove many of this high-minded settlers northward to the "Land of Goshen" at Collinsville and O'Fallon—including the Badgelys and many of the Lemens. Warren Smith and Rex Franklin, southern Illinois historians, delighted us by touring cemeteries with us. The two gentlemen from Fergennes, Illinois took us to an old abandoned cemetery in a woods corner just off Hartman Lane, southwest of O'Fallon. It was on the site of the old Badgely homestead, and Billons and Badgelys are buried there. Again, we cleared away fallen trees, vines, leaf mold and moss to uncover two side by side gravestones, flush with the ground. Scraping off the moss from the black stones, the inscriptions were quite clear and unworn, as follows:

"In Memory of Rev. David Badgely—born in Essex Co. N. J. Nov. 5, 1749. Immigrated to Hardy Co., N. C. in 1768. Visited Illinois in 1796, and constituted the first Baptist Church on the Territory. In 1797 immigrated to Illinois. Died Dec. 16, 1824. Peace to His Memory."

"Rhoda Badgely—consort of David Badgely. Born in Essex Co. N. J. Oct. 7, 1752, Member of the Baptist Church 59 years. Died July 29, 1835, Aged 82 years, 9 months."

The first American settler at Maeystown was James McRoberts, a Revolutionary War veteran. He and his wife, Mary, settled there in 1793, and called it McRoberts Meadow. The additional stone at the James McRoberts grave site is his granddaughter's:

"Sarah Chance
Consort of Col. EDWARD FORSTER
Born Mar. 11, 1832
Died Aug. 19, 1848"

Halbert Mueller, who lives in the old McRoberts house, tells that his father, while plowing, saw the tombstone with the epitaph intact one morning, then after visitors were at the gravesite that day, he looked at the tombstone again that evening. He saw that a square containing the "D" in Edward had

been removed. Had a secret recess hidden something precious? Like a ring? No one knows.

Rev. Charles Hellrung told me about his restoration work in old cemeteries in nearby parishes. In bygone years it was customary to bury unbaptised infants and suicides outside the cemetery fence. This was to denote their state of limbo—that they were somehow not fit for burial with the others. In restoring and cleaning up the cemeteries Father Hellrung removed the fences so all were in the same burial plots. His was an uncommon but humble greatness!

When Grandpa first broke ground at his new farm east of Waterloo in 1865, he inadvertently plowed out some graves along the east property line. He reburied the remains, and thereafter called them the Saunders graves, after the earlier pioneers who had lived there.

Our pioneer ancestors respected the dead and their graves. In Pax Requiescat!

THE GHOSTS OF GREENWOOD CEMETERY

Edward R. Lewis, Jr.

Nearly half a century has passed since I came to Canton, and for over thirty years no one has recalled the event I want to relate, which was once hush hush, a scandal so to speak, and a ghost story of the time. The tale is well founded because the events leading to the ghostly aspects of the story are documented in the Canton newspaper.

On June 29, 1899, an announcement appeared in the local newspaper concerning the untimely death of Edward Chell, eight-year-old son of cemetery sexton Thomas Chell. Later, the coroner's inquest declared the death to be accidental due to a crushing blow to the head.

The previous day, the sexton arrived at the cemetery with his son and noticed that the massive gates leading into the cemetery had been opened sometime during the night. The south gate was broken from its hinges. It was a well known fact that the top hinge had been broken for some time, but the middle hinge had been twisted in two, permitting the lower hinge to be forced out of position.

As the sexton examined the gate, he decided that a rope would hold the gate temporarily. Leaving his son by the gate, he did not touch it but went to the tool house only a short distance away to obtain some rope. Just as he reached the tool house, he heard a crash, and turning around to see what had happened, he was horrified to see the gate lying flat on the ground and his son under it. He immediately rushed to the scene, and in his anguish and desperation was strong enough to raise the 500-pound gate with his left arm while using the other to drag his child from under it. The boy was dead.

At the inquest, the sexton swore his son had not touched the gate and was last seen standing only a short distance from it. There was no explanation as to why the gate fell at that time, unless a sudden gust of wind had caused it to topple.

One month later, the *Canton Register* reporter noticed some unusual activity in Greenwood Cemetery. The sexton was grading and leveling a section which had been set aside from the very beginning of the cemetery as free burial ground. This was for the burial of those not able to afford the price of a regular lot. It was probably the most ideal location in the cemetery at that time, and there had been approximately 200 burials made in the area since the beginning. When asked what he was doing, the sexton replied that he had been instructed to level and grade the land to make new and wider drives in the cemetery.

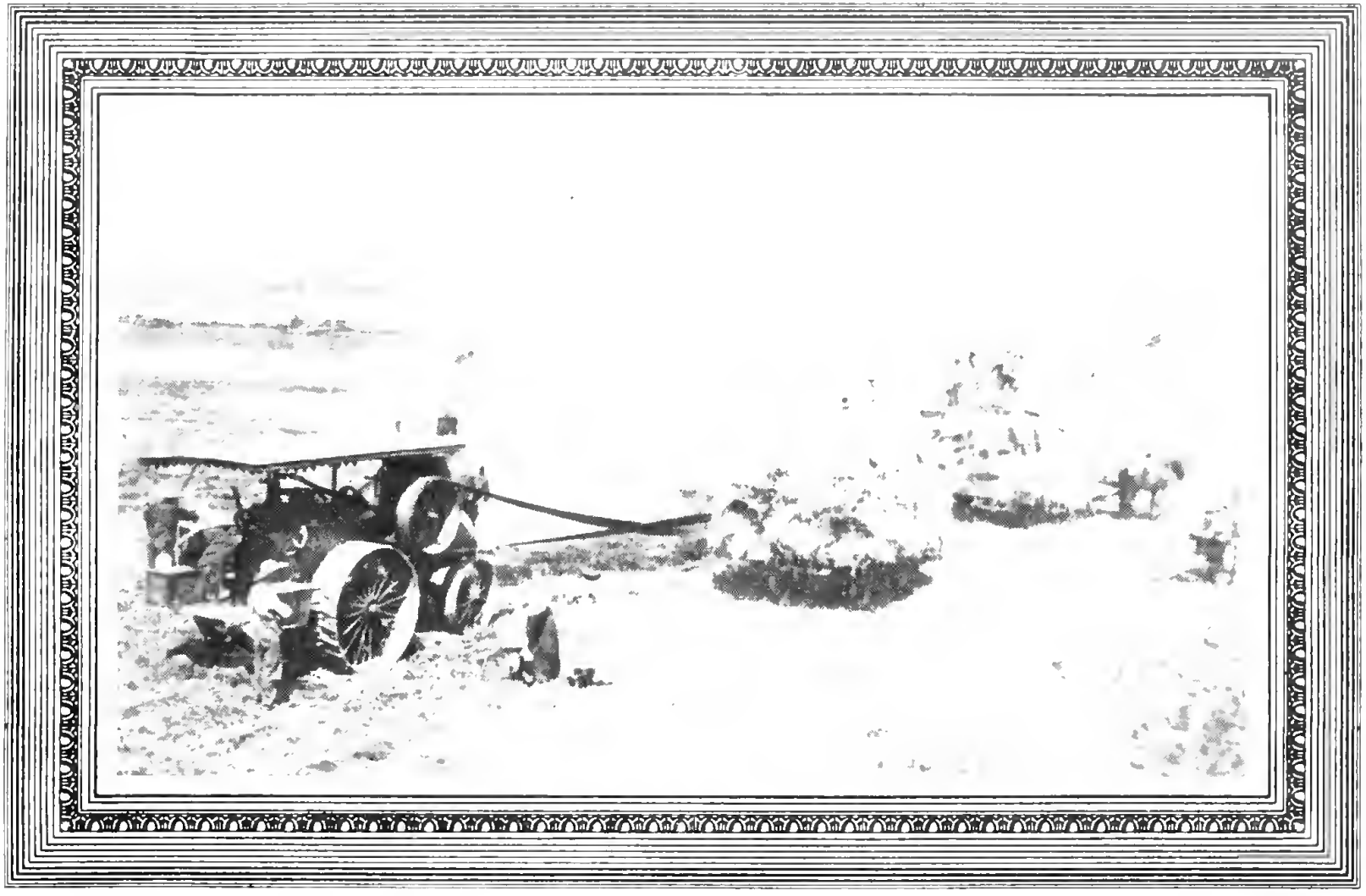
Upon further investigation by the reporter, it was discovered that for some time the sexton had been removing the remains of the bodies from this area and re-burying them in a trench in a remote section of the cemetery. This land had not

been deeded to the City of Canton when the Canton Cemetery Association turned over the cemetery to the City in 1881, and the sexton had for some time taken a lien on a number of lots in this area. It was customary then to make a $5.00 down payment on such lots and pay the balance later upon delivery of the deed.

This he had done, and he had sold a number of these lots for as much as he felt the "traffic would bear." When approached by some of the more influential and prosperous individuals of this community, he would show them around the cemetery and explain that there were few if any available lots that were desirable for their particular status in the community. And then he would show them the lots which he owned. In some instances he sold lots in this potter's field for $200. Others he sold for as little as $40. Within no time at all, he had cultivated quite a number of speculators in burial lots.

The *Canton Register* editorial stated that apparently the plan was to rob the poor of their graves and the rich of their money. An investigation was instituted by the Canton City Council as a result of the exposure by the newspaper, and the sexton was soon relieved of his job. Further removal of bodies from this burial ground was halted, but no further action was taken against the sexton.

For many years the story persisted in the minds of those interested in the occult and supernatural. The death of the sexton's little boy was viewed by some as not just a chance happening, but the work of irate spirits, getting revenge for the disturbance of their graves.



III Good Times and Bad Times on the Farm

GOOD TIMES AND BAD TIMES ON THE FARM

Prosperous times for the American farmer have been few and far between. The Great Depression, notorious for displacing millions of farm families, actually began in the country nearly a decade before the fall of 1929, when the Wall Street catastrophe struck city folk. Even in pre-Depression years, farmers lived on the edge, subject to whims of fluctuating markets, capricious nature, and the men who, in Hamlin Garland's words, "farmed the farmer." The further he moved toward a market economy, the more precarious the farmer's existence became . . . and in the Midwest, most farmers *began* as market operations, producing what they hoped would be a large cash crop for market, and supplementing that cash with home-grown vegetables and a few livestock, milk cows, and poultry. When the cash crop or the market failed, farm folk could always eat, as long as they escaped eviction by maintaining mortgage and tax payments. Significantly, most of the fondest memories of Americans who lived on the farm during the 1920's and Dust Bowl years are tied not to what constituted the "real farm work," work related to raising and marketing a cash crop, but to the operations which, while they were supposed to be subsidiary, actually maintained the family: baking and sewing and canning, home butchering, and doing makeshift repairs on clothing and machinery which in post-World War II America we have come to simply discard.

The impression of farm life before 1945 given by the overwhelming majority of testimony is of long hours of manual labor, not only for the farmer himself, but also for his wife and children, older and younger. In his reminiscences of late 19th century farm life in Iowa, Minnesota and South Dakota, Hamlin Garland recalls taking his place behind the plow in his pre-teenage years, and remembers with slightly more bitterness the long hours of work (up before dawn, awake till long after dark) which made his mother and many of the girls with whom he grew up old before their time. Garland's experience was not, however, unique: farm boys were often pressed into difficult and tedious (not to mention dangerous) tasks like plowing and cultivating, even at age 11 or 12. All farm children had chores to perform before and after school . . . and before they were old enough to go to school. Garland's mother at least spent her time in the house—not, like many other farm wives, driving a team of horses (later tractors and combines) in the fields. That was *before* they prepared dinner and supper, and hand-washed the laundry, and cleaned the chimneys on the kerosene lamps, and all the other domestic tasks that occupied a farm wife's time.

So very much was done by hand in those days: corn was picked and shucked and sometimes even planted by hand. Clothes were made and patched and washed by hand. And of course butter was churned, bread baked, gardens weeded, geese plucked, cows milked, fences built, floors swept, carpets beaten, grain shocked, water hauled and heated, hay pitched *by hand.* The coming of labor-saving mechanical devices, especially the advent of the tractor and electricity, are vivid memories in the minds of those who experienced them.

Economic necessity and habits handed down from immigrant grandparents made for a life of great frugality. "If Old Man Brunner were God," poet Leo Dangel has written, "everything in the universe could be fixed with baling wire and a pair of pliers." Baling wire and binder's twine mended everything on the farm, from fences to machinery to, occasionally, articles of clothing. Feed and flour sacks—bleached and redyed—were recycled into everything from table cloths and dishtowels to school clothes. The washcloth used at bath time was probably a piece of worn-out long-john underwear. Shoes, shirts, coats were handed down from older child to younger siblings.

For all of its austerity, farm life in early twentieth century America was far from unpleasant. While more sober individuals express reluctance about reliving the tough times, a

common sentiment is "The Bad Years Were Happy Years." Nor is this notion simple nostalgia. There was a directness to farm life missing from most life today: you ate the dinner you had prepared yourself, from milk you milked yourself from cows you tended (and birthed) yourself, from eggs from chickens you had bred and raised yourself (perhaps you had slaughtered a rooster or an old hen yourself for that very dinner), from game you had hunted yourself. The jelly and jam you had set up yourself; the vegetables and fruit were home-canned, the sauerkraut and pickles homemade. Children played with farm animals and with toys whittled by their fathers from wood from the grove. A farmer might pay or be paid not in cash, but in produce that represented the sweat of a man's brow: a truck of ear corn for a truck of coal. Such direct contact with nature and clear relationships between cause and effect have a certain clarity missing from modern life.

And for developing a sense of community, which is especially important to families separated by long and dusty dirt roads, television and the modern movie theater cannot compare with old-fashioned trips to town, square dances, or, yes, even fall threshing, with the busy excitement of the arrival of the machine and crew, those enormous meals eaten outdoors and in great haste, the boom and whoop of the threshing machine, the interplay of men and women, people and machines.

Most pleasant to recall—and perhaps most lost from modern experience—are those stories of rural ingenuity or embarrassment: stories of trapping skunks to raise money for Christmas presents, stories of running naked across a river bottom in pursuit of a run-away team trailing an ancient cultivator on a hot, hot summer day, and others. Whatever hard work or embarrassment they meant at the moment has melted with the passage of time, leaving only a fondness for the larger values of community, closeness to nature, a sense of custodianship of the land.

David R. Pichaske

MY GRANDPARENTS' FARM

Vivian C. Workman

As a child I lived with my grandparents on their farm. Two of their sons and a daughter were still at home, and I grew up as a little sister to them. Although times were very hard during that time, we shared may happy years, and I remember them with great joy.

They raised chickens, cows, and pigs on the farm. They worked from early morning until far into the night sometimes; indeed it seemed their work was never done. As soon as morning chores were finished, grandpa went into town to sell whatever he could. They had regular customers for the milk and eggs. Occasionally grandma tried to save a little of that money, thinking maybe she would buy something for herself, but it always went for some necessity for the family. She never had a pretty dress or any of the feminine frills, but I don't think it ever bothered her; she was too busy for them anyway.

We always ate very well, due to the huge garden they planted in the spring, and the other products from the farm. That garden was very important; I can still shut my eyes and visualize all of those tin cans we had hurriedly put over the plants on nights when frost seemed imminent. Grandma canned everything that grew there, as well as all the berries we could pick in season. I can almost hear her saying, as she gave a final twist to the lid of a canning jar, "That sure will taste yummy this winter when the snow flies." It sure did. She also made pies and cobblers that "fairly melted in our mouths."

In the winter we ate a lot of pork. The old black kettle that hung out by the barn had many uses, but I remember it primarily on butchering day, being used for scalding the hogs. That was quite an eventful day. Several neighbors gathered at one farm and worked all day long. While the men did the outside work, the women had their duties inside the house. They made cracklins and head cheese, prepared the meats for curing, and fried down sausages. The hams and the sides of bacon were hung in the smoke house, and the sausages were put into big white crocks, covered with a layer of lard, and stored in the cellar along with the many jars of food, the vegetables that had been dug from the garden, and the fruit wrapped for winter. Crocks were used a great deal; they held sauerkraut, turnip kraut, and grandma's specialty—apricot brandy. I wondered what was so special about it until she let me taste it—once—then I understood why she enjoyed a nip of it now and then.

Breakfast was a hearty meal, as the men needed a good start for their day. How wonderful it was to awaken to the smells from the kitchen: the meat and potatoes frying, the homemade biscuits and the milk gravy, fried or scrambled eggs, and jelly or preserves from the cellar. Once in a while we even had pickled peaches, a favorite of mine.

You have all read stories I'm sure about the daily trek to and from school in cold weather, and the lunch bucket that contained only a cold biscuit and a cold egg or piece of meat, and possibly a piece of fruit; unfortunately those stories are all too true. Although I would rather just forget about the outdoor bathroom, it was a necessary part of life. You were about as cold as you were ever likely to be when you had to make a trip there in the middle of a winter night, but we had a chamber pot inside, and only in case of a dire emergency did we make that trip.

Grandma scrubbed our clothes on a washboard with lye soap which was made in one of the big black kettles, and she ironed with flat irons, heated on the kitchen stove. We studied by lamplight, and we took a bath on Saturday in a washtub. The rest of the time we took sponge baths from a washpan. My aunt and I wore dresses made from feed sacks. We thought it was kind of a game to choose the print we each liked best; then grandma made them real pretty for us, and we wore them with pride. Nothing in life was easy, but somehow together we survived. We were all reasonably healthy, and that was a great blessing.

Along with all of the hard times, were also many good

ones. On summer evenings, neighbors would get together for some homemade ice cream and gossip. The youngsters had parties. They popped up big bowls full of pop corn and made fudge; sometimes they would crank up the Victrola and dance. Boys and girls found ways to get together, even then.

One of my fondest memories is of the old black pot bellied stove that stood in one corner of the dining room. It seemed like an old friend, as we warmed ourselves beside it. At times the sides of it glowed a fiery red. That and the kitchen stove were the only sources of heat for the entire house, but the house was small and the bedrooms were shut off during the day. Oh, but those bedrooms were icy at night! My aunt and I shared a featherbed in one of them. On bitter cold nights we would burrow into it as we listened to the howling wind and watched the snow piling up on the window sill outside. On those nights grandma heated bricks, wrapped them in towels, and put them at our feet. Bless her, she couldn't have slept at all, for she spent the night trying to keep us warm.

Another pleasant memory is of the big round wood table at which we ate. It was the only piece of furniture in the dining room besides the stove. I don't know just how big it was; I only knew that there was always room around it for one more. Mealtimes were cheerful, with everyone talking and laughing, and the lamplight shining about the room.

One of the saddest times I recall was when my oldest uncle had to quite school to help on the farm. He had just started to high school and he loved every day of it, but they couldn't afford to send him. The day he brought his books home, dropped them on the table, and cried as if his heart would break, was the day I decided there must be something to that book learning.

There were never any gifts for birthdays, for it was all they could manage to be sure that we had the daily necessities of life. Even Christmas was almost like any other day, but they tried very hard to make it seem special. On Christmas Eve we hung our stocking, and we got to look into it before going to early church. We knew what to expect: a sack of candy, an apple and an orange, and a few nuts. Once or twice my aunt and I got a little china doll and the boys got a bag of marbles or a knife. For me the most exciting part of the day was church, for there, off the right side of the altar, the nativity scene was always displayed on Christmas morning. I was awed by it; it was beautiful with evergreens all around it and an angel hovering above it. After services, grandpa would take me by the hand and we would go up for a closer look; then he would gently tell me the story of Jesus. How I loved that moment.

My grandfather's infinite patience and my grandmother's inherent goodness supplied the important elements for a happy family life. Even after he had spent a hard day working on the farm, grandpa was even-tempered and kind. There was so much that had to be done, and they did it without complaint.

I REMEMBER

James B. Jackson

I remember plowing the fields in the spring of the year with a walking plow and a team of tired old horses. I can feel the pull of the lines across my back as the sun grew warm and personal. Some times I'd kick off my shoes and walk barefoot on the smooth firm earth, newly exposed by the plowshare. The rich smell of the loam, the black birds following along behind to pick up grubs and worms, the sound of the earth falling away from the moldboard—how clearly it comes back after more than sixty years.

I remember gathering nuts after the first frosts had set them free so they fell among the leaves for me and the squirrels to harvest, black walnuts with their juicy green husks that had to be removed and that stained our fingers a rich brown. The browner our hands, the higher our status in the closed

society of the country school. And shag-bark hickory and butter nuts—bushels of nuts to be cracked and eaten all winter long and to be used in cakes and cookies and candy. But the reality was in the gathering.

I remember warm summer nights when we sat on the porch in the dark and listened to the night sounds, the horses moving in their stalls, the insects singing monotonously, the katydid's harsh statement repeated mindlessly over and over. Then a far off whippoorwill or a night hawk swooping low with a zooming vibration of stiff pinions, maybe the call of a great barred owl from the timber, or the mewing of a screech owl from the cedar tree in the corner of the yard. I remember a feeling of closeness that bound us, young and old, together as nothing since has ever done.

I remember a wild blackberry patch on the warm side of the hill in the woods pasture, and another near the creek bank just north of Macomb. The sweet juicy fruit was as big as a man's thumb. The curved thorns reached maliciously out to rip skin or clothing without discrimination. The sweat ran into our eyes and ears and soaked the garments that the early morning dew had not already drenched. But two or three great buckets filled with fruit for jelly or pies and black berry dumplings or cobbler made it a happy experience, especially if there was some one to share it all with.

I remember the smell of the school house, the little one room school house-yard, Joe Duncan, Walnut, White Flock. In the fall it smelled of apples and new books and tablets and cedar shavings from the pencil sharpener and fresh sweat. In winter the dinner buckets gave off their special aroma—peanut butter sandwiches, fresh pork, fried rabbit or chicken and rarely an orange just after Christmas. The wet mittens drying around the big "circulating Heater" reeked, and that, coming led with the stale sweat, coal smoke and dinner buckets, with an overlay of chalk dust and sweeping compound, produced an aroma unmatched anywhere else on earth. Now the country schools are all gone, as are most of those who remember them. But as long as one of us lives, the smell of the country schoolhouse will live.

I remember Grandpa's barn. Built shortly after my birth in 1908, it was the Taj Mahal of barns. It was painted a gleaming white. It was the largest building I had ever seen—bigger than either the Majorville or the Friendship church. And it was taller than a house. There were four sharp, pointed lightning rods along the roof-tree, doors opened at a touch and then I was inside where the light was always dim and the hay and the horses and the cow's breath perfumed the air. There stood the eight great horses whickering for their feed. There was the white barn owl in the hay mow. There were the barn swallows with their deep blue satin coats and their brick red vests. There were the barn cats, too shy to be petted, slinking away at the first sound of my intrusion. There was the occasional rat darting from the corn bin across the great central driveway. We never played in the barn, not that it was forbidden, just forbidding. Here was a place of magic, a place of mystery, scary and fascinating and vibrant with life and sound and smell where little boys dared not go alone and felt more secure if there was a big grownup hand to hold to tightly.

SURVIVING HARD TIMES

Helen E. Rilling

Farm life in the early 1900's was harsh. Making do was a way of life. Houses were ill-heated and water had to be carried from a well in buckets for practically all purposes. Food was home grown, preserved, and then prepared on a black range heated with coal, corncobs or wood. Transportation over roads knee deep in mud when it rained was on foot, horseback or by wagon. Sleds were used in the winter. Much of the family's clothing was made by the housewife.

In bad years worry lines creased the sun-burned faces of the farmers. They wore their denim overalls and jackets for an extra season. The patches overlapped to hide thin spots and to make them warmer. Rubber overshoes and boots were patched with innertube patching kits. They had to be water-tight to wade through the mud in the hog lots. Grain crops brought low prices. Much of it was used for feed and bedding for the horses needed to farm the fields. There was much hard work to be done just taking care of the horses, cleaning the barns, and keeping pasture fences in repair.

Early rural people never wasted anything. Every item was made to last as many years as possible, as there was little money to replace them. Holes in water buckets and milk pails were repaired with copper washers and rivets. Cotton gloves for husking corn had new fingers, thumbs, and patches sewn on again and again. When the father wore out the knees of his long-john underwear, he cut the legs off. These pieces were used for wash cloths. Clothes were handed down from child to child. Winter coats and boots were bought a size or two too large so the children could get an extra year of wear out of them.

At the beginning of the school year each child was outfitted with two pairs of stockings, high shoes, two sets of underwear, a cap or knitted hat, one sweater, and a pair of gloves. The boys got a heavy coat, four-buckle overshoes, two shirts, and two pair of gallus overalls. These lasted for the entire school year. When the children returned home from school, they changed to old patched clothes and their old shoes. Their school outfits were hung and and worn for a week before laundering. Baths were taken once a week. Newspapers were spread on the kitchen floor and wash tubs were brought in from the washhouse and filled with a few inches of warm water from the reservoir on the back of the range or the steaming teakettle. Clean long underwear was put on if it was wintertime. It also served as sleepwear for the children.

A doctor was seldom called when sickness occurred. Home remedies were used. Kerosene, goose grease, hot soups, and tea were favorites. Bag balm used for the cow's sore udders was a good hand lotion for the cracked hands of the housewife caused by homemade lye soap. A peddler sold the farm family flavorings, spices, and patent medicines. A blood tonic was given each spring to the children. The peddler also sold laxatives which were administered when children complained of being too ill to walk the mile or more to school. It usually cured them quickly.

The early housewife worked hard without any labor-saving devices. Bread was made at home and kneaded by hand. Butter was churned with a paddle that was pumped up and down in a stone jar. In the summer the housewife spent many hours canning and preserving. Most wives washed clothes by scrubbing them on a corrugated metal board. The water was heated in large black kettles in the yard. Clothes were dried outside and in the winter they froze to the clothesline. There were no toilets in the early farm homes. Narrow cinder paths or a few wooden planks provided solid footing from the back stoop to an outhouse set behind some tall flowers or perhaps the henhouse.

The early housewife sewed most of the family's clothing. Patching work-clothes was an unending chore. She cleaned by sweeping with a broom, scrubbed with a rag mop, dusted furniture with a few drops of kerosene on a rag. The most particular job for the housewife was keeping the cream separator, milk pails, and crocks sterilized so the milk wouldn't turn sour.

Children were expected to help with the chores. They were taught to take care of their clothing and not tear them climbing through fences or up on corn cribs. They knew there was no money for new clothes. Children were treated to a bag of candy occasionally when there were a few cents of egg money left after the father's chewing tobacco and perhaps some coffee, rice or beans were purchased. Children had few toys in the early part of the century. There were trees to climb and timbers to play in. Sometimes there was a pony to ride or a

boney old nag bought or traded from a band of Gypsies. There were creeks to wade and lots of cats and dogs to play with. Sometimes there was a rubber ball. A paddle could be whittled out of a narrow board and used for a bat. If the father was handy with his knife, he made whistles out of reeds and guns from boards for the children. There were few trips to town for farm families. Money was too scarce for such things as a circus or fairs. Children sometimes reached their teens before tasting soda pop.

A hopeless feeling often surrounded farm families when a prized horse or other beloved animal became sick. There were few medicines or treatments to be used and no money could be spared to call the "horse doctor." Hog cholera could wipe out an entire hog crop. The farmer then hunted for extra meat. He killed rabbits and young squirrels when other foods were in short supply. The loss of crops from too much rain, a drought, or late spring frost caused much hardship. It meant clothes would have to be worn for another season and the housewife could not buy a much-needed kitchen range.

But no matter how poor the farm family was, there were always those who were much worse off. Hard times on the farms touched the lives of many other people. The hired hands lived in miserable cramped houses with their large brood of children. They came to central Illinois from Kentucky and the other poorer states and lived in shacks at one end of most small towns. The men worked on the farms as extra hands in harvesting season. In the winter they walked a mile or so out of town and rode the railroad coalcars back, tossing off coal along the way. The coal was picked up and carried home in burlap bags on their backs and used to heat their homes along with what little wood they could cut on good days.

Those years of hard times bred several generations of gritty hard-working Americans. They were the backbone of our nation.

THE BAD YEARS WERE HAPPY YEARS

Guy Tyson

In 1928, my Dad owned 80 acres of land in Scab Hollow. He lived up the road west a mile and farmed the fields with horses and kept a flock of sheep in the pasture. Then he rented a larger farm west of Rushville and wanted to know if I wanted to farm the Scab 80. The old shack was in bad shape, but I fixed up one room and moved in. I owned a horse, and bought another for 15 dollars, and Dad loaned me a three-year-old colt. I bought a 16-inch walking plow for 50 cents, a disc for $3, and a harrow for $3 at a sale; Dad also loaned me a corn planter. There was 24 acres, all bottom land, for corn.

Fred Henninger wanted me to help him sow oats, and when we got done and he paid me, he also gave me a runt sow pig that weighed about 25 pounds. I bred her when she was old enough and she had five pigs. John Dailey sold me a large Brown Swiss cow for $75, one half down and he would carry the rest. When I paid him the other half, he said times were so bad anyone who got his money back was lucky and he wouldn't take any interest.

Uncle Geo Parks gave me 100 baby chicks. I put my fresh milk in crocks and skimmed the cream off the top and the skimmed milk I didn't use I fed to my pig and baby chicks. They grew fast and the chicks were soon big enough to eat, so I would have fried chicken at least once a week. Most of the meat I had been eating was squirrel or rabbits that I shot with my rifle, which I always carried when I went to drive the horses home or cows from the pasture.

When the pigs got big enough, I kept one to butcher and one to breed and sold the other three. The farm elevator hauled them to market in St. Louis. They weighed 220 lbs. and brought $3.15 per hundred, but they deducted 35 cents from the $3.15 for haulage and commission. Through the summer I worked on the house. I put new floors in two rooms, and when it was ready to move into, I got married in the fall.

Dad had a lot of milk cows, and he had one he didn't like. He said I could have her if I would come and get her. She gave a lot of milk, but sometimes she would kick the bucket of milk over. I bought a cream separator and our two cows gave us all the cream and butter we wanted and we had three gallons of cream to sell every Saturday. When we got the cream check, we bought three gallons of gasoline for 15 cents per gallon, so we would be sure to have enough to get back to town, and the rest was our grocery money. There were forty hens from our baby chicks, and we ate some of the roosters and sold the rest.

All the farmers went to town every Saturday night. There was a picture show, and the stores and barber shops stayed open until 10 o'clock.

When I was a small boy, my folks went to town with a team of horses hitched to a surrey. There were two picture shows, one on the north side of the square and one north of the Penny Store. Each one showed a 30-minute comedy and a feature story that lasted an hour. They each showed two shows each Saturday night so the patrons could go to one, then come out and go to the other. They were always full. It was about midnight when we got home and got the horses put in the barn.

A neighbor from Browning planted a patch of corn, and when it was ready to shuck, he had a job in Havana. He said he thought there would be 200 bushels and he would let me have all of it for $14 if I would shuck it. I needed the corn, but I didn't have $14. Fred Beebe owned a coal mine up the road a mile. He had a brother-in-law who farmed at Roseville. He told Fred if he would bring him a truck load of coal he would give him a truck load of ear corn to take home. He had been burning ear corn in his stoves because he didn't have the money to buy fuel. Fred was selling coal for 7 cents per bushel.

We always gave the boys a dime when we went to town. Usually they would buy a bottle of strawberry soda pop. If they met one of their schoolmates, he would go along and they would ask for three straws.

We lived in Scab seven years. Harold and Dick were born there, and Harold started to school at the East Union School House on top of the hill. I was one of the school directors and Jim Bartlow was the teacher. I still think he was one of the best teachers and district superintendants Schuyler County ever had. We paid him $45 per month.

One year I planted a quarter of an acre in soup beans. When they were ripe I would load a half load in the wagon and tramp the beans out of the hulls. One day when I was cleaning beans a neighbor who had several kids came over to the wagon and said he would work for me a day for a bucket of beans. I gave him a milk bucket full of beans and he helped me cut wood for one day.

I owned a Baby Overland car before I started to farm. There were no gravel roads so you had to put chains on the back wheels when it was muddy. I soon wore the old car out and we drove a horse and buggy to town for a few weeks. One of our neighbors had an old Model T Ford car, but it got so it couldn't pull the hills. He bought a 1918 Dodge touring car that had the top tore off. It could go through mud or hills that some cars couldn't climb, but he had never driven a car with a gear shift lever and was afraid to try to drive up and down the Scab hills, so when he wanted to go someplace he asked Elsie or I to drive for him. One day he said if she wanted the car she could have it for $15. We drove it a year.

A neighbor told me the Ford Agency in Jacksonville had a Dodge Coupe that was as good as new but was ten years old. They wanted $25 for it. My brother Vaughn took me to Jacksonville and I bought it for $18. I bolted a pulley wheel to one of the hind wheels of the old touring car to power my table saw to saw wood. I traded so many cars I've forgotten most of them, but I don't think we had a new car until we had been married twenty-five years.

During World War II, we tried to feed the world and furnish war material for the allies, so there was work for everyone and wages were high and prices were good. Since then there have been several recessions but never one as bad as the

depression after World War I.

Franklin Roosevelt was elected president and he and his followers organized the New Deal. One of their theories was that if city folks could have electricity, country folks were entitled to it also. The Rural Electric Association was organized and they started to build electric lines to every farm house in the U.S. at the government's expense, but it put thousands of men to work, and they spent their wages for necessities that they had been doing without.

The Farm Home Administration was organized. Any worthy farmer who was a family man and had tried to borrow money from three different places and been turned down, the government would loan him up to $8000 on a farm. That had to be the price of the farm, if the county committee approved you and the farm and thought you could make a living on it and enough extra to pay for the needed repairs on the building and fences and lime the fields. Lots of farms had never been limed. If you bought the place you had 40 years to pay for it at 3 and 3/4% interest. I was among the first ten to get a farm in Schuyler Co. I bought a 148-acre farm with 100 acres in cultivation. It had 2 houses, 3 barns, a good hog house and most of the fences were hog tight.

One of the county committee members turned me down on one farm. I was forty years old, and he said I wouldn't live long enough to pay it off at one payment per year, so I was a bad risk. He let a bale of hay fall on him and he wasn't able to go to the next farm I looked at, and the other two approved it. I paid for it in 17 years.

The other night Harold and Dick and their wives were here and we were all talking about how happy we had all been and Dick said he didn't know we were poor because all the neighbor kids were as poor as we were. I think all of us agree that for all of us even the hard years were happy years.

A BOY DOING A MAN'S WORK

Robert L. Brownlee

The hard times which I knew best happened the last six or eight years of the 2¢ postage stamp era, which ran from 1885 to 1918. I was a boy, doing the work and carrying the responsibilities of a grown man. I was born May 22, 1899 on a farm in Mercer County, Illinois, the youngest of nine children. Dad made a living from this place for many years. He was going blind, and by 1911 he could see only to do chores. I was twelve years old that spring, tall and skinny with big feet, a willingness to work and a lot of experience for a boy of my age. I had been doing the chores and a lot of other work for three or four years. That year I had to take over the major part of the real farming operation. Dad couldn't afford to hire a man, and my older brothers were all married and on their own. So it was up to me to take over and I was as proud as a peacock that the folks trusted me to do it. My two sisters helped me all they could, but they had their own work and could spare only three or four hours a day for field work.

We had six horses, good big ones. Dad was very particular about them. They had to be curried and fed just right and the harness had to be kept in A-1 condition, especially the collars and collar pads. When the spring work started and the horses hadn't been worked hard all winter I had to stop every hour or so and wipe and get rid of the sweat and the long winter hair until they toughened up. We couldn't afford a sick horse or sore shoulders. Everything had to go good for us to make a crop; if not, we had to go without something for the rest of the year. What we made off the farm was all we had, and unexpected expenses made it that much harder. Mother raised the garden and took care of the chickens and turkeys. The girls ran the house, did the milking and helped me when they could. We worked like a well oiled machine with mother to lay out the work. We lived two miles from a country store that sold us what we had to buy on credit. We paid the bill twice a year—

when we thrashed the oats and when the corn was shucked.

We had a banner year in 1911. The corn made 60 bushels to the acre, oats was good and we raised 60 head of pigs and they brought a good price. Since Dad liked to buy every new thing that came along, he bought our first car, a model-T Ford touring car and then found he couldn't see well enough to drive into town. So I started driving and became the family chauffeur for all the rest of the time that I stayed at home. That summer Dad developed a cancer on his face and decided to take treatments from a man in Monmouth who had a treatment for curing cancer. His name was Dr. Call. I don't know whether he was a legitimate doctor or not, but he did cure the cancer in a year or so and it never came back. Quite some time later Dad had the cataracts removed from his eyes and could see pretty well the rest of his life.

We had 60 acres of plowed land, five acres of hay, and 55 acres of timber pasture. The crops were corn, oats and red clover which we rotated. Each year we had 40 acres of corn and 20 acres of oats to plant. In March I would drop out of school and sow the oats with an endgate seeder with help from one of the girls. Then the field was disked and harrowed and that was it until harvest time.

That left two 20-acre fields to get ready for corn. One field was corn stubble from the previous year. We broke the stalks with an old railroad rail with a team of horses hitched to each end, me driving one and one of the girls the other. Then we raked the stalks into a windrow and burned them. After the ground was worked down with a disk and a harrow it was ready to plant. Planting was usually done by an older man with a steady hand and a lot of experience, but I planted my first field of corn just two weeks before I was twelve years old. The rows turned out pretty straight and I was able to plow the corn without any trouble. My Dad was a good coach and I caught on quick. I was real proud.

In 1914 Dad bought the first tractor in the neighborhood. It was a steel-wheeled Fordson with no fenders. You sure had to watch those back wheels. That was a good year. I got along fine with the tractor. I loved it. I was fifteen and pretty well grown up. It was the fifth day of May and I wanted to plant the next day, so I was pulling the harrow and riding along about half asleep, kicking the dirt when my foot caught in the real wheel. It wrapped my leg around the axle and pulled me down off the seat before I could get loose. I had to get to the house somehow and I couldn't walk. Finally I got the harrow unhitched and drove the tractor half a mile to the house. Dad was in the barn shelling corn and couldn't hear me. I crawled the last hundred feet and banged on the door until Mother came and helped me to the couch. She decided it was not broken but it was a bad sprain and the pain was terrific. Dad came in and he began worrying about the corn planting. Every one else was busy planting and he couldn't see well enough to do it. I decided to plant on crutches, so on Monday (this was Saturday) I got started and planted the forty acres on crutches. Believe me, it took some doing but I got it done.

Besides the field work there were daily chores to be done. There were three or four cows to milk night and morning, livestock and poultry to be fed and watered, the barn to be cleaned, coal or wood to be brought in and ashes to be carried out. The "chores" took an hour or more and could not be put off. I helped my sisters until I was ten, and after that most of the chores fell to me. We had over a mile of fence to keep in repair. Dad and I cut walnut posts and then cut the tops up for stove wood. I checked the fence about twice a year and repaired it where needed. That was my job from the time I was about 10 or 11. It was hard work for a kid, but Dad was able to help sometimes.

Our garden was all of a quarter of an acre. Mother showed us when and where to plant. In the spring the garden took two or three hours of work a day and Mother was pretty strict, because the vegetables furnished a good deal of our food. We also had a truck patch where we grew late potatoes, tomatoes, sweet potatoes, pumpkins, and melons. We picked

the roasting ears right out of the field corn. I don't think I ever tasted sweet corn until I grew up.

As soon as cool weather came we butchered six or seven hogs. We carried water and heated it in a big kettle to use in scalding the hogs. Then they were scraped clean, hung by the hind legs and gutted. Dad did this, but the kids carried the water and scraped the hogs. After the meat was cut up we carried it to the smoke house to be cured. We had accumulated all the necessary equipment for butchering, including grinding the sausage and rendering the lard. By the time we were through we were all so tired of meat we didn't care if we ever saw another piece. Even now, I don't care much for pork!

Helping Mother do the washing was another hard weekly job. We carried hot water from the kitchen to the wash house where Mother had three washing machines. (There were always several small children around that Mother was raising for someone else.) The water came from a big cistern and it was nice and soft. My sisters and I talked Dad into building a new wash house closer to the cistern. Then we got a big kettle that fitted into a round iron stove. That was set up right in the wash house, so the job of carrying water was not so bad after that. My brother gave me an old upright gas engine and I repaired it and rigged it to the new ABC washer Dad had bought. Then we just dipped the hot water into the machine and cranked up the engine. I liked that because it gave me more time to go fishing or hunting and I didn't have to carry all that water.

We burned coal to heat the house in the winter and we hauled the coal from a small mine about five miles away. From the time I was eight, Dad and I would go to the mine with two wagons; Dad drove one team and I drove the other. I loved to watch the big old horse that went round and round to lift the coal up from the mine. They dumped the little coal cars in our wagons and we shoveled it into the coal house when we got it home. We would haul four loads each fall. After I got to be twelve years old I hauled the coal by my self in August, one load a day. Some chunks of coal would weigh nearly a hundred pounds. It sure was hard work.

Hunting and trapping was part of the winter activity that I really enjoyed even though it was not an easy sport. I trapped mink, muskrat, coon, possum and skunk with an occasional fox. I hunted rabbits, pheasants, quail and ducks but rabbits were a staple food in the winter. Many times there would be twenty or more rabbits hanging frozen on the clothes line and Mother would cook rabbit three or four times a week. I went to look at my traps every morning before daylight and then had the chores to do when I got back before I went to school. I made two or three hundred dollars each winter from my trap line. No one thought of hunting and trapping as a sport; it was a way to make a few extra dollars in the winter when work was scarce.

By the time the first World War was over in the fall of 1918 I had had all the farming I wanted. I was sick and tired of the hard work and the hard times. One of my several brothers-in-law took over the farming and I struck out on my own. After nearly seventy years I am surprised at how clearly I remember those early days and how much more enjoyable they are as memories than they were in reality. The hard times of the depression and the ones the farmers are having now were and are wide-spread. My hard times were of a very personal nature.

OUR FIRST FARM

Vera S. Henry

The big work horses strained to pull the wagon-load of furniture up the deeply rutted lane, and my Dad hollered "Giddy-up! Gee! Haw!" as they neared a step grade. From our perch atop the furniture, we children got our first glimpse of our new home, a two-story white house with a big yard enclosed by a picket fence and surrounded by large oak and elm trees.

I was a sturdy, six-year-old, out-doors girl with a mop of auburn curls. My middle sister was eight, a thin, delicate, pretty girl with light hair, who preferred to stay inside most of the time. Our older sister, thirteen, had dark hair, was short and chubby, quiet, very adept at sewing, cooking, and cleaning. We all had big brown eyes that missed very little!

Dad was tall with a shock of gray hair that had been reddish-blond, and had vivid blue eyes. He was a gentle, hard-working person who loved to gather us around and tell us tales of snakes that formed hoops and rolled down the hill, or salt and pepper ones who could scatter themselves apart then come back together to one piece. We didn't believe them—but we loved to hear them.

Mom was a tiny, feisty, loving, laughing woman who much preferred being out in her flower beds to working in the house, but who, nevertheless, ruled the roost, and not only made home-bread every week, canned all summer, sewed all our clothes on a Singer treadle machine, but always had time to give us a hug or a swat, whichever was appropriate at the time. Oh, yes, laundry was washed in a hand-operated machine and pressed with heavy irons heated on the stove.

Our other family member was our big brother, fourteen, also a tall, quiet, but not very "work-brittle" person! He had dark blond hair and hazel eyes.

He had gone ahead of us and had the wood stoves burning in the parlor and the range in the immense kitchen. As we piled out of the wagon and ran into the house, we entered a large center room, forever after referred to as the "porch," although it really was the connecting room between the two ells of the house, one side being the kitchen and the stairway to the attic, and the other the parlor, sewing room, the only downstairs bedroom and the stairway to the upper bedrooms.

I ran to the parlor and there it was: our big square Steinway piano that Dad always said he'd never move again, but which all of us children learned to play by ear. They were setting the leather-covered horsehair sofa there too, and the corner what-not. I discovered a little chimney cupboard there that, from that time on, was mine to play in and hide my special treasures in.

Mom gave us each tasks to help with the supper. The reservoir on the range had warm water, so Sarah and I washed the dishes. Mildred filled the kerosene lamps, trimmed the wicks, set them around the house and lit them. Mom was busy rolling out long dumplings to put into the pot of beans she had cooked and brought along. This, with big chunks of bread from the warming oven on the range, was our supper.

Dad had put the horses away and came stomping in the house. He pumped water from the little hand pump into the metal wash basin, put his face down in it and made a sound like "Bow-legged Jones." This always made us kids laugh. Then he walked towards the big round oak table where we sat and sang, "Oh, she washed her pigs in the kitchen sink! Knickety, knackety, now, now, now! The little black ones, they all turned pink! Knickety, knackety, now." Then as we ate we all had a chance to share the day's happenings.

Our first night on the farm was a cold one, even though it was March. My two sisters and I argued over which upstairs bedroom we got, then finally climbed in on the soft feather ticks and pulled the heavy comforters over us. There was no heat upstairs except the bit that found its way from the parlor stove.

We children bundled up the next morning and Dad hitched the wagon and took us to school. It was to be the last time we rode the two-mile long journey. We soon learned to cut across our pasture and shortened it considerably. Our teacher was a man, and he had a fire going in the stove at the back of the school room. We all tried to get desks close to the stove, but with all eight grades in one room this didn't work. I was in grade one, with two boys. The other grades had only one or two each, totaling fourteen students.

Even on cold days we went outside at recess to play fox and goose if there was snow, or "May I?" or "Red Rover" or ball games if it was nice. Our teacher always took part in these activities. On the last day of school all parents came; we set up long tables in the school yard and had a bountiful picnic, played games and sang songs.

Each day on the farm was a new experience, as we had always lived in Pekin, Illinois before moving to Fulton County. We explored the pasture and woods, the big red barn with loose hay in the loft and pigeons cooing in the rafters. Stalls for horses and cows were below and the barn had a spicy, sweet smell, a mixture of all these things.

There was also a big corn crib, and you could see the ears through the slats. A smoke house for butchering days, and ice house we never used, a chicken house with Rhode Island Reds and Leghorns. Mom always "set" her hens, sometimes with duck eggs. Then the poor mother would be frantic when the little ones decided to go to the creek and swim.

I loved following my Dad as he drove a team of horses, the reins over his shoulder and around his neck, as he guided the plow that turned over great rows or rich soil. Huge white clouds billowed in the blue sky, a sound of turtle doves carressed my ears, and joy was complete.

Threshing days were also exciting. The big steam machine was taken from farm to farm as each farmer's wheat ripened. Workers had cut and shocked the wheat, making stacks. Men would toss these on a rack, haul them to the thresher and feed them into it, and the yellow straw and wheat were separated and stored.

All the women and kids would be busy getting a meal ready: chicken, beef, dumplings, homemade bread and pies, home canned vegetables and fruit, pickles of every kind, salads and cakes. Usually the food was placed on tables in the yard and the men ate first, then the kids, then the women.

I remember one day we had been to our neighbors helping on threshing and we kids had gone for a walk. A cyclone came up suddenly, scaring all of us, as the wind whipped the trees and bushes around us. We ran like frightened deer back to the house and found tables overturned, dishes broken and food everywhere. When we got back to our own farm our corn crib was flattened, but we felt lucky this was the only damage. My Dad and brother started cleaning up, and this was just another day on the farm.

Putting up hay was also a favorite time, for I got to lead the hay horse. When the hay rack loaded with loose hay came in the barn, a large hook was firmly placed in it. Then as I led the horse, a rope from him to the hook and over a high rafter would swing the hay up in the air and over to the loft. Workers would mow it back, usually a hot dirty job.

Our "porch" was the entertainment center, and was the scene of many neighborhood square dances and song fests. My sister and I were always asked to harmonize such old favorites as "Juanita," "Doodle-Doo," "Shine on Harvest Moon," "Who Broke The Lock on the Hen-house Door?" and many others.

These years on the farm were very decisive in forming my love of nature and all outdoors, and in giving me memories to be treasured forever.

RECYCLING

Marie Freesmeyer

The early years of my life were spent on a farm in Calhoun County during the first part of the century. Those were not difficult times as were the Depression years and those during World War II, but, like most families of that era, we practiced strict economy. Our philosophy was, "Use it up; wear it out; made do; or do without." By today's standard, we experienced "Hard Times on the Farm."

The term "recycling" had not yet been coined, but we practiced it in the strictest sense of the word. We recycled everything from baling wire to lace curtains. Nothing was thrown away until it had been used at least once after its original purpose. "Save it; it might come in handy" was our motto then and is still mine today.

Take baling wire, for instance. This heavy wire, as the name signifies, was used to tie bales of hay. When the two wires were cut in order to feed the hay to the livestock, they were carefully put away for future use. The pieces were used for mending fences, machinery, tools and furniture; for securing latches, crates, gates, sidecurtains (on rigs and cars) and tarpaulins. Most everything was either temporarily or permanently fixed by using this versatile wire and a pair of pliers.

Binder twine, that coarse, heavy string made from hemp fibers, was purchased by wheat farmers in huge balls to use in their binders at harvest time. This useful twine served many purposes after the original one. If kept dry, it lasted for years and was used over and over. It came in mighty handy for tying sacks, gates, chicken coops, bundles, harness, and even an occasional suspender.

Cotton string which the grocer used to tie most all the commodities he sold was never discarded. Why, that string was carefully wrapped into a ball and occupied an important place in the "what-not drawer." We used pieces many times each day. When a 50-lb. sack of flour or an occasional 100-lb. sack of sugar was purchased, we carefully unraveled the string with which it was sewn. By starting at just the right place, we obtained two long pieces of good string to add to the ball. What did we do with all this string? To quote Robert Browning, "How can I count the ways?" With no adhesive tape, paper clips, or rubber bands, string had to serve a multiplicity of uses. What really took its toll on our collection was when some child wanted enough for his kite or the outside of a ball.

These same flour and sugar sacks, when emptied, were a good source of useful cotton material. The flour sacks had letters and a rose or other design stamped in bright colors. This coloring had to be coaxed out before the material was usable. To do this, Mother applied a generous portion of coal oil (never referred to as kerosene), rolled it up, and allowed it to remain for several hours. After another soaking in a strong suds made with lye soap and boiling, most of the coloring disappeared. Oh, you might be able to still see traces of the lettering, "Mothers' Best" or "American Beauty" for a while. Perhaps the large red rose was the most stubborn of all, but repeated washings and drying on the grass in the hot sunlight bleached them nicely. All that effort paid off as it produced a large square of white muslin for free. Four of these pieces sewn together made a table spread which lasted for years. With a bit of turkey red pearl cotton thread, Mother ornamented the feld seams with a pretty feather stitch. This sack material was also used for making petticoats, children's undergarments, gowns, and even pillowcases. All our dishtowels were made by hemming material from either flour or sugar sacks. The sugar sacks were much larger but were of a thinner, unbleached material. They, too, had many uses besides for dishtowels.

Though they came at a later date, I can't overlook the printed feed sacks, which were the housewife's delight. Housewives, including myself, found an opportunity to recycle in a big way. We even sent along pieces we wished to match when our husbands went to purchase more feed. We outdid our mothers in our ingenuity for finding ways to use this colorful

material. We made it up into aprons, dresses, gowns, tablecloths, curtains, and many other things. Wear? Things from these feed bags wore like iron! In fact, the same material was recycled several times and finally ended up as cleaning cloths.

Worn bed linens (always cotton muslin) were always recycled. This soft material made excellent handkerchiefs to be used by children or anyone with a cold. Rolls of sterile pieces were kept on hand ready to be used for binding wounds. Strips were torn for bandages and for securing splints and making slings. Numerous sterile pads were made for the sickroom. In summer, squares of this thin material were used to strain the juice from fruit for making jelly. Mother made her sausage sacks from strong portions. If the available quantity exceeded all these uses, this white material went through a dye bath and added bright colors to the rolls of carpet rags.

Everyone has at sometime made over garments, but we saved every worn or outgrown one found uses for parts or the whole. I received a thorough education in this art, as did most girls. No girl was ready for marriage until she was able to cut an appropriate patch from discarded overalls or pants and neatly apply a patch to a torn or worn pair. We made aprons, blouses, and most all the children's clothes from discarded adult clothing. Then we cut off all buttons, trimming and fasteners to be used later. What went into our rag box were really rags! These, too, were used. Woolen clothes were cut into squares to be used for making comforters. All other rags were cut into strips and sewn together for carpet rags. White slips and shirts were dyed then cut into carpet rags. Knitted underwear was patched and mended but had to eventually be replaced with new. The discarded ones were laundered and cut into wash cloths, dishrags, dust cloths, and patches for mending.

Newspapers! Who could list the many uses for the newspapers of that era? First and foremost, I presume, would be their use as kindling for the many fires that had to be built in the kitchen range the year round, plus all those in heaters during the colder months. They were used to cover shelves, line drawers, protect floors, and to paper the out-house. They were used as padding for carpets, for wrapping all sorts of articles, as improvised fans, and even as extra protection inside of coats during severe cold spells. The dishes and crocks of vittles were protected from flies and dust by using papers to cover them. I have named only a few of the many uses of this versatile commodity. Often it was used over and over before it finally ended up being used for kindling the fire. I'm sure the families in those days would have been grateful for a much larger newspaper like the ones we have today.

This treatise on recycling would not be complete if we neglect to mention the all-important use of discarded catalogues (note the former spelling of this book). What would we have done without them? Ours was scarcely sufficient for the need. We were usually down to the slick, colored pages by the time the new ones arrived and we could take the old ones out back.

This thorough training in recycling enabled me to cope with the hard times which came later. Having married "on a shoestring" the year the stockmarket crashed, and giving birth to two children during the Depression, I needed and put into good use all the techniques of recycling.

MEMORIES OF MOTHER

Hazel Denum Frank

My mother did all the things the homemaker of the early nineteen hundreds did, such as wash on a washboard, iron with sad irons heated on a wood-burning kitchen stove, bake all our bread, carry water from the outside pump, sew all our clothes—all the routine. But she would also do almost any job people wanted done, especially the unusual jobs.

My dad, Jesse Denum, was Charlie Peasley's hired man. The Peasleys lived in the big twenty-room stone house near Decorah. My dad, mother (Mary Hudnut Denum), my sister Roberta and I lived in the three-room tenant house back of the big house.

As I look through our family pictures, many of them bring back memories of my childhood. This picture is of Mother dressed in her coveralls, ready to go to the cornfield. She and Dad each had a team of horses and a wagon with high sideboards, and a higher bump board on one side. As soon as Dad got his chores done and Mother got us girls ready for school, with breakfast over and dishes done, they would go to the cornfield. By noon they would have their wagons full. While Dad scooped the two loads into the corn crib, Mother prepared dinner. After a quick dinner, they would be back in the field and by chore time they each would have another load. Mother often picked one hundred bushels a day, a good day's work for most men.

Here is a picture of Mother in her coveralls again. This time she is picking geese for Mrs. John Peasley. She would hold the big old goose with his feet between her knees and his head tucked under her left arm. The soft feathers and down were plucked off its body and placed in a flour sack. Later they'd be made into pillows or maybe a feather bed, which was a bag of feather ticking large enough to cover the bed as a mattress. It didn't seem to hurt the geese, who soon grew another covering of feathers. However, they didn't like to be held and often left bruises on the arm if they got a chance to bite.

Mother wasn't always in coveralls. One picture is of us four standing in front of the kitchen door dressed in our Sunday clothes. We always got a chuckle out of this picture because Mother was standing right in front of the big white enamel dishpan that hung just outside the kitchen door. She was positioned in such a way that it looked as though she had on a big funny hat.

Mother's life wasn't all hard work. She loved to dance. There were home dances almost every Saturday night. Mother often called for the square dances. For many years I had a sheet of fools cap paper listing the calls she knew, and they numbered eighty or more. Of course these dances were family affairs and we girls always got to go along.

I enjoy looking at the pictures, but there is one memory I don't need a picture to remember. Mother often did the house cleaning for Mrs. Peasley. One day when she was cleaning her bedroom, I was with her. I was so awed at the beautiful furnishings and the many interesting things on her dresser, especially the music box. In a tray there was a half of a broken celluloid hair pin. For some reason it interested me, and since it was broken I saw no reason why I shouldn't take it. After we got home and I was admiring my "treasure," Mother saw it and asked where I got it. I not only lost my treasure, but had to take it back to Mrs. Peasley and tell her I stole it. Believe me, I have never forgotten that lesson.

Mother often did quilting, crocheting and all kinds of handwork. One of my treasures today is a wide circular collar she wore with some of her dresses. It is knitted lace made of sewing thread.

She sewed all our clothes. One dress I especially remember was made of flour sacks, bleached and dyed yellow. A large rose was appliqued on the skirt. I was so proud of that dress.

Although Mother died in 1925, at the early age of thirty-eight, I have many good memories, either with or without the family pictures.

MOONLIT NIGHTS AND HOME-BAKED BREAD

Truman W. Waite

Time marches on, but the memories still live of the many changes that have been made in the past eighty years since I was a plain old barefoot country boy down on the farm. My earliest recollections were filling the wood box with wood for the kitchen stove, taking a small pail of water to my father working in the field, and helping my older sister bring in the cows from the pasture to be milked. Not long after that, I got a promotion. I too had a cow to milk.

In the fall we walked to school. A hickory stick was used to point out work on the blackboards and also to make sure we understood what we were being told. In those days if that stick was used on you in school, you got an introduction to another stick when you got home.

Quite often when we arrived home from school, Mother would have some fresh home-baked bread for us. After a slab of bread that we sawed off with a butcher knife and covered with a spread of butter, then topped off with applebutter, we were able to do the evening chores.

In the spring, when work started in the fields, I was introduced to the walking plow and walking cultivator. Walking was not the brand name of the plow and cultivator, it was what you did when you operated the machine. It was not uncommon to walk over twenty miles during a day's work.

Later in the year it was making hay and harvesting the wheat and oats with a binder. Then it was several days in the threshing run to harvest or thresh the grain.

I was introduced at an early age to shucking corn, which was often an every day job that lasted for several weeks. I was up early in the morning and in the field before the break of day. Long before we had finished, our fingers and hands would be very sore and painful from the frost that covered the ears. Corn in those days did not yield as much as today with our hybrid corn and fertilizer. Sixty bushels was considered a good yield and eighty bushels was a topic of conversation in the neighborhood. Today yields of more than twice that amount are quite common.

After a young man had served his apprenticeship helping his father, he usually decided to start out for himself. There was always another, a farmer's daughter, who was ready, willing, and able to be his wife and wanted to have a home of her own.

The courtship, during the winter months, was spent quite often in the parlor playing the organ, playing dominoes, and eating popcorn. When spring came, it was Sunday afternoon rides with the horse and buggy and attending church services in the evening. The horse, which had made the trip many times before, knew the road home and needed no guidance, so the lines were wrapped around the dashboard, leaving both hands free for whatever emergency might arise.

When the time came to say "I do," the couple went to the courthouse, bought a license for $1.25 (now $40.00), and were married. The minister, while receiving only a small token for his services, could nearly always guarantee his services. It was very seldom for a couple to divorce.

Other expenses were some candy for the women and children and a box of cigars for the men and boys that were sure to meet them at the house that night for a shivaree.

The cash outlay, other than your clothes, could be less than a ten dollar bill. You made arrangements with a local landowner for thirty or forty acres of ground. With a team of horses, a wagon, and some used tools that you had previously bought, you were in business. Your new bride had also had the foresight to accumulate some dishes, cooking utensils, and some furnishings that she had made such as bedding. Most likely a few chickens were included.

Money was nonexistent at times. We raised about everything we ate except sugar and flour, which we purchased with the eggs and cream.

Not until electricity came into use, less than fifty years

ago, were conditions in the home any different than those faced by early settlers. Before it was available, we used oil lamps that had to be refilled with kerosene and have their chimneys washed every day. If the wife was not lucky to have ice, and very few were, she hung the butter in the well and placed the milk in crocks in the basement. Water was carried into the house and placed in the boiler on the wood stove to do the weekly wash, which was done on a wash board. For soap we sometimes saved wood ashes and placed them in a container called an ash hopper. By pouring water on the ashes, we collected the lye water and made our own soap by boiling the lye solution and meat fryings saved from cooking. The irons used to iron the clothes were placed on the cook stove to heat. We all had clean clothes to put on after we took our weekly bath, on a Saturday night, in the old wooden tub beside the warm cook stove in the kitchen.

When electricity came to the farm, it was a different way of life. It eliminated the kerosene lamps and both hot and cold water was available at the turn of a faucet. The old wood-burning stove was replaced with a new electric range, a modern washing machine eliminated the wash board and tub, and the sad irons have become collector's items. The old wooden tub, that was used for the weekly bath, was replaced with a shower, and the outhouse was moved inside.

Over the years there have also been many changes in the farming operations. The draft horses, the large flocks of chickens, and the milk cow, to mention a few, are no longer on the farm. Farming has been made easier by improved machinery, especially the early tractors that began to replace the horses, and combines that replaced the threshing machines. With the introduction of hybrid seed, fertilizer, herbicide, and insecticides, the yields have increased until in many instances they are more than three times what they were forty years ago.

Years ago when I toiled all day in the fields with that walking plow, little did I realize that I would live to see the time when great machines pull large plows and others harvesting the grain like we have today. I would not want to got back and relive my life again as it was in the "good old days." I am content to live with my memories and dreams, especially of when I had a thick slice of fresh home-baked bread and butter, and of the times when I courted the farmer's daughter with a horse and buggy in the moonlit nights many years ago.

BARE IN THE CORNFIELD

Clifford J. Boyd

This episode took place in the late June of 1930 when we lived about one mile west of La Crosse next to Crooked Creek. In those days the Lamoine River was appropriately called Crooked Creek. My parents, Walter and Olive Boyd, were having a hard time, as most all farmers were in those depression days, making the payments on the farm, so my dad rented about forty acres of the Johnson bottom land adjoining us to the south. Bottom land next to the creek was always a good money-maker in corn if the year was dry and the creek didn't flood over it. As usual, like all farming, it was a big gamble, but this year the crop was good.

