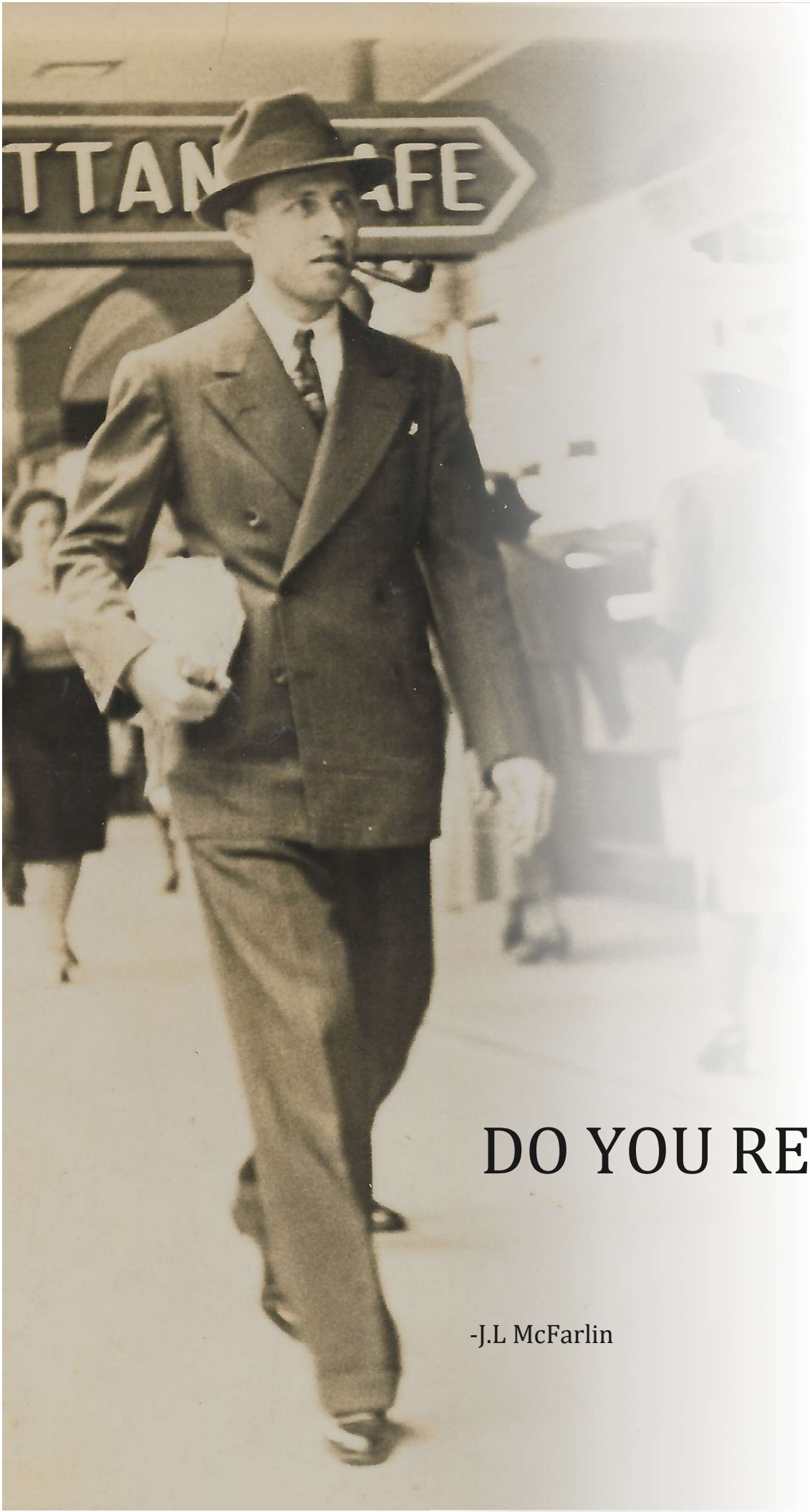

DO YOU REMEMBER?

...I DO

-J.L McFarlin

Contents

FOREWORD

I witnessed most of the events and episodes described in this book. Some others were told to me many times, and under the right circumstances, it feels as if I witnessed them as well. Though I have forgotten some of the details, I've used the recollections I still have, along with my imagination, to make them more colorful for your entertainment.

Most of the episodes are described briefly; otherwise, this book would be too long for most readers. Some events were omitted entirely, as I deemed them of very little interest.

In my opinion, to truly enjoy this book, you must read it slowly and with some imagination of your own, allowing the events to unfold as if they were happening to you at the same age.

I hope you enjoy reading it.

Edited by Michael Poznecki, grandson of J.L McFarlin.
Note: This book is just as J.L McFarlin typed it.

CHAPTER I
A CHILD IS BORN

In late November of 1909, the weather in Sligo, Texas, was already growing very cold and windy—the place and time where I was born. Sligo no longer exists, but it was located near the present-day site of Denver City. Some still find remnants indicating that a settlement once stood a few miles from downtown Denver City, but it seems no one today remembers Sligo.

The town was small, consisting mostly of my parents, my older sister, and some of my father's relatives, including his Aunt Jo, her husband, Uncle Dade, and their daughter, Cousin Tessie, along with a few more family members and other folks I never knew.

It's hard to imagine why anyone would have lived in Sligo at that time. The town was only a few miles from the New Mexico border, and since New Mexico had not yet become a state, it was necessary to be vigilant against all kinds of raiders.

The people of Sligo farmed to some extent, mostly growing cotton for the market, feed for livestock, and food for their families. There was also some ranching, but trapping played a significant role in their livelihoods. My father was involved in all of these activities, in addition to operating the only trucking and hauling service in and out of Sligo.

His equipment consisted of a large, heavy wagon, a smaller wagon that was hitched behind, and at least six strong horses or mules. He also had all the essential tools needed to run such a business and strive for profit. His route was from Sligo to Big Spring and back, as Big Spring was the closest town with a railroad at that time. Lamesa was the only other town along the route.

The land was very flat and sandy, with no rivers or creeks in sight—nor does it appear there ever were. The area received only about twelve inches of rain annually, and as a result, the native vegetation consisted of small mesquite trees, shinnery, and hardy grasses.

In 1909, there were very few people living in this part of Texas. The area was mostly made up of ranches, some of which were very large, spanning many sections of land. As a result, the houses were widely scattered. There wasn't a direct road from Sligo to Lamesa, but rather a series of trails connecting watering holes and ranch houses. To travel directly from one town to another, you had to cut across pastures, aiming to reach water around noon and again in the evening. The distance from Sligo to Lamesa was about sixty miles—an overnight or longer trip by wagon.

The distance from Lamesa to Big Spring was also roughly sixty miles, but this area was more populated, and there was a road suitable for loaded wagons. Most farms were fenced, and the road followed the fences, so even though the goal was to go south, you had to travel in various directions due to the irregular shapes and sizes of the farms. This journey also took about two days by wagon.

During the last week of November 1909, my father was preparing for his next trip, as he had done many times before. He checked both wagons thoroughly, greasing them and adding extra axle grease for future use. He packed a large bottle of horse liniment, just in case one of the horses became lame. He had decided to use four horses and two mules for this trip. Each animal had its own harness, so everything had to be checked and made ready for the journey.

Then, he gathered the necessary tools and spare parts. Opening his large tool box, he said, "Let me see… Yep, here are the tools needed for repairing the harness, along with plenty of leather and chain. And here are the tools for fixing any part of the wagons—including a saw, axe, shovel, hammer, pliers, and nails in various sizes. There are the feed bags for giving the horses just a snack, and hobbles for when I

turn them loose to graze. There's plenty of wire, to be used as a last resort, and lots of rope. Well, it looks like I have everything I might need. I'd better put my saddle in the wagon now, just in case of an accident where I need to ride off for help. If there happens to be an accident, I hope it's during the day, because it's very hard to find help out there when it's dark and cold, and you're not exactly sure where you are."

The next item was food for six hard-working animals for fifteen days, and they really required a lot. Daddy had raised enough feed, but it needed to be prepared for the working animals. The maize had already been harvested and placed in the barn, but the grain had to be stripped from the main stem for easy eating and digestion.

It required around ten bushels for each animal for the fifteen-day trip, totaling sixty bushels. Twelve bushels of corn were shucked and shelled to offer a change in their diet. At this time of year, grass was hard to find, so a generous supply of bundled feed was also loaded.

Well, that about takes care of the equipment and horses. Now, how about the driver?

Daddy had recently killed two hogs, so his food would be mostly pork. Mama had baked a ham, so one-half of that went into his grub box, along with a slab of bacon, a link of sausage, a dozen eggs, plenty of coffee, flour, beans, and other necessary items, such as matches, for camping out.

As it was cold and there was very little danger of spoilage, Daddy took two one-gallon jugs of sweet milk, one gallon of buttermilk, and five gallons of drinking water. His pots and pans remained packed between trips. A few medical supplies were also packed, along with two changes of clothing and plenty of blankets and quilts for warmth.

All of this, plus his shotgun and rifle with ammunition for both, were placed in an easily accessible spot while he went around Sligo picking up items that people wanted to send to market and getting orders for things they wanted to purchase.

Daddy had six coyote hides, thirteen polecat hides, eight rabbit hides, and three badger hides to take to market. He also had a cowhide to be shipped to Ft. Worth for tanning, with instructions on which part should be made into shoe leather and which part for harness use. Several other people also had hides to be taken. All of these hides had to be tagged for easy identification, as they all looked alike.

Many people had already brought their wares and orders to Daddy, and others had sent word for him to come see them. One family had a coop of thirty-one chickens, along with their feed and water, to be hauled to Lamesa and sold for the highest price obtainable. The money earned from the sale was to be taken to Big Spring and used to purchase piece goods suitable for making children's clothing, along with matching thread and a package of sewing machine needles.

Two other families each had an empty kerosene drum, which was to be taken to Big Spring and exchanged for full ones. This would add up to around eight hundred pounds on the return trip. Some others did not have anything for sale, but a few had money left over from previous sales. One man wanted a pair of hinges for his barn door. As neither knew the cost, he gave Daddy a dollar bill to purchase a good pair of hinges, take out his fee, and bring the change back.

You can see from the above that Daddy had to be a good salesman, an excellent buyer, and, above all, a very good bookkeeper.

With all wares loaded and preparations made, it was decided that the trip would begin at the break of dawn the following day. It was a sad occasion, as my mother was with child, due to give birth almost any time within the next two weeks. Arrangements had been made with Aunt Jo and Uncle Dade to keep an eye on things until Daddy's return. Mama had already made one trip with Daddy to Lamesa to see a doctor and stayed with friends while Daddy went on to Big Spring and back. That was about three months ago, so Daddy promised to send the same doctor back as soon as possible.

At daybreak on December 4th, Daddy fed the animals, ate breakfast, finished loading, and was ready to be on his way. He hooked three horses and one mule to the wagon, leading the other two. He figured that four animals could handle the load, giving him two spares in case one of the working animals tired or became lame. He decided to take a direct route to Lamesa and travel a little more each day in an effort to return home a little sooner than usual.

There was a watering hole down the trail that could be reached just after noon if he drove hard, so he hit a pretty good pace. Around ten o'clock, he came upon a lone cowpoke working that pasture. They stopped, made a fire, and had a cup of coffee. Daddy checked everything, fed and watered the chickens, and hung a feed bag with a little maize on each of the animals. As one of the horses was showing signs of fatigue, it was taken loose and replaced with a fresh mule. The trip continued, with the cowboy riding alongside for the next few miles, until they came upon a barbed-wire fence.

The staples were removed from two posts, and the cowboy got all three wires to the ground, standing on them until everything was on the other side. After putting the wires back in place, they bade each other goodbye and rode off in different directions.

A little before one o'clock, Daddy came upon a water hole that he knew was around there somewhere. He would have missed it by a mile if he had not noticed that animal trails all seemed to be going to a central point, and the lay of the land was sloping slightly toward the same place.

Immediately upon arriving, Daddy unharnessed all of the horses and mules. He hobbled all of them except one, which was tied with a long rope. This one was Daddy's favorite saddle horse, and the precaution was taken just in case one or more of the hobbled horses could not be caught on foot.

Some wood and dried cow chips were gathered up, and a fire was made. The coffee pot, half filled with water from the five-gallon can of drinking water, was placed near the fire. Six wooden baskets,

which had been filled with maize, were emptied to half full. A little corn was added, and some bundle feed was scattered around for the animals to eat. The chickens were fed and watered, and two eggs were found in the coop.

Dinner was prepared and eaten with two cups of coffee. Daddy discovered a bucket of teacakes Mama had made and packed unknowingly to him.

He got a glass full of sweet milk and had a real nice dessert. After resting for a spell, he saw that the horses had finished all of their food and had begun to wander off. He checked the wagons and found everything in ship shape, so he began rounding up the horses, catching one at a time, putting a rope around their necks, and removing their hobbles. After catching all of them without any trouble, they were led back to the water for one last drink before leaving. Some drank a little while the others did not. Four were harnessed, and two others were tied behind the wagons to be led.

It was now about 2 p.m., with not more than three hours left before darkness set in. There was a farmhouse toward Lamesa that could be reached by dark. It was judged to be about fourteen miles away, but there were hardly any signs, and the sky was cloudy, making it very hard to keep in the correct direction. Daddy had crossed all of this country many times and knew to keep his eye out for familiar signs—an old dead stump, a pile of cow bones, even the land, as flat as it was, offered contours and slight changes in texture and color to guide him. He had passed a bad sandhill earlier that day.

It was an uneventful afternoon, stopping once to let the horses rest after pulling the wagons through a rough patch of land. During this stop, two of the tiredest horses were replaced by two fresh ones, who would pull more than their share of the load until they, too, became tired. Of course, the chickens had to be fed and watered, and one more egg was picked from the coop.

One of the wheels on the lead wagon had begun screeching pretty loudly. It so happened that enough dry wood was nearby, and it was

placed underneath the axle to take the load off of the wheel. With his shovel, Daddy dug enough sand from under the wheel so that it was loose on the axle. The nut was removed, and an ample supply of axle grease was applied. Afterward, the wheel was spun several times to evenly distribute the grease. The nut was screwed back on, and everything was ready to roll. The blocks under the axle did not have to be removed, as the horses would pull the wagon off of it.

It was about four more miles to the farmhouse, according to all the signs Daddy had noticed. The time was less than an hour before sunset. It was getting dark, and still, no signs of a house. About then, Daddy noticed a field that had already been harvested, and he saw two cows in the field. They looked like milk cows that were dry but would bring calves in the spring. Daddy figured that they must be milk cows, and surely there was a farmhouse nearby.

He had not traveled far when he heard a donkey bray. Upon looking in that direction, he saw a faint light in the outline of a window. The light was less than a mile away, about ten degrees to his left. After making this adjustment in his direction, he was soon close enough for the four dogs to begin barking. Daddy kept driving toward the light and barking dogs for several hundred yards, until he figured that he was close enough to be heard but not shot. He stopped the wagons to lessen the noise and let out with a loud, "HELLO!"

Before long, he saw the cabin door open, and in the center stood a big man with a lit lantern in one hand and a double-barreled shotgun in the other. The man said, "Who goes there?" Daddy replied, "Joe Mac, the trucker from Sligo. I would like to spend the night." The man said, "Why, Joe Mac, you old son of a gun! My name is… (I'm sorry, but to save me, I can't remember the name he gave), and I haven't seen or heard from you in years. Let me get the dogs together, and we'll see what we can do."

The man, his wife, and three children lived in this small cabin, with the closest neighbor about five miles toward Lamesa. It seemed like a lonely place, but they enjoyed it, for all they knew.

There was no place for Daddy to sleep in the cabin, so he spent the night in the barn, which was better than the cabin anyway. It would take another book to write all that was said that night after the children went to bed, but it all boils down to the fact that Daddy had worked on the same ranch with this man before either of them were married.

The next morning, Daddy cut some sausage from his link, as they didn't have any, and brought it into the kitchen. The woman cooked it, along with some eggs, a large pan of biscuits, and some gravy, and everyone ate breakfast.

Daddy got an early start right after eating, as he wanted to try to reach Lamesa while some of the business houses were still open. He also wanted to catch the doctor before he left for home. He had made about thirty-four miles the first day and had approximately twenty-six miles to go.

Everything went fairly well, stopping a few times to rest and to feed and water the chickens. During the afternoon, he discovered that one of the hens had died. She had not looked too healthy to begin with. She was removed from the coop and thrown out for the varmints to eat.

Around noon, he came upon a watering hole and stopped for dinner. As always, he hobbled, watered, and fed the horses, then built a fire, cooked, and ate his dinner. The horse that had become a little lame the first day had been led all morning but was now limping more than ever. Daddy got the liniment and rubbed all four legs, focusing on the lame leg very vigorously, and retied her to the back of the wagon to be led.

During the afternoon, Daddy got out his order book and arranged all of his stops in Lamesa in such a way that it eliminated as much backtracking as possible, considering that some places would be closed for the night before he could get there. Daddy reached the edge of Lamesa, which was about a quarter of a mile from the center of town, around four o'clock in the afternoon.

Over to his right was a poultry house. He drove up in front of it and got down from the wagon. The proprietor came out to see what he wanted. They bargained back and forth for some time and finally came to a deal. Daddy got the chickens unloaded, got his money, and told the man that he would pick up the coop on his way back through. This payment was entered in the book immediately, noting the amount that Daddy was charging. I, or no one else, has ever figured out a system for setting a fair charge for such a transaction, as Daddy got a total of five fresh eggs, about ten pounds of feed, plus the money that he was taking for his share. After one more stop at the grocery store to deliver two large sacks of dried black-eyed peas they had ordered, Daddy headed for the wagon yard. He made arrangements for camping overnight, unhooked his horses, and placed them in the pen that had been assigned to him. After putting some maize and corn in the feed trough for them to eat, he headed downtown, which was a short distance away.

Daddy had been to Lamesa several times, so he knew his way around. He headed straight to the doctor's office. The sign on the front of the building read, in large letters, "DRUGS" and over a little were, in smaller letters, the words "DR. WORMACK" and further down, in even smaller letters, "IN REAR." Daddy entered the front door, and the only clerk was busy with a customer. On one side of the walls were shelves reaching to the ceiling, filled with all kinds of animal treatments for horses, cows, hogs, and dogs. On the opposite side were shelves lined with patent medicines for human use.

Daddy went straight to the rear of the store, and on a small door was printed the one word "DOCTOR." Daddy knocked twice, shook the door, and tried to open it, but it was locked. He turned and asked the clerk if he knew where the doctor was. The clerk glanced at the large clock hanging on the wall and said, "Doctor Wormack has been gone about fifteen minutes, and if he was going home, he would stop at the saloon for a drink and chat, but on the other hand, if he had to make a house call, he would go get his horse and buggy and make his house call, skipping the saloon."

Daddy rushed out and went to the saloon, where he was told that Doc had dropped in, had a drink, and said he was heading home. The bartender said that Doc kept his horse and buggy at the wagon yard when not in use.

This turned out to be the same place where Daddy had camped. Daddy rushed to the yard just as the Doc was pulling out. He explained to the Doc what his mission was, but the Doc interrupted and said, "It's past supper time, so why don't you saddle up and come with me, and we'll talk about it after we've eaten?"

After supper, Daddy explained that his wife was about to have a baby and that he wanted the Doc to be present. He asked the Doc to make preparations to leave very quickly. The Doc explained that he was taking care of as many sick people as he could, but after a while, he agreed that he would prepare to leave the day after tomorrow. It would be necessary for him to see some of his patients, inform the druggist about what others had been prescribed, and tell the only other doctor in town about some of the others.

Daddy laid out a route for the doctor to follow, which was about ten miles farther. However, since he was going alone and on horseback, he should be able to make it in two days. The route took the Doc from one farm or ranch house to another, and since the Doc would never be more than ten miles from a house, he was unlikely to get lost. With everything settled, Daddy rode back to the wagon yard and went to bed in the hayloft.

The next morning was very cold, and it looked like it might snow. The lame horse had gotten worse, so Daddy made a trade with the yard master for another horse, giving him five dollars as well. The trade would be null and void if Daddy was unsatisfied upon his return from Big Spring. To give the horses a change in diet, he also traded two bushels of maize for one bushel of oats with the yard master, which he immediately fed to the horses.

Daddy had several more stops to make in Lamesa before leaving. When he was all finished and ready to leave, he drove back to the

drug store to reaffirm his conversation with the doctor. The Doc was standing out front, talking to one of his patients about leaving town and scolding him very harshly for standing out in the cold weather—though it was the Doc who had detained him. Daddy and the Doc went over their agreement in detail until they both understood. They then shook hands, with the Doc going to his office and Daddy climbing up on the wagon.

But before he could start, the druggist ran out, waving a sheet of paper and some money. It was an invoice for two cases of cold remedies that had arrived at the railway freight office in Big Spring and should be picked up without delay. The invoice indicated the amount, including the freight and C.O.D. charges. The druggist handed it to Daddy and had written across the face of the invoice, "Deliver to bearer, upon payment," and signed his name below. He then handed the exact amount of money to Daddy, explaining that his fee would be paid upon delivery, undamaged, in Lamesa.

It seems strange now, but no one gave the other a receipt for either the money or the merchandise. I guess they must have trusted each other. After this, Daddy headed for Big Spring, which would be hard to make in two days, even though the load was somewhat lighter, and he would soon get out of the bad sand. It was fortunate that he was heading south with such a strong north wind blowing.

With that, we will leave him on his way and get back to Doc, who was very busy preparing for his first trip to Sligo.

Doctor Wormack was a rough man in his early forties. He drank whiskey a little more than most men, but usually only after a hard day or night. So, the first thing that he thought about packing was something to drink. He went to the saloon and ordered a bottle of good whiskey. Then, he said, "On second thought, make that two bottles." Since he would be traveling on horseback, he couldn't carry too much, so he took everything out of his black medicine bag except for the items he felt would be useful for the mission. This way, he had room for two bottles of whiskey.

It was impossible to determine the exact amount of food he would

need, so he decided on six biscuits, two boiled eggs, a large stick of beef jerky, two apples, and maybe some vegetables if he could find something at the store that could be eaten raw. He would also need a change of clothes, some extra socks, and his slicker.

He planned to wear heavy underwear, two shirts, a top coat, and an overcoat. He also packed his fur-lined cap (instead of his Stetson), ear muffs, and fleece-lined gloves. Of course, he would wear boots instead of shoes. And there was his shotgun and shells that had to be packed.

With everything packed and tied to his saddle, he looked at the map Daddy had given him and saw that a farm about fifteen miles away should be reached around noon or shortly thereafter. So, he kissed his wife goodbye, mounted his horse, and was on his way.

He reached the farmhouse shortly after twelve o'clock. After introducing himself, he was invited to dismount, take care of and feed his horse, and come in for dinner. After they had finished eating and talked for a spell, Doc handed the man a fifty-cent piece to cover the cost of what he and his horse had eaten. At first, the man refused to accept pay, but finally, Doc convinced him that he was entitled to it—and more. Doc got his horse ready to go.

Looking at his map, he saw two farmhouses ahead and a ranch house further away, where he was supposed to spend the night. So, he headed for the first farmhouse. It seemed to be getting a little colder, and a light snow was falling. After a short while, Doc got off his horse and walked about half a mile, increasing his circulation and warmth. It wasn't long before he reached the first house, where he obtained a drink of water for himself and his horse. He also got better directions to follow to reach the next house.

It only took about an hour and a half to reach the second house. By then, the snow was falling heavily. After Doc had a drink of water and gave his horse one as well, he asked the man for further directions to the ranch house. The man said, "Doc, the snow is piling up, covering the road, and you won't be able to find the house or see a light." But Doc replied, "I can't help it. I've got to reach that house

today, or else I won't be able to reach Sligo tomorrow."

After much discussion, the man agreed to ride along until they came upon the fence around the pasture where the house was located. From there, he would give further directions.

They both rode off in the general direction of the ranch, with the man pointing out that the road was now completely covered with snow. Many of the landmarks had disappeared, leaving only the tops of a few still visible. The man told Doc that he knew this country so well that it was as if he had suddenly become blind. In less than two hours, they came upon the fence of the ranch, missing the crossing by about two hundred yards.

After riding up to the crossing, the man said, "Well, this is it. Are you sure you want to continue? I'd rather you came back to my house with me, at least till morning."

Doc replied, "No, I must go on."

The man then said, "In that case, I will direct you. Follow this fence north about seven or eight miles. Don't let it out of your sight. Then you'll see two tall fence posts with a wooden gate between them—that is the entrance. Go through this gate and head southeast about one mile. From there, you should be able to see the house. But if you can't see the house, at least look for the windmill. With all this snow, you may not see either, so as a last resort, fire your shotgun into the air. This should arouse the dogs, and they'll start barking."

With that, they parted, the man heading back to his house and Doc continuing on toward the ranch house.

Doc rode for a while, then felt hungry. He took out an egg and a biscuit and ate them while still in the saddle. But his hunger remained, so he took an apple and ate about half of it. At this point, he decided to cut the rest of the apple into small pieces and let his horse eat it from his hand. While he was down, he decided to walk for a while, so he cut off a chunk of jerky and took a big swallow of whiskey to moisten it. He walked about thirty minutes, leading the horse. When he got tired, he got back on the horse and continued

riding, still following the fence.

The snow was getting worse, but around dusk, Doc saw the gate, even though it was painted white and covered with snow and ice. It seemed that you could tell a wooden gate from a barbed-wire fence, regardless. Doc entered and followed the directions, riding about a mile southeast. He stopped, looked, and listened, but could not see or hear anything. He rode a few hundred feet more, stopped, and listened again. Nothing.

He looked for something that could make noise, but even his horse walked silently due to the heavy snow. The only option left was to fire his gun, which he did. This aroused all the dogs, and they began barking and running toward the sound. The dogs soon found Doc, who was back on his horse. They barked and carried on so loudly that the horse became frightened. If the horse hadn't been so tired, Doc probably would have been thrown off into the snow and dogs.

It seemed that no one was going to come to the door, but after the man had put his boots back on, gotten his wraps, cap, and gun, he came to the door, saying, "What is all this noise about?"

After introductions, the man assisted Doc to the barn to tend to his horse. Then Doc said, "I could sure use a drink after all this excitement."

The man replied, "I'll join you if you have anything."

Doc got out a bottle, and they each took two drinks. Afterward, Doc put the bottle back in the bag, along with all its contents, and carried it into the house. Doc had to spend the night in the bunkhouse with one of the cowboys, as that was the only bed available. They played a little poker, with Doc losing a dollar and fifteen cents before he quit and went to bed.

Everyone slept a little late the next morning, as due to the snow, there would be very little work that could be done. Doc was the first one up, so he dressed and went out to feed his horse, which was standing out in the lot with some of the ranch horses. Doc's horse

was taken and placed in a separate pen to be fed.

Doc noticed a light in the kitchen, so he knocked on the door. The foreman's wife answered and said that breakfast was about ready. She invited him in to pour himself a cup of coffee and sit down at the far end of the table. The man was busy in the other part of the house, getting the two oldest children ready for school. He saw Doc in the kitchen and came in to get a cup of coffee.

It had almost stopped snowing, but the snow was over a foot deep everywhere and was banked up three to four feet deep in many places. Doc showed the man the map he had, and the man told Doc that due to the storm, he had decided to ride along with his children to school to ensure their safety. Since the schoolhouse was on the route that Doc was taking, the man offered to chaperone the kids to the schoolhouse, which was about three or four miles away. The oldest boy knew enough to lead the way to the schoolhouse and give directions to the next house.

The snow was frozen so tight that the horses could walk on it, except in a few instances when they would break through. It was slippery, so extreme caution had to be taken at all times. They arrived at the schoolhouse just as some boys were riding in from the opposite direction, so all Doc had to do was follow their tracks, as closely as possible, to the next house. Doc fared the rest of the day pretty well. It would snow now and then, but the cold north wind that had been blowing in his face had quieted down until it was almost calm. Doc rode upon some cowhands now and then, who were able to keep him going in the right direction. By the time he reached the edge of Sligo, he had eaten all of his food and taken two or three more big drinks of whiskey. Not being accustomed to such a long trip, he was sore and tired, but was in no pain due to the food and drinks keeping his hunger down and his body heat up.

He knew when he was at the right house by the description furnished by Daddy. He rode to the back and saw Uncle Dade attending to Daddy's livestock and poultry, which he always did in Daddy's absence. They attended to Doc's horse and then both went

into the house so Doc could meet Aunt Jo, Mama, and my sister. Uncle Dade and Aunt Jo had been spending the night here since Daddy left, just in case. But since Doc came, it was necessary for them to go back home, which was next door, a few hundred feet away, as Mama did not have enough beds. After eating, before going back home, Doc asked Uncle Dade to assist him in making preparations. So they brought in some extra fuel to ensure there would be enough. They got two large wash tubs, which had been hanging on the wall just outside the kitchen door, and filled each with snow, placing both on top of the cook stove so that the snow would melt. Doc would continue to add snow as room became available, until both tubs were full of warm water. Wagon sheets were located to cover Mama's mattress for protection and one to cover the dining table, which was to be used to lay the baby on for cleaning. Plenty of soft cotton and flannel rags were piled in the corner of the room for easy access.

Doc told Uncle Dade and Aunt Jo, as they were departing for home, that if he needed help, he would get two skillets, go to the back door, and start banging them together. Shortly after this, Mama went to bed with my sister, who had long ago fallen asleep. Doc sat up for a while and finally pulled his boots off, took a drink of whiskey, and went to bed. This was the night of the eleventh, and everyone slept until long past daylight, without having been disturbed. Nothing happened on the twelfth, thirteenth, or fourteenth, and all of the snow was still in place.

On the fifteenth, the sun began to break through about mid-morning, and about halfway through dinner, Doc laid down his knife and fork, raised his head, and said, "I'm gonna go rabbit hunting this afternoon, and if nothing happens between now and morning, I'm gonna head for Lamesa at daybreak."

Mama said, "But—"

Doc interrupted and said, "But nothing. It's been nearly a week since I left. I've got sick folks, some are probably dead by now, to attend to. Besides, Joe Mac should be coming in a day or so."

With this, Doc finished eating and then went rabbit hunting, coming back a little before sunset. He made all preparations for leaving at daybreak, and everyone went to bed very early that night.

Shortly after midnight, Mama woke up the doctor with loud noises. Doc looked over the situation and went to the back door and banged the skillets together. This not only woke up Uncle Dade and Aunt Jo, but also a couple down the street. Doc then stoked up the fire and added more fuel so that the tubs of water would warm faster. It was all over soon, and I was laying on the dining table, almost screaming my lungs out, without any clothes on—naked—just about to freeze out there in the open. Aunt Jo was still dabbing me with a wet cloth, which was much too hot. The wagon sheets and a bunch of rags were in the wash tubs, soaking in the remainder of the water, and Doc was getting a glass in order to have a leisurely drink of whiskey.

Everything went along fine for the rest of the sixteenth and seventeenth. On the next day, around the middle of the afternoon, Daddy came in with both wagons well-loaded. Doc prepared to leave for Lamesa the following morning, and Daddy was busy distributing his purchases and the money he had left over.

Doc was supposed to register my birth upon his arrival in Lamesa, but he forgot to. This caused some excitement when my draft number was called during World War II and my birth certificate was required. More about this later.

There are many more events that happened during this time, but I consider them to be minor, so on with my story, as I remember it.

CHAPTER II
SOME RELATIVES AND FRIENDS

This book contains the names of many people that played a part, some large, some small, in my young life. First, there was Grandma Hazelwood, daddy's mother. Grandma was born around 1850.

The first story that I can remember her telling me, while I sat in her lap, was about her adventures in the Civil War. It seems that she was about sixteen years of age when the war came to their part of the country. Most all of the single ladies, as well as some of the married ones, joined in the war effort. Grandma told me about doing the cooking, washing, and mending for the fighting men on the Southern side. Sometimes she would help out in loading the muzzle-loaded guns during a fierce battle with the North. Many times, when the man they were assisting got shot, the woman would grab the gun and hold the position until help arrived. No doubt, this was among the first Women's Volunteer Auxiliary.

After the war was over, Grandma married one of the men that she had helped. His name was McFarlin. In 1874, she gave birth to my father. Later on, she gave birth to another son, whom they named Eugene, and still later a daughter was born and they named her Martha (Mattie). Four or five years after Daddy's birth, his father died. In a few years, Grandma married a man named Hazelwood, who did not live very long after the wedding. Grandma did not remarry, so she was known as Grandma Hazelwood from that time on.

After all of her children got grown and married and left home, she would go visit one or the other of them and stay until she wore out her welcome—usually about six months. At which time, she would go and visit one of the others and do likewise.

Grandma will be mentioned many times later on.

Grandma had five or six sisters but no brothers. One of her sisters that I remember very well, because she always lived close to us, was named Josephine, but everyone called her Jo. This was one of Daddy's aunts, and all of us relatives, as well as just about everyone else, called her Aunt Jo.

She had married a man by the name of Dade Frost, who was usually known as Uncle Dade. They moved to Lamesa and lived in a large house, with a large barn and a hay loft, all of which was on half of a city block of land. They always had a milk cow, some chickens, and usually a hog. In this way, no food, milk, or scraps were wasted. They also had a buggy horse for Aunt Jo and possibly two horses for Uncle Dade. You can see why they had to have a large barn as they had to house all of this, plus a buggy, wagon, etc.

Uncle Dade traded and did odd jobs until he became the owner and operator of a meat market. This was a small wooden building downtown. It had a porch in front on which was a bench where men would sit and pass the time of day. Uncle Dade had some land down in what was called the draw, so he kept his live cows and hogs there. On the bank of the draw, he had constructed a small slaughterhouse, large enough for him to handle one carcass at a time, and the slope of the land gave it good drainage.

Uncle Dade would come out every day in his wagon and butcher enough for the next day's business. He would load the meat in the back of the wagon and haul it back to town. Uncle Dade was known as a rough and tough old miser, but when I was very young, I discovered that some people are not always what they seem to be.

One afternoon, my friend and I were in town playing and had a little bit of money. We came to the meat market, and Uncle Dade was sitting out on the bench. We just knew that it was useless to ask him for anything, but we asked anyway, hoping that he might

give us a nickel. He immediately refused.

Inside, he kept the floor covered with sawdust, which soaked up the blood that dripped off of the meat before it was wrapped.

In just a second or two, Uncle Dade came back outside and said that yesterday he had dropped two nickels on the floor and had been unable to find them, so we could go look with "finders, keepers." We went inside, and there lay two nickels on top of the sawdust. We picked them up and ran down the street to find some place to spend them, with Uncle Dade calling us cheaters and telling us never to bother him again when he was so busy.

I have often wondered why Uncle Dade was unable to see those two nickels, as they were right there in plain view. I wonder…

Aunt Jo and Uncle Dade had one child, a girl named Tessie. As far as I know, all of her second cousins called her Cousin Tessie. She married a man known as Mr. Myers. He was an uneducated man who didn't have anything and wasn't expected to. They never had any children.

One of grandma's sisters, who was called Aunt Bessie, had a daughter that we all called Cousin Josie. She married a tailor named Mr. Clemens. They had two daughters named Katie Lee and Josephine.

After two years, Uncle Gene, daddy's brother, didn't live close to us very often, but I remember one time when I was very young. Daddy had gotten hold of a farm close to Lamesa, and in order to help Uncle Gene, who had gotten married and had a house full of kids, daddy rented the farm to his brother.

Over the years, the farm and buildings had run down, so daddy soon saw the mistake he had made. Daddy put the farm up for sale, and all of us went out to tell Uncle Gene that he would have to move as soon as he gathered in his crop. This made Uncle Gene so very mad that none of them spoke to any of us for many years. In fact, no member of their family attended daddy's funeral.

Daddy's sister, Aunt Mattie, married a man named Mr. Morehead,

and they had two or three children. We visited them several times, and in the following year or so, they would visit us. I can still remember the old half-dugout that they were living in the time we went to see them when I was about four years old.

Mama's mother and father were known by their grandchildren as Granny and Grandad. Most of the time, they lived fairly close to us, say within two days' travel by wagon. Mama had five sisters, some older and some younger than she was. Their names were Cynthia, Carrie, Zora, Lillie, and Katie. Lillie and Katie were still at home when I was very young. Lillie married sometime before 1920 and had two sons. Her husband passed away, and later on, she married a man named Painter. He had one leg off at the hip and used one straight crutch, but he walked about six blocks to work, back and forth at lunch, and back home at night. I could hardly keep up with him when he was walking. All of mama's sisters, except Katie, married and raised families. In the summers, some of them would visit us for a week or more at a time.

Dr. Wormack, as you have already learned, was living in Lamesa when I first met him. He passed away somewhere in the 1930s. At one time, he was the leading doctor in this area, but as time passed on, new doctors moved in, bringing new knowledge and began to get the trade from Dr. Wormack. As he got older, he drank more, and after prohibition came in, he had to drink whatever he could get. When his wife passed away, he was left alone and became an old drunkard with very few friends and no customers. Lamesa was growing with mostly new people who favored new doctors with new remedies. Every time that I see "DOC" on the TV program "GUNSMOKE," I think of Dr. Wormack, as I remember him when he was the leading doctor in Lamesa.

Daddy was a bachelor, thirty years of age, when he married mama, who was seventeen years old at the time. They were married in 1904. Daddy had to teach mama how to do the housework, and I've heard it said that she did not know a thing about cooking, so daddy taught her how to be a real good cook. Daddy was a very small man, the most that he ever weighed was

148 pounds. He passed away in 1922, leaving mama with five small children. Gladys was the oldest, and I was next at the age of twelve. Daddy had pneumonia seven times during his lifetime, being on his deathbed in each case. How he ever found the time and strength to do all of the things that I can remember is beyond belief.

Before daddy and mama were married, he had a friend named Dr. Lindley. One time when we visited Aunt Mattie, we went on to visit Dr. Lindley as they did not live too far apart. I was four years old, and I remember that one night at Dr. Lindley's house, I had a very bad earache as well as the croup. Dr. Lindley put some warm honey in my ear and then a wad of cotton. He then put a mustard plaster on my chest and gave me a dose of JO-He cough medicine. This seemed to cure me, and we came back home in a few days. I do not remember anything else about Dr. Lindley until daddy's death when Dr. Lindley came about a week before daddy died. At that time, he gave a very helping hand in making the funeral arrangements. Dr. Lindley stayed about another week and was of great help in business transactions necessary at that time. After he went back home, mama kept in touch with him by letter until his death many years later. I got my middle name from him, for some reason the "E" was omitted. I also got my first lesson in true friendship, which I shall never forget.

Another true friend of daddy's was a man named P. L. Alexander. I do not know when they met, but shortly after New Mexico became a state of the union, a person could buy a section of land at 50¢ per acre, provided that you settled on it for six months out of the year and made improvements—in other words, homesteaded it. Mr. Alexander was farming at that time, and daddy was living in Lamesa. They decided to team up and file on a section of land in New Mexico. They each loaded their wagons with supplies, lumber for a cabin, barbwire for fencing, a cow, some chickens, and a plow or two. Upon arriving at the land office, they would file in one or the other's name and then go and find their land. Very few people lived there at that time, and one section of land looked just

about like all of the others. After they had located their land (at least so they thought), they built a cabin and pens for the horses and cows. When the work got down to where one man could handle it, one would stay and the other would return home, with the understanding that they would switch places in about three months. The one staying would put in a small field, do some fencing, and make other improvements. At the end of the year, they would get word to have the land office inspect their land, and when it passed inspection, they would get a clear title to the land. In a short time, this area had all been sold, and quite a few settlers had moved in. It was about this time for daddy and Mr. Alexander to make a clean-up, so they thought, so they would advertise their land for sale at $1.00 per acre, including improvements.

This same land now has oil wells and irrigation wells all over it, and unimproved rural property sells for $500.00 and up per acre. If a person had held on to some of this land for around sixty-five years, they would have made at least a thousand percent profit. Very few, if any, did. After daddy and Mr. Alexander sold their land, they would go and file on another section, further removed, for 50¢ per acre and repeat the same routine. This went on for about three years until it got to where there wasn't any more government land for sale at any less money than the settlers would sell at.

Alexander later moved to Lamesa and built two identical houses on his property: one house for his father and mother and the other one for him and his family. He became postmaster and held that position for many years. After he lost this job, billboards had begun to appear, so he got the agency for the entire county. He held this agency for many years until age caused him to sell out and retire.

Mr. Mullins was one of a group of people who left Ft. Worth in the late nineteenth century, going west—maybe all the way to California. One night they all made camp just below the Cap Rock, about twelve miles east of where Lamesa was later located. Scouts had ridden on ahead, and on their return, they brought back the report that once on top of the Cap Rock, they could see

ahead of themselves for miles and miles, maybe all the way to California, and it was all flat and sandy land. With this news, the group would camp at the foot of the Cap Rock overnight and venture climbing it and traveling on the open prairie early the next day. When they had gone about ten miles, Mr. Mullins announced that he had enough, so he was turning back. He returned to the spot they had camped at and decided that he would look around. There was a small creek about ten feet wide and, in some places, about two feet deep. The clear blue water was coming from a spring on the side of the Cap Rock. Mr. Mullins decided this would be an ideal place for him to settle, so he returned to Ft. Worth to get lumber and supplies so that he could live out there. He had a girlfriend in Ft. Worth, so arrangements were made for him to return in two years, get married, and bring her out west with him.

Mr. Mullins lived alone, a few Indians were still roaming around, and he had a few fights but always survived. He got bitten by rattlesnakes a few times but always took out his pocketknife and cut a cross on the place where he was bitten. Then he would suck out as much blood as possible and fill the wound with kerosene. Usually, he had to stay in bed for a few days until he overcame the poison. Mr. Mullins had gathered a large amount of dinosaur bones and had them stacked out by the side of his house. I remember that he had some leg bones around ten feet long, jawbones at least six to eight feet long, some still had a few teeth in them. He also had a lot of Indian bones, all of which he had gathered up while wandering around his pasture.

Mr. Mullins returned to Ft. Worth and brought his wife back with him, as previously arranged, and in later years, they had several children. As time passed, more people moved into the area, and when the Mullins' children became of school age, a general store, post office, church, and schoolhouse had been constructed. The settlement was called "MULLINS." Mr. Mullins would come to Lamesa once in a while, and he would find a place to sit down and tell this story and many more to me and all the other kids that were interested, which just about included everyone.

CHAPTER III
EARLY CHILDHOOD

There are two to three years after my birth that I hardly remember, but I know that it wasn't long after my birth that we left Sligo and settled in and around Lamesa. Uncle Dade, Aunt Jo, Cousin Tessie, and one or two other families also moved to Lamesa at the same time. One harvest season, daddy hired out and was gone all fall with some other men who followed the harvest and camped out in their wagons until the weather just got too bad.

Daddy was forever getting hold of a vacant lot in Lamesa, having a house built on it, and then either selling it or the one that we were living in, and we would move to the new house. Within six months, the whole thing would be repeated. Sometimes we would have to move into a rent house until a new house could be completed. I remember some of the houses that he built, for instance, the one sold to Mr. Clemens and Cousin Josie, and about three more in that same block.

Daddy was forever changing occupations. The picture on page twenty-seven shows daddy with Mr. Alexander and Mrs. Dunlop in his dry goods and grocery store. Mr. Alexander is standing behind the candy case. Notice the candy scales in front of daddy. The stock of groceries doesn't seem to be much, but at the time, this was one of the leading grocery stores in Lamesa. The outside of the store is shown on page twenty-five. This store was located on the southwest corner of the courthouse square on what is now known as South First and Austin Streets.

McFarlin's General Store

Lamesa, Texas, circa 1910'S

After this store was either sold or lost, daddy owned one of the finest cafes in Lamesa. I remember several times when mama would take us kids to church on Sunday, and we would stop by the cafe and have dinner with daddy. This cafe was on the west side of the square, about the middle of the block. I don't know what happened to this cafe, but I suppose that he sold it. For many years afterward, it was known as "Inman's Cafe."

I was four years old this year and had a younger brother, but no one seemed to be able to decide or agree on what to name him. So, he named himself in honor of Roy Williamson. He called himself Roy Williams McFarlin, and later on, he was just called "Roy."

I had received a copper cup with a handle, and in order to keep me quiet and out of mischief, mama would put a teaspoon of sugar in this cup and hand it to me. I would reach down in the cup with my thumb and forefinger, get as much sugar as possible, and put it in my mouth. It would take me several hours to finally get all of the sugar. I carried this cup around for several years, until I got smart and started turning the cup up to my mouth, like I had been doing with milk or water for a long time, and found out that I could get all of the sugar at one time. This was when the cup was taken away from me, and I was taken off of sugar.

I have often wondered if I was so dumb that it took me years to figure out how to get the sugar by turning the cup upside down or perhaps I was so smart that I had figured out that if mama knew that I knew, it would be the end of the sugar. And it was. I still have this cup, and it shows that it was pretty badly treated.

Daddy bought a new dining room suite for mama this year, the year of no babies. The chairs were all high back and had cane bottoms. It wasn't long before I had gotten the butcher knife, climbed up in one of the chairs, and began hacking away at the back. Mama gave me a very good whipping, and every time after that, when we sat down to eat, I had to sit in this chair unless I was told to sit on the bench with the other kids. We kept this furniture for over ten years, and every time, and I do mean every time, that company came at mealtime, it was explained in great detail what had happened to the chair and why I had to sit in it.

I do not remember when daddy bought the farm located seven miles west of Lamesa, on the Seminole road, but it had a four-room, unpainted frame house, a barn and pens, a windmill, and about a fifty-acre field. In 1914, daddy wanted to move back to the farm, so he notified the renters, Mr. & Mrs. Williamson, to move as soon as they had gathered their crops. Mr. Compton and his family lived about three miles further west. They had a daughter named Elsa Mae, who was about the same age as Gladys, and they wanted to get her started in school.

Mr. Compton had a wash house, probably about ten feet square, out back of his house. He decided to clean it out and put some school desks in it. It was agreed that as soon as we moved back to the farm, Gladys would attend their school. Gladys was too young to go alone, especially in the wintertime, therefore, even though I was only five years old, I was to ride with Gladys on the same horse. Daddy and Mr. Compton got together on choosing a teacher who would live with the Comptons, and they decided how the cost was to be divided between them.

The school had three pupils: Gladys in the second grade, Elsa Mae in the first grade, and me in kindergarten. I can remember Gladys and I riding along with snow all over everything, but we were wrapped so well in blankets that we never noticed the cold. We attended the rest of that year, but mama had become pregnant again, so daddy wanted to move back to town as soon as he gathered his crops. Several more people who were living a little south of the Comptons had children becoming school age, so a regular schoolhouse consisting of one room about twenty feet square was erected about halfway between our house and the Comptons.

We moved into a house close to the Clemens. I remember playing with Katie Lee, Josephine, and other neighborhood kids. It had been planned for a railroad to pass through the western side of Lamesa, and so dumps had been made

through the northwestern end and through the center in the southwestern part of what we always called the draw. This draw is the beginning of Sulphur Springs Creek. Old-timers could remember running water in it, but all that I can remember was running water for a few weeks after a hard rain and standing mud holes of stagnant water most of the rest of the time.

The draw is all but gone now, highways and roads cross it everywhere, and many fine homes are built right in it. The southwest part was used as a city dump for a number of years. It is now a city park and an eighteen-hole golf course. Even though the right-of-way was obtained and the dumps had been built for a railroad from Brownfield through Lamesa and on to Stanton and Odessa, it fell through somehow. A few years later, a railroad from Lubbock through Tahoka and O'Donnell and on to a dead end on the east side of Lamesa was constructed. This is still the only railroad in Lamesa, and it still turns around there and goes back to Lubbock twice a week.

Well, us kids sure did like to play on the railroad dump. Several families always staked their milk cows down there, as it was railroad property and it was not necessary to get a permit. There was always plenty of grass because there was usually plenty of moisture. Sometimes we would start after our cows in the afternoon, at least an hour early, so that we would have a lot of time to play on and around the dump.

Somewhere around this point in time, daddy owned the cafe, and I remember that sometimes I would go down to meet him in the evening, so that I could walk with him to our house. I would get there early enough to help clean up the cafe. This is where I learned to stand the end of the broom on my forefinger, balance it in midair, and walk around without dropping it. Sometimes daddy would stop at the saloon, which was two doors down the street, to get a drink, leave a message, or to get some information. I would wait outside of

the two swinging doors, as children were not allowed in a saloon.

I remember a few years later when prohibition was to become effective at midnight on a certain date. All of the men, for miles around, gathered at the saloon and began drinking. Daddy worked until quitting time, came home, ate supper, redressed, and went back to the saloon to see the ending of an era. The later it got, the cheaper the whiskey got, as at the stroke of midnight, a deputy sheriff was to enter, pour all of the whiskey into the gutter, and padlock the saloon.

By eleven o'clock, whiskey by the bottle was selling at half price. Fifteen minutes before midnight, the price was reduced to twenty-five cents on the dollar. Daddy purchased four quarts at this price, and everyone else was taking all they could afford and could carry, either on foot, horseback, or in their wagons or buggies. It was a madhouse by midnight, and selling was still going on when the deputy walked in. He explained his mission, as if no one knew, and asked all of the customers to leave, taking all of their belongings with them.

They all gathered out front and watched the deputy direct the bartender and his assistant to take all of the remaining whiskey and pour it into the gutter. A few bottles escaped being broken and fell to the ground still full. At that time, there would be a wild scramble by several drunks trying to retrieve the bottles from the broken glass. Most of the whiskey had been sold, so this destruction did not last very long. Soon, the deputy put his padlock on the door, and everyone went home, or at least started in that direction. Daddy got home around two o'clock with his four quarts.

I can remember that every morning for at least two years, daddy would get a small glass with some warm water, a little lemon juice, and sugar, then pour some whiskey, stir, and drink a hot toddy. He claimed that it was quite a good medicine.

I got a little ahead of my story with this prohibition deal, but in

the meantime, Leona, my sister, was born, and daddy wanted to move back to the farm. We had sold the cafe and now owned a hide and produce house located on one of two lots on the east side of the square in Lamesa. Each of the lots was about forty feet frontage and about one hundred feet deep. The building was on the south lot, and the north lot was vacant.

Daddy gave the business to Mr. Myers and sold him the land, which I am sure was mostly a mortgage. It was to be turned over to Mr. Myers upon our returning to the farm. It seems that daddy had sold our house and promised to vacate a little too soon, as he and mama had to pack both wagons with all of our belongings, and it was too late to head for the farm. So, the only thing left to do was to go and sleep in the hide house. They managed to unload enough bedding, quilts, etc., for daddy, mama, and four children to make beds on the floor. The hides, eggs, cream, etc., were moved from the center to make enough room.

The following morning, the key was turned over to Mr. Myers, and we headed for the farm. I was still too small to be of much help on the farm, although I did help with the chickens and pigs. Gladys and I attended school in the winter months. We all helped with picking cotton. Mama would come out after she got the kitchen cleaned up after dinner. Leona was a baby, so she would sleep, mostly on the back end of mama's cotton sack. Roy would pick cotton alongside mama and put his cotton in a bushel basket that had been brought along for this purpose.

I think we must have lived on the farm for one year and then moved back to town.

Daddy was involved in several different businesses, and as Lamesa was growing rapidly, he built and sold many houses. He was always doing something else, constantly buying, selling, and trading. One deal was the farm he obtained and

rented to his brother, my Uncle Gene. Daddy had also gotten a car, which had to be cranked to start. When he wanted to go to Uncle Gene's, he took me and several other boys around my age to help him.

He would also bring boards, about twelve inches wide and two or three feet long. When we had to let down a barbwire fence to cross to the other side, two boys would stand on the barbwire, and another boy would place the boards over the wires in the proper places so the barbs wouldn't puncture the tires. Even then, we had many flat tires. Running over a mesquite thorn would often cause a puncture. All of us boys, including me, could also get out and push when the car got stuck in the sand, which happened very often.

Grandad and Granny lived near Loop, a small settlement over in the sand hills, about twenty miles from Lamesa toward Sligo. Loop had one general store, which also served as the post office, and that's about all it had then and still has today. Grandad's house was about a mile from the store, but his field was in the direction of the store and came to about a half-mile from it.

One time, Grandad came to Lamesa for supplies and, of course, had to spend the night. It was decided that I could go home with him the next day, as he planned to come back to Lamesa in a week to ten days. During my stay, Grandad would plow the field, and around 10:30 in the mornings, Granny would send me out there with a gallon jug of cool water. I would follow the plow for a while, and then, when we got to about half a mile from the store, Grandad would tell me to go and see if he had any mail. He would also give me a penny to purchase some candy.

In the fall, it was decided that we would move back to the farm at the end of the year. Uncle Dade and Aunt Jo had built a rent house on part of their land, so in November, after we sold our house, we moved into their rent house to live until we

could move to the farm. One night, about the middle of November, Gladys and I were taken to Aunt Jo's house for the night. The next morning, we were told that mama had a baby girl, and she was named Cloreta. We were all very happy, except for Leona, who cried for a long time and would have nothing to do with Cloreta, realizing that she was no longer the baby.

Moving day came, and Roy and I were sent ahead with a wagon load of furniture, bedding, etc. Daddy and the others were to come later in the other wagon, just as soon as they got everything else loaded. Roy and I arrived at the farm and unloaded everything we could lift before the others arrived. This was in December 1917, and I was eight years old. Roy was about six and a half.

CHAPTER IV
DESCRIPTION OF THE FARM HOUSE

The general layout of the farm was very much like my drawing on the preceding page. The house was made of one-inch by twelve-inch boards standing on ends, with cracks covered by thin four-inch boards. Door and window frames were constructed of two-inch by four-inch lumber, with absolutely no finishing on the inside except for the ceiling. This certainly let in plenty of dust and cold air. Mama stuffed the larger cracks with newspapers during the winter.

Each of the bedrooms was about twelve feet square. The dining room was about the same size, and the kitchen was the same width but about eight feet long. The boys' lean-to bedroom was added later to separate the boys from the girls and because we needed more room. It was about twenty-five feet to the front yard fence and another fifty feet to the Weaver Ranch fence. About six shade trees were planted on the west side and front of the house to provide shade and to help keep the soil from blowing so badly. Just beyond the trees on the west side was about a ten-foot-wide road, so wagons could go to and from the farm.

On the east side of the road was a large coal bin, and space to stack cow chips that we gathered up for fuel. On the other side of the road was our toilet (outhouse). Our orchard was mostly peach trees, though there were also some plum, apricot, pear, and two cherry trees. The grapes were added later, planted along an arbor about three feet wide and between four and five feet high, stretching the full length of the orchard.

Daddy would prune all the live trees every year and replace the dead ones. During the summers, especially when it got very dry, we would quit work in the field at noon on Fridays. After dinner, the whole family would work in the orchard. Every tree had to have a barrel of water poured around the trunk. We had a sled that could hold two wooden barrels, so Daddy would hitch our horse, Homer, to the sled and start hauling water from the horse trough, which he dipped up with a three-gallon bucket.

Roy and I had our hands full, each with a hoe, pulling dirt from around the trunk of the trees and forming a large circle around each tree, one that we thought would hold a barrel of water. Mama and Gladys were assigned the job of ensuring the circle could hold the water, and as soon as all the water had soaked in, they had to cover the moist dirt with dry dirt so the sun wouldn't evaporate the moisture and bake the ground. Sometimes, it would be very late in the evening when this job was finished.

This job had to be repeated every Friday all summer, unless it rained. Most of the time, we had a very good crop of fruit. The two cherry trees were planted just for novelty, but they did very well. The berries would begin to ripen early, in May, and we kids sure did enjoy going out to the trees to eat a handful at a time.

Peaches of several different varieties would ripen at various times. We would eat peaches at any and all times of the day, and Mama would make a big peach cobbler almost every day. It's hard to beat a bowl of hot peach cobbler, covered with fresh whipped cream for dessert. Mama would can enough fruit to last us until the next crop was ready. We also had a lot of dried peaches and apricots for eating when we wanted. We nearly always still had more peaches, so we would gather some of the ripe ones in bushel baskets and take them to Lamesa to sell. Some people would come out to the farm to buy peaches, but Daddy wouldn’t let them pick, as they might

damage the trees. So, Roy and I would usually do the picking.

On the southeast corner of the orchard, enough trees were omitted to allow room for the chickens, and we usually had from one to two hundred at a time. We had a pretty large chicken house, made of lumber, except for the south side, which was closed in with chicken wire, with a few small openings at the bottom to allow the chickens to enter or leave. All of the openings were closed at night. The north side had several large openings near the top. These were covered with solid boards, with hinges so they could be closed in cold weather and opened in hot weather, to regulate airflow and keep the varmints out.

The roost was made of small boards nailed together and rested on several large stakes driven into the ground. The roost was constructed in such a way that it could be pulled up to the ceiling by ropes to allow for easier cleaning. About six feet of the east end was fenced off from the rest with chicken wire, with a door that reached from the roof to the ground. This portion was known as the laying house.

Oranges and some other fruits were shipped in wooden crates with a partition through the center. Those crates, with slight alterations, made excellent hen nests when sufficient straw was placed in them. Bananas came in long wooden crates full of straw. Daddy would get these used crates from the stores in town and use the straw for nests, and the banana stalks were hung up in the chicken house, as they were excellent for catching fleas. The crates became kindling for starting fires, so there was no waste.

The laying house was lined with enough nests to accommodate thirty to forty hens at one time. On the outside, there was enough room for several small pens and coops. Sometimes, we would have a sick chicken or two, or maybe a setting hen that we did not want to set at that time, so out to the coops they would go.

Mama had a 144-egg incubator in the cellar, and sometimes she would hatch as many as 125 baby chicks. They would be left in the cellar for a few days, but soon they had to be put outside. One time, we had a setting hen that had been placed in a coop and given a nest with four or five chalk eggs about five days before the eggs in the incubator began to hatch. During the hatching process, Mama slipped a half-hatched egg under the setting hen and removed one of the chalk eggs. This went on for two to three days. By that time, the hen had hatched twenty-five eggs, and Mama had placed all of the other baby chicks in her coop.

I am sure this hen was one proud mother, as she had set for less than a week on some chalk eggs and managed to hatch over one hundred babies. Just think what she could have done with real eggs.

Small coops and pens were always being built to take care of any situation that developed. We also had some guineas that roosted in the trees, some turkeys that hung around the barn and stack lot, and maybe a dozen ducks that hung around the tank.

Getting back to the house, our storm cellar was on the south side, a little west of the kitchen. It was about seven feet deep and possibly ten feet by fifteen feet in size, with steps leading up to ground level. The roof was more or less gabled and held up by four-by-fours about every five feet. There was a large bed in the rear where we kids slept during many storms at night. Mama kept such items as canned fruits and vegetables, lard, and soap in the cellar. She also kept her incubator and surplus eggs there. Daddy kept a grubbing hoe, axe, spade, hammer, etc., in the cellar, and everyone knew they had to remain there in case of an accident such as a cave-in during a storm, or if the wind blew a tree or something over the door, making it impossible to open.

There was a small clay hill in our pasture, east of the house. In the late spring, after the wind and sand storms had just about quit, Daddy and I would get the wagon and start hauling this clay, throwing it on the roof of the cellar and in the backyard to replace the dirt that had washed or blown away. This was quite a job as the clay had to be dug and loaded with a spade and shovel and then unloaded in the same manner. But it had to be done to save the cellar and keep it from leaking.

East of the house was just a vacant space, and I've heard Daddy say many times that someday he was going to build a real nice house on that spot, but he never got around to doing it. The sand blew and banked up there so badly that he planted the whole area in shade trees, mostly locusts, with a long hedge up close to the windmill. The trees grew fairly well with minimal care. The hedge, planted as a windbreaker, grew some, but it seemed that every year one or two bushes on the north end would die due to the wind, until eventually, the whole hedge was dead.

We kept two kerosene (coal oil) drums up against the fence for easy loading and unloading. They lay down on a stand built of two-by-fours, with the spout downward. Every family had two drums so that when one got empty, there was plenty of time to go to town and get a refill, without an emergency developing.

About fifteen feet from the southeast corner of our kitchen was our well, over which was our windmill, about twenty-five feet high. This was very tall for anything on the plains, and even today when people describe a major oil company sign, they often say it is as high as a windmill. The derrick, wheel, and fans were all made of lumber. The well was about one hundred feet deep and had real good tasting and cool water. Most other wells around that area, constructed later, produced salty and alkaline water so bad that it could not be used for any purpose.

There were two wooden barrels on a wooden platform. The water was pumped into the first barrel, and the second barrel was used for storage. This setup came in handy on wash day or hog killing time when one barrel of water wasn't enough and the wind wasn't blowing. These barrels sat side by side, and water was transferred from the first one to the second one by a short piece of two-inch pipe just below the tops of the barrels.

On the opposite side of the second barrel was another piece of two-inch pipe about the same height. This pipe flowed the water onto our milk trough. The trough was made of two-inch by six-inch lumber and was supported by four legs made of four-by-fours. It was about the same height as the barrels. On the opposite end of the trough was a long piece of two-inch pipe that allowed all of the overflow to go into the dirt tank. This pipe was inserted in the trough to maintain a water level of about four inches, regardless of how many things were in the trough.

Mama had some bricks in the trough to set short containers on, such as butter dishes. Milk and other liquids were either in crock jars or gallon buckets, both covered with lids. All containers were covered with cotton cloths, made from feed or flour sacks, which were held in place with additional bricks. On hot afternoons, the cloths were removed, soaked with water, and then placed back over the containers. This setup was just fine except when the mill was broken, or the wind did not blow for an extended length of time. Many times, under severe conditions, the food would spoil.

When the mill needed new cups (leathers) on the traveling valve, I would help Daddy pull the rods and install the new cups. First, we would pull down on the cut-off lever, at ground level, until both fans and the wheel were side by side. At this time, we would tie the lever down to the leg of the derrick. A larger piece of timber, something like a four-by-four, was hoisted up the ladder about two-thirds of the way to the top

and laid across from one side of the derrick to the other side, then chained in position. Another chain was securely tied to the center of this timber, and a double sheave block and tackle was secured to this chain. The rope, about three-quarters of an inch in diameter, with the other sheave, was lowered to the ground. The well had a two-inch pipe in it, with wooden clamps about three feet apart and twelve inches square, with four large bolts to clamp around the pipe. These bolts were checked for tightness periodically.

Just above these clamps, the pipe had a two-inch collar (coupling) which rested on the clamps. On top of this collar was a piece of two-inch pipe, screwed in, coming up to just about the top of the barrel. On the top end of this piece of pipe was screwed a two-inch tee. Screwed into the side was a piece of two-inch pipe going to the barrel, and on top of the tee was a short piece of two-inch pipe, about four inches long, to keep the water from overflowing at the well. All of this, down to the coupling on the clamp, had to be removed before pulling the rods.

The shaft that came from the gearbox, located on top of the derrick, downward and connected to the sucker rods about six feet from the ground, was disconnected from the rods and tied back to the derrick. This was done with the mill on the downstroke, so as not to drop the rods for the full length of the stroke. We had a bottom valve catcher on the end of the traveling valve in order to retrieve the bottom (standing) valve when it was necessary to change the ball and seat. This was done by lowering the rods so they would set on top of the bottom valve, which had female (internal) threads to match the male (external) threads on the traveling catcher. When the rods were lowered as far as they would go, a wrench was used, and the rods were turned to the right as long as possible, at which time it was assumed that the bottom valve had been securely caught.

At the bottom of the two-inch pipe was screwed a cylinder, five feet long, with the inside smoothly finished with hard steel to exactly a 1-25/32″ bore. This cylinder was called a working barrel. The bottom coupling was designed so that the bottom valve would not go through it, and a tailpipe could be screwed into the bottom of it. The bottom valve was shoved as far down into the working barrel as possible to allow for the longest stroke of the mill. The standing (working) (bottom) valve had two, sometimes three, cups (leathers), measuring thirty-thousandths larger than the bore of the working barrel, so as to hold the valve in place. However, these measurements made it very hard to pull through the working barrel.

I remember one time Daddy had to go get our horse, Homer, and tie the rope from the block and tackle to him. He led him very slowly until Homer had pulled the valve above the working barrel, without parting the rods. Most of the time, it was only necessary to pull the rods, replace the cups, run the rods back in, and redo the hook-up. We could do all of this and have the well pumping within two hours. By the time I was nine years old, I could climb the derrick, oil and grease the mill, but Daddy had to change the stroke when desired, as that was usually necessary when the wind was very strong, and I was not quite big enough.

I remember one time when the well had to be worked over. Daddy went to town and hired a well digger with an old steam-powered wooden rig. He arrived at our place after dinner, with his rig and boiler pulled by four horses, as it was very heavy and bulky. He spent that afternoon gathering wood and cow chips to be used for fuel to heat the water in the boiler. The next morning, he and Daddy dismantled our mill and lowered it to the ground. Then, the derrick was laid over to the ground and dragged out of the way. The rig had to be set up and placed over the well. By the time all of this was accomplished, it was too late in the day to fire up the boiler.

Early the next morning, the well driller was out, built up his fire, and by ten o'clock, he had enough steam to go to work. About one week later, he finished his work, had our mill back pumping, and moved his rig, boiler, and tools to another place.

Just east of the windmill, we had a small building, probably sixteen feet square. When Grandma was staying with us, she slept in this building. All of the rest of the time, she stayed in the house with us. We also had a De Lava cream separator, a complete set of shoe lasts and stands, some odd pieces of furniture, and other miscellaneous items stored there.

The overflow from the milk trough ran into a circular dirt tank about thirty feet in diameter. On the west side of this tank was a length of two-inch pipe buried in the ground, running under the fence and into the horse trough. The pipe had a float on one end of it, to maintain the water level in the trough. The trough was made out of two-inch by twelve-inch timber. It was about two feet wide, eight feet long, and three feet deep.

Almost every spring or summer, Daddy would cut off the windmill and drain the water out of the tank into the garden. When the water had gone down enough, he would get a team and hitch them to his scraper. He would dig the sand and mud out of the tank and use it to fill holes, ruts, etc., in and around the yard, wherever the wind had eroded the ground. He would work at this all day but would quit when night came and turn the mill back on. Sometimes we would have to carry water to each of the livestock for two or three days until there was enough water in the tank for them. They would be led to the tank for water until it got deep enough to flow into the horse trough.

Between the house and tank, we had three large locust trees that kept the entire backyard shady most of the day. In the summer, we had two bedsteads out there with three or four chairs and some tables. It sure was a nice place to sleep, eat watermelons, or just sit in the shade on hot summer days.

Our garden covered a large area on the south and east sides of the tank. A ditch was often made in the tank dam and up to the spot in the garden that we wanted to water. In the spring, Daddy would get his scraper, and with Homer pulling, he would clean out the lots and pens. He would enter the garden through the water lot gate and spread the fertilizer around the garden. Almost every week, Roy and I had to get our little red wagon and clean out the chicken house, scattering the chicken droppings around in the garden, often in a particular spot. This was a year-round job. After getting all of the barnyard fertilizer spread, Daddy would hitch Homer to a walking plow and give the entire garden area a good plowing. After this, it was ready to be planted. Different vegetables were planted at different times, all according to the phase of the moon. It was Roy and my job to see that it was properly weeded, hoed, and watered, which we did, many times under protest.

The entire garden was fenced with chicken wire, which was supposed to keep the chickens out, but sometimes one would fly over, and another would crawl under. We were always alert to this problem and would temporarily solve it as soon as possible. We grew many fine vegetables in this garden, eating all that we could and canning the rest for future use.

Northwest of the tank, we had a small smokehouse, which was used for smoking and storing meat. On the front were some boards laying on the ground and up against the smokehouse at an angle. They were used to lay the hogs on to be cleaned after they had been scalded. Above these boards was a properly braced scaffold, which was hinged to the smokehouse so that it would swivel. Out on the end was a small block and tackle suitable for lifting a large hog into and out of the pot after it had been scalded, then laying it on the boards to be cleaned, and back up again to be cut up.

With this setup, Daddy could handle a five-hundred-pound hog all by himself. A three-legged, cast-iron wash pot was placed somewhere between the smokehouse and tank. When ashes

around the pot got too high, the pot was moved to another spot, and the ashes were saved and spread at the proper time and place as fertilizer. The pot was filled by carrying water in a three-gallon bucket from the well. Up against the smokehouse were two large heavy benches and about four wash tubs hanging on nails driven into the walls of the smokehouse. On wash days, these were all moved into the shade, usually underneath the locust trees, and when the washing was finished, they were all put back in their proper places.

There was a barbed-wire fence that ran behind the smokehouse from the corner of the garden to a point just beyond the smokehouse, then west to the back of the orchard. Just beyond the cellar was a small wooden gate large enough for people or single animals. A little further west, just before getting to the chicken house, was a wire gap large enough for wagons to pass through. Both of these opened into the water lot.

This area was known as the water lot, as the only stationary thing in it was a wooden water trough, where all of the animals came to drink. Water was carried from there to the animals that were penned up and for other purposes. This lot was also used as a parking space for the wagons, buggy, surrey, and later on, a car. Plows in use or torn down for repairs were also parked in this area. The south end was fenced with barbed wire, with a gap large enough for a wagon. This gap usually remained open unless it was closed so that a certain animal needed to be caught, after which it was reopened.

There was a narrow lane running east and west with both ends opening into pastures. On the west side of the water lot were the pens and barns. Along the side next to the barn was a long rail. This barn was on the northwest corner, with a narrow lane between the back of the barn and the chicken house and orchard. This lane was closed on the east end by a wire gate, which remained closed except when in use. The other end was

completely open. The barn was constructed of lumber with a corrugated iron roof, part of which was continuously being blown off by the wind.

The barn was approximately twenty feet by forty feet, with a door on the front opening into the water lot. Ten feet or more of this end had a wooden floor and was separated from the rest of the barn by some one-inch by four-inch planks nailed to two-inch by four-inch studs about six feet apart. The south end of this partition was left open for passage. This part of the barn was used to store tools of every kind, spare parts, and supplies. Harness and saddles were also stored here.

Against the north wall was a large wooden box used to salt down pork and to store it until it was brought into the house. Several links of sausage were always hanging from the rafters. There was always a certain place for everything. Many a time on a rainy day, Daddy and I would spend our time out there repairing harness or making some new parts. We also had a hand-driven corn sheller that we would bring from the corn crib on a rainy day and shell a lot of corn. The rest of the barn was used to store maize, which was used as feed for the animals. Sometimes, after harvest, it would be packed jam full.

The roof of the barn sloped downward to the north. From the top of the barn, there was another corrugated roof sloping to the south, about twelve feet wide. This roof was held up by some heavy round posts sunk into the ground about every eight feet along the southern end. This shed would accommodate a loaded wagon to pass under the roof and out the other end. The east end was closed by a wide wooden gate, and the west end was open. This shed was called the horse shed.

As Daddy was always buying and trading horses and mules, some unbroken, it was necessary to have a strong fence around the horse lot. Shortly after moving to the farm, he bought enough rough timbers about one inch by six inches and plenty of good, heavy round creosoted posts to rebuild the entire lot. The old lumber and

posts were used later to rebuild the cow pen. The new horse lot was about sixty feet deep, and including the shed, it was about forty feet wide, with the gate at the end of the shed being used as the main entrance.

There was a similar gate on the north side, behind the barn, that opened into the lane. We could drive a loaded wagon through the east gate, under the shed, unload, and drive out of the north gate into the lane and from there into the water lot. There was a small wooden gate on the west side that we used in going to the stack lot or hog sheds. In the lot, there was one feed trough running east and west, and in the back of the lot, there was another trough running north and south. These troughs were large enough and situated in such a manner that sixteen horses could be fed at the same time.

Adjacent to the south side of the horse lot was the cow pen. This pen was of the same depth as the horse lot but about ten feet narrower. It had been enclosed by barbed wire, but Daddy used the old lumber and posts salvaged from the horse lot, plus some new lumber to replace the barbed wire. It didn't have to be as high or strong as the horse lot fence, and only three sides had to be rebuilt.

In the northeast corner, Daddy built a cow barn about ten feet square with a wooden floor and a window on the east side, close to the top, so that feed from the wagon could be pitched into the barn. The barn would be filled with cotton seed, meal and cake, and other things for the cows to eat. There was also plenty of calf ropes and medicines. The west side had a wooden door for people to enter. West from this barn, along the horse lot, was a corrugated-roofed shed that would accommodate three cows to be milked at the same time. In the back of this shed was a long trough in which feed was placed for the cows to eat while they were being milked.

Under the shed, along the side of the barn, was a long shelf on which we placed our milk buckets and pails. In the center of the pen was a long trough in which we placed feed for the calves and cows that were not being milked to eat. The calves were usually penned up during the day, so around noon, they were let out for water and then

put back into the pen and given some fodder, cane, or something to eat. We usually milked from six to ten cows, twice each day, so this was quite a job.

The pen had a small wooden gate in the west fence for entrance to the stack lot and a slightly larger gate on the east fence that entered into the water lot.

Just west of the horse lot, along the lane by the south side of the orchard, were our hog and pig pens and sheds. There was a small wooden gate on both the north and south sides for entering, and a loading ramp on the north side. We had a large hog wallow, and Roy and I would have to carry water after water in buckets from the horse trough to keep the mud to the hogs' satisfaction. There were several pens in which to keep a sow with little pigs or hogs to be fattened for market or slaughter. There were about eight separate pens, each with its own trough. Water had to be carried to each pen several times a day, and they were fed about three times each day. All of the other hogs ran loose, around one hundred hogs, and they were usually fed a little corn in the evening.

The stack lot extended from the back of the cow pen and horse lot, west to a line parallel with the back of the orchard; north to the lane along the side of the orchard and south to the plow storage area.

This lot was fenced on the east side by the cow pen and horse lot, and the rest of the fence was heavy hog wire on the bottom and two strands of barbed wire on the top. There was a wooden gate on the west side and another one on the south side, each large enough to accommodate a loaded wagon.

Fairly close to the horse lot, we had a one-hundred-barrel, iron tank standing on its end. A hole had been cut in the top and covered with a hinged door, and on one side, a door had been cut so a person could enter. At harvest time, corn would be hauled in, and with shovels, it was taken from the wagon and thrown through the hole in the top until the tank was completely full. The rest of the lot was used for bundled feed, placed in long stacks, perhaps eight feet high,

as it was hauled in from the field. Sometimes, after harvest had been finished, this lot would be so full that it was barely possible to get around in it with a wagon.

When we first moved to the farm, there was one field of approximately fifty acres, extending from a line parallel with the west fence of the stack lot and orchard southward to the south end of our property line. The eastern boundary line was just east of our garden's eastern boundary. There was a lane between the north side of the field and the lots, etc. Both the east and west sides of the field were pastures, which extended north to the Weaver Ranch boundary and were joined together in front of our house and orchard.

We entered the field from the water lot by going west to a wire gap, just across from the wooden gate in the stack lot fence. Upon entering the field, we went down what we called the turn row, on which we traveled to the spot in the field that we were going to work at that time. Just west of the beginning of the turn row was a space in which all plows and parts were parked and left until that particular plow was to be used. It would be left there each night until the following morning.

It wasn't long, however, before Daddy discovered that we needed more field in order to feed and clothe the family he now had. We grubbed out the mesquite and catclaws in the west pasture, took down the fence that separated this pasture and the field, and used the salvaged fencing whenever needed. The fence between the field and lane was extended to our western property line. A fence was put up from the back of the orchard, northward to the Weaver Ranch boundary. A few gates were added or changed, and we had a good five-acre calf and pony pasture. We kept the small calves, Daddy's saddle horse, Mama's buggy horse, and later on, my pony, in this pasture.

Sometimes when Daddy was to leave early the next morning, he would put the two horses that he was going to hitch to the wagon in this pasture the evening before. The animals in this pasture could

enter the water lot through the lane behind the barn. At the end of the lane was a wire gap that remained closed except when in use.

Daddy could call his horse, Mama could call her horse, and I could call my pony by going down the lane to about the end of the hog sheds and calling the horse's name in a loud, clear voice.

In the east field, Daddy would prepare about five acres, closest to the house, for vegetables and early crops for the animals. Some of the things grown in large quantities were: black-eyed peas, pinto beans, cantaloupe, cucumbers, watermelons, peanuts, sweet potatoes, squash, early June corn, and some cane, which was to be cut and fed to the animals every day from the time it got two feet high. The rest of the fields were planted in maize, kaffir corn, and corn, all for feed, along with a lot of cotton for market.

Daddy had rented the quarter section due south of our place. It was all pasture. Daddy wanted to buy it, but the owner would not sell, so Daddy bought the quarter adjacent to it, farther south. This was also all pasture, but it wasn't long before we had about half of it grubbed, fenced, and under cultivation. Daddy built a small cabin at the edge of the field so as to have a place to leave a few parts and supplies that would be handy when needed.

To get to this farm, we left our house and traveled west through the calf and pony pasture, entered the road, and traveled south one mile. There, we came to a gap through which you entered into what we called the south field.

CHAPTER V
SCHOOL

The schoolhouse that we attended during 1918 and 1919 was a small one-room structure on the Higginbotham Ranch land, about two miles west of our place. At first, there were about five pupils, but by the end of 1919, the number had grown to about twenty. The ranches had not sold any of their land yet, but families east and south of us had begun to increase in numbers. Some were like our family, where the babies were getting to be of school age.

I remember one family that lived about two miles southeast of us; their name was Jones. Their son, Clyde, who was about my age, had been coming by our house and going on to school with us. Mr. Jones had a Black family working for him, and they had twin daughters, about the same age, who wanted to attend school. I don't believe there was a school for Black children in the entire county, so it seemed that they wouldn't be able to get any book learning.

Daddy was head of the school board, which consisted of three members. The board called a meeting one night at the schoolhouse. It seems that all of the adults in the surrounding countryside attended, and it was voted that the two girls could attend school in the first grade, until further notice.

Mr. Jones went to town and bought each of them a first-grade reader, a box of crayons, a pencil and tablet, a slate with marking chalk and an eraser, and some school clothes. On the first day of school, here came Clyde and the Black twins by his side. We joined them and went on to the schoolhouse. I thought it was a lot of fun, running and playing with them all the way to the schoolhouse and back. The Black girls attended school for several years without any further board meetings. I suppose Mr. Jones saw to it that their pro-rata share of the school expenses was taken care of in the proper manner.

All of this integration was accomplished without the aid of federal guidelines or inspectors from Washington. It's hard to see how it ever worked unless guidelines issued from higher up were followed.

At this time in history, schools did not furnish books or any other personal items. Daddy had already purchased, for me, a *Playmates Primer*, a slate with crayons and an eraser, a pencil, and a tablet. As I remember, the primer was orange-y yellow, and the first story in it started out, "Jack and Jill went up the hill." Another story was about "Tom and Nell," and there were many Mother Goose rhymes. The tablet was about six inches by nine inches in size and about one inch thick, with very coarse paper. It was called *BIG 5*, which I assume was because it cost a nickel to purchase. All of these items were brought home every evening so that your parents could see how you were progressing in school and so you could do your homework at night.

As I progressed in school, it soon became time for me to learn to write with pen and ink. Daddy bought me a bottle of ink, a pen staff, about five pen points, and a new tablet with a better grade of paper, as the paper in the *BIG 5* was too absorbent for ink. I poured some of the ink into the ink well in the top of the desk, and the bottle containing the rest of the ink was placed on the shelf in the desk and pushed all the way to the back to avoid spilling or upsetting it.

In about the second grade, spelling had to be learned. In that grade and each grade through the seventh, a *Blue Back Speller* had to be bought, with each grade being farther advanced. A spelling tablet with sufficient pages for the entire year was also purchased. The speller had words suitable for that grade. Each lesson had ten words, showing the pronunciation, part of speech, and whether the letters were long or short. It had enough lessons for each day for the entire year. Each word in the lessons was listed in alphabetical order for quick reference in the back of the book, with a short definition and how to use it in a sentence.

Gladys, Roy, and I were all attending school at this time, and in good weather, we would walk, playing, gathering flowers and such, all the way there and back. In bad weather, Gladys would ride on one horse, Roy and I would ride double on another horse. Mama would see to it that we were properly wrapped and clothed for very cold weather. At other times, we went to school in the one-horse buggy. Some days, when a very bad snowstorm or sandstorm came up during the day, Daddy would come after us in the wagon. Other parents usually did the same thing when the weather was more severe, thinking it was the best thing to do.

A coal-burning stove was located in one corner of the room, and some of the larger boys were assigned the duty of keeping the fire going on cold days. This assignment meant that we had to keep plenty of coal inside and stoke up the fire when necessary. It also required that you got to school early to have a good fire going by the time the others arrived. This worked out fine, except when the boy who was supposed to make the fire didn't come to school or was late that day. Other boys were assigned to sweep, clean the blackboard, dust the erasers, etc. New assignments for the following week were passed out on Friday afternoons. Daddy would see that there was always plenty of coal in the coal bin, which was located out against the fence. All of the pupils and the teacher had to bring their own drinking water as there was no well nearby.

Mama always baked a batch of teacakes and kept them in a gallon syrup bucket with the lid pressed on tight. All of our school lunches were put together in another syrup bucket. One day, by mistake, we took the wrong bucket. At noon, we discovered that we had a gallon of teacakes instead of biscuits, sausages, hard-boiled eggs, etc. Mama was worried that we would have to go hungry, but we bartered teacakes for sandwiches and the like with the other pupils, so we actually had more to eat than usual.

In the early fall, as soon as we had picked and sold the first bale of cotton, Mama and all of us kids would meet Daddy at the dry goods store on Saturday afternoon. Daddy would settle what little bill he

might have and tell the clerk that he wanted the entire family outfitted with school and winter clothing and that he was in a position to pay cash. We all got a new pair of shoes, new stockings, and long underwear. Roy and I got new caps, overalls, knee britches, and possibly a new shirt. Mama would buy some material to make more shirts. The girls got everything new, including maybe a new school dress. They also got to help Mama pick out new material to make each of them several new dresses. Other new shirts and dresses were made out of material already on hand or outgrown, discarded dresses from the larger ones. Underclothes were always made from flour or seed sacks. Naturally, mine and Roy's clothes were too large as they would shrink, and we would grow quite a bit before wearing them out. This was our entire winter wardrobe. We all had new clothes to start school, but by spring, after several washings and a half-year of wear, they had as many holes and patches as our work clothes.

It took the clerk at least two hours to wait on us, and if Daddy had any money left after paying the bill, we all went with him to purchase school supplies. Otherwise, they were purchased later. Sometimes during the year, other items were purchased for us kids, but not very often. Daddy and Mama bought new hats, shoes, etc., for themselves all during the year whenever they wanted to and could spare the money.

As more and more people moved south and east of us and there were more children of school age, and Mr. Compton had moved to town, it was decided that the schoolhouse would be more centrally located if it were moved to a spot in our pasture, less than a quarter of a mile east of our house. That summer, Daddy and two neighbors got some long, heavy timbers, jacked up the schoolhouse, and set it upon the timbers, which had been tapered on the front ends to make them easier to slide. They then hitched all six horses to the front end and started out on a two-mile slide. Larger mesquite had to be cut away, and new braces had to be nailed to the building as the moving progressed. In about one week of hard work, the building was in the spot that had been decided upon.

In the absence of any federal guidelines or bureaucrats from Washington to enforce busing children to school, the local citizens simply moved the schoolhouse to where most of the children were. Besides, buses had not been invented, and as far as I can remember, bureaucrats were pretty scarce too.

This move made it very convenient for us to attend school as it was so close that we could run all the way and still not be out of breath. I am sure that Daddy liked books and reading, as he was teaching us from the time we could talk. He bought us many books, especially at Christmas time, when every one of us got at least one book each. The small children received some sort of color book until they could read. I received several books about the Rover Boys, in fact, our dog got the name "Rover" because of these books, *Black Beauty*, *Robinson Crusoe*, some Shakespeare books, and many others. Many nights while Mama and Gladys were cleaning up the kitchen after supper, Daddy would go to the front room and sit down. Leona would get on one knee, Roy on the other, and I would get on the floor between his legs, and he would read to us from one of the books for an hour or so, until we would practically fall asleep.

We always raised some popcorn, so many an evening Mama and Gladys would pop some while they were in the kitchen and bring in a big bowl full for us to eat while listening to Daddy read.

The schoolteacher was usually a woman about middle age, and she roomed and boarded at the house of one of the students. One year, she stayed at our house. She was about thirty years old, and her home was about fifteen miles east of Lamesa, below the cap rock. She drove a sulky and went the twenty-two miles home on weekends when it was possible. She would often invite one of the pupils to go home with her. One weekend, she invited me.

We left our house after school, around five o'clock on Friday. She made the horse go as fast as possible over the rough wagon roads. Believe me, it was almost impossible to stay on top of a sulky under such circumstances. We finally arrived at her house after nine o'clock

and were still in one piece. Their place was beautiful, located close to a small stream, between what I called mountains, they were probably less than five hundred feet high. We came back to our house on Sunday afternoon at a much slower pace.

School usually did not commence until around the middle of October, allowing the pupils to help in the fields during harvest. Many of the older boys who were big enough to plow had to leave school a month or so early in the spring. As a result, they never advanced in school but remained in the same grade from around the age of twelve until they eventually quit.

The school had to open for a certain number of days each year. Because of this, there were often times when we had to go to school on Saturdays and certain holidays to make up for lost time. Typically, country schools continued for two or three weeks later in the spring compared to the schools in town.

CHAPTER VI
NEARBY RANCHES

The Higginbotham Ranch bordered our property on the west and extended along the Weaver Ranch boundary for probably twenty miles. I'm not sure how far south it stretched. Their ranch headquarters was about ten miles west of us. We didn't become very well acquainted with them, as they had sold off a few scattered parcels of land over the years for farms. By around 1923, most of the ranch had been divided and sold to farmers in plots ranging from one-quarter of a section and up.

I remember one afternoon, late in May or early June, when all of us kids were heading home from school on a very hot day. Before we reached our property line, we noticed a herd of cattle up against the fence. I didn't know why they were there, but they were clearly close to dying from thirst, with their tongues hanging out at least a foot. I wasn't sure what to do, so I ran home and told Daddy. He said we'd have to round them up and drive them to our water tank.

We saddled our horses and rode over to the Higginbotham Ranch, where we cut the barbwire fence and drove about twenty-five head of cattle through our gate. From there, they easily found our tank, and it took about two hours and nearly all of our water to quench their thirst. In the meantime, one of the ranch hands rode up and told us that the windmill in that pasture had been broken but was now repaired and pumping water. With our help, he would get the cattle back into their pasture and fix the fence. Of course, Roy and I had to repair the dam around our tank where it had been damaged by the cattle.

As usual, we would turn our horses loose during the winter months when they weren't needed, letting them graze on the ranch lands. One spring, as plowing time was approaching, we hadn't seen our horses for several weeks, though we had heard they were over on the Higginbotham Ranch land. One day, Daddy and I decided to ride over and try to find them. We arrived at the ranch house just around noon and were invited to join them for dinner. We were told that our horses had been seen a couple of miles from the ranch house two or three days earlier. We rode in that direction and soon came upon our horses. Homer was still pretty tame, but the others had gone wild. Daddy roped Homer's neck, and I led him slowly home while Daddy got behind and made sure the others followed.

One summer afternoon, a traveling cowboy rode up to our house at a fast gallop, shouting, "FIRE! FIRE! FIRE!" We looked out and saw that the Higginbotham Ranch pasture was on fire, no more than five hundred yards from our property, and it was spreading rapidly.

Daddy was working in the south field, so Mama took charge. We already had our telephone, so she called town for some firefighters. Men came in droves, some still in their suits and ties, having gathered every broom they could find in Lamesa. In the meantime, we gathered up a lot of tow sacks, hitched a team of horses to the wagon, and loaded three barrels with water. We set off for the fire, fighting it with wet brooms and sacks until we were exhausted. We had to make several trips back for more water. By sundown, the fire had spread over several sections of land, and by dark, it could be seen from Lamesa, even though it was twenty miles away. Mama and us kids stopped at sundown and returned home. We had a lot to tell Daddy when he came in from work.

The Weaver Ranch was due north of our farm, bordering it on the north, running west along what is now Highway No. 180, turning north-northeast along Highway No. 62, east along No. 83, and

south-southeast along No. 137 to Lamesa. It then turned back west to our farm, making it a very large ranch. The ranch headquarters was about one mile due north from our house. The ranch house was very large, about twelve rooms. The bunkhouse could accommodate around twenty men. There were two windmills, a large pigeon roost with nests all around it, a very large barn, and a silo.

Everywhere you went, you either had to open a gate or walk over a stile, with about four steps on each side of the fence. The owner, old man Weaver, didn't live on the ranch but would come and spend three or four months at a time. The rest of the time, he managed the ranch from his home in Ft. Worth. He had sent his son Jewel out to live and run the ranch for about two years, but he must have failed, as he was replaced by his brother, Rod.

Rod was married and had a son about my age, named Bill, and a daughter named Grace. We visited them quite often and really had a lot of fun, running and playing together. They always had a lot of cowhands, some regulars and others who would work for one or two months before moving on. Daddy sent many a roaming cowboy over, and if it was close to round-up time, they would be hired for a month. The pay was $30.00 per month, plus all the food you needed and a bunk to stay in. Your horse also got well fed and treated.

The ranch had a windmill and concrete tank with a watering trough scattered about every four miles, so the cattle were usually less than two miles from cool water. Some cowboys assigned to work in faraway pastures would be gone for up to ten days at a time. Usually, there would be two cowboys assigned to the same pasture. Their jobs were to keep the windmills in working order, check the fences, work the cattle, and, of course, do their own cooking, etc.

One time, one of the cowboys was out riding the fences when a sudden thunderstorm approached. He and his horse were struck

by lightning, and both were killed. The cowboy who was working around camp got worried when his partner didn't show up at night. But since it had gotten dark, he had to wait until morning to begin his search. By the middle of the next afternoon, he rode upon the dead cowboy. He and his horse had both been killed. The cowboy was still astride his horse, and both had been burned so badly that nothing could be done.

The cowboy was a long distance from the ranch headquarters, but he knew that two other hands had been sent to the adjoining pasture. So, he rode toward the closest windmill, knowing they would camp at one of the two windmills in the pasture. As he approached, he realized he had made a mistake because there were no signs of a campfire. Since he had been in this pasture previously, he knew that the other windmill was about four miles in an easterly direction. By the time he reached this location, it was already sundown. They decided to head back at four o'clock the next morning. It was a sad occasion when they brought the body back to headquarters, wrapped in sheets, with only one leg. The other leg had been left under the horse. It was summer, and the odor was very unpleasant, to say the least.

One spring, Daddy agreed to go with them on their spring round-up and let me go with him. When the day arrived, we left early and got to the ranch house to find everyone very busy. Several new hands had been hired, some of whom had never been on a round-up, so they were following orders. Two men were assigned to butcher a half-grown calf and put the meat in the chuck wagon. The cook was gathering up other items and instructing his helpers where to put them for easy access. Others were attending to the horses, feeding them, etc. When all chores were finished, everyone was invited into the ranch house dining room for an enormous breakfast. During breakfast, the foreman went over all of the details, giving some men authority over others regarding certain tasks. For instance, the cowboys were to be split up into groups, some to do the night watch, some to do the branding, some to start driving the cattle to market, others were

assigned to help the cook, and still others to take care of and feed the horses.

The foreman ended his instructions by calling the names of certain men who could not go and had to stay at the ranch to take care of things. Then, the foreman said that those whose names were not called should saddle up and be on their way. It was a little past daylight by this time.

I already had my own pony and saddle, so since Daddy and I were the only ones ready to ride, we helped the cook harness and hitch his two horses to the chuck wagon, and off we rode. The plan was to start the round-up at the backside of the farthest pasture, which we reached after two days of travel. We rode along with the chuck wagon until the cook decided to stop for dinner or for the night, at which time he would signal the leader. Some would build a fire, one would make a pot of coffee, some would attend to the horses, two would help the cook, and others would busy themselves doing something useful. At the end of the second day, we arrived at the turnaround spot and pitched camp. By this time, everyone was accustomed to the chores assigned by the foreman, so everything was running smoothly. Some men had brought their razors so they could shave after supper, sometimes. Others said they would shave after the job was finished.

The plan was to take one area or pasture at a time. All the men would fan out to cover every corner and drive every head of cattle in that area to a pre-determined spot. The men assigned to decide which cattle should go to market would pick out the cattle and have one of their assistants ride out to separate them from the rest of the herd. This process continued until every head that was to go to market was put into a separate herd and started toward the next pasture. Meanwhile, other cowboys were separating cattle to be branded, castrated, or doctored.

It takes good men and good horses to handle all the separating and roping in a large herd of wild cattle in an open pasture. The men assigned to do the roping had trained their horses to perfection. They could ride into a large herd of bawling cattle, cut one little calf out, rope it, and lead it to the man with the branding iron. When everyone was satisfied that a pasture had been thoroughly worked, we moved to the next pasture and repeated the process. Meanwhile, the cattle destined for market had been herded into the next pasture, waiting for those from this pasture that were also to go to market.

It took two weeks to finish this roundup, and we had over one thousand head standing by to be taken to Lamesa and loaded onto the train for shipment. Daddy was paid $1.00 per day for his work. I do not remember whether I was paid anything or not. I do know, however, that my horsemanship improved tremendously, and the experience was something that I talked about for years.

I assume that Mama, Gladys, and Roy had taken care of all the required chores at the farm during our absence.

Some of the cowboys on the ranch would entertain themselves and other interested people on Sunday afternoons with their own rodeo. Some were experts at calf roping, others at bronco riding, some at bulldogging, and others had trained their horses to do many things. Their quarter horses or cutting horses were so well-trained that it was a rare pleasure to watch them work. The foreman was an expert at many things, but what I liked best was his ability with a lariat rope and the many tricks he could perform with it.

A great number of years later (perhaps thirty years), the ranch was divided up between the heirs. A great deal of land was sold, but Bill received twenty thousand acres, and he put most of it into cotton, so much so that he had to put up some cotton gins just for his own use. Rod also received twenty thousand acres. He still

wanted to run cattle as he was getting along in years, but was still able to boss a ranch.

I was in Lamesa on a visit a few years later and came across Rod on the street. He had come to town to do some banking. He had leased his entire ranch to an oil company at $5.00 per acre and had the check for one hundred thousand dollars in his pocket. I saw the check. It was necessary for him to come to town to do some banking.

CHAPTER VII
TRAVELERS

During this period, we had several travelers and visitors worthy of mention, partly because we were the last house on the Seminole Road west of Lamesa for another fifteen or twenty miles. Many times, a lone cowboy would stop to get a drink of water for himself and his horse, and after finding out where the next stop on the road was, if he couldn't make it before dark, he would seek permission to spend the night.

Daddy always kept a loaded shotgun leaning up against the doorframe in the dining room, one of the reasons being for Mama's use if necessary, while he was in the field or elsewhere. She never found it necessary to use it, except on varmints. Us kids had been forbidden to get close to the guns, whether or not they were loaded, without proper supervision.

One time, a cowboy was spending the night with us. It was in the summer, and all of us were sleeping in the yard for comfort, while the cowboy stayed in the barn. For some reason, Daddy didn't like his looks, so before going to bed, Daddy got his five-cylinder pistol from the dresser drawer, put one bullet in it, and placed it under his pillow. As it happened, he didn't need it, so the first thing the next morning he put it back in the dresser drawer. This pistol looked just like a six-shooter, except it had only five cylinders. It used regular pistol bullets. It is the only one I have seen or heard of. Leona still has it.

Daddy still didn't want to leave the place until the cowboy left, so he helped around the house, gathering some roasting ears for dinner, etc. The cowboy was helping Daddy shuck the corn when Daddy noticed that after the shock was removed, he would rub his hands around on the grain. Daddy assumed it was to remove some of the silk, but he started putting his corn in a different pile.

When he took it in to the kitchen, he told Mama to throw the ears that the cowboy had handled out to the hogs. After dinner, Daddy told our visitor to be on his way. I wonder why Daddy didn't like that man.

One day, a man was passing by with about five head of cattle in his wagon, taking them to market, when one of the rear wheels of his wagon came off, wrecking the wagon and spilling all the cattle. He came up to the house and told his story to Daddy. The only thing to do was for me and Daddy to saddle up, round up the man's cows, and drive them into our pen. Then we loaded them into our wagon, along with the man's broken wagon wheel, and headed toward Lamesa. The next day, the man came back and got us to help repair his wagon. Afterward, he thanked us and drove off, never to be seen again.

We always grew more watermelons than we needed and always had an ample supply during the season, kept cool in tow sacks in the tank. We would sit in the backyard, in the shade of the locust trees, and eat all that we wanted, at any time.

One time, we had all gone to town on a Saturday, and upon returning home, it was discovered that some people had stopped their car in front of our house and walked into our watermelon patch, stepping all over the vines and bursting several of our best melons in the patch. They had eaten the hearts and scattered some of the rest all the way back to their car. This was very annoying to all of us, to say the least.

It was not hard to determine who was responsible, as there were very few cars around at that time, and each tire left its imprint in the sand. It was also easy to see how many wore men's shoes, women's shoes, or were barefoot, from the tracks in the sand.

Daddy made a sign saying that cool melons were in the tank, "Help yourself and sit in the shade, but please stay out of the patch." He hung it on our front fence in clear view. The next Saturday, Daddy told everyone around town about what had happened and

especially the ones he suspected, making sure to inform them of when we expected to be home.

That afternoon, we went home about an hour earlier than Daddy had indicated. Upon arriving home, sure enough, there was the car, and several people were in our backyard enjoying the melons. We joined them in eating, and when they started to leave, Daddy insisted that they take two big ones home with them and invited them to come back again. Daddy took his sign down, but no one ever helped themselves to our melons again. All the thrill was gone.

The tax assessor of the county, around this time, was a man who had lost one leg just above the knee. He had fashioned a peg leg from 2x4s, with the outside board coming up high enough so that he could fasten it around his waist with a leather strap. With two more straps fastened around his thigh, the peg leg was not apt to get away from him, but it sure was stiff from his hip down.

One afternoon, we were out in the water lot when Daddy looked up and saw the tax assessor driving up in his buggy. He had his peg leg still buckled on, sticking out across the buckboard. He could get in and out of the buggy when he had to open or close a gate, but he said it was pretty hard to do, so he stayed seated while he was at our place. He had his rendition forms with him, so when he came to the page with our name on it, he asked a few questions like, "How many cows, hogs, horses, fowl, wagons, etc. do you own?"

In a short time, he had everything down and valued, so after Daddy signed his name on the paper, the tax assessor drove off, promising to return next year, provided he was re-elected.

One night, around two o'clock in the morning, Daddy heard someone hollering "HELLO," and our dogs were barking, so Daddy went to see who it was at this time of night. It was a man who said

he lived about twenty miles away, and one of his sons had eaten some green apples and was very sick. He was on his way to Lamesa to fetch a doctor, but he had ridden his horse so fast that it was very doubtful he could make it to town and back home again. So, he was wondering if he could borrow a horse.

Daddy went out and called his horse. The man was taking the saddle off of his horse and was fixing to put it on Daddy's horse when Daddy stopped him with the explanation that it would not fit the back bone on his horse and, besides, it and the blanket were too hot and sweaty to put on a cool, dry horse. With this, Daddy got his saddle and blanket and put them on his horse. Daddy had already put his bridle on him, and the stirrups had to be lowered a little as the man's legs were longer than Daddy's.

Daddy told the man to remember that he had seven miles to go and about twenty-seven miles back to his house, so not to ride too hard. When Daddy came back into the house, Mama asked who it was, and Daddy replied, "He didn't say."

About two weeks later, we began to worry that Daddy sure got the short end of the stick on this trade, but one day, soon enough, here came the man riding on Daddy's horse. He apologized for not introducing himself before, but he explained that he was too excited to think of anything except his son. Daddy accepted his apology, saying that he understood the situation.

The man went on to explain that he had gotten Dr. Wormack to ride out with him, but by the time they got to his house, the boy had been dead about an hour. I don't suppose that Doc received any pay for this house call, for, after all, he did not render any professional services.

On another winter night, a man came to the front, and the dogs were cutting up quite a bit. It was snowing very hard. We discovered that the man could speak very little English and that he was the head of a group of Mexicans who had been following the harvest. They had purchased an old car in which they hoped

to return to Mexico, but it had broken down a little west of our house on the Seminole Road, and they were unable to get it running. There were a dozen or more of them, ranging from a baby on up in age. They had intended to spend the rest of the night in the car, but the snow had covered the ground, making it impossible to find anything to keep the fire going.

The man at our door could speak a little English, but not a single one of the others could say a word except in Spanish. He wanted to know if we could provide them with shelter until morning. Daddy told them yes, they could come into the house and stay by the stove in his and Mama's bedroom. We all stayed in bed, except for Daddy, Mama, and Cloreta, who were still in bed when all of our guests entered and gathered around the stove. Imagine how crowded it was in that twelve-foot square room. Some of the men were sent out to get more coal, and some of the women were in the kitchen making coffee. They brought all of their belongings from the car and spread out some bedrolls in the dining room so those who wanted to could lie down.

Roy and I were asleep, or trying to sleep, back in the lean-to, but we couldn't because we were trying to figure out why our home had suddenly been overrun by strangers. I can't imagine what went through our minds.

Everyone that was not already up got up early that morning. The women were in the kitchen preparing breakfast, and the men were out around the barn with us, doing the morning chores. The snow had stopped, but it was still cloudy and very cold. The leader of the group decided to go to town and try to find the parts necessary to repair their car. Daddy loaned him his saddle horse so he could make the trip faster than walking.

About the middle of the afternoon, the man returned, and within an hour, they had the car running. Mama had already made friends with the women, even though neither knew what the other was saying. They left our house in plenty of time to reach Lamesa before night, and as far as I ever found out, they made it

all the way to Mexico, or perhaps they decided to make Texas their home. Some did, you know.

The visitor I remember the most was our neighbor, Mr. Compton. Daddy had all of us kids out in the water lot, and we were already on our horses, ready to go to school, when Daddy looked up and told us to wait a little while because it looked like a storm was coming up from the northwest. It wasn't long before the wind had shifted, and it was getting colder fast. By the time we got our horses unsaddled and put away, a blizzard had struck, driving the temperature down to almost zero, and the wind was very strong. We gathered what livestock we could and threw a lot of fodder into the hog pens so they could make their own beds. We gathered the chickens as fast as we could. Some had blown away, others had landed up against a fence or weed, so we picked them up as fast as we could. Some of the chickens had made it back to the chicken house. All of the chickens, ducks, turkeys, and guineas that we could catch were put in the dugout. Even so, some of their combs and toes were frozen off. Daddy put containers for water down there and had to go back very often to break the ice so the fowl could get a drink.

We had all come back into the house to warm up, after which Daddy decided he'd better bring in a large quantity of coal before it became impossible to get out. He got the wash tubs and put them in the corner of the dining room with the intention of filling them with coal. He poured all the coal from the scuttle into one of the tubs and started warming his hands before going back out again. The front door could not be opened as it faced the north, and too much snow and wind would enter, so he was using the dining room door, usually going around the back of the house, but since he was getting the coal, he went around the front of the house as it was closer.

When he reached the front of the house, he could barely see due to the snow. A wagon with two mules hitched to it was parked against our front yard fence, about twenty feet from where he

was standing. He dropped the coal scuttle and, as he approached the wagon, he could see a human form lying in the bed of the wagon, all wrapped in quilts. Daddy knew this was Mr. Compton's wagon and mules, but he wasn't sure of the body in the wagon until he pulled the covers from around the man's face. Then, he could tell that it was Mr. Compton, frozen into unconsciousness.

Daddy got him out of the wagon, half-dragged him into the house, and laid him across the bed, not too close to the fire. In a short time, he regained consciousness, but Daddy kept rubbing snow on his face and hands. His shoes and socks were removed, and his feet were placed in cold water. He was soon given a little bit of coffee and soup.

After he was able to talk, he told us that he had gone to town early that morning to attend to some business. When the storm started coming up, he decided to get back home. He was afraid that Elsa Mae had gone to school and that his wife would be unable to attend to everything and would probably be frightened to death.

It was lucky for him that Daddy had left our front gate open, as we had some cattle running on the Weaver Ranch land, and he thought maybe they would come home for water. Mr. Compton had already passed out, but his mules came to the open gate and turned in. Just a stroke of luck, some said. Maybe so, maybe not.

Daddy drove his mules to the water lot and took care of them, then brought in the coal he had started out to get. By this time, it was dinner time, and after everyone had eaten, Mr. Compton wanted to go home, but neither Daddy nor Mama would let him, as he was still in pretty bad condition. The storm was still raging, so Daddy said he would ride over and tell Mrs. Compton what had happened.

All of our animals that we could find had been put in the lots and pens early that morning, so Daddy didn't have any trouble finding

his horse. He had to ride, facing the storm, so it was necessary to travel very slowly. He rode by the schoolhouse to check on the kids and teacher, but no one was there. He went inside to check the stove, and since the morning kindling was still in the box and the stove had no warmth, he knew there had not been a fire that day, so he assumed no one had arrived.

Daddy went on to the Compton's house and told Mrs. Compton the entire story—that her husband was now alright and would probably be home tomorrow or the next day. After this, he helped Mrs. Compton do all of the outside chores. Elsa Mae had started to school but turned back and came home as soon as the storm hit.

Daddy returned home about four o'clock, almost frozen, but after warming up for a while, he and I got out to do our chores, all in a blinding snowstorm. Mr. Compton recovered satisfactorily, but he had to be taken to the doctor as soon as the storm abated. He lost about four toes, one finger, half of one ear, and a quarter of the other one in this ordeal. The following summer, they moved to a place about one mile from Lamesa.

There are several other characters that I remember, but their stories do not amount to much, so permit me to tell you about some of our storms.

CHAPTER VIII
STORMS

This part of Texas always seems to have more than its share of storms, especially sandstorms. They start in the late fall and continue into early summer, usually blowing from the northwest. During this time, some storms have wind velocities of fifty miles per hour or more, with sand and dust so thick that tumbleweeds would roll for miles, until they lodged against a fence or something solid. These, in turn, would catch more sand, and in a very short time, unless the weeds were removed, the fence would be buried so deeply in sand that it couldn't be seen.

All of this land is now under cultivation, and all of the fences have been removed. It looks odd when you see a field with a hill, maybe a hundred feet wide at the base and ten feet high, running across the field in a perfectly straight line. They say this used to be a fence row.

Weeds would stack up against our fences, but Daddy would get Roy and me to burn them on some still day in the wintertime. In the fall, he would plow along the outside of the fox fence, about ten feet wide, to kill all of the weeds that had come up during the spring and summer. Us kids would get our hoes and kill the weeds under the fence that the plow had missed. Sand hills would form in many places, especially around small bushes and in our east yard, where the wind would whip around our house to meet the wind coming from the opposite side. Sometimes the wind would change direction slightly, moving the sand hills to another location.

Our gate leading from the yard to the water lot was made of lumber and opened to the north. I have seen many times when the wind was so strong from the north that, even though I was about ten years old, I would have to crawl through the barbed wire fence because I wasn't strong enough to open the gate.

Sandstorms usually came up during the morning and lasted all day, settling down around sunset. But I have seen some that lasted all night and longer. Some storms would catch us at school, in the field, at town, or anywhere, so it was a good policy to always be prepared. Several times, we'd be coming home from school during a sandstorm, and a small rain cloud would form, raining just enough, with the sand blowing, to get us and our school clothes all muddy. The sand stain was certainly hard to wash out.

One Saturday, Daddy was in town with the wagon, and Mama and all of us kids came after dinner in the car. It wasn't long after we met that a very bad sandstorm began blowing, so Daddy decided he had better start home in the wagon. Mama could finish her shopping, and we could come home in the car, which was supposed to be faster than the wagon.

As the wind blew from the west, neither of them made much progress; sometimes the car would barely move. When we got home, Daddy had already arrived and was out in the east pasture, gathering up chickens that had blown out there and couldn't make it back against the strong wind. We always seemed to have more than enough roosters, but they kept fairly busy protecting the hens from varmints, hawks, and the elements. During high winds like this, it was common to see a big rooster heading into the wind with eight or more hens following closely behind him. He could be heard talking away to his flock. A rooster is adapted to this sort of thing, as he is much heavier and steadier on his feet. When the wind did topple him, he would remain clinging to the ground until he saw his chance to make it a little closer to the chicken house.

The wind had already blown the windmill's wheel and fans down, scattering the sticks over a large area. The derrick was leaning about ten degrees. Daddy got some large rope and climbed up the leaning derrick as high as possible and tied one end of the rope around it. He then came down, and we tied the other end around the trunk of one of the locust trees. After that, we all went

about gathering more chickens and other livestock until it got too dark to see.

When the storm was over and the wind was calm the following day, Daddy had to go to town and get a new wheel and fans for our windmill. Upon his return, we hitched the horses to the derrick and very carefully straightened it back up, securely anchoring it to new posts. After this, Daddy climbed to the top of the derrick, and Roy and I brought the wheel and fans, one piece at a time, to the top using a block and tackle. Daddy bolted each piece in place until everything was properly installed.

We had many thunderstorms in the spring and early summer. Many of them came in the afternoons, giving us no more than ten minutes' notice. They would last about that long and cover an area of only a few miles, but the bottom would fall out while they lasted. During the spring, Mama would have a lot of baby chicks, and sometimes they would get caught out in the storm. After the storm was over, they would be gathered up, brought inside, dried off, and wrapped up to warm up. When they could get up and run around, they were put back outside. Sometimes there would be up to fifty that couldn't make it.

One day, Daddy and I were plowing in our south field, each of us on separate cultivators. The temperature that afternoon was around one hundred degrees. At one point, when we met, we stopped, and Daddy said, "It looks like a cloud is forming in the northwest."

We watched it for a few minutes, then decided it would be best to set our plows as deep as possible, in case there was any wind so that they wouldn't be wrecked. We unhitched our horses and led them at least a hundred feet away. We had intended to remove the harness, but the thunder and lightning became so fierce that we left the horses standing there and got about another hundred feet away from them. We stood out in the middle of the field, getting soaking wet, and watched the lightning play from one cultivator to the other and from the harness of one horse to the

other. Luckily, there was no direct hit. It rained terribly hard for perhaps thirty minutes, with some hail, and water was standing everywhere.

After the storm was over, Daddy decided the horses couldn't pull the plows through all that mud and water. Even though our wagon was at the edge of the field, we thought it best to walk home and let the horses follow us. Much to our surprise, when we got home, still soaking wet, it hadn't rained a drop. Daddy and I sure got teased by the rest of the family for quitting and coming to the house on such a beautiful afternoon.

The next morning, we harnessed our horses and went after our cultivators so we could work in the home field for a few days. They weren't hard to get out of the field with the plow points lifted completely out of the ground. They were brought up to the wagon. We were to load one and trail the other. With the aid of a block and tackle, we got one about halfway up. Daddy was pulling on the rope while I tried to balance it by holding one of the wheels. The rope slipped, and down came the cultivator, knocking me flat on the ground with one wheel across my leg. Daddy freed me and secured the block and tackle better, and we tried again. This time we got it loaded without further trouble. I limped for most of the rest of the summer, using a stick to help balance myself. Somehow, this didn't get me out of any of my chores—it just made them harder and longer to accomplish.

We had many storms, and if they came at night, more than likely, we all went to the storm cellar. A lot of times, if they lasted very long, we kids would sleep and be left there until the next morning. I remember one night when we went to the cellar, and the storm kept getting worse and worse—thunder, lightning, wind, hail, and rain were at their worst. Our cellar door had a long rope tied to it on the inside so it could be tied down, and also so you could hold onto it when you wanted to peek outside. This night, especially, Daddy kept wanting to take a look. He had barely come back from the door when a large limb broke from one of the locust trees

and landed across the door. Daddy could not peek anymore, as he couldn't lift the door.

The cellar was leaking around the edges, so we didn't know whether we were trapped and would drown or not. Of course, Daddy knew he could chop his way out and get the rest of us if it became necessary, but at that time, it was very difficult to convince young children of his ability.

When the storm was over, we all pried, pushed, and pulled until I could crawl through the door to the outside. Daddy gave me the axe, and I chopped enough of the limbs off until, with my pulling and Daddy's pushing, we finally got the door open. It was a surprise to everyone to see hundreds of small frogs hopping all over the place and lots of fish, from one to two inches long, swimming around in the puddles. But I don't believe it rained cats and dogs!

One of the worst snowstorms or blizzards I can remember was the one in which Mr. Compton almost lost his life. It snowed for about four days and nights, and for the entire time, the temperature never got above freezing. At night, it dropped below zero. The snow was so deep and banked up that horses could walk over barbed wire fences.

It was so deep behind our barn that Roy and I had an awful lot of fun climbing up on top of the barn and sliding down into the snow. Many cows froze to death standing up and were still standing after the snow melted. Some cows lay down and froze, and others weren't found until much later. We lost one cow and calf, a few pigs, and twenty to thirty chickens.

This was one time I remember Daddy didn't put his tools away after using them. The water in the horse trough was frozen solid. We got the axe and chopped through about four inches of ice in the tank, making a hole about the size of a wash tub so the livestock could get a drink of water. Many times, the ice had to be re-chopped before a single horse had finished, and we had to be

alert so that their mouths wouldn't freeze to the tank. This had to be done continuously until the ice began to thaw. Sometimes the animals, after drinking, would walk out on the ice in the wrong direction, as everything was covered with snow, and the ice was strong enough to support a horse.

After the snow began to melt, we would walk around the pasture and find rabbits that appeared alive and squatting behind a bush. But when we approached them, we discovered that they had frozen in that position. Many birds could be found on tree limbs, their tiny claws clamped to a limb, holding on for dear life. They had frozen in that position. Quail, in large coveys, were nestled under bushes, some still standing, but all frozen. We cooked and ate many rabbits and quail that had frozen to death.

One storm that I will always remember came up on a Sunday afternoon. This storm looked like most of the worst ones—black and angry, coming from the northwest. The only difference was that it appeared to be much higher than most other storms. We all went to the storm cellar and waited for thunder, lightning, rain, or something to happen. Daddy finally got tired of waiting, so he looked outside and saw grasshoppers all over the yard. We all went outside, and in a short time, there were millions of grasshoppers everywhere. They eventually covered an area about five miles square.

Inquiries were made later in adjoining towns, government agencies, etc., as to where they came from and why they descended when and where they did. Farmers that lived in their flight path saw the cloud pass over but didn't know what it was. People farther away didn't see the cloud at all, and absolutely no one had any idea where the grasshoppers originated. After all the information had been gathered, it was assumed that the flight began about one hundred miles away and that the grasshoppers rode the air currents to travel such a long distance. No one could come up with any reason why they landed at the time and place they did, unless it was because they had been crossing ranch land.

No one knew for sure—they might have been looking for farms with more vegetation.

The next day was Monday, and Daddy stayed in bed all day while the grasshoppers got thicker. So many were landing in our tank and horse trough that Roy and I had to dip them out several times during the day to let the livestock get a drink of water. Daddy got up early on Tuesday morning and announced that he was going to town in the wagon. Around the middle of the afternoon, he came home with the wagon loaded with small turkeys—probably two hundred—lots of lumber, and three dogs. We took it all out to the cotton patch and unloaded the lumber in three widely scattered locations. By sundown, we had built three large coops and water troughs.

We separated the turkeys, placing about an equal number in each coop, closing them in for that night and the next day and night so they could get accustomed to their new homes. The dogs were tied to the outside of each coop to ward off coyotes, skunks, etc. I have no idea where Daddy found so many small turkeys in a small town like Lamesa on such short notice. Maybe Mr. Myers knew, and I've heard that where there's a will, there's a way.

The grasshoppers were eating everything in our garden, especially the corn that was just beginning to silk. Each morning, before breakfast, every one of us kids, except for Cloreta, was given a sack to hang around our necks. We were then sent out to catch grasshoppers, pull their heads off, and put them in the sack. After we had completely gone over the area, we brought the dead grasshoppers and emptied them in the hog troughs. The hogs loved them, and the chickens were able to catch more than they wanted just around the house and orchard.

Daddy got a long two-by-four, nailed a strip of canvas along its entire length, and mounted it on the back of one of the cultivators. He would take a pair of horses, trot them while pulling the cultivator, and go up and down the rows in the field. He and I would take turns doing this. About every two hours, a fresh team

would be brought out, and the tired, sweaty horses would be taken back to the lots for rest, feed, and water. This went on for two or three weeks, from early in the morning to late in the evening, with each horse working two hours and resting two hours. Since the canvas covered five rows at a time, and the rate of travel more than doubled that of plowing, we covered the entire field in less than a day.

This operation didn't kill many grasshoppers, but it drove a lot of them either to one side or the other, or out the end of the field, only for them to return shortly. It also greatly interfered with their eating habits and the laying of eggs. I think Daddy had the idea that if you could stop them from eating or laying eggs, you had won half the battle.

The turkeys thrived on the grasshoppers they could catch, and it wasn't long until we had turkeys running out of our ears. After most of the grasshoppers had disappeared, we began catching almost full-grown turkeys and taking them to town for sale. Some of them were very hard to catch, as they were wild and couldn't fly for great distances, but by waiting until they went to roost at night, we could slip up on them. We sold several wagon loads of turkeys and made a pretty good profit. Many other farmers in the area didn't make a crop at all and didn't have a single turkey for sale. I don't remember what we did with the dogs.

CHAPTER IX
TRAPPING

One of Daddy's main occupations during this period in the winter was trapping. We had a lot of traps of various sizes, and Daddy subscribed to a monthly magazine that advertised a lot of trapping items and provided all sorts of information about trapping. He would order new traps as well as new bait through some of the ads appearing in the magazine.

We had a shotgun and a .22 rifle, which we carried with us when we went out. Sometimes we would just go hunting, summer or winter, and shoot something to eat. These guns were stored in the dining room—the shotgun on the floor, leaning up against the door frame, and the .22 up over the door, as Mama had trouble getting the heavier gun from the top of a seven-foot door. Both guns were loaded at all times, and even the smallest one of us kids knew better than to touch either one of them. However, Daddy would let me shoot the .22 when he was along, but not at any other time. Mama used the shotgun to shoot at chicken hawks or any other intruders when Daddy wasn't around the house.

The dog we had around this time was named Rover, and he would accompany us many times. He and I were both trained to stay a few steps behind when Daddy had the gun in his hand. When Daddy shot a rabbit or bird, Rover would run with all of his might, get whatever had been shot, and deposit it at Daddy's feet, then get back behind for the next exciting moment.

We would set some traps in likely spots around our pasture. I remember one time when Daddy was not at home, Roy and I went out to run the traps. We had caught a few skunks, killed them, and reset the traps in different locations, marking the locations so they could be

found later. We came upon a trap with a large coyote caught by one of his front feet. We were afraid to get close enough to kill him with a stick or slingshot, so we decided that Roy should run to the house and get Mama to bring the shotgun and shoot the coyote.

In just a few minutes, even though it was about a quarter of a mile, Roy had reached the house, and I could see Mama coming. She was running at top speed, with her skirts and petticoats blowing in the wind, mostly made by her cutting through the breeze. Roy was about one hundred feet behind, running as fast as he could with his short legs. Mama had the .22 instead of the shotgun, and as soon as she got fairly close, she didn't stop to catch her breath or take aim—she just started shooting. She finally killed the coyote in about six or seven shots. She bragged for a long time about killing a coyote with a .22, not mentioning that he was trapped and couldn't move more than a foot in any direction. A good rock between his eyes would have probably done the same thing.

The Higginbotham Ranch joined our property on the west. There was a fairly large lake on the ranch, which extended into our south field pasture. On the bank of the lake, in their pasture, was an old well. All that could be seen was a few inches of a piece of four-inch pipe sticking out of the ground. I liked to drop pebbles in it and listen for them to hit the water at the bottom. We could see the water with the aid of a mirror on a clear day. Daddy said it was about fifty feet deep. It was probably an old well abandoned by the ranch for some reason. Many years later, when this land was sold to a farmer, he tried several times to get a good well close to his house up on the hill, but there was always something wrong with the water. He finally cleaned out this old well and found it to be pure, cool water. He ended up piping it all the way up the hill to his house and has been getting plenty of water from it ever since.

We used to find a lot of buffalo horns and bones, Indian pottery, trinkets, and arrowheads around this tank. It was a really good place to set traps, as animals came up there for water, and many of them lived close by. So, we did a lot of trapping and caught many animals

around it.

We set most of our traps around the Weaver Ranch, in front of our house, and along the Seminole Road. When running these traps, we would usually go in the buggy, but if we wanted to gather some wood or cow chips while we were out, we would go in the wagon. Trapping season and school season seemed to overlap, so on these long trips, I usually had to wait until Saturday, except for the two weeks when school was closed for Christmas.

I don't know the kind of deal Daddy had with the Weaver people, but it seems he was to work this part of their pasture, and he could gather anything he wanted and also run any of our livestock in their pasture at any time during the year. We would go in the wagon and pick up all of the mesquite wood and cow chips we wanted. Bones were selling at a good price, and many times we would come upon a pile where a cow had died, especially after a severe blizzard.

These bones were stacked out in our plow storage lot to be further bleached until we had a big wagon load. At that time, they were hauled to Lamesa and sold. We asked Daddy many times what was made out of all these bones, and he would reply that they were ground up and sugar was made. This was hard for us to believe, so upon further inquiry, we found that many things were made out of bones, such as combs, knife handles, shoehorns, corset stays, and on and on.

Many times, we would come across a dead cow that had just recently died. Daddy would skin it and bring the hide home to dry so it could be taken to market a little later.

I remember one trapping trip when I went with Daddy in the buggy. It had snowed earlier but had stopped, though it was still very cold. We took along our bucket of fire and plenty of corn cobs to burn as needed. After traveling a short distance, we came upon a dead cow. We skinned it and put the hide in the back of the buggy. Daddy then cut off several large chunks of meat to be used as bait. We set a few traps around this area and moved on. A white rag was always tied in

the top of a nearby bush so the trap could be found.

We came upon traps that had previously been set. Some would have either a skunk or coyote in them. If the animal was still alive, Daddy would take the .22 and kill it. He then placed it in the buggy. Sometimes he would change the location of the trap, and other times, he would have the feeling that it was still a good location. Some traps that had not been sprung were located by Daddy poking around in the leaves and snow with a hoe handle that had been brought along for that purpose. After finding and springing the trap, it and the white rag were moved to what appeared to be a better spot. Daddy would bait the trap with some of the fresh meat and sprinkle it with some of the mail-order bait. The trap was always tied to a large mesquite, then everything was covered with grass, leaves, and snow.

Daddy would back up to the buggy, covering all of his tracks until he stepped into the buggy. As a rule, he would cut off several small pieces of the meat and scatter it around the area to create a scent to attract the animals. When we were at a trap or relocating one, I stayed in the buggy so as not to make any tracks that could be visible or carry a scent. I would keep the fire going and hand Daddy things from the buggy. When we finished this run, we had many animals, and the buggy was loaded. Some coyotes were tied on the outside of the buggy, some skunks were in front on the floor, on the seat, and a couple in my lap. Polecats and skunks were everywhere.

When we arrived home, it was skinning time. Daddy had made some jigs to hold the animal up by its hind legs while the hide was removed. He also had many boards about one-quarter inch by one inch, which he nailed together at the ends with one small nail. The boards were nailed together at one end and slipped into the hide (which was inside out) as far as they would go. The third board was nailed to the bottoms of the other two boards after they had been stretched as far apart as possible without damaging the hide.

After this was all finished, all of the hides were hung on the side of the barn to dry. They had to be turned over every few days so the

backside would also dry. The cow hide was salted down and placed in the barn with the other hides we had. I do not know what we did with all the carcasses, but I assume they were fed to the dogs, cats, hogs, and chickens. It was now cleanup time. We both had to scrub and change our trapping clothes to fresh ones. I just do not know how we ever removed enough odor from Mama's buggy for her to use it again, but she did—and I think without a complaint.

By the end of trapping season, we had more than a wagon load. One day, we loaded all of the bones that we had gathered, placed all of the cow hides so as not to damage them, and then we loaded about twenty-five coyotes, one hundred skunks, twenty badgers, and about a dozen rabbit hides. Daddy had told Roy and me that the money received from the rabbit hides was ours to spend on anything we wanted. Good, undamaged jackrabbit hides were bringing fifty cents each, so we had a lot of money coming—five or six dollars.

Daddy and I took the load to town and sold everything to Mr. Myers, even though there was another hide and produce house in Lamesa at that time, and it was rumored that he was paying a little more than Mr. Myers. I do not remember what Roy and I purchased with our fortune, but I suppose it was something we always wanted but could never afford.

CHAPTER X
GOING TO TOWN

Everyone around knew Daddy as Joe Mac, and he had to go to town just about every Saturday and sometimes during the week, summer and winter. As a rule, he had to take a load of something to sell. Besides the bones and hides, we nearly always had some corn or maize left over from what we needed. We also had cotton, hogs, chickens, turkeys, horses, cows, as well as produce, vegetables, and fruit. Sometimes we would go with him in the wagon, and at other times, we would stay home unless Mama wanted to go later in the day in the buggy, and later on, in the car.

One summer, two fellows drove up to our house in a brand new model "T" touring car. They were looking for a farm they could buy and said they liked ours. After spending a couple of days looking around and talking, a deal was made. They complained about the absence and roughness of the roads to the town where they lived, so they wanted Daddy to keep the car while they went back home to make arrangements to get the money and have the papers prepared, provided he would take them to the train in Lamesa and meet them on their return.

A few weeks later, we received a letter from them stating that the deal had been called off, and they were wondering if Daddy would pay them $750 for the car, thereby saving them the expense of coming after it. Daddy sent them the money, and we kept the car. It sure was a lot of help, as we could go to town, most of the time, in half the time. We could use it to come home for dinner when we were working in the south field. We found a thousand uses for it, and no one could keep from wondering how we ever got along without it.

I remember going with Daddy several times to take a load of cotton. If it was very cold, we would walk by the side of the wagon most of the way in order to keep warm. When we did get to the gin, there

might be as many as twenty wagons ahead of us, which meant that we would have to wait several hours before our turn. Daddy would leave me with the wagon to hold our place in line, and he would go to town to transact his business. Sometimes he would get back before I got up to the gin. At other times, I would already have our cotton ginned and have a receipt in my pocket and maybe a bid ticket, which showed the offering price.

As cottonseed did not bring a good price, we would usually have them loaded in the wagon and bring them home for cow feed. I would have all of this attended to and have the wagon parked over to one side, out of the way. Why not? I was nine or ten years old.

Sometimes, when we had some cotton pickers, we would begin to get more cotton than we could haul to the gin, at which time Daddy would take a load at night. He would eat his supper, pack a lunch, and head to town after dark, after already doing a day's work. He didn't actually lose too much sleep, as he could sleep some while going and after getting in line at the gin.

He would take a rope and tie one end to the wagon in front of him and the other end to the bridle of one of his horses. In this way, when the wagon in front moved, it woke up our horses, and they followed. In the meantime, Daddy was in our wagon asleep. He could also sleep all the way home, as an animal will not pass up its own home unless forced to. Sometimes it would be after breakfast when Daddy got back home, and sometimes it would be three or four o'clock in the morning. But regardless, he was ready to start another day's work.

One year, cotton was not bringing the price that the farmers wanted. Many of them did not sell and brought their cotton home. Daddy sold enough to satisfy all of his creditors and the banker. He brought six bales home to hold for higher prices. He unloaded them in our pasture in front of the house and waited. And waited… and waited… Finally, it was spring, and the price of cotton was still about a nickel a pound lower than he had been offered at the time of ginning. But

Daddy decided that he would sell before the price got any lower. I cannot tell you how a 148-pound man goes about loading six 500-pound bales of cotton on a wagon, but he did it.

We always raised a lot of hogs, and as soon as they got large enough for market, Daddy would take a load to town, sell them, and buy some little pigs. One time, he came home with sixteen little pigs. One of them had broken a front leg. Daddy reset the bone as best he could, then put some boards on the leg to hold it in place. The pig was then put in a separate pen for a week or so and given special attention. It wasn't long before he could walk on it with only a slight limp and grew into a good hog.

We also had a lot of livestock, and in the spring, as well as the rest of the year, many calves, colts, and pigs were born. We had one mare that was very good at bringing a colt every spring. Daddy usually had her bred to a jackass, as she produced excellent mules. She was worked at the plow until a few days before she gave birth and again a short time after birth. We would let the colt follow along in the field, and when he wanted to suck, we would stop until he had enough. In a few years, the mare was retired from work but was still producing good colts, so we kept her. One evening, she failed to come up for water, so Daddy went to the pasture and found her and a half-born colt dead.

We had many sows, some having a litter of pigs just about any time of the year. Daddy would usually have her in a pen with a lot of fodder to make a bed before the pigs were born.

Sometimes, Daddy would get up two or three times during the night to check on them, and many times he would have to assist the mother.

One time, we were doing the chores in the evening, and Daddy noticed that one sow had not shown up for water all day, perhaps longer. He knew that she was about ready to have pigs, if she had not already done so. He also knew that the loose hogs had been going to Weaver's pasture for food and to find her. The weather was

getting very cold, so we decided to go and see if we could find her.

Rover did not care much for hogs. It made him pretty mad when one was in the orchard or yard. He got real mad when one was messing around the chicken house or chickens, regardless of where they were. He threw a wall-eyed fit when one got in the garden. In every event, he would chase the hog until it got out of sight behind the barn or something. He would then come back and lay down somewhere to keep an eye on the spot where the hog was last seen.

We finally found the sow with eight little pigs. Daddy got the rope around one of her hind legs, and I held her back while Daddy gathered up the pigs. He had his arms full, some hanging by their hind legs, etc. I never heard so much squealing and screaming between the sow and the pigs in all my life. Daddy started walking toward the house, which was about a quarter of a mile away. I held back on the rope to keep the sow from attacking Daddy. Rover kept her from going side to side, stopping, or attacking me. When we got them to the water lot, Daddy turned the pigs loose, and we were able to drive them into a hog pen.

Rover permitted the chickens to go all over the yard, barnyards, and fields, but sure disliked for one to get in the garden. Once in a while, a chicken would fly over or crawl under the fence and get in the garden. If Rover noticed it, he would begin barking and running along the fence. When one of us saw what was going on, we would open the gate and try to drive the chicken out. But when Rover hemmed the chicken in a corner, we had to be fast; otherwise, Rover would pounce on it and cripple it, so we would have to kill and eat it.

In the spring and summer months, we usually had an awful lot of vegetables for sale, so sometimes we would have the wagon half full of watermelons and cantaloupes, and the other half loaded with about a dozen sacks of roasting ears, several baskets of green beans and black-eyed peas, and possibly some squash. There were several small neighborhood grocery stores in Lamesa at that time. We would go around to them and peddle as much of it as possible. We also

went to several cafes and hotels that served fresh vegetables with their meals.

Sometimes, we would eat dinner at one of the hotels that served meals in their dining room from about eleven in the morning to about two in the afternoon. All of the food was placed on long tables, and those that wanted to eat had to pay twenty-five cents. Children paid less, sat down at a vacant spot at one of the tables, and began saying, "Please pass the..."

If we had not sold everything, Daddy would drive down one street after another, with Roy on one side and me on the other, screaming, "FRESH CORN, FRESH BEANS, WATERMELONS!"

Sometimes, we would have to bring some back home, which we fed to the hogs. When we had plenty more, another trip was planned for the next day or so. After we got a car, it was used for such trips, cutting the time required by at least fifty percent. Many times, when all of us were too busy in the field or elsewhere, Mama would make this trip with Gladys and Leona doing the peddling while Cloreta slept in the car. When there was not too much for sale, Mama would go in the buggy. When peaches got ripe in abundance, they were added to whatever else we had.

Daddy had a small trunk, about nine inches wide, fifteen inches long, and nine inches deep, with a tray. This trunk was kept under his bed. It contained his important papers and a daily journal, which was ruled and had columns for date, description, income, and expenses. Daddy made entries in it every day right after supper. Many times, he entered the date, and in the description column, he wrote "No entry." On other days, after returning from town, we would have a lot of entries. Instead of writing "Groceries," he would enter each item, showing its cost. Sales were shown in the same manner.

It didn't make any difference whether us kids went to town with Daddy or came with Mama later on Saturdays. When we got to town and parked, Daddy and Mama would talk about what they had to do, where to meet, and when to go home. We kids would be hanging

around, all fidgety, but when Daddy reached in his pocket and handed each of us a quarter, we scattered like a covey of quail. I have no idea where Daddy got all of those quarters, but this continued as long as he lived. Roy and I usually ran off together, going first to the grocery store and buying a nickel's worth of candy or a box of Cracker Jacks. Peppermint and peanut butter sticks, large jawbreakers, and all-day suckers were one cent each. Cracker Jacks were a nickel per box.

Sometimes we would have a nickel; at other times, we would buy just what we could put in our mouths. In this way, we eliminated the danger of having to divide with others. When we were staying in town until late, we might go see the picture show, which had a western matinee every Saturday afternoon. The price of admission was a dime, and we usually got a big sack of popcorn, which cost a nickel. This left us a little money with which to buy something like a sack of marbles or a top to take home. We always had a lot of friends in town, so we would run and play all over town until we were completely exhausted. However, we knew to meet at the appointed time and place, or else we would have to walk home, so the nearer the time came, the closer to the wagon or car we got.

We very seldom went to town without going by and seeing Aunt Jo. She always had a jar of cookies for us, and we would play some more at her house.

Even though Daddy had an anvil and forge, he still had to bring a lot of plow points and horseshoes to the town's blacksmith shop for repairs. We boys did a lot of playing around the shop and asked a lot of questions regarding new discoveries that we made while there.

There were several vacant lots on the north side of the courthouse square, and on many Saturday afternoons, an auction sale would be held starting around two o'clock. All kinds of furniture, plows, and livestock of every description were brought in by people to be auctioned off. Everything was put out for display so that potential purchasers could make up their minds. I remember one day there

was a span of mules that Daddy wanted to bid on. Before they were placed on the block, Daddy went to the bank, which was across the street, and I ran along with him. Banks stayed open until six o'clock on Saturdays, just like any other day. The president, manager, or whatever he was called, sat out front of the tellers, behind a large desk, just as you entered the bank. The tellers, bookkeepers, and other employees were to one side and to the back of him. In this manner, the man running the bank could see everyone entering or leaving. In fact, you kind of had to go around his desk to get to the rest of the bank.

Upon entering the bank, Daddy explained that he wanted to bid on some mules and that he needed $100.00 and would return to settle after the auction was over. The banker opened a large drawer of his desk, and I could see that it was full of money. He counted out ten $10.00 bills and handed them to Daddy. I did not see anybody sign any papers, but surely the banker must have made a record of where the money disappeared to. Daddy bought the mules for a little over $90.00. We took and tied them to the back of our wagon. We then returned to the bank, and Daddy gave the banker $9.00 and told him that he wanted a loan of $91.00. In a short time, the banker produced something like a mortgage for $91.00 that listed two mules as collateral. It seems like loans were easy to come by in those days, but very few people went overboard.

Many times in the summer, we went by the ice plant and bought a hundred pounds of ice. We wrapped it really well with newspapers and sacks, put it in the back end of the wagon, and headed home. We had a large hand-cranked cream freezer. As soon as we got home, Mama would mix up some cream, eggs, flavoring, etc., while one of us chipped some ice. It took about an hour to freeze the cream, so by the time the chores were finished, the ice cream was ready to eat. We ate several bowls each and then came back to scrape the freezer.

If we had enough ice left, we would make up a lot more on Sunday afternoon and pair it with watermelon.

In the fall of the year, men would bring wagon loads of apples from New Mexico. They would park on the courthouse square and peddle the apples. They were usually small and partly green apples. Some had rotten spots where they had been bruised.

Every year, daddy would come home with a wagon load of apples that he had bought while in town. The bed in the cellar was rolled up and taken out of the back of the cellar, as apples had to be stored back there. Daddy would drive the wagon up as close to the cellar as possible, and all of us would get some bushel baskets. Daddy would stay on the wagon handling each apple, putting the badly rotten ones in a basket for the hogs, the partly rotten ones in another basket so the good parts could be cooked as soon as possible. The good apples were placed in still another basket, which we kids carried to the cellar, down the stairs, and carefully dumped them in the back of the cellar. We returned to get another basket full just as fast as daddy filled them. After supper, all of us would help prepare the partly rotten apples for cooking or drying. Sometimes it was getting pretty late at night by the time we finished. We took several apples to school with us in our lunch bucket and ate some more when we returned home.

Lamesa had an old two-story courthouse that had become too small and needed a lot of repairs, so it was decided to move it six blocks to the north. It was used for several years as a rooming house. A new brick four-story courthouse was to be constructed on the site. On the appointed day, daddy and I rode over to town to take part in this great event. There was a lot of speech making, and daddy took a hand at removing a shovel of dirt while they took his picture. Everyone present seemed to have something they wanted to put in the cornerstone. Daddy and I both put something in, but I do not remember what they were. Speeches were still being made when daddy and I left for home. As far as I remember, this was my first involvement in governmental affairs.

I remember the time that bugs and lice got into our watermelon and cantaloupe patches. Daddy came home with a large paper sack containing five pounds of bulk snuff. Most everyone that used snuff bought it in bulk as it cost less per pound than the bottled kind. He left the snuff out in the laying house, as that was where the sacks of lime were kept. Mama made Roy and me each a small bag out of cheesecloth, which was usually used to make sacks for sausage or cheese. We were told to mix the snuff and lime, fill our sacks with the mixture, tie it on the end of a long stick, and shake it over the vines to dust them. Roy and I indicated that we understood. The next morning, after getting all of the chores done, daddy went on to the field, and Roy and I began our crop-dusting adventure. We had seen grandma dipping snuff all of our lives, so while mixing it with the lime, we ventured to fill our bottom lips with snuff. It didn't take long before we both were deathly sick from the snuff in our mouths and our nostrils full of lime fumes. We went to the house, and mama had us wash our mouths out real good. The dusting had to be postponed until the next day. You can be assured that neither of us got any closer to the snuff than we had to.

One day, daddy made a trip to town and, among other things, purchased a new suit of clothes for himself. It had two pairs of pants, a vest, and a coat, and it was expensive—$12.00. Daddy said he tied it to the back of his saddle and merrily headed home. When he arrived home, he got off his horse and was going to show his new suit to mama. It was not there. The only thing left to do was to go back and look for it. He rode slowly back, looking on both sides of the road. He went back to the store, and they assured him that he had not walked out without it. It was late when a tired, broken-hearted man came in for bed that night. It was a long time before he got a new suit.

Daddy belonged to the I.O.O.F. lodge, and several times during the summer and fall, he would leave the field early on lodge night, go to the house, clean up, and ride his horse the seven miles to town to attend a meeting. He would get back home as late as two o'clock in the morning. We did not think too much of this at the time, as it would leave all of the evening work for us to do, but after his death, he was buried by the

lodge, and mama got some money—not much, but some.

We had a large eight-day clock hanging on the wall in mama and daddy's bedroom. It struck the hour on the hour and one strike on the half hour. It seemed that during the night, it was always striking. Daddy would stand in a chair and wind it every Sunday morning right after breakfast.

Almost every Sunday morning, right weather permitting, we would get up early, get the chores all done, dress up in our very best, and go to church in Lamesa in our wagon. It took so long that we could not make it to Sunday school, but we did attend services on Sundays. Of course, after we got the car, it was much easier. We were always very friendly with the preacher and his family, which was always a large one. Sometimes they would come out for a fried chicken dinner. When you get about ten kids playing around a farm, it takes a lot of fried chicken.

One summer, a carnival came to town and set up around the courthouse square. We attended on Saturday, going early and staying late. It was my first time to see such a thing and witness such a crowd. The picture on the following page shows the large crowd, some automobiles that people had come in and parked anywhere, anyhow. The windmill is one on the courthouse lawn. The merry-go-round is in the middle of the street corner.

I sure did

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Each end of the cigar was handled to keep it from falling out before being purchased. When a man decided on the brand he wanted, the clerk would bring out the box, and the customer—regardless of what he had been handling or how long it had been since he had washed his hands—would feel around all of the cigars until he came upon what he thought was the best cigar in the box. It was against the law for the clerk to reach in and get his customer's cigar, as it would

be considered unsanitary.

On top of the counter was a square tin box containing cigars by the trade name of "Y.B.'s..." These cigars were wrapped, and daddy would buy two of them—one for Saturday and one for Sunday afternoon. Also, on top of the counter was a cigar lighter. This was a contraption about six inches square and six inches high, with a deal on top about four inches high. On one side was a lever with a ring close to the top, so you would put your finger in the ring and pull. The lever would come forward, and a flame two or three inches high would emerge. After getting your cigar lit, you would release the lever, and it would spring back into place.

After daddy got his two cigars and lit one of them, he would go outside and find somebody that he wanted to talk to. They would find some place to squat and whittle while they talked. Sometimes, they would lean up against a telephone pole and start whittling on it. This whittling soon got out of hand, as far as the telephone company was concerned, because in a couple of years, the pole was whittled into two. One time, they put up new poles around the courthouse square and wrapped the first eight feet with hardware cloth. This slowed down the whittling a great deal, but it did not stop it. The next time, they put up iron poles, which are still there.

When someone asked daddy what kind of a family he had, he would reply, "Three queens and a pair of jacks" (three girls and two boys).

Many times when daddy went to town alone, Rover would find a shady place in the afternoon, scratch out a cool spot, and lay down. There was a rock hill about a mile from our house, toward Lamesa. This hill obstructed the view for two or three miles beyond it. Rover would be asleep until a wagon or horseback rider came over the hill, and then he would raise up and listen. If he was still unsatisfied, he would go to the edge of the yard where he could get a better view. If it was not daddy, he would come back, lay down, and go back to sleep. This would continue all afternoon until the person coming over the hill was daddy.

I remember one afternoon when Roy and I were out with Rover, and he was asleep. A man on horseback came over the hill, Rover raised up to listen, then he went to the front yard to look. Like a flash, he started running across our pasture toward the man. Even though we could not recognize the horse yet, we trusted Rover and went to open the front gate for daddy.

We had owned our car for less than a year and were parking it under the horse shed for protection from the weather. One morning, we went out and discovered all four tires and tubes had been stolen. They had been taken out through the orchard and front pasture to the Seminole Road. The thieves loaded them into their car, turned around, and drove toward Lamesa. Daddy was able to make drawings of all the tire treads from their car as well as our four, where they had been rolled. We had planned on working in the south field that day, so daddy sent Roy and me on, and he went to town in the wagon.

He checked every car, every person, tire dealers, etc., to no avail. Finally, he gave up and bought four new tires and tubes. We had two dogs at that time, but they must have been off roaming around or sound asleep. Neither dog would put out any information.

Somewhere along the way, daddy had purchased two donkeys, which he gave to Roy and me. I believe these were the most stubborn donkeys available then—or at any time since. We used them to ride after the cows in the evenings sometimes. It was very hard to make them go and practically impossible to persuade them to drive a cow. Sometimes, they would just stop, and if it was impossible to make them move, I would take the bridle off and leave him standing there while I drove the cows on foot.

One time, daddy had bought about twenty calves, paying $1.00 each, from a dairy farmer that lived about two miles north of town, making it about ten miles from our house. The calves were from one week old up to six weeks old. Roy and I were sent early one morning, on our donkeys, to drive the calves to our place. We

arrived at the dairy in time for dinner, after which we got the calves started toward our house. The calves had to be driven through open pasture all the way.

Believe me when I say it was a big job for two boys, eight and ten years old, astride two donkeys that were probably a little older and a lot more stubborn. Some of the calves would run east, some would run west, some south, and some north, while others would just stand there. It seemed that our donkeys liked this last group the best, as they wanted to just stand there too. After a while, we would get all of them headed in the right direction, only for the whole thing to happen again and again.

It was a hot afternoon, and there was no water on the way. Most of the calves got really thirsty, and some of them couldn't make it, but we finally reached home just about dark. With our urging, it wasn't long before daddy got rid of the donkeys and bought a pony and saddle for me.

CHAPTER XI
WORKING

A few of the things that I remember about woman's work at that time, besides raising baby chicks, canning vegetables and fruits, shooting chicken hawks, and trapping coyotes, were preparing meals. One of my jobs was to build a fire in the cook stove as soon as I got dressed and to bring in enough water for all purposes. Mama was usually dressed by that time.

A coffee grinder was hanging on the wall, so she would get a cup of the proper amount of coffee beans, pour them into the top of the grinder, and hold the cup at the bottom of the grinder to catch the grounds as she turned the crank. Then, the grounds were poured into the pot. The coffee pot wasn't cleaned until it got so full of grounds that there was insufficient room for the amount of water required. At that point, the grounds were put around her favorite plant as fertilizer, and the pot was washed. After making coffee, she had to cook eggs, sufficient meat, and biscuits for breakfast, school lunches, and lunches for anyone working in the south field. Eggs for lunches were always boiled. I think I was in my teens before I learned that lunches could be made without boiled eggs. By the time we had finished feeding and milking, she had breakfast ready.

With weather permitting, on Monday, it was one of my jobs to build up a fire around the wash pot, set the tubs in the desired place, and carry enough water for boiling and rinsing. When school was in session, this had to be done before leaving for school. At other times, I had to work in the field or stay and help with the washing. As a rule, except during school, Gladys and Mama did the washing. After the clothes were dry, most had to be ironed, and some had to be patched, mended, or darned.

Mama could usually get all of this done in one day.

Roy and I had to take the warm, sudsy wash water and scrub the kitchen and dining room floors. Water was poured on the floors until it was about one inch deep. The floors were scrubbed with strokes of the broom until they were spotless. The water was then swept out through the dining room outside door. The two or more rinses were swept around and then out the same door. Even though the floors were unvarnished pine boards, by the time we got through, they were bleached to a neutral shade.

Mama had a few more things to do, such as giving a hand in the fields, especially during harvest time, attending to the milk and churning butter almost daily, assisting at hog killing time, making lard and soap, cooking three meals a day for those at the house, doing all of the sewing and mending, most of the shopping, and maybe a thousand other things. Daddy loved her teacakes, so she always had a batch on hand. Almost year-round, he would fill one pocket, at least, with teacakes and another pocket full of peanuts when he was going to be away from the house for a while. This way, he could have a snack at the drop of a hat.

Mama baked three loaves of light bread and a large pan of cinnamon rolls once a week, usually on Saturday morning. She would pinch off a chunk of dough, put it in a quart jar, add a little yeast, some flour, milk, and so forth, and she would have enough dough on the next baking day.

Many times, Daddy and I would be working in the field or with the livestock, and about the middle of the afternoon, we would see Mama coming toward us carrying a pitcher containing about a gallon of cool lemonade. She had caught fresh, cool water from the well, squeezed several lemons, added some sugar, and rushed out in the hot sun just for us. We would stop whatever we were doing and drink the entire gallon before returning to work. This was what I called happiness.

We always had from ten to twenty ducks, so three or four times in the summer, we would catch them one at a time, and Mama

would pick the down off of them. She eventually got enough down so that each of us had a feather pillow, and each of the three beds had a feather mattress, in addition to the cotton ones.

At the end of the cotton-picking season, we kids were sent around the field, and we gathered from two to three hundred pounds of cotton. In our spare time, we would pick out the seeds and cord the cotton sufficiently to restuff some of the mattresses and to make quilts and comforts.

The quilting frames hung up in the girls' room and nearly always had a partially completed quilt on them. As soon as one was finished, another one was started.

Grandma lived with us a lot, sleeping in the little house and spending the day in the house with the rest of us. She was some help to Mama sometimes by taking care of the baby, churning, quilting, cording cotton, and so on. But she had the habit of being too bossy for Mama's liking.

Grandma dipped snuff all day, and in the afternoons, she could be found in the orchard hunting limbs that looked like they would make a good toothbrush. She would break a small limb off, which Daddy didn't like, and chew on the end for a while. If it didn't work out just right, she would throw it away and get another one until she found one to suit her.

One day, after dinner, Daddy and some of us kids were outdoors in the shade resting when Mama came running out of the kitchen door, screaming that she couldn't put up with Grandma any longer. After getting her calmed down, Daddy saddled up and went to town. When he returned, he said he had rented a nice two-room house a little down the street from Aunt Jo. The next morning, furniture, bedding, food, and Grandma were loaded in the wagon and hauled to town. She lived there for many years. We would visit

and bring food every time one of us went to town. She passed away in the 1930s, well past her ninetieth birthday.

Roy and I usually had to put the feather beds out to air and sun at least once a week, weather permitting. It would have been worth your money to see two boys manhandling a large, bulky feather mattress that didn't have any handles, through a thirty-inch door, out to the yard and back again after it had been aired and sunned.

We had six kerosene lamps, and it was Gladys' job to clean all the chimneys and to make sure every lamp was full before supper. In the summer, a pan of water was placed next to the lamp that was lit to catch the bugs and fireflies attracted by the glow of the lamp.

One of the jobs Roy and I had to do every Saturday morning was to get the hammer, wire pliers, and a bucket of staples and go completely around the field fences, making mends wherever necessary. After this was finished, we had to gather up all the trash, cans, etc., around the place and put it in a big pile near the wood pile. When the pile got really big, it was loaded in the wagon and dumped in a ditch at the far end of our pasture. If we still had time, we cut weeds and such around the yard.

One of my jobs was to oil and grease the windmill at regular intervals, and in between, if it began to squeak. I remember one morning the mill was squeaking, and Daddy told me to be sure to attend to it immediately after returning home from school. Well, what do you know, I forgot to do it. Daddy came in from the field around sundown and ate supper. Soon afterward, just as I was leaving the table, Daddy said, "Preacher, did you oil the mill? Seems like I hear it squeaking." When he said this, I could hear it loud and clear for the first time since morning. I was always afraid of the dark, but regardless, Daddy told me to get a lantern and an oil can, climb up to the top, and make sure that I stopped all of that noise. For many months afterward, the mill was always over-oiled and greased—and, oh yes, before sundown.

In very cold weather, we had two two-and-a-half-gallon buckets in which we built a fire to carry around while we did our chores. About four inches of ashes were kept in the bottom, and two or three corn cobs with a little bit of kerosene on them were placed on top of the ashes. When they caught fire really well, more fuel was added as needed. When using one of these fires over an extended period of time, we added a lump of coal, which would burn somewhat like charcoal—not a big fire, but enough to warm your hands and feet by.

After getting the fire in the cook stove going, I would get a fire going in the buckets. Roy would take one, and I'd take the other one, along with the necessary milk pails and buckets, and off we would go. We'd leave the fires and pails in the cow shed and start gathering up the calves and horses required for that day's activity. After getting everything rounded up, all of them had to be fed. Then Roy and I settled down to do the milking, warming our hands very often during this time. We usually milked somewhere around six to eight cows, so milking took thirty minutes or more. We'd have about ten gallons of milk, which we brought in and placed close to the cream separator, carefully covering it to keep the cats out.

After we ate breakfast, Mama and I—sometimes Daddy too—would attend to the milk. Mama would strain it several times, set aside the part that she wanted to clabber or churn, and the rest was poured into the container on the separator. I was supposed to turn the crank, and the cream would come out of one nozzle while the skimmed milk came out of another. The crank was very hard for me to turn, so sometimes Daddy would give me a hand.

After the job was completed, everything had to be washed and scrubbed, even the floor, and gotten ready for the next morning. The skimmed milk was fed to the hogs and chickens. Mama fed some of the clabber to the baby chicks and always had plenty to make cheese. The milk obtained at night was strained and put in

clean buckets to be separated the following morning. In the winter, it was time to head for school just as soon as this job was finished, but in the summer, there was no telling what was coming up next.

In the spring of 1918, Mama, Gladys, Roy, and Leona were all in bed sick with the flu. Daddy and I were the only ones not sick. Daddy didn't want to send me to school alone, so he and I did all of the chores, and he did the cooking and waited on the sick ones and Cloreta. One day, he brought the shoe last, tools, and leather and set up shop in the dining room. Shoes that had anything wrong with them, or looked like they might in the future, were half-soled, the tops stitched where needed, and put in first-class condition. Some cane-bottom chairs were repaired by installing strips of rawhide. On other days, harnesses were repaired, along with other things that could be done in the house until Mama was able to get up and attend to things.

Roy and I shelled some corn almost every day. Our sheller was usually kept in the corn bin, and we would shell corn for the chickens and small pigs. The corn was first shucked, with the inside shucks being saved to make some mattresses for the yard. The ends of real good-looking corn were shelled by hand, and the centers were thrown into a basket and shelled at a later time to make cornmeal. Other ears were shelled for feed. When we needed some more meal, we would have plenty of good ears to shell, so it could be taken to the miller in town.

Daddy started his plowing somewhat earlier in the spring than most farmers around here did. He would get his planter, put large sweeps on it, and hook four horses or mules to it to start listing the land. At the beginning, he would work only four or five hours per day until the horses got used to working. Most of the time, there would be one or maybe two wild ones that he would break in to work in this manner. They got much tamer after about two weeks of hard work, but at the beginning, it was a wonder that he ever got the harness on them.

Freshly grubbed land was usually plowed once or twice during the winter so that by planting time, it could be plowed real deep. I followed the plow many times to pick up arrowheads and other Indian artifacts that were turned up by the plow.

Daddy had an anvil and forge out by the side of the barn. He would keep the plows, wagons, etc., in good shape, fashioning some parts to replace broken ones, but mostly he would make sure that the horses had the best. The saddle horses and the ones used in going to town, etc., had to have properly fitted shoes. The other workhorses just had to have their hooves attended to and trimmed. It was something to see Daddy pick up the hind leg of an almost wild horse and trim his hoof.

Sometimes Daddy would have an untamed horse that he wanted to break. He would get it and Homer hitched to the wagon. He would then manage to get the wagon out of the water lot, down the lane into open pasture, and let them run. Homer would hold back, but he would have to run some in order to keep the wagon from running over him. Daddy would let them run as long as they wanted to, then trot and walk them, and then try to make them run some more. He would begin teaching it the meaning of "giddup," "whoa," and when to turn, etc. Sometimes, when this was all over, Daddy would take the harness off, throw his saddle on the horse, and without even letting him have a drink, ride out to the pasture and make him run and pitch some more. By the time they returned, the horse would be walking, and you could tell that Daddy and the horse had become very friendly. Daddy would then rub and pet the horse real good all over, even his legs, and probably give him some sugar out of the palm of his hand.

Maize had to be pulled from the main stem and fed to the working horses at the rate of about a bushel basket full to each horse, three times per day. When Daddy was working in the field alone with four horses, Roy and I had to be sure enough maize had been prepared

in advance to last until we got around to preparing more. Of course, when we were all working in the field, this chore had to be done in the evenings along with all of the other chores.

Before any horse was harnessed or saddled, he had to be completely gone over with a brush and curry comb. Any knots or cuckle burrs in his mane or tail had to be removed, and the hair straightened out. He had to be checked for split hooves, lameness, or swelling in his joints. His shoulders were checked for collar blisters or bruises. His manner of eating was observed—maybe he had a bad tooth, or perhaps the bridle bit did not fit and had made sores on his tongue or lips.

Liniment, salves, etc., were available for minor aches and pains, or maybe some alteration in his harness had to be made. If something was wrong and could not be corrected, he was not worked until the necessary corrections had been made.

During the late summer, Daddy liked to walk around the fields, showing his crops to visitors and others, especially on Sunday afternoons. At other times, he just wanted to look at his crops. He carried a piece of white cloth with him, and when he came to a nice-looking ear of corn, head of maize, or kaffir corn, he would tear off a small piece of cloth and tie it to the stalk. During harvest, two sacks were tied to the back of the wagon, and all of these ears and heads were placed in them to be used as seed the following year. By the end of harvest, we would have plenty of good seeds for the following year's planting. The seeds from a particular bale of cotton were put in sacks instead of in with the cow feed. I don't know, but it seems that the yield of our crops got better each year.

Roy and I had to get these seeds ready for planting when Daddy wanted them. Corn was usually first, and it had to be shelled by hand, as the sheller might damage some of the seeds, causing a skip in the row. Every bad grain had to be thrown out. About one inch on each end of the ear was considered either imperfect or

worm-eaten, so these grains were discarded. Maize and other grains were put in a cotton sack and beaten with a stick. Then, all had to be poured from one tub to another until the wind had thoroughly removed everything except the grain. Whatever Daddy was going to plant next, a sufficient amount of seed was put in a sack and placed in the tank to soak until the next morning.

Daddy had enough planter plates for his planter box for every kind of seed, and by making a few adjustments in the gears, etc., the distance between seeds could be controlled. The box was about the size of a three-gallon bucket, so several rounds could be made between refilling's.

After school was out for the summer and the crops were coming up, I plowed right along with Daddy most of the time. Sometimes, when it came a hard shower or rain, some of the seeds would not come up as the ground would dry out and form a crust. If this happened, I would have to run our scratcher. This was a homemade affair used for breaking up the crust so that plants could come on up.

The scratcher was five cedar posts, about three feet long. Ten-penny nails were driven into them about two inches apart all the way around. These posts were tied to the two-by-four (once used to drive grasshoppers) at the proper distance so that they would roll, thereby staying in the furrow, covering five rows at a time.

Sometimes, when a sandstorm was beginning to come up, we would try to get a head start and stay ahead by hitching a team to our harrow and covering as much territory as possible where the sand had begun to blow. The harrow is a walking plow made flat with the ground. Ours covered five rows at a time. It had adjustable and removable teeth, very similar to railroad spikes. They ran up and across about every six inches, with a lever in the back by which the slant of the teeth could be changed.

When necessary, I would get the harrow and go to the spot where the sand was blowing and start going up and down the rows or crosswise if I thought that might kick up enough clods and damp dirt to settle the sand. Sometimes I would look up and see another spot that was getting worse, so I would rush over to it. At other times, the sand didn't get bad, but we knew that after a shower, the ground needed to be broken up as soon as possible, so I would harrow from one end to the other until the entire patch had been gone over.

One time that I remember, Daddy and I were each riding separate cultivators when a sandstorm came up about nine o'clock in the morning. Sand began blowing in a spot across the field, so we rushed over to it and were plowing when another spot got worse, so we went over to it. We plowed crossways and every way, but it didn't stop the sand from blowing. Did you ever ride a cultivator crossways in a deeply plowed field? Well, let me tell you, it's a little rough and hard to stay on top. We gave up around noon and went to the house. By the time the wind had quit blowing, we had lost about twenty acres of cotton, but there was still time to replant.

We had another homemade plow called a slide. This was made by getting two 2x6's and nailing a straightened-out buggy tire along one of the two-inch sides for easier sliding and longer-lasting use. This was the bottom. On top, close to each end, another 2x6 was stood up to the height that you wanted to put the seat. These two boards were nailed to the top of the two slide rails, making them six inches apart. Another 2x6 was nailed across the top of the two uprights, and a cultivator seat was bolted on top of it.

On the back, two adjustable small plow points were attached for loosening the soil and throwing some up around the plants. On each side of the slide, a knife blade about five feet long was attached at a forty-five-degree angle. These slid along under the dirt between the rows, cutting all of the weeds and loosening the soil to the center or more. Roy and I would ride these slides over

the small crops while Daddy rode the cultivator over the larger crops.

Sometimes, Roy would run a slide by himself while I joined Daddy with a cultivator. We always carried some seed along while doing this, so we could drop them in any skips as we rode along. Later on, skips were planted with watermelon, turnips, etc. One time, there was a large spot that had been blown out, and Daddy planted it in cashews. After the last plowing had been done and it came a shower, we would go along inside of the fence and plow it up, then sow some turnip seed.

In the spring, Daddy would plow about four to six hours per day, but by the time school was out for the summer, plowing was done from early until late. Many times, I have seen the time when I was on the cultivator, after getting all of the morning chores done, and witnessed the sunrise, only to see it set that evening with me still on the cultivator, and still having the evening chores to do.

We always quit the field a few minutes before twelve for dinner. The horses were unharnessed and fed, and then, if the peaches were ripe, we would go by the orchard and get a handful to eat while washing our faces and hands. Mama would more than likely have a big, hot peach cobbler for dessert. After we rested for a while, we would take care of the hogs, work on the plows or harnesses, etc. At two o'clock, we would get the horses, groom and check them, hitch them up, and head for the field.

Each person working in the field had their own gallon crock jug with a tow sack tied around it. We let our jugs soak in the tank so as to get the sack very wet and cool. We then filled the jug with fresh water from the well. Upon arriving in the field, the water was placed in the shade of a post or something, at the end of the rows. The shade always seemed to move before we got thirsty, so it wasn't long before we had warm water to drink.

Daddy received his draft notice one Saturday during the fall when he picked up the mail from the post office. In those days, being a farmer or having a house full of kids was no excuse for not reporting for duty. He gave Mama and me a lot of instructions and information as to what and how things were to be done in his absence. The armistice was signed just a few days before he was to report, so everything went back to normal.

It seems there was always hoeing to do—the orchard, garden, yards, and even the fields. The fields were usually hoed right after the last plowing. The corn was first, the grains followed, and last was the cotton. The corn and grain crops were not very hard, as the plants grew fast and tall enough that the plow could be set deeper to cover up bigger weeds, so us kids would get this hoeing done pretty fast. We always kept the hoes real sharp and then carried a good file, which we left at the water jug. We filed the hoes many times during the day.

On these long days, one cultivator could cover about eight acres in a day. Sometimes I would cultivate for one or two days with Daddy, and then I would help with the hoeing. Daddy liked to stay about two days ahead of us. When all four of us kids were hoeing, we could also cover about eight acres per day, so after getting about two days ahead, Daddy more than likely stayed far enough ahead.

One time, he had finished cultivating on the home place and started plowing in the south field. We kids were out in the field by ourselves when, at the far end of the rows, we came upon a large rattlesnake. We had all been taught to be wary and to stay away. We had a hoe in hand, and I thought I was man enough to kill it, but Gladys thought otherwise. She dropped her hoe and started running to get Mama. Mama grabbed the twenty-two and ran, as previously described, with her skirt and petticoats blowing in the breeze.

Gladys stayed at the house with Cloreta to watch the dinner cook. By the time Mama arrived, I had already killed the snake and had him hanging across the barbed wire fence. It is supposed to rain that night if the snake does not wiggle and slide off of the fence before sundown. I don't know, but this one must have slid off before sunset. Gladys was too afraid, nervous, and upset to hoe for the next several days.

We had a small patch, perhaps an acre, of blue weeds almost in the middle of our cotton patch. Blue weeds are blue in color, and they multiply from the roots, something like Johnson grass. If they are not controlled, they will soon cover the entire field. Once they take over, it is hard to grow anything else due to their many roots. Our patch was getting larger and thicker, year after year, until Daddy decided to do something about it.

After running the cultivator very deep over them, he had Roy and me go to the spot every morning and cut every weed we could see, even if it meant digging up the cotton. The first day was really hard work, as the weeds were very thick, but by the end of thirty days, we would go every once in a while and hardly find a weed. The following year, there were still a few, but with constant hoeing, they were all killed out.

Most of the summer, we would come from the field all hot, sweaty, and dirty. So many times, after all of the chores had been done and supper eaten, Daddy, Roy, and I would take some clean clothes and a towel and go get in the horse trough to wash off. The girls would wash off in a tub inside. Sometimes, we would play around and stay in the trough until we became chilled.

During the summer, Roy and I had to cut cane and gather bad or rotten watermelons for the livestock. We had a slide with a large box built on it. The box was deep and long but narrow enough to go between the rows. We would load it with bad watermelons, with two or three good ones on top. We threw the bad ones over the

fence to the hogs' house and then cut and took the good ones to the house to be eaten by us.

We also cut enough cane to feed the other livestock. After the corn had ripened, we would cut all of the tops and fill the slide every day until all the corn had been topped and fed to the stock. When there was a lot of work to do, we would hitch Homer up during noon and do this while the rest of the horses were resting.

After the hoeing was finished, the crop was laid by, and it would be about thirty days until harvest, which would make it around the middle of August or the first of September. During this time, there were always a few things that needed doing. Every year, there was some grubbing to do. Daddy and I would go do some, and at other times, he would hire a group to come and work for a week or so.

One day when Daddy and I were out grubbing, with me taking the little bushes and Daddy the big ones, I hollered that I had been snake-bit. Daddy came over to where I was, and sure enough, there was a large rattlesnake hanging from the heel of one of my boots. He had struck and gotten stuck in the thick leather around the heel. Daddy had his axe and tried to cut its head off, but the snake was wriggling and jumping so much that Daddy had to try several times before he finally hit it.

I carefully removed my boot, and Daddy took his pocket knife and equally carefully dug the fangs out of the boot heel. We decided that, since my skin had not been broken, it was safe for me to put the boot back on, which I did, and continue grubbing until quitting time, which I did.

After the grubbing was completed, the fences had to be moved. Sometimes this was not completed until very near plowing time. The country was very full of prairie dogs. They usually dug their holes in the pasture but would roam into the fields for several hundred feet. They would eat every blade of grass or any other

plant they came in contact with. Around their holes, the ground would be as bare as a desert. Sometimes, a dozen or more would live in the same hole. Naturally, they had to be killed or driven out of the area that was to be cultivated.

Daddy would buy something that worked like lighter fluid. We would gather a lot of horse apples (manure), take one, lay it on the side of the hole, pour a little fluid on it, and set it on fire. Daddy would then kick it into the hole, and I, with a grubbing hoe in hand, would cover it up. The fire would burn all of the oxygen in the hole, thereby killing all of the dogs in it. This usually worked, but it would take over a year to kill or drive all of them away.

One morning in the spring, Daddy got up from the breakfast table and looked out the front door. Out on the Seminole Road was a half-grown hound dog, looking toward the house. Daddy went out, got him, and noticed that he was almost starved to death. So we fed and watered him real good. We kept this hound dog for the rest of his life, and he was very old when he died. He loved to chase rabbits, so he would go along with us in the pastures and fields.

When Daddy was plowing, especially in a new field, there would be a lot of jackrabbits that had not yet been driven out. The hound would follow the plow, and when a rabbit was jumped, he would take off after it. He would circle the rabbit until it was headed across the rows. The rows were plowed very deep and three feet apart. The rabbit could jump only one row at a time, while the hound would jump two rows at a time, so he soon had the rabbit. He would then kill it and leave it lying right there.

When a rabbit ran under a barbed wire fence, the dog would jump over it. Sometimes, after a long chase on a hot day, the dog would come to the house, jump in the tank, and stay there until he cooled off. Then he would go back to where Daddy was plowing. In his old age, he got too fat and tired to run, but we kept him as long as he lived.

There were a lot of snakes around there in those days, all kinds, but the most poisonous was the rattlesnake. There was one species we called the hoop snake because it would form its body into a hoop and roll across the ground at a fast rate of speed. Another species was called the racer. When something disturbed one, it would raise its head and start moving. The higher it raised its head, the faster it would move. I have seen them with their heads at least four feet in the air and about six inches of their tail on the ground, out-running a fast horse. We also had bull snakes, chicken snakes, and several other kinds.

Sometimes, when a shower came in the afternoon, Roy and I would walk to the pasture after the milk cows and snakes had come out of their hiding places and were roaming around. We would carry a hoe with us to kill any snakes that got in our way.

Rover did not care for snakes, and he had an odd way of killing them. When he came upon one, he would begin circling it at a safe distance. The snake would start to coil, and Rover would keep getting a little closer with every circle. When the snake got coiled so tightly that it had to unwind a little, it would take its eyes off Rover for a split second. During that time, Rover would leap and grab the snake behind its head, shaking the breath out of it, thereby killing it.

One year, Rover got bit by a rattlesnake. He came to the house with his head swollen up, eventually getting to the size of a basketball. He survived this, but he was never quite the same afterward. He eventually went crazy and blind, so he had to be put down.

One summer, it was decided to build a lean-to on our house for Roy and me to sleep in, and to enlarge the kitchen by about four feet. Daddy went to town and purchased the necessary materials for the job. We started by enlarging the kitchen, separating the entire south end from the rest of the house. One end of the block and

tackle was tied to the wall, and the other end was tied to the trunk of a locust tree. The wall was stood up on two large timbers for easier skidding. Posts had already been set in the ground for the wall to sit on after it was moved. Braces were nailed to the wall from every angle to keep it steady.

A long rope was attached to the top of each corner so that Mama and I could keep the top of the wall from leaning too far in any direction. When everything was ready, Daddy got Homer and another horse, and hooked them to the block and tackle rope. He started them moving very slowly. It didn't take long before the wall was in the desired location. When Mama and I had the top exactly four feet away from the rest of the house, Daddy nailed the two sections together with two-by-fours. The bottom was adjusted until the wall was perfectly straight up and down, and both ends were at the correct distance from the house. At this point, the bottom was nailed just like the top.

We then installed two-by-fours for the flooring, ceiling, and rafters. The ends were closed with one-by-twelves standing on end, so no studs were required. The kitchen was completely finished in two days, and on the third day, we started on the lean-to. The framework for the floor was laid and leveled, corner studs were installed, and the framework for the ceiling and rafters was soon completed. Roy and I helped Daddy with the hammering and sawing, as well as handing tools when needed. A door leading into the dining room and another one to the girls' room had to be installed. The west window in the dining room was removed and installed on the west side of the lean-to. The entire job was completed in about two weeks.

One summer, possibly the same one, we decided to install a telephone. First, we needed over seven miles of wire and posts. Daddy went to the lumberyard and bought fence stays, measuring two inches square and five feet long. He had a small hole drilled one inch from the top of each stay, with a slot sawed from the hole

to the top. The wire was placed in these slots. Daddy must have made an arrangement with Weaver Ranch because these stays were nailed and tied to their fence posts.

When the lumber yard had our material ready, we picked up the first wagon load and began at the first Weaver Ranch post we came to. The bottom six inches of each stay were nailed with long nails to the post, ensuring that the hole in the top ran east to west. We wrapped about four turns of telephone wire around the stay and post, tightened it, and tied it off. We installed a stay on every other post for the entire seven miles, making several trips back to town for additional material. Daddy made a jig in the back of the wagon to unwind the wire as he drove, so it could be stretched and tightened every quarter mile. When the wire was tight and tied, we used a forked stick to lift it up and place it in the slots.

It took a long time to prepare all of this, but finally, the company installed our telephone. From that day forward, every time any of us went to town, we had to keep an eye on the line, watching for breaks or damage.

I should mention that the summer before, there was increasing traffic and more automobiles. The county, or maybe the state, decided some roads had to be built. A lane along property lines was to be created from Lamesa to the county line, passing along our property. Everyone bordering the proposed lane either gave or sold a ten-foot strip of land and moved their fences back. This created a lane twenty feet wide, which was thought to be plenty for the foreseeable future.

The fence between us and the Weavers was theirs, so they sent out some ranch hands to move their fence back ten feet according to the new survey taken by the county. We had to purchase new fencing and build a fence on our side. A little later, Daddy purchased a lot of small locust trees and planted them about fifty feet apart along our fence. A few of them lived for two or three

years, but we were unable to keep them watered, so most of them died.

It wasn't long after the lane was built that someone discovered the road had to be maintained, or else it would soon be worse than the old Seminole Road. Since there wasn't a highway department or county road authority, it was decided to create one. About every two miles, a road foreman was appointed, and he was to maintain a two-mile section with the help of other men who could spare the time. There was no road-working equipment available, so all the work was done by hand or with farm equipment. The road was to be worked at least twice a year, by the foremen and their crews, for a distance of two miles each.

Daddy was appointed foreman over the area near our property. The wages to be paid were $1.00 per day per man, another dollar for the use of a team, and the foreman received an extra dollar per day. The road authority set a limit, say $100.00 per mile. Daddy would solicit the neighbors, ranch hands, etc., to decide when the work could be done and who could take time off from their regular jobs. On the appointed day, some men would bring scrapers, plows, and other tools. Others brought hoes, shovels, grubbing hoes, spades, and similar tools. Daddy supervised the work, trying to get as much done as possible before running out of the allotted money.

For several years, there would be a mile or two of good road, and then a distance that was almost impossible to travel. In fact, this continued until the county purchased a grader or two and hired their own crew. The rock hill, about a mile east of our house, was in Daddy's area. Picks and other tools were used to remove the large rocks from the center of the road, and they were thrown over to the side.

The dirt around our house horse trough was nothing but loose sand, and the animals would beat it out until we were always having to haul in more dirt to fill it. Daddy decided we should go to the rock

hill and get some of those rocks to fill in around the trough. As it didn't take many rocks to make a wagon load, we had to make several trips to cover the area with rocks to Daddy's satisfaction. Ten years later, there had never been a need for another load of anything to fill in around the trough.

One job that I enjoyed was sharpening tools on our grindstone, especially when Daddy would let me do the sharpening. We had a large grindstone mounted on a wooden frame with wooden bearings and a crank. Sometimes we would gather up all the tools—axes, hatchets, hoes, and anything else with an edge—and get a bucket of water to keep the stone and bearings wet. I would turn the crank while Daddy put a sharp edge on the tools. At other times, when there was something more important to do, we would only sharpen the tools that were needed immediately.

We always had a lot of livestock, so at least once each year, we had branding and castrating to do. Our brand was an "M," and all of our unbranded calves had to be caught, thrown to the ground, and held until the hot iron had been applied. I usually did the holding. Daddy had a bone-handled, three-bladed pocket knife that he carried and used all the time. Male calves, as well as male hogs, had to be caught and held while Daddy performed his job. Daddy also carried a whetstone with him all the time, so he could sharpen his knife between each operation.

Daddy used this knife for everything—whittling, heading maize, castrating animals, and any other job that required cutting and could be done with a pocket knife. One time in 1972, when I was visiting Mama, she went to a back room and came out holding part of a knife between her fingers. She asked me if I knew what it was. I said, "I believe that's Daddy's knife." She replied, "Yes, it is. I've carried it for fifty years, and I want to give it to you." I asked her if she knew when Daddy got it, and she said she didn't know, but he had it when they got married in 1904. I still have it.

Around the middle of August, Daddy would say that it was time to begin gathering our crop. Roy and I would get some cotton sacks, pick all the dry beans and black-eyed peas, and Daddy would go and head the patch of early maize. We'd pick a sack full of beans or peas, bring them into the water lot, and beat the sack with a stick until all the seeds were separated from the hulls. Then, we'd pour them from one tub to another until the wind had blown all the hulls away, leaving only the seeds. By the time this was finished, something else would be mature enough to harvest, whether it was more maize to head, corn to pull, or kaffir corn to cut and shock.

One day, Daddy and I were heading maize in the south field. He had bought me a regular maize-heading knife, which had one large curved blade. He also gave me a whetstone so I could keep the blade sharp. He was using his regular pocket knife, as always. We walked along beside the wagon, cutting each head, and when we had a handful, we'd throw it into the wagon, except for the heads to which Daddy had tied a white string. Those were placed in a seed sack tied behind the wagon.

In the middle of the afternoon, I cut my finger—deep enough that the bone was showing. Daddy looked at it and told me to take the bandanna tied around my neck, which kept the chaff from getting down my collar, wrap it around my finger, go to the house, and let Mama take care of it. He would continue heading maize until quitting time.

It was well over a mile to the house. I ran some and walked some, the bandanna soaked with blood and my finger throbbing. Mama got the bleeding stopped, put something on my finger, and wrapped it up. I didn't head maize for a few days after that, but I'm sure there was something else I could do. I still carry a scar completely across the top of this finger, and the end of the finger is about fifteen degrees from being straight.

A man with a row binder was hired to come over and cut and bind all our shock feed. Daddy and I would gather the bundles and place them in shocks all over the field to dry. We'd place about twenty-five bundles in each shock, with the grain on top. After drying for about thirty days or more, the feed was ready to be hauled to the stack lot and placed in stacks.

We'd go to the field in a flatbed wagon. I would get the bundles and pitch them up onto the wagon. Daddy would place them on the wagon, with the butt ends sticking out six or eight inches from the bed. Both sides of the wagon were loaded this way. The next layer wasn't stuck out quite as far to keep the weight centered. We always had to be very careful not to pick up any snakes with the bundles, as you could get bitten, or you might throw one on the wagon, making it very dangerous to unload.

When the stack got as heavy as the horses could pull, we'd take it to the stack lot and unload it the same way, making stacks about fifteen feet high, ten feet wide, and as long as possible.

One fall, school had already started, and some kids were coming down with the mumps. It wasn't long before, on a Thursday, the teacher looked at me as soon as I arrived and told me I had the mumps, so I had to go home immediately. Daddy was still around the house when I got there. The weather was a little foggy and damp, which helped keep the dust down, making it a good day for hauling bundled feed—provided that I felt like it.

We hauled feed for the rest of the day, and on Friday and Saturday. We almost got it all hauled in. I never felt much pain, except when I tried to swallow. I returned to school the following Monday and was very happy to do so, as it was a lot more fun than having the mumps.

One morning, Roy and I couldn't go to school because a frost had occurred, so green tomatoes and watermelons had to be gathered

before the sun ruined them. We grabbed bushel baskets and picked every tomato, cucumber, etc., big or small, ripe or green, and brought them into the house. Afterward, we returned and loaded all the green watermelons onto the slide. The entire day was spent making watermelon and tomato preserves, relish, chow-chow, ketchup, etc. We also fried a lot of green tomatoes.

One Saturday, in the fall, Roy and I were instructed to go to the field and gather the cashews and put them in the cellar. The rest of the family went to town. We cleaned out the cellar, placing the apples in one corner, the canned goods in another, and then began hauling and storing the cashews, load after load. When the others got home, we had the cellar jammed with at least one wagon load on the ground, around the cellar, and another load still in the wagon. Daddy said he had no idea there were more than two wagon loads.

We ate cashews, the cows ate cashews, the hogs ate cashews, and we still had cashews in the spring.

It was about time to gather the sweet potatoes. Daddy hitched Homer to the walking plow, and soon had the potatoes on top of the ground. The kids and I gathered them up and put them in bushel baskets. They were then hauled in the wagon up to the house and placed in long potato bins. We ate many of them baked, with the skin still on, and they were delicious, hot or cold.

Daddy also plowed up our peanuts. Roy and I loaded them into the wagon with pitchforks. Once the wagon was full, we'd take it and unload the peanuts in the garden to keep the livestock from eating them. After proper drying, the nuts were picked off and put into tow sacks. The hay was thrown over the fence for the cows to eat. We always had peanuts to eat from one harvest to the next. We carried some in our pockets most of the time, and very often, Mama made a big batch of peanut brittle and peanut butter.

We usually had about two rows of popcorn, and we would pop a lot after supper, especially in the wintertime.

We began picking cotton about the first of September, and since school didn't start until around the middle of October, we had about six weeks to continue working. Daddy and I would alternate between picking cotton, heading maize, or pulling corn, but the rest of the kids had to pick cotton, as they were still too small to do the other jobs.

When school began, we usually had most of the harvest done, except for cotton picking and fodder hauling, and perhaps a day or so of other chores. We kids would attend school and hurry home, change clothes, go through the kitchen, and grab a patty of sausage, a biscuit, and maybe a baked potato, all of which had been placed in the oven when Mama went to the field. This kept the food warm as the fire died down. We would then stop by the cellar to get some apples and peanuts, and head for the cotton patch. By the time we got there, it would be after four o'clock, giving us only about two hours to pick. We picked cotton almost every Saturday and any other day that we didn't have school, except Sundays. Sometimes, when the cotton was opening faster than it could be picked and extra hands weren't available, the upper grades at school would be dismissed for a week or so to let the kids stay home and still not be marked absent.

The watermelons Daddy had planted in the skips tasted especially good when you came upon one in the middle of the afternoon, even though the sun was shining on it. The turnips planted along the fence row were even better to eat on a frosty morning.

Shortly after the first freeze, Daddy would kill and butcher a hog, butchering a total of six during the winter. Unless I was in school, I would help; otherwise, Mama gave him a hand. The hog would be cleaned and strung up for butchering. Daddy would carve him up, trimming as he went along, and throwing the cuttings into a wash

tub for sausage. The brains were eaten with scrambled eggs at breakfast the next morning. The liver, kidneys, and tongue were cooked for evening meals. The feet were cleaned and pickled. All the meat was placed in the proper spots: hams and shoulders went in the smokehouse, and the sides were salted down. The ribs and backbone were set aside to be eaten as soon as possible. By the time we got home from school, the grinder had been set up, and the meat had been seasoned, ready for grinding. I would turn the handle until I gave out, while Daddy fed the meat into it and Mama stuffed the sausage into the sacks she had already made out of cheesecloth.

I can't see why I wasn't Henry Ford or somebody, so I could have rigged up an old bicycle to turn the crank on the meat grinder, cream separator, whetstone, and corn sheller with my feet while sitting down.

Later, Mama took the fat and placed it in a wash pot to make lard. At the end of butchering season, she would have ten or fifteen gallons of lard, and we'd have an abundance of cracklings to make crackling bread, which was delicious while warm. From the other fats and waste, she'd add some lye and make soap. She'd let the pot boil nearly all day, stirring it often, and when the soap was ready, she'd dip it out and pour it into containers about two inches deep. When it cooled, she'd cut it into usable-sized bars. I don't think we ever bought soap, as the homemade soap was used for every cleaning task.

After reading this far, I'm sure you've formed the opinion that we were practically depression-proof. We always had more than enough to eat. Sometimes we craved something fancier, but it's hard to beat fried chicken and pot peach cobbler. Anyone who is able and willing to work approximately seventy-five hours per week can still have plenty to eat, provided they spend their money wisely.

CHAPTER XII
PLAYING

If you've read the first part of this book, I'll bet you've been wondering if I ever had time to play. Well, I'm here to tell you that we played all the time when two of us kids got together. A prank of some sort, like turning a somersault in the wagon full of cotton or chasing each other, was always happening.

The girls liked to play with dolls, especially paper dolls, and house out in the shade of a peach tree. Each would mark off a house in the sand, get some broken glass, etc., for furniture and cookware, and make a lot of mud pies. They would then go visit one another and talk as though it had been a long time between visits. Sometimes, Roy and I would play house with them.

One day, Daddy and I were in the water lot making more hog troughs when Gladys came out through the backyard gate and asked Daddy if she could go somewhere (I forgot where). Daddy said, "Go ask your mama." Gladys replied, "I've already asked her, and she said to come ask you. I can't see why you two can't get together and stop running me around." With that, Daddy picked up the lariat, which was lying nearby, and lassoed Gladys around the ankle. She fell and started crying and screaming. Daddy came back to work, and Gladys finally got up, pulled the rope off, and went to the house crying. She cried for about two days before she gave up and spoke to Daddy or me again.

Roy and I liked to get an empty kerosene drum, lay it on its side, get on top, and make it roll by walking on it. We rolled these drums all over the place where the ground was smooth enough. We really got good at it. Our rule was that when one fell off, it was the other person's turn. Obstacles were laid in the path of the drum in an effort to make you fall off.

In season, we would get some marbles and have many games at home or at school during play periods. We had what we called aggies, pee wees, taw, etc., and would play several different marble games. We saved our marbles from season to season. Sometimes we would get a few as gifts at Christmas or birthdays, and sometimes we would buy a few.

Spinning tops also came in season once each year. Many of the boys at school, including myself, had homemade ones that we or our daddies had whittled out of a piece of wood, but most boys had at least one that had been purchased in a store. The homemade ones were not nearly as good as the bought ones, but who could afford to buy many tops at the price of five cents and up for each one?

Mama usually kept us supplied with hardballs that she had made from string saved from packages, which was tied with a string. She would cover the ball with canvas taken from worn-out cotton-picking sacks. We made our baseball bats out of two-by-two fence stays by chopping away with a hatchet, then taking our pocket knives for the finishing touches and smoothing out the part for our hands with a piece of broken glass. The surface of the wood could also be sanded down to a smooth finish by laying it in the sand and taking both hands full of sand, sliding them up and down. This method was better than sandpaper as it was plentiful and never wore out. Being made of this kind of material, a bat did not last very long, so we would usually have several under construction at the same time.

Roy and I would get in the center of the water lot and see how high we could throw the ball and then catch it without moving out of our tracks. We would also play catch, pitch, etc. When we didn't have more than four people to play a baseball game, the girls would play with us sometimes. Mama also made us some baseball mittens out of canvas, stuffed with cotton and cross-stitched so they wouldn't get too lumpy too quickly, but they didn't hold up very well.

We played mumble-peg by the hour as soon as Roy and I were allowed to play with pocket knives. We probably had to be at least five years old. We made our own kites, using the thin boards from a

banana crate for the frame and tying it together with string. We made some flour paste and used it to hold the paper to the frame. Mama would furnish enough rags for the tail and also a ball of string. Kites of this type couldn't be flown in the early spring as the wind was usually too strong, so we waited for a calm day for take-off. I would run until I got the kite airborne and then have a lot of fun making it do all sorts of tricks.

Everything on this farm had to be put back in its proper place immediately after it had served its purpose. One night after supper, Daddy said, "Preacher, I saw a hammer and some boards out on the trail to the water lot as I was coming in to eat." There was nothing more to say, as I remembered that Roy and I had been building something and had gone off to do something else, leaving everything there. I tried my best to make it right to attend to it the next morning, but I failed to convince anyone.

I was afraid of the dark, but I had to get the lantern, take the hammer all the way over to the barn, place it on the shelf, and stack the boards back where I had found them—all by myself. Rover went with me, but Roy wouldn't go. It's a wonder a booger didn't get me right there and then.

In the springtime, the teacher would get the boys running, jumping, etc., during play periods. Roy and I would continue after we got home. We would jump over a barrel, put sticks up high from the ground and jump over them. We would play leapfrog, run as far and as fast as we could, and test our abilities at many things. These events could be carried on right through work, like getting the livestock, repairing field fences, and going to and coming from the field. We mixed work and pleasure all the time.

When time permitted, we liked to get on our horses and just ride around—running, trotting, or just walking the horses—until time ran out. We would roll and tumble in sand hills and snowbanks, making snowmen, throwing snowballs, playing with our little red wagon, or playing with Rover in the sand or snow.

In freshly grubbed and plowed areas, we hunted for arrowheads, Indian pottery, trinkets, and buffalo horns. We had a large collection of them, but somehow they've all disappeared. We rolled buggy wheel tires as hoops all over the place, taking our slingshots with us so we could get in a little target practice while we were out. We liked to go out to the Seminole Road, where we made many discoveries. We would go up and down the road often, picking up horseshoes, nails, bolts, etc., and a lot of other stuff that had either been thrown away or bounced off of wagons, buggies, and whatnot. We also found tracks of animals and tried to determine what animal had made them.

We played many other games, some not named, and some that even I could not name. I do not know if a lot of them would have been played if Daddy had bought us a television set in 1918.

It seems that Daddy believed the old saying that "all work makes Jack a dull boy," but he also had faith in the saying, "There is time for work and time for play," as he combined them at every opportunity. It was nothing to see Daddy, after a long day in the field, come by where we were playing and play a little hopscotch, leapfrog, or a little baseball with us. He always managed to be just a fraction better. If Gladys had jumped the rope sixty-nine times without missing, he would jump it seventy-one times. If I had jumped a stick three feet from the ground, he would clear it two inches higher, and so on. Every time we got better, he would too. Always teaching us that we had just a little bit more to go before we were the best.

CHAPTER XIII
SICKNESS AND DEATH

Daddy became very ill in the later part of 1921. He would try to work for a few days, and then he would have to go back to bed for a while. In April 1922, he went to a hospital in Sweetwater, Texas, where they removed all of his teeth.

While there he wrote mama the following letter:

Sweetwater, Tex

April16, 1922.

Dear Ol' Sweetheart:

Will write you a few lines again this eve.
Received your letter last night, glad to hear all are doing so well.
Am glad to say I have a fair chance to recover; in fact, I think I will be able to come home in about a week.
I am feeling pretty good today; haven't had anything to eat yet but sweet milk.

Well, I had some company today. Wade Bartlett came again, and Jim Lee Hart was here a while ago.

Well, you did not tell me about the damage done last week. I am guessing it fixed my corn and maize. Say, if you get 1/2 of a stand of corn and maize, I'd try to keep it. If you don't get that much and can't save it, have O.K. plant it over at once. Tell him to get to planting cotton just as soon as he can. I would like for him to finish listing the old land in the south field if he is not done, then get to planting cotton.

Then, if he gets some cotton planted and it rains before it comes up, be sure and scratch it good. And if he gets the cotton

up and it comes a rain, get over it with a slide. If there is any indication of a wind, he can rig up both slides and get Roy and Lindly to run one and get over a lot of land in a couple of days. I sure don't want to lose my cotton.

Tell O.K. to use his best judgment about covering the cotton. Let me know how he is getting along with his work. Hope you will have success with your goods.

Did you get home Monday all right? How many chickens did you lose? Did it blow the fruit all off? Did they get the calves branded?

Well, you had better take 8-1/2 for the hogs as I think that is pretty good.
Tell the kids to write to me. I can't see yet, but maybe I can by the time I hear from you.

Well, I won't write any more for a few days. If anything goes wrong, I will phone you, so consider me all right till you hear from me.

So love and best wishes to you and the kids.

So, bye-bye.

JOE

It can be seen from this letter that he had a lot on his mind regarding the work and welfare of his family, giving O.K. enough work to last him a month. In four days, he came home and was met at the train by several hundred people, many of them hollering, "Joe Mac, you are looking a lot better." I did not believe this, as he had lost so much weight that he weighed just a little over one hundred pounds, all of his teeth were out, and his eyes were sunk way back in his head.

We had come to meet him in the wagon, as we had it loaded with

hogs. So, as soon as the cheering was over, he took charge of the reins, as always, and drove us home. He had to go to bed immediately, and he stayed there until his death in May. He was sick for many months and suffered an awful lot, as very little was given to him to relieve his pain.

Between spells, he would talk to each of us individually as well as together, explaining everything. What we should do after he was gone, how to grow up, etc. He called mama and me in together many times, explaining that I was to be the man of the house, inasmuch as I had already passed my twelfth birthday and was the oldest male in the family. He explained about the fences, pointing out that the north and west fences were ours, the east fence was half ours and half belonged to the adjoining neighbor, and the south fence was not ours, other than the fact that he had maintained it, adding new posts and wire as required. He emphasized that all of this should be taken into consideration whenever a settlement was required. He also impressed upon us that all fences he had an interest in were at least two inches inside our property line so that no argument could ever arise about the location of the fence. He also went into detail regarding the fences on our south quarter.

He gave each of us a keepsake, giving me his pocket watch. This was a large watch, with big numbers and a lid covering the crystal, which could be opened by pressing the stem. It was called a railroad watch.

He told me about the two nickels given to him by his father. It was a custom in those days to place a nickel on each eyelid of a dead person in order to keep them closed until they would remain closed by themselves. These two nickels would then be given to the oldest son as a keepsake. They were usually obtained by the preacher or doctor. If they went to the bank and got uncirculated nickels, bearing the date of death, the monetary value was increased. It was further increased if the father obtained two uncirculated nickels bearing the birth date of his first-born son and saved them until the son passed away. Daddy's father had given him two uncirculated 1874 nickels, his date of birth, to save and use as eye closers at his

death, thereby increasing the monetary value a great deal. If these same nickels had been used as eye closers by the second and third generations, both the monetary and sentimental value would have increased tremendously.

It got to plowing time, and daddy was unable to do the work, so he hired a man known as O.K. He did a lot of the listing and planting, as you will notice by reading daddy's letter to mama while he was in the hospital. But as the season advanced, he got further behind, so farmers from everywhere, many using their own teams and plows, came over and helped plow our fields. Some plowed for half a day, others for a whole day, a week, or more. Some even neglected their own fields to help us. As the season progressed, these farmers would come and get seeds and ask mama where she wanted them planted. At the time of daddy's death, most of our planting had been accomplished.

Many men from town would come out and set up all night. Dr. Lindley had arrived and stayed day and night, helping out a lot. Mr. Myers and Uncle Bade came out often and would stay until it was time for them to go back to town and go to work. Mr. Alexander, men from the lodge, merchants, bankers, churchmen, and many others took time to come out and lend a hand.

From what I can remember about daddy, some of which I have mentioned briefly, it is next to impossible to understand how one small man could have accomplished as much as he did in a life span of forty-eight years. He had a system about work and understanding that very few people ever obtain. He loved his life, mankind, his family, and his animals. I have seen his horses, cows, hogs, etc., get so attached to him that they would follow him just like a dog, and many times get in his way when he was trying to work. Some of our chickens would follow around so close, at times, they endangered their own lives, especially when he was plowing in the orchard or just working around the house.

I remember one day he had started to the field on a plow, and one of

our ganders was following. Daddy had to get off of the plow and bring the duck back to the house so that mama could hold him until daddy got to the field. Had daddy permitted the duck to follow, he would have gotten tired and probably lost, or else daddy would have had to bring him back to the house from the far end of the field.

During the early part of the 1970s, I was visiting in Lamesa, and by chance, I got into a conversation with an old man who said he was ninety-four years old. When I introduced myself, his eyes sparkled, and a grin came over his face. He said, "Are you Joe Mac's son?" When I answered in the affirmative, he then told me that he remembered Joe Mac and asked if it hadn't been about fifty years and if we didn't live out west of town on the Seminole Road. We talked for a long time, and he told me a lot that he remembered about the "Good Old Days." I wonder how many more people got old, like this man, who had no sparkle, no grin, and no happiness except when something or somebody made them remember "The Good Old Days."

Do you remember a man, when he was out in the pasture hunting, grubbing, or something, and a horse... two horses... three... all of them would come over to where the man was and rub their noses up against the man's back and shoulders? The man would then reach into his pocket, come out with some teacakes, crumble them up, and let the horses have a taste out of the palm of his hand. He would then turn his pocket inside out and let the horses lick all of the crumbs off the material?
I DO.....

Do you remember a man whose saddle horse would get behind him and nudge him up to the saddle rack, lower his head so that the bridle could be put over his ears without much effort? The saddle would be put on his back, and then the man would climb up, and the horse would take off. He would go to the pasture, run, and play. Sometimes, he would run as though he was in training for the Kentucky Derby; other times, he would trot, fox trot, two-step, gallop, or just walk. He would circle a bush two or three times and then turn

from side to side as though he was working cattle. All the time, the reins were loose. The horse was just out talking and playing with his friend, without fear of interruption from the other animals. After a while, the horse and man would return to the barn and stand still while the man dismounted.
I DO…

Do you remember a man with an ear of corn in his hand, who would have six or more hogs and pigs following him all around the barnyards? The man would stop and shell about six kernels into the palm of his hand, stoop over, and let the hogs eat the grain out of his palm. This would be repeated until all of the corn was gone, or each hog and pig had the opportunity to lick the palm of their friend. All the while, the man was saying something, and the hogs were answering back with different-sounding grunts.
I DO…

Do you remember a man whose cows would follow him around, letting the man touch their horns, rub, and scratch their bodies anywhere that he wanted? Conversations would be carried on between the man and the cows. I believe they understood one another. To me, it sounded like "MOOO."
I DO…

Do you remember a man who was a close friend to birds as well? A male quail would stand on top of a fence post a long way from the lots, just about sundown, and holler "Bob White." The man always answered. Each day, the quail got closer until he would be no more than twenty feet away, and when he would say "Bob White," the man would answer.
I DO…

Do you remember a man that mockingbirds would follow and imitate? The man would answer back, and they would carry on a conversation for a long time, I'm sure with understanding.
I DO…

Do you remember a man who, during what was referred to as hard times, had six to eight hams, fifty pounds of bacon, and about the same amount of sausage in store? He had at least one hundred pounds of lard and close to the same amount of soap; fifty gallons of canned fruits and vegetables; a wagon load of apples; a wagon load of sweet potatoes; enough chickens running around the house so that the entire family could have eaten chicken every day for a year. He had enough hogs, just across the fence, to more than double the amount in store. There were eggs, milk, butter, cheese, vegetables, and more. Some of it had to be thrown away.
HARD TIMES… **I DO…**

The Old Seminole Road is now at least one hundred and twenty feet wide, a four-lane highway. You can go to our farm in ten minutes or less. You can go to town and get a loaf of bread, a dozen eggs, and a half gallon of milk and be back home all in thirty minutes.

There are no ranches, no fences, no trapping, and very few farmhouses. These are occupied by hired people, someone other than the owner. Nearly all of the owners live in expensive houses in town. About all you see in the country is fields… More fields… And more fields… The work is nearly all done by machinery, which is usually driven by one man. He needs to farm about one thousand acres to make a living or work for wages by the hour.

Our farm has long been sold to some people who live there. They farm this land and many acres around close by. The house was remodeled with paneling and outside asbestos shingles. A jet pump was installed, and the windmill dismantled and hauled off. All of the trees, including the orchard, have died. The barn, chicken house, lots, and pens have all been discarded, as most farmers do not have a single animal or fowl on the farm anymore. It is just too time-consuming, and it is cheaper to get what they want at the store. They think. If it happens that you do not have the money, you are bound to qualify for food stamps.

Farmers do not waste time planting and attending to a garden anymore. When they come in from the fields after riding a tractor for eight to ten hours, they are tired and want to watch the news on TV.

Four schools, including ours, have been combined into one big school. Buses take everyone to school, some over ten miles away.

I wonder how daddy and many more like him would adjust to fit into a society without a single animal for miles around to talk to, pet, love, or be loved. Where you get up around seven in the morning, fix your own skimpy breakfast and a sandwich for lunch, then get on a tractor and ride it for eight to ten hours. Afterward, you come home just about six o'clock in the afternoon, all worn out, in time to hear the news and probably watch a movie on TV. When you get in the house, your wife tells you that she got up shortly after you left and that she had worked all day too. She explains that she took the laundry to the laundromat in town and, while they were being washed, she went to the beauty parlor and got her hair fixed. But she had forgotten to get a loaf of bread, so would you mind going to the store, just seven miles away, while she opens a can of corn and a can of beans for supper?

As I remember daddy, he would not have a sparkle or smile but would be longing for the "GOOD OLE DAYS"...

Shortly after daddy died, O. K. left, and mama hired a hand to help with the fieldwork. The first one didn't last long. Shortly after being hired, he went to mama and told her that he was quitting because I was too bossy. The main issue was that he wouldn't brush or curry the horses. Many times, I saw him throw the harness over sand and dirt on the horse, and he wouldn't give the horses a full two hours at dinner to eat and rest. He would also make a horse continue to work after indications were made that it should stop and get its wind. All of these things had been taught to me and proven to be correct. Other farmers' horses would be down to skin and bone by the end of summer, while ours had almost maintained their regular weight. Mama hired several more men during the summer, and we finally got the crop made.

Daddy had a will letting all of his immediate heirs share and share alike, just as soon as Cloreta reached her twenty-first birthday in November 1938. He also had an insurance policy giving mama $3,000.00, subject to current indebtedness. I don't know what the indebtedness was, but the lodge furnished the cost of the funeral.

Friends and neighbors did all of the extra work, but of course, there were doctor bills, medicines, etc. Daddy had pleaded with mama to move us to town, so during the summer, she bought a large ten-room house right across the street from the Alexanders. We moved into this house as soon as we had gathered our crop.

At harvest time, mama hired a lot of people to pick cotton and head maize. One Saturday, we were all in town, and while we were there, Mr. Myers brought out a man who said he wanted a job picking cotton. Upon finding all of us gone, Mr. Myers sent him out to the patch where the other hands were. We didn't know anything about this until the next morning.

Sunday morning at the breakfast table, mama said that she had dreamed someone had stolen daddy's watch. I said, "That's funny, I dreamed the same thing." The watch had remained in the pants pocket that daddy had worn to Sweetwater, and the two nickels had been dropped into the same pocket for safekeeping, mama thought. Mama went and got the pants. There was no watch. There were no nickels. Upon inquiring from the other cotton pickers, we found out that the man had picked just a few pounds when he decided to quit. He came by the house and went on to the Seminole Road. We checked in town, but Mr. Myers had failed to get his name, so we never found the watch or the two nickels.

Mama started all of us kids, except Cloreta, in the Lamesa school so we wouldn't have to transfer at midterm. Therefore, we started about six weeks earlier than the rest of the country kids. We went in the car, leaving home early enough in the morning to allow for about two flats on the way. Gladys would drive sometimes, but we didn't like her driving, so I drove most of the time.

At times, mama would bring a load of cotton, with Cloreta on top, to the gin. When it was still early in the evening, she would have it ginned. When it was late, and school was about to get out for the day, she would

get the car and all of the kids, except me, and go home, leaving me to get the cotton ginned and come home in the wagon. Sometimes, it would be after midnight when I got home.

We got the crop all gathered by the end of the year, moved to town, and turned the farm over to grandad and granny, as mama had rented it to them earlier.

CHAPTER XIV
CITY LIFE

Mama's purpose in buying a ten-room house was to take in as many roomers and boarders as possible in her effort to support herself and five children. This house had a large parlor and dining room, a bath, kitchen, three bedrooms opening into the parlor, and three bedrooms with outside entrances. It had electric lights in each room, running water in the kitchen and bathroom, but no hot water. We had a wood or coal-burning stove in the parlor and the kitchen. A kerosene-burning stove was also in the kitchen. For hot water to wash, shave, or bathe, water was heated in the kitchen and carried through the dining room into the bathroom.

Mama tried to keep five of the bedrooms rented, forcing all of us to sleep in one room. When there was a vacant room, Roy and I would sleep in it. Mama was trying to carry too much of a load, so she soon got in a rundown, sickly condition and had to give up boarding anyone. She soon took a job as a clerk in one of the dry goods stores.

We kids, except Cloreta, continued going to school until the term was over. Although it was more than a mile from our house to the schoolhouse, we all came home for lunch almost every day.

On the west side of our house was a large grape arbor, high enough to walk under. A little further west was our windmill and storage tank. Further west was a garden spot, I'd guess, about one hundred feet square. The garden extended all the way to the property line on the north and west. Our pens and barn were located on the southwestern corner, extending east for probably one hundred feet, and on the eastern corner was our outhouse. We had brought from the farm a horse, a cow, two pigs, and some chickens, and of course, our car, which had to sit out in the weather, covered by a wagon sheet. Nobody had a garage.

There were not nearly as many chores for kids to do in town as there were on the farm, so we had to help mama in the house—washing dishes, clothes, linens, etc. We scrubbed floors, took care of the livestock, and worked in the garden during the summer. All of this still left a lot of time for playing. Mama was very strict about us kids leaving our yard, so we soon had most of the other kids coming into our yard to play. Most of the larger boys, including myself, had become owners of a wheel. We soon gathered enough suitable boards and made wheelbarrows. We went everywhere pushing a wheelbarrow. When we got it full of bottles, we would sell them. We would gather up a lot of discarded items, of very little or no value, and bring it all home in our wheelbarrows.

In those days, there was a train every evening from Lubbock. They refrigerated cars by ice being in the cars with their perishable items. The ice was in the opening at the end of the car. This was about a five-foot square opening in the top of the car and was left open after the merchandise had been removed. Mama would send Roy and me with our wheelbarrows and sacks to get some ice. We would climb up on the car, and one of us would get in the hole and begin filling the sacks. The other one of us would help lift the sacks out and lower them to the ground. I believe we would get about one hundred pounds per day during the summer. The dirt and salt were washed off of the ice after we got home.

Roy and I, and some of the other boys, were always looking for a job, delivering circulars, etc., for the merchants or the theater. The going wages for delivering circulars for the theater for about two hours was a pass to see the picture shown on Saturday afternoon. It wasn't long before I got on as a regular employee. They began having a picture on Friday night as well as Saturday afternoon and night, and the entire theater had to be swept and cleaned after each showing. This became one of my jobs. I also relieved the ticket taker, the popcorn maker, and gave some assistance to the projectionist by rewinding the films, etc. This job didn't pay much, but I also got to see all of the pictures, and it didn't interfere with school.

There was a lot of construction going on at Lamesa around this time. One of our roomers was a master carpenter. He did cabinet and finishing work and was paid $12.00 per nine-hour day. Another roomer was a master bricklayer; his work was to do corners, door and window openings, and supervise four or five other bricklayers who did the other parts of the building. His pay was $16.00 for a nine-hour day. One day, he told me that he needed a water boy on a job that he was supervising and that the pay was $1.00 per day. I took it.

The first thing in the morning was to take my wheelbarrow, go by the ice factory, about six blocks away, get twenty-five-pound blocks of ice at five cents each, and take them to the construction site. The foreman would refund my dime. One chunk would go into each of the two ten-gallon water cans, then I would get the water hose and fill the cans with water. I also had a three-gallon bucket with a long-handled dipper, which was used in delivering the water. There were also three or four tin cups hanging on the water cans so that workers could serve themselves. All of these had to be rinsed several times during the day.

In about one hour after arriving, I would start out with my first bucket of water, walking out to the first man that I saw and hollering, "W A T E R." Some would make a yes gesture, and some would indicate no. Each time I returned to the water cans, I refilled them with water from the hose. As the day went on, when the temperature had risen a great deal, it was hard for me to keep up. Men high on scaffolding were calling for me. Sometimes I could climb up with my water, and other times, I would send it up on the pulley that was used to take up brick and mortar. Some men would drink two dippers full, maybe more, as they knew that it might be a long time before I returned. I kept this job until school started in the fall, and I had to give it up.

This was the first time in my life that I was fully employed for wages. All of the previous work was done because I was told to do it. Any profits accumulated from my efforts went to my parents to be dished out as they saw fit. Now that I was receiving six dollars per week,

mama informed me that my room and board, including laundry, would no longer be free. From now on, as long as I was employed, it would cost me $3.00 or more per week, and I was expected to buy school clothes for myself with most of the other $3.00. From then on, Mama charged me fifty percent of my income until we moved back to the farm. Many times, I thought I would be better off not working and receiving a handout now and then, but I soon realized that better food and more of it were being put on the table. My clothes were better, and I was avoiding a lot of work around the house, like scrubbing floors and washing dishes. Besides, it was very hard for a boy my age and size to get many handouts. Work was the only thing for me to do, as Lamesa did not have an employment or welfare office at that time.

During this period, Lamesa had formed a city water system and dug a deep water well. The two city wells located on the courthouse square were shut down and plugged. They began laying water pipes in the middle of the streets, first around the courthouse square, and then outward in each direction. As soon as these water mains became operational, everyone had to connect to them and do away with their own water wells. A lot of the streets were almost impassable for a long time because of the ditch in the middle, piles of dirt on one side, pipe and machinery on the other. They also began to pave some streets, starting at the courthouse square. Water tanks in the center of street intersections, at each corner of the courthouse square, were removed, never to be replaced. The streets were leveled and packed, then a layer of cement was poured on it. Workmen followed, laying brick on the wet cement. By the time they quit, they had laid brick on every street around the square, two blocks in each direction, and all the way to the schoolhouse, about a mile away. The brick-paved streets are still in very good condition after more than fifty-five years of heavy usage. I was the water boy for one of these crews and found it was a lot easier work than when I was on a construction job, as all of the workers were at ground level and usually a lot closer together. You would be surprised at all the valuable items a boy can find when a street is being dug up for the first time. I found valuables such as rusted

pocket knives, nails, bolts, and parts off of just about everything in use up to that period.

These farms came right up to the edge of town, and many men and boys worked in the fields during the summer and fall months, chopping and picking cotton, etc. One summer, I got a job chopping cotton. This job lasted about two weeks. A farmer, whose farm was about half a mile from our house, let it be known that he needed some hands by Monday morning. Some men, some boys, Roy and I showed up for work, with hoe, file, lunch, and a jug of water in hand to apply for jobs.

The man took us to the field and told us that a day's work was from sunup to sundown. The pay was a dollar a day for the men and seventy-five cents for the boys. Those that wanted to could start to work, and those he fired at or before the first row would not receive any pay. He said he would bring us some fresh water around ten o'clock, and anyone getting fired at that time would receive twenty-five cents. At ten o'clock on the first day, one man and two boys quit, and he fired one boy.

At noon, he came to the edge of the field and waved for us to come. He then told us that we should get our lunches and some cool water and rest in the shade while we ate. He said that he expected us to be ready to return to the field in thirty minutes. He also told us that anyone wanting to quit now would receive forty-five cents, and the boys would receive thirty-five cents due to the fact that the mornings were shorter than the afternoons. No one quit at that time.

When we started back to the field, he called me to one side and told me that he had noticed I was doing as much and as good work as the men, so if I continued doing so for the rest of the day, he would raise my pay to $1.00 per day. At sundown, I was one round and more ahead of all of the men. The hot afternoon sun, their age, and lack of exercise had worn them down. I worked at this job for about two weeks, receiving $1.00 at quitting time each day.

In the fall, mama would send all of us kids out to the edge of town to pick cotton as soon as we got out of school for the day. I was a pretty good cotton picker, so at the end of each evening, we would bring home between two and three dollars, much more on Saturdays. This money went into living expenses, but we did share in new clothes, etc., without regard to who picked the most cotton.

One time, mama and Roy got real sick and had to stay in bed for several days. Gladys was not at home, so mama proceeded to teach me how to cook, with her in bed and me in the kitchen. I already knew how to fry and boil, but I had never attempted to bake anything. In a few days, I was making a pretty good batch of biscuits. I still remember just about how it was done.

There were always a lot of things that boys could do, like helping someone load or unload a wagon or truck for a quarter, or running an errand for a dime. This type of money was usually spent before we ever got home. Kids did, and always will, find the time to play, and so did we.

One game we played a lot was something like cops and robbers. Each boy would whittle out not less than two pistols, find an old inner tube, and cut bands across the tube about half an inch wide. One of these bands would be stretched on the pistol from the end of the barrel to the hammer end. When pushed off by the thumb, the band would fly ten feet or more, depending on the length it was stretched, in the direction that you were pointing the pistol.

When everyone had his gun and rubber bands ready, we would choose sides with an equal number. For easy identification, one side would wear armbands or a rubber band around their head. We then decided what awards the better side would receive. Everyone came prepared for the payoffs. Some had marbles, nails, a piece of wood suitable for a pistol, and sometimes a penny or two. Each boy on the losing side had to allow the only un-shot boy to have his choice of items up for awards. The winner of one game had to put his winnings up for a later game when he lost, so it was probable that

the most valuable items changed hands several times during one afternoon.

The teams would get completely out of sight of each other, behind the barn or house, something like that, then the designated leaders would holler "READY GO". We would then run out into the open and hide behind trees or something. The object was to hit the boy from the opposing side with a rubber band without getting shot yourself. It was wise to have good rubber bands and to be accurate. If you were hit by a member of the opposing team, you had lost and had to get completely out of the way. When only one boy was left, he was declared the winner, and every boy on the opposing team had to offer him his choice of the items displayed earlier. The other boys on the winning team did not receive anything, but neither did it cost them anything. As soon as everyone was ready, sides were chosen again, and another battle got underway. This went on for hours and hours. We played a lot of games, even after supper, until mama called us in to study or to go to bed.

Mr. Myers had been successful in the hide and produce business, which surprised almost everyone. He had constructed a brick building on the north lot and put in a real nice grocery store. He still handled hides, eggs, poultry, and such in the small wooden building. At the beginning of our second summer living in town, he gave me a job, which I kept all summer and after school and on Saturdays through the fall and winter.

My primary job was building egg crates so that eggs bought by us could be trucked out to market. There was a fairly large balcony in the rear of the store, where I performed this work. The lumber for these crates was already cut and bundled by separate pieces—tops, bottoms, ends, sides, etc.—in separate bundles. My job was to nail these pieces together properly and without any waste of material or nails. Each crate was divided in the center so that each end held twelve dozen eggs. When I had enough crates made to last for some time, I then helped out in the store as instructed.

Mr. Myers didn't do much about operating the grocery store except consulting with his head man. This man did all of the buying, except for the hides and produce. He also supervised the store operations. He was the one that made all the rules and told me and a clerk what to do and when to do it.

Friday was a very busy day as all shelves had to be stocked to capacity. A large supply of brown paper bags and twine was placed under the counter. A large supply of sugar, potatoes, coffee beans, etc. were weighed to the proper amounts, placed in paper bags, tied, and stacked so as to be ready for Saturday's rush. Some items were poured into bins behind the counter to fill orders for a different quantity than we had sacked. Specials for the day were selected and stacked somewhere in the middle of the floor.

One Saturday, we were featuring seven large (the only size available) boxes of Post Toasties (the only dry breakfast food sold by us) for $1.00. We had an awful lot of bundles consisting of seven boxes each, tied with string sufficiently tight so that they could be handled as one item, stacked in a large pile reaching almost to the ceiling. We ran specials like this on different items every week.

Crackers came in a large box about twelve inches cubed. The crackers were wrapped by layers as a unit in a large sheet of waxed paper. One day, the drummer came by and sold us some crackers packed just one row to the box. These were to retail at ten cents per box. We bought a large quantity as we thought they would be good sellers. We put them on the shelf, but they would not sell. We put them in the middle of the floor and they would not sell. The next time the drummer came by, he was asked what could be done. He said that it would be no problem as people were beginning to expect items to be priced at an odd figure. So, he prepared a large sign that read "NOW 114." The crackers were stacked in the middle of the floor, and the sign was placed alongside. Every cracker was sold long before the store closed for the night. I believe this is how odd-cent pricing got started.

Twenty-five and fifty-pound sacks of sugar were stacked in the allotted area. Twenty-four and forty-eight-pound sacks of flour were placed in the proper place. I wonder why flour is packaged in twenty-four, forty-eight, and ninety-six-pound sacks?

I assisted with all of these things on Friday and more. Farmers began coming in on Saturday, before the store opened and continued all day. Some brought vegetables, watermelons, and such. If purchased, they would be set on the sidewalk in front of the store with a price tag on them. Others brought in cream, butter, eggs, or chickens. Mr. Myers always bought these items, giving them a receipt which could be settled later in the day. I would help him grade the cream, candle the eggs, as well as pack the good ones for shipment. With the information obtained, Mr. Myers would figure out how much he owed each one. When time permitted, I helped in the store.

A customer would come in and give his order to either the store manager or the clerk and expect his order to be filled upon his return later in the day. His wife probably handed him the list as he was leaving the house, so he knew probably less about what he wanted than we did. For instance, she would have things like flour, baking powder, coffee, etc. on the list without showing the sizes, brand, or anything else. Now, if the clerk knew the size of the family, it was no problem to decide on the large size. But how about coffee? We handled the three-pound can of Maxwell House, the three-pound can of Arbuckle and Peaberry, as well as coffee beans, which we would grind if desired. The order would be filled and stacked somewhere out on the floor, ready for delivery. On a busy Saturday, we would almost run out of floor space.

I was kept busy restocking the shelves and assisting customers with loading their purchases. There weren't too many brands or sizes of anything. No paper goods except toilet paper, which was mostly sold to city folks, so it didn't take a lot of space to display the merchandise. Large purchases of an item were usually filled from the storeroom.

There was a bakery located about a half-block down the street. On Saturdays, I would be sent over there to get a dozen loaves of bread. The bread, which was not wrapped, sold for ten cents each, but we got it wholesale, twelve loaves for $1.00. I would give them the money, and they would stack twelve loaves, which were not wrapped, on my sweaty, dirty arm, and I would carry them back to the store, down the street through dust, dirt, etc. We would stack it on the counter, and everybody, men, boys, and women, would squeeze just about every loaf before it was sold. Some people had pretty dirty hands, but that didn't seem to hurt the bread.

One time, we bought an awful lot of flour, which was shipped to us in a boxcar. When it arrived, the drayage firm was notified, so we told him to deliver it to our back door. He had a flatbed wagon, so he would stack a load on the wagon, and I, and sometimes others, would help him unload. About two days later, when he had completed the delivery, we had a large portion of our stockroom stacked to the ceiling with flour.

By the time this job came to an end, I had become a pretty good store clerk and had met many people, both country and town.

The following summer, Mr. Myers and a friend by the name of Mr. Davis decided to go fishing and take their families. Mr. Davis had a son just about my age, who was a very good friend of mine, so Mr. Myers wanted me to go with him at his expense. I can tell you, it didn't take much convincing.

The day was set, so just as soon as everything was packed, we were "OFF." Each of the men drove a Model "T" touring car. Bed rolls were secured to the front fenders. Groceries, pots, and pans were in the back seat, barely leaving enough room for me. Cane fishing poles were tied on the driver's side of the car, because the cars didn't have a front door on that side anyway.

The first day, we made it through Big Spring and on to Sterling City—approximately seventy-five miles. We found a good place and

pulled off the side of the road and made camp. The second day, we drove until around the middle of the afternoon and reached the outskirts of Menard. Where the road crossed the river on a low-water bridge, we pulled off and drove down the river bottom for about one hundred yards, where we found a good spot and made camp. There were several other people up and down the river that had done the same thing.

We stayed about a week, catching a lot of fish and having a lot of fun. The women cooked biscuits and fried fish at almost every meal. The boys did most of the fishing, and we played, swam, and climbed trees.

Mr. Davis decided that he would return to Lamesa, but Mr. Myers said that he had often wanted to go to San Antonio, so since he was this close, he was going to see the sights. So, we parted early Sunday morning. It rained on us all day. Men with teams were at all low-water crossings, and there were many of them, to pull cars across for a fee. We finally arrived in Junction, soaking wet, including our bedrolls. It had quit raining, so the next morning, we drove on to San Antonio and found a good place to camp.

It turned out to be Breckenridge Park. We were already up and eating breakfast when a policeman rode up on a big horse and informed us that overnight camping was not permitted in this park and warned us not to do it again. Mr. Myers assured him, and so he rode on.

We visited the zoo and then caught a streetcar to town and visited the Alamo. I had never in my whole life seen so many people; the streets were so crowded that I could barely walk. We returned to our car, cooked, ate lunch, and left for Lamesa. It took us about three days to get there. What a trip, I shall always remember it.

Several years later, Mr. Myers sold out and retired, being pretty well off financially. He had nothing to do except walk the streets and stand on the corner. It wasn't long before he passed away.

Sometime during 1925, a man by the name of Jim Johnson, known by everyone as Uncle Jimmy, began courting mama, and in the fall, they got married. They had decided to move back to the farm, so as soon as granddad gathered his crop, he moved to another farm, and we moved to the country.

CHAPTER XV
BACK TO FARMING

Uncle Jimmy had bought eight good-looking horses, harness, plows, wagons, etc., and we still had our 1921 touring car. It seemed like old times were coming back again, but I soon discovered differently.

The Higginbotham Ranch had been broken up and sold as farms. People had moved in to the east of us, south, and west, all except for Weaver Ranch. A three-room brick house had been built on land donated by the Weavers. It was about two miles west of our farm and was called Weaver School. There were about sixty pupils and three teachers, including the principal, Mr. Edmunds. New roads were everywhere.

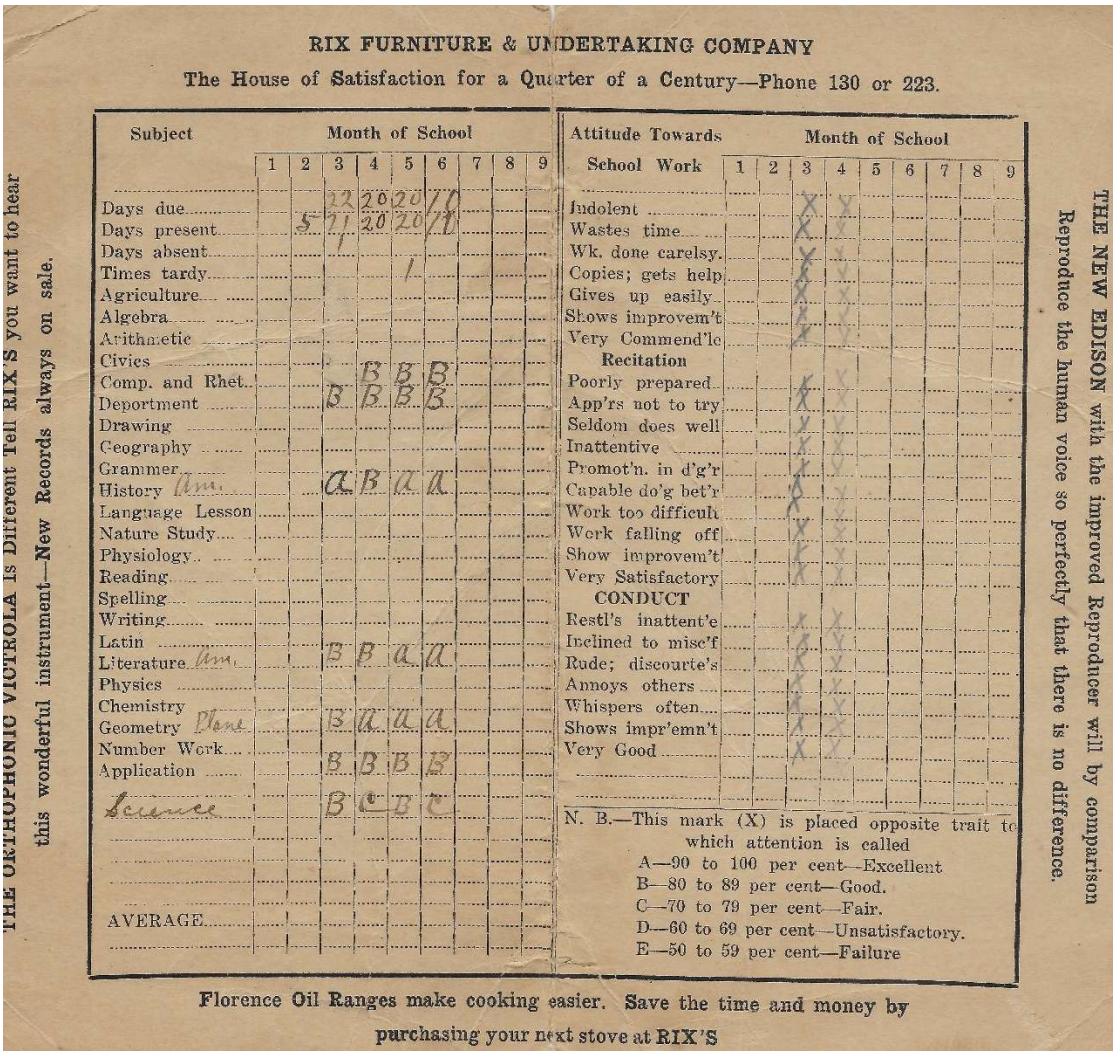
We started school and soon became acquainted with everyone. We walked to school most of the time, and by the time we got there, there would be at least twenty of us. There would be enough of us to play anything that we wanted to, and we did. I was at the age when a boy begins to get attracted to girls, so I always had one favorite and possibly two alternates. So did the other kids my age.

I'll never forget one April Fools' Day. About ten of us older kids, including Leona, Roy, and myself, got to school early. We got a basketball and walked to the neighboring school (about eight to ten miles away). This school was named "Sunset." We arrived in time to play several games of basketball during the lunch hour. One of their players was named Smith, and his brother Preston had already graduated. We returned to Weaver School just at closing time, and Mr. Edmunds gave each of us boys a very hard whipping with his belt. I forgot what the girls got.

Another time, Roy had gone out in the pasture during lunch and

killed a skunk. He brought it up to the schoolhouse and left it inside. When class resumed, the odor in the room was almost unbearable. Boys were sent out to locate the skunk and remove it, but the smell remained for several days.

My final year at Weaver School was the term ending in the spring of 1927. I was in the tenth grade with two other students. Each of us had pretty good grades, but I believe mine were the best, as you can see from the copy of my report card shown below.



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Subject	Month of School 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Days due			22	20	20	21			
Days present		5	21	20	20	21			
Days absent			1						
Times tardy					1				
Agriculture									
Algebra									
Arithmetic									
Civics				B	B	B			
Comp. and Rhet.			B	B	B	B			
Deportment									
Drawing									
Geography									
Grammer			A	B	A	A			
History Am.									
Language Lesson									
Nature Study									
Physiology									
Reading									
Spelling									
Writing									
Latin			B	B	A	A			
Literature Am.									
Physics									
Chemistry									
Geometry Plane			B	A	A	A			
Number Work									
Application			B	B	B	B			
Science			B	C	B	C			
AVERAGE									

Attitude Towards School Work	Month of School 1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Indolent			X	X					
Wastes time			X						
Wk. done carelsy.			X						
Copies; gets help			X	X					
Gives up easily			X	X					
Shows improvem't			X	X					
Very Commend'le			X						
Recitation									
Poorly prepared			X	X					
App'rs not to try			X						
Seldom does well			X	X					
Inattentive			X	X					
Promot'n. in d'g'r			X						
Capable do'g bet'r			X	X					
Work too difficult			X	X					
Work falling off			X	X					
Show improvem't			X	X					
Very Satisfactory			X	X					
CONDUCT									
Restl's inattent'e			X	X					
Inclined to misc'f			X	X					
Rude; discourte's			X	X					
Annoys others			X	X					
Whispers often			X	X					
Shows impr'emn't			X	X					
Very Good			X	X					

N. B.—This mark (X) is placed opposite trait to which attention is called

A—90 to 100 per cent—Excellent
B—80 to 89 per cent—Good.
C—70 to 79 per cent—Fair.
D—60 to 69 per cent—Unsatisfactory.
E—50 to 59 per cent—Failure

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Uncle Jimmy was very good to all of us, but it seemed that he just couldn't get his work organized or accomplish as much as Daddy

did. With Roy and I much larger and more capable than before, we managed to get by fairly well.

A lane from the old Seminole Road running south for several miles along the old Higginbotham Ranch boundary had been made. Where it crossed the natural lake, where the old well was, they had built a high dump using dirt from each side. This was intended to ensure the road would still be usable during wet weather. We had to travel this road to get to our south field.

One summer, there was a lot of rain, and the lake filled with water, covering the dump. We had already planted our south field, and it needed plowing as soon as possible. With a few hot sunny days, the water receded, so one day Uncle Jimmy and I decided to attempt to cross the dump. We hooked up two of our big, beautiful horses to the wagon and drove to the dump. Upon arrival, we got down and walked across, testing the ground. Although there were some soft spots, we believed it to be hard enough to withstand the weight of the horses and wagon. So, we got back in the wagon and started across.

We were about halfway across when one of the horses got bogged down and slipped off the side of the dump, pulling the other horse and the front end of the wagon into the water with it. There we were, with two large horses in water over their necks, trying to get a foothold but never succeeding. Uncle Jimmy was very strong, but it was almost more than he could do to keep their heads above water by pulling on the reins.

I was told to take out my pocket knife and walk out on the bobbing tongue of the wagon, which in some places was two feet under water. I was to cut both hame straps, thereby freeing the horses from the wagon and each other. This I did, but I certainly did not envy it. When I cut the hame straps, the end of the wagon tongue fell to the bottom of the lake, leaving me suspended between two horses fighting for their lives.

Each of the horses soon climbed up on the dump, so shaky and

nervous that we had to wait for quite a while before leading them back to the house. They lost several hundred pounds and were unable to do much hard work for the rest of the summer, which slowed us down in our plowing. We retrieved the wagon a few days later.

Uncle Jimmy owned an old muzzle-loading double-barrel shotgun, which he used sometimes when we went hunting. When I went with him, he would load one barrel with a light load and allow me to shoot something. The gun weighed fifteen pounds and was fifty-six inches long, so it was hard for an inexperienced lad like me to handle. In later years, when he was on his deathbed, he gave me the gun, a buffalo powder horn, a rawhide shell packet, and a carrying bag. I still have them but have not fired the gun since I was a boy.

All of the farmers and most of the town people came to downtown on almost every Saturday afternoon. By noon, the courthouse square was so crowded with people that a person could hardly walk. If you wanted to stop and talk, you had better pull over to the curb to avoid being run over. So many people were coming in cars and parking wherever there was a vacant space that all the main streets had traffic jams all Saturday afternoon. People parked wrong, backed out into traffic, or just waited for a parking space. We liked to arrive not later than two o'clock in the afternoon to see those leaving early as well as those arriving late. It wasn't just people from Weaver but from thirty miles or more from every direction. Some were old acquaintances, while others were new faces.

Every Saturday night, somebody in our district, as well as most of the other districts, would give a party. That meant you were invited to their house to entertain yourself. All of this was usually planned and settled on the streets of Lamesa. Once settled, word had to be passed around, dates made, and the mode of transportation arranged, and then all had to be approved by your parents before any certainty could be asserted. Leona and I

usually attended these parties, so when I didn't go to town, she would tell me everything since Mama would not let her go unless I went. Sometimes she wouldn't let either one of us go, regardless of how hard we begged.

There was usually close to an equal number of boys and girls, ranging in ages from about sixteen to twenty-three. One of the boys in our crowd played the guitar, and his brother played the fiddle, both by ear. They were always expected to be there to play music while the others danced or played games.

One of the games we always played was called "Snap." This game was played by two boys and two girls, and it was really a lot of fun. Sometimes, some of us would crash a party in another area or have our party crashed by a group from some other place. This was usually done for the purpose of flirting with other members of the opposite sex.

In the spring of 1927, Mama and Uncle Jimmy told Roy and me that we were being given five acres each in the field, and we could have all of the income produced on this land for the year. Naturally, we chose the very best cotton land that we had. It happened to be close to the house and situated in such a manner that the sand did not blow as badly as it did on some parts of the rest of the field.

Roy and I plowed and hoed our cotton more often than the others, and we made what was called a good crop. I had already left home by harvest time, so Mama hired someone to harvest my crop. When all of it had been gathered, she sent me a check for $300.00, stating that this was all that was left after paying expenses. I often wondered how it came out to such a round figure.

During that summer, Mama and Uncle Jimmy told me that instead of sending me to high school in Lamesa, as Weaver did not teach the eleventh grade, they wanted me to go to a business college and maybe become a banker or something like that. So one day, the three of us got in the car and drove to Abilene to visit Draughon's Business College.

We discussed subjects available, their cost, where I would stay, where I would work, etc., at length with the college manager. Mama and Uncle Jimmy gave him the required amount of money for my entrance fee with the understanding that he would notify us as soon as he found me a job that I could do without interfering with my schooling, as well as a place to room and board. With all of this accomplished, we returned home.

One of our neighbors, Mr. Williams, lived down the road less than a mile from our house. He had a patch of early maize that he wanted harvested, and since ours wasn't quite ready, he hired me to help him. We each took one of his wagons and went to work. I headed the same number of rows that he did, except it took me about thirty minutes longer in the morning and about the same in the evening. We finished by the end of the week.

He said that some of his cotton was ready to be picked, so anyone wanting to could go to work on Monday morning, and he would pay $1.00 for each one hundred pounds. As our cotton wouldn't be ready for another week, I agreed to work for him until then.

Monday morning found a lot of people in his cotton patch. Some picked for only a short time, and others said they had to get to their own fields in two or three days. By Saturday, there were only about ten of us still picking.

I was pretty good at picking cotton, being able to pick about three hundred pounds in a day, in good cotton. Mr. Williams had good cotton—thick enough, boles opened wide, and still pretty heavy, as it had not opened long enough for all of the moisture to be removed by the hot sun.

Saturday morning came, and I had averaged a little over three hundred pounds per day, so I was determined to stay in the field until I had picked eighteen hundred pounds for the week. This would amount to $18.00. Noon came, and I was still short by slightly less than one hundred pounds.

Everyone quit, including Mr. Williams, as they wanted to go to town. I told them that I had brought a sandwich and was staying a while longer. When I weighed in at the end of the day, I had two pounds more than needed, so I donated them. I hurried home as fast as possible so that I could clean up and go to town and find out what was going on.

After bathing in the horse trough and putting on clean clothes, it was already three o'clock in the afternoon. I started hitchhiking toward town, but it was to no avail, as everyone was coming home, going the wrong direction for me. After walking about halfway to town, I met Mama, Uncle Jimmy, and the kids returning home. They had a letter from Draughon's saying that I should be in Abilene early Monday morning. I got in the car and returned home.

After supper, I drove over to Mr. Williams' house to collect my $30.00, then returned home to do my packing.

Early Sunday morning, Uncle Jimmy took me to Lamesa and placed me on the bus, instructing the driver to put me off in Abilene. Buses around there were shop-made. A regular car was extended in length to accommodate four to six seats. This was my first time riding on a bus, so I was somewhat excited.

CHAPTER XVI
ABILENE--HERE I AM

My letter from Draughon's instructed me to go to Mrs. Black's boarding house, and it also provided her address. After many inquiries, I reached Mrs. Black's just about sundown. She had sixteen boys, including me, all of us going to school, mostly to Draughon's. I was placed in a room with three other boys, sleeping two to a bed. My bed partner was a Draughon's student by the name of Dave Posey.

My letter also instructed me to go to Clay's Meat Market early Monday and introduce myself as the new employee. Mr. Clay owned three markets, and the one I worked at was number two. This market was managed by Mr. Clay's son-in-law, whose name was Kenneth.

My hours of work were from six until eight in the morning, from four until six in the afternoon, five days a week. On Saturdays, I worked from six in the morning until seven in the evening. On Sundays, I worked from seven until nine in the morning, with no evening work on Sunday. This added up to around thirty-six hours per week, for which I was paid $7.50—slightly more than twenty cents per hour.

This market was in one corner of Parrish's Grocery Store, located on South First Street. It was about two blocks from Draughons, where I was expected to be from eight until four for five days a week. I had to leave Clay's a minute or two before eight o'clock and run all the way to avoid being tardy.

Some of Kenneth's customers were six all-night cafes, and I had to call on them twice each day and once on Sunday. I would get their orders, return to the market, fill the order, and deliver it, collecting payment. The largest of these cafes did a tremendous business. When I called on the chef to get his order, I could expect him to say something like this:

"25 pounds hamburger, 10 pounds sausage, one ham, one slab of bacon, and one hind quarter."

Of course, all of this wouldn't be in every order, but it is indicative of what I could expect.

Besides this, I made the sausage and ground meat, and scraped all the meat from the bones that had accumulated. The grocery store handled and sold live chickens and paid the market to kill and clean them when needed. This was one of my jobs, anytime I was available, which was usually on Saturday. I held this job as long as I attended school.

Sometimes, when I called on one of the cafes to get their order, I would find the cook, one of the waiters, or the manager trying to keep up with the dishwashing, as the regular dishwasher had not shown up. Many times, I would be asked to take the job just as soon as the market closed. Sometimes, I did, and I washed dishes all night, leaving just in time to get to the market as Kenneth did.

In a short time, I made a deal with Mrs. Black to help her after supper with her dishes, laundry, etc. Sometimes, she would owe me enough to pay about half of my room and board, which was $12.00 per week.

Charles Lindbergh had made his famous flight to Paris and was traveling around the nation when he came to Abilene. A large parade was held, and the entire city stopped whatever it was doing and went to the parade. There were many large banners proclaiming him to be "LUCKY LINDY." My name being Lindly, everyone who knew me began calling me "LUCKY LINDY." Many people called me that as long as I lived in Abilene.

I progressed at a normal pace or a little above it in spite of my outside activities. For instance, in bookkeeping, typing, and penmanship, students advanced according to their ability. I, among others, was getting a few lessons ahead of some students, some of whom never got more than halfway through. In about six months, I had advanced to the point where I would be included among those offered a job to help one of the local stores take inventory on a weekend, when Draughon's was asked to submit names of those students desiring to help.

One time, my name was submitted, and I was asked to be at Woolworth's on Sunday morning, just as soon as I had finished my work at the market. I was told to assist one of the regular employees.

He told me that we would inventory the hardware counter. He got an inventory pad, and I was told to count the individual items in each bin while he wrote them down. I never got so tired of counting in my life, as each space would contain from one hundred to a thousand nails, tacks, etc., and I had to count each one of them. The regular employee just stood there, with the pad in hand, watching me count. When I called out the quantity, he would write it down along with the description. The quantity column on all items that were purchased and sold by weight was left blank to be filled in later by someone in the office capable of converting quantity into weight.

I soon got bored with this job as I discovered I was doing a useless task. Every counter containing merchandise for sale by weight had a scale so the clerk could measure the amount sold. Why count them, then refer to the charts to determine the weight? But I was just a helper. I assisted other firms in taking inventory, but this one was more boring than any of the others.

School recessed for about two weeks for Christmas, so most of us students went home for the holidays. Mama and Uncle Jimmy presented me with a seventeen-jewel Elgin watch, which I carried for many years. I still have it and would still carry it if I could find trousers with a watch pocket. It still runs perfectly.

I was sure glad to get home, as I had never spent more than a night or so away from home. Many of the students who did not work went home many times on weekends, on Sunday afternoons. This made it pretty lonesome around the boarding house.

With the end of the holidays approaching, I returned to Abilene. So did most of the other students, including some new ones. I was advised by Kenneth that he was increasing my salary to $9.00 per week, as I was now capable of helping him on the counter during rush periods. With all the odd jobs I had, I became almost self-supporting.

Dave Posey and I became tired and disgusted with Mrs. Black, so we moved to another rooming house run by Mrs. Bacot. The rates were the same, but the food, surroundings, and roommates were different. I soon made arrangements with Mrs. Bacot to work out part of my bill.

Shortly after the first of the year, I received a check for $300.00 from Mama, covering my net income from my five acres of cotton. I had studied banking at Draughon's for two or three weeks, so I knew just about all that was necessary for me to know at that time. I went to the closest bank and deposited the check. This made me totally independent. I have added to and subtracted from this amount many, many times, but I have always managed to maintain a deposit, sometimes very small, at all times.

The Southern Pacific railroad ran through the center of Abilene, and with their more than a block-wide property, it divided the town right down the middle. With the number of trains passing through, it was very hard to travel in a streetcar or other vehicle from one side to the other. They had a very large depot along the side of the tracks, and for more than a block, they had wooden benches in the shade for people to sit on. Abilene had six colleges and universities and about three business colleges. That was a lot of students to have free time on weekends.

On Sundays, a lot of the boys would go to the depot square and sit on the benches, while the girls who owned or could borrow a car drove down North First Street. When one of them saw a boy they wanted to take for a ride, they pulled up to the curb and let their desire be known. If the boy was waiting for an acquaintance or didn't like the car or the girl, he would not accept the invitation. The street was jammed with girls, so boys could be a little discriminating sometimes. But you might wait a little too long and have to take whoever comes along—or do without.

Mrs. Bacot had two beautiful daughters, still in their teens, that all of us roomers thought a lot of and treated them somewhat like sisters that most of us had left at home just a few months before. However, sometimes we would date one or both of them and go to the movies,

but neither of them became the regular girlfriend of any of us roomers.

One of Mrs. Bacot's roomers was a student at McMurray University and had a job driving a milk delivery truck for Pangburn's Creamery. The truck was a panel job with the entire back end open, and it had a step about halfway to the ground for a person to stand on. Pangburn's had two trucks with a driver and a helper for each one. The helper for the driver who lived at Mrs. Bacot's also lived there. He was a student at Draughon's. It seemed that he got lonesome very often and had to take Saturday and Sunday off to go home. I would take his place on many occasions.

We were expected to be on the job by midnight, load our truck almost to the ceiling, deliver the milk from door to door, return, unload the empties, load again, deliver the second load, and return to the creamery and unload by six o'clock in the morning. We covered the entire north side of Abilene, so it was a job where you had to hustle.

The driver had a book with the names and addresses and usual order of each customer arranged in the same sequence that we delivered to them. He would drive along and tell me what and where the next delivery would be until I learned the route. Upon my return to the truck, he would credit the customer with the number of empty bottles I had. We had to hurry. I ran all the time, sometimes just barely catching the truck as it drove. I would hop on the step, get rid of my empty bottles, and grab the next delivery in a matter of seconds. When I had delivered all of the milk I could reach by shifting cases around, we would have to stop, and both of us would work until all of the empty bottles and cases were in the front and the full cases in the back. We could now deliver the rest of the milk without stopping to switch cases.

One night, we were slightly ahead of schedule when we stopped at an all-night garage to warm by the stove in the back of their shop. The mechanic, the only policeman on the beat at four o'clock in the

morning, and two other men were engaged in a hot poker game. My driver played one game and lost. We had already spent more time than we should have, so we went back to work. I don't believe policemen still do things like that. Do you?

It was still raining one Sunday, and it rained all day. It was very cold at midnight, but it made no difference—the milk still had to be delivered. Many creeks and streams were several feet deep in water. We had to go until we found a crossing in order to work the other end of many streets. Several times, we had to walk and deliver milk for a block or more in water over our knees. We finally covered our route, with the exception of a few houses. We were more than an hour late in getting through, which greatly upset Kenneth at the meat market.

There were several houses of ill repute on our route. Most of the time, they would be closed for business by the time we got there, but sometimes some of the girls were still up, drinking bootleg liquor and still wanting to play. My driver usually went with me on these deliveries, especially if the milk was to be delivered to the rear. I guess he was afraid that I couldn't make it with all those girls clad only in a scanty nightgown. Sometimes less… One of our customers had the milk delivered on the front porch, very close to a bedroom window. Their daughter, just about my age, slept just inside this window. When I would come up with the milk, she would have the window opened and the screen unlatched, even in cold weather. She would beg me to crawl through the window and get in bed with her. I kissed and petted her a lot but never did crawl through the window—what with my driver threatening to drive off without me. I want to tell you, milkmen had a lot of trouble in those days… and nights.

In the spring, Draughon's told me they had a client that needed another Burroughs machine operator and that they had recommended me. I agreed to an appointment and was told who to see at J. M. Radford & Son, wholesale grocers. I accepted the job. It paid $50.00 per month. The hours were nine hours per day, six days

a week. This was about $2.00 per day. I was already making this much or more counting the market and side jobs. The one at Radford's was more in line with what I had been studying for, and besides, there was an opportunity for advancement.

Radford's had twenty-six wholesale warehouses scattered around in north and west Texas. Each one of them did their own selling and billing. Abilene was the main office, with all record-keeping performed there. Sales tickets from each warehouse were mailed to Abilene, as well as any collections each night. The billings were turned over to the proper bookkeeper each morning. The collections were turned over to the treasurer, who would add them to the ones received directly from the customers in that particular district. He would make receipt vouchers for each, showing cash or check, discounts, adjustments, etc., and give these vouchers to the bookkeeper handling the accounts receivable ledger for that warehouse.

There were ten of us boys on the machines, each with different warehouse ledgers. At one time, I had two—one large and one small. After a few months, I was transferred to the Abilene ledger, which was a very large one. Everyone had to work no less than nine hours per day, regardless of whether you worked in the office or warehouse. If you punched in late in the morning or at noon, you were docked when the time lost came to five cents or more. If you were not finished with your work by quitting time, you stayed on the job until you were, but there was no extra pay for overtime. The bookkeepers had to get everything posted and balanced before leaving, turning the totals into the head bookkeeper on our way out.

Upon posting and balancing the figures for the last day of the month, we had to make statements on all accounts showing a balance. It had to show all transactions for the month. These were given to the credit manager as soon as they were balanced. He looked at each statement, and those with past-due balances got either a rubber stamp imprint, a reminder sticker, or a personal letter. On this day, he was assigned several stenographers, but still,

many times they would work until very late at night. Everything had to be finished and all letters in the post office before the day ended for them.

I held this job for a year, receiving a salary of $60.00 per month when I quit and moved to San Antonio.

In the meantime, one of Mrs. Bacot's daughters, by the name of Janet, had a girlfriend named Oleta. Sometimes she would come home with Janet from school, and other times she would come over on Sunday. In a short time, we met, and very soon we were dating. It soon got serious, and after a short courtship, we got married on October 30, 1928. I had not quite reached my nineteenth birthday.

What happened after this date is the difference between boy and man. An entirely different story, so I will close this tale and certainly hope you have enjoyed it.

CHAPTER XVII
PICTURES

Joe Lee & Mattie McFarlin
Wedding - 1905

1920
Joe L, Mattie, Gladys, Lindly, Roy,
Leona & Cloreta McFarlin

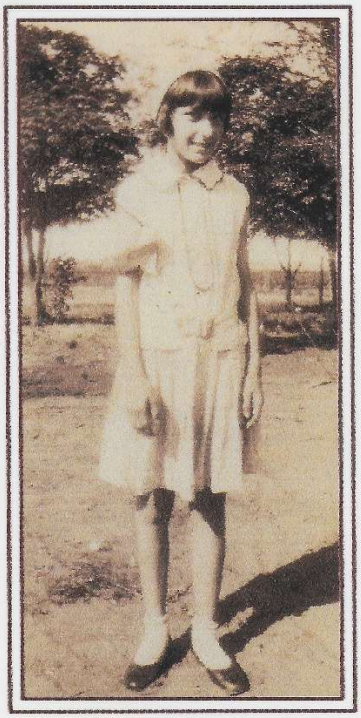
Great-Aunt Jo Frost
sister of
Susan Lippard McFarlin

Uncle William E. McFarlin
brother of
Joe Lee McFarlin

age 8

Roy McFarlin
1912-1989
brother of Lindly

age 18



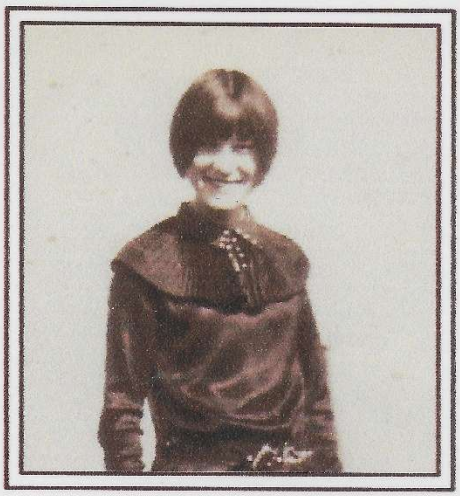
Cloreta McFarlin
sister of Lindy

born: 1917
married: 1937 to
Leonard Townsend
died:

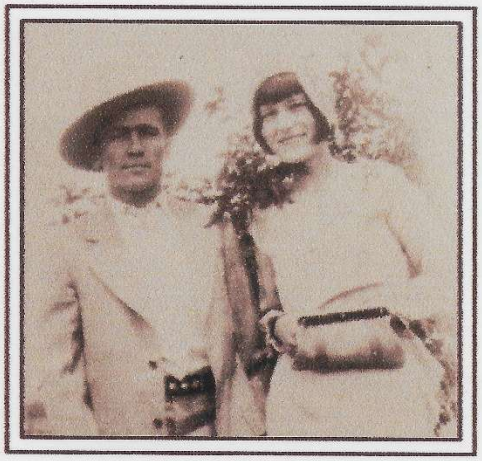
Gladys McFarlin
sister of Lindly

born: June 29, 1907

Gladys, age 8
1915



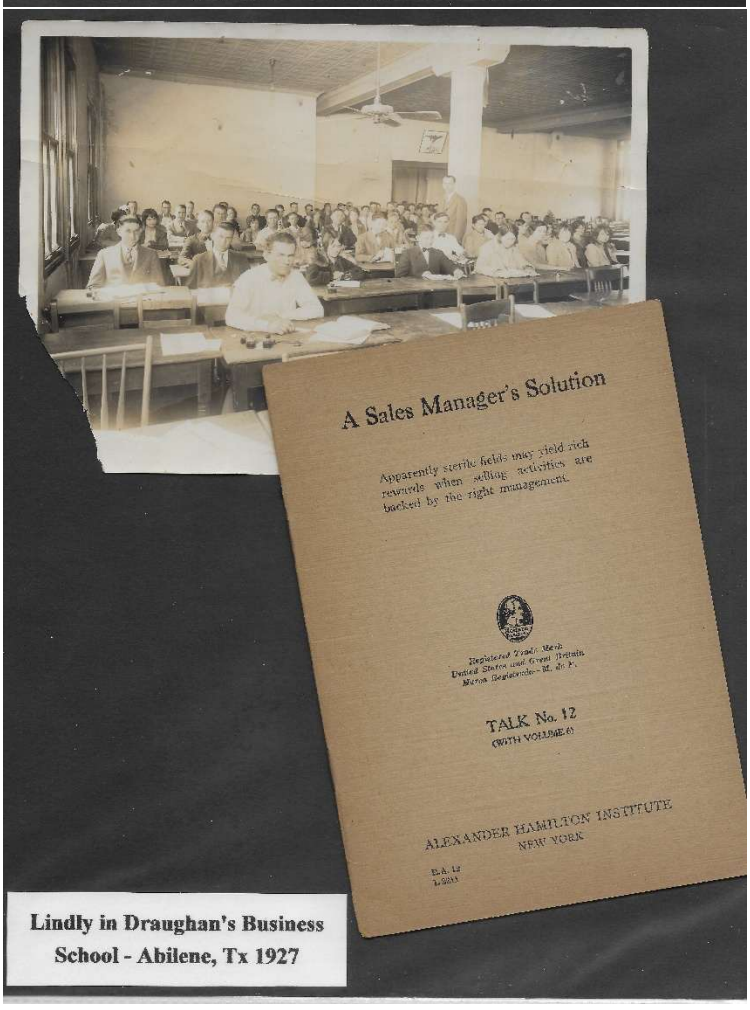
Leona McFarlin
sister of Lindly
born: 1913
married: 1929
to Otis Wilson
died:



Wedding Day
July 28, 1929

Leona & Otis - 1929

McFarlin family's school
Dawson County, Tx - circa 1915



Lindly in Draughan's Business
School - Abilene, Tx 1927

Wyatt's Rooming House

Mattie & Lura Jean

circa 1940

Mattie & Mr Wyatt

Lindly & Oleta Sistrunk

Married: Oct 30, 1928

Abilene, TX

Lindly and Oleta McFarlin