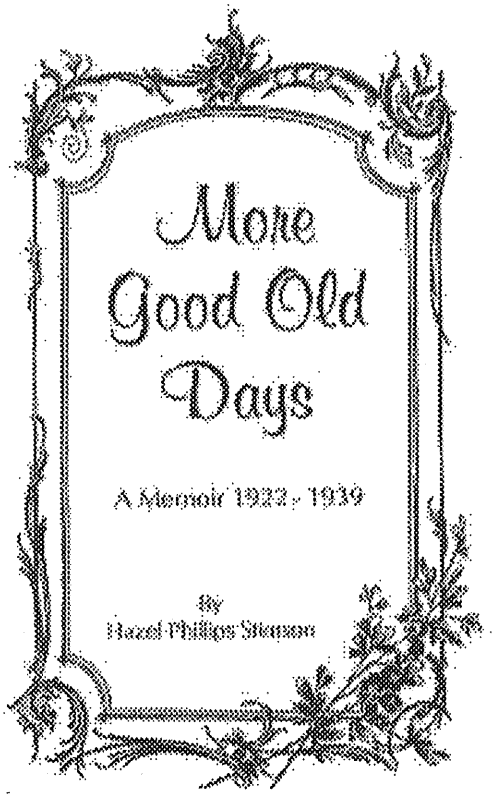

Forward

This book is a continuation of our mother's life story, published posthumously. Her first book, The good old days, told of her family's life in Iowa from the time her four great-grandfathers settled in Linn and Buchanan Counties, through her own childhood. More Good Old Days continues our parents' story, beginning with Mother's high-school graduation and ending just before World War II.

Born in 1900 and 1904, Roy and Hazel Phillips Stimson lived through the great changes sweeping agriculture this century. They began farming with horsepower, windpower, and waterpower; they ended using electricity, diesel fuel and propane gas. They moved to their first farm behind a team of horses: they came to their last home in a Chrysler Cordova. They did their country school homework by lamplight; Mother finished her books on a Radio Shack computer.

They were born as the automobile was being developed. They lived before airplanes, REA, plastic, nylon and television. They lived through 'The War to End All Wars' and the 2nd World War. They lived when Korea and Vietnam were just names in geography class.

This book details their life during marriage, childbirth, the great depression, the winter of '36 and all of the perils that go with farming and dairying. We hope that you enjoy this memoir written by a great lady, our mother.

Eldest daughter Ruth

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More Good Old Days

Hazel May Phillips
Graduation from Center Point
High School, 1922

With this work, Mother Hazel brings her account from her graduation from High School in 1922 to her life on the farm to 1937. After much concentration of the Phillips family, we are introduced to another large pioneer family, the Stimson family of Masonville, Iowa. Suddenly, there are four Grandpas and Grandmas, along with an entirely new set of brothers, sisters, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Trying not to intrude too much, I have continued to try to clearly identify each family reference when I think there may be confusion to the reader.

Mother Hazel passed away after she wrote More Good Old Days and before it was published. The manuscript lay dormant for a time until her son-in-law, William Sherman, took the manuscript and entered it on a computer. Mother had taken steps to fictionalize some of the characters and her daughters Ruth and Dorothy edited the manuscript to reflect the true names of all people who were identifiable.

Chapter 1

Out of School

There were only seventeen graduates in my class, May of 1922, at the Center Point High School, thirteen girls and four boys. I received a scholarship as Valedictorian, which was good for the tuition for tour years at a state school or one year at a private school. At that time, tuition was thirty-three dollars a quarter at the state schools and I chose the University of Iowa, which was the most convenient. The electric interurban ran from Center Point to Cedar Rapids and connected with the electric Crandic (**C**edar **R**apids and **I**owa **C**ity) to Iowa. City. Through our pastor, the Reverend J. J. Bearse, I was promised a job, working for my room and board with the student pastor in Iowa city.

I had enjoyed high school but I was glad to be finished with the constant time table of school. Although I was handicapped on extra-curricular activities by the seven mile drive, I had taken part in the Junior and Senior plays, many programs, a few class picnics and wiener roasts and so forth. I sometimes stayed in town with friends, the Thomas', for play practice or other evening activities.

At first, I drove a horse and buggy but Papa fixed a racing sulky with a solid sheet steel bottom to prevent the wind from coming up under me and I drove the sulky the rest of the four years. It was much easier on the horse and much speedier than with the buggy. I left home at 7:30 each morning and seldom reached home before 5:30 each evening. The horse was kept in the livery barn several blocks from school and when the men at the barn weren't too busy, which was most of the time, they hitched and unhitched for me. School ran from 9:00 AM till 4:00 PM, in those days. Some days the ride would be wonderful but sometimes it was the pits.

Before I had really relaxed form school and made any plans for the summer, Frank Carrothers of the Silver Creek Community hired me to help his wife for the summer. They had a year old boy and were expected a second child very soon. Cousin Ella (Emerson) had given them my name. In a few days, I was living in the Silver Creek vicinity on a farm, working for four dollars a week, room and board, the going wage.

I washed dishes, washed the cream separator, milk pails and cans, helped with the cooking and any needed housework. The only different chore was watering the flock of fifty or sixty white Peking ducklings of all ages and sizes. Binnie had the great luck with her flock that year, setting the duck eggs under broody hens.

Binnie was a fine pleasant woman, easy to work for and there was always plenty to do. Her name had been shortened from Belinda. Her twin sister, Minnie, shortened from Matilda, visited during the summer. Sadly, she was recovering from a bout of sleeping sickness and was badly crippled. They had other brothers and sister, among which was another set of twins, Romona and Monona, called Mona and Nona.

The family consisted of Frank, Binnie and Albert, one year old. Frank had two hired men, one who lived in and a second one who went home every night. He also exchanged help with his two brothers on their adjoining farms, who also had hired men. Some days, all would eat at our house but on other days, we would have no men for dinner. There were four to six corn cultivators in the fields every day, weather permitting. There was always lots of company, making more meals and dishwashing but some of the

guests were most helpful and friendly. I met many new people that summer and enjoyed the extended family and the community.

It was here that I met my future husband, Roy O. Stimson. He worked on the farm for thirty dollars a month, room, board and laundry. Introductions were made all around as the men came in to dinner that first day but I scarcely noticed him. He was dressed in work clothes, dirty and sweaty from cultivating in the corn field, he was not the "Young Lockivar From Out Of The West". I remember noting that he had brown eyes and beautiful dark hair as we hurried to put the dinner on the table. Meal time was about the only time we had contact with the men as everyone worked early in the morning and also late in the afternoon. Everyone retired early to be ready for the morning.

Oliver, age 18 & Roy , age 20

Carrothers had a large old house, large enough that each of us, as well as some of the guests had a private room. There was even a small storeroom, where they kept groceries: boxes of crackers and cookies, canned goods, syrups, most any groceries which could be ordered through a mail order house, likely Sears or Wards. Out family had never purchased groceries through the mail order houses but we were never so far from town and the grocery store as they were in the Silver Creek community.

Although we cleaned the living room regularly every Saturday, the kitchen was really the living room. It was a large room with the usual kitchen range, cupboards and preparation center. There was also a large table with the necessary chairs, where everyone ate their meals and where everyone sat to rest and read the daily newspaper. The well and pump house was just off the kitchen and apparently I had little to do with the laundry as I remember nothing about it. The usual path led past the wash house to the edge of the small orchard and turned to face the blank wall of the wash house. No peeking toms were possible.

A couple of weeks after I came, I was picking up cobs for use in the range, when Roy detoured to find me alone. As he helped me fill the basket, he asked me to go with him to a neighbor's born dance that weekend. The dance to which everyone was invited was a barn warming for the new barn on Frank's brother Charlies's farm. I had never had a date and hardly dared say "Yes". Although my classmates had been friends, four boys about fourteen girls and my driving back and forth didn't leave much chance of dating. When I confided in Binnie, she encouraged me and assured me that Roy was from highly respected family in a nearby community (Masonville). I was a little uneasy because I knew that Papa and Mama would not really approve, for if I was going to college, I couldn't get

sidetracked with fun and games.

The barn dance was lots of fun with good fiddle music, plenty of food and soft drinks. It was a lovely moonlit evening and a group of us walked together across the field, following the lands used by the teams and machinery, across the corn and the meadow. It was probably less than a mile.

I helped cook for the threshing crew at Charlie's that summer (he was a bachelor), along with several neighboring farm wives. It was the joke of the community that he and his hired man could not awake and get up in the morning, so they were always late to work. Stories floated around about the alarm clock and the bedlam they tried to create to awaken themselves, like putting the clock in a pie tin, poised ready to fall off the table

The day that the crew threshed at Charlies's was a hot sticky day, to hot for anybody. They stuck it out until a couple of the horses and one of the men passed out form the heat and then everyone went home. I don't remember but I suppose that the brother's families divided up the food. Remember we had no refrigeration in those days. That afternoon the small house was like an oven, with little shade, no fans, no ice water, and a cook stove going to cook the meat and potatoes.

Several small dates with Roy followed through the summer, at church picnics or community parties but I never really expected anything to come of it when we both returned to school that fall, I to the university at Iowa City and Roy to the State College at Ames. I was seventeen and Roy was twenty-one.

Surprisingly, letter followed and it gradually became accepted that I was his girl. He visited me only once on campus, which was not surprising as he had to take the night train from Ames after classes, spend the day in Iowa City and take the night train back to Ames, to be ready for classes the next day.

In Iowa City I was enrolled in advanced English, French, chemistry, chemistry lab., speech and gym.. Many classrooms were scattered about the town. English was held in an old building which looked like it could have once been a mansion, and the chemistry lectures were in a gloomy old brick building, both gone by now. The farthest class was gym in the Women's gymnasium near the river.

The University President held open house for the Freshman class in his home, near the end of Dubuque street, and I was appalled and shocked by the actions of the students as they crowded into the lovely old house. There had to have been some real damage, from all the pushing and shoving, as we crowded and passed through the stately hall and into the other rooms.

The pastor's manse was on Dubuque street, as handy to the college as it was possible to be. Only the State Hospital and the men's dorm, (The Quadrangle) were across the river at that time. I was turned around in directions in Iowa City because the sun came up in the north, that entire semester. I worked for my room and board, working four hours each day and eight hours on Saturday. I seldom saw the pastor except at breakfast, which was one of my duties to prepare. Although I thought that I could make good pancakes, I had to follow Ellen's recipe. It was very similar to mine except that she separated the egg yolks from the whites and beat each separately before adding to the batter.

I was introduced to egg cups and soft boiled eggs, which none of us kids would have eaten at home. We expected our eggs to be leather hard, thoroughly exasperating

Mama. I ate all my meals with the pastor's family.

Forrests, the pastor's family, consisted of the pastor, his wife, Ellen, a seven year old boy, a three year old girl and soon another baby. His parents, retired ministers visited several times and I enjoyed them very much. On Saturdays, if the weather was nice, one of my jobs was to take the little girl for a stroll in her buggy. It should have been fun but I hated it. It seemed like such a waste of time. I did see a lot of Iowa City.

I shared a nice large upstairs room with a pleasant senior girl and we got along well although we had almost nothing in common. The large windows of our room opened onto Dubuque Street so that after the football games, (to which I didn't have the money or any real inclination to attend), we watched from the room as car loads of students raced up and down the street, singing "The Old Gray Mare, She ain't what she used to be."

My studies seemed much like a repetition of high school work, not very stimulating and I was disappointed when I received C's at midterm. Remember I was used to getting A's without much effort. I thought that I didn't have time to study more but now I must admit that I didn't know how to plan my time or really know how to study. The only extra-curricular time I had was Sundays when I attended church and the Epworth League. This I really enjoyed, especially the singing. I was thrilled when all the young people, maybe sixty or seventy in their late teens or early twenties, really poured out their worship in song.

Papa and Mama, with the family, came in the Overland to see me and brought me my winter coat and warmer clothes. They had a terrible muddy trip of it as they were stuck twice between Cedar Rapids and Iowa City. The road was so bad that teams of horses were kept ready to help motorists through the worst places. Now, we are so used to good roads that it seems inconceivable that we drove through mud between the two cities.

It bothers me to this day that my family, who had made such an effort to see their daughter and sister, seemed so out of place as they, tired and muddy, came into the parsonage with it's deep rugs and upholstered furniture. Not that anything was said, Ellen was kind and gracious and my folks were always courteous and well spoken but I was embarrassed (was it shame that I felt?), by the onslaught of seven muddy people. We never did discuss it, but I think the folks were embarrassed also. Obviously, I was born too soon if I was going to let mud embarrass me.

I was homesick that fall but I didn't get home until Thanksgiving even though there were good connections between the Crandic and the Interurban. I was so happy to be home and see everybody but I can still remember how small and dark our kitchen seemed when I first came in.

Ellen had a baby girl, born prematurely, who came home from the hospital when she weighted five pounds, a sweet little petite doll. She thrived at first but somehow she contracted pneumonia and they lost her. It was a sad dreary time.

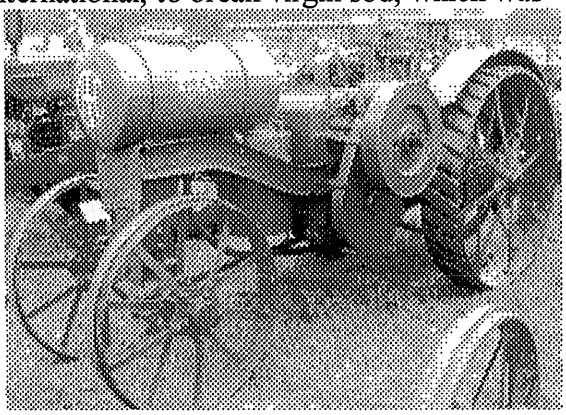
The pastor and his wife wouldn't be needing me the second semester so I used that as an excuse and left school at the end of the first semester, as I had already guess that I would be marrying a farmer. Although I did enjoy living in the college atmosphere, I was a country girl at heart and missed the rural life.

Papa and others of the neighborhood had become interested in a new organization called "The American Farm Bureau", dedicated to the betterment of the farm families and

farm communities. I chose the study of "the Farm Bureau" for the theme of my last long paper in English class but it was a poor choice because there was not enough published facts about the new organization, nor did I have enough real knowledge of the many problems which they were trying to emphasize.

Roy had graduated from the two year course in Agriculture at the College at Ames in 1919. After his graduation he had worked on a farm in western Iowa near Ruthven and Spencer and the Iowa Great Lakes, where he received $70 dollars a month, twice the going wage in eastern Iowa.

Here he used his first tractor, a Titan International, to break virgin sod, which was then sown to flax. Flax is a far different crop and needed special handling. The threshed grain had to be sacked or the wagon to had to be lined because flax seed will ooze out like water. If you step into a wagon box of flax seed, you will sink to the bottom.



Roy enjoyed life in western Iowa. On hot summer evenings, he and other hired men would go swimming in one of the many small lakes, skinny dipping as it is now called but then no one cared if they wore bathing suits or not. That spring, after heavy rains had flooded many of the streams and when the water receded, it left pools of water filled with fish, which of course perished. They shoveled the dead fish into manure spreaders and spread them on the fields for fertilizer, and they were plowed under.

He returned home the next spring to help his father, while his brother (Oliver) recuperated from an operation for appendicitis. When Oliver was back to work again, Roy found work in the neighborhood, so finished the summer working for Frank. He returned to Ames that fall and took two more quarters in dairying and cattle judging. When he landed a job with a large dairyman near Cedar Falls in March, he left school for good after finished the second quarter.

Our courtship was not easy. It took miles riding trains and interurban. It required making arrangements by mail for meeting trains and for staying overnight in each other's homes. We wrote each other every week or so but it wasn't the custom to write every day as it later became. It makes me laugh to think that Papa and Mama might have said if we had suddenly began writing every day. For my birthday, he sent me a manicure set with Mother of Pearl handles. Was I ever thrilled! I hadn't even known that he knew by birthday date but it turned out that one of my sisters had sneaked a tiny note under the seal of one of my envelopes to be sure that he knew. This had been easy to do as she probably had carried the letter to be mailed in our rural mail box near the school house, a mile and a half away. Roy also sent me a box of candy for Valentine's Day.

Roy visited me in my home several times, where we visited with the family, played games, took long walks in the fresh air, mostly to avoid the younger brothers and sisters. He had to ride the interurban from Cedar Falls to Center Point where we met him and he had to return by the same route. He was snow bound once with us, sleeping in our hide-a-bed in the front room. It was a large heavy looking library table, with the springs and the

mattress folded into and under the top. It was a nice piece of furniture but rather a hard bed. I visited his home less often since he wasn't living at home. I really enjoyed his brother and sisters (Esther, Bertha, Alta, Oliver, Emma) and remember with pleasure the musical evenings with friends and relatives. The girls enjoyed burning a sweet incense in a little burner, shaped like a Buddha, a custom in vogue at that time but it was new to me. Usually I visited in the summertime and Roy's mother (Mary Cross Stimson) would make large freezers of ice cream, adding fresh sweetened strawberries. Delicious! Mother's sister, Aunt Ola (Cross) was living with them. She had been a telephone operator at the Masonville Exchange for many years and had retired. In later years she returned to Kansas and lived with another sister.[1]

The next summer I worked for May Emerson[2] (*), also in the Silver Creek vicinity. She had five children, a farmer husband, a hired man and carpenters. They were repairing and refurbishing a stately old house on the farm, which had stood vacant for several years. The house had been the residence of the manager k, when they build the CAN, the Chicago, Anamosa and Northern, a railroad running from Anamosa to Independence, but which only got as far as Quasqueton. It ran for several years but was defunct and the rails and ties had been removed some years before I worked there.[3] In that area, depots and stockyards had been established at Keine, Monti and at Robinson. This was very welcome to the farmers, as the area was far from the more prominent railroads. But it was not to be and the railroad went out of business.

Although we did not feed the carpenters, there was plenty of work to do. Remember, a hired man and/or a hired girl was a neighbor, whom you hired when you needed help. They were considered as equals and treated as such, only of course, you did the work laid out and earned your wages.

Silver Creek was a community of Orangemen, Scotch-Irish emigrants from Ireland in the middle 1800's. Many of the elders had a strong brogue and all of them had a talent for blarney. They supported their small Methodist Church and each other. Cousin Ella had married into the community and her family were a part of the church family. I enjoyed the people and made many friends, some of whom are still friends today. Roy was able to visit me at Emerson's several times. He came home to Masonville by train and borrowed his father's car to come to Silver Creek, eight miles or so to spend an afternoon or evening with me. One especially bright moonlight night, we sat on the steps of the rebuilt house as long as we could, until he had to hurry back to Masonville to catch his train.

Then, one Sunday, a fellow hired man and Roy drove down from Cedar Falls and with Roy's sister Bertha, we made a foursome to spend the afternoon at the Devil's Backbone State Park. George was a weird-o; he sang all the way to the park, sang, "Yes, We Have No Bananas", hummed it continually and sang it all the way home. And, of course, he tried to get fresh with Bertha. She was so put out with him that when we got home, she went straight to her piano and buried her copy of the song at the bottom of the pile. Although I shared her opinion of George, I gladly welcomed the visit, for Roy and I had a good time as all of us clambered over the rocks and went down the Devil's Chimney. Roy didn't' invite George again but I expect that George was as nervous as could be, being clearly out of his element. On a later Sunday, Clarence Popp, a neighboring bachelor farmer offered to drive Roy home one weekend and thus met his (Roy's) older sister Esther, and Clarence soon returned on his own.

Roy and I attended the National Cattle Congress in Waterloo that fall. I visited my Aunt Lydia, Papa's sister and her family for a few days in Waterloo, at their home on Falls Avenue, close to the Cattle Congress grounds. Roy called for me there and we left the car in their yard and walked across to the fair grounds. We took in everything; all the dairy exhibits, the machinery, the horse show, and the many business exhibits and displays. Roy was especially interested in dairy cattle and we paid special attention to the Holstein Friesian breed. Roy was also very interested in the various varieties of seed corn and other seeds, generally well displayed at the Congress. His employer had a booth, advertising Reed's Yellow dent. Electric Park, then Waterloo's amusement park, was open and part of the fair. We rode among other things, the roller coaster, small compared with modern days, but large enough for me. It was torn down shortly afterward.

That night, believe it or not, we became lost on our way home. Someway in passing the big school house, we must have turned too many corners and started off in the wrong direction, and every row of street lights looked just like the others. We had to return to the fair grounds and start over. We became engaged at this time and we made it a point to attend the Cattle Congress each year for thirty-four years, until we both worked off the farm and it was too difficult for both of us to get time off on the same day.

Roy also called on me at Herman's, Uncle Nates's folks in Cedar Heights, where I spent one day with them. I remember we sat and visited until so late that Roy missed the last street car back to Cedar Falls. I never did know whether he walked or how he got home that night. My young girl cousins, about the age of my sisters, were excited and teasing me because I had a beau. I was surprised as my sisters were more accepting and wanted to visit with Roy as a brother.

I lost my purse during that week end. I was sure where I had left it but it couldn't be found. We searched everywhere, went over and over the house and Clarence's car, which Roy had borrowed but we never found it. Although Uncle Nels offered to lend me enough, Roy bought the ticket home. I don't remember how much money I lost, but it was likely around ten or twelve dollars. When I told Papa about it, he suggested I just forget it. There was nothing we could do about it and who knew what temptation was put in someone's way. I always had the feeling that he had a suspicion as to who took the money but if so, I never knew.

I remember some of my dresses of that time because I had made them; even Roy remembered two of them. One was made of pink organdy, with inch-wide tucks in tiers around the waist and the full skirt, finished with a wide belt of the pink organdy and tied in the back with a perky bow. A second dress was black taffeta, made with wide overskirts trimmed with red piping.

High School graduates did not wear caps and gowns in those days, (those were for college graduates) so all of the girls thought that we had to have a new white dress for the occasion. Mine was white batiste, lace insertions and tiny tucks, made by a dressmaker that Mama hired. It was very nice and I approved it but I don't think I ever wore it a second time. Probably that is the reason that high schools went to renting caps and gowns. One of my favorite outfits was purchased, a black pleated skirt with a red middy wool blouse. It would be right in style again now!

Chautauqua shows were still in vogue with good speakers, dramas, musicals, skits, all presented with good acting and good taste. Roy and I, with his sister and brother,

attended a magic tent show one evening in Manchester, one of the most excellent and exciting magic shows I have ever seen.

One Saturday night, we wondered along the streets of Manchester and we met Roy's Uncle Will[4],

Roy's Father Harry and Brother's and Sister

who was selling popcorn from one of those moveable popcorn stands. He was pleased to see us and insisted on giving each of us a large bag of popcorn. Then wishing to please, he added a second dollop of butter or whatever he was using. We couldn't eat the corn it was so greasy we had to throw it away. Of course, we never told him, we wouldn't have hurt his feelings for anything. We ended up the evening with a banana split, an ice cream concoction, the first one I ever ate and probably the first time I had ever heard of one.

Our family often had ice cream cones, vanilla and strawberry usually, (I still like cones) and Papa had purchased an ice cream sundae for himself and me a few times but I don't think our local shops ever made any fancy dishes. Anyway, the six of us had better rejoice over nickel ice cream cones.

I seldom saw any of my high school classmates as we scattered far and wide. Gladys went to Normal training School for the summer and she taught our local school that fall. I substituted for her twice but I am sure that I wasn't very good at it. Grace went on to Coe College and when she graduated, she spent most of her life teaching high school Latin. She was one of our group of shy country girls and she had great difficulty with getting passing grades. While we were goofing around at recess and so on, she would be at her desk, really studying, receiving D's and D plus. It was an astonishment to all of us then she entered college. It goes to show that where there is determination, there is a

way.

My oldest sister (Blanche) started to high school beginning the long drive for four years. My friend Mary Thomas graduated and soon married and moved to Cedar Rapids. There was plenty for me to do at home and I worked on my hope chest. I visited with Grandma and Grandpa often as they now needed some help. We took all the washings home with us and we did most of the cooking and baking. Grandma was in a wheel chair part of the time but Grandpa was as spry as ever. Sometimes it kept Papa and the Overland busy coming and going. None of us girls ever learned to drive at home and I wonder why. It wasn't that Papa wouldn't allow it, he probably didn't encourage it, but I don't think that I ever seriously asked to. Perhaps the uncertainty of the old cars and tires scared us off. Papa did try to teach Mama to drive once, but she ran into a stump and she wouldn't try again. Perhaps one car and one driver was all the pocket book could stand.

Roy Orval Stinson
Student of Agriculture at Iowa
State College, around 1922

[1] Surviving children of Hiram Cross & Clarrisa Bennett: Corwin, Elwin (?), Salome, Lillian, Viola, Mary E., Ella This information from 1880 census of Mitchel County, Kansas. Also from the obituary of Mary Emma Cross Stimson, "…When about 18 years of age, she came to live with her Brother Corwin near Masonville, Iowa."

[2]

[3] The short lived CAN railroad was a victim of WWI when the ties and rails were appropriated for the war effort.

[4] Surviving children of Milton S. Stimson & Nancy Chandler Stimson: Della, William, Maggie, Calvin, Edward, Harry.

Wedding Bells

Clarence and Esther Mason Popp

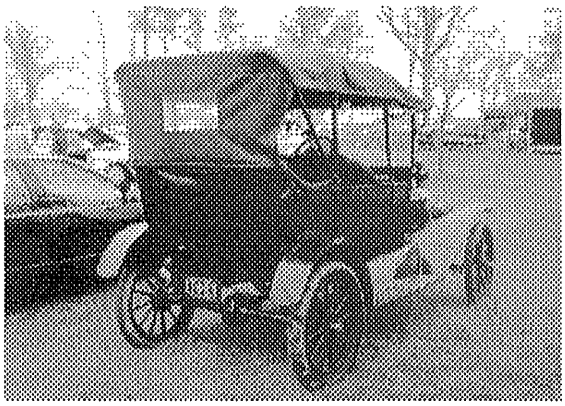
Roy and I were honored to be asked to stand up with Esther and Clarence at their wedding that fall. Clarence owned and farmed a 120 acre farm southwest of Cedar Falls near where Roy was working, and he and Roy and become good friends. Esther had been working in Manchester, where she was completing a dress making course with a local seamstress, so she usually wasn't home when I visited. I had met her several times but I hadn't had a chance to know her very well.

It took all day for me to come the thirty or so miles from my own home to their home. (Masonville) Papa took me to the depot in Walker and I rode the Rock Island Railroad freight train to Independence. There was only one passenger car which was attached to the train carrying grain, coal and lumber. In Independence, the Rock Island depot was almost a mile west of the center of town and the Illinois Central depot was almost as far north, eleven long blocks to be exact. I rode the passenger train to Manchester where Roy's mother met me with the team of Indian ponies and buggy for the last seven miles.

Rock Island Depot, Independence, Iowa

I shopped in Independence as I waited and among my purchases was a wedding gift, a silver appearing crumb tray with a knife-like scraper to match. I wasn't very practical was I? When Clarence broke up housekeeping many years later, it came back to me and is one of my cherished keepsakes. Another keepsake is the gift they gave us at our wedding, a flowered celery dish and four tiny salt dishes, the only gift that survived our moves and fires.

It was a very simple wedding in the living room of the old house. The ceremony was solemnized at 7:30 in the evening by the local pastor with only the family and a few relatives and friends present. Refreshments were served and the evening spent in visiting.



Model T Touring car

Roy's mother had a full house that night. Roy bunked with his brother Oliver; Oliver's girl friend Nadine and I shared a room with his younger sisters while the bride and groom were privileged to have the guest room on the first floor.

Mother Stimson and Roy's brother Oliver took me home in the family Model T Ford touring car. Mother was a stern stately appearing woman and I nervously felt that she wanted to see the home of this girl in whom Roy was obviously getting interested. It was only an intuition and maybe it was so. Nervously, I pictured our dark cluttered kitchen and hoped that Mama and the girls were wearing clean presentable dresses. It is sad to be so self-conscious when we are young.

Looking back on those years, kitchens in all those old houses were usually small and dark with an adjoining pantry. It was the same in Roy's home. Everyone entered through the kitchen and traipsed across the kitchen to the dining room and on to the rest of the house. Both houses had a side entry into the dining room but no one ever used it.

Those kitchens were crowded because so much had to be kept there. All water had to be carried in and carried out. The cream separator was kept there, out of the freezing cold and for convenience. The washing machine was usually in the kitchen, the ironing board was set up there, so the sadirons could be heated on the range. The round metal tub was brought in for baths before the kitchen fire using warm water from the reservoir. Here was where we cracked walnuts and hickory nuts and picked out the

meats. It was were we polished our shoes. It was where we removed our boots and outdoor clothing to hang on a string of hooks in the corner. We washed up at the kitchen sink or washstand and used the roller towel hanging on the back of the door.

A good pantry was a necessity and contained all the things we now keep in the refrigerator and the sundry supplies of the kitchen shelves. Milk and cream was set to cool in crocks on the shelves. Baked goods cooled there and all leftovers were stored in the pantry. Except in very cold weather, a window was open to cool or air the room.

I have no idea what Mother Stimson thought of my home but she was always kind and pleasant to me. Possibly she was acting as a chaperone in not allowing Oliver to take me home alone. Only a year younger than Roy, he was talkative and dated girls often which Roy did not. Also, he had a reputation for stealing Roy's girls (Roy's opinion) but most likely, it was a pleasant outing for Mother to get away for a few hours and to keep Oliver company on the ride home.

Clarence and Esther did not take a honeymoon but settled in on the farm at once. They had a pleasant six room house on two floors, situated on a gravel road, with some large shade trees, a nice lawn and flower beds. There was a well planned kitchen, light and larger than we had been used to, a pantry and enclosed entry. Clarence had plenty of furniture so Esther could take time to rearrange and change or redecorate to suit herself.

Roy worked for a dairyman near-by, where he especially appreciated the experience on a large dairy farm. He saved his money toward starting farming for himself. I worked a garden at home which fitted in with my chicken chores. I purchased a 100 egg incubator and set it up in the dining room, and used Mama's brooder house to raise two hundred chickens, more or less. Aren't parents wonderful? I hope I told them that I appreciated it!

Occasionally, I worked for neighboring farm wives, for four or five dollars a week. As I was living at home, I could save all of it. One of the ladies, I'll call her Marie, was pregnant with her eighth child and she was confined to bed for medical reasons. Her only daughter was married and living away and although the older boys worked outside, they were not expected to help in the house. It was a busy household. Marie was very jealous of her good looking husband and did not really trust him off the farm, being most suspicious of her daughter-in-law, who lived just down the road. Whether or not she had reason to be, I don't know but her nearest neighbor aggravated the situation with her sympathy and spying.

Irene D. was a man hater, a forerunner of Woman's Lib. I never met her husband but I felt sorry for him. He was in the neighboring work crews, as the threshing ring, and although she talked most spitefully about him, (she didn't claim any real abuse but he was a lazy good for nothing) he couldn't have been all that bad. He died in his forties, leaving her with three or four children but I have lost track of them.

Marie and Jeff went on to have another two children and together they lived to celebrate their eightieth wedding anniversary, at the age of 96 and 99. They managed to survive the Depression, two World Wars and raised a family of ten children who are a credit to anyone.

I worked several weeks for Laura, so very unlike the first two. She was so happy with her husband and family, (her first marriage had been a disaster) and now she really appreciated her kind thoughtful husband. She told me all about it as I helped her care for

the new baby and helped with the housework. Her oldest child was from her first marriage and she was so pleased that Henry seemed to love the child as his own.

Before marriage, she had worked in a laundry and she taught me to fold and stack the towels just so, each folded one way. This applied to wash cloths and tea towels also. At home our towels were folded any old way and piled helter-skelter on the shelf or in a drawer. Our wash clothes were worn pieces of towels or underwear and stuffed into a bag which hung beside the sink to be used as we needed them. To this day I think of wash cloths as wash rags.

One interesting thing I remember about their home was the way she cared for and preserved their meat. She had sliced all the hams, shoulders and side meat, fried it ready to eat and stored it in lard, in ten gallon crocks. These were kept in an upstairs storeroom and a small amount removed to use as needed. The meat only needed to be thoroughly heated ready to serve.

A furniture store in Center Point was selling out and I managed to purchase a sewing machine and a kerosene range at bargain prices. I made quilts, sheets and pillow cases, towels and some fancy work. We canned fruit and vegetables all summer and fall. After Mama had filled her four or five hundred quarts, both one and two quart jars, I bought new pint and quart jars and filled them for myself. I also made jelly and pickles. Those cucumber pickles turned out to be the best I ever made and I could never duplicate them.

One weekend in the late summer, Roy invited me to go on a special excursion trip from Cedar Falls to Dubuque and on from Dubuque to Bellevue on the Mississippi river. Papa drove me to the depot at Center Point and I rode the interurban to Cedar Falls where Roy met me. We stayed overnight with Esther and Clarence and their new baby, Mary. It was very hot and sticky weather and I remember that it was the first time that I had ever seen such a tiny baby dressed in just a diaper. Earlier mothers didn't have as much sense or else enough courage to defy convention and make the baby more comfortable.

In the morning Clarence took us to Cedar Falls to board the train and there was such a crowd that two trains had to be made up. We were the last couple allowed on the first train and we had to ride backwards all the ninety miles to Dubuque. Riding backward on the rough train track made me feel sick and I was frightened that I would be sick on this most wonderful date. After arriving and boarding the boat, I recovered and felt fine all day.

We had a wonderful day! The weather was perfect, the sky a cloudless blue, and the sunshine glistened on the ripples back of the paddle wheel. I had seldom eaten out and when we did, if we happened to be in Cedar Rapids at the noon hour, it was usually soup and crackers or a hot beef sandwich. On the boat, we had a breaded tenderloin dinner with all the trimmings and for dessert, we had yellow watermelon. It was delicious!

It was dark by the time the boat returned to Dubuque and then we had to stand and wait two hours for the train to be made ready. We didn't mind the waiting except that the mosquitoes ate heartily on our ankles that evening. A group of fellow travelers had imbibed too much while they waited and they put on a rousing entertainment, mostly silly, on the return trip. With our jackets pulled over our faces as we reclined in our seats, we could laugh and giggle at them even as we hoped they thought we were sleeping.

It was after 2 AM when we arrived back in Cedar Falls and Roy was a little

nervous about how we were going to get the five miles to Esther's. He needn't have worried because Clarence was still waiting for us at the depot. Dear, good, kind brother-in-law.

Memories of our wedding day are clouded over my memories of the many weddings we have attended since. We made plans and set the day for December 3, 1924, set late enough so that Roy would have finished his job of corn picking. Then he would retire from being a hired man and become a farmer in his own right. I visited Grandma and Grandpa for three weeks and we visited and visited as I pieced, by hand, three quilt tops for my own use.

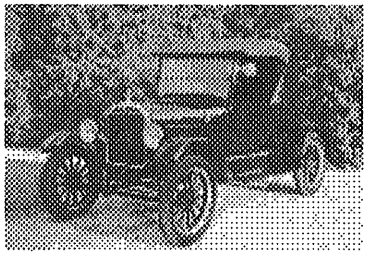
Roy came down two days early for the wedding as he had to get the license in Linn County. In the Overland, Papa and Roy drove to the courthouse in Marion for the license and Papa signed as my witness. The cost was $1.50. Roy also bought a bouquet of red roses for the wedding ceremony, which Papa thought was an extravagance, because he told me "You'll have to raise a few more chickens to pay for them."

God bless our money conscious men, always worried about making ends meet. These silly women who think that men have it so much easier than women, should have to provide for their families, year after year after year. Men and women both perform interesting jobs and humdrum tasks, so what? The humdrum have to be done! I think that the women really have the most variety, in housekeeping, cooking, sewing, child bearing, child training, and keeping the social tone of the family and the community.

Edith and Mary Thomas and their mother Louisa, long time friends from Center Point helped with the wedding dinner preparations and with the decorations. We made what we fondly imagined was an arch in one corner of the living room and we hung white streamers and white paper bells. Mary Thomas and Roy's brother Oliver stood up with us. The Reverend J. B. Bearse, our pastor and friend, performed the eleven o'clock ceremony. My wedding ring was a band of white platinum with a scroll pattern. Men were not expected to have wedding bands a that time, as rings on men's fingers were a source of injury. For some reason, Rev. Bearse was rattled and forgot the closing line and we never were pronounced man and wife.

Roy's suit was a dark gray and my dress was a deep warm tan, trimmed with ecru lace, made in the style of the day, rather short and long waisted with a low belt line. I carried the red roses. I remember nothing about the dinner except that everyone forgot the cranberry sauce left waiting on the pantry shelf. Mama was embarrassed and never let us forget it. Neither can I remember anything about the cake, except that one of my cousins has a piece of it after all of these years. She couldn't attend and one of her sisters brought her a piece of the wedding cake which she dried and kept. Probably made by myself or one of my sisters, I'm sure it was a very simple cake when compared with some of the beauties of today.

December 3rd was a lovely fall day. Esther, Clarence and Mary drove down from Cedar Falls in the Model T Roadster.



Model T Roadster

Roy's family came from Delaware county. Grandma Todd had arrived several days earlier from South Dakota. There were aunts, uncles, cousins, family and a few

friends. Only Grandpa and Grandma couldn't come.

When Papa and Roy were in Marion, Roy happened to pick up a ring laying on the street and put it in his pocket, thinking that he would give it to one of the younger girls and promptly forgot about it. That afternoon he showed it to my sisters and Edith Thomas but Edith was curious and thought it looked better than a child's ten cent ring and tried to cut glass with it. To all our surprise, it did make a line on the window pane. So Roy was an Indian giver and returned the ring to his picker again.

In the late afternoon, Papa took the Thomas' home and Roy and I to the depot in Center Point. We rode the interurban into Cedar Rapids and caught the midnight train to Chicago. It was a daring and exciting place for a honeymoon, at least it was to us. We stayed in a small kitchenette apartment in the Sheridan Arms on North Shore for several days. The bed in the room took up almost the entire room and when made up, folded up into the wall.

It was almost unbearably hot and sultry in the room and we could find no way to cool it off. Even thought the windows were wide open, nothing seemed to move the oppressive air. Roy had a touch influenza and did not entirely enjoy the time in Chicago.

We saw many things, the Planetarium, the Art Museum, the Aquarium, Lake Shore Drive with Lake Michigan spraying all over the road and we finally found the proper bus and the proper corner to get off at the Lincoln Park Zoo. It was the big Chicago zoo at that time. We wandered through the Marshall Fields huge store and all Roy remembered about it was that he couldn't find a drinking fountain in the entire store. He never was much of a shopper. Still for both of us, the honeymoon was a bright and shining memory.

I regret that we have no wedding pictures but we thought that we couldn't afford them. It was also inconvenient as we would have had to go to a studio in Cedar Rapids. We did have a small brownie camera and it took good snapshots so why we didn't have a few keepsakes is a wonderment today.

When we returned to Cedar Rapids by train, the buildings looked unbelievably small and flat and it was fifteen degrees below zero. The very next day after the wedding, a big sleet storm had blown in. Grandma Todd had gone with Cousin Ella to spend the night: during the storm, ice weighted branches fell and knocked the chimney off the house. This gave Grandma another juicy bit to add to her story of trouble always following her around.

While we were gone, Edith and my sisters had been watching the papers and found a lost and found ad for a diamond ring. A reward was offered. Although we still couldn't believe that it was very valuable, we called the number and set up a meeting. It proved to be the lady's ring, and she gave Roy a five dollar reward. She insisted the ring was not very valuable except for it's sentiment, so we never did know the real value of the ring.

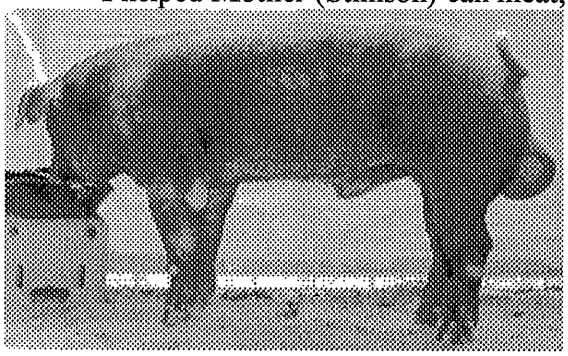
We spent a week with Clarence and Esther, where we expected to be chivareed but it did not materialize as the weather was terrible that week. It snowed and snowed some more and the temperature hovered around twenty below zero.

In traveling by train, street cars and interurban, we were constantly waiting for train time, sometimes several hours. We saw movies as we waited, being entertained as well as having a warm place to wait. We saw movies, starring Harold Lloyd, Buster Keaton, Gloria Swanson, Mary Pickford, cowboy pictures, cartoons; we even saw two movies in one evening at different movie houses.