On the day of this incident my dad and I were cultivating the corn in this bottom land, but about noon he had to go somewhere on business and left me working by myself. Dad used a two-row cultivator pulled by three horses, and I used the single row cultivator pulled by two horses. Cultivating corn was a very tedious and boring job which demanded your full attention at all times. You sat on a hard metal seat and guided two sets of three plows around the corn hills by using your feet in the stirrups and hands on the handles. The horses were guided by tying the reins tightly around your back and twisting your back right or left in the direction you wished the horsed to turn. It was important that you not plow too close to

the corn roots but close enough to plow out the weeds and aerate the soil.

The team I was using, Max and John, were probably the worst team in the country for cultivating corn. Max, a ball-faced sorrel, was extremely high strung and skittish and would run away at any unnatural sound. John, a bay, was not quite as skittish as Max but would go along with anything he did. It was extremely uncomfortable holding the team from running by rearing back on the reins around the back, especially for a twelve-year-old boy.

On this June day the temperature was close to 100 degrees with the humidity at least 80% and there was not a bit of wind. The bottom land was completely surrounded. The west side had high brush and trees growing next to the creek bank. The north and east side had a high hill and brush, and on the south side the T.P.&W. Railroad tracks were built on about a thirty-foot bank. The place was like a furnace. With all these discomforts the rippling sound of the creek seemed to beckon me each time I came to the end of the corn row. Late in the afternoon I could not resist any longer, so I headed the team with the cultivator into some high weeds and brush next to the creek. I next peeled off all my clothes and dived into the cool refreshing water. As I broke water I heard Max give a terrific snort and the immediate tearing down of weeds and brush. My heart sank as I knew at once what had happened. Not stopping for my clothes I ran to the edge of the clearing and saw the team about 100 feet away, running at their top speed, dragging the bouncing cultivator behind them. The team ran diagonally across the field toward the only gate which was open and toward the barn, which was about one mile away. I knew I had to somehow stop them before they got through the gate or there wouldn't be anything left of the cultivator and harness but junk. Running as fast as I could and hollering, "Whoa Max, Whoa John," didn't do any good and they were gradually gaining on me. Not only were they tearing up the corn, but parts of the cultivator were coming off. After the team ran across the field, about a quarter of a mile, and up the hill toward the gate they fortunately straddled a tree and stopped themselves. After getting my breath, I settled the horses down and started leading them back, picking up the cultivator seat, tools and other parts. As I returned to the creek, I remember worrying that the 4:00 p.m. train would go by. It would probably have raised some eyebrows and quite a bit of laughter to have seen a naked boy running after a run away team or leading them back across the field.

After collecting the parts and putting on my clothes, I was surprised that there was very little damage. Each plow was attached to the shank with a metal bolt and a wooden pin. This was to keep from bending the shank if you hit a tree root. All the wooden pins were broken, but I fixed them and went back to plowing. About that time the T.P.&W. train went by, but no one knew that if they had been a little earlier they would have seen quite a show.

Fortunately that night a big rain storm came and we were not able to get back in the cornfield for several days. All the torn out corn and tracks were obliterated, so my dad never knew. I have never told anyone about the bare in the cornfield until now and the very important lesson I learned: never leave skittish horses untied when you dive into a creek in your birthday suit.

STRAW STACKS AND KIDS

Helen E. Rilling

Today's children will never get to look across the fields and see those golden mountains of straw that we enjoyed in the early nineteen hundreds. Everyone had them in fields and feed lots. They were something we all shared, and the sight of them gave us a feeling of belonging to the land where we lived on a farm on the eastern edge of Morgan County.

Wheat was planted in the fall. When it greened in the spring we chewed on the new green shoots on our way across the fields to school. We'd arrive with green faces and tongues much to the amusement of the other children.

Wheat ripened in late June or early July. Oats were planted in the spring, many times while snow was still flying. It ripened in June or July just after the wheat. These crops were cut with a binder that cut and tied the grain into bundles. Four horses pulled the binders, or reapers as they were called. The driver sat on a high seat, using a long binder whip to keep the horses moving. The bundles were then put into shocks by hand. It was a good job for kids to help with. What fun we had running ahead to grab a bundle in each hand and stash them against the shock already started by the men! The shocks had to be just "so," father said. Two bundles were stuck down tight in the stubble, then two more to form a center core. Bundles were placed around the outside over the cracks. Two or more bundles were then set tight on the top—some in other directions to form a cap, so the shock would shed rain.

Late in July the excitement would build around the neighborhood. The huge steam threshing engine and long red separator would pull into the grain fields giving a toot or two to announce it was setting up. There would be the big threshing dinner to prepare. My sister Nellie and I hunted jugs and wrapped them in burlap bags and cut bright corncobs to make stoppers. We would have to haul drinking water to the fields for the crew. Our brother, Zack, helped haul the grain from the threshing machine to the elevator at Alexander, Illinois.

The bundles of grain were picked up on hay wagons and hauled to the threshing rig, where the grain was separated from the straw. The wheat straw was blown from the long spouts on the separator into huge stacks in the fields. Wheat straw had beards and was used for bedding the livestock. Sometimes there was so much straw two big stacks were made side by side or at each end of a long field. As the stacks grew in height, the spouts were turned from side to side forming several peaks. The oat straw was used for feed and shelter, and those stacks were often put in pastures near the farm buildings.

What fun we had tumbling down those big straw stacks. From the top of our straw mountains we could see the neighbors' houses for miles around. Sometimes a hay baler would use the straw to make bales for easier hauling. They would leave a sheer drop. We'd slide down the stack and shoot off the edge, landing in the deep softness of several feet of loose straw.

In the winters we raced across the fields after a snowfall, hauling our old wooden-runner sled and carrying shiny grain scoops. We'd slide down the stacks at the craziest speeds, laughing at each other's daring exploits. When we got cold, we'd dig a hole on the sunny side and scrunch back into it, baking in the hot sun until toasty warm again for the long trek home over the frozen fields. Animals used the stacks for winter homes. We'd investigate all the mysterious burrows hoping to find a sleeping bear.

In the spring the stacks were burned to make way for plowing the fields. Those were exciting times. We always begged father to burn the stacks when we were home from school. We thought they were the biggest fires in the whole world.

In early summer mother planted watermelons and cucumbers for pickles in the ashes. She had to be sure father plowed around some of the spots where the stacks had been. Just the thought of those big juicy watermelons and cantaloupes always did the trick, and he left her several nice spots. The cucumbers were planted in one spot and the melon in another. It was thought they would mix if grown too closely together. The ashes were five inches deep and the ground underneath loose and crumbly. It took very little cultivation to grow a bumper crop. Those oases among father's growing corn and hay were places we all enjoyed going. Kids and dogs went along. We helped mother dust for insects. What a thrill to discover the first big yellow bloom or the first tiny green cucum-

ber just an inch long. They looked like little bugs.

Children will never again get to look across the Illinois prairie and see those beautiful mounds of golds straw. In winter they were tall white hills inviting us to climb them. It was the grandest time to be alive. Each spring we could hardly wait for the cycle to begin anew. In the end we knew we would be the owners of those lofty mounds of straw where laughter rang across the fields as we rolled and tumbled down. Straw stacks and kids belonged together.

SKUNK CHRISTMAS

Dorris Taylor Nash

Living as a tenant farm hand, earning a dollar per day (which fed and clothed two adults, a four-year-old and a two-year-old) was hard times in a serious fashion in 1925. My father, Irven Fisher, and his brother Wesley were glad to be hired hands, each working on neighboring farms in Greene County, Illinois. They were blessed with two hard working wives. Dona, called "Doughnut" by her friends, was a slim, freckled woman, and Aunt Essie was a chunky redhead with movie star legs whose laughter could be heard a distance away when she was tickled about something. Each wife was a good helpmate. Stretching pennies was a way of life for them. I remember seeing my mother sitting at an old drop-head treadle machine at night with a kerosene lamp throwing shadows on her sewing. She made all the bread the family ate and cooked nourishing pots of food. It seemed that a pot of something was always simmering on the back of the wood-fed cook stove. Mom made lye soap to use, and when she washed clothes all the water had to be heated on the stove, and transferred to the wash tub (she used a washboard) and two tubs of rinse water. Each piece of laundry was wrung out by hand. I saw her fingers raw many times from vigorous rubbing on the washboard.

The homemade squares of lye soap served as a cleansing agent for her floors too, and my little brother and I loved the day Mom scrubbed floors. After letting the lye soapsuds figuratively eat the dirt off the floor, she melted a chunk of parafin and mixed it with a small can of kerosene and applied the odorous mixture to the linoleum which was the poor man's carpeting in those days. Next she would pull some of Dad's old wool socks over our shoes, and Jack and I would exhaust ourselves slipping and sliding merrily over the floor to induce a shine. A final buffing by Mom produced the desired glass-like surface she wanted on the floor.

Mr. Hardcastle, Dad's boss, kept us supplied with meat when he butchered in the winter. Mom had a chicken pen and Dad milked a cow kept in a nearby pasture, but we had many meatless days unless Dad found time to walk into the nearby woods and shoot game for our table.

I remember one time he brought home a ground hog he had shot and expected Mom to cook it. She balked noisily and strongly. He hated to see it go to waste, but she dug in her heels and wouldn't even let him bring it into the house. Finally, in disgust, he threw it into the hog pen. She was a good teammate for dad, but the ground hog as food was going too far in her mind.

For recreation she and Aunt Essie would "neighbor" back and forth in good weather. It was an ordinary happening to see Mom trudging down the road pulling a coaster wagon with two small youngsters chattering away on their way to go see Aunt Essie and cousins Loretta and Rosemary. Then in a few days Aunt Essie could be seen returning our call, pulling her daughters toward our house.

One day they were talking about Christmas and wondering where they were going to get cash to provide gifts for their families. Both mothers knew the children would expect to hang up their stockings on Christmas Eve and find them full on Christmas day. Finally an idea was born. Skunks! That was

the answer! Aunt Essie's dogs, named Sport and Whiskers, had killed a skunk a few weeks before and Uncle Wesley had skinned it and got a two dollar bounty fee for it at the courthouse at Carrollton, the county seat. The two young mothers had seen a lot of skunk holes in a high creek bank one day when they had been in the woods picking up walnuts with their children, so they knew they didn't have to go far to find skunks. Discussing the idea with their husbands and getting sage advice on how to become a successful skunk hunter, they quickly made plans for their first skunk hunting expedition.

For several afternoons in early November the two energetic mothers, pulling their offspring in the coaster wagons, carrying a bucket with a rope inside, and the dogs trotting friskily alongside, would travel to the creek to get skunks. We children were told to gather sticks and small pieces of wood which our mothers used to stick in all visible holes except the main one, which could be identified because it was bigger. The dogs would stay close by, barking and jumping as if they knew they were going to be an important part of the event. After all the holes were plugged with wood, calling the dogs to stay close to the hole, Mom and my aunt would begin to draw a bucket of water at a time using the rope to reach the creek water with the bucket. Bucket by bucket they poured water into the remaining open hole in the creek bank. Soon groggy, soggy and bewildered skunks would crawl out of the hole. As they emerged Sport and Whiskers would each grab a skunk, and the fight was on. The dogs would kill them quickly. They had to because the skunks always retaliated in their own distinctive fashion. We youngsters watching from a safe distance would cheer as our mothers called out the score to us.

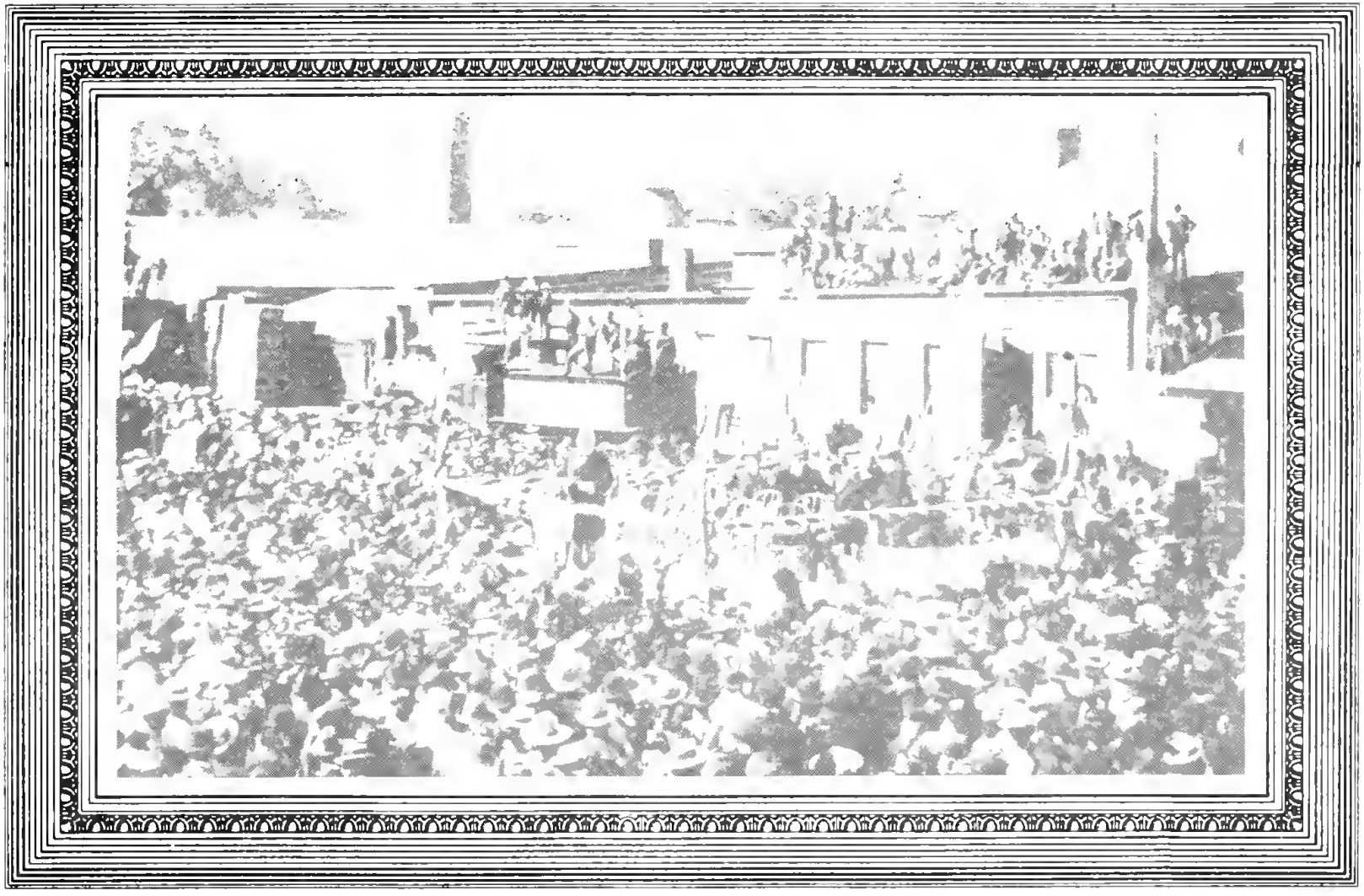
When the skunks sprayed their scent on the dogs, the poor dogs would get so sick. They would rub their faces in the leaves and dirt and roll around being awfully sick. Yet each day they were ready to go tackle another skunk. After the dogs recovered a bit, the skunks would be left in a sack tied to a tree limb and we would go home. We usually had three or four skunks in the sack each day. After dark, when farm chores were done, Dad and Uncle Wes would go to the creek by lantern light, drag the gunny sack to Uncle Wes's house, skin and stretch the hides to dry.

We never ran out of skunks, but eventually the November weather became too cold for us little ones to make the trek to the creek and be outside for long. In mid-December our fathers put the dried pelts in Dad's Model T and turned them in at the courthouse at Carrollton to collect the bounty fee.

Twenty four stiff and stinky skunk hides created a financial bonanza of forty-eight dollars! Over a month and a half of pay compared to Dad's earnings as a farm hand. Twenty-four dollars as our share gave us an unforgettable Christmas! Our stockings were bulging on Christmas morning with candy, nuts, and the traditional orange plumping out the toe. Dad got a couple of warm flannel shirts and Mom had dress goods and warm cotton stockings under the fresh-cut pine tree. My brother was delighted with a shiny red coaster wagon and I recall that I got a toy piano that I used as a stool when I looked at a book.

Looking back many years later I realize those hard times in that small tenant house were a lesson showing that hard work and common sense and family love are a means to overcome hardship and everyday problems. My parents worked together as a team creating a warm solid home environment that a four-year-old remembers sixty years later.

Most people driving on the highway and seeing a dead skunk will wrinkle their noses at the pungent odor. For me, well, it serves as a reminder of the time when life was hard but my parents gave me a beautiful memory that I have shared with my children and grandchildren. Thanks to a pair of enterprising ladies and a few skunks, a family had a happy Christmas.



IV Old-time Politics

OLD-TIME POLITICS

No aspect of Illinois history has received more attention than politics. That is, of course, not surprising since Lincoln was the greatest political leader of his century, and all the issues and campaigns of his time, as well as his associates and opponents, have been discussed again and again.

But Lincoln was the product of a state that already had a lively political tradition that stretched back to the territorial era. A poem called "Candidates," which appeared in the *Illinois Intelligencer* at Kaskaskia on July 1, 1818, demonstrates that campaigning for office hasn't changed much over the years:

> . . . From year to year, no friendly steps
> Approach my cottage, save near election days,
> When throngs of busy, bustling candidates
> Cheer me with their conversation, soft and sweet.
> I listen with patience to their charming tales.
> My health and crops appear their utmost care,
> Fraternal squeezes from their hands I get—
> As though they loved me from their very souls—
> Then: "Will you vote for me, my dearest friend?
> Your laws I'll alter, and lop taxes off;
> 'Tis for the public weal I stand the test,
> And leave my home, sorely against my will;
> But knowing that the people's good requires
> An old substantial hand, I quit my farm
> For patriotism's sake, and public good."
> Then fresh embraces close the friendly scene,
> With protestations firm, of how they love.
> But what most rarely does my good wife praise,
> Is that the snot-nosed baby gets a buss! . . .

Canvassing from house to house, making promises, and kissing babies were part of the routine even before Lincoln came to Illinois. Personalities played a big part in political campaigns, and the man who could appeal to the voters as a regular fellow, no better than anyone else socially but devoted to the public good, was most likely to prevail. Lincoln himself made good political use of his humble background and storytelling ability to build a following among the plain folks of small-town and rural Illinois, even as his intellectual ability impressed the more sophisticated.

He was also a talented speaker at a time when political rallies played an important role in Illinois politics. Rallies have become less common and less important in the twentieth century, with advances in communication, but in this section of *Tales from Two Rivers IV* Edward Young and Roy B. Poppleton recall the days when they were big events.

Old-time politics in Illinois was also characterized by the citizen-legislator, the man who worked at some occupation outside of politics and the law and brought his experience as a farmer or businessman into the legislature. One of the last of that dwindling group was Clarence E. Neff, a farmer from Henderson County who served in the Illinois House of Representatives for many years, and who provides a memoir of political change in our time.

The way that elections are conducted has also changed. Two views of that process from the inside are presented by Josephine K. Oblinger and Delbert Lutz. The former recounts a single experience in the infamous world of Chicago politics, and the latter summarizes years of work in rural Hancock County.

We are reminded of the many ways in which politics can be a personal matter by all of the memoirs in this section, but especially perhaps by Keith L. Wilkey's nostalgic "Buttons and Memories—from Garfield to Reagan" and Nelle Shadwell's serio-comic "Family Feud." It is, of course, the very capacity of politics to involve us in the issues, developments, and personalities of our day that makes that aspect of our national life so continually fascinating.

John E. Hallwas

A DAY AT THE RALLY IN ASTORIA

*Edward Young**

It was at the turn of the century, as far as I can remember, that this story took place. I was about nine or ten years old when my folks took me and my two younger sisters to our first political rally. Of course, I should add this was a Republican rally day. This was during the time when the Republicans were called Gold Standardmen and the democrats were Free Silvermen.

It was a sunny weekday morning when my stepmother packed us a delicious picnic lunch of fried chicken, fruit, homemade bread and butter, and pie. Then we started out for the rally. Dad, my stepmother, Gracie, Nellie and myself rode in a black surrey with the bright colored fringe on the top. Our team of horses, bay mares named Cricket and Kate, pulled our buggy to the small community of Astoria. It took us about an hour and a half to reach our destination, for we lived in an area which was called Flatwoods, just southwest of Vermont. I imagine it is a distance of about fifteen miles from Astoria.

William McKinley was our president at this time, and he must have been running for a second term in office.

The streets of Astoria were filled with excited people cheering and shouting. The town was all decorated with red, white and blue bunting, and flags were hanging everywhere. The politicians, wearing straw hats with red, white, and blue bands around them, were walking around the crowds advertising for their candidate and wearing political buttons pinned all over them. There were other people passing out lots of literature and free political memorabilia, such as slogan and picture buttons and posters. Several bands were placed throughout the town playing patriotic songs such as "The Star Spangled Banner," "America," and of course other cheery loud songs.

*This memoir was written down by Judy Small.

The rally lasted all day, with politicians from all over getting up on a wooden platform in the middle of the streets of the town. They each spoke on behalf of the Republican party's candidate. The crowds of people were loud and full of cheers the whole day. I remember I was right in the middle of all the commotion, wearing two buttons on my coat. One of the buttons had a picture of President McKinley on it, and the other one had a picture of our Vice President, Theodore Roosevelt.

It was such an exciting experience for a young boy like me. Everyone seemed to be happy and full of enthusiasm until some shocking news reached us. It was while we were still at the rally when one of the platform speakers announced the tragic news to everyone: President William McKinley had been shot and killed that day. He announced that Vice President Theodore Roosevelt would have to finish McKinley's term as President of the United States.

I can remember how fast that happy day turned into a sad one. The people were quiet as they stood around and talked of the tragedy that had struck our country that day. People gradually began to load up their families and head for their homes.

It was a memorable occasion for me, but it was unfortunately marked by the death of a great president.

POLITICS IN GENESEO, 1908

Roy B. Poppleton

The story I'm about to tell has to do with politics, politicians, elections and ramifications of the old days. At that time there were few telephones, no automobiles, dusk-to-midnight electric service, horses and buggies, dirt streets, wood sidewalks, and no radios or electrical conveniences.

I especially recall the political rally about the year 1908 at Geneseo. It was a rally complete with all the trimmings,

including the large street crowds, the torchlight parade, the band and the band concert. The rally started in the late afternoon on a fairly decent November day. It was in the days of "local option," and Geneseo was wet while Cambridge (the county seat) was dry. There was the Geneseo House, and they had a bar in the basement with an outside stairway and it was handy. More later about it.

I was about fifteen years old and was a member of the Cambridge Light Guard Band. We were set up on a platform on the corner across from the hotel. We played several numbers, and later in the evening it was time for the torchlight parade. Long sticks were used, to which had been attached a bottle of kerosene with a wick. These were lighted, and being quite a number of them, they made a very high class parade. There were also some fireworks of the lesser varieties.

Roy Jennings was a man of huge proportions. He weighed over 350 pounds and was always around when there were activities of any sort, especially if it had to do with Republican politics. At this particular time he was on the street mingling with the crowd. His long swaggering overcoat had the pockets filled with roman candles. As the coat tails floated in the breeze, some guy snuck up and lit the candles, and they started shooting hither and yon. Miraculously, no damage was done, but the excitement was intense.

Referring to the Geneseo House, I might say it was very handy to our concert platform, and the saloon in the basement made it just dandy because our band members were always thirsty. After the street demonstrations, the torchlight parade, and the other activities had died down, it was time for our band to render a few numbers. The trouble was, only a few members were available to play. Couriers were dispatched to the basement to bring the boys back, but some got lost and never did get back, so the concert had to go on with an abbreviated number of men still able to toot.

Those rallies always had various forms of noise makers, badges, souvenirs, etc. My grandfather had a metal cane with a horn for a handle, and he used it at the rallies.

On the night of a presidential election our courthouse was headquarters for all interested parties. There were plenty of chairs and a long table in this room. There were also boxes of cigars, lots of smoke, and foot-high spittoons. The spittoons had leaded bases so they might rock a little but would not spill over. I liked the excitement too and would be among the men seated about the room. Around ten o'clock at night some early telegrams would begin coming in. Our station agent would remain at the depot well in to the morning hours to receive these messages. I was delegated to do the leg work and would run from the court house to the depot and return with a handful of telegrams. I would do this till after midnight—that's as long as my mother would let me stay out.

In later years when I lived in Kewanee election returns would come to the Kewanee *Star Courier*, and big sheets of paper would be hung on a wire strung across the window setting forth the returns from time to time. There were always crowds assembled outside to watch. But no other election was as memorable for me as the one in 1908, when I was a boy in Geneseo.

CARTHAGE POLITICIAN WILLIAM HARTZELL

Billie Hartzell Thompson

During the presidential campaign of 1892, a local battle was going on between Springfield and the grape growers of Nauvoo over what they considered unfair taxation of their products. William Hartzell, campaigning for States Attorney of Hancock County and sympathetic toward the growers, had sought their support. He was 23 years old at his introduction in Nauvoo, and one citizen voiced the sentiment of all: "My God! Is this the kid we've been working for?"

The young man won that election, and in seeking a sec-

ond term, his campaign poster read, "His record from 1892-1896. Of all indictments returned by grand jury during that period charging offenses which were punishable by imprisonment in the penitentiary, ninety percent convicted. He paid County Superintendent of Schools Nineteen Hundred and Fifty-Five Dollars, over and above his salary."

Years later while I drove that same William Hartzell, who was my father, and my mother about Nauvoo, he warned me of the road we were on. Not only was it leading into the Mississippi, but we were in "bootleg country." Mother said, "We can't be. They have flowers in their yards!" At the moment of our turning into a driveway, we were hailed by a gentleman from behind his flower garden. "Oh! Hi, Hartzell! What can I do for you?" I don't remember how we made our departure, but the incident was typical of Mother's great trust in flower growers and Father's diplomatic exit when it was his choice to back away.

Though my father was a strict prohibitionist ("Liquor has no defense," as Lincoln said), he remained a friend and counselor to his Nauvoo client-electorate. At his death the Editor of the *Nauvoo Independent* wrote—"We have known 'Billy Hartzell' for two score years and never found him wanting."

Father had a way of identifying with voters. On the campaign trail in Durham Township, he said, "They claim the farther you go up on Crooked Crick, the tougher they get. I was born at its headwaters." And at a rally in La Harpe, he bragged, "I was the smartest, the handsomest, the most ambitious (pause)—I was the *only* one in my graduating class." His audience, anticipating his punch line, caught its timing and laughed knowingly.

Of political relics and stories in our family, three concern William Jennings Bryan. Pants pockets full of jingling silver was evidence of Father's admiration for the man's political views, the "free silver" position. A small nondescript drum has survived moves and years since a brother carried it in a parade honoring Bryan. The Blandinsville Picnic, a mecca for family reunions and political opportunities, was for us an opportunity to visit in our Uncle John Huston's home. During a presidential campaign, the Great Commoner was also a guest of the Hustons. At dinner Aunt Ally was apologetic for the gravy. "No need for apology, Mrs. Huston," said Mr. Bryan, "It's just good Baptist gravy." The expression was never explained to us. Its graceful humor sufficed for the occasion, and we children guessed the gravy was thin enough for baptism.

Although he might have cited biblical reference to it, political chicanery seemed never to have been credited to William Jennings Bryan. Someone once asked Judge Charles Scofield, another well-known lawyer/preacher, how he could reconcile the two professions. Well, he had never said anything from the pulpit of which he was ashamed. Father was never guilt ridden in this area either. But one wonders, then and now, at the skullduggery in politics. How seemingly honorable men can play the dirty role when their provincial bias is at stake.

It has been fifty years since I became related to the Ewings of Elvaston. I was finally bold enough to ask John Leonard Ewing if he knew why our fathers were such enemies. John said he certainly could tell me. "My father was running for Supervisor when your father brought up this no-good, so-and-so from Basco to run against him. And he beat Father!" If we didn't laugh uproarously, we smiled. Another time I recall Father and his cronies from west Carthage chose to run a neighbor, John L. Paris, for Mayor against a member of one of the most respected names in the Carthage Democracy, A. Davidson. I guess John made as good a Mayor as many. Earlier, during World War I, Father had served as Mayor.

Among his political peers were John Scott and Ed Combs, more noted enemies within the party. Going to vote in an election where each was seeking a seat on the school board, they had encountered each other on the west side of the

square. Combs said to Scott (or was it the other way around?) "I don't need your vote in this election!" The reply, "If you don't want my vote, get off the ticket!"

During the 1930s, there was a colorful figure in Illinois politics, Senator James Hamilton Lewis. Perfect in sartorial splendor, he had a cane swinging rhythmically with each step. His glasses were the pinch-on type; his hair and well-trimmed beard, once a becoming auburn, had faded to an unfortunate pink. Thus in his later years, he had the demeaning title, "Pink Whiskers." He had been the intended speaker at a Democratic rally in Carthage but, suffering from an ulcerated tooth, he had had to retire to his hotel room and Father did some political-ad-libbing for him—on a ready topic, the farm scene and farmers' plight under the Hoover regime. A youngster joining the gathering late was heard to say, "Senator Pink Whiskers must have shaved. He looks a lot like Mr. Hartzell."

Edward Martin, a law partner, believed that his congressional defeat "was the luckiest thing that ever happened to Mr. Hartzell. He would have been lost in Washington." Father had been swept under the avalanche of votes along with the other Democrats in that disastrous campaign of Al Smith for President. Locally, he had made his political bed with a strange bedfellow—one Warren Orr, who subsequently became a judge on the State Supreme Court. As usual, I knew nothing about the cause but I did know of the enmity between the Judge and Father indirectly. On an occasion, we were walking to town when we met Mr. Wallace, Mr. Orr's father-in-law. Father asked, "How do you do, Mr. Wallace?" Quite amiably I had thought, but the older man passed by silently. In not a subdued voice, Father said, "I always speak to a dog for fear they'll bite." It was one of the two times I had observed my father's unbridled distaste for the actions of his fellow man.

Perhaps, as Mr. Martin said, Father would have been lost in Washington; however, recalling a trial of some consequence in Rock Island, I would be his defender. His opposing lawyer, from Chicago, spoke of "The Country Lawyer"—that intentional remark of derision was all the attorney from Carthage needed. The city barrister retreated in a disastrous exchange of legal maneuvering. Father could handle himself very well. He knew his capability. Once Father was visiting us in Springfield and in a homesick moment I had confided in him, "I wish I could run down Monroe Street shouting who I am and from where I came!" He smiled and counseled, "You know it. That's all that is necessary."

My father's quiet confidence motivated him to a life of achievement as a lawyer and politician.

FAMILY FEUD

Nelle Shadwell

As I grow older, I realize that I was very fortunate to spend the first twenty years of my life in Funkhouser, a small village about 130 miles south of Springfield, Illinois. There are many stories yet to tell about Funkhouser. We had our comedy, mystery, music, barn dances, school and church socials, and even a murder. Some of our humorous experiences, however, resulted from our politics and politicians.

As far back as I can remember, my father was one of the strongest Democrats you could find. Frank Stewart was known for miles around, mostly because he drove a 1914 Model T Ford with straight fenders, a brass radiator and a funny horn that went, "Khuga!" (He named the car "Old Liz" and drove it until he died in 1949.)

On election day, I would sit in my old tire swing and watch him drive back and forth down the old National Trail (now Route 40) to the small, white voting precinct building, which sat back on a dirt road among the trees. All day long he would drive by with Old Liz full of Democrats. But there was a problem.

My mother, Amanda Stewart, was as strong a Republican as Dad was a Democrat. Since drivers were paid to "haul" voters, there was some objection to my mother riding to the polls with him to vote Republican. Mom answered that political ply with the argument that since Frank Stewart belonged to her, so did Old Liz.

This conflict was just part of the situation that had the village in an uproar. Part of the fun was watching—or listening to—the rows between Frank and "Mandy."

For example, Dad tied a large "Democrat" banner across the entire back of the car. Mom countered with a small, red elephant on the small, oval glass window in the back. Later, she entered the garage to find her little elephant scraped off. She marched into the house and got a large butcher knife. No, she didn't use it on Dad, but he wouldn't have been half so angry as he was with what she did. She cut his banner in long slits, then slashed the four ropes holding it to the car and left it lying on the garage floor. My young ears were too tender for what I heard when my father discovered his banner. Even the men spending their usual afternoon on the "gossip" bench in front of the Perring grocery store, just west of our property, heard the battle.

Needless to say, the community was greatly amused by the antics of my mother and father around election time. The grocer, Harry Perring, offered me candy bars if I would sneak around and put Republican stickers on Old Liz. Like all children, I loved candy, but I wasn't dumb enough to do that.

Now, Mom knew how to drive, but Dad wouldn't let her "haul" Republicans. He should have remembered the circumstances under which she learned to drive. He would have been more careful.

Dad worked on the Pennsylvania Railroad and was gone all day. Mom would go out after he left for work, push Old Liz out of the garage, crank her up and practice driving, backing, turning. She could drive all around the big lot and the curved driveway. One day a neighbor, Oma Waugh, hurried over to our house. She needed to go to nearby Effingham for some medicine for one of her children. Although Mom had never driven on the highway, or "hard road," as they called it, she said she would try. With Oma's daughter, Leone, Oma, and me loaded into Old Liz, away we went. Leone and I giggled all the way, bouncing along in the back seat. Mom did beautifully until she tried to park at the curb in front of Paul Eiche's drug store. She ran over the curb and up onto the sidewalk.

When she got home, she told Dad what she had done. He didn't say a word. The next day, Mom and Oma decided to pack a picnic lunch and drive down to the Wabash River to go fishing. They herded all the children out to the garage, but there, on the door, was a big, shiny padlock. Mom didn't say a word. She just went back to the house, got some tools, came back and took the hinges off the door. She opened it back the other way and we went fishing.

With this background, we all knew Dad's restriction on Old Liz was a mistake. Sure enough, Mom announced that if she couldn't use Old Liz to haul Republicans, she would just get a job and buy a car of her own. She said she would show him. She would haul two Republicans to his one Democrat. Dad laughed and told his friends what she had said.

I think my mother's strong Methodist background must have paid off, since two factories came to Effingham soon after her vow. A friend took her to apply at a glove factory and the "Vulcan Last" factory. Mom got calls from both factories on the same day. She chose the Vulcan, where she was to spend seventeen years. The first purchase she made, much to Dad's dismay, was a brand new Ford.

From then on, I sat on the porch swing and watched both of them drive by, hauling voters. I vowed I would never be a Democrat or a Republican.

But now for the finale. When Franklin D. Roosevelt ran for president, Dad got angry and switched to the Republican Party. Mom, however, decided that since Theodore Roosevelt was a good president, Franklin Roosevelt probably would be

good, too, so she switched to the Democratic Party.

Although the old country voting houses are just a memory now, I like to study the politics of the old times. With Frank and Mandy Stewart for parents, how could it be otherwise?

POLLING DAYS—WITH TILLIE

Vera Niemann

A bell rang and "Hear Ye, Hear Ye the Polls are now open" was called out and solemnly repeated three times by Ernest Shively, our grocery store owner and a judge of election. He had stepped outside to give this message to a bitterly cold, deserted world at 6 a.m.

Other judges, already seated at the long dining room table, were: Frank Adams, an alert man with piercing blue eyes; Eugene Schirmer, a polished gentleman of the old school and an accomplished musician; Otto Hesse, our close neighbor, scholarly, quiet, quick, always ready to help, and Papa, Joseph Klein, who always aspired to things political but had to earn a living for us as an accountant at a railroad office.

Voting booths, installed the previous evening, were heavy, gray-painted metal, with a heavy canvas curtain across the upper front. Red and white placards on the windows of the front porch proclaimed this the polling place, always showing the date.

This was a day of great excitement to us. It seemed so right that everyone should come to our house through those many years for elections. In this sparsely settled community, many people walked, more came by horse and buggy, and a few chugged up to the cinder sidewalk in those new-fangled contrivances: auto-móbiles. Mama's hot coffee on the range welcomed all.

Voting day was family day for many people and we enjoyed seeing them, including the babies. Memory does not cover whether women voted then, or not. the sight of men's shoes under the curtains is still clear.

We had strict instructions not to enter the voting room. The rules were tempered with "you may come in if we need you." I managed to be always around the corner to fetch a glass of water, sharpen pencils, empty big bowls of cigar ashes, etc. This was accomplished with aplomb and dignity. With precise, mincing steps, looking neither right nor left, I did the tasks with what I considered queenly grace. After all, I *was* privileged to enter. Did the workers exchange amused glances over the intense, calico-clad child with long black cotton stockings and long brown braids?

One day, a pompous, elegantly attired man took his stance near the front porch. He approached each arriving voter with all the charm of a medicine man. His big, gold-toothed smile and pat on the back accompanied his handing them printed sheets with his name and what appeared to be his business card. I could not understand his words from the election room. "What do you think he's up to?" was heard as the judges peeked around the lace curtain.

Papa, ever the one to decide, stated "He's electioneering and it's against the law." I was summoned, and told to ride over to the constable's (his name fails me) and ask him to come immediately.

My feelings were ambivalent as I got out my treasured, gleaming Ranger bike. This man was handsome and so nice, but they were going to arrest him. However, duty called and the courier for government pumped her way over two hills. The constable, a jolly man, put on his badge and came. After he entered the house for some whispered talk, he strode over to the man. My heart beat wildly as I listened with no shame.

With great affection they greeted each other, shaking hands, and rocking back and forth on their heels. Finally the constable leaned forward with a smile, and said, "Charlie, you

ain't allowed to electioneer on the premises. It's against the law." Charlie stuffed his papers into his pockets, and thanked the constable. He smiled too, but all his sartorial elegance seemed to crumple. I felt sorry for him, and had to reassure myself that, at least, they did *not* arrest him.

After the full day of voters going in and out, the polls were closed by the ringing bell and Mr. Shiveley's triple proclamation to the world at 6 p.m. Then began the rustling and shuffling of papers, and grinding of the pencil sharpener. Talk settled down and we knew the "count" had started.

Why, though, did they mention my little friend "Tillie" so much. They repeated her name many, many times. Later Papa was confronted with the question.

"Tillie?" His was all question marks. "We never talk about Tillie."

"Yes, you do; you all say 'One-two-three-four-Tillie' lots of times." It was then a new golden nugget of information was given me. The meaning and use of the word "tally" in counting.

This voting day was completed. Two judges delivered ballots to the Belleville Court House. Voting booths were removed with great grinds and scrapes. Winners were announced.

The smell of constant cigar smoke filled the rooms for many days. Mama tried her best by pushing the hand-sweeper furiously, and washing woodwork, opening windows and hanging draperies outside. The odor did eventually leave, but sometimes we thought it was into the very walls.

Everything settled down until the next glamorous day of booths, voters, records, counting—minus my friend Tillie.

BUTTONS AND MEMORIES— FROM GARFIELD TO REAGAN

Keith L. Wilkey

"Our husbands link to Lincoln, but our fathers were for Clay."

Political slogans like the above could have been chanted by Grandma Lawless and her sisters-in-law in 1860 when their menfolk were electioneering for Abe Lincoln, the Illinois rail-splitter candidate.

In 1834 when Great-Grandpa Lawless brought his family from Kentucky to central Adams County, Henry Clay was the pride of Kentucky.

In 1850 when Lawless was elected Justice of the Peace in Dover Township, he was no the Whig ticket. And after Uncle Tom Lawless spent five months as a prisoner in Andersonville Prison during the Civil War, the family ties to the (Whig) Republican Party became even stronger.

I have a collection of Republican presidential campaign buttons stretching across a period of 104 years; from James A. Garfield in 1880 to Ronald Reagan in 1984.

All but two of these buttons have a personal connection or a personal recollection. Only my Garfield and Benjamin Harrison buttons were bought from collectors and have no personal meaning.

My James G. Blaine button of 1884 has two personal ties. In 1975 an aged woman in Camp Point sent word for me to stop and see her. "I heard you have a good collection of Republican campaign buttons," she said.

She then handed me an emblem, made of light metal, with the word, in script, "BLAINE." An arrow pierced through the letters.

"My husband, Joe, wore this with pride during the Blaine campaign of 1884. I have kept it all these years. I want you to have it," she said.

Another incident relating to that campaign concerns a

story I have heard my mother tell. In the summer of 1884 she was five years old and her brother was four. About two weeks before the election there was a funeral in the community. In those days a funeral procession moved at a slow pace. No one wanted to be accused of "hurrying them off to the graveyard."

As the black, square-bodied hearse, with its black adornments, pulled by a team of coal black horses with black tassels attached to their heads, moved slowly down the dusty road in the autumn sunshine, mother and Uncle Hugh, swinging on the front yard gate, shouted at the top of their childish little voices, "Hooray for Blaine and Logan! Hooray for Blaine and Logan!"

Their parents, riding by in one of the slow moving buggies, were mortified beyond words.

Until 1896 political campaign buttons were not always buttons, but a non-descript assortment of emblems, stickpins and what have you.

The smooth celluloid button first appeared during the McKinley-Bryan contest of 1896. When I was about 18 years old my mother gave me one of those buttons in mint condition.

"Pa wore this in 1896," she said. "He and my brother, Lloyd, attended a big McKinley rally held in Quincy's Washington Park. After the speaking they got to shake hands with McKinley and it was at that time that he received the button."

My Theodore Roosevelt button was purchased by me for ten cents in 1949. That button also ties in with a family incident.

I have a faded penny postcard addressed, "Oscar Roosevelt Wilkey." It was postmarked August 2, 1912, the day I was born.

My Uncle Oscar, like all my maternal relatives, was a staunch Republican, and he thought it would be nice to have his name connected with the popular Teddy Roosevelt to be carried by his new little nephew. But my father, who was a Democrat, had some very different ideas.

The first campaign of which I have any personal recollection, dim though it is, was the Justice Charles Evans Hughes-President Woodrow Wilson contest of 1916. Though I was only four, I can recall hearing around the house, "Hughes" and "he kept us out of war." I even recall my father having the last laugh when after the Republicans thought Hughes had won, the late votes came in from California and gave Wilson the state and the election.

I was eight years old at the time of the 1920 election. I recall hearing my uncles having a lot to say about Illinois Governor Frank O. Lowden. But as it happened, a dark horse, Senator Warren G. Harding, was the presidential candidate. Being loyal party men, they supported the Ohio Senator.

On my birthday that year Grandpa Lawless was at our house. As he took a big chew of Yankee Girl scrap tobacco, he said, "Keith, come over here and I will give you a birthday present."

As I stood before him he pinned a button on the front of my homemade blue shirt which read, "Harding and Coolidge."

I heard little enthusiasm for the Cox-Roosevelt ticket put forth by the Democrats that year. It was a big Republican victory all down the line.

Coolidge and Dawes were easily nominated by the Republicans in 1924, but the Democrats had a donnybrook. Governor Alfred E. Smith and Treasury Secretary William G. McAdoo were hopelessly deadlocked. I recall hearing over our small Crossley radio that hot summer, the voice of the convention clerk intone, "Al. . . .abamaa. ., 12 votes." Time after time came back the answer, "Alabama casts 12 votes for Oscar W. Underwood!"

Finally, on the 104th ballot, compromise candidate Governor John W. Davis, of West Virginia, was chosen. I recall how all of us felt relieved that it was over.

During that carefree summer of 1924, my sister and I would chant, "Coolidge and Dawes for the nation's cause." At

other times it was "Keep Cool with Coolidge." But when us kids got into a name-calling verbal battle, it was, "Democrats eat dead rats!" versus "Republicans lick tin cans!"

In state politics in 1924 Illinois Governor Len Small was heralded as the "Illinois Good Roads Governor." Like President Coolidge, he won easily.

On March 4, 1925, when President Coolidge was inaugurated, our school teacher, Miss Ethel Lawless, made arrangements for the seventh and eighth grades to go to the home of Wilbur McNeall and hear the inaugural address over his Atwater-Kent radio.

I still recall the thrill I got as I heard the actual voice of the President of the United States, as he began, in his northeastern twangy drawl,

"My countrymen. . . ."

In 1928 I did some actual campaign work for the Republican team of Herbert Hoover and Charles Curtis. "Two cars in every garage and a chicken in every pot," was the most often used slogan. Mr. Hoover had noted that "Prohibition is a noble experiment." Democratic nominee Al Smith was a "wet." Never having known anything but Prohibition, I couldn't conceive of "open saloons."

On election night, as we listened to the returns at Frost's Restaurant, old Louis Frost, Postmaster and a veteran of the McKinley-Bryan torchlight parades, said triumphantly, "Yes, and Hoover will be reelected in 1932." How wrong could anyone be?

Incidentally all the rest of my campaign buttons were collected by me, usually at Republican campaign headquarters.

In 1936 I shook hands with the only presidential challenger I ever have met. At a whistle stop in Hancock county I shook hands with Alfred M. Landon. When I got home I told mother I had shaken hands with the next president. Like Mr. Frost in 1928, how wrong could one be?

No, I have no personal recollections of the granddaddy of all flamboyant and boisterous political campaigns, the McKinley-Bryan contest of 1896.

I did not hear the blaring trumpets and the booming drum of the Camp Point Roller Mills Band as they marched down Hampshire Street in Quincy. I didn't see Colonel William Hanna, swashbuckling legendary leader of the old "Blind Half-Hundred," as the 50th Regiment Illinois Volunteer Infantry, was known. Astride his sorrel gelding, with his head held high, he proudly carried the Stars and Stripes.

Behind the band came the blue-clad veterans; then the marchers, with their kerosene filled flambeau torches, whose flame leaped higher into the night air as the marcher periodically blew into the mouthpiece.

But many times I have heard tales told by older men in the community who had participated in those action-packed affairs. I remember when Mr. Frost would wave his arms and raise his voice as he told his tales. And his adversary, old Dick Morris, a "hot Democrat" and Bryan supporter, related his versions.

The political parades I recall were low key affairs and more local oriented than state or national. Campaigning was mostly attending the numerous fried chicken suppers and picnics sponsored by the churches. All the local candidates would be there, eating fried chicken, smiling, shaking hands and handing out cards and books of paper matches. I recall no bumper stickers.

Those raucous and noisy campaigns of old now live only in the minds of the fading old-timers. The automobile, the telephone, the hard roads, and especially the radio have changed forever those unique and picturesque times. Though I didn't actually experience them, I am glad I could talk with those who did.

HOW I LEARNED ABOUT VOTING IN CHICAGO

Josephine K. Oblinger

As freshmen at Chicago-Kent College of Law, where only seven or eight students were women, we were known by our last name and the initial of our given name. Hence, I was "Harrington, J."

In early September, 1938, the Cook County States Attorney, Thomas Courtney, contacted the local law schools to recruit watchers for the upcoming general election. I volunteered, as did most of my classmates.

We had several sessions at the Cook County Building under Judge Jarecki on what to watch for and on the procedures to be used to report any untoward incidents to the States Attorney's office. At the last session we were given our assignments. To my surprise I found "Harrington, J." listed for a precinct in the First Ward, on 22nd and Michigan Avenue, the river ward. The ward had been made famous by those notorious politicians "Hinky Dink" Kenna and "Bathhouse John" Coughlin. This was the ward where votes were bought openly, where many of the registered voters "lived" in vacant lots or inhabited nearby cemeteries. This was the ward where loan sharking, prostitution, the numbers racket, and paid-for elected officials flourished openly. Did they really want a young lady from the Beverly Hills suburb to go in there?

No matter. I reviewed my instructions on Monday evening, set the alarm clock for 4:30 a.m., and went to bed with visions of my single-handedly reforming the crooked elections in Chicago.

I arrived at the precinct polling place on time, 5:55 a.m., to be greeted by a ward "heeler" who demanded to know what the "little lady" wanted so *early* in the morning. When I replied I was there to monitor the election, he burst into a loud guffaw and said that was the first time he'd ever heard that description of the "little lady's job."

Finally, a policeman came to my rescue and opened the door into the polling place. What a sight the proverbial smoke-filled room with bottles frequently making the rounds. Who could help me identify the judges! I decided they were the five with their coats off. I presented the least red-faced one of the five with my credentials. He tossed the paper aside and said this must be a Salvation lassie come to save our souls. At last I was given a chair and told to sit there and keep my trap shut; but I couldn't.

I had so many questions. My first question, "which were the Republican judges and which the Democrats," was greeted with hoots of derision. I was informed that "we're all one big family here and all belong to *the* party."

I was astounded when the voters finally began to straggle in, and money changed hands. It was known as "chain voting." A ballot had been obtained by my greeter, the ward heeler, before the polls opened, who then marked it. When the first voter arrived, he was given the *marked* ballot outside the polling place. He then requested a ballot inside, went into the voting booth, came out and deposited the previously *marked* ballot, gave the fresh ballot to Mr. Big who proceeded to mark it and pay off Mr. Voter in clear view of all of us. Now he had a marked ballot ready for the next voter. I rushed to the phone to report this violation to Mr. Courtney's office, only to be shoved into my chair and told that they didn't like snoopers.

It seemed that two out of every three voters needed help to vote. (Nothing so legal as two judges, one from each party—or were there any Republicans?—accompanying the voter.) The curtains weren't even closed as the *judge* voted the ballot.

I again attempted to use the phone and was threatened with being given the heave-ho. The policeman just smiled.

As the day progressed I noticed many women coming in to vote all dressed in black—black shoes and hose, black gloves, black dress, black hats and heavy veils. Who were they? Had they voted before? I couldn't pierce the black veils to verify the vote. When lunch time arrived, I was told there

was only one place nearby to eat, the old Lexington Hotel. When I entered the dining room, I noticed a large center table presided over by a chubby pink-faced man, whom I discovered was Hinky Dink's deputized chief of the disorderly hotels of the First Ward, Dennis Cooney. At this table sat ten ladies, my voters dressed all in black! I soon learned that this hotel was their home. They were prostitutes who had obeyed orders and voted at least four or five times each, and were now receiving further instructions. I gobbled my lunch, dashed to a phone to report my latest findings only to have it yanked from my hands. I was then escorted to my car and told to "scram."

I decided this was a good time to go home to vote. After a block or two I glanced in the rear-view mirror to discover I had a black limousine escort. The car followed me for fifteen miles to my polling place and again back down to the 22nd Street polling place opposite the Lexington.

This time when I entered the polling place, I was met by a "person" who told me I had another assignment. He told me I *must* move on.

As Paddy Bauler, famous wag and saloon owner of the South Side, once said, "Chicago ain't ready for no reform."

EPILOGUE

The old Lexington Hotel, the former brothel and my luncheon site, has been purchased by Sunbow, a woman's organization, to showcase achievements of women in politics, arts, health, and science for the 1993 World's Fair. I am astounded—a sin palace about to become a museum honoring the virtues of women! The world turns and changes, but Chicago is still Chicago.

MY EXPERIENCE WITH HANCOCK COUNTY ELECTIONS

Delbert Lutz

My first experience in the election process of Hancock County was serving on the election board in Appanoose Township about 1930. At that time the election board consisted of three judges and three clerks; now there are five on the election board, all of whom are judges. A large majority today are women. I do not recall any women serving on the board at Appanoose Township during the ten years from 1930 to 1940.

When I first served on the board, the polling place was located at the Center School, which was a one-room country school. It was located near the center of the township. There were few all weather roads, so it equalized the distance that people had to travel. The polling place was soon changed to a building at Niota because the township was getting all weather roads. Also, Niota had electricity and was the largest village in the township. As the Center School had no electricity, we had to bring oil lamps, and they seemed to get dim before we finished our duties. At times we were at the polls for about twenty hours. After the polls closed at six p.m. (at the present time they are open until seven p.m.), we had to sort, tabulate, count, and record the votes. It was a long, tiring job.

Prior to an election, the three judges would have a registration day at the polling place where they would enter the names of the qualified voters in a book, taking out the names of the deceased and the ones that had moved. People could appear in person to register or were entered by the judges from their knowledge of the age and residence of the people. This method has been changed to two cards for each voter and the cards being filed at the office of the County Clerk. One card is kept there permanently; the other is returned to the polling place for election day only.

The County Clerk is the registrar and he appoints deputy registrars throughout the county. I served as deputy regis-

trar for many years, resigning in 1984. Inflation hasn't changed the fee for registering voters. The pay is still twenty-five cents for each person registered, and the cards have to be delivered to the County Clerk's office.

My next experience was as Town Clerk from 1937 to 1940 in Appanoose Township and from 1943 to 1959 in Nauvoo Township. The term of office for the Town Clerk was two years, which was later changed to four years, as it is now. Some of the duties of the Town Clerk for township elections were: to get election supplies, to have ballots printed, to make public the date and names of the candidates, or the propositions to be voted on, to send out notices, to give the oath of office to those elected, and to file all material that was used for the election.

The size of the ballot depended on the number of candidates or propositions to be voted. The size of the ballot for township elections was never very large. For one election other than the township, we had a ballot with about eighty names, and its measurement was about two feet by three feet. Each ballot had to be checked by the board and tallied on a tally sheet. It was always stressed that there had to be a cross in the square before the vote could be counted. Most of the time we would find a few with check marks which couldn't be counted.

Starting with the year 1981, the state consolidated the elections and the county started using a vote recorder. The ballot used in this vote recorder is about three and one quarter inches by seven and three eights inches and has room for two hundred and thirty five names or propositions to be voted on. After the polls close, the ballots are delivered to the County Clerk's Office and are counted by machine, which takes minutes, whereas it took us hours when the ballots had to be counted the old way.

My last experience with elections was as Supervisor of Nauvoo Township from 1959 to 1981, excluding one year. Some of the duties I had to perform include setting up and dismantling election booths, picking up ballots and supplies from the County Clerk's Office and delivering them to the polling places in their township, plus contacting judges to remind them to be on duty at five a.m. on the morning of election, to prepare for the opening of the polls at six a.m., and assisting the judges in any way possible.

People seldom think of the work that some individuals do to make sure that an election is handled fairly and efficiently. After more than fifty years of election work, I feel that voting is not only a privilege but a duty, and those who don't vote have no right to complain about the state or their nation—or their community.

OLD-TIME POLITICS

Clarence E. Neff

One of my first recollections of politics was when I was quite small, hearing my father talk about what a great president Theodore Roosevelt had been. My father, a very staunch Republican and a Republican Committeeman in our area, deeply admired Teddy Roosevelt.

My father was a very active precinct committeeman, and I can recall him going around on horseback getting petitions signed for different candidates, as well as riding around to the different parts of the precinct telling them about different candidates. This was in rural Sangamon County, and I like to think of my father's horse trotting down some of the very roads traveled by another Republican, Abraham Lincoln, a half-century before.

A few years later, I believe I was about nine years old, so that would have been about 1918, I remember attending a Republican rally with my father at the New Berlin Fair-

grounds west of Springfield. There were a lot of people and a lot of speeches. I don't recall what any of the speeches were about, but I do remember the roast beef sandwiches and pop they served.

In those days there was no radio or television, so most of our candidates had to visit the area in person whenever they could. Those were the days of "orators," and political rallies were often all-day affairs with people coming from miles and miles to hear candidates.

Our presidential candidates generally made "whistle stops" through the country. The first president I recall seeing in person was Herbert Hoover, who made a "whistle stop" in Springfield. That was probably around 1928. Due to my father's strong interest in politics—which he imparted to me—I attended dozens and dozens of political rallies in my youth. But, to be honest, I do not recall much about the speakers at the rallies, as I was always more interested in what food they were serving. I can't remember a single speech, but on a warm summer's day, I need only close my eyes and I can still taste the cold of an ice cream cone served on a hot summer's day at a political rally many years ago.

As I said, my father was a strong supporter of Teddy Roosevelt, and in 1912 he supported President Roosevelt and his Bull Moose Party. I believe that was the only time in his life that my father didn't support the Republican Party. But then, at that time a lot of people felt they were supporting the "true" Republican Party by supporting Roosevelt, and surely if he had been the Republican candidate, Roosevelt would have been elected president again. Ever since the Civil War, Republicans had dominated national politics, but with this split in the Party, the Democrats were able to win the presidency.

Radio became popular in the 1930s, and the first president whose voice I recall hearing on the radio was Franklin Roosevelt. While he is best known for the "fireside chats" he conducted after his election, he also used the radio considerably during his campaign. President Franklin Roosevelt was quite popular with the people and can certainly be credited with reviving the Democratic Party, which might not have survived without him.

I recall Tom Dewey running twice for the presidency. In 1948 he was the Republican candidate and made several whistle stops. The only time I recall seeing him was when he made a stop in Rock Island during the campaign. In 1948, Dewey was running against Harry Truman, who had become president upon the death of Franklin Roosevelt.

Everyone gave Dewey the lead in that election, which was one of the first to make heavy use of public opinion polls. All the polls showed Dewey very much ahead of President Truman, and he evidently decided he would not make any "commercials" and keep everyone happy. As I recall, when he spoke in Rock Island he said very little and spent most of the time just smiling, without making much of a political talk. He was evidently convinced that he had the election won and did not have to do anything.

That election may be best known for the famous picture of Truman holding up the front page of the *Chicago Tribune*, which had printed the headline "Dewey Wins" before the votes were counted. I am sure their faces were a little red after that. As I recall, the pollsters had also stopped taking polls because Dewey was so far ahead and they were so confident that he would win.

On the state level, there have been quite a few changes in the General Assembly since I first took office in 1963. At that time, many legislators had served for many more years than today's average legislator. I remember that during the first two terms I was in Springfield we had a man serving who was 94 years old. Also, one of the men I replaced in the House had served 38 years and was close to 80 years old.

It was definitely considered a part-time job at that time as we usually had sessions only every two years, and generally, during that two-year period, we were only in session for about five months. This has changed, with either the legislature or

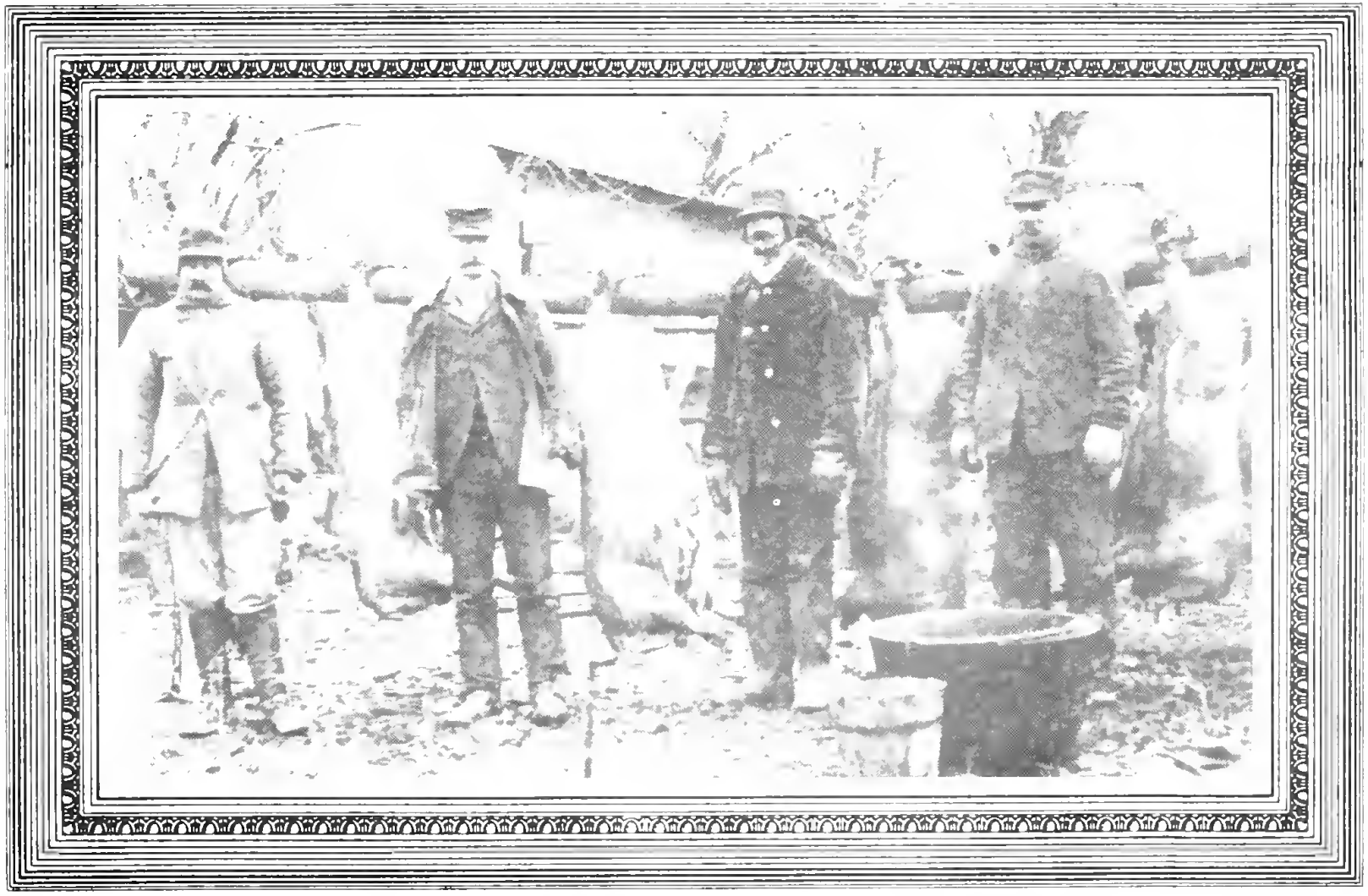
committees meeting almost year round. The make-up of the legislature has changed considerably too, with many business and professional people dropping out because the office has become a full-time job.

When I was first elected to office, we received a salary of $6,000 per year, plus we had an allowance of $50 a year for stamps and office supplies. We did receive a mileage allowance to pay for travel between Springfield and our districts once a week, but we received no living expenses while in Springfield. At that time, we had no personal secretaries and the only way we could get any help was by using the "steno pool." In the House, we had approximately 20 secretaries for 177 members.

The changes came very quickly after the approval of the 1972 Constitution, which required annual legislative sessions. Each legislator has a personal office now and all have at least a part-time secretary. Also, in the last few years an allowance for home office expenses has been added. That allowance has been $17,000, but will soon go up to $27,000.

