

Eudene, Earl Kleinsorge's Wife and Ilene's Mother

by

Eudene Kleinsorge

The following is a copy of the story written by Dena in the early 1990's for ILENE and her CHILDREN: AMY LYNN KLEINSORGE THOMPSON AND VINCENT MATTHEW

GONZALES.

Chapter 1

-- Grandma tell me about when my Mama was a little girl.

It is the year 1949. Earl's brother Paul has been a partner in the farming business since the fall of 1946. Except for Dena's illness of narcolepsy; life has flowed in a happy vein.

Your Grandfather Earl was a handsome young cowboy. He stood 6'1" tall and had black wavy hair and beautiful blue eyes. I was a beautiful 5'7" strawberry blonde with dreamy blue eyes the color of the Sea of Cortez. We were considered to be a dashing young couple and everyone was awaiting the birth of our first child.

This was in the days before they had medical technology to tell you if the baby was to be a boy or a girl. The men in our circle of friends were placing bets on whether your Mother would be a girl or a boy. The pot actually got to be quite high among our Catholic friends. Our Protestant friends thought gambling was a sin. Not many of them placed a bet in the pot. Never the less the pot grew to \$978.00 and the money would be given to us to use in furnishing of the nursery, paying the hospital bill etc.

Your Great Uncle Paul lived with us and was a junior partner in the cattle, hog and farming business.

On the morning of March 16th. We woke up to a land of enchantment. The snow had fallen most of the night and big soft, fluffy flakes were still falling. It seemed to be a world without any imperfections.

Grandpa Earl gently helped me out of bed and told me to sit on the chair by the table while he made us some breakfast. I appreciated this because your Mother had grown quite large and was making me clumsy in my moving about. Grandpa fixed us bacon, eggs, biscuits and coffee. You see he was a bachelor for 7 years and he really knew how to cook.

Your Great Uncle Paul went out to feed the animals while Grandpa got the breakfast on the table. The old country school bell was tolling for 8:00 O'clock. It was the signal that school was about to begin.

I picked up my fork to have my first bite of egg and w-h-a-m-m-y!! The first birth pains began. I did not say a word as Dr. Meredith had warned me that those pains would start several hours before the baby was to be born. I sat back for a moment until I was comfortable again and then gingerly picked up a piece of bacon and munched its

succulent flavor.

Grandpa really was a master with homemade biscuits. They were made using cream instead of any shortening. I must not hurt his feelings by not eating one of them. The top and bottom crusts were so very crispy and golden brown. Oh, what I would give just to taste one of those cream biscuits again. Oh well today we consider that to be a no, no, in our diets.

Too much fat, but to get on with the story.

I took my knife and dipped into the homemade butter and spread it on my biscuit. Then it was time for the homemade preserves that I had made from wild strawberries. Picked from our fields. Oh, there is nothing in today's world that compares to this scrumptious delicacy. I took the first bite and savored the goodness. I lifted the biscuit to my mouth and whammy! The second birth pain hit. This time I just had to tell your Grandpa. Such excitement, he immediately ran to the phone and called my Mother. That would be your Great Grandma Emily.

She took control of the situation and gently soothed him down. She calmly told him to see that I had everything in the suitcase that I would need for my stay in the hospital.

He methodically ticked each item off. 1. Nightgown 2. housecoat 3. toothbrush 4. toothpaste 5. hairbrush 6. comb etc. I had already packed them in anticipation of this moment.

Oh, my another pain. This one really took my breath away. Grandpa ran to the phone and again called Great Grandma Emily. She told him to place that suitcase in the car and see that I was warmly dressed. The next step was to get ourselves in the car and start for the hospital, which was 42 miles away. We must stop and pick up Great Grandma Emily on the way. They lived 10 miles from us but it was on the route.

The countryside was beautifully clothed in the new fallen snow. The Kansas wind had come up and was causing drifting snow on the road. I silently prayed that the snowplow would be out there working. My prayers were answered and the path was prepared ahead of us. The snowplow was clearing our side, but the wind was blowing the snow and the road was quickly drifting shut behind us. Grandpa Earl was aware of the urgency to get us to the hospital while the roads were still open. We sped right along and I felt safe and secure because he was an excellent driver. My Mother, Great Grandma Emily, could handle any emergency situation that may arise.