We lived with Roy's folks during the month of January, where we finally received our chivaree in the form of a neighborhood party. The old house was filled that night with friends and neighbors. Roy's box of cigars was gone but at Mother's suggestion, we bought a bushel of large red apples and passed out an apple to each. Mother served refreshments to all.

Roy cut wood near Buffalo Creek during the month to earn the money needed to transport our belongings to New Hartford on the Illinois Central. January was a good winter month. Each morning frost hung from every branch and bush, then it was sunny all day with no real extreme of temperature. Oliver was also working up wood for the home place and they could ride together. One week, I went with them and Roy and I stayed a few nights with cousins Ella and Jim (Emerson) and their baby Isabel.

I helped Mother (Stimson) can meat, both beef and pork. They gave us a quarter of beef and she helped me can it, to add to our boxes of canned goods. Aunt Ola had gone back to Kansas to live with another sister; Roy's younger sisters were in school and of course Esther was married, so I really felt that I was helpful to Mother that winter.



Duroc Boar

We felt that we would never got started farming if we bought a car so Roy bought a driving horse. He had owned one horse, a chunky strawberry roan work horse, named May, which he had raised form a colt. I spent the last of my savings on an order of pots and pans and a water pail. Roy's father gave him five bred gilts, Duroc Jersey breed.

Roy had rented a hundred acre farm in Grundy county for the going rate of nine dollars an acre, which upset his father very much because it was almost twice the going rate of rent in Delaware county. Father had promised to loan Roy enough money to get a start but he couldn't keep his promise. He had erected a new windmill and other expenses had left him with no money to lend. Roy was very disappointed, upset and worried. He couldn't really back out, the lease and rent notes were signed and Clarence was expecting him to help with the spring work and was saving the necessary seed, both oats and corn.

A dear old neighbor friend, Jay Wellman, came to our rescue and loaned us $400 Dollars, which Roy used to buy three more horses and five milk cows, to freshen in the spring. It was a hard loan to repay. We visited them in their farm home where they still used an old fashioned laundry stove as a kitchen cook stove and they used a large hard coal burner in the living room. They had bought one of the first cars in the neighborhood, a 1914 Oldsmobile touring car and he was still driving it when they came to see us in 1927, by then one of the oldest cars in the neighborhood.

About the first of February, we borrowed a team and wagon and drove to my folks to pick up my belongings, and we spent a week at home. Roy attended farm sales with Papa and he bought a single buggy, a heating stove, and a dining room table with chairs on John Fairchild's closing out sale.

When the day came to leave, the wagon was loaded with these purchases, the

incubator, brooder stove, bed and dresser which the folks gave us, the sewing machine, the kerosene cook stove, the boxes of canned goods and my trunk, filled with my hope chest linens. With the wagon loaded and the buggy piled high, we hitched old Jim (my old reliable steed, who had taken me to high school for four years), to the buggy and I drove him for the last time.

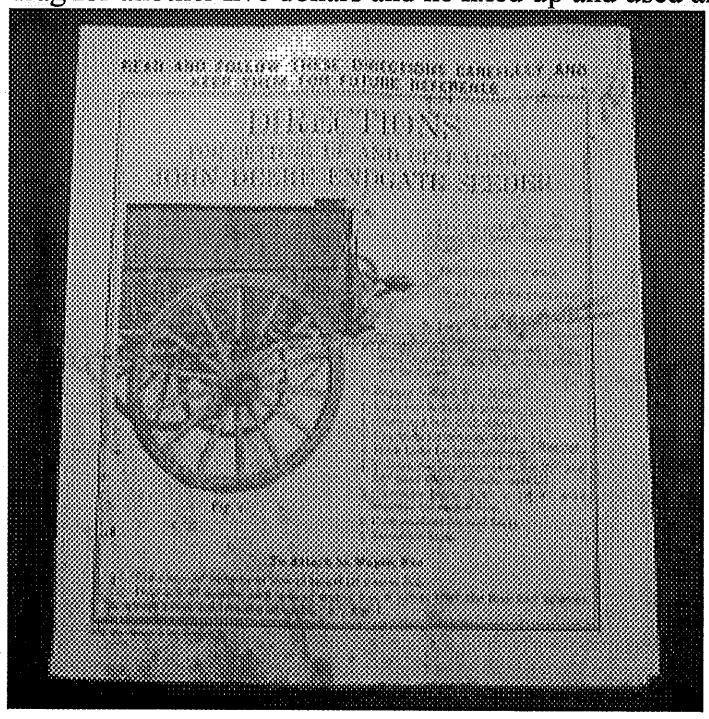
The first day we drove as far as Grandpa's (John Morris & Eliza) and spent the night with them, my last time ever. Grandma was now confined to the wheel chair but we had a very nice visit and they at least got to meet and know Roy a little bit. Mama or one of my sisters was sending quite a bit of time with them. Grandpa clung to the old homestead but Papa soon was forced to move them to live with him so they could have better care.

I felt forlorn and bereft when I was leaving home for the last time. Visits are never the same! From further experience, I realize that Mama felt as bereft as I did, when her eldest girl was leaving for her own home. Neither of us was able to express our feelings, an empty sense of loss even as we knew there would be many gains in the future.

On Our Own

Esther and Clarence were most helpful as we moved into the large old ell-shaped farm house with four rooms downstairs and two upstairs. We set up what furniture we had and we felt very happy with our new home. There was a fenced in yard with shade trees, several apple and plum trees and a good garage stood separately from the house, which we later used for growing chickens. There was an old style barn in poor condition but the horse barn was adequate and an addition had been added on one side for a simple cow barn which was sound and dry. A hollow tile silo stood beside the barn but it was useless with big holes on one side where some machinery or something had ruined it. There was a small hog house with pens for six or eight sows, a corn crib, a small henhouse and a couple of small falling down sheds, almost useless. With so little machinery, actually they were adequate for our needs. All the buildings except the house were in need of repair but the 100 aces was well tiled and was some of Grundy county's best farm land.

Roy attended farm sales and bought his three horses and five cows, due to freshen soon, and fifty laying hens. He bought an endgate seeder for five dollars, a four section drag for another five dollars and he fixed up and used an old eight foot disk which had been abandoned on the farm. Clarence had bought a new gang plow so Roy used the old sulky plow.

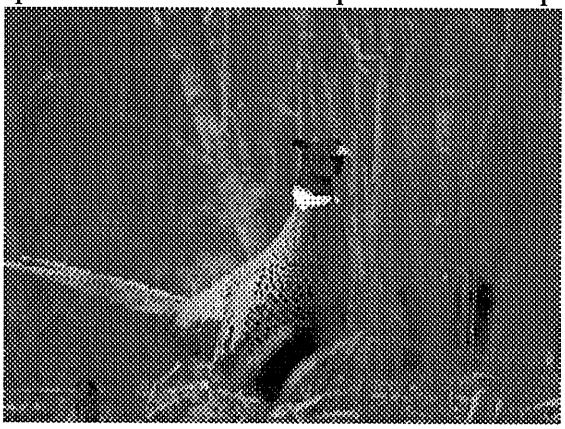


We envied a young farmer who had been able to buy from his father, a complete line of tools and machinery, and had everything to use even if they were old, whereas we had to buy and borrow or go without everything from horse collars, harness, rivets, shovels, pitchforks and hammer handles, as well as machinery.

The season was very early that spring so Roy planted a small field back of the grove to corn and I planted a garden in early April. Alas, a late May freeze set back the corn and ruined the garden: even the potatoes froze and did not recover. The best crop from the late garden that year was a bountiful crop of acorn squash, I still don't like acorn squash very well.

Although the corn was nipped off, it recovered and came on again. One thing about the corn that year nearly floored us. Ringneck pheasants, which had been introduced into Grundy County, had thrived so well that they were very plentiful. In one of our fields, the birds walked right down the row of newly planted corn and ate each

sprouted seed as it came up. We had to replant eight acres. We bought hatching eggs and started the incubators. At that time some farm wives specialized in selling hatching eggs to neighbors, which meant that all eggs were fresh, not over a week old and carefully sorted, leaving out misshapen or weak shells. The flocks had to be healthy and only good roosters kept for breeding purposes. From five to ten cents a dozen extra was charged for the extra care and work. I have forgotten these ladies and their farms now, but once when we picked up the eggs, the lady treated us with huge pieces of delicious angel food cake.



Somewhere we had acquired a second incubator but I don't remember where. They were heated with hot water which in turn was heated by kerosene lamps. The eggs were place on a tray, none touching, and were turned by hand twice a day. After ten days or so, the eggs were candles and the infertile eggs thrown to the pigs. Sometimes these eggs were boiled, chopped up, shell and all and fed to growing chickens or the hens. It was difficult to keep an even temperature of one hundred degrees as the room temperature varied so much. I was constantly adjusting the heat, turning the wick either up or down. Some hatches were better then others, from a disaster of maybe fifty, to a good hatch of 180 farm two hundred eggs. Then the chicks were placed under a kerosene brooder stove with a canopy to spread the warmth. The chicks would hover and make a ring under the edge of the canopy, wherever the heat was most to their liking.

Coccidiosis[1] was a very prevalent disease among chickens at that time, so sometimes the death loss was terrible and sometimes not so much. We had no idea of the cause except that we knew they died of a kind of diarrhea. We tried different feeds, fed medicines in the water, varied the heat, anything. Sometimes, nothing helped , although, always some would survive and I suppose start a new series of exposure.

Baby chicks from some of the earlier hatcheries succumbed like flies before the disease was identified and controlled by vaccination, sanitation and isolation. The first commercial hatchery in Dike, was a series of flat incubators, strung in rows down a long building and heated with hot water in pipes. The trays of eggs were turned automatically but otherwise it looked and was much like my small incubators.

Roy and I built our first brooder house, eight by ten feet with a shingled shed roof, four feet to the eaves at the back and six foot at the front, with two windows in front and a door in one end, using new lumber and shingles. I remember we worked together on some of those bright spring days as we got ready for the first hatch. We loved it!

Roy worked for Clarence, plowing and planting, to earn seed corn and seed oats and then Roy borrowed the planter to plant his own corn. This work was very beneficial but a chore just the same. Remember, he had to drive the horse and buggy the ten miles over and back every day, which meant doing the milking in the dark, both night and morning. I was able to do most of the other chores while he was helping Clarence.

That summer he also helped Clarence pick sweet corn for the Cedar Falls Canning

company, twelve acres of it. Although picking sweet corn is a hot miserable job on hot wet mornings, Roy was glad to have the work. I went along several days to visit and help Esther. It was especially fun to play with Mary for the day.

Sweet corn had to be picked by hand in the early morning and delivered to the cannery by eleven or twelve o'clock so the cannery workers could finish before the corn would heat and sour. The corn was hauled directly from the field to the factory in three bed wagon boxes drawn by horses, a distance of five or six miles in this case.

We named our driving horse, Gunpowder, because of her explosive action when she backed away from a hitching post. Woe to anyone who parked too close when she made her wild plunge backward. She was a good driving horse, a well built bay, who trotted tirelessly on the buggy for many miles. She could not be bridled in the barn but she would stand like a lamb in the buggy shafts to be harnessed and bridled. Needless to say, we wisely parked where she had plenty of room to turn but occasionally someone would park nearby and cause us anxiety.

It was a constant battle of wits between us and Gunpowder. One time happened as we were driving a small herd of young cattle, eight or ten, a distance of ten miles to summer pasture on the river. I was to drive the horse and buggy ahead, show enough that the cattle would follow and not disperse at every crossroads. At least, that is the way we hoped it would work. But, Gunpowder could not understand the slow pace and since she would not disobey me and run, there was nothing left for her to do but balk. We sat there and the cattle passed us. When they were far enough ahead, she would trot to catch up with them. After this happened several times, we gave up and Gunpowder and I went ahead to wait at the pasture gate.

We borrowed from the bank in Dike to buy eight springing heifers, Holstein-Friesian, from the Hogar Christensen herd near Cedar Falls. His herd was an outstanding one at that time and we purchased some nice, well grown two year old bred heifers. This was the beginning of the herd we tended for many years.

That first year, one of our cows, a big Guernsey gave birth to twins. Thin births are rare in cattle and it only happened once again on our farm many years later when a big shorthorn dropped twins.

Roy managed quite well, even though we had so little machinery. By working with Clarence, he managed to get the crops planted in good season. He exchanged labor in oat harvesting with a neighbor to the west which was mutually beneficial. In other words, Roy did all the oat shocking behind the grain binder on both farms. Threshing also went well, Roy and I built a new hay rack to use on our one wagon running gears in threshing. One of the heavy awkward jobs was changing from the wagon box to the hay rack and back again. We managed alone. The corn crop was good that year but it didn't mature enough for seed.

That fall, Grundy county had its' first open season on the ringneck pheasants. The season opened early when much of the corn was not yet picked, so many farmers would not allow hunting in their fields. Roy permitted a group of business men from Gladbrook to hunt on our acres. Happily they took to the field and shot their limit and left two for us so we felt well repaid, especially so since we hoped for less pheasants another year. A

week or so later, here came a box in the mail from them, containing a box of candy and a box of chewing gun (twenty-four packages), I had never seen that much gum. Just imagine the lift this gave us, two kids struggling to start farming on a shoestring.

Clarence had one field of corn which was ripe enough for seed so he and Roy saved enough for the next year from that field. They lamented all the next year because Clarence had fed the bulk of the corn to his hogs and cattle. The following spring, seed corn was selling for seven dollars a bushel and they could have sold the entire field for seed. It would have been a killing. What a favorite conversation piece, "What might have been!"

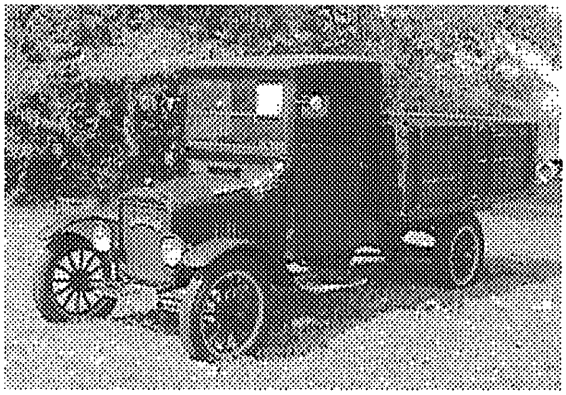
We tested our own seed corn in those days, using a rag doll tester. A strip of white canvas or heavy material, about a foot wide and two or three feet long was marked off in two inch squares and numbered. Three or four kernels from each ear, usually one kernel from the butt, one the center, and one near the tip, were placed on a square, with a matching number given each ear. A strip of this cloth was laid over the kernels to hold them in place and the entire strip rolled up and tied. It was kept wet and in the warm place for several days or until the kernels sprouted. The roll was carefully unrolled and any unsprouted kernels were duly noted and that particular ear was thrown out. Many farmers that spring, picked out ears from their crib and tested each ear for germination. Many had to plant seed with only 60 to 80 percent germination.

Our corn was sold to the grain elevator in Dike that year, and the neighbors helped deliver it with wagons and sleds. The sheller came to the farm and shelled the corn directly into the wagon boxes. Three bed wagon boxes were used with either the wagon or sled and of course the horses had to be shod. It was quite a chore to get all the corn and oats delivered to the various elevators or buyers. Much of a farmer's time was taken up between seasons with helping each other get his crops to market. With grain, it had to be dry weather although it might be windy and cold. On the other hand, hogs were sometimes loaded and hauled in foul weather.

We shopped in Dike and New Hartford, being an equal distance from each and we attended the Methodist church in Dike. The pastor, A. B. Chamberlain and his wife called on us, "Aha," they said, "newly weds", looking at our still shiny new pans. One Saturday night, we shopped in New Hartford, and coming home late, we left the groceries in their box sitting on the kitchen table. Alas, sugar came in soft cloth bags in those days and it had lain in a Palm Olive soap box all night. I tried many ways to use that sugar but none succeeded. To this day, I never use Palmolive soap as the odor still sickens me. Usually I am not very sensitive to odors either.

I made another blunder that fall with navy beans. I had heard that if the beans are pulled, vines and all and stored that way, the weevils wouldn't bother them. So I stored them in an unused room upstairs but when I came to shell them, weevils were flying all over, over my hands, in my hair, so that I had to throw the entire mess out. That story was certainly an Old Wive's Tale. Really, I should have known better! I should have known more about the habits and life cycles of insects. I studied Latin not biology in high school. Sometimes we learn the hard way!

Life in this Danish community was interesting, with Nelsons, Jordisons, Hansens, and Van Chase. Another young couple lived directly across the road from us, who were as badly off financially as we were. They were each a year older than we, had been



married a year longer, and had been farming a year longer. They had a year old boy. While Roy milked cows for spending money, Frank drove a school bus for the Dike school. He had a Model T Ford truck under the school bus body and it was a terror to start in cold weather. Roy often helped and they dragged the truck around and around on many a cold morning with two teams of horses.

Both of our houses were large barny types, very cool and pleasant in the summer time but cold and drafty in cold weather. When I called on her one day, the dribbles from the wash tubs had frozen on Carol's kitchen floor. The only warm room in both houses, was the living room, probably built for a dining room, but that was where we kept a fire going.

We exchanged help with Clarence and Esther and we visited back and forth, traveling the ten miles with the horse and buggy while they drove the distance in a Model T Roadster. Clarence's brother, I think his name was Al and his family visited on Sundays occasionally and we joined in on several Sunday get-togethers.

We borrowed Van Chas's buggy a couple of times and we discovered that they kept their buggy washed and polished like we try to keep our cars today. Why this should have surprised us, I don't know. Evidently our families didn't wash or polish their buggies. I never did know anyone else who did this, for the roads were always dusty or muddy. Maybe none of our folks ever owned a brand new buggy.

Once during the summer the four of us and baby Mary, drove to Delaware County to visit Roy's folks. It was a wet rainy day but Roy and I rode comfortably, well blanketed, in the rumble seat. When the pavement ended at Winthrop, we plowed along through the mud until something went wrong and we had to be towed into Masonville. The garage loaned us a car to continue on, and we arrived so late that they had given us up and finished their dinner. Of course we were made welcome and we were glad to be home but all too soon we had to start back because both Roy and Clarence had chores waiting.

The car was ready for us in Masonville and we made good time until after we passed Cedar Falls. Then we had a flat tire. Clarence changed to the spare but when a few miles later that also went flat, he had nothing left to change, so he drove on several miles to our place on the rim. At least we were home. Clarence borrowed Frank's car, a Model T Ford Coupe, for the last ten miles. Their troubles were not over as the lights went out and they ended up in a ditch. No one was hurt and someone from Dike took them home about midnight. Ditches were not like ditches today! Neither were car lights!

I was a little homesick that summer and we were able to go home once. We arose, milked, rather Roy milked while I did the rest of the chores. We turned the cows out to pasture and drove Gunpowder the twelve miles to Cedar Falls and stabled her in a livery barn. We took the interurban, Waterloo, Cedar Falls, and Northern to Waterloo and on the Center Point where Papa met us with the Overland.

It was a lovely day at home with the family, even Grandpa and Grandma. They

lived in the big front room which was both their living room and bedroom. Mama and the girls cared for Grandma, prepared the meals, cleaned and washed for them. Mama did very we under difficult circumstances.

Returning in the evening, we arrived back in Cedar Falls, retrieved Gunpowder from the livery barn and arrived home about midnight to find the cows in the cornfield. They had to be rounded up and milked before we could call it a day. It was worth it but not too often!

Papa and Mama came to see us one Sunday, an all day trip with the Overland. On the way home, after dark, one of the tires came off and rolled down the road ahead of them. Papa put on the spare but they never did find the tire that rolled away somewhere. Roy's father came to see us and stayed all night. I was chagrinned the next morning when he came down to breakfast, his suit was covered with lint from my nice new blankets. Roy's mother also visited with us for a few days. I remember how concerned she was because she thought that we weren't eating enough meat. She bought meat and fruit, a welcome addition to our diet but I was embarrassed.

Both came to New Hartford on the railroad and Roy or I met them with the horse and buggy. At home, they were still using a team of Indian ponies on a buggy although they did have a Ford Model T touring car, which Oliver drove. Neither Father or Mother ever learned to drive a car and I don't remember any of the girls driving. Although both Bertha and Alta drove later, I don't remember them driving while they were home. Esther never learned to drive.

Edith Thomas came for a few days and we really enjoyed her young company. We met her in Cedar Falls as she came on the interurban from Center Point. While she was visiting us, I developed a felon[2] on my right forefinger, which became swollen and painful. We decided that I had to see a doctor so we started for Dike. A single buggy is built for two but three can ride; Edith and Roy sat on the seat and I sat on their laps. Naturally, then I had to hold the reins. In the hurry-scurry of getting ready, my finger felt much better and I told them that maybe I wouldn't see the doctor after all. Just then, the loose end of the rein hit my finger. It hurt so badly that I was perfectly wiling to hunt up the doctor. I don't remember the doctor's name but he froze the finger with something before he lanced it. Did that ever hurt! I felt as though someone was squeezing it: it did heal rapidly.

A few weeks later I developed another felon on the same finger and this time it was more convenient to see a doctor in New Hartford. He didn't freeze it but lanced it almost as soon as he saw it. Although I quaked, it didn't hurt as badly as the freezing had done and it healed as rapidly. I had never had a felon before and I have never had one since, either.

Edith went shopping with us in New Hartford one evening in the general store. It was a store, still common then, which advertised that they sold machinery, groceries, dry goods; everything from tooth picks to threshing machines. I don't know when cokes (Coca Colas) first came out but we tried a coke that night for the first time. We had used many flavors of soda pop but we tried cokes that night. We were unaware of how much the gas came back through the nose or in noisy belches. We were so amused and laughed so much that we embarrassed Roy, who said disgustedly, "Anyone would think that you two were drunk."

Speaking of drunks, I remember one in Dike. He was a cattle buyer and sometimes auctioneer but on Saturday nights he was a drunk. He was the perfect picture of the movie version of a western sheriff, tall, well built, dressed in a cattleman's clothes, wide cowboy hat and all. He even had a black handle bar mustache. He would come weaving up the street, giving a glad hand to all the men and slobbering over all the women. We avoided him whenever possible.

We also laughed and laughed over being caught sitting in the cow barn. Roy liked company and liked to be in on all our visiting, so while he milked, Edith and I stood in the back of the cows and talked and talked while he could join in as he liked. We got tired of standing all the time so we brought out two kitchen chairs to use as we visited. One of the neighbor men came in one evening and there we were, sitting on chairs while Roy was slaving away at the milk pail. We wondered what he thought. Danish wives did all the milking! Roy never did want me to milk and I happily went along with that. I don't think that he trusted me with his precious cows. Edith was a city gal anyway.

One of the neighbors by the name of Wright, bought 1200 feeding lambs and Roy helped drive them from the stockyards in New Hartford to the Wright farm. It was a new and interesting experience for him as they drove them the four miles and turned them into the cornfield. This was late in the summer or early fall and Mr. Wright hoped to make a profit and free his fields of weeds. Lambs will eat the undergrowth and weeds and do not destroy any of the ears of corn. None of us had ever seen that many sheep before.

One of the miserable jobs of fall and winter came to an end that year. We sent our hogs to market by truck and they went straight to the packing plant in Waterloo, bypassing the local hog buyers. No one regretted the loss of the dreary task of loading a few hogs in the wagon box on a cold windy day. Usually the box had to be built high to keep the hogs from jumping out. Only the necessary income check goaded them to do it. Probably that is why it was always a bad day because they had put it off too long. The Model T Ford truck couldn't haul very many head but it was a beginning. Always the trucks have been ahead of the roads.

Of course, hauling by truck had plenty of problems as well. The heavier truck loads and larger tires tore up the roads and farm yards so much worse. Telephones were few and far between in that neighborhood; for instance to get the truck for that first load of hogs, we had to drive six miles to Benson which also was the location of our creamery, to hire the trucker. Everyone had to use a makeshift loading chute, besides the one usually carried beneath the truck. I remember using gates, bales of hay and straw and what-not to enclose enough of the ramp so we could corral the beasts.

For Thanksgiving, Esther and I planned and shared the preparations for a holiday feast at their home. Roy and Esther's folks were coming! I was to make plum pies among other things but the trouble they caused made me remember them. When I checked to see if they were brown enough, I found that they had barely started to bake. Nothing I did made any difference, although the burners were burning, they were not producing any heat. I finally took the pies across the road and baked them in Carol's oven.

We finished chores and hurried over to help Esther with the dinner. We had a fine holiday feast with all the trimmings but we were dreadfully disappointed because the folks did not come. Did we ever have left-overs! My stove? Water had clogged the wicks of the burners, as somewhere we had bought some watered kerosene. It is likely we got the

last of a barrel from someone who had never cleaned out the dregs. After a through cleaning and drying, and with new kerosene, the stove worked as well as ever.

Our neighbors, Frank and Carol were good friends as well, as we exchanged work, recipes and went shipping together. This was always a family affair in the school bus because they only had the coupe and Carol, like me and most women, did not drive. They had a darling little boy and were expecting their second child. Her younger sister, Esther, often visited and helped during the busy seasons. About all I can remember about her was the fact that Frank was usually mad at her because she broke so many dishes.

Frank smoked a pipe constantly and he was forever trying to stop smoking. He would throw pipe, tobacco, and all into the fire "Never again" but a few days later he would have to buy a new pipe and supplies. Although his motive in quitting was to save money, it did not work that way. Once during corn picking, he lost the bowl of his pipe, leaving only the stem in his mouth and he didn't even know he had lost it until quitting time.

At the back of his land was a slough, grown high with weeds and trash. Early in the spring, with Roy helping, he decided to burn it off. It went like wildfire and they couldn't control it and it burned over forty acres of a neighbor's new seeding. It was so early in the spring that the seeding wasn't badly hurt but it surely scared everyone. Although Frank gave the excuse that he had started it inadvertently with his smoking, we know that they had set it deliberately. There was no fire truck to call but many neighbors came running to help. I know that it made Roy very careful when he had to burn off any area and that he was most likely to decide against it.

On Christmas Eve, while Roy was milking , I went with Frank and Carol in the old school bus with a twelve dozen case of eggs to sell for last minute shopping. Frank drove the bus around behind the store to unload his crate of chickens but the truck straddled a large snow covered boulder, wrecking the oil pan and I don't know how much more. They had relatives in New Hartford, where we stayed while the garage fixed the truck. What a night! Christmas Eve and I was stuck in town while Roy was home wondering whatever had happened to us. Actually the truck was ready by three o'clock in the morning but it seemed like a week to me. I was very bored and depressed that night but I hope that I didn't act like I felt. Carol had so much more reason to be depressed than I had, although she did feel at home and at ease with her relatives.

I wonder how soon a car or truck would be repaired on Christmas Eve in our present times? Everything was open in these small towns for last minute shoppers until eleven or twelve o'clock. This last minute shopping was necessary as we had to wait for the cream check or for the hens to lay a few more eggs. It was the same with the Franks' although we never discussed financial matters. Also the same with many others, for obviously, the stores were not keeping open for us. Money was scarce. The creamery paid once a month but if you took your hat in hand and hunted up the secretary on a farm miles away and asked, he would advance a few dollars on your check. Sometimes the five, ten or twenty dollars was all we had that month to pay for food, seed, fuel or other necessities. Hand to mouth, that was many of us!

We were getting adjusted to Grundy County and it is interesting to speculate on what our lives might have been like if we had continued to farm there. However we accepted the challenge to buy Grandpa's farm in Buchanan County. Uncle Nathan

(Pepper) had bought the west eighty from Grandpa and had built another set of buildings on the road eliminating the long lane. With the collapse of farm prices in 1919 and 1920, after World War 1, he gave up and moved off. Although I do not believe it was anyone's fault, only the fault of the times, Aunt Lydia held a deep resentment against her father. It seems to be the fate of ambitious farmers to build up a farm and lose it so someone else. Grandpa was unable to assume the cost of the buildings and had to give a mortgage to the lumberman, AW Savage. Later he was forced to give up and deeded the farm to him.

AW was a busy lumberman and he wasn't very interested in farms so he sold the 154 acres to us for $15,000, a reasonable price at the time. We borrowed $3,000, from Roy's father for the down payment. We were obligated to the lease for 1926 to A. Andres so we planned on farming another year in Grundy County and moving in the spring of 1927.

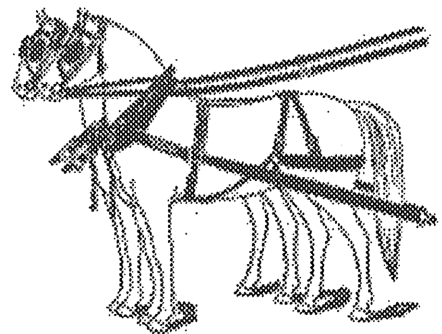
We had a good year in Grundy County. After crops had gone to market, we made arrangements to order a railroad car to move us to Coggon, Iowa. We couldn't move the brooder house, so Clarence and Esther bought it. When Clarence came to move it, he had so much trouble with the skids that when the second skid broke, he sold the building to the nearest farmer. I wonder now, why any of us thought that he could move a brooder house ten miles on skids. Esther had really wanted the building but Clarence never really though it necessary because he thought chickens were only a bother. To make peace in his family, he finally bought a new house from the lumber company in Cedar Falls and they delivered it already built to the farm.

All of our plans went awry however because disaster struck. We were aroused one night by passers-by that our house was burning. They had noticed the reflections from some distance and came to investigate. We are deeply indebted to them. No one knows what might have happened if they had not wakened us. As we opened the bedroom door into the living room, smoke poured out so we grabbed some clothes and climbed out the window. We ran around the house to find the entire south side was all ablaze even down to the outside cellar door. The New Hartford fire truck came and although they saved the nearby garage, the house was a total loss. No one ever decided on the cause of the fire. We wondered if a spark from the chimney had ignited leaves blown into the cellarway but it seemed unlikely because we were burning coal at the time.

Of course, we as well as the helpers all zeroed in on Frank and Carol that night. I remember sitting there with a coat thrown over my nightgown listening to all the excited chatter. Our landlord, who lived in a near by town and his wife were there. Everything is pretty hazy. The only thing we saved from the house was a few items in the unused front room. I had packed my truck with some keepsakes and knickknacks, ready for the move and this trunk and a dresser and a couple of straight chairs were all that was in the room. I don't remember what we did for clothing or if we had any insurance or not, but if we did it couldn't have been much since our furniture had little value.

The landlord decided to fix the garage for temporary living quarters until a house could be built. Since the house was empty on our newly purchased farm, he allowed us to move at once. Esther and Clarence and everyone helped and we loaded a freight car in New Hartford. We had little furniture of course but we had eight milk cows, four heifers, five horses, including Gunpowder, six gilts, and a hundred laying hens. We had a line of old used machinery, not good but usable, our buggy and wagon. The deck was already

stacked against us but being ignorant of the coming depression, we moved onto the farm with high expectations. I will call it The Orchard Place. (Savage farm)



[1] Coccidiosis- any OD series if specific infectious diseases caused by epithelial protozoan parasites, which may affect the intestines of birds, domestic animals, or dogs.
[2] Felon- an acute and painful inflammation of the deeper tissues of a finger or toe, usually near the nail: a form of whitlow.

The Orchard Place

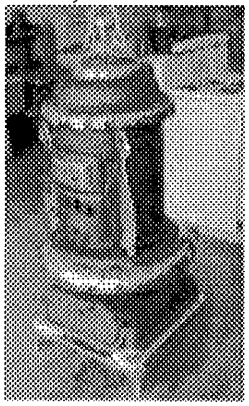
Roy rode on the train with our belongings, traveling on the main line to Manchester, then south on a branch line towards Cedar Rapids, until the train set our car off on the side track at Coggon. I stayed with Clarence and Esther that night and the next day I rode the interurban to Center Point where Papa and my brother met me and took me to my new home. Uncle Jim and Aunt Bedia (*) met Roy in Coggon and were most welcoming and h helpful. Uncle Jim had gotten someone to drive the cattle home (one of the drivers was the pastor of the local Spring Grove church, (Rev. Ellis) and a few wagons to move our goods to the farm.

The so-called new buildings were located on a north slope, on an east and west road between Linn and Buchanan counties. We were on the Buchanan County side. Uncle Nathan had been very conservative in the new buildings and they were adequate for the time. However his timing was wrong, and through no real fault of his own, he was broke and in the process also broke Grandpa. Farming has always been at the mercy of the money lenders. No once could expand, whether land, buildings, machinery or stock without borrowing on short term loans, so that they were very vulnerable to ups and downs of the banking system.

There was a very good evergreen windbreak, already large enough to be helpful, a few small apple, plum and nut trees but no large shade trees. Uncle Nathan had set out some fine trees but in a busy farmyard. used by tenants. Something always seemed to happen to them. One linden, still trying, was just a few feet tall, having been pruned back each year by grazing horses.

The house was a very old one, having been moved from a neighboring farm and set on a high wall to form a good basement under the kitchen. Mama warned me at once that the cellar froze every winter "So don't try to keep much in the cellar, especially potatoes. Uncle Nels (*) had fruit jars break in the cold." There were three large rooms, with good windows, making it bright and cheery, also cold and drafty! We had good weather, just cold enough that the ground stayed frozen as we moved in and set up a routine.

Some way we managed to get a heating stove, a coal burning stove called, "Round Oak", and another kerosene cook stove, with three long burners and a separate oven to set atop the burners. Some of our furniture came from the surplus which had resulted when Grandpa's moved in with the folks. We were lucky to inherit a large old chest, a dresser, a bed and so on. Although some now call them antiques, basically they were old and had soon hard usage for many years.

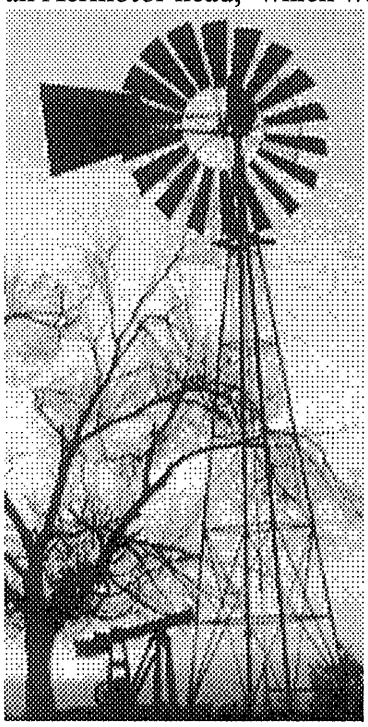


The barn had been built new, about ten years before, a very simple barn, with room to stable eight horses in the east lean-to and ten cows in the west lean-to. Hay extended to the floor in the center section, the hay being pulled into the barn through a large door in the peak on the south. Any section, not filled with hay was used for calves and/or pigs.

The fine new hog house was a semi-monitor type, built on plans from the Iowa

State College, with room to make pens for twelve sows at one time. Although we were pleased with it, we were to find that it had many drawbacks. It was drafty. It was built on a slope so that rain water or melting snow ran into the building at the higher end unless someone was quick enough to ditch it away. The floor of the house was only two inches higher than the attached feeding floors so that any build-up from cobs or snow or rain ran into the sleeping quarters. The drain from the feeding floor was also inadequate but that was easy to change, Roy broke a large hole in the side wall. Think of the many years someone had put up with the slow drain. Another problem was more aggravating than real. All the partitions and pens had been made of native oak timber and it was almost impossible to drive a nail anywhere in that hog house. It cause a lot of bad language as we tried to change pens of pigs.

A small nearby grain bin or granary, and a small henhouse completed the buildings. Everything except the hog house needed repair and paint. Fences were poor or non-existent. There was no windmill so we had to pump water into the stock tank each day by hand. It was a good well, over two hundred feet deep with eighty feet of pipe and only an inch and one-half cylinder lift pump. We kept a steel fence post driver on the handle to balance some of the stroke. We soon bought a windmill with a forty-five foot tower and an Aermotor head, which was very successful. It was sheer luxury to have the wind and the mill fill the tank with water.



The Orchard Place has good land but the soil had been sadly neglected for some years, Grandpa had been unable to oversee it properly and left everything to the renters, some good and some careless. The fields were badly lacking in humus; for instance after a hard rain, the cultivator shovels would hardly penetrate the compacted soil. The pasture was wet and boggy. Several sloughs ran almost the entire length of the farm, dividing it into small fields. Many weeds had gained a foothold, such as cockle burrs, smart weed and sour dock. One especially obnoxious "March smart weed", which acted and looked much like wild mustard was almost solid in one field along the west road. Weeds in those days had to be controlled with cultivation and by rotation of crops.

I loved the old building spot with it's orchards, huge cottonwoods and pine windbreak. Although I happily went along with Roy's plans and enthusiasm, I never did grow to love the new spot like the old. It was always too barren of trees with their beauty, shade and coolness. The old homestead because it was now far off the road, had been abandoned and was falling down amid the rows and rows of neglected apple and plum trees. Over the years, Grandpa, with Papa's help, had made some new improvements on the old homestead, a new cattle shed, a new floor in the living room and new doors in the house. We now made good use of the usable lumber as we repaired and fixed up the buildings and later as we fixed up our cabin.

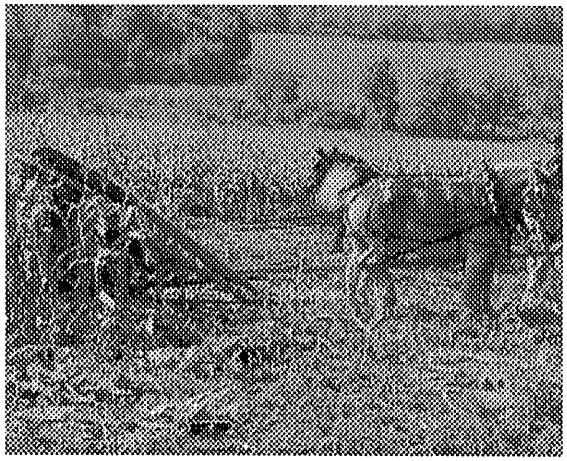
We had just enough feed from our share of the renter's 1926 crop to last until the pasture season but we didn't have any to sell so we were already behind financially by one

year. 1927 was also a very poor wet crop year and we had a poor corn crop. Since we had lost our incubators, we didn't try to buy another. It was a time of change and commercial hatcheries were springing up all over. We bought baby chicks from hatcheries in Coggon, Cedar Rapids and Hopkinton. Roy and I built another brooder house, this time using old lumber from the grove and only needing to buy shingles and nails. We had repaired the small henhouse but it only held one hundred hens at best so that year we used part of the granary for the growing chickens and the pullets.

Now that we were living only ten miles from my folks, I was homesick more often but we didn't go back and forth very much. Grandpa and Grandma kept them at home and we found that the ten miles of roads were so often muddy that it took too long, not easy like the ten miles to Esther and Clarence's. The roads in rural Grundy had been graded and surfaced with gravel but in rural Linn and Buchanan countries, mud was still the style. My sisters took turns visiting for a few days at a time. Uncle Jim and Aunt Bedia came quite often on their Sunday drives and we stopped at their place every time we were in Coggon.

When it became obvious that some of our corn would not get ripe that year of 1927, Roy became alarmed that he wouldn't have enough feed to last the coming winter. Although he had seeded clover and timothy with his oats for hay another year, the 1927 crop of hay was thin and mostly timothy. Although timothy and wild hay make good feed for horses, ten milking cows need something more. Most farmers at that time fed corn fodder to their cattle during the winter but milking cows must have more grain and protein supplement added.

We purchased a 12X45 foot cement stave silo at the Dairy Cattle Congress that fall, on easy payments, of course. A four man crew erected the silo in two days. We were to give the men, board and room for two days and we planned on having them stay with neighbors for the one night but they wouldn't hear of it and they slept on two straw ticks on my kitchen floor. It was warm so that I had plenty of bedding. It was exciting to watch the process as the silo went up, stave by stave, with a cable around every row of staves except that the first five rows had two rings each. The interior was finished with a wash of pure cement. The doors came ready made from the factory.



Roy hired Fred H. who lived just west of us to help him build the silo room and chute, using old lumber from the cattle shed in the grove. When it was painted barn red, it looked as new as if new lumber had been used. Fred's seven year old boy, Clifford, came with him one day and he persisted in climbing on the inside ladder of the silo. Fred could hardly stand to get his feet off the ground, so he was alarmed and sent the boy home. Instead, the boy ran around the silo and climbed to the top on the outside rings and ladder. His father almost had a heart attack when they discovered him. A corn binder, pulled by three horses, cut the green corn stalks, one row at a time, while the ears were

still in the dough stage. They were tied with twine into bundles of twelve to eighteen stalks and dropped to the ground in orderly rows. On silo filling day, these were picked up, loaded on hayracks and transported to the silo where a chopper cut the stalks, ears and all into small pieces. After the corn was cut into bits, called ¼ to ½ inch cuts, a blower blew the ensilage to the top of the silo, through an eight inch pipe forty-five feet long. Two or three men worked in the silo and guided the goose neck to keep the incoming silage spread evenly and they systematically tramped it enough that there should be no air pickets to cause spoilage.

