

Chapter 5

NORTH DAKOTA

The railroads were giving harvest rates to the Northwest. There was no railroad commission to make them all quote the same fare, so every railroad set its own rate; and men who were going could frequently save several dollars by shopping around. I wasn't the only one from our neighborhood that was talking of going to North Dakota. Some eight or nine of us met in Noblesville, Indiana, on August first, 1898, to investigate rates. One of them was Royal Horney, a second cousin.

After we found the rates from there, he said, "If I am going to Dakota tomorrow morning, I have things to do, so I will go and do them. You fellows go ahead and see if you can get any better rates and I will meet you here tomorrow morning, prepared to go."

The rest of us spent the day going from town to town looking for better rates, but without success. Going home after a hard, disappointing day, the leader of the bunch said: "I have a lot of things around the farm that need doing. I really have no business going away and leaving them, so I will just cancel everything and forget all about Dakota."

Seeing that their leader had backed out, one by one the others began to find reasons why they shouldn't go either; and, by the time we reached Westfield, I was the only one going to Dakota and I felt very much depressed and alone. But I had written Robert that I would be there, and I couldn't back out. I got my things together and next morning Uncle Robert took me to the train. We went past Grandfather's so I could tell the folks good-bye. Just as we left there Uncle Finley said, "If Royal doesn't come,

will thee go on alone?" I just couldn't answer that one. Everyone else had backed out, why shouldn't Royal? I had promised Robert I would go; yet I couldn't see myself starting out alone on such a long trip into the unknown. I can't remember another occasion in all my life when I felt so much relief as when we overtook Royal and his father on the road to Noblesville. When we went to buy our tickets, the agent told us he had just received a telegram to sell us tickets to Chicago over the Nickel Plate R. R. and their agent would see us on the train and sell us tickets from Chicago to wherever we wanted to go. The two of us started alone, but were very much surprised when we reached Arcadia, to be joined by my first cousin, Irvin Tomlinson, and a Dunkard preacher. In Atlanta a perfect stranger, Charley Ross, got on. He had been up there the summer before and liked it, so was going back. How he learned we were going to Dakota I don't know, but he joined us before we were out of the station and we traveled on together.

We changed cars in Kokomo, with an hour to spare; and I got my first moral shock. I had been brought up in the Quaker tradition of "industry, economy, and simplicity". As I had never been away from the Quaker neighborhoods, I naturally supposed everyone else was the same. I have learned, over the years, that it is characteristic of a large portion of the human race to keep appearances pretty much in line with their neighbors, so long as they are where they are known. But just as soon as they get away from home "they lighten their loads of the moral code, 'til they can't tell the right from the wrong". In Kokomo, all but the preacher and I went into the saloon for a drink. On the other train, the agent met us and for \$13.05 sold us tickets to any place in North Dakota and gave us certificates that would take us home for the same price.

As we entered the black peat lands of Northwestern Indiana, our landscape suddenly

changed from wheat, corn, and pasture to onions. Thousands of acres of them, just being harvested. I remarked to one of the other boys that there were enough onions there to stink the whole United States.

In Chicago, they put us on a tourist sleeper. We were supposed to have our own bedding, but didn't. Not only were those slats painfully hard, but the mercury went down that night and we were awfully cold. It was the third of August; and yet when we went out on the platform next morning, we could see our breath; and, men in St. Paul wore their overcoats 'til about ten o'clock.

We had the biggest part of a day to spend in St. Paul. Some wanted to see one thing, others something else; so we split up. Irvin and I went together. We visited the State Capitol and some of the parks; then went down along the river front, which we found very interesting. That part of the city is built on a very high bluff. An enormous side hill cut had been taken out of the bluff to make room for the several railroads there; and very high, heavy masonry walls built to keep the city from sliding into the river. There were the river steamers, loading and unloading cargo, and the rafts of logs, going down to the sawmills. Some of the rafts must have been nearly a quarter of a mile long; and the most interesting part of all was to watch the raftsmen maneuver the long rafts so they would not hit the bridge piers.

We crossed over to South St. Paul on a very high bridge. I had studied the acceleration of falling bodies in Physics, so thought this a good opportunity to put my knowledge into practice and find out how high that bridge was. We took time out, dropped many pebbles off the bridge and figured our height. Our pebbles were not in a vacuum and our only timing device was an ordinary watch. We didn't expect any very great degree of accuracy; but by averaging

the time of many pebbles we got a pretty good idea of the height of the bridge; and, just think of the fun we had working it out.

Next morning, just at daylight, we pulled into Morehead, Minnesota. The brakeman came through the train and told us we should take our last drink and get rid of the bottle, as we were crossing over into North Dakota which was dry.

I had heard a great deal about the great Red River Valley of the North. As we crossed over the bridge, I decided that if there was anything great it must be the Valley. As a matter of fact, it is; for the river is but little bigger than Lightening Creek, that ran through our farm in Kansas. When we got into Dakota, it looked like one vast wheat field as far as the eye could see on both sides of the train, broken here and there by a house and barn, a few trees and a windmill. A little of the wheat was already in the shock but most of it was still standing. Every once in a while you would catch repeated flashes of light; reflections of sunshine on revolving reels as some farmer was harvesting his grain. I walked out onto the back platform and the scene was quite awe inspiring. There was not an up nor a down nor a curve visible on the track behind us. The rails ran together on the horizon. At Jamestown, we changed cars onto the Leeds branch of The Northern Pacific Railroad. We took a mixed train of some twenty-five or thirty boxcars and two passenger coaches. We spent most of our time on top of the boxcars looking at the great expanse of prairie. At Carrington, our preacher left us. As Ross had no particular destination, and seemed to like our company, he stayed right on with us.

We reached Sheyenne, our destination, sometime around four o'clock in the afternoon and inquired for Richter's house. It was very near and in plain view. Robert had already asked Richter for a job for me, so

he was expecting me and just hoping I would bring some men with me. He asked the others if they were looking for work; and told them his harvest was starting next week; and that he could use all of them if they would just hang around. He said they would have to sleep in the haymow, but their board wouldn't cost them anything.

Then he turned to me and said, "Williams, how do you want to work, by the day or by the month?"

"What's your proposition?"

"I'll give you a dollar and a half a day through harvest and threshing, or I will give you twenty-six dollars a month 'til it freezes up too solid to plow." I asked which would be better. "If I knew that, I would know how to hire my men. The chances are there will be very little lost time during harvest; but during threshing, there will be both wind and rain. My guess is that you will have more money at the end of harvest if you work by the day; by the end of threshing, it is anybody's guess, but then you are through. Furthermore, if you work by the day, you sleep in the haymow; if you work by the month, I have a bed upstairs for you to sleep in." I hadn't seen Robert yet, but knew he was hired out 'til it froze up too solid to plow, so I told him I would work by the month.

Then, I asked him where I would find Robert. He showed us which way to go; and said that when we got to the edge of the bluff, we could see his men over across the river (Sheyenne) on the Indian Reservation, making hay. When we got to the edge of the bluff, we saw some men making hay all right; but we didn't see any river. As there was no one else in sight, we headed over to the men we saw to ask about Richter's men. Those were Richter's men. The surprise was that as we walked in their direction, we suddenly came to the river. Every other place I had ever been, streams have trees along their banks. Not the Sheyenne River! There was

not a stick of timber in sight. With the grime of three days' travel, behind coal-burning engines, on us; and a beautiful stream of clear water in front of us, we decided to clean up a little. It never occurred to anyone to feel the water. We all stripped and dove in. What a shock! The water was like ice! We didn't stay long, neither did we even cross the river. There was no bridge, so we just sat down and waited for the men to come from work.

Next morning, August 5, 1898, there was a big frost; and we were told there had been frost every month that summer, so we knew why the water was cold. In his first conversation with us, Richter had told us he would give us all work when harvest started; but apparently, with a night in which to think it over, he decided it might be a good idea to hasten his hay-making while there was plenty of help available. At breakfast next morning, he told us of his decision and began assigning jobs. Simultaneously, my job and my re-education in the lingo of North Dakota began. I got my first word in re-education right then and there, and many more words before the summer was over. No, not new words; just new applications of the old ones. In his job assignment, he told me to take a team and wagon and go "draw" some hay. I thought he meant to go to a stack and pull the hay out; so I said, "If you have a hay knife, it will be much easier to cut it than to draw it." Robert was sitting next to me. He nudged me with his elbow and said, "He means haul it."

When Richter first went up into that country, several years before, settlers could take up homesteads, preemptions, and timber claims. He took up all three, and opened a store to trade with both the Indians and settlers. As the homesteaders, for one reason or another, decided they didn't like it there, one by one, over the years, he bought their land, until, when I was there, he owned nineteen quarter sections, and they were

widely scattered. Some of them too far away to operate from the home place.

My first few days were quite uneventful; just making hay. Then, one morning, he told Robert and me to take our wagons, cross the river at the local ford and go up river on the north side to where he had some hay cut and raked. Load up and continue up river to another ford, cross back and draw our hay to the Anderson place. He would meet us there and stack it for us. The Anderson place was a half section four miles West of the home base, and had a sod-house and small barn on it. At plowing and seeding time, two of his men went out there and kept batch while doing the work. The hay was to feed their horses.

For the benefit of those of my readers who can't remember back to when hay wasn't baled, it was hauled loose on big, flat racks. If it wasn't properly loaded, or if you drove on too much of a hillside, the load slipped off. I had lost many a load that way, both in Kansas and Indiana. In Dakota, there was so much wind that, normally, if you pitched hay onto a flat rack, the wind as promptly pitched it off. So farmers took strong wooden slats and built fences about three feet high around their racks, and called the combination a basket rack. Hay neither blew out nor slid out of these baskets. Dakota wagons were both narrower and higher than Indiana wagons. With very much of a load on, they became top heavy, and it didn't take much of a "side hill", in North Dakota language, or wind, broadside, to turn them over.

Part of our hay that day was on the sloping river bank, and part was up on the flat. Robert said we had better drive along the bank and load about half of our loads, then drive up onto the level to finish them. We guessed all right on the first load. On the second, Robert had just said he thought it was time to pull up onto the level and started the team, when the whole thing rolled

down the bank almost to the water's edge. The hay was on the ground; the rack on the hay; and the wagon on the rack, wheels up. That was really a mess. Wagons and hay racks are heavy and there were only two of us, so we had to use a little ingenuity to untangle the mess. We finally succeeded in getting the wagon back on its wheels, and the rack back on the wagon. Instead of loading it again right there and risk its turning over again, we turned the wagon around ninety degrees and backed it down at one end of the pile, so that it was headed uphill. When we finally got loaded, it was past lunch time, but we didn't stop to eat; we divided our lunch and ate while we drove. When we got to the place, Richter was already there waiting for us. He asked what was the matter and Robert told him. We threw the hay off as rapidly as possible, and he stacked it.

Then he said, "Go on back for another load, and I will go back home and get some help to load it." He had an open buggy that he drove around in. It had both tongue and shafts which snapped on and off and could be changed very quickly and easily. He had one driving horse that he drove single, and a pair of broncos that he drove double. He drove them about equal time. Just as we got back to the hay field, he drove up, followed by Horney with another wagon and two pitchforks. Both of them jumped in and helped us load our wagons, then he said, "You go on back out there, and Horney and I will throw some hay on this wagon for him to take home, and I will meet you out there and do the stacking." When we got to the ford, the same one we had crossed with our other loads, Robert went through all right; but when I started through, one side sank in the mud and the wagon turned over, this time into the river, and me with it. We had much of the morning's work to do over again! This time it was not so hard, for it didn't have so much of a downhill roll, and wagon and basket

were lying on their sides, not bottom up with the wagon on top as in the morning. Nevertheless, it was a big job and it took a lot of time. As we finished Robert said, "It will be a wonder if we don't both get fired; two loads of hay turned over in one day."

When we came in sight of the place, neither Richter nor his buggy was anywhere in sight, and we wondered what had happened. Just as we drove up from the west, he drove up from the east. Horney was sitting beside him in the buggy and leading his team behind. He said, "What's the matter boys?" Robert answered, "We turned another load of hay over. This time it went into the river."

"You did better than we did. We left ours in the river."

He amused the whole crowd at supper that night, describing Horney's catastrophe. He said he drove through the river to show Horney just where to drive, and when he got through he stopped and looked back to make sure Horney drove where he had indicated. He said Horney obeyed all right, but the bottom of that ford was just naturally soft. One side sank and it was really funny to see Horney throw the lines and start climbing as the load turned over. I am not quite certain, but I have a very strong suspicion that Horney's accident right under his watchful eye, saved us a bawling out. Next morning he sent me and my wagon with Horney to bring his hay home.

The harvest was quite uneventful—just a whole lot of hard work—with emphasis on both "hard" and "work". North Dakota is far north, so the days in summer are very long; and, as one man expressed it, all they asked you to do there was to work from sunup to sundown. That was true when we went up there; but as the sun went south, they changed the schedule. Another one said we worked on the eight hour system up there—eight hours in the forenoon and eight in the after. He wasn't far wrong at that.

Richter had four one-year old Deering

binders with bundle carriers. He had five men who had been with him all summer. He put four of them on the binders, made a chore-boy out of the fifth, and put us four new men to shocking. He put three horses on each binder. Since it was too far home and time too precious to go home for dinner, he personally brought us some sandwiches about ten o'clock; had the chore-boy feed a full relay of horses and bring them out about one o'clock, together with our dinners. It was sure a sight worth seeing to see one man coming with a wagon and fourteen horses. He had them spread out all over the road.

The binders all worked, one right behind another, and cut eighty acres a day and left it in windrows. It was up to us to shock it. Shocking twenty acres a day is a big day's work in any country. The days were long; the weather was cool; and we did it. We had to work on the run all day long. If we were caught up at noon, we could rest while the drivers changed their horses and oiled their binders. If not, we could use that time to catch-up.

Harvest lasted just three weeks and one day, then threshing began. He owned his own threshing outfit. It was big, but old, and gave considerable trouble. His traction engine was a straw burner, and they are notorious for their habit of throwing sparks of fire around, so he would never let the engine come closer to the separator than the length of the drive belt. All moving of the separator was done with horses. When threshing started, he gave me a bundle wagon. It took eight bundle wagons to supply the machine. We threshed right out in the field, and dragged the straw away from the machine. After the machine moved on, they burned the straw, a very un-economical thing to do.

I don't know why he picked on me; but he gave me the biggest, best pulling team on his whole farm, which automatically meant that when the separator had to be moved, I

had to move it. On the short hauls I moved it alone, on the medium hauls he added another team, and on the very long hauls we had six horses. Nobody knew when nor where fire would break out, so every night he had the separator pulled away from all straw. So, no matter how early I got my wagon unloaded, I had to wait 'til the last load was off, and pull the separator out of the straw. Since the last thing a separator does is pour grain into a grain wagon, I then had to hitch to the last grain wagon and haul it home. Fortunately, I didn't have to unload it. I, also, had to be the first teamster on the job, so I could pull the separator to where they were going to thresh that day. Hence, I got an empty wagon to drive out in the morning. Some nights, when we were far from home, it was eleven o'clock before I got into bed. Four A. M. 'til eleven P. M. is a very long day. A man couldn't stand it very long at the gait we had to work; but, fortunately, for us, both wind and rain interfered with threshing, and we had a lot of both.

While we were threshing, I had the worst attack of homesickness I ever had in my life. While we were harvesting, I didn't have time to think about home. During **threshing**, we put in more hours per day than during harvest; but the old machine gave a lot of trouble, so many times I sat idle on my loaded wagon, waiting my turn to unload. It was then that I had time to think about home and feel sorry for myself. Sometimes I almost wished I could fall off the wagon and break an arm or a leg so that I would have an excuse to go home. The engine whistle always brought me back to reality.

The threshing had not been in operation very long until he put us to plowing the fields near home, on days that were too wet or too windy to thresh—of which there were many. He gave me three horses on an eighteen inch walking plow. One day when it was too windy to thresh, I saw him coming in my di-

rection, driving over the plowed ground like mad and wondered what could be wrong. He drove straight to me and said, "There is a fire coming across that stubble field right toward the house. Drop one trace on each horse, get to it as fast as you can and plow a fire-guard along the pasture fence."

He tossed me his buggy whip and was gone. I whipped the horses to a gallop and got there just in time to plow two furrows before the fire struck it. That held it till more help came. When Richter left me, he went directly to the barn, where the entire threshing crew was loafing, and routed them. Fortunately, the engine's water tank was standing in the barnyard, full of water. Very soon the tank, and all the threshing crew armed with pails and empty sacks arrived and were able to stop the fire at my fireguard. Had I been five minutes later, the fire would have been in the pasture; and there was no force in that part of the country that could possibly have stopped it. In the pasture was prairie grass—which burns much more rapidly than stubble—and several straw stacks. Beyond the pasture were Richter's barns for all his livestock, his house, and beyond that two elevators and the whole town of Sheyenne. Had one link in our chain failed, all would have gone up in smoke.

As I looked, day after day, across the river onto the Indian Reservation, I got a burning desire to see what was over there. I couldn't get anyone to go with me, so one Sunday morning I packed a lunch; crossed the river on the railroad bridge; and set out a-foot and alone, to explore the Reservation. I started in a general northeasterly direction, and wondered what I would see when I got to the top of a hill I was approaching. Only another hill! This happened three or four times before I finally reached the top of the tableland. Then all I could see was a vast expanse of prairie, with two houses a few miles away. Not another landmark anywhere.

So I decided to go have a visit with the residents of the houses. They were much farther away than they looked. Distances are very deceiving in that high altitude. It was just noon when I reached them—one room sod-houses, unoccupied at the time. There was some plowed land near each house. Doors were locked, but I could look in through the windows. Each house had an old stove, a few pieces of crude furniture, and a wooden beam walking plow. I decided that they probably belonged to some Indian who farmed out here in the summertime, and had gone into Ft. Totten for the winter.

I sat down and ate my lunch. Then, as it had taken me half-a-day to walk out, I thought I had better start walking home. Then, I was panic-struck! I had no idea which way home was. There wasn't a ray of sunshine, and there had not been all morning. There wasn't a landmark on the whole horizon, and I had no idea of direction. Furthermore, I had heard many stories of folks wandering in circles when lost. Well, there was plenty of room to circle, whichever direction I might start. Then I got hold of myself and did a little thinking. As I had approached, these houses kept a fixed relative position. If I could put myself where they would have the same relative position they had when I was coming, then turn around, I would be facing toward home. Even though I might vary a little, I would strike either the river or the railroad; but I would have to be very careful about that circle business. As I walked, I looked back many times to make sure the houses were in their proper relative positions, and that I was not circling. Even so, it sure was a great relief when the tops of the elevators in Sheyenne showed up on the horizon. It started raining a cold rain just as I reached home, and rained far into the night. I shudder even yet to think of the awful night I would have spent on that "lone prairie", soaking wet and chilled to the very marrow in my bones, and no possibility of

rescue, if my panic had been sufficient to becloud my reason.

When the threshing was over, Richter organized his forces to get as much of the fall plowing done as possible. He gave Irvin and me each an eighteen-inch walking plow with three horses to plow the land near home. He gave Robert and Frank Dunham a gang plow and five horses each and sent them to the Ponto place. It was something over two miles away. They boarded at home, carried their lunches, and hauled feed and water for their horses. Bob and Ott each had a gang plow and five horses and were keeping batch at the previously mentioned Anderson place, doing the plowing there. So far as I knew at the time, things were going very smoothly, and we were sure getting a lot of work done. Suddenly something snapped! Frank came in from the Ponto place very early one evening; Irvin and I came in at the usual time, and Robert was very late. Richter came home from wherever he was at the same time Robert got in. Robert finished his supper and came out to the barn just as I had finished my work and was leaving. He asked me if I would please curry a couple of his horses for him.

When he got a chance, he whispered to me, "It isn't that I want you to do my work for me, but I want a chance to talk to you after the others are gone."

It seems that Frank had been shirking his work for some time and Richter was catching up with him. He and Robert had just had supper together, with no one else present, so had a chance to talk. He asked Robert why he was so late and was told that Old Pat had played out and just couldn't make it any sooner.

"How many bouts (rounds) did you make today?"

"Eighteen."

"How many did Frank make?"

"Either fifteen or sixteen, I am not certain which."

"What time did Frank leave the field?"

"I am not certain of that either, but it was quite early."

"Why did he leave so early?"

"I have no idea."

"The days are getting short, and the horses are pretty well tired out, so we will just cut out that last bout. By the way, do you suppose Noah could handle that big team?"

"I think he could do just like the rest of us had to do, he could learn."

When the others had all gone, Robert told me of the above conversation with Richter; then added, "He didn't make any definite statement, so I don't know a thing, but don't be surprised if you go on the gang in the morning. I thought you would like to know."

The next morning Richter was very much on the job, which was quite unusual. He pensioned Old Pat off for a few days recuperation, and gave Robert my best horse, then gave me one of his driving broncos. I had been listening for some new order, but none came; so when I got my team organized, I picked up my lines and started to the field. I had gone about fifty feet when I heard, "Hold on there, Noah. Frank, you go take that team. Noah, you take this team." That's all there was to it. No explanation, but I was on the gang.

So far as the work was concerned, things went very well after that, but the weather—man soon began to lower the boom. Day by day, the mercury went down. Then we got about three inches of snow.

Richter said, "That's fine; they say that a crop of snow plowed under is just as good as a coat of manure."

Then it really got cold; and, with the snow on the ground, it just couldn't freeze up. Someone said there was only a three wire fence between us and the North Pole—and it was down in places. The wind howled, and those plows wouldn't scour if we didn't ride them; and riding those plows wasn't the only place we suffered. Richter didn't believe in

putting out good money for the comfort of his hired men. There was neither heat nor light upstairs where we slept; but there was an alarm clock and plenty of woolen blankets, so once we got thawed out, we could sleep comfortably until the alarm went off. After threshing was over, he did set the alarm back to five o'clock instead of four. He kept lanterns in the barn so we could see to do our chores. That was business; neither comfort nor pleasure.

When the alarm went off, we had to get up and dress in the dark and cold; then feel our way down the winding stairs and make our way out to the barn, still in the dark. There we lighted lanterns, so we could see to do our chores which consisted of feeding, currying, and harnessing our horses, and putting feed and water on the wagons for noon. To get the water, the wagon with a barrel on it was drawn up by the barn door. The pump was an old-fashioned wooden one, and it was inside the barn so it wouldn't freeze up in winter. One man stayed on the ground; pumped the water; carried it outside the barn; and handed it up to the other who stood on the wagon and emptied it, and froze between buckets full.

After breakfast we took our lunches which the cook had prepared; wrapped them up well; and placed them beside the water barrel, hoping they would get enough warmth from the water so they would not freeze. At first it worked, but as the weather got colder, it didn't. We hitched two horses to the wagon, and tied the other three behind. We drove the more than two miles to the field, then hitched the five to the plow and renewed that cold, monotonous grind. We would never have stopped for lunch if it had not been for the horses. They needed to eat. Did you ever try eating a frozen lunch, right out on the open prairie, when the mercury is near zero and the wind doing twenty-five or thirty miles an hour? Try it sometime. It is a

real experience! One you will probably not care to repeat. The nearest approach to a windbreak we could find was the lee side of a horse, and we danced while we ate to try to thaw our toes out. The two soft spots in the whole day were breakfast and supper. We ate in the kitchen by the cook-stove. There was no time for loitering after breakfast; but, believe me, we took plenty of time to thaw our bones after supper.

When things are going along on an even keel, whether pleasant or disagreeable, you somehow lose all sense of time. So it was on this job. I have no idea how long we plowed after snow fell. Then one morning the wind was really howling; much worse than common. We had been at the barn but a few minutes when Richter came out, which was unusual for him. He said, "Boys, I don't like the looks of this. It looks to me like there is a blizzard brewing. If a blizzard catches you out there, you won't come back, so you needn't go out. Take the wagons and the farm machinery apart, and stack them in the implement shed."

We were on a branch railroad. A mixed train went north one day, south the next. About noon the second day of the big wind, the train went north. Shortly after it passed, Richter came out where we were working and said, "I have just been down and got my mail, with papers and a telegram from Minneapolis. It looks to me like this is it. If any of you want to go down to make arrangements about your tickets, you may do so and I will have your money for you in the morning." Then he began asking us one at a time, where we were going. When he got to me he said, "Noah, where are you going?"

I had a funny feeling somewhere between my heart and stomach and gasped, "I don't know."

"Boy, you had better be finding out, because you are starting tomorrow morning."

Robert wasn't there just at that time,

and I didn't know what his plans were; and the whole thing had hit so suddenly, it caught me completely off balance.

In writing of my father—in an earlier chapter—I mentioned that he, Irvin Stanley, and Absolom Rosenberger, kept batch together at Spiceland Academy in Indiana, and that Absolom later became President of Penn College in Iowa. During the year after I finished Union High, he gave a lecture there. Robert heard him; I didn't. In the course of his lecture, he said that one of the things he was striving for was to make Penn College a school where poor students with ambition could work their way through. When Robert got back to Grandfather's that night, he announced, "I am going to Penn College some day." I had heard about his announcement but I wasn't interested. I had worked my way through High School, and thought that was good enough. I was through! Nor had I heard him say any more about it until about a week before the freeze-up. Then one Sunday he wrote a letter to President Rosenberger. He told him he was a graduate of Union High, and heard him speak there the year before. He said he could get to Penn with approximately one hundred dollars in his pocket, and asked if he could make a year's schooling on that. Promptly came the answer, "It all depends on the man. Some men make a year's schooling on less than one hundred dollars; others have to have much more. By the way, Worthy Hagerman from your school is here." This answer was received just three or four days before the big wind. Then on the very train that brought Richter the news that made him decide to close up for the winter, Robert got another letter from Rosenberger. It said, "I have just had a talk with Worthy Hagerman. He tells me there is also a Noah Williams. That reminds me of Robert and Noah Tomlinson, and that Nathan Williams married Lydia Tomlinson. If you are a son of Nathan Williams, and a grandson of Noah Tomlinson, I know you

can make a year's school on one hundred dollars." (What an understatement! Arriving with one hundred and fifty dollars between us, we both made four years of college.) Rosenberger's letter ended with the question, "Where is Noah? If he is there, bring him along."

When Robert read that letter, he said, "That settles it! I am going to Penn College!" But that didn't help me a particle. I didn't have a hundred dollars, nor any burning desire to go to college anyhow. Furthermore, I didn't want to go back to Indiana, and had no place else to go. I was over my homesickness. A lot of the migrant laborers who were there for the threshing, were going down into Iowa to shuck corn. I hastily decided to do the same thing, and thought Oskaloosa might be as good a place as any. When the south-bound train came next day, four of us were there to board it—Robert and I for Oskaloosa, Iowa, and Irvin and Snyder, the chore boy, back to Indiana. Horney and Ross were out somewhere with the threshing machine. In Oelwein, Iowa, about forty hours later, at two o'clock in the morning, we said goodbye to Irvin and Snyder, and never saw them again. I saw Horney at a Tomlinson Reunion in Indiana, just fifty years later.

Chapter 6

PENN COLLEGE

We arrived in Oskaloosa about seven-thirty on Sunday night and inquired our way out to the College, which was more than a mile away. As we approached the building, we saw a light in one basement window. When we looked in, we saw two young men standing by a table; and, to our very great surprise, one of them was Worthy Hagerman. When Robert called down and told him who we were, he let out a yell and jumped so high he could have hit the ceiling. With no word whatsoever to his friend, he grabbed the key to the front door and came up to let us in. I am quite sure his companion must have thought he had completely lost his mind. When we got downstairs and Worthy got back to earth, he introduced us to his friend, Paul Bowles. The name rang a bell in Robert's mind but not in mine. After Paul was gone, Robert said, "You don't suppose that could be the Paul Bowles we knew in Kansas, do you?" Inquiry next day proved he was the same Paul. His father taught a colored school in Parsons; and, being Quakers, we frequently visited them. I was only five when we left Parsons, but I remembered him after I had my attention called to him. He is a first cousin of Gilbert Bowles who spent well onto half a century as a missionary in Japan, and now lives with a doctor son in Honolulu. Gilbert was in Penn at that time, teaching some classes and working on his Master's Degree.

Hagerman was quite a naturalist and had made arrangements to procure specimens for the museum in payment for his tuition. They had fixed him a room in the basement to live in. He slept on a cot that was only built for one person, but he and Robert both slept on it that night. They had recently put down a new carpet in the office, and had stored

the old one in the basement. We dragged that in and made me a bed on it. Next morning we got another surprise when the janitor, Lewis Pearson, came down. We learned from him that he was from Columbus, Kansas, and his wife was the daughter of Ira Kellogg. Ira had been quite a prohibition worker and had occasionally stayed at our house when on lecture tours, and we had visited in his home in Columbus. He had moved to Oskaloosa to educate his children and was now living there.

A few days later, passing through the hall, Robert saw the name, Mary Folger, on the bulletin board. Again he said, "You don't suppose that could be one of the Folgers we knew in Missouri, do you? I don't think any of those girls was named Mary." He made inquiry and learned that she was indeed from Missouri, so sought an introduction.

"Yes, I am the daughter of Tommy Folger of Carthage, Missouri."

"I remember his daughters but don't remember any Mary." Then he started naming Tommy's daughters. He got the first two right and the third one was Petty.

"Don't you dare start that here!" Her mother's name was Mary so she had been nicknamed Petty and evidently didn't like it.

Father and Tommy Folger had been neighbors at Ridge Farm, Illinois. Father had moved to Kansas; Tommy to Carthage, Missouri. They were both Quakers and both belonged to the same Quarterly Meeting, but not to the same local nor Monthly Meeting. Our Quarterly Meeting was held twice a year at Timbered Hills, Kansas, and twice a year at Carthage, Missouri. So just naturally when we went to Quarterly Meeting in Missouri we stayed at Tommy Folger's.

We very soon began to feel like we were among old friends and acquired many new ones. My faith in human nature started to revive when I discovered that there were, after all, many God-fearing people in the world.

The men I had been associated with in Dakota were mostly what were called hobos.

The difference between a tramp and a hobo is that a tramp doesn't work. He depends on begging and stealing for a living. The hobo works, and works well when he has a job. He hunts the short-time jobs that pay big wages. When a job is over, he spends his money in drinking, gambling, and riotous living. When he is broke, he inquires where there is another job that pays big money, and bums a freight train to it. Many of them brag that they never pay carfare. If there was a Christian, besides ourselves, in that whole Dakota outfit, they didn't let it shine through and I was beginning to lose faith in human nature. Here, at Penn, they were so nearly all fine, upstanding Christians, that it re-established my faith in the human race.

Getting back to the thread of my story: When Prof. Gifford, the Business Manager of the college, and President Rosenberger learned we were there, they both came down to see us and congratulated us on our decision to come to college. I told them that I was very sorry to have to disillusion them, but I had not come to attend college; I had come to shuck corn. Was there any corn around there to shuck? They thought there was, but why not go to college? I told them the answer was very simple. I didn't have enough money. I might honestly have added that I wasn't interested anyhow.

Prof. Gifford said, "I hate to pry into a man's private affairs, but how much money do you have?"

"I have fifty dollars."

"If I could get you a job where you can work for your board and room, would you go to college?"

I didn't take time to even think that over. I simply, and almost automatically, said, "Yes". He left, and in an hour or so was back.

He said, "I have been trying for some time to get a boy into our best hotel, the Birdsall. Up to now, I have failed; but I have just had a telephone call from the

manager. His night bellhop has quit; and, if I have a boy who can do the job, he can have it. I think the smaller of you would probably fit into that job better." Then he turned to me and said, "How would you like to go with me to see about it?"

It was all news to me. I knew there were hotels, but I had never set foot inside of one in my life. I didn't know that hotels had bells, nor that bells had hops; but I went along. The building was three stories high and occupied a quarter of a block. On the ground floor was the hotel lobby, kitchen and dining room, a saloon and several stores. The second and third floors were entirely taken up by hotel rooms, of which there were fifty-seven. That was before the days of elevators, hot and cold water in every room, and private baths. On the back of every door was a printed sign, "One ring, Bellboy; Two rings, cold water; Three rings, hot water." Whenever the bell rang, the bellhop had to start leg action, up and down those stairs. But what was really exasperating, was for someone on the far end of the third floor to ring for the bellhop, and then ask for a pitcher of water. When a guest wanted a bath, he told the clerk. He, in turn, called the bellhop and told him to prepare the bath, and include a wash rag and towel. The charge was twenty-five cents. The manager explained the job very well, in a general sort of way, but neglected the details. I could have a room on the far end of the third floor, and eat in the kitchen with the other help. I must eat my supper before I went on duty. My work hours were from seven till twelve, seven nights a week. My pay was what I could eat and a place to sleep. My station was the check room. I could have a chair and a book in there and study when not busy. My duties would be to check hats and overcoats; answer those fifty-seven bells and do whatever the guests requested. I accepted the job, to begin that same night; so now, I was obligated to enter college.

I entered the registrar's office and he asked which course I was going to take. I didn't know that there was but one. He handed me a catalog so I could study over the various courses. I didn't know enough about college studies to be able to form any idea what I wanted to study. But I had had enough Latin to know I didn't want any more, and readily guessed I didn't want any Greek. With both Latin and Greek eliminated, the only one left was the Scientific. So I enrolled in the Scientific Course; not because there was anything in it that I particularly wanted to study, but because it had neither Latin nor Greek, which I particularly didn't want to study. I can truthfully say I have rejoiced all these years that I made the choice I did. The fall term was half gone, so I had a lot of work to make up regardless of what studies I took. To make this possible, I enrolled for only three studies: Freshman English, Zoology, and second year German. I had already had one year of German at Union High.

Our German professor was a little, sawed-off, cantankerous Swiss. My troubles with him began very soon. He asked me how much German I had in High School. When I told him, he said that was not enough. He gave me a German book and told me to translate it and write out the translation to make up for what they lacked of teaching me enough in High School. With my work at the hotel, and back work to catch up in three studies, I had no time to translate his book; but did manage to catch up the current work in German well enough to get a C grade. In the winter and spring terms I took more studies, so still found no time to translate his book. He thought I should have translated his book instead of taking on the other studies. They were in the course, so I must take them sometime, and besides I enjoyed them much more than translating German. At the end of the year, he didn't flunk me, he just refused to give me any grade at all till I brought in

the translation. I went to President Rosenberger and asked him if Union High wasn't an accredited school. He said it was, and when I told him what Prof. Diem was trying to do to me, he said, "I'll speak to him. He won't be with us next year." I got a B.

Diem was an old bachelor and crazy about the girls. Most of the girls were just as crazy to keep away from him. He really put the girls in his classes on the spot. If he asked one of them for a date and got it, she got straight A's, whether she studied or not; but if she turned him down, he flunked her. A man as cantankerous as he was should naturally expect trouble from a bunch of college boys. He frequently got it. One day he appeared at the Boarding House with a brand new hat. While he was eating breakfast, the boys literally cut it all to shreds. When things were done to him, he tried to force the other students to tell who did it. If no one would tell, he punished every boy present. One day he was late to class. Anna Everett slipped a chairback under the door-knob so he couldn't open it. When she thought he had sweated long enough, she went and took it out. As he entered the room, she was walking toward her seat, so she became an "Angel of Light" for removing the chair. He was terribly angry and demanded, "Which one of you boys put that chair under the door-knob?" Naturally, he got no answer. "Every boy in this room may be excused from class." Jessie Tandy, who later married Robert and became my sister-in-law, seeing such rank injustice, spoke up and said, "Professor Diem, it might not have been a boy." "Oh, so your heart is with the boys, is it? You may be excused, too. Go on. You are excused from class, too." Anna Everett got A's; Jessie Tandy B's or C's. I think everyone who had ever had a class with him was glad he wasn't back next year.

At the hotel things went along on a pretty even keel. In Dakota our food was

principally bread, meat, potatoes, and beans. We were working hard; enduring lots of cold, so had very big appetites. Now suddenly, my work was reduced greatly but not my appetite. A hotel of that size naturally has a very large variety of food. I had to eat in the kitchen but could have any kind of food I asked for. With the change to light, inside work, and such a big variety of rich food, I soon discovered that all my clothes were getting too small for me. I stepped on the scales, and was indeed surprised to find that I weighed one hundred and fifty-nine pounds dressed, which is entirely too much for a man of my height.

The one thing I didn't like there was going into the saloon and buying liquor for the guests. Had I known that would be a part of my job, I most likely would not have taken it. The manager had merely said I was to do what the guests asked me to do; and I was so ignorant of the ways of the world that I never even suspected the guests would want liquor. Purely by accident I was not asked to buy liquor for several days. When I was asked, I was quite shocked; and had a heart-searching debate with myself. The manager had said I was to do whatever the guests asked. If I refused, I was through. If I was through at the hotel, I was most likely through at the college. While I had not been interested in going to college in the first place, now that I was in, I was enjoying it and thought it would do me good. While I had come to Iowa to shuck corn, the weather just wasn't nice for shucking corn and was getting worse daily. Furthermore, corn shucking would soon be over. Then, what? Whether I did right or wrong, I will let another judge. I stayed with the job and bought the liquor till I found a way without quitting school. The only hard part of my work was running up and down stairs. That got very tiresome and monotonous some nights. Other nights I had quite a little time to study. I kept account of my tips. They

averaged almost exactly one dollar a week.

There was only one event in the whole time I was there that I consider worthy of mention. The night clerk, the porter, and the shoeshine boy decided they were going to make me drink a bottle of beer. The clerk gave the porter a quarter to buy the beer. When he arrived with it, the clerk and the shoeshine boy grabbed hold of me to hold me while the porter poured it down me. When he tried, I made a pass at it to knock it out of his hand, and barely missed. He said, "Oh no, big boy, you are not going to waste this beer! It is too good to waste!" And he drank it himself. Things went along on an even keel till late January.

One evening as I was going from the college to the hotel, I came up behind Francis Blackledge carrying a kerosene can to the store for kerosene. We got to talking and he told me he had a room rented and was keeping batch. I asked what it was costing him, and it was so little I almost fell over. I asked him right then and there if he didn't want a roommate. He said he wouldn't mind. I told him I would be there just as soon as I could let go of my job. When I got to the hotel, I immediately hunted up the manager and told him to hunt another "bellhop" as I was quitting just as soon as I could get relief. I found batching so good and so cheap that we very soon had company. Robert had a job out in the country caring for a cow, some chickens, and a furnace for board and room. Worthy had a job at the college club washing dishes for board. They both chucked their jobs; Robert moved in with Worthy and both of them came over to eat with us.

As I said before, Hagerman was quite a naturalist and was getting his room and tuition for procuring specimens for the museum. He had read in some of his ornithology books that the big owls of Iowa nested in February. He made inquiry and learned that some big

owls had been seen in a big woods several miles east of Oskaloosa. He enthused the other three of us to go with him on an owl egg hunt. It was cold! The ground had been all covered with snow. The snow had partially melted off, then the ground had frozen hard where the snow had melted away. We started on foot at four A.M., carrying our lunches and Worthy's climbers. He inquired for the woods; and, when we arrived, we spread out looking for hollow trees with small animal hair and bones under them. It took us some time but we were real lucky. We found a nest each of both the Bard Owl and the Big Horned Owl. We, also, found a big hornets' nest. As the weather was cold, the inmates were quite inactive, and we felt sure Prof. Miller would like it for his biology class, so we cut it down and brought it along. (The hornets gave us no trouble; but, when we took them into the laboratory next Monday morning, they began showing signs of life. Prof. Miller promptly put them into a big can with some chloroform, and thanked us profusely for bringing them in.) We didn't get home till after eight that night. A more tired bunch of boys you seldom see, and we still had to cook our own suppers.

James M. Davis, a Quaker, and a Penn student in the years gone by, went out selling books one summer and discovered he was such a whiz as a salesman that he never returned to college. He spent several years selling books, then became interested in stereoscopes and views. He sent photographers all over the world to take views, then got college boys to sell them during summer vacations. He made a lot of money out of his view business; found a bankrupt college out in Wichita, Kansas; bought it and turned it over to the Quakers. It is still going strong as Friends University. Despite the fact that he had representatives all over the country, he, personally, came to Penn that winter to sign up the students to sell his

views. Some of them were going out at the end of the winter term, but most of them in June. I signed up with the former bunch. He assigned us territory in southern Illinois. I chose Cumberland County because a classmate of mine in Kansas had moved there. I am quite certain someone told President Rosenberger I was leaving. One Saturday, shortly before the end of the winter term, there was a knock on our door. When I opened it, there stood President Rosenberger. I hated to invite him in, because we were dreadfully poor housekeepers; but there was nothing else to do. He sat down on the bed and looked around. I know he didn't like what he saw, but he, too, had kept batch. Aunt Annie, Uncle Asher's wife, whose sister was with him at Spiceland, told me that he came to school with patches on the seat of his pants that he, himself, had sewn on—and not very neatly done. He asked a few casual questions then turned to me and said, "I understand you are preparing to leave at the end of the term."

"Yes."

"Why?"

"My money has run out."

"Well, that is too bad. This is a very poor time of year to quit. You should try some way to finish the year; then, if you have to stay out and work a year, you have left your work in shape so that you can pick up and go on."

"I have no intention of going on."

"You never know. Time and circumstances change many things. It can't cost very much to live here. About how much does your board cost?"

"Fifty cents a week."

"Spring is coming on, and there will be lots of work you can do mornings, evenings and on Saturdays. If I arrange to let your tuition wait till you can earn the money after school is out this summer, you can earn enough to take care of the rest, can't you?"

"There are still books and room rent."

"Well, I will arrange the room rent, too."

How many times over the years have I been thankful to President Rosenberger for that kindly, friendly, urgent visit!! Had I dropped out then, I most likely would never have returned.

* * * * *

The treatment Rosenberger gave me was so different from what Stetson University in Florida gave my daughter, Elizabeth, twenty-seven years later. I paid a half a year's tuition when she entered. Then the Florida boom burst, and I had serious financial troubles. I wrote to them and asked for an extension of time on the other half year. The answer, "No, indeed! If the money is not here within two weeks, she will be dismissed." Times were really tough then, and I had to almost mortgage my soul to get the money. I got it and she finished the year, but she never went back there.

* * * * *

Sometime during the spring term, the anti-saloon league spotted a place where liquor was being sold all night, which was against the law. They had all the evidence they needed except someone to actually buy some liquor. Sylvester Jones, President of the college Y.M.C.A., was the college representative of the league. I don't know why he picked on Robert, but he did. He wanted him to go to the place some night after midnight and buy a bottle of liquor. As a boy, Robert was a very big coward, almost afraid of his own shadow. As a man, he was very brave and fought the liquor interests with everything he had but he surely "reneged" on that one. Maybe that was just at the time of transition from boy to man. Anyway, he told Sylvester to get me, as I was used to buying liquor and he had never bought any in his life. I got Dennis McVey, a classmate, to go with me; and we went up and bought a bottle of beer about one o'clock in the morning. We produced our bottle of beer at the

trial, and gave our evidence. The man was fined \$500.00 and got a sentence of five years in the penitentiary.

When the spring term was out, some eight or ten of us scattered out in pairs over southern Illinois. I had as my partner, Charles Henry. He was about two years younger than I, a young giant, and a very fine young man. The work was new to both of us. We worked hard and made some progress, but the going was tough. Our only diversion from hard work was when we spent the Fourth of July in another town with two or three other crews, and one Sunday in the home of my boy friend, Willis Wright, from Kansas. About the middle of the summer, something went wrong at his home and Charley had to leave me. Then it was very lonesome. When I left college in the spring, I didn't think I would be back. As the time approached for school to open, you couldn't have tied me with a rope. The last town I canvassed was Marshall, Ill., just over the state line west of Terre Haute, Ind. That was so close to home that I couldn't resist the temptation to go. I planned my deliveries so I could spend a few days there before returning to school. I sent the money to pay my spring tuition and room rent, and still had a little left. I bought a ticket to Westfield and had a few hours layover in Indianapolis. While wandering around the streets, I stumbled onto a sale where they were closing out their bicycles for the winter. There was a brand new Ivanhoe for sale for only seventeen dollars and fifty cents. I had long wanted a bicycle and had the money to buy it; but now I, also, wanted to go back to college and to do so I would need every cent I had and a lot more. I finally tore myself away and went on down the street. The farther I went, the slower I walked until I could withstand the temptation no longer. I went back and bought the bicycle.

The folks were all very much surprised

when I reached Grandfather's. After the excitement had subsided a little, Uncle Asher said, "Well, did thee come back to work for me? I am very much in need of a hired hand."

"Nope."

"What is thee going to do?"

"I am going back to college."

"How much money does thee have?"

"Ten dollars."

"What is the fare out to Oskaloosa?*"

Ten dollars?*"How is thee going to get out there?"

"Ride my bicycle."

"And how is thee going to pay expenses when thee gets there?"

"I didn't have any money when last Spring term began and I made it through. I know a lot more people now who want work done, than I knew then, and somehow I will make it." And somehow I did make it for three more years.

I had not taken my trunk when I went to North Dakota, since I didn't know where I would be, nor how long in one place. I had been living for more than a year in a telescope grip, the ancient version of a suitcase, and was tired of it. So, after a few days visiting, I rounded up my earthly possessions, put them in my trunk and shipped them to Oskaloosa.

I had never ridden a bicycle, only just enough to learn to ride fairly well, and had not been on one for more than a year. My muscles were not bicycle hardened. The first day I had a good gravel road all day but had to buck a head wind. I made about sixty miles. Next morning, I was so sore it was very painful to sit on the saddle; and my knees were so stiff and sore that it was with the greatest of difficulty that I could bend them enough for my feet to come up with the pedals. When I reached Illinois, the gravel road ran out, and those dirt roads on gumbo land were very rough. I had left Westfield Tuesday morning, and about an hour before

sundown on Saturday, I reached the little town of Oquaqua on the east bank of the Mississippi River. I can truthfully say it had been an uneventful, but very painful, trip. I hired a fisherman to take me across the river in his rowboat. I found a house on the levee and spent the night.

During the night, the heavens really fell. Next morning it was so muddy I not only couldn't ride, but that gumbo mud was so stiff and sticky I couldn't even lead my wheel. I finally scraped off all the mud I could, shouldered the bicycle and proceeded on foot. I found a few spots during the morning where the road was sufficiently dry for me to ride short distances, but I walked much more than I rode. To add to my troubles, there were several heavy showers during the morning. About one P. M., in a driving rain and soaked to the skin, I reached the little town of Mediapolis on the narrow-gauge railroad that ran from Burlington to Oskaloosa. I inquired when I could get a train to Oskaloosa, and was told, not till tomorrow morning. There was a fire in the stove in the waitingroom and it felt mighty good, so I sat down and proceeded to thaw out my weary bones. The rain continued all afternoon and far into the night. The only times I left that fire was just long enough to run over to a store to buy some cheese and crackers for lunch and a can of pork and beans for supper. I camped for the night right there on the benches. Sometime during the night, the agent went to sleep and the fire went out. Despite the fact that my clothes were entirely dry by now, I was cold. About three-thirty A.M. I remembered that the best way to get warm was exercise, so I started up the railroad track leading my wheel. Sometime after daylight I came to a little town and inquired about a train. The agent said one was due very shortly. Then I asked how far the rain had extended. He said he didn't know but he thought it had been pretty general. I bought two dollars worth of ticket

and hoped that would get me out of the mud. It did. I took to the road, and early in the afternoon I rode into Oskaloosa. Including railroad fare, I had spent five dollars on the trip. I had five dollars left to start the year's school.

I got the same room we had the year before. Blackledge was not coming back, so Robert came in with me. Everyone, both students and faculty, gave me a hearty welcome. Rosenberger let me sign a note for my tuition, as I felt sure he would. After enrolling, I set out to round-up some part-time jobs and found them. Whether Hagerman liked our food and the way we cooked it, or whether it was the price that attracted him, we were hardly settled in our room when he came over to see if he could board with us. A little later Merritt Votaw joined us. There were so many of us it became necessary to form an organization. Robert had a part-time job collecting so was frequently downtown. Hence we gave him the job of doing the buying and bookkeeping. To tell the honest truth, he was the only one of the whole bunch that always had money to buy with. I was chief cook and bottle washer. The other two carried in the coal and water, and dried the dishes.

One day when Hagerman came in to dinner he said, "Do you know that little Jap? He wants to come over and eat with us. I was talking with him just now and he asked where I boarded. When I told him what it was costing, he asked if he couldn't come over and board here, too. I told him he would have to ask Robert Williams. Now if he comes over, let's feed him on beef soup for the first week; and, Noah, put plenty of Skunk River (water) in it. I'll growl but I'll eat it. We don't want him to get the idea he is being pampered." Soup bones sold for a nickel a piece in those days, and we bought oyster crackers by the twenty-pound box. Oatmeal, rice, Boston drip molasses, stale bread, soup and crackers don't make a balanced diet, but

nobody had ever heard of a balanced diet then, and they were cheap. They were the principal items in our daily rations.

Shinji Imai was the son of the Chief Justice of Japan. He was converted to Christianity, and was promptly disinherited. The missionaries somehow got him into a small college at Tabor, Iowa. I never learned who induced him to make the change nor why, but at the beginning of his junior year, he transferred to Penn. I think his tuition was arranged, but he had no other support. He had been brought up with the teaching that work was for the lower classes, hence entirely beneath him. Consequently, he didn't know how to do anything. Furthermore, he had had a white swelling on his back that left him unable to do manual labor even if he had known how. No wonder he was looking for a place to eat where eating was cheap. Under those circumstances, it really took a lot of moral courage and Christian faith to go into a foreign land where he knew but little of the language—where many of the people would consider him beneath them—and undertake to earn his way through college. I don't know if some missionary society had given him a little money, or where he got what little he had; but it was running very low when he came to us. I don't know if it was his own idea, or if someone else suggested it to him, but when he got down to about his last dollar he wrote a lecture on Japan. He contacted churches of all denominations within reach; and, on Sunday nights, he gave his lecture for a part of the collection. His lecture was factual and instructive, but he didn't overlook the comical either, so it was very entertaining.

One of his best was in describing the relations between the sexes. Women are beneath men over there, hence they are never together in public. If it is necessary for a man and wife to go to the same place at the same time, the man always walks a few steps in advance. When he saw boys and girls

walking together, he was shocked. If the American boys wanted to degrade themselves by walking with girls, there wasn't a thing he could do about it; but he was definitely not going to degrade himself that way.

One morning as he went to school it was raining. Just as he was passing a house, one of the college girls came out carrying an armful of books and an umbrella. She said, "Mr. Imai, would you like to walk under my umbrella?" That put him on the spot. How could he degrade himself by walking beside a girl, even if she was doing the menial task of carrying an umbrella over him? But, on the other hand, it was awfully wet if he didn't. He chose the lesser of two evils. They had walked a little way when she suddenly stopped; set her foot on the bottom board of a fence that ran along the walk, and said, "Oh, Mr. Imai, my shoe has come untied; would you please tie it?" That was just too much! He stammered and stuttered and said, "Oh, I forgot something. I've got to go back to the house to get it." And he left the girl standing there in the rain—one foot on the fence; the umbrella in one hand and an armful of books in the other. He went clear back to his room and stayed there till he felt sure she had time to extract herself from her predicament and go on to school. He had to go all the way to school in the rain! Then he added, "But now when I walk with a girl, I always watch her shoe strings to see that they don't come untied."

Worthy was about six feet, very slender, red-headed and witty. Shinji was five feet one or two, black-headed, heavy-set, good natured, and a foreigner. Between the two of them, they gave us a lot of entertainment. At the college clubhouses, they always served an extra special dinner on Sunday noons. I think it was the first Sunday after Shinji came to eat with us, he didn't show up for Sunday dinner. When he showed up at supper time, Worthy squared himself in front of him;

pulled himself to his full height; and, looking down on him just as serious as a judge, said, "Look here, young man, the rest of us like good grub, too. You're not going to take advantage of our cheap food all week, then run off on Sunday and get a good meal that the rest of us can't afford. You either go to the club and eat all the time, or you stay here and eat just what the rest of us do." Shinji took it just as seriously as if it had been law and gospel. He never went to the club for another meal.

About a mile and a half north of the college was a dairy. I frequently worked there on Saturdays; and, when I did, I took my lunch in a six-quart pail and they gave me a pail full of separated milk to bring home. Then we had potato soup instead of beef soup. We had a bottle of pepper sauce that was plenty hot that we used to season it with. We used a very few drops to a plate of soup. The first time we had potato soup after Shinji came, we each took a few drops of sauce and passed it on. He took several times as much as anybody else. We were sure he had no idea how hot it was and began kicking each other under the table to call attention to how he was going to get stung. When he had all the liquid he wanted, he pulled out the cork, ran his fork down in the bottle, speared a pepper and ate it without batting an eye. We felt like our expected joke had backfired. He said that in Japan they cook the peppers right into the food to season it, and that the Ainu, the aboriginal inhabitants of northern Japan, eat them as articles of food—just as we eat tomatoes and potatoes.

One night we all went to a lecture. Just what the connection was, I don't remember. But one of the things the lecturer said was, "You little, short, sawed-off runt with black hair, don't look down on your long, lank, lean neighbor because his hair is red." Next morning when Shinji came in to breakfast, Worthy stood up in front of him; looked down at him and said, "Young man, young man, there

is one of your little stunts I don't want you to ever try on me. I don't want you to look down on me because my hair is red." We were short one chair, so someone had to sit on the end of the trunk to eat. It was considerably higher than the chairs. One morning Shinji got it. I noticed during grace that he was just about to split. After grace he stretched himself up; looked down at Hagerman and said, "Now, Mr. Hagerman, I guess I will look down on you."

The climax came the night of the Junior-Senior Banquet. Shinji asked Effie Meredith for her company. Her father was a farmer who had moved to town to put her in college, and kept a horse and buggy to go to the farm. It was a bitter cold night; and, when he called for her, she asked if he didn't think they should take the horse and buggy. He thought that was a splendid idea, so her father went out and hitched up for them. The banquet was at the Birdsall Hotel, and there was a livery stable just across the street. He put the horse in the stable, and when the banquet was over, the stable-man hitched up for them. The banquet lasted till the wee small hours of the morning. When they reached her home, they got out and he started fumbling around trying to unhitch. Pretty soon he turned to her and said, "Miss Meredith, I think you had better send your father out here. There are too darn many buckles here for me."

Shinji graduated with honor, and got a scholarship to Harvard. He went out lecturing that summer to earn money to help him along and that trouble in his back got him down. He had to go to the hospital; and, when school opened at Harvard, he was unable to go. He died before Christmas—tuberculosis of the spine.

My chief source of revenue during the cold winter months was the skating pond. The college Athletic Association in previous years, had built a dam across a ravine, forming a pond for skating—built a shack and

put in seats and a stove to make it comfortable. Robert took on the management of it, with me as his assistant. Because he had collecting to do, by far the greater part of the work fell on me—which was all right with me, since I was paid by the hour and needed the money. The work during skating hours consisted of keeping up a fire in the shack; keeping the lanterns going, both in the shack and out on the pond, and collecting the fees. I always had to be on the look-out for small fry who would slip on and skate without paying; and a few times toughs came from downtown for the avowed purpose of making trouble—and really made it. For the most part, the work was very pleasant during skating hours. After the skaters left, the pond had to be swept and flooded so it would be nice and slick for the next night. That was a cold job and usually lasted till about one o'clock in the morning. That part was tough! I liked to eat, so kept the job until relieved by the spring thaw.

One source of relaxation on warm summer evenings was baptizing young lovers on the college steps. It wasn't exactly doing unto others as you would have them do unto you, but more like David Harum's advice: "Do unto others as you know they would do to you under similar circumstances, but do it first." We got a big kick out of it.

The college set back in a beautiful grove and had three big front doors, not one in sight from another, but two of them in plain sight from our front door. It was an ideal place for young lovers out for a stroll, to sit down on the doorsteps and enjoy each other's company. I have no idea who invented the sport, but it was in vogue long before I went to college. I got into it because someone told me about it and I had such an excellent view of the front steps.

The first time I saw a couple sitting on the steps, I went to the janitor and asked him for the key to another front door. As he handed it over, he said, "I hate to do

this, but my orders are to keep the downtown lovers off the college campus, and they stay away a whole lot longer when you boys send them away than when I do." (Reader, please don't get the idea that I was the only one that indulged in this sport. There were many others.) The unwritten rule was that the first one to see a couple, and to get the keys from the janitor got to perform the ceremony without interference. However, it was quite common for others to hide nearby and let out a roaring horse-laugh when the water fell.

The usual proceeding was to enter the building by another front door; go to the basement where the janitor had a big candy bucket that he used about his janitor work; and draw it full of water. There were stairways in both wings, and they both squeaked so badly, that if anyone went up the stairs adjacent to his intended victims, they would most likely hear the squeaks; get suspicious and move on. So, experienced hands always used the opposite stairway; crossed over on the third floor; quietly raised a window; and dumped the entire bucketful on the unsuspecting victims.

In the year nineteen hundred, we had an unusually nice warm spring. As a consequence, there had been a very large number of "baptizings" and students were talking about it. Sylvester Jones, ex-president of the Y.M.C.A., a member of the senior class, and for many years afterward a missionary in Cuba, had had his part in numerous baptizings. He remarked to some members of his class that he didn't think any boy should be allowed to graduate from Penn College without an aquatic degree, and that if the weather continued as at present there should be a large crop of unsuspecting victims on hand Sunday night.

At that time bathtubs were not household equipment. You either took your Saturday night bath in the washtub by the kitchen stove, or you did without. Students away

from home had neither the washtub nor the kitchen stove. To satisfy a very great need, the college Y.M.C.A. installed several showers in the college basement for its members, and employed Olda Barnett, a classmate of mine, to heat them up on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons. On the Saturday afternoon following the above conversation with his classmates, Sylvester went down for his bath. While he was down there, he told Olda he thought there would be a lot of seniors out Sunday night looking for victims to duck. It would be a good joke if someone would fix up a pair of dummies, so that the seniors need not be disappointed. He even furnished a discarded white shirt for the lady's shirt-waist. Olda and his brother, Ivey, promptly made the dummies. Ivey had a date for Sunday night, so during the afternoon, Olda came over to my room; told me all about it and asked if I wouldn't help him put them out.

There was Christian Endeavor meeting at the college on Sunday evenings but no church services afterward, so many of the students scattered out and went to various churches downtown. We started with quite a bunch of the boys, but soon announced that we hadn't been to the H Street Mission for some time, so thought tonight would be a good time to go. We went a block in that direction, then turned back toward the college.

Since Olda cared for the baths, he had a key to the back door. The east door, which was right in front of the stairway running up to the chapel, had a Yale lock on it, so could be unlocked from the inside without a key. We carefully arranged our dummies on the east steps, locked the door, and stepped back into the darkness to await results. We didn't have long to wait. One of the back windows raised with an awful bang and three boys came in—Orville Mendenhall and Carl Mather, seniors, and Harlan Meredith, a junior. They came to the window beside the door, and looked out to see if

their victims were still there. Then Orville and Carl went to the basement for the bucket of water, making more noise than a corporal's guard of soldiers ought to make. As they came by, Harlan called out, "They are still there." They climbed the east stairway, right beside the door; and, as they did, it squeaked to high heaven as they went up. They raised a second story window with an awful clatter, and poured out their water. Had those dummies been human beings they would have been dumb, indeed, to stay there in all that noise. When the water fell, Harlan, just inside the door, whooped and yelled and gave them a big horse-laugh. Then he looked out of the window to see which way they were going, and exclaimed, "Why in thunder don't they get up and leave?"

About that time three more boys came in at a back window. They had their bucket of water with them. Ivey Barnett, passing in front of the college with his date, saw three more with a bucket of water heading for the back of the college. With the two of us, the three who threw the water, and the new arrivals all running around in the dark near the east door, things were getting complicated. Olda grabbed me and said, "Let's go!" We ran into the west wing; jumped out of a window; ran over and grabbed our dummies and took them over to my room. The next morning was the only time in all my life that I ever cut chapel for mischievous reasons. Olda came over to my room. We fixed a big placard saying, "We ducked 'em! Orville Mendenhall, Carl Mather, Harlan Meredith. We wanted to! Homer Rosenberger, Dias Ellis, Jonathan Springer, Wesley Mattison, and two more whose names I have forgotten," placed it on our dummies, and set them up on the campus right in front of the east door, where everyone coming down from chapel would see them. We retired to my room to watch developments. I never saw so many people come through one door so fast as streamed through that door to see the exhibition. When the janitor saw

what was going on he grabbed the dummies and took them to the furnace.

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More than forty years later, I was working for the Bureau of Reclamation in Yuma, Arizona, when I saw an announcement in the local paper. Dr. W. O. Mendenhall, President of Whittier College, would give a lecture there on a certain date. I immediately got in touch with the powers that be; told them that he was a schoolmate of mine; and asked for the privilege of entertaining him. They, in turn, asked me to introduce him to the audience. In my introduction I told of his struggles to go through school; his cutting the students' hair for ten cents each; working in the grocery store and other menial jobs. How, in spite of the time he had to put in, he won the scholarship to Haverford; taught school; studied for his Ph. D. and was now president of his second college. But that in spite of his hard work and seriousness in his youthful days, he did occasionally take a little time out for diversion along with the other boys. I told them about his ducking the dummies. When he got up to talk, he didn't look like he was too highly pleased with my introduction and said, "I have wondered all these years who put those dummies out, and just to think I had to come way out here to Yuma, Arizona, to find out!"

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While I had earned enough selling stereoscopes and views the summer before to pay up my back debts, I hadn't earned much more. Somehow I got the idea into my head that if I started in the south, and worked my way north with the harvest and threshing, I could earn much more. Our fellow-boarder, Merritt Votaw, helped the idea along. He had two brothers in Oklahoma; and his brother, Elmer, had two or three hundred acres of wheat, and would have to have harvest hands. He could get me a job. Merritt left at the end of the winter term and went down to work for his brother, Irvin. Just as soon as examinations

were over in the spring, and without waiting for commencement, I bought a ticket and checked my wheel to New Kirk, Oklahoma. Elmer had three binders and five shockers. Two of his binders were right-handed and cut an eight-foot swath—the other was a seven foot binder and left-handed. The right-hand binders and left-hand ones couldn't work in the same field, and he couldn't figure out how to divide his shockers.

I remembered that I had shocked for an eight-foot binder in Dakota, that had a change of horses. I thought it would be a cinch to shock for a seven-foot binder that had no change, so I volunteered to take it alone. What I overlooked was the fact that when I went to Dakota I had been working all summer at the hardest kind of farm labor and every muscle was hard. I had been feeding the threshing machine, and the ends of my fingers were calloused like sole-leather. In Dakota the weather was very cool. Here in Oklahoma it was very hot, and I had done no physical labor for two years. The skin on the ends of my fingers was as soft as the skin of a child, and soon wore through till they bled. I made good on my offer but suffered intensely for it. I was almost overcome by the heat, and was so tired before night I could scarcely straighten up when I stooped over to pick up a bundle.

I had heard a good deal about Miller's One Hundred and One Ranch at Ponca City, and that they needed men. So when Votaw finished threshing, I went down there. I arrived in the evening and hired at once. I went to the bunk house and didn't like the looks of it. To tell the truth, it wasn't a bunk house at all. There wasn't a bunk in it. It was a long empty granary with a thick layer of straw on the floor where everyone stretched himself as he pleased. It didn't look clean at all. I walked out by a straw stack; pulled some straw out of it and made me a bed on the ground beside it. There must have been around one hundred men and two hundred

horses and mules around camp and no pretense whatsoever of sanitation. The dining-room was just some boards set upon saw-horses in another granary. No screens! The cook shack was on wheels and backed up to one end of the dining-room. It was screened; but with so much passing in and out, and so many flies, they did little good. We ate supper after dark, and breakfast before daylight, so I didn't get the full picture of the flies till noon. The table was almost black with flies, and it took real maneuvering to put food into your mouth without also putting in flies. After dinner I saw several men out getting rid of their dinners because they had eaten flies. I have traveled around quite a lot in my lifetime, but have never seen the flies so bad anywhere else as they were there in Oklahoma.

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One of my glad surprises when I went to Cuba was the scarcity of flies. Being tropical and warm all the year around, I expected to find them as bad or worse than in Oklahoma. None of the natives screen their houses at all, and it is surprising as to how few flies they have.

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I was handed a little span of mules and a bundle wagon to operate; thrashing in the field. Every place else I ever worked there were men in the field to pitch the grain on to the wagons and the drivers loaded it. Not here! We had to get off and pitch our own loads till they got up so high and poorly placed that the bundles wouldn't lay on any longer. Then we got up and straightened out our loads and a pitcher came around and pitched up a few more shocks to top out the load. I think those mules had been trained by professional hobos who were interested in their meals and pay-checks; nothing else. In the morning, and just after dinner, they were just ordinary mules. As the day advanced, they got slower and slower till you could hardly beat them along from one shock

to the next. When the whistle blew, they stopped dead in their tracks and stood there till they were unhitched. Then they were in a dead-run for camp before I could possibly jump on one of them. I had to yank them back on their haunches a time or two before I could mount.

One day I was talking to one of the men about the awful condition there and so many flies. He said, "The flies are not the worst of it. There are gray backs (body lice) in that bunk house." That started me thinking. I had heard old soldiers of the Civil War tell about getting gray backs, and how hard they are to get rid of. So long as I slept by my strawstack I was all right. But suppose we got a big rain some night. I would have no choice but to go to the bunk house. I called for my time that very night.

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Years later when I read Will Rogers' autobiography I was surprised to learn that he was punching cattle on that same ranch while I was threshing wheat there.

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I went back to Votaw's, packed my grip ready to ship, and left it with them to ship when I found work; taking a change of work clothes with me. I headed up the Arkansas River Valley; but I had stayed in Oklahoma so long, all the harvesting and most of the thrashing was done. Between Wichita and Hutchinson, Kansas, I found a strange thing. Thousands and thousands of acres of wheat, already headed and in long ricks awaiting threshers, and not a person nor a house for miles and miles. When I finally did find a man to talk to, I asked him what it was all about. He said that whole country had been homesteaded. The farmers borrowed money from a big insurance company. Dry years came and they couldn't pay, so the company foreclosed the loans. Now in the summer they send men out with steam plows, harrows and drills. They live in tents till the ground is all plowed and sowed to wheat. Then they fold

their tents and move away till harvest time. Then other men come with horses, wagons and headers. They harvest and stack the grain, just as I had seen it. Soon the threshers will come and thresh the grain, and the cycle will start all over again. Near Hutchinson I found two or three outfits threshing headed grain, and asked for work. It doesn't take as many men to thresh stacked grain, as it does to thresh in the field, and they all had full crews.

At Hutchinson I left the valley and headed north, through Salinas, Minneapolis and Concordia. Near Concordia, I got permission to sleep in a haymow. About daylight I heard the farmer and his near-grown son come out and start the morning chores. Very soon thereafter two men came into the barnyard in a two-horse open buggy. One of them stayed in the buggy while the other went to the cow lot where the farmer was milking. After talking with him a little while, he came into the barn where the son was harnessing the horses, and was still talking to him when I came down out of the haymow.

He turned to me and asked, "Where is your partner?"

"I have no partner."

"What make of wheel is that?"

"Ivanhoe."

"What company makes it?"

"Waverly."

"I thought so. What time did you come through Jim Town (James Town)?"

"Jim Town, North Dakota?"

"No, Jim Town, Kansas."

"I didn't come through there, and didn't know there was such a place."

"Where did you say your partner is?"

I said, "I don't have any."

"Where did you say you came from?"

"I came from Oklahoma, and I am looking for work. Do you know where there is any?"

"No, but do you have anything to show who you are?"

I thought for a minute and said, "I have two letters I received while I was in Oklahoma, and my diary."

"You had better let me see them."

I undid them out of my pack and handed them over. Without a word, he sat down and read the letters, then started in on the diary. He read a few of the last entries, then turned well back toward the front and started reading straight through. He must have found it quite interesting, for he read a very long time without saying a word. Then he closed it up and handed it and the letters to me saying, "I am satisfied you are not the man I am looking for" and he drove away. I noticed he went east.

The farmer invited me up to breakfast and at the table he told me all about it. Two young men had stolen a Waverly bicycle in James Town the day before and headed toward Concordia, ten or twelve miles away. One of them was riding the stolen wheel, and his description fit me entirely too close for comfort. The fact that my wheel was made by the Waverly Company didn't lessen the sheriff's suspicion of me one bit. When I started on, I could see a bicycle track going east. I didn't stick around to see if the sheriff got his man or not.

I didn't find one bit of work till I was half-way across Nebraska. There a German farmer was just ready to stack his wheat and needed a hand. That lasted just a week. In the meantime, I had read that it had been very dry in the Dakotas, and the wheat crop was very short. Also, Robert had written me while I was still in Oklahoma, that the water company was putting in a new twelve-inch water main from Skunk River to Oskaloosa, and that he was working on it. So I decided to head back for Oskaloosa.

A few miles out of Council Bluffs, Iowa, I was sitting in the shade of a tree, eating lunch, when a man drove up and asked if I wanted to work. When I told him I did, he said, "Follow me." In those days, farmers

exchanged work in threshing. He took me to the home of an elderly German who wanted a man to work in his stead at the threshing machine. He gave me a pitchfork, and told me to go with the machine and pitch in the field. That lasted three weeks. Those Germans were real feeders. Five meals a day! Breakfast, dinner, and supper in the house, and a mid-morning and a mid-afternoon lunch carried to the field. The first morning I was there, the owner of the field where we were threshing brought out the sandwiches. When I was through, he offered me a bottle.

"What's that?"

"Whisky."

"Thanks, I don't drink whisky."

"What do you drink? Beer?"

"No, water."

"Water, huh. Water is all right to wash clothes in and for animals to drink, but it never was intended to go on a man's stomach." What's more I think he both believed it, and practiced it.

When finished there, I went back to Oskaloosa and joined Robert on the water-works gang. In those days, all work was done by hand. We had to put our pipe five and one-half feet underground to get below frost. They handed me an eighteen inch tile spade to help dig the ditch. I was well acquainted with a tile spade. I had helped put in several tile ditches in Indiana. But the sun was hot, and the ditch was deep. The sun shining on the damp, freshly turned up earth, generated so much humidity that our clothes were generally as wet with perspiration as if we had been in the river. That just wasn't the kind of work I really enjoyed, but I stayed with it till corn was ripe enough to shock.

Then I got a job of cutting corn by the shock till school opened. My summer was not the success I had hoped for, but it was far from being a failure. I had lost some time which I had spent riding, looking for more

work. Harvest and threshing wages in those days were the best wages paid on the farm, and farm work was the only kind of work I really knew anything about. I had saved quite a bit more money than I did the summer before. I had also done a lot more back-breaking work, and acquired a lot of valuable experience.

Robert started in spading in the ditch, but later he and a man with a team took the job of backfilling the ditch by the lineal foot. Handling that scraper was very hard work, but he also earned more than twice as much as he did on the spade. About two weeks before time for school to open, he said to me, "I have been gone from home now two years and a half. I have worked awfully hard this summer, but have made good money. I am going to take a run home before school begins; and, if I can, I am going to bring our sister, Luella, back with me." He brought her and our living quarters looked much more like a home, thereafter.

Oskaloosa got its water supply from Skunk River, five miles north of town. For storage and to keep good pressure in the pipes, they had a standpipe one hundred and sixty-six feet high. All the water that went into the standpipe was pumped through sand filters that had to be washed occasionally, depending on how muddy the water was. At the foot of the standpipe was a two-story house that housed the filters and the keeper. The keeper's job was about as easy a job as a man could ever hope to find; but it was, also, the most confining. His duties were washing filters when they needed it, keeping the place respectably clean, and turning the proper valves when there was a fire. Washing the filters was all done by turning valves. The catch in the whole set-up was he couldn't leave the place for one minute without a substitute. Theodore Cook, a married student, got the job that winter. Being a student, he had to attend classes, and he, also, liked to play football. He gave Robert and me the

rent of the upstairs rooms to substitute for him when he was away. There being three of us, it wasn't much trouble to arrange for one of us to be there.

When a fire alarm was turned in, it started a big gong ringing in the filterhouse, and it didn't stop till someone stopped it. Normally, the pumps at the river only ran enough each day to fill the standpipe, and the city ran on storage the rest of the day. The tower pressure was not sufficient to successfully fight a big fire. We had a direct telephone line to the pumphouse at the river; so when the gong rang, we rang the river and told the pump operator to get ready for action. Then we ran out to the valve house; turned the river water directly into the city main; closed valves so the water couldn't go either to the filters nor to the tower; then ran back and told the operator to start his pumps. Pumping unfiltered water into all the city system was a very unsanitary thing to do, and today wouldn't be tolerated for one moment. When the river was low and clear, people in town couldn't tell the difference, and the water company operated on the theory that what folks don't know doesn't hurt them. When the river was high and muddy, the water would get so muddy in the faucets that it was unfit for household use till it was drawn out into a vessel and settled. Frequently, it didn't clear up till they sent men all over town and flushed all the hydrants.

The next spring our class was getting out our annual and Worthy Hagerman was illustrating it. One day after a fire he said, "I've got an idea. I know why we have muddy water. Noah has been up on the tower washing his feet in it. I am going to make a cartoon for the annual showing him doing it."

I said, "Cook is the caretaker; everybody will think it is he." Some days later he came over while I was alone, studying my lesson, waiting for a fire alarm and hoping I wouldn't get one. He had his pencil and

drawing pad with him and said he wanted to draw my picture. He was always drawing somebody's picture. I gave it no thought and posed as he placed me. He drew for a while, then told me I could relax. He drew a while longer, then walked over to the door; opened it; stood in it and held up his drawing and said, "They will think it is Cook, will they?" He slammed the door and was gone. I never saw it again till it came out in the annual. No one who knew me could possibly think it was anyone else. He had me sitting on the rim of the standpipe, far above the city; pants legs rolled up to my knees; my feet in the water; a cake of Ivory soap in one hand, and a sheet of paper in the other. On the paper was a seal and the statement, "This is to certify why Oskaloosa has bad water." Down in the kitchen at the foot of the tower, a woman was drawing water. It was as black as ink.

The next summer I let F. E. Gordon, a local lawyer in the winter-time and an agent for the Model Portrait Company of Chicago in the summer-time, talk me into canvassing for enlarged portraits. He had four or five groups out but stayed with our group two or three weeks. He gave us a good start, then turned them over to me to manage. Our starting point was Lanesboro, Minnesota, away down in the southeast corner of the state. We arrived about ten o'clock on Saturday night. When we looked out of the window on Sunday morning, we saw a four- or five-hundred foot bluff right north of town. Everyone of us, except Mr. Gordon, had to rush right out and climb that bluff before breakfast. We thought it was a mountain, and we wanted to see what was on the other side. It was not a mountain at all, but a high tableland. The Mississippi and the Lanesboro Rivers had cut wide valleys in it four or five hundred feet deep, and every little tributary had cut a canyon in it.

Our instructions were that the towns had been pretty thoroughly canvassed. We should ride bicycles and canvass the country.

We could ride on the small patches of table-land, but we couldn't ride either up nor down the canyon walls. Bicycles in those days had no brakes, so it would have been suicidal to attempt to ride down. So much walking took an awful lot of time, and left little for canvassing. Later someone showed me how to stick the toe of my shoe in the fork of my bicycle; and using my shoe sole as a brake, bear down enough to control the speed. If the hill was too long and too steep, my foot would get so hot I had to change feet; but it saved a lot of time and energy. We divided up the territory and went out in different directions for the week. We spent the nights with farmers and came back into the hotel for the weekend. There wasn't a man in the bunch with the slightest desire to climb that bluff next Sunday morning.

About the time Gordon left us, Carl Barker, another boy from Westfield, Indiana, joined us. We worked east to La Crosse, Wisconsin, then turned south in Wisconsin. One Saturday afternoon, we came into Lynxville, Wis. For diversion, we hired a boat and went for a boat ride and swim in the Mississippi River. After we swam a little while, I decided to try swimming the river. I asked one of the boys to keep near me in the boat, just in case I might need help. I reached the other shore all right; but the current was very strong, and I reached it far below where I headed for. I never knew how far it was across, but we guessed about half a mile. We worked south to the Wisconsin River, then turned eastward up it.

To break the monotony, we made arrangements by correspondence, to meet another gang one Saturday afternoon and all spend Sunday together. The other gang was Robert, Stephen Berry, and Bishop White. Bishop was not his name, but he had been nicknamed that because he was so very religious. When a big bunch gets together away from home, they can usually dream up something to do. We were no excep-

tion. We had heard of the Dells of the Wisconsin River at Kilburn; decided we would never have a better time to see them than now; so hired a livery team and went. It turned out that we had quite a bit of sandy road and they had given us a team that had been driven most of the night, so before noon they were dragging their feet. We had been told that the last nine miles was all deep sand and that many people put their horses in the livery stable at Lyndon, and took the train. We stopped to check up on the road and train, and learned that the train was just about due. We put the horses in the livery barn and caught it. In Kilburn there was a stern-wheel steamboat waiting to take visitors to the upper Dells, and plenty of guides with rowboats looking for customers. We hired a guide who had a boat big enough to carry the seven of us. We took the boat on the steamer and went to the head of navigation. There we disembarked and started sightseeing in earnest. Some of the sightseeing we did on foot, but most of it was on the canyon walls and we did it from the boat.

One of the on-foot expeditions was to a natural column variously called table-rock, standing-rock, and flat-top. It was once the end of a high ridge covered with about a six-inch stratum of fairly hard rock. Erosion had cut it off from the parent ridge, so that now it stood alone some ten or fifteen feet from the ridge, and fifty odd feet high. On top was a remnant of the hard stratum about fifteen feet in diameter, balanced on the column which was only seven or eight feet across. The same hard stratum overhung the end of the ridge to the extent that there was only six feet of intervening space between the overhanging ledges. When our guide was soliciting our patronage, he showed us several pictures of the things he could show us, and among them was a picture of this rock with a man in the act of jumping across. We asked him if he had ever been over on the rock. He said he was over there every day. When

we came to it, we were on top of the ridge. The guide just walked to the edge, and with an extra long step landed with his instep on the edge of the rock and his heel hanging over. It looked so easy. Bishop said, "Look out. I am going to be the first one across." He backed off and took a run, but when he got to the edge he stopped. Then he got a stick, measured the distance across, and measured the same distance on the ground and jumped that. As I remember it, the distance was just about six feet. Six feet is no jump at all on solid ground; but when there is fifty odd feet of empty space right under it, it isn't so easy. Robert, Steve Berry, and I jumped Bishop's measured distance, then took a run and jumped onto the rock, but not with the ease and nonchalance of our guide. Bishop ran up to the edge time and time again, but never could hold his courage long enough to make the jump. On the boat ride down the river, the guide really rubbed it into Bishop. He said, "Well, this is a pretty good average crowd; half of you got over. Three jumped, three didn't start, and one got the wind-work done." Pictures of that rock with a man jumping onto it used to be quite common in travel magazines, but I haven't seen one for years. I am wondering if it hasn't toppled off in the intervening years.

Next morning, we went to the Lower Dells. There were no boats going there, so we walked. We got back just at high noon, and there was no train going our way until four P.M.—a long time to wait, and a long night drive afterward. Just as we reached town, a very long freight train pulled in. They sold tickets on some freight trains in that part of the country; and, if we could go on it, we could save four hours, and get back to our hotel before night. We hurried up and asked for tickets. He said they didn't sell tickets on that train, but neglected to tell us why. We held a brief consultation and decided we would ride anyhow, and if they

wanted to put us off at the first station that just suited us fine. We walked down alongside the train; and, when it started, we each grabbed a bumper except Bishop. He was too conscientious to steal even a ride. But when the caboose came along, he grabbed that, in spite of the fact that they told him they didn't carry passengers.

In those days, brakemen ran along on top of the trains and screwed the brakes by hand. We hadn't gone far when one came along. He asked where we were going, and we told him "Lyndon". He said, "This is a through freight and we don't stop till we get to Winona, Minnesota. It is down-grade through Lyndon and we go through there at forty miles an hour. Don't try to get off or you will be killed sure." That was a jar! We didn't have any business at all in Minnesota, and Winona was just about a hundred miles from where we wanted to go. He went on his way so we could see what a truthful man he was. When we went through Lyndon, if we weren't going forty miles an hour, it was because we were going sixty. The cars were really jumping up and down and we had all we wanted to do to hold on.

After we were well past Lyndon and had had time to reflect on what an honest man our brakeman was, he came back and asked if we had any money. He said if we would make up a purse, he would speak to the engineer and get him to stop at New Lisbon, which was only about forty miles from where we wanted to go. We made up the purse and he went on his way. After a while, he came back and said it was all arranged, but if we got off in town we might get arrested. The engineer would blow the whistle, and slow down enough for us to get off about a mile before we got into town, and we could walk into town. That went off according to schedule, but what burned us up was that as we walked into town we saw that they were changing engines. Our

very honest brakeman had talked us into paying to stop the train at a division point, and I had lost my hat into the bargain. We ate dinner, then put Bishop on the passenger train and sent him back for the team, while the rest of us hiked about fourteen miles across wild country with no roads to a little town on the road where Bishop could pick us up. After all, it saved us a little time, for the east-bound train was earlier than the west-bound, and the team traveled faster with one passenger than with seven. That was the first, last, and only time I ever bummed a freight train.

When the summer was over we all went back to school. I didn't like canvassing, but by working hard I had made more money that summer than I had ever earned in a like period of time in my life.

Carl Barker sent back to Indiana and got his sister, Oriana, to come out. The five of us rented a three-room apartment and kept house together. President Rosenberger was back from a year's leave and everything settled down to a quiet, uneventful year of just plain, hard work.

One day during the spring term, I was walking through the hall when the President called me into the office. He didn't have an expression on his face as if I was being called on the carpet, nor did I have a guilty conscience. I wondered what it was all about.

He said, "I have just had a letter from the president of Nebraska Central College. They are looking for someone to take their Chair of Science next year, and haven't money to hire an experienced teacher. He asked if I could recommend a member of our Senior Class for the place. I have recommended you as the best in the class in both science and mathematics. You will probably hear from him." I heard from him in due time and took the position. I can't describe how I felt getting that kind of recommendation from President Rosenberger.

Father had been in North Dakota for four years and hadn't seen any of us children in that time—and some of them for longer. We hadn't all been together for ten years, so he decided to make our Commencement an occasion for a family reunion and paid the fares of the other children to come out from Indiana.

With our Commencement exercises and all the activities that go with them, and our reunion, we were very busy—but also very happy. Although schoolmates at Spiceland Academy in Indiana, Father and Rosenberger hadn't seen each other for just about thirty years. So when Commencement activities were over, and the rest of our family gone, Rosenberger invited Father over to supper one night. Father told me next day that Rosenberger had complimented both Robert and me very highly. He had said, "Nathan, you have two boys you can well be proud of. Noah is the best in his class in both science and mathematics, and Robert is the best business manager in the whole college."

Noah Williams, 1902,
sitting on water tower
washing his feet.

Drawn by Worthy Hagerman,
a Penn College school-
mate, for the year book.

