Autobiography
by
Justin A. Mace

Foreword by Frederick Mace:

It is with great honor and a deep sense of nostalgia that I present this remarkable autobiography, penned by my beloved father, Justin A. Mace. Through these pages, we embark on a poignant journey into the life and times of a man whose experiences spanned generations and whose wisdom has forever enriched our family's legacy.

"My Way: The Justin A. Mace Story" offers readers a unique glimpse into a world that is both of its time and timeless. As we follow my father's narrative, we encounter a tapestry woven with anecdotes, adventures, and enduring life lessons. From his early days growing up in the heart of Montana to his adventures in academia and the CCC (United States Civilian Conservation Corps), we gain insights into a life lived with purpose and passion.

Through his candid and often humorous storytelling, my father allows us to witness the trials and tribulations that shaped him into the man we all knew and loved. Whether recounting his college days, his brief stint in the Operetta, or the heartwarming romance that led to his marriage, each chapter reflects the indomitable spirit of a man who truly did things his way.

But "My Way" is more than just a chronicle of personal experiences. It is a testament to resilience, adaptability, and the enduring power of family. It serves as a reminder that life's challenges can be met with grace, humor, and an unwavering commitment to doing what is right.

In these pages, you will find not only the story of Justin A. Mace but also a testament to the enduring spirit of the American Dream. Through adversity and triumph, my father lived a life that exemplifies the values of hard work, dedication, and a love for family that knows no bounds.

As we delve into this autobiography, let us pay tribute to a man whose legacy continues to shape our lives. With a heart full of gratitude and a tear in my eye, I invite you to join me in celebrating the life, adventures, and wisdom of Justin A. Mace.

Rick Mace

PREFACE

This autobiographical record is written to give my children, their children and the future children from this lineage, some understanding of the background of their Mace family and, specifically, my early life.

Unlike some autobiographies of this era it is written to portray the friendship, trust and love that existed throughout my life. There are no titillating events or horror stories; no bad guys or gals; no pathos or spicy adventures. It is a story about lovely people with whom I had the privilege of being associated.

I have tried to impart that feeling of love, trust and understanding in telling my story. The inspiration for that premise comes from a poem that hung over my bed, at home, for the first eighteen years of my life. In simple language, it stated:

I Love you

Two Score Reasons

Can I Find

For Wishing You

Joy and Health

And Around Them All

Is One Entwined

I Love You.

And I do love all of you, wherever you may be.

Justin A. Mace

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Justin A. Mace

Justin A. Mace -- Remembers

an Autobiography

Justin Avard Mace was born in Glendive, (Dawson County) Montana at 3:45 p.m on April 30th, 1915. I was the third (the second was stillborn) child of Mae Bauder and William David Mace. The first child was Gertrude Ethel, born 14 years previously on August the 12th.

Glendive is a remote, rural community in the "Badland Country" of the Northern Plains. The town's economy then centered around its position as a Division Point on the Northern Pacific Railroad. Glendive also is the County Seat of Dawson County and in the center of "Wheat Country"--where vast acreages of grain stretch as far as the eye can see. The town, itself, is located on a plain sandwiched between rising, gully-strewn hills on the south and the muddy Yellowstone River on the north. The population always hovered in the vicinity of about 5,000.

“Badland Country” of the Northern Plains

As I understand it, "Badlands" were so named because the deep gullies that crisscross the plains of that area appear to be identical. Consequently they were, for those who so utilized them--Indians, Outlaws, and eventually Rancher-owners--excellent hiding places. A stranger to an area (commonly referred to as a "Tenderfoot") could easily become lost in the badlands. Indians and Outlaws knew the maze-like terrain well. They could attack their "targets" from these hidden gullies, and then absolutely disappear from sight.

Ranchers became completely familiar with the badlands of their area and often had to spend many hours, during a round-up, hunting down stray cattle that had wondered into the thick, brush-lined arroyos to browse for grass.