Much like threshing, a gang had to be assembled; we hired the ensilage cutter, blower and tractor for power; the day was set, help notified, food purchased, meals prepared. It took a couple of hours just driving around the countryside to notify everybody and be sure enough help would be coming. At first, ours was the only silo in the neighborhood so we had to repay help with corn shredding, wood sawing, manure hauling, almost anything for which they might use help.

Later that fall, Roy helped Dick Mines move six miles to a farm near Walker, hauling four loads of corn fodder. Can you imagine it? He hitched a team to the hayrack about eight o'clock in the morning after the morning chores and milking were done; drove to the Mines farm; loaded his rack with corn fodder; drove the six miles and unloaded onto the fodder stack. Then he had to drive the seven miles home to do the chores again. Often I had to carry the lantern for safety, especially in the hay mow. Those were the good old days!

The nearest neighbors, forty rods down the road were an older couple on forty acres and he ran a blacksmith shop along with his farm. This was very convenient for small repairs. He also kept a large barrel of kerosene, so we could buy a gallon, if we ran short. She was a large woman, mostly confined to the house, a wonderful cook, always urging rich desserts on each of us. She had a knack of making visitors welcome and at ease, a knack which I have often envied. She was kind if she liked you but she was a malicious gossip, embroidering her tales to fit the emphasis she wished to add to her story.

Often as we drove past, we could see her leaning over the wall telephone. They had pulled a fast one and taken Grandpa's telephone share which should have come to us with the farm but instead they had it installed on their son's farm, so we could not be added to the already seven party line. It was necessary for us to go to their house and borrow the use of their phone when we really needed one. I never felt guilty about this and I don't think they really cared either, it was just that they wanted the share for their son and were able to grab it while the house was vacant. Possibly we could have gotten it away from them but it wasn't worth the ruckus it would have caused at the time. The line often did not work and when it did, so many listened that it was hard to hear anything. If someone missed a call, Mrs. Wachal gladly repeated it.

Party lines have been much maligned but they were the most helpful and interesting invention of the times. Years before, Papa had joined with the group of farmers and helped put in the line out of Troy Mills, buying a share each for both his farm and Grandpa's. After Grandpa's moved, the share was used in the renter's house until the Wachal's took it while the house was empty. You heard via the line all the news, when someone needed help and they also heard when you needed help. A complication in our neighborhood was the fact that we were kind of on the dividing line. Part of the threshing

crew was on Troy Mills line, part was on the Coggon line and some of us had no phone. If there was any long distance (calls) between the two towns, no one every used it. One of the families did have a phone on each line and would repeat messages until they tired of the imposition and had one phone taken out.

To the north of us lived two elderly bachelors, whose widowed sister kept house for them. For weeks, no matter how cold, these two men, dressed in sheepskin coats and caps, drove their team and bobsled past our place and another two or three miles to timber along the river. They returned each night with a load of firewood for their furnace.

They were faithful members of the Roman Catholic church at Monti. One Sunday, the elder brother Nick, entered the church with his hat on and staggered down the aisle to his pew. The priest realized at once that something was wrong and went back but Nick died of a massive brain hemorrhage. His sister died soon after and a niece and her husband came to live with Uncle Johnny and run the farm. Their only child, a two year old Marta, soon became the apple of her Uncle's eye.

The family faithfully followed the rules of the church, among which was the rule of no meat on Friday. Since they often hired non-Catholic men to work on the farm, they served meat on Friday, abstaining themselves. As the little girl was too young to understand, she was not expected to follow the rules but Uncle Johnny could scarcely bear it to see her partake. Would he ever be shocked if he came back today! Surely God has blessed him for his steadfast devotion!

We practically lived in one room that winter. Although I used the kitchen for cooking and the separator, washing and so on, we could only keep the front room warm enough to sit in. We had to move our canned goods and small supplies into the front room. We had a blizzard on New Year's Eve and after we finished the chores and had somewhat warmed up, we tried to get comfortable in the drafty room. I hung a quilt over the back of straight chairs about six feet from the stove to make a warm spot. "Well anyway, the follows won't be going far tonight", thinking of Oliver and his girl friend. But Oliver had gone twenty miles that night in the Model T in the storm. I guess we were getting old already.

Speaking of Oliver and storms reminds me that the summer before, we had watched an ominous looking black cloud go t the northeast of us. It was so black and hung over there so long that we almost knew it was a damaging storm, perhaps at Manchester or beyond. Later, we learned that no much rain had fallen in the hills above Manchester that the Maquokata river had gone on a rampage. Oliver and Bertha were caught in Manchester that night and couldn't get home until the river subsided the next afternoon. Water was everywhere, causing the closing of both bridges.

We had a mild early spring, rather soggy but we were anxious to start spring work and get started on another year. Roy was patching up the sets of harness and he needed more leather and rivets, among other things, so we hitched Gunpowder to the buggy and started for Coggon. As we left, Roy remembered another broken strap and returned to the barn to get it and I waited in the buggy, idly watching the dark clammy walls of the house with a small column of smoke rising straight up into the foggy morning air. We were only a mile and one-half from home when Reece's stopped us, crying, "Go back! Bo back! Your house is on fire." We replied, "Why no, that can't be. We just left home. Everything was alright."

But they insisted, "Ride with us! So Roy tied the horse and we went back much faster than we had come, in their Ford touring car. I didn't really believe it until we topped the rise and we could see through the fog that the fire was blazing high. My heart sank through the floor boards when I saw all the fire and smoke as the dry wood and plaster board burned like so much kindling.

After the ashes cooled, it was discovered that the stove had exploded scattering pieces of stove all over a wide area. We were burning coal and apparently too much gas had built up until it exploded. The escaping smoke, which I had been watching, hadn't been enough, so too much smoke and gas had built up until it exploded. Needless to say, we again lost our furniture and personal belongings. The house and contents were a total loss. It was over so quickly that I don't think a fire truck was ever called. Wachal's had noticed the fire and alerted the neighborhood on the phone.

I never really mourned for the house, even though we lived in temporary quarters for three years. Roy and I were deeply disturbed that we had had two fires in a span of two years. Although we really didn't blame ourselves for either fire, we felt a worried sense of responsibility. Should or could we have done differently? What had we done? What was wrong? We became almost paranoid about fires, lamps, lanterns and matches. At least, we were deeply embarrassed.

With AW Savage, the mortgage holder's consent, we used the insurance money to tile three sloughs and improve the drainage in other fields. Roy hired a professional tiler and ordered the clay tile needed, which would come in on the railroad to the Coggon Lumber Company. He hauled tile for weeks, so it seemed. He would load his three-bed wagon box with four inch tile off the freight car, drive home and unload it on the pile in the house yard. Every tile had to be handled twice, two at a time. Uncle Jim hauled for him several days when Roy had to be in the field. Also, the Lumber company truck delivered several loads, especially the five and eight inch tile as they hurried to unload the car before the railroad charged extra; I think that it was called demurrage.

The entire lay of the land was platted and the tile lines laid out through the sloughs and wet spots. There was no regret for the beauty of the wild sloughs from any of us; we were making more work ground. We had put up wild hay for the horses from these sloughs in 1927 but nothing will eat the coarser rip-gut, growing in the wettest places. The sloughs were beautiful with many spots of wild flowers, from the early buttercups to the late tiger lilies and Indian paint brush. In season shooting stars were especially plentiful and lovely.

Bohren, the tiler was paid forty five cents a rod and he paid his two helpers. We also gave them the noon meal as they drove out from Coggon every day in an old jalopy. Some days I had to drive to Troy Mills with a case of eggs in the buggy to get flour, sugar, baking powder or whatever, so I could put on a decent meal for these hard working men. The tilers used tiling forks and spades to dig the ditch in three tiers; the helpers dug the first two tiers and Bohren finished the last of the thirty six to forty eight inch ditch. He carefully laid the tile with the agreed on slope of an inch to a foot or whatever. They laid twenty thousand tile for us that summer.

The tilers were immigrants from Switzerland and they worked hard and well. They were of uncertain temperament, perhaps due to the jug of wine kept in the ditch with them at all times. We were cautious not to rile their touchiness. One of the men was especially

hot-headed and if he found a rock too big to move with his spade, which could be often, he would throw his hat onto the field, climb out after it, and jump up and down on the hat until his anger was spent. Reshaping his hat he turned back to the task, which might be the removal of a twelve inch rock or require a stick of dynamite to break up a boulder. He always finished the job. They were always polite and mannerly around me and the house.

Bohren had a family of twelve children. One story told about his quick temper, happened when he was a traffic victim when crossing the Buffalo Creek bridge in Coggon. A car ran into his buggy and family, causing a lot of damage but no one was seriously hurt. Furiously, he struck the offending driver and broke the man's jaw. Trouble was that he had struck the wrong man.

Each morning, Roy had to reload the day's tile from the house yard and haul it to the field and string it along the line laid out for that day's work. Then each evening, after the men had finished for the day, it was his job to blind the tile, to ten inches of soft dirt. In this way he could inspect all the tile laid and secondly, see that all the tile were covered so that clods or small rocks, later pushed into the ditch would not break any tile.

When the tile ditch was filled, a disc or old road drag, pulled by horses, was used to push the dirt into the ditches. Nothing worked very well. It was a lot of hard work for both men and horses. Then the loose rocks and boulders had to be moved and piled along a fence row or in a corner. Now bull-dozers and hydraulic lifts move the rocks easily and bury them efficiently. Then it was men, horses, a stone boat, a log chain and a crow bar.

If the boulder was too big to be moved, it was broken up with dynamite. There was always a man or two in each community who would come to your farm and use dynamite for stones, ditches or three roots. One of the implement stores in town would order the dynamite for you when it was needed or ordered.

To back track a little, right after the fire, we fixed up the granary to be used as our home for a year or so. It was about sixteen feet by twenty-four feet, already divided into two rooms, one third in one room and the other room larger. We left the original red car siding on the outside but we lined the inside with wainscoting, put in a ceiling, who windows in the south, mostly using old material from the old house and we did all the work ourselves.

For the first few days after the fire, we stayed with Charlie and Nola each night. All the neighbors were kind and helpful but there really wasn't much anyone else could do. When we laid the floor, it was a wet rainy day so we worked through the noon hour and did not go to dinner at Wachals where they were expecting us. It made them angry. We knew that they were expecting us but it was raining hard and we convinced ourselves that they wouldn't expect us to harness the horse in the rain. We were sorry that we offended them but it was done and outside of apologizing, there was nothing we could do about it. The kneeling and working in the damp unheated rooms, left me with the worst case of muscle stiffness I have ever had. I could hardly go up or down a single step. I , at least should have taken that break.

Some way, we collected enough furniture for the small space, a cook stove for both cooking and heating, a kitchen cabinet, two beds, a table and straight chairs. One bed was in the living room and used as a sofa and for company or the hired man. We rigged up some shelves for supplies and moved in.

I was pregnant that spring with our first baby so with all the extra work, Roy had

to hire help. He hired an older man, Tom Peyton, to help with the cultivating in June. Tom was short and heavy, a pleasant good worker but he nearly killed us off. He arose at daybreak, about four o'clock and we, now being awake, arose with him. I helped Roy bring in the cows, (although I am not a morning person and I hated it) while Tom rounded up the horses, stabled and fed them. Tom then sat, watched and visited while Roy milked the eight or ten cows, separated the milk and fed the calves and pugs.

After breakfast, they hitched their teams and cultivated all day until six o'clock, stopping only for the noon break for both men and horses. Then Tom would sit again and watch Roy do the chores, talking, talking, talking. There was nothing wrong about this' he was hired to cultivate and he did it well. But by the time the corn was laid by, we were worn out with the early-late routine. We were still too young and shy to do anything about it.

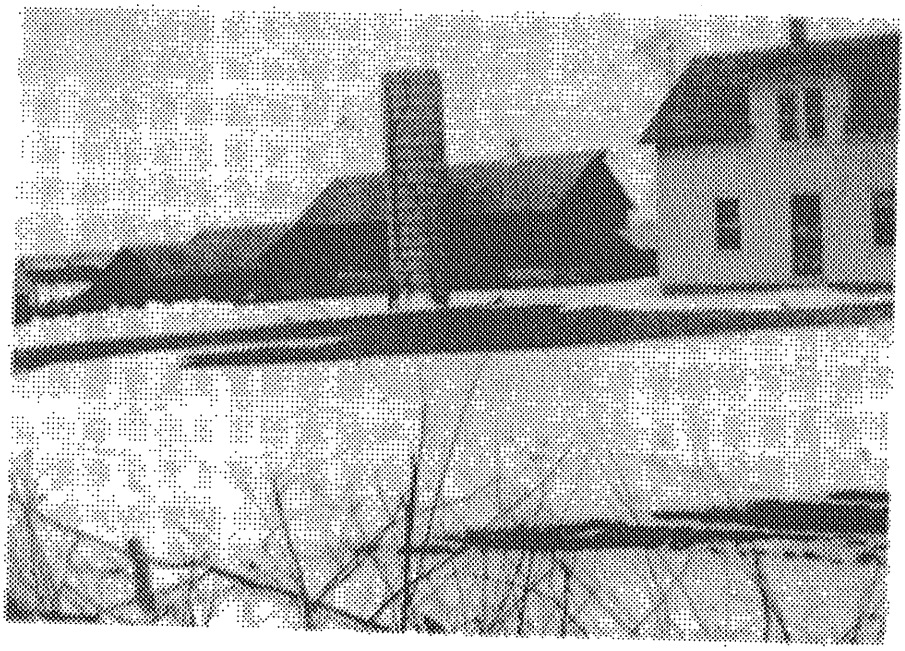
Our two room cabin proved adequate. I had to get used to using a cook stove again, and burning cobs through the summer. During warm weather, the wash tubs, as well as the separator parts hung to dry and air on the outside wall of the cabin. When it was colder, the separator had to sit on the table until either Roy or I could or would take it back to the milk room and put it together again. I kept very busy with the garden, a new brood of chickens and with helping Roy. Even with a horse and buggy, the farm wife was expected to be a go-fer. And of course, there was always meals for us and for the tilers.

We had no closets so I improvised with hooks behind a sheet and I used two packing barrels to store the unused bedding and extra clothes. We had to replace our every day clothes and coats and so forth but Roy didn't feel that he could afford to buy a new suit. We were constantly behind anyway, in money. Of course, when Mr. Wellman gave him an old suit, he thanked him and hung it in the makeshift closet, never expecting to wear it. Horror of horrors, Roy was asked to be a pallbearer at a funeral and had to wear the suit, a perfectly good suit of heavy navy blue serge, but fashioned for an elderly gentleman of the past century. It is doubtful if it was more than a point better than his customary overalls but the point was there and he wore the suit. I was better off because I could make a new dress, out of a few yards of material and although it was simple cotton, it was new and fitted reasonable well in the style of the day.

Sewing was a little difficult however because I had to either use Mama's or Aunt Bedia's sewing machine. Maternity clothes were uncommon in our area but all women wore large aprons to protect their dresses and many an apron was worn to hide a misfitting dress with gaping buttons. I suppose maternity dresses were available in Cedar Rapids or in the catalogues but almost all of our dresses were made at home. During the last few months of pregnancy most of us stayed at home. Riding in buggies, wagons and even cars over our rough roads was not very comfortable and often the doctor forbade it.

Roy's brother and sisters drove down to see us one day unexpectedly and we did not know that they were coming. That was the day that we went to town because the cupboard was bare. We took the eggs, probably hunted them again to fill the case and drove off. When the company came, of course they couldn't find us and couldn't find anything to eat. They went into the field and picked sweet corn and cooked it for their dinner. Good for them! We never did see them that day as they were gone when we returned. One of those disappointments that we remember all the rest of our lives.

Oliver and Margaret Jones were married that summer in the Whitney church, a country church north of Winthrop. Both I and Margaret's sister were expecting soon and we were embarrassed when we had to file up the isle, across the front of the church full of guests to congratulate the newly-weds. I was very self-conscious as I felt large and awkward and poorly dressed. I realized even then that it was my own attitude, that no one was criticizing me but myself. How times change! Her sister had twins, a boy and a girl. I don't remember how we went to the wedding but I am sure that we didn't drive the horse and buggy all that way. Probably we drove as far as Roy's folks and rode with some of the family. The wedding reception was held that same afternoon in Margaret's family farm home near by.



The Farmstead on the Buchanan-Linn County Line around 1936

A New Baby

Roy, Hazel and Ruth Virginia
1929

Babies were born at home in the Twenties and Thirties, and the doctor came to your house, sometimes accompanied by an experienced helper but most often he came alone. Whoever was present, the husband, mother, sister or neighbor lady assisted as they were needed. The doctor's fee was twenty-five dollars. For this, he cared for the mother and new born baby and he returned on the third day to check on everything.

All doctor's insisted that the prospective mother visit him for tests and examinations at least three or four times during the last few months of pregnancy. These tests included blood pressure and urine tests. Some women either couldn't or wouldn't, so sometimes the doctor was faced with a strange unknown case. Each doctor instructed each mother-to-be on the needed sanitation and preparations for caring for herself and the child. Newspapers were made into sanitary pads for the bed and white towels and torn sheets were baked in the oven for a specified time to assure sterile linen.

The practical nurses and housekeepers, who traveled form case to case, were a valuable asset as they took over the care of mother and baby and often the rest of the family as well. New mothers were kept in bed for ten days, gradually allowed more

activity until they were allowed to stay up on the tenth day. Although many of us broke the rules or at least bent them severely, we did stay inactive for ten days. All mothers nursed their babies, unless for some physical reason they did not have sufficient milk. I treasured the moments of closeness with each of my babies and used the few moments as a rest period, even in later months, when a part of me worried about unfinished work.

When we were expecting our first child, we made plans to hire a practical nurse for two or three weeks. We were very forward looking and drove nearly to Central City in the buggy to interview a nurse by the improbable name of Mrs. McGillicudehey. She was an attractive older woman, highly recommended, and we felt very fortunate in securing her services.

It didn't work out that way. About two weeks before the baby was due, she wrote that she was sorry but she had made other plans and so would be unable to help us. She had! She planned her own marriage to an elderly neighbor. Alas, as they waited in the depot for the train to take them on their honeymoon, the groom suffered a fatal stroke, leaving her a widow again as soon as she was wed.

So all of our well laid plans were spoiled and we had to start over again. Mama was busy with Grandpa and Grandma and all the sisters were back in school so there was no help there. We inquired around but found no one free to come. At this time, Esther and Clarence and the girls came to spend a few days with us and we were overjoyed to see them. Mary was now four years old and her sister Alice was two. Alice was in supposed disgrace because had had cut her own hair, so butchering it that her mother had evened it up, giving her a butch all over her head. I can still picture the big brown eyes staring in wonder at all of us from her almost hairless head. She was such a darling and she didn't seem to be a bit abashed by all the fuss.

I went into labor while they were there, so Clarence took the girls and went on to Masonville while Esther stayed with us. It was a long hard labor, or so I thought and I was always very thankful that Esther was with us, for both Roy's and my sake. The doctor from Coggon was crippled and used crutches so his wife, a nurse, always went with him on baby cases. I don't remember thinking about it but they must have been very crowded in our small house. Chloroform was the anesthetic used in those days. A bit of cotton was soaked with chloroform and the patient breathed the fumes. Hospitals surely had a better method of using it, even then. I remember that I hated it because often the cotton would touch my lips. I wondered about the chloroform afterwards, it seemed to me that I was given enough to keep me from hollering but not enough to ease the pain.

Ruth was born September 7th, 1928, weighing nine pounds, eight ounces and perfect in every way. She had blue eyes and lots of dark hair which she soon lost and it came in very blond. Roy and I were very happy that Esther was with us but of course she soon had to go home. Roy's mother came to our rescue and stayed with us until we found a young girl to help out. Mother was very capable and although I'm sure she left a great deal of work at home, it did give her a chance to get acquainted with her new granddaughter. However one soon forgets! Jennie, fifteen, had finished the eighth grade and did not go to high school so she was available. She was a member of a large family but she knew little about cooking and housework. When I asked her to make oatmeal for breakfast, she didn't say that she didn't know how, but she put two cups of oatmeal in the pan, added cold water, ending up with a raw gummy mess. She was cheerful and good

natured and we got along. She did know something about babies, however. As soon as I felt able to wash the separator and care for the chickens, I took over alone.

The doctor suggested that I feed Ruth every four hours since she was a strong healthy baby. I tried to keep to that schedule but sometimes I was only reasonably close. We used a bottle for water and orange juice. Right at first, she drank quite a bit of water but I remember when she refused the water, spitting out the nipple again and again until she had made her point. She didn't want it!

I had studied many government pamphlets and magazine articles on babies and child care. The value of vitamins in orange juice and cod-liver oil were the new discoveries being emphasized at the time. I remember squeezing the orange and I ate the pulp and the white inside of the rind. I expect that I needed the vitamins as badly as she did as I actually craved that orange peel. As most older mothers know, cod liver oil stains clothes, whether spilled or spit up and our methods of washing did not take out the stain.

I did not have many fancy baby clothes but I did make small garments of outing flannel as well as the two dozen flannel diapers. Bird's eye cloth was available but I liked the soft flannel. One of the pleasures of carrying your child, is preparing the small garments, the wee shirts, bands, stocking, kimonos; each week adding a new purchase or a finished nightgown or kimono, folding and refolding as you dream, sharing your hopes with your husband. Members of the family gave us practical gifts and one of Aunt Bedia's friends, our rural mail carrier's wife, gave us a lively pink baby blanket, with a hand made card to welcome the new baby. I still have the card.

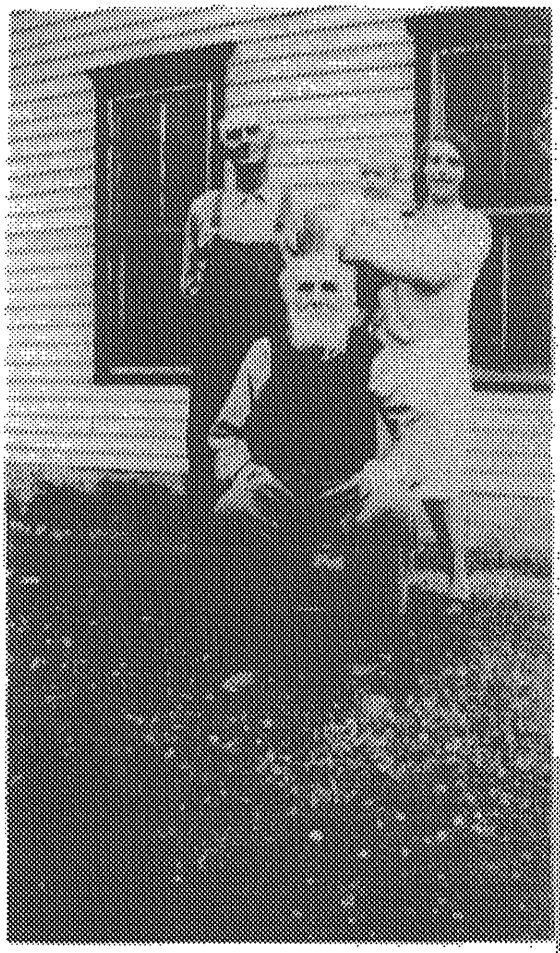
I made small white cotton bands of cotton flannel, three or four inches wide and long enough to go around the baby's belly and overlap. These were wrapped around the baby snugly and fastened with small safety pins. This was only tight enough to hold the dressing on the navel and keep the dressing and band from slipping. A similar wider band perhaps twelve inches wide was wrapped around the mother's middle and fastened with safety pins for several days. We laugh now but the band felt very comforting.

I made several small flannel blankets from large old blankets, and saved a piece of oilcloth to use under the baby. Mama and the girls made a nice patchwork quilt, crib size for the baby. We had purchased a large oval shaped clothes basket to use the first few weeks.

Mama and Papa came to see their first grandchild although they always had to leave someone with Grandpa's. When Ruth was old enough (we didn't take the baby out for several weeks in those days), we took her over to visit and show Grandpa and Grandma the new baby. Grandma was so nearly deaf and blind that we couldn't know if she really understood or not.

We bought our first car in early 1929, a 1926 Chevrolet coupe from the Ward Chevrolet Garage in Central city. He was having a promotion sale with special trade-ins, of which we took advantage. I don't remember what we paid for the car but we traded a horse and two cows as the down payment. It was a good car and served us well and we drove it until we began to outgrow it.

Ruth was a happy child, so sweet and cuddly. I certainly did the best I could to



4 Generations
John Morris Phillips
1843-1930
John Edward Phillips
1875-1958
Hazel May Stimson
1904-1986
Ruth Virginia Stimson
1928-

Ruth in buggy, 1928
See page 85.

keep her happy for I believed that happy babies grew up to be happy people. When Ruth outgrew her basket, I lined a large wooden packing case, inside and out, for a baby bed, using quilts and pillows for a mattress. There was just room beside our bed for the small bed. I don't remember what the box sat on but it was the right height for my convenience.

In earlier times, my mother's for instance, it was the custom for the newest baby to sleep with his or her parents for the first year or so. Doubtless it was necessary in some of the poorly built houses, but none of that for us, we were afraid that we might roll over on her. It was bad enough to have to nurse her in bed for warmth during the night. I occasionally fell asleep before she finished nursing but she was soon back in her own bed.

In the daytime, she lay on the bed in the living room but it wasn't long before she could wriggle herself off. I had to improvise a pen with pillow and later chairs across the front of the bed.

The winter of 1928 and 1929 was a cold winter with lots of snow and deep drifts. Since Ruth was so small, I was hardly off the place all winter. After breakfast, while Roy was still in the house to watch and play with Ruth, I did the chicken chores so I did get out of the house each day. We only had a hundred or so hens in the small henhouse as all our young poultry was sold in the fall. Our mailbox was only about thirty feet form the cabin door.

Once, Roy borrowed a sleigh and we went to Coggon where I shopped and then visited Aunt Bedia and Uncle Jim. We were very happy to show off our baby, well wrapped against the cold. It was a pleasure to be welcomed into their home, always invited to stay for dinner, visiting and chatting around the table and helping with the dishes.

They lived on an acreage at the edge of Coggon, which they bought when they retired from the farm. Both of them were brought up in pioneer Iowa in very religious homes. They had farmed for many years. Aunt Bedia's health problems, acute neuralgia (*) of the face, neck and shoulders, caused them to retire and Uncle Jim served as a rural mail carrier for many years but had now retired. Most of his years on the rural route was with a team and enclosed buggy. He did use a car in the later years but often the roads were impassable.

Aunt Bedia was an excellent cook although many of her ways were the old ways. Her mashed potatoes, creamed chicken, buttered peas, home made bread and home churned butter tasted good, always. She would add jellies or jams, which might be gooseberry or elderberry, dill pickles and a sauce dish of canned fruit. She always boiled coffee In an old fashioned granite coffee pot. For each meal, she added cold water and a handful of coffee. When the pot became too full of grounds, it was emptied and started over again. Never waste any of the strength of the coffee! As we didn't drink coffee at that time, I have no idea how good or bad it was. Although we considered it one of Aunt Bedia's eccentricities, many of the older women made their coffee the same way.

Her cabbage slaw was perfect. She chopped the cabbage fairly fine in a wooden bowl, adding sugar, vinegar and salt as she chopped, always coming up with the same delicious slaw. I tried to copy her but mine was never the same.

Aunt Bedia's general health was good but she still had severe bouts with the neuralgia. Uncle Jim kept a team and farmed his few acres of corn and garden. He also kept a cow and Aunt Bedia had some chickens, so they always had plenty of vegetables,

milk, cream and eggs. They were very generous and gave garden stuff and produce away to most everyone they met. On the other hand they were considered very tight fisted and never spent a nickel foolishly. The owned a 160 acre farm several miles in the country so they were really considered well-to-do. Years of pioneering and poverty made all material things valuable and not to be wasted. Some of the clothes and hats which she gave us as a family at home (probably left over from some rummage sale) caused many arguments for we children hated them but Mama could see nothing wrong with them. She could remake some of the garments to be useful but the hats were a complete loss. Although we ridiculed and laughed then, I can sympathize with her now when I see all the lovely containers, cans and bottles just thrown away. How we could have used them once!

They were religious and very knowledgeable about the bible and I thoroughly enjoyed listening to the discussions of theology which they and fellow church members carried on. It was much deeper theology than I have ever heard elsewhere, even from the pastors. They were musical and we would gather around the new piano and sing the old songs. They often had a new song book, containing a song which they had heard and enjoyed, so they had bought the book to use in their own home. I wish that I had their collection of religious song books. However, the two or three similar books that I have, are now so faded, they are barely legible anymore.

Aunt Bedia and Uncle Jim might have pinched every nickel until it screamed but they also befriended countless numbers of young children in their home or in helping them get an education. It was hard for some of them to accept the stringent rules expected of them. Still many nieces and others had reason to call them blessed, and many expressed their affection for their benefactors.

One of Aunt Bedia's saving ideas was her aversion to wasting paper. I can see the reason as she grew up when every scrap of paper was precious. She carried on quite a large correspondence with her sisters and families. Often her letter would be written on the back of some advertising letters, which they might have received. One of her exasperated sisters wrote protesting and sent her some packages of new writing tablets. She tore up a grocery sack, wrote on a portion of it, "You can't teach an old dog new tricks!"

She made many scrap books using magazines as the books and filled them with colored pictures, verses, sermons, unusual events, bits of history, anything she considered interesting and gave them to hospitals and shut-ins. For youngsters, she made smaller and brighter ones. After she died, some of the best ones were saved and are now given to the Coggon Historical Society for their museum.

Mama gave me Grandpa's old high chair but it had no tray, so Ruth sat at the table with us and I had to tie her down, to keep her off the table. Do you remember how this works? She had half the table and we had the other half. This chair was really more useful than it sounds as we had so little room: the expensive modern high chairs of that day would have taken up half the room. Another useful gift came from one of Papa's neighbors, a homemade rocking horse, with a wide roomy seat and wide wooden rockers. It was better than a modern walker because it stayed put and didn't roll around the room, that is, until she became adept and strong enough to make it walk as she rocked.

Mrs. Wachal came to see us often as their mail box was also on our corner. She had a new grandson, born just three days later than Ruth, who also weighed nine pounds

at birth. He was a bottle fed baby and grew circles around Ruth. When she weighed twelve pounds, Max weighed eighteen pounds. He had the first tooth, on and on. It was rather irksome sometimes but I really didn't take much notice as we were very happy with our healthy blond baby. Max was also a very handsome baby with brown eyes and darker complexion. They were simple different types.

We had occasion to stop at Nola's one day when Ruth was about five or six months old and was Nola ever astonished! "Why, there's nothing wrong with this baby. I was worried because I had heard about how thin and white she always was. I should have known better than listen to her. Ruth's a lovely baby." After the babies began to crawl, walk and talk, Mrs. Wachal forgot to compare them. Ruth was so much more active that she ran away with the honors after that.

Naturally, papa and mama were very proud of their first grandchild and my sisters and brothers thought she was perfect. Once when they visited me, I left Ruth in the house with the girls while I ran some errand outside. When I returned, Ruth welcomed me with a big smile and outstretched arms and one of my sisters commented "How wonderful to have someone think that much of you." I agree!

At first, Roy was shy with Ruth but he got over it. He would lay a blanket over his work clothes so he could cuddle and talk and play with her. Roy was always busy with chores, milk chores, cutting wood for the stove, all took up most of his time. The wood had to be split rather fine to use in the cook stove which was our only heat, very adequate but using lots of fuel.

Fred H. who helped with building the silo chute and also helped occasionally with field work, lived down the road about half a mile west in an old house. The house had been a fine well built house sixty or seventy years ago, a two story with three large rooms downstairs and four full sized rooms upstairs. The time had come when the eighty sandy acres would not support a family so to settle an estate, the farm was sold off to neighboring farmers and only the twenty acres with the house was rented.

Before they moved away, Fred told us that the rats were so bad that they had to keep all foodstuff in the oven and hang all their clothing on a wire strung across the room, never on the floor. He left a pair of leather gauntlet gloves on the floor one night and in the morning, all that was left was the cotton wristlets. At the time, I wondered if he was exaggerating but since then I have seen rats come and go in really large numbers and I can believe anything.

Several families came and went in this house. One time the Bailey family lived there and he sometimes helped Roy with farm work. One morning, Roy stopped to ask his help just as they were eating breakfast. They were eating cornmeal pancakes and instead of the usual syrup, they were using cornmeal mush over the pancakes. Imagine! I suppose that was all they had that morning.

One family lived there for a few weeks, so poor that we suspected that they moved on as soon or before the rent was due. The first we knew they were there (the evergreen grove shut off the view from that direction) was when Mrs. Grim came driving into our yard one early morning with a few coins to purchase some milk as Mr. Grim was sick.

Her cart or wagon was an old cut down buggy and looked like the proverbial one-horse shay, ready to fall apart. She did drive a decent horse, however. She wore a large man's overcoat, a ragged shawl around her head and bedroom slippers on her feet, with a

gunny sack wrapped around them. She wouldn't come in although it was nearly zero. She was pleasant, talking about the weather, her husband's illness and her children. We filled her small pail and sent her on her way.

We called on them shortly, wondering and worrying about his sickness, the cold house and the children not in school. They were living in one room, having only the single heating stove, built for coal, but they were keeping warm by burning trash which the wife picked up around the barn and woodlot. One spot on top of the stove was flat enough to hold the teakettle, and was the only place they could warm food. Grim was better although he was so hoarse, that he could hardly talk and the three children, about five, seven and eight, were bright and alert but the stark need of the family was pathetic.

The poor old house was weather beaten, needed shingling, but the worst was the condition of the plaster in the room. Built before anyone ever heard of insulation, it was thinly built in the first place. Some renter had tacked cardboard over gaps in the plaster, then someone had tried to wall paper over that and now all was torn and more plaster had fallen.

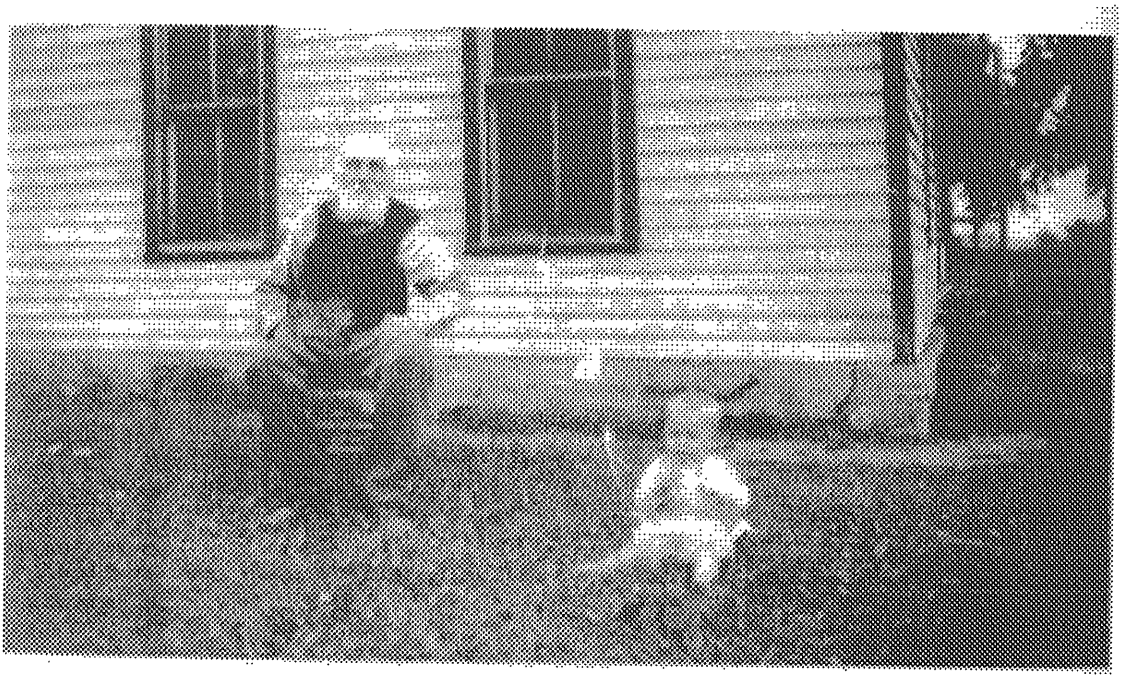
Roy and I gave them a few groceries. They were hauling all their possessions with a team and wagon and the single cart and horse. A few days later, they moved on, out of the neighborhood before we had any more contact with them. We often wondered about them, what became of them and what they were doing. They seemed very intelligent and knowledgeable.

Although poverty stricken, they did not seem to be beggars but they accepted the help we offered. Most of us had so little more but we did stay put, raised gardens, stored potatoes and other vegetables, canned food for the winter and wore made over hand-me-downs. Of course you had to have a base from which to start. Many who worked in town also had a hard time making ends meet. Wages often didn't cover the necessities even if many of the then so-called luxuries are now considered necessities. In many families, pale listless children with constant colds could be attributed to drafty houses and poor nutrition.

Roy's sister Bertha was married that winter of 1929. They were married in the parsonage in Jesup and the wedding dinner was served to relatives and friends in the family home in Masonville. A bad snow storm had so blocked the roads that we were unable to attend. Loren, (Olive) her husband, worked on a paving gang so that they moved often, renting rooms or a small apartment until they could buy a motor home and move with the job.

In 1929, our finances were a little better as we had a cream check, some oats, corn and hogs to sell. But of course, we couldn't begin to make up for past losses. It was a constant worry over unpaid bills always due. We could barely keep up with the current taxes and interest without paying any off on old accounts and on the mortgage.

The spring of 1929 was full of hard work as they broke the sod of the sloughs to add to the fields. More rock showed up and had to be moved. Hired men came and went. There was a lot of friction between Roy and I that spring, because we were so used to my helping everywhere that we couldn't adjust to the fact that we had a baby and she couldn't go many places or be left behind alone either. One time, she went with us and slept in a



It looks as though Ruth was given a treat to get her to sit this close to her great-grandfather.

box by the side of the field while I drove on the hay loader. Around the yard and barns, I could take her in her buggy where we could both keep an eye on her. My garden was right outside the cabin so I could work there and leave her asleep because I could hear her when she awakened.

Fences were always breaking, which meant that there was stock, hogs or cattle to round up and fence to fix. It seemed to me that the fence troubles always came when the men were at the farthest field. I became an excellent fence mender, using binder twine, baling wire, old boards, broken posts and sharpened stakes to fill the gap. I would have welcomed one of the modern back packs for Ruth, but at that time, it was unthinkable. Only Indian squaws (shows how bigoted we were) carried their babies on their backs. I made good use of the small wire wheeled baby buggy, especially as I did chicken and yard chores.

In the picture of Ruth in her buggy, note the large buggy, lacking wheels because the wheels were soaking in the stock tank. Gravel roads were hard on buggy wheels and we could not afford to have them reset every few days. I wasn't very choosy about the back ground of the picture and I felt mortified by my poor picture. It is expressive as it included also the large buggy, the windmill, the henhouse, the outhouse and the barren yard with few trees. The tree at the right of the picture was a small walnut tree and grew to be an average sized walnut tree, very productive of small thin shelled excellent nuts. I was standing with my back to our cabin and the new house was later built to the right of

the picture.

My sisters were growing up also. Edna graduated from high school and spent the rest of the year and next winter with Mama's sister Anna and Uncle John near Redfield, South Dakota. After she returned home, she was soon dating Alpha Hawkins. When they came to tell us of their engagement, they came after we were in bed and asleep. Edna knocked on the door and awoke us and apparently we knew who it was because I answered the door. I had a bad cold which had left me so hoarse, that I couldn't speak above a whisper. Because I was whispering, Edna whispered, too, thinking that I didn't want to wake the baby. In my half-awake state, it took a long time for me to understand that they wanted to come in and tell us something.

They were married in the parsonage in Center Point and went directly to the farm only seven or eight miles from us. In late August, they took a late honeymoon and drove to South Dakota to visit Alpha's father and mother. Since we had relatives in the same vicinity, they prevailed on Mama and my younger sister, myself and Ruth to go with them, in their big old Oakland touring car. That morning, we left in a deep fog so we couldn't make much headway the first few hours.

We must have taken our lunches with us but I remember little about the ride except the fog, with Bob driving with his head out the window, and the wash-boardy roads in western Iowa. We rode mile after mile in the dark, where we could sometimes see lights in the distance but we never came to a town. About midnight we pulled into Aunt Anna's out in the country some miles from Redfield. Edna and Alpha went on the next morning farther west to his folks.

Aunt Anne and Uncle John and four children were living in a basement house while they waited to get enough money to build the house above. It had many advantages over the shack that came with the farm; it was warm in winter, cool in summer and there was plenty of room. He was farming three sections of land, mostly in wheat and oats, with some corn and pasture for cattle. It was so dry that year, that everything was dry and brown except the tumbleweeds. They had harvested some oats, very little wheat and the pasture was so bare, you could have seen a mouse run across it. They were cutting the corn, which stood about three feet high, for fodder and feeding the cows. From our green Iowa, it looked pretty bleak. It was many years before they could build their house.

Uncle John took us to Woonsocket in his car to visit another of Mother's sisters. Aunt Florence and Uncle Joe (Christensen) lived in the county seat town where he was clerk of courts. Joe was a veteran of World War I and had an artificial wooden leg from the hip. They had a house full of little ones, four under seven years old.

From Woonsocket, we rode the train to Canton to visit with Grandma Todd. She, with sons Nathan and Wendell lived in a large modern house near the high school in Canton. There was a large yard, a small barn, chicken house and some fruit trees. When they retired from the farm, Grandpa (*) had continued to keep a cow and help with some of the work on the farm. He died of a heart attack at the age of seventy while he and Nathan were bringing in a load of hay from the farm to their acreage.

This was the first time that Ruth had been exposed to stairs and they had a huge old fashioned stairway. She soon crept up the stairs, the full flight as we watched over her and then to our astonishment, she turned around and came down, sliding off each step on her bottom. Oh! We were so proud of her, not yet one year old. She had an aunt, her

mother, her grandmother, and her great grandmother to dote over her.

One day, I went down town with Wendell to get some buttermilk from the local creamery. Wendell was my uncle but he was only a year and one half older than I. He had been attending a Bible Seminary in Ohio but after two years he was again at home, feeling that he had lost the call to the ministry. Although he was still deeply committed, he was uncertain of his next move.

I had wondered why everyone seemed to prefer home made butter to creamery butter and now I could see why. The creamery was dirty and swarmed with flies. Roy and I had toured through our local creamery in Coggon and it was spotless, without a fly in sight. We used Coggon butter without a qualm.

Edna and Alpha came for a day or two and then it was time to go home. Although I enjoyed the trip and was always glad that I went, I was constantly uneasy about leaving Roy alone with all the chores. He survived at least and I have no memory of any special problems.

Ruth started walking alone soon after and was soon climbing all over the place. On a pleasant visit to the folks in Masonville, we discovered Ruth shaking the canary in his cage, really shaking the pedestal or pole, back and forth. It was funny to see, even though we hurried to rescue the bird. It did no harm but the poor bird must have been scared to death; he must have thought a hurricane had struck.

Mother and Alta, Roy's younger sister, were running the local telephone switchboard, which was set up in the glassed-in front of an old store building, and the family lived in the rest of the building. It was nicely divided into rooms and they had plenty of space. One day, when Alta sat at the switchboard, one of the gentlemen leaving the local tavern, staggered down the street and stumbled over the cement steps leading up to the telephone office. He backed off, lifted his hat and bowed deeply to the steps, and said, "Excuse me!" Alto was so amused that she broke up over the incident and could hardly quit laughing.

We took our turn with having trouble with rats. Mice are always with us, living in the fields and coming into the buildings at every opportunity. Tight buildings, poison bait, many traps and cats keep them under control most of the time. Rats are another story. They will migrate about the country, now you have them, now you don't but you soon will again. When cribs of corn were emptied, rats ran in all directions, even up some hapless individuals pant leg. Dogs are often good ratters and will destroy many as they flee the noise and loss of shelter in the crib. Most cats will not tackle a rat.

During the time we were living in the cabin we were overrun with rats. We weren't aware of it as we had little stored grain to attract them but I did notice that something was eating on the tops of the beets and turnips in the garden which was very close to the cabin but I never thought of a rat. It is the only time I ever knew or heard of rats in the garden. Although Roy had soon a rat occasionally, he never noticed many around.

Still, I began to hear noises in the night and it seemed to come from under our bed. Roy thought I was dreaming but finally I looked. This was quite a job as it entailed taking out Ruth's bed, then taking down our metal bed to move it. I had stored the filled fruit jars and the filled jelly glasses, covered with paraffin and loose metal covers, in boxes under our bed. Rats had dislodged the loose covers and were feasting on the jelly. I was

thankful that they hadn't harmed the canned goods. When we took everything outside, we discovered rats had gnawed a small hole in the corner of the floor. Even Roy was convinced!

About this time, we accidentally drowned many rats. After milking and separating each evening, the skim milk was saved in at barrel to mix with ground feed and the resulting mix was fed to the growing pigs in the morning. One morning, Roy found dead rats in the bottom of the barrel. During the warm weather, the milk curdled, making huge amounts of curds and whey. A board had been carelessly left leaning against the barrel, the rats had run up the board and jumped into the curds but the cord wouldn't hold them and they drowned in the whey. We followed this up for several days and all together we drowned 65 rats. Apparently since there was no dead rats around, it didn't alarm them. Ordinarily they are very suspicious.

We purchased some strychnine poison, made the proper solution and soaked corn in it, then scattered it about in their runways. Presto! We had no rats. They must have moved on because after the first few poisoned ones we picked up, we never saw another rat, either alive or dead. Now-a-days some of the newer poisons are successful but it is a never ending battle. If you see one rat, you probably have five hundred.

Grandma (*) died May 2, 1929, a sad loss but a blessed relief. She was so helpless and unknowing. Aunt Lydia and Uncle Nathan and the girls were now living in Waverly and only Aunt Lydia came to the funeral. Grandma's funeral was held in the Troy Mills Methodist church and she was buried in the Troy Mills cemetery.

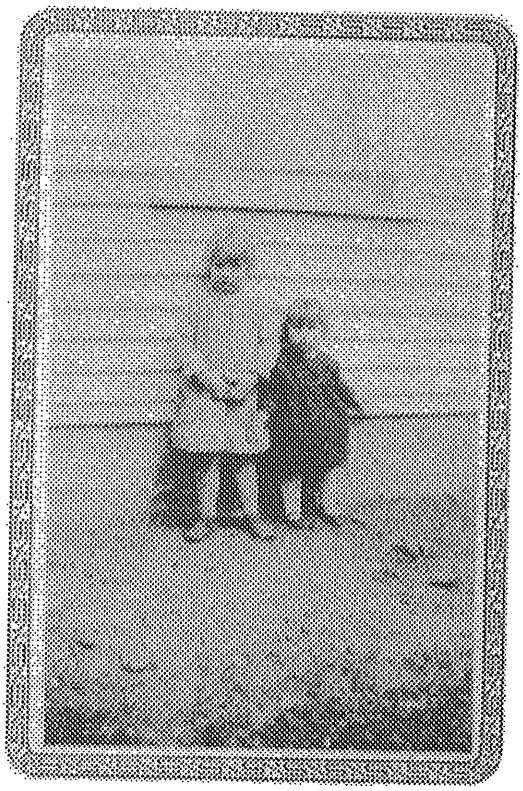
Grandpa (John Morris) missed her very much. Papa continued to keep the front room as his and kept the fires warmer than usual but Grandpa was so lonesome that he sometimes joined them in the dining room, almost freezing to death, of course. Later, Mama told me, that was her one regret about caring for them, that she was not kinder about the cold room. Poor Mama! She was always warm blooded.

As Ruth grew older, Grandpa would have liked to hold and cuddle her but she was afraid of him. He had developed a problem with his legs, likely arthritis and was on crutches and along with his white beard, the movements frightened her. If we could have visited more often, no doubt she would have accepted him.

Grandpa (John Morris) died February 1930 at the age of eighty-nine. The day of his funeral, we had a terrible time getting to their farm. The last mile to their place had been newly graded the fall before and a thaw had made it a sticky mess. The mud was soft enough and rolled up under the fenders and had to be scraped off with a spade every few rods, so the wheels could turn. The road west and north, although not newly graded wasn't much better. The hearse did not try to come to the farm but waited at the Fairchild's corner on the gravel, about six miles north. The casket, after the prayer service, was taken by wagon and a team of horses. The six or so cars which had made it to the farm followed and it was very tricky driving. To keep going in the muddy ruts, you had to use full power and if the line stopped, the trick was to get going again without ploughing into the car ahead of you. Someway everybody made it.

This was before the days of funeral parlors. The undertaker came to your home to bring the casket and prepare the body. Relatives gathered at the home to view the body, to mourn and console each other. A short prayer service was held in the home before the body in the coffin was transported by hearse to the church. Grandpa was also buried from

the Methodist Church in Troy Mills and laid to rest beside his wife and his parents in the Troy Mills Cemetery. It would be wonderful if all people had such wonderful memories of their grandparents as I have of mine.



Ruth and Dorothy May
Notice the long, brown, cotton stockings.

New Life

Both Roy and I were pleased when we knew that we were going to have a second child. Naturally, we hoped for a boy. We were delighted when we heard that Clarence and Esther, Oliver and Margaret were also expecting that same summer. We joked about all the grandchildren their parents would be having if this kept up. Cousins of the same age would be wonderful at our get-togethers and picnics.

Alas, Esther died in childbirth leaving Clarence a widower, with three little girls, six, four and a new born baby. Father and Mother (Stimson) took the baby, now named Emma into their home and raised her. Clarence kept the older girls with him, hiring a housekeeper until the girls were both in school and then he managed alone. He had bached it for some years so the cooking and housekeeping didn't bother him. He was not very good at choosing clothes for the girls but he was a kind and indulgent father.

It was a sad and bitter loss for Roy and me, for we had grown close to them over the years. Esther was the closest to being a confidante that I have ever had. Some believe that emotional distress will trigger physical ills and I have often wondered about myself. After we heard about Esther (Uncle Jim drove out form Coggon to bring us the telegram), I was picking up a basket of cobs, and suddenly, I couldn't straighten up: my back hurt so badly that I thought that I was going to lose the baby. The doctor thought it was probably muscle spasms and he taped my back with long strips of adhesive tape, about two or two and one half inches wide, so that I couldn't bend my back at all, very awkward for a busy mother and farm wife. This problem with my back continued to bother me during the rest of my pregnancy and for some time afterward.

Esther was buried on a beautiful spring day, in a new perpetual care cemetery in southwest Waterloo. We visited the grave several times until it because almost impossible to find the small marker among the many. It was a sad spring for us.

My second pregnancy was easier than the first as both of us had learned from experience that the usual round of life has to have some changes to allow another individual to be a part of our family. A mother can't be everywhere at once and when she is busy in the house with a baby, she can't always help as formerly. We were still in the cabin but this time Mama was free to help and they invited me to come to their home when the baby arrived. My sisters would be back in school but they would be home evenings so there would be plenty of help.

Oliver and Margaret had a girl in the early summer to join a year old brother. All three new cousins turned out to be girls. Sad as we felt about Esther, life goes on and all of us were very busy. When I felt the first warning pains, Roy took Ruth and me to my parents farm and we called the doctor from there. He was tied up with another case so we had to call Papa's doctor from Center Point. Dorothy was born August 28, 1930, weighing eight pounds and six ounces, smaller than Ruth. She was a very pretty baby with a. heart shaped face and lots of dark hair. She also became a blonde for two or three years.

When Ruth was born, the doctor had had to take several stitches and the soreness lasted a long time. I was especially miserable when I first sat up. When Dorothy was

born, the tear opened again and the doctor said that the tear had never healed properly. He put in more stitches this time and within a week the soreness was gone and I never had any more trouble.

After everything was in order and the doctor gone, Roy had a chance to see and hold his new daughter. Soon, he went home to his endless round of chores and work, but he came over to see us as he was able. Now I wonder how he survived without a cook as he couldn't even boil water. He probably came to see us to get fed.

We lived in the lap of luxury, so as to speak, with constant care and attention. There were plenty of doting aunts and uncles to care for Ruth. I was established in the big front room and now I was using the table bed. It was not a comfortable mattress but it was probably as good as any of the hospital beds at that time.

Our own doctor came on the third day. Due to the use of two doctors, no birth certificate was ever filed; each doctor expected the other to do so. We were not then aware of the future need of such documents or knew what we should have done. In later years Dorothy had to get her birth certificate drawn up with the necessary signatures and so on.

Dorothy had a few colicky days. I developed a little trouble in one breast, mastitis, and as she was nursing, it upset her. I remember one evening, my sister Blanch decided that the baby had cried long enough and she took her from Mama and walked the floor with her until she fell asleep. Mama and I had tried for hours to ease her so we were very happy when my sister was able to. After those first two or three days, she was a good baby and developed into a happy daughter for us and sister for Ruth.

We were richly blessed with our two girls, Ruth with her blue eyes and blond hair and Dorothy with blue eyes, a heart shaped face and darker hair. They were perfect spots of love and comfort for us as we struggled through the trials of farming. We were delighted with their smiles, their affection and their g rowing abilities as they learned to walk and talk. In some ways, it was easier with the two because they often entertained each other and did not depend on me for constant attention.

When Dorothy outgrew her basket. I made a bed for Ruth, simply a wooden frame and box, fastened to the wall and to our bed. I made a small bed tick to fit and filled it with fresh straw for her mattress so then Dorothy had the small bed. Our bedroom was wall to wall beds.

We never had any boughten blankets except the sheet blankets but we always seemed to have enough quilts and pads. I made one or two new quilts or comforters each winter from scraps and old blankets and Mama and my sisters made several each winter. Some of them were filled with cotton batts purchased from the store, and these could more properly be called comforters as they were tied, not quilted. I suppose some of our supply came from Grandpa's. Grandma Todd from South Dakota sent each of her grandchildren a quilt for their very own.

In winter, instead of sheets, we used large double flannel sheet blankets on our beds. As these became too worn to use (the part of the foot wore out first), we cut out the ragged spots and hemmed the best parts to use on the children's beds as needed.

Dorothy was as adorable as her sister as I nursed her and cared for both of them. Roy was more relaxed with his second baby and enjoyed them more and more. I continued doing the chicken chores while she was in the house to watch them so I could

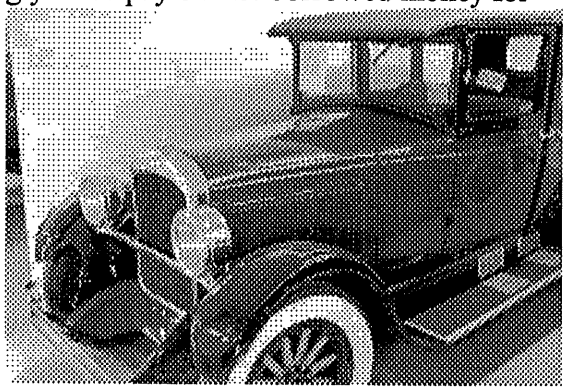
get outdoors at least once a day.

That winter, Roy hired a seventeen year old neighbor boy, Orlan, to help him cut trees in the grove, getting ready for the saw fill to cut the lumber for the new house. We happily worked on plans, planning and replanning. If we could furnish our own native lumber for the frame work, we figured that we could save one-third of the final cost of the house. The new house was to be 26X28, a story and a half, with a dormer window at the front to make three bedrooms upstairs. Downstairs would be three rooms and a bath. We would have to buy wooden shingles, six inch siding, windows, doors, hardware and so forth.

The saw mill set up in the grove that summer. The huge blade was powered by a steam engine, which used both the wood slabs and some coal for fuel. Have you ever watched a steam engine running? They are a marvelous machine, running whisper smooth with no show of working hard as they ran the huge blade through the many logs. They sawed dimension lumber, two by fours, two by eights, sheathing boards; some were three feet wide from the large cottonwoods. The tall cedars were carefully kept separate and they sawed out long two by fours for the rafters.

In these days of such common items as power saws and hydraulic lifts, it is hard to visualize all the work that went into lumbering. Roy and Orlan had cut down each tree with a crosscut saw, cut the logs from the longest length that could be used from that tree truck and also from the largest branches if they were straight enough. Sometimes if the tree was crooked, they could make only one saw log but often two, three, or four could be cut from one tree, still using the cross cut saw. Then all the larger remaining limbs were trimmed with saw and axe and piled for firewood to be sawed with a buzz saw later. The small branches and brush had to be piled and burned. Although it took out the bulk of the larger trees, it left many trees among the fruit trees still bearing in the orchard.

My sister Blanche graduated from high school and attended the State Teacher's College at Cedar Falls for a year. While in school she met Duane Kingsley and they were soon engaged but she did teach the following year to pay off her borrowed money for school. Duane found her a used Hupmobile touring car to drive the five miles back and forth so she could board at home.



Duane was from the Chicago suburbs and he had lived there all of his life. His father had been a history teacher in Chicago high school for many years. Duane was very talkative, especially going on and on about automobiles, the merits and demerits of each model (he really did know) but it was outside our knowledge and interests. To our eyes, he was a city slicker from Chicago, although we weren't being fair. He had been attending the Iowa school, and had many interests but he was trying to cover up his nervousness with talk. We chuckled to ourselves when he complained to Blanche that Roy and Papa never talked about anything but crops, weather and farming. It was true, of course. They didn't see each other very often and felt the need to compare and estimate what they were doing. Politics and religion were verboten

subjects. They were good friends but both were extremely busy with farm work and families and had no interest in automobiles except to try to keep his own machine in running order.

Right after school was out, they were married in the farm home. His parents from Maywood and his sisters from Freeport and Cedar Falls came to the wedding and of course, Grandma Todd and our assorted relatives and friends.

During the rush of getting ready, Grandma Todd came to spend a day with me. She said she couldn't stand all the pressures and marveled at Mama being so calm. "Why when I left, the bread was ready to roll out, the separator wasn't washed, the dishes undone and there sat Effie, working her crossword puzzle. I couldn't stand it so I came to visit you." Papa had to bring her in his Overland and come after her but at weddings, fathers are usually the errand boys.

Grandma Todd was a veteran of many busy weddings but that was behind her. Roy and I always enjoyed Grandma Todd. She was opinionated, well read on most subjects, both politics and religion and unafraid to argue with anyone. Because of her advancing years, most of the relatives wouldn't argue with her any more but Roy and she really enjoyed it. Papa called her an old battle ax and in her day, it might have been true, but if so, the hard years of pioneering in Dakota made her so. On the other hand Papa wouldn't argue with anyone. He used to just walk away, leaving Mama in tears. Pioneering in South Dakota was hard on everyone but the hardest on women. Between drought, grasshoppers, no fuel, no gardens, it was a fight for survival. They won a fine farm in the end but many had given up and went on west or returned to the eastern states.

Blanche and Duane went to live north of Chicago at lake Zurich, where his father was establishing a new golf course. They lived in one of the cottages on the property and while Duane worked with his father on the golf course, he and Blanche also ran a small eating stand. Many week-enders from the Chicago area stopped on their way to and from the many lakes in the region. Duane was driving a DeSota Coupe. Papa junked the Overland and ran the Hupmobile for some time after that.

We had purchased the Orchard Place, then known as the Phillips farm for $15,000 dollars and moved onto the farm in 1927. Being young and inexperienced and lacking in the foresight of the deepening depression, we made beautiful plans. With no rent coming to us from the first year due to the poor crop of the renter and our own poor crop the next year, we were behind the eight ball before we even started. When hogs sold for two or three dollars a hundred weight, we knew that it was no use so we gave up and deeded the farm back to AW. We then rented from him on a fifty-fifty basis for many years. After we rented, AW put some money into the operation for his share of the livestock and machinery. We were on our way up, slowly, with many a set back.

We were embarrassed, devastated, defeated, broke and almost broken. The fact that we weren't the only ones in trouble didn't make it any easier to bear. Many farm mortgages were foreclosed in the twenties and thirties and further judgments on the personal property, machinery, feed and seed, sometimes including the household furniture, were gained for the creditors to cover the back interest and to make up the amount that the land didn't sell for. If he was allowed to keep his personal property, usually only a few hundred dollars worth, he could rent land and at least have a home and produce much of his food for another year. Otherwise, he was without a job, a house to live in, and without

any means of support.

As the farmers watched their neighbor's belongings being sold at auction for ghastly prices, they hit on a scheme, called Penny Sales that stopped the forced sheriff auctions. As they would agree before the sale was in progress, a dollar for a horse, twenty cents for a cow and no one would raise his bid. If someone forgot or a stranger started to bid, he was forcefully reminded. Naturally the bankers, landlords, auctioneers and clerks pleaded for fair prices but to no avail.. After the sale was over, (the article or animal had to be sold to the highest bidder) the buyers paid for their purchases and then they gave the property to the former owner, all perfectly legal. No one, of course ,thought that two dollar hogs and fifteen cent corn was fair but they pleaded for the law to take its course.

Needless to say, it stopped the forced sales but nothing could stop the huge debts accumulated by years of give-a-way prices and many farmers lost their farms and lifelong savings. Others salvaged something from the debacle. Papa and Mama were among the victims also. They had purchased another forty acres making his farm a square 160 acres of rich farm land, paying $240 an acre for the forty. Sounds ridiculous now, doesn't it? He was having trouble because of low grain prices and one year, he was completely hailed out, not even the garden survived. He borrowed from Grandma Todd that year to pay the interest and taxes.

When the Creek Place buyers couldn't make their payments and turned the farm back to him, he was in trouble. He lost the Abbey place and he barely survived with a heavy mortgage on the Creek Place. They moved back on it. It was a bitter blow to them, and although our hearts ached with theirs, we welcomed them back to the neighborhood. They were now only a mile and a half from us.

AW accepted our plan for the house and went ahead to complete it. However he did change the plan by cutting two feet off each side of the house, taking it off both dining room and living room, thus making both rooms too small. If I had been consulted, I would have changed the first floor arrangement. The kitchen was a good size, 11X11 and the bathroom was 6X8 but it was never used as a bathroom. It was a storeroom, dressing room, a bedroom, although a double bed left little spare room. It was a pleasant bedroom however because the short window was placed in such a way that air always circulated and it was cooler than the other bedrooms. Upstairs, the three bedrooms were adequate in size with large closets under the eaves and there was good ventilation although hot in summer and cold in winter. I was especially frustrated by the small living room, only about ten by ten feet but I couldn't even complain because, "it is your plan".

When the house was built in the heat of the summer, it was so dry they had to use pickaxes to loosen the dirt and clay before they could even use a shovel. Horses and slips were used to move the dirt after it was loosened by pick and shovel. As dry as it was, they cut across a vein of water in one corner. About then it rained and filled the excavation with water and they had to tile and drain the basement before they could even put in a wall. This vein of water often trickled through the wall so that the basement was often wet at one end. Otherwise it was a good well-finished basement and usable with good windows and good ventilation.

The wooden foundation forms were made and held in place by the earth on the outside and staked and restaked on the inside. Sand was piled, sacks of cement were delivered, a stock tank was set up near by and filled with water ready for the day. The

mixer, a barrel sized, bell shaped metal container, with an open mouth, which turned around and around while in use, was powered by a gasoline engine. One man shoveled in the sand, a second the cement and a third added water. Measure was by shovels full, so many scoops of sand, and of cement to a pail of water. When mixed, it was tipped to empty the mixture into a wheel barrow, which was then trundled into position to empty into the foundation form.

When Papa and Roy cemented anything which might be anything from cement steps to setting in heavy fence posts, they used a cement box. It was about three feet by six feet by six to eight inches deep and they mixed the water, cement and sand with a hoe. All tools used in cementing has to be washed after each use, including shovels, the trough, the mixer and the wheel barrows.

A Mr. Minehart and his crew were the carpenters but before the frame was up, he suffered a stroke and Stoney and Son, ODC, our name for them completed the house. The day before his stroke, Minehart had sawed all the rafters to the proper length, and he notched and beveled the ends. A few days later Stoney growled, "Minnie must have been sick already because he sawed all the rafters three feet too long." Sad to say, they sawed three feet off every rafter, only Minnie was right, and after all our careful planning and care, every rafter in the house was spliced by adding three feet. Do you wonder that we called them "ODC" Our Destruction Crew?

After the sub-floor was laid, the plasterers came and plastered the house upstairs and down. Part of the agreement was that we would remove the dropped plaster from the sub-floor before the carpenters came to lay the flooring. Roy and I worked and worked and although we removed pails of broken plaster, we never did come up with a smooth floor. When the carpenters came, they were offended or so they said, to find it unfinished. They knew how and with hammers, they drummed the floor until all the cement was loosened. Well, we tried! Live and learn!

Ruth was almost three, was a very interested spectator of all this activity and spent much of her time picking up dropped nails and using Roy's hammer, trying to drive them into any likely board. Sometimes, it seemed as though they dropped as many nails as they used. Roy was usually busy in the field but Ruth and I made good side-walk superintendents. Curious anyway!

We moved into the new house just ahead of a severe electrical storm. The house windows were large after our dark cabin, allowing us to see all the bright lightning and even the thunder sounded louder. There were no shades or drapes at the windows as yet and the beds were not even set up. I sat on a mattress on the floor and held a frightened Ruth for on hour until the storm was over. Although Dorothy was with us on the mattress, she didn't seem a bit alarmed by the noise and Ruth's fright. Our timing was wrong but we were glad to be in the new house and able to spread out a little.

Our poor little smidgen of furniture barely made a dent in the new rooms. Ruth's homemade bed sitting on the floor in the new bedroom looked crude and disreputable. Dorothy still slept in the baby bed. Both were entirely unaware that their parents were unhappy because there was neither furniture nor money. Relatives and neighbor families seemed so much better off. AW sent out all the paint I could use and I painted all the inside of the house. He hired a painter to varnish the woodwork and doors and to paint the white exterior.

We had purchased a new Home Comfort Stove and it was now installed in the new house. It was the first time that we had ever used a budget plan and we paid for it during some of the hardest times, but we did get it paid for. It was a real necessity and it served us well for years. It was a large cook stove with a large stove top, which never needed blackening, a warming oven, a large baking oven and a large reservoir. The firebox had a prodigious appetite, especially if I was picking up cobs and trash for fuel. The reservoir was always kept full so we could have warm water but the warming oven was never used for keeping food warm. It was used to store small things out of children's reach and was also a place to dry mittens and gloves. There was a pull out bar over the reservoir on which to dry towels and small items. Wet coats and larger jackets were hung from a clothes line strung up behind the stove. I wonder what a fire marshal might say today or for that matter, what I might say today?

Our makeshift cabinet and shelves used in the cabin could hardly be moved into the new house, so except for the stove, we had only the table, chairs and beds to move, besides the dishes, pans, clothing and bedding. We were starting over again. With AW's consent, Roy used wainscoting from the house in the grove to build a counter with cupboards underneath, on the west wall around the sink. Then on the north wall, he built a counter with cupboards below and also above on each side of the windows. He was inexperienced in wood working but he did very well with the old lumber and I was pleased with the set up. We used linoleum for the counter tops. I don't even remember what color it was. I was very thankful for the double windows on both the west and north side because I could now see the activities in the barn and door years. It helped me keep track of the children when they were outside. A mirror with a comb tray was hung, bars for the towels and wash cloth put up. With a wash basin in the sink and a pail of water, with a dipper sitting on the counter; we were set. There was room for the dishpans underneath the sink.

The kitchen range was the comfort station of the house. When the oven was not in use in cold weather, the oven door was left open to dispense the heat into the room. All earlier mothers have dents in their shins where they have collided with an open oven door at some time. Baby's bath was here. I laid out my supplies, wash basin, soap, powder, olive oil, clean clothes, towel and blanker; then I sat down to cuddle and wash the baby. This sponge bath was satisfactory and a happy occasion most of the time but if baby had other ideas or was simply mad, it could be very frustrating. Hurrying a bath with a screaming baby could be very nerve racking. All of my babies were cheerful happy babies but they had good lungs and let you know it if they were displeased. There were no whiner or whimperers in the family; they just opened their moths and let their frustrations roll out.

For other baths, a wash tub was brought up from the basement, and was set in front of the open oven door. It was filled with warm water from the reservoir and we took turns bathing. Bath water was either emptied into the sink or carried outside. Bath supplies were kept in a small closet near the chimney but clean clothes had to be collected and brought down from upstairs. Most of the week, we used the wash basin at the sink but Saturday or Sunday night was bath time as we prepared to take the eggs to town and buy groceries each weekend.

Laundry went down to the basement through a chute at one end of the small

closet. This in one favor that Stoney, head of the ODC did for me as he suggested that a chute be added to the plans and did so. I built a box, waist high to keep the clothes off the damp floor and so I wouldn't have to stoop to sort clothes. Although water still had to be carried in, the wash water could be emptied into the cellar drain. Nice.

Dress clothes were hung in the small closet between the bedroom and the living room and we used the bathroom as a dressing room. Work coats and jackets were hung on hooks in the back entrance, which went up three steps to the kitchen or a flight down to the basement. In cold weather, coats and boots often intruded into the kitchen. The cream and eggs were kept in the basement, both summer and winter.

I soon threw out the home-made bed and both girls slept in a double bed in the east room while we used the west room and the dormer room was used by the hired man and sometimes company.

Our only shade outside the house was a cottonwood tree near the road. All of us had deep tans. The small building at the end of the path was as convenient as an outside path can be. At least they didn't depend on electricity or running water. We had an old one near the walnut trees, a little too far from the new house but I never thought about it as a nuisance. One day, when AW was there he noticed Ruth crying loudly as she went to the small outhouse. She was probably crying for an entirely unknown reason but a few days later, he sent out a new building by truck and ordered the men to put it closer to the house. It was much handier. AW was always concerned about the children.

Kerosene lamps were a big chore, needing daily attention, either fill the container, trim the wicks and always wash the chimneys. I carried a lamp from room to room as I worked, never leaving a lamp alone where small children might accidentally throw something into it or knock it over. We used lanterns in the basements, barn, outbuildings, or outdoors and they were harder to care for then the lamps. Used in the wind or set on uneven ground, the lantern glovers were soon smoked.

We never had a baby sitter for the girls when they were small. Their grandparents were too far away to be convenient so they were always with us, even on business occasions, wriggling, squirming, their bright eyes taking in everything and also listening, sometimes too well.

After we turned the farm back to AW we were desperately short of money as we waited for another crop or for prices to improve. We bought groceries as the hens laid a few eggs, used everything from the garden and the basement, used our own milk and eggs. When we settled with AW, we had angered him because we had insisted on taking enough out of the crop money to pay off the Wellman note. In turn he had insisted that the cream check come directly to him to apply on money we still owed him. We were so happy to get the albatross of the Wellman note off our backs, that we agreed. Still we just couldn't live on so little and finally I rebelled and insisted that I have to have something each month from the cream check. It think that I only asked for ten dollars. AW was a hard nosed business man but later I realized that if he had understood our situation, he wouldn't have been so difficult. Also, he began to see that there really was no money to spare anywhere from farming.

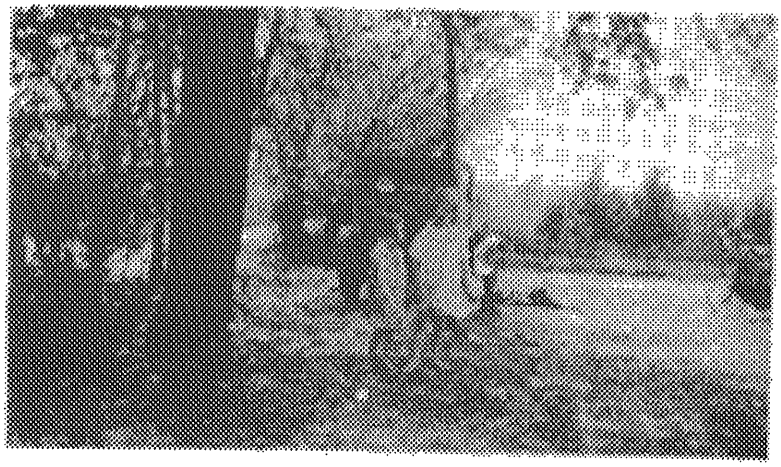
In our small towns, the hardware and grocery stores were adequate but none of them stocked enough sizes in overshoes, underwear, outdoor clothing, so they had to be ordered or purchased in Cedar Rapids. It was always a rainy or snowy day when we went

to Cedar Rapids to shop, where most of our purchases were made at Penny's or at the dime stores. One day as Roy and I finished shopping, we treated ourselves to an ice cream sundae at the Dime store counter, with Roy caring for two year old Ruth and I for the six months old Dorothy. In some manner, Dorothy grabbed my dish and the dish, ice cream, and all was dumped on the floor. The waitress made light of the incident and insisted on replacing the concoction. Although I ate it, I was too embarrassed to enjoy it and Roy would have disowned us if he could. It was a shame to be so self-conscious.

During this period of my life, I was forever losing small items, as grocery lists and gloves, in the welter of baby blankets and baby clothes. In winter especially, I was hampered by my own heavy garments. How I would have enjoyed modern diaper bags. Often I couldn't replace the lost gloves, so I went to town gloveless in all kinds of weather. If it was too severely cold I wore the everyday clodhopper mittens and left them on the car seat while I was in town. Rough red hands were a natural, caused by washing by hand, hanging out wet clothes in cold weather, but mostly the washing of the separator and milk cans. Some of the soaps recommended for the sanitation of the milk things were very severe or else I was allergic to them. I was afflicted with deep painful cracks on my fingers most of the time. Lotions were not as good then as now but at corn husking time we bought Corn Husker's Lotion, which was excellent.

One of my worst frights came about during this time, from the herd sire. I hurried to the garden one day, now some distance away, leaving the girls asleep for their afternoon naps. I hurried, really rushed as I never liked to leave them alone even for a few moments. So much can happen while your back is turned. Anyway, I looked up to see Ruth standing by the stock tank and just then, around the corner of the barn came Major, the big herd sire, dragging his rope and heading for a drink. I ran sobbing, praying, gasping all the way, having visions of our darling meeting the bull. Nothing happened! Major wasn't interested in the blond baby girl or she in him and they went their separate ways. I have a scar to this day, where I tore my knee as I went through the fence.

I always had a good sized garden, very productive with many vegetables to can as beans, peas, corn and tomatoes. Late garden often went to weeds and I'm afraid my garden was often weedy. Sweet corn was planted with the planter on some of the edge rows of the corn field and cultivated with the rest of the corn. We always had a strawberry bed, sometimes more productive and sometimes less. If more, I canned some or made jam or mixed with rhubarb for jelly. If one of the sisters could stay with the girls, I sometimes picked black raspberries along the roadside.



In the front yard
Notice the large cottonwood, the car,
the windbreak and the plow.

Life Goes On

The range heated the kitchen nicely and that fall we bought an Airtight heating stove, a metal stove especially built for burning wood. It had no grates but had an extra large door to accommodate larger chunks of wood. It was a success although Dorothy burned her hand a few times before she learned to stay away. We never knew when she did this but I would discover a blister on the back of her tiny hand. It must have been that she got too close, but not touching so that it didn't hurt all that much. We found a large wooden box with a lid for a wood box and it also served as a handy bench. I never minded burning wood, although no one likes ashes, scattered chips and bark, or carrying the wood. Burning coal is a lot dirtier with more soot, smoke and clinkers. I liked to have plenty of wood on hand; it was just too much to worry along with the wood supplier. Sometimes I had to worry too as I picked up cobs and trash to eke out the fuel.

In a second hand store in Cedar Rapids, we found a large round oak table with a matching buffet and six straight wooden chairs, for eighteen dollars. The table was fifty-four inches in diameter and had four twelve inch leaves so it could be used for a large group such as the threshing crew. These, added to the stove, wood box, and sewing machine made the room crowded already.

A stove of any kind had to be set at least two feet from a wall, better if it was three feet; a large metal pad with a heavy asbestos lining, thirty by thirty inches, was under the stove with eight or ten inches extending to the front, under the door openings. No other furniture could be set close so the stove took up much of the room.. During the summer, the stove was taken down and stored in the back room. Even if it turned cold, the range could be relied upon to furnish enough heat for comfort.

We served all meals in the dining room as I never did like a table in the center of my kitchen but kept it clear. The smaller table which we had used in the cabin, was set up in the basement and used in many ways but mostly it was used in sorting and cleaning eggs. We managed linoleum rugs on the three floors downstairs. I tried keeping rag rugs down in the hallway and the kitchen to help absorb the tracking but they were never very successful because they were always bunched up and a hazard for busy feet. Those rugs were made from our own carpet rags, which I had either crocheted or braided into throw rugs. Mama and I made several each winter, colorful and useful, especially upstairs on the bare floors.

Ecru and white window shades were the rage, looking very smart, instead of the usual dark green ones. Actually, I know the green shades would have been more efficient against the sun and heat. In the downstairs, room by room, I gradually put up the shades. For both upstairs and down, I made curtains of scrim, muslin, feed sacks, light colored prints, mostly tie backs, to avoid too much handling by little fingers. Our windows were just the right height that the children could stand and look out. Curtain rods were the cheapest I could find in the ten cent stores.

Roy built some shelving in the basement for the canned goods. I kept the wash tubs there but I brought them up to the kitchen on washday. It was not possible to keep track of the girls when we were on two different floors. For an example, one day when

Roy suddenly called me to help him for just a few moments, I left the girls alone. I returned to a mess. I had just opened a fifty pound sack of flour, and it was sitting on the floor where I was prepared to transfer the flour to thirty pound metal lard cans for safekeeping, While I was gone, using table spoons, they had been busy carrying the flour to their little red wagon. They hadn't moved the wagon but left it across the room and carried the flour by the spoonful. Luckily the amount wasted wasn't very much. A friend told me that this happened to her one time, only it was fine coal dust, her kids were moving. Ugh!

During the summer, our houses grazed in the pasture at night because they needed the green grass; we needed all the hay we could put up for winter feeding and it eliminated cleaning the horse barns during the busy season. It also scattered the manure across the pasture thus eliminating some of the breeding grounds for flies. In the early morning, Roy's and the hired man's first chore was to bring in the cows for milking and the horses had to be rounded up and stabled, where they were fed grain and harnessed for the day's work. Often they would be at the far end of the pasture of twenty or thirty acres. The cows came I readily and the horses would come docilely enough until they were ready to enter the yard gate, when up would go a head and a tail and off they could gallop to the far end of the field. It was simply a game for them. After a couple of rounds they would go in, ready for their breakfast. We stabled Gunpowder all one summer because she would lead the others in this game every morning. She wasn't expected to do any field work so she was a nuisance and she was sold shortly after we bought the car. Fun for the horses but maddening for the tired harried farmers.

All horses and ponies have an infuriating habit of thinking that the grass is greener on the other side of the fence. They stand as close as possible to the fence wires, lean over and stretch for each tender morsel. When eight large work horses take their turn in reaching for that tidbit a neck and a half away, wires loosen in a hurry. Horses are afraid of wire about their feet so they seldom push their way through but cattle and hogs soon find the weakened fences.

I learned to drive a horse on a single buggy with Mama as she drove Fanny, our driving horse. She was safe and steady but she did have her idiosyncrasies. She didn't like to have the lines under her tail and it seemed to me that she deliberately tried to switch that tail over the reins. Also she was often a nursing mother, so she was always in a great hurry to get home on each trip. When Papa and Mama's family became larger, Mama drove a team of black work horses on the surrey, for the trip to church or to Grandpa's.

This team of good black work horses were Fanny's colts which Papa had raised and trained himself, and they were most trustworthy. We never had a runaway with either the buggy, surrey or wagon. Either Papa was a good trainer or he sold the skittish ones.

Some teams got into the habit of taking a dozen steps after they heard the command "Whoa". Roy recalled that one of their teams at home had this bad habit and it was infuriating in corn cultivating time when you covered a hill of corn, to have the team go on and cover three more hills before they stopped. Their hired man said, "I'll fix them". so when he was cultivating near a fence, he hollered "Whoa" and dropped the reins over a fence post, stopping them dead in their tracks. It cured them too! This could be done because the reins were always tied together and worn across one shoulder to free the hands to control the swinging cultivator shovels.

This story was an aftermath. Roy's father didn't know about this lesson so shortly afterward, in haying, he shouted "Whoa" from the top of a load of hay and the team stopped short. Of course he wasn't expecting such instant obedience and he fell off the front end of a load of hay, breaking his arm. You can win and still lose!

We gradually bought better horses until we usually had eight or nine work horses, that is, we tried to. It seemed to me that one was always sick, stifled, heevy, or dead. When we went into partnership with AW, Roy bought a matched team of nice roan Belgians at a farm sale, just the day or so before the back moratorium. No cash was available anywhere but AW went to the Railway Express office and got the cash to pay for the horses. So Roy paid the farmer, with four one-hundred dollar bills. We had never seen a hundred dollar bill before and have never seen many of them since either.