WE reached the hospital and Great Grandma Emily quickly had us registered and we were ushered to our room. This was in St. Mary's Hospital in Emporia, Kansas. The

building is now used as an apartment building.

Dr. Meredith came in to say “Hello” and check out my medical condition. He said it would be a few hours yet and he was very busy. I was to be assured that he would be there when he needed to be. But it did seem every pregnant woman in his care was giving birth this night.

We relaxed and let nature take its course. About 10:30 P.M. Your Grandpa got restless and hungry. He decided to go out and get a hamburger. Great Grandma Emily asked him to bring her back a ham sandwich. He said he would be glad to and he would be right back. Being a country bumpkin, he did not know they locked the hospital doors at 10:00 P.M. You could go out but you could not come back in. Great Grandma Emily did not think to warn him that he must ring a bell and someone would come and let him in.

When he arrived back he found the door was locked. He knocked and knocked but no one heard him and came to let him in. He went all around the hospital trying all the doors and peering into the windows of the offices, but to no avail.

Finally he gave up and went back to the car and ran the heater off and on all night to keep from freezing to death. Praise the Lord, at 6:00 A.M. The nurses began to change shifts and Grandpa quickly got himself through that door while they were coming and going.

What a wonderful reunion of us three. The doctor was just coming in to take me into the delivery room and Grandpa wanted to talk. But Dr. Meredith said, in his voice tone that meant no argument, you go with Emily into that waiting room there and I will be in to talk to you shortly. Then he walked from the room.

I waved goodbye to them as they ushered me into the delivery room.

Dr. Meredith was true to his word and in a short time he walked into the waiting room with a little of blue blanket in his arms.

He placed your Mother in the arms of Grandpa Earl. Grandpa looked down and his face lit up as he saw a little squalling baby with red hair and blue eyes. And wonder of wonders that little infant wrapped her fingers around one of his big ones and quit crying. Grandpa always said that she smiled at him. Great Grandma Emily and I knew it was probably a gas pain that made her change expression. But we never shared that thought with Grandpa Earl. Here was this long lanky cowboy. We did not want to shatter that myth. Hadn't he been through enough being locked out of the hospital and worrying so many hours? Besides that; wonders never cease and maybe she actually was

sharing her first smile with her Daddy.

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added by Dena in 2009

It was a good thing she had won his heart for she was a very fussy baby. Dena tried to nurse her. She suffered with the colic, she cried night and day for 9 months. She weighed 7 1/2lbs. When she was born and only 14 lbs when she was a year old. Dena and Earl would take turns rocking or walking her back and forth in the night. Sometimes Earl would bring her buggy close to the bed and gently rock it with his foot. They were determined it would be them who took care of her in the night. Finally they found a formula that agreed with her and she became a happy child.

The following are a few incidents that need to be included in this story.

Earl's sister Inez Anna Kleinsorge had married Harley Sprague in March of 1946. Their son Bart Vincent was born Feb. 21, 1949. Harley and Inez were divorced in 1949. Inez married Marvin Whiles in March of 1950. Marvin adopted Bart as his son. Therefore he is Bart Vincent Whiles.

Earl's sister Ruby Etheldreda Kleinsorge married Lawrence Joseph Wittman on August 27th. 1949. Their first child Diane Marie Wittman was born on July 26th. 1950. the Kleinsorge brothers and sisters were beginning to have a nice little group when they got together.

On the Phillips side of the family Norma Jean Dressler was born March 14th 1946 Glenda Kay Dressler November 30, 1948.

The group of cousins was beginning to grow. They spent many happy hours together.

After Ilene was born it was another 6 months before Dena's problem with Narcolepsy finally came to an end.

Aunt Virginia Phillips came and stayed for a few days until permanent help could be found. Mrs Archer came and stayed for 2 months. Then, a neighbor Doris Allen helped for 3 months. Her Mother became quite ill and she had to go home and take care of her.

Paul was relieved when that happened. Doris had taken quite a shine to him. Paul was not interested in her at all. He was kind and discouraged any romantic inclinations she might have.

She finally decided she liked Tuffy Dressler better than Paul anyway. Tuffy had that inclination to flirt with every lady in sight. He really had no romantic intentions either.

It was just his personality. I am sorry to say that he took a lot of teasing over Doris's attentions. He always got the largest piece of pie and the first choice of the chicken platter when she was serving the table.

Doris was slightly retarded. She graduated from the 8th grade with mostly D's and a few C's. Her Mother had taught her to be a good cook and to be an excellent house keeper.