I have noticed that along with the annual sessions came a tremendous increase in the cost of running the legislature. We used to operate on approximately $2 million per year. Now it is running over $25 million per year. It appears that we are becoming an assembly of full-time legislators. Today, about half of our legislators have no other job. When I came in in 1963, we had several farmers, dentists, accountants, plumbers, some doctors and also, as we still have, several attorneys. There are still many attorneys, but very few other businesses or professions are represented. Although Illinois is a farm state, my retirement left only two House members who listed their occupation as farmer.

The way the system operates today, very few people can handle any other business or profession outside of their legislative duties. I personally question whether this is good for the public. When we had several different types of businesses represented, I felt we had a better idea of the effects a piece of legislation had on businesses and individuals. I feel the citizens of Illinois would be much better off if we would go back to bi-annual sessions and bring back some of these business and professional people, who could better balance the legislative process.



V Immigrants

IMMIGRANTS

At the beginning of his famous book, *The Uprooted* (1951), Oscar Handlin said, "Once I thought to write a history of the immigrants in America. Then I discovered that the immigrants *were* American history." Indeed, more than 40 million people gave up their settled lives in other countries to make a new start in America, and they and their children entered into every facet of American life, transforming the country as they themselves were transformed by the experience.

Why did they come? As President John F. Kennedy said in his short book, *A Nation of Immigrants* (1964), "There were probably as many reasons for coming to America as there were people who came. It was a highly individual decision. Yet it can be said that three large forces—religious persecution, political oppression, and economic hardship—provided the chief motives for the mass migrations to our shores."

In the history of Illinois, the quest for economic opportunity has been the chief motive for immigrants, although the desire for freedom influenced many, including Morris Birkbeck, who founded the famous English Settlement in Edwards County, and Eric Jansson, who led his Swedish followers to Henry County and established Bishop Hill.

Early Illinois was frequently described in such glowing terms that easterners and Old World residents alike often found the lure of the Prairie State irresistible. The most well-known early book about the state, John Mason Peck's *Gazetteer of Illinois* (1834), included a section on "Emigration" that presented Illinois as the foremost embodiment of America's renowned identity, the land of opportunity:

"If rural occupations are pleasant and profitable anywhere in our country, they must be peculiarly so in Illinois, for here the produce of the farmer springs up almost spontaneously, less than one-third of the labor being necessary on the farms here than is required on the farms in the east. Indeed, Illinois may with propriety be called the 'Canaan' of America!

Industrious mechanics [i.e. tradesmen], more particularly brickmakers, bricklayers, and carpenters, are much wanted in the various towns in Illinois. We know of no better place west for a permanent location. . . ."

As the nineteenth century progressed, Chicago became the destination of increasing hordes of European immigrants, including large numbers from Ireland, Germany, Poland, Austria-Hungary, the Balkans, and Italy. Those people often lived in ethnic neighborhoods and retained many Old World customs and values. Elsewhere, Germans settled in many communities, including places like Belleville and Quincy that were on or near the Mississippi River. Swedes became numerous in Galesburg, Rockford, and other towns in northern and western Illinois. And members of many other immigrant groups showed up to work on Illinois farms, in coal mines, on the railroads, and in factories and shops.

The impact of these people on the state has been extensive, but their experience has often remained unchronicled, except for those who settled in the Chicago area. Scholars have written about the Irish, the Polish, the Italians, and others in the great city, and writers like Finley Peter Dunne, Upton Sinclair, Jane Addams, James T. Farrell, and Harry Mark Petrakis have produced important works that reflect immigrant life in Chicago. The experience of immigrants elsewhere in the state, where their numbers and impact were more limited, has seldom received attention and is often little known in the communities where they once lived, or still do live, for that matter. That represents a challenge to local historians and historical societies.

The memoirs in this section of *Tales from Two Rivers IV* increase our appreciation for the Italian, Swedish, and German immigrants who came to Illinois and settled outside of Chicago. The very well-written piece called "The Trip Home" by Floy K. Chapman, while not focused on the immigrant

experience itself, reveals the adjustment that non-immigrants made time and again when they were confronted with the newcomers in various localities.

John E. Hallwas

AND THE ITALIANS CAME

Joe Mangieri

The migration of Italian immigrants to Abingdon from Jersey City, New Jersey, Newcastle, Pennsylvania, and New York occurred around 1908-1914.

Practically all came to Abingdon instead of to Knoxville or Galesburg because Abingdon is where the Abingdon Pottery was. At that time the Pottery was located at the south edge of town, alongside the C.B.&Q. Railroad. James Simpson, C. F. Bradway, and G. K. Slough were the entrepreneurs who put the package together, and it was a good package, except that the workers were unskilled and inexperienced.

Anticipated profits didn't develop. So the call went out for skilled help in the area of pottery manufacturing. In Newcastle, Pennsylvania there was a flourishing factory in the same business with a work force that was 80 percent Italian.

Mr. Simpson and Mr. Slough agonized over their problem for many days and agreed to resolve their dilemma by enticing Domenic Fiacco, who was first team vintage, to leave Newcastle and come to Abingdon. As the story goes, he arrived in Abingon at 3:00 p.m. and went to work at 3:30 p.m. He worked around the clock for 2 days. On the third day he hinted to his employers that he was a little tired and asked if he could send for more skilled help. "Beautiful," said Mr. Simpson; "Terrific," said Mr. Slough. "The more Italians the better."

Within weeks Angelo Ippolito appeared on the scene. His arrival was not as hectic as Mr. Fiacco's. He was allowed to stay at the Hotel Martin over night. He was interviewed the next day by the timekeeper, Vernon Stockdale.

Unfortunately, Mr. Ippolito spoke absolutely no English and Mr. Stockdale absolutely would not speak any Italian. The end result of this communication fiasco was that the word "Martin" came through repeatedly. Out of sheer frustration Mr. Stockdale struck a deal: from now on you are Andy Martin and I am Vernon Stockdale. For many years thereafter Mr. Ippolito went as Andy Martin. And reciprocally Vernon Stockdale among the Italians went as Stocka Dale, or Mr. Dale.

Around 1914 a similar episode was to occur with the arrival of Angelo Mangieri. Same timekeeper—another good worker. "What's your name, Charley?" began Mr. Stockdale. Having been briefed on Mr. Stockdale's style, Mr. Mangieri announced himself loud and clear as Angelo Mangieri. "How do you spell it?" came the challenge. The briefing apparently had been inadequate—spelling was not in the script, neither was spelling possible—a shrug of the shoulders was his best effort. The dialogue ended abruptly. Mr. Stockdale took a piece of paper and printed "Charley Morey."

He handed the paper to Mr. Mangieri, shook his hand, and delivered a huge wink that somehow said it all. Up to the time of his death, Mr. Mangieri was also known as "Charley Morey."

Alex Sabetti, James Lamberti, and Jack Amato came in 1910-1912. Ultimately all three of the above-named families were to become grocers. But first of all it was work at the pottery. They lived frugally, acquired some cash, borrowed some from friends, extended their credit, and opened up shop. No notes involved, just a handshake. What was the prime rate of interest? It was zero. And none of the above failed in business. Thirty to fifty years of grocering wasn't all that glamorous, and neither did it contribute to great wealth, but it revealed a commitment to commercial service.

When Gene Petrini came to Abingdon, he brought with him a language rather peculiar to everyone but his wife Philomena. It was neither Italian nor English, neither was it a mixture of the two. It seemed to be rhapsody of many dialects beautifully blended. When Gene spoke, people listened. For many years Gene operated a restaurant called The Palace of Sweets. People thought Mr. Petrini got rich selling penny

candy.

Lorenzo Coryo was a confirmed bachelor, who saved his money. He also made good wine, but made no attempt to save it. One Sunday he had a few of the boys over to his house in "Little Italy" down on south East Street. While he and the boys were playing Bocce and drinking wine, another group of boys known as the Klu Klux Klan were at another house drinking beer and whiskey, waiting for darkness to come. Darkness came, and then came the Klukkers in their robes and masks in a Model T Ford, whooping and hollering. They parked in front of the Coryo Home, lit a fire, and burned the wooden cross, all the while shouting threats, insults, and reminders to stay in your own neighborhood. By now the message was clear. What at first appeared to be a wiener roast turned out to be pure bedlam. Lorenzo Coryo headed for the bedroom in search of his shotgun, proclaiming all the while that since he was not a family man he would risk his life for the protection of the rest. Luckily two of the more sober men tackled him as he headed out the door, causing the gun to discharge with a loud bang. Needless to say, the Klukkers left in great haste. In later years when the younger generation got together for a wiener roast someone invariably would recite the above episode.

Some Italian families lived next to the C.B.&Q. Railroad. People would gather at one house waiting for the slow freight to show, loaded with coal. At the precise moment all would leave, intercept the freight, climb aboard the coal car and heave overboard some of the coal, which was later gathered up and stored in a coal shed, built especially for the purpose.

Antonio Faralli spoke good English. With this attribute he served as a kind of go between among the Italians and the others. He operated Faralli's Billiard Hall for many years and was best remembered for his business-like attitude in the conduct of business. Former residents of Abingdon, when visiting local friends, never fail to recall his interest in young people and his concern in their pursuits.

The list is endless and space limits anecdotes in their regard. However, in the interest of recollection, these names come to mind: Arsenio Buzzacaci, Michael Zipparelli, Angelo O'Matteo, John Russo, Lougi Palmerio, Antonio Maenzo, Juliano Ambrosia, Angelo Perfi, Michael Rescinito, John Lambasio, Guidano Lambasio, Francisco Donato, Guiseppi Vericena, and others.

Of course, the offspring from the above immigrants are countless and I am sure that all of us of the next generation are immensely proud of them as parents. We feel that the early Italians had developed a love and endearment to their adopted country and to Abingdon in particular. They responded to the needs of the community in the manner they knew best, and their best effort at times bordered on futility. Their Old World customs, their religious attitudes, their dress, their speech, their work habits, their maturity, and their lack of it, were all introduced to the Abingdon community under conditions not exactly favorable. This alien humanity possessed a quality of energy and skill that was conducive to an improvement in the economic climate. Here was an element that would tolerate exploitation. They were aware that they were being exploited but found solace in the fact that, even though this exploitation existed, tomorrow would be better. It mattered that they were not totally accepted by others. It hurt that Mr. or Mrs. was a prefix reserved for others while they were often called "Dago" or "Wop." And the greatest of frustrations was their inability to speak and understand a new language. But they worked hard, blended in, and as a result, Abingdon has a distinctive heritage.

HOG KILLING—ITALIAN STYLE

Joe Mangieri

Hog killing, Italian style, in 1934 was not only necessary to provide food for the table, but was also the means for a "happening." In many ways the structure of the hog killing event very much resembled today's golf opens. It was a big production.

Hog killing was an annual mid-winter event with the scheduling done in the summer and fall. On a given Saturday, you were to appear at the Mangieri residence—by invitation. On the following Saturday the event was held at the Maenzo residence, and so on. Failure to invite all to participate was unpardonable and could very easily be interpreted as a snub—with the consequences that snubs usually generate. Needless to say the invitation list was carefully scrutinized so as not to leave out any of the *paisanos*.

Invariably someone would inadvertently be left off the list, and when this happened a problem was sure to surface. Hurt feelings would soon be in evidence, and the maligned person played his part to the hilt with recitations of unworthiness.

At this time a committee of three would be appointed to make a call on the offended one. The committee would supply itself with a few bottles of wine and then call on the offended person. After two or three hours of stroking, with assurances that the omission was by accident and not by design, the hurt person would agree to accept an apology.

One such incident occurred when I was eight or nine years old. In this case my father was on the committee and we all went to the home of Guiseppi (the offended one) to take care of the problem. Guiseppi was true to the script—sullen and not too communicative. It wasn't until the second bottle of wine was consumed that he began to mellow out, but only after he had vented his feelings well. He referred to last year at this time when he had hosted the hog killing and how he delegated to Lougi (the offender) the high honor of sticking the hog with his best knife, and how after Lougi had bungled the job the hog broke loose and ran away squealing with everyone in pursuit. He also noted how all the women in the neighborhood became hysterical, witnessing the chase of many men and barking dogs after the wounded hog. After finally catching up to the exhausted hog, Lougi was offered a second chance to do it right. Guiseppi then reiterated that for the blown assignment he refrained from scolding Lougi. His suggestion was, though, that in future hog killings, Lougi was not the man to use the knife, but rather he should be relegated to the task of stirring the blood as it gushed from the hog. That job was usually reserved for a young boy—perhaps Lougi took it as a put-down.

By now the third bottle of wine was gone, and the procedure advanced into the stage of everyone talking at once, much backslapping and a continuous round of handshakes. My dad was not a great energetic talker. He had, however, a keen sense of timing and I noticed that on different occasions he would mutter something about "Let by-gones by by-gones; everyone deserves a second chance; it takes a great man to accept apologies." One more bottle of wine and Guiseppi agreed to accept apologies properly offered. Mission accomplished.

I reviewed this incident in my mind many times as I grew up and have never been able to conclude whether the omissions were an accident or deliberately designed so as to prepare the way for committee action. Be that as it may, I find it comfortable living with either concept. The one thing I am sure of is that with the much more sophisticated methods of butchering today, hog killing, Italian style of 50 years ago, would certainly not be tolerated.

I remember that in those years, when I was going to and from school, my schoolmates would sometimes inquire as to why my people chose to butcher with such extravagant energy and festivity. Of course, I had no reasonable response at that

age, but in review I believe that getting as much social mileage as possible out of a necessary function helped them tolerate a dismal winter and was a means of bringing each person into contact with others for a valid reason. Certainly the price was right.

Everyone shared in the ultimate product, and it was another means of cultivating a cohesiveness in a sometimes not too friendly environment.

MY SWEDISH ANCESTORS IN WATAGA

Glenrose Nash

Among immigrants from Sweden, one or two adventurers in each family usually led the way. Olaf Peterson, my great-uncle, was the one in my family. Why he came, I wish I knew. I like to think that he was somewhat of an idealist, inspired by Eric Janson's plan for a religious-oriented, communal colony. Whatever his impetus was, he chose Bishop Hill as the place to settle. He was not to remain there long, for the Civil War was on the horizon. In 1861, he enlisted at Galesburg, in Company C, 43rd Regiment, Illinois Volunteers. Later, he was in the 57th Regiment. During his two years in the Union Army, he fought in the battles of Shiloh and Fort Donnellson, among others. He arrived back home to find that his younger brother, John (who was to become my grandfather), had left Sweden and had settled in nearby Wataga. He had married Bengta Parson in Sweden and a daughter, Anna, had been born to them. Now he was preparing a home for his wife and child. About this time, Olaf moved from Bishop Hill, but not before marrying a local girl, Sigrid Johnson. They made their home in Wataga, too. Before long, Bengta and Anna had traveled across the Atlantic Ocean and on to Chicago, where her husband met her. After a voyage, steerage class, and a tiresome trip overland, how happy she must have been to be almost home—at last—in Illinois. Both of the Peterson brothers were to live the rest of their lives in Wataga, each reaching more than 75 years of age. Their descendants gravitated to Galesburg gradually, but the old hometown drew them back often.

I did not ever see my great-uncle or my grandfather. They both died before I was born, in 1918. My recollections are of my grandmother and of the next generation—the six children born to the John Petersons: Albert, Charles, Oscar, Emma, Anna, and Minnie (my mother). All of them could and did speak Swedish. Whatever I heard in that language was not at all revealing to me. My grandmother taught me a few rhymes and how to count in Swedish. In fact, although she would converse in her native tongue at family get-togethers, she learned English early. She was determined not to be a "Green Swede," and later she taught her neighbors the new language. She even changed her name to an Americanized version, Betsy, a name that my daughter now bears, in front of another Swedish name, Anderson.

Wataga was largely settled by Swedes. Those with enough money bought farmland at the almost unbelievable price of $1.25 per acre. John Peterson was not one of these people. He felt lucky to buy a house with five acres around it on the edge of Wataga. He had earned the money working at the local brickyard before Bengta arrived. Her home was always her best-loved place. Even when she was very old, she wanted to be back there at night. She didn't mind at all milking the cow, raising chickens, and keeping a garden, besides her other tasks. After all, back in Sweden, women were accustomed to doing farm work. Having a house, barn, and a piece of land of their own represented a certain status. Back home they had been merely peasants. Here, they were already property owners. John, and later, his son, was now digging coal from the hillsides beyond town. Every morning he set out before daylight to walk the mile or so to the "banks." Nowa-

days, in this Wataga-Victoria area, enormous steam shovels extract more coal in an hour than he and his companions did in a day.

A dirt road straggled past the house. A few, initially small, but later, much added-to, homes appeared at intervals. A cinder path led the four or five blocks to downtown. The Petersons didn't need to buy many supplies from Sweden. As in the old country, Bengta would soon begin spinning and weaving cloth to make into clothes for her growing family. Yard goods could be bought, but money to buy it was scarce. The big loom, once set up in the parlor, is gone. The only part left from the spinning wheel is the wheel itself, now kept in my parlor, along with a pair of carding brushes, two Staffordshire dogs, a castor with some cruets replaced, and Grandma's portrait in the original, curliqued frame. This thrifty housewife gathered and stored eggs in salt-filled crocks in the fruit cellar under the kitchen. She skimmed the cream, kept cool in the same place. Fresh meat was cooked or salted to preserve it for winter. Vegetables and fruit were dried or canned. Only flour, salt, baking powder, coffee, sugar, and rice were bought.

Although I have few tangible reminders of that immigrant lifestyle, I can picture it clearly. In the last years when the Petersons lived in that small version of the common "T"-shaped farmhouse, I visited it many times. It had six rooms, but they were small. The main part contained a parlor and bedroom, with two attic-like rooms above. The one-story, lean-to section had a sitting room and kitchen. Coal and storage sheds strung along behind. Down the path from them was the unpainted, unlovely outhouse.

Mostly my memories center about that kitchen, largest of the rooms. It had to be, with the big cookstove located there. Beside it was a coal bucket and scoop, and back in the corner was a pail of corncobs for starting the fire. In winter, an assortment of boots, coats, and gloves were stashed to dry out. In another corner was a dry sink, with its washbasin, water bucket, and dipper handy. Somewhere close by was the tall, wooden churn. Built-in cupboards were as scarce as closets in those old houses. For dishes and staple foods, a roomy, free-standing cupboard known as a pie safe was utilized. Small vents allowed the steam to escape from the freshly-baked pies set within to cool. A shelf on the wall had a supply of kerosene lamps, kept filled and wicks trimmed. A large oval table and accompanying plain wood chairs occupied the center of the room. There the family and visitors gathered for tasty (and high-caloried) Swedish food. Fruit soup—a mixture of dried apples, pears, peaches, prunes, and raisins, with a little rice for thickening—was a favorite. Equally delicious were the pastry, rolls, and doughnuts, with the "holes" for us children. Homemade rye bread made with cardmon seed, and crisp rusks (like German zweiback) were always on hand. The latter were dunked into coffee, but children were not permitted that beverage. Coffee was boiled in a mottled gray granite pot, with liquid clarified by an egg mixed with the grounds. I had always watched, fascinated, as my grandmother turned the handle of the wooden coffee mill, grinding the coffee beans.

To a city child (from Galesburg), the sources of water were intriguing. I looked into the murky depths of the rain barrel outside the back porch, but was repelled by bugs floating on the surface. This soft water was used for washing, after first being heated in a big copper boiler. A reservoir on the back of the stove kept smaller amounts always hot. To go across the road and work the handle of the neighborhood pump and see water gush forth was the most fun. I didn't consider what a chore it was to carry those heavy buckets of water back to the house.

Whenever my parents and I visited my grandmother in her last years, we sat, appropriately, in the sitting room. Its furniture was strictly for utility: a few extra kitchen chairs, a cot, a small dropleaf table. On a wall shelf, a tall, carved wood clock ticked. A bracketed holder on the wall held a kerosene lamp, and a big pottery dog doorstop held the upstairs door shout. The adjoining parlor was closed off in winter, since the

heating stove was in the sitting room. In summer, I could unmelodiously pump the old organ. How many eggs and how much milk my grandmother sold to buy that organ and pay for my mother's lessons, I cannot imagine! I didn't care to linger on the stiff settee or on its two matching chairs. "Oatmeal" wallpaper, lace curtains, kept stiff and straight by curtain stretchers before hanging, a tacked down carpet, a lamp with a decorated china shade, a vase or two, a few pictures, and the Swedish Bible on a round table completed the scene. Grandma's most prized possessions were in that parlor, so they were seldom used.

I loved the adjoining bedroom, used in later years for a spare one, because it had a down-filled feather bed. What a luxury to sleep on it! My grandparents had once slept there, while the six children somehow managed to sleep in that low-ceilinged space upstairs under the eaves. A closed-in, steep stairs led to that half-story area. In my day, the bulky, scarred, wooden trunk brought from Sweden stood at the top of the steps. A few discarded items lay in it: a faded sunbonnet, two or three old aprons, a moth-eaten, red-printed tablecloth favored by the Swedes, a few ancient arithmetic and reading textbooks. None were very advanced, since fifth grade was the limit of the children's education at the village school.

Church was not only the center of religious, but of social life as well. My mother remembered that as a child a bit of candy and a small gift from the Sunday School tree was her only treat at Christmas. Services were in Swedish, even when I was growing up. The Ladies' Aid Society met at the members' houses. When my grandmother took her turn, she cleaned every corner of the house and served her best baked delicacies. That was not the only time that she shared. When neighbors were sick, she took food to them. All the immigrants helped one another. They could not have existed without such aid.

As was the custom, Swedish girls "worked out" for families in the "burg" (Galesburg). My mother and her sisters left home at 16 or 17 and took jobs. They made good maids. Such qualities as thrift, neatness, and willingness to work brought them good husbands, too. Being a good cook didn't hurt, either. Although my father worked for W. A. Jordan Company, wholesale grocers, many of the Swedes, like Carl Sandburg's father, worked in the C. B. and Q. shops. Others were carpenters, tailors, and store keepers. The older two Peterson "boys" stayed in Wataga and worked in the coalbanks, but Oscar, the youngest found work in the East Galesburg brickyard and then worked on the section gang for the railroad, as far away as Wray, Colorado.

During the last ten years of Bengta's life (from 1915 to 1925), she was glad to have Oscar, who was a bachelor, return home to live with her. On her eightieth birthday, friends, relatives, and neighbors came to help her celebrate. That was the last really happy occasion in the old house because later that year, her daughter Emma died from cancer. I can scarcely recall either of those events, but I remember my grandmother's death and the funeral held in the parlor, with people overflowing onto the front porch and into the yard. It all seemed so hushed and solemn in contrast to the good times that I had always had among my Swedish relatives. Only a few of the elderly people could have thought back to the experiences in the new homeland that they had shared with Bengta, John, and Olaf. The young wife had tried to leave old ways behind, but she had succeeded only in transferring her strict set of values, her skills, and her customs to another setting. She probably did not ever realize how much of the old country she had brought to the new one. As those early days of immigration recede in memory, those of us of the third and fourth generations appreciate more and more the legacy that people like the Petersons left for us. It gives us a sense of continuity in our own lives and the duty of passing on the Swedish traditions to our descendants.

MY EXPERIENCE AS A SWEDISH IMMIGRANT

Annie Enborg Exalena Johnson

On February 6, 1920, I set out for Cambridge, Illinois, from N. R. Solberge, Sweden. I was twenty years old at that time.

After a couple of train rides and a boat ride over the Atlantic Ocean, I finally landed in Chicago, Illinois about noon on March 6, 1920. When I got off the train in Chicago, I was all alone. Not knowing any English, I just sat and watched the people go by. At 3:00 p.m., the conductor put me back on the train and off I went for Kewanee.

Upon arriving at the Kewanee train depot, a lady came up to me and started asking me many questions. When the lady realized that I knew no English, she went to find someone who could speak Swedish. She found a man who worked at the depot who could speak both English and Swedish.

The man asked me if I was scared. I replied, "Yes." The three of us were finally able to carry on a conversation with the man being the interpreter. After we talked for awhile, they took me to the hotel where I was to spend the night. The lady got me settled into my room and then left.

After I had a nice hot bath, I re-dressed and decided to take a walk around the hotel. By this time, I was getting pretty tired, so I decided to go back to my room to bed, knowing that I had another hectic day ahead.

Even though I was so tired, I couldn't sleep. I was so scared. All I could think about was what would happen to me. I had heard so many stories of what happened to young girls coming to America.

At 6:00 a.m. the next morning, the lady came back with breakfast for us. We had coffee and sandwiches. After we were finished with breakfast, I went down to pay my bill. The lady said to me, "Annie, don't be scared." Once again we went to the train depot.

When we got to the train depot, we saw the man who had helped us the previous day. He asked me if I remembered him and I said that I did.

While I was waiting for the train, a man came up to me and said that he would take me to Cambridge. The man from the depot heard him and said, "No, she has to ride the train because she has a ticket and has to use it."

The man from the depot told the conductor about me and how scared I was. The conductor was real nice and took good care of me. He didn't speak any Swedish, but he would pat me on the shoulder and tell me everything would be okay.

There was a heavy set man also riding the train to Cambridge. I thought he looked like a Swede. He came over to me and started asking me questions in Swedish. He asked, "Is your name Annie with three names, and are you from Sweden?" I said, "Yes." The man, whose name was Andrew Larson, turned out to be a friend of my aunt and uncle, Ester and Swan Olsen, where I was going to stay. Aunt Ester was my father's half sister.

Mr. Larson asked me if I had ever met my aunt and uncle. I replied, "No." I told Mr. Larson that my father's half brother, Carl Peterson, had paid $200 for me to come to Illinois. Since uncle Carl was a bachelor, I was to stay with Aunt Ester and Uncle Swan. I would look for work to pay Uncle Carl back. I would work for Aunt Ester and Uncle Sam to start with in return for a place to stay.

Mr. Larson discouraged me from working for my aunt and uncle. He said, "It is real hard to work for relatives." He told me that he had worked for his relatives when he first came to Illinois and it just didn't work out. "They expect too much out of you," he said. "You are better off trying to find a job with Americans, even though you don't speak English. The Americans are smart and you will understand each other soon. The Americans will be good to you."

When we finally got to Cambridge, Uncle Swan was there to pick me up. We went "home" and we had a big dinner of roast beef, potatoes and gravy, and pudding, which I had to

help Aunt Ester make and serve.

My uncle's sister, her husband, and two girls, along with two neighbor families, joined us for supper.

After supper was finished and we had cleaned up, we sat around talking. Everyone kept staring at me. I was so embarrassed. I was starting to pick up some English words now, and could tell that they kept saying how "rosey" my cheeks were, how pretty my hair was, and what a nice shape I had.

My "rosey" cheeks were from working and being outside. My hair was blond and I wore it in braids wrapped around the top of my head.

The next morning, Uncle Swan took me to the shed where I was supposed to do all the washing. The shed was not very good. It was pretty dilapidated. The boards were loose and would blow back and forth. The motor on the washing machine would now and then quit working and I would have to run it by hand.

I had to wash and cook for my relatives and three hired men. Aunt Ester and Uncle Swan had eleven children and were expecting their twelfth. It was sure a lot of hard work. Guess they figured I was a "tough Swede" and could handle it.

The first time I saw Uncle Carl, he wanted to buy me new clothes. He and Aunt Ester thought that my clothes were too "Swedish" and that I should have American clothes.

My Aunt Matilda back in Sweden had made me clothes and a coat before I came to America. I told Aunt Ester and Uncle Carl that the clothes I had were good and that I was not going to buy any American clothes! I was too set in my ways!

Whenever my aunt and I would go to the store, everyone would stare at me. I would ask my aunt why everyone always talked about me and she said, "They're just curious about the Swedish girl."

I had been at Aunt Ester and Uncle Swan's for about two weeks when my uncle's cousin asked if I could come and stay with him and his family for awhile to help out. My uncle said I could, so off I went to the Anderson's. Mr. Anderson's wife was sickly, so I had to care for their two small children as well as do all of the housework.

The work was easier than at my aunt and uncle's because I only had seven people to wash and cook for, compared to sixteen at my aunt and uncle's. The Anderson's had a much nicer shed, too. It was real sturdy and nice and warm.

One day Mr. Anderson came and told me that there was going to be a lot of extra men for dinner the next day. He told me the men were coming to help shell corn. He wanted me to prepare a large dinner.

Mr. Anderson went to the store at Osco, a small town nearby, and bought meat and vegetables for me to cook. He also told me that he wanted me to make seven cherry pies!

I didn't even know what a pie was! We didn't have pies in Sweden. When I asked how I should make one, Mrs. Anderson said to use lard, flour, sugar, and cherries. "Just use you own judgment," she said. And that's just what I did!

The next morning at 5:00 a.m., I got up and found some pie tins and all the ingredients I would need and went to work on making my first pies. The cherries were pretty pale looking and sour, so I added some sugar to make them sweeter. Then I mixed some flour, lard, milk, and sugar together. I figured somethings had to go in the bottom of those tins. Then I put in the cherries and topped them with another layer of mixture.

After the pies were all baked, I showed them to Mr. Anderson. He said, "They look better than my wife's." I told him, "You'd better not say that!"

The men came to help Mr. Anderson shell the corn, and at noon they all came in for dinner. They were all real curious to see what a Swedish girl looked like. They thought I looked pretty good. I knew what they were thinking and I gave them a look like "You leave me alone!" One of the young men said, "Oh, she has sharp eyes." They knew I meant business. (But they all liked the pies.)

I worked two weeks for Mr. and Mrs. Anderson and then went back to Aunt Ester and Uncle Swan's.

When I got back there, I had to work real hard. Not only did I have to bake, cook, and wash, but now I had to start cleaning the house too. I didn't get paid anything for my work either. Like I said before, they thought I was a "tough Swede" and could handle it!

Every now and then, Uncle Carl would come and see me and we would go for a ride. It bothered me that I hadn't been able to pay much of his $200 back.

I stayed at Aunt Ester and Uncle Swan's for about three weeks. Then another cousin of my uncle's, Eric Gustafson, asked him if I could come and help him and his wife for about a week. My uncle said, "Yes." It would be helping with housework and baking.

While I was there, Mrs. Gustafson's sister was there for a visit. She asked me if I would like to go to Moline and work. I said, "Yes."

We went to Moline that day and went to where she worked. The lady she worked for was rich. She saw me and wanted to know who was in the car. She came out and said to me, "How pretty you are. Just look at those 'rosey' cheeks." She asked, "Would you like to work for me?" I said, "Yes, but I'll have to check with my aunt and uncle first."

When I asked my aunt and uncle if I could go and work for the lady in Moline, that Mrs. Gustafson's sister worked for, they told me, "No." This was in April. After my week was finished at the Gustafson's, I went back to my aunt and uncle's.

In May, we had a real hard freeze and all the corn crop was destroyed. So, guess who had to replant it? That's right! Me, and all by hand! That was a real hard job!

After working so hard and for so long for my Aunt Ester and Uncle Swan with no pay, I decided that I should find a job so I could start paying Uncle Carl back.

I went to Andover, a town a few miles from Cambridge, and met Mrs. Ed Walline. I asked her if she needed someone to do housework for her. I told her I was a good hard worker. She said that she would talk it over with her husband, and then let me know. She got back to me with good news! "Yes," hey could use some extra help around the house because they also had a store to run in town.

I started to work for the Wallines in June. I was paid $4.00 a week. By fall I had paid the whole $200.00 back to my uncle Carl that I had owed him. I worked for the Wallines until Thanksgiving.

I had a couple of more housekeeping jobs in the area, and at one of them I met my husband, Severn Johnson. We were married from February 5, 1923, to February 8, 1952. We had no children.

Even though I missed my dear homeland of Sweden and never returned, I have been very happy and contented and fulfilled with my life in Illinois. I have had a lot of experience and have many, many friends. I thank my good Lord daily for all He has given me!

DOWN THE RHINE TO AMERICA: MY GERMAN ANCESTORS

Effie L. Campbell

The picture is that of an old man, with flowing white beard and piercing eyes. The clothes are of an old fashioned cut, the kind worn shortly before the turn of the century. The man in the picture was my grandfather on my father's side of the family, and when I studied his face in the past, I never had any feeling of kinship for a man I never knew. It was only after I started doing the family history that I began to identify with him and the ancestors before him. Then, as I put together the bits and pieces, a story of courage and adventure began to unfold.

It started back in Germany well over two hundred years

ago. Like so many places in the "Old World," the Palatinate, a rich, agricultural region of Germany, was a target for warring princes of various realms. It was also a battleground for religious wars between Catholics and Protestants, and the "little people," the farmers and tradesmen, suffered the most. When word of a new land across the Atlantic filtered back to them, many saw new hope for their future. But first, they had to escape the bonds of the past.

That is why, in 1738, two brothers by the name of Bauman (one of whom became my great, great, great grandfather) were among those who chartered boats to take them down the Rhine River to the Port of Rotterdam. That alone was a long, arduous journey. But it was only the beginning.

Taking ship at Rotterdam, the immigrants were then transported to Cowes on the Isle of Wight, off the coast of England. There they were forced to wait until a ship was available for their journey across the Atlantic. If it's beginning to sound like smooth sailing from there on in, it's far from the truth.

The ships used to carry the immigrants to the New World were galleys, not much better than slave ships. The people were packed aboard them like sardines in a can, without proper food and water. Many became ill on the passage over, and some of them died and were buried at sea. Storms on the Atlantic were especially fierce in the wintertime; that's why the immigrant ships ordinarily set sail for America in the summertime.

The ship on which my immigrant ancestor sailed later arrived in the Port of Philadelphia in the dead of winter, suggesting a forced layover in the Azores, according to our family historian. It was she who searched the ships' lists of passengers and came across the names of the two Bauman brothers. She also found their signatures on the Oath of Allegiance to the King of England.

Perhaps her words can describe the discovery more dramatically than I can: "On February 7, 1739, Jacob Bauman age 22, and his brother 'Daniel Jacob' age 18, arrived in Philadelphia on the Jamaica Galley from Rotterdam, last out from Cowes on the Isle of Wight with 320 passengers, Robert Harrison, Captain."

She then goes on to explain that "Daniel Jacob" was actually Daniel George who was to become the head of our family in America. Because his English was limited, he was able to write "Daniel" fairly well but couldn't manage "George," so he copied part of his brother's signature.

About here, I might indulge in a bit of imagination. I can picture the two brothers, dressed in their homespun clothes, waiting in line, eyes fixed apprehensively on the clerk at City Hall. I can imagine that gentleman as well-dressed, possibly in the king's livery, or barring that, at least wearing a curly, white wig, silken neckcloth and a snowy white waistcoat under a knee-length coat.

Speaking in German, Jacob says: "Are you ready little brother? Our turn is soon."

And Daniel George, with awe in his voice, whispers back: "He looks so grand, Jacob. Almost like the king himself."

To calm his brother's fears, Jacob answers: "He's no better than you or me. He's only a clerk in the service of the king."

The clerk raps on the table. "Next!"

It's then that Jacob steps up to write his name proudly on the Oath of Allegiance, followed closely by his brother. I have copies of their signatures on that document, and because it may be of historical significance to others, I'm setting down the words to the Oath of Allegiance:

> "We subscribers, natives and late inhabitants of the Palatinate upon the Rhine and places adjacent, having transported ourselves and families into this Province of Pennsylvania, a colony subject to the Crown of Great Britain, in hopes and expectations of finding a retreat and peaceable settlement therein, do solemnly promise and engage that we will be faithful and bear true allegiance to His present majesty, King George the Second,

and his successors, Kings of Great Britain, and will be faithful to the proprietor of this Province; and that we will demean ourselves peaceably to all His said majesty's subjects, and strictly observe and conform to the laws of England and of this Province, to the utmost of our power and the best of our understanding."

What a mouthful for two simple farmers to swallow!

After the oath was signed, physical examinations were given and passage money paid. The fare ranged from twenty-seven to about seventy-five dollars, and those with no money had to sign terms of "indenture"—bonded service to work out the passage money. Fortunately, the Bauman brothers were able to pay.

They settled first in Pennsylvania, but later on (about 1745) they took the "Great Road," a trek of over 400 miles across mountains and wild terrain by cart and oxen, to North Carolina. There, they built their sturdy homes in the Catawba River Valley, not far from the foothills of the Great Smoky Mountains.

Daniel married Mary Bolch, and the family name was translated into Bowman. His oldest son (another Daniel) became a landowner of some extent. In 1769 he was given a grant of 200 acres by King George III; then he received a state's grant of 300 acres, and to this he bought up and added some 200 acres of land. One of his sons was Joseph, my great grandfather.

To that fertile valley came more and more of the German immigrants. They were farmers, good law-abiding citizens who raised large families and food enough to feed them. And like good Americans, they paid their taxes promptly—except for the tax on home brewed "spirits"—to that, they objected strenuously!

There's a story our family tells about the apple harvest in the valley. They dried some of the apples as "schnitz," and in the words of one of the Bowmans, "We put up some and made a little brandy to have trouble over."

During the Revolutionary War, the German settlers were not entirely convinced they should fight a war against the grandson of the king they had sworn allegiance to. But when the war threatened their peaceful valley, many of them took up their rifles and joined the local militia. I've found one account of a Captain Bowman who was killed at the Battle of Ramsour's Mill. That was near the well documented battle of King's Mountain.

It was in that valley in North Carolina that my father was born during the Civil War. He was the only one of my grandfather Jacob's five sons and three daughters who left North Carolina. But first, he married and fathered children. Sometime after his first wife died, Dad packed up his trunks and his children and came to Illinois. He married my mother, and they settled on a farm in Cass County.

After I learned the full story of my heritage, I could look at Grandpa Bowman's picture with a keener perception. I can now see those same piercing eyes in the face of a young man, stepping down the gangplant of the Jamaica Galley, looking hopefully toward a strange, new land.

IMMIGRANT MISFORTUNE AND ONE MAN'S KINDNESS

L. M. VanRaden

I have always been not only fascinated by the stories of my immigrant forbears but immensely moved by their experiences which, today, seem like pure fiction. Often one hardship followed on the heels of another!

First of all, there were pressures in leaving the homeland. Family members told them to stay, the energetic young people who were full of adventure and promises of better things. Then the continuing warfare between France and the 300 independent German states under Austria meant there was a

commanding need for manpower. Young men of strength and stature were sought for the armies. My grandfather's brother was one. After long deliberations, the family had finally reached the port of embarcation and had boarded the sailing ship. It had been a struggle that far, disposing of property, finding transportation to the port, saying good-byes, resisting all the hustlers who would deprive them of the meager remaining means intended to get them started in the new land. They were an intimidated people, to be sure, but the family was still intact. Then the searchers came on board. They weren't interested in the older folk. They were seeking the young, stalwart passengers, those who would be best to keep the warring armies supplied with soldiers. It was understood there were three potential recruits on board their vessel, and inspectors were commanded to locate, arrest and remove every one of them before the boat embarked to the new land of freedom. Everyone was tense, of course, not the least of whom were the nervous parents, Charlotte and Henry. Perhaps the journey should not have been attempted after all. What would they do if their second son was discovered? His age and size made him a prime suspect, nearly 21, tall and strong. Then someone thought of it: "Why not hide him?" There were piles of rope everywhere on deck, and because winds were calm, departure was being delayed. That was it: "Why not conceal the lad in the coiled ropes until the boat left shore?" And so it was that one young man sat in a crouched position in the coiled ropes of the Harzburg for days until sailing winds prevailed, and thus evaded the draft in 1866.

But not all the threats had been overcome. A severe storm overtook the immigrant vessel at sea. Passengers feared the ship would not survive for the severity of the storm, but after six weeks and four days, the sailing vessel managed to enter New York harbor in a badly damaged condition. Yet the story does not end here.

After reaching Castle Garden at New York, where emigrants were momentarily deposed at that time, no doubt my father's family felt a sense of relief and may have taken a bit of time to rest before encountering the next step of their journey inland. Then it happened! Another hustler, this one on the "shores of freedom," robbed the family of the funds intended to establish them in the new home here. Fortunate indeed were these poor immigrant grandparents of mine to have a friend in America who knew and trusted them. It was Ernest Vieregge of Freeport, Illinois, who wired funds to New York for my father's people to come to Stephenson County, Illinois, and then helped them find a place to live and to work during the early years of this part of the state.

We do no know that Ernest Vieregge's name ever appeared in a newspaper or a history book or any account that mentioned the accomplishments of early settlers in America. He had no descendents to honor or distinguish him. As far as we know he was a humble blacksmith by trade, but his name stands high in my father's family history, and we are still grateful after 120 years!

THE SAXTOWN MURDERS: A GERMAN IMMIGRANT TRAGEDY

Wilson M. Baltz

The story of the murder of all five members of a German immigrant family has been folklore for more than a century in and about Millstadt in St. Clair County.

During the night of March 19, 1874, the members of the Steltzreide family, consisting of Carl, a widower age 70, his son, Frederich, 35, Frederich's wife, Anna, 35, and their two children Carl, 3 years, and Anna, 7 months, were bludgeoned to death and decapitated while asleep in their beds. A neighboring farmer, Ben Schneider, discovered the enormous crime the next morning, March 20, which was, oddly, the first day of Spring. As he later told me, when he walked into the farmyard,

he sensed immediately that all was not right. The horses had not been fed and the cows had not been milked for a long time. He was puzzled because he knew the family was not inclined to let the stock go unattended. Now seeing nor hearing anyone about, he went to the rough-hewn log house. No one answered his calling or his rapping on the door. Hesitating a moment for fear that his uninvited entry would not be welcomed, he pushed open the slightly ajar door. Glancing into a bedroom, he saw the family sprawled about the room, murdered.

The crime occurred in a locality called Saxtown, four miles south of Centreville (now Millstadt). Saxtown, like the neighboring localities of Boxtown, Bohleyville, Darmstadt and Herr Godt's Eck (Mr. God's Corner), was strictly rural. It had no municipal government. Its boundaries were invisible, yet definite. Those people of Saxtown were immigrants from the Old World, having emigrated to the New World after the Napoleonic Wars in Europe. Hessen-Darmstadt, Bavaria, Baden and Saxony were their places of origin in the Fatherland.

The Saxtownites lived in rugged austerity. The homes were made of squared logs or rough-cut boards—simple, yet adequate. Clothing was home-spun, and many farm implements and tools were hand-made. Crops were planted and harvested, and food was preserved for the long winters. Meats were cured by either smoking, salting or drying. Nothing was wasted, not even kitchen fats from which soap was made. The immigrant settlers were energetic, industrious and frugal. They believed that by the sweat of the brow a man earned his bread. They practiced in what they believed. Work was their god; frugality, their creed; faith, their salvation.

When the bodies were discovered, someone rode horseback to Centreville to alert the citizenry. From there, a rider was sent to Belleville, the seat of county government, to summon Sheriff James W. Hughes. Hughes and his team of investigators, including his son, Deputy Julius, left for Saxtown in a two-horse rig. Coroner Ryan was summoned from East St. Louis to conduct an inquest. The inquest lasted all night and into the next day. No real motive for the killings was determined. Some speculated that a family feud between the young wife's brother-in-law and the old man was the reason. Speculation pointed to robbery as the motive. Young Steltzreide was to have been expecting a sum of money from Germany, an inheritance from an estate. It was said he walked to Centreville every few days to inquire at the post office. He was seen at a farm sale four days before his murder with a tightly covered basket, closely guarded. He refused to reveal its contents. A theory held that the money he inherited was in the basket because he stopped at the farm sale on his way home from the post office. However, the basket was found inside the house after the murders. It was never ascertained that he received any inheritance.

Some thought that the killings were committed by some maniac living in the vicinity. That was baseless because everyone in the area knew everyone. Whoever committed the crime must have known the family and the floor plan of the house. And Steltzreide's dog was known to bark at only strangers. If the killer was a stranger, certainly the dog's barking would have awakened someone inside the house.

One thing was undeniably established: the killings were done by one person, a left-handed person, man or woman. The pattern of marks on the head board and a door jamb by the instrument of death was proven to have been that of a left-handed person.

Detectives, both professional and amateur, tried to solve the crime and collect the $3,000 reward, but to no avail. Henry Steltzreide, an invalid brother of the old man, offered $1,000 for the apprehension of the killer. However, he withdrew the reward offer when he and his son were arrested for the murder. Both were exonerated in a short time.

The Steltzreide family, members of the young Zion Evangelical Church in Centreville, were buried in the Freivogel Cemetery on Sunday, March 22. More than a thou-

sand people attended the graveside services conducted by the Reverend Jacob Knauss. Friends and relatives of the family raised enough money to buy a lot in Walnut Hill Cemetery in Belleville. Their intention was to move the dead family to Walnut Hill to lie under a ten-foot high stone memorial to "Die Ermordete Familie" (The Murdered Family). However, the Trustees of Zion Church, who had jurisdiction of Freivogel Cemetery, refused to allow the disinterment of the bodies "now and forever more." So, ironically, the family lies buried in five unmarked graves some twelve miles from another cemetery in which a memorial, pointing heavenward, stands in their memory.

Another odd twist to the story occurred later and opened old wounds to revive rumors and speculation. A young man, mentally unbalanced, had in his possession a man's hunting watch of German manufacture with a likeness of the old man's deceased wife on the inside of the cover. Persons positively identified the watch as being Carl Steltzreide's and insisted that he would have never parted with his priceless keepsake. Questioned by authorities, the unfortunate young man gave several versions of how he came into possession of the watch. He said he found the watch; that it was given to him by the old man; that someone gave it to him, someone he did not know. Yet, no one was a stranger in the community and he was a stranger to no one. The one version which baffled and intrigued the authorities was that he was in the company of the killer that night. Try as they might, the authorities could not cope with the complexities of his mind to determine the truth of his astounding statement. The burning questions remain: Was he at the scene of the crime? Did he kill the family? Did he think his alter ego to be the killer?

A century has passed since that frightful night in Saxtown. The house in which the five died was in continuous use until 1954 when it was dismantled and a new structure built on the foundation. The original barn is still in daily use.

The elapsed time of the past century has erased much of the spoken and written word. The fortunes of some of the principals are known. Names of arrested suspects are not mentioned for reasons of the right of privacy of living relatives. Fred C. Horn, Foreman of the Jury at the inquest, lies buried in the St. Paul United Church of Christ Cemetery at nearby Floraville. Sheriff James W. Hughes was killed in a fall into a stairwell in the County Court House in 1881. His son, Deputy Julius Hughes, met his demise in the tornado which ravaged East St. Louis on May 29, 1896. He was found several days later in a demolished brick freight house. Ben Schneider, discoverer of the crime, and his wife, Kate, served as custodians in the Millstadt Public School for the eight years that this writer attended it. Parents of three, Ben and Kate lived to be 81 and 90 years, respectively. They lived at what is now 105 East Mill Street. They were neighbors. I knew them well, and they were important sources of information about the murder of the Steltzreide family, one of the great tragedies of the German immigrant experience in Illinois.

THE TRIP HOME

Floy K. Chapman

It was five o'clock in the morning on March 16, 1910. Already, we were on our way to our new home at Virden. I was nine and our entire life had been spent on the little farm about six miles west of White Hall. Now, Grandpa sat in the front seat of the surrey and guided the farm team down the long, country road. My brother and I sat beside him. Our mother, my younger brother, suitcases, a picnic basket, and various packages holding the necessities of travel filled the back seat. All was quiet, except for the sound of turning wheels and the inevitable plop of hooves on the country road. The little farms along the road were coming to life. That was livestock country, and we felt at home with the animals and the farmers who

tended them. We were facing the East, and a glorious pink sunrise welcomed us.

On we went, past the proud, big houses where Mother had often delivered fresh country butter at the back door, and on to the smaller houses around the big factories with their huge buildings and kilns. Several railroad tracks ran along the west side of the factory, and the depot stood just short of the railroad. Here, our grandpa stopped and hitched his team.

It was a bustling place, and soon our grandpa was busy, unloading the surrey and buying tickets. He showed my mother how to manage, and told her to not be afraid to ask questions. "You will have to change to the L. C. and W. at Carrollton," he said. "Then, at Carlinville, you will change again. There will be a short wait there. Just wait and they will give directions."

Soon, the train came chugging in from the north. Grandpa went on the train with us and helped us to get settled. There were blasts from the whistle, and he left us just as the train pulled out.

The trip to Carrollton was uneventful and short, but it was an adventure to us. At Carrollton, we left the train and were soon on the new train, under the care of the accommodating train men of the L. C. and W. It was one of those small railroad lines that connected the busier lines running north and south from the larger cities. The little lines were very important to the farmers who had settled the country in a day when there were only poor, muddy roads. The initials of the railroad stood for Litchfield, Carrollton and Western, although some of the people who used it frequently were inclined to call it the "Look, Cuss, and Wait" Line.

Boxcar stations were situated about ever so often along the railroad. Often, they were named for a nearby farmer. Sometimes, there would be an elevator, a few houses, and a side track where boxcars could be loaded from a small lot where livestock were taken or received. It was all very informal, with no station master and a telephone call to the nearest depot sufficed when cattle were to be shipped or received. People who wanted to ride or disembark simply went to the station and waited until the train came.

The crew consisted of the engineer, brakeman, and conductor. During the years we were privileged to ride the L. C. and W., Bob Shackleton was the conductor and general boss of this little railroad. He wore a blue uniform and cap, was friendly and greatly respected by all. He called the names of the tiny stations and took care of business while the train was moving, making out reports on a small, portable typewriter. Going east from Carrollton, I remember these stations: Daum, Kahm, Greenfield, Fayette, Reeder, Hagaman, Carlinville, Barnett, Litchfield. Probably, there were others that I do not recall. Just east of Carrollton, Mother opened the picnic basket and we ate most of the rest of the way. We had drinks from paper cups beside a container of water, and of course, we used the restroom as often as possible. It was a real experience—accompanied by fear. "What if we fell through?" My mother laughed at that, and told us a story about an old farm woman who got sick on the train and lost her new false teeth through the toilet. We did not think it was funny, but she did.

Finally, after many stops—one at a place where a road crossed the tracks, we arrived in Carlinville. At the depot there, we continued eating and even struck up conversation with some of the other travelers.

It did not take long to go from Carlinville to Virden. The train was faster and better, and there were only three stops—Nilwood, Girard, and Virden. The first thing we children saw in Virden were two small, dark men with coal dust on their faces, dinner buckets in their hands, and lamps on their caps. We were entranced because they were talking at a great rate and we could not understand anything they said. Next, we saw our father, smiling all over his face. When we got through laughing and hugging him and our mother, he took us to the hitch-rack where our own horses stood with our surrey. How our parents talked! It had been a week since we had seen him,

as he and our old, hired man had accompanied most of our things in a boxcar when the last of the moving took place. "Oh," he said, "This is a good move. I love the place more every day. The farm lies along the Sangamon-Macoupin county line. There are acres and acres of good black soil and nice modern buildings. Another family lives in a little house near ours. They have children and their father works for me. They will go to school with you children."

I looked at him doubtfully and thought of the two black-faced men we had seen at the depot. At long-last, I dared to ask him about them. How he laughed! "They are white, just like us," he said. "They are Italian miners and they had been at work and had coal dust on them."

"But, what about their talk?"

"There are many miners here from other countries," he said. "Some are blue-eyed and light-colored, just as we are, and they all talk different languages. Our nearest neighbors are German farmers, and there are many families of Irish, English, Scotch, French, and Austrian descent. Some people from Greece run a restaurant and a fruit store. Some yellow Chinese people run the laundry. The children learn to talk English and how to live the American way after they start to school. I think we are living in the new America."

"But, what about our old neighborhood?" our mother asked. "What about all the white, blue-eyed people who came up from the south and worked so hard—all the good people?"

"That is it. They are *all* good as I am finding out. These are good people, too."

By this time, we were at the new home. Our own old dog, Tim, a Gordon setter, met us before we were out of the surrey. The old man came to the door with a dishtowel pinned on like an apron. His "Thank God" sounded very sincere to me. Ham and fried potatoes were cooking on our own stove. We were home—a new home in a new place, with our own little family and our own little things. The old life was gone. We had traveled into a new world not over sixty miles away from the old place where I was born. We had come a long ways, and it was good.

VI Around Home

AROUND HOME

It may be the second most important decision of a person's life—where he or she lives—although we spend nowhere near as much time in choosing where we live as we spend choosing with whom we live. Often our habitats are chosen quickly as temporary quarters (which have a habit of becoming long-term and even permanent dwellings), or because a good home comes suddenly on the market at a good price, or because we need *someplace* to live, and quickly too, because, well, we have to get on with our work. Even in the old days, when choosing a home often also meant choosing a farm, or when families often designed and even built their own homes, or additions to homes, the dwelling place was a consideration secondary to vocation.

In those days, of course, women spent much more time inside the house than men, and they were usually in charge of furnishings and decorations . . . within the limits of what a husband could provide or would tolerate. But not often did a husband purchase a building just because his wife had taken a fancy to it. The home-maker worked within narrowly defined limits in making a house a home.

As is so often the case, it's the small, unconscious decisions that most affect our lives. Our most vivid memories are of the most trivial details of childhood: the peculiar black-and-white salt and pepper shakers Mom salvaged from the old stove and continued to use all through our school years; the kitchen table bought who knows where and when, around which so much of our life revolved; the maple leaf designs on the crocks of sauerkraut and pickles down in the fruit cellar, the old halltree at the foot of the stairs, the distinctive wallpaper in the best parlor, the smell of polish Mom used on the livingroom furniture, the peculiar way Dad shook the grate on the coal stove each morning.

Most commonly, those memories associate themselves with a room or a person, and most commonly—perhaps because home was so very much a wife's responsibility—that room is the kitchen and that person is Mom or Grandma. Like the present-day recreation room, the old fashioned kitchen was large and full of varied activities. It was the heart of the house: people ate there, mother did her daily chores there, and the rest of the family spent much of its indoor time there. This only made good sense, because the kitchen contained a source of heat (no central heating in the old days), and kerosene lanterns could be, *should* sensibly be, concentrated in a single room to reduce expense and maximize light. The best parlor was used only infrequently: a visit from the minister, relatives, or a suitor; a funeral or a home wedding; some other ceremonial occasion. The best parlor was not a warm room in any sense of the word, and although it contained the family's newest and best furnishings, it is not well remembered. Upstairs bedrooms were also not warm rooms, being heated, usually, only with whatever heat escaped the kitchen stove and drifted up a staircase or a floor grate. On winter nights, children changed into bedclothes quickly beside the still warm kitchen stove, then scurried up the stairs and dove under quilts and feather beds. Is it any wonder that the kitchen is remembered far more fondly than the bedroom?

As much remembered as the kitchen itself is the mother whose domain it was. Like her room, she is remembered as a symbol of sustenance: neither unattractive nor attractive (although neat, clean, groomed); cooking endless suppers; preserving endless jars of fruit, vegetables, and meat; boiling water for baths, laundry, cleaning a scrape or cut; stoking the stove (although *hauling* water, wood and ashes was a job invariably assigned to children); ironing the laundry in the days before permanent press and drip-dry. Images of heat, warmth, and food surround the mother like a halo: the smell of fresh-baked bread, the feel of warm water, the taste of fruit preserves and baked pies, the stove glowing cherry red or golden yellow. In contrast, the modern kitchen (and the modern mother) seem infinitely more convenient, but somehow less warm and

somehow less sustaining. Memories of mother or grandmother in her kitchen sometimes evoke in daughters and granddaughters feelings of guilt, inadequacy, envy or nostalgia.

Another focus of home memories is also associated with food and sustenance: the smoke house or the fruit cellar, the food storage area filled with bins of apples and potatoes, stone jars of preserved meats and fruits and vegetables, smoked meats hanging from the ceiling, and the long shelves of glass jars filled with peaches, cherries, apple sauce, pears, quince, tomatoes, beets, pickles, mincemeat. The cellar was not warm but cool, not light but dark, not feminine but somehow mysteriously masculine: it represented the father-provider, a little distant, a little forbidding, somehow slightly forbidden—but rich in its own fashion.

Details of homelife were not, as we've said usually thought out with much deliberation, and probably the special warmth of those details could not have been contrived. Life around home was as unconscious as it was routine, and perhaps for that reason the most powerful of memories.

David R. Pichaske

OUR ALL-PURPOSE ROOM

Virginia Dee Schneider

Our all-purpose room didn't look at all like the modern recreation-room, den or family room you see today. Actually, when I was a little girl growing up on the south side of Chicago, our all-purpose room was our big, yet cozy, old-fashioned kitchen!

At one time this flat we lived in—my mom, dad, brother and two sisters—included a front parlor. However, we seldom used this room except when my baby sister Janie died of influenza. She was then laid to rest in her tiny coffin in this front parlor.

Soon afterward, the landlord decided to rent our front parlor to a new tenant of the combination grocery and meat market in front of our building. From that time on, all our activities took place in this large kitchen, making it truly an all-purpose room. It became the epitome of our life together.

On cold winter mornings, for instance, no one had to wake us up for school. Dad got up before anyone else and we'd hear this harsh sound dad made while shaking the grates free of ashes in our pot-bellied coal stove which stood proudly in the center of this kitchen. He then had to go outdoors to empty the ash pans in the alley behind our building.

After dad shoveled more coals on the fire and warmed the kitchen for us, we'd tumble out of bed quickly and dress around this stove. I remember that I'd pull up a chair and raise my feet up onto the shiny nickel-plated collar which adorned this stove; then I'd toast my toes. Our bedrooms were not heated at all, so you can imagine how good this warmth from the stove felt on frosty mornings! And Chicago mornings are frosty indeed!

I didn't waste any time getting into my long underwear as I carefully wound its legs under my long, tan, ribbed stockings. Then I'd put on my above-the-ankle, tan-with-black-trim, laced shoes.

I really hated that lumpy look of the long underwear showing through my stockings! I'm ashamed to admit that often as soon as I walked far enough away from home so that my mother couldn't see me, I'd roll up the long underwear legs above my knees from under my stockings.

One morning while my sister warmed her bare back around this pot bellied stove, she stood too closely and toasted the part where she sits down too long and it took awhile before she felt comfortable sitting down!

After we'd come home from school, what a welcome sight it was coming in out of the cold, to see this bright, cheery fire glowing in the stove's isinglass windows. Dad once told us that this isinglass was made from the swim bladders of fish like sturgeon. It withstood the fire yet was quite fragile when poked with a finger. Once, my younger sister poked her finger deliberately through one of the isinglass windows after she got spanked for misbehaving. She didn't try it again, though, because this finger test earned her another spanking!

This kitchen also served as our play-room. One day after school, my mom had a pot of pumpkin soup simmering on the back burner of her gas range which stood against a wall, while my brother and I played catch with a good-sized ball. Much to my mom's dismay, our ball plopped right inside the pot! Oh well, pumpkin soup was not one of my favorites anyway.

On Saturdays, since the bathroom wasn't heated, our kitchen became a room for bathing as well. Mom would place a galvanized tub near the warm stove, pour hot water in it and give us our baths. Dad would shine our shoes and line them up neatly by the stove for us to slip on for church the next morning.

Besides the stove, our sturdy, large, square-shaped wooden table played a prominent part in our all-purpose room. This table was usually covered with white oil-cloth which was easy to clean by wiping it off with a dish cloth. When company or the parish priest came calling, mama would cover this table with a white tablecloth.

After school, we'd do our homework at this table. Mama would often send me to the store in front of our building to buy meat for our dinner. After she'd unwrap it, I'd smooth the clean part of the butcher wrapping paper on the table. Then I'd pencil sketch my own paper-doll and her wardrobe, while my brother spread out his collection of milk bottle caps and counted them.

When mama wanted to use the table to prepare our dinner, we'd duck underneath and pretend it was a tent and continue our play activities.

If the kitchen windows steamed up from mama's cooking, we'd satisfy our urge to fingerpaint by making pictures with our fingers. When we were finished, mama would hand us a rag to "erase them please," she'd say.

Saturday was mama's baking day, and we'd gather around the table and mama would assign a task for each of us. One of my sisters grated nutmeg, the other beat eggs, and I'd sift the flour. Mama creamed the butter and sugar by hand, since we had no electricity. Gas was used for cooking, and a gas fixture with a mantle to cover it gave light.

Mama used butter because margarine wasn't used much then; besides it was sold plain white. Jelke margarine had a packet with yellow coloring enclosed, but it was a messy, do-it-yourself project.

On Sunday it was fun to watch mama make noodles for the savory chicken soup that was simmering on the stove. Deftly, she'd slice the dough into narrow noodle strips. We also enjoyed watching her make crullers for dessert, especially the part where she'd flip one edge and insert it inside a gash she'd made in the middle of a cruller. Each one measured about five inches long and two inches wide. Mama would fry these in deep fat then dust them with powdered sugar. What a treat to eat!

If an unexpected caller came to the door, mama kept her comb handy in a mirrored cabinet over the kitchen sink so that she could spruce up in a hurry. Inside this cabinet, she also kept our all-purpose medicine . . . castor oil! It must have been big business in those days, for no matter what ailed us we got a dose of castor oil!

When a doctor did come to call, mama would spread a thick blanket over the kitchen table and lay the sick child on it. The doctor was pleased to work at this height. How happy we were when he didn't advise an enema. That and castor oil were quite common treatments in those days!

This all-purpose room also served as a laundry room. Mama's washer? It was two galvanized tubs with a standing hand wringer in the middle. Other equipment was a washboard and copper boiler steaming on the stove. She'd rub the clothes with a bar of Fels Naphtha soap on this washboard inside one of the tubs filled with hot water. Then she'd feed these clothes inside the wringer and keep turning the handle until the clothes fell into the other tub of clear rinse water.

The white clothes mama would drop into the copper boiler filled with boiling water and Fels Naphtha soap chips which she shaved herself with a knife. Bleach and umpteen detergents weren't invented yet! Mama used a long sturdy stick to remove the hot clothes.

After all the clothes were rinsed once, they went into a bluing rinse to assure a really white wash. After all, mama didn't want to hang out a tattle gray wash for all the neighbors to see! There were no automatic clothes dryers made in those days.

Mama also ironed in this all-purpose room. She heated what were called sad irons on the gas stove. She had a special handle which she would attache to the iron she was using while another iron was heating on the stove. These irons were pointed at both ends.

Over a thick blanket, placed on our large square table, she could iron a whole pillow slip at once without moving it around. A sheet needed to be folded over only a few times. It was just as easy to do curtains, since this table was much wider than the ironing board of today. Those items needed to be

ironed, since there was no permanent press materials made as yet.

In a corner of this kitchen stood mama's treadle sewing machine, which she had to pump with her foot. I had the job of dusting the iron grill stand under the machine since mama said my fingers were small.

Another corner provided my brother's and sister's entertainment center. It was a huge rocker with two solid arms. On these we would pretend we were riding our horses far, far away, riding a street car or a carousel.

Just before Christmas, dad would go up in the attic to bring down our artificial tree. By today's standards, it would be considered a very poor specimen, since it was quite scrawny. Yet to us it was beautiful, with its lighted candles inserted in metal holders snapped onto the tip of each branch.

One evening while everything was peaceful in our all-purpose room, mama sitting in the rocker knitting mittens for Christmas gifts and dad shoveling more coal in the stove while we children were doing our homework at the kitchen table, our hair practically stood on end when we heard this loud bang on the back porch!

Dad went out to investigate immediately. He sure was surprised to find a large bottle of whiskey which a prohibition violator tossed out. Hot on his heels was a police officer with his horse going "clippety-clop, clippety-clop" at a break-neck speed.

"Now this is what I call a fine Christmas present," dad beamed as he brought the bottle into our all purpose room, poured himself a drink, and wished us all a Merry Christmas!

IN THE BOSOM OF THE FAMILY

Eva Baker Watson

When I was a child and spent the night at Grandma's house, the crazy quilt on my bed fascinated me. I remember sitting up the next morning and poring over the tiny pieces that made up the quilt.

They were in odd shapes, sewn together, all joinings outlined with a feather stitch. The fabrics were beautiful and I ooh-ed and aah-ed over them, imagining each garment from whose scraps the pieces had been cut, picturing myself grown up and dressed in such elegance. There were velvets, silks, satins, and brocades in luscious colors, a quilt impractical for general use, but ideal to enchant a grandchild who visited.

Looking back I see that crazy quilt as a symbol of my visits to Grandma's house and the varied experiences of my early years there. In memory, those times are a kaleidoscope, now showing one design, then with a slight turn of the mind a different pattern, all within one setting: Grandma's house.

Grandma, who had been a widow many years, was a matriarch. The lives of her six children and their families revolved around her. Her code of ethics and behavior set the standard we all were supposed to live by, and I never heard it questioned, back then.

My visits were mostly pure leisure, but in the late summer and early fall, the tempo quickened. It was apple harvest time.

I can still see—and smell—the old "packing house" and the long table down which the apples rolled to be graded. On each side of the table stood workers who sorted the fruit according to size, quality, and color. When I grew tall enough, I got to be one of those sorters, earning actual money.

As the apples rolled down the table, the scrawny ones fell through holes into baskets below. These were taken to the end of the building where an odd-looking contraption stood.

This was the cider mill that with groans and squeaks

pressed out juice to make a golden nectar of the gods. It made a funny sound, "oh-WA-a-a-oh-WA-a-a-a-ow." We children had fun imitating it.

Cider was good when it was fresh and sweet, but best after it had aged enough to have a tangy "bite." Not hard, you understand. Grandma's teetotaler principles would tolerate just so much bite.

Much of the apple crop was shipped from Brownfield by rail, but Grandma did a steady business with local customers who came to the packing house to buy a winter's supply of Jonathans, Winesaps, Rome Beauties, Kinnards. My favorite was one I haven't heard of in years—Grimes Golden.

Sometimes people who didn't know Grandma very well would make the mistake of stopping by for apples while on a Sunday outing. It mattered not how far out of their way they'd come, Grandma wouldn't sell them one apple. To her, keeping the Sabbath holy meant no money changing.

During summer vacations other grandchildren—my cousins—would come to visit and my sister and I would join them there, sure that Grandma was delighted to have us all pile in at once. She did have a lot of headaches, as I remember. Today I suspect the reason. We all felt secure in her love, although she was not the spoiling, overindulgent type of grandparent.

Only one time did I ever see a sign that she had had just about enough of us.

She had a lovely phonograph—an Edison—that stood on legs and had a crank sticking out from its side. One evening it was playing, wound up tight. My cousin, Robbie, was standing by it near the creek, raptly listening. My sister, Juanita, crept up behind her and shouted, "BOO!"

Robbie shrieked to the top of her voice, jumped, striking the crank which forthwith came "unlatched" and went into reverse, CLACK-CLACK-CLACK-ing at a terrific rate of speed, making a perfectly awful racket. I can still see Grandma's what-on-earth-now expression as she rushed in from the kitchen to see what we were up to this time. She said very little (her face said it all), but I know she was ready to send us all home about then.

We weren't always inside and under foot, for out in the driveway stood the old surrey. It had been replaced by the Maxwell touring car sitting in the garage. But what do you do with a surrey when you buy an automobile? Probably it had no trade-in value, so there it sat, ready for grandchildren who filled it and took many "rides" in it, slapping imaginary reins on the team of horses conjured up out of our make-believe world.

I suppose it was because I was a "middle child" that my best times were when I was the sole visitor—those days when, being bored at home, my mother would let me go to visit Grandma. On those visits Grandma and my aunts and uncles made me feel special. Middle children need that. I felt like Little Red Ridinghood as I walked those two miles up through the woods to reach the winding dirt road, meeting no one—certainly no wolf, in that safe era. I always gathered wild flowers from the roadside for bouquets to take to Grandma. She received them as graciously as if they'd been American Beauties.

I loved to roam the house, especially the attic rooms—one a coy bedroom with sloping ceilings, the other a catch-all for everything that didn't belong anywhere else. It was filled from floor to ceiling and from wall to wall, leaving only a narrow walkway down the middle. There was an unbelievable collection of old trunks, clothes, stacks of magazines, photograph albums, cast-off furniture, an accordion, a guitar, and a violin—family keepsakes galore. Downstairs there was a small counterpart to this, a bureau drawer that I always longed to look in, but would spend hours getting up courage to ask Grandma's permission. She laughed but never refused.

It was filled with hundreds of little things that there was no real place for—worthless, actually—but a treasure trove to me. I'd find jeweled combs to wear in the hair (with teeth and

gems missing), empty powder boxes, brooches and "breast pins," odd beads, bits of necklaces, fancy hair pins.

Then there was the button box. Grandma's family saved every button. When a garment was discarded, the buttons were cut off and put in the box. Might need them sometime. Grandma could tell me the history of each one. "These were on my wedding dress." Others were from a baby dress of one of the two she had lost in infancy. "Here's one from your great-grandfather's Civil War uniform."

At Grandma's house there was music—a piano, the Edison, and later on there was one of the first radios in the community—an Atwater-Kent, complete with headphones.

But it was the piano that I loved. I learned to pick out one tune and would entertain my long-suffering relatives with "Work For The Night Is Coming" until the enjoyment was almost more than they could stand. Uncle Hal, the perfectionist, gave vent to his enjoyment by often interrupting me to correct my mistakes.

After supper he would play his cornet and Aunt Elva would accompany him on the piano. We never dreamed how much we were deprived because television had not been invented. Creativity thrived in Grandma's house.

Grandma's house was built for her by my grandfather before they married. She told me she never went near it until he took her there as a bride.

They were engaged, but it would have been unseemly for her to have anything to do with their future abode before marriage. She told me about riding her horse along a distant ridge some miles away, from which she could look down across the fields and see the house under construction. This was as close as propriety allowed.

When I was older, the pull of Grandma's house didn't diminish. The whole clan still gathered there for family dinners. I thought nothing of inviting a friend to go along, for food and hospitality were expandable to accommodate any unexpected visitors. I never doubted my guests would be welcomed.

One morning last fall a phone call came telling me that the lovely old home had burned the night before. I felt a wave of nostalgic sadness; then I began to realize that the century-old wooden structure was only that: A wooden structure. What Grandma's house really *was* stood untouched—in my heart.

The house and premises had long ceased to be what they'd been in my childhood. The people into whose hands the property had passed had let it fall into a sad state of disrepair. Now that it was destroyed, it seemed almost a mercy, for the way it had come to look was a desecration.

My kaleidoscopic memories of that warm, crazy quilt time of my life are still intact. In maturity I came to know something I took for granted then, that the strict standards Grandma set (the rigidity of which I've later privately and cautiously challenged)—actually were safeguards during my formative years.

To me, the atmosphere at Grandma's house exemplifies the expression "the bosom of the family." Children who live in close contact with grandparents receive a nurturing of untold value. Our own daughters grew up within a few blocks of two sets of grandparents, a benign circumstance.

In today's migratory society, this is lost to many—including our grandchildren, whom we see only on visits, weeks and months apart. This, I know, is making a difference in the lives of us all.

THE WALLS OF OUR ROOMS

Irene Barkon Tinch

I was born three days before Christmas and ten days before the advent of the twentieth Century, in a town of probably two thousand people, set amidst farmland that had formerly been prairieland in central Illinois.

The streets were very straight and long, bisected by sidestreets separating the blocks. A block was occupied by six houses, usually made of clapboard siding. In our neighborhood the houses averaged five rooms and 3/4th of them were one-story. There were no circles or squares or by-streets in the whole town.

Inside the house, every room was plastered, even and smooth, and covered with wallpaper of many designs. At no time did I ever see a wood-paneled room except in picture books.

The front room, or parlor, got the most expensive wallpaper, which was sometimes striped or flowered or had other designs. Many of the stripes were gold or silver, or the flowers had a touch of gold or silver. Here in the parlor, never a small room, home weddings took place. It was also where the preacher or any other dignitary who visited was received. And it was also where the family dead lay in their coffins for several days before the funeral services. Funeral parlors were seldom used, perhaps because there was a lack of transportation in those days, and it was a long way from the edge of town to downtown where any funeral parlor would be located.

The kitchen wallpaper was usually a dull color with small flowers or other motifs. Smoky stoves tended to dull the color of the paper, and less expensive paper was used here. The dining room paper was usually gay and cheerful. The bedroom paper was subdued. Wallpaper made our homes look very neat. One couple that I knew changed their wallpaper every spring.

But I do remember some very ugly wallpaper. It had a big pattern of a large shield with crossed spears and some other paraphernalia. Not only was the design ugly, but the coloring was awful—either a bilious green or a nauseous red. When the paper faded, it looked even worse. As I grew older, I saw less and less of it; perhaps they had quit manufacturing it or people quit buying it.

There were other things on the walls besides paper. Just about every home had a large motto, either framed or unframed. The two that I saw most often were "GOD BLESS THIS HOME" and "HOME! SWEET HOME." The mottoes were usually sold by peddlers or door-to-door salesmen.

On the wall of my uncle's home was the following motto:

THIS LIFE THAT WE ARE LIVING HERE
IS MIGHTY HARD TO BEAT
YOU GET A THORN WITH EVERY ROSE
BUT AREN'T THE ROSES SWEET

Another motto that I remember showed a clown in baggy trousers leaning against a post and holding a large doughnut. The verse said,

AS THRU THIS LIFE YOU TRAVEL
WHATEVER BE YOUR GOAL
KEEP YOUR EYE UPON THE DOUGHNUT
AND NOT UPON THE HOLE.

Frequently the mottoes had Bible quotations. One that I remember was "THE LORD GIVETH, AND THE LORD TAKETH AWAY." This was frequently quoted to parents who had lost a child, for there was a high death-rate among small children. It meant that they had been given their child for a limited time.

Occasionally in the parlor, one saw a big, carved, heavy frame containing the picture or photograph of a very dignified man who usually wore a beard or a moustache. Occasionally

one saw a group photograph of a band-group, a ball-team group or some other group. But most family pictures were in the family album.

THE CELLAR IN WINTER

Lou Gamage

It has been said that the older you are, the colder were the winters of your youth, the deeper were the snowdrifts, and the farther you walked to school. Although such stories may be somewhat exaggerated at times, they usually contain some element of truth.

To those of us who associate our good old days with the era before the horse was replaced with the automobile, the winters *were* probably more severe, not so much due to the lower temperatures, deeper snows, or lustier winds, but because of the conditions under which we lived.

I can remember my own home very well. It had been built by my grandfather and added onto by my father. It was heated with stoves that burned either wood or coal, and the house was blessed with neither insulation, sheeting, nor basement. A small cellar under the original portion of the dwelling could be entered only through an outside doorway, which in the cold weather was covered with old carpeting to keep out the cold. During the winter months the cellar was a place of wonder. Along one side were large bins piled high with potatoes and apples, and on the dirt floor there would be two or three ten-gallon stone jars filled with "fried-down" pork chops, loins, and sausages. At one end of that semi-dark Ali Baba's Cave, as far from the doorway as possible, were shelves loaded with glass containers of tomatoes, peaches, applesauce, pickled beets, and mincemeat.

Overhead, beneath the heavy oak joists which supported the living room floor, my father would hang the smoked hams and pork shoulders, and for a while after winter began, there would be some large slabs of fresh "side meat." This great abundance from the land, however, depended each year upon the productivity of our little farm, for I also can recall the time when the bins were only partially filled with a few undersized potatoes and worm-eaten apples, and the tantalizing store of meats and canned vegetables was conspicuous by its absence.

Monday was the traditional wash day. Being the only boy left at home, I was responsible for having the firewood and water ready, so on the evening before, it was my job to fill the woodbox behind the big black kitchen range, and leave an extra wheelbarrow load on the back porch. Then I would carry enough water from the well about twenty-five yards away to fill the large copper boiler, two rinse tubs, and the reservoir of the stove.

As my father's health steadily failed, and the older sisters married and established their own homes, I gradually became the man of the family. The financial circumstances of my aging parents kept deteriorating, until our only means of subsistence was the sale of milk from five old cows. During the summer, my mother would supplement our meager income by selling vegetables from our large garden. I recall that the price of milk was five cents per quart and roasting ears sold for ten cents per dozen. In my fifteenth year I raised a crop of corn, plowing the soil with a pair of ancient horses and a walking plow. Turning the earth in fourteen-inch furrows, I could plow three acres in one day. Tilling was done with a one-row cultivator, and the harvesting was accomplished by hand.

My oldest brother, who entered the University of Illinois the year I was born, was the only member of the family who had a steady job, being the head football coach of the University of Kentucky, at Lexington. When I was sixteen, he borrowed the cash value of his life insurance, paid off the mortgage on the land, and assumed ownership of the homestead that Father had spent his whole lifetime trying to own.

The parents, however, were to have a home there as long as they lived.

The winters of my youth, although enriched by countless recollections of parental love and good times together, will always live in my memory as times of almost unbearable cold, hard work, and, as I entered my teen years, hunger. Those frigid mornings when I would take the old kerosene lantern and make the rounds, feeding the two old horses, a half dozen sows, and the five cows with their calves, seem like only yesterday. My young life began in a time of relative prosperity, and I matured when the Great Depression was at its worst.

I cannot remember not milking those cows, huddling as close as I could to their hairy bodies, my palms warm but the backs of my hands freezing, twice a day, seven days a week. It was always my job, among my seven older sisters, there was not one tomboy. Vivid is the memory, though, of how cold it was in that old barn, and how bitter was the wind that howled around and through the walls of the birthplace of three generations: my father, my son, and myself.

School was never a problem of distance, for the farm was situated at the edge of town, and we actually lived on a city street; and all but three years of my education was acquired in the same building, located only seven blocks away.

If we could have afforded a thermometer to show us the actual temperature, or a radio to give us a weather report, I am sure that the average winter would have proven to be much the same as those of today. The two factors that seem to make the difference are, I believe, the vast improvements that have been made in our standard of living, and, of course, the enhancement of the hardships of days gone by, through the magic of much retelling.

MY HAPPY CHILDHOOD YEARS

Kathryn Steward Roan

As I look back over my years of life, I believe a few years in my early childhood were the most enjoyable, the ages five to eight. At this time I lived in Augusta, Illinois. I had no fears, cares, problems or worries. My mother was a very happy person who sang a lot. She could cook, bake, sew, iron, mend, crochet, knit and tat, hem stitch by hand and do all the many things to keep a happy home.

My days were filled with excitement. Oh! I remember all the wonderful things I could make from wallpaper books. My older sisters made me beautiful doll clothes for my cardboard doll. I played hours and hours with them. My sisters also made Christmas decorations, stars, snow flakes, canes, trees and chains, all to help decorate. I watched and helped. Also there were the beautiful May baskets with sweet williams and violets. How we loved to knock on doors and run. My brother and I also enjoyed building and playing with wooden spools, the ones mother gave to us after using all the thread from them.

I attended the Augusta grade school with some of the same boys and girls I went to Sunday school with. We all played together, enjoyed one another and had wonderful days at school. Miss Jennie Mead and Rosie Thompson were two of my teachers. Boys and girls played drop the handkerchief, dodge ball, fox and geese and tag. Everyone accepted everyone else. We sang together and had short parts in school and church programs.

When school was over, it was straight home. Mother's first words would be, "Change your clothes while I slice some bread." (We always put on older clothing and in summer time, taking off our shoes and socks and going barefoot to save our shoes). While we were having our snack of homemade bread and preserves, jelly or maybe just oleo, mother would ask about our day at school. Of course at that age, we told all. The good smells coming from the pots and pans on the stove or in

the oven told us the menu for the evening meal.

Next came chore time. Some things had to be done right away; others could wait awhile. Setting the table for the evening meal came later, while gathering corn cobs for the stove, feeding the chickens, gathering the eggs, getting a bucket of water or a bucket of coal—these had to be done right away. Each of us had something to do. Some evenings there was rinse water to scrub the porches and toilet. Some days there were clothes to take down and fold, to be put away, sometimes a few flat pieces to iron. My first pieces of ironing were my dad's work handkerchiefs. Some were red and some were blue. I remember the flat ironing board placed between the seats of two chairs, the hot iron, from the stove, resting on a lid from a syrup bucket. Mother did not like a scorched place on her ironing board cover. I really thought that was great when I could do a few pieces of ironing. My two older sisters did the dishes, but I helped put them away, and the pots and pans.

When chores were done we could play until time for the evening meal. When those dishes were cleared, we sometimes got to play outside for awhile. Winter evenings we didn't go out.

When mother called, we would go in and gather around the kitchen table. The oil-lamp was lit and set in the center of the table, so all could see. Homework was done under mother's supervision. She could read well and was an excellent speller. Perhaps later mother would read a story book or a Bible story to us, or we would play a game.

Too soon it was time to get washed for bed. We always had a piece of bread and tomato preserves before going to bed. (Mother never left us to go to bed hungry.) Then it was off to dreamland, sunk down deep in our warm featherbed or, sometimes in hot weather, on a pallet on the floor, usually in front of the door. Sleep came quickly and easily because I was so very tired but very happy.

These are my cherished years.

MY DAD AND HIS HANDICAP

Grace B. Schafer

My dad grew up as a cripple, handicapped at least in appearance, although certainly not in capabilities. Born on November 11, 1863, in Clark County, Missouri, in a rural area known as Union, somewhere east of Kahoka, he moved with his family the next spring to Rock Creek Township, Hancock County.

According to the family, when he was about ten months old, which probably would have been sometime in September, he was put down for a nap, and, when he awoke, my grandmother is supposed to have said, "Him sick." That illness caused paralysis to his right arm, allowing the arm to grow in length, but not in girth or strength, and the hand was always in a perpetual curl. It is said that he dragged his right leg also, but since he was past 50 years of age when I was born, exercise evidently had strengthened it, so that I was never aware of anything particularly noticeable about his walking ability.

Years into his adulthood, my dad was in Elvaston one time, and a local doctor hailed him to come into his office and to remove his shirt. Upon a cursory examination, the doctor said that my father's childhood illness had probably been infantile paralysis, just becoming recognized, at least in the rural areas. Whether it was about the time of the local 1912 area epidemic, or if it was earlier in time, a bit of attention was being paid to the condition.

Since farm kids were expected to do their share of work, I assume my father did what he could, or was allowed, but my grandfather was probably brutally frank that he was not going to support a "hopeless" cripple all his life. My dad was allowed to go to LaFayette country school at least as much as he wanted, and also boarded in Nauvoo one or two winters, so as to learn the German confirmation studies. When he was 17, he was taken to Ferris, only three miles from home, and put on the train to Quincy. He didn't know the way to Ferris—

straight roads, and square corners! Yet he went to Quincy, and I assume found his own living arrangements, and stayed out the term as well as a second.

Although I have no idea how my grandparents or even my dad knew anything about Quincy and what was offered there in advanced education, they selected Gem City Business College, run then by the father, and possibly a brother of Mr. Musselman, whose sons kept on running the school well into the twentieth century. And, although far-removed in concept from the school of 1880, and removed from a Hampshire street corner, it is still flourishing today. They even had lifetime certificates for further study—but not transferable, as I realized when I was in high school. My dad learned his business subjects, and also wrote a rather distinguished looking left hand script.

He was really adventurous, for he went to Illinois State Fair in Springfield in 1909 and purchased a car, a Zimmerman, not much more than a glorified buggy. I don't know who taught him to drive—maybe the zealous salesman did a few tricks—but my dad operated a car until in the early 40's, graduating to a series of Model T's after he was married and had two daughters. He used to muse about a gear shift car, but always doubted if he would be able to shift lefthanded, so stayed with the Model T. That first old car was shipped home, and he got on another train and took off for the West. I imagine that piece of freight gave a few turns to the on-lookers at Ferris, or perhaps Elvaston, when it arrived.

Eventually, my dad got into the hog-raising business and sometime after a disastrous springtime storm, when he lost a lot of baby pigs, he sat at his drawing board, and worked out a design for a farrowing house, balloon style roof, complete with automatic, individual waterers, feed storage, and a dozen or so farrowing pens, with outside runs, all of which could be removed for space and ease in cleaning. The floor was of short lengths of oak, set on end on a concrete base, then tarred overall. It wasn't even, but it was smooth and water-tight. Then, in order to properly finish the fat porkers, he built a large finishing shed and later installed an automatic sprinkling system to cool down the hogs, for in those days, marketing weight was at least 350 pounds, and possibly 50 to 100 pounds more.

He had his own livestock truck, a Model T of course, delivered only as running gears, and then built his cab and box and racks. He hauled the livestock to Elvaston, where it was shipped to East St. Louis, or occasionally to Chicago, which was farther. So noted were the hogs that when they were unloaded for feeding and watering enroute, yardmen were known to say, "Something about those being Behnke's hogs."

Today there are all sorts of programs for the handicapped or the disadvantaged, but a hundred odd years ago, you did it yourself, and certainly grandfather had no reason to fear the support costs for a "hopeless" cripple.

THE DAYS WHEN FATHER SHOOK THE STOVE

Kenneth Maxwell Norcross

Few of our present readers are old enough to describe what it sounded like when father shook the stove.

Although it was a daily exercise, usually performed at six in the morning, we kids could never quite condition ourselves to the shock of being awakened from sound slumber by such a dreadful clamor. You could readily determine Dad's mood by the tempo with which he shook the old coal-burner; if he felt real cheerful and peppy, it sounded like a fast passenger train roaring through the house; if he was tired and sleepy, the sound resembled a slow freight puffing up a long grade.

Shaking the stove doesn't mean grasping the stove near the top and rocking it back and forth. Shaking the stove means

emptying the grate of the ashes which accumulate as coal is consumed in the firepot. This was usually accomplished by moving a lever back-and-forth sideways in the ashpit, which caused the ashes to sift through the grates while the lumps of coal remained in the firebox. It was necessary to keep the grates free of ashes so that the fire could obtain sufficient oxygen to support the combustion.

Some stoves required the operator to insert a crank and move the handle up and down vertically. There were many variations in the method of shaking, depending on the particular manufacturer. Regardless of what ingenious device was employed for the purpose, an inconsiderate amount of noise resulted, and the process of shaking the stove always had the side-effect of shaking the family's progeny from their sweet repose. Edgar A. Guest, in his poem "When Father Shook the Stove," stated it quite aptly: "To human voice I never stirred, But deeper down I dove, Beneath the covers, when I heard, My Father Shake the Stove."

In the spring, about the middle of May, Mom would begin to drop hints that the huge, nickle-plated parlor stove should be moved to its summer storage place. Maybe after a week or more of gentle persuasion, Father would manage to get the stove moved. He would then cover it with an old blanket, and there it would remain dormant until fall.

How large the parlor, or living room as we call it nowadays, seemed without the old coal-burner! How happy it made our mother to get the extra space! No matter how careful we were about bringing in the coal, or taking out the ashes, Mom was kept busy cleaning-up after us.

Then near the end of September, as the days began to get shorter and shorter, Dad secretly began to dread the day when he'd have to reverse the spring process and return the old heater to the living room.

With the help of some strong neighbors (which, of course, was reciprocated) the decorative four-foot square zinc mat was brought in first and placed on the floor about where fond recollection said it should be placed. Then the old stove was carried in and placed on the mat with the legs positioned according to the scratch marks left from many previous years' wear and tear. Next the stove pipes were meticulously cleaned of residue soot and perhaps given a coat of black polish. They were then carried into the house and precisely fitted between the stove and the outlet in the chimney.

This sequence of events required great imagination on Dad's part, not to mention a frequent pause while he counted to ten! Finally, the whole Rube Goldberg conglomeration would be completely assembled and Dad would give it a victorious pat, happy the job was done. Sometimes he'd deliver too enthusiastic a pat, which would cause the smoke pipe to fall in a heap and he'd have to do it all over again.

Mom would then give the old eye-sore a coat of black stove polish. The first time the stove was fired up, the polish would burn-off, filling the house with smoke and a terrible odor. It is amazing to reflect on what stupendous tasks we had to contend with to heat our homes in those good old days! Now about all we need do is turn up the thermostat.

There were no controls, blowers, thermostats, humidifiers or automatic controls to adjust. Everything about the old stove was 100% manually controlled. The stove pipe was fitted with a "damper" about at eye-level, which was partially closed at night after "banking" the fire. Closing the damper partially slowed down the chimney draft, which in turn retarded the rate of fuel combustion so that the fire would hopefully last until six a.m., when Dad would again shake the stove.

The upper, front door, complete with mica windows to observe the fire, was kept closed until it was necessary to ad more fuel. The lower, front door, in the ashpit, was also normally closed unless you wanted more draft for a hotter fire, or had to remove the ashes.

The warmest spot in the room was right next to the stove. The temperature was much lower in a far corner of the room. We kids always got ready for bed standing close to the old

heater. Our Saturday night baths were taken in a washtub placed near the stove. On real cold nights Mom would heat her sadiron on the stove for a few minutes, wrap it in a towel and place it at the foot of the bed to keep our feet warm. By morning the whole house would be cold and we'd discover Jack Frost had paid us a visit during the night and etched all the windows with intricate designs. But soon, thanks to Dad, the room would begin to warm up and we could get out of bed and dress.

Nowadays we don't have to carry in coal or carry out ashes. By the mere twist of the thermostat dial we can command air-conditioning, hot or cold. Dad no longer has to get up early to make the house comfy for the rest of the family. Mother no longer has to follow us around to clean up the soot and ashes we scattered on the floor in the good old days. The kids of this era have it quite luxurious, but they've missed a lot of old-fashioned family living—especially the days when Father shook the stove!

PRIMPING AND PRINCIPLES

Eva Baker Watson

One of the earliest memories I have of my mother is of her standing before the dresser mirror, curling her hair.

Mama used a curling iron heated in the chimney of the kerosene lamp. After it had hung there a few minutes, she would lift it out by its wooden handles, moisten the tip of her finger on her tongue, then give a quick touch to the iron. If it sizzled just right (and she was expert at knowing what was just right), it was hot enough to curl her hair. But horrible tales were told of too-hot irons that had singed locks right off the head.

In my lifetime I've seen the curling iron come full circle, for it's now back after a generation's absence.

The one I use would have delighted Mama. It is electric and thermostatically controlled to a heat safe for the hair. Even with this efficiency at my fingertips, my hair never looks as pretty to me when I finish curling it as Mama's did back then.

She would curl all the hair around her face, then brush it back into a soft puff, sweep up all the rest of her hair to meet it in a neat coil high on the back of her head as was the fashion, circa 1918. She looked like a picture.

But in the fashion world, the status quo is not countenanced. So in a few years along came bobbed hair.

In Brownfield, deep in the hills of Southern Illinois, this startling craze infiltrated the women's minds. Conversations were filled with arguments about whether or not it was a sin. Even sermons were preached against it. Some women sighed regretfully (and a bit proudly) that their husbands wouldn't hear to their cutting *their* hair. Others, despite opposition, did it surreptitiously then kept their folly a secret from their husbands by pinning on "switches." Husbands had quite a lot of say-so about their wive's hair.

Mama, after some weeks of mulling it over, decided to have hers cut. She didn't ask Papa's permission. She just told him. A sort of early Women's Libber was Mama.

So one day when Uncle Hal, who was handy with the scissors, stopped by our house, Mama thought—well—maybe the time was right to take the daring step.

When Uncle Hal had finished and I saw those long brown locks lying strewn about on the floor, I felt a tiny pang—in the midst of my applause for her determination to be stylish. But she really looked "bobbed."

About that time Papa came in from the fields. He stopped in the doorway, looked at Mama for a minute with a kind of bewildered, stunned expression, then walked over and, giving her head a light, gentle touch, said, "Aw-w-w, Mom!"

That small tinge of I-wish-you-hadn't-done-it in his tone was the nearest he came to reproaching her for the mutilation of what everybody considered woman's crowning glory.

Pretty soon Mama hauled out the curling iron again and learned to put ringlets in her short straight hair. My, she looked nice. And fashionable. People were always complimenting her on her "natural curls." She was an artist.

Mama wore no makeup at that time. We'd not heard of lipstick, eyeshadow, or rouge. (Oh, we'd *heard* of them—used, of course, only by show girls and fast women.) Mama was, however, a dedicated face powder-er. Just to take off the shine, you understand. She always bought "flesh color" powder and applied it with a chamois skin. Years later we discovered powder puffs and they were wonderful.

Mama powdered her face everyday as routinely as she combed her hair. Not everyone did. Once as she was thus making herself presentable for the day, a cousin was visiting us. She asked, "Aunt Edna, where are you going?" Such primping wasn't usually bothered with when just staying home.

Mama believed in keeping up appearance, but this is not to say she was vain. It was only a matter of self-respect. One occasion stands out in my mind that is a poignant illustration of this. Our family suffered a tragic loss when my only sister died. Mama was, as were we all, devastated. But as we were getting ready to go to the funeral, there stood Mama curling her hair.

There she was, in the throes of the worst experience of her life, yet she was holding her head high, "keeping up appearances." It was a part of her creed. She owed it to herself and to her family to be presentable. To me then it was nothing unusual, but in retrospect, it seems so touching.

My mother's adherence to these principles was not superficial posturing. Her attitude toward appearance typified in a small way the general attitudes of those times—that propriety, simply behaving properly, come what may, was important.

This may have contributed to unhealthy repression in some cases, but my view from today's vantage point is that with her it symbolized the high standards she lived by.

Early conditioning leaves an indelible mark, and I find myself today often harking back to the time when this or that type of present day laxness would not have been tolerated. I realize it dates me to think that the pendulum of permissiveness has swung too far. I can't help but believe that, with the anything-goes syndrome having reached epidemic proportions, we may have lost something of greater value than the freedom we've gained. It seems there should be, somewhere along the way, a middle road—a comfortably acceptable one—between the corseted past and the braless present.

Today, Mama no longer uses the curling iron. She lives, at 99, a half-life existence in the nursing home, aware of little, able to do nothing for herself. I see to it that her hair is done regularly. She would have wanted that. Up until the time when her faculties deteriorated, a few years back, she was still concerned with her appearance.

VII *Old-time Arts and Culture*

OLD TIME ARTS AND CULTURE

Culture has been hard in the American Midwest. Grandsons and granddaughters of immigrant pioneers know well enough what they ought to be enjoying, and they know well enough what they really enjoy, but generally speaking they have been too hard pressed in cultivating new and untamed land, providing the essentials of food and shelter and roads, and developing effective social and political systems to devote too much time to reading, writing and performing fine art. Settling a country—wringing civilization from wilderness—takes many decades, perhaps even centuries, and western Illinois of the early 1900s was a land still very much on the edge. First food, shelter, physical necessities. Then church and school and the county seat. Time enough later for the arts. (And when that time finally arrived, it brought dust bowl and depression, and thus back to square one.)

Moreover, good art, like corn and soybeans, grows organically out of the soil, its environment. Seeds can be imported, but a rich and vital cultural tradition grows to suit its environment—it cannot be pasted on, dropped down, hustled in for a weekend from outside of a community. The subtleties of indigenous art also require a certain self-examination, which in turn requires a great deal of time . . . a luxury not readily available to a culture in early stages of becoming.

Rural people, pre-occupied with raising grain and barns as they have been, but mindful always of the "benefits of civilization," are often slightly apologetic about the sparsity of art and culture in the countryside. In fact, the land between two rivers did rather well for itself in the early years of the twentieth century. Here was no Boston or New York (not even a Chicago), but here was no wasteland either, even on high cultural terms. Violins were played (and *made*) in Prairie City; Sousa performed in Buffalo Prairie; Chautauqua brought its annual smorgasbord. On a more modest scale, the showboats, the circus, the town band, church groups, ladies' groups, and school programs afforded numerous opportunities for cultural development and artistic display. "You know," Leonard Anderson, an old Swedish carpenter said, "I got a pretty good musical education just singing in the church choir. And it was free!" Later, of course, vaudeville, the phonograph, and the radio brought the world to western Illinois.

Culture in the town and country divides, usually, into three categories: what people think they ought to enjoy ("high culture"), what they genuinely enjoy even though they think they should not ("low culture"), and what they do not enjoy at all but what can, with a little imagination, be transformed from necessity into art ("folk art").

What art people thought they should appreciate, of course, was "high culture": Shakespeare plays and Schubert songs, the kind of artificially imported, pasted-on culture viciously parodied by Mark Twain in the famous "Royal Nonesuch" scene in *The Adventures of Huck Finn*, and more gently by Sinclair Lewis in the pretensions of Carol Kennicott in *Main Street.* High culture was provided early in this century by Chautauqua, by the area's small colleges, and by legions of piano teachers, choral directors, and band leaders intent on bringing Schubert *Lieder* to the citizens of Hanna City. In later years, such importation was made easier by the gramophone, the Victrola, radio, movies, and Public Television. Undeniably there was support within the community for high culture, especially among the blue bloods but also among working farmers. (Hamlin Garland recalls his pioneer father's veneration for Booth, the Shakespearean actor, among other orators.) More attendance than supporters would care to admit, however, came from a sense of obligation; like Sunday sermons, Chautauqua speakers elicited a great deal of sleep.

It is touching how embarrassed the rural community is, even today, to admit to enjoying certain forms of culture it considers "low." Early in this century, such entertainments included the circus, showboat performances, tent shows, medicine shows, and—probably—local theatrical productions.

Some of this embarrassment stems from a recognition, especially in retrospect, that much of this entertainment was primitive, crude, and vulgar. Theater productions especially were crude, although turn-of-the-century American theater was not, even in the Fabled East, the stuff of greatness. Details of high school plays produced in Abingdon and other Illinois locals are not reassuring on this point. Nor are the details of circus side show performances, tent shows, and even showboat productions, although they were all very much in the American grain and probably elicited more genuine enthusiasm than did loftier forms of art.

Music, however, was enormously popular, relatively sophisticated, and relatively attuned to the small town culture. Most towns had their band shells and bands to perform on them one hour each week (a tradition which persists in many small and not-so-small towns even today). The bands might also perform at commemorative and patriotic occasions like Flag Day, the 4th of July, and Armistice Day. The town band was participatory music, and a constant encouragement to youngsters to play a musical instrument. Probably there is more, and more omnipresent, music in rural America today than in the early years of this century, but there were certainly more performers then than now.

Dancing in its many forms appealed to just about everyone. The appeal was as much social as it was artistic, and young gentlemen especially were shy, but the appeal of a barn dance, a square dance, or an evening at one of many downstate ballrooms was powerful indeed. "I did not go to my first regular dance until I was 19," recalls Robert Richards, but "then it was six nights a week." Square dancing was so popular that when an empty barn could not be found for a dance, young men constructed their own floor of tongue-and-grooved pine boards nailed down to a two-by-four base.

Music was important enough even to those who could not play instruments that player pianos were popular . . . and then the "gramaphone," and then the Victrola, and then the radio. Significantly, favorite recorded music included classical opera arias, Sousa marches, and popular tunes.

Some forms of art were very closely related to daily life in the country and small town. "Folk arts" like quilt-making, hand-sewing, paper folding, stenciling, utensil ornamentation, and the construction of home-made toys have only recently achieved recognition as legitimate art forms. All were examples of the folk transforming necessity into pleasure, the stuff of their daily lives into the stuff of art. The resulting "culture" was closely tied to the lives of those who made it, and in that respect, at least, newspaper doilies, tissue paper flowers, and hand-sewn French seams may have been more appropriate art than Ibsen plays and Schubert *Lieder.*

David R. Pichaske

CULTURE IN ROSEVILLE IN THE EARLY 20TH CENTURY

Martha K. Graham

Today, when there is such a plethora of cultural activities and opportunities that one can hardly choose among them, it might seem that we of the early 1900's were woefully culturally deprived.

Not so in Roseville and nearby towns. Many talented, accomplished people—artists, musicians and speakers—freely gave their services for programs of various organizations and churches.

Roseville had a community band composed of townspeople and high school students, with Guy Arter as a motive power, that gave concerts in the band stand in the square all summer. Everyone came to town on Band Concert Night.

Ella Kreig and her sister Jenny taught violin and piano. Their cousin Clarabelle Kreig came on Saturdays from Bushnell to teach piano. For years Maude Calvin Ditch had a large piano class, and Grace Gawthrope Peterson of Monmouth College Conservatory spent Saturdays in Roseville teaching piano. Theophilous Hess taught clarinet, and later Rolland, Homer and Austin Truitt taught trumpet, clarinet and trombone. Julia Anderson, Mary Dixson and Susannah McCracken, school teachers, taught voice.

Hattie Lee and her daughter Edna held classes in painting. Both were fine artists whose paintings hung in many Roseville community homes, and no doubt still do. I have four of them.

For a whole week every summer, Redpath Chautauqua brought to Roseville a varied and outstanding program of music, lectures and plays. This was a week when out-of-town people came to visit Roseville friends and relatives, and all attended the performances.

Even before the turn of the century almost every community had its opera house, with the largest seating capacity in town, an adequate stage, a showcase for musicians, actors, lecturers, politicians and other bringers of culture to a community. The huge white frame barn-like opera house, on the south side of West Pennsylvania Avenue in Roseville, was no longer in use as an opera house while I was growing up, but it was still in existence, being used as a livery stable. It was fascinating to hear tales of its heyday.

Roseville Library must not be slighted as an important center of culture. Children spent hours browsing, reading and listening to story times, especially in summer when school was out. Adults made good use of the library's service. The elderly who could not get out could depend on the librarian to send them books to their reading tastes. She had been librarian for years, and she knew everyone's preferences in reading material.

In my youth, Roseville people gravitated toward Monmouth and Galesburg, kept informed as to their cultural events and often attended. Both Monmouth and Knox Colleges had a yearly season ticket course featuring well known speakers, musicians and actors. Members of both college faculties gave lectures, concerts and recitals and presented their talented students in performance.

In Monmouth I heard, among others, Percy Grainger, world famous composer and pianist. Our own Howard Silberer, after his graduation from Knox Conservatory, came back from nationwide concertizing to play piano concerts in Knox's old Beecher Chapel and in his home community, Bushnell.

Both colleges had fine stage facilities and brought well known traveling groups to present plays. I remember attending the play *Outward Bound* at Knox, where the audience was in evening dress, and definitely not strangers to the fine points of such a cultural evening.

The Galesburg theaters, the Orpheum and the Strand, every year hosted a several-weeks run of plays to which the surrounding communities flocked to buy season tickets.

When I was very young I saw the famous John Phillip Sousa, The March King, direct his world-famous military band in Monmouth. Their tent was set up on the brick-paved street south of Warren County court house. At that time Sousa was old, white haired and white moustached, but I remember how, with the agility of a young man, he leaped up onto the stage, immaculate in white gold-braided uniform and white gloves, lifted his baton and brought music out of all those instruments to stir Monmouth and surrounding towns for weeks. People flocked to music stores to buy the volumes of his famous marches arranged for piano. It was typical, then, of listeners that, after musical performances, people strove to own the compositions played, and tried their own hand at playing them.

In Roseville High School, as in surrounding towns, students trained in solo, ensemble and declamation competed in the bi-county meets and in the Military Tract contests. The whole community turned out for the preliminary contests which determined who would compete in the finals.

High Schools had their community meetings, their Junior and Senior plays, and proms with their formal class dinners which showed that the school students were no strangers to proper social etiquette, itself a constituent of a community's culture.

Almost every home in Roseville had its piano, the most popular musical instrument of the early 1900's, which was played by at least the younger members of the family, and around which family and friends gathered at parties and evenings at home. Player pianos were popular for fun and dancing.

Flat, square-shaped table model Victrolas were very popular, the earlier ones having a long flared horn from which issued the music from the record, picked up by a long sharp needle. The mechanism had to be wound by hand and would run down at inconvenient moments. These instruments were advertised in store windows with a plaster model of a large black-and-white short-haired dog sitting near the trumpet, one ear cocked listening to "his master's voice."

Later cabinet Victrolas were popular, all the mechanism enclosed, and with a storage place below for records. Records were very thick and heavy, flat or cylindrical in shape. Manual winding was still necessary. The first record I ever heard on a cabinet model Victrola was *Dardanella* played by an orchestra.

Soon radios found their way into every parlor, bringing a variety of music, as well as news and other cultural enlightenment from the outside world.

These conveyances of culture were more attentively listened to than are the hi-fi, radio and TV of today that people seem to habitually turn on as soon as they get up in the morning and return home in the evening. People seem prone to let them run as a background for all kinds of activities that, in my youth, were best done in quiet—homework, reading, conversation, eating, or just thinking and planning.

In the 1930's, Depression years, people valued cultural activities highly, often spending more money and time than they could afford to support and attend such events. In the absence of affordable, planned cultural offerings, people made their own. They read books and newspapers, learned to appreciate and make their own art and music through lessons and study or their own self-teaching, took correspondence courses, quilted, embroidered and sewed creatively often to their own design. They told and listened to tales of their family and community history.

These are the foundation stones of culture. People in small communities like Roseville possessed these foundation stones. Families and communities had not lost their cultural roots, and, as time went on, they had increasing opportunity to enjoy, and appreciate and participate in cultural activities brought within their reach.

Even during the Depression years of the 1930s people did not feel culturally deprived. In the small communities every

family was working hard and thinking hard to make a bare living. Worry and fear were their constant companions. But the bed-rock culture was still there, a source of pleasure and release from the unavoidable anxieties of the Depression years.

THE PERFORMING ARTS—1920s

Louise Parker Simms

During the early part of this century and into the 1920's and even the 1930's entertainment and "shows" were vastly different from what they are today.

People in smaller towns enjoyed medicine shows, the organ grinder and his monkey, gypsy dancers, street carnivals as well as side shows at county fairs, home talent shows, vaudeville, tent shows, and school class plays.

The medicine shows are probably best remembered by the way they are depicted in old western movies. Usually the medicine man came to town in his enclosed wagon filled with "elixirs" which were supposed to cure almost anything from a hangnail to lumbago.

After a short performance by someone such as a magician, a juggler, or ventriloquist, the man would open his wagon and try to sell the magic portion to those who had gathered to see the free entertainment.

The organ grinder and his monkey were just that—a man and his pet monkey, needing little else except perhaps a tin cup which the monkey on a leash passed through the crowd to collect coins after he had entertained. The performance was usually a dance to music produced by the organ grinder, who turned the handle on the box-like instrument he carried on a strap around his neck. My father was the village blacksmith with his shop a half block east of the Main Street business district. If there was an organ grinder and his monkey in the business district of our town, I usually knew about it.

When gypsies made a stop in Abingdon, they were usually traveling by horse–drawn wagons, much like the covered wagons seen in old time western movies. They were usually dressed in colorful clothing with a bright colored cloth tied in gypsy-fashion around their head. The women wore full skirts, lots of costume jewelry, and carried a tambourine. The gypsies would dance to the beat of the tambourines, then pass the inverted tambourine around the circle of spectators for a monetary donation. They also asked to tell your fortune—for a fee, of course.

Gypsies roamed from town to town and lived in their wagons, setting up camp at some rural location near a town. Children were usually warned by their parents to avoid gypsies because they were told they had a reputation for stealing and also for kidnapping children. These tales may or may not have been true, but they kept many children at home when gypsies were camped nearby.

My childhood home was at 401 East Martin Street in Abingdon, less than two blocks from the eastern edge of our town. There was a favorite gypsy camping ground just outside the east city limits. You can be sure I was not allowed outside my yard at home when gypsies were camping nearby.

Home talent shows were popular in Abingdon in the 1920's. A local sponsoring organization would hire a director who traveled from town to town directing, producing, and providing costumes for a play or a musical show complete with chorus line. The local American Legion sponsored many of these annual productions in return for a percentage of the ticket sales.

First there was a call for local performers, providing an opportunity for local hams (myself included) who could pass the auditions. Performances were usually held during the winter in the Opera House located in the first block of East Martin Street on the north side behind the hotel.

Rehearsals were held evenings and weekends. Excitement mounted as the time for dress rehearsal approached

and, trunks of costumes arrived from New York, Chicago, or wherever the director's home base was. To the many teenage actors involved, it would seem only logical that this home base was a big city.

Where the costumes came from was not nearly as important to the cast as the fact that they (hopefully) fit the person playing the part. Many last minute alterations were often necessary.

Show night finally arrived, and ready or not, the show went on, in spite of all the butterflies in many of the performers' stomachs. The show provided the topic for conversations over a Coke or ice cream soda at the corner drug store or the ice cream parlor. All of us looked forward with happy anticipation to show time next year.

During the summer, tent shows provided entertainment in a tent erected by a traveling show troupe. In Abingdon the tent show was usually on the west side of the 100 block of South Harshbarger Street next to the Chicago, Burlington, and Quincy (now Burlington Northern) Railroad tracks.

A different play was given each night for a week, and those who could afford it attended every night. There was always an intermission about half way through the show, when members of the show troupe would walk around in the audience selling boxes of taffy candy kisses individually wrapped. Each box contained a prize, the counterpart of prizes found in boxes of Crackerjack. Being able to buy a box of candy with a prize in it became as important to the children as being able to buy a ticket to the show.

On hot summer nights the sides of the tent would be rolled up during intermission, hopefully to allow summer breezes to cool the spectators as well as the performers. The sides were never rolled up before intermission, for this might allow someone to slip in and see the performance without paying. The show troupe lived in smaller tents pitched behind the big tent.

High school class plays afforded an opportunity for students to learn about the art of performing. I remember vividly the part I played in our junior class play in the late 1920's. It was *Seventeen*, written by Booth Tarkington.

One scene called for Lola (me) to come on stage carrying a small poodle dog. The reason for the dog and the dialogue during the scene somehow escapes me, but I recall that I was "dressed up" in a fancy dress made of lace. We encountered a problem during dress rehearsal when the dog's toenails became entangled in the lace. We solved that problem by fastening a piece of white cloth around each of the dog's paws in a manner resembling bandages. The toenails did not become entangled in my dress on the night of the performance, but as I remember it now it must have looked somewhat stupid. I am sure there must have been a better way, but at the time we couldn't think of it.

Seventeen was a favorite with all of the cast. In fact we had so much fun that one cast member wanted to take the show on the road and perform the same play in several small towns in the area. Well, teenagers often daydream—both then and now.

HES PHILLIPS, BARBER AND FIDDLE MAKER

Martha K. Graham

To most Prairie City people in the early 1900's, Hes Phillips was just the only barber in town. Prairie City was so small that the business district comprised no more than one block on each side of the main street through town.

Hes Phillips (his given name was Heslip) was tall, dark haired and very thin, with an ascetic look about him. He was a mild mannered man, serious, extremely quiet and reserved. He had none of the banter, gossip and small talk one thinks of as being a feature of the old-time barbershop where everyone knew everyone else.

His shop was on the south side of the street about midway of the block, near the post office. Walking past, glancing in the big oblong-paned window, one noticed that the shop was often empty, not even the barber in sight.

Not many people knew or cared what Hes Phillips was doing when he wasn't barbering. I, too, might never have known except that, casting about for a likely topic of conversation to break the silence during my haircut, I remembered that he sometimes played violin accompaniments to the Presbyterian Sunday School songs with Mrs. Gratia Bone or Miss Sade Wilson at the piano. I timidly mentioned having heard him play, and that I, too, enjoyed playing the violin.

That statement inspired more conversation than I ever expected to hear from Hes Phillips. I was amazed to learn that he had never had a formal music lesson in his life, yet he played a wooden flute, trumpet and violin by ear and by note. And he preferred to play classical music. He especially liked string instruments, and in the back room of his barbershop he made violins in his spare time.

The barbershop, it seemed, was his way of keeping food on the table for his wife, Nora, those few of their seven children who remained at home and their two grandchildren. Every spare minute he was in the back room surrounded by his violins in various stages of completion. That was where he did his real work and lived his real life. Since I seemed interested in violins, he showed me his workshop.

The back room had an old pot-bellied stove on which sat his glue pot suspended in a big can of warm water to keep the glue from hardening. Pieces of wood, tools, brushes, cans of varnish, folded newspapers and old rags lay about, but not in great disorder. Most of the tools he worked with seemed to have been made by himself. He had made a half-size violin for his granddaughter, Rose Marie.

As he handled his finished and unfinished violins, this quiet barber became a different person. The morose diffidence fell away, and I saw Hes Phillips as few people, outside his family, must have ever known he could be. He simply loved everything about violins—the feel of them, the sound of them, playing them and making them.

In the 1920's the violin playing at Sunday School and church was the extent of his performance. But in his younger days he played trumpet in the old Prairie City Brass Band, of which he was also leader. This band traveled to surrounding communities and earned about $400 a year, which they spent on music and whatever else would benefit the band.

In earlier years he had been the motive power for the organization of various band and orchestral groups in the Prairie City community. It was Prairie City's loss that, as he grew older, he became more withdrawn, and no longer let his musical light shine for everyone to see.

His barbershop burned down, along with the other places of business on that side of the street. His son, Leo, rescued three of the violins. They are in his family today. Hes moved his shop across the street and continued barbering.

In 1942 we left Prairie City, moving to Macomb, where my husband, Burdette Graham, had been called to open the first agriculture department at Macomb High School. In our new environment we lost contact with our barber-fiddle maker friend. Hes Phillips died in 1945 at age 84, after 55 years as a barber. He had been Prairie City's oldest businessman. But he didn't disappear from our lives.

About 1956, my husband amazed our three children and me by bringing home a full-size harp he had found at the estate sale of A. E. Dowell, on North McArthur Street. Only one other person bid on this unusual instrument, and it fell to Burdette for $9.00. The harp was old, with an old-style pedal mechanism, but it was strung up and playable. We set it up in our living room and tried playing piano music on it. My piano students were enchanted. For the only time in their lives they got to try playing a harp. On cleaning the discolored metal frame, at the top we uncovered a delicate, elegantly engraved inscription:

1898 H. Phillips

About fifteen years later, looking through a box of old pictures at the home of Mrs. Ronald (Dude) Mead of Prairie City, I found a picture of a small orchestra and recognized Hes Phillips as a young man, sitting up very straight and handsome beside his harp—our harp. The distinctive design was unmistakable.

Marie Mead knew that this musical group was called The Phillips Harp Orchestra, made up of the harp and two violins, and that Hes Phillips had made the harp. The musicians were R. H. Cox, F. W. King and H. Phillips. The Harp Orchestra played for weddings and dances and other social events. They sometimes played in theaters (Macomb's Illinois Theater for one) where they furnished music for the silent movies of the time. That was an exacting performance, for, ideally, the music had to be appropriate to the scene on the screen, and that could change in a flash from calm to exciting and back again countless times during a movie. Most of the time they gave up trying to follow the action and just played. Later a pianist was added to the group. She was Esther Dodsworth, well known Macomb musician.

In the later 1970's Hes Phillips' grandchildren, Rose Marie (Palm) of Bushnell and Jack Phillips, both of whom I had the pleasure of teaching in elementary school, came to our house to see the harp their grandfather had made. They had always known of its existence, but had only recently discovered that we owned it.

Jack and his lovely wife, from Alaska, where he was employed in Alaskan oil operations, were in Illinois for a visit with relatives. Jack, tall and dark-haired and looking very like the young Hes Phillips in the Harp Orchestra picture, pleaded with us to sell the harp to him. He would transport it to Alaska in his station wagon, recondition it with the help of his sons, and give it the honored place in his home that it deserved as the family heirloom it really was.

Much as we loved the harp and hated to part with it, we realized its place was with some member of the Phillips family. So the beautifully designed harp Hes Phillips had made in 1898, very probably in the back room of his barbershop, is now in Alaska with the Jack Phillips family. However, because of certain regulations, the harp could not be transported in the station wagon. Jack supervised its crating and saw the instrument started on its way. In Alaska he had to pay $500 freight charges to redeem his harp.

Hes Phillips would have been overjoyed that his 1898 harp was back in the Phillips family. On the afternoon of their visit, as we took final snapshots of the harp and its new owners, the Phillips grandchildren spoke of their grandfather with the nostalgia of old times remembered. They regretted not having known and understood their grandfather better. They remembered that he used to play them to sleep with *Humoresque* on his violin. They spoke of the back room where he made violins. Sometimes they had helped by handing him things, holding pieces of wood or the glue pot for him while he worked. Rose Marie remembered exactly how his hands looked working on his violins. But while he was living they never realized he was doing anything special. To them he was just grandpa, a very quiet man, puttering around in the back room when there was no customer in the barbershop.

But when I first knew Hes Phillips I was aware of him as someone unusually different, unique and special. He was a natural musician and an inventive craftsman. He was an extremely vulnerable dreamer and a fiddle-maker, hiding his dreams and his violins safely behind the facade of his barbershop.

I feel very fortunate to have known Hes Phillips. In my book of poems published in 1942 by the Prairie City press of James A. Decker, this tribute to Hes Phillips has a page all its own:

Fiddle-Maker

Fiddle-maker, that is what I am,
Whatever else I may have seemed to be,
Fiddle-maker, and singer of fiddle-song.
Whatever else I do, these things I love:
The sound of the bow across a set of strings,
The feel of a fiddle shaping in my hands.

PAPA AND THE PIPE ORGAN

Lois Harry Mellen

The year was 1910. The place the village of San Jose, Illinois, and Papa was a self-educated, ordained pastor of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Also, and more important to me, he was Rev. Frank M. Harry and *My Father.*

Papa was also a self-taught musician and a lover of music, who possessed a powerful baritone voice which he rejoiced in raising in praise of the Lord.

San Jose was a miniscule town in Central Illinois, set in the rich black soil of Logan County. The town itself had little to offer, but it had two churches, both Methodist. One was the English Methodist Church and the other smaller one was the German Methodist Church. My father was pastor of the English-speaking church.

The edifice was the usual white frame building, with the steeple and bell-tower standing in one of the few elevations in this prairie town. The parsonage was equally imposing, spacious and two-stories, situated back of the church on the hill.

Certainly, San Jose was a nice "charge" to be assigned to by an aspiring preacher. the assignment, or church, to which the Central Illinois Conference sent its ministers was called "charge"—for that it was, a charge to look over the flock. The rich farmers made up the "flock," as San Jose was the nearest trading point and place of worship if they had one. And rich farmers they were. In 1910 a man was rich who owned eighty or even forty acres of land: no income tax, no fertilizer bill, no high gasoline bill, a low labor bill, or none at all if he was lucky enough to have sons, or a live-in hired man if needed. Certainly, San Jose was a nice charge to have.

But Papa was not satisfied. Oh, he was paid his meager salary on time, he had a nice house for his family, and the membership was fairly regular in attendance, especially the women. But Papa wanted a pipe organ so its tones could ring out the open doors and windows for the glory of his Lord.

Therefore, he set his boundless energy to the task of getting such a marvellous possession for his church. The cost—which I have no way of knowing—was probably around five or six hundred dollars, and must have seemed like an enormous amount to those Illinoians in 1910.

There were, I am sure, endless meetings, lists drawn up, calls made, more meetings and calls. Doubtless there was dissention—"We do not need an organ. We have a piano. Why get an organ?" Also "Who wants an organ? And who will play it?" To which I can guess Papa would reply, "I want an organ and I have someone to play."

So his campaign began. He must have had some supporters, for the work went on. Papa probably took Old Scott, the family mare, out on calls all through the area to ask for contributions, and to visit a lot of farmers who never came to church. They left the church-going to their wives, who would not dare make even the smallest of pledges.

One on whom Papa called was Mr. Adolph Weisenberger, a staunch supporter of the German Methodist Church but a friend to Papa. So Papa asked him for a contribution. To his surprise, Mr. Weisenberger replied, "Ya, I giff you money. Vat is the most anyone giff in your church? I giff as much as anyone in your church giff."

Papa must have driven home on wings, so anxious to tell

Mamma the news, and to set about getting someone to increase their pledge. But no! Not one of the good Methodists would give more than twenty-five dollars. So Papa's hope of having two pledges of fifty or maybe seventy-five dollars were dashed to the ground. Poor Papa! Mr. Weisenberger was not so generous either. He just did not want anyone to give more than he did.

The list of pledges must have grown, for at last there were enough to insure the purchase of Papa's organ and it was ordered and eventually installed in the white church on the hill.

When Papa told the scoffers he had a player he was not lying—which he would never have done under any circumstances. The player was his daughter Helen, my older 14-year-old sister.

Helen was also a born musician who practically taught herself to play the piano. In fact, she played for Sunday School occasionally. To learn to play the pipe organ Helen went every Saturday to the neighboring town of Delavan for lessons. I do not know whether Papa or the church paid the bill. How I envied Helen! To go all alone on the interurban!

When the organ was installed Helen could practice at the church right next to our house. No more trips to Delavan. But there was a difficulty. The instrument had to be pumped. That was done by pumping the long handle bar which extended back of the organ through the wall into the Sunday School room. A slightly mentally handicapped boy was hired to pump on Sunday, but not for Helen to practice. That little duty fell to Helen's two little sisters, Ruth and Lois. I recall we did a fair amount of giggling and probably protesting as Helen on some occasions had to call Mamma to "straighten us out."

At last the great day of dedication came. It was one of those beautiful Sunday mornings in a usually quiet little town. Papa arrayed himself as usual in his Prince Albert black coat, gray trousers and shiny black shoes. Helen had a new dress and Ruth and Lois wore their all-over embroidery white dresses with pink and blue ribbons. I do not remember what Mamma wore.

We all knew the organ was not quite paid for. But surely, when the congregation heard and saw Papa's Organ they would pledge a little more. The Presiding Elder was to preach the sermon. (San Jose was too small to rate a Bishop.)

The church bell pealed out over the town, the congregation quieted down and Helen took her place at the organ and started to play. Not a sound came forth. Papa—who could rise to any occasion—motioned Helen to go to the piano and play the hymn to be sung.

He went through the Sunday School room at the rear, while Mamma went out the front door. Soon Mamma beckoned to Ruth and me. We followed her to the back and learned the difficulty. The pumping boy was not there. In the excitement of the morning no one had missed him. Two little girls—the preacher's kids—were pressed into service and manfully "manned the pump." The first hymn was finished, Papa announced the second one as Helen again took her place at the organ, which gave forth its rich sonorous tones. They might have been a little wheezy at first until the pumpers got the rhythm.

Papa had found the janitor who took over the pumping for the rest of the service. Two little girls in white embroidered dresses slightly rumpled, and with pin and blue hair ribbons slightly askew took their usual places in the front pew. Papa took his place next to the Presiding Elder, and the service continued. Papa's rich baritone voice never sounded better.

The mystery of the missing pumping boy was not solved until later. Papa was too busy playing host to the Presiding Elder, Mamma was too busy getting dinner for him, and the girls too proud of themselves to care. The Church Board was busy counting the contents of the collection baskets and found there was enough cash and pledges to make up the deficit. The pipe organ could be paid for. Glory Be!

Late that Sunday Papa learned the story from a well-

wisher but not a church-goer. Even in small towns in the early 1900's there were malicious people who did not like "that Methodist Preacher." They were smart enough to know the organ had to be pumped and that addle-pated Burney Clark was to be the pumper. So they bribed him to stay away and even took him fishing that Sunday morning.

Papa, the Christian man he was, vented his temper on no one. He had his organ, the service was gratifying, and he was proud of his family. "God was in the Heavens and all right was the world."

I am now eighty-years old, the last living member of the family that lived so long ago in the parsonage on the hill in San Jose, Illinois. No opportunity has come to go back.

Maybe it is just as well. I may not want to know what is now on that hill where once stood the spacious white house, the tall white church with its steeple, bell-tower and with Papa's Pipe Organ.

CIRCUS TIME

Dorothy B. Koelling

It happened the other day when I was arranging some old snapshots. There was this picture of a very large elephant and I, a child, was on his back! Like Alice, I plunged into another time, another place. It was in the twenties and the bills of Barnum and Bailey Circus had been posted throughout Adams County and beyond to announce the coming of the Big Top. The Circus would perform at the County Fairgrounds at Baldwin Park in Quincy. I felt a special part of all the excitement because Daddy's farm adjoined the Park area and we would spend most of a memorable day there.

It was the practice for some early rising residents to go to Front Street in Quincy where the circus people would unload animals, equipment, and rides from the railroad cars. This activity at about 4 a.m. was more fascinating for many than the actual performance later. It didn't matter to us wide-eyed youngsters that we were getting only half of the show promised by the posters. It was customary for the huge company to split and only a part unloaded at Quincy while the rest went on, possibly to Burlington, Iowa.

However, the attraction for Daddy was to be at the park when the circus folk arrived to set up for the day. The first tent that went up was the cook tent, and the smells of bacon and coffee permeated the air long before the entire company arrived. Other tents were soon raised, often with the help of elephants, trained to wield a heavy mallet on the stakes that held the guys to steady the lifting. When elephants weren't used for this particular job, a small crew of men would hammer rhythmically in turn on each stake, a fascinating activity to watch. These men, the roustabouts, were a motley crew of transients, who had "circus blood in their veins" and lived a vicarious life in following the Big Top wherever it went.

Perhaps we were intruding as we walked about the grounds at this early hour, but the circus people made us feel welcome by smiling and saying a few words sometimes. We felt we were in a truly cosmopolitan atmosphere as we recognized many of the circus folk to be foreigners whose talents classified them as professionals and whose desires included a love of travel.

Yes, we *were* intruding into their personal lives. We saw their laundry hung on ropes stretched in any available space. We smelled straw, animals, food, humanity, all relative to the circus. We saw their camaraderie among themselves, some joking, some playfully quarreling (occasionally, not playfully), some using words which I'm sure my Mother did not know that I heard. But, young as I was, I realized that "circus folk" lived a different way of life than I, and for that reason it was all right for them to talk so.

There was a single purpose in the busy activity we saw in the early morning. It was to prepare for the 11 a.m. parade

through town. This would be a rousing hello to the townsfolk and an encouragement to come to the show later. The parade started at the park and wound through the city streets, a distance of about six miles. (The parade was discontinued in later years because it was presented usually on a Sunday morning, the day of the show, which made it objectionable to some of the citizens.)

It seemed everyone was out to see the parade, little ones perched on their fathers' shoulders, older ones running alongside the colorful wagons that were carrying the wild animals. I wondered what would happen if those animals got out. The horses drawing the wagons wore brightly polished harnesses. They seemed proud of their part in the parade as they high-stepped along with the plumes on their heads seeming to nod in time. The performers, dressed in their garishly colored performing costumes, rode on horses or in decorated carriages. They were friendly and waved and threw candy to us. Heavily painted clowns danced along with boundless energy, occasionally coming up to a spectator to tweak his nose or to pull his ear. Over all the hubbub we heard the circus music played on a calliope. At times the music would stop abruptly. That was when the calliope ran out of steam.

After the parade there was time to return to the circus grounds for a hot dog and red cream soda, maybe even pink cotton candy. What fun it was to watch them make that candy with the syrupy mixture twisting on the turning blades of the machine. I wondered why it was always pink.

We went then into a large tent called the Side Show where individual presentations were shown. The barker outside with huge larger–than–life pictures on worn canvas flapping behind him had called us in, telling us we would see the dog with two heads, the fat lady, the skinny man, the magician, the sword–swallower, the fire–eater, the woman sawed in half. We expected all these and others because they were *always* in the Side Show.

To me, a puppet show called Punch and Judy was most attractive, perhaps because the spieler at each performance gave a gadget to a child standing near. This gadget would permit the user to "throw his voice" or be a ventriloquist. How I wanted one of those. I always stood very close to his platform, but the spieler never saw me.

It was in this Side Show that it is said P.T. Barnum, in an effort to encourage people to move along, erected a sign "egress" over a doorway leading outward. Most of the folks, thinking "egress" was another animal to be viewed soon found themselves outside. (Wasn't it Barnum who said, "There's a fool born every minute"?)

From the Side Show tent we entered the Big Top where the main show was given twice in the afternoon and twice in the evening. The entranceway contained the caged animals that would perform in the special acts. I remember feeling sorry for them as they twisted and growled in their too small confinement. The Band was already playing its peppy marches in tones strident and brassy, yet fitting. Next we bought some Cracker Jacks. The prize in that box was worth the price of the circus ticket to me. We found seats which were on plain hard boards, but we didn't mind. We tried to choose a spot from which we could watch all three rings where performances were given simultaneously. We didn't want to miss a thing.

It was difficult, however, to see all the daring feats of the Wallenda family, the high-wire artists, the admirable courage of Mabel Stack who worked with trained tigers, of Clyde Beatty, also a trainer of wild animals, and others. It was fun to watch the antics of the clowns, Emmett Kelly among them. A part of the clowns' reportoire was always the noisy wreck of a car that had occasional explosions, caught fire, and amidst the pseudo-concerns of the clowns was saved by a miniature fire-engine. And the clowns in their grotesque, mismatched garb, extravagant wigs, and carrying tiny parasols moved on to repeat the hilarious performance in another spot.

After the Show in the Big Tent we wandered around in a

carnival area which always accompanied the circus. The rides tested our bravery, but we enjoyed them all—the Ferris Wheel, the Merry-Go-Round, the Whip, and maybe a sort of flying bucket ride that was very scary.

Various attractions here, such as games of skill, weight guessing, hammering a scale hard enough to ring a bell—all these kept people in the park longer, of course, and more money would pour into the circus coffers. It was at this time we saw the elephant that was used for the snapshots taken with children on his back. Daddy convinced me that it would be a terrific souvenir. So, with my eyes closed and showing more courage than I felt, I found myself hoisted to the back of the rough-skinned pachyderm. It pleased Daddy and has provided me this nostalgic trip back to my childhood.

SPENCER SQUARE BAND CONCERTS

Junetta Findlay

I have lived my entire 65+ years in Rock Island. One of my earliest memories is of the mid and late 1920's, and of the Spencer Square Park. It was formerly Union Square, changing to Spencer Square in 1885. It was a block square park at the edge of the downtown area of the city between 19th and 20th streets and 2nd and 3rd Avenue. There were wide—possibly six foot—sidewalks laid diagonally from the northwest to the southeast and from the northeast to the southwest corners. There were smaller walks within the park. The large walks were bordered with flowers, round flower beds were set amidst the grounds of well kept grass. Where the two wide sidewalks crossed stood a huge cement planter kept full of blooming flowers in season, and it looked tall and pretty in the winter filled with snow and ice hanging from the rim. On the east side of the center walk a little more than halfway from the north edge of the park was a small pond with a tall fountain in the middle of it. I can remember gold fish in it. There was a low cement wall around the pond that I sat on and watched the fish darting around in the water. The benches around this pond were of black iron with rounded wrought-iron backs. Other regular park benches were placed around in the park. A little closer to the Third Avenue side was a granite statue of Chief Blackhawk.

On the west side of the walk was a band stand. It was round, with steps going up to where the bands would sit. Going up the center of the wide steps was a black iron handrail. Underneath the stand and to the rear were the ladies' and mens' restrooms.

In the summer on Sunday evenings my gentle dad would say, "Let's go; the music will be playing." I knew it would be concert evening and it would be my cue to wash my hands and face and brush my hair. I would take the big, calloused hand and walk the one and a half blocks to the Spencer Square and the Band Concert. We were always early and got a bench approximately the same spot each time. There was time to sit a while. My Dad could relax. I'm sure I fidgeted, but he never said anything about it. There were other children in the family, and he must have known it was important for me to have this time just with him, and I would be excited. The music always started with "The Star Spangled Banner." I would expect and get a tug at the back of my dress, which meant to stand. My Dad would stand straight, tall and proud in his blue bib overalls and blue shirt. A lot of marching music played and song arrangements of he popular music were played. There was toe-tapping and humming along with some of the music. The sight will remain with me forever: early summer evening with people occupying every bench, the little low wall around the pond, the steps going up to the band, with some people sitting on the grass, the instruments moving and shining in the hands of the musicians. The clapping of hands and the shouts of approval with "MORE! MORE!" The music lasted about an hour, and it was always over too soon for me. Then everyone

would stand and clap their hands and everyone would be smiling. A standing ovation. I didn't know what it meant then, but I appreciate it now. It was sad to see the park give way to make room for a post office. The post office is important, but in my history it doesn't compare with the Spencer Square with the beauty and the Band Concerts.

DIP TO THE OYSTER

Eleanor H. Bussell

Barn raisings and square dancing were popular social events across the Illinois prairies during the 1930s. Both were enjoyed in most of the rural communities throughout the midwestern states. After the era of building spacious barns that would accommodate both horses and the hay to feed them ended, the fun of square dancing continued on wooden platforms and open air stages at county fairs.

But it was in the high raftered hayloft of a newly built barn just before the first crop of clover or alfalfa was due for harvesting and placing in the mow where the exuberant square dancing began its happy times.

In my own late teens, in the early 1930's, I had the best of good times at the country square dancing parties. I was born and grew up on an Illinois farm in Marshall County. I belonged to two 4-H clubs, both as a member and later as a leader. Then I advanced to the Rural Youth that was county-wide in its membership. Square dancing was the fad in those years and Rural Youth meetings almost always closed the evening sessions with a couple or three squares before adjourning and getting into the Chevy coupe, heading for home.

It was, however, at the barn dances that we really had plenty of room to maneuver and to swing our partners on the corner in harmony with the caller's instructions. One of the several barn dances that I vividly recall happened in the summer of 1933.

A prominent farmer located several miles northwest of our farm decided to celebrate the completion of his new barn with a hayloft party. The word went over the countryside for all who loved square dancing to come and enjoy. It was nearly the day for the hay harvest to begin, so the affair was quickly arranged. The owners of the fine new barn was the Willis Shearer family. They were well known as good farmers in the western townships of Marshall County but also in Stark County on the west and in Bureau County on the north.

So that is how it happened that four of us in the Steuben neighborhood double-dated and traipsed across the country roads on a warm summer night to the Shearer farm. We traveled in an open touring car, arriving in time to hear the fiddlers scraping the bows and warming up for the evening's pleasure. The dance caller was Fred True, very accomplished in calling and always in demand.

Within minutes Fred was directing sets of eight out onto the floor. It may be noted here that the elaborate full-skirted gingham skirts and flounced petticoats that the square dancers wear in the modern 1980's are more glamorous than the costumes worn in the '30's. Yes, we wore gingham skirts that gathered on a waistband and allowed the skirts to swirl prettily as the fellows swung us on the corners. Our ruffled blouses gave us the party air.

But let it be said that the square dance outfits of the 1930's were almost everyday dress. It was what we considered style. Most of the girls' outfits were homemade as opposed to store-bought. In many cases the skirts had been 4-H projects that went on to the country fair for competition with their peers. Some of them won blue ribbons. Some of the girls wore prints which were thought by several to be a notch above gingham. They were all the same style—full and flouncy. When the fiddlers nodded to each other, and scraped the freshly rosined bow across the strings, the dance began with Fred

True up on a box where he could see the whole floor. The men wearing overalls and with red bandannas knotted loosely at their necks, led their dates through the elementary steps in obedience to allemande left and bow to your corner. The laughter rose to the rafters as everyone tripped through do-si-do without a misstep.

As the evening progressed all the favorites were danced from "Skip To my Lou" to "Dip To The Oyster," my own special favorite. Considered one of the most strenuous of all the dances, it still had had its fragile grace.

I was the smallest dancer in the set, as I weighed almost ninety pounds and stood not quite five feet tall. The other seven towered over me. Hindsight has told me that I was too petite to figure in a set of five feet-six-and-seven fellows and girls who were more buxom than I. It was of no concern at that moment.

In a square the calls are executed four times to complete it. On the third call of "dip-to-the-oyster and right on through" I lost my sweaty grip of my partner's hand and sailed right out into the center of the set. I was airborne!

In a split second I was caught cradle-fashion in the arms of big, husky-built Herman, a lithe fellow who was poised to swing his lady through the maneuver. Herman's big blue eyes looked down on me as he held me in his arms for a second before he set me down on my feet. It was a quick rescue that brought laughter and the square finished only a step behind beat.

The dance went on and after sitting out a couple to regain my composure, my date and I joined another set to swing through the rest of the evening. In later years or whenever I was at a country square dance, the memory of "Dip To The Oyster" came flooding back. I thought again of big Herman who saved both my dignity and surely some splinters by catching me so neatly in his arms.

THE DANCE OF MY LIFE

Robert C. Richards, Sr.

The waltz, fox trot, square dance, bunny hop, Charleston, and circle two-step were the most popular in my dancing days. The circle two-step was very popular, as changes of partners allowed boy to meet girl. Many couples got together in that manner.

Dance studios were well attended, as boys were very shy and needed to bolster their confidence on the dance floor. The dime-a-dance halls furnished the girl partners, and dance tickets were purchased, 10 for $1.00. Many a boy learned to dance at these halls. My sister, Genevieve, was in high school and she had a party in our farm kitchen, which was quite large, and a three-piece orchestra, Clyde Girkin, Bill Minks and Henry Orr were the Band. I was seventeen then, and the girls tried to show me how to dance, but I was a slow learner. So even with my sister teaching me I did not go to a regular dance until I was 19. Then it was six nights a week, with Monday the day of rest.

From 1927 to 1940 many famous bands like Wayne King, Art Castle, George Olson, and Tom Owens and His Cowboys were booked at the Kewanee Armory. They were sponsored by the police, firemen, the Kewanee Club, DeMolay, Eagles, Moose, Elks and other civic clubs. In the summer the DeMolay and the Kewanee Club sponsored pavement dances, which were very well attended. Local orchestras were Doc Hunt's, Chick Hurt, Ray Binge, Skinny Blake, Potter Brown, Ken Kurbut, Max Packee, Roy Dee, Frank Cornellisen, Shaner's, Briggs, Curley Walker and Charlie Packee's. Dancers would follow them to other towns when they played.

Popular out-of-town bands that played in local dance halls were Chapin's Illini Five, Hal Miller's, Lukehart's and Tiny Hill. My boy friends and I would go to the Avalon and Roof Garden in Galesburg, Alexander Park in Princeton, Annawan Illinois Coliseum, Cambridge Illinois Coliseum,

Hicks Park in Spring Valley, Silver Leaf near Brimfield and several dance halls in Peoria, Illinois to hear and dance to our favorite bands. The local dance halls in Kewanee were the Parkside Ballroom, Redman, Eagles, Moose, the Ritz, Knights of Pythias, Elks, American Legion, Tri-Angle Inn, the Flamingo, Labor Temple, the Windmont Park Pavilion where all the big bands played from May until October. The airport also had summer dances. Dreamland on North Chestnut Street had dances three nights a week. Some local dance promoters were Roy "Doc" Hall, George Bremmer, Gint Hippert, Kay Voight, Joe Stewart and "Bun" Pierce. Krahns Orchestra advertised in telephone books, city directories and newspapers. Then booking agencies sprang up in many cities and you could call them and find the band available for a certain date. Al Reusch and I used to promote dances at the Eagles, American Legion hall and the Kewanee Armory. We would select the most popular band available, then have posters printed out and would post them in business places in surrounding towns. Most of our promotions were successful, as dancing was a popular form of entertainment in a 15 year span, 1925-1940. Eleven music teachers were listed in the 1926 city directory, so most of our local musicians were well schooled. We would also go to other towns like Rock Island that had the Plantation, the Davenport Coliseum and the Ingla Terra in Peoria for special big bands tours. Some of the local square dance callers were Lloyd Bumphrey, Charles Huffman and Lawrence Nash. We always had our own foursome at the square dances because over the years, dancing together we did pretty well.

When they had gasoline rationing during World War II, there were organized "Dance for Health Week Clubs." Folk dances were held during coffee breaks, as a substitute activity for automobile riding.

In June 1928 a man was telling a friend how bad his dance hall business was. The friend, a press agent, dreamed up the marathon dance, where couples were supposed to dance the longest period without sleeping or stopping for some reason. I believe the pay ranged from $20 to $50 for a 24-hour period. They would rest five minutes an hour in the first 24 hours, then rest 15 minutes, then dance 45 minutes. The rest and dance period varied from town to town. The dance hall promoter would bring in milk and sandwiches and the couples danced and ate in unison. A newspaper reporter wrote an article about the "strange" goings on in the dance hall. After that the craze spread all over the United States and the marathon dance was the in thing. Most charged 25¢ for admission.

June 10, 1928, the championship dance was held at the Madison Square Garden in New York City with 91 couples participating. Nobody actually danced, but would sway aimlessly, hanging on to each other or sleeping on his or her partner's shoulder. The phonograph music would never stop unless a regular orchestra was brought in on a Saturday or Sunday night. Then the couples would have to really dance for a few minutes.

The Chicago Marathon staggered on for a record 259 hours and 44 minutes with 131 contestants. Partners would slap each other trying to keep awake. They would get leg cramps and friends would rub their legs during the rest period. When the marathon craze reached Kewanee, the event attracted 50 couples and was held at the Windmont Pavilion. Every day a couple would drop out from exhaustion. After 14 days "Red" Anderson and his wife won the top prize, dancing 220 actual hours. The fad died out in 1931 and many other fads followed that.

One night Bill Pitney and I were coming from a dance in Bradford at 2 a.m. in the morning. We saw a bright glow in the sky, and it was coming from a fire at the Windmont Park Dance Pavilion. It was September 19, 1929. Someone left a note at the Kewanee Fire Station saying they would burn Windmont Pavilion that night at 10:00 p.m. They thought it was the work of a crank, and did not pay any attention. However, the fire bug kept his word and he did burn the Pavilion. It

had been a Dance Hall for 23 years.

As I said before I went to many dances, but the one I remember best is the one at Camp Grove, Illinois. It was in a large barn, and dances were held in the large hayloft. Many good orchestras played there every Tuesday night in the summer to a very good crowd. There I first saw the girl who was later to become my wife. I mentioned the circle two-step as a means of getting acquainted, but they also had the tag dance where the boy would tag the girl on the shoulder while she was dancing; then she would dance with him. We danced together quite often from June, 1930 until August. Then I wrote her letters until June, 1931, when we had our first date. We would go to dances at Rome, Mossville, Peoria, Silver Leaf and high school dances, firemen's balls, etc. She graduated from the Chillicothe High School in 1932. I proposed the next November, getting the consent of her father, because then that was the proper thing to do. We were married Saturday, February 18, 1933. We have been together 52 years, so that is one dance hall romance that really lasted.

SHOWBOAT!

Helen Sherrill-Smith

Something—some unusual sound in the early morning still, brought my head up from the pillow with a jerk. What was it? Could it be? It was, it really was! Loud and clear now, with a strong rhythm, and vibrant melody, it was what we had been anxiously awaiting. The calliope was playing, The Showboat was coming in to the landing!

Weeks before, the advance man had come through, putting up colorful posters advertising the coming attraction. They showed beautiful heroines, handsome leading men, villainous villains, scantily clad dancing girls—all of which whetted our appetites for the real thing and sent us hurrying about looking for ways to earn the money we would need to see the show.

After a quick breakfast, we raced to the river landing to see for ourselves that it was really there. What a sight! Double decked, with pilot house stop, lacy wooden cutouts forming curlicues and lattice work, gleaming white paint and lavish golden trim, all made it look like a floating fairyland to us! The lower deck was the theater with rows of seats, the stage with velvet curtains, tasseled drapes along the walls held back with golden cords. The posters called it a floating palace; that's what it looked like to our eager eyes. The upper deck was the living quarters for the cast and crew, and was strictly off limits to landlubbers.

At 10:00 a.m. and again at 3:00 a.m. those very early showboats would send cast, crew and musicians parading up the levee road and through the business section of the town. Colorful costumes, a band playing loud martial music, high-stepping dancing girls in spangles and frills were sure attention-getters. Some who were not sure about attending made up their minds after having been caught up in the excitement of the parade which was of course the purpose of it.

Not only the townspeople came to the performances; people from the surrounding countryside and from nearby inland towns crowded the floating theater. Our opportunities to see live theater were mostly confined to the annual play put on by the high school drama club or an occasional home talent play to raise funds for some special purposes. These local attempts could in no way compare with these riverboat thespians, who made their living as actors; they were real professionals!

My younger brother and I were always ready to go to the performance early on trying to persuade Mother that we needed to be there early to get a good seat. The music of the calliope only made us more eager; finally we walked down the levee road. The way was not that well lighted, but the showboat was aglow. Floodlights over the gangplank led us up and inside

the theater itself. Settled into our seats and envying the well-to-do who could afford the loges or boxes (small clusters of plush seats partly enclosed, along the side and elevated, thus set apart and with a better view), we were now ready with our hard-earned quarters for the candy and the prizes. Crew members with baskets containing colorful boxes threaded their way through the crowded aisles, loudly proclaiming that each and every box contained not only a large amount of delicious candy, but also a prize of untold value. Watches, necklaces, pocket knives all were mentioned as possibilities. As I remember it, we found a few pieces of taffy and the sort of prizes usually found in Crackerjacks.

Never mind, the show was now about to begin. We saw simple morality plays wherein the lovely leading lady was pursued by the villain, placed in dire peril, always saved at the last minute by the handsome hero at great risk. We saw Poor Nell in the snow on her stern father's doorstep, betrayed by a false lover; we even saw Simon Legree, whip in hand, pursuing the escaping slaves. Virtue was always rewarded and evil punished—we loved it all. Between acts there were jugglers, comedy skits, singing and dancing. The acting may have been a little overdone, but we thought it was great!

For weeks afterward we acted out that show, playing all the different parts, using available grown-up clothing, making flowing draperies of old curtains, Spanish shawls of old tablecloths. The pleasure of the showboat lingered long after it had gone.

No more do we hear the whistle of the showboat, nor the early morning serenade of the Calliope heralding the arrival of the Cottonblossom or the Goldenrod. But memories linger, and even though we moved on to a local movie theater, it was never the same. Perhaps it was that they were river borne, came so seldom, gave us a glimpse of another way of life; all of these made the coming of the showboat such a memorable part of life in that little river town of Browning.

The movie theater in our town in the early twenties was open for business only on Saturday night as I remember. Perhaps that was as much as the economy of the town could support; John Kelly was too sharp a business man to have pursued a losing proposition. Anyway, the Saturday night movie was an important event. With piano accompaniment, we saw a preview of coming attractions, a two-reel comedy, two reels of a thriller-diller serial (which always ended with one of the leading characters on the verge of violent death in a blood chilling situation. All this was followed by the feature film which ran heavily toward western or adventure pictures.

By this time I was beginning to be aware that there was a special attraction developing between teenage girls and boys. About this same time, my foresighted Mother decided that my five-year-old brother would enjoy going to the movies with me. As she so reasonably explained, it would be no problem, since I was going anyway. Somehow, I got the idea that if I protested too much, it might be better for me to stay at home also. So I decided the going was no problem and once there I could plump him down in one of the front seats, with threats of death and destruction if he failed to stay in place.

I then joined girl friends several rows back. Just behind us sat the boys, jockeying for position until they were nearest the girl they liked best. Amid what passed for wit on their part, giggles on ours, a little hand holding took place and sometimes arrangements were made to walk home together. This was fine, except that I couldn't leave without Little Brother. By this time he was fast asleep, and not at all happy to be awakened. Two blocks with a squalling kid stumbling sleepily along was usually enough to discourage any romance; my anticipated walk home had turned into a disaster. I began to wonder why Mother ever thought L. B. would like to go to the movies; she knew he always went to sleep early and was cross as a bear when awakened!

How innocent it seems now. I'm sure we did not stay that way for too long, but in those early and mid-teen years it took so little to satisfy our romantic yearnings. A smile, a glance, a

few words together, jokes, laughter, an awkward embrace, a quick kiss—compared to what we see nightly on television where premarital and teenage sex, divorce, infidelity are presented as a natural and normal way of life—what we considered a happy time sounds to today's young as if we may have been retarded! I am sure that our more cautious, more closely supervised approach put us under less pressure, gave us more time for dreams, for anticipation, for romance and for more meaningful memories than today's greet, grab and gulp style will leave behind.

NEWSPAPER DOILIES AND TISSUE PAPER FLOWERS

Florence Ehrhardt

Newspaper doilies and tissue paper flowers were works of art in my early childhood. My pioneer mother needed to use her creativity to express her individuality. Using the materials at hand, she folded newspaper in accordion type pleats and cut holes in it to make a repeated design.

One such newspaper doilie was carefully fitted around the clock shelf in the kitchen. Dad and the men folks thought that a shelf on which to put the clock was luxury enough. In spite of what the men folks thought about it, these paper doilies were seen in many places in the homes of long ago. A cupboard, either built-in or moveable, made an ideal place to show off this special kind of paper art. Like shelf paper, they edged pantry shelves in homes with a pantry. In the summer kitchen, there were always a few shelves that needed a decorative touch, too. Often a large sheet of newspaper, with only a few fancy holes in it, was tacked over a window in the summer time to keep out the sun's heat and discourage flies. Each housewife was ever alert to a new design as she visited her neighbor.

Tissue paper, like newspaper, is adaptable to many uses, a quality not overlooked whenever the simplest artistic endeavor added variety to plain surroundings. Flowers made from tissue paper that often came with items purchased at the dry goods store are an example. My mother most often made pom-pom type chrysanthemums.

Using a five or six-inch circle of tissue paper, she folded it in half, then in quarters, in eighths, and finally in sixteenths, forming something of a triangle. She trimmed the shortest side of the triangle in the shape of a chrysanthemum petal, with the cuts extending to within a half-inch of the center of the original circle. She then snipped off a tiny piece at the tip of the triangle making a very tiny hole. When the paper was unfolded, she used a hat pin with a small, perfectly round knob to roll down the center of each petal, starting at the outer edge. This made the tissue paper curl and crinkle at the edge of each petal like a real flower. Best results were obtained when the piece of tissue paper was placed on a folded towel or on mother's knee.

She bent a piece of thin wire on one end to form a hook to hold a small ball of crumpled tissue paper for the center of the flower. Then the crinkled petal pieces were strung on the wire, the wire going through the tiny hole in the center of the circle. Each petal piece needed patient encouragement to fit closely around the preceding one. A dozen or so formed a nice full blossom. When my mother had green paper, she cut out leaf shapes, using a natural leaf for a pattern, and pasted them to the wire just below the blossoms.

An arrangement of these homemade tissue paper flowers was the pride of the housewife, was never touched by children, and sometimes covered with a lightweight cloth, or placed in a cupboard to keep from getting dusty.

THE LAST DAZE OF SCHOOL, A 1934 COMEDY

C. Rosemary Kane

The other day I came across a booklet with a play entitled *Last Daze of School*. "Oh yes," I thought to myself, "that is the play a group of cousins put on back in 1934." Lots of you will remember that money was quite scarce at that time—so, since the "Irish Ball Club" needed money to buy equipment, we ordered a bunch of booklets, tickets, hand bills and such, from an oil company called En-Ar Co.

Cousin Helen became our co-ordinator and helped assign the different parts to all eighteen cast members. What a job! Everyone was enthused that we were going to put on a play—actually everyone attended all practices and became very good at becoming the characters, like Cousin Helen, the teacher named Miss Lily Fern Primrose, the mischievous Johnny Jumpup, the tom boy Ida Ho, the cry baby Pansy Bluebell, the Sissy, Sweet William, and the two who played the part of colored children, Black Beauty and White Rose.

We held lots of practices and hauled lots of chairs and equipment to this small wooden building, the Point Pleasant Township Hall, we normally voted, had family gatherings, school programs and lots of old time square dances. Since all things change, this great old building has long since been torn down and replaced by a nice new metal building where people still go to vote and have social gatherings.

Our big night finally came! Everyone was in top form—our performance was a success and the end results was a neat sum of money for our Irish Ball Club.

The type of show was probably too corny for kids nowadays, but at least it didn't contain sex and bad words—just good clean fun, like when Miss Lily Fern Primrose asked, "What is an adult?" "An adult is a papa or a mama who has quit growing except in the middle." Holly Hock Petunia said, "Let's sing the 'Forgotten Baby Carriage.'" Teacher asks, "How does that go?" "On four wheels." Others said, "No, let's sing the telephone girl song." "What is that?"

"I hear you calling me." Then Mont Anna, the hardboiled character, said, "Teacher, you have been asking all the questions, let me ask you some." He continued, "Who ate the hole in the doughnut? Where does a smile go when it vanishes? What becomes of your lap when you stand up?" The teacher asked, "What is this younger generation coming to?" Mont Anna answered, "Old Age." Miss Primrose said, "Curiosity once killed a cat." Violet asked, "What did the cat want to know?"

For a bit of business, Miss Primrose, introduced a member of the school board, Mr. Ed. U. Cation. He included what one might consider a commercial, and told about this oil company which furnished all the script books, posters, and tickets. He encouraged folks to use the products White Rose Gasoline and En Ar Co. Motor Oil.

Teacher asked, "Ida Ho, where do sugar and spices come from?" "From the neighbors." "What is a sign of an early fall?" Ken Tucky answered, "A sign of an early fall is a banana skin on the sidewalk—plop."

"Black Beauty, what is dust?" He answered, "Why dust am just plain mud with the juice squeezed out."

"Al E. Gater, can you tell us what is the tight-wad song?" "Yes, let the rest of the world go buy."

"Sweet William, why does a giraffe have such a long neck?"

He answers, "A giraffe has such a long neck because its head is so far from its body."

Teacher asked, "Zeb Ra, what is an old maid?" He answered, "An old maid is a bachelor's wife."

The program continued with recitations, harmonica and guitar music, and lots of songs, like "School Days," "The Old Spinning Wheel" and "School Day Sweethearts."

Our effort to entertain folks proved very successful and we all agreed it was lots of fun. By the way, we made a nice sum of money for our favorite ball team.

THE QUADRILLE AND THE WALTZ

Florence Ehrhardt

The farmhouse southwest of Fowler, Illinois, where my parents set up housekeeping when they were married, had a large kitchen with a smooth wooden floor. Around the year 1920, my Dad bought what has come to be known as the Cadillac of Victrolas, an Edison, with a diamond needle used with one-fourth inch thick records. Quadrilles were the dance of the times, and neighbors would gather at my parents' home for an evening of dancing in the kitchen, after some of the furniture was moved out.

A Negro family lived in the neighborhood and were included. That was before anyone thought about race discrimination. I can remember seeing Jim Wilkins and his wife dance with the rest of the group. I can also remember seeing Mr. Wilkins jig to the music on records especially selected for their rhythm.

In my grandparents' home, the dances were accompanied by my grandpa's accordion music. This kitchen floor was first strengthened to support the stress of the dancers.

My Dad was my first dancing partner, and after some practice sessions at home, my parents arranged to have two of my uncles, who are only a few years older than I am, modernize my dancing abilities. When I was ready, my Dad took a neighbor girl and me to nearby dances. After a year or two, my sister and brother went too. Soon we went without Dad.

Barn dances were held in the springtime, after all of last year's hay had been fed to the animals. Only a few barns in the area were suitable for dances. The hay loft floor had to be fairly smooth and made easily accessible, and the loft needed good ventilation. Usually only the newer barns met these requirements.

Admission was ten cents for girls and twenty-five cents for boys. After a four-or-five piece orchestra was paid about five or six dollars, the profit went to the barn owner. Ballroom type dancing, with steps like the box waltz, single shuffle and double shuffle had replaced the quadrille of my parents' day. Three tunes made up a dance, and popular girls would soon have several dances promised ahead. An occasional hoedown square dance or a mixer, such as a circle fox trot or broom waltz, didn't count when a girl was saving a dance for a certain boy.

I especially remember coming home from one of these barn dances one rainy night. My brother, sister and I had gone to the dance in an old Ford pick-up truck that my Dad borrowed thirty dollars to buy. Coming home, the engine got hot, and my brother, being knowledgeable about such things, knew that it needed water. We spotted a cistern with a bucket upside down on the cistern platform, quite near the road, but not too near the farm house. It would have been inconsiderate to awaken a sleeping family, and risky to awaken a family dog, at that time of night to get water. With the help of light from the lightning, my brother pumped some water into the bucket, put it into the truck's radiator, and we got home before all the water boiled away again.

When the weather was too hot for barn dances, platforms were laid for dancing. These platforms were made of narrow, tongue-and-grooved, fourteen-foot-long pine boards, nailed across two-by-fours, in seven-foot sections. Seven sections made a forty-nine-foot-long platform and fit right on a hayrack wagon for hauling. It took a level spot to lay the platform, a reasonable amount of parking space for cars, and some strong young fellows to haul, lay and return the platform, to have a successful platform dance. A little cooperation from the weatherman was important, too.

Usually unmarried or newly married young folks attended these dances. Many romances were begun when a young fellow took a girl home from one of these dances.

MAMA AND MUSIC

Vera A. Niemann

The best days of my life were undoubtedly when Mama had the Grant School pupils at our house, marching by twos, fours, and breaking into single lines, led by their teacher with marching music by Mama. Then they gathered about the piano with their song books. One song remains with me:

Green and gold and red and brown,
See the bright leaves drifting down,
Over the forest floor,
O-ver the for-est floor.

The last line was drawn out with great emphasis. The melody is with me too, as plain as when they sang it. I was not permitted to join the group—too young.

There were about eighteen to twenty pupils, including Pauline Gossman, Ruth Buck, Donald Xander, the Schirmer bothers Elmer and Rudolph, Mathilda Hinterhuer, Irma Kuhlman, Bill Bergmann and Wilma Norbury. I was their captivate audience. Time always passed quickly, and I was disappointed to hear the teacher's voice "Time to line up children, and march back to school."

Occasionally some of these pupils were asked to sing at some gatherings. I first thought they were church meetings, but since there were only ladies, they probably were a quilting group, or a little social affair. My younger brother, Les, and I were along on these little trips, happy to be made spic-and-span and wait "on that chair" until all was ready for departure.

We felt important meeting the new ladies and the arriving children and mothers from Grant School. When they had sung for the group, we were all invited to "have a bite." The tables of goodies were impressive to our hungry eyes. Mounds of tempting sandwiches and the most delicious cakes—huge angel food, luscious chocolate, golden sponge and many more. We had instructions, along with others in department, for one sandwich and one piece of cake. We must say "No, thank you" for any more. How hard it was to select that one piece of cake! After polite "good-byes" we were ready for the ride back home.

Practices at school led to more during the evenings, when parents came with the children, bringing music stands and music. Both the adults and children sang and played. There were guitars, banjos, a cornet, several harmonicas, a saxophone, combs covered with paper, a saxophone and one drum. It was surprising to see them playing so earnestly, trying very hard to stay with Mama's "1-2-3-4" at the piano. One man brought his fiddle and he did join the others. When all the practices and singing ended, everyone begged him to play the fiddle. He obliged, hunched low on a chair, and vigorously tapping his foot to the tune. Some of them were "Turkey in the Straw," "Down by the Old Mill Stream," and slowly, "Let Me Call You Sweetheart." All joined in singing the familiar melodies.

Our fiddler acknowledged playing for square dances, so some couples came for that. My father knew a lot of square dance calls. He knew an Ozark way of the dance that I've hardly ever seen since. It was a fast shuffle of the feet between all the steps, so there was constant movement. It was most graceful and delightful to watch—three "squares" made a lively picture. Some of the biggest ladies were most adept and light on their feet. Everyone listened attentively to the calls and hardly ever made a mistake. When they did, there was great, good-natured confusion and they would start again at a certain step. If only there could have been home movies in those days, they would bring back old times, different dress and hair styles with all the fun people had meeting and dancing together. "Do-Si-Do," "Promenade," and "Swing Your Partner" were often heard. Other dances like the Virginia Reel and round dances were done too. When our fiddler could not come, he sent an accordion player. His loud, booming music

was good, but it drowned out the sound of dancing feet.

The regular music sessions continued, and another group formed; one young man played cello and several others violins, centered around Mama's piano playing. Even I could tell they were into good music. One time I asked Mama the name of one selection and hummed it for her. It was Schubert's "Seranade."

In the larger group of singers, the girls graduated from grade school and bought long, printed sheets of words to new, popular songs. Words, but no music. Mama would hurry to town to find the sheet music for as many of these songs as she could afford. Strangely enough, I recall only one of these, and it was rather sad; "Call Me Back, Pal of Mine."

I am sure many others realize how very much Mama promoted the enjoyment of music in this area. It is all the more difficult to understand how she accomplished this because she was a very quiet, self-effacing person. When I asked her why she did not play some solos, she answered, after a pause, "I think it is because I am a better accompanist."

DAD, HIS FIDDLE, AND THE PLAYER PIANO

Ruby Davenport Kish

Dad could play the violin as well as several other instruments by ear. He also had a good tenor voice and when he played, he would sing along with his playing. One day, a salesman from the Bruce Company came through our town selling player pianos. Dad wanted a player piano so that he could pump the piano with his feet and use his hands to play the violin and sing along at the same time. He couldn't really afford a piano, but then if he had waited until he could afford it, he probably never would have had it.

We didn't have a radio—radios were just beginning to come in and very few people had them. The only time that people in the community had music was when they went to church or school programs, when traveling minstrels came to town, when they had band music in the park or if someone like Dad had instruments and could play.

My father often told us the story of how, when he was eight years old, he cried for a violin because his older brothers had one and they played and sang together. One day when his brothers went to town, they came back with a violin that they'd picked up in a pawn shop for eight dollars. My father was so happy that he stayed up all night learning to play, "Pop Goes The Weasel." After that he could play anything he heard by ear. He kept the old violin all his life, although he wore out several bows.

When my sisters, brother and I were small children, Dad would sit down after supper and play tunes like "Turkey in the straw," "Virginia Reel," and "Irish Washer woman." "Over the waves" was his favorite waltz. He would play and we children would get up in the floor and dance after our fashion.

When we acquired the piano, Dad would play in the evening and the music carried all the way down town in the summer time. Soon the front yard and the living room would be filled with people. They would dance to Dad's music and when they tired, Dad would play the old favorite hymns like "God Will Take Care Of You," "In The Garden," and "The Old Rugged Cross." He played and sang these hymns in such a way that he made a believer out of anyone who heard. I never hear these songs that I don't look back with nostalgia on those happy times. He brought a lot of joy in our lives with music.

The music, the singing, and the dancing got to be a nightly affair. Dad would keep time by stamping his foot. As the noise got louder, he would stomp louder until it seemed to me he would surely stomp a hole in the floor. The women decided to bring potluck so that we could all eat together and have more time for fun. This went on until people started getting radios; then they only came on occasion. Always after these nights of singing and dancing, Dad and Mom would dis-

cuss the events of the night before. Dad would say, "My, don't Happy and Mae Pitt dance well together," or "I didn't know that Tom and Bud Simpson had such beautiful voices."

When Dad had the stroke at age sixty, the fingers of his left hand were left numb and without feeling, so that he couldn't finger notes anymore on the strings. He worried and worked with a rubber ball for two years trying to get the feeling to come back in his fingers. Finally, he got the idea to restring the violin so that he could learn to finger it with the opposite hand. A week after he restrung the violin, he had another stroke and died. Had he lived, I'm sure he would have accomplished what he set out to do as he was a very determined person and didn't give up until he had to. He left us a heritage of beautiful memories.

THE VICTROLA

Lillian Nelson Combites

My first memory of the Victrola goes back sixty years or more ago. It was years before we had one, but a lady about three blocks from us shared hers with us when we were fortunate to have a dime for a dozen. Mrs. McKee was a paper hanger, and we used to make many trips to her house in the spring of the year when the new wallpaper books came out. She gave different children of the neighborhood the old books. We made booklets of the unprinted parts of the sheets, drew Valentines and made cut-outs of Campbell Kids, and used the rest for scratch paper. No matter what excuse brought us to her house, she always played the Victrola for us. We were never allowed to touch, but we sure did listen. It was a square box that set on a table with a horn speaker. The records were round cylinder ones, the music was wonderful, and we never did figure how the music could come from it.

A neighbor who lived across the street had an old discarded Victrola in the shed. We brought it out, sat in the yard in a circle on the ground, and played it. It was also a square box and had to be wound with a crank. There was a big round red horn with huge flowers painted on. It played the flat records.

We had one at our elementary school that was in a suitcase carrier. This was used by the school for our music class. Two rooms had three grades each, and seventh and eighth grade were in one room together. We took turns sharing music days. Here I was taught by records the different instruments of an orchestra and introduced to finer music like "The Blue Danube Waltz." I really liked music class.

Later my sister's boy friend had one of the suitcase style and would bring it and records to play for us. I learned a lot of songs from these records.

Later my brother worked at Hainline Vault works in Macomb. They made Cyprus wood vaults. Each payday he went by the music store and bought two records. How excited we were when he come home and we sat up late at night playing them. By then we had a suitcase Victrola.

We later bought a box Victrola. All these played flat records. Sometimes the spring would break if we wound it too tight. Until we could get another, we still played the record by putting a finger in the middle of the turn table and twisting round and round.

Later our two children had one of the suitcase style. When their grandmother broke up house keeping, she gave them her old Victrola that stood on the floor. It played the old Edison thick records. The children finally broke the spring and we never had money to buy one or couldn't buy one. It sat upstairs in the storeroom and parts were lost. The records are still good.

Lather the old Victrola was taken by our daughter up to Bolingbrook, Illinois. She is restoring it, and one day it will play again. Some parts have come from some dealers and big flea markets. Some parts have been shipped from California. One day we may hear those old records again. Henry Burr was

my favorite singer.

We have a stereo now given us by one of our children, but it will never be as great to me as the old Victrola from long, long ago and all the happy memories of long ago that I still have.

VICTROLA CLASSICS

Harriet Bricker

I was very fortunate to have been exposed to music via the Victrola as a child in the twenties. One benefit was, if none other, that I absorbed such a variety!

With the wind-up Victrola standing in the hall, I well remember my child's record. A nasal voiced fellow coyly sang the ditty about "pretty Bobby Shaftoe" who went to sea. Bobby was also "fat and fair, combing down his yellow hair" which didn't seem to put me off too much, except that it sounded so dreadful that I still recall it. His encore was "Oh, dear, what can the matter be?" which was a combination of the poor little record and some laggard who lingered too long at the fair and wasn't bringing home the "bunch of blue ribbons" he promised the girl with the "bonny brown hair." From Mother Goose, this was not an auspicious start for music appreciation.

But that old Victrola held other treasures. Slowly climbing the scale, there was Harry Lauder singing—and again the word "singing" is of doubtful authenticity—"In the Gloaming." He went roaming in the gloaming, "the time he liked the best," many, many times to the delight of my dad and me and the forbearance of my mother.

In the hall where the Victrola reigned, there was a Wilton rug patterned in geometric design. When the Sousa records came on, I marched around and around that rug, up the sides, across the diagonals, and over the ends. I doubt if the rug's nap survived, but I had intimations of future marching bands, I'm sure. Then I whistled along with Arthur Pryor's band and "The Whistler."

Operetta music was popular then and I had been fortunate to be taken to see a few stage productions in Chicago as a child. One was "Rose Marie" by Friml and, having the record, I warbled the title song as I roller skated along. Another was "Lilac Time" based on the music and, supposedly, the life of Schubert. At the time I was greatly impressed, as any child should have been, sitting in a box seat! But listening now to the re-issue of the old record on my player makes me realize it was a travesty! However, I grew into a devotee of that lovely Schubert music.

Disposing of a few comical records, we come to the real stuff and my first introduction to the world of opera and the classics. Here came the old war horses, the Sextette from *Lucia* and the Quartette from *Rigoletto*. The "Meditation" from *Thais* and the "Bell Song" from *Lakme* became familiar. There was Geraldine Ferrar and Galli-Curci. Caruso sang the famous aria from *Pagliacci*. John McCormack sang "Somewhere a Voice is Calling" and, with Reinald Werranrath in duet, "The Crucifix." Who remembers Reinald Werranrath? I do! Of course, the Overture to *William Tell*, and the "1812" and *Orpheus*, not forgetting the "Anvil Chorus" from *Il Trovatore*. The family favorite, I think, was Fritz Kreisler playing so beautifully "The Old Refrain."

Even though the accompaniments were tinny and the too prominent horns went um-pah, umpah, the music of the Victrola came through to stay.

THE GRAFAPHONE

Isal N. Kendall

I will never forget the night that I and my brother and sister were awakened by our laughing, excited parents—and brought down stairs to the sound of music never heard in our house before. It was not long before we were dancing to the lively tunes coming from a large horn attached to a small brown box. It was called in those days a talking machine.

Papa had left early that morning by train on the Santa Fe railroad to accompany his load of fed cattle to market at Galesburg, Ill. As was his custom on these annual trips, he searched for something to bring home to the family. One time, it had been a fine oak sideboard for the dining room. Another time it had been a new kind of couch for the parlor. Both the head and foot of this couch could be mechanically raised and lowered to make it comfortable for sitting on or lying down. This time he brought a Victor graphaphone.

Papa had arrived home late that night long after we "youngens" were asleep. He had ridden from Galesburg to Williamsfield on what was known as the Hog Train, a freight train with one passenger car attached to the end. It stopped at all the small town stations and was quite a convenience in those days of no cars and mud roads.

Mamma and papa were so happy with this music-making contraption they could not wait for morning to show it to us. We had a wonderful thing.

This happened in about 1902, when I was possibly six years old, my brother eight and my sister four. Up until that time, the only music we had in our home was mamma singing. In her clear strong voice, she often sang to us such songs as "Who Killed Cock Robin?" or "Throw out the Life Line, Someone is Sinking To-day," or something to make us laugh: "Bell was the name of our hired girl."

Nowadays, with stereo music filling the air in shopping centers, grocery stores and most everywhere including our homes, it is hard to believe at six, I had heard only songs at Sunday School, hymns at church and martial music by the Williamsfield Village Band on holidays and on Saturday evenings in the good old summer time.

Our phonograph soon became a sensation in the neighborhood. My parents had them all in to enjoy it with us. Our warm summer evenings, they would gather in our front yard bringing a kitchen chair to sit on, and our parents would play their favorites over and over, ending the evening with cake and lemonade.

We kids loved to play our favorites, even though we had to change the needle after each one.

"Turkey-in-the-Straw" was our number one favorite, with "Bill Baily, Won't You Please Come Home?" a close second.

"Hello Central, Give me Heaven, for My Mamma's There" made us weep. Although we did not understand the meaning of "A Bird in a Gilded Cage," it was such a pretty melody we liked to listen and feel sad with out knowing why.

We kids and our friends laughed hilariously during the playing of "Jerusalem" by an opera singer. We did not understand that kind of singing. We scoffed and mimiced and had a wonderful time while that well trained tenor gave that song his all. Yet today when I hear that song, I remember the fun we had in our ignorance. Now decades later, I wish for a bit those kids were here to laugh with me as I watch some overtrained artist on T.V. trying too hard and making a himself ridiculous. When I was young, we called it "puttin' on the agony."

Our record of Josh Billings describing his first stay in a "hospitle," enjoying every minute of the telling, brought smiles to the faces of even the sober ones in spite of themselves.

There was another company putting out a phonograph at the time. They called their machine an Edison. The horn was made to look like a big blue morning glory and their records were cylindrical.

The records for the Victor were flat, like our record today only much thicker. The Victor people had an appealing trademark. It was the picture of a small black and white terrier sitting in front of a Victor phonograph with an alert ear cocked into the horn. The caption below read, "his master's voice," a trademark that became known the world over.

The years flew by with our little phonograph doing its work well until in 1914, when it was traded in one a new one with no horn but better sound. It was encased in a four-foot-high cabinet of well polished mahogany finished wood and was called a Victrola.

VAUDEVILLE—1926

Audrey Ashley-Runkle

The curtain rises, the pit orchestra plays, an amber spot is on Lawton as he does his juggling act. Variety Pioneers follows with songs and clogs, concluding with a snappy Charleston routine. The Two-Man Quartet, an arrangement of fun and song, are next. Djiro, accordionist, and a trio perform. A grandpa character, Phil Rich, and a charmer, Alice Adair, do a skit, "The Flower Vendor." The final act is "Joe Bennett and Co." with dancing and instrumental music. The curtain comes down, the house orchestra plays. They fade. The Wurlitzer rises from the pit, a spot on the organist as she plays; the house lights dim and the moving picture begins. This is 1926 theatre fare of vaudeville and movie with house music.

In 1926 I was girl pianist with a six-piece jazz band that assisted two multi-talented dancers. We were "Joe Bennett and Co." and were on Orpheum Circuit, Vaudeville, booked out of the Chicago office.

Vaudeville was in good shape and going strong. For years it had been an important part of the moving picture establishment. It was live. The movies were silent. Talkies, as they were called, were not as yet perfected. Picture show business was thriving. Everyone went to the movies. Theatres were packed. Still, in a few years, vaudeville would be gone.

Big theatres boasted pit orchestras of eight to twelve musicians and a director, excellent organists and pianists for the movies and specialties, stage hands, lighting specialists and a stage manager. They also gave their public from four to nine vaudeville acts at every show.

Our band had been organized in college. We were cut from nine pieces to six, composed of three women (saxophone, banjo, piano) and three men (saxophone, trumpet, drums). We were named "Jazz Classmates" by Orpheum Circuit. The two dancers were Joe Bennett, an experienced Ziegfeld dancer, and Rose Wynn, who had been in vaudeville previously.

We had much to learn and do: help compose an act, learn all dance and special music, learn cues and nuances, learn showmanship, makeup technique, keep the show peppy, alive and interesting.

We played Chicago's "break-in" houses, small neighborhood theatres. These were our trying out places. As a result, two dancers and three musicians were eliminated. We were down to six in the band and the two dancers. We were not paid for these practice performances. We kept the act moving and no time was wasted. We learned to even make a bow in the least amount of time. We were preparing ourselves to be viewed by the vaudeville circuits.

After about two months, we learned that on a certain night, at a certain theatre, representatives from Pantages, Orpheum and Keith Circuits would look us over. Every act that night was on the spot. Our act was "bought" by Orpheum Circuit. We cost about $3500.00 a week, which included transportation and salary.

Orpheum Circuit was booker and promoter. They fixed salaries, set up transportation routes, and made hotel

arrangements. Travel was by train. Sometimes we would ride all night and arrive at our destination an hour before show time. I was paid $35. a week. Joe was paid $350.00. We could pay for hotel and food and have money left. I received a $2.50 raise later on.

Our act was considered a big act, having eight people. Usually we were the last act of the show. Jugglers, magicians, and animal acts preceded us. Each theatre planned its own sequence of acts.

Usually, we played a split week, Monday through Wednesday at one theatre, and Thursday through Sunday at another theatre. Most theatres had three shows at 3:30, 6:00, and 9:30. Where four shows were scheduled, one was added at noon.

Our act followed this order: Joe and Rose opened in front of the curtain with a comedy routine. As they left, the band, on stage, started "Breezin' Along With The Breeze," as the curtain went up. We bowed and immediately went into an acrobatic dance routine by Rose. Joe did an eccentric dance seated in a chair. The band played "Black Bottom." Rose, having a costume change for each dance, did another dance. The act ended with Joe and Rose doing a toy soldier tap dance in costume. They bowed and we bowed and the curtain came down. The pit orchestra played.

Dressing rooms below the stage, and some on stage, were assigned to each act in accordance to importance of the individual or group. Rose and Joe had their own dressing rooms. The three women were in one room and the three men in another. Costumes were in trunks which were delivered to the dressing rooms.

Some of the theatres and cities we played were Northshore, Riviera, Tivoli, Tower and break-in houses in Chicago; Ottawa, Waukegan, Streator, Aurora, Joliet, Rockford, Galesburg, Peoria, Decatur, Springfield, Champaign, Quincy. We played the Midwest area of theatres, but were primarily in Illinois, with head office in Chicago. I have no record of itinerary, but some of the theatres were Orpheum, Majestic, Palace, Joie, Novelty, Mainstreet, Indiana. All of these were Orpheum Circuit Vaudeville houses.

Theatres were rich, decorative, colorful, ornate, ostentatious, sometimes garish and overdone. The drapes, light fixtures and trappings were lush and tasteful. The acoustics, generally, were wonderful. We did not use speakers or amplification.

The act finally closed after a rather short period, and I went back to college.

Television, sound to movies, transportation changes, loss of interest and the depression were responsible for the demise of vaudeville. It still exists, but is an adjunct to clubs and television programs.

This was an interesting and educational experience. It was fun. The actors we met were good people trying to make a living while waiting to move on to other things. Some were troupers and this was their life. To our band, it was an experience to remember.

VIII School Days

SCHOOL DAYS

Throughout much of America's history, the two great centers of community activity were the church and the school, and in many small towns today school and church remain the hubs of community life, although the post office, the cafe, and the town bar are all staking their claim to townsfolks' time. In an increasingly secular world, the church receives proportionately less time than it once did; as the nation focuses its attention and energies increasingly on sports, the school—or the high school football and basketball teams—grows in importance. The recent movie *Hoosiers* is instructive on the premium midwestern towns place on high school athletics, on the way a town's life can become focused on the local school . . . or its basketball team.

Although organized sports were not a major part of early twentieth-century schools (many schools would have found it impossible to field a football squad, and been hard-pressed to put together a basketball team), school played a prominent role in community life, and school days provide important memories to those who grew up in the 1920's and 1930's.

And how different things were! As often as not, the rural school was a one-room school, with all grades mixed together, older students tutoring younger students, each student receiving almost individualized instruction (individualized instruction and self-paced learning have been recently rediscovered by educationalists and are all the rage in the nation's more progressive schools these days). Everybody in the school participated in programs at Christmas and patriotic holidays and graduation exercises in the spring. Teachers taught every subject in the curriculum and sometimes directed the preparation of an occasional hot lunch. They were not necessarily graduates of four-year, state-licensed teaching programs, either—just literate individuals who met with the approval of local school boards and were able, one way or another, to maintain discipline in a school where some of the children were larger than they.

Instructional materials were limited. The physical plant was a building of one room (or, for the larger schools, two or three—grades 1, 2, and 3 in one room, 4 , 5 and 6 in another, 7 and 8 in a third), furnished with student and a teacher's desks, blackboard, flag and portraits of Washington and Lincoln. Books were few, and most school libraries, in the words of one former teacher, "not worthy of the name." Perhaps the school, with a box social or some other fund-raiser, had bought a globe or a ball and a bat. There was no audio-visual equipment, no reference library, no locker room, no computers. Yet this type of school produced, proportionately, more American persons of distinction than did any other form of educational institution, thanks almost exclusively to the dedication of its teachers. (Robert Bly, perhaps the most prominent living American poet, received his education—before Harvard—in just such a school, because his father refused to allow the rural Madison school to be consolidated; his reminiscences on that education are worth reading.)

A teacher's duties extended far beyond instruction. She (usually; occasionally he) maintained the school building, which meant firing the stove in the morning and sweeping the floor in the late afternoon. She directed plays and special programs, usually drawn or adapted from materials provided at teacher institutes or printed and distributed in early versions of what we now call resource books. She put out fires on the school roof. She adjusted her personality to whatever family she happened to be "boarding with" for this particular two-week period. She oversaw the transformation from childhood to young adulthood of several generations of Americans. She retired without a pension.

Student memories of schooldays are, for the most part, of the special days. This might be the school play (not, usually, of a particularly high quality artistically, but an opportunity for students to develop skills, show off in front of friends and parents, and learn how to deal with a bad case of jitters). This

might have been a special program (songs, recitations, pageants, orations, all orchestrated by the teacher). This might be the fire in the school roof. Many of the women remember the box socials or pie socials, for which each girl prepared a meal (or a pie) in an elaborately decorated box to be auctioned off at the social to a male (probably her boyfriend or father) who would share the goodies with her and, if events had progressed to that stage, walk her home that evening. Pranks are remembered by both men and women.

And so are the long walk to and from school, in all kinds of weather, down dirt roads or through the back pasture and across the creek, mile or two-mile hikes in the company of sisters and brothers, neighborhood children, pet dogs, farm animals, timid woodland creatures, great and small, and the constantly changing tapestry of meadowland grasses, shrubs and farms. Here was an education in itself, and, in retrospect, the stuff of fond memories. For in school, as in so much of our lives, what is important is not so much what happens when we get there as what happens along the way.

David R. Pichaske

CLASSICS TO "CORSET STUDY"

Vera B. Simpson

I grew up in an area that sophisticated people might label culturally deprived. There was potential, and sometimes desire, for a richer cultural life, but economic and other practical considerations made realization difficult.

A few "refined" families interested in art, literature, and music provided the community with musicians and teachers of piano or violin, but the energies of most people were exhausted by the struggle to secure the necessities of life.

Reading material was limited in many homes, and the flickering light from a kerosene lamp discouraged reading. My parents read local newspapers, *The Prairie Farmer* magazine, and occasionally the Bible, which my father referred to as "true stories." I remember the shock on the face of a lady visitor who, when he stated that he liked "true stories," thought he was referring to a popular romantic confession magazine called *True Story*.

Two households in our neighborhood had a variety of magazines and books. One of these was the home of E. H. Diehl, a respected scholar, area historian, and contributor to local newspapers. My aunt, Bessie Roddis Weber, who had an upstairs bedroom overflowing with books, often loaned reading matter to me and gave me a boxful of *Youth's Companion* magazines. I treasured them for years.

Numerous families had either a piano or pedal organ, and a few had player pianos with music rolls, like "Drowsy Waters," "Red Wing," and "Missouri Waltz." Gramophones, with large horns for amplification, using either disk or cylindrical records, were in some homes. Radios, along with the phonograph, brought to many ears for the first time the sounds of truly professional music, even if notes were occasionally distorted.

My parents bought a battery-powered radio with a goose-neck shaped horn amplifier in 1923, but we used it sparingly. Batteries lost their charge rapidly, and no one was quite so upset as a farmer who wanted to listen to market and news reports at noon only to find a discharged battery.

Art work was thought to be for children, with their boxes of crayons, but not for adults. Our neighbor, Harry Wickert, was scolded by both his father and teachers for wasting time sketching horses. A display of art masterpieces was circulated among area high school one year, but, on the whole, art appreciation opportunities and participation were rare.

Monthly community meetings in rural schools contributed to social life in winter. There was generally a program, socializing, and refreshments. The actors, singers, and guitar pickers were usually amateurs, but audiences were appreciative. A number of "old timers" scraped a bow across fiddle strings with good results, and several people played the French harp or harmonica, by ear. I remember an evening when a red-haired lady sang a solo, accompanied by a guitarist. They unfortunately started the song with each in a different key, and, like wind-up toys that will not stop until they run down, the two valiantly struggled through to the end. The number received a hearty ovation and was probably enjoyed more than all the others on the program combined.

Rural school teachers directed their students in Christmas programs and possibly one at Halloween or Thanksgiving as well, using materials ordered from catalogues given them at a yearly institute. Paine Publishing Company in Cincinnati, Ohio, was a popular supplier. The Dennison Company catalogue was used for crepe paper, program materials, and ideas for homecomimg floats.

Rural school libraries were often not worthy of the name. In Washington School near Ipava we had a dictionary and a set of "saclopdia." That was the extent of our library until I was in fourth grade, when four books from the state reading circle list were ordered for upper grades. The nearby Whealdon School had an extensive library, much of it donated by P. H. Hellyer, our beloved Fulton County Superintendent of

Schools for many years. He had attended that school in childhood.

A few rural schoolrooms had pianos that were used by teachers who could play the instrument, but even without musical accompaniment, the school day often began with group singing.

Capable teachers were sometimes able to instill the love of reading in their students. Teachers occasionally read orally to the entire room and stories were thus shared. Our reading texts were excellent. They often contained abridged versions of classical literature, such as Thackerary's *The Rose and the Ring*, as well as stories and poetry by other acclaimed writers. We memorized most of the poems but, unfortunately, recited them in a singsong voice, swaying back and forth as we did so. Even now, the lines of poems I learned then happily come back to me.

A few towns established libraries with monetary help from philanthropist Andrew Carnegie, but Ipava was not one of them, although we had a small library with Anna Quillin as librarian.

Perhaps our community was more fortunate than others in that Miner Borck, a college-educated Shakespearean scholar and actor, was a familiar figure on the streets of Ipava for many years. He tried to bring a higher level of culture into our lives. As is often the case when someone gains the attention of contemporaries, there were various personal opinions of Miner. The most flattering of these was that he was a misplaced genius.

He was a smallish, somewhat dainty fellow with a fuzz of hair sticking out on both sides of his head. I think he prided himself on his individuality—a "free spirit" of casual grooming and at times a caustic tongue. A bachelor with no family obligations, he was able to devote his life to the work he enjoyed: writing, directing plays, and supervising community activities.

Miner was hired annually to direct class plays in several central Illinois high schools. When I was a freshman, we gave an all-school play that Miner wrote and directed. I think the title was *Land of the Upside Down Umbrella*. The script must have been a literary masterpiece, possibly ranking with Shakespeare, if worth is determined by the fact that scarcely anyone understood it. I suspect our performance was a disappointment to Miner. Only a few students seemed able to define their roles and perhaps do them justice. Miner also wrote a book of poetry, *Birds that Frequent the Night*. I found it as difficult to understand as *Land of the Upside Down Umbrella*!

During the Great Depression, Ipava merchants paid Miner to organize weekly programs presented in the park on summer evenings. Usually there was a short play, music, and an endless number of tap-dancing imitators of Shirley Temple slapping away on stage. People enjoyed these programs, especially mothers of the aspiring Shirley Temples!

Also in summer there were tent shows and an occasional Chautauqua, which, with its lectures, debates, etc., was probably more cultural than the tent show. The audience was seated either on centrally placed chairs or bleachers. Plays such as *East Lynne, Tempest and Sunshine*, and *Uncle Tom's Cabin*, were performed. Various members of the tent-show cast entertained with singing, dancing, and telling jokes between acts. Local people especially enjoyed jokes like this:

> "Who was that lady I seen you with last night?"
> "That wasn't no lady! That was my wife!"

Whatever that joke reveals about the cultural level of our community, I must add that it is difficult to acquire cultural values that you hardly know exist, and that it is possible for a person to lead a fulfilling, happy life in a restricted cultural environment. When I was a child, many people I knew did that.

LITTLE SCHOOLHOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE

Juanita Jordan Morley

It was 1931 and I had just graduated from MacMurray College, Jacksonville, Illinois with a B.A. Degree in Art Education and a minor in English. Try as hard as I might, I could find no openings in the education field for my qualifications—the depression still had its grip on the nation.

My first year out, at least eight of my friends were in similar plight, so we all enrolled in shorthand and typing classes at the local high school (Watseka Community High School).

In the spring of 1932 I heard of a vacancy at the Longshore School just three miles south of Watseka on the Woodland Road. I started on my quest—never having been in a country school in my life, I figured my first job would be for the experience. I was right!

After finding out who the directors were, I started seeking them out. The last one I remember vividly. He was plowing a field and must have been nigh into the middle of it when I stopped him. Trudging over a freshly plowed field was a new experience and a bit degrading, but I got the job—eight months at $40 a month, minus either three or four months of $5 deductions each month for Teacher's Retirement. There was the problem of transportation and janitor work at the school. The latter I did myself—I learned to fire a furnace, bank a fire, sweep the floor whose cracks never gave up *all* the dirt. My Dad drove me to school and sometimes I took his car, picking up several students as passengers along the way. Often I received eggs, fresh butchered meat or the like in gratitude for my service. Sometimes I received nothing.

My school was large—thirty pupils at one time the largest. They were in all eight grades and no alternating of grades. Some names like Schladdenhauffen were so long I could not make them fit in the school register—as I remember there must have been at least five of them in the family. I had to learn how to schedule all subjects within the school day. Believe you me, it was a puzzlement! I attended a teacher's institute before school started that gave me many pointers on how to keep the primary grades interested and learning. I had the upper grades listening when they should have been doing their work. Their comment was, "We didn't do that when we were in first grade." Flattering, but not helpful!

I heard my aunts tell of their country school experiences—the recitation bench, the games and pranks on the playground, the lunches they packed to school. Now I knew what they were talking about. Now I had a recitation bench and problems on the playground and in the outdoor toilets. What do you do when your little first grade boy comes to you and asks "What does f-u-c-k spell?" After a session with the older boys, we had a scrub party down in that outdoor privy. Then there were the lunches of cold biscuits and maybe nothing more. It was after seeing these lunches I was prompted to start a hot lunch program.

Our school building had a vestibule—really a cloak-room in which we placed a small kerosene stove. I don't know where we got it, but it worked. I assigned lunch committees, clean-up committees and whatever else we needed to make it work. And it did! Our favorite menu was tomato soup, which the girls had a good success in making. It was only after I insisted the boys have their turn at it that it lost its popularity—the boys' soup curdled! This brought much criticism from the girls. When someone in the neighborhood butchered, we had fresh meat for lunch. It took longer to prepare, but no one assigned to prepare it seemed to mind. Even clean-up was done happily, as that got them out of studying. Since we did not do "hot lunch" every day of the week, I felt they did not get robbed of precious study time.

Christmas was always a special time. I would spend much time looking in my old Latta *Teacher's Aid Book* for ideas, poems to recite, songs to sing, etc., sometimes short plays. These I would type and assign to different students to recite. Near Christmas much time was often needed to ready our-

selves for *the* program.

Our school had many windows on the south—a few reflector kerosene lamps on the same wall and that was it. I used the lamps only for the Christmas program as this was the only night program. If some of the parents had not brought lanterns or big special lights, we would have been pretty much in the dark! An old pump organ furnished our music, which I asked one of the parents to provide for the program. All went well except for this lady's husband, who invariably sat in the back of the room and carried on, trying to get the pupils to laugh or forget their lines.

There are always those students who take your all in order to teach them, and one was Fern. I kept her in at recess to help her read. Once I kept her for awhile after school, in which case she informed me, "My Dad will whup you if I don't get home!" When the kids found she had thrown her books under the coal shed, I had her retrieve them and then took her home. I never saw her father, so he never whupped me. I don't think she learned to read either!

My pupils had a great fear of anything beyond their home territory. About the time when we were reviewing hardest for county eighth grade exams, questions of high school would come up. When I talked high school they would shutter. One girl said high school was "too big" and had "too many doors" she would be lost. It was then I decided to bring a few home with me on week-ends. My folks were most obliging in helping me accomplish this. I also saw a side of my pupils I did not know: they were silly! When you talked to them they would giggle instead of answering you. When I found one of my little first graders with his underwear sewed on, I figured I had seen it all (or just the reverse).

Our school picnic ended the school year. Parents were welcome, but because spring was a busy time, they couldn't always make it. The day was spent with fun and games and lots of eating.

I learned more by far than the students those years in my country school. You dared not show emotions when you found your desk drawer full of squeaking mice! And where else could you get a cross-section of all grades, all ages, so quickly? I found that Friday afternoons after recess was one of their favorite times—and mine also. That was when we had art.

I taught one year at Longshore—the next year, second grade at the South Side School in Watseka. I got married at the end of that year (1934). Since married teachers could not be hired, I resigned. After a year learning to keep house, I was back at Longshore for two more years. I must have helped to overcome some fears of high school, as a goodly number of my pupils did go ahead and graduate. Now that era of country schools is long gone and almost forgotten.

THROUGH THE VALLEY AND OVER THE HILL

Florence Braun

We lived on the edge of a sloping hill across from a stand of trees. My father, mother and two brothers, Kenneth and Virden, and I had moved there from the little village to this small farm.

In earlier times this land had also been covered with timber; the tree stumps were still there on the hill back of the house. My father would try to burn them in the fall after the corn was in shocks. We liked to watch the stumps burn and the red coals; we would put grains of corn on a piece of tin while the coals of fire were hot. The corn would parch and have a very special smell, almost like popcorn. We would run from stump to stump on the hillside chewing the parched grains of corn. The sloping hill back of the house was shaped like a spoon, and was cut off slick as a whistle at the old spring where the stock came to get water. It ran a steady stream below the hill, except in winter when ice froze all around it.

A huge old walnut tree stood beside the road and fur-

nished shade for the travelers who stopped there to cool off. It always provided plenty of walnuts for any one who would gather them. It was said that Abraham Lincoln had traveled this old trail, and stopped under the shade of this large walnut tree on his way across the prairie to the county seat at Carthage.

My Grandmother Roberts lived in a little house alone back of the timber and walnut tree. She spent her days gathering bark from under the trees to burn in her cook stove. She had stocks of the long pieces of bark piled up around the stove in neat rows.

I used to sit on the porch with her while she peeled apples to cook. She used an old paring knife worn so thin that only a thin blade was left. Above the kitchen door she had cut strips of newspaper and fastened them to the door to scare the flies away. When the door was opened or shut the paper would rattle and blow to scare the flies when we went in and out. She also had a big fly swatter made of screen wire to kill the flies that came in. I like to walk in the hot deep dust on my bare feet in the lane, through the tall trees and weeds to my Grandmother's house.

Sometimes in the summer she came to our house for dinner. We ate on our long screened-in porch across the back of the house. Everything tasted so good out there. We would have our own cured ham, vegetables from the garden, cheese made from clabber milk and blackberry pie made from the berries that grew along the road.

Always there was a bouquet of dark purple petunias and sweet peas gathered from the fence by the garden. The sweet peas were very delicate pastel colors and smelled so sweet I could barely believe it.

The little one-room village school where my brothers and I walked was one and a half miles across the valley and hills. The walking all during the year, and through the different seasons, was as much a part of our education as the books were. One of my friends says she never remembers getting a ride to school or being brought home.

As we walked, I carried my small red lunch box and would meet other children along the valley. We walked the length of the long hedge row, sitting down on a snow drift in winter to rest. My friend Flora lost her reader there and it wasn't found until the snow melted in the spring.

We walked across the small red bridge and always looked to see what was there. We looked for a bird or any kind of animal that might be there. We met other children in groups of three and four along the way; one very favorite family were four children from a German family who had just arrived in this country. They would meet us every day. They wore bright colored clothes and cheeks were as red as apples. They knew a few words of English, but we liked them so much that it wasn't very long until we understood what they said in German, and they could soon speak some English.

We met another boy who rode a brown and white spotted pony to school, and we thought he had a fast way to go.

As we left the valley to walk up the long sloping hill, there was a lot to see, especially in the spring. The wild plums and crabapples were in bloom in clusters along the road and smelled so good I can never forget. Meadowlarks and song sparrows were all along the way, sitting on the fences and wires singing as we went. One hardly ever sees these birds now, and I miss their cheery songs. Later in summer the wild roses bloomed on this bank, by the road. These were my very favorite flowers, growing wild and thick. They were a delicate pale pink with single petals and yellow centers, growing there among the tall weeds and other wild flowers. The leaves were very fine, and they never grew very tall. They had a delicate fragrance and smelled very sweet as only a wild rose could. Never in my imagination would I have thought these would disappear. Bittersweet and wild grapes hung on the fences in the fall and added much to our walk.

One sad day as we walked down this sloping hill from school, one little boy was hit and killed by a car. He ran down

the dirt path on the bank into the road. There were only a few cars, and the children didn't expect to see one. I was walking ahead that evening and looked back to see something was wrong. How we missed that little boy later on as we walked to and from school.

Sometimes a wagon load of green cane stalks would come by as we played at school and some of the children would get a long stalk of the cane, break it up and chew it to get the sweet juice. The load of cane was on the way to Mr. Wilson's sorghrum mill to be made into molasses. My father raised cane, and we would look forward to popcorn balls made from the molasses in winter. They had a very special taste that I still remember.

This is the way it was living in the hills and valleys of west central Illinois when I grew up. If you are ever going to know, you will have to hear it from a few who are left, and still treasure these memories.

If you visited our old home today, you would pass right over the bridge and up the sloping hill and come to the place where the little one-room village school house stood, and you would find it gone. The coal shed is gone, and the two privys are gone; one stood below the hill back of the school house and the other in the far corner of the school yard under a large shade tree. Even the old time village store across from the school is gone. It all went back to the land, with only a straggly tree left here and there to mark the spot where the children played, went to school and grew up.

"THE SCHOOLHOUSE IS ON FIRE"

Lucius Herbert Valentine

I started to the Bethel School located in Woodstock Township of Schuyler County in September, 1920. This one-room school house was built of brick with a coal house of wood and two brick outhouses, one for boys and one for girls. The yard had a ball diamond for baseball and three swings on steel posts set in concrete.

I was a six-year-old without any kindergarten except in the garden and truck patch hoeing potatoes, cabbages, carrots and picking raspberries. My first teacher for two years was Edwin Johnson, who lived in Rushville and drove a one-horse road cart each day to our school, a distance of six miles. He taught me how to read and write.

Of course, he had all eight grades to teach. I had two older brothers, Glen and Ed, and one older sister, Olive, in school. Each day in my first grade class Mr. Johnson would print a new word on the blackboard. If we knew the word, we told him and if we did not, he would give us a hint. The day he printed "mother" on the blackboard, no one knew what it was. The hint he gave us was "the one you love the most in the world." Every hand in my class went up, but when he called on the first one and the answer was "Santa Clause," which was wrong, all hands dropped but mine, because I knew who I loved most, and that word was "mother." He called on me, and proudly I said, "Mother."

When Christmas came, we had a large decorated Christmas tree and small gifts for each other. The worst thing was small metal candle holders with clips to hold them on the branches. These candles were lit during our Christmas play. It was beautiful but very dangerous.

The big event of the year came one afternoon several weeks later when my oldest brother, Glen, stood up during school and said, "Teacher, the schoolhouse is on fire!" The furnace, which sat between the two front doors and the ceiling,

was blazing around the chimney pipe. We all left the room, and Mr. Johnson sent one student to the neighbor's, and a general alarm was put on the telephone line that Bethel School was on fire.

The well was about twenty feet from the front porch, so under the direction of Mr. Johnson, all of us kids formed a bucket brigade while my brother Glen got on the cone of the roof where the fire was and Jimmie McDonnel got on the roof of the front porch. Buckets of water were passed very rapidly, and by the time my dad, mother, and other neighbors got there, we had the fire out. The people seemed to have a social get-together and planned what to do to repair the roof and ceiling.

As everyone was ready to leave and we got to my dad's Model T car, my dad said, "You kids go in there and get your books and everything out of your desks, as that might reignite and burn down before morning." I ran with joy to get my things out, hoping it would and I wouldn't have to go anymore.

BOX SUPPER AT LOST GROVE

Helen E. Rilling

He was a man of good humor. The auctioneer at the one-room school box socials was an important person, a friend of the teacher, someone in the district or maybe even a neighbor. He created a lively atmosphere with his witty patter as he auctioned off the beautifully decorated boxes filled to overflowing with delicious food and eyed by brazen fellows and blushing young girls.

Each fall the school in our district, Lost Grove, held a program and box social to raise money for special things like books and games. (Our library consisted of twenty-five books kept in an old fashioned glass-front bookcase. New bats and balls were always welcomed by the students.) The program, given by the pupils, consisted of recitations and songs. There was no piano at the school so the songs were very simple tunes. An appropriate skit was given, which took lots of practice by the pupils and was fun because they got out of lessons for a few days. One year the skit was The Thanksgiving Story with Pilgrims and Indians. The girls' mothers made long dresses of grey material and added white aprons and caps. For the Indians the boys pulled feathers from their turkeys and chickens.

The parents and older boys helped the teacher make the stage props. They stretched baling wire between nails to make two dressing rooms and a stage. Unmatched floral curtains were hung from the wires on big safety pins for easy opening and closing. Parents brought extra lamps and lanterns so the big school room was well lighted. One chore always performed for the teacher by a director was to tie the bell rope in the hall up so high no adventurous guest would be tempted to ring the bell while the festivities were going on.

On the big night all twenty-two families in the district came with many others from the surrounding communities in buggies and farm wagons pulled by teams of horses. The horses were tied to the schoolyard fence. The wagons had bales of straw in them for the families to sit on. Blankets and cow robes were tucked in for warmth on the long ride home under the cold full moon.

The most important part of the evening came when the auctioneer announced the time was ready for "high bidding." A long table was filled with beautiful boxes which had been kept hidden so no one could guess which box belonged to which girl or girls. The big boxes were for doubles. Two young men would bid for them and get to eat with two young ladies.

The auctioneer lifted the first box. The room became still and everyone anxiously waited for the excitement to begin.

"What am I bid? This *is* heavy! Um! I can smell fried chicken and chocolate cake," he called out.

The bidding was lively. Often there was rivalry between families or fellows. They would be determined that the box from their house would bring the highest bid. A double box often brought twenty-five dollars if the fellows really wanted to eat with certain young ladies.

"Look at this! A cupie doll all tinseled up—isn't this beautiful?"

The auctioneer made each box sound special. He talked up the good food he imagined to be hidden inside. He teased the girls, trying to find out who had brought certain boxes. If he could get a blush or giggles, he knew he was close to finding out the owner. Then the bidding went higher and higher.

The boxes were made from cut-down cartons, hat and shoe boxes. Men's boot and shoe boxes were in demand as they were roomier. Extra pieces were glued or sewn on to make replicas of schools, houses, and even gazebos. Cupie dolls were a favorite, dressed in ruffled crepe paper and ribbons. Ribbon roses adorned many boxes. Tinsel was a favorite decoration and sparkled in the lamplight.

When the auction was over, the young men claimed the box they had successfully bid on. They opened the lid and inside were the name or names of the girls who would be their supper partners. The girls sat at one of the larger school desks and the men perched on top of the desk in front of them.

Inside was a delicious supper. It often consisted of fried chicken (if a late brood had hatched) or meat and cheese sandwiches, deviled eggs, pickles, salads and fruit salads in orange cups cut into basket shapes. There often were bunches of purple grapes, apples, and bananas. Wrapped in wax paper were generous slices of chocolate or yellow cake, cookies, and slabs of apple pie. As a surprise there might be squares of fudge or a bag of popcorn.

While the box suppers were being eaten, parents and guests ate sandwiches, salads, pies and cakes. They visited with each other as families didn't get together often in those days. New neighbors were made welcome. The women exchanged recipes while the men bragged about the number of bushels of corn they could shuck in one day.

This program was a special affair of the school year for the pupils and parents. But the box supper was the highlight for the older pupils and guests. From the first "What am I bid?" to the last cake crumb, the atmosphere was electric in our modest little one-room school that sat on the Morgan-Sangamon County line in the 1920's.

COUNTRY SCHOOL DAYS—THE 1930s

Clara Rose McMillin

I was up early, a chubby brown-haired child, excited and expectant, for this was my very first day of school. It was September, 1929. My Grandma and Grandpa were coming to drive me to school in their Model T. Ford. I wore my new brown-checked dress and shiny new shoes, and carried my brand new lunch box and pencil box with yellow pencils and a new eraser and a big red chief tablet. This was a day of adventure for a little country girl that had never been inside a schoolhouse before.

Grandma took me inside the school house, told the teacher my name, waited until I was assigned a desk and felt at ease, and then she left. I was not afraid. In a few days I would be six years old, I was the oldest child in the family, and I looked forward to school and all of the children to play and make friends with.

I don't remember too much about the first grade, but we had a primer with the story of the Gingerbread boy: "I am a Gingerbread boy, I can run, I can, I can." I missed a lot of school that year because I caught all the things going around because I had not been exposed to so many germs and colds before. When I came back to school after being sick, the teacher would take me aside and listen to me read and get me

caught up with the class. Sometime she did this at recess or before school. Our teacher seemed to have plenty of time for each of us.

By the time I was in the third grade, our school was expanded and we had two rooms, four grades to a room. There was no indoor plumbing at school or in our home, and we pumped our drink in our own cup at the pump in the school yard.

Our day started off with the Pledge of Allegiance and singing from *The Golden Book of Song*. Each class came up to the front of the room to recite and read or work problems on the blackboard. We had recess at mid-morning and again in the afternoon, as well as a half-hour or so of play time at noontime. We played games, tag or softball, and we had a merry-go-round to push and ride on. Our schoolyard was dusty and had rocks as well as grass to play on. In the winter we played in the basement. It was frustrating when we played ball. Two of the older children chose up sides. The best players were chosen first, and we dreaded being the last one to be called.

Once I hurt my ankle on the schoolyard and Mrs. Wendler insisted on me taking off my shoes and socks and letting her see what was wrong. My mother had this rule that we always wash our feet before going to bed, but I had skipped the night before. Silly wasn't I? I was embarrassed for her to see my dirty feet, but after playing in our dusty school yard they would have been dirty anyway.

My parents expected us to cooperate fully with the teacher, do our work, behave ourselves, etc. I don't remember ever getting a spanking at school, but I'm sure that if I had, another one would have been waiting when I got home.

Remember the Palmer Method? We did all of those rows of letters over and over, pages and pages of them, every Friday afternoon.

The nicest things that I remember making for art was an oatmeal box made into a hanging pot for crepe paper sweet peas. We plastered our box with the strings of sweet peas hung out of the box; it was hung on the living room wall. To me those were the most gorgeous pink sweet peas ever.

We had programs for our parents at Christmas and sometime in the spring. We had the usual songs and pieces, but we also had plays, and people would come and pay 10 or 25 cents to see them. We always had a full house. This entailed a lot of work for the teacher, who was director, stage manager, etc. We had stage curtains to pull to change the scenes. We had to practice a lot, and some of our performances were quite good. There was no T.V. for competition. Most of the parents and friends knew one another, and it was a night for socializing, cake and coffee and entertainment. One time Mrs. Wendler came to our house on Sunday and sewed and fitted me with a beautiful ruffled crepe paper ballgown. At the program, a boy stood beside me in his best clothes, the lights were dimmed, and someone sat at a spinning wheel and sang "There's an old spinning wheel in the parlor." It was beautiful and we felt like glamorous stars.

One day a lady named Abby Kneedler came to our school to start a drum and bugle corps. She had a big one in Collinsville, and hoped to have some of us join her group when we were older. The Collinsville group marched in parades and competed for prizes. I was thrilled when she said I had the "right lip" to play a bugle and was chosen to be in our group. We played and drilled and practiced until we were pretty good, and we marched in the school parade and drilled on the school grounds before dark on graduation night. We wore bright red tops and white skirts. I don't think any of us went on to the Collinsville group, but it was good training and discipline for us and put a little spice and excitement into our lives.

I was fortunate to finish all eight grades in the same school. We went to Rock Jr. High in E. St. Louis for our finals. Some of us were very well prepared, and others plenty worried. It was a sad time, too, for soon we would be leaving our school, and friends and teacher.

Graduation day came and we were all thrilled with our

new clothes and the diploma that we had worked so hard for. We looked forward to high school, but some of our classmates were almost sixteen and would drop out of school. There were only ten or twelve of us, and we would get lost in the crowd at Collinsville Township High School.

All of this was very important to me at that time, but when I think back I find I can't remember very many of my classmates' names. I know some of them have passed on, but the others, where are they? It makes me sad. I still live in the same area, but our paths never cross.

"I'M BID ONE DOLLAR"

Effie L. Campbell

The year was 1925, and our family had been invited to a box-supper to be held at a country schoolhouse. I was six years old at the time, and, never having been to one, I asked what a "box-supper" was. "Well," I was told, "it's when you put supper in a box and sell it." That sounded a little bit crazy to me, but when I learned more about it, I began to be excited, especially when my two older sisters started hunting for shoe boxes to put the food in. Of course, in the home of nine people, two shoe boxes were not all that hard to find.

The next thing on the agenda was getting together various items to trim the boxes with, and that meant searching in trunks and closets for wrapping paper saved from birthdays, and ribbons and flowers off of old hats. I think it was LaVeta who put a bunch of artificial cherries on her shoe box, and I thought they were beautiful.

Since my sisters of sixteen and seventeen would be the only ones to have their box suppers put up for auction, Mom planned on taking a picnic basket of food for the rest of the family. But after they were finished with theirs, I wheedled the girls into trimming a small box for me. When it was done it was covered with shiny white paper with a large red paper heart pasted on top and smaller hearts glued along the sides. I loved it.

But the boxes were only the first step in the preparations. After they were decorated and set aside, it was time to bake the cakes—two of them, one Lady Baltimore and one Red Devil's food. My bother Virg and I "helped" by licking the frosting pans. We also filched any of the other food that wasn't being closely guarded. And there was a lot of food: pickles, bananas, sandwiches, potato salad, fried chicken, and anything else that could be carried picnic-style. So they wouldn't spoil, the fried chicken and the potato salad were made last of all. Mom was the one to add the finishing touches, because it was time for Clara and LaVeta to primp for the social.

Both girls had beautiful complexions like our mother's, and since excessive make-up was frowned on by our father, they had to content themselves with a dab or two of face powder. All of us were blessed with wavy, black hair in those days, but the girls thought theirs needed extra crimping for the party. To achieve that end they held curling irons over the flame of a kerosene lamp and singed a few more curls. It was also the time when "spitcurls" were in fashion, and across their foreheads the girls each made a row of what looked a little like upside-down question marks. I don't remember the dresses they wore, but from pictures I've seen taken of them about that time, I'd say they wore what were known as "middy-tops." Those were dresses with sailor collars, tied at the neckline with a bow, and with long-waisted tops that bloused about an inch or two below the start of the waistline.

When it was time for use to go, Dad cranked up the family Dodge, and we scrambled for seats. We rode five in the back, four in the front, with Dad driving, me in the middle, and Mom on the other side holding Marcella (the baby) on her lap. I don't know where we put the boxes and baskets of food. They were crammed in somewhere as we drove the mile or so to the Edgewood schoolhouse. It set just across the road from my

half-brother's farm—located exactly as the name implied—at the edge of a grove of trees.

It's difficult for me to recall a scene of sixty years ago, but I do remember the schoolhouse with the light of lamps and lanterns shining through the dusk, and the cars of a vintage that would bring smiles today, driving up into the schoolyard. Inside, the one big room had been gaily decorated with Chinese lanterns and twisted ropes of red and white crepe paper. Everything was a stir of happy voices and children's laughter.

If I close my eyes I can picture the boxes placed on a table down in front of the schoolroom. They represented all the colors of the rainbow and the creativity of every young woman there. Then the picture shifts, and the auctioneer (a local farmer) starts to hold the boxes up, one by one. "Who'll start the bidding? What am I bid for this box with the blue ribbon?"

At times the bidding was lively, especially if two young men wanted to eat with the same girl. "One dollar! I'm bid one dollar. Who'll make it two?" And another man would call out, "Two dollars." Then the auctioneer would try for three, and so on, perhaps now and then selling one for as much as five dollars.

Years later, my sisters let me in on a secret: although the boxes were supposed to remain anonymous, a red flower, a certain combination of colors, maybe a blue ribbon would speak the name of a girl. If that failed, signals were passed between a young lady and a certain young man.

When the auctioneer came to my box I was so excited I could hardly sit still. But I doubt the sight of it affected anyone else the same way. Compared to the other boxes, mine was so small no self-respecting young man with a hearty appetite was likely to jump up and start bidding on it. The auctioneer made a crack about "good things come in small packages," and the crowd snickered.

About then I grabbed my father's arm and shook it. "That's my box, Daddy! That's my box!"

Faces wearing broad grins were turned in my direction, and I shrunk inside my cotton dress. I hadn't meant for my voice to carry so far. However, I felt better when my dad raised his hand and said, "I bid one dollar."

Well of course, that ended the bidding on the little box with the paper hearts. The auctioneer rapped his homemade gavel on the desktop. "Sold to Tom Bowman for one dollar. Hope it won't make you fat, Tom." Naturally, I didn't understand the good-natured ribbing. I think my enthusiasm was all for the chocolate cake I knew was inside the box Dad carried back to me. I wanted to open it then and there, and it was torture to be made to wait until the last box of food was sold.

When it was time to eat, families gathered together near the front of the schoolhouse, while the young couples drifted to the back of the room. That way, a girl could share fried chicken with her best beau and indulge in a bit of flirting at the same time. According to custom, having bought my box, Dad was supposed to share it with me. But I expect it was a good thing Mom brought along her big picnic basket of food.

We lost our father that next year, and I'm glad I have the memory of that one box supper while he was still with us. At the time, I thought I had to let him know which box was mine. But I guess he knew all along and never intended for me to share it with a stranger.

THE BARNES SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

Ruth Rogers

At the Barnes School, east of Bushnell, the Christmas program was the highlight of the whole school year. It was a time when the church, which met in the schoolhouse, cooperated with the school to have a program. The women of the neighborhood would come in to help with the practice of plays and pieces and make costumes. Then a few days before the special night, the fathers would come in and build a wooden stage and hang curtains in front of it, on the wire which was always stretched across the front of the room. This was done twice during the year, at Christmas and again at Children's Day in June.

The men of the neighborhood cut a large pine tree in the woods. It was brought into the schoolhouse and decorated with strings of popcorn, bangles and candles. On Christmas Eve, many gifts would be placed on and under the tree for the children of the community.

The Christmas I remember especially was wonderful as well as terrifying, because the event required special preparations at home, and one was very painful for my sister, Myrle, and myself. We had long hair, my sister's being blond and mine rather black, which we wore in long braids for everyday. However, the night before the program, our hair was done in what was known as "doing your hair in rags." The hair was divided into strips, then wound around a length of a strip of cloth, then the cloth wrapped around the length of hair and cloth and tied tightly at the top next to the head. When we were finished and ready for bed, we looked as if we had long white sausages hanging from our heads. The next morning, amid howls and crying, the cloth was removed. Each roll was carefully wound around our mother's finger and let loose into the most beautiful long curls. Then our mother carefully dressed us in our finest clothes, which included a white fur neck piece and muff, gifts from our paternal grandparents the year before.

When we were all ready and the grandpa we lived with had readied the farm sled with a bed of hay, blankets and warmed bricks, we made our way to the Barnes Schoolhouse. The windows of the building were ablaze with light, every oil lamp was lit and the tree candles were beautiful. The lit candles would be forbidden by law today.

As soon as we arrived, we removed our caps, coats, mittens and boots and joined our schoolmates on the front benches reserved for us. Almost at once, I noticed two large dolls under the tree. I wondered who would get them.

We spoke our pieces and took our parts in the plays. After the program, it was time to call names for each pupil and the little ones to recite the goodies from the magic tree. Myrle received her big doll first; then I knew who the best gifts on the tree were for. How wonderful! Myrle's doll was blond haired and dressed in blue silk, and mine was dark haired and dressed in pink. They had been placed under the tree as a surprise gift by a friend of our paternal grandparents.

After careful examination by us and the exclamations of the other children, the dolls were packed in the tissue paper-lined boxes and stored away in the sled for the trip home.

Not until our grandma and mother started to put coats away in the closet did they discover the extra coats were all gone. Our uncle's wonderful horsehair coat had also been stolen. The house was searched for other missing objects. What an unhappy ending for a beautiful evening.

The coats were never found. A search was made in every ditch and gully in the area for days. None were found. To this day, the vandalism remains a mystery. However, the excitement and joy of the Christmas we received our beautiful dolls remain stamped in the memories of two aging women.

BOARDING AROUND

Charlotte Young Magerkurth

The old time teacher's duties or obligations included one of which modern teachers, happily for them, know nothing. This was called "boarding around." The terms of contract between all boards of directors and all teachers in the olden time included the clause "must board around." The duration was, by common consent and for the sake of convenience, a week at a time. In those days, I had to be very versatile to mesh with the cogs in the machinery of such a life. One week I would be blessed with a home in a refined family, where the children were quiet and obedient, where grace was said at a table and family worship was a feature of the morning and evening. The very next week fate would cast me into a family where the profane oath and ribald conversation prevailed, where the children were rude impudent and defiant, where the men smoked intolerable tobacco in intolerable pipes, where the whiskey jug was hauled from beneath the bed morning and evening. The beds, the food, the drinking water were as different as the characters and habits of the people. But the successful teacher had to fit in all these homes like a halo on the head of a saint. If I hadn't, my occupation, like Othello's, would soon have been gone.

There was another side to this custom. Sometimes I was a burden on the back of a long-suffering community. At the Union District, I had deep snow and big obetreperous boys. Mr. Olson, a father of one of my boy scholars, was quite perturbed with my discipline. One day Ole broke out with, "Aye thank yuh ban skule taycher lak hel; ya ban better tak other yumpin' yimmy yob, whair yuh don't ban left minded. Such mind yuh got all on one side, lak yug handle."

Ole's speech made such a deep impression on my mind that I never forgot it. I used to go round repeating it to Brother Elon, and the pigs, and other animals.

Our Union Schoolhouse was typical: a small frame, a wood-colored shack, surrounding a big drum stove and, at the farther end, a raised platform with a pine desk, where the teacher sat enthroned. All round the walls was a sloping board, used as a writing desk. The middle of the room contained pine benches without backs. Everywhere was pine and the resinous odor of new pine. Never a swab of paint, anywhere.

Corporal punishment was common. I had a startling way of flinging a "ruler" at a recalcitrant student. The latter had to pick it up immediately and bring it directly to me, who would then more or less vigorously paddle the open hand with the "ruler." Sometimes the punishment was to stand facing the wall in the corner of the room, until released. Sometimes it was to hold a book out at arm's length, till relieved. Once I sent Bill for a bundle of willow sprouts, sarcastically remarking that I would show Bill what they were for when he returned. I scorned the trifling twigs he brought, and furiously flung them from a window.

"They're too small, I tell you. Fetch big ones, a yard long," I shouted.

Bill murmured that he would as soon wait for these little ones to grow, but I bowsed at Bill, and he went.

Bill selected sprouts a yard long, carefully ringing them round and round with his keen knife. I was in such a rage when Bill returned that I grabbed all three at once and brought them down on Bills' shoulders. the switches instantly flew into forty pieces, the school broke into an uproar of mirth, and Bill flew like "forty."

COMMUNITY MEETINGS IN A ONE-ROOM SCHOOL

Mary Cecile Stevens

My thoughts return to the horse-and-buggy or horse-and-bobsled days when I traveled with my parents and seven brothers and sisters over country dirt roads to our enjoyable community meetings in the one-room rural school.

These meetings were attended by parents, children, relatives and friends, and sometimes there was not standing room in the building.

One of the most memorable occasions was the box supper, usually taking place during the fall months. This was held to raise money for the teacher to purchase needed supplies. Eight grades were taught in the school, so the girls ranged in ages from six to sixteen. At the recess and noon periods the teacher assisted in planning the decorating boxes, as to the color of paper, designs, ribbons and bows of contrasting color. The plans were discussed openly, but the making was done secretly at home.

Often young married ladies enjoyed decorating boxes, too.

After the program was presented, the chief concern was for the auctioneer to come forward to auction the boxes to the highest bidder. Young unmarried men glanced at each other as if questioning which was the teacher's box. Each was anxious to buy it. Was it to eat with the teacher, whom they thought the popular one of the evening, or was it the honor of being able to pay the greatest price? Sometimes envy and ill feelings were astir. Soon that was over, and all enjoyed a splendid evening.

The boxes sold from one dollar up to twenty dollars, and nearly always the teacher's box sold at the highest price. In these boxes was a hearty lunch consisting of fried chicken, sandwiches, cake, cookies, fruit, pie, and other delicacies.

The meeting during the winter was the Christmas program. Since the school had no music teacher, the recitations, dialogues, and songs were directed by the teacher.

Again, parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts crowded the building to hear the children speak and sing.

Were the relatives proud? You know they were, even if mistakes were made and the children's voices went a bit awry with the thrill of Christmas. Perhaps the sleigh bells in the horses ringing out the merry tunes coming to the school inspired us to sing in earnest.

A tree cut from the nearby woods found its place in the building. Only the glow of the wall side lamps gave the tree its light amidst strings of cranberries and pop corn.

Santa Clause came with gifts, candy, and oranges, and following a lunch for all, the party came to a close.

The horses covered with blankets and all families tucked in under blankets in the bob sleds and sleighs started home on those frosty nights.

During the latter part of winter we celebrated patriotic days and Valentine's Day. Again, a program was presented by the students directed by the classroom teacher. How we enjoyed holding our small flags and singing to celebrate Abraham Lincoln and George Washington's birthdays. Many times the parents and others joined with us on the program.

Then from a pretty decorated box valentines were passed from one to another. These were made from discarded wall paper and scraps of pretty paper found in the home. These were not revealed until that night to surprise an especially admired school mate.

Baskets of food were opened and all old and young partook of a delicious lunch. After good–nights, with the lights extinguished from the lamps and the coals in the cast iron stove fading away, we went to our mode of transportation, bringing to a close of another delightful community meeting.

The final meeting of the year was a daytime gathering—the picnic and the winding of the May pole. The school year consisted of eight months or less, so in April the school closed for the summer.

The picnic was on the school grounds and attended by parents, relatives and friends. Baskets of food were spread on table cloths on the ground for the picnic dinner.

After dinner, eyes turned in the direction of the May pole to be wound, but not yet: all had to enter the building to see the children's display of penmanship (penmanship in that day was very competitive work), art work, written stories, poetry, and maps displayed on chalk boards and walls. We children enjoyed seeing our parents looking at our work.

Our school room was decorated with spring flowers found in the woods: violets, bluebells, jack-in-the pulpit, forsythia, and dog wood. This was done by the pupils and teacher. Gathering spring flowers was an important part of the last day of school.

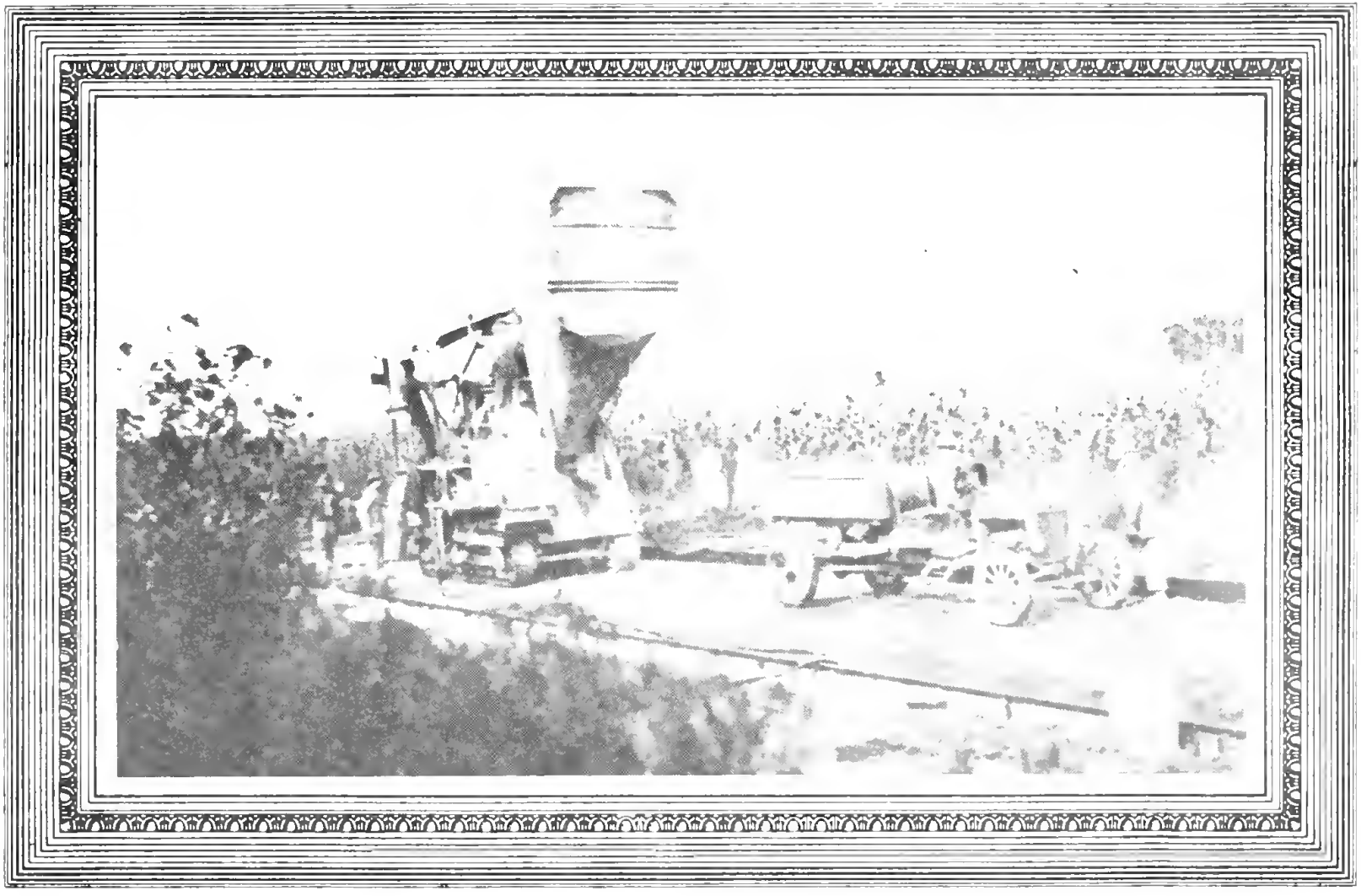
Soon the teacher began the sound of music from the pump organ brought in from a family for this special day. The girls dressed in pretty white dresses and the boys in white shirts and knee trousers took places at the May pole, which had been cut from a tree in the woods and set by the fathers. Crepe paper ribbon of various colors trailed from the pole as we prepared to celebrate the return of spring.

As the organ music sounded, we wove the ribbons as we walked around the pole until the May pole was covered with the bright colors. We sang spring time songs to complete this special festival.

After visiting relatives and friends, we called this a day—our final day of school until September. Farewells were said and we were homeward-bound, some by buggy and others walking.

Our teacher was an important person in these community meetings. Her programs brought families together, and brought out the talent of the children.

What could have been a better method of sustaining that community relationship than these meetings in the one-room rural school?



IX Transportation and Communication

TRANSPORTATION AND COMMUNICATION

The present generation of senior citizens, especially those who are 75 and older, has experienced the revolutionary transformations in American life that have occurred because of great developments in transportation and communication. So thoroughly has the world been changed by automobiles, airplanes, radios, motion pictures, and television, that it seems incredible that vast numbers of older people can recall when these first came into our culture.

The automobile has had the greatest impact. First viewed as a novelty and then as a kind of recreational vehicle, it soon became an indispensable part of the American way of life. The automobile promoted the development of suburbs and hastened the decline of small towns. It made people more dependent upon banks, which supplied automobile financing, and less dependent upon their neighbors, who could be bypassed for more distant resources. It fostered individualism, and it encouraged materialism. It quickly became a symbol of modern life, and it eventually became a leading cause of death.

Three of the memoirs in this section of the book recall experiences with automobiles that could only have occurred when they were something new. "My First Auto Ride" by Helen Alleyne Taylor re-creates the thrill that millions of Americans once had when they went for their first ride. "Hard Times When Papa Drove the Car" by Eva Baker Watson centers around a driver who made an uneasy transition from the horse and buggy to the automobile. And "Touring, 1920s Style" by Bernadette Tranbarger describes a family vacation back when travel by car was a great adventure.

Some of the memoirs in this section depict work that related to transportation, for that too was part of the experience of some senior citizens. Perhaps the most significant construction work of the century, in terms of its widespread impact, was the building of hard roads back in the Twenties. When small towns were finally reached by the Illinois system of paved roads, local people sometimes celebrated with a dance on the new road surface, which symbolized the coming of a new era. But ironically, hard roads only hastened the decline of many small towns, for local residents then had better access to larger places. "When the Hard Road Went Past Our Farm" by Margaret L. Cockrum not only reflects the process of road construction but also one girl's experiences during the memorable time when the hard road came in.

Certainly the biggest single construction project in the Illinois area during the early twentieth century was the building of the Hamilton-Keokuk Power Dam. That project also had an impact on Mississippi River transportation, since it allowed large boats to easily navigate a stretch of rapids that had been a problem since pioneer days. H. D. Ewing recalls the world-famous project, which he worked on more than seventy years ago.

When senior citizens write about communication developments, they commonly focus on the telephone—not that it was invented in our century, but the nature and quality of telephone service has changed dramatically since they were young. In particular, the use of party lines and the importance of the operator are factors which gave early telephone use a distinctive character, as pointed out by Hazel D. Frank and Clarissa M. Jahn. In other words, telephones once connected people in ways that they no longer do.

The editors were surprised to find Nellie Roe's memoir, "Television Comes to Mt. Sterling," among the manuscripts available for this book, since TV seems so recent, and many who are not yet senior citizens can recall when it first became a part of our lives. But the memoir proved to be a fine piece that presented the topic very well. And it reminds us all that television has done more than any other medium to give the American people a shared experience.

The memoirs in this section of *Tales from Two Rivers IV* provide views of transportation and communication developments that have changed the lives of all Americans and have made the early decades of the century seem like another world. No wonder these experiences were memorable.

John E. Hallwas

MY FIRST AUTO RIDE

Alleyne Taylor

I was sixteen in the year 1910. My folks were farmers and plain country folk, and neither we nor any of our neighbors had yet purchased an automobile.

My cousin and her husband lived a few miles from us, and we thought they were a little prone to show off, but we were all excited when we heard they had bought an auto. Needless to say, I was a little envious as I didn't see why my father couldn't be the first to buy one, but that didn't matter if only they would invite me to take a ride. Sure enough, it wasn't long until my sister and I received an invitation to take a Sunday afternoon ride in their new Rio.

What a beauty it was: cherry red with yellow stripes, room for three passengers, and no top.

My sister and I could hardly wait for Sunday to come. It was springtime, May to be exact, and the weather was uncertain. It was an exciting time for all the family. "Should we wear our Easter Hats or simply tie scarfs over our heads?" Mother thought we should wear our hats as everyone would be looking at us as we passed by. Father was certain that we couldn't keep them on as he wasn't sure just how fast the new auto would go. We finally compromised by wearing our hats with the scarfs tied over them.

At two o'clock we were ready and we boarded the beautiful new car. It was a perfect day, but we soon found out that we had to hold on to our hats with both hands. Before long Walter, the driver, called out, "We're hitting thirty miles an hour!" What excitement! That was when I let loose and my hat went sailing through the air. I hollered, "Stop!" Of course, it took a few minutes at the magnificent speed of 30 to come to a stop, but he did and backed up the Rio to where my hat lay in the road.

Again we started up. Soon we heard a sound like a hiss, and Walter pulled off the road. We all piled out and got the necessary tools from under the back seat, and we each took turns pumping up the back tire.

My best dress looked a sight and my hat was ruined, but we had fun.

It wasn't long until my father bought a car, and like my cousin's, ours was only used in nice weather. When winter came the air was released from the tires, and it was stored in a large building we called "the carriage house." It was called that because it had been built to house the buggy and surrey and was also a storage place for harness and tools. The buggy was relegated to the driveway of the barn to make room for our new five-passenger automobile.

In the years that followed, I had many wonderful experiences on afternoon drives, but I'll never forget my very first auto ride, back when cars were still uncommon and going for a ride was an adventure.

HARD TIMES WHEN PAPA DROVE THE CAR

Eva Baker Watson

Even though to many, depending on horsedrawn vehicles for transportation taxed the patience and was considered hard, Papa was satisfied with our buggy and his docile team of gentle mares, Bird and Crystobel. He understood them and they understood him. And it was a comfortable rate of speed for traveling, he thought.

But all around us people were buying cars, and everyone knows that peer pressure like that is a most powerful sales pitch.

So, while it seemed traitorous to replace those faithful servants with a noisy, mechanical contraption that sputtered, jumped, then died at the slightest provocation, Papa decided (with considerable help from a friend who had a new job selling cars) to buy a Baby Overland. And the old team was put out

to pasture. That was when Papa began to face what really was hard times.

Now one thing that made this transition so difficult for him was the fact that Papa was a schoolteacher. He was used to making the rules instead of being, himself, subject to a rigid code set by—of all things—a machine. Papa's forte was books, not automation.

We four children, however, hailed this new acquisition with unbridled enthusiasm, the exuberance of which probably tried Papa's patience. He tended to view the car as a mixed blessing, if not a downright threat.

He was blessed (or cursed, as we children saw it) with an overly-cautious nature. Old habits died hard with him.

To stop the car simply by taking one's foot off the accelerator and applying the brake seemed a risky business to him. So, with the caution of the man who wears both a belt and suspenders, he always accompanied these machine-dictated maneuvers with a slight pull on the steering wheel and a time-honored word, "Whoa-oa-oa!"

Our new Baby Overland was a four-door "touring car," all black and shiny—sheer luxury. It had isinglass-windowed curtains folded under the back seat for rainy times.

If it began to rain while we were out riding Papa would stop the car and some of us would jump out to put up those curtains. There was usually a bit of an argument about which edge was the top and which curtain went where. This mushroomed sometimes into quite a production, damp and steamy. Eventually, though, the curtains were snapped in place and the installers all back in the car, dripping wet and not too popular with the only-a-little-drier passengers huddled inside.

We kept our elegant conveyance in what had been the Buggy Shed. I insisted that it was befitting our automated status—besides being more precise—to call it "The Garage," now. But my old habits, too, died hard and even my purist posturing couldn't prevent my lapsing now and then into still calling it "Buggy Shed." Papa straddled the fence and called it "The Car Shed."

Papa's learning to drive was fraught with jerks and killed engines. Driving uphill in Pope County (which is all uphill or downhill) entailed, of course, the shifting of gears at exactly the right moment. Choosing that moment so as not to stall the car was almost Papa's undoing, with many killed engines and backward rolls. The fact that most roads were rough didn't help.

Once we were going up an especially rocky, steep hill with Papa and Mama in front, us four children in the back. We neared the crest and it was time to go into low gear to ease us over the top. Papa, alas, unintentionally shifted into reverse.

As we began the headlong (make that BACKlong) dash down the hill, Papa aimed for the footbrake but, to compound his mistake, hit the accelerator, instead. Our speed was spectacular.

During that ten-second hour that we shot backwards no one uttered a sound. We landed with a jolt in a ditch, miraculously right-side-up.

Mama was the first to recover her voice. Not for a moment doubting that the worst had happened to us, she shrieked, "HOW MANY ARE KILLED?"

A quick count revealed everyone alive.

I can't help but think, on looking back, that Papa never ceased to long for the relaxing speed and dependability of the good old horse and buggy days. I see now that it was only his amazing courage that kept him driving until my brothers were old enough to take the wheel. It was, indeed, a giant step for him, and the car was something, I think, with which he never quite made his peace.

TOURING, 1920's STYLE

Bernadette Tranbarger

It was in the spring of 1923 when I first took a long trip by automobile. Mother informed me we were going to visit her aunt. My parents and my baby brother, myself, and my Granny and Gramps were going in Gramp's 1922 Model T Ford all the way to Arkansas.

While the men folks got the car ready, Gran and Mother packed clothes, food, and bedding. I was busy, too, trying on my new wardrobe. I had a special tan khaki skirt and middy blouse, patterned after my mother's outfit.

Gramps took his large canvas tent. It was so large it would accommodate a 9 x 12 rug. So we took along a rug, an old faded one. We also took two full-sized mattresses, my brother's crib mattress, and a couch pad for me on top of the car. Granny supplied pots and pans, carefully tinned sugar and salt, even some flour. There were fresh eggs, a slab of bacon, some of Granny's prized home-canned fruits and vegetables, the huge granite coffee pot and two big black skillets.

When the car was loaded, Dad told Mother it weighed just twice as much as originally. My father went around kicking each wheel to see that the tires were still up.

I sat in the back seat with Gran and Gramps. There was just enough room, with the suitcases piled around us.

In the front seat mother sat next to Dad in the navigator's seat. She held my 2½ year-old brother on her lap.

The day was warm and sunny. To pass the time we played a game called Zit. The one who saw the most white houses won the game.

At first the road was familiar. Shortly after noon we crossed the big Mississippi River and then Mother told me we were in Missouri. Soon the road became unfamiliar and Mother read directions from a bright red book that Father had purchased for the trip. One direction said, "Proceed several miles south until you come to a huge oak tree on the right hand side of the road. At the next crossroad after that turn west. . . .

We made good time and stopped only long enough to rest under an inviting shade tree and feast upon meat sandwiches that Gran had packed. Of course, we had to stop at given intervals to service the car. At each place the radiator needed water and the tires were pumped up a bit. Occasionally Dad put in an extra quart of oil which he had brought with him. The gleaming black car fast became coated with dust so thick you could write your name on it. Only rarely did we come upon paved roads—"patches of black-top," as they were called.

By mid-afternoon our road became Highway 9. We were all kept busy hunting the square white signs emblazoned with bold black 9's. These were the first highway markers I had ever encountered. My little brother called out suddenly, "There's Bumber Bine!" From then one "There's Bumber Bine" became our rallying call. There were no special posts for these highway markers. They could be found tacked to a split-rail fence, a tree, or even a shed or barn.

As evening approached we pitched our tent in a nice meadow, and enjoyed our first hot meal cooked on the little portable coal-oil stove. There was even spring water close by.

What a beautiful night it was! I remember a big yellow moon and only a few wispy clouds.

While the men got the mattresses down, Mother and I strolled around and looked at our dirty Model T. Then into the thick yellow dust on the back of the car she playfully printed, "Little Rock or Bust."

Everyone was tired, so soon the beds were made up and we were fast asleep.

A murmur of voices awakened me, but it was too dark to be getting-up time. And why were the grown-ups all standing around whispering? Just then a dribble of water washed over my face. I looked up at the ridge-pole of the tent, and saw water dripping along the pole. There was no more sleeping that night. New leaks appeared everywhere. The tarpaulin wasn't sufficient to cover the bedding. The food box was leaking.

Finally, it was decided to pack up before everything was ruined.

We attempted to find our highway in the gloomy morning light. The farther south we drove, the less black-top we found.

Now the mud roads were slippery, and several times we skidded. Once we had to be pushed out of a ditch by some other fellow-travelers.

We finally stopped at a little village for breakfast. The natives didn't take too well to "furriners" and Mother got very upset because she had to pay 40 cents for a quart of milk for the baby.

We continued our way deep into the Missouri hills, later to become well-known as the Ozarks.

At that time Missouri was trying to build a fine highway system, and that necessitated much grading and filling. There is no mud like Missouri gumbo. We made little headway and spent much time pulling and pushing others and being helped in return. At one place a farmer had a team of mules and a log-chain. He devoted his whole day to pulling out hapless travelers.

By evening it became apparent we wouldn't be sleeping out that night. The rain kept coming in a steady drizzle. Also, there was something broken and dangling under the car.

We limped slowly into a little town built around a square. It was dusk and we were in a strange place, hungry, and very tired.

Just off the square my father spotted a rambling building from which hung a sign "Lodging and Board." There was but one room available, and my father quickly signed for it.

Our family, wet and bedraggled, struggled up a steep staircase to find our room. When I walked into it, I believed I had found a fairy place. It was the most opulent room I had ever imagined. There was ruby-red wallpaper decorated with gold medallions. There was a high, shiny brass bed with a red velvet spread, an ornate, golden-oak dresser with brass drawer-pulls, and a big leather Morris chair. On the floor lay an Axminster carpet splashed all over with red roses. From the ceiling hung a huge chandelier with four frosted light bulbs that winked in their brass holders.

We were very hungry, so after a hurried clean-up, all of us trooped down the stairs to the dining room. There were two long tables, and seated around were other hungry and weary tourists. There were no menus, so all the guests ate the same meal—baked ham, sweet potatoes, grits, and delicious pies and cakes.

After supper Gramps and Dad went to find help to fix our ailing Ford. No garage was open, but a kind blacksmith offered the use of his forge, and Gramps began to mend the broken tie-rod.

The rest of us returned to our hotel-room. Gran and my brother crawled in the huge, high bed and were soon fast asleep. But Mother was strangely quiet. She just sat in the morris chair and looked out upon the drizzly night. I sat down beside her and took her hand. I told her what a wonderful trip we were having and asked if she didn't just love the room! She started to cry and hugged me to her and said how lonely she was.

"You see," she explained, "this room is the Honeymoon Suite!" I never could decide why she cried about that.

The men finally came back, and everyone had a rest, even though some had to sleep sitting up.

Next morning was clear. After a good breakfast, we were ready to go again. My father said we were not too far from the Arkansas state line. When we crossed that mysterious "line" the road would be paved all the way to the state capital.

Everyone looked the car over carefully to check on our soggy baggage. When Mother and I got to the back of the car, "Little Rock or Bust" was still visible. The overhanging mattresses had protected it.

With a little sigh, my mother smiled at me, and then very carefully under that dusty slogan she wrote:

"We Busted."

WHEN THE HARD ROAD WENT PAST OUR FARM

Margaret Sneeden Cockrum

It was my privilege, (and sometimes, my source of annoyance) to see the beginnings of a part of the American highway system, as it was built between the Illinois and Mississippi rivers.

People of the early highway departments apparently decided that it would be economically useful to have a concrete highway connecting Pittsfield with Alton and St. Louis. Perhaps they were considering that it would be simpler to take the hogs that were our principal farm product in trucks to the St. Louis stockyards, rather than loading them in horse-drawn wagons to haul to Dory McEvers' boat dock down at Montezuma, and thence ship them by boat to St. Louis. And they must have hoped that farmers might travel to the big city occasionally, and spend their money there. In any event, it was decided that a new highway was to be started from Route 36 at Detroit, just east of Pittsfield, and then go through the villages of Milton, Pearl, Kampsville, and Hardin, there to cross the Illinois river on a bridge, and so on to Alton. We lived on a farm on the north end of that road, between Detroit and Milton.

First, there was the excitement when the road was approved. Now we could drive without chains all winter long if we needed to go to town for bread and coffee! Now we could safely expect to travel in the car in winter, even if we did have to put the side curtains up! It was a simple matter of cranking the car while Mama minded the gas pedal, instead of chasing a reluctant horse and harnessing him to the buggy; and besides, the car made somewhat better time than the horse and buggy.

The next step came when several surveyors with their transits appeared, marking the right-of-way with official-looking stakes with little white flags on them. These were duly examined by us inhabitants when the surveyors were gone for the evening. ("Now why did they put this stake here? Why not over there?")

Then came a road grader, huge in our eyes, and a dozen or so men with horses and wagons to haul the dirt away. The horses lasted several days—until they gave out and were replaced by mules from Missouri. And in addition, there were people to take out the trees, with saws and axes and blasting caps. There was one gorgeous giant elm that we all hated to lose, a good twelve feet in diameter, just to the east of and across the road from our next door neighbors. Then, as now, it would have been unthinkable to bend the road in order to spare the tree. The patch of violets and ferns (and many another patch of violets and ferns) beside the road not far from our house was turned over and buried by the road grader, and the trumpet vines to the south also fell as its victim.

The twenty-foot right of way bared an immense amount of red clay. We travelled over that for interminable wet and sticky months in the horse and buggy that we had hoped to discontinue using. This period, of a muddy clay swamp that passed for a road, lasted far longer than we had envisioned. There was a level one-half mile stretch in the prairie just south of Detroit that especially defied taming and became known far and wide as "the Detroit mudholes," with immense water-filled ditches and trenches cris-crossing the right-of-way in patterns that defied reason. This made it necessary for those of us south of the Detroit mud-hole to hitch up the buggy or maybe the surrey and detour by an almost abandoned road two miles to the east, which was called "The Lizzie Sanderson Road." Since it was springtime, this had the advantage of taking us past a hillside grove of blooming white locust trees. I discovered that it was more interesting to fold my sixty-pound self into the box at the back of the buggy meant for hauling groceries, and since I was eight and had reached a certain amount of discretion, I was allowed to use this space, somewhat to the astonishment of the occupants of buggies which we met. "She *wants* to sit there", my parents explained.

Such were the days before the highway was finished. But

at last the road was graded, and dried out, and levelled; and the machine which actually built the concrete pavement came, with its accompanying dusty gravel trucks. There were iron rails placed at the sides to contain the wet cement, and there was a kind of wide canvas belt which was pulled back and forth across the new cement to make it level.

After that, the men and machinery departed, and there was a period of "mustn't touch" when we drove at the side of the road but were allowed to walk on it if we chose. At this time, I was allowed—oh, marvellous privilege—a pair of roller skates, in spite of the Depression and the mortgage on the farm. For several months, before the road was open to traffic, I was one of the most fortunate of children—with a new pair of roller skates, and a roller rink twelve feet wide and five miles long!

THE NEW INTERURBAN AND THE SUMMER OF 1910

Vera Smith Hawks

As an innocent bystander, I became a very interested spectator in the historical events of building a railroad. I cherish these childhood memories of watching a new business being born. It was the year 1910, and I was ten years old.

The Walsh Brothers from Rock Island were building a railroad from Rock Island to Monmouth, known as The Rock Island Southern Interurban.

The little community of Gilchrist, where I lived, was greatly affected, and the summer of 1910 was filled with events, both happy and sad for me.

It was very interesting to see farm fields change into right-of-way, with the surveying and grading of the land. Horses, with men manipulating the slip-shovels, seemed to perform miracles as we watched.

To make it more exciting, a camp site was established in a pasture directly across the road from our home. The construction workers, a teamster, and a cook lived there for many weeks. But even more thrilling, a two story tent was erected in the shade of a pine tree in our own front yard to provide temporary living quarters for some members of the Walsh family. They hung a rope swing from a limb on one of our apple trees for their son, Edwin, and gave me and my three sisters the privilege of using it. They also supplemented the Sears Roebuck catalog in our privy with rolls of bath tissue, and sprinkled lime generously.

Along the right-of-way nearby, railroad ties were stacked in piles of equal height and in a neat row. Some creative minds saw this as a challenge, and as if by magnetism other kids in the neighborhood joined in testing their ability to climb to the top of a stack, then proceed running, leaping, and jumping on and on from one stack to the next, back again and again. On our final run to the last stack, I did not quite make it to the top, but caught my toes under the top layer and fell backwards. Such a tragic finish, on that Good Friday evening, to a delightful game.

Since I was unable to walk, one of the big boys, Thomas McWhirter, attempted to carry me home. I said that it hurt too much to dangle my leg against him, but I'm not sure that was the real reason, or whether I was just embarrassed to be carried by a boy. I do know that I didn't put my arm around his neck to make it a little easier. Whichever, I insisted that he put me down. With my older sister, Gladys, and his sister, Agnes, on either side of me, I hopped home, about a city block away.

Neighbors and Grandma Smith gathered around, speculating, "Does that lump on her shin mean that the bone is broken?" and to me, "See if you can wiggle your toes." I could wiggle, but it still hurt. One of the two telephones in the neighborhood was in Grandma's house, next door. From there Dr. Miles was called and he came promptly. His diagnosis was: "Both bones in the lower leg are broken." However, because he had not been informed as to the nature of our needs, he had to

drive back to Viola, two miles away, with horse and buggy to get proper supplies.

A good neighbor, Maime Jones, held me down on the couch, screaming with pain, while the doctor pulled those bones into position for knitting. Without benefit of x-ray, hospital facilities, or nurse, he set the bones perfectly. Because of the swelling, he could only bandage it that night, and he came back Easter morning to put my left leg in a cast.

I lay in bed for five weeks, using a bedpan, being reminded always by visitors that my leg might grow crooked if I moved it. I complained that the covers hurt my toes so someone in the camp made a frame of half-hoops to put over my leg. The cook brought special desserts, and others brought a whole box of chocolates and bon bons.

Mama and my sisters colored Easter eggs on Saturday, and as the finished with each color, those eggs were brought to my bed so I could pick out the one most beautiful. Some friends also brought special eggs and I kept them in a beautiful bowl for a year. They were not disposed of any too soon. Six fluffy, yellow chicks complete with birdcage came from the John Noble family. Picture post cards were in vogue at that time, and the mailman brought enough to fill an album.

From my window I could see the horse-drawn traffic go by. I watched blue jays battle for their nesting places, robins come and go, feeding their nestlings in our pine trees. I played a game during April showers by selecting raindrops at the top of the pane, and guessing which one would be the first to reach the bottom.

Finally I did get out of bed with crutches to use, but I was not experienced enough to get to school for the last day of the school term, so my dear daddy carried me. As I sat on my half of a double seat, at a double desk, my seat mate was afraid to move and so was I. That all changed quickly, and I became very proficient with my crutches. I walked a mile to Sunday School, and learned to keep up with other kids at play, which led to another near tragedy.

Our Voss cousins, Vernon and Harold, were at our house to play one day. Their mother, Aunt Jessie, came by with horse and buggy, and I went leaping out to ask her to let the boys stay longer. With my good foot I landed on a broken bottle at the roadside and almost cut off my big toe. Such a set-back, literally! Not a leg left to stand on! I sat in a chair and moved about only when somebody carried me. People talked about my having proud flesh in that toe which would have to be burned out, but without stitches or hospitalization, and with loving care and home remedies, I did heal.

However, not to be left out of the action, I got myself into trouble again. While Mama was hanging clothes on the line, Gladys and an older cousin, Bessie, were putting a blanket out of the rinse water through the wringer—the kind that had a handle on the right side to turn and activate the rollers. Being eager to help, I tried to straighten the folds of the blanket, but instead, I got my arm caught in the cogs of the wringer, tearing the flesh to the bone. I carried the scars to those cogs for many years.

Progress on the railroad continued. One day, as I sat in the shade, with sisters and friends, the teamster stopped with horse and buggy and asked me to go with him to see the piledrivers at work building a bridge over Edwards River. I answered immediately, "Mama won't let me go." Alas! During my next seventy-five years I haven't had an opportunity to see how a pile-driver works, and that was before the time when it was not safe for a little girl to be alone with a friendly man.

When the track was all laid, steam engines carried traffic, while the high-line was being constructed to provide the electricity. During this time I went to Matherville to visit my Grandma Adams for a few days. I experienced a great thrill on my way back home. As I watched for my train at the depot, a brilliantly lighted coach came into view, and I boarded that electric-powered car on its first run from Rock Island to Monmouth. I was dazzled by the beauty of it all. We were still using kerosene lamps in our homes.

Life in Gilchrist became more interesting. The southbound and northbound cars met and passed at this point. Cars on the spur track came from Aledo. Al Heflin, with his horse-drawn hack, brought passengers from Viola, and picked up those who were returning to Viola. At least seven daily trips each way were scheduled to carry passengers on business or pleasure trips; motor coaches carried freight. All of this service became part of our daily existence. I and several other students commuted for four years to Aledo High School or William and Vashti College. My parents accepted the opportunity to open a lunch room in the depot at Gilchrist, and had several years of good business.

With the advent of automobiles, these short journeys could be planned by individuals to suit their specific needs. Traffic on The Rock Island Southern diminished gradually and was finally less than enough to be profitable. I was grown, married, and had left Gilchrist by that time, but if I had known when the last run was made, it would have saddened me to see this once-flourishing business, which played a part in my life, come to an early end.

THE FERRY BOAT

Lloyd M. Hance

To those of us who have lived many years in the Quad Cities, the great river that runs through our towns holds us in a state of awe and reverence because of its natural beauty, its great power and sense of permanence, and its recreational and commercial importance.

Much has been written about its history and about the days of the riverboat. In my own time the ferry boat between Rock Island and Davenport was very important during those days when the river was free of ice.

The ferry boat was built in Rock Island at the Kahlke Boat Yards and was owned and operated by W. J. (Billy) Quinlan. Logically it was named and called the *W. J. Quinlan.*

When I see pictures of the old boat, memories of the 'Billy Q' and of the sights and sounds of the river come to mind out of first-hand experience.

In Quinlan's navy, perhaps I belonged to "special services" as a non-combatant on the upper deck playing in the dance band. Older people, "plus 70's," will remember that Tony Catalino's Jazz-Bo Band played for the dances during the summer of 1928. We played six nights a week and also for special parties and outings.

Dancing was a major diversion in those Volstead days of the "Roaring Twenties," and while the many winter dance hall floors were getting a new sanding and coat of varnish, the ferry boat provided summer dances. They were well attended.

Tony had a six-piece band on the ferry, with himself on trumpet, Ernie Beaverbock on trombone, Louis Bruhn on piano, Herb Day on drums, and Johnny Eberhardt and I playing the saxes. Tony had been playing since jazz was invented and had a wide reputation.

There was great fascination to the river. Sunsets and golden paths of waves under silhouetted bridges changed into a Disneyland of thousands of lights with each light reflected on a million dancing waves. And the boat itself was outlined by white bulbs and the dance hall was colorful with hanging Japanese lanterns of many colors. Many people came just to ride in this cool festive atmosphere.

There seemed to be a rhythm to the boat and to the river in addition to the dance music. The great wooden drive-shaft seemed to set the basic beat as each slat in the stern paddle-wheel slapped the water in double time. The entire boat throbbed. And at just the right time, the throaty old whistle would let patrons and shoppers know that the boat would soon be docking. This path was repeated by the clock as the pilot

put the boat in a dog trot against the current back and forth in sort of a figure 8. Nearing the dock on the upstream loop, Lee "Red" Bateman, with a large rope in hand, would leap across the churning gap and twirl the rope around a large piling to stop the boat's momentum. As the current settled the boat back, Lee would re-twirl the rope and lock it by a slot at the piling top as the shiny post squeaked painfully, holding the boat secure. Bateman would then raise the restraining fence and lower the gangway. Next he'd race to the rear where another piling and rope would hold the boat in place while docked and act as a pivot allowing the bow to swing out with the current when pulling away. This would require another leap from the dock to the boat.

There was great skill shown in these landings and debarkings between the pilot, the rope man, and the engineers in the boiler room who obeyed the bell signals for power, both forward and reverse. Wind, river stages, and currents kept the river alive and sometimes unfriendly.

The boat was Billy Quinlan's pride and joy. He was all over the boat during long hours of every day. He was a trim dapper little Irishman in his naval officer blue and white cap. He ran a tight little ship with efficiency and decorum at all times. He'd take tickets, relieve the pilot, sweep out peanut shells and popcorn, inkstamp hands of the dancers, and perform any duty of the moment. I often thought of the ferry boat as Billy Quinlan's toy as he pushed it back and forth across his big Mississippi bath tub.

There was a romance about the boat endemic to everyone. It provided an efficient and enjoyable way to cross the great river, which was a necessary service in those days of "down town" shopping and rivalry between Rock Island and Davenport merchants. At a nickel a crossing, it was a real bargain. Many tourists and vacationers enjoyed riding the upper deck (for a fee) just to enjoy the sights and sounds of the Mississippi. Children were always thrilled to ride the boat. And summer dancing on the *Billy Q.* brought pleasure to thousands of young as well as to old.

These memories make the final demise of this lovely old girl all the more sad. Resting on a rotten wooden cradle, deserted and alone, stripped of all her valuables, and unpainted, and smothered in window-high horse weeds and nettles, she was a forlorn and melancholy sight.

But I'll always remember those happy, smiling faces as viewed from the orchestra stand, see the Japanese lanterns, hear the paddle wheel and splashing water, the signal bells, the beckoning whistle and the squeaking ropes, and picture Billy Q. in complete command of his lovely toy.

GANDY DANCING ON THE OLD ROCK ISLAND RAILROAD

Glenn Philpott

During the depression of the 1930's, I spent several summers working as a gandy dancer on the old Rock Island Railroad, lovingly later called "Route of the Rockets." As another page of history is turned, it is now out of action.

The extra gangs of laborers consisted of a bunch of unemployed men with little knowledge and strong backs. The pay was 35¢ per hour, and payday was the first of the month and the 15th. On these nights, the taverns did a lot more business than the banks. Most of these men were "floaters" or drifters. Some had prison records, and it wasn't at all unusual for the sheriff to come out to our job and take a man back to town. On one occasion, one of the foremen actually carried a 45 revolver in his belt.

Several of these men were from other states. They only worked a few days. Then they would draw a "time check." With a few dollars, they would just drift with the wind.

One summer, we worked out of Bureau, Illinois, resurfacing track west thru Tiskilwa and Wyanet. Some of the

gang were: "Otto" Vowels, "Babby" Babcock, "Bob" and "Fuzzy" James, David "Scotty" Scott, "Red" Anderson, "Swede" Shallean and "Happy" Ryan. I have been told that some of them are now working on that railroad "up there" with the golden chariots.

Most lunch hours were spent playing poker, penny ante, or just swapping yarns with some of the gang. Seldom was there any shade available, so some of us just crawled up under our straw hat and tried to rest.

After a few days out in the sun, we all looked like Indians. Between the hot sun and the creosote on the ties, we always peeled a lot. The work was hard, and in those days, we had *no* coffee breaks. As I don't smoke, there was no way to kill time. A lot of men rolled their own in those days, so they could fudge a little break now and then.

Most of our work was maintenance. We laid new steel at times. All the work was hard and quite dangerous. All the tools were heavy, and mashed fingers and toes were quite common. Resurfacing the tracks required raising the rails and tamping new gravel under the ties manually (no hydraulic tools in those days).

I never got used to drinking that warm water out of a wooden keg when thirsty. The water at Bureau was artesian, which is bad enough to drink when cool. One day, one of the men dumped a pound container of rolled oats into that keg. He had heard that drinking too much water wasn't good for a person, and he thought the oats would reduce the water consumption. It did, and if there had been a tree handy, we would have hung him right there.

After spending eight hours out in the weather, rain or shine, it was always a joy to crawl on the motor car for the ride back into town. We could forget all about tie plates, angle bars, creepers, frogs and lining bars until tomorrow.

In my memory, I can still see the old steam engines bearing down the track with the smoke rolling back over the cab. No other sound is like what the drive wheels make. The old gray-haired engineer would hang out the cab, waving with one hand and holding the other hand on the throttle. It makes me want to start whistling "Casey Jones."

MY RECOLLECTIONS OF THE KEOKUK DAM CONSTRUCTION

H. D. Ewing

It was a hot sunny afternoon in the summer of 1913. I was standing on the bedrock of the Mississippi River when I heard a voice scream "Look Out!" At that moment I heard a crash and looked around in time to see the tail-end of a rope pass through a pulley. Although I did not see the accident, I had just experienced the death of a man working on the ground of the power station of the Keokuk Dam.

I was a lad of 13, carrying water to the workers on the dam, an I learned that death from accidents was not unusual. There were several water boys of about my age carrying water in a bucket filled with one chunk of ice and water. There was one long handle dipper for use of all, and sanitation seemed to be no concern. The wall of water was about four times my height as the workers were closing the last section of the dam to connect it to the power station. The roar of the water pouring through the last section was frightening. The dam was started on the Illinois side of the river, and the locks and power station were in Iowa.

I was excited about working on such a big project. The dam was intended to improve transportation on the river as well as provide hydro-electric power. My salary was 75 cents per hour for a 12-hour day. At the end of two weeks, I was paid in cash and felt like a rich man.

As mentioned above, deaths were not uncommon, and not all were attributed to accidents. The laborers were mostly foreign, from Poland (called Polacks) and Hungary (called

Huns). Temporary buildings were erected on the Iowa side to house the laborers, which naturally forced them into smaller groups. Often after payday, there were drunken brawls, and occasionally someone among them suffered death.

The coffer dams were a feat of engineering. They were large box-like affairs deeper than the water was high. These were made of very thick lumber, mostly oak. They were filled with rock and sunk to the river-bed. A series of the high boxes stopped the water so work could be done on the river-bed. I recall the small engine trains of concrete that ran on the track on the top of the dam as the dam progressed and took shape. The small cars were dump cars and each held several cubic yards of concrete. There was usually a lot of noise from the gasoline engine water pumps that kept the river bed dry enough to work.

The completion of the dam was marked by a big celebration. A large fireworks display was held from the railroad tracks at the foot of the bluff that was a city park, Rand Park. The last display was the American flag, and it must have been 100 feet by 50 feet in size.

In June of 1913 two of the largest riverboats on the Mississippi went through the locks at the same time, and the lake created north of the dam improved navigation on that stretch of the river.

THE TELEPHONE OPERATOR

Hazel Denum Frank

When I "think back," it is almost unbelievable how things have changed. Today we have all kinds of telephones—any shape or type one can imagine. Dial, push button, automatic recall, cordless—the varieties are unlimited. Back in 1926, for instance, there were basically two kinds: the box-like phone that hung on the wall, or a plain desk phone, or perhaps a "cradle phone." All wires were on poles along roadways. The wires of larger companies, both local and inter-city lines, were on straight poles with cross arms supporting the lines. Privately owned local companies could be seen on shorter, crooked poles supporting perhaps one line.

The switchboard in the "Central Office" consisted of numbered "drops" designating the lines, two rows of plugs and push keys. When someone wanted to make a call, they took the receiver off the hook and turned a crank on the side of the box. This sent a signal to the central switchboard and the drop connected with that line would drop down and start a "buzzing." The operator would plug in one of the plugs, which were in pairs, and answer, "Number please." When the caller gave the number, the operator would plug the other plug of that pair into the drop on the board corresponding with the line asked for, and with the key make the ring of longs and shorts according to the number requested. Then she would open the key to see if the party answered. If not, she would repeat until they did answer, or she was satisfied they were not going to answer. As soon as the party answered, the operator was on her honor to shut the key and not listen in. When the call was completed, there was again a buzz, signaling the operator to disconnect both plugs.

Numbers were based on a code system, the first part designating the ring and the last part designating the line number. (1, 2, 3 and 4 designated the number of shorts. And 5 meant 1 long. For example: "25 on 56" meant a ring of 2 shorts and 1 long on line 56.) When the operator made a ring on a line, this ring would come in on every phone on that line, which might be as many as six to twelve. This made it possible for anyone on that line to listen in, so there was no privacy. However there was an advantage to this lack of privacy. If there was some bit of information such as an announcement of a meeting, or a birth or such, or if there was an emergency call for help such as a fire, three long rings repeated several times means a "line call" and everyone on that line was expected to

answer. This "line call" might be made by someone on that line or by the operator.

The Stronghurst Telephone Company Central Office consisted of a 2-section board where two operators could work at once. Periods when there were fewer calls, one operator could take care of both sections. In order for continuous service to be available, a night operator would go on duty at 9 p.m. and work until 7 a.m. The office was on the second floor, above the bank, and consisted of the office, a bedroom, and toilet facilities. When the calls stopped, usually about 9 p.m., the operator would turn on the night bell which, when a call came in, would ring loud enough to awaken the operator in case she was sleeping in the adjoining room. She might be wakened several times during the night and had to be up, dressed and have the bed made by about 5:30 or 6, when the farmers began calling. She would turn the board over to the day operators at 7 a.m.

In 1926 I was a junior in High School. My only sister, Roberta Denum, had graduated and was employed as the night operator for Stronghurst Telephone Company. As my mother had died the previous December, and my father, Jess Denum, was the Village Night Marshal, I stayed with my sister in the telephone office at night. Since I was not 18, I was not supposed to work and drew no pay. However, I soon learned to work the board and often did so while my sister undressed for the night or dressed and made the bed in the morning. However, I was very careful never to answer the "Boss's" calls. Most nights there was seldom a call late, except for the doctor or other emergency. However, on New Year's Eve, just at midnight, calls began to come in wishing friends "Happy New Year." When one particular call came in, you could hear much laughter and talking in the background, but when the party answered, all was quiet. And they would seriously ask, "Is this 1-9-2-7?" Of course, the sleepy voice would reply, "No" and the caller would say, "Go look at your calendar," and hastily hang up, then repeat this call to another sleepy victim. This was one night the operators got very little sleep.

The services of a telephone operator went far beyond the required duty of running the switchboard. If a patron called for a person by name, the operator would look up the number, or perhaps she would know it without referring to the list, which was posted so she could find it easily. Since the office was on second floor on main street, view of the street was easily available. If someone did not answer their call, the operator might say, "I just saw him go down the street or into a store." The operator was often very helpful in other ways. One day a farmer called and said he wanted to call the man who owned a corn sheller. He didn't know the man's name or ever what town, but it was "down south, maybe at Colchester or LaHarpe." In a few minutes, the operator called the farmer back with his party on the line.

The telephone operator handled all emergency calls, relaying the message to the proper source, such as the doctor or police. In case of a fire she would sound the alarm and relay the message to the Fire Department. If the fire was in the rural area she might make a general line call (three long rings, repeated) on the lines of that area.

Although there have been many advances in technology, they have never invented a machine that completely replaced the telephone operator of yesteryear. If you have never known a local telephone operator, you can never comprehend how important she was to her community.

LISTENING IN

Clarissa M. Jahn

Brrng-brrrrng-brrng; short-long-short—that's our ring! I ran into the kitchen and took down the receiver from the old wooden box phone on the wall. A city girl who had married a farmer, I had been used to a telephone that rang when a caller

wanted to speak to one of our family. Now I was on a party line with ten families at the "party."

This time it was my aunt, asking how my first attempt at making preserves had turned out. "Great," I assured her, "I used all the pears, two pounds of sugar," and I finished with a hasty description of my afternoon's labors.

As soon as I hung up, there came our ring again—short-long-short. This time an unfamiliar voice asked, "Would you go over the last part of that recipe for preserves again? I didn't get all of it." A neighbor had been listening in.

Listening in was necessary at times. To make a call, I had to take down the receiver and listen to see if someone was already using the line. If I forgot and cranked the handle on the side of the phone to signal the operator without listening in, I might be ringing into a conversation. Then I would hear a voice exclaiming, "Well, someone just rang my ear off!" At these times it was best to hang up quietly without saying anything to betray my identity and call later. Much later.

Listening in took the place of modern day soap operas to some people on the line who were unable to get out very often. There were no TV sets and no daily newspapers. If someone was a steady listener, the many voices on the party line soon became familiar characters.

Once in a long while, four long rings were heard. This was a general emergency signal for everyone on the line to listen in.

One windy October day our paper-dry corn field caught on fire. I remember running to the phone, calling the operator and shouting, "We have a fire here!" I hung up and ran out with a half-filled water pail and threw pail and all toward the field. The roaring mass of flames sweeping through the corn was already out of my control.

I ran back to the phone to ask the operator to send more help, but she had already recognized my voice and had called for all help available. Over 300 people responded to fight the fire, and although we lost two fields of standing corn, they saved our barn and corn crib.

During World War II, the "boys" who called home to this rural area were treated to a special privilege. The operator would alert the party line that an important call was coming in. Relatives would gather at several phones along the line to hear Johnnie's voice and maybe get in a word or two.

The main switchboard was in the operator's home. Zella, our operator, worked for 16½ years, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. Of course she occasionally had someone substitute for her so that she could go on errands, but this was not often.

In October, 1967, the old switchboard, the last of its kind in the state of Illinois, was carried out of Zella's house in Edgington. It was shipped to the Bell Museum in Chicago, where it is on display.

There was over half a century of humor, pathos, courage and tragedy carried over the party line. I sometimes wonder what it would be like to hear those long-lost voices coming out of the old head-set again. No matter who was speaking, I'll bet Zella would know!

TELEVISION COMES TO MT. STERLING

Nellie Roe

It was Christmas morning, 1953, and my husband and I were awakened about 6:00 a.m. by the excited whispers and giggles of our small daughters. The four stockings which had been "hung by the chimney with care" were filled, including a tiny one holding a jar of baby food and a rattle. There was no doubt Santa had been there as there were four neat piles of toys, books, games, and snuggly warm pajamas and a note thanking the girls for the cookies and milk.

After turning on the tree lights, daddy gave the "go ahead" signal and the living room was immediately filled with squeals of delight. Suddenly the oldest daughter glanced up

and shouted—"Television!" Needless to say we were not surprised as we had contrived with our local appliance dealer and friend, Clarence Shields, to deliver and install the set after the girls were asleep (a fringe benefit from living in a small town). According to them, *everybody* in Mt. Sterling already owned television but the Roes! While this was a "slight" exaggeration, it was true that TV antennas were springing up around town like mushrooms.

Although experimental TV began in 1930 and commercial TV in 1941, World War II had postponed expansion of the medium. It was not until 1946-47 that full scale promotion got underway and the number of sets in use in the U.S. grew from 14,000 to almost a million in two short years. The first television in Mt. Sterling was owned by Julius and Lucille Wegs in 1947 and was kept in their Pool Hall on Capitol Ave. where the fights were the most popular program. The first sets had a small ten-inch screen and received their programs from St. Louis or Rock Island and occasionally Kansas City. Reception was often poor and affected by weather conditions. Local reception improved considerably with the addition of WGEM in Quincy, followed shortly by KHQA. Most owners had a box-like device on the set that rotated the antenna for a clearer picture.

Lucky was the Mt. Sterling child whose family owned one of the first TV sets. He or she had a multitude of friends and a choice of baby-sitters. These homes were a gathering place for friends and neighbors for special shows. Meanwhile, "back at the Roe living room," Grandma and Grandpa's visit, which was usually the highlight of the season, was put "on hold" while the girls sat entranced through the story of "The Little Match Girl." A couple of years later as I put the preschooler in front of the set with her breakfast to watch "Captain Kangeroo," the older girls reluctantly gathered up their books and left for school. I was always glad if the Captain got in his "this is be good to Mommy day" before they departed. Some of their older favorite shows were "Howdy Doody," "Superman," and "Winky Dink," which urged you to order a see-through sheet of plastic to draw on after placing it over the screen.

I'm sure mothers of my generation in this area will remember the "Cactus Jim" show on KHQA, sponsored by Prairie Farms Milk. Children were invited as guests on the show and many a carload of children made the trip, knowing that friends and neighbors would be watching their television debut. Cactus Jim (alias Dick Moore) would be dressed in full Western regalia and interview each child, followed by a cartoon. Then small cartons of milk (Prairie Farms, of course) would be passed around, followed by an enthusiastic chorus of "Man, that's good milk," while rubbing their tummy.

As for adult programs, who can forget Ed Sullivan's "Toast of the Town," "I Love Lucy," Milton Berle, Edward R. Murrow's "Person to Person," and "The Hit Parade"? Favorite game shows were "What's My Line?," "Name That Tune," "To Tell the Truth," and "The $64,000 Dollar Question," which ended in a scandal. One of the first Soap Operas, "As the World Turns," is still watched by millions, and some of the original stars are still with the show. However, I miss Nancy and Chris Hughes, and their daughter, Penny, hasn't written the family for about 20 years! Commercials? Oh, yes, we were blessed with them back then too. Our toddlers, like those of today, could spell T-I-D-E before they could spell C-A-T and sing TV jingles while they were being "potty-trained" without missing a note.

Now, as I look back on nearly four decades of television, the changes have been dramatic. Practically every home contains one or more TV sets ranging in size from a 45-inch screen (or larger) to a tiny one which can be worn on the wrist. We can turn on our set or change channels from our easy chair and enjoy a wide range of programs with the additions of cable, movie channels, and satellite dishes. The ability this medium has to entertain, educate, inform and influence is "mind-boggling." Even though we live in a small, rural county, we can

watch brilliant drama, comedy, world-wide sports, and news in-the-making. We have run the gamut from watching the senseless assassination of a president to listening breathlessly for the first historic words of Neil Armstrong as he stepped on the surface of the moon. We have seen the course of politics changed by appearances of candidates during debates and the resignation of a president in disgrace. Our world has indeed become smaller.

However, many would agree that not all changes have been positive. Many of the programs are bland and mediocre and episodes of violence and pornography are increasing. Research has shown that the average high school graduate will have spent almost twice as much time watching TV as he has in the classroom and has witnessed some 150,000 violent episodes. Statistics show that crime, drugs, suicide, and sexual promiscuity are on the rise throughout our nation. Is TV viewing contributing to the problem, or is it a reflection of our changing times?

It is unrealistic to believe we will ever return to the days when Jack Paar caused a furor over using the term "water closet" (toilet), but I think the pendulum has swung too far in the other direction. There should be a clear message to the industry in the fact that Bill Cosby's new family show is rated number one in popularity.

In retrospect, even with all it's growing pains, I believe television is one of the greatest inventions of the 20th century, and I am glad it occurred during my lifetime. Outwardly, it seems to have done little to change life in the small town of Mt. Sterling. Farmers still meet in town and discuss the weather and the crops. However, one may end the conversation by saying, "Well, I better get home. I want to find out who shot J.R.!"

X Special Memories

SPECIAL MEMORIES

Wright Morris once made the point that the rural midwestern environment has the effect of magnifying the minutest details of life and landscape: a particular branch in a particular tree, the peculiar pitch of the 12:00 whistle, the apple orchard across the C&NW tracks on the south end of town, the weathering of the outfield fence at the ball park or the sign on top of the water tower. In the days before television (and radio), rural life had a way of magnifying certain small moments as well, moments which might easily have been lost in the richer tapestry of a more cosmopolitan, urban existence: *the* day Sousa came to town (or a neighboring town), the day the dry goods store burned, the weekend of the big blizzard or the flooded river. Small entertainments too tended to be enlarged: the pleasure of a game of cards, stories well told, ice skating, playing with the pets, reading the farm newspaper. "Much in little," as the motto of one downstate Illinois town translates.

A sensibility hardened by nightly television disasters imported from all around the globe cannot comprehend, really, the impact of a *real* tornado, of a murder or a theft, of a suicide or a major trial on a community which had neither seen on television nor experienced directly any major disaster in decades. These were the material of lifelong memories, and many of the stories recounted here are of small town disasters which, in their day, made headlines in local newspapers but, unlike the Chicago fire, impacted little on the rest of the country and have since disappeared from the national consciousness.

Sensibilities are likely to be similarly hardened to the nuances of a game of cards, a grade school valentine, the sight of circus animals close up. Actually, there was a day not long distant when card-playing, no matter how innocuous it today appears, was frowned upon by much of society and preached against from the pulpits of some churches. A game of pinochle was not entirely innocent. In the routine that was farm life in the early years of this century, a visit from even the smallest circus—the sight of elephants and camels and other animals drinking from livestock tanks used to water horses and cattle—might just be the memory of a lifetime.

Looking at the list of pastimes suggested by the reminiscences which follow, one is struck at first by how inexpensive they are: fishing and ice skating (although youngsters learned on two-blade skates and "graduated" to single-blade skates), marbles, jump-rope, stilts, card-playing, the usual assortment of pets. One, however, is conspicuous by the expense involved: pigeon-racing was apparently, in Moline at least, big business. The birds were fed and bred, housed, trained, transported long distances from home to race each other back to their respective coops. And owners were not above betting a little cold cash or friendly drinks on the races' outcomes. It is not entirely accurate to assume that old time pleasures were necessarily cheap pleasures.

The least expensive pastime of all is story-telling, and in these remembrances we see ample evidence of that now dying art. Elements of that skill can be seen in the grace with which narratives are recounted, stories shaped, characters developed, and details handled in many of these reminiscences. Some, however, are actually crafted mystery and suspense stories of the type told by grown-ups to young children around a camp fire as the coals dull to black on the eve of their first night in the wilderness. These tales of the supernatural come complete with all the characteristics of the oral story: direct address to audience, a variety of rhetorical strategies designed to evoke the hearer's sympathy and confidence in the speaker's integrity, and a wealth of precise detail that attests to the story's authenticity: you just could not make something like that up.

Whether the stories have been made up, whether they are folk tales told and retold by at least two generations (and polished and ornamented in the process), whether they are

communal tales or the tales of their authors, is difficult to say. They are proof positive, however, that the pastime of story-telling—the art out of which Sherwood Anderson crafted the American short story tradition—was alive and healthy in this area, and remains alive today in the minds of at least some of our citizens.

David R. Pichaske

"A" IS FOR APPLE

James B. Jackson

When I was seven our house was just across the road from Eli Munson's orchard, a small commercial planting of perhaps ten or fifteen acres. To me it seemed endless. That spring when all the trees were in bloom and thousands of bees worked with a steady hum from sun-up to sun-down, I felt maybe heaven was a lot like an apple orchard. I still remember the old Wolf River tree with its huge fruit, and the funny shaped Sheep Nose; neither was very high quality but both were memorable. Considering their shape, either variety could have produced the sport that was the original Starks Delicious.

Jim Burrow had a smaller orchard. He made cider from his own apples and did custom work for the farmers who brought their apples to be processed. Jim was married to my mother's cousin, and I was always welcome to all the cider I could drink and all the applies I could eat. We walked past Jim's to and from school. The blossoms in the spring and the ripening apples in the fall and even the bare, gnarled trees in winter held a special attraction for me. Further down the road we passed Frank Conn's farm orchard. Any apples on the ground could be had for the taking by any kid or grown-up that wanted an apple to eat. It was just far enough between these two friendly orchards to eat an apple!

The apples came in great variety and over a long season. The very earliest was the Yellow Transparent, ready for sauce in early July, often by thrashing time. It was medium size, pale yellow, not too sweet and so tender when ripe that it squashed if it fell to the ground. They made good pie and were O.K. to eat raw, but special only because we had been out of apples for several months. Early Harvest came next, another yellow apple but darker and more substantial than the Transparent. These two held us until the Wealthy and the Maiden Blush came in early September. The wealthy was a nice, firm, tart apple, light red with greenish-yellow stripes, fine for pies, jelly, sauce and just fair for eating raw. Maidenblush was rather flattened in shape, dusky gold in color with a lovely pink cheek. This was probably the best pie apple of all time. The last tree I knew of was growing in the back yard of a house we bought in 1947. It had been badly neglected for many, many years. By careful pruning and spraying, we got two or three small crops before that venerable tree fell over in an ice storm and we reverently burned the wood in the dining room fireplace. So for more than 35 years I have dreamed at least one tree of Maiden Blush apples would survive.

Let me not overlook the Snow Apple. No child who grew up with Snow Apples could ever be considered underpriviledged. I wonder if they have gone the way of the Wolf River and the Maiden Blush. Snow Apples were small, round, brilliant dark red outside and snow white flecked with red inside. They were sweet and crisp and tender and juicy. I thought it a shame to sacrifice even just enough to make a pie or a dish of sauce. If manna had grown on trees, it would most certainly have been presented as Snow Apples.

By mid-September the fall and winter crop began to come in. Grimes Golden was a rich, flavorful apple truly golden in color, medium in size and superb in flavor—sweet and spicy. A grade A eating apple, it was also excellent for any and all kinds of cooking. As late as 1975 it was still available in limited quantities in a few orchards in Southern Illinois and elsewhere, I suppose, where the old trees had not been uprooted to make way for the much newer and more popular Yellow Delicious. Even at its best, the Grimes could not quite match the old fashioned Jonathan for culinary purposes. For many years the Jonathan was the most popular red apple in the Midwest. There have been some "improvements" to make it a better keeper and a better shipper and a redder red, and the result has been a lessening of the true quality of a once famous apple. After the Starks Brothers nursery of Louisiana, Missouri, introduced the Red Delicious as a companion piece

for the Yellow Delicious, the popularity of this grand old favorite has declined.

The Jonathan was *the* apple for pies, sauce, dumplings, jelly, baking and most of all for eating raw. It was ready to cook when it was red, no matter how hard it was. Picked at that early stage and stored in the coolest possible place, it would keep until Christmas. We always left some on the tree until first hard frost or light freeze. They would then be sweet and juicy and would almost pop when the first bite was taken. The flesh would no longer be pure white, but a very pale yellow and there would be almost clear spots of a deeper yellow. The fragrance was so pronounced that a deer could smell one a mile down wind. We used to stomp on a couple of Jonathans when we took a stand on a deer hunt. It not only attracted deer but seemed to override the smell of the hunter. I learned in later life that most so-called deer lure was made from apples. What wonderful cider they made and what wonderful vinegar that cider made! Were I a poet, I would write "an Ode to a Jonathan Apple"—far better than a Grecian Urn.

Many of the old apples had almost romantic names. A list of winter apples is truly poetic:

Wine Sap, Northern Spy,
Ballwin, York and Willow Twig.
Ben Davis, Greening,
Russet, Pippin,
McIntosh and Jonathan.
Maiden Blush, Rome Beauty,
Yellow Transparent,
Wolf River, Sheep Nose, Wealthy,
Early Harvest, Red Astracan and Crab.

Northern Spy was a very old variety, dating from pre-Civil War times, spicy, juicy, colorful, good cooker, good keeper, fine to eat out of hand. It long ago disappeared from the Mid-West but it is still available in Canada and northeastern U.S. It is truly a northern apple, and it thrives on cold winters. Thank God, its true worth is still recognized by some orchardists! Let us hope it never becomes merely a memory, another dream.

Ben Davis! If it were not for modern refrigeration, we might still be suffering through March and into April with nothing better than that poor, miserable apple. It could be eaten. It could be cooked. What flavor it had was not in the least tempting. The texture was poor; the color was poor; everything about it was mediocre except its keeping qualities. In this one area it was a champion. When all other apples were used up or rotting, old Bed Davis was just as good, nay, better than ever. I have always believed we have Johnny Appleseed to thank for this cherished but ignominous apple. So I tip my hat ever so slightly to John Chapman and his bag of apple seed and whoever it was that saved that one particular seedling.

When I think back to the days when every farm had at least one or two apple trees and many had a small orchard it would be easy for me to write a fat paragraph about each of those wonderful old fashion apples. Each had it's own special merits and its own loyal supporters. Many are still on the market and can plead their own case. The others have earned their place of respect in the annals of apple history and need no further word of praise from me.

I sometimes dream of the least apples, the crabs. I knew two kinds as a youth. The one was large for a crab, maybe an inch and a half long and an inch thick. It was mostly red but had dull yellow stripes. Sweet enough to eat in a pinch but strong on the malic acid, it made good jelly and pickles and preserves. The Siberian crab was smaller, more acid and beautiful to behold. It was a glowing golden color with a red blush on one cheek and dusted all over with ever so slight bluish cast similar to that found on concord grapes. The trees were always loaded. Once Pat McKone gave us a branch about four feet long so full of the beautiful fruit that we got over two gallons of apples from it. The juice carried so much pectin that it could

be used much as we use commercial pectin today. If there were no crab apples available, we could always pick a gallon or two of the hard, knotty, green wild crabs. Any one who knows the bloom of the wild crab will remember their delicate beauty and incomparable fragrance. But all that ended with the bloom. We used the juice only with some other fruit such as cherries or strawberries. There was one wild apple that we hunted for and cherished even when cultivated crabs were abundant—the red haw. They had a richness and an aroma not yet matched by any other apple, wild or tame, and this quality carried over to the jelly. Even the cultivated sorts used to adorn city boulevard strips and public parks should not be overlooked. I picked a gallon or so every fall for several years on a busy street in a St. Louis suburb. No one else ever bothered with them. Several bushels went to waste every autumn. I have also picked some of the ornamental crabs and from that sampling I feel sure that most if not all of such fruit would be equally delightful.

New apples are being developed and marketed every year. They are to be found in the supermarkets and produce stands. They are as good or better than the romanticized old varieties. I think of Ida-Red, Improved Jonathan, Matsu, Granny Smith and Jona-Gold to name but a few. In time the new will crowd out the old ones that I dream about. But I am all ready starting to dream about the future, and more importantly about the men like Stark and Burbank and Burpee who know how to make dreams come true. They are hard at work all over the apple world and they will give substance to my dream of the perfect apple. May their tribe increase!

HARD WORK BRINGS SWEET RETURNS

Gale Dixon

My family and friends have encouraged me to write of my experiences in running our maple syrup camp. The forty acres where the hard maple trees are is on the Crooked Creek bottom northwest of Colmar. My brother Howard and I own it. The forty acres was given to my Mother by her Father, E.P. Williams, in 1908. We bought it in 1952 after my Mother died.

Before my brothers and I were old enough to work the camp the Roberts family ran it on shares. The area grew 200 or more hard maple trees. Not all trees were tapped the same year. We usually tapped for sap water in February or the first week of March.

My Dad, my brother Clee, and Roberts built the camp shack. It was open on two sides, and had a small enclosed area on one end with a wood stove for heat and storage. In the two-sided area a furnace pit was dug about two feet deep to put the cooking pan in.

I found a bill where my Mother had bought the last syrup pan we used. It was a blue annealed iron pan about thirty inches wide and eleven feet long. She bought it in February of 1938 from West Sheet Metal Company of Galesburg and paid $24.40 for it. It was shipped by Dohrn Transfer to Colmar for 70¢.

The syrup pan was set over the pit and dirt mounded up to the top of the eight-inch deep pan. It was partitioned off into two sections, a starter end and the cook–off end, which was smaller. Six gallons was the least that could be cooked off without scorching. The most we ever cooked off at one time was 22 gallons.

Before opening the camp we whittled out about 400 spiles from sumac. Each was as big around as a broom handle and five inches long. We burned the pith out of the center and cut half of one end away to make a trough for the sap to flow through. The other end was tapered to drive into a hole bored

into the tree.

We also washed around two hundred ten-quart and twelve-quart buckets. These were hung on the tree to catch the sap water. Then the hard work really began. We cut several cords of wood to fire the furnace. We sawed and split this all by hand. The chain saw was unheard of then.

It took freezing nights and thawing days to make good sap running weather. When we thought the time was right we drilled holes in the trees to about 1¼ inches deep and drove the spiles in tight. Two spiles to a bucket hung on the tree from a nail. If sap water was running good, we emptied twice a day, but usually it was only once.

We sometimes carried buckets of sap water to a holding tank at the shack. But we had a team and wagon with barrels on that we pulled around to trees to empty into. It took a thirty-gallon barrel of sap water to make a gallon of maple syrup. We dipped sap from the holding tank to a barrel with a spigot on it so it would run into the cooking pan. The largest end of the pan was where we fired the furnace under it. Filled it to about half full and as it cooked down more sap water ran into the pan from the barrel. It took about one and a half days to cook down a batch. As syrup thickened, we dipped to the smaller end of the pan to stir off from it. We started a new batch in the first pan as syrup finished cooking. We had to skim off the foam from time to time. It took a lot of experience to know when the syrup was just thick enough. Too long cooking, it would go to sugar.

The Comar and North Colmar school children, their teachers, and some friends came for a wiener and egg roast when we were working at the camp. Mrs. Bushnell and Mrs. Pugh would cook some syrup down into maple sugar and the kids sure liked that. They had lots of fun romping in the timber.

The syrup sold good to our regular customers around Macomb, Colchester, and Plymouth. Some of our regular customers were A. Larson, H. Martin, C. Hunt, M. Nooner, Steward, Dr. Brown, F. Williams, Pittenger, Burford, Dr. Goldberg, and Dr. Holmes. I have a record of 67 gallons of syrup being made in 1936. Also, we bought the gallon tin pails for 10¢ a piece and a 55-gallon wood barrel for $1.00. We received $1.75 for a pail of syrup. Also I worked the camp in 1940 and made 69 gallons.

In 1941 my brother Howard and I ran the camp, and I have some good pictures taken while we were cooking, hauling in, etc. Last time I ran the camp was in 1945. Lots of trees have since died.

The taxes on this forty acres in the 30's and 40's was around $15 to $20. We now pay $150. The land shows no profit as it did when the maple syrup was made and cows pastured there and we gathered lots of big bottom hickory nuts.

The forty was pastured when my parents lived. They farmed the ground around it and lived on the hill above. Two years ago my grandson brought me a board from the old camp shack. I had burned our initials on it and named it the Lazy K. We hung it on the wall for a memory conservation piece. The shack has fallen in and the area has grown up in brush and briars that you can hardly walk through. It is still good for fishing and wildlife, but that is another story.

THE ILLINOIS AND MICHIGAN CANAL

Celina L. Rawlish

What is it that triggers the mind, setting off thoughts that make an elderly, sedate, housewife suddenly want to toss in the dishtowel, dig out some skates and head for a favorite outdoor area and go ice skating? But when I think of the Illinois and Michigan Canal, I laugh aloud as I picture myself gliding across the ice—at my age.

I was born in Morris, Illinois November 28, 1915. Our first address was on Liberty Street, but I have no memories of

those days. Then we moved to Jackson Street, which I remember because of the big flu epidemic. Several family members had the flu. No one would come into our house, but neighbors brought needed items, which were on a list tacked to a post on the front porch. North Street was our next location. Here I went through a two-month illness which caused my failure to pass third grade. Although I got passing grades in exams, I could not be promoted as I had been out of classes too many days. That was the law. Our final move before leaving Morris was to 424 Wall Street, a flea-hop away from the I&M canal. This was the start of an association that preserved this canal in my heart and mind forever.

I shop often in Morris, Illinois . Each time I pass over the canal, going into town, I feel I'm meeting an old friend, with whom I spent some of the happiest days of my childhood.

There were nine people in our family, two adults, seven children—five boys and two girls. We shared household space with two cats, a dog and three canaries. A large family plus a small house equals crowded conditions, so I spent a lot of time outdoors, much of it either in or on the canal. The seasons determined the in or on.

The canal was our year-around playground, our recreational area. Although there was a well equipped playground nearby, most kids preferred the canal, winter and summer. When the ice was safe enough to support the gang of kids who utilized it, it became as busy as a bee hive, swarming with kids. There was skating, sledding, hockey and many other outdoor games. The activities lured kids from other neighborhoods. If one didn't own a sled or skates, the hads freely shared with the had-nots. All this was free, no admission fee. On school days the hours spent on the canal were too few. We weren't allowed near the canal after dusk unless with an adult. On weekends, there were day-long sessions. We took time out long enough to refuel with a hot lunch, then back to the ice for as long as muscles responded. The only restrictions were lack of parental consent or physical stamina. Only two things could induce us to leave the ice—a call to supper and dwindling daylight.

I started out skating on double runners and soon thought I was ready for single blades. On a pair of borrowed skates I set out to strut my stuff. What a shock! My ankles collapsed inward. Skating on my inner shinbones was to be my style, as I couldn't keep my ankles stiff. This made me the butt of many smart alecky remarks and caused much amusement. The embarrassment I felt didn't keep me from trying to straighten them bones, but all I accomplished was to wear holes in the inner parts of my high leather shoes. This didn't improve my popularity with my parents. When we moved in the fall, I thought it was to keep me off the ice and save shoeleather—the real reason was my father's work. I haven't been on skates since then—1928, so the problem of weak ankles is still in my mind. Maybe that is why this desire to go skating has surfaced. I like to succeed, and the memory of those rubbery ankles rankles.

In the 1920's there weren't many homes along the canal where we played. Some areas were used as dumping grounds and some debris would get in the water. In the winter, as the canal froze over, this trash would protrude through the ice. These hazards could trip one up. I know. I went from horizontal to vertical pretty often. Absorbed in keeping my balance, I wasn't too alert to these booby traps.

In summer, it was swimming, fishing, boating and fighting mosquitoes. Our ammunition against mosquitoes was a rolled up newspaper. Newspaper wielders versus mosquitoes usually ended with many bumps on various parts of the newspaper wielders. This tells who hit the target most often.

We loved to fish. In the early evening, my father would take the four oldest, space us out along the bank, settle himself, and fish. We tossed out and yanked in our lines, baiting them with doughballs we cooked, and molded in the shape and size of marbles. I don't recall ever using worms, but we used the crawdaddies that were numerous and easy to catch. At dusk, when all those swirling lines made it hazardous, we

hauled in our catch: bullheads (a few), and carp (many). Then we went home.

This sometime fluid, sometime frozen playground served as another way. It also helped to keep our food from spoiling. We skated from Wall Street up to where the ice house was located, on Rod and Gun Club Road. We watched as ice was cut and stored. The ice business was owned by the Davidson family. When the iceman came, we would pester for a chip of ice, which we sucked on till our lips almost froze; then using our teeth as icecrushers we devoured those bits of our frozen playground. The old icebox was an important household item and not a collectible conservation piece as it often is today.

With so many children playing in or on the canal, something was bound to happen—not a drowning, as might be expected, but an argument during a hockey game that ended in tragedy. As the quarrel progressed, tempers flared and a youth was hit in the back with a hockey stick (a gnarled tree limb). The resulting injury led to the youth's death. An inquest was held. Children who had witnessed the blow were asked to testify. The testimony given caused a rift in the friendly relations that had existed between several families. The bond of friendship was never healed, as some children who gave testimony were related to the youth who swung that fatal hockey club. It was a stressful time for all who were involved.

Another time, being a curious child, I went to see why a crowd of people were gathered on the canal banks. A man had been discovered, frozen in the ice. Several men were busy chopping the ice, in order to free the body. The man had traveled from his home south of where he had fallen, up to across from our place. He had fallen, arms outstretched, a bottle of poison clutched in one hand. When the body was freed from the ice, the imprint left, was in the shape of a cross. It was difficult getting the body into the large wicker basket, used in those days by undertakers. The arms were frozen, making it hard to get the body in the basket. I didn't see how this was accomplished, as a neighbor lady saw me, scolded me and sent me from the scene. I never learned whether he died from poison or exposure. This incident bothered me for some time, as I went to school with and played with children of his family. Years later I read this quotation: "Most men lead lives of quiet desperation." I thought of this man. Remarks I overheard about his life conditions seemed to fit these words.

In spite of these tragic events, I have many pleasant memories of Morris, Illinois and hours spent on the Illinois and Michigan Canal.

LIVING IN A SOD HOUSE IN 1885

*Anna Hughbanks-Jackson**

My mother, Mrs. Ann Hughbanks-Jackson, has often told me of my grandmother, Mrs. Minda Snook, and her experiences while living in a sod house in Kansas. The following is her story:

During the winter of 1884-85 my Mother received a letter from her father saying that he had filed a claim on 160 acres of land in Kansas, and that there was another 160 acres of land joining his land to which no claim had been filed. He advised her to come out and lay claim to this piece. Being a divorced woman, Mother decided to go. She felt this land would give her more security. At the time she received the letter, Mother was teaching at the Sperry School, south of Bushnell, Illinois. At the close of the winter term, she packed her baggage and, taking me, her eight-year-old little girl, with her, she started for the "Wild West."

We left Bushnell at five o'clock in the morning by train, arriving in Dodge City, Kansas, toward evening. As the train pulled to a stop at the depot, we looked through the car window across the street. We were horrified and shocked to see a

*Mrs. Hughbanks-Jackson told this story to her daughter, Pearl Jackson-Foster, who wrote it down.

naked woman standing in the open doorway of one of the buildings. I can imagine my mother having second thoughts on the prudence of her decision in bringing an eight-year-old girl to such a rough country. Since Dodge City was the closest the railroad could take us to my Grandfather's home, it was necessary to take a stagecoach to a point nearer to my grandfather's house. At midnight we stopped at a half-way house. The driver explained that it was necessary to change ponies; and asked, "Would we go inside the house to wait?"

As we stepped inside the door, we soon saw the floor was covered with sleeping men; so, we had to pick our way across the floor lest we step on a man. We found chairs, to which we had been directed. We had not been sitting there long until a lady came down the open stairway. She wore the most beautiful dress I had ever seen. It was black covered with pretty beads. She came over to Mother and asked, "Would you like to go upstairs?" My mother gave her a very curt "No," and the lady walked away. Soon our driver came and said, "We are ready now to go." We took our seats in the stagecoach and were again on our way.

Shortly before, dawn, the stagecoach drew up in front of a farm house. The driver called out, "Hello, Hello, Hello!" Soon a light appeared and a man came out. He escorted us into his home and the stagecoach went on its way. We were shown to a bedroom and I soon fell asleep. Morning soon came to a tired little girl. We were given our breakfast and then taken by team and wagon to my grandfather's home. We found him living in a one-room stone house, which he had built himself from the stone picked from his own land. The stones were cemented together with a mixture of dirt and water. There was a board roof on the house and he had also built a board lean-to. This lean-to served as a bedroom for Mother and me until she had time to build a house on her own land.

As soon as convenient, Mother filed a claim on the 160 acres of land joining my grandfather's land. She complied with the government regulations, which demanded that she build a house, dig a well, and plow six acres of ground. Mother hired a man to plow the six acres of ground and build us a sod house. For the making of the house, he took two foot strips of sod and laid them as a mason lays brick, breaking joints and allowing for a door and two small windows. He then thatched a roof with poles and brush. The crude structure resulting from his labors was our home. Our life as settlers in Kansas was a struggle, but it was also a new and exciting experience for me.

A few days after we arrived in Kansas, Mother's youngest brother Ward, also arrived. He came from Fredonia, Kansas. He was, of course, my Uncle, but he was only five years older than me. We became pals for the summer.

We had neighbors within a half-mile on three sides: the Clarks on the North, the Joneses on the South, and the Curtises on the West. The Curtises were our favorite neighbors. Their family consisted of Mr. and Mrs. Curtis, a grown daughter, Delia, and a little boy, Willie. Ward, Willie and I soon became fast friends and often exchanged visits during the summer. The Curtises had a yoke of oxen as their means of transportation and often took our family for a joy-ride on Sunday afternoons. Mother had some unpleasant experiences with the oxen. The oxen had learned to pull the stake up so that they would be free to wander about where they pleased. Occasionally, they seemed to be pleased to wander over to our sod house. They would rub their sides against the house, and their snorting and rubbing would awaken my Mother. Slipping her shoes on, out the door she would go, grabbing a stick as she went, and then she would beat the oxen over the back, until they were as far from the house as she thought necessary.

My recollection of Western Kansas in 1885 is one of wide open spaces, a wide expanse of sky and land. There were no fences and no roads. Wagon wheel ruts near our house where the Clarks passed on their way to Ashland served as the road. We saw wild cattle every day, but they never came near the house. Occasionally we saw deer, but always at a distance. The prairie dogs barked in the day time and wolves howled every

night. Snakes were so numerous that we kept big sticks, just outside the house door. We never started away from the house without one of the big sticks. We generally used it before we returned. We were three miles from Ashland, a little one-street village, the county seat of Clark County. Grandfather would walk to Ashland for our groceries.

The Indian Territory, now known as Oklahoma, was only six miles from us. At that time our government had contracted to pay the Indians a certain sum of money at a specified time. During our stay in Kansas, the government for some reason was a trifle tardy with their payment. As time went on, there was no money with which the Indians had to buy groceries, they became impatient. It was rumored that the Indians were on the war path. For two nights Mother and Grandfather never took off their clothes. They were expecting to hear the Indian war-whoop before morning. At the end of the third day, word reached us that the government check had arrived. All was quiet again.

My grandfather had spaded a small patch of ground for a garden and also a melon patch. In that sandy soil, we raised the sweetest, juiciest melons that I ever tasted. One day Mother went to the garden for a head of cabbage. She slid her fingers along the ground under the head of cabbage and pulled. Instead of the cabbage, she had a double handfull of snake! Naturally, she dropped it and screamed. The snake slithered away and the she got the head of cabbage. Another day as Ward and I were coming back toward the house, I stepped across a wagon wheel rut. As I stepped over the rut with one foot, I glanced down. There, stretched full length in the rut was a big snake. In those days, we were taught that snakes had the power to charm. The snake was quiet, so I stopped, and standing over the snake, I looked down at it's eyes and noticed how far it's mouth reached back on each side of it's head. Ward saw that I was looking into the eyes of the snake and yelled—"Anna, get away from there!" I heard him but I wanted to look a little longer, so I didn't move. When he yelled at me the second time and I still didn't move, he ran and gave me a shove that nearly knocked me over. As we started on toward the house, he said, "That snake was charmin' you." "It was not!" I said. "Then why didn't you get away from it?" he asked. I retorted, "Because I didn't want to." And so the argument went all the way home.

The Joneses, who lived in the dug-out, had some very unpleasant experiences with snakes. In the night, snakes would come slithering down the hillside and into the thatched roof. Sometimes the snakes would lose their hold and drop on someone's bed! Whoever was in the bed would lie still, but would yell for someone to get up and light a lamp and take care of the snake.

One evening just about sundown, I was sent on an errand to the sod house. I was almost to the house when I saw the face of an animal crouched in the tumble weeds. As I looked, I saw a slight movement. I screamed, and ran. The whole family came out to meet me asking, "What's the matter, What's the matter?" I pointed toward the animal and said, "An animal!" They looked in the direction I had pointed and sure enough there was something! It had the face of a cow, but it had no body. It had big, red, eyes that seemed to shoot fire. When my family saw the hideous animal, my Mother turned to her Father and said excitedly, "You'd better get your gun. Grandfather hurried back into the house, got the gun, and we all started toward the animal. We got just about so close when Ward said, "Shoot! I saw it move! You better shoot!" Mother, still excited, as we all were, pleaded, "Pa, why don't you shoot?" Grandfather wanted to be a little closer. He wanted to hit it right between those two big red eyes. He stepped on a little closer, then took aim. We all stood with bated breath waiting to hear the report of the gun. About that time, Grandfather lowered the gun a bit, saying, "Wait a minute." Gazing intently at the animal, he said, "Why that's a piece of brown paper." Sure enough, it was a piece of brown paper standing on end and propped up by tumble weeds. Two holes were in the paper

just the right size and in the right location for eyes. The sun was at the horizon, just the right position to shine through the holes, giving them the red look. The movement came from the gentle breeze.

It was in late August that my mother "Proved up on her claim" and plans were made for our trip back to Bushnell, Illinois. We looked ahead to the return trip with pleasure. I handn't seen butter, or milk, or an egg in the six months that I had been in Kansas. After bidding our neighbors "Good-bye," we were on our way back to Bushnell, traveling by stagecoach and train.

We arrived home just in time for my mother to start teaching the fall term at the Sperry School. She began where she had left off in the spring. Except for the memories we had, nothing had changed. During the following winter Mother received a letter from a man in Western Kansas, offering her one thousand dollars for her land. She accepted the offer.

Time went by, and I often thought of the summer I had spent in Western Kansas. As the years rolled on I began to want to see the place where I had lived. When forty-nine years had passed, I decided I would see Western Kansas again. My husband and I made plans to drive to California by way of Ashland, Kansas, the next year, making it an even fifty years since I had lived there. In the latter part of August, we started our in our car. It was late forenoon when we reached Ashland. I went directly to the courthouse and found the clerk who kept the records. I gave him my name, the name of my grandfather, my mother, and the year that they had filed their claims. It didn't take long to find the record of their filing. The clerk said, "I know exactly where that land lays." He looked at his watch and then said, "Let's all get our dinner and then meet at your car and I'll go with you and help you find the place." I asked about the Clarks and if there were any of the Joneses or Curtises left. He said, "Delia Curtis is my wife, but she is visiting in Colorado just now." I asked if Willie Curtis was still living. He looked up and down the one main street saying, "Bill, why yes, he's our town Marshall, but I don't see him. He's probably gone home to dinner. I'll call him when I go home and tell him about you and have him come to the car when we get back from the country." As soon as we had our dinner, we returned to the car. The clerk arrived shortly and we were on our way to the farm that once belonged to my mother. As we rode along, I noticed that the country was pretty much the same. Wide open prairie, just as it had been fifty-years ago. There were no houses. There really was more of a road; in fact, there was a barbed wire fence along one side of this shadow of a road. Aside from that, it was the same wide open prairie.

Soon the clerk said, "Now right about here is the land your mother once owned." Lucky for me that the clerk had come along and pointed out the place. The land seemed to be perfectly worthless, only good for cattle grazing. We drove back to Ashland, parked our car to one side of Main Street. Soon a tall, lanky, typical Westerner walked over to the car. The clerk introduced him. Yes, that *WAS* Willie Curtis! There were the same boyish features. We had questions and answers for each other. Then he reached into his inside coat pocket and pulled out an old autograph album. He leafed through it until he came to the page that he was looking for. He handed it to me. There—on the page, scrawled in a little eight-year-old girl's hand-writing, was a verse. At the bottom of the page she had scribbled her name, Anna Hughbanks. I glanced at the top of the page, at the date: August 20, 1885. Today was August 20, 1935—fifty years to the day. After a few more questions and answers, I once more bid Willie Curtis, "Good-bye," and we were on our way to California.

My summer in Western Kansas is part of the past, but the experience of the sod house, riding behind a yoke of oxen, and traveling in a stagecoach are cherished memories that I shall never forget.

PIGEON RACING

R. B. Hulsen

In the twenties, the City of East Moline had a large population of immigrants from the Low Countries of Europe. By far, the largest group was from Belgium. These folks were hard-working, frugal people. The mothers of many of our grade school classmates were employed as core-makers in the John Deere foundry and most of the fathers worked in the farm implement factories. Belgian families usually built fences around their yards and often planted gardens in both front and back. The walks were lined with flowers, but the balance produced vegetables of all kinds to help reduce the family grocery bill.

Most families had a small dog, often a fox terrier, inside the fence, whose duty was to protect the property. It took considerable courage for a visitor to open the front gate. We kids quickly learned we could get lots of noise out of a dog by running down the sidewalk while holding a stick against the fence to make a machine gun-like tattoo. It was perhaps the school boys who conditioned these little animals to attack anything that walked or ran.

One of the most exciting and satisfying hobbies and forms of recreation for many East Moline citizens was pigeon racing. The sport originates from the fact that homing pigeons have a built-in compass and will return to their homes even though they are transported far away in a dark box. When bred for speed and stamina, they can and do travel faster than any surface transportation known then or now. In those days our town always had one or more pigeon racing clubs.

Pigeon racers built lofts or roosts, called coops, in the back yard near the alley. Pigeon coops were always at least two stories high. They were rooms of varying dimensions usually not larger than 12 by 12 feet set on stilts. In some buildings, the coops perched on four or more posts, and in others the bottom was enclosed to form a room for storing feed and other supplies. The coops were reached by a ladder or a stairs generally on the outside of the structure. At least one wall had a number of openings at floor level where the birds could enter and depart at will. There was also an outside platform for take-offs and landings. The inside of the house was divided by wire or solid walls into areas for nesting, raising young birds, confining breeding stock and the mature racers.

A pigeon racer's equipment was not only his racing birds but also a wicker basket about 4 feet long, 2 feet wide and 18 inches deep. The basket had a carrying handle in the middle of the top. The top was hinged and could be completely opened. A man carrying a basket of pigeons was a common sight in East Moline.

Another piece of equipment was a clock. The clock was not unlike the clocks carried for years by night watchmen on their rounds. It was carried by a shoulder strap and instead of being activated by a key, as a watchman's clock, it was activated by a band worn by the pigeon on its leg. Racing pigeons were all banded as soon as they could fly. The bands were removed when the birds arrived home from a flight and inserted into the clock to record the exact time of arrival. This time could not be changed except with special tools kept at the club headquarters.

Because most of the club members were workers in business or industry, pigeon races were usually on weekends. In my mind's eye, I can still see the mail and express wagons piled high with pigeon baskets at the Rock Island Railroad Station on Friday afternoons. Members of the club would take their birds entered in the race to be shipped with all of the others 100, 200, 300 and even 500 miles from East Moline. Designated employees or friends of the club would receive the birds from the train at the town from which the race began and release all of them at once at a designated time for the flight home.

Every club member with one or more birds in the race could be seen on Sunday morning watching his pigeon coop for

the return of the birds. It is amazing how well these breeders recognized flight characteristics of their own pigeons. As the birds arrived, the owners scrambled up the steps to catch the bird, remove its band and insert it into the clock to establish the exact time of arrival. Then away to club headquarters, usually a tavern, to compare the times, establish the winners, pay off or collect the bets and discuss the details of the sport.

The breeding of pigeons that could fly faster with more stamina, how to feed and condition birds before a race, as well as the rearing of young birds were always red-hot topics. The hazards were storms, adverse winds and attacks by raptors. Hawks and eagles or accidents meant the loss of the bird, and some never returned. Others delayed by storms, even for days, would eventually return home.

Very few experiences could be more spirit-lifting for an East Moline pigeon racer than to have a winner on Sunday. I recall being completely flabbergasted at how fast a pigeon released 300 miles away could fly home. It was a noble sport participated in by bright and gentle men with no opportunity for bookies.

THE BIRTH OF A MEMORY

*George B. Stuckey**

The Cannon Ball Trail went right by our house. In the first decade of the twentieth century, we did not travel to culture, culture came to us. That hot August day in 1907, the Cannon Ball Trail brought culture to me.

The Cannon Ball Trail! Remember those trails? We had just been introduced to that new invention, the automobile. With it, our horizons broadened. Up until then, getting more than ten miles away from home was not among the probabilities. We did not own a car, but we knew about them. Even those earliest automobiles could eat up ten miles in half an hour, if the driver didn't get lost or caught in a rain storm. Excepting in cities, all roads were dirt. They followed the boundary lines of farms, or the railroad right-of-way. Hence, if people were going to get farther away from home than ten miles, they needed some guidelines. The Cannon Ball Trail was one of those.

The Cannon Ball Trail extended from Chicago to Omaha, Nebraska. The way was marked by red cannon balls being painted on telephone poles along the route. Not every telephone pole was painted. The signs were about six feet up from the ground, and frequent enough to keep one on the trail. However, one had to be careful at corners to see whether the trail turned right or left, or went straight ahead. Our farm was on this trail, about one hundred fifty miles southwest of Chicago.

Dad bought the farm, which we now call "Windswept," in 1906, when I was six years old. On this special day, in August 1907, about a year and a half after we moved there, Dad and I were in the barnyard when a man came walking up our driveway. We could tell by his dress that he was not a native of our community. He was slender, and wore dark trousers and a red, short-sleeved shirt. He had a cap on his head. His dress was what we would call "roust-about" raiment, the dress of someone who did not stay in one place very long. The colors were gaudy; his clothing was casual.

He did not tell us his name, but greeted my father politely, and said, "We are traveling with a small circus. Our animals are thirsty. I see that you have a windmill and a watering tank. Will you let us water our animals at your watering tank? I will pay you ten dollars for this service, as you will have to clean your tank thoroughly, because your cows and horses will not drink where elephants, camels, and zebras have been drinking."

Elephants! Camels! Zebras! I had seen a circus performance. In those days, a circus visited most of the midwestern communities each summer. My dad hitched up the team to the

*This was written by Katherine R. Stuckey.

surrey, and we made the twenty-mile trip to Galesburg to see the circus. It was one of the high points of summer. However, seeing a circus in Galesburg, and having those animals right in our barnyard was quite another matter.

Dad answered, "Yes, you may water your animals at the tank."

I went with Dad out to the road to get a closer view of this phenomenon. It was a very small circus. Most of the animals were very old. The elephants, camels, zebras, ponies, llamas, water buffaloes, and ostrich were walking. Some of them were pulling cages which contained lions, tigers, and small animals. Several other men were walking with the circus animals. Some of these men were pulling the smaller cages. They, too, were dressed in casual but gaudy clothing.

You can imagine my curiosity as Dad and I walked out to the road. It was a hot day. The elephants were scooping up dust from the road with their trunks and blowing it over their backs to shoo the flies away. The flies flew up, but as soon as the dust settled, the flies settled again on the backs of the elephants.

"Don't touch anything," cautioned one of the handlers.

The animals who were waiting got their food by grazing along the roadsides. There was always plenty of grass there. There was grass, but large streams of running water were not plentiful in our area, so the animals were very thirsty. The handlers herded the animals, who were walking down the driveway and into our barnyard. They did not bring them in any special order. These animals had been together for a long time. Camels could drink with llamas, and zebras could drink with ponies. The great interest of them all was to satisfy their thirst. While they were drinking, the handlers talked with us about some of the problems along the way. As the land in our area is rolling, there are many small bridges in the roadway over the small streams. The animals were very reluctant to use these bridges. As the land was fenced, it was not possible to ford these streams, and the caravan was delayed every time they came to one of these bridges. While they were talking, the handlers filled containers with water and carried them to the animals in the cages. When all were satisfied, they filled the containers again and stored them in the wagons for a time when water would not be available.

With a great deal of activity, the caravan was re-assembled.

Who led the procession, where they came from, where they were going, how far they traveled in a day, these were questions which did not enter my mind. It was enough for me to have such close contact with circus animals, to see them closely, to smell them, to watch their peculiar habits. They went north from our farm. I watched them until they were out of sight; then Dad and I went to clean out the watering tank. Our cows and horses *were* a bit skittish about drinking from the tank for a few days, but I had memories to last me for a lifetime. Since then, I have pondered. I have heard that small circuses often traveled through the country-side of Europe. Was this circus patterned after them?

Never again would this happen. Only *once* did circus animals set their feet on our farm. Once they went down the driveway of Windswept. Once they drank from our watering tank.

The Cannon Ball Trail has almost passed into oblivion. It has been replaced with super-highways and road maps. The tank is gone, but the windmill is still there. But sometimes on a hot August day, as I sit on the porch here, in my mind's eye, I look across to the driveway, and see again those camels, zebras, elephants, and water buffaloes wending their way down the driveway to the watering tank by the windmill.

MICKEY

Louise Young

It was with the best of good intentions that our well-to-do Uncle G.C. brought us a tiny, brindle English bull-dog whom we christened Mickey. He had a near-human sense of humor, and no citizen of Bardolph escaped his attention.

Since Mickey possessed a religious nature, he felt duty-bound to attend any and all available religious services in town, but he especially leaned toward Methodism. One Sunday morning, as my sister was at the communion rail, she was horrified to hear his well-known panting as he hurried toward her. To her relief, someone quietly led him to the door. Four Sundays later, I was playing the piano for Sunday School exercises when I detected an unmusical sound behind me. I beheld a racing grey cat with Mickey in full pursuit. They were circling the piano at a speed guaranteed not to improve the skill of the pianist.

Among his more mundane social pursuits, Mickey attended the cooking demonstrations given by a salesman for ranges. Making not a sound, the uninvited guest sat in the front row, giving full attention to the demonstration until samples of oven-fried steak were passed around. Being reminded of his presence, the demonstrator gave him a share which he gobbled appreciatively, but I don't believe he bought a range.

Like many animals, Mickey seemed to recognize some people who were a little different. One of Bardolph's most peculiar was the opinionated woman who ran the dry goods store. She was one of his frequent targets. One day, she was bent over unpacking a case of thin, dainty cups to add to her stock. Her copious rear end was tempting, and Mickey's resistance was low. Suddenly Mickey, having no respect for man or women or china, bumped this target; and both he and several of the store buyers went sprawling among the china with disastrous results. Poor Dad—another bill to pay!

Another of Mickey's female victims was Citizen Rosie. Intending to go by train to Macomb, she set her luggage in front of the post office while she went to get her mail. When she returned, the valese was nowhere to be seen until she noticed Mickey standing across a sea of mud holding the missing suitcase in his mouth. Bereft of her luggage, Rosie screamed, "Harry, make him bring back my suitcase." Knowing that calling Mickey wouldn't suffice, father heroically waded across the sea of mud and returned with the suitcase just as the CP and Q roared into town.

One of Mickey's other memorable moments was the time he took it upon himself to visit one of Bardolph's senior citizens to give him last rites. Mickey raced into the sick man's bedroom and stole the covers off his bed. As Mickey was being pursued, the poor old man died, alone and coverless.

Until his death, Mickey continued to add spice to our lives and to the lives of Bardolph's citizenry. It seemed ironic that he was shot and killed by an angry owner as he was visiting one of his several girl friends.

SNOW-BOUND, WITH PINOCHLE

Robert L. Tefertillar

Times were tough on the Illinois prairie farm land in the depression years of the late 1930's, although farm folk were a bit more fortunate than many of their city cousins because there was always plenty to eat, thanks to a large garden and the farm woman's knack for canning.

Naturally many farm families had to make do with kerosene lamps, old coal stoves and that very essential little shanty with the carved quarter moon above the door.

The very isolation of country living in the past, and without the modern home entertainment diversions of television, VCR's and tape recorders, required country people to make up

their own entertainment and recreation. This was especially true in the winter. The automobile, if the farm family even owned one, was ancient and would rarely start at any temperature below 20 degrees. Old Dobbin' had to be used for any outing. It would be years later that he was replaced by a horse of another color, a Pinto or Mustang.

One winter weekend in the late 1930's is forever imbedded in memory. It was during the holidays and my wife, myself and her two sisters and their husbands were visiting the old homestead. Amazingly we in-laws got along quite well and genuinely loved my wife's parents, Cora and Jay.

It was a happy group that set down to a good, hot country supper. It really wasn't very cold; there was even surly dog growling thunder in the distance. However, during and shortly after the meal the temperature dropped a remarkable twenty degrees. That's when it started to snow . . . and snow . . . and snow.

Around ten o'clock my father-in-law came in from checking on the animals in the barn.

"I think this is going to be a ring-tail blizzard of a storm. We may be snowed in for a couple of days," he announced, shrugging out of his sheepskin.

"That's not so bad," my brother-in-law Bob happily replied. "We got plenty of food and we all love pinochle. What more could you ask? Let 'er snow."

Bob got his wish as it snowed all night and all the next day; we were snowed in, isolated from everything in a lovely, lonely little island of white.

The pinochle game started Saturday morning. There wasn't much else you could do after breakfast except shovel a path to the barn, feed the animals, make sure the coal buckets were full and keep the pump primed with hot tea-kettle water.

Since there were eight of us, we had two tables, a championship table and a losers' table. As long as you won, you stayed at the championship table. The losers had to move to the other side, while the winners at the losers' table got a crack at the champs. By the way, the championship table was near the stove, which made winning an added incentive.

I don't remember when the games started getting *deadly* serious. It must have been after Christmas Eve, because no one thought of taking a break to open the many presents under the fresh pine tree cut from the timber just across the road. Of course, everyone knew their presents were handmade or knitted garments. Come to think of it now, these were the nicest presents I have ever received.

The card games had all started in high good humour, especially for my partner, my sister-in-law Madge, and me. We couldn't seem to lose or be moved from the warm championship table. I do know we had about a 26–game lead when remarks started flying about like "Shuffle the cards better," "Get another deck," and "For crying out loud, don't I even get a cut?"

Naturally I was in high spirits as Madge and I were rolling along . . . until about two o'clock Sunday morning. That's when Jay trumped my partner's ace.

"Hey, come on Jay," I shouted. "You can't rub your ring to show Dorie you don't have any diamonds and then she leads them and you trump. She knew what to lead. Thou shall not trump my partner's ace with such a cheap shot!"

"Well what about you? Rubbing your heart all the time and then Madgie makes hearts trump," he thundered back. It was a Mexican stand-off.

What had been a close knit family was disintegrating into distrust and suspicion. We played and played. It snowed and snowed. The pinochle marathon was out of hand, and the games were all close by Monday morning.

What finally saved the relationship, the friendship and our sanity was that it finally stopped snowing and the country lane was opened. The game ended. I think everyone was relieved.

PLAYING CARDS

Floy K. Chapman

During the first decade of the twentieth century, we lived on a small farm in the fringe of timber that separated the great region from the bluffs and the Illinois River bottom. It was a close-knit community of 26 homes, a school house, Pleasant Dale Church, and a Justice of the Peace. Mail came by Rural Free Delivery. Not far away was the little town of Walkerville, truly a pioneer town with its quota of small houses, saloon, and stories of shootings, murder and crime.

We were related to almost everyone in our school and immediate neighborhood, and there were rules of behavior which women followed: 1) We went to church on Sunday morning. 2) We learned the ten commandments as children and tried to abide by them. 3) Women wore long hair and black or dull colored clothing. 4) We did not smoke, drink, swear or run wild. 5) We did not play cards. Sometimes the young men would step aside, but never the law-abiding Christian women.

Sometimes we would hear our father talking about a neighbor who could not leave cards alone and gambled the hog money away or failed to milk his cows until 10 o'clock in the morning because he was so involved. It was a scandalous thing to be avoided by all decent, self-respecting people who were trying to get ahead in the world.

No wonder I was amazed to see my grandmother and the boy, Richard, who lived with them, having a great time playing cards at the dining room table. Grandpa was sitting on a rocking chair nearby reading the St. Louis paper. When I approached Grandma asking about it all, she began to laugh. "Oh, this is not a card game. It's Flinch and nothing but some cardboards with numbers on them. Our new teacher uses them to teach the children the numbers and how to count. It is nothing like real card playing."

"Dreadful waste of time," said Grampa, "but harmless, I suppose."

Soon everyone in the neighborhood, young and old, was playing Flinch. It helped to pass many a long tiresome evening.

When we moved to Virden in 1910, the game had preceded us. It was a slow game, but quiet, so our parents did not object when school work was done. Personally, I did not understand why the cards with kings, queens, and hearts were so evil, while those with plain numbers were harmless. About 1918, Rook became popular. It was a little faster and was popular for several years. No money ever changed hands, and church people played with clear conscience.

About 1925, some people began playing Rummy, Pinochle, and Crazy 8. Other things were happening after the boys came home from war. Women were cutting their hair, shortening their dresses, even dancing. The grandmothers were as shocking in their behavior as many of the girls. What was the world coming to?

FOOTSTEPS IN THE DARK

Lucius Herbert Valentine

President Reagan and I both graduated in 1932, he from Eureka College and I from the Rushville High School. After he was elected President of the U.S., he remarked to the public that he may not have lived on the other side of the tracks but he had lived so close to them that he could hear the whistle blow. Well, Mr. Reagan, I would like to say that I lived so far on the other side of the tracks that I could not even hear the whistle blow. In those days you had to have two years of foreign language to enter a college, so I had struggled through two years of French in preparation for college, but the depression was in high gear at this time.

I finally got a job five miles from Eureka, but it was on a

dairy farm, and the hours of work were from 3:30 a.m. to 10 p.m. I soon saw there would be no college for me here, so I quit and found work in Peoria in the hope that I could go to Bradley Polytechnical Institute, but money was too scarce. I tried every job I could get.

While in Peoria, I tried salesmanship. I got a job selling Watkins' Products all over Peoria, and rode the street cars any where I wanted to go. I was rooming with Mr. and Mrs. William Tweedel in Peoria Heights on West Moneta Street when one evening I had a death defying experience which I will never forget.

One night when I arrived at my room on West Moneta Street, I found a note that said for me to come over to the Bartons, who lived six or seven blocks away, as they were having a fish supper. The Bartons were friends of the Tweedels, and I had been over there with Bill Tweedel once or twice to the back yard where the Bartons kept two police dogs chained at their back porch.

It was very dark when I came to the street on which the Bartons lived. This street had houses on the right side only and a weed field on my left. As I proceeded down this street, I heard footsteps in the yards going the same direction that I was; and when I stopped to listen, the footsteps stopped too. They sounded so close to me, and I decided they must be a horse and someone was trying to scare me. So I walked slowly and when this creature got in front of a window with a bright light shining, I saw that it was a lion about thirty feet from me. It appeared that he was stalking me. My hair was pulling up as I started running. Each step I took I visualized would be my last, and the lion would drag me off into the weed field for his supper.

I had been fairly fast in track at Rushville High, winning several ribbons and a track letter, but never had I run this fast. Fearing the police dogs at the back door, I got to the front porch door and, thank God, it was unlocked. I must have made a lot of noise as I slammed the door shut and hung on to the door knob trying to get my breath. Mrs. Barton and Mrs. Tweedel came from another room and turned the light on. Both asked "What's the matter with you?" I couldn't talk for a while, and when I told them I had just seen a lion, they both laughed and thought I was drunk. They told me to tell the men who were dressing fish in the back room. They made fun of me, too, and I guess I gave up trying to convince any of them.

A few days later the Bartons walked over to where I stayed on West Moneta for supper and after supper the four of them played cards. I sat and watched for a while and then excused myself and went to bed.

I was asleep when the Tweedels came into my room and shook me awake. They were as excited as I had been. They had driven the Bartons home in their Model A sedan and when they turned the corner onto the Barton's street, that lion crossed the street in front of their car and all of them saw it. They said Mrs. Barton screamed loud enough to wake everyone in the Heights. She had walked up and down that street many times after dark. They all apologized to me, and the watched the newspapers expecting to see where the lion came from. To my knowledge, they never did see anything in the papers, but I assure you I never did walk that street again!

THE SPOOK

Wilbert Weitzel

Many years ago when the Weitzel family came to this farm, the buildings sat back in the field away from the road. They were poor people and had to live in an old log cabin that probably had been built by some member of the Knox family.

Now this log cabin was haunted by a spook. A spook is not visible. You may hear it move, feel it around you and feel that you see an image. It has the power to do things that cannot be explained. The reason a spook does these tricks is

unknown.

My father was born in this old log cabin that was haunted by the spook. In later years, the cabin was too small for the family, so a frame house consisting of two rooms was built on one end of the cabin. One room was used as a parlor, and this building still stands today. It is the old garage standing by our house. Sometimes, Mandy the dog likes to sleep in it.

Now the spook had more places to roam, and the parlor was the favorite place to haunt. When I was a little boy, my father told me stories about the spook that made my hair stand straight up. I was twelve years old before I could get up enough nerve to enter this house at night.

Now back to the spook and the little old house in the field. At times, the door to the parlor was locked and no one could get it open. No one knew who locked it, and a few minutes later the door would open by itself. Who done that? The spook done it. Some nights, footsteps were heard in this room, and the next morning the parlor was topsy-turvy. Chairs were upset, and the pictures hanging on the wall were tilted at a crazy angle. Who done that? The spook done it.

On dark nights when the wind would howl around the cabin, whoo, whoo, there were footsteps in the parlor that sounded like some sort of dance and chant. Then came the sounds of someone sobbing and crying. Who was in there? The spook was in there. Now remember this, the spook was never seen by anyone. It would do things right before your eyes and be invisible.

One morning, grandmother Weitzel got up early to get breakfast. She went to the cupboard, and the cupboard was bare. The day before, she had baked bread, some biscuits and several pies, and they were all gone.

Going into the parlor suffering remorse for the loss of food, her eyes fell on something shocking. Chairs had been piled on the table and here were stacked her loaves of bread, biscuits and pies. Who done that? The spook done it.

Once I heard my father tell this story to my mother. My mother laughed and said there probably were a family of raccoons or pack rats in the attic that done that. My father was serious and said, "Not so. If it had been animals, they would have chopped everything up and ate it." Not one crust of bread was broken nor one crumb lost from the pies and biscuits.

Now believe this. Sometimes at night, sounds came from the kitchen of the clattering of dishes and pots and pans. Nothing was ever found broken. The spook did not work every night. Sometime it would not show up for months, and then suddenly it would come back and haunt the entire house.

Now we come to the year 1892. The Weitzel children were very happy, for their father was going to build a new house this year. It would be a big house with many rooms, and best of all it would set alongside the old Chicago Road. No more living in the haunted house back in the field.

There was a lot of work to be done, and everyone pitched in and done what they could. Lime rock had to be hauled for the foundation from the quarry at Lee Center. Lumber had to be unloaded from the boxcars at Bureau Siding. Many carpenters were hired. Everything was peaceful, for the spook had not shown up for many months.

The men made good progress on the house, and then one night the spook returned to the cabin in the field. I suppose my grandfather made a remark about the spook, and it was overheard by one of the carpenters. "Hah! I don't believe in spooks. Tonight we will set up and catch the spook." Four men volunteered to set in the parlor that night. They were brave men, tough and strong with nerves of steel. When it was dark, they lit a lamp and placed it on the parlor table. Then one man sat in each corner of the room. They would see everything. About midnight, the room became very silent. It seemed so still that the men thought they were seated in a tomb. The pictures on the wall started to sway. Chairs started to move and change positions. It felt as if someone or something was moving about, but the men could see nothing. A small vase standing on a shelf started to move around. Then the lamp on the table

appeared to be picked up and carried about the room although it never left the table. Suddenly, for no reason at all, the lamp on the table went out and something swished about the room. Four brave men scrambled for the door and headed for the barn. There they stayed the rest of the night.

The next morning, the men were rather silent. They did not admit they were scared. They said they could sleep better on the hay than sitting in a chair. Finally, one of the men did tell what they had seen, but he could not prove what happened. He did not know why the lamp went out when there was plenty of oil in the bowl.

(As a young boy, my father heard the carpenter tell of the incident that happened in the parlor. I am trying to write this just as my father told it to me.)

With the sawing of wood and driving of nails, work went on with the building of the new house. The spook was no longer discussed.

The house was nearing completion, and perhaps within a month the Weitzel family would move into the new home. One morning, Anna Weitzel decided to wash the windows in the old house once more. (This Anna was my father's older sister.) With soap, water and cloth, she went to the outside of the house and started to wash the parlor windows first. The shades on the parlor windows were generally pulled low for the better furniture was in this room. Suddenly, the roll shade on the inside of the window Anna was washing snapped up. There in the window stood the image of the spook. This was too much for poor Anna. She turned, fainted and fell to the ground. She was carried into the house by her mother and revived. When she was able to talk, she tried to describe the image she saw. It was only a dim outline of something, and it had a broad, weird looking face.

Did Anna really see the image or imagine it? Did she faint from frights or was she in a weak physical condition? How come after this incident the spook vanished and nothing was ever molested again? These are questions I cannot answer.

My father told the story many times. "Anna was washing a parlor window when the shade flew up and there stood the thing and Anna fainted. The spook was never heard of again."

MEMORIES OF ONE HORSE–AND–BUGGY DOCTOR

Fern Moate Hancock

My father was a "family" doctor, a veteran in a vanishing age. His name, Dr. Thomas Moate, Physician and Surgeon, was printed on a brass plate which was on the front door of our home for over fifty years. It was my task to polish it every Saturday.

Thomas was born in Doncaster, Lancashire, England on November 15, 1871. When he was three years old, the family moved to the U.S.A. and settled on Rooks Creek on Rt. 116 in Livingston County, Illinois. His father was a wheelwright and he chose this place where folks were moving westward. Soon Thomas had the usual boyhood chores, enlivened by diving and swimming in Rooks Creek.

Eventually his father was able to buy a farm and moved to the farm, which is three miles north of Weston, Illinois on Route 24. Here the boy dreamed his dreams. When his mother would say, "Tommy, run to the outhouse and then get to bed," he would say, "When I get big, I'm going to have a pipe inside so I won't have to go outside."

The dream that surprised his family most was when he said, "I'm going to be a doctor and make people well, and be a surgeon, too!" This from a boy who hid under the bed when hogs were butchered was greeted derisively.

This dream became a reality. One fall when he had "served his time" (a boy owed his father his labor until he was twenty-one) my grandfather gave him a watch and said, "Now

you're on your own. I've done all I can for you." My father said those were the kindest words his father could have said when he was presented this watch.

He went to Chicago and enrolled in Northwestern University. He worked his way through school with a variety of jobs. I remember his telling of carrying papers. He somehow earned a bicycle, and on his route he sometimes hung on to the end of a dray-wagon (not a truck!) and saved some energy.

He also had some financial aid from a brother who chose to farm, which he later repaid.

He graduated in June, 1897, and said the gown served a very useful purpose: there was no distinction between the rich man and the poor man.

He located in Gridley, Illinois, also on Route 24. His family lived about eighteen miles east on the "home place." He served his family all through his busy life. I remember the days he was called to his mother's bedside, and he took me along. The drive seemed endless as our horse trotted smoothly along.

He lived in the rooms he rented for his office. He placed his few books on shelves, spread out his surgical equipment, and soon had a trickle of patients. He ate his meals in the hotel where he met the girl he eventually married.

One day in 1901 he was in the country making a call when a fire broke out in Gridley. He lost most of his belongings in this fire, even his beloved violin "Gretchen." Undeterred, he started over.

He opened boils, performed tonsillectomies and other minor surgery in this office. It was difficult to accept that neither the Peoria or Bloomington hospitals would employ him as a surgeon. They listed the difficulty of his getting to either place because of the distance, too far for horse and buggy. Train travel was the only alternative.

In the winter the roads would be frozen into ruts. Spring or fall they might be seas of mud, and they were hot and dusty in the summer. I have a picture of him mounted on his saddle horse, wearing boots, carrying saddle bags, with the horses tail tied up. When the mud was very deep, he'd rent a team of horses and a rig.

There were no telephones in rural areas, so a member of the family had to ride in to contact the doctor. Then he had to hitch up and go to the farm. About this time two brothers started a telephone company in Gridley. My father always carried a telephone in his buggy, showed it the family and told them how useful it would be when they needed a doctor. He always said he "sowed" telephones in the Gridley area.

Many of his cases were childbirth. Babies always seem to come at night. Many times he would attend the mother all night.

Then there were runaways. A horse would be frightened and despite the driver hanging on to the reins, the horse would take the bit in his teeth and dash off.

I remember one such incident well. Every young man's dream was to have a spirited driving horse and a shining new buggy to bring his best girl to town on Saturday night to show them off. This particular time the horse ran off and dumped his passengers. The girl's head struck the sidewalk and she had a severe head gash. My father attended her. The next morning, all the children in the neighborhood gathered to see where the pool of blood had been. Someone had thoughtfully covered it with dust.

Other Saturday night cases might be the results of drunken brawls, such as broken bones or smashed faces. I don't remember knifings.

As my father was also a "justice of the peace" (an office we no longer have), sometimes his waiting room was a court room where justice was impartially administered.

The "flu epidemic" of 1918-1919 was another memorable time. My father would start his rounds with a team and a rig rented from the livery stable with arrangements to be met by a fresh team at a prescribed time and place. He'd be gone from early morning until night.

One chore we had was to put a slab of soapstone in the

oven to be thoroughly heated. It was then wrapped in a blanket to hold the heat and placed on the floor of the carriage to keep the doctor's feet warm.

Eventually my father got a Ford, the second one in Gridley. This early car required good driving conditions. When it was muddy or sticky, Illinois mud would roll up on the wheel clear up to the fender so the wheel couldn't turn. Then one had to borrow a wooden fence post and poke the mud out.

In winter my father jacked the car up in the garage, brought the battery and the wheels into the basement and resorted to the horse.

Eventually roads were improved, first with gravel, and finally by black-topping them. Now there are very few dirt roads.

Professionalism throughout most of his fifty years of active practice was very good. Doctors didn't charge other doctors or their families for services rendered. I remember one of the doctors my father treated, who, upon his recovery, came and presented him with a fine watch. Another time my father missed his twenty-fifth class reunion to accompany another doctor to the hospital for surgery. Toward the end of his active years, two young doctors came to town. Neither had anything good to say of the other. Finally my father called them into his office to give them some advice. In conclusion he said, "If you fellows keep running each other down, the public will think we're all a bunch of quacks."

My father kept up on the many changes in medical practice. He was an early proponent of vaccinations and immunizations.

After the advent of the car there occurred an incident I'd like to recall. An only son of wealthy parents needed an appendectomy. They were afraid of hospitals! So my father made arrangements for a surgeon from Peoria and his nurse to assist in this surgery. A room was thoroughly cleaned. The surgeon, his nurse, and my father performed this surgery in the farm house. The boy recovered nicely.

Although my father healed many people he lost his wife to galloping consumption when she was thirty, despite his best efforts to cure her. He raised two daughters with the help of housekeepers for eight years. He then remarried and had a son who served in the navy during W.W. II.

Before my father retired, he studied blood chemistry. He never quit learning. After he had retired, those two young men he had counseled were "called up" to the service, so he practiced until they returned. Still, he said at the close of his life, "I didn't set my sights high enough." His life ended on May 29, 1947.

DISC SHARPENING: BORN OF HARD TIMES

Lydia Jo Huntley Boston

Today he might be called an entrepreneur, but back in the mid–1930's Dad was just an average working man trying to make a living for his family. Like many another working man in those hard times, he needed a job, but was willing to work at anything. Resisting suggestions that the family should go on relief, Dad would say, "I may be down, but I'm not out and something will turn up."

The summer of 1934 found us back living in Nauvoo. A carpenter by trade was of little value where no building was going on and little, if any, repair work was being done. Dad's latest venture, of cutting trees on an island near Burlington and taking rafts of logs to the basket factories there and to Keokuk, had been cut short by an accident on the river. It was time to begin again.

From a mail order catalog Dad had secured a hand grinder and, borrowing a horse and buggy, started out through the nearby countryside offering to sharpen scissors and knives for 10¢ each. Then he began to sharpen a few hand saws which netted 25¢. When our family moved up on Mulholland

Street, it was much handier for folks coming into town to leave their sharpening needs. We kids often woke up to the screech, screech sound of Dad filing a saw fastened to the shelf he had made in the kitchen window. We were often sent to the local hardware store for files, with the admonition, "Take your time a going, but hurry back," which to Dad meant "I need this, so hurry!" In the summer Dad built a work shelf on the catalpa tree in the back yard. When he bought a Model T Ford, he attached a shelf to the back of it, and by jacking up the car and running it, with a belt attached to the pulley on the grindstone, he now had a power-driven stone which enabled him to do more easier. Now he could also gum crosscut saws and sharpen mower sickles, hand sickles, scythes, axes, and corn knives. In winter ice skates were also brought in to be sharpened.

Things were looking up for the family after Dad secured a job with the bridge–building crew when the scenic highway between Nauvoo and Hamilton was being built. However, emergency surgery kept Dad in the hospital for three weeks and off the job most of the summer. The poems and Scripture verses which Mother posted on the walls at home served to remind us that God was still looking after us through all the trying and difficult times. Dad often quoted his uncle, from whom he had learned the carpenter trade: "Something always happens fifteen minutes before it's too late." And Mother would quote from Psalm 37:25: "Yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken, nor his seed begging bread." Their philosophy of life was that God would take care of us if we tried, and righteous living should be the direction of our lives regardless of the circumstances in which we might find ourselves.

Dad bought a disc sharpener, using a Maytag gasoline engine designed to run washing machines for his power source to operate the sharpener. The disc was taken apart and the gangs fastened in the machine, which turned it while he held the cutting tool in his hands. He was not the first one to have a disc sharpener, but he worked it with a diligence borne of need. He didn't take much stock in the ones that only ground the blades, as they didn't stay sharp long enough. "A farmer with stalks to cut needs a disc that stays sharp until the job is done," he reasoned. As the country began to work its way out of the depression, Dad worked his way into a business that challenged him. To persuade a reluctant farmer that he needed his disc sharpened was a victory Dad did not take lightly. He delighted in telling how he finally persuaded a doubtful farmer to try it. He was thrilled when the satisfied farmer became a steady customer.

How excited we were when Dad decided a telephone was essential to his business. The painted circle saw hanging on the front of the house proclaimed "HUNTLEY'S SHARPENING SERVICE." A firm believer in advertising, Dad often had cards or leaflets printed to distribute, listing what he could sharpen, which soon included lawnmowers. Letters and postcards arrived addressed simply to "The Disc Shaŕpener." Once a hurried farmer forgot to sign his last name or address to his urgent request, but Dad eventually figured it out and got the disc done in time.

Dad's solution to the World War II gas rationing problem was to purchase a small, used house trailer and leave it in a farmer's lot while he worked that particular neighborhood. By then he was working in Hancock and McDonough counties as well as parts of Adams, Henderson, Warren, Fulton and Schuyler, and on occasion, ever further. He dismissed suggestions that he should get a higher paying war job with, "That will last only as long as the war." He had found his niche, and he wasn't about to surrender it.

The family's hopes and dreams collapsed when Mother died eleven days after major surgery in the Spring of 1943. A month later I had emergency surgery. Dad took my brother, Rus, with him for the summer's work while my sister, Lois, was nursemaid to me while I recovered. Dad determined that all three of us, as usual, should go to church camp and we did. I was soon back to work and Lois and Rus back in school. Rus did odd jobs around the neighborhood after school and Lois

worked as relief telephone operator one night a week and at a grocery store after school.

My sister and I both married in 1946, and when our brother graduated from High School he went to Evanstown to a self-help college. In 1947 Dad bought the blacksmith shop in Colchester and then that was the hub of his growing business.

Dad remarried in 1951, establishing a home to be visited by children and grandchildren. With the acquisition of the blacksmith shop Dad added shear sharpening to his service and pioneered a process known as hard coating, which applied a new surface to plows and cultivator shovels. Even as his health began to fail, Dad did not lose his zest for work. He would often reflect on the humble beginnings of his business and express gratitude that we had "made it through some rough times."

The integrity of the farmer was underscored by the fact that in over thirty years of sharpening discs Dad never received a bad check. In the early years he often traded work for wood, or for meat if the farmer was butchering, or even for popcorn.

The TV news reporting team of Huntley-Brinkley and the Huntley Sharpening Service proved confusing to one farmer, but Dad never noticed until he was at the bank endorsing the check that it was made out to Chet Huntley. Chet and Dad did share a common ancestor, John Huntley, the immigrant who settled in the Boston, Mass. Bay Colony, circa 1647.

When Dad sold the shop and retired to fishing in Argyle Lake and selling bait at home, he still sharpened a disc now and then. He just couldn't give up. When his wife died in 1968, he bought a mobile home and moved it to our farm near Burnside to live out his remaining days. He slowed down significantly following surgery that fall, but he did one last disc for a long-time customer even though it took him several days to do it. Taking meals with our family, he would then retire to his home to watch TV and rest. He relived in memory the days when he could work sharpening discs for his farmer friends and hard coating shears for them.

He entered a nursing home following several weeks of hospitalization after a stroke in the fall of 1969. Visiting him on New Year's Day 1970, I asked, "Dad, if you could sharpen just one more disc, what kind would you want to sharpen?"

"A John Deere," he replied with all the enthusiasm his weary body could muster.

The next day my sister and family came out and, finding me writing a long overdue note of sympathy, urged me to finish before we visited. But then the phone rang. It was the nursing home telling us that when the nurse went to give Dad his medicine a few minutes earlier, she found him dead in his wheelchair. Russell Huntley, the disc sharpener was gone. A man and his vision had died together. As farm equipment became larger, the discs stay sharp longer, and disc sharpening is almost a thing of the past.

Remaining for all who knew Dad is the memory of his spirit that would not allow him to give up in the face of any challenge, a spirit born of faith in God, devotion to his family, and confidence in his ability to make work when there was none.

IN LESS THAN THREE MINUTES

Blondelle Brokaw Lashbrook

It happened quickly, but what havoc it wrought in those three short minutes on the unsuspecting community of Rushville, on March 30th, 1938. No sirens announced its coming. Shortly before it struck, a pall of darkness enveloped the city, accompanied by a heavy shower of rain and hail.

A dentist, after treating a patient, was sitting relaxing in his office as was his habit about 2:00 p.m. and was casting his eyes on the weather vane atop the 115-foot city water tower.

The arrow on a ball-bearing frame pointed to the east. Suddenly it veered to the north and west and quickly made the round of all points of the compass as he still gazed with fascinated interest overlooking the black clouds forming in the northwest. All at once he saw the 4-foot weather vane disappear entirely. He was reminded of Major Bowes' radio lines: "Round and round she goes, where she will land nobody knows!" No one has, as yet, reported finding the city weather vane.

The tornado cut its swath through the south edge of the community at approximately 3:50 p.m., to judge from the electric clock, which stopped. Winds up to 40 and 50 mph were whipping through the city.

At that time I was living in the north part of town with my two daughters, ages four and six. That afternoon, they were huddled in a corner of the living room with a playmate and clinging to each other. I was hanging onto the doorknob to keep the front door from swinging open. It was the strongest wind that I was ever in. The house shook and I thought that at any minute the roof would go. Debris of all kind flew past the living room window, including a wash tub. Suddenly it was all over. I opened the door and the extreme quiet following the roar of the wind struck me. Voices could be heard so clearly in the air.

The south section of the city suffered the worst damage. It was only a few minutes until the whole population realized it had been hit by its first tornado. Hundreds of citizens rushed to the storm-stricken areas to lend assistance to the few people who had been caught and injured. While many men, women, and children received minor cuts and bruises, only five ladies had to have immediate attention.

Some brick homes were damaged, a whole street of houses were demolished, and an old broom factory collapsed. Some tenants escaped through the upper window. Scores of garages, barns, and out buildings were damaged or destroyed. Yet with all this destruction of property there was not one fatality. Neither was there a fire, in spite of the fact in every home reduced to ruins there was either a furnace or a stove full of burning fuel.

A seven-year-old with a new raincoat insisted on walking home from school that afternoon in the rain. When the storm hit, the boy was in front of the broom factory. He tried to make the porch of an elderly lady's home and the wind carried the porch away and the house crumbled into ruins. He was tossed to the ground and rolled under a car which was parked in front of the hospital. Crawling out from there, he fought his way to a mail collection box and clung to the box until the storm subsided. He heard cries for help from the lady whose home had collapsed. He hurried to the hospital and summoned aid. With debris all around him, he escaped without a scratch.

When a couple east of Rushville returned to their home from a trip through the east, they found the garage just west of their house wrapped around the corner of the home and debris scattered all over the farm.

Sticking in a house were timbers that had been blown there from wrecked homes a block away.

Over 138 homes were damaged, and losses were placed at about $275,000.

In the cemetery stately tall evergreens were torn out by the roots, broken off a few feet from the ground, stripped and twisted and elegant old trees lay flat on the ground among a mass of broken tombstones which they had demolished as they fell to the ground. It would take years and years to replace the many beautiful pines and evergreens of which only a few were left standing.

Twenty-four state police were placed on duty in Rushville following the tornado. Two state police first aid cars were brought in. Telephone linemen helped police overcome handicaps of broken telephone wires. Patrolmen were on their way to the city within 10 minutes after the storm. A Forest Howard who operated an amateur radio station in Rushville was instrumental in broadcasting the needs for immediate aid

after the storm.

This destructive tornado had taken a northeasterly course through the Illinois River Valley, flattening everything in its wake. The worst sufferer was South Pekin, although Rushville, Astoria, Morton, Tunnelwell, Havana, Deer Creek, and other points incurred severe losses. It cut a 70-mile swath; 15 lives were lost and there was $1,000,000 in damage.

THE DAY ONEIDA BURNED

Ruthe E. Seiler

"Get up, George, Oneida's on fire!" My father's voice roaring up the stairwell brought all of the family plunging downstairs. The house and the whole sky were lit by a red glow—a light so bright it had waked my father, who had thought it was the sun. However, it was only four-thirty that morning of November 15, 1915, so Dad knew it was fire and he immediately called the telephone operator to report it.

In less than five minutes after his yell, Dad and my sixteen-year-old brother George were running with buckets down the road toward the skyward-shooting flames. Since the farm we lived on was less than a half mile east of the heart of town, we crowded against the west windows of the house to see what was going on and to watch for a nearer approach of the fire. But our view was blocked by the big brick schoolhouse at the east edge of the business district. As the flames burst upward silhouetting the building, my twelve-year-old brother Carl's voice could be heard shouting gleefully, "I hope it's the schoolhouse!" But alas for a small boy's hopes: the flames never reached that far!

Before Dad and George were out of sight, we heard five short, sharp rings on the telephone—the company's line signal for help. In our house, as in all other homes along the lines, Mother hurried to the phone to hear the operator saying that the first block of Oneida's eastside business district was ablaze and that help was needed to keep the fire from spreading.

Those were old wooden stores—built when Oneida was only three years old—but all except one housed a thriving business. The six occupied stores consisted of Stephenson's Dry Goods Store, Anderson's Harness Shop, Sheafer's Drug Store, Mollie O'Dell's Millinery Shop, a dry-cleaning establishment and a "candy store," which may have been a restaurant, but we children never got farther in it than the candy counters in the front! They were mostly two-story buildings with porches along the front, nice places for small children to take refuge when they were caught uptown by a sudden summer shower.

And help came—men on foot from all over town and nearby farmers in wagons, all with buckets, and Oneida's small chemical fire engine swung into action. But still the fire roared on. As the flames leaped from building to building, threatening the whole town, Mayor Sam Metcalf telephoned the Galesburg Fire Department asking for help. Wataga, Altona, and Victoria fire engines were already on the job, but water and chemical supplies were almost exhausted.

Since two of Galesburg's veteran fire-fighters were from Oneida, the large Galesburg chemical tank was rushed at awesome speed to the Burlington's Railroad depot, loaded on a flat car and with a special engine sped toward Oneida. We could hear its frantic whistle and its bell clanging for the right of way as it came. It arrived about seven o'clock, and an hour later the fire was under control, though the ruins continued to smolder all day. Fortunately, there was very little breeze, a factor which helped the firemen in their fight to save the town.

At home we children, standing at the windows and in the yard, could see the farmers racing in with their wagons, and we all wanted to go to help, but Mother assured us that children could help most by staying home out of the way! This idea did not suit Carl at all, and as we gathered for breakfast, we found that he was absent. What young boy can resist going to a fire

only four blocks away?

But at 8:30 the first schoolbell rang and we headed for school where we chattered about the fire, which we could still see and smell from the schoolyard. Closer inspection was forbidden by the teachers. As a first-grader, I got out at 11:30, so I had a half hour before regular dismissal and, of course, I rushed uptown to see.

The streets and public park were blocked with counters, furniture and goods from the stores. There were great bolts of lovely, brilliantly-colored silks from the drygoods store all soaked with water and stained with the white of chemicals, and there, face-down in a muddy pool of water on the ground, was a doll—alone, dejected and sadly in need of care. I picked it up, cleaned it as best I could with my little handkerchief (and the ruffle on my petticoat!) and put it on a nearby chair, spreading its skirts out to dry. With a final pat and "Everything will be all right; someone will come for you!" I left Dolly and proceeded on my way among the piles of rescued objects. Ah! There were the counters from the candy store—intact! However, although I looked hopefully at them for some time, no one offered me any of the candy, so I went on with the crowds, "sadder but wiser" indeed!

The whole area south of the railroad tracks was jammed with workers and strangers sightseeing, but there was no looting and everyone was quiet and orderly except for two men who had apparently tried to make off with some stolen goods. However, they were promptly arrested and marched off to the city jail by Marshal Westfall and a couple of helpers—and I had been right there in time to see it all! A big event in the life of a six-year-old!

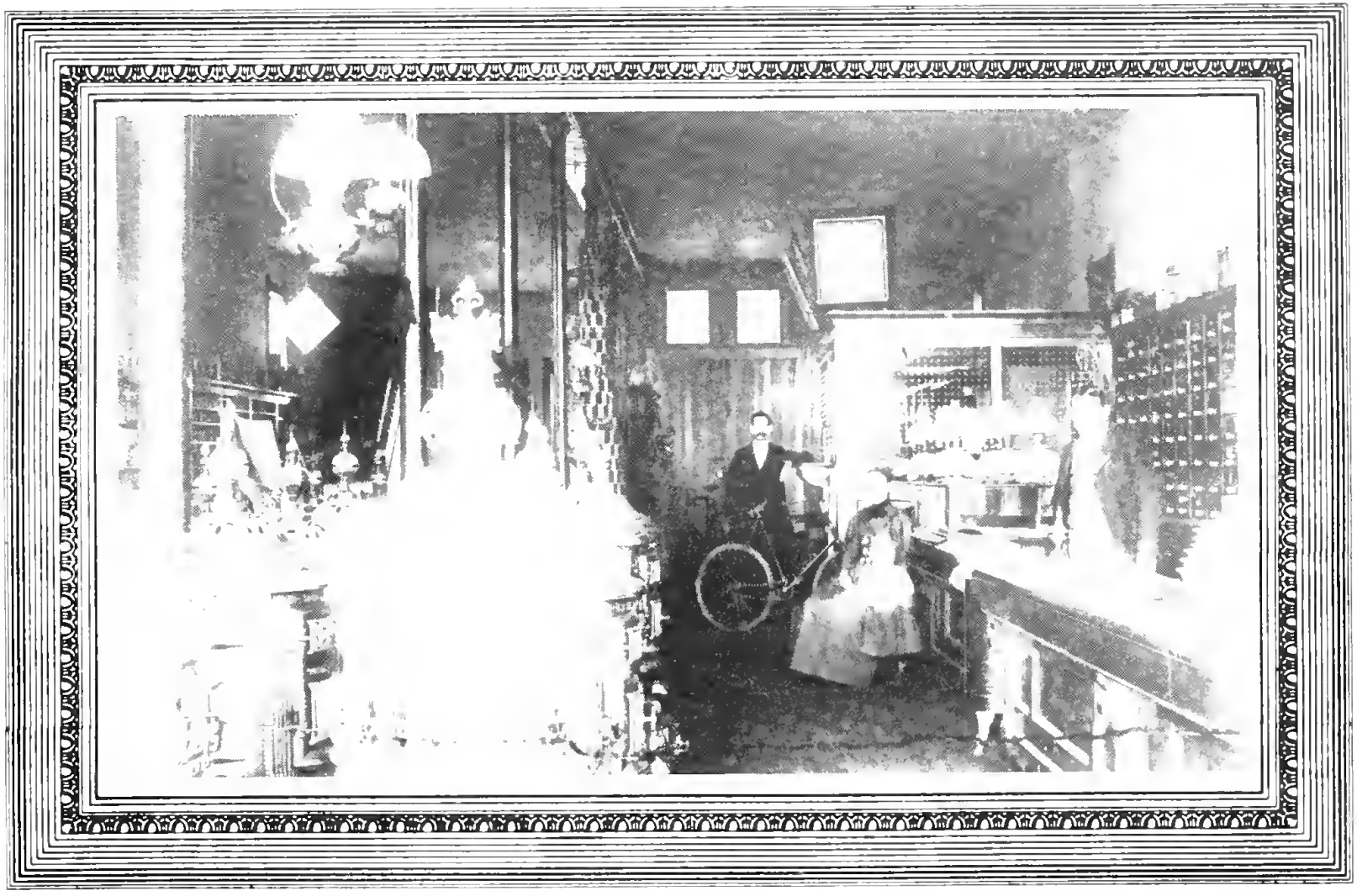
By that time I was getting both tired and hungry so after finding out that my friend, the daughter of Mollie O'Dell—whose family lived above her shop—had escaped unharmed, I headed home for lunch. There I found my father and George just coming in for a brief rest and their first food of the day before returning to help reorganize things in the burned area.

I hardly recognized them, for their faces and arms were burned and blackened, their overalls were covered with ashes and soot, and Dad's eyebrows and mustache were singed almost off. After cleaning up and tending to their burns, they joined us at the table; then we got our first account of the fire.

We learned that two workers' hands had been cut by broken glass, but no one else was injured. What caused the fire? No one knew for sure (and they never *did* find out!) but the men suspected that the fire had started in the dry-cleaning shop. Or could it have started in the apartment where a man lived alone over his empty store—a man who was known for his heavy smoking and drinking—and who just happened to be the first man at the scene?

All of the merchants had sustained heavy losses—even those partially covered by insurance—and some, like Mollie O'Dell, had no insurance at all and would not be able to rebuild.

This was Oneida's last big conflagration, and it meant that all the business sections of the town had at one time or another been destroyed by fire. But it also meant that Oneida's last block of wooden stores was gone, and from then on all business houses would be made of brick and Oneida would have a fire siren, paid for by donations, and a better-equipped fire department. Thus, Oneida—like its big sister, Chicago, forty-four years earlier—would rise phoenix-like from its ashes!



Passages

In one end of her kitchen, my grandmother had a large loom where she wove rag carpets and rugs. People came from miles for this service. This loom took up one end of her kitchen, and I remember big rolls of carpet waiting to be picked up. The strips of carpet had to be sewed together for the room size they needed; then they tacked it down over newspapers or straw for padding. Wall to wall carpeting has come a long way since those days in the 1800's.

Lula Fordyce Hughes

If you were born around the turn of the century, the Great Depression hit you, too. It didn't miss any of us, did it? It really didn't HIT us. It just slipped up on us when we weren't expecting it. We look back on the GREAT DEPRESSION as one of the happiest times of our life together. We learned to work and plan together. Those bill collectors taught us NOT to buy anything we didn't have the money to pay for. The market taught us the pleasure of hard work. We didn't make much money but we accomplished what we set out to do. We fed, clothed and sheltered our family through the crisis. We learned that the deepest joy comes from the simple things of life. We learned to evaluate the material things for their true worth: do they enrich your life, or are they a burden to be cared for? We learned to accept the problems of life as a challenge and have faith in our ability to solve them.

Katherine Runkle Stuckey

The particular trip that I am recalling today involved the historic National Air Races. We had been able to borrow camping gear from a variety of friends . . . probably in return for some farm produce, I suspect. This equipment included a tent large enough to shelter the four of us; a pressurized gasoline stove; and some sort of a "kitchen cabinet" that was lashed to our plucky Model T. Since it came from our land, food was no problem. An insulated container of sorts kept perishables from becoming tainted . . . so long as we located a source of ice, regularly. Bags of ice cubes were not only unavailable . . . they were as far in the future as regular trips to the moon are today.

Marion Y. Baker

Another feature of the early 1900's was those mud roads. There was no rock or gravel on any of the roads, and in the spring the mud would roll up so heavy on the buggy and wagon wheels the men would have to get out and dig the mud from between the spokes of the wheels. No wonder our taxes go higher and higher when we enumerate the conveniences and the privileges we have from our tax dollars.

Aurelia S. Marshall

Autumn on the farm, in the early years of the twentieth century, required not only the most hard work, but also offered the most rewards. Of course, we had no radio or television—in fact, no electricity—but we had each other. On long winter evenings we had to make our own entertainment. We played dominoes, checkers, pitch, and other games. One of my fondest memories is our own music entertainment. We gathered around the piano while my mother played, and my father held a kerosene lamp so she could see the music; led by my father, we all sang. I'm glad to have lived during this era—to have seen the first automobile chugging down the dusty streets of Cuba and to have seen, on television, the first astronaut step on the surface of the moon.

Emma Cline Murphy

My family lived on a farm near Fenton. There were nine children. We carried water from the windmill, heated it on the cookstove, and took our baths in a large washtub in the kitchen. No bathroom, just a little house out back. It was horse and buggy days. Plowing was done with horses, and corn was picked and unloaded by hand.

Jennie Florence

A month before Christmas "Pa" and "Ma" started preparing for the beautiful approaching holiday. A barrel of fruit and a wooden pail full of candy were put in the parlor. The door was closed and not opened until the day before Christmas. The week before Christmas the fowl was killed and frozen, the bread, cakes, and pies were baked and put in the cool pantry. Christmas Eve the whole family came home, and we all attended Midnight Mass together.

Katherine Lyons Beck

They found him dead, face down in the snow under a lilac bush at the house of an old lady. He was frozen as stiff and as lifeless as the rocks he had carried to the steep front yard of his little house. He loved flowers, they said at the funeral. The people, who had tolerated him, took up a collection and bought him two baskets of the beautiful symbols. Felie would have liked to have seen the flowers, to have smelled them, and pressed a few in a book. He would have taken others and put them in a fruit jar or a pitcher, and set them on the warped, drop-leaf table in the corner of the one-room home where he ate, slept and dreamed the thoughts of his mind. . . . They buried Felie today. From the neat, white, painted small town funeral home, they carried him over the street, narrow and unpaved, where he had walked so often. Past the place where he had spent his last living moments, over the hill to the snow covered driveway which led past the other burial plots, to the one which lay cold, raw, and open in the zero weather. At last, Felie had had his moment of importance—a time when everyone noticed him, and gave him their almost-undivided attention.

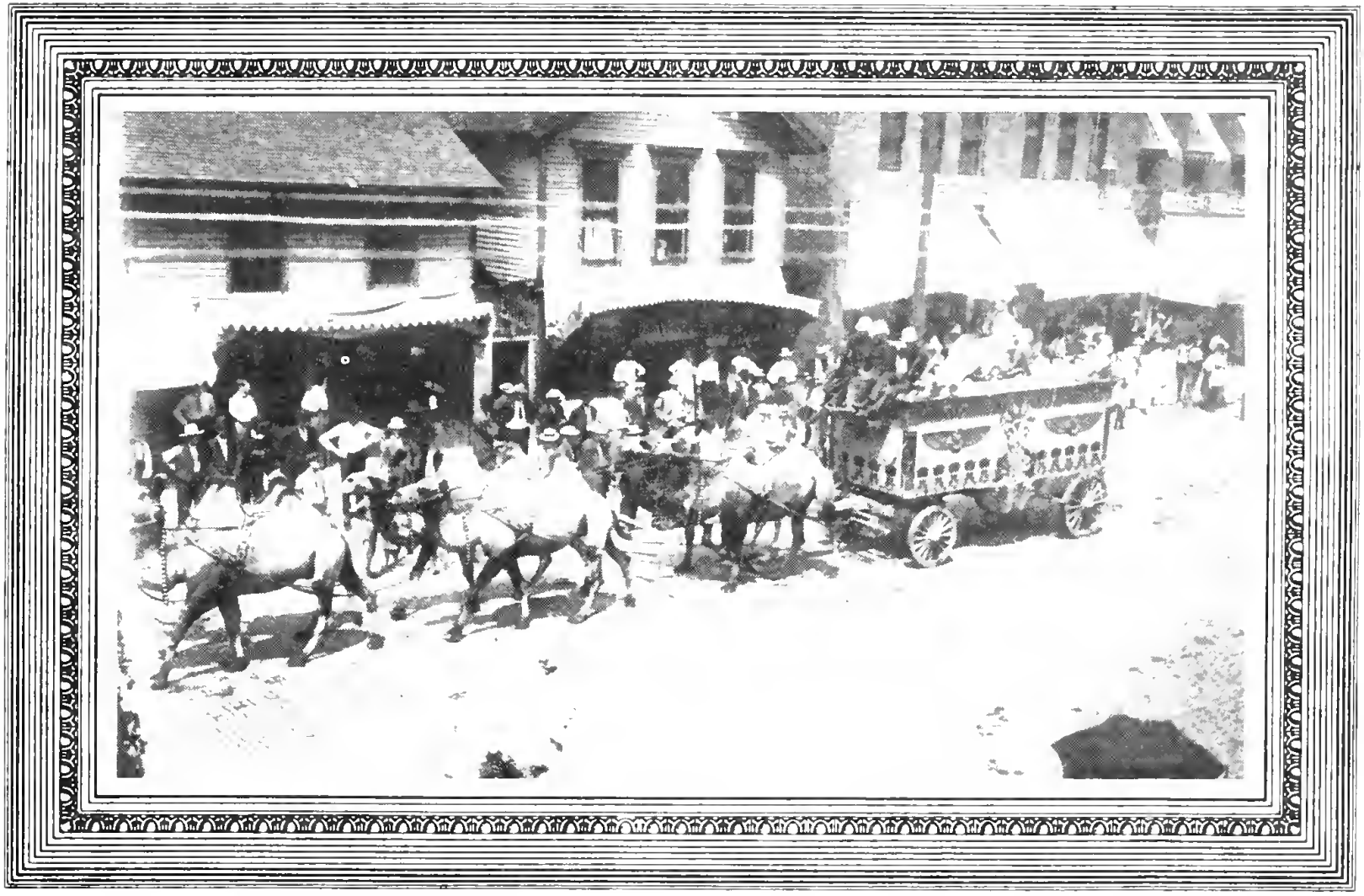
Floyd M. Lowary

Dust Storms! Nov. 12, 1933: We had our Praise Service in spite of a terrific dust storm, and the street lights were out. The dust was so thick we could scarcely see the corner. The wind blew our empty milk bottle off the porch into the rose bushes and broke. . . .We had to feel our way home from church. The dust was gritty between our teeth. James helped me the next day vacuuming the rugs and mopping the kitchen floor. I worked all morning and part of the afternoon cleaning up the dust. April 16, 1934: I scrubbed the bench on the back porch since the dust storm this week left it in terrible condition. April 16, 1935: We had a dust storm today that penetrated through the doors and windows.

Beulah Jean McMillan

The wind rattles my window. A dog howls in the distance. A fresh blanket of snow covers the ground and the wind continues to sing that winter is here. Winter is here unquestionably. Strange events—what of yesterday and the morrow? Best I make no predictions nor plans with arbitrarily chosen time frames. —My forest is here. From a 9th story perch I look north-west and see a sea of trees, red brick homes mostly hidden behind the grey black bare branches that caress the sky in its many moods of blues, pinks, mauves, greys. The banks of the grand old man, the Mississippi, and open country beyond continue the carpet to the horizon. . . .

Lapu Ooman



List of Authors

LIST OF AUTHORS

(who submitted memoirs to the Tales From Two Rivers Writing Contests VI and VII)

Adams County
Florence Ehrhardt
Beulah Herman
Bob Hulsen
Lydia Kanauss
Mildred Krueger
Ann Marsh
Lapu Ooman
Glen Philpott
LaVora S. Reid
Ruth Reinebach
Sarah J. Ruddell
Dolores Seliner
Edna Thompson
Turman W. Waite
Keith L. Wilkey

Alexander County
Guyla Wallis Moreland

Boone County
Florence Salisbury

Brown County
Nellie Roe
Duward F. Tice

Bureau County
Clark Norris

Cass County
Alice Blessman
Vivian Pate
Edna Renner
Helen Sherrill-Smith

Christian County
Anna Becchelli

Clinton County
Catherine Goodwin

Cook County
Paul C. Crum
John Zimmerman

Edgar County
Guinevere Koppler

Effingham County
Nelle Shadwell

Ford County
Archie Stewart

Fulton County
Marion Baker
Elizabeth Schumacher Bork
Grace Breeding
Bernice Cooper
Louise E. Efnor
Vera Henry
Lula Hughes
Hazel R. Livers
Floyd M. Lowary
E. C. Murphy, DVM
Emma Murphy
Vera Simpson
Esmarelda T. Thomson
Ferne Trone
Mrs. Garnet Workman

Greene County
Lora G. Allen
Floy K. Chapman
Dorris Nash
Neita Schutz
Viola A. Stout

Grundy County
Mrs. Clarence Knop
Lois M. Mellen
Celina Rawlish
Helen Ullrich

Hancock County
Lydia Jo Boston
Clifford J. Boyd
Florence Braun
Ruth E. Bywater
Mattie Emery
Delbert Lutz
Aurelia Marshall
Elden McClintock
Ruth McCutchan
Kathryn Roan
Grace B. Schafer
Irene B. Tinch
Bernadette Tranbarger
James Whitson
Marvin Wollbrink

Henderson County
Mrs. John W. Kane
Clarence E. Neff
Rev. Carroll Oschner
Faye Christian Perry

Louise M. Young

Henry County
Ruth S. Peterson Bengston
Margaret M. DeDecker
Annie Enborg Exalena Johnson
Charlotte Magerkurth
Kenneth Maxwell Norcross
Marvis L. Rasmussen
Robert C. Richards Sr.
Donald B. Swanson

Iroquois County
Alice M. Green

Jackson County
Claudia Kupel
Aleatha McLaughlin Mifflin

Jasper County
Naidene Stroud Trexler

Jersey County
Marie Freesmeyer
Elma M. Strunk

Kankakee County
Katherine Lyons Beck

Knox County
Lou Gamage
Opal Ivie
Dorothy Johnston
Isal Kendall
Eleanor Arnold Mills
Glenrose Nash
Helen S. Peters
Marjory M. Reed
Ruthe Seiler
Opal Self
Louise Parker Simms
Lulu Stone
George and Katherine Stuckey

Lake County
Rachel L. Creamer
Fern Elliott
Ruth Mogg

LaSalle County
Robert T. Burns
Marguerite Thompson
Wilbert Weitzel

Lee County
Charlene L. Ketcham

Logan County
Robert Sparks

Macoupin County
Martha Karlovic

Madison County
Dorothy B. Koelling

Marion County
Mildred Bross

Marshall County
Eleanor H. Bussell
Grayce E. Kuhn

Mason County
Roy B. Poppleton
Hollis Powers
Edythe D. Worner

Massac County
Jack Dunning
Beulah Pearl Green
Evelyn Korte
Dean Rodgers

McDonough County
Katherine Z. Adair
John Newton Albright
Paul E. Bates
Harriet Bricker
Effie L. Campbell
Hila Chandler
Lillian Nelson Combites
Minnie Conner
Mrs. Meryl Cook
Harriet Cordell
Gale Dixon
D. H. Ewing (deceased)
Pearl Foster
Addra I. Graham
Burdette Graham
Martha K. Graham
Charles H. Harper
Veta Harper
Teckla Keithley
Robert Little
Floyd Lovejoy (deceased)
Beulah McMillan
Juanita Jordan Morley
Lyle W. Robbins

Ruth Rogers
Mary Cecile Stevens
Helen Alleyne Taylor
Gertrude Wetzel
Esther Fowler Willey
Edward Young

McLean County
Wilson M. Baltz
Vita Mueller Chapman
Fern Hancock
William Leonard Kelley
Marjorie J. Scaife

Menard County
Margaret P. Faith

Mercer County
Hazel M. McMeekan

Monroe County
Albert E. Hartman
Emil C. Hartman

Montgomery County
Vivian Sparks

Morgan County
Mary Brown
Phyllis T. Fenton

Peoria County
Bette Thill Maloney Adams
Joseph B. Adams Jr.
Robert Babcox
Vernon Barr
Francis J. Bunce
Mary Don
Charles Harshbarger
Erwin O. Keyster
Glenna Lamb
Mildred Norton
June K. Pope
Ed and Fran Riley

Pike County
Margaret L. Cockrum
Ruth Roberts Lingle
Merl Swartz

Pope County
Eva Baker Watson

Randolph County
E. M. Gross
Theodore E. Guebert
Anna Rittenhouse

Rock Island County
Gladys M. Bell
Signe Evangeline Chell
Eunice Stone DeShane
Genevieve Fetes
Junetta Findlay
Rhoda Grimm
Lloyd M. Hance
Vera M. Hawks
Arthur M. Jahn
Clarissa M. Jahn
Lina F. Johnson
Blondelle Lashbrook
Marie F. Lerch
Marguerite M. Millikan
Etta Nicely
Ruth E. Pearson
Lilah Peterson
Eleanor R. Rowe
Orpha Swanson
Loretta McManus Verschoore
Marvel Walker
Evelyn Witter
Margaret Hammer Wolfinger

Sangamon County
Chris Dean
Sr. Jacqueline Deters, OSF
Sabra Sue Evans
Ruby Davenport Kish
M. LaChance
Mary Midden
Arnold F. Miller
Josephine K. Oblinger
Helen E. Rilling
Virginia Dee Schneider
Mary B. Stultz
Robert Tefertillar
Vivian Workman

Schuyler County
Helen Baker
Ruth Agans Kearby
Laurence Royer
Lillian Terry
Guy Tyson

Scott County
Stella Hutchings

Shelby County
Miriam Herron

St. Clair County
Don Burrows
Eileen M. Greco
Clara Rose McMillan
Lillian D. Miller
Vera Niemann
Virginia Roy Rhodes
Hazel Somers
Lavern Sturman
Grace R. Welch

Stephenson County
Stella M. Jensen
Mrs. L. M. Van Raden

Tazewell County
Ruth B. Comerford
Frances (Sue) Elliott
Mary Stormer
Lucius Valentine

Vermilion County
Clarence E. Johnson

Warren County
Carmen Costello
Hazel D Frank
Joe Mangieri
Anna Miller
Dorothy E. Ray
Zella L. Ross

White County
Ruth Martin

Whiteside County
Jennie Florence
Clarice Harris
Kay Harris

Will County
Nina W. Kurkamp

Williamson County
Audrey Ashley-Runkle

Places Outside of Illinois
Irene Brei — West Liberty, Iowa
Robert Brownlee — Seminole, Florida
Elizabeth Harris — Muscatine, Iowa
James B. Jackson — Seminole, Florida
Billie Thompson — Phoenix, Arizona
Roy Wehrman — Ventura, California

"To my surprise I found 'Harrington, J.' listed for a precinct in the First Ward, on 22nd and Michigan Avenue, the river ward. The ward had been made famous by those notorious politicians 'Hinky Dink' Kenna and 'Bathhouse John' Coughlin. This was the ward where votes were bought openly, where many of the registered voters 'lived' in vacant lots or the ward where loan sharking, prostitution, the numbers racket, and paid-for elected officials flourished openly. Did they really want a young lady from Beverly Hills suburb to go in there?"

Josephine K. Oblinger
Sangamon County

"I remember the first real medicine show I ever saw, which was in Kincaid, Illinois. It was the last one I saw too. In 1935, it was still 'hard times,' and no one had anywhere to go."

Anna Beccelli
Christian County

"The old shack was in bad shape, but I fixed up one room and moved in. I owned a horse, and bought another for 15 dollars, and Dad loaned me a three-year-old colt. I bought a 16-inch walking plow for 50 cents, a disc for $3 and a harrow for $3 at a sale; Dad also loaned me a corn planter. There was 24 acres, all bottom land, for corn."

Guy Tyson
Schuyler County

"The jail in Millstadt, St. Clair County, was built in 1905. The small red brick building, now relegated to the unglamorous role of a store room, opened its door to vagrants, drifters and genuine tramps in the late 20's and the 30's to provide shelter, warmth and a hard bed on wintery nights."

Wilson M. Baltz
McClean County

"The square at Table Grove had several grocery stores, including Haist's on the south side, and Frederick's in the southwest corner, and a Red and White on another part of the square. On the east side was Kirkbride's Clothing Store; on the northwest corner was Charly Cox's Shoe Store, and on the northeast corner was Keoler's Drug Store and Ice Cream Parlor.

Usually on Saturday night a movie was shown in the park, or sometimes a play put on by Minor Brock."

Burdette Graham
McDonough County

"Time marches on, but the memories still live of the many changes that have been made in the past eighty years since I was a plain old barefoot country boy down on the farm. My earliest recollections were filling the wood box with wood for the kitchen stove, taking a small pail of water to my father working in the field, and helping my older sister bring in the cows from the pasture to be milked."

Truman W. Waite
Adams County

"At the inquest, the sexton swore his son had not touched the gate and was last seen standing only a short distance from it. There was no explanation as to why the gate fell at that time, unless a sudden gust of wind had caused it to topple."

Edward R. Lewis, Jr.
Fulton County

"In those days there was no radio or television, so most of our candidates had to visit the area in person whenever they could. Those were the days of 'orators,' and political rallies were often all-day affairs with people coming from miles and miles to hear candidates."

Clarence E. Neff
Henderson County