This team worked well for us for several years but one winter night, one of them, in high spirits, kicked her stall to pieces and in jumping and prancing, she impaled herself on a splintered two-by-four. Another dead horse. Most of our equipment called for four horses so with a hired man, it was necessary to have eight working horses.

Colts had to be trained and young horses acted like colts until they were four or five years old. One of Roy's boyhood miseries was to help break the colts in the early spring. This was always a damp dark day, when they hitched the colt with an older trustworthy horse to a wagon and they drove the team around the mile square. Roy said there was never anything to do but they had to ride along because there might be trouble. Roy and I never raised any colts of our own.

One spring day, we had a four horse team hitched together and I held the reins while Roy fastened the tugs to the evener on the disc. The near horse swung around and kicked me just back of the knee. The horse was just being playful and was soon put back in his place but I had a black and blue spot back of my knee which was bigger than the knee itself. How could that Be? It was!

Roy was kicked in the face one year, cuttings a gash just above and between his eyes, so that the blood ran down his face. He was far out in the field, had to bring the team in and drive himself to the doctor. The injury required several stitches but he was very lucky that there was no concussion. Roy has been stepped on, bitten, kicked, squashed against the wall and thrown from a wagon in a runaway but he was always lucky that he had no more serious injuries.

Livestock farmers have many different interests and problems. I can still feel the sense of dismay when I remember some of our serious losses. One of our first big losses was a large Holstein cow, who had just freshened with her first calf, and she should have increased our cream check by ten percent which was badly needed. Already, we had made the cows the center of our lives and we were badly shaken when she developed blood poisoning in her udder. The veterinarian gave her shots and we nursed her and wrapped her udder in warm blankets, but it was no use. At add to our gloom, she died on Easter Sunday. Over the years we developed a philosophy, those that have, must lose. Sometimes, it seems unjust, especially when the animal wasn't even paid for as yet.

Cows, usually young heifers, died at calving time or if they lived, they dragged around, useless to themselves and to the milk pail. One young cow raced across the pasture, tripped and broke her neck when she fell in to a big hole left by the removal of a boulder.

We tried to have cows freshen in the fall so they would milk heavily through the winter months and on through the spring pasture season. Calves were weaned at only a few days of age and fed from a pail, whole milk at first, then switched to skim milk. Bull calves were sold as veal and the heifers kept to add to the herd.

One time, Roy sold a three year old heifer due to freshen soon, to a neighbor but when the truck came for her, she wouldn't enter the truck. She was used to being stanchioned but she was not about to enter that strange truck alone. The use of the electric prod frightened her and she jumped over the men and escaped into the barnyard. When she was again in the barn, she was bleeding badly about the udder. We called the veterinarian and of course the neighbor went home without her. Not only did we still have the cow without any money but we had a cow with an injured teat to deal with, never easy and sometimes very costly. The blood flowed, the vet didn't come and he didn't come so in desperation, we made a thick paste of flour and water and slapped it on over the seemingly injured spot. It worked! The vet never did come. Later when the blood and paste were washed off, we found that she had only a small three cornered tear in one of the big veins on the outside of the udder, and it healed without a sign. This story has a happy ending as the neighbor did take her but next time, they loaded several others with her and brought them back after she was delivered.

The depression was hard on everyone, no less so because they lived in the country. We had our tragedies as well. Farm people are no different, only more scattered. Jesse mowed and cared for one of the local cemeteries. One day as he worked, Fred Lang[1] drove in and stopped near him, and after the usual exchange of greetings and comments on the weather, Fred announced, "I've just shot Nellie and Lucy," and drove away before Jesse was even sure that he had heard aright. Startled and uneasy, he hesitated but the strangeness of the situation caused him to drive to the Lang farm at once. He was to late, Fred had already shot himself also. All Jesse could do was call for help and for the sheriff.

Dirt poor on a small sandy farm, Fred and his wife had plenty of reason to be bitter and frustrated with each other. The filthy condition of the house would have to be seen to be believed. The step daughter Lucy, only fourteen, was a pale wraith of a girl who never had a chance. Fred had taken things into his own hands.

Down along the river lived several small farmers, getting poorer and poorer, falling into the sordidness of utter poverty. Some members of these same families had moved on, to Nebraska, to further west; some got a job in town, some bought more land and expanded their crop land but some still stayed, still trying to eke out an existence on the worn out sandy soil. I never understood why some educated themselves, or moved on but others did not.

One young man with a crippled foot, was farming his eighty acres, struggling against all odds. We called there one day and saw the deplorable condition of the house yard, dirty children, dirty mother. I wonder if any of us would have done any better? Her well was a hundred feet from the house, more or less, down a rather steep slope and up another. Maybe the answer is that we wouldn't! So the family would have had to move elsewhere. Remember this was before ADC or most other aid except a direct widow's pension. Ironically, now with fertilizer and hybrid seeds, this sandy soil will produce almost as well as the heavier soils.

Premarital affairs are as old as recorded time. One girl planned her wedding, only

the would-be groom was already married with a family. She kept the baby and the grandparents raised the little girl until the mother did marry and took the little girl with her. Another girl really was too young to be married so her parents raised the child as their own and as her mother's sister. This was one of the juiciest pieces of gossip in those years but the girl, a talented teacher and musician, married and raised a fine family of her own. Other girls allowed their babies to be adopted into other homes, often friends and relatives.

Earlier the stigma of illegitimacy was strong and the hapless individual was looked down upon. More recently as in the cases I have mentioned, it was a juicy piece of gossip and some people would never forget it or allow you to forget it, but the child was not really discriminated against.

On a lighter side and much more important was our neighborhood relationships with each other and with the small town merchants. In our town, Troy Mils, the storekeeper was your friend, as was the butcher, the hardware man, the restaurant keeper, the truckers, the cream hauler, the egg buyer, and the gasoline station operator. A good example would be the partnership of our general store keepers, a partnership which lasted many years, a partnership of good will, industry and integrity with each other and with the community. They were helpful, would deliver your meat and perishables on the morning of a threshing day or whenever needed. In time of trouble, accident, fire or disaster, they were always among the first to arrive to help out.

We gathered on Saturday nights in town with our eggs and cream to buy groceries and visit with each other. The stores stayed open until nine, ten or eleven o'clock. We used to joke that stores were open until the last nickel had left town. However that is really not fair as the tradesmen were also glad to visit with all of us each weekend and were reluctant to bring the week to a close. Everything was closed on Sunday except for emergencies. Often someone would promote a public dance which was really appreciated except that a few heavy drinkers always managed to cause a free-for-all fight and spoil it for everyone.

Neighbors exchanged help in sawing wood, threshing grain, hauling manure, filling silo, shredding corn fodder, butchering, castrating young animals and in moving. A great deal of sociability went with these jobs for the women as well went with these jobs for the women as well as the men. Almost always a meal was eaten together. It was still customary if anyone was at your house at meal time, you set on another plate or as many as needed and they ate with you, even traveling salesmen.

Threshing oats was a way of life. It was much the same as in earlier days except that the power was a gasoline tractor instead of the old steam engine and instead of the old straw stacker, a blower blew the straw into at stack or into a barn. It was a time of great responsibilities; bins to mend, labor to exchange, meals to prepare. Every farm furnished a team and hayrack or wagon box and the larger farms also furnished an extra man.

Oats were cut with a grain binder, which tied the cut oats into sheaves; the sheaves were stacked into shocks of eight sheaves and the shock was covered with a cap, made of another bundle, spread out to cover the heads of the oats. On threshing day, an extra man, called the pitcher, threw these bundles onto a hayrack and the driver loaded them so as to have a full rack perhaps six feet high. The filled racks were then pulled up beside the

threshing machine and the driver threw the bundles into the carrier. At least once every year, there was a smart alec, trying to show off, who threw the bundles in too fast and choked the machine, which then had to be laboriously cleaned out by hand.

When the wagon box was filled with oats, the spout was shifted to another box and the first moved to the bin, where the shovelers hoisted the oats with scoop shovels into the bin, sometimes over a ten or twelve foot partition. Two men spelled each other in shoveling. I have often thought that instead of a pitchfork representing the farmer, it would be just as appropriate to show a scoop shovel.

Sometimes the straw was just blown into a pile and allowed to pile up as it would but often, one man on the stack guided the blower and another one or two would shape the stack with pitchforks. Properly built it would shed water and stand a long time. If it was blown into the barn, it was the same, only dustier. Some men wouldn't work in the straw and others have ruined their health by doing so. Roy always wanted his straw just so, and persisted until he had dust pneumonia in two different years and had to give up working in the straw. With lots of livestock and poultry, it was a real pleasure to have plenty of fresh clean straw to use.

For me, there were groceries to buy, the stove to clean, bread to bake, vegetables to gather from the garden. I had to make sure we had enough potatoes dug and I had to be sure that I baked enough bread the day before. Early in the morning, even before breakfast, I would make four or five pies so the oven would be free later for the fifteen to twenty pound roast and the big pan of baked beans, that would be baking. We peeled two or three big kettles of potatoes, made a gallon of gravy, cut cabbage for slaw, good substantial food for the fifteen to twenty men and the ten or so women and children. It took a lot of help, especially if there were small children and a nursing baby.

Seldom did any of us have sufficient dishes, large pans, glassware or silverware, so we borrowed from each other or from relatives. Someone's big three gallon granite coffee pot made the rounds. A raw egg was mixed with two or three cups of ground coffee and put in the pot, which was then filled with cold water and heated until it came to a boil and considered ready to serve. If you didn't use the egg, the coffee grounds would permeate the entire pot. After the coffee came to a boil, a couple of cups of cold water added with a dash would help settle the grounds.

All the flies were shooed out as best we could and the fly swatter was in constant use. If, on this particular day, the flies congregated on the entrance door, someone shooed them away as each person entered. Because of the rich odors coming from the house, especially on hot still days, the screen doors might be black with flies.

A place to wash up had to be provided for the men as they came to meals. Wash basin, soap and towels were set up somewhere in the shade with several pails or a milk can of water. Sometimes a mirror would be hung in a tree and a comb provided. Towels were made of cotton or linen crash. It was usually very hot in threshing time so no one missed the hot water.

Usually we assemble enough dishes to set two tables but we had to wash dishes before setting the third table. When the first table of men had finished, we reset the table for more men, then the women and children ate at the third table. By this time the kitchen would be a shambles, the children underfoot and fussy with hunger. We would take time to linger and relax over our table. Looking back now, I wonder how much we relaxed. I

enjoyed the activity and the people but the heat was often terribly oppressive.

After the dishes were finished we started the preparations for supper. Suppers were a little lighter with cake and sauce instead of pie for dessert. More potatoes, vegetables and sliced tomatoes. Sometimes, one of us could manage to get a large chunk of ice from the Troy Mills ice house and have iced tea for supper. The ice was river ice but it never seemed to hurt anyone. Usually a few of the men went home for supper because they had to hurry home for chores or family responsibilities.

One year, my sister Blanche and Duane unexpectedly arrived just as we were finishing dinner. Naturally, we set them up to a good dinner but Duane couldn't get over the fact that we had fed thirty and still had enough for drop-in visitors.

Storms sometimes interrupted the threshing so that it could be pretty expensive if we had to prepare too many meals. If the crew was rained out and went home, we had to divide and share the prepared food because we couldn't keep it for another day and it might be several days before it was dry enough to thresh again. One threshing crew got deadly sick during an afternoon and it was traced to a salad which had been kept over from the night before. Although it might have been expensive, we always started over again. It is hard to believe the difference between refrigeration and the lack of it.

My youngest sister, Nona, started to high school but said, "I'm not going to drive to school for four years" and she got a job with a family where she worked for her room and board and still went to school. Sad to say, this didn't work out and she quit school at the end of her first semester. She worked at home and for other families in the communities until she married. One of the neighboring farms had a truck garden and she worked there also, one time weeding onions.

She and Wilbur (Van Fossen) were married on New Years Eve, Dec. 31, 1932, in the farm home. Wilbur's folks were farmers near Robins, solid citizens, descended from early settlers and they were still members of the Dunkard[2] faith. Wilbur had rented a farm near his folks and they moved onto it in the spring. Roy and I had the flu that New year's Eve and I don't remember much about the wedding. I do remember how hard it was for us to throw down the hay and feed the cows that night and get ourselves and the girls ready for a wedding, drive the ten miles, when we both just wanted to drop into bed and be miserable. I don't remember how bright company we were that evening but likely it didn't make much difference. At least we were there to wish them the very best.

[1] Mother fictionalized several incidents in her work.
[2] Dunkard Faith- a denomination of Christians founded in Germany in 1708 and later reorganized in the United States, characterized by the practice of trine immersion, the celebration of a love feast accompanying the Lord's Supper, and the opposition to the taking of oaths and to military service.

New Barn

After the house was finished, AW decided that if he was going to be a partner in a dairy business, we should have a suitable barn replacing the old one by the silo. It was thirty-four by seventy feet and twelve feet to the eaves of a high pitched roof so there was lots of hay mow room. Five double horse stalls extended across the east end, then an alley, then the main portion of the barn, stanchions for twenty cows, ten to a side, facing each other. Behind the north row of cows ran a row of small pens for the bull and calves, and a small feed bin.

The roof and hay mow extended out over the west shed, intended for young cattle but it proved too cold and inconvenient. However it was a handy shelter for the men to drive through, load their spreaders under a roof before driving out into the fields in all kinds of weather. It was also a windbreak for the doors of the cow barn and sheltered the cow barn and the cows as they came and went, from the hot western sun and the cold winter winds. Roy stabled his cows all day during the winter months, turning them out to water twice a day and cleaning the barn while they were out. A twenty by forty foot open shed extended west from the barn, providing shelter in the barnyard also.

This barn was built in the depths of the depression and AW used much odds and ends of labor. Some of the men who owed the lumber company worked out their bills as laborers. I best remember Charlie, whose job it was to break up large rocks into small enough fragments that they could be used in the cement floor and foundation wall. The wall was only a foot to a foot and a half above ground on the dooryard side but was about five or six feet high on the back side, so it took many years of cement and many rocks to complete the cement base, the footings, the foundation wall, the floor, the gutters, the feed mangers and all. I don't remember just what Charlie's occupation was but he definitely didn't like this job. He was strong and brawny but no one likes to swing a sledge hammer. It took many rhythmical blows to crack a stone and many more until it was broken into small enough fragments. I can still picture Charlie, sitting there desultorily hammering away on the rock and then how busy he became wherever the boss came around. The head carpenter was called Old Tutt by everyone and it must have been trying to use so much untried and unskilled help along with his regular carpenters. The extras were unskilled in carpentering but most of them were willing enough and glad to have a short job.

Later, our famous Our Destruction Crew (ODC) built the cattle shed west of the barn and they were to build a solid wooden gate between the shed and the barn, really a part of the windbreak. Although this shed and gate were built without blueprints, with only specified width, length and so on; when Roy asked them to add a small walk gate beside the big gate for convenience, they refused, saying, "The boss didn't say so," and went ahead and made the solid wall. It was such a small obvious necessary gate but Roy and to go to AW before they grudgingly made the gate. We put it down to rudeness and trying to put Roy in his place but now, I wonder, did they get more pay for working on it twice? However, we didn't have to drag the big gate open every time we went from one yard to the other.

Roy and I really appreciated the new barn but it was not perfect for a dairy barn. Like the house, everything was cut short in size. The space between the stanchions and the gutter was too narrow, the gutter was too narrow, the space between the gutter and the wall behind them was too narrow. Actually, Holsteins require lots of room. We managed but Guernsey's would have found it the right size. In the plans, Roy and AW thought that they had allowed more room for larger cattle but the had underestimated and tried to crowd too much into one barn.

Another problem, especially in the late winter, was the fact that the only hay chute was directly in front of the horses and at the end of the cows manger, right most of the year except when feeding from the two west bents. A bent was the name used for each section of the hay mow between the big cross beams and each bent if filled separately. Hay form the west bent had to be carried or dragged almost the entire length of the barn, dropped though the chute, then carried back down the manger to the west end again Every once in a while they discussed cutting another chute nearer the west end but it was never done. At least it was warmer in the winter time.

With such a nice light new barn, we were ashamed to complain, so we enjoyed what we had. It was light, warm in winter, doors all worked, hinges all worked, latches all worked, concrete floors everywhere, so easy to clean. Hay ropes, pulley, and track were new; ladders were solid and safe.

In the horse ban with the door to the east, were four and a half double stalls with good heavy plank mangers and a feed box for each horse. The space beside the half stall was the alleyway from the rest of the barn into the horse barn. Strong hangers and hooks were attached to the wall behind the stalls on which to hang the harness and collars. Each horse had a halter, a bridle, a collar and pad and one heavy harness, which consisted of a pair of hanes and two tugs with connecting straps and fasteners. Collars had to be fitted and kept clean and smooth to prevent sore shoulders. Even then sometimes trouble occurred. Soap and water and the carbolic acid salve sold by Watkins or Raleighs, was the best help. Sometimes a change of collar or a new pad helped.

Hay was thrown down right in front of the horse manger for both the horses and cattle. The feed bin was intended for grain for horses, but it proved too difficult to get the grain into the bin over the high wall and it was not large enough either, so it was usually use for other purposes, as special proteins or minerals. The corn or oats fed to horses was carried in a bushel basket from the crib or bin and measured out to each animal according to its production level.

The big mow was full of hay many times. We estimated that it held a hundred tons of hay. A large door in the peak of the east end dropped down to make room for the fork loads of hay. A large iron track ran the entire length in the peak of the barn and the harpoon fork ran on this track carrying the hay to whichever bent was being filed that day. The fork was pulled by a rope attached to the fork carrier at one end and to the eveners on the ground at the other end. This heavy 1 and ¼ inch rope, ran thought several pulleys and had to be twice the length of the barn and double the height to the peak, roughly two hundred feet of rope. Rope was expensive and was used over and over. When hay rope broke they spliced the thick rope, by cutting out the worn and broken part, unraveling some distance back and then reweaving into a strong rope again. Many became master of this craft. I wonder if it has become a lost art? If the rope had a special name, I never

heard of it but knew it only as a hay rope. A second 3/8 inch rope, called the trip rope was attached to the fork and trailed after the loaded fork the length of the barn, to trip the fork whenever the load was in position.

The hay, usually a mixture of clover and timothy was cut with a horse drawn seven foot mower in the field, then raked into windrows with a side delivery rake. When dry enough, the hay was elevated to the back end of the hay rack with a hay loader, while the man of the family pushed and pulled the hay with a pitchfork to shape the load of hay. There had to be a balance to the load or it would upset or slide off on the way to the barn. The woman of the house, an older child, or neighbor boy drove the team on the hay rack, guiding the team to straddle the windrows, stepping up higher on the hay as the load was built.

Women or children most often drove on the hayfork at the barn also. The worst job was in the hay mow, dragging the forksful into the corners in such a way that it could be forked out without moving a ton of hay with each pitchfork. If at all possible, two men worked in the mow, which was most often dusty and stifling hot.

The wagon load of hay was pulled into place under the big open door; the fork pulled from the barn and set in one end of the load. In the meantime, the team was hitched to the set of eveners or double-trees at the end of the rope and the load was pulled into the barn. Some farms had their double-trees fastened to a cart for the driver to ride but most of us didn't. If the hay was too dry, it pulled apart, needing many forksful, or if it was too damp, it came off in four or five forksful, almost too large to go through the big door. When the hay was in the desired position, s shout alerted the fork man or woman to trip the load. This was one of the trials of haying because often the fork man could not hear the call from the depth of the barn and had to guess as best he could. It always seemed that it was the soft voiced men who worked in the hay mow. We did have good, though old haying machinery. It almost kept one person, usually a child, busy with carrying water to the hay makers.

On one side of the barn, next to the silo, they built a large cement water tank, five or six feet wide and twenty feet long and completely covered with a shingled roof. Doors in the roof opened to give access for the cattle to drink from the cattle yard and one door on the end of the tank so that the working horses could be watered form the door yard.

During the depression, we started to feed out hogs, which were purchased at 50 to 90 pounds and they were fed to market weight, two hundred to two hundred-thirty pounds. We got started at this because AW took in some pigs on a lumber and feed bill and we fed them out. The first ones were bought at $3.50 a hundred weight and sold at the packing plant in Cedar Rapids for $4.10 a cwt., and we paid the trucking both ways. Trucking to the Cedar Rapids plant was $5 dollars a load. You can see that we didn't pay off many debts at those prices.

Today (1980's) there is much comparison with the depression of the Thirties but agriculture wise, there is no comparison. Remember horses were still the main source of power although these were the years when the row crop tractors begin to be used. When the bottom fell out of the banks and all, we could still farm another year. With our horse power, home grown feed and seed, we kept going. Those who were paying cash rent had more trouble than the ones with grain shares but the landlords couldn't see any way out either. Even though we were bankrupt and broke, we could still raise much of our own

food. We lived on the garden, our own canned goods, cracked eggs, cull chickens, corn as meal and hominy, our own butchering, but we were so desperate for cash that the animal was most often sold. Relatives and neighbors share their feed and seed, their garden produce and everyone had a cow or two to milk even if they weren't dairying. This also applied to the small town and suburban families.

We never did burn corn as many did. We needed the feed and we had access to plenty of wood, which was just waiting to be cleared out of the way. Occasionally, a few ears of corn which had spoiled were burned but this did not happen often. If corn is cribbed too wet and the weather stays warm, it will spoil. Many times this corn will look alright but if it is examined, the inside of the kernels will be black with a sort of mold or mildew. Hogs will not eat this spoiled corn but cattle will, even if it is not good for them and it is a deadly poison to horses. For this reason, ensilage is not fed to horses as too often spots of mold will form in the air pockets.

Overalls and jackets were mended over and over, clothes were made over, and outgrown clothes used for the younger ones. I remember a dear neighbor sitting in our kitchen one day and I admired the many neat patches on his jacket. I'm afraid that Roy's patches were flapping. At least all of us were in the same boat and there was very little trying to keep up with the Jones. Many landlords were just as bad off, as they received so little rent and those who had invested in many companies received no dividends.

Eggs were thirteen cents a dozen, cream got down to seventeen cents a CWT And hovered around twenty cents for years. Perhaps I should clarify that a little, the butterfat in cream was paid for by CWT, (hundred-weight). Holstein milk ran about three percent fat, and the cream we sold, ran thirty-five to thirty percent butterfat, and we were paid for the total amount of butterfat we sent that month. Richer cream would stick to the containers so that too much was lost between the separator and the creamery scales. We always bought butter off the cream truck. Many families saved money by using margarine, even as they colored it themselves to make it look like butter. Roy insisted, "As long as we milk cars, we are going to eat butter."

Veal calves sold for seven dollars a CWT. We bought corn from a neighbor, which who picked, delivered and shoveled into our corncrib, for twelve cents a bushel, small ears but good corn. We purchased corn from the Coggon Bank for twenty-two cents a bushel. Perhaps AW had some advantage over us as he was taking in grain and hogs on lumber and feed company bills. Undoubted, he was losing on each transaction.

AW furnished fence materials so Roy and his hired man built fence for weeks at a time, it seemed to me, although AW hired a man to put in the eighty rods along the west road. We ended with a hog tight fence around the farm, all steel posts and woven wire. There were no cross fences except around the pastures. The hog pasture was hog tight except after very heavy rains and then we would have to mend fences across the waterways. Around the cattle pasture, there was a simple three barbed wire fence, which should have been rebuilt but they never seemed to get around to that. Everything would be fine until the pasture became short, then the cattle would push against the fences, reaching for the grass, oats or corn until a wire broke and we would have to round up some cows from the corn field.

When we first moved to the Orchard Place, the road between Coggon and Troy Mills was a rutty, dusty mess. It was graded the very next two years with mules and

scrapers and surfaced with a heavy coat of gravel. McGraw had the contract and he pastured and wintered his forty head of mules in neighboring stock fields that winter. The new grade held up well except in early spring for a few weeks when the frost went out of the ground. Quicksand holes would develop in several places, making it necessary to plank strips of road so the needed cars and trucks could go through. These were one or two plank wide, right over the mud. Watch your driving!

On one hillside, tons of crushed rock was poured into the spongy mess each and every spring. We could never understand where all the material went to; there must have been a cave under that hill. If so, it is now filled with crushed rock. In recent years, the road has been resurfaced with asphalt and is now a beautiful road.

The first marked road across the nation in this area was the A and P, the Atlantic and Pacific Highway, which ran from Dubuque to Sioux City, going through Waterloo and it became Federal Highway No. 20. The Lincoln Highway which became Highway 30, ran through Cedar Rapids, from Clinton to Missouri Valley. AW and Marion (Mrs. Savage) drove to California and Oregon before there were many paved roads anywhere, and they told of some hair-raising experiences on the mountain and desert roads.

Bad roads were always the bane of our lives but they were also the thread of life that led to the rest of the world. Roads were either deep in mud, clouded with dust, slick with ice, impassable with snow or rough with ruts. If the road grader did smooth them, it soon rained and there were again ruts. The early gravel road knocked our buggy wheels so badly that we kept all four wheels soaking the stock tank when they were not in use. We couldn't afford the money to have them reset. I wonder how our Amish neighbors keep their wheels in working order? I suppose they have their own blacksmiths.

At first, Roy worked his poll tax by helping fill in nearby mudholes with a team and a slip, under the direction of the township road boss. We were on the very edge of Newton township and voted in the school house at Newton Center. Times change so after woman suffrage became a reality, the state discontinued the poll tax and soon mechanized road graders were used. Many a farmer kept a discarded horse drawn road scraper around to smooth out his own section of the road and to move snow in the winter time

Everywhere, roads have been straightened, widened, trees removed, hills cut down, and grades made higher. After cars and trucks became common, our road troubles increased. When the tires were small, it wasn't so different but as the tires got bigger and bigger, the ruts became deeper and deeper and bigger and bigger. Each time the road was widened and resurfaced the cars and trucks became larger and the race is still going on, with the cars and trucks winning.

I have a vivid memory of riding home with my father in the surrey through the slough road after the spring break-up. I remember Father, the creaking buggy, the jingling harness, and I have no words to describe the horse's hooves clumping in the mud and the suck-suck as the hooves withdrew at each step. Firefly lanterns blinked their elfin aligns all around us that dark night.

When anyone complains about road taxes, I remember the roads at Grandpa's funeral in February, 1930, when the coffin had to be transported to a gravel road by team and wagon. In the early 1930's when Iowa was making great efforts to dig themselves out of the mud, Roy and I drove some distance down into Missouri to buy some feeding pigs. Of course we never strayed off the paved road but we saw clay side roads like you

wouldn't believe and the United States mail was being delivered by mule back. This was our first experience with traveling anywhere and we didn't take along enough money. We came home all the way without eating or sleeping. I don't suppose we were very starved but it spoiled the trip for us. It wasn't that we spent too much, but a tire or something cost us our eating money.

Neighbors helped each other shell and haul corn to market each year, using triple boxes on wagons or bobsleds. Horses had to be shod before they could travel the frozen roads but every town had at least one blacksmith. Some livery barns were still running to care for the teams and hitching posts were still all around town where you tied your team and blanketed them for an hour or so stay.

Earlier tires were poor compared to today's. Ten thousand miles was about the best any tire lasted. One neighbor boy, man really, ran a trapline on many of the small streams and he made his rounds in a Model T Coupe. He not only booted his tires in the usual way but he cut out more boots from old tires and wired the boot on the outside of the tire to cover a hole. Those were the days!

Old Matt, when her worked for us had a similar car which would never start, until after much cranking and many words of exasperation, he jacked up one rear wheel but he did have god tires however. One severely cold day, his car stopped along the road and he couldn't get it going again. Angrily, he threw out his spare to get at the jack but when the car started he forgot to pick up the tire and drove off. When he remembered, it was too late, someone had taken it. Anger didn't pay that time.

Although we sometimes scream about thigh taxes, roads are a necessity and good roads are beneficial to all of us. Bad roads are more expensive. We have lost a small fortune in delayed shipment of cream, stock, both cattle had hogs, or eggs, or in broken harness, wheels, tie rods, single and double trees, tired horses, tired men and muscles. By the way another name for single trees is whiffle-trees.

The cream hauler would get stuck, the school bus would get stuck, the mail man would get stuck; no one charged for helping then out. Only once, without being asked, the sheriff paid Roy five dollars. A red letter day!

Mike Burney, a neighbor to the northeast, came to the door one night, about two thirty in the morning, knocking and calling until he aroused someone. Swaying unsteadily, he looked up at Roy in the upstairs window and asked him to give him a little help to get his car out of the ditch. "All I need is a little push. We won't need to horses." Roy awoke the hired man to accompany him but a hitch arose at once because Mike didn't know in which direction his car was stalled. There was a light fog drifting across the hollows as they went to find his car, after Mike decided that it was just over the hill to the east. When the car wasn't there, Mike was so crestfallen in his befogged state, that they tried another direction until Roy decided that he must have been celebrating in a local tavern in a nearby town so they turned that way. To Mike's vast relief, (Roy said that he was like a kid in his pleasure), the found it down the road where he had slid into the ditch

Naturally, they couldn't budge it so they returned to the barn to harness a team and get double-trees and a chain at three o'clock in the morning. When they returned Mike had fallen asleep slumped over the wheel. As the night was warm, they turned out his lights and left him there, better asleep than driving down the road in his condition. Next morning as they milked, here he came again. This time with the help of the cream

hauler, they pushed him out and sent him on his way and at nine o'clock, he was threshing with the rest of the neighborhood. We wondered if he remembered anything about his first call for help. If he did, perhaps he thought he had been dreaming!

We sometimes had amusing, irritating and unusual experiences because we lived on the corner at the end of an unmarked T road. There was only about a forty rod jog in the road and many forgot that the road north did not go straight as a string. One morning as we lingered over breakfast, who should walk past our window but a very tall man, dressed in a tuxedo and a tall black hat. Shades of Abraham Lincoln! Frankly we stared, since in this country we never saw a tuxedo except in a movie, much less own or wear one. At the door he politely asked for help as he had over-run the corner and was stalled. He was on his way to a wedding in a small town north of us and he was one of the priests involved. Happily we were ale to send him on his way shortly.

One winter night a group of teenagers going home to Winthrop, after attending a basketball gave in Coggon, came barreling through the fence and across our frozen garden, spilling boys and girls along it's path. Miraculously, no one was hurt and the girls warmed themselves by our stove while Roy and the boys got the car going and on the road again. Frost had so fogged the windshield, they couldn't see and thinking they were on a straight read, they ran off the corner. Very lucky children they were!

Two of the neighbor boys ran off the corner and straddled the broken post so that they had to get their father's loader to lift the car off. No serious damage. Another two neighbor men ran off the corner to the west, hitting the south bank hard enough to bung themselves up with cuts and bruises. One not so close neighbor went through the fence in the night and on into the cornfield. Next morning he was looking all over for his car. He didn't even remember where he left it!

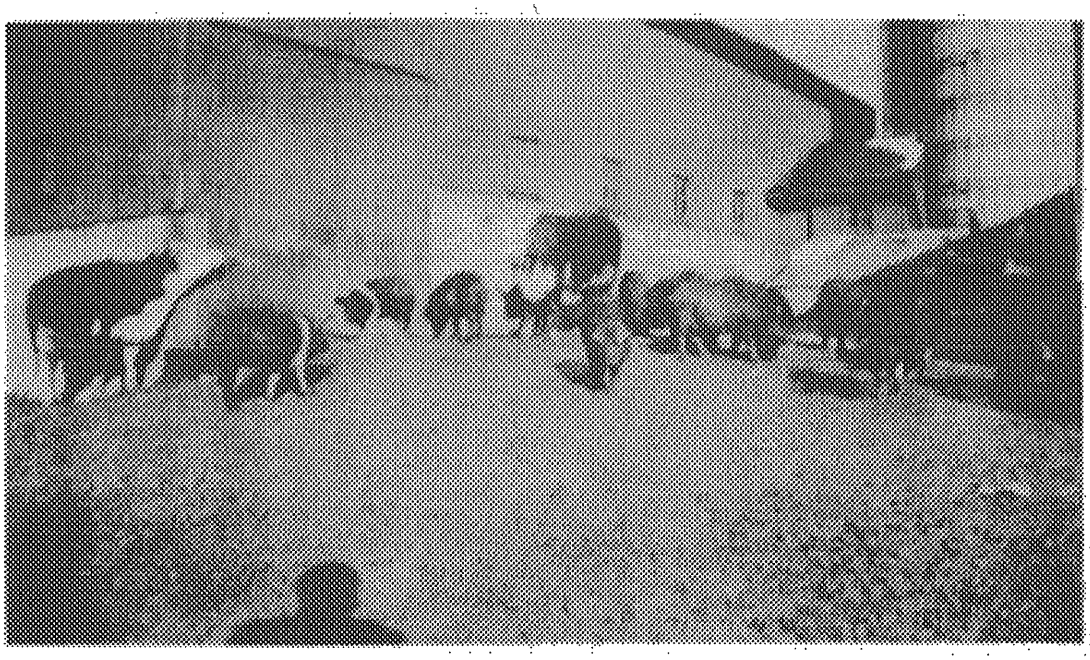
The new woven wire fence came almost to this corner but the old fence was still across the garden and poultry yard. It had been mended so many times that there was little left to mend. AW suggested that we build a good stout fence with heavy posts and stop the damage but we never did. He agreed with us that it was better to fix the fence than have someone killed or seriously injured.

One summer evening after we were in bed, someone parked on the corner. We knew that they were there because the dog barked and sometimes their laughter would carry through our open windows. When they came to leave, the car wouldn't start! They tried and tried! Finally they actually turned the car around, pushing and grinding away with the starter, then they had to push it over a slight rise where it then rolled downward and finally started. Roy and I lay in bed and giggled over their predicament. It must have been someone who didn't want to be identified, else they would have asked for help.

We had bough our first Holstein heifers from a good herd near Cedar Falls so we had some good foundation stock, and we always bought good purebred bulls, the best that we could find at a price we could manage. Although some of the cows were purebred, we were not working toward a purebred herd or tried to keep up any papers. We were aiming for high milk averages.

As the herd grew so did the children. One day, when Dorothy was two or so, she was missing. We hunted high and low, looked in the stock tank, searched the out-buildings; we climbed the windmill to look father afield but no Dorothy. She was Ruth's constant shadow but this time Ruth didn't know where she was. Frantic, I rushed up to

Wachals to call for help and there she was, eating bread and butter in their kitchen. She had been found playing with their kittens near the barn. Dorothy was fully satisfied with her guest life and there was nothing to do but carry her home and hope that it didn't happen again. We had visited before (walking) and we guessed that she just decided to go by herself. None of the children ever threatened to run away. If any of them were exasperated enough to reach that point, I never knew of it.



The Farmyard Hereford steers-Hampshire hogs

We take a Holiday

In 1933, Chicago hosted a World's Fair, The Century of Progress. Although we had talked about going, I never really expected that Roy would leave his cows in the care of anyone else, or that we would spare the money needed, besides which I was pregnant and that would make it doubtful. All my life I had heard Papa tell about the time he and his father had attended the World's Fair in 1893 in Chicago, so that it seemed a magical place to me.

My sister Blanche and her husband were living in a suburb some miles north of Chicago so it made a good excuse for Papa and Mama. They visited Blanche and family and with them attended the Fair on several different days. They came home very enthusiastic and they insisted that Roy and I take a short holiday. They would keep the girls; they would come up every night and morning to help the hired man so that everything would be alright.

Cousin Ruth A.T. (Ruth Alice Todd) about our age, who lived in Coggon, suggested that she would like to go with us and share expenses so we actually did go. The three of us in our Chevy coupe drove to Blanche's and stayed with them for two nights, where we made the acquaintance of the new baby Bruce, now six months old.[1] Then we drove down to an El Station near the city and parked our car in a garage's private lot. We rode the elevated down to the fair on the lake front. We walked and walked, taking in all the sights we could reach for free, which were more than we could manage. There were so many wonderful exhibits from all the world, depicting the progress of manufacturing, and especially of transportation.

We stayed that night in a big hotel nearby. Roy and I wondered just how we were going to ask for one room for three people of mixed company and we hesitated. Not Ruth A.T. she marched right up and asked for a double room with two beds and that was that.

That night, my legs cramped so badly that I had to walk the floor several different times. Even if I was handicapped because I expected the baby in about six weeks, I really enjoyed the fair. We collected many items of interest concerning the fair, to pore over and study later, many pictures to share with the girls. I still have some of these from the Century of Progress.

We had little money to spend, nor did Ruth A.T. We couldn't just go in some of the lovely restaurants and order a meal, be it breakfast or dinner but bought a sandwich or an ice cream cone as we were hungry. I don't really remember how much money we had or didn't have. But after we started home, we stopped at a grocery store in a small town and bought a ring of bologna and a package of sweet rolls to eat on the way. The combination of the sweet roll and the spicy meat tasted wonderful.

When we rode the train back to the El Station, it must have been Saturday evening, no one was around the garage to collect our fee for parking the car. There was nothing to do but take the car and go home. Apparently, they had done us a favor by allowing us to use the lot and were not expecting any pay. It as a wonderful vacation!

Lloyd, our first cherished son was born August 29, 1933, the day after Dorothy's third birthday and Ruth was five only eight days later. Doctor Adams, of Central City,

Roy and Mama were with me that night. Lloyd was another blue eyed blonde baby, nine pounds and eight ounces. A strong healthy boy.

Mama had helped me can chicken that day. We dressed, cleaned, cooked the meat from the bones and canned fifteen quarts, using the hot water method. These were about three pound leghorn roosters, almost worthless on the market but they made good chicken ala king for us later. I always had by babies after a day of hard physical work.

We were fortunate to be able to hire Louise, a practical nurse from Troy Mills, who cared for me, the baby and the girls. She prepared the meals for all of us, including Roy and the hired man. Except for a few small things, Mama took the washings home with her. How handy it was to have them so near us. Louise was a jewel, pleasant, efficient and we got along fine.

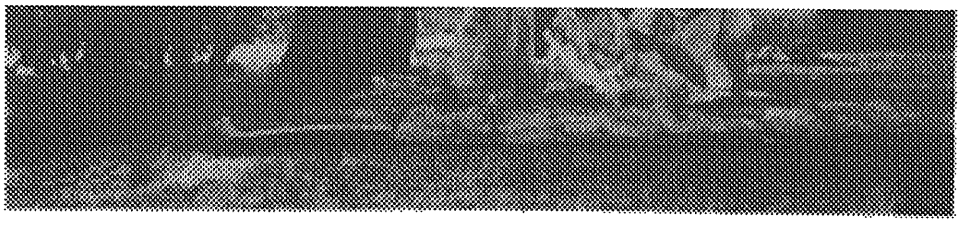
Louise had to leave after three weeks, because a granddaughter had fallen off a horse and was badly injured, so Louise felt she was needed there. I felt so forlorn when she left that I cried, feeling so incapable of managing everything by myself. We then hired a young inexperienced girl of seventeen years for a week but she was so inept that I tried it alone after that. I'm sure she helped her mother very much but she was used to being told everything to do and I wasn't a very good boss. I remember I even had to tell her to put the lid on the pan when she put the potatoes on to cook.

Ruth started to school in our local Reilly school that fall but after two weeks, we made arrangements for her to change schools and attend the Troy Mills school so she could ride the bus which came to our corner only thirty rods away. It was just too much to expect a five year old to walk the two miles alone, twice a day. On her first day of school, she learned the poem, "I had a little turtle, he lives in a puddle and etc." I started my long service to the lunch pail.

I gradually got things under control but it was a hard fall and winter for me. Lloyd was so precious and grew so fast with a wide smile and happy temperament. Despite all the work, and financial difficulties, the children were always a comfort and blessing to Roy and me. We had moved our bed down into the living room for convenience when Lloyd was born and we kept it there for a long time. Lloyd soon outgrew his basket and a baby bed was set up in one corner near the big bed. One night when Lloyd was still in the basket, he had been dissatisfied after I finished nursing him so I had given him a four ounce bottle filled with warm water. He drank a little and it seemed to satisfy him for he soon went to sleep. When I checked on him a little later, he had emptied the bottle. Startled, I didn't know if that much water could hurt him or not. I consulted Roy and together we decided that it probably wouldn't. Mothers can worry about the darndest things.