Her Mother was a widow, left with two children to raise. They were grateful for Doris to be able to earn a few extra dollars. Doris remained their friend until she died. The last one to help was a young lady by the name of Lucy Leabold. She was a niece of Uncle Clarence Tannahill's. She resented having to work. She did do a good job. Even though she got homesick; she stayed until Dr. Reith was satisfied Dena would have no more problems with the Narcolepsy.

Chapter 2

It was a great relief to Earl and Dena that she now would be able to lead a normal life.

Dena became proficient in assisting the sows in farrowing their piglets. Earl and Paul both had hands to large. At one time they had a herd of 100 sows and quite often they needed assistance. The pigs were raised in an area that was not suitable for farming. Earl would spread a wagon load of corn along the bank of a subsidiary stream and the pigs took very little care, except when they were farrowing. The hog market dropped in 1949 and they sold the hogs and never handled them again. Dena was pleased with the decision. The stench of the hogs was not one of her favorite fragrances. Modern technology no longer lets hogs run free.

When Dena retired from teaching she withdrew her Teacher Retirement money. It was all of \$137.00. She bought a Howe sewing machine. She began to sew all her own clothes and make Earl's shirts. She was not the seamstress her Mother was but for the first time in his adult life Earl had shirts that had long enough tails to tuck in his jeans and his broad shoulders and extra long arms showed off his slim torso.

He was 2" longer in the torso than the average man his height. He could outreach any of his brothers or cousins who were several inches taller than he. He need a 38" shirt sleeve and a 17 1/2 neck size. His jeans were 36" waist and 32" leg length.

In January of 1949 we had a very big ice storm in the Gridley area. Our electricity was off for nine days. We were fortunate that our cattle were protected by the trees and buildings. The outside work was treacherous as the ice stayed on for days. Earl and Paul worked unceasingly to keep the animals fed. They increased the amount of ensilage and added a little grain to the mix.

I can't remember the name of the feedlot down by Yates Center. But the owner had came to this area from Texas. No one thought to warn him of the dangers in Kansas ice storm. The cattle always stand facing the wind. When the storm was over most of his cattle were frozen in place. The ice had plugged their nostrils and frozen their mouths shut. They had suffocated. The man returned to Texas a financially ruined man.

I am not sure what year the permanent library in Gridley was established with funding from the W.P.A. Mrs. Tillie Scales was employed as librarian. Shelves, desk and library supplies were placed in her small home. They were served by a traveling library which came to Gridley once a week. Dena quite often checked out a book from there.

Her son Bill Scales would touch Ilene's life in the future. He was the counselor who

would help Ilene cope with her divorce years in the future.

The Gridley community considered it a tragedy when he was crippled with polio as a youth.

There were three other Catholic families in the Gridley area. They were:

- Willis and Betty Beyer. They ran the Beyer motor company and sold Chryslers, Plymouths, Dodges and used cars of all types.
- Earnest and Mamie Rossillion. They were farmers who had moved from the Olpe, Kansas area. That community was strongly Catholic. Their family was grown.
- Leonard and Marjorie Rossillion. He was the son of Earnest who choose to stay and farm with his Father and Mother. They were the parents of 5 children, one of which was born the same year as Ilene. They had 4 more children after that.

They were a very affluent family. As Catholics they were also singled out by the Klu Klux Klan. They found it very hard to find anyone to help with their field work etc.

Leonard met Earl and Dena when he waited on their porch to inform them that Fr. Bauer had annulled their marriage. They must be at the Church in the morning to be married by the Catholic Priest.

They became friends and The Kleinsorge brothers and the Rossillion's decided to help each other in their farming endeavors. Earl owned the field cutter to harvest the corn and make ensilage. He and Paul owned more cattle than the Rossillion's. Consequently they had more silage to be cut. It was decided the men would start cutting each day at 8:00 A.M.. That would give both entities time to do the morning chores. They would continue cutting until the sunset. Marjorie and her children would do their evening chores. Dena would be responsible for theirs.

Dena would furnish the meals while they were at the Kleinsorge's. She would also take snacks out to the field in the middle of the day.

It was in the middle of September when they finished. Dena had marked off each day.

Exactly 44 days of constantly preparing meals for four very big eaters. 44 days to take snacks to the field. Other necessary duties such as canning, housework, shopping, washing etc. also had to be done. She thanked God every day that her health had returned.

If she wanted to have fried chicken for dinner she would ask Earl to catch one for her. He would step out on the porch and shoot one. Then go out and pick it up; place his big foot on it's head and give a jerk. Everyone knows a chicken must bleed when it is killed.

Dena would have the scalding water ready to plunge it into. She learned to have that chicken plucked, singed and cut up ready for the pan in ten minutes time.

She never did learn the knack of making a decent pie crust. The men had to be content with cobblers, cakes, cookies and wonderful custards and bread puddings. She baked fresh bread almost every day. She became famous for her wonderful cinnamon rolls and raised dough nuts. Along with sandwiches they made a wonderful snack for the field.

On the last day they all sat down at the table. Earl asked Earnest if he would say the blessing. Earnest began with the traditional Catholic meal prayer "Bless us O Lord and these gifts which we are to receive from thy bounty through Christ our Lord and Thank you Dear Lord for all the wonderful meals we have shared with these friends. I give you praise that the field work is done at the Kleinsorge's. I bless You that we will be able to put our feet under the table at the Rossillion's tomorrow. Amen" Everyone at the table echoed that same "Amen" The two families continued to work together as long as they lived close to each other. They remained friends all their lives.

In 1949 LaRue and Marie Gordon bought the Clarence Owens farm in Greenwood County. They had been living in Wichita, Kansas. Marie had recently learned that she would never be able to conceive and give birth to a child. She became quite depressed. LaRue decided they would be better off if they moved from the city and made new friends. She agreed, she was a nurse and began looking for a job in a rural area. She acquired the job being the County Health Nurse in Greenwood County. They built a new home there.

They were also Catholic and lived 9 miles from Dena and Earl. They were friends of the Rossillion's before they moved there. LaRue knew little about farming. He had owned his own tire and automotive business in Wichita. Leonard suggested to Earl they include him in their agreement to work together. Earl, Dena and Paul agreed that would be fine.

They became good friends. LaRue was a good worker and a fast learner. Marie loved her job and enjoyed the Rossillion and Kleinsorge children.

At first she was snobbish to Marjorie and Dena. She bought all her clothes at the highest priced stores in Wichita and Kansas City and had more education than they did. The old saying still held true. "If you educate a fool you only intensify their foolishness."

LaRue suggested she observe how Dena and Marjorie dressed. Perhaps she would want to purchase clothes more suitable for the country.

Marie took La Rue's advice. She began by asking Marjorie where she purchased her clothing. Marjorie said she sent for most of her clothes out four different catalogs. She

promised to bring Marie catalogs from Sears, Montgomery Ward, Spiegel's, and J.C. Penny.

It was not long before Marie began to purchase her clothes from those catalogs. Her snobbishness turned into friendliness and they all became very good friends.

It was during these busy days of harvest that Dena decided to ask Joe Draper the Barber in Gridley to give her a short haircut so she could give herself a perm. Joe hesitated for a minute and then he explained he did not usually cut women's hair. Of course he did cut his wife's hair, so he probably could do it.

Dena knew his wife and she wore a lovely short bob that lay in waves. She thought she probably accomplished that with pin curls.

Imagine her amazement when she got out of the chair to find he had cut her hair to exactly 1" lengths all over her head. She took a lot of teasing from everyone until it grew out long enough she could get a home permanent in it. Even then she looked almost like a little Pixie. She did have to admit it was easy to take care of while she was so busy.

Earl suggested she never go to a Barber for a haircut again. That is when she learned to cut her own hair. She continued to do so until she was in her 70's.

Dena and Paul became very good friends in these years. She will always consider him as another brother. Paul played ball many times on Sunday. He played on a Gridley team and a team from Yates Center. Earl and Dena never went to the ball games. Earl always said they (meaning he and Paul) needed a day apart now and then to do what they pleased. Earl was never fond of sports. All of his brothers and sisters were fond of sports. He would rather play cards or just visit.

The Fair Hope community quite often got together and had picnics on Sunday afternoon.

Earl and Dena usually attended them. They were often invited to the homes of longtime friends of Earl's. Sometimes they returned the favor. Paul was always welcome to stay home and be included in the group if he wanted to. He learned to know several of their friends in that way.

Once Ilene had a formula that satisfied her tummy she grew by leaps and bounds. She was a happy child, and was content to play happily close by her Mother. Oliver Skillman was right. That large kitchen, dinning, living room area was where most of the time was spent. The parlor was reserved for the overflow when there was company.

Aunt Annie Tannahill's mailbox was located on our corner. She often stopped in to play

with Ilene for a short while. Sometimes if Dena was working in the field she would have Ilene stay with her.

One day when Ilene was playing in her sandbox she brought sand in the house. Dena was aggravated because she had just cleaned up the floors and had a very busy day ahead. She cleaned up the mess and gave Ilene a scolding. Ilene began to cry and wanted Dena to hold her and rock her. Dena picked her up and took her out to her sandbox and told her to stay outside and play. Sometime later she went outdoors to bring her in because it was getting hot out there. Even though there was places to play in the shade.

Ilene was no place to be found. Dena called to her and looked every place she could think of. She got in the car and started toward Aunt Annie's. There she spied Ilene running as fast as her little legs would carry her. Dena got out of the car and went to pick her up. Ilene cried "No Mommy, No Mommy, Aunt Annie loves baby Ilene. Mommy mad." Dena held her in her arms and said "Mommy loves Baby Ilene too." Ilene cried like her little heart would break and threw her arms around her Mother's neck. That was the last time Dena would pick her up and put her aside when she asked to be loved. Sometimes even Mother's need to learn lessons.

Chapter 3

Earl came into the kitchen calling out “Dena, I need to go to Burlington right away. We need some black strap molasses before we feed tonight. Do you need to go get groceries?” Dena replied “are you going to be there long?” Earl “Not to long. I do need to get a few other things however.” Dena stood a few minutes considering “I have an awful lot of things I need to get done today. The green beans are ready to be picked and canned. You and Paul are almost out of clean clothes. I had planned to make jam out of those blackberries Dad brought to me last night. I do need sugar before I do that. I guess I better go along. How soon are you leaving?” Earl looks at the clock “I want to be there by 9:00 O’Clock. It is 8:07 now. Can you be ready by 8:30.?” She sighs, “Ilene just got up. I haven’t fed her yet. I guess if I leave the kitchen in a mess I can do it. I will do the best I can.” By 8:30 they were on their way.

When they reached Burlington Earl pulled up to the M & L grocery store. He came around and helped Dena and baby Ilene out of the car and into the store. Then he said “I will go on to the elevator and get the things I need there. Take your time getting the groceries. I will come back and park the car on this block if I can. I will go ahead and do my business. I need to go to the bank and a few other things. See you after while.”

Dena sighed, in her mind she hoped this would not be one of those days when she would have a long wait. The biggest bone of contention in their marriage was caused by his lack of consideration for anyone when it came to time. She had given up on trying to reason with him about this problem. Recently she had asked her parents if she could bring baby Ilene and come back home. Joe’s answer to that was “Young Lady, I warned you about marrying a bullheaded Dutchman. You knew when you married him it was supposed to be forever. I raised one family. It is the responsibility of you and your husband to raise yours. You will just have to find a way to cope.”

This day turned out to be one of those days. She bought the groceries and asked them to keep the groceries back until she came to pick them up. They would keep the perishables in a cool place. Thank goodness baby Ilene was potty trained. That had been accomplished by the time she was nine months old. She was still on the bottle and Dena had neglected to bring extra formula along. She did have one bottle with her. That should do her until after 1:30 P.M..

Earl came back to the M & L and found Dena had finished her shopping there. She and Baby Ilene were waiting in the car. He opened the car door and said “I am afraid this is going to take longer than I expected. We will plan to eat lunch at the restaurant. I will meet you there at 12:15 several of our friends should be there by then.

Dena was happy he had at least let her know of the wait. She went into the grocery store and had them bring her groceries out to the car. She put Ilene into the car seat and backed the car out and headed for home. She calculated that if she hurried she could get home, put away the groceries, clean up the kitchen, fix Paul some lunch, pick those green beans and be back to Burlington before Earl knew she had left. When she met him for lunch she never mentioned her trip home and back. She could can those green beans this afternoon when they got home.

It was a good plan but it was flawed. The dinner at the restaurant was a pleasant one. Indeed there were several friends in there. They leisurely consumed their meal. It was time for Ilene to have her bottle, Earl suggested she take the bottle there while he visited with their friends. He drifted from table to table telling jokes. As their friends left they came by and spoke briefly to Dena. Time flew by and before they knew it the hour was 2:10 P.M.. Ilene had taken her bottle and had a 45 minute nap. All the diners had left.

Dena assumed they were going to be on their way home. She was wrong again. Earl said "Honey, I still have a few things to accomplish. I will finish as soon as I can. You surely have some more shopping you can do." Dena only sighed and asked "Do you think it will take long?" He shook his head and spoke "You know they close the stores at 6:00. Why don't I park the car by the M&L so we can get the groceries? I will finish as soon as I can."

As soon as Earl got out of sight Dena decided she would make another trip home. She bet that he would never know she was gone. In she went and got her groceries. Then she hurried home snapped her beans washed them, packed them in the jars and put them in the pressure cooker. There should be time for them to process and she could be back to Burlington before 6:00 P.M.

Her Father was right. She had married this man so she better learn how to live with him. If it took driving extra miles, so be it. At 5:30 she had baby Ilene fed and was back in the car speeding toward Burlington. She was correct in her assumption that Earl had never known she was gone. She was parked in front of the M&L waiting for him when he appeared at 6:15 P.M.. When they arrived home he went to get the groceries out of the trunk of the car. "Dena, we forgot the groceries!!" She laughed and told him of the days events. It was agreed between them that she was free to do that when she had things at home she needed to do. It was also agreed that if she could she would take her work or something to amuse herself and Ilene with until he was ready.

She had supper ready when Paul came in from the field. Now it was his time to be frustrated as he asked his brother what the heck had he been doing all day. Paul like Dena knew there were some things one could not change. Never the less it was surely a

source of discontentment. Paul seldom spoke of it. If it was imperative that Earl must be on time he would ask Dena for help in accomplishing that.

I want to go back to right after Dena and Earl were married. Earl needed to talk to Frank Housman and make sure he had the pastures South of Burlington and the farm where they lived rented for the coming year. He warned Dena on the way there that there were three brothers. All of them just a little odd. But Dena really needed to know Frank. If something happened to Earl it would be up to her to finish up business.

The three brothers were a little odd and each one very different. They seldom left their home. Frank did all of the grocery shopping and picked up anything they needed to do what little farming they did.

John was the next in line and he did most of the farming but did not associate with anyone unless he had to.

Charlie was the youngest brother. He did all the cooking and what little housework was done. He was a man of few words and if he saw you coming he turned and went the other way. She was not to be surprised or offended at anything these men did. They certainly would never hurt anyone.

After this burst of information Dena was very apprehensive. It was early afternoon but when they walked into the house the old kerosene lamps were burning. It was so dark she could hardly see where she was walking. The windows were so dirty that they gave very little light. The lamp globes were black at the bottom and a light charcoal gray all the way to the top.

Charlie had been caught with no way to escape. He was putting wood into their wood burning stove. Earl spoke "hello there Charlie, I want you to meet my wife Dena." Charlie never looked their way. He bent over and put another piece of wood in the fire. Then Dena was startled when he spoke "I know what she looks like Earl, I saw her sitting out there in your car when you were here before. I suppose you are wanting to bring your brothers and that Joe Phillips and Tuffy Dressler Quail hunting again."

Then he turned his back to the wall. He never spoke again or looked their way as long as Earl was talking to Frank and John. Dena certainly sat on the edge of her chair and kept her mouth shut. If anything she was as frightened as Charlie was shy.

Charlie had hit the nail on the head. One of the items to be discussed was quail hunting. It was one of the best places in Coffey County to hunt. The men always had at least one quail hunt there every year. Their wives and children always came along. The quail

hunts were looked forward to by everyone.

Now let us get back to 1950.

The cattle market was booming. During the quail hunt this year Earl noticed the quality of the cows and calves that were grazing in the pasture. He decided to ask Frank and John for a chance to buy the next years crop. Frank jumped at the chance because he had heard that Earl was now considered to have a good eye for what cattle were worth and was willing to pay a fair price.. They would talk in the fall of 1951.

Earl had forgotten the advice John Skillman had given him. Don't buy anything from the Housman brothers.

The year 1951 saw price control come to our great nation.

The Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, The King and I, premiered on Broadway.

In February Dena was delighted to find she was pregnant again. That delight soon turned to dismay. She was standing at the stove making breakfast and suddenly had severe pain, surely that could not be a birth contraction. She finished getting the food on the table and then sit down wondering what to do next. Should she call her Mother? Maybe she should call the Doctor. Dr. Meredith had died and she was doctoring with Dr. Reith.

She sat pondering these actions when the phone rang. It was her sister Pearl. She explained her dilemma to her. Pearl advised her to get Earl to take her to the Dr. immediately.

Earl was just finishing his breakfast when another pain wracked her body. Dena spoke "Earl, I believe you had better take me to see Dr. Reith." Earl replied "O.K. Just as soon as I get the cows milked." Dena replied "No, let Paul milk the cows, I mean right now!!"

concerned Earl asked "Why on earth are you in such a hurry?" At this moment she gasped in pain and grabbed her belly. Earl is immediately alarmed and says "Paul, you need to take over the chores. I believe Dena needs to go to the Doctor. We will see you later. Do whatever you think needs done until I am back." With that said he helps Dena out the door and into the car. They are on their way.

Dr. Reith takes them into the examining room. By this time Dena has began to spot. When the Doctor finishes his examination he says. "You are in danger of losing this baby. I will call my nurse and she will come right in. You must not try to ride back home today. We will play it by ear. Maybe you can go home tomorrow.'

Earl asks “Whatever is wrong? Tell us just what is going on.”

Dr Reith sits down and asks Earl to do the same. “My examination shows me that when Ilene was born Dena has a serious tear in her uterus. The Doctor must have repaired it but it left the uterus tipped and now it is trying to abort the fetus. We have got to keep Dena very quiet today. If we are lucky she will not abort today. But it is absolutely imperative that she be in bed at least until tomorrow and maybe for several days.”

Dena breaks in “Oh, Earl can we afford to let me stay here? And she begins to cry.

Earl puts his arm around her and says “We will manage to pay the bill somehow. Remember that my job is to worry about how to pay the bills. Your job at this time is to try to keep this baby growing. If we loose it we will get through that too. Now you do your best to relax, that will probably do as much good as anything right now.”

Dr. Reith had gotten up and called Freda Harris. He turns to the pair and says “Dena, Earl is so right. Your job is to relax. I am going to give you a shot right now that will help you do just that.”

When the shot begins to take hold the Doctor ask Earl to carry Dena into the back where he has a small maternity ward set up. By this time Dena is asleep. She will be kept highly sedated for the next 24 hours.

Freda arrives within ten minutes from the time the Doctor had called. Dena is kept at the maternity ward for three days.

Emily and Joe, Pearl and Tuffy came the first day to see Dena. Emily listens to the problem she has and the measures she must take to try to keep from aborting. She asks Dena if she is sure she wants to keep this child. She has always thought it best to let nature take it's course.

Pearl is shocked at their Mother's question and says so. She implores Dena not to listen to any such suggestion.

Emily defends herself by pointing out all the problems Dena will encounter trying to take care of Ilene and run a home.

Pearl turns to Dena and says “Don't worry about the problems I will help you work them out. Mom just thinks you will not have a healthy baby. My baby Joyce was damaged because I had diabetics and did not know it. You are perfectly healthy. There should not be any question about that.”

Dena replies “thanks Pearl, I will probably need your help. Now I want this discussion to

end. Mom, I know you mean well but you are upsetting me and Dr. says I must not be upset. You two come over here and I want us all to agree this is a decision only Earl and I can make.” They all hold hands and agree to help support Dena and Earl in their decision.

When Earl comes to take her home Dr. Reith gives him strict instructions to follow. He warns him that these rules must be followed exactly if they want to have a healthy baby.

For 6 weeks she was not allowed to stand on her feet except to go to the bathroom or to move from the bed to the couch in the living room. All her meals were to be served on a tray.

For those 6 weeks they borrowed Paul's 1937 Ford and Dena was carried to the car, put in the back seat with her legs stretched out in the seat. Pillows were placed all around her so the ride would be as smooth as possible. Earl felt it was imperative to get her out of the house at least twice a week.

The last six months she could walk around and do light housework. BUT she could not lift anything that weighed more than 5 pounds and could not bend down to the floor.

It was a hard task to explain to the two year old Ilene that she could not set on Mommy's lap. In those months Ilene learned to always help her Mother. Perhaps that is why Ilene grew up to be an excellent housekeeper. Dena certainly never was a housekeeper. I think it is safe to say she was a homemaker.

Flood of 1951 purchase of cattle from Frank Housman.