Chapter 2

EARLY RECOLLECTIONS

I was born in a little two-room house on the plains of Kansas, on a farm that had been homesteaded by my Uncle Henry Williams, about six miles west of Parsons, June 12, 1879.

How early in life does memory begin to register? Few can answer that. Fortunately, I have one early milestone to reckon from—my grandmother, Anne Peele Williams. I remember several events that happened in association with her. I remember well her sitting around the house in her Quaker cap, reading the Bible. Each chapter began with a capital letter and I remember well standing beside her and asking her the names of the letters, but I don't remember how many of them stuck in my memory. I do remember that when I started to school at the age of five I knew all the alphabet, and don't remember anyone teaching it to me after her death. She died at our house, but I can't remember her being sick. I do remember the long line of farm wagons going to her funeral; that the remains were carried into the church; that the screws that held the coffin lid on were flat on top so they could be turned without a screwdriver; that after the sermon the lid was loosened and moved toward the foot so we could view the corpse; that as we passed the coffin, Mother carried brother John, and Father led me and held me up so I could get a last look at her. The record shows I was just two years and nine months old when she died.

Another memorable event was the last day of school where Uncle Henry taught. He was drawn out of shape with rheumatism so bought a horse and buggy to drive to school. That was the first, and for a long time the only top buggy in that whole neighborhood. Why he wanted to be bothered with a three-

year-old at school, I will never know. He was at our house the Sunday before and asked me to go. I was all for it and Mother said I might go. I had no idea what was meant by the last day of school, but did have a very definite idea about a ride in a new top buggy, a privilege very few enjoyed in those days. When he came for me on the eventful morning Mother had me all ready, including a brand new gingham dress, of which I was very proud. I enjoyed the ride very much but have no idea which direction we went, nor how far. The horse was a sorrel with a star on his forehead and a blaze on his nose. When we reached the schoolhouse, Uncle Henry unhitched and unharnessed him; put the harness in the buggy; took a long rope out of the buggy and staked him out to eat grass. Right there memory ends 'til dinner time. The neighbors came in and brought a basket dinner, the first I ever remember attending.

There was another event that probably happened the same year. Father went to the pasture, which was quite a distance from the house, to salt the cows and get the horses. Robert and I went along. When he had finished at the pasture, he closed the bars; put Robert on Rowdy; me on Charley; and started for the house with the empty salt pail on his arm and leading the horses. Boy-like, and for no reason at all, I decided I should carry that pail. Father told me I had enough to do to hold onto the horse; but I kept on insisting, and reaching for the pail. Suddenly I lost my balance and remember falling head downward between the horses, but I don't remember hitting the ground. I must have landed on my head and been completely knocked out, for the next thing I knew I was at home in bed and wondered how I got there.

The summer I was three years old, I remember going with Father to buy a reaper. There were only two kinds of reapers in those days. The "dropper" and the "self-

rake". As he had no mower, he bought a combination dropper and mower. When you wanted to harvest grain, you took off the "cutter bar" and put on the "reaper bar". It cut higher than the "cutter bar" and had a kind of slat platform at the back side of it to carry the grain. The driver controlled the slats with a pedal. When he pressed it down, it raised the back end of the slats, so the wheat fell on it. When he raised his foot, the slats dropped down, and the stubble, protruding between the slats, held the straw while the slats slipped forward with the reaper. It also had a reel that revolved just fast enough to lay the straw straight on the slats. The driver, as nearly as possible, dropped the grain in amounts so that one length of straw would reach around it. Then three or four men came behind, tying or, as they called it, binding it into sheaves, using a small handful of straw for the purpose.

That same summer, Grandfather Tomlinson's youngest sister, Esther; Mother's youngest sister, Zeruah (Ruah for short); and Uncle Zeno Tomlinson's widow, Mary Emily, with her daughter Stella, who was just my age, came out to visit us. Aunt Ruah drove the dropper while Father, Lewis Fast, the hired man, and a neighbor bound wheat into sheaves. There seemed to be a romance budding between Aunt Ruah and Lewis, but Mother put her foot down hard. We were Quakers and Lewis was divorced and Quakers didn't believe in divorce. All summer I said I was going home with my aunts. When we took them to the train and they were seated in the coach, Father held me up to the window to tell them good-bye. I was so certain he was going to put me through the window to do just what I had said all summer that I was going to do, that I kicked and cried 'til he put me down and I never did tell them good-bye.

If I remember my astronomy correctly,

the planet Venus passed between the earth and the sun in 1874, and again in 1882 and will not do it again for more than one hundred years after the latter date. (12-9-1874, 12-6-1882, and 6-8-2004 - GLW) This is called the Transit of Venus. Normally a happening of that kind would make no impression whatever on a three-year-old boy; but there were just too many things that happened on that day in 1882 to pass unnoticed. I remember them very vividly, but would not have tied them together as happening on that particular day if I had not had help. It was as beautiful a morning as ever was seen at that time of year. Father was hauling corn to a little town named Mortimer. I wanted to go along. My principal argument was, "I never have sawn Mortimary" which got a laugh out of some members of the family; but didn't get me the chance to go. Father said later it was such a beautiful day he was very much tempted to let me go, but was sure glad he didn't.

Soon after Father left, Mother took the chimney off the lamp, turned back the cap and lit it. Then she took a piece of window glass and passed it over the flame collecting the soot, or lamp black, on the glass. I asked her what she was doing and she said she was preparing a smoked glass so that she could look at the transit of Venus. Later she stepped out on the front step and looked at the sun. Kid-like I wanted to look too, but she said there was nothing to see, so I gather that her smoked glass was not much of a success.

Father had a hired man. While he hauled the corn to market, the hired man shucked the next day's load and piled it on the ground. He came in to dinner and I remember that he remarked, as he started back to work, that he surely didn't like the looks of the sky. Not long after he was gone, the wind shifted to the northwest and really began to howl. Mother began to worry. She had plenty to worry about in that blizzard.

It went down in history as one of the quickest and biggest temperature changes ever recorded in that part of the West. Sometime during the afternoon, the hired man came in beating his hands and said his hands were so cold he just couldn't shuck corn any longer. Mother told him that she was so glad he had come, as she was worried about the school children. She had him take our third horse and go to the neighbors and borrow another horse and a wagon. When he came back, she had him put plenty of hay in the bottom of the wagon bed, and she stripped the beds and put the covers in to wrap the children in. The driver wrapped up in just about all he could get on and took off. It seems that the driver brought, not only the ones he was sent for, but all the children who were going his way. Two of them lived half a mile beyond us, giving them two miles and a quarter to walk from school. The driver stopped at home and let Ruth Anna and Robert out, then went on to deliver the other two. In spite of all the cover they were wrapped up in, Ruth Anna and Robert were very cold. I can only guess and shudder at what might have happened to those other children if it had not been for Mother and our hired man. They were not dressed for weather like that.

With the children safely at home, Mother began to worry about Father. There were few trees in Kansas in those days, and you could see great distances over the plains. She kept her eyes pretty well glued to the west window until she finally saw the wagon come over the horizon. That relieved the tension, momentarily; but only made it worse in the long run. That team was in the habit of running away at every opportunity it got; and, as it came closer, she could see it was coming on the dead run and without a driver. Then she really worried. What could have happened to Father? The moments were very tense, but not for long. That team

was homeward bound and in a hurry; but she couldn't see him 'til the team slowed down to turn in at the gate. Nothing had happened to him except he had got too cold to sit on the wagon and drive. So he wrapped the lines around the upright on the dashboard, and got out to walk behind the wagon and keep warm. The horses were cold, too; and, when they felt the tension on the lines slacken, they began to pick up speed and were soon in a dead run. He didn't walk behind the wagon. He was soon hanging onto the tail gate; jumping up and down; and being pulled twenty-five or more feet at every jump. He wasn't cold when he reached home!

In the spring of 1883, Mother's brother, Morton, came out from Indiana to work for us. I remember one day that summer Father was working in the front yard and I was doing the heavy looking on, when our next door neighbor, Mr. Thurston, walked in at the gate. He was very tall and straight, probably about sixty; wore a full beard; was slightly gray and was the best dressed I had ever seen him. He talked with Father a while; then the two of them walked into the house and he undressed and went to bed in the bed nearest the front door. The next thing I noticed, he was lying face down, with his head hanging over the side of the bed. He was running his fingers down his throat to make himself vomit, and Father was holding a vessel for him to vomit into. That was the strangest thing I had ever seen. When I vomited, it was because I had to; not because I wanted to. I learned later that he had told Father his family had given him a dose of poison and were trying to kill him. I can testify, that if they had given him poison, he was making good headway toward getting rid of it. Sometime that night, Father was awakened by the old man's voice. He said, "They've been here; they've been here." When Father got really awake,

he saw that the front door was open and the old man framed in it, but standing outside on the front step. He also recognized the odor of chloroform in great quantity. He immediately awakened Mother, though with some difficulty, and the two of them carried us children outdoors. When he went to awaken Uncle Morton, he was out cold and couldn't be awakened until they half carried, half dragged him outdoors into the fresh air. He was sleeping in the kitchen.

There was always a question in Father's mind whether Mr. Thurston's boys did do the things he accused them of, or if he, insane with a persecution complex, did the things himself and accused the boys of them. There was plenty of evidence pointing both ways. The old man was in the house, but the door was unlocked, so either could have done it. Chloroform puts people to sleep; it doesn't wake them up. If one of the boys did it, why did the old man wake up and awaken Father? Why was there no perceptible odor of chloroform on his bed, while every other bed in the house was loaded? Why was Uncle Morton given so much more than the rest of us? He had had a recent attack of pneumonia. Could it be that because of that the same amount would have a greater effect on him? Why would either of them dope the whole family? The sons rode by the house very slowly several times the next day looking in but did not come in. But who wouldn't look in when all the bedding was out in the yard? We don't know if they even knew he was there. The empty chloroform bottle was found in the yard next day, but that gave no clues.

We spent the next two nights with neighbors to the southwest. Mr. Thurston moved to another neighbor's about two miles to the northeast, and that night they were chloroformed. If he did the chloroforming, where did he get the second bottle of chloroform? Next day he moved on again, and we lost track of him. In due course of time,

he was back at home living with the family, peaceably, so far as the neighbors knew. He was still there two years later when we moved away.

That same summer Father decided he needed another team. Someone rounded up a herd of ponies on the Texas range and brought them there for sale. We all went with him. He picked out two strawberry roan mares and bought them. They were well matched in size and color; but right there the similarity ended. We named them Add and Liz, for Addie Beach and Lizzie Epley, two hired girls we had had at different times. Add was very nervous and high strung. She was very hard to break, both to work and to ride. We worked her but she never was a good work animal. On the other hand, once she was broken to ride, she was the nicest saddle nag in that part of the country. She had a short gallop that made her ride, as some folks expressed it, "like a rocking chair". Liz was easy to break, both to work and to ride, and was kind and gentle. But, if she was hitched to a load she thought was too heavy, she would balk; and it is surprising at the amount of punishment she would take before she would even tighten her traces.

I remember well when they went to break the ponies to work. They tied them behind the wagon, and drove to the top of a gently sloping hill in a neighbor's pasture. There they unhitched the team and hitched the ponies to the wagon. One man got into the seat and took the lines. The other shoved the wagon downhill onto them and jumped in. Naturally the ponies were scared and took off, and the breaking process was on. They put in the biggest part of half a day running up and down and around that hill. Then they unhitched one pony and hitched an old horse beside the other. That worked so much better that the breaking job was finished that way. The next thing was to break them to

ride. Uncle Morton put the saddle on Liz and mounted. She reared up a few times, then went off like an old horse. Father put the saddle on Add and mounted. She tossed him so far he never would try it again until she was broken. So, it happened that we had a work horse on the place for almost two years that no one could ride.

Then, Father hired a Texan, named Harris Reeves, to work for him. When told he couldn't ride her, he told Father he would break her to ride if he might have her to ride on Sundays. Father agreed and he went to work on her. She surely gave him a real work out, but he won. I remember well one Sunday afternoon, after he thought he had her broken. He had bought a new suit and started to see his girl friend. Just as he went to throw his foot across her back, she let loose in true Texas style and tossed him, new suit and all, flat on his back in a mud hole. He went to see his girl all right, but had to change back to his old suit first.

In the fall of 1883, when it was time for Uncle Morton to return home to enter school, it was decided that Mother and we children would go along for a visit. Robert volunteered the information that they got him onto an old bumpy train when he was only five months old and couldn't help himself. He was now six years old and they couldn't shove him around. He wasn't going. Why we went to Columbus to take the train, I don't know, unless there was some kind of an excursion from there. It was forty-five miles to Columbus, and only nine or ten to Cherryvale on the same railroad. We did get off there when we came home. Forty-five miles is a long, hard drive for a team and wagon, so we got up early and started before daylight. I knew that it was dark at night, but this was the first hint I ever had that it was also dark in the morning. I had never seen it that way and it was something of a shock. The same Lewis Fast who had worked

for us the year before, was married again and living in Columbus, so we went there for the night. We reached there about sundown. While we were in Columbus, Uncle Morton bought Robert a set of marbles so he could entertain himself after we were gone. About the only kind of nuts we had to eat in Kansas was peach seeds. We cracked and ate them regularly. So, when Robert got his marbles home, he took the hatchet and cracked one to see what kind of kernel it had in it. At four o'clock the next day we took the train. Mother was skeptical about Robert so took his clothes along to Columbus, just in case he should change his mind. He went with us to the train and told us goodbye without a whimper. Sometime later, in one of Father's letters, he wrote, "Robert says don't tell Mother I don't want to see her, but she can leave Noah there. I am afraid he would lose my marbles."

Soon after the train started, I was very much surprised to see fence posts, trees, and telegraph poles going by at a great rate. It took quite a bit of explanation to convince me that they were all standing still and it was we that were moving. The trip must have been very uneventful, for I don't remember one thing about it 'til we arrived in Indianapolis, twenty-four hours later. Grandfather, Uncle Asher, and Aunt Ruth met us there with the wagon. We got started on the twenty-odd miles to Grandfather Tomlinson's just about dark. There was plenty of hay in the bottom of the wagon, so I promptly slid down and went to sleep. Sometime later the wagon stopped. I awoke and asked why we stopped and was told it was a tollgate. The same thing happened several times during the night. I had never heard of a tollgate, and had no idea what it was; but, before I got to Grandfather's, I formed a pretty good opinion that it was some kind of a device to stop wagons. We reached Grandfather's late in the night. I had never seen

an open fireplace, and the fire was blazing brilliantly. The room had in it a mirror, a bookcase with two glass doors, and four windows. As it was night, every glass reflected the fire. I knew nothing of reflections, so to me every one of those reflections was a real fire and I just knew the house was burning down. Mother assured me the house was not burning down, and would still be there in the morning. It was—but there is one thing that puzzles me to this day—there were still two fires, and ever afterward there was only one, the one actually there. If I saw the second fire in the mirror, why did I never see it again?

After breakfast Grandfather put on his hat and coat, and asked me if I wanted to go with him to the mill.

"Has thee got a mill?"

"Yes."

"Does thee make flour?"

"No, I have a sawmill."

"What's a sawmill?"

"I make lumber, not flour."

"What's lumber?"

"Boards."

I knew what boards were, but had no idea that anyone made them. I did know that if you made anything you had to have something to make it out of. "What does thee make them out of?"

"Logs."

"What's a log?"

"A log is a tree that has been cut down." I knew what trees were.

Mother said I might go, so I hunted up my hat. Grandfather picked up the fire tongs, fished a burning stick of wood out of the fireplace, and took out across the field with me trotting along behind. When he came to the rail fence, he straddled over it. I had never seen a rail fence before, so hesitated and took a good look at it before tackling it. With a boy's natural instinct for climbing, I negotiated it all right. When

we reached Grassey Branch, that was something different. It was a large drainage ditch with a foot-log across it. Grandfather walked right across, but I balked. When he reached the other side, he looked back to see how I was doing. When he saw I was stuck, he told me to sit down astraddle the log, and work my way across with my hands—which I did. When he reached the mill, he must have had his mind so intently on his work that he forgot all about me. He strode through the mill, stepped over the dust pit and went on to build his fire in the boiler. The mill was old-fashioned even then. The saw ran up and down. Such mills went into oblivion very soon after that; but to me it was new and I was so interested in the machinery that it didn't occur to me to look where I was walking. I walked right off into the dust pit like a nickel in the slot. Fortunately, there was plenty of sawdust in it and I was not hurt; but was plenty scared. Thereafter, whenever I was around the dust pit, I always gave it a wide berth. I either rode the log carriage across it or walked around over the sawdust pile. When I went to Indiana to live nine years later, Grandfather kidded me about trying to walk across the sawdust pit on faith. I told him, "Yes, I had faith, faith in thee, and thee let me down." He never mentioned it to me again.

Times were really rough in Kansas in those days, and money was practically an unknown commodity. Many farmers rarely saw any at all. They raised what they ate, right there on the farm. If they couldn't raise it, they did without it. To get their flour, they took their wheat to the mill and had it ground; and the miller took his pay in grain. I remember one year our wheat was a failure; so Father took corn and had it ground. I never got so tired of anything in my life as I did of corn bread. I got another dose of it in Cuba during World War

I, and I haven't acquired any longing desire for it yet. I like one meal of it once in a while; but would sure hate very much to have to eat it as a steady diet, even yet. We couldn't even sell our butter and eggs for cash. We had to take the pay in trade. So, that is how we got our clothes. We never had sugar on the table except when we had company. We raised sorghum, so could have all the sorghum molasses we wanted to sweeten with.

When we were visiting at Uncle Robert's in Indiana that summer, I was eating sorghum molasses and saw that the sugar was on the table, so I wanted my molasses sweetened. Mother said, "No", but Uncle Robert was willing to spoil kids, so he put a spoonful of sugar on my molasses. I was very much disappointed; it didn't taste any sweeter than it did before. Uncle Robert wasn't so anxious to spoil me when I went there to live nine years later.

While we were there, Grandfather was remodeling his house. He had a negro, John Burtwell, mixing mortar for the plasterers. I got a hoe and was sure I was a big help. Then one day I felt awfully miserable and began to yawn. Silas Cook, one of the carpenters, saw me and every time I opened my mouth, he would open his. Naturally that made me mad, which was just what he liked to see; and I would say, "Thee knows I can't gape when thee is gaping." Then he would promise to be good, and about the time I got my mouth open, he would open his again. Mother told me to look the other way but kids will be kids. I would look at him and get madder all the time. Soon I began to tremble and got cold. Mother came out and got me and put me to bed, where I went into a high fever and later an awful headache. That was my first acquaintance with malaria, but far from the last. At that time, no one knew what caused malaria. I insisted I got it by helping Burtwell mix mortar. (This

is a very small world. Just twenty years later I was teaching in a small college in Central City, Nebraska, when Silas Cook's daughter, Lillie, showed up out there to take a teaching position.)

Once, while the weatherboarding was all off one side of Grandfather's kitchen, John (aged one) was out in the yard. He went to the kitchen door and began calling, "Muvver, come and open the door." She told him to come in beside the door where the siding was off. He yelled all the louder. Grandfather happened along about that time and picked him up and put him in through the open side. He ran right back out and this time began kicking the door, as well as yelling. There was a rain barrel about half full of water standing handy by, so Grandfather picked him up, held him by the ankles, and put him, head first, down into the rain barrel, but not into the water. When he stood him back onto the ground, he didn't need anyone to open the door!

When we started back to Kansas, we took the train at Westfield; and Grandfather went with us as far as Indianapolis to help Mother get the ticket and change cars. An acquaintance of his was on the train, so he put me over by his friend so he could have a last visit with Mother. This friend was quite a kidder; he asked me all kinds of questions and naturally laughed at some of my answers. He finally asked me where I lived. I had the answer. "I am visiting with my Grandfather in Indiana now, but I was raised in Kansas." He turned his penetrating eyes on me and looked like he was going to look right through me and said, "You haven't been raised very high yet."

Father was a schoolteacher. Whether he was right or wrong, he started us all to school at five if we were physically able to go. Ruth Anna and Robert had gone to school two years to Amanda Truex before I was old enough to go. She later became our step-

mother. She was born in Ohio and grew up in Indiana. She was a Baptist, but there are plenty of Quakers in both states, so she made no comments on their Quaker language. Not so, Nellie Canfield, my first teacher. She was from North Carolina and was used to talking to slaves and children as her inferiors. We all three ran into trouble on my very first day at school—not because I was there, but because we were Quakers. We spoke to her in the only language we knew and she regarded us as a bunch of ill-bred, disrespectful brats. She informed us that we could not address her as "thee", and we must always say "mam". She must be respected. That put us poor kids on the spot, between the upper and nether millstone, so to speak. Mother was a real, old-time Quaker and if one of us ever said "you" to one person we were duly punished; and as to saying "mam", we had never heard of it. Ruth Anna reported the situation to Mother and she wrote back. She informed the lady that "you" is second person plural and that she definitely was not plural. As for "mam", the Bible very definitely says, "Let your yea be yea; and your nay be nay." She wrote again and said it wouldn't hurt us to compromise and say "yes'm"and"no'm". Father was a Quaker, too; but from the time he was fifteen until he was grown, he had lived in a non-Quaker family and his first school was taught in a non-Quaker neighborhood. He told Mother that the language was not as important as the living; just forget it. Mother didn't see eye to eye with Father on that subject. The correspondence continued and I don't remember who won; but, knowing my Mother, I have a pretty good idea.

I had other troubles, too. I had a primer but Albert Thurston, grandson of the old man who involved us in the chloroforming, did not; so Nellie Canfield had us sit together so he could use my book. He was at least two years older than I, but had never

been to school; and was as full of cussedness as a boy his age could well be. One day, right after noon, we were turning through the book and he said out loud, "Look, there's a cat." I laughed and she made us both come up front and stand on the floor, one at each end of a long bench. He watched her and when she turned her back, he sat down and when she faced about, he jumped up. I saw he was getting away with it so I tried it,too. I didn't watch her closely enough and got caught. The threat she gave me so nearly scared the daylights out of me I didn't try it any more. He watched her carefully and sat down nearly half the time, and in addition did everything he could possibly think of to make me laugh. As a consequence, she kept us standing there through the afternoon recess, and on until after school was out in the evening. When the other children started home, I began to cry, and she sent another pupil after Ruth Anna and had her wait for me.

That turned me against school. I wanted to quit. Father was for making me go, but Mother said I was too young to be driven, so she resorted to giving me a small allowance to go. It was a mile and three-quarters to walk, and when the weather got cold they let me quit. From that time on I had no time for that teacher; and even today I say that a teacher who punishes a five-year-old for the misdeeds of an older boy and keeps him constantly standing on the floor for more than three hours, has no business teaching school.

When I got up the morning of my fifth birthday, there was a brand new colt wandering around in and out of the barn where her mother was stabled. Mother said that because she was born on my birthday she should be mine. Father said that the accident of her being born on my birthday gave me no extra claim over the other children.

Finally, he said I could have her if I would go and hoe corn all day. Imagine a five-year-old hoeing corn all day alone in the hot sun. Father had a rented cornfield a little more than a mile from home that was very weedy on one end. Mother fixed me up a lunch and gave me a bottle of water. I shouldered the garden hoe, which wasn't very heavy, and proceeded to the cornfield. The field had been cultivated, which pretty well took care of the weeds between the rows; but, in the rows, the weeds were just as high as the corn and as thick as they could possibly grow. They were six or seven inches tall and it took real skill, which I didn't have, to hoe out the weeds and leave the corn. A five-year-old's muscles are not well co-ordinated, so it frequently happened that when I went to cut down a bunch of weeds beside a stalk of corn, the hoe reached over and cut the corn down, too. I have no idea how long I hoed, nor how far I advanced into the field; but I do remember that I had advanced quite a way. The mid-day June sun was getting awfully hot. I looked back at what I had done, and looked ahead at what was still to do, then beheld the corn which I had cut down. I hadn't meant to cut it down. It was purely accidental. I knew Father wasn't going to like it, and that if I kept on hoeing, I would continue to have accidents, for I just couldn't control that hoe. After carefully contemplating the facts that were staring me in the face, I decided I didn't want a colt anyhow. So I gathered up my bottle of water and my lunch; took a big drink of water; shouldered my hoe and went home. I arrived in time for dinner.

Chapter 3

CHEROKEE COUNTY, KANSAS

Mother never was satisfied with our home in Labette County because there was no Friends Meeting within reach. The nearest was Lightening Creek Preparative Meeting(later changed to Friendship Monthly Meeting) in Cherokee County, a full twenty miles if you went by Montana and the ferry across the Neosho River—many miles farther if you went by Oswego and the bridge. The ferry was frequently out of order; and, when in order, there was not enough traffic to justify a man on the job all the time. He had to do something else to help earn a living. Consequently, when you wanted to go across the river, you had to begin by hunting up the ferryman. If he was on the other side of the river, it wasn't easy; and, when you got across, if it had rained recently, that heavy, sticky, gumbo mud made travel very slow and difficult.

The folks transferred their membership there soon after they moved to Kansas; but, owing to the above-mentioned difficulties, they were lucky if they got to go once a month in the summertime and not at all in winter. Mother thought it was a real stroke of good fortune when they were offered 365 acres of good rich, bottom land for their 160 acres of prairie land; and this land was only three-and-a-half miles from their Meeting. The only drawback was that a large part of this land overflowed some years; but you could raise so much more the years that it didn't overflow, that it more than offset the losses. They traded.

Instead of being good fortune, it proved to be the beginning of one misfortune after another—almost, you might say, the beginning of the end. We moved in March before I was six years old. The house was a two-story

box house; combination living room, dining room, and kitchen downstairs, and one big bedroom upstairs. Lightening Creek cut the farm in two, passing within three or four hundred feet of the house. Where the house stood, there were twenty-five or thirty acres that did not overflow; all the rest did. With the farm, we got a big, flat-bottom rowboat; and it was lucky we did, for all the pasture and about eighty percent of the land was on the other side of the creek. A lot of the time it could not be waded. I remember one morning in April when I got up, I saw the water far out of the creek bank toward the house. I asked where Father was, and was told that he and the hired man had gone across the creek in the boat to get the cattle. It was all new and strange to me, so I must have stood and watched it most of the morning; watched the logs, the foam, and the drift go by. Then I saw the cattle, right out in the middle of the stream, one right behind the other, and only their heads sticking above water. I had never seen an animal swim before. As they neared the ford, they all turned their noses toward our side; but the current was so swift they couldn't land 'til it carried them quite a way downstream. Next came Father and the hired man in the boat. The hired man at the oars, and Father on the back seat with a club in his hand. I have heard that hogs can't swim, but I know better. They had a lot of little pigs in the boat, and the mothers were swimming on both sides and behind, trying to get to their pigs. Father had all he could do to keep them from turning the boat over. Behind came the other hogs single file. I heard Father say after he got to shore with his pigs, that he was indeed lucky. He hadn't lost an animal.

Soon after the Civil War, a lot of Texas Negroes came to this part of Kansas and took up land. Three families in our

vicinity lived in the flooded area. They were in no immediate danger, as their houses were on stilts; but, as they had no boats, they would be isolated for some time without food. So, after Father got his livestock cared for, he took the boat and brought these three families to our house. Counting children, there were about twenty in the three families. Father got a small tent somewhere; but, even with that, I can't see how we all existed, but I know we did, for I was there and I remember it. I didn't check to see how they were stacked-in. There were eight of us and the hired man, and approximately twenty Negroes, a total of twenty-nine, and only two rooms and a tent to sleep in, and only beds enough for the family and hired man. The Negroes must have slept on the bare floor of our downstairs and on the bare ground in the tent; but Father had to feed the whole bunch. The water kept rising until it would swim a horse all the way between Lightening Creek and the Neosho River, five miles away. The year 1885 has gone down in history as the wettest year ever seen by the oldest residents in that part of Kansas. The April flood was duplicated in July and again in September.

The work of saving the livestock and Negroes was also very much the same, with one pathetic exception. In the July flood, our work team was on our side of the creek, but the Texas ponies, our yearling colt, and a colt belonging to Easter, the Negro who lived nearest to us, were in the big woods pasture across the creek. When they went to get the livestock, these ponies could not be found. After all the other animals were on dry land, and the Negroes brought in from their various log cabins, they set out to find the ponies. I think it was the second day of the hunt, late in the afternoon, that they found the old ponies, but no colts. Now that they had them found, the question was what to do with them? They were far from

home, the whole country was flooded, much of it so deep the ponies would have to swim, and night was rapidly approaching. The pasture gate was closed, and so far under water that it could not be opened; but not far enough under for the ponies to swim over it. Furthermore, to lead swimming horses through the woods in the night, was just unthinkable. One of the Easter boys was with them, and he told them that very near there, on the bank of Slouch Creek, was a knoll that never overflowed. The ponies had already, most likely, been without food for several days; but Father said they had better be hungry and alive than to be dead, so they took them to the high ground and tied them. Next morning Father said that so long as the ponies were all right on their island he would just haul feed over and keep them there 'til the flood went down. When he arrived with his feed at the knoll that "never overflowed", the ponies were in water, belly deep. But the rising water had relieved one situation. The ponies now swam right over the gate without touching it. They spent a few more days looking for the colts, then Father gave up. He said they could not possibly have survived so long in such deep water. The next day Father went to church. I don't remember if it was Sunday or some business meeting of the church. I am inclined to think it was the latter or we would all have gone. Anyway, he was late getting home, and we were just sitting down to lunch, when we heard what sounded like a colt's whinny. We all jumped up and ran out-of-doors. Sure enough it was she, just coming up out of the water, gaunt and thin, but otherwise all right. Easter promptly proclaimed that our colt came home because Father went to church. That same afternoon they resumed the search, and found Easter's colt, very much exhausted. I remember, I was playing in the yard, when someone said, "There comes the boat and they have Easter's colt." We all ran for the creek, including

Mother. There was the boat with Father and two of the Easter boys, but no colt.

Mother said, "They said you had the colt."

Father said, "We did have him 'til right here. His front feet were on land, and he was about half out of water. He either got his feet tangled up in some brush, or just slipped on the steep bank, and fell backwards, with so much force he jerked the rope out of my hand and went down."

One of the Easter boys said, "Someone down at home must have said a cuss word just as we reached here."

The Quakers are not a superstitious people, and I had never heard any superstitions until we got among the Texas Negroes. They pumped us full. I particularly remember two. One day I was down at Easters'. There was a ladder leaning up against the house; and, as I was walking along, I just naturally walked under the ladder. It raised a tumult. They made me walk under it backwards, so I wouldn't have bad luck. I was only six years old but rebelled against such foolishness. The next time I was down there, I looked all around to see if anyone was watching me, then deliberately walked under the ladder to see if it would give me bad luck; then I ran away.

As we had no creek in which to fish in Labette County, we knew nothing about fishing. The Easter boys were very kind to show us how to bait our hooks, and emphasized that we must always spit on the bait so the fish would bite. Again I was skeptical. Whenever I got my hook baited, I always looked around to see if anyone was watching me. If so, I spit on the bait. Otherwise, I didn't; and I never could see that it made one bit of difference to the fish!

As I remarked before, Father's troubles began soon after he traded for that farm. In addition to having to feed all those

Negroes, he didn't raise a thing for man or beast to eat that whole summer. Not only did he have to hire pasture on the prairie for his livestock while the water was up, but for long after it went down. The mud in the water coated the grass 'til it was unfit to eat until there was sufficient rain to wash it off. The hogs that he so successfully saved from the flood, died with cholera. The mosquitoes didn't bother us much while the water was up; but, when it went down, they came by the millions, and he had to buy mosquito bars for all the beds and Mother had to make them. Then came the malaria; and doctor bills piled up. We were all sick, but I think Mother and I were the worst. She had two congestive chills, and the doctor said a third was usually fatal. I was unconscious and in spasms for some time. While in Cuba, many years later, I was frequently in the lowlands where all around me had malaria, yet I never got it. I attributed it to two things. I took some quinine as a preventive; and I have always thought I most likely built up some immunity to it right there in Kansas. At that time, no one connected malaria with mosquitoes; but doctors had learned that people who lived along the creeks had it. They thought it came from the awful odor of decaying vegetation after the flood went down. The doctor told Father that if he didn't get his family onto higher ground, we would all die.

There was an eighty acre farm just a mile away that was for sale for twenty dollars an acre. He set out to sell a part of his bottom land. That wasn't a good time to sell bottom land. The biggest offer he could get was four dollars an acre. With all the family sick, he had no choice. He sold about half of the bottom land and got enough money to make a down payment on the other place, and mortgaged it for the balance. The buildings were very inadequate, but so were they on both our other farms in Kansas. The

house was a small box house with an open fireplace and a lean-to kitchen, but it did have a cellar. The downstairs was ceiled with newspapers, but still the cold came in. That first winter was really tough. One blizzard dropped the mercury to twenty degrees below zero. With a big fire in the fireplace, we would stand before it and burn the side next to the fire while the other side froze, so we had to keep turning around. The upstairs was not ceiled at all and the wind blew the snow in, both between the boards and between the shingles. Sometimes we would wake up in the morning with an inch of snow all over the bed. That helped to keep us warm, but we had to take our clothes under the cover with us and keep our faces covered. Worse yet, someone had to get up in the morning before the fireplace began to heat up, shake the snow off the bed and sweep the floor, or water would soak the beds and leak downstairs. Instead of a barn, there was a stable of boards on end, with four stalls in it. In front of the horses' heads was a half-fallen-down log cabin where we could store a little feed; but most of the hay had to be stacked in the barnyard and the corn put in rail pens. The cattle had to exist as best they could around the straw stack. They had little to eat but the straw, which is very poor feed, so they became very thin and weak, particularly the younger ones. As always with cattle, the stronger ones hook the weaker ones away from both the feed and the shelter of the stack. With the intense cold of that first winter, several of the weaker ones froze to death.

What we ate, which wasn't much, or at least not expensive, as well as all the feed for the livestock, had to be bought. Father had no money and could borrow none in Kansas because he had no security. Grandfather Tomlinson, back in Indiana, came to the rescue. What he didn't have, he borrowed on his credit and sent us enough to get us

through the winter. I never knew how much he sent. With other bad luck, Father never was able to repay it; and, when Grandfather made his will, he willed us $200.00, stating that he thought that, added to what he sent us in Kansas, would be about our share. He gave the other children twenty acres of land each. (He didn't die until 1918, some 32 years later.—GLW)

I have mentioned my Uncle Henry before. He was by far the best business manager of the whole Williams family; and had it not been for his rheumatism, he doubtlessly would have made his mark. When his rheumatism got so bad he could no longer care for his horse in bad weather, he quit teaching and opened a store in Parsons. There were too many things around the store that he couldn't do, so he wrote to his brother, Isaac, in Iowa, and got him to come down and help. With him doing the managing and Isaac doing the physical labor, he really prospered. He very much enlarged his store and bought several houses and lots in Parsons and added the rents to his income. Then he slipped and fell and dislocated a hip. The doctor set it and got him up so he could walk around a little on crutches; but the rheumatism was drawing it so badly that it just wouldn't stay and he had to go to bed permanently. Isaac was no manager, and very soon ran through with the store. They got Henry to deed all his property to them, on their promise to care for him for the rest of his life. Isaac's wife, Rose, wore the pants and was down-right dishonest in the bargain. One by one they sold the houses and ran through the money.

I mention Uncle Henry here because it was just at this time, when things were so very tough for us, that he came into our lives. Just after the September flood, and before he bought the prairie farm, Father had business over at Parsons and naturally went to see his brothers. On arrival, he

found the house vacant. Inquiry among the neighbors revealed that Isaac and Rose were in Urbana, Illinois, and Henry was at Epley's. Epley was a German farmer, who lived several miles out in the country. At one time Henry had taught the school where Epley's children went, and boarded at Epley's, and they had been very good friends ever since. When Uncle Henry opened his store, Epley did his trading there; and, after Henry was bedfast, Epley frequently visited him and often asked him to have Isaac bring him out and spend a week. Sometime before Father's aforementioned trip over there, Isaac went into Henry's room one morning and asked Henry how he would like to go out to Epley's for a few days. He thought it was a good idea, so Isaac got a spring wagon; got some of the neighbors to help load him, bed and all, and took him out there. Then Isaac and his wife skipped town.

After some investigation and some legal action, Father hired a spring wagon and brought Uncle Henry to our house where he ended his days some five years later. He must have suffered something awful on that trip. He was already suffering from arthritis and bedsores; add to that the jostling of the spring wagon over some twenty-five miles of rough country road, and the mental agony caused by the knowledge that his own brother had run through all of his property and abandoned him to the care of outsiders. He not only could not turn over in bed, but he could not lie on his side, hence could not be turned. Big bedsores formed on his back and the rheumatic pains plagued him. He often groaned and said he wished he could die. As time went on, the bedsores healed; and as his joints became ossified, the pain ceased. For a few years before his death, he had practically no pain whatsoever. He became quite cheerful, and was always glad to have neighbors come in and visit with him, or have some of us read to him.

Schoolteachers in those days were not too well educated. If we ever had one at our school that didn't get stuck on some of the problems in advanced arithmetic, I don't recall it. I think Father was the best educated man in that whole district. At any rate, whenever the teachers got stuck, they always sent their problems to him. When Uncle Henry found out what was going on, he would have us read the problem to him. Then, we would get a pencil and paper and write down numbers as he figured them out in his head and gave them to us. Many problems were thus worked out, and taken back to the teacher, without Father ever seeing them. Uncle Henry had no more than a common school education, but a very bright mathematical mind; and he dearly loved to get problems to work to help keep his mind occupied. Considering the condition he was in, I think he was as easy a person to care for as I ever knew. But even so he did take a lot of care. He never could be left alone more than a very few hours at a time; and, until we boys got big enough to assume a part of the load, it very much limited Father's ability to get out and do the things a farmer should do to earn a living. Father had to rent part of his bottom land and keep a hired man to do a lot of work that he would have done himself, thus adding to his financial troubles. We children spent many hours reading to Uncle Henry; and, when we were at school and Father at work, he spent many hours just looking at the ceiling, yet he never complained.

When Flu is mentioned, we all just naturally think of the wave that hit us in 1918 during World War I. Few people now living remember that we had a similar wave in the winter of 1890, only then it was called Russian Influenza. Uncle Henry was the first in our neighborhood to go in that wave.

Nearly everyone, particularly politicians

are complaining now about low farm income. I wonder what they would do or say if they faced the low income of those days. There was practically no cash income. What farmers didn't raise themselves, they didn't eat. I can remember when butter sold for six and a quarter cents a pound, eggs the same per dozen, and you had to take your pay in trade. Hogs sold on foot for three-fourths of a cent a pound; wheat was fifty cents a bushel and oats fourteen cents. Father went to town one day and asked what they were paying for corn. The buyer said that if it was solid and well-filled out, he would pay ten cents a bushel. Father said it just wasn't worth gathering at that price; so he gathered what he thought it would take to feed 'til the next crop and turned the cattle in to finish the job. Many farmers farther west burned corn for fuel. They had the corn and had neither coal nor money to buy it. We didn't need to do that. We had plenty of wood. We could live without money, eating what we raised and trading butter and eggs for clothes; but we just had to have money to pay interest, taxes, and back debts. So Father decided that his best chance to get any "cash money", as we called it, was to go back to teaching. He could get a hired man for twelve dollars a month, who would both act as nurse for Uncle Henry and work on the farm. The schools that were near only paid teachers twenty-five or thirty dollars a month; but in Star Valley, only ten miles away, they had a very large school. The house had a folding partition in it and had had two teachers. It, also, had some very bad boys who had run some previous teachers off. They told Father that if he would teach the whole school they would pay him $40.00. He accepted; and, what is more, in spite of the efforts of some of the bigger boys, he taught it, "even to the tune of a hickory stick" when necessary.

That same summer Mother's youngest

brother, Finley, finished Union High School, back in Westfield, Indiana, and prepared to teach. He could get no school there, so he came out to Kansas where teachers were in demand. He arrived just in time to join Father at Normal School, a school for teachers. Also that same summer, Mother's youngest sister, Zeruah, married James H. Hill, a Dunkard preacher, seventeen years her senior. They took their honeymoon going to the Dunkard annual meeting, somewhere in the West, and stopped to pay us a visit on the return trip. Following her close bout with malaria the year before, Mother was not in very good health; and, as stated before, Father was going to teach that winter and be away five days a week. That would leave Mother responsible for caring for six children; and the supervision of the farm, the hired man, and the care of Uncle Henry. Aunt Ruah succeeded in convincing Father and Mother that the load was just too much for her to carry and offered a solution. Uncle Jim had two daughters by his first wife and had always wanted a son. Let them take John, then five and a half years old. It wound up that they not only took John to live with them, but they also took Luella, four, to live with Grandfather.

Very soon after they were gone, Mother suddenly and unexpectedly died. I was only seven but well remember the gloom that settled over the whole family. Deep as it was with the rest of us who had not yet reached the age of responsibility, I can only imagine how deep it must have been with Father. Already so deeply in debt, now doctor bills and funeral expenses, and both the physical and financial care of Uncle Henry and four children—the youngest, Zona, only two-and-a-half years old. With the situation at home what it was, it also looked very much like he would have to give up his school—his only hope for any money. It was scheduled to begin the following Monday. In spite of

it all, he kept his chin up and did not give up in despair.

The doctor that had attended Mother offered at least a ray of hope. His sister and husband had just come out from the East and were looking for a place. He told Father, frankly, that he didn't know anything about them. His sister was a girl in pigtails when he left home and he never saw her husband until he met him at the train. If Father was interested, he would bring them down. Next day he brought them—Isaac and Sadie Spencer, and a two-year-old boy. I never did know his exact name. His mother always called him Perleydoll, all in one word. Father was desperate, so easy to deal with, and they made the deal on the spot. Spencer took the team and wagon with him to move them in the next day. They were to move in and take over just as if they owned the place. Believe me, they did!

She was to take over the care of the family; and he would do the farm chores, do for Uncle Henry what we boys couldn't do, and farm all the land he could tend on a rental basis—Father furnishing everything. Father would rent the rest of the land to someone else. After they were gone, either Ruth Anna or Robert said, "I do hope he turns out to be better than Arthur Eggleston." He was the hired man we had had while Father was in Normal School. Uncle Henry said, "If I am any judge of character, and I think I am, you will find he is a lot worse." It is hard to compare a callow youth with a mature man. Eggleston was there while Mother was in charge. Spencer had the full responsibility of our bringing up.

The very day Spencer moved in, he inquired if Robert and I knew how to milk and promptly assigned us a cow each to milk night and morning. Furthermore, we were to carry in the wood, and that was no small job. That open fireplace surely did eat up wood. Whatever may be said about his bad points,

of which he had a-plenty, he also had some good ones; one of the best of which was that he taught us boys to work. He started right in to do his fall plowing; and in order to get in a big day's work, he got up at four o'clock in the morning, built a fire, and as soon as the room was warm, we had to go milk, despite the fact that school didn't take up 'til nine o'clock and regardless of how cold the weather. He surely did a lot of work that fall and winter. When the ground froze up, too solid to plow, he went into the woods, felled, sawed, hauled home, split, and corded enough wood for all next summer. We had the most wood on our woodpile that had ever been there. About the time he thought he had enough wood cut for the summer, a sawmill moved into our neighborhood, and he made some kind of a deal with Father to cut the saw logs off the place and haul them to the mill. About the same time, the big boys in Uncle Finley's school became too much for him. He resigned and came back to our house, and he and Spencer hauled logs 'til he went back to Indiana in March to enter college. In the spring, Spencer sowed ten acres of oats; planted twenty-five acres of castor beans and several acres of corn. Then for some unknown reason, his energy began to wane. By mid-summer, when most farmers are putting in their longest days, he didn't get up 'til six or seven o'clock. As one of our Negro neighbors expressed it, "He lays in de bed of a mawin 'til de sun bo' a hole clean fru em."

Now the scene changes to the home. At the time the Spencers came, Zona, the youngest, was in very poor health and only two-and-a-half years old. I don't know what was the matter with her but suspect the background was malaria, from the year before, with something added that threw her into jaundice. She was as yellow as a pumpkin, and very weak. Perleydoll hadn't been in the house twenty-four hours, until he

discovered that if he pulled her hair she would cry. He was younger than she and smaller, but well, active, and a young demon. He would grab her by the hair and run, pulling her across the floor, sometimes forward, sometimes backward, but always crying to the top of her voice, which pleased him immensely. All his mother ever did about it was to tell her to run; but Zona was too sick to run. Sadie said she was going to raise her boy without punishment. The only thing she ever did to restrain him was to tie him up. /Before they left our place, he had learned to untie himself. I have often wondered how long it took him to get into either a reform school or the penitentiary.

Isaac, seeing the situation, said he would fix the hair pulling. He took the scissors and cut Zona's hair close to her head so Perleydoll couldn't get hold of it. Then, if she was standing or walking, he would take a run and throw all his weight against her to knock her down. The harder she fell, the louder she cried and the better he liked it. I can't imagine what Father would have done if he had seen Zona being so badly abused. He was at home very little, and that mostly at night, and Sadie saw to it that he didn't get to see what was going on; but he couldn't help seeing the peeled head and the wasting form. Both we children and Uncle Henry told him.

I am a firm believer that God often intervenes in the affairs of men after they have done all they can to help themselves. One Sunday at church, after Father had seen what was happening to Zona, he was introduced to an elderly couple from Indiana, who were visiting their daughter there. He asked what part of Indiana they were from; and, when told they were from Plainfield, he asked if they knew Jane Doan. She was Grandfather Tomlinson's sister. When assured that they knew her, he told them the story and asked if they would take Zona and leave

her with Jane Doan until she was called for. They were very glad to oblige. Father came home and packed all her clothes and wrote to Aunt Ruth, telling her what he was doing. There was not time to write to Aunt Jane. Father left for his school that afternoon and we went to school as usual next morning. Sometime during the day, the folks came by and got her. When we came from school that evening and found her gone, despite the fact that I knew she was going, I broke down and cried. That poor sick child, going away with absolute strangers, and not one of her family there to tell her good-bye, and we might never see her again. I feel quite sure that had she stayed there with Perley-doll we would have buried her before the winter was over.

God takes care of his children. We did see her after six years. She grew to womanhood; graduated from college; taught school, both in a mission school for Negroes in Arkansas and in the public schools in Indiana. Later she was recorded a Quaker preacher and spent a lot of time in the service of the church. Twice married, she has no children of her own but has reared two stepsons. Now in her seventies, she is caring for her blind husband and Uncle Finley, now in his ninetieth year.

Since Father's land was all rented out, when his school was out he hired out to work on another farm 'til harvest. He had ten acres of wheat that was planted before Spencer came, so he came home to harvest that. I was only eight years old and don't know what it was all about, but friction grew up between Father and Spencer that really exploded the day the threshers came to thresh Father's wheat and their joint oats crop.

The threshers figured out their schedule and told Father they would be at our house for dinner on a certain day. The day before they were expected, Father went to town;

bought the necessary groceries and brought them home for Sadie to cook the dinner. After the threshers were there and the work going nicely, just about half an hour before time to stop for dinner, Isaac hunted up Father and told him Sadie was not going to cook any dinner. Father left his work and went over to a neighbor's, a quarter of a mile away, and made arrangements for Mrs. Horner to cook the dinner. Then he rushed home and got the groceries for her to cook. Then back to the threshers and explained why dinner would be late, then back to the house for dishes, chairs, etc. We had a good dinner but quite late. In the meantime, Spencer went to Gib Rainey, the engineer, and told him he didn't want the threshers to blame them because there was no dinner. Gib was sometimes quite profane in his conversation. He picked up a hammer, poured out some of his choice invective on Spencer and said, "We know whom to blame. We have threshed here before, and if you don't get out of here, I'll use this hammer on you." I really think he meant it. Spencer thought so, too.

After dinner one of the threshers, whose judgment Father prized very highly, said, "Williams, if I were in your place, I would get rid of that pair if it cost me a horse." That night after supper Father called them into conference, and they agreed on a price for Father to buy all of Spencer's share of the crops in the field. I never knew the price but suspect it was far more than any two horses on the place were worth. Of course he did get the crops after he gathered them. Neither do I know what he put up for collateral, but the next day he went to the bank, borrowed the money and paid them off. The following day they took our team and wagon and moved, bag and baggage, to her brother's. When he brought the team home, he stopped to tell Uncle Henry and us children good-bye. We never heard from them

again, not even indirectly. Getting rid of them cured some difficulties, but opened up others. Ruth Anna was just under twelve, and the whole running of the house, including making our clothes, was dumped in her lap. Of course, we helped her some, but the responsibility was hers; and when you consider her age, she did a mighty good job of it.

The twenty-five acres of castor beans were dumped into the rest of our laps just when they began to ripen. Caring for castor beans is a very laborious job. First, we picked a piece of level ground and cleaned it off absolutely clean for a bean yard. Then we took the team and wagon and went through the field, straddling every ninth row so as not to break down any more stalks than was absolutely necessary. The cutters took four rows each side of the wagon and cut every spike that had one ripe boll on it. If left longer, the boll would snap open in the field and the bean was lost. We hauled these in and spread them out over the bean yard for the sun to dry and snap the bolls open. When most of the bolls were open, the spikes were raked aside and the beans were swept up and run through a hand-powered fanning mill. The cleaned beans were sacked for market and the unopened bolls that the screens threw out were again spread over the yard for the sun to work on a while longer. Any time there were signs of imminent rain, there was a great rush to get everything but the green ones gathered into barrels and boxes, and covered with a canvas. Rain didn't hurt green beans.

I was eight; Robert was ten. Of course there were variations as need arose; but, for the most part, Robert and I took the team and cut the beans while Father did the heavier work of operating the yard. Twenty-five acres is a lot of land to go over; so very soon the beans were ripening faster than we could harvest them. Father hired

neighbor boys to help us and put on another team and wagon. The wages ranged according to the boy, from ten to twenty-five cents a day and dinner. I remember one nine-year-old, Lee Blackston (Toad for short) couldn't stand it to work for ten cents a day while his older brother was getting twenty-five, so he went on a one-man strike for higher wages and struck out. He told his mother that there wasn't enough work for him to work any longer and spent the next day and a half catching grasshoppers and putting them under glass to cook in the sun. Apparently his mother checked with his older brother and found out what the score was, for the second day at noon he came and wanted to go back to work. Father told him he might, at the same price. Money was very scarce and his mother figured it was more profitable to work for ten cents a day and his dinner, than to cook grasshoppers and eat off her.

Work continued 'til frost killed the plants. I don't know how Father came out, financially, on his castor beans. I do know he never planted any more.

That same fall, 1887, Father married Amanda Truex. She was a schoolteacher where we lived in Labette County. Ruth Anna and Robert had both gone to school to her. I was too young. You hear many stories of stepmothers and how they treat their stepchildren. Some of the stories paint her as being good; most of them, as being downright mean. Does it ever occur to anyone that a stepmother's treatment of her stepchildren might be greatly influenced by the way they treat her? Our stepmother was human; she had her good points, and she had her bad ones. But we weren't all little angels with sprouting wings either. Brother John would probably take exception to those last two statements. I have one very important thing that I will thank her for as long as I live.

When she came to our house, I was con-

stantly troubled with indigestion and belching up grease, known then as dyspepsia. She told me that my principal trouble was that I ate too fast and didn't chew my food long enough to let the saliva mix with it. She said, "Chew your food longer and quit eating fat meat." I tried her recipe, got better, and have followed it ever since. I attribute my many years of rugged health, largely, to following her advice.

The next year after their marriage, John got the notion into his head that he wanted to come home. Uncle Jim found someone going out to Kansas and sent him. That year, also, Amanda's only child, Lloyd, was born. Sometime after that, Ruth Anna and John reported to Robert and me that they had overheard Father and Amanda talking about disciplining us children. They said Father told her he thought that if she undertook to whip Robert, he would stand and take it; but if he didn't, it would be just too bad for her. He thought Noah had spunk enough in him to fight back. She could most likely handle him anyhow, but it would make her a very uncomfortable tussle. So the best thing to do with them was to report them to him and he would take care of them. As for Ruth Anna and John, she could handle them. Be sure and make them mind. Whether they actually heard that conversation, or just dreamed it up, one fact stands out clear. She never laid violent hands on either Robert or me. Another fact is, that generally speaking, we minded her without question and we definitely didn't deliberately do things to make her mad.

I did get two whippings on her order. One was pretty well deserved; the other very unjust. Father sent me out to round up some neighbors to help thresh. When I got to the last house I was supposed to go to, the woman sent one of her boys out and told me not to come in, for they had the measles. I said I didn't care if I did get the measles; tied my pony to the fence; went in and played

'til dinner; then ate dinner with them. Naturally, I didn't mention measles when I got home; but measles are like murder, they will out. When they did, Amanda was plenty mad. She was afraid Lloyd would not survive them. As a matter of fact, it was the very best time of year to have them, July, and the best time of life for him; he was one year old. He had them the lightest of any of us; I had them the worst.

After all, I had not disobeyed her; I had had no orders on the subject and a whipping wouldn't keep the other children from getting measles, so I didn't get one. But Amanda didn't forget, and sought every opportunity to make me pay. Our upstairs was only a half-story high and its only ventilation was a half-window in one end. The Kansas sun bore down on that low roof plenty hard. It was just like an oven in that room. All the family was sore at me. They said I wanted the measles, now I could enjoy them. With the heat of the room and the fever of the measles, I wanted cold water desperately, but very little of it did I get. It was impossible to get any decent care from any of them. I suffered alone, but recovered in due time. They all four came down at once, so I not only had to wait on them, but also had to do a lot of their work and was the only one that ever went upstairs.

They wanted everything, particularly cold water. There was no ice in those days. The only place to get cold water was to draw it fresh from the well with a bucket, rope and pulley, and it sure didn't stay cold long after you got it. Both Father and Amanda saw to it that I answered every call, and they came plenty frequently. I was definitely resentful at how much care they demanded, when they had given me so little. One day Father told me to ride to the bottom farm and get a hoe. As I rode past the house, Amanda called to me to draw some fresh water and take it upstairs. Instead of dismounting and doing as I was told, I laid whip to the

horse. When called to account on my return, I said I didn't hear her. "If you didn't hear, how did it happen that you laid whip to the horse?" I couldn't answer that one and Father promptly laid whip to me!

Father and Amanda went with their brother-in-law, Elbridge McCoy, over to her mother's, to be gone several days. They told me when to meet them at McCoy's to bring them home, which I did. On the road home he told me he had traded a Jersey cow for a Holstein bull, and was going next week to make the exchange, and that one of us boys would have to go along to drive the led animal. I promptly asked if I might be the one and he said, "Yes." Nothing more was said. On the morning of the trip, we boys hitched up the team and tied on the cow while the folks were getting ready. Robert drove the team and I walked behind and drove the cow to the house. When the folks came out, Amanda climbed up and took her place and Father handed up Lloyd. Then, she turned around and said, "Why is Noah going? He can do more work at home than John. Leave him at home and take John." Father promptly gave the order for the change. Naturally, I put up a loud and vigorous protest. I had been promised that trip. She said, "Take Noah out and give him a good sound thrashing, or he won't do a thing while we are gone." Father did just that. That broken promise and severe whipping for something I was not even accused of having done, but something she was afraid I might not do, burned into my very soul and had reactions into the second generation. When I was rearing my children, I was very conservative about making them any promises of any kind. But when I did make a promise, whether it was in compliance with a request of theirs, a punishment, or a reward,I was very, very careful to keep it.

Deliberately doing things to make her mad was John's specialty. Whenever he saw an opportunity, he never let a certain

whipping to follow stop him. I particularly remember two. We had a hand-operated washing machine, and on washday one of us boys had to furnish the power. It wasn't a modern machine, and frequently the clothes would roll up instead of washing. We were instructed that we should stop the machine and straighten them out when they rolled. One day John was running the machine. The clothes rolled up. He just kept on rubbing and let them roll. She came out and was straightening them out and at the same time scolding him for not doing it. He just reached into the machine, grabbed a pair of pants and slapped her in the face with pants, suds and all.

Another time, Ruth Anna was sitting in our only rocking chair, holding the baby, Lloyd. Amanda wanted her to do something else and told her to give the baby to John while she did it. John sat down in the chair all right, but laid his arms down along his legs. When she laid the baby in his arms, he straightened his arms and legs and rolled the baby fairly gently, but most surely, right down onto the floor.

Those were only two of many. Either his hide was tougher than mine, or she didn't lay it on like Father did. I know I never purposely did anything that I knew would get me a whipping. Father's whippings hurt. In spite of the very raw deal she gave me, on the whole, she was a pretty good stepmother and I am satisfied we were all four better off at the time, and made better citizens because of the five years she "rode herd" on us.

The year I was six years old and should have started to school, I was too sick with malaria to go. So I didn't really get started to school until I was seven. People who talk about crowded schools should have seen that one. I can't give its dimensions, but it was quite small. The desks were made for two, but many of them had to seat three; and still some of the smaller pupils had to sit

on recitation benches. There were forty to forty-five of us, and one teacher taught us all. There were no grades, but there were classes from the primer to the fifth reader. I went to school six years at the District Number One School. The first two years, May Rodenburger taught; the next two, Wiley Sparks; the fifth, Theresa Galoup; and, the last year we were there, Father taught. Every one kept a hedge gad, six or seven feet long, standing in the corner; and, I think every one used it on occasion; but I am quite certain those occasions were not nearly as frequent as the need for them would have been if the gad had not been there and the certain knowledge it would be used if necessary.

May Rodenburger was a German girl. Her father was of the old German school, who thought everyone should work. He had seven children. The oldest was a boy, followed by four girls in a row. The boy married young and left the burden of the farm work on the four girls. So, it could be truthfully said that a large part of May's education was acquired on the handles of plows and hoes; and, with the education, she also acquired a liberal amount of muscle, which served her well while teaching. Many a time I have seen her yank a recalcitrant youngster out of his seat by his coat collar, move him over to a convenient bench and chug him up and down. Most of them didn't care to have the performance repeated. I remember that one time she stood two big boys up on the floor—Joseph Martin, who was almost as big as she was, and Harris Canfield, who was considerably larger than she.

Joseph got to laughing, and she asked him what he was laughing about. He said he didn't want to tell. She walked over to the corner, picked up her gad, walked back and asked him if he was ready to talk. He said, "Harris said, 'Damn old May'." Harris said, "I didn't either." She took that gad in both

hands and really went to work on both of them where they stood, side by side. Joseph stood next to her so he didn't get hurt much. Harris got the full lap of the gad around his legs. When she told them they could take their seats and they started to return to their seats, Joseph laughed, Harris didn't. When she saw that Joseph was laughing, she called him back and really warmed him up. He didn't laugh that time!

She had barely enough education to get a license to teach, but I must say she used what she had well. She had a few girls as big as she was and four or five boys that were much bigger, though, as I remember it, Joseph and Harris were the only ones that ever gave her any trouble and they didn't repeat. Despite her limited education, she taught a very good school, considering her limited facilities, number of pupils and number of classes. But I am convinced that her muscular prowess, coupled with a liberal amount of good, common sense, contributed far more to her success than a well-rounded education without them could possibly have done.

Wiley Sparks was a young bachelor, probably in his thirties. He lived on a farm nearby with his widowed mother and two younger sisters. He had taught school several terms, teaching in winter and farming in summer. He probably had more education than May, but not enough but what he had to send his harder arithmetic problems to Father for solution. While he used the gad, he also had other methods of torture. He had a piece of planed walnut wood, about an inch wide, a half an inch thick, and eight inches long that he called a ruler. Whenever he saw anyone doing something he shouldn't, he let it drive and was usually a pretty good shot. However, one day, I was studying my lesson as I should, when I caught that ruler right on top of my head. I jumped and looked around, half scared to

death. He said, "Pick that ruler up and bring it here." I was too badly scared to even move. Then looking right at me, he said, "I mean you" but still named no names. Then the same Joseph Martin who had given May Rodenburger trouble, and who sat right behind me, stooped over, picked it up and started forward with it. What a relief! When Joseph handed him the ruler, he made him hold out his hand, palm up; then, holding the ends of his fingers with one hand, he whipped him across the palm of the hand with the ruler so hard that his hand was quite swollen the next day. I always thought he should have apologized to me for hitting me on the head when I was studying, but he never did.

One evening during spelling class, there was a commotion in the back of the room, where the big boys sat; and he told Otis Borman and Bud Gentry to come up and stand on the floor. Otis was fully as big as Wiley, and Bud was really an overgrown boy. He was eight or nine inches taller, and weighed thirty-five or forty pounds more than Wiley. When they didn't come, he walked back and took Bud by the shoulder of his coat to encourage him. Bud suddenly jumped up and struck at Wiley with all his strength, but Wiley was quick enough to interpose the spelling book which he held in his hand. It sure ruined the spelling book. Bud said Wiley tore his coat and no one could do that and get away with it. Wiley told Bud he could knock him clear into next week if he wanted to, but he didn't come there to fight. I am not sure but what he could at that. He was mature, wiry, quick as a cat, and I am not positive, but think he had had boxing lessons. Bud was big and strong, but slow and something of a lummox. In the meantime, I think everyone in the house was trembling in his boots. I know I was. Bud's sister, Addie, about sixteen or eighteen years old, jumped up crying

and said, "I am going home." But the fight, if you could call it that, was right in front of the only door. She didn't go anywhere. Talk about the calm after the storm. The commotion ended as suddenly as it had begun. Those two big boys walked up in front as quietly as any two boys ever did and stood there 'til school was out. The teacher continued the classes just as though nothing had happened. But he wrote out his resignation, to take effect soon after, and sent it to the school board. They called a meeting of the patrons. After considerable discussion, Mr. Gentry offered to take Bud out of school and Wiley agreed to teach the school year out.

Theresa Galoup was a small-town girl, and this was her first school. I don't think she had any more education than the others, and she most certainly didn't have anything like May Rodenburger's physique. But, in the meantime, the big boys had quit school and the little ones had not grown up fast enough to take their places. Some of the patrons had moved away, so the school was not as large as it had been, and the four years of strong discipline we had had was bearing fruit. I can't say that she had no trouble, but can say it was surprising as to how little she had in view of her small stature and the years that had gone before.

Father didn't have much trouble either. Bud Gentry's nephew, fresh out from Missouri, started something one day but Father was an old hand at teaching. He promptly finished it.

There was one boy in this school I particularly want to mention: Millard Propse, not particularly bad, not particularly good, just about average. But every few days he would hold up his hand and say, "I am sick. I want to go home." Maybe he would be back next morning, maybe he wouldn't be back for a week. I remember one day in particular. We were playing Black Man during the morning recess. He suddenly stopped running, threw

his hand up over his heart and said, "I am sick; I've got to go home." He went in the house; got the teacher's permission and his lunch pail; came back out; set his lunch pail down back of the school house and went on playing as vigorously as ever. When the bell rang, he picked up his lunch pail and went home. He was back only a day or two later. I am quite certain there wasn't a person in school, unless it was possibly the teacher, who didn't think that Millard was just playing sick. We got the jar of our lives one summer day when a neighbor came to tell us Millard was dead.

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Some forty years later, when I was working on Hoover Dam, living in Nevada, my third daughter, Mary, began acting much as Millard had. She would come home from school sick, lie down 'til school was out, then go out to play with the other children. One evening when I came in from work, she had been home sick but was now gone for a hike in the mountains. The other children said she wasn't sick, so I should punish her; make her stay at school and also do her share of the housework. When I thought of doing so, I always thought of Millard. A little rest in bed doesn't injure well folks and is quite beneficial to sick ones. So I set my foot down hard. No matter what happened, nor who went where, when Mary came home sick, she went to bed and she stayed there 'til next morning. Her coming home after that was much less frequent, but she did continue to come.

We had a chiropractor in town that thought a lot of himself and claimed he could cure almost anything. I sent her to him for treatments, but they didn't seem to help her, so we quit. I met him in town one day and he asked why Mary had quit coming for treatments. I told him frankly that the treatments didn't seem to be helping her, and we just didn't have the money to waste.

He said he couldn't blame us for that. Then I said, "What is the matter with Mary?" He said, "Frankly, I don't know what is the matter with Mary." But he was willing to take my money. However, I must say for him, he wasn't a fake. That was just one case that he couldn't diagnose, nor handle.

When the "flu" hit camp, most of those who got it went to the hospital for two or three weeks. He spread literature all over town that was put out by the chiropractor organization, showing the average time it took medics, osteopaths and chiropractors to cure "flu". Naturally, the chiropractors cured it in much less time than either of the others, or the literature would not have been published nor distributed. The "flu" hit me one afternoon on the job. I came in on the transport with a very high fever and stopped at his office before I went home. He put me on a machine, something like the "rack and pinion" used during the Spanish Inquisition, and really treated me rough. He had me come back three times a day for the next two days. After the third treatment of the second day, I was feeling much better and asked when I could go back to work. He said, "Let your conscience be your guide." I caught the transport back to the job the next morning. There is some difference between two days and two or three weeks, when your pay stops and you have a family to feed and doctor bills to pay.

To get back to Mary, when summer came, my wife took the children down to Los Angeles to get them out of the desert heat. Mary got no better, so she took her to osteopaths, chiropractors, and child specialists—a lot of money spent and still no results. Harry Coffin, a schoolmate of mine in Penn College, had studied medicine and was practicing in Los Angeles at that time. I wrote to him and asked him if he could recommend a good diagnostician. He wrote back that that had been his specialty for about twenty years and he would like to see her. He put her through

a series of tests and found that her trouble was a deficiency in the secretion of the thyroid gland. There was no cure, but by supplying the secretion, which was prepared commercially at the slaughter houses from hog thyroids, she would be well as long as she took it. Sometimes, after the gland had a chance to rest, it began to function normally. He took over her care and cured her.

After we found out about her, I have often wondered if Millard had the same thing.

While in Cuba, in conversation with an American-educated, Cuban doctor, he told me that practically every-one in Cuba had malaria in his system. Under normal conditions, it lays dormant; but if he gets an overdose or something happens to weaken his system, the malaria jumps in, so they always have to be on the alert for it. Accidents weaken the system so when accident cases are brought to him, the very first thing he does is give them quinine. Millard lived near Lightening Creek, where there was plenty of malaria, but he didn't act like the usual malaria case. I am convinced that he had the same trouble as Mary, which weakened his system and malaria did the rest.

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Chewing tobacco was very common in those days. About as common as smoking is today. It was not allowed in school, but some of the bigger boys did it on the sly. One day at recess, when I was about 8, Jetto Martin, Joseph's younger brother, asked me if I didn't want a chew. I thought it was a splendid idea but was afraid I would get caught. He cut a small corner off his plug and gave it to me. I stuck it down in my vest pocket and forgot it. One Saturday, sometime later, I was herding some 30 cattle in a cornstalk field about three miles from home. I accidentally ran my fingers down into my vest pocket and found that piece of tobacco. I thought, "Now is the time, with neither parents nor teacher to interfere." I put

the whole chew in my mouth and went to work on it; chewing, spitting and feeling like I thought a grown man ought to feel. Then, suddenly, I didn't feel so big. I was so sick I had to get down off the pony to keep from falling off; then had to lie down on the ground to keep from falling over. While lying there and suffering, I had all kinds of visions. I knew I was going to die. There was no question about that. What worried me was the pony and the cattle. I felt pretty sure the pony would go home, but the cattle would wander over the neighboring wheat fields. I wondered if they would ever find all of them, and how much damage Father would have to pay. But worst of all, I wondered if they would ever find me and give me a decent burial. I have no idea how long I laid there, but eventually I realized that I wasn't dead and that my misery was gone. I got up and looked around. The pony wasn't very far away and none of the cattle were in the wheat field. I looked at the sun and decided it was time to go home. So I rounded up the cattle and went. I didn't tell anybody about that chew of tobacco for years, and never took another.

When offered a smoke, I always remembered that chew; and thought, if smoking is as bad as chewing, I wanted none of it. I have been thankful all these years that I took that chew and that I was so sick that I never wanted another. I am quite sure I have had fully as much enjoyment in life as those who use tobacco; and, judging by the fuss they made, I have been much happier than many who did use it and for some reason could not get it. I have seen men get up in the middle of the night and walk two or three miles to get a plug of tobacco. In the Zapata Swamp in Cuba, I had to interfere to keep two men from fighting a duel, one with a machete, the other with a Colt 38, all over a half package of cigarettes, when there were no more available.

James Whitcomb Riley, in his "Old Swimmin'

Hole", very accurately describes the swimming hole we had in Lightening Creek. It was there that we all learned to swim and spent many happy hours. When we worked on the bottom farm, we always carried our lunches and ate them and fed the horses under the wide spreading branches of a big elm tree, a short distance downstream from our swimming hole. We boys always bolted our lunches and ran for the swimming hole. If my reader thinks a bunch of boys can't swim without making a lot of noise, he just hasn't figured out what the proper inducement can do for a boy. Father always laid down for a nap after dinner, while the horses ate their hay. When he awoke from that nap, it was time to go to work. Can you imagine any of us doing anything to disturb his slumbers? We were very careful not to.

Father was right in always taking Robert to drive the second team when hauling wheat or corn to market, tho' John and I didn't like it. He was not only twenty months older than I and forty months older than John, but grew up much faster than either, so was able to do a lot more of the unloading. But that was no excuse for babying him. No matter what he wanted, he usually got it for the asking. If he didn't, he would cry for it like a two-year-old baby, and almost always got it in the end. He didn't like the way Father had the horses paired into teams, so he took one horse from each team, put them together and announced that that was his team. If anything was ever said about John or me using it, he put up a howl and usually had his way.

Grass came in the woods much earlier in spring, and stayed later in fall, than on the prairie, so someone had to herd the cattle there for a month or so both fall and spring. Herding cattle isn't hard work but gets awfully lonesome. None of us liked to do it. Robert wasn't lazy about the things he liked to do and would set a pace it was hard for us to follow. But if there were two jobs to

do, he took his choice and shoved the other onto John or me. I wasn't lazy either and willingly did a liberal share of the undesirable job; then told him I had done my share, it was his turn to finish. If he didn't take over, which was far too frequently the case, the work went undone. If he undertook to whip me and make me do it, which also happened frequently, there was either a fight or a foot race and still the work went undone. So, Robert told Father not to send Noah to work with him; send John, he will mind. He had to or take a thrashing. Result: If there was any work for one person alone, I was that person. Generally, in the fall and spring, that job was herding the cattle.

I remember well one year in late summer, Robert and John were plowing for wheat and I was herding the cattle, as usual. There was a political rally in town and a neighbor invited Father and Amanda to go with him and his wife. Child-like, we all wanted to go but the work must go on. Robert had the solution. Despite the fact that the grass in the home pasture was short and pretty well dried up, it wouldn't hurt the cattle to live on it for one day. Just in case they didn't approve, and decided to break out of the pasture, we would saddle a pony and tie it to the hitching post. Ruth Anna, while doing her household duties, could also keep her eye on the cattle; and, if they got out, go and put them back in. The entire pasture was visible from the kitchen door. John and I could plow. We all gave him credit for a wonderful idea, but it had one basic fault and needed a little variation. The basic fault was that he was the very one who couldn't go because anyone else would ruin his team. We had heard him say so many times. We couldn't agree on the variation needed, because everyone of us wanted it varied in such a way that he would be the one to go. Robert always kept his mind

fixed so he could change it on a moment's notice, if it was to his advantage to do so. He was quite positive I couldn't possibly ruin his team in just one short day. So, as usual, Robert got his way. The rest of us worked just as he planned it, with the promise we could go to the next rally that came along. No more rallies came along, nor anything else we wanted to go to, until the Fourth of July celebration next summer. We all three promptly told Father that we would gladly accept that instead of the promised rally, and he agreed. It was in the summer, the grass in the pasture was good, so no one was herding cattle. The corn plowing was pretty well caught-up and nothing pushing to be done. So we all went to the celebration, Robert included.

I don't remember ever putting anything over on Robert, but once; and I always thought that was good enough to pay off for a lot of the things he did to me. Father sent the two of us to the bottom farm to plow corn. Sitting on a four by five cultivator tongue and driving a team can get awfully tiresome. Naturally, he made me drive. Sometime in the afternoon, we stopped for a drink of water. When we went back to work, I told him it was his turn to drive. He said Father sent me down to drive. I said he sent the two of us down to plow and I had driven more than my share, and wasn't driving any more. I never knew 'til then that a strap with a hole in it would raise a blister if properly applied. He reached me with the end of the lines and really raised a beauty. I was out of reach before he could raise a second. After some more argument, he laid the lines down and said he was going to tell Father. Father was three-quarters of a mile away, so I was quite sure he was bluffing. As soon as he was out of sight, I tied the lines together, put them around my back and started plowing, doing my own driving. I don't know where he

went but he was gone quite awhile. When he came back he again told me to get back on the cultivator and drive. I told him to attend to his own business and I would attend to mine, and I never stopped the team. He didn't bother me any more. Just fooled around 'til time to go home. When we got home, nothing was said about what went on in the field; there very seldom was. Father was a firm believer in the theory that when there was any question as to who should be whipped, whip both so as to be sure you whip the right one. A practice which, instead of healing the discord, merely covers it up.

Next morning Father decided he wanted that field finished that day. We had another cultivator, pretty well worn-out but it still worked if you applied enough effort, and a double shovel and horses, such as they were, to pull them. So he said we would take them, and take Ruth Anna and John to drive the cultivators, while he, Robert and I operated the plows. He didn't say who would operate what, but from past experience I had a strong suspicion that I was headed for the double shovel and the prospect didn't please me at all. A double shovel only plows half as much as a cultivator, but because it has no wheels, it is much harder to operate. With that double shovel staring me in the face and hope that I might avoid it if I made my plea strong enough, I decided to risk a whipping for the day before; so opened up right at the breakfast table and told what had happened and added that Ruth Anna was needed at home; and if I could have the same team I had yesterday, I wouldn't need a driver. Poor Robert sat there and looked down his nose and never said a word until I mentioned driving the same team I had yesterday. Then he woke up and said that was his team and I would ruin it. Father, for once, got the cue and remarked, "Since you insisted so strongly that he drive them yesterday, I can't see how he could possibly spoil them

very seriously in just one more day." I got that team and cultivator and lost no time in getting them into action lest Father listen to Robert and change his mind. Father took the other team and cultivator with John as driver and gave Robert the double shovel with the best saddle nag on the place. She worked very poorly beside another horse and was just impossible in single harness. He soon had her running all over the place, tramping down more corn than he plowed, and he was bawling like a weaning calf. I had the only horse on the place that worked real well in single harness, but didn't offer to stop and trade. In fact, I didn't stop, period! I was quite sure that as long as I kept moving and doing a good job of plowing, I was safe in my job; but that if I ever stopped or slowed down, I might find myself using the double shovel. I am not quite clear whether it was pity for Robert or because of the corn that was being trampled down, but Father eventually took the double shovel and let Robert use the other cultivator with John as driver. We finished the field that day according to plan.

The summer Lloyd was two years old, Robert and John were plowing near the house. Apparently Lloyd started down across the field to them. He either fell down or laid down in the furrow and went to sleep. When John's furrow horse came to him, he very obligingly stepped out of the furrow to go by. John jerked him and yelled at him to get back in the furrow. He promptly obeyed, but in the meantime he had passed Lloyd, and John saw him just as the plow rolled the dirt over him. He wasn't hurt very badly, but would have been had that horse not been a great respecter of persons.

That same horse didn't respect me much, a year later. Maybe he thought I was bigger and didn't need to be respected. He had been quite frisky in his youthful days and ran away at every opportunity; and, when there

wasn't any opportunity, he frequently created one. The summer I was twelve, he was seventeen and hadn't run away for years, so I guess we all forgot his bad habits. Father wanted to borrow his brother-in-law, Elridge Truex's, one-horse open buggy and sent me with this horse to borrow it. It was four and a half miles from home. I saw, as I put him between the shafts, that he wasn't one bit happy. Just after I turned from the barnyard into the road there was a long downgrade. The buggy ran down onto him and he started kicking. He kicked the dashboard out of the buggy and narrowly missed kicking me. He got one foot over the crosspiece between the shafts and hopped along on three feet 'til he got it down; then he really took off. The buggy was light and his mouth was tough; the harder I pulled on the lines, the harder the buggy shoved onto him and the less he was inclined to stop. I looked out at the sides and rear and considered jumping, but at the speed we were going I decided it was too dangerous. My best bet was to keep him straight along the road 'til he exhausted some of his excess energy. It was half a mile from where I started to the crossroad where I was supposed to turn right to go home. If I could pass that crossroad, there was a hedge fence on both sides of the road for another mile. He should begin to wear down before he ran that. There was also a hedge fence on both sides of the road running south, which we should take to go home.

Consequently, a huckster wagon coming from the south, was invisible 'til we reached the road. I was pulling hard on the left line to keep him from turning toward home. When he saw that huckster wagon, he suddenly turned left and turned the buggy over, throwing me headfirst through a barbed wire fence. Just as I was landing in the fence, I also felt the buggy hit me in the back of the left knee as it rolled over. To say that my head, arms, and chest were ripped to shreds is putting it mildly. On my arms and chest,

as my shirt tore it rolled up some and lifted the wire, so the barbs did not penetrate so deeply as on my face and head. My deepest cut was a split upper lip, which left a scar that I carry to this day. My most dangerous cut was on my left temple, where the temporal artery was severed and with every heartbeat the blood squirted several inches from my head. I was already half-way through the fence, so I crawled the rest of the way through and walked to a nearby house, which belonged to William Pickering, a member of our church. His wife, Sally, and two half-grown daughters were at home. They were horrified when they saw my condition, but soon rallied and went into action. They drew a pail of cold water from the well, laid me down and put cold packs on me wherever I was still bleeding to stop the blood. They washed the rest of my wounds and put healing salve on them.

In the meantime, the buggy broke loose from the horse when it turned over. He stopped very nearby; turned around; looked at the wreck; threw up his head and snorted; then stood quietly by to see what would happen next. The huckster, when he came up, tied his horse; then caught mine and tied him, too. Then he came to the house to see how badly I was hurt and offered to do anything he could to help. Sally thanked him and assured him they had the situation well in hand. When they got my bleeding stopped and my wounds dressed, they fixed me a bed in the back of their spring wagon, tied my horse on behind, and took me home.

My cuts hurt much worse than my knee, in the beginning; but as the cuts got better the knee hurt worse and swelled up to about twice its normal size. In those days a person had to be pretty sick to go to a doctor. Father eventually thought the knee serious enough that he took me. The doctor took a long strip of cloth, and beginning at my toes, he wrapped my leg tight to above my

knee, and put me on crutches 'til the swelling all went out. He said he thought I would be all right now, but it might bother me again in my old age. He was only partially right. Over the years, it has bothered me very little in ordinary times; but just as sure as I had to walk in heavy Cuban mud, where the mud gathered on my boots and made a load for my knee to carry, I went lame. So lame sometimes, I could hardly walk at all. Now in my late seventies, just as the doctor said, it does bother me a lot, particularly in climbing stairs.

This same Sally Pickering was President of our local W.C.T.U. She was not a mere figurehead but really worked at it. A year or so after she doctored my wounds, she became very ill and was sick a long time. Her doctor told her she must take some brandy to build her up. She told him she would not. He told her she would die if she didn't. She told him that if that was the way of it she would just die. She positively would not take his brandy. Then the doctor went to her husband and told him the same story, and asked him to give it to her as medicine, without telling her what it was. He said, "If that is what she needs, it is all right with me for her to take it, but I am not going to fool her onto it." She promptly proceeded to get well without the brandy. When some of the neighbors later threw it in the doctor's face, he said, "I knew blamed well she wouldn't die. She was too contrary to die." She lived, and worked for prohibition many years after that.

Being between Robert and John, I was much like being between the upper and nether millstone. When any work was to be done, Robert always got his choice of jobs. Sometimes it was because he was bigger and could do the job better; but many times it was just because he was Father's pet and got what he wanted. After Robert got his choice, I had to give way to John because he was younger,

so, all in all, I had a pretty hard time of it, but I got one real break without even asking for it. As mentioned before, Uncle Henry was bedfast and lived with us for several years. When he came, we were too small to care for him. As we grew older, we just naturally took over. Robert didn't seem to mind doing his share but John would do almost anything else rather than care for either Uncle Henry or the baby. One day, when I was about 11, John came to me and said, "Noah, I've a proposition to make to you. I have talked it over with Robert, and he has agreed that if you will take care of Uncle Henry and the baby, we will do all the work at the barn." I jumped at that so quickly it almost scared him, and I was afraid for a minute he was going to back out of his own proposition.

In the Indiana sense, we had no barn. As mentioned before, when we moved to the prairie farm in Cherokee County, there was a stable with stalls for four horses, nothing more. All the rest of the livestock had to do the best they could around the straw stack. On the lower farm were several log cabins. One by one as he found time, Father tore them down; hauled them home; and rebuilt them for animal shelters, until all our increased number of horses and milk cows were under shelter, but none of the feed was. The corn was in rail pens and the hay was stacked around the barnyard, and the feed had to be carried to all the log cabins. The barnyard was very flat, and in spring it got awfully muddy. We had neither rubber boots nor overshoes. Unless farmer boots were kept well greased, water and snow seeped through, wetting our feet. And pitchfork handles were always unbelievably cold in the wintertime. All the animals had to be led to water night and morning, and the water drawn from the well with a rope and pulley. Times when Father wasn't at home we also had to do the milking; and in real cold weather, the milk would freeze on the

sides of the milk pail as we milked. We also had to carry in the wood, and that fireplace surely did burn a lot of it. John didn't mention the wood in his proposition, but he did say work at the barn. Well, they shoved the wood-carrying onto me, but there was room to shove a lot more onto me before I would have as much work or cold hands and feet as many times as they.

In the morning when I got up, I dressed for school; washed Uncle Henry; took Lloyd on my lap and a book in one hand and read to Uncle Henry 'til his breakfast was ready. Then, I fed and waited on him, and resumed my reading 'til school time. The evening was very much a repetition of the morning except I, also, had to carry in the wood. I never had to either get my boots muddy nor change clothes to do my work. I often wondered as I sat by the fire in comfort while they were out wading the mud in the cold, if they didn't regret their proposition. If they did, it was their proposition and they were game enough never to mention it. The deal lasted as long as Uncle Henry lived, then I had to go back to the barn and do my share.

The winter of 1891-1892 Amanda became very sick. The doctor said she had typhoid fever. I presume that I, a layman, should not question the diagnosis of a learned physician, and especially sixty odd years after the patient's death, but I do. In all the cases of typhoid fever I have known over the years, the patient either died or got well. She did neither. Furthermore, typhoid fever is an infectious disease, carried in food, water or milk, and there is usually an epidemic. We all drank the same milk and water, and ate the same food she did, and no one else was sick, and no one in the neighborhood. Her legs swelled to twice their normal size, and the doctor brought out a hand-cranked battery to treat her with. She was a very sick woman all winter long. We had to sit up with her every night, to keep

up the fire and give her medicine. We divided the night into shifts, and each took the same shift every night. In the spring she got better, even able to get around a little, but never well. Then, the doctor decided that her trouble was the climate. She couldn't live in that climate. I am not enough of a doctor to even guess what her original ailment was, but it weakened her 'til T.B. took over. It was already in the family. Her mother and one brother had died with it. No one knew in those days what Arizona can do for T.B. patients. She had a brother in Florida, who bragged a lot on the climate there, so she decided to go there. Father made a sale; sold everything he had; sent Mother's children to her father in Indiana and took Amanda and Lloyd to her brother, William's, in Florida. She lived about two years longer and is buried in what was then a small cemetery south of Bartow. I am satisfied that had she gone to Arizona, she would have lived several years longer, but Arizona was wholly unknown as a health resort at that time. They did the best they knew.

Chapter 4

INDIANA

We took the train at Columbus, Kansas, early in the morning of July 18, 1892. The trip must have been quite uneventful as I remember but one happening before we reached Indianapolis twenty-four hours later. I was asleep as we were running through the Ozark Mountains in Missouri. Someone very excitedly called me and told me we were up above the clouds. When I was awake and looked at the clouds, off down the side of the mountain, I, too, became excited. I have been above the clouds many times since, both when working and traveling in the mountains, and when riding in aeroplanes, but never has it given me the same thrill as on that occasion. We arrived in Indianapolis around three or four o'clock next morning; and as we rather expected someone to meet us there, we went into the Union Depot and sat down together for easier identification. We didn't have very long to wait. A man and woman came in and walked back and forth in front of us looking at us, before the man finally made up his mind we might be the ones he was looking for.

He came closer and asked, "Are you from Kansas?"

John spoke right out and said, "Yes, and I know you, too."

"No, thee don't."

"Yes, I do. You are Morton."

He had worked for Uncle Jim Hill four years before when John lived there. The rest of us hadn't seen him for nine years and he had grown a heavy mustache in the meantime. So, naturally, we didn't know him. He took us through the state capitol, and to various places of interest, during the forenoon, and we took the noon train for Westfield, only twenty miles away. We spent the rest of the week at Grandfather's.