All the piled up work and difficulties had made Roy irritable and Old Matt's attitude rubbed off a little, too. Roy had a penetrating whistle which meant, "Come quick! Trouble!" With a hired man around, the whistle seldom sounded and then it was really serious trouble. One day I was giving Lloyd his bath in front of the range, the baby lying naked in my lap, when I heard the whistle. I jumped up, baby and all, to lookout the window and saw that they were working on the wagon and the wheel was leaning and about to fall. I ran into the bedroom and laid the naked baby on the bed and hurried out but of course the wheel had fallen and they had to start over again. Roy was very angry with me because it had taken so long but it hadn't. I never could understand why he was

Ruth, Dorothy, and Lloyd Orval



so angry. He wouldn't talk about it and I don't know to this day. I could only surmise that it had been something between him and Old Matt and someway I had let Roy down.

Old Matt was the most exasperating hired man I ever put up with. At least he was to me, Roy seemed to get along with him okay. He was sixty-nine years old and could work with the best of them. A mason by trade, with no masonry work to do, he hired out for the winter months on a farm. Although he didn't do any of the milking, he plunged into everything else as though he was killing snakes. Instead of loading manure from the edge of the pile in the sensible way, he climbed to the top and dug in. I saw him plaster a house once. It was the same. You would have thought that he had to finish by eight o'clock in the morning. He was with us all winter and I had to feel an exasperated sympathy for the crusty old man for he was always cold.

Hot headed and explosive, he entertained us with his tales of former years when he had thrown a twenty dollar bill into a store's pot-bellied stove instead of the intended banana peel. Also, much about the days of the Industrial Workmen of the World, the I.W.W., which he had joined in Sioux City in the early days of the labor movement.

His sister in Troy Mills was one of the neighborhood battle-axes and sometimes he told us about the battle of words between them over the I.W.W., I won't work, to sister, and his defense of the labor movement. I was glad that I didn't have to listen to them. She and her husband lived separately, she in town and he still on the farm, although they did celebrate sixty years of marriage. They had seventeen children, eleven of them living.

Old Matt was always cold. Winter clothes weren't nearly as warm then as in more recent times and although he wore heavy fleece lined underwear, he was always cold. He borrowed some clothes from his sister and wore a long dress and a pair of pants and overalls. Imagine my clothesline on washdays with the ballooning skirts all outsize, flying in the wind. Or in colder weather they were huge frozen garments like so many boards. Old Matt wasn't in the least abashed. Age does have it's compensations. Despite the many covers on his bed, he froze at night in our unheated upstairs,. He bought a horse hide robe and added it to his covers, nearly exhausting me as I made the bed. One day he helped me and we put the robe under the mattress pad and it worked much better.

He was gruff and outspoken and considered women only made to wait on men. His wife had been dead years before (worn out with work, no doubt) and he was unwelcome in any of his five children's homes. A sixth, a daughter had gone to work and live in Washington DC and she had disappeared. She was never found or heard from again. Although he wouldn't have admitted it. I think he was sorry to leave in the spring. For all his grumpiness, he had learned to like us.

One of the big bones of contention that winter was the cream separator, milk cans and pails. During the summer, it was easier all around to wash the utensils near the milk room and hang them on an outside wall to sun and air. In cold weather, it had to be brought into the house for cleaning and I made the mistake of carrying it in, during the busy corn picking season. For some reason they couldn't carry it in when they came to breakfast. I rebelled and told Roy, either they bring it in or it would stay unwashed. I don't remember how long it went unwashed but finally Old Matt clumped in with it. Roy couldn't bring himself to give in to me completely but he instructed Old Matt to do so and after that they carried it in every morning. I don't think that either one of us even thought of the possibility that they could wash it themselves!

Lloyd was soon crawling and following his sisters everywhere, into everything they did (not always welcome). The floors were cold so baby wore long sleeves, long stockings and long pants over all, it required lots of clothes and lots of changing. Rubber pants were for Sunday and even then they were questionable, for as soon as baby noticed the added attire they often tore a hole in the stiff rubber. We used a yardage of old oilcloth under the blankets to protect the bed.

Many little things stick in my memory giving me a smile or a groan as I recall incidents and have a quiet laugh at myself. When Lloyd was creeping, he was into everything, as most creeping babies are. Ordinarily, I kept the slop pail for potato peelings and other garbage on the floor under the reservoir and it was emptied regularly to the pigs. Of course, this was a natural attraction to our young adventurer so I was faced to keep the pail on top of the reservoir or on the counter, where it was both unsightly and in the way.

About this time, I saw an advertisement of a step-on can, where the lid could be lifted with a foot pedal. We couldn't afford such luxuries but nevertheless, I couldn't rest until I purchased one. I sat it under the reservoir, very pleased to think that I had out-foxed the baby. Lloyd came pattering out to the kitchen, stopped short to stare at the new can, put his little hand right up under the lid and pulled out some potato peelings. I never did get any benefit from the can and the pail sat on top of the counter until Lloyd was old enough to know better. He and double ha!

We were soon milking fifteen cows, feeding out two hundred head of pigs, raising three or four hundred chickens so the supply of feed sacks was endless. What do farmer's wives do now then there is no money? We used feed sacks for everything. Now all feed comes in paper bags that have to be burned or put in the township dump. In a way, I envy them, however, because they come in forty or fifty pound sacks. We struggled with one hundred pounds of everything even huge hundred pound sacks of bran.

One of the men at the elevator could pick up a hundred pound sack of feed and toss it upon the three bed box of ground feed. It took two of us to unload it, let alone pick the sack up. We eased a full sack over the edge and down until the weight rested on the wheel, then we eased it to the ground. However, the man at the elevator probably weighed as much as both of us together.

I made many things out of feed sacks, from underwear and towels to sheets and pillow cases. At that time, all the sacks were white or unbleached. I even made three unbleached work shirts and although Roy must have been embarrassed, he wore them threshing. Remember blue overalls and blue chambrey shirts were almost a farmer uniform. At least the shirts were not ragged. Mama was most helpful with these sacks as she could bleach the printing out much better than I could. Where I might have made garments with Sargent's feed, Quaker Oats, or Pillsbury across the back of the seat. Mama lovingly washing them for me and I took over from there.

One of the big problems was keeping the overalls and overall jackets mended. Somewhere we had gained a sewing machine and I made good use of it. So I had lots of practice and I did become expert and proficient in mending overalls. Washing clothes today is a far cry from the time I washed on the board. I filled a wash boiler on the kitchen range with soft water if I had it, otherwise, it was carried from the well. That meant that we had hard water and the water was broken by the addition of a given amount of lye.

When the scum covered the surface, it was skimmed off and I shaved a bar of laundry soap into the water, either some mom's home made soap or P and G or FELS NAPTHA bar soap. When the water was hot and the soap melted, I dipped out enough to warm a half filled tub of cold water, and I put the white clothes to soak. These galvanized tubs sat on two kitchen chairs side by side. After the clothes had soaked ten to thirty minutes, I wrung them out by hand and placed them in the other tub which was now filled with hot soapy water, as warm as my hands could stand. After the white soaked clothes had been rung out and the tub emptied, it was filled with fresh clean water, warmed if at all possible. I then dipped each garment up and down in the warm soapy water, rubbed it lightly on the wash board, giving special attention to any soiled spots, wrung as much water out as possible, then dropped the garment into the rinse water and repeated until all were done.

Obviously, hand wringing couldn't compete with the roller wringer nor the roller wringer with the spin dry. After the rinse water became too soapy, the first wash water was too dirty and the dirtier clothes were put to soak, socks, overalls and the jackets. Another rinse was prepared and I used the first rinse to wash out more clothes. I tried to be finished by noon but sometimes it took me all day with the many interruptions, the nursing baby, meal preparation, and so forth. I used two or three dining chairs across the doorway into the dining room to keep the small children out of the wet room. I never did have a play pen for any of my children. I never regretted this as I am sure they would have been very unhappy bound to a play pen. I made a pan of starch to use on dresses, dress shirts and so forth. Blueing was added in the last rinse water for the white clothes

I can't brag that my washings were as white as I would have liked them to be. Diapers, dish towels, white sheets, and pillow cases, (all sheets were white or unbleached muslin) were boiled in soapy water to whiten and to remove stubborn stains. Still I was proud of my line of clothes drying in the sun and wind. The water was emptied by pail after dinner when the children should have been asleep. Often Roy and the hired man would carry out the tubs of water for me if they were ready at the time the men were in the house.

In winter, cold fingers were unavoidable as we hung the wet clothes on the line of number 10 wire, which had to be washed before using each time or there would be a dirty streak across all the clothes. In severe weather, we used many tricks to try to keep our fingers warm, warm rinse water, warm clothes shaken out ready to hand, clothespins warmed in the warming oven and I only carried out a few pieces at a time. We tried to keep a pair of white gloves handy but they were most often missing, either used for other purposes or by other members of the family. I was pretty awkward with gloves on anyway. If the wind blew either briskly or gently, the clothes dried beautifully even in freezing weather. Then there were other days. If raining or snowing, washing was postponed until a better day.

Some communities had neighbors competing, crowing over being the first to get their wash on the line on Monday morning. Mrs. Wachal and Nola had this conversation most every Monday. Mrs. Wachal, "Good morning, Nola. What are you dong this morning?"

Nola, "Oh, I have been busy, my washing is on the line. I just finished hanging out the last of the colored clothes."

Mrs. Wachal, "Oh, I finished the washing an hour ago. Teehee! I have a pie started for dinner!" Ignoring the fact that she washed for two adults and Nola washed for five which included two teenagers and a hired man. I was in such a late class that no one vied with me, or maybe I was lucky that we didn't have a telephone.

One day my clothes line broke and the washing had to be done all over again. Another day, we went to town and did we ever come home to a mess. Sleet mixed with blowing dirt had fallen and my long line of white clothes was grimy and frozen stiff. They had to be carried in like so many boards to thaw and be washed again.

On some occasions, damp clothes hung all over the kitchen, over the bedroom doors, anywhere we could drape damp clothes. I would put a dry towel over the open doors and drape the damp sheet over it. It didn't take long to finish drying but they couldn't be left piled up. Starched clothes were sprinkled and rolled up in a basket until the next day. We used peach baskets entirely and they lasted from one canning season until the next. Lined with newspapers, they were clean and just about the right size. When we got new peach baskets, the old ones graduated to cob baskets.

Some articles could be ironed dry if there was time to do it. I enjoyed ironing when I was a girl and did much of the ironing for Mama. I eliminated many items in my ironing basket as they were too soon back in the laundry. School and Sunday clothes were always starched and ironed, even if someone waited to don the garment as I was finishing. Almost before I knew it Ruth and Dorothy were doing their own. The biggest difference between the old sadirons and an electric iron is in the method of heating. It took three or four sadirons on the kitchen range to keep the irons hot enough. Although it was sometimes unbearable hot in summer time, we could usually iron in the cool of the morning. In cooler weather, it was warm and comfortable and when the radio came out, it could be enjoyable. Now, we have so much permanent press that no one needs to do any ironing.

With a all of the activities on the farm it is easy to see why some of us were not good housekeepers. When I was first married, it embarrassed me to have company come to a house with unmade beds and unwashed dishes and so on. I learned to welcome company as they came but I was not always comfortable. With all the outside chores, small children under foot, garden work, housekeeping often came in last. We did the best we could. I often helped with other chores but regularly I washed the cream separator and milk and cream containers, fed and watered the chickens, big and small, gathered the eggs twice a day, tended the garden, harvested the garden and prepared the vegetables and canned many of them.

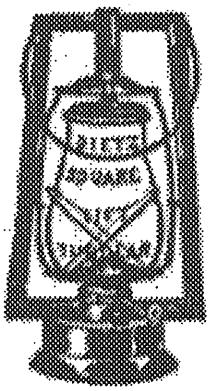
I might have served dinner over unswept floors but the food was clean and the dishes were always clean even if I was washing them as I set the table. The care and the well being of the children always came first, especially the mothering. Many times a meal was prepared with a baby riding on my hip. Other times, small hands helped, actually hindering of course, but feeling a part of the family and close to mother as we prepared some "dainty" and welcomed father as he came in to meals.

Housekeeping is so different in modern homes which are fully carpeted and make a good use of vacuum cleaners. We used only linoleum rugs. A corn broom was the most necessary tool to sweep up tracked in mud, sand, wood chips and spilled ashes, on some rooms every day. Some neighbor houses did have a nice rug in the parlor but it was hard

to care for. So it is no secret why parlors weren't used very much. We used oilcloth on the dining room table, buying a new one when we couldn't stand the old one any more, if we could squeeze out a little extra egg money. Window washing varied form house to house to house as it is done now. From simple bonami, either in the bar or powder form, to using vinegar in warm water, window washing doesn't change much. The modern liquids and sprays are good but not too much better. The lower parts of my windows were always smeared by small fingers and noses as they studied the outside world. Each of them took their turn, watching out the window and crying as I hung up the wet laundry.

One of my most frequent and hated outside chore was opening and closing gates. At times of manure hauling, which was often, and in going to certain fields, they had to go through the cattle and/or hog lot. This was always a constant interruption, often when I was busiest. Someone had to open he gate and watch that no critter escaped while the team and load were driven through. This often happened in the fall and I would stand waiting in the freezing cold with wind blowing up under my skirts and I would be drying my hands inside the big mittens. Some of the gates were flimsy wire ones, other were sagging metal and then there was the good wooden one which weighed a ton or so it seemed when I had to drag it open. Sometimes Roy and the hired man could help each other but all too often I was called upon to help. It really was impossible for one man to open the gate, drive through, go back to close it again without some hog or steer escaping or the team taking off by themselves. I don't think that I ever made a great fuss about it but I did hate it. It was just something that had to be done!

A prize Holstein



[1] Bruce Kingsley died at age 5, Nov. 6, 1939. Surviving children of Blanche and Duane Kingsley are Mary, James, John, and Donald.

Hired Help

For many years, we always had a hired man, usually a neighbor boy, who worked with Roy for a few months until school opened or they found another job which they hoped would be easier. We paid the going wage by the month, furnished board, room and laundry. Although no one ever told us so, I suspect we were considered a hard place to work. Dairymen always have too much to do. They were needed help for Roy and I didn't have to go to the barn to help but often I could have done it better. I made the best of it and I tried to make them comfortable and accept them as much a part of the family as reasonable.

Clark and Fred were two neighbor boys. Fred was the one who couldn't wake up in the mornings so Roy called him as he went to the barn. One morning or night rather, Fred dreamed that Roy had called him so he dressed and went to the barn. When Roy went to the barn at six o'clock, he found Fred asleep on the hay. After that Fred took the lantern to his room with him each night and Roy took it away when he called him in the morning.

Al was another neighbor boy, about age twenty, who worked for us all of one year. He could dance and tomcat around all night, come home about four in the morning, sleep an hour or two and then work all day. On the nights that he did come home and fall into bed, he so soaked his covers with sweat that they were wringing wet in the morning. I surmised that he was doing some drinking. He was a very capable dependable hired man, however, and we were sorry to see him go.

Bayard stayed for three weeks and then moved on to greener pastures. Bailey, an older man, only lasted two weeks. Roy found him practicing sodomy in the barn and although nothing was said, Bailey didn't come to work the next day. Some would work all summer, others all winter. Some only through corn husking season. Most of them were capable enough but often they were not very dependable.

Then we had a chance to hire a married man if we could provide him with living quarters. Howard had just married and he was almost frantic as he insisted that we could set side two rooms upstairs and they would do fine, he was that anxious to get a steady job. We fitted the west room upstairs with a heating stove, a small kerosene cook stove and they moved their small amount of furniture in and set up housekeeping. After all his planning, Howard and his wife only stayed three months but it did look promising if we could find a steady hand.

Clarence A. applied, a married man with two children, a boy, five, and a girl, three. We were very doubtful. It would be very confining for two children and their mother in two rooms upstairs. They would have to carry all water and fuel in and out and use the outdoor facilities with its usual path. They could use the basement for washing and storage, while the large closets under the eaves could furnish some storage. In spite of our doubts, we allowed them to try it.

Clarence was from the hills and coal fields in southern Illinois. He had been raised by a grandfather, who hadn't insisted that he go to school, so he could neither read or write. He was a tall, neat appearing man, intelligent and sensible. I do hope that he

learned to read with his children. His wife, Sarah, was from a mining area of southern Missouri and she had a simple elementary education. The youngsters, Junior and Martha were darlings and usually played happily with my two; three really, because Lloyd was right in the midst of everything.

Since they played in my house or outside, I was the one who had to watch over them. Although Clarence and Martha were very clean-spoken around us, Junior had picked up many naughty cuss words somewhere, possibly from friends in Sod Town, words which even shocked me as I had never heard them before. Once I slapped Junior for a nasty dirty remark to the girls. Luckily, I was able to impress upon him that he couldn't use such language in my house as I held him and comforted him. There was no aftermath of this but if he had run crying to his mother, I fear we would have had a battle right then and there. Sadly, none of them had any training and knew no better. I was distressed because I had slapped him. I was very much against slapping any one in the face, especially children and I just never slapped another child. I paddled them on their bottoms on occasion. I was protecting my cubs like a Mother Bear.

I laughed on another day, when they had company. I overheard Junior tell his visiting friend, a slightly older boy, "You don't live here so you can swear at the girls." He did but from such a safe distance that no one paid any attention to him. Martha felt superior to her husband because of his lack of education but he was an intelligent sensible man, and made Roy a very capable reliable hired man. When they left, I think they were with us nearly a year and a half, we parted warmly and with best wishes although Sarah and I never became warm friends.

Somewhere along here, we bought our first radio. When I was still in school, a friend, Dilman Thomas, built a crystal set and I listened through ear plugs to WOC Davenport, one of the first Iowa stations. Some of our friends, uncles and aunts had big old sets but since we had no electricity, it was not possible. When they came out with a battery powered set, it was so huge and expensive that we couldn't afford one. Later, they made a more compact set, using both B and C batteries and we bought a Philco from a furniture store in Independence. It cost thirty-four dollars, if I remember correctly and we paid for it, at so much a month. Papa and Mama bought one which ran on a six volt battery, and was recharged with a Windcharger. It opened a door into the world for us. Although we read a great deal, we had become workaholics. I remember shortly after we got the set, Roy and Carl, another neighbor boy, laughing out loud at the dinner table over Jack Benny and his antics on the Jello program. I realized how much we needed a little more fun and laughter.

Some of the music was super on WOI, a station for the State College at Ames and they had a story lady that read a chapter of a classic book each morning. We enjoyed this story while we were eating breakfast. We did feel that we had to use the radio sparingly because the batteries did not last very long. Clarence and Sarah and the kids would come down in the evening to spend an hour or two listening to "The Grand Old Opera" or some other special program. Sometimes we made a freezer of ice cream and served cake, always chocolate cake. I wish I had a nickel for all the chocolate cakes I have made over my lifetime. A dollar would be better.

Each early spring, we bought three hundred baby chicks and started them under a kerosene brooder in the brooder house. Later we bought another three hundred but these

were often two or three week old started pullets for the laying house. AW had erected a new henhouse, which held two hundred laying hens, was well built, with a good cement floor, good windows and built in nests. We divided the chicken and egg money on a fifty-fifty basis also but I did sell the eggs and use the money and it was settled for in the next settlement of accounts about every three months or so.

Baby chicks have many pitfalls, too little heat will kill them, too much heat will kill, some will eat too much and some will never learn to eat; some will pile up and smother each other or one of the small humans will love one to death. There was, however, a great satisfaction in caring for the baby chickens. It was pure pleasure to take the little puff balls form the boxes straight from the hatchery, into the sweet smelling straw, amid an admiring audience of varied age children. If we were lucky, no waterers were overturned, no chick was loved too much or stepped on, a real tragedy to all concerned.

It took constant vigilance and attention to watch the brooder stove temperature, even during the night. A cold snap or bright sunlight could change things in a hurry. Waterers, feeders had to be filled as often as needed, the straw changed every day.

It was also pure pleasure to collect my share of the check in the fall after the summer's work. Of course, the check was never enough to cover all the items needed or wanted. Over the years I helped the family finances until it became a way of losing money and we could no longer afford them.

Each spring, I always managed to bump my head on the brooder house rafters, hurting myself enough that it scared me into being more careful. I probably resembled a pretzel as I stooped more and more to care for the chickens.

One early spring, a windy draft put out the fire during the night but the oil, (kerosene), continued to flow until the little puff balls were dead in a sea of oil. Another time, stray dogs killed fifty half grown fryers. Another gusty spring day, a back draft somehow started a fire and we lost the chickens and the building. Why did I like them? Hope springs eternal, I guess, and the little ones are so adorable.

In different years, some of the roosters were sold as broilers, some as roasters, and some were caponized and sold later in the fall. Although we ate chicken when we wanted, usually there was a cull waiting for the pot, a non-laying hen or a rooster with an injured wing, or pullets too small to put in the laying house. Always there were a few roosters in the brood of pullets which we ate as fryers, as they were practically worthless on the market. As the pullets grew bigger they abandoned the brooder house and roosted in an apple tree or in the evergreen windbreak. All of us, hired man included, spent two or three evenings each fall catching and carrying them into the henhouse. Over the years, I achieved a measure of skill and my share of the chicken money was a welcome addition to the family funds.

The laying flock in the hen house was a different matter. The work was heavier but the profits were greater. I loved to gather eggs or fill the feeders in the busy atmosphere of the hen house where the gossipy sounds showed that all was well as they busily scratched and clucked in the straw. In the deep drifts of winter, it was heavy work to carry all the feed and water for many rods. Still it was needed outdoor exercise to take me from the house and its endless chores. If the hens came to the door to meet you, the water pans or the feeders might be empty; or if they sat glumly on the roosts, you knew something was wrong and we better find the cause at once. Hens could succumb to

cholera, typhoid, pox, or what have you, jut about like flies.

In summer, broody hens were always a problem; they will try to make a nest and then set in some of the weirdest places. Usually one would steal off and I or the children would find the nest of spoiled eggs in the horse manger, under a bush, in the straw pile, under the corncrib or even in a crotch of a tree. Broody hens were removed from the nest as soon as they were noticed, and confined separately for a week or so until they forgot their maternal instincts. When we began to use leghorns hens for layers, we had less trouble but a few would still try to steal away. One year we had two small orphan pigs which we were keeping in a horse manger for warmth and we were feeding them milk in a pan. A broody hen, a Rhode Island Red, adopted them, hovering over them as though they were chickens. This was a ridiculous sight to watch a hen mothering the two small red pigs. All the emotion was on her part as the pigs submitted to the warmth but they had no interest whatever in their foster mother.

Lice and mites were the bane of all poultry growers and I suppose that they still are. The broody hens, as they were caught were individually dusted with a foul smelling louse powder, often dividing the lice with you in the process. Then it had to be repeated in another week or two. Mites were a little different. Blood red in the mornings from feasting all night, they are easily found on the roosts. We drenched the roosts with disinfectants every month or so. After the development of a nicotine product called Black Flag, we could paint the roosts two or three times a year with good control.

For disease and insect prevention, we scrubbed the brooder house with lye water each spring and sprayed it with a disinfectant as we got ready for another brood. Always we moved the house to another location, away from last years spot and as far away from the laying flock as reasonable and if possible to new ground for poultry. Our first henhouse was too small as SW had built a new building 20 feet wide by 40 feet long, sized for two hundred hens, with a concrete floor, many windows and built-in nest boxes. It was the usual good henhouse of the time.

We confined the hens after we had the new henhouse, fed well balanced rations and practiced all the new knowledge about poultry. We also changed to White Leghorn laying hens as they were better producers and not so broody. We bought baby chicks and started chicks from the Lux Hatchery in Hopkinton for many years. We never sold hatching eggs or raised flocks for the hatcheries to furnish a ready source of hatching eggs. Many farmers did. I kept the nest boxes as clean as possible but sometimes the eggs had to be washed.

I tried to raise ducks in a couple of different years but never with very much success. They were so darling as babies, just a yellow puff ball on web feet. They were easier to start than chickens, required less heat and pampering but something always seemed to happen to mine. As they wandered, each day another would be missing and we would find the remains later. I probably never had more than eight or nine reach adulthood.

When it became time to dress the ducks for the holidays, my troubles with the feathers and down was something to behold. One Thanksgiving, long before we were married, I stayed with Uncle Jim and cousin Charles while Aunt Bedia went to a family reunion. Charlie and I were to dress two ducks and roast them for the holiday dinner. We scalded them and pulled out the feathers like I had dressed many a chicken. We dropped

the feathers and down into a wash tub because were to save them for pillows. What a mess! We had down and feathers in the air, over the floor and the poor ducks were still half clothed in down, wing and tail feathers. After repeated scaldings, we finally managed nude ducks but they were sad looking fowls. However the roasting went all right and we enjoyed the meat for dinner. We kept cleaning up the mess but likely, Aunt Bedia found feathers in the most unlikely places. I have cleaned and dressed many ducks since but I never did find an efficient way to do it. Many of our present pillows, still in use, are filled with down and feathers from our own feathers from these ducks and from those purchased for the holidays and an occasional goose.

During the wintertime, we butchered a likely finished hog with Papa and my brother helping. Papa always shot the animal in the head with his rifle, then cut it's throat to facilitate thorough bleeding. Then they scalded the animal in a large barrel of scalding hot water, pulling the carcass out to lay on a low table (probably a barn door), where they scraped the hide until is was white, clean and free of bristle and hair. Usually the animal was large enough that they scalded one end and had to turn and repeat the process with the other end. Because of the difficulty of heating enough water, they required more care to keep it clean as the protective rind had been removed.

They securely fastened the hind feet to a single tree and with a block and tackle, they pulled it up to hang from a cross beam in the driveway of the corncrib. The carcass was cut down the middle and the insides removed. They peeled out the leaf lard, and saved the liver, heart, kidney, brains, or whatever was wanted. We always had fresh liver for supper that night and always divided the liver with Papa as they also had with us at their butchering time. We were squeamish. Some hired men would insist on cooking different portions. I remember Old Matt insisted on my frying the brains for him. It was a new project for me but he approved of the dish, which did look crisp and appetizing but none of the family would eat them. With a saw and an exe the carcass was then split down through the backbone and left to cool for the night.

The next day, the halves were carried into the house and cut up into portions as we wanted them. We did not cut pork chops as such but peeled the loins form the back bone. Side meat was cut into two or three pound slabs and put down in smoked salt. Hams were cut into roasts and if the weather was cold enough, some pieces of meat were frozen and left outside in a tub or barrel till used. Some was canned by the hot water method and although it is disapproved of today, we also canned meat in the oven with good success. Lard was rendered, the meat cooked off the bones, mincemeat made, sausage fried down and preserved in lard.

One day, Fritz, our black and white dog, caught a jack rabbit, as Roy was plowing with the sulky plow nearby. The rabbit was just playing with the dog, back and forth across the woven wire fence, until he was too careless and allowed the dog to catch him before he could squeeze back through the woven wire. Roy grabbed the rabbit, too big for the dog to handle, before he could get away and we enjoyed a fine roast rabbit, which was very tender and tasty. That was the only jack rabbit I ever cooked or ate. We used to see them occasionally but I haven't seen a jack rabbit in many years. Mama was visiting that day when Roy carried this huge rabbit into the house, and we exchanged smiles over Roy's obvious excitement and pleasure over the capture.

We usually caught four or five cottontails in some sort of trap during the winter

but we never really wanted any more rabbit meat. Roy was not a hunter. We had a neighbor who hunted all winter, covering many square miles and his wife canned fifty quarts of rabbit meat each winter. That may be one of the reasons that rabbits are almost scarce any more but the biggest reason is the number of fox living in the territory now. There are more rabbits in town than in the country.

Nearly all bread was home made. The first baker's bread was shipped in large wooden trunk type boxes, from a bakery in Cedar Rapids. The bread came on the railroad each day and was set off at the depot. The drayman in the town delivered the bread to the store or restaurant ordering them. Then the empty boxes were returned to the station to be sent back and used another day. Buns and bread could be ordered by families who needed them on threshing day or for an auction sale or other special occasions. I baked bread once a week in winter time and oftener in summer time as bread molded too readily in hot weather. We supplemented with all kinds of hot breads, baking powder biscuits, muffins, gems, corn bread and pancakes. One of my specialties was pop-overs.

Mama would come over from her farm and help me can apples all day, then she would pick up apples for herself, all she could take home in the surrey. Mama managed to can more apples than I did. One time as she was leaving, she started the team but she did not notice the cloths line until the line pulled the surrey over with her in it. Luckily we were all handy and no damage was done. Roy stopped the team and he and the hired man righted the buggy and rehitched the team as I helped Mama to her feet. She wasn't hurt but it really scared me as I remember shedding tears. We reloaded the apples and sent her on her way.

Our mail box was directly in front of the house, only thirty or so feet, far different from papa's mail box which was a mile and a half away. Mail time was always a pleasant time of hoping for a letter and we always tried to keep some papers coming. I expect there were times when we let the daily paper lapse but we usually subscribed to the Cedar Rapid's Gazette. We also took the Iowa Homestead, Farm Journal, Successful Farming, and the Wallace's Farmer. One year, we attended a Farm Bureau meeting in Independence, at which Henry A. Wallace, then working for this paper and long before he became famous, talked on the problems of the day, discussing the MacNary-Haugen bill.

We exchanged papers and magazines with the folks. Also with Aunt Bedia. We were eager for reading material and we had no access to a library, where being none closer than Cedar Rapids. We gave and received books for gifts and exchanged afterwards. Over the years we have subscribed at different time to the Colliers, Household, Literary Digest, Country Gentleman, and the Atlantic. We especially enjoyed the Country Gentleman, with articles concerning the new health discoveries and short stories concerning Ehphiam Tutt, the trial lawyer and Scipio, the man that bartered everything into a profit.

We never felt that we could afford the Saturday Evening Post, the magazine of the day but when an enterprising salesman traded some bushels of corn for a five year beginning subscription, we gave in and continued to receive the Post until it retired from the field. The articles were informative, the cartoons super and the fiction excellent. We enjoyed such authors as Mary Roberts Rhinehart and Leslie Ford. Much of our current education came from the Post. Gradually it changed to the supposed glamour of famous individuals leading seedy lives, fiction of moods instead of action, articles on international

misfits instead of those with moral dependability. This destroyed our interest and we really didn't care when they closed, just another sensation seeking magazine.

I think that magazines and movies have erred in following new trends so slavishly; styles always change, but the vast majority of us accept what we like and the rest fall by the wayside. Much trash has been written in the name of realism. Even the advertising business has made use of ads, which, if not pornographic are in decidedly bad taste. Pornography is as old as time. The pictures used to be kept at the bottom of a tobacco can or hidden in the barn, to be giggled and guffawed over on occasion. Good morals still rule although the TV and the movies do their best to undermine the morality of our times.

Roy and I burned wood for many years as did most of the neighbors and friends. Roy and Papa exchanged wood sawing each year, then each split his own chunks as needed. Papa had a full-sized wood shed attached to the house in the same way that we now attach the garage to the house. All his wood, chunks and all were in the dry. We never did have a woodshed but piled the wood as near the kitchen door as practical. Many times, we have had to dig the wood out of a snow bank. I still murmur a prayer of thanks when I come into a warm house remembering the days of yore when I had to build a fire while I and small children huddled in our coats as we waited for the house to warm up a bit and I could get some supper ready.

We fed ear corn to the hogs so there was always a good supply of fresh corn cobs on hand. If they were picked up every day, they were reasonably clean but if it rained or snowed they might be pretty messy. All the children took their turn in carrying in wood and picking up cobs in bushel baskets. The wood box was always a fixture in both the kitchen and the dining room, where they also doubled as benches.

When Dorothy started to school in 1935, it left Lloyd alone with us during the day. Lloyd, two years old, followed us everywhere as we chored. One day, he became so engrossed in watching the baby pigs that he leaned over too far and fell into the pen with the pigs, right of top of the mother sow. One of us snatched him back to safety but you have to hear it to believe the noisy harrumphing of a startled mother sow. The thought of what might have happened made us weep.

Lloyd was an active, busy, alert boy, our pride and joy. One summer, when we were still using the horse drawn cultivators Roy and the hired man left their cultivators in the dooryard when they unhitched at noon. After dinner, each day before they returned to the field, they had to tighten all the burrs because Lloyd, now three years old, had taken all the burrs off and replaced them but he hadn't the strength to tighten them enough. Roy's pride in his small son's ability outweighed his irritation.

Another time, there was a great commotion because some of the grease cups were missing from the disc. Blankety, blankety, Blankety, blank; Imagine Roy's exasperation and pride when they finally figured out what had been going on. Lloyd had filled the cups with axle grease, thinking he was helping, and doing it correctly. Either he had lost interest or someone had called him away for they found the missing cups in the axle grease pail, where he had been working or playing as you will.

With the girls both in school, he was lots of company. When they were home, he followed them everywhere and copied everything they did. Once, he insisted on wearing a hair ribbon in his hair, just like his sister's ribbons, and no amount of explaining or cajoling could change him, so he went to Grandma's with a pick ribbon in his tousled locks, must

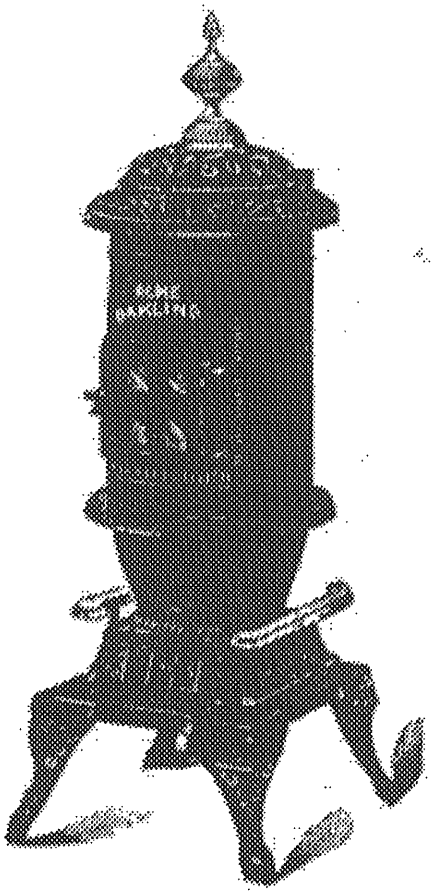
to his sister's dismay. They needn't have worried for the ribbon was soon lost and forgotten.

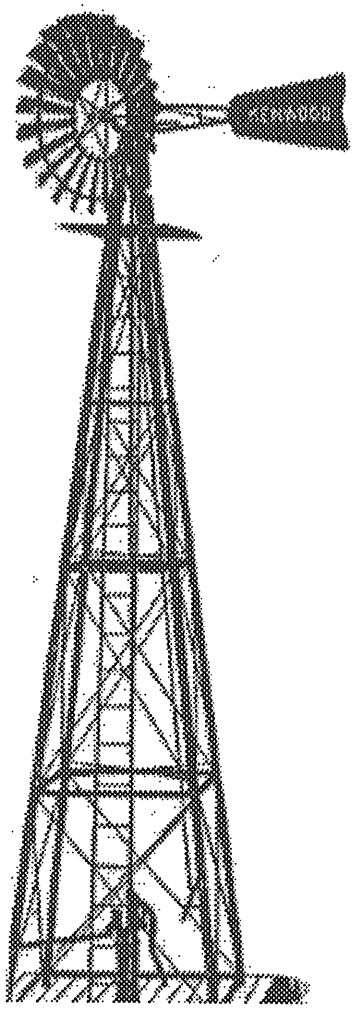
I missed the piano and the victrola when I married but Roy and I often sang together, enjoying many melodies, both old and new. Roy was much better than I was with the tunes and he could remember the words of songs which he had heard long before. When we moved to the Orchard Place, Aunt Bedia gave us her old organ, when she bought the new piano. In a way, it was a shame that she did because it caused us to realize how off tune we were singing. We never did sing after that and we soon lost the organ in the fire.

When a friend, discouraged because his girls wouldn't practice, sold his piano, we bought it for twenty-five dollars and they delivered it to our house. I thoroughly enjoyed the piano, although I had never learned to play well, but I could entertain myself and the girls with small songs. I could play "Falling Waters" and "the Repas Band March" and many hymns. I could read the music correctly but my fingers made all kinds of mistakes when I tried new music. I suppose that practice would have helped. Roy would never sing with us any more for although he enjoyed and encouraged all of us, he couldn't force himself to join us.

When we bought the piano, it had to go into the living room and that meant that we had to move our bed upstairs so we had two double beds in the east room for the girls and ourselves. Lloyd still slept in one corner of the living room. The hired man was using the west and dormer rooms and both families used the common stairway, divided by a landing. Sarah kept the top half of the stairway very clean and left the bottom half for me. I didn't always get to it or keep is as clean as she did.

All the children learned to count as we climbed the stairs to bed. I started this when Ruth was tiny. When I had the trouble with my back, I was unable to carry Ruth as I was accustomed to doing and she had to walk up the stairs to bed. To distract her I interested her in counting the steps, which proved quite successful and I continued that with all the children. Likely the rest of them were a little older.





Hard Winter

AW added a new building to our farmyard about every year after the house was built. First, after the big barn, was a corncrib between the barn and the hog house. This double corncrib was a simple building with seven foot wide cribs on each side and a wide driveway between them. It had good cement floors and tight rolling doors on each end, a badly needed permanent crib to replace the temporary wire or slat cribs formerly in use. It was a valuable addition to the barnyard. Wagon loads of grain could be kept dry in the driveway and we used one end as a shelter for our car.

Our cabin had been converted back to bins for the oats, the purchased mill feed and the ground grist. During the first few years we lived on the Orchard Place, Roy would haul a load of mixed corn and oats, either to Walker or to Coggon to have ground in the elevator's grist mill. When several men in the communities bought a portable feed mill and would come right to your farm to grind when you wished, it was a great improvement and time saver. Roy had only to load the wagon with the grain and shovel it into the hopper when the mill came and it ground the feed and augured it right back into the bin. Wonderful!

Beside the barnyard and near the road, AW had erected a machine shed, 20X40 feet with huge double doors to allow larger machinery to be pulled inside. It was too small already as many of the machines had to be dismantled and parts stored as best they could. This soon proved to be too time consuming and the large machines set out in the weather. The shed, as it would be considered today, was very useful for repair work, and often kept the man out of foul weather. Roy used it well to store smaller machines as the tractor, corn planter, mower, corn binder, and he stored the oils, greases, and other supplies there. Also we kept our car there and the hired man could then keep his car in the corn crib.

Our evergreen windbreak was beautiful and protected us from the north and west winds. It also limited the size of our barnyards so that the buildings had to be close together. It made choring handier but kept the yards too small for really best care of cattle and hogs.

Hired men came and went. Most of the men had a jalopy of sorts so we didn't need to chauffeur them around as we had to for our first employees. Francis worked for us for a year or so, living down the road in the remodeled house and we furnished him milk, wood and some meat, his dinner meal and thirty dollars a month. He was a good man and careful in his work. He had trouble with his feet, having large plantar warts come on the bottom of the soles. He actually cut holes in the soles of his shoes to accommodate the warts. He had a wife and four children. If you wonder how he lived on thirty dollars a month, I can tell you because we often lived on less so we could pay him the thirty. Those were the good old days!

With all the demands on our time, it is no wonder that our housekeeping was pretty sketchy. One friend always happily greeted me at the door, sweeping dirty clothes off a chair so I could sit down, probably sweeping a dirty baby off another chair for herself, all the while putting me at ease. Once I called on her just as she finished milking

her share of the cows, three or four, while the baby slept peacefully in the baby buggy drawn up close outside the cow barn door. When she arose from her last cow, she emptied the milk into the ten gallon can and saved enough milk for the house, setting the pail right in the buggy with the sleeping baby. The under two year old had fallen asleep on the ground under the buggy, wet, tear stained, dirty shirt and diaper, but she lovingly picked him up and carried him into the house and put him to bed, still asleep. I have no doubt that he slept there as he was until morning. Much as we prize cleanliness, it isn't the final answer. Three more children came to join the fun all within five years. All five grew to healthy adulthood and all are good citizens and all the girls are good housekeepers.

There really isn't much excuse for poor housekeeping today. Consider all the convenience foods, wash and wear clothing, both and cold running water, prepared dinners. We could go on and on. Electricity made much of the difference. Now, we are only minutes away from dinner but then, between the garden, cellar, lack of refrigeration, and the driving time to the store, we were often hours away from dinner.

I always prepared healthful meals as best we could afford, fairly easy in summer time but often difficult in winter. The grocery stores carried canned vegetables and fruit, fresh oranges and bananas, fresh meats, but almost no fresh vegetables. We used lots of potatoes, most often boiled fresh for dinner then creamed or pan fried for supper. If for some reason our garden hadn't yielded enough potatoes we bought the needed amount in hundred pound sacks and stored them in the cellar. Some families actually demanded potatoes also for breakfast but not ours. We canned corn, peas, carrots, beets, cucumber pickles in fairly large amounts, varying in different years. In season, we had lettuce, onions, turnips, radishes and cabbage, and later in the summer, we had tomatoes, melons, squash and pumpkin to use. We always had lots of home canned apple and plum sauce both sweetened and unsweetened, and in season we always had a surplus of fresh apples and plums. Although some of the apples were not the best, and not saleable, we were still harvesting from grandpa's many years in his orchards.

We used some navy beans but I never raised them for myself. I didn't have the patience to pick and shell beans. Mama and my brother Paul did raise many beans to sell at so much a pound. It was something Paul could do to make a little money. Also he raised, shelled and sold several bushels of popcorn each year. Green shell beans are a delicacy but we only managed a few messes. Fresh sweet corn was a favorite and we stretched the season with many planting as long as possible.

We used some of our own butchered pork and once we bought a quarter of beef from a relative. A jar of canned pork or beef, browned slightly in the skillet was delicious and we made excellent gravy form the juices left in the pan. Our fried down sausage was in quart fruit jars and covered with lard, so to use, we had to let the jar of sausage stand in the warm reservoir for several hours until the lard would be melted enough that the sausages could be forked out. We used lots of eggs in the menus; custards, omelets, deviled eggs and just plain fried eggs (fried egg sandwiches were especially good for hurry-up meals). Almost always there were plenty of cracked or dirty eggs which were unsaleable.

We canned string beans, sweet corn and peas by the hot water bath method, boiling the filled jars of beans for two hours and of corn and peas for three hours. To can

meat, it also had to be processed for three hours. I had inherited many fruit jars from Grandma and from Roy's mother, for she canned less and less as her family grew smaller, and I purchased many dozen more over the years.

To save money we used the zinc lids and rubbers over and over until they were cracked or broken. The lids were tightened, then loosened a quarter of turn before putting in the hot water. On removal from the boiler, they were tightened and turned upside down on a towel to cool and be sure they didn't leak.

Our hot water bath was the wash boiler with a porous wooden tray under the fruit jars and then enough water to cover the jars an inch or more. The fire had to be kept going at a fairly even temperature to keep the water boiling for three hours but not too hard either because that might crack the jars. It was tricky to move the filled boiler back on the stove to refill the firebox. If the fire got too low and the water stopped boiling, then we had to boil just that much longer. I don't remember just when we purchased a pressure cooker and it shorted the process immensely.

Some families used different methods of preserving foods. Sometimes vinegar was added to the jars of string beans to shorten the canning time. Corn was sometimes canned with large portions of salt and sugar and had to be freshened to remove the salt before using. Mama dried sweet corn and also apple slices, which were strung on a long string of cord to dry. She used the apples to make winter pies. Cabbage was made into Kraut. Mama always canned her kraut after it had worked to prevent it from fermenting any further.

When the frozen food locker came to Coggon, it was wonderful to freeze our meat instead of other processes but it was not very practical to freeze the vegetables. It was too hard to cool them properly and then they had to be transported to town and put in the locker. So we continued to can most vegetables. Like so many new ideas, the first frozen food locker couldn't make it pay and had to close it's doors. Someone else took over the business, built a newer plant and they are still in business today. The first locker still stands locked up and waiting for I know not what. (the building is now used by the city). Those who put their money into the first locker lost it. Roy had one share.

Fresh cabbage, if it survived the cabbage worms, was stored in the basement and would keep for weeks. We used lots of cold slaw. Mama had always made gallons of sour kraut but Roy didn't care for it so I didn't make much. The first time I tried I filled a gallon stone jar with the chopped cabbage, added the salt as I went, covered it with a white cloth, some newspapers and weighed it down with a clean stone as I had seen Mama do it. After it cured for so long, I opened it and saw that it was spoiled. I was disgusted and emptied it out to the pigs but behold, only the top inch or so was spoiled and the rest was good. I hope the pigs liked it. When I asked Mama about it, she said that the top inch or so always discolored and she threw that away. Since Roy didn't care for it, I didn't try again. Mama often shared hers with us and some of the children learned to like it. Dorothy would drink the kraut juice off a spoon when she was under a year old and in the high chair. Roy always said that it made his teeth stand on edge just to watch her relish it.

Late in the summer of 1935, after Clarence and Sarah left, we hired another married man, Horace and his wife Ruth A. (Annis) They were recent newlyweds and anxiously searching for a steady job, and they fitted quite nicely into our two rooms

upstairs. He turned out to be a good hired man; Ruth was young and pleasant and we grew to love both of them. He was nineteen and she was sixteen.

Horace had been raised in a very religious home and his frail, ill mother had become a religious fanatic. Shortly after they moved in, they brought her to stay with them for a few days and give his sister a rest from the care of her mother. During the very first night, she awoke us with her high pitched voice praying and beseeching. We lay listening, wondering if she would wake and frighten the children and wondering how long we could stand for it. The next day, Horace asked for the day off and took his mother back to his sisters, and she never returned. He wasn't about to risk his new job so we never had be face the problem. Nothing was said between us, but I strongly surmised that Ruth also said "Never again!"

We were still plagued with mud roads. One day as Roy and Horace sorted hogs, always a dirty frustrating task, a young stranger came to the hog house door and asked to be pulled out of a mudhole to the west of us. Roy was irked by the interruption and angry because the fool had gotten into this roadside mess. What we he doing there on this back road anyway? So he made him wait until they finished sorting the hogs. While he waited the young man nervously shuffled fifty cent pieces (he had a whole handful) from one hand to the other and back again. Still smarting from the last broken harness, Roy sent Horace with the team to help him, and ordered him "Charge him a dollar and don't take the chain off until he pays it". Roy later hitched a ride into town with the stranger who complained bitterly about the easy buck they had made. We later learned that he was a photographer working the rural schools at fifty cents a pupil to make a living. Times were hard all over!

1935 was a nice fall with good crops and weather but winter came early that year so we were glad that the crops were all harvested. Snow fell at Thanksgiving time and stayed for the winter with more snow and cold temperatures during most of December. The winter was open enough so that the horses still ran in the stock fields. We were well prepared for winter behind our evergreen windbreak. All the buildings were banked, windows tight, or covered with flexoglass. We had a big pile of wood in the grove, all sawed into stove lengths, and they had hauled three or four loads, triple wagon box's full and piled it near the kitchen gate, planning to haul the rest of the pile later.

We were milking twenty cows, most of them producing well, and sending the cream to the Coggon creamery with the cream route of Jack D. We had twelve yearling heifers in the barn as well as several calves still being fed skim milk. We were feeding two hundred head of shoats, weighing between fifty and one hundred and fifty pounds. After the milk was run through the cream separator, the cream was brought to the house in a five gallon cooler and saved in ten gallon cans for the cream hauler while the skim milk was fed to the pigs. We had two hundred laying hens in the henhouse and we were getting almost 150 eggs a day, very good, the highest we had done till then.

Both girls were going on the school bus to the Troy Mills school, Dorothy, age five was in her first year and Ruth, age seven was in her third. They went well dressed for winter with snow suits and overshoes even if they did ride the bus. They walked the thirty rods to catch the bus and enjoyed playing outdoors in the snow and cold. Ruth especially never seemed to mind the cold and neither did Lloyd; Dorothy was less enthusiastic but she also played outside. They carried their lunch pails.

We had road trouble before Christmas when we slipped off the built up track of

snow, just south of Wachals. A few days later, Horace and Ruth were stuck in the same spot and had to come for a team to get their car home, a big old Chevy, which they kept in the driveway of the corncrib. Still it was a normal cold winter until in Mid-January, winter pulled out all the stops.

Very early one morning, Lloyd, now two years old came trotting upstairs and crawled into bed with us because he was cold. We aroused to find that it was snowing and blowing. Roy pulled on his long underwear while still in bed, then arose to finish dressing. He lighted the lantern and warned me as he lit the lamp, "The house is awful cold. Better get right up."

Lloyd, of course, went back to sleep. I dressed hurriedly in the ice-cold room although it is difficult to hurry with long underwear and high laced shoes. I could see my breath as I carried the lamp downstairs to start the fires. We were still using the metal air-tight stove. I rejoiced that I had filled the wood box and laid in kindling the night before as I built the fire at once. As soon as the stove pipe began to glow red, I shut down the drafts and built the fire in the kitchen range. I found that the water was frozen solid in the tea kettle, the wash basin and the water pail, with even a layer of ice in the reservoir. I put the frozen tea kettle on to heat but it was still too cold to take off my coat. I heard Horace build his fire and leave to join Roy in the barn. I put up the school lunches but at daylight I could see the extent of the storm and knew that the school bus would not be coming that day.

Roy came rushing in, letting in a blast of cold air and snow to breathlessly ask for help. "The horses have come in to the north yard. We can't get them to face the wind and go into the other yard. Come help us for a few moments? Please bundle up! It's wild out there!"

The wind took my breath away as I tried to face it and I had to turn and almost back my way into the barn. The barn itself was warm, an oasis in the raging storm. Out back, the horses huddled, tails to the wind, but with me as an extra hand, they meekly crossed through the gate to the protected shed. Roy said, "That's fine, I sure didn't want them going back to the grove. We'll put them in the barn later." Leaving the men stamping their feet to warm them and cursing the weather, I returned to the house, half frozen and gasping in the frigid air.

The house seemed almost warm now, Ruth and the girls were up, marveling over the radio announcement that roads were closed all over and there would me no school. "Did that mean our school?" The girls dressed behind the stove, happy to think that there was no school and no school bus. Lloyd came trotting down to join them, happier than they, that they were not going to school.

The men came in late for breakfast so the children had eaten long before but I allowed them to eat the lunches from the dinner pails. They sat in a row on the wood box bench, happily enjoying an early lunch. Lloyd's smile was a mile wide as he ate from a dinner pail in company with his sisters. He happily carried that lunch pail around with him for many days.

Normally, each morning, the men had a break between milking cows and starting the later feeding chores. They had milked fifty or sixty gallons of milk, ran it through the cream separator, fed the calves, fed ensilage and ground feed to the cows. So with the children off to school, Horace upstairs with his own breakfast, Roy and I, with Lloyd,

relaxed and ate a good breakfast while we listened to the radio. That winter, the story lady from WOI was reading the novel, "Crisis" by Winston Churchill, a novel of Civil War days set in St. Louis. She had a delightful voice and read perfectly.

When the men came in the house that morning, they stopped to look at the thermometer and they almost couldn't believe it. It was twenty-six below zero and it was snowing heavily with a thirty to forty mile wind blowing the snow. We had never known it to snow at such a low degree of temperature. Although we moaned and groaned, we weren't especially worried because we had plenty of feed, fuel and groceries to last a good siege. The cream man was due so our cream cans were about full and I would have to find more containers for the evenings cream, and how many more? All to soon the men returned to work, as everything had to be watered, fed and bedded with straw carried through the storm if that would be possible.

Ruth A. stayed with the children while I braved the storm to care for the hens. The hen house was well protected from the wind and the hens sang and fussed about. It was heavy work with the snow getting deeper and deeper all the time. Although the building was protected from the wind, my path was not. I pumped the water by hand as I didn't dare turn on the windmill lest the wheel go flying off into the storm. I started the tank heater, using crumpled paper, corn cobs, a little kerosene and left it for the men to keep going.

Jack, the cream man did come. He recruited a neighbor with a team and bobsled to help him gather up the cream and haul it to his truck parked on the gravel road; a miserable job in the cold and blowing snow! The rural mail man also went; he walked a mile in and a mile out to bring the mail to three patrons, which must also been a miserable walk. We were thankful for the pile of wood at the gate, unaware of that was to become more and more of a problem.

The radio was a great comfort, giving news, weather forecasts, comedy, drama and music, entertaining us right in our own homes. It was such a miracle how all those sound waves could travel through the air and come out through our radio set. I still marvel at all the sound waves going in all directions at once. They bounce off the Telstar, travel to the moon, and almost instantly return. Miraculous! I still wonder why all t hose waves don't collide! Luckily, we had brand new B and C batteries at the time.

The second morning, the snow had stopped but the wind was worse than before, piling the snow into deep drifts. I had risen in the night and replenished the fire in the heater so it was not as bitter cold in the house and I had only to build the fire in the range. As I watched the men with their lanterns wading through the deep drifts on their way to the barn, I knew there would be no school again that day. When I did the chicken chores, I carried warm water from the house to fill the waterers so it wouldn't freeze so soon. I also mixed a little warm water with some mash and spread it along on top of the feeders to tempt the hens from the roosts. I thought if I could get them to eat a little more feed, they would produce more eggs. I got 145 eggs that day. Pretty good!

It was crowded in the kitchen as the separator tank and the pails sat on the counter, and we dodged ten gallon milk cans waiting to be washed, sitting where the men had brought them in. Luckily, the basement did not freeze so we could continue to keep the cream and eggs there but it was too cold to wash the separator there. Horace carried most of the water for both households although I carried one or two pails every time I

went out. We used gallons of water.

The third morning dawned cold and still. How beautiful! The bright blue sky over a pure white world with bright son-dogs siding the sun, all reflected on the snow covered trees, bushes and snow banks. Beautiful! I couldn't say this to the men; to them it was not beautiful, only more work, misery, and cold, cold and colder. A slight breeze sprang up and light snow drifted across the drifts. Was it cold? It was thirty below zero! They dared to turn on the windmill and found that the pump was frozen. Outside in thirty below weather, they wrapped the pump with straw and gunny sacks and soaked them with kerosene and struck a match to it. On the third attempt it melted the ice and finally water was running into the stock tank.

When the cows were turned out, frost formed on their nostrils as soon as they left the barn. I had again built a fire in the tank heater but I could hardly force myself to stay out long enough to do anything. The men fed the heater with cobs as often as they thought about it.

The severe cold hung on. We added more attire to our outdoor get-ups and I added another pair of socks, putting a pair of men's socks on over my shoes and under the overshoes. It all helped but nothing made it seem any warmer. I hunted and hunted through the snow drifts until I found the two little red wagons and took them into the house with me. I was afraid that it could be hard on the furniture and wood work but children have to have something to do.

The pile of wood at the gate seemed to melt away as I carried it into the house. Alarmed at the rate of use and the length of the cold spell, Roy and Horace decided it would be best for Horace and Ruth A. to live downstairs during the day and allow their fire to go out, only using the bedroom at night. The men fell asleep in their chairs after supper so we were all soon in bed. The cream hauler was due again but all the roads were now blocked so I started hunting for extra containers.

A few days later, we were surprised to hear the sound of the cream truck motor as it labored into our yard. Jack had recruited two helpers and they had opened a road through the fields and farm gates, shoveling and pushing where necessary. We were so glad to see them. Jack had brought extra cans for our use for although it was still below zero, it was again spitting snow. Jack visited with me as I emptied the cream into the cans. Did you ever have to find containers from among your kitchen equipment for twenty gallons of anything? I had cream in the two gallon churn, three water pitchers, the canister set, two dishpans, and six two-quart jars. If he hadn't come that day, I was in trouble. Taking advantage of the gravel road being open and of Jack's track, Roy called a trucker and sold three loads of hogs. He followed with the car and the eggs and we stocked up on groceries again.

Burke's who lived a mile north of us, pulled their car out to the gravel road with the team to keep an appointment for their two year old who was getting her shots against diphtheria and whooping cough. This was widely recommended but our doctor hadn't mentioned it and we didn't have enough money to cover expenses, let alone more doctor bills, so I comforted myself with serving the best possible balanced meals. I had studied all the magazine and government pamphlets that I could find and I practiced everything practical. My big garden of vegetables and my hundreds of quarts of canned food were my best try to help Roy and to see that his children were well fed and cared for.

With the three loads of hogs gone, (they weighed 230 pounds and we were very pleased) it was possible to resort and separate the gilts by themselves. Leonard, with his feed mill came and ground two wagon loads of grain so we felt that we could cope. The weather forecast was not good but the men planned to get a load of wood from the grove on the morrow, even if they had to neglect something else. It's a good thing we didn't know what was in store for us.

The windmill had turned so slowly all that day that the pump had to be thawed out four times and at nightfall there was barely enough water to cover the tank heater. The feed company had also plowed out through the snow bringing cottonseed meal, tankage, Sargents for the hens and a half ton of channel coal for the tank heater. Hugh, the driver, said that the town was low on coal and we should be glad we were burning wood. Ha! Who would have thought that we couldn't get wood from the grove any old time. There were now such deep drifts, it was doubtful if the horses could struggle through.

Another blizzard was raging the next morning, whistling and screaming through the attic and window. The windbreak muted the storm (just try to walk outside the shelter of the windbreak) but the wind seemed to whip around the silo, across the top of the barn and the windmill and then across the tip of the house. We were better prepared this time, as the tank was full of water, the channel coal kept the heater going all day which was a great relief for me. After the chicken chores were done, I could relax in the warm house and enjoy having the children at home although there was still plenty to do in the house. Both of the red wagons were racing about the house, someone pulling, pushing or riding. Although it was dangerous to our shins, there was little real damage. They played train with all the chairs turned upside down in a row with the engine going Choo-Choo-Choo-Toot-Toot. We were completely snowed in again and the blizzard blew and blew.

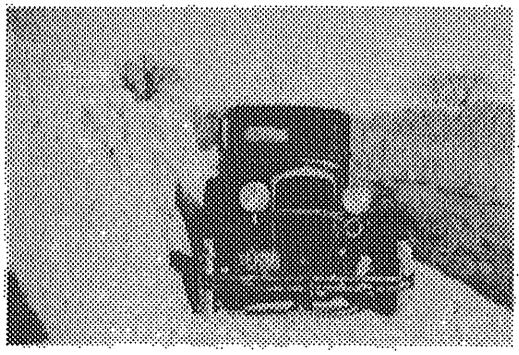
Early next morning, we were awakened by the most horrible noise, clanking, crashing, groaning, enough to wake the dead. Roy dressed hurriedly and went to inspect the trouble, which had to be the windmill, of course. Every time the wheel turned, it scraped the tower making what terrible noise. Roy said, "It's really too dark to see but the axle must be broken as the wheel in leaning. Good Lord, what are we going to do?" They went to milk! No matter what troubles may loom, the dairy man can always escape for the moment, he has to go milk the cows!

It was a terrible day! The wind roared, the mill wheel went round and round about a hundred miles an hour (so it seemed) and each time around it struck the tower with an awful crash of steel on steel. Nervously, I did the best I could, afraid that the wheel might fly off into the storm and come down on what, the house, the barn, or on one of us trudging through the deepening snow? Hoping against hope that the wind would die down, Roy and Horace cut a green tree to mix with the remaining dry wood and the daily supply of cobs. Luckily, the tank was full of water that morning.

Before it became too dark and the wind didn't abate, they climbed the tower with a length of hay rope and tied the wheel to the tower and so stopped the racket. Ruth A. and I couldn't stand to watch them and we couldn't not watch either. Everyone breathed a sign of relief when the men were back on the gr9ound. Both Roy and Horace should be awarded a medal for climbing that tower in the swirling snow storm and in much below zero weather to stop that wheel and tie it to the tower. Although it hadn't seemed to worry the children and Ruth A. like it did me, everyone was glad of the comparative.

quiet.

Soon the water tank was empty again and we allowed the heater fire to go out. All the cream cans were full again. The snow drift at the gate toward the henhouse was four feet deep. This storm was so bad that the men did the chicken chores and I had only to fix the mash and gather the eggs. and of course there was the constant cleaning up after the tracking in for warm water, bringing in fresh water, carrying in the fuel, armsful of wood and all those cobs for the range and sometimes for the heater. What a life!



The Winter of '36

12

More Winter

House work was always with us even when it stormed and stormed and we could rather have stood at the window and just stared at the swirling snow. We seemed to dirty dishes faster than Ruth A. and I could wash them and every day there was the separator, milk cans and pails. There were lamps and lanterns to keep filled, clean and trimmed. There were slop jars to empty, the path to the little house was six feet deep in snow long ago), garbage to carry out, water to pump and carry in, meals to get for seven people, children to care for and especially to entertain. Of course the stoves demanded constant attention.

Our meals were very irregular, due to the impossibility of a regular routine. I couldn't expect the children to wait and I fed them at regular times and the men when they came in. Sometimes Ruth A. and I ate with the children and sometimes we waited. A usual supper menu might be scrambled eggs, American fried potatoes, creamed peas, bread and butter with either apple sauce or plum sauce for dessert. We drank plenty of milk and I made many puddings, cakes and cookies. None of us drank coffee, so often I hade hot cocoa if we had the cocoa and sugar to spare.

When Lloyd was asleep in his bed, I helped the girls into their pajamas and bedsocks and raced them upstairs to bed and they were soon asleep. They didn't seem to mind the cold upstairs but Roy and I did. However, we slept warm and well, it was only the cold going to bed and the cold rising that we hated.

I ran their wagons into the back room for the night. I could hardly stand the crowded racing wagons but I couldn't stand their fussing and bickering either so I let them run the wagons about the house. We needed a larger house but I felt sure that if the landlord could see the way we were using this one that we were lucky to have a good roof over our heads. After such a tiring day of wind and snow, the racket and worry about the mill, we were too tired to worry anymore. We went to bed right after supper and we slept soundly although I did get up and feed the fire.

Ruth A., only sixteen, was a great help in entertaining the children, as she played school and games with them, really four snow bound children. Each day came the request, in fact about five times a day, "Can we go out and play?" Of course the answer had to be "No"!

When we stepped out the morning after the mill broke, snow was piled everywhere. It had swirled over the roof of the tank house, over the fences, over the hog lots, huge drifts everywhere we looked. They had to shovel out the barn door before they could even enter the barn. Luckily, they had left their shovels in the house entrance the night before. The midwest had received another severe blow with roads and streets closed everywhere. Again I was thankful for the radio.

I stumbled through the chicken chores as best I could. Some of the drifts were four and five feet deep in front of the hen house. The building was comfortable but dark, because snow covered many of the windows. I was still getting more than a hundred eggs a day. I carried warm water from the reservoir to fill their fountains and pumped more to fill the reservoir. Some of the usual tasks and chores, I ignored that day.

The water tank was empty again, so after the morning chores were finished, they pumped water by hand for the cows. Only first, they found that the underground pipe from the pump to the stock tank was frozen so they had to rig an over the round pipe, using pipe from the north yard where a summer tank had been set up. They dug the pipe out of a snow bank, and soon found that there was water frozen in a crook in the pipe. We used all our hot water to no avail. Finally the end of the twenty foot pipe was brought in through the kitchen window with the bend in the pipe set over a washtub on the kitchen range. There they left it and returned to their chores. I closed the window as closely as possible and wedged towels into the opening to keep out the cold. I poured the contents of the teakettle over the pipe as often as the water boiled. It took three hours before it thawed enough that the men took the pipe outside and emptied it. After the pipes were connected they pumped off and on for three hours. The cows drank off the end of the pipe all afternoon and some of the cows never had a drink and no water was accumulated in the tank. All of this in twenty below zero weather.

Next day was just as cold. Because the cows had been so chilled by their long excursion into yesterday's below zero temperature, it had taken hours for the barn to warm up again, so Roy decided to try a new approach. They cleaned the barn with the cows still in their stalls, and we watered them individually in a tub in the manger. I was the tub watcher to prevent spills, and as soon as one cow was through drinking, I moved the tub to the next cow in line. Roy pumped two pails of water, Horace carried it in and emptied the water into the tub, and they exchanged jobs occasionally.

I had dressed warmly and I didn't really mind since Ruth A. was with the children. We couldn't have done it without her. Although the children could have been with us in the barn, it would have been very trying. The barn was warm and pleasant with the noisy movements of cattle and horses. The scent of warm milk, ground feed, ensilage, clover hay, fresh warm manure, mixed together meant a comfortable, well tended barn. Each cow drank two, five gallon pails of water apiece, each calf, half a pail and the horses, two full pails each. Ordinarily, the horses were led out to drink from the tank, singly or two at a time. When I left to go back to the house, the men still had to water the hogs but I wasn't needed there. It was snowing again.

They cut down another green tree, these were all small trees, growing into a fence row or in the windbreak where they were unwanted and we carried the channel coal into the house. It was a hot flashy coal intended for the small tank heater so we had to use it sparingly as it was not suited to a wood stove. It was fuel though. Between he cobs and the new coal it was almost a steady job to keep the fires going without one fire going out or else getting too hot.

The temperature stayed below zero for days but we were able to dig out doorways, open some paths; for the most part we waded through the drifts and next time over the same path, until we did have a fairly solid path even if it was a foot or two off the ground. The barnyard and hog lot were drifted almost full and the cows were not turned out to churn up the snow. The hogs didn't leave the shelter of the hog house either, but ran out and grabbed an ear of corn when they were fed and ran back inside to eat it.

Pigs are supposed to be smart but they don't act like it at the feed trough. When any liquid, milk, water or liquid mash is fed into the trough, all crowd as close as possible so that the liquid is fed onto their backs, instead of into the trough. This was not only

wasteful but meant wet hogs in frigid weather. To avoid this, Roy had fashioned a sort of wooden funnel, about four feet long, eight inches deep and sixteen inches wide. One end was fastened into the trough and the other end against the outside fence, then liquid was poured into the top of the funnel and it ran into and down the trough under their noses instead of giving them a bath in their own feed. In cold weather, this was especially important. During the freezing weather, bits of feed and milk would adhere to the wooden surface, until the day come that it was frozen full and couldn't be used.

Can you guess how we handled that? The funnel, full of frozen milk and slop was brought into the house and set in a washtub on the range until it thawed. Farm kitchens have seen and smelled most everything. At least it was successful and they continued to use it. It only was clogged that one time.

Roy had waded through the snow up to Wachal's to call the repair man for the windmill but of course, he couldn't come in such drastic weather. On a more quiet day, Jack D. hired the neighbor again to help pick up the cream and the windmill repair man rode out with him. The gravel road was open again, but we couldn't keep track of it and anyway it did us no good. Mills, the repair man climbed the tower to check the trouble, retied the wheel and rode back to town. He had to send to Chicago for repairs but at least we felt that help was at hand eventually.

One cold day, Papa drove in with his team and sled, heading for Coggon with all his cans of cream, which hadn't been picked up since the first storm. He didn't milk much in the winter time. Donald was with him and they looked tired and frozen already and they were only well started on the way. Even his team of horses looked tired. As well they might considering that they had just waded and pulled the bobsled making the first track through three and four foot of snow for two or so miles. Roy decided to go with them, so he had Horace change the teams, putting one of our teams on the sled and Papa's team in the barn. Roy took our cans of cream also and both Ruth A.'s and my list of groceries. "Nothing that freezing will hurt", he reminded us and I heard him tell Ruth that Horace's mittens were wearing thin. It was nearly noon but they couldn't wait, only finished a plate of cookies I had and hurried away.

It was dark when they returned, cold and tired. Horace rehitched the teams as they unloaded the empty cans, the groceries, and half ton of coal, all they could buy as it was rationed. Papa and Donald looked half frozen but they wouldn't come in, only hurried on with the half ton of coal for Donald and groceries for both of them. Papas' wood shed was full.

Roy reported that the roads were still blocked in many places and the even with the sled they had to drive through the fields to avoid several cuts. Some one had broken most of the trail so it hadn't been quite so hard on the team. In the cut near the Castle place, the show was higher than the telephone wires. The railroad had a train stuck just north of Ehler and the businessmen of Coggon had gone out and shoveled the train out to bring coal into town. They had shoveled in tiers, one man up one tier, then another man over a second tier and finally the third man threw the snow over the top. It's a wonder that someone didn't have a heart attack in the cold with all that extra exertion

The Linn County snow plow had opened the road to Cedar Rapids, that very day, allowing two trucks to bring in two tons of coal apiece, and it was rationed out. This same group of men had also shoveled out the road to Troy Mills so that the mail and

cream trucks could go through. Most the county maintainers and snow plows were broken down. They couldn't withstand the continued punishment in such bitter cold. Only Linn county's snow plow with the new snow blower was still working on the main highway.

Roy took advantage of the main road being open and he and Horace used the team to pull our car down to Johnson's on the gravel road and parked it in their driveway. The next day, Roy and I drove the team and wagon the mile to Johnson's, stabled the team in their barn and then drove the car to Cedar Rapids. Since we had gotten the coal, Horace's were living upstairs again so the three children were delighted to visit with Ruth that afternoon.

We purchased some badly needed overshoes, chore coats, mittens, stockings, not forgetting gifts for the children and for Ruth A. and the coming baby. Back to Johnson's again, we transferred everything to the wagon, rehitched and drove home. We had spent a lot of money, money I'm sure we really needed later. I hadn't felt more than slightly cold at any time but that evening, I shook and shivered and couldn't get warm till after I warmed up in bed. I wondered how the men went on and on in the cold.

On one of our quieter days, I took advantage of the day to mix fresh feed in the feed bin and refill the self feeders in the henhouse. I mixed ground corn and oats, with tankage, bone meal, sergeants and some minerals, mixed it by shoveling it over and over several times with a scoop[shovel. Usually the men did this but they had so little time for these extras. I was very pleased with the hens as I was still getting 80-90 eggs a day.

I found it harder and harder to keep the children busy without fights and someone always in tears. I used the piano, teaching them such little songs as "Mary had a little lamb", "I am climbing Jacob's ladder", and "Jesus loves me". for a bench (one didn't come with the piano), we used an old chest, which my great-great-grandparents had brought with them when they came to Iowa long ago. It had plenty of room for the four of us to sit comfortably and the chest served as a piano bench through all the years of piano lessons, group singing, teenage friends and family gatherings. It was sturdily built of plain pine boards, merely stained and it had rope handles. It served us well. Is it now an antique? At least to me it is now a keepsake.

Every day I washed out a few articles of clothing, so there were always garments and towels drying behind the stove on the line and there were always mitten drying in the warming over. I baked ten loaves of bread, once a week. Each of the children had a small bit of bread dough for their very own and they rolled it and patted it and put them in little bread pans., a gift at Christmas time which had been a success. Their loaves might have been a bit gritty but they happily sat them to rise with mother's loaves. I always made a pan of biscuits for supper (we call them rolls now) and always a pan of cinnamon rolls. One of my special treats were the pumpkin pies. I cooked our own pumpkins and made five or six pies at a time. If the men came in to warm up or rest a bit, a whole pie would disappear at one sitting. With cookies and cake, I always had lots of help, especially to lick the spoon and the bowl.

For Christmas, Lloyd had received a large block of wood and a small hammer with a dimes worth of shingle nails. It was a great success. I pulled out the mails so he could drive them again. Small boys seem to need to be pounding on something, so it was anything to keep it from being his sisters. Dorothy would put up with him but Ruth would

fight back.

Although we had a break in the weather, it continued cold, and the men planned to get a load of wood the next day from the grove. It was particularly galling to have such a nice pile of wood all ready for the stove and have to cut and burn green wood, besides at this rate we would soon run out of trees. The coal was almost gone. It would take a lot of shoveling to help the horses to pull themselves and the wagon load through the drifts and gates in the lane. The field didn't look any better.

The next day, another storm was raging. It was getting us down. The radio announcer reported that all the roads were closed again and it was again twenty below zero. We did the chores as best we could. I was still the tub watcher at the barn. They used five gallon paint pails, to carry the water, two pails at a time. Let's see, what is two pails per cow, forty pails, a half pail each calf, six pails, two pails each horse, sixteen pails, twice a day, six pails to the hens, and fifteen pails to the house, makes close to a hundred pails of water to pump and carry when we include the needs of the hog lot. I carried most of the water to the henhouse and some to the house. Much of the water in the henhouse was wasted during the night because the waterers froze and then had to be thawed enough in the morning to drop the ice outside and refill.

The next morning the snow was still falling with a raging wind. It was a terrible cold blustery day. No fuel anywhere again. Across the road I some falling down abandoned buildings were some large oak beans and the men dragged two of them across the road in the storm and into the machine shed where they cut them into stove lengths with the cross cut saw. They did make fine fuel but we always felt guilty for stealing them that miserable day and we never were able to find a way to pay for them. Us squares that would never think of stealing the slightest thing.

After watching at the barn each morning, I hurried through the chicken chores before I started the daily rounds in the house. Meals, dishes, slop jars, garbage emptying, separator and milk pails, and always the stove to keep going. We were also burning all the cobs we had each day. The radio helped as it brought the world into our home, news, music, and humor, to lighten our days and give us something to think of other than our weather and financial woes, which we now had to leave in the background for the duration.

I haven't mentioned Ruth A. very much but she was a great help that winter, helping with dishes and meals and especially watching over the children while I helped outdoors. She worried me as she still had morning sickness and although she seemed to feel quite well, she was thin and pale. Their doctor had told them, "It wasn't common for one to be sick so many months, just the same it wasn't uncommon either."

Ruth A. remarked, "They told me about the movements of the baby but no one told me that he would use my ribs for a race track." She was always bright and cheerful and much of the credit for our enduring the winter as well as we did goes to Ruth and Horace.

On another day without snow, Burke's again opened the road enough to pull their car to the gravel road. With a single walking plow fastened to the right sled runner on a bob-sled, with a team of horses, they pulled it all three miles down to the gravel and back. Then the horses were able to pull their car through the make shift track to the open road and when they returned, they pulled the car home again. Roy took advantage of the open

gravel road and the trucker took out three more loads of hogs following the tracks though the fields, shoveling where necessary. I waded the deep snow up to Wachal's to call and while there I called the feed grinder also. Leonard came and shoveled off two loads of grain, saying, "You guys are busy and I need to keep warm."

The next day, the temperature was almost up to zero but it was snowing lightly again. We rejoiced when Mr. Wachal walked into the yard to tell us that Mills had phoned that he would be out shortly if we could meet him on the gravel road. After many trips to the house to warm up and many cups of cocoa later, the mill was running and water flowing into the big tank while Horace with the team and wagon took Mills and his tools back to his truck. We had been pumping water by hand for three weeks.

Next day another blizzard was upon us. When would it ever end? Groceries were scarce again. The snow was four feet deep on the level and all fences were buried in drifts. Each day, as the wind blew, snow drifted across the top of the hog house and across the storm fence where the snow was three to eight feet deep. Although the tank was full of water and they started the tank heater, they carried water to the cows another day. It was so stormy and the cows were not used to cold and storms. We were thankful that the mill pumped the water but I had to still watch the tub in the barn. We took better care of the cows than we took of ourselves!

We missed the daily mail. Now we got our mail once or twice a week if one of the neighbors took a sled to town or someone walked down and met the mailman on the gravel road. Sometimes he left it in Troy Mills if the road was open. The men from Coggon and Troy Mills had opened the road with shovels several times, but it was soon blown full again.

Without the pumping and carrying, the chores went much faster although now I had to start the tank heater again and feed it with cobs. How nice it would have been to have individual drinking cups in the barn. Almost better than having running water in the house. We had had so much bitter weather that when the temperature got up almost to zero, we did not mind the cold as much and could catch up on many neglected chores. Horace would carry straw for me and I would rebed the henhouse as they were doing in the hog house.

We had a good bird feeder that winter, entirely accidental, only the remains of an outdoor crib, which was being emptied a few bushels each day and it was directly outside in full view of the dining room windows. The snow banked against the cribbing to form a good shelter from the wind and we were surprised at the number of birds around all winter. I wondered if they wished they had gone south with the rest of the flocks but having stayed, they endured along with the rest of us. Each day, two pair of cardinals, three blue jays came to feed and the pigeons after strutting along the barn ridge, flew down to eat before returning to the barn loft. One day a big black crow scared all of them away but he didn't come again. Little chickadees, juncoes, snow birds, downy wood peckers, a sap sucker, and a multitude of sparrows entertained us. Two squirrels and a rabbit fed there regularly.

Appetites were prodigious. Due to the fuel shortage, Horace and Ruth A. were again living downstairs with us. I cooked potatoes, opened cans of string beans and sweet corn (the peas were all gone). We had plenty of tomatoes but no one liked them without sugar and the sugar jar was empty. I scrambled eggs and opened the last jars of sausage.

We would have normally butchered but not in such weather. Along with bread and milk we got along.

I made hominy twice. Each year when showed in I made hominy. As I washed and rewashed the lye form the kernels of corn. I was glad that hominy was welcome only once or so a year. I used the first batch of ten quarts along with the canned foods but when the weather continued to be so miserable, I made a second batch of twelve quarts, as any surplus could be canned for later use. I had much interested assistance from both Ruth A. and the children.

Papa and Mama came driving in one day in the bobsled and this was a gala occasion for all of us. Papa had driven to Troy Mills where he picked up the mail, his and ours, so he and Mama came on with it. They stayed for dinner, exclaimed over the Christmas gifts and played with their grandchildren. It was the first time Mama had been anywhere since the storms began. Mama took all the piled up washing home with her to do in her washing machine and to dry on the lines in her spare upstairs bedroom. I don't remember when we were able to get it home. What a blessing we have in Mothers

This last cold spell dragged on and on. All the cans were full of cream again and I added another stone jar. The next day, Roy borrowed a sled from a neighbor and hauled all the cream to Coggon and returned with groceries, still more cans and a load of coal. He told us that it was almost unbelievable the amount of show piled in the town of Coggon. They had had to shovel the train out again, and the road to Cedar Rapids was drifted full again. Horace took part of the coal down to Donald's to be sure he had some fuel, and to check on them. We had heard via the grapevine, (Mrs. Wachal) that Donald had pulled a hand sled to Troy Mills and brought home some groceries. We were concerned!

Sometimes, on quieter days, when I worked outside, the children would come out to play. Ruth A. helped them into their clothing but they didn't stay long. It was just too cold. Yet, I heard a cardinal in the evergreens, whistle, "Spring is here-spring is here." How optimistic can you get, I thought?

We were out of ground feed again so when we heard that the gravel road was open, Roy called the feed grinder to meet him at Johnson's. Roy and Horace loaded two wagons of corn and oats and hauled them through the fields to the main road, where Leonard met them. The grain was ground right onto the frozen ground and then reshoveled into the wagons again, a hard aggravating job. It was dark before they returned and left the loads in the corncrib driveway as they hurried to unhitch and care for the horses. Chores were late, and it was way after nine o'clock when they came to supper. The repeated this several days later.

With the coal, Ruth A. and Horace were able to live up-stairs and the house was kept much warmer. Coal did not work well in our airtight stove but it was fine in their stove and in the kitchen range. Most of the cobs now went into the heating stove and the tank heater. We were out of sugar again and it was very difficult to cook for a sweet tooth family. Once I whipped cream and whipped a jar of strawberry jam into it, strawberry mousse, and we froze it in a snow bank. The children were interested helpers and watched that no dog or cat came near. Actually our dog and cats kept themselves pretty well hidden in the barn and spent little time foraging for themselves; fed on milk and comfortable with the stock, they led pampered lives.

The winter of 1935 and 36 was the worst winter during our farming years and

instead of Papa saying, like is often done, "Oh, I remember such and such a year", he agreed it was the worst he ever saw. Finally, we had three days above zero. It had been below zero for thirty consecutive days, many of them stormy and windy, and there was forty eight inches of snow on the level but much of it was not level.

SW's birthday was February 29, so that year he had a birthday and he was giving a big party to celebrate. If we were going to the party, we would have to get ourselves out of the snow bank. It was a mile to the gravel road with snow drifts as high as the brush along the road, sometimes eight or ten feet deep and it was three miles to Troy Mills on the county line road which was drifted full from fence top to fence top. Almost as soon as the snow stopped falling it began melting so the roads through the fields were impassable. They decided to go west because the mailman and the school bus would come that way. Also they hoped for a little assistance from some of the neighbors. They pulled Horace's car around the yard with horses to start it; ours was still at Johnson's.

So they shoveled and they pushed and drove the car ahead a few rods, then shoveled and pushed some more. Papa, Donald, Jons, and Powell came to help and at last they drove into town. The brought back some badly needed flour, sugar, and kerosene. I had made pancakes for breakfast with the last of the flour and had served them with apple sauce. Very good, too.

The next day, February 29, we went to Coggon and the leap year Party. It was the first time that the children had been off the place since the last day of school, six weeks before. Ruth A. hadn't been out since before Christmas when they had gotten stuck in the snow. She had declared that she wasn't going that day either but we persuaded her. We all crowded into Horace's car and drove through Troy Mills and back to our car at Johnson's. It only took a little push to get it started. It was a gala day in Coggon. With many farmers in town for the first time since the storms began, the business men were very happy to see so many of us. AW had a nephew, whose birthday was also on Feb. 29 and they shared the honors. The party was held in the theater for everyone; here we watched a first rate movie and then were served sandwiches, cookies and soft drinks.

Snow was piled in the center of the wide streets so that there was barely enough room to drive on either side and you couldn't see across the street over the huge snow bank. We enjoyed the day and went home happy and tired. Ruth A. was especially glad that she went so she could see the snow. "It is so different. I wouldn't have believed it if I hadn't seen it." It had done us all good to get away for part of the day and we discussed the movie (an Alice Faye) all evening.

Another Year

The very next morning, March 1, Roy walked up to Wachal's to call the doctor and Horace took the car around through Troy Mills to get his sister, who was to take care of Ruth A. I helped her take her bath and remake the bed. I cleared away some of the untidiness, rather bad, since we had been gone yesterday. I tended all the fires and started breakfast. Roy returned and reported that her doctor was at a convention in Chicago. He didn't quite know else to do but he called the nearest doctor, Dr. Closson from Walker and he was coming. It was surely a good thing they had opened the road when they did; at that the doctor had to drive down through two muddy tracks between three and four foot snow drifts. Roy went to milk and chore alone.

Horace returned alone. His sister was sick and her husband had taken her to his mother's in Cedar Rapids. He didn't know what to do either so he hurried home as fast as he could . Ruth A. was very miserable and Horace stalked around like a caged tiger, making Ruth A. and me very nervous. I did ask him to get some water and fuel and he fixed all the fires, both upstairs and down. Ruth A. didn't mind that his sister didn't come but I did! I didn't like it at all! She felt comfortable and at ease with me as she might her mother or older sister but I was afraid of all the responsibility.

Horace helped Roy bring in the separator and milk things and then came upstairs two steps at a time. He was appalled by the misery of his young wife. I was as matter-of-fact as I could be and I was very happy to hear and see the doctor. I had known him all of my life, and he always brought a breath of fresh air and quiet confidence into the house with him. Also he was very talkative and I could see that it was annoying Ruth A. Do her good, I thought as I left to care for my own family for a while.

Roy was listening to a church service on the radio and the girls were having a service of their own, with Lloyd as a willing and rapt congregation. As I watched, he opened his song book and joined in the singing. No matter that the book was upside down, the tune was well known. How proud if them, I was! As my mother's heart swelled with pride, I wondered if it was sinful to be so proud.

When I returned to the room upstairs, Dr. Closson explained what he needed and we prepared for the big event. A baby girl. I marveled as I washed and dressed this new addition to our household, at her tinyness, her perfection of form, and her dark hair, already long enough to cover her collar. Soon the doctor gave his last instructions and I was alone with a brand new mother and baby. I was panicky as I thought of all the work and responsibility, on top of this awful winter.

Roy was as worried and concerned as I, "You have enough to do without adding any more." There was no hospital closer than Cedar Rapids, and no relatives to take them in, this side of Missouri. We well knew that they had no money. When Horace came down, we discussed the situation and he suggested that he try to get his cousin's wife for a few days. The poor lady was probably as busy as I was.

When Horace returned, he had with him, his cousin's daughter, sixteen years old, I had always considered that she was somewhat retarded. She answered all my questions with a monosyllable and it was soon evident that if Ruth A. was going to get any care, I

would have to give it. I worked out a plan as we went along. Selma washed dishes and the separator, swept the floors: not well but just as I told her, nothing more, nothing volunteered. I was not used to bossing anyone so I did not find it easy but she did get along with the children. Horace was helpful with the stoves and carrying water in and out as well as doing my outdoor chores so it worked out. Luckily, the good weather continued.

The children were excited about the baby, now named Elsie, as they gathered around me to see her bath and to touch her when I allowed them to. Ruth A. was resting and happy and wrote letters to her mother and sister in Missouri. I kept Elsie downstairs with me at night and Selma slept on the couch in their living room.

We prepared all meals downstairs and carried Ruth A's to her, each meal. After all the months of morning sickness, she was now ravenous. She had plenty of milk for the baby and the baby was a sleepy head who didn't do much crying. The washings were the hardest, especially the bedding. Horace, of course carried the fuel and water for both the upstairs and downstairs and emptied the wash water for me. Someway, with Roy and Horace's help, I managed!

When the doctor returned on the third day, coming down the still muddier road through the snow banks, he complimented me on their care and assured us that all was well. "Ruth A. is young so she can start moving around. Just don't overdo it", thus violating the ten days in bed. Almost before we knew it Ruth A. was up and around and taking care of herself and Elsie as well as her own household.

Our girls had been out of school for six weeks; the school itself had been shut down for five weeks and had been running a week before we could get out of the snow. They had many absences that week but picked up wherever they could. Ruth and Dorothy were both good in school and did not have any trouble going along with the class. After they had left for school one morning, I stood in the doorway and looked at the shining white of the fields, and admired the reflected rays of the sun on the ice crystals. The cardinal still whistled in the evergreens, "Spring is here." Water was running down every wheel track and dripping from all the eaves. Already snow had disappeared from the evergreens and the fence posts had lost their dunce caps. In the distance, sounded the mournful whistle of a locomotive.

I could hear Roy using an ax to cut a channel through the ice to carry off the melting snow water around the hog building instead of flooding the pens. Horace was cleaning the brooder house and disinfecting it, getting ready for the three hundred chicks which would be arriving on the next Monday. It certainly didn't look like baby chick weather but the order had been made long ago, and they were on their way.

A new neighbor went by with a load of hay on a bobsled, the runners dipping in and out of the chuck holes in the snow, nearly upsetting the hay. This was one year that the moving wasn't finished by March 1. Roy and Horace were hurrying the chores so they could sort out the various sets of harness. We had purchased a new set of britchin harness, the first new harness we had ever owned and they hoped to make six good sets out of the eight old ones. Spring is always welcome but as usual, we weren't ready for the change of pace, from the barns to pastures and fields.

Snow stayed in some deep drifts until the end of march. Field work started late that spring of 1936, due to all the moisture from the snow. Clover and timothy was a

bumper crop and oats and corn got off to a good start, only then it never rained and it turned exceedingly hot. The oats didn't fill out and we cut ours for hay and added them to the hay in the barn which was a mistake because it drew a big colony of rats that next winter.

In our particular area, we did receive an inch or inch and a half rain on the Fourth of July, spoiling many plans but saving our corn crop. Luckily that year, our corn had been planted on lower ground. Remember that this was cross checked corn before the days of drilling and such a large number of plants per acre. We filled the silo and harvested a fair crop but many others didn't, not only in Iowa but in surrounding states.

There were some tractors in use but most of the work was still done with horses, so the heat was a dangerous threat. Horses had to be rested, watered often, and worked only short periods of time and still some had heat stroke or died in the heat. We did have some hot winds that scorched everything. My pea crop was nil as the vines, pods and all wilted in one day in a hot southwest wind. During the summer the pump in the well was in almost constant use. We had a good deep well with a good windmill and the water was always pleasantly cool. We purchased a gasoline engine and a pump jack that summer so we could always have a tank full of water. We had too much stock to take chances on an empty tank at any time.

During the summers of 1934 to 1937 we had some extremely hot summers. I can't really remember which summer was the hottest but several times during each summer, the temperature ranged over 100 degrees during the heat of the day. Hot winds dried everything and in the west dust storms raged sending dust all over the United States.

Papa always wet large catalpa leaves and put them in the crown of his hat to protect his bald head. Others used their red bandanas. Some could work at oat shocking and so forth in the evening after the sun went down, but since we could neither harvest or thresh as soon as the dew fell at night or until it dried in the morning, both horses and men worked through the heat of the day.

As the winter had been a hard one, now the summer was a scorcher. Our house, a very nice small two story house was a hot box. It was pleasant in the morning until the sun rose over the tree tops to the east. Ruth A. spent much of her day downstairs with Elsie on a blanket on the floor. All of us slept outside on the lawn or quilts many a night, coming in about midnight or later to seek our beds. Several times, we slept on the floor in front of the open dining room door.

We put out a tub of water in our only spot of shade and allowed the children to play to their heart's content. We never even thought of swim suits as they played in their brief panties. Of course someone would throw too much water on another and a battle take place that mother had to settle. They seemed to stand the heat better than we older ones did. I envied them their pool of water and would have liked to join them. Ruth A. occasionally took out a dishpan of water and bathed Elsie in the shade to cool her off. Heat was hard on babies. Nearly all of us had prickly heat.

Our garden was hurt but we still had lots of produce, especially from the early planted seeds. I canned beans, corn, Harvard beets, tomatoes and of course, apples and plums. It was a hot job keeping the fire going for three or four hours, especially if we were burning cobs. We tried to time it so that we could use the oven at the same time to bake but it wasn't always timed right. Canning by the open kettle method was worse

because you had to stand over a hot stove and ladle the boiling fruit or whatever into the jars, put on the hot lids, and tighten them. I always turned my jars upside down on a towel to cool on the counter. We had to beware of any stray breeze, which might break the jars if they cooled too fast.

Late that year, we purchased our first washing machine, a Maytag with an aluminum tub, good wringer and powered by a small one cylinder engine with a foot crank to start it. We set it up in the basement and ran the exhaust out a window. How modern and convenient it was! A cistern had been put in at the corner of the house to catch the run off water from the eaves, with a hand pump in the kitchen and a faucet in the basement. It was a large cistern and held enough water that we never did run out of soft water. The clothes came down the chute from both floors; I could fill the tubs from the faucet and the water ran out the cellar drain. The only water we had to carry for the wash was the water to the boiler on the range and the hot water to the machine in the basement. The machine washed the clothes so much better and easier, that we dispensed with boiling except for very special stains. Clothes still had to be carried out and hung on the line outside. With the pump in the kitchen, the only water we had to carry for the house was for drinking and cooking.

Horace took a job in the Masonville area with another dairyman and moved. We hated to see them go but we couldn't expect them to live in two rooms upstairs forever. His new dairyman had a separate house (not very good) but it was a house, and he had a milking machine, but it was a terrible place to work just the same, much too much to do and very unorganized. Horace didn't stay long but found a better job (not a dairyman this time) with a decent house.

When they were expecting their second child, they were living about five miles away and Horace came to get me to be with Ruth A. when the baby arrived, but the baby arrived before either I or the doctor did. Everything was fine. This time, the lady who was going to care for Ruth A. while she was in bed was already there so Ruth A. wasn't alone. I washed and dressed this new baby, ready to take to her mother, just as sweet and precious as Elsie had been, another sweet little girl, Arlene, with long black hair. They had a third girl, Waneta, several years later but they lived so far away that I was unable to help out.

We didn't try to hire another married man and we bought a milking machine for ourselves. It was a McCormick Deering pipeline machine, powered by a gasoline engine which also was belted to run the separator. It even had a hot water jacket with a faucet so we always had hot water to use in cleaning the machines. It took much of the drudgery out of milking cows. I never milked by hand but I used the milking machine when necessary. We found that new hired men couldn't tell one black and white cow from another at first, and it was sometimes easier to do the milking alone than to break in a new hand to the task.

We had several times discussed getting tractor with AW but he was opposed, so we had put it off. After the latest fiasco with a horse, Roy went ahead and purchased a Farm-all tractor, an F-12, the very latest in row crop tractors on steel wheels, as they all were at the time. It worked faithfully for us for many years. AW gave in and insisted that we continue to own the machinery in partnership which really made it easier for us at the time. He was a hard headed business man and always collected all money due, with

interest, but still he did know when anything was ready or not and so didn't press us as a banker might have done, but let us settle every few months or whenever we made a good large sale.

We still owed back money from our failure and the depression dragged on and on We were gaining in stock and machinery owned and we did take out a reasonable sum to live on. Today, it sounds like a pittance and was then if we had had to buy everything at the grocery store.

Most of our horse drawn machinery had to be adapted to use with the tractor and any new machinery was bought ready for power farming. Our farm was supposedly well tiled but each spring, some quicksand holes would appear especially in corn cultivating time. A favorite method to get the tractor out of the mudhole was to use a long pipe, put it in front of the rear wheels, then when the lugs caught the pipe, the tractor would lift itself out onto more solid ground or onto the fence post pile or whatever was found to help. It was dangerous and your driver had to have good reflexes to stop at just the critical moment. Sometimes you only made a larger pit for the tractor and you had to call a neighbor to pull our out with his tractor.

Without the care, feeding and cropping for horses, Roy could accomplish much more. He was very happy with his Farm-All. Some of the neighbors looked askance at this college trained farmer, who was always trying new varieties of seed and only cultivated his corn three times. Some of them proudly boasted of five times. All of them soon had bought small tractors also. Most of the farms were not well drained at that time and so neighbor helped neighbor when he was in trouble in mud or quicksand holes. Roy and the others would be appalled to see some of the holes left after some of the large combines have been dragged out with a powerful winch.

One day, Roy helped a neighbor, Carson, where he was badly stuck on a hillside east of us. After much digging, many posts and many tries, darkness fell and they had to leave the tractor there for the night. That night, we received a big rain and in the morning the tractor was sitting in a small pond where they had dug the day before. They then had to dig a trench from the spot to drain it before they could even try again. Even the tractor motor had sat in muddy water most of the night. I don't know how much it cost him in time and money to get the machine running again.

The tractor was also much more efficient and easier to use when Roy had to haul cars from the mud roads. One time, the school bus settled so deeply that all the nearby tractors couldn't budge it and they had to send for the county maintainer for help. We still had snow vacations and mud vacations as a relief from the eternal lunch box and getting ready for school. Also I really enjoyed the family together. I was always glad to have them home, whether a short vacation or all summer. Snow would block the roads for four or five days or maybe a week and the mud vacations only for two or three days. Mud vacations came as the frost went out in the spring and there seemed to be no bottom to the roads. A hard rain would settle them or maybe the moisture dried on a few sunny days. We never had another long vacation like the one in the 1936 winter, but often the difference between school and no school was very narrow.

Other cars still got stuck in the roads, whether snow or mud. One time, Roy had to take the tractor with the temperature at twenty below and pull a neighbor boy from a snow bank. He was only a teenager but should have known better than take this particular

road. Apparently, it was already the style for the young to go hatless because he came walking into our yard with his scarf tied over his head but as soon as he thought we could see him, he took it off and put it in his pocket, braving the cold bareheaded. Roy wore his heavy coat and when he jumped off the tractor to fasten the chain, he tore a gaping hole the front of the coat. I mended it as best I could. If you are wondering why I remember this, good coats were hard to come by. Roy had bought this coat at a naval surplus store, a navy blue sheep lined, three quarter length coat, probably the warmest coat he ever owned and he kept it to wear on such cold occasions as a farm sale and etc.

Somewhere along here we had a small fire. Mama was visiting me that day and I had made a small trash fire in the living room heater to take off the chill. A little later, it dawned upon me that I was hearing the crackling of fire but the fire in the stove was practically burned out. I couldn't see anything wrong but still I could hear that crackle. I ran upstairs, nothing, down to the cellar, still nothing, no smoke anywhere, but when I looked up the clothes chute, I saw a sparkle of flame. The fire truck got there in time to save the house. However it did leave a big mess as they had to chop around the chimney to get at the flame and the chimney was in the center of the house. When they investigated, they found that the carpenters had lathed the wooden lath right tight to the thimble into the chimney. Shades of carpentry! Many times before we had had far hotter fires (think of the cold winter) and what made it burn that particular time, we'll never know. It was the famous ODC, Our Destruction Crew! The man who plastered over the lath should have known better also, and cut it out or reported it. The damage was repaired, parts of several walls and two ceilings in the upstairs had to be replastered and then I cleaned house. I began to wonder if I was jinxed by fires. I was glad that Mama was there that day; at least she knew that it was nothing I had done. Our other fires had deeply depressed me but this time I was simply mad, because it was carelessness that caused the thimble to be put in wrong. I can't even remember what Roy thought about it. Likely he was in the field at the time.

My oldest sister Edna and her husband Alpha lived on a farm only about five miles away and since they had no children, they sometimes came driving down late on a warm summer night after the evening chores were done. We always had milk and cream available so the men would drive to Troy Mills for ice while we prepared the ice cream mix, and made a cake. Once we come home after seeing the late show at the movies and they were waiting for us, at nearly midnight. No excuses were made, we made ice cream and cake and we feasted. When they moved father away and couldn't come unexpectedly, we missed them.

The spring after they moved, we had occasion to get some seed corn that Alpha had left over, so we drove up after chores. On the way home, Roy and I both went to sleep, Roy arousing to realize that he was driving in the ditch with a cement culvert looming in his face. He managed to jerk the car into the road without an accident but it was close. The commotion awoke me, and after such a scare, you would think we wouldn't ever get sleepy again while driving. Evidently, Roy didn't that night because we got home all right but I was almost asleep again before we made the four or five miles home. The girls had never awakened. In corn planting time, working all daylight hours and choring by lantern light, we were in no shape to drive at night.

Earlier, I had sewed by hand and whenever I could I would run some seams or

finish a garment on Mama's or Aunt 'Bedia's machine. Then we bought a sewing machine on a sale and I certainly made good use of it. When we were young Mama had made all of our clothes and about the only materials she had to use were dull plaid ginghams, percales, worsteds, and flannels in rather dark subdued colors and the colors were not fast but fading in washing. I had many kinds of new prints in all the colors of the rainbow. I loved making the small dresses and shirts and my own aprons and house dresses. I also made over outgrown garments of my sisters and brothers. I was pleased when Mama looked upon the girl's bright new dresses with such approval. She told me that she had always lamented her own lack of style in dressmaking.

Shoes and coats were a different problem. I did make over a few coats but usually the material wasn't suitable for children's wear. In summer, they went barefoot and simple sandals for Sunday School were inexpensive. Winter was a different matter. As soon as each child went to school or could run around much outside, we purchased good rubber overshoes for each one every fall. Each year, the boots were either worn out or outgrown and no footwear ever fits another child. Never! Anyway, we tried to keep their feet dry.

They have worn flapping shoe soles or soles fastened on with hog rings or tied on with binder twine before we could afford to replace them. Sometimes it was difficult to find time to go to Cedar Rapids shopping, and that had something to do with it, but we considered good overshoes a must. The life of overshoes was questionable too, with nail punctures, snags and sometimes a cut with an ax in splitting wood or kindling.

Caps, mittens and scarves could be made out of scrap material. Mittens, especially could be made out of good parts of worn overalls and lined with similar good parts from old underwear, carefully sewed on the sewing machine. In corn picking time, we purchased several dozen pair of two-thumbed flannel mittens, for a picker could wear out a pair a day and even in an afternoon if the corn was very dry. I ripped the worn mitten with a razor blade, patched the worn part with a piece of another worn out mitten, or new ticking or denim material and restitched the mitten to it's former shape. Overalls were patched and repatched. I became an expert on patching overalls and mittens on the sewing machine.

Cornpicking was always a hectic time. After both of the girls were in school, Lloyd and I would go to the field with Roy, where I would pick one row to Roy's two, while Lloyd and the dog played about or rode in the wagon. I always picked the outside row so I had to be careful and not hit the other picker. With so many chores, we could not spend very many hours in the field. Still we always managed to get the corn picked. Some years we hired a neighbor boy to pick at so much a bushel. It was considered very shiftless to have corn left in the field all winter.

When a neighbor bought his first mechanical picker, we hired him to pick one twenty acre field. He used four horses on a one row picker but heavy rains soon softened the field so that he had to put another four house team in front to finish the field. Because the farm was fenced hog tight, we could run our shoats all over the fields so we were not unduly worried over the amount of corn dropped or left in the field. That was the only horse drawn picker that I recall, for shortly tractors were the sole power for cornpicking and we eventually bought a one row picker which was pulled by the F-12. Now it seems that it must have been terribly slow but it was a great improvement. Usually we

exchanged help with a neighbor at picking time so that one would be picking corn and the other, hauling it in and unloading. A forty foot elevator was a great addition and stopped much of the shoveling . Do you remember what a shoveling board is?

The corn picker was not an unmixed blessing. Every neighborhood has had at least one fatal accident with this mechanical marvel. Several others have lost an arm, a leg, a hand or fingers with it's misery, cost and loss. These tragedies involved the entire neighborhood. Some one had to finish the field work, someone had to chore, and take care of the live stock. Someone had to help the family come and go to the hospital and help them adjust to a changed life. If the accident was fatal or crippling enough, there was usually a sale and the family had to try another way of life off the farm and there were weeks of convalescence, artificial limbs to adjust to and tolerate.

Our nearest neighbor to the north bought a new picker and when it was delivered, it stood in the center of the yard running while he inspected it, moving around and around the machine. Suddenly, his coat, a denim jacket, was caught in a moving chain and ripped right off him, leaving only the collar and cuffs. He was very lucky! Since he was inclined to be reckless, it was good lesson before he even started to use the machine.

Another neighbor caught his coveralls in a nail or link in the elevator chain, which also ripped all his clothes off, leaving him unhurt. Allen, a young neighbor laughed and laughed, saying, "I wouldn't want to see him hurt but I have to laugh every time I think of that fat old buzzard running naked to the house." Later, it was far from funny, when Allen's father was caught in a power take-off and badly injured. There was months of hospitals and recuperation, along with family fights and recriminations, causing a rift in the family that never did heal in either father or son's lifetime.

Times are Better

Lloyd started to school in the fall of 1938 at age five and although he had to walk the almost two miles, he had the company of his sisters. We had made arrangements to sent Ruth to the Troy Mills school in her first year and we continued until Dorothy was through her first year. The local Pleasant Valley school, also called the Reilly school was almost too far but Roy took them in bad weather and when the roads were icy.

One morning when the road was as rounded and smooth as a door knob, the wind blew him off the road at the corner. It was no real problem as he could drive out of the ditch onto the road again. Another time, he wasn't so lucky as he skidded crosswise of a deeper ditch and had to have someone pull his out. The car wasn't damaged but he injured his elbow and a cyst developed. It was duly removed and healed but there was always a slight seepage from his elbow for the rest of his life. It's no wonder that Roy was such an expert driver on ice. He had a wealth of experience.

With the girls in school, Lloyd had been our constant companion. He was very alert and noticed almost everything. If he didn't know the name of a new object, he might name it after its' use. One day in Independence, we window shopped and noticed a reel type home lawn mower. We didn't have one and at that time as we had no grass in the yard to mow. "Oh, look, Mama, see the grass-cutter-offer." We missed his company during the day, after he went to school.

All three of the children had started tot school at age five, which was rather young as it was just past their fifth birthdays. They had primary the first semester, first grade the second semester, and started the second grade in the second year. This was customary in all rural schools at that time, Troy Mills included, (primary students attended full time from the start). None of the three had any trouble adjusting, although often some of the other classmates were almost a year older.

The lessons were easy for Lloyd, the only beginner that year and everybody spoiled him, including the teacher. The next year there were four beginners, all girls, all of them only a few months younger than Lloyd. Now he had some trouble in a room full of girls, including his sister and a teacher that expected such perfect behavior that he was always on the defensive. There were only two other boys in the school, both older. I recognized his problem, he was always being compared with little girls instead of the active boy he was, but I couldn't seem to do anything to help him. His only teacher in all eight grades was a well-intentioned perfectionist young woman who really tired and really cared about her students. She sent us a Christmas card every year after she married and always asked what Lloyd was doing and wishing him sell. Sadly she was killed in an auto accident. However, Lloyd became very anxious and unsure of himself. I tried to talk to the teacher about some trouble he was having in spelling but she was so defensive that I thought it best to drop it. He graduated on the county honor roll so I guess I worried needlessly.

As a girl, I had badly wanted to take piano lessons and I did take lessons on the organ for a while until Papa bought a new upright piano, during the world War 1 years, when corn was a high price. I took lessons from a Mrs. Carr in Center Point, a seven mile

drive but I was soon driving to high school and had little time to practice. All I remember about the teacher was that if you used the wrong fingering, she hit you across the fingers with a ruler. Probably that is the real reason that I didn't take lessons longer.

When Ruth and Dorothy were old enough to start on the piano, we were fortunate to have a neighbor lady, who gave thirty minute lessons for fifty cents. She even came to your house to give the lesson on the pupil's own piano. It was difficult to save this small sum each week but it was money well spent as the girls received good basic instruction from this competent teacher. Much practice and later teachers helped both of them to become expert pianists. They always did like to practice and they played many duets together. Roy and I enjoyed their music and encouraged them all we could.

Although we had books and papers around, we never had enough. Papa had always subscribed to the Cedar Rapids Gazette even when there was little money. My grandfather's house was crowded with books and magazines, many of them saved for years. His relatives in the east had sent many Chatterbox series, Youth Companions, medical books, botany books, music and philosophical books. I remember that at one time, Grandpa took the Dubuque daily paper. I think that over the years that I read (at) most of the books. My parents would have been appalled at some of the medical books with exact pictures. I doubt that Mama had ever looked at them and Papa not since he was a boy if he ever did. He was educated at home so perhaps he had read them but if he had remembered some of them, I would have not been allowed to see them. I suppose that he never even thought that I would be interested in such adult books.

We gave each other books for gifts, exchanged books with friends and relatives, exchanged magazines as for instance Mama took the Christian herald, and we took one of the farm papers. Some of the newer novels ran serially in magazines. The first one of Zane Gray's that I read was "The Light Of The Western Stars," as it appeared serially in the Wallace's Farmer. I searched in dime stores for small books on Mother Goose, children's story books, bird books with pictures. At one time, I and the children could recite dozens of nursery rhymes we learned by heart as I taught them to the children. Many a dime book has been worn out with constant use. How we would have loved access to the modern libraries.

We got together with Roy's family and my own on many special occasions, giving the cousins time to know each other and play together. Usually we enjoyed a pot luck dinner together. We missed some of these occasions at Masonville because we would be so short of money that we couldn't even buy the necessary gasoline. Once, coming home rather late on a very dark night, we ran out of gas about five miles from home Neither Roy nor I would go to the nearby dark farmhouse and arouse them to beg, steal or borrow enough gas to get home. So we slept in the car the rest of the night (it was warm) and Roy got the gas in the morning when the farmer stirred and started his chores. Thankfully the babies slept, much better than we did, likely. People, poor and proud do some crazy things.

After Roy's sister Alta married, their folks gave up the telephone office and moved into a residence in Masonville with a lawn and garden. We visited them and visited Oliver and Margaret on the farm (their five children were nearly the same age as our three). We visited Clarence and the girls at Cedar Falls once a year or so and he brought the girls to visit us every summer. The girls still remember spending the night with us and how they

thought that their father and Uncle Roy would never stop talking and go to bed. We saw baby Emma quite often as she was growing up in Masonville. My parents were near by and we saw them often at church or as we worked together. We had many get-togethers with them also and during the summer often picnicked along the creek.

My sister Blanche and family came back to visit every summer from Chicago way for a day or two. Once they left their little girl, Mary, with me while they attended the Iowa State Fair, with Dad and Mother. We got along fine but once I was appalled to find her on the pump platform, reaching for the running belt of the pump jack. I didn't realize the dangers which surround a city kid who knows nothing about a farm. Any farm trained child knows as soon as he can walk that you stay away from anything that moves, be it machinery or stock. Gear and belts are dangerous and never, never stand behind an animal or approach an animal without first speaking, to let them know that you are there. One of Roy's nephews, only four or five years old, once visited us at milking time and he hurried in to see the cows, walking right up the rear leg of a cow and stood there looking up as though as a wall, with no more thought of being afraid than anything. Luckily the cow didn't move so nothing happened but it rather scared us.

Edna and Alpha, Nona and Wilber and their families usually joined us at my folks for holidays and picnics. We had special programs at church for Easter, Children's Day, and Christmas, while the school had Christmas, Valentine's Day, special fund raising programs and always a picnic on the last day of school. Although the school always had four days vacation for Thanksgiving, we didn't usually make big plans as were often still picking corn. If picking was finished we might spend the day in a parental home but often we roasted our own chicken, made pies and kept right on picking corn. Sometimes there was snow, sometimes mud, but we kept at it because we knew that it would get worse.

Christmas weather was also very unpredictable, fall plowing might still be in progress or it might be cold and stormy with temperature below zero. One year a blizzard kept everyone at home and another year we crept along icy roads through deep fog. Surprisingly, there were few years that we couldn't go to one of the homes or entertain the family instead. Rain, snow or sunshine, we have always worshiped the Lord and his son Jesus, and have enjoyed togetherness with prayer, songs, fun, small gifts and plenty to eat. In what order?

I recall a special Christmas Eve, after an impressive candle light service, where the young people marched in singing, "Adestes Fideles" and later one of the young boys sang "Silent Night", bringing tears to our eyes by it's simple purity. We came from the church that night to find four or five inches of fluffy new snow. Beautiful! It heightened our spiritual peace and awareness of the Christian meaning of the Christmas season.

I walked through the snow to the local store, only a block away to buy some last moment groceries and small stocking stuffers, mittens, candy canes, a pair of sox apiece, last minute oranges (oranges were still a big treat) anything I could find to please me or could afford. I always enjoyed Christmas with my own family, even if it did entail a lot of work. Since money was always a scarce item, we used all our efforts to make it a meaningful and happy occasion. Within the limits of our purse, we bought or I made each child a new item of clothing to wear to the Christmas programs at church and school. Something new always seemed to add to their assurance.

Our gifts to the children were small toys, balls, a pocket knife, books, tops, dolls,

games, clothing and so forth. Since we couldn't afford a large gift for each one of them, the large playthings as wagons and sled were left to all of them or purchased as they were needed during the year, and so belonged to all of them. I hunted the dime stores over for stocking stuffers looking for small items with which they were unfamiliar but would enjoy as a surprise, and for gifts for the members of the extended family. At that time for ten to fifty cents, we could find pretty dishes and small useful items, which wrapped in red tissue paper looked festive, even when we hadn't spent much money.

Scraps and leftovers from the sewing bag became aprons, pot holders, pillow cases, collar and cuffs sets, mittens, scarves, anything serviceable or fancy. Rag dolls and bean bags were popular with the small set. For my own children, using new materials, I made dresses, slips and shirts. Each year I made each child, a pair of warm pajamas of bright gay outing flannel. I worked on these projects while they were in school or after they were in bed, or early in the morning before breakfast, hiding everything for Christmas day.

One year, one of Roy's aunts was visiting his parent for the holiday season and she gave each of the men folks a beautiful white shirt and a bright tie to go with it, a magnificent gift in our penny pinching times. Roy's tie was a deep maroon. Aunt Inez wasn't able to do the shopping herself and I can picture mother's pleasure s she picked out the shirts and ties for each of her beloved men folks. A small thing!

One year, AW and his wife Marion asked to give the girls their Christmas dolls from Santa Claus. They purchased large baby dolls, one dressed in blue and one dressed in pink, then for Lloyd they bought a smaller boy doll. (Boys weren't supposed to play with dolls). Lloyd, probably three at the time, was so disappointed and barely looked at his doll and it almost spoiled the pleasure of the girls in their dolls. I should have gotten him a similar doll myself but money was scarce and shopping almost impossible. Our hindsight is always so much better than our foresight. Ruth and Dorothy played with their dolls but they were never absorbed in them as some girls are. They were interested enough until the dolls were undressed and dragged around by a leg or an arm but never enough to redress the naked doll. They were always too busy outdoors with wagons or sleds. They were feminine enough in a way but they preferred being tomboys.

We made ready for the holidays as we did the regular chores. We tried to enrich their experiences so that they wouldn't miss the big gifts that some of the neighbor's children would be receiving. One neighbor, much more well-to-do, probably spent three times as much on their one as we spent on the three. I didn't envy them as I knew they were very sad over the loss of their first two baby boys and adored their only daughter. I wasn't sure that our three were old enough to understand such different circumstances.

We made popcorn balls, fancy cookies, candy of all kinds and descriptions, all stored away for the day. Naturally there was always someone to lick the spoon and the bowls. As we made the goodies, washed the dishes, and followed the routine of daily living, I listened and prompted, as each child studied and memorized the songs, recitations and parts in the dialogues to be given. Then when Roy came in for the evening, they would try them out on him as an interested and appreciative audience.

They always hung up their stockings on Christmas Eve, which Roy and I filled with the small items, beads, toy watch, small mouth organ, ten cent rings, and an orange, candy and nuts with always a penny in the tow. Roy always cracked some nuts and ate

them as I fussed around and tried last minutes ideas. Many of the gifts, such as the pajamas, should have been called necessities but it made the holidays more festive. I have never regretted the extra time and work at Christmas time. I guess I must admit that I enjoyed it.

On Christmas morning, everybody was up early so we could watch the children empty their stockings before Roy went to milk. Some years the hired man joined in the fun and other years he had gone home the night before. After breakfast and early chores, I prepared the dinner, either at home or for the pot luck at another home. I often wished to stay home and enjoy Christmas and not drag the children away from their toys but when the time came that we could do that, I missed the extended family get-togethers dreadfully.

Our financial progress had been painfully slow, always. Whenever we settled with AW we still owed him money. Some of the depression debts dragged on and on. We were gaining however in the amount of property owned and in the well being of the family. We were now growing enough feed, that some could be sold. In 1929, one of our earlier years on the farm, one twenty acre field, manured and using some new seed, had delighted us with a yield of 45 bushels to an acre. Now we were getting 60 to 70 bushels per acre over the entire acreage planted to corn. The hundreds of loads of manure and the plowing under of green crops had worked wonders. Now they, AW and Roy, decided to feed out a few steers to feed the grain rather than sell it.

They used the enclosed yard which had access to the water tank, with a shed for shelter and bought the necessary feed bunks for the grain and ensilage. The yard was already cemented but the set up would only accommodate 45 to 50 steers at one time. They bought 45 steers weighing 450 pounds each, purchased off the sand hills of Nebraska and started. This made more chores to add to the dairy and hog set up for we still milking eighteen to twenty good cows and feeding out hogs.

We were apparently spreading out a little in 1938 and 1939 as the record shows that we bought a new seven foot John Deere mowing machine for $91.80, a new three bed wagon box for $30, and a new hammer mill for $128.50 with a 50 foot continuous belt for $17.50. We ran the mill with the Farmall F-12 and we ground our own grist after that. The portable mills filled a real need and we owe Leonard and others a big thank you for all the work and effort beyond their paid stipend, in all kinds of roads and weather. Thank you!

In 1938, when we sold 21 steers on the Chicago market, the trucking to the Coggon stock yards was $10,the freight to Chicago stockyards was $65, the yardage was $11, the timothy hay was $1.47, the commission, $17.50 and 57 cents for making out the check. The steers weighed 900 pounds and brought 9 dollars a CWT.

All prices were still low although they had risen off the floor of 1933 and 1934. Hogs sold at the packing plant in Cedar Rapids at $7 to $7:50 a CWT. Eggs brought from 22 to 23 cents a dozen. Hens sold for 9 cent a pound. That summer our early broilers went to market at a very good price, 85 cents apiece. Butterfat varied from 22 to 25 cents a pound. Chick started was $2.35, growing mash $2.15 and cottonseed meal was $3.39 and tankage was $2.65, all a CWT.

That spring we paid $1.03 a bushel for a special variety of seed oats and $1.00 a bushel for soybean seed. That year, 1938, Roy purchased his first bushel of Pioneer

Hybrid seed corn for $8.00. He had tried many new brands of seed corn advocated by the State College at Ames, most of them were related varieties of Reid's Yellow Dent.

My brother Donald had finished high school and he came to work for us as a hired man for a time. It was a pleasant time as he knew his job and he enjoyed his nieces and nephew, and they him. Although he stayed nights with us, he went home every weekend and Mama continued to wash for him.

Besides Orchard Place, Roy was working an eighty acre plot of bare land which also belonged to AW. It was all in crop and I soon had to send more lunches during the days they worked there. Lunches weren't so bad, the men aren't as critical as school children are. We bought thermos jugs so they could have something hot at noon but the jugs were soon broken. It seemed that they were always being run over or falling off the wagon so it was too expensive and we gave it up. We were also renting more pasture and work ground near by, basically poor rather worn out soil.

We joined the DHI, the Dairy Improvement Association, and the technician, (to us, he was the cow tester), came to our place once a month. The cost was three dollars a month, room and board for the tester. It was very interesting as he weighed the amount of feed consumed and weighed the milk from each cow and tested for butterfat, at both night and morning milkings. He used scales and a centrifugal machine which he hauled with him in the trunk of his car. He kept a complete record of feed and milk. Gasoline, including tax was fifteen and nine tenths cents a gallon and kerosene was ten and nine tenths a gallon. We used gasoline in both the car and the tractor, and kerosene in the brooder stove, the lamps and lanterns, and a small kerosene cook stove. We had purchased a three burner cooking stove with a small oven to use in hot weather for daily cooking except canning and baking bread. The small oven worked well for small baking but the loaves of bread were too much.

We filled the silo with five or six acres of green corn fodder and filled the permanent crib and some temporary cribs with corn each fall. We raised enough oats for our needs and to seed down clover and timothy to have enough hay to fill the big barn each year. We still used the clover timothy mix but we were beginning to use a little alfalfa with the mixture. We had tried sweet clover, which was good for a plow down crop but it was too coarse and hard to cure for hay. It must have been in the spring of 1934 when it was extremely dry, so dry that the pastures were barren, when we ran out of hay and still had no pasture. We turned the cows into a five acre patch of sweet clover, which stood about a foot high and gloriously green. We did it in fear and trembling, real fear of losing cows with bloat but we had no trouble. That sweet clover saved the day.

We had many extremes of weather during the 1930's. The year of 1934 was very hot during the spring so that there was no pasture, hay or oat crop but we did have a fair corn yield. We used ensilage to fill in for the no hay. Then 1935 was a wet year followed by the severe winter of 1935 and 36. Hay and oats were a good crop in 1936 but we had heat and drought the rest of the year. The summers of both 1936 and 1937 were very hot and dry. These were the years of dust storms and searing heat with the sky sometimes hazy with blowing dirt.

We planted soybeans for hay and although they made abundant foliage, they were very hard to cure as hay. They were mowed and raked into piles to dry but it was not very satisfactory. Then in the winter, when fed they were too laxative for the cattle, some

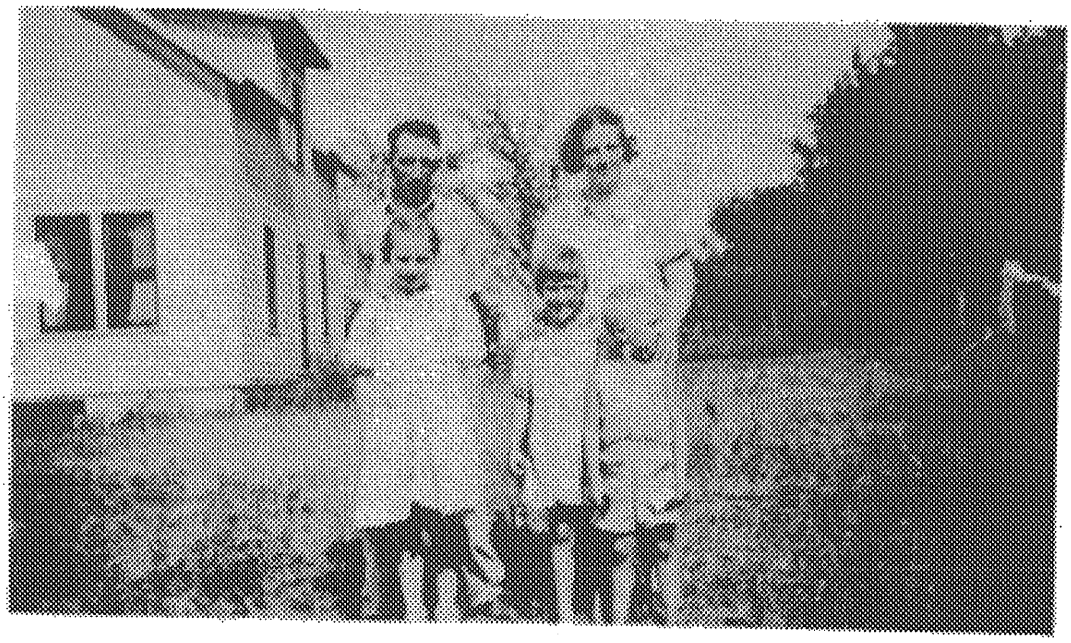
of the beans still being in the hay so only a small amount could be safely fed. They also tried Sudan grass which grew as high as the cattle's backs but it never caught on in our territory.

In the spring of 1939, Roy bought five bushels of Vinton hybrid corn at $6.50 a bushel and we used all hybrid seed corn from then on. He also purchased the first fertilizer attachment to use on his John Deere planter and we continued to use commercial starter fertilizer on all corn grown. We were still planting with check wires so it could be cultivated both ways.

AW and Marion bought a new car and we bought their used one, a 1937

Oldsmobile sedan. It was a fine car, the best one by far that we had ever owned. It was large enough for the family and for the constant hard use a farmer gives his car. We enjoyed it very much.

I am closing this book, basically covering eighteen years from 1922 to 1939; before our family was complete, before World War II, before the high school years and so much more. I have tried to paint a picture of the times and so have recorded my memories of our family as one of the many families on the farm, all much alike, all different, all striving to live and let live.



The family at home.
About 1937