Dad was a sheep rancher. He left his family's home in Malta, Illinois, at about the age of 20, to explore the West. The open spaces attracted him, so he returned to Malta, married Mae Bauder, his school teacher sweetheart, and returned to the Willowa Country of Oregon. There he collected his first flock of sheep and embarked on a new career. After several years he moved to the Glendive area of Montana where he joined forces with another rancher by the name of Bob Evans. Together they ran a large flock on the plains some miles to the north and east of Glendive. When dad "retired" from running sheep, the family moved into Glendive where they lived in a small concrete-block house on the south side of the railroad tracks. A few years later they bought a small, red-painted home (apparently not much to look at, either inside or out) at 318 N. Meade Avenue, "on the right side"--the north side--of the tracks. That's where I was born. The family lived there only a couple more years, until they built "the new house".

This home was a two-story structure with a full basement and a full attic. The main floor had two large bedrooms, a living room, dining room, kitchen and a half bath. Upstairs were three large bedrooms, two smaller bedrooms and a full bath. The attic was completely floored which made an extra large storage area. Three quarters of the basement was floored in concrete. Half of the remaining room was a large coal bin of at least one-ton capacity. The other half (separated by a five-foot high concrete wall) was natural dirt that had never been dug out. This area was special to me because I made it a play area where I spent hours "building roads" and doing "general excavation work" with my toy trucks, cars, cranes and shovels.

There were four rooms in the floored portion of the basement. The largest was a basic laundry area with a floor drain. As long as I can remember there was an electric washing machine with an attached, hand cranked set of rollers that extracted the water after washing. Adjacent to the washing machine was a bench with two galvanized wash tubs, used to double rinse the clothes. Another hand-cranked roller was attached to the first rinse tub, making our washday work a tedious, but simple, matter. After the second rinse, the clothes were rolled back toward the first tub where they were hand caught to make sure nothing fell in the dirty rinse water.

Between the washing machine and the five-foot concrete wall, clothes lines were strung. The lines--generally used under inclement weather conditions--were adequate to handle seven standard sized bed sheets (Queen and King did not exist then) plus table linen, towels, etc., and all personal laundry generated by a family of five and sometimes six. Sheets were changed once a week, with the bottom one going to the laundry and the top sheet becoming the bottom. Contour sheets didn't exist either. A chute, from the second floor to the basement, expedited moving dirty laundry from each floor without having to carry it down the separate flights of stairs.

The other three rooms served various storage purposes. As you came down the stairs into the basement, the room on the right was where mother stored all of her canned jams, jellies, pickles, etc. It also was the room where, in later years, I made five gallon batches of root beer and stored all of the capped bottles. If I used too much yeast, a number of bottles "blew" their caps, spewing root beer all over the room.

The room on the left was much larger and served as an overflow bedroom as well as storage area for clothes, blankets, trunks, and other such useful items. Next in line, on the left was the large coal burning furnace that heated the hot water radiators throughout our house. Beyond that, toward the coal bin, was a small work shop area where dad kept grain for the chickens, as well as shoe repair tools and other tools necessary to maintain the family's functioning equipment.

I should explain that my sister, Ethel, graduated from high school at the age of sweet sixteen. She then left Glendive, with a friend and her family, for California where she studied a couple of years at UCLA. Soon after that she was married. So I had little chance to know her during my pre-school and school years up through high school.

Although I do not recall the early events in my life, my sister and family told me about two, of which I have photographic proof. I was a "tad" about two years old when the World War I troop trains, from the West Coast, stopped in Glendive on their way to East Coast embarkation ports for Europe. My sister and her friends would take me to the railroad depot, put me up on a baggage cart, where I would sing "Johnny Get Your Gun" type songs to the soldiers, while the Ladies Club served coffee and doughnuts.

The other event happened a couple of years later. I had naturally curly hair which my mother shaped into curls that hung down to my shoulders. A family of four then took rooms in our house. Mr. Worthington was the new manager of the Glendive Golden Rule store (later taken over by that upstart J.C. Penney Co.). Their daughter, Louise, was a year older than I and she had long curls that hung down to her shoulders. The day before the Worthingtons moved in, mother had taken me to the barber shop for my first "grown-up" haircut which, of course, eliminated the curls. At the sight of Louise, I "threw a fit" and wanted my locks pinned back on so we could look alike.

In the Spring, Summer, and Fall--of these early years--I played outside most of the time. Our back yard extended about 75 feet from the house to the alley. Here mother and dad had a good-sized garden as well as a chicken house with around 25 chickens. At one time, a small creek ran through the area of the chicken house, but that was filled in and never reappeared. Besides the chickens, I particularly remember the asparagus patch. When the asparagus was past its prime, the patch was a "forest" of ferns. These made wonderful cover when we were playing hide and seek.

On the right side of the lot (as you faced the alley), and separated by a four-foot walkway, were the outdoor clothes lines. There were four lines about 50 feet long. In the summer they did double duty--hanging out the washing and for beating carpets. In the winter, when the temperature was below freezing, the clothes that hung on these lines would freeze stiff. It was my first experience with the phrase "freeze dried". After a couple of days the clothes would still be frozen, but once in the house, they would thaw out and be dry.

Adjoining our lot, to the West, and on the alley, was a big empty barn. We didn't go in there, but just in front of it, several of us built a club house, with an excavated "basement". It made a great hiding place. In front of the barn, toward the street, the remainder of the lot was empty. For several years this lot was planted in potatoes, and sometimes watermelon. On a hot summer day when the melons were ripe, dad and I would go into the patch to look it over. If there were several ripe melons dad might break one open and we would eat just the heart. On a similar day, when the patch was in potatoes, I would lay down between the rows trying to catch potato bugs--and usually fell asleep in the process. I also used this lot, when it wasn't planted, for secret tunnels from the "club house". I would dig a ditch deep enough to crawl through, then cover it with boards and pile dirt on top. The trouble was, it didn't really go anywhere.

A boarding house, then, was similar to today's modern Bed and Breakfast. The big difference, was that mother served three full meals every day--including Sundays. She also made "brown bag" lunches as necessary.

There were always from six to eight roomers, six or seven additional boarders and usually from one to three high school students, as well as the family, dependent upon mother's cooking. The students came from family friends who lived on farms too far from Glendive for any semblance of a reasonable commute. In this time-period of my pre-school years, commuting was accomplished by horseback, wagon or walking. (The Model "T" Ford was only two years older than I, and "a luxury item" for the vast majority within our community.)

For a youngster growing up in the environs of a boarding house, life was a continuous round of joyous events. I'm sure there were any number of not so joyous events, but such, seemingly, did not track into my memory bank. There was no preschool, not even a kindergarten--so my friends and I "rode" stick horses--generally a single lath stick, with a length of light rope (reins) fastened at the head end. We played Cowboys and Indians, ran our toy (made out of lead) cars all over the sidewalks, played hide-and-seek and other such games that helped to spend our pent-up energy.

We had wind-up trains, Erector sets, Tinker Toys and building blocks that served to consume many hours of indoor time. I pulled my little red wagon when going to the store with mother for groceries. And there were many hours spent on the laps of either mother or dad while they read books and the Sunday funnies to me. I also had the advantage of being helped by some

of the people who roomed with us. They taught me songs, games and generally included me in any family oriented activities such as picnics, or going to the swimming pool.

Erector Set and Tinker Toys

Living with us then was mother's mother--my Grandma--Jane Matilda Bauder. The davenport in our living room made up into a bed for Grandma. As a girl, she was in a horse-drawn wagon when the horse "spooked" and dumped the wagon, Grandma, and all off a small bridge. The result was a broken hip, which left her with a decided limp.

Grandma's world, was sitting in her rocking chair where she could look out of our big front window. And she didn't miss much. All the neighbors knew she would be there, consequently they would wave to her as they walked by.

Grandma's talent was as a seamstress. Her eyes were sharp and her fingers nimble. She could knit, crochet, tat, and cut cloth in any shape desired. She made countless quilts, some with one-inch, octagon, as well as square, shaped figures sewn into eight-inch blocks. Her stitches were so small that many of her friends had difficulty equaling them, when it came time for a "quilting bee".


Quilting Bee

When that time arrived, the "frames" were set up in the living room, and fastened on the four corners with small C-clamps. Set up on the backs of chairs, the quilt, and its backing, were stretched and pinned to the frames. Then the game began. Boarders, roomers, neighbors, visitors, students and family all took their turn stitching the quilt and its backing together--and all under Grandma's watchful eye. She made sure it was done right or the faulty stitches were removed and replaced. Of course for us kids, the frames and quilt made a perfect tent--a new play area to be temporarily enjoyed.

This procedure went on for many years until eventually Louise and I were both old enough to stitch, and/or tie, whenever a quilt was up on the frames. Some quilts had cotton batting between the quilt and its backing. These were not stitched, but tied with a bright colored yarn placed specifically every three inches. When finished the edges were sewn and the ties stood out like the rows of crosses in a National Cemetery.

Quilt 'Ties'

Grandma Bauder was a great story teller, too. Many times, when I woke up in the morning, I would crawl in bed beside her and she would tell me about the friendly ghost that scared the horse when she was thrown off the bridge and spooky stories about ghosts that visited her friends in Up-State New York while she was visiting them. She'd talk about the little town of Fonda, NY and about swimming in her Sunday dress in a creek near her home, then picking butter nuts off a nearby tree while her dress dried. She told about an Indian raid when her Grandfather was away from home. Her Grandmother and her mother (then a tyke of three or four) heard the Indians coming. They ran to hide in a nearby hollowed-out log. The Grandmother then plied her mother with enough whiskey to put her to sleep and keep her quiet. It was well she did. After setting the house afire, the Indians sat on their log and talked. Had they been found, and killed, (perish the thought) I wouldn't be writing this!!!

Because of Grandma's limp, she "wore" a cane. With their curved handle, those canes made marvelous "horses" when fitted with a string or light piece of rope. They made a much more realistic horses head than the old straight lath. How many of her canes I broke, while riding them, I have no idea. Dad dutifully replaced them and admonished me to be more careful. I'm sure I was careful, but the next one broke just as easily as the one before.

One cane I didn't "ride" was straight, black, and had a golden head. Grandma only used it when special company was in the house. That special cane was handed down from Grandma Bauder to my mother and then to my sister Ethel. She gave it to her daughter, Jane. Jane gave it to me, and I still have it.

Grandma was no lightweight either, since her primary pastimes were sitting and eating. The big disadvantage came when she had to go to the bathroom. Often, it seemed, (too often for mother) her heavy clump across the floor came at a time when mother had a cake in the oven. If it was an Angel Food cake the result was complete disaster, because the cake would "fall" on one side, sometimes to within a half inch of the bottom of the pan. The saving grace was the fact dad had a healthy flock of chickens. There was always another dozen egg whites available. Besides, omelets were a welcome dish for breakfast.

Somewhere in this time frame, my buddy from next door and I got into an argument. He was three, and I was four. The short of it was that he threatened to run over my toes (it was summer, and we were barefoot) with his lawnmower. I told him to come right ahead if he was big enough to push the thing. He was, and he did. Just as he got close to my toes, I reached down and grabbed, with both hands, the crossarm that ran across the frame just above the mower reel. That stopped him from hitting my toes, but when I raised up, the tip of my middle finger on that hand was dangling by a thread of loose skin. I ran home bleeding and bawling. Soon Dad was carrying me to the doctor's office. Lacking modern-day know-how, the doctor was unable to make the finger whole.

Mother was very distraught, because she had visions of my being a piano player and she just knew I'd never be able to hit the keys with that shortened finger. As it turned out her fears were all in vain.

Another disaster of that time occurred when mother sent me on an urgent mission to buy a quart of milk. Milk always came in glass bottles, so I was outfitted with two heavy carry-all bags nested together. The handle made for easy carrying. I spent the dime for the milk alright, and dutifully put it in the double sack. Somewhere between the store and home, however, the sack got heavy. As I walked across the streets, the bottom of the sack apparently banged the curb. When I got home I had nothing more than a sack of liquid milk, mixed with a well shattered bottle.

During these formative years I had a habit of sometimes saying the wrong thing--especially when sitting at the table with all the boarders. Dad always sat next to me. When I had, or was about to, misbehave he would jab the thumb of his nearest hand up and under my short rib on whichever side he was sitting. Truly effective, believe me. Dad never spanked me, but he could straighten me out with words and that thumb-jab equally as well.

Mother was more strict. While she didn't spank me per se, many's the time she sent me out to cut a small willow switch, which she could wield with great efficiency.

While mother kept the roomers and boarders (and her family) happy dad was working on a "truck farm" outside of town and near the river. The vegetables they grew were exceptional--and would meet modern day standards as organically grown. About twice a week, dad would load up a buggy, hitch up the horse and make "his rounds" over the town.

Occasionally I got to go with him. I well remember one such trip when for some childish reason, I reached down and grabbed the rim of the turning wheel. Quick as a whistle, I was picking myself up off the ground, while dad reined the horse in to a stop. Because "someone" was looking out for me, I ended up bruised, but no broken bones. Dad, of course, explained that that was not the way to dismount from the buggy.

There also was the "big flood" while dad worked on the truck farm. The Yellowstone River was prone to flooding when the ice broke up in the spring. This particular year it caught dad out at the farm. Completely surrounded by water, the hands were stranded on a small hillock. The water wasn't more than three or four feet deep, but it was well over half a mile to the nearest high ground--the railroad track.

Somehow word got back to Glendive that workers were stranded by the flood. A rowboat was loaded on a railroad flat car and hooked to a switch engine (commonly called a goat). The engine moved slowly out of town, (because water flowed on both sides of the track) with a

brakeman standing where he could visually see that the track was not washed out. When the engine and flat car reached a point where the stranded farm hands could be seen, the boat was unloaded and a two-man crew started rowing toward the ridge where the men were marooned. The boat crew had one problem--they were rowing against the river's current. As the boat neared its target, it was making little or no headway, so dad jumped into the water and half swam and half splashed his way to the boat. With his feet in the mud he helped move the boat over to the ridge so everyone could be picked up.

Soon after that, dad had a couple of job changes. From the truck farm he went to the local flour mill. He was there only a couple of months when he learned of an opening as Storekeeper at the Northern Pacific Railroad. It would only be a temporary job, he was told--maybe 30 days--but the pay was better. Twenty years later, Dad retired from the railroad.

Starting school at the age of six was, I'm sure, a big event for my mother. My first grade teacher was named Miss Littlesand. I enjoyed first grade, I guess, but the teacher cramped my play style. How well I remember playing while she was talking, with my favorite oversized marble. It was a beautiful sphere of mottled blue and white. I would toss it up into the air--just a little way--and it would fall right back into my hand. However, Miss Littlesand didn't like such goings on when she was teaching. She marched back to my desk and demanded immediate possession. What could a six-year old do under such an assault? I never saw that beautiful marble again. Later on I lost a jack knife under similar circumstances. Lucky for me, these events were never reported to my mother.

As the year progressed, however, I learned that mothers were informed on some matters of great importance--like drinking coffee. For breakfast, it was normal for me to have a glass of milk. With a little finesse I could usually con an adjoining boarder into dropping a spoonful or two of coffee into my glass of milk. Properly stirred, I had my "coffee". Mother was aware of this, but let it go, until one day she received a note from Miss Littlesand. "I find that drinking coffee is very harmful to the health of young children", the note said. "I suggest that Justin no longer be given coffee at breakfast."

A week earlier, Miss Littlesand had asked our class, "Do any of you drink coffee at home?" Dutifully, I held up my hand. Whether anyone else held up a hand, I don't remember--but from then on no one within the confines of our home put a drop of coffee in my glass of milk.

About this time, on a late Winter evening, the old, frame railroad depot caught fire. Within a short time our entire house was evacuated except for Louise and me. We both had the mumps. Everyone else walked the two blocks to where they could see the Firemen work on the burning building. Louise and I went up to the big bedroom, at the southwest corner of the house, and stood on the bed. Large sparks of fire were blowing straight for our house. The spectacle of seeing the flames shoot sky high was thrilling. But the concern that our house would catch fire,

too, was very scary. Before too long, however, mother returned home, and watched the final demise of the structure with us.

I was never a great student in grade school--unlike my sister. I was fair to good, but that's all. I liked music and we received a good foundation in Music Appreciation--mostly operas and other high brow classical stuff. To further such progress, mother started my piano lessons. The piano teacher, Mrs. Farnum, lived only two blocks away, and I took a lesson once every week. The cost was fifty cents for each one hour lesson. I have often wondered if the roomers didn't rue that day.

Every morning at 6:00 o'clock I was routed out of bed, directed to get dressed, and pointed toward the piano. The room was not sound proofed, so I'm sure the continuously, repetitive sound of scales was an affront to all other ears throughout the house. To my knowledge, however, none of the roomers left because of it. (Maybe because I spent all the time I could get away with, in the bathroom.)

Somewhere around the third or fourth grade, I was started on the clarinet. Those early squeak-squawk sounds must have been just as ear shattering. But I didn't start that at 6:00 o'clock in the morning, and I did a lot of practicing down in the basement. These lessons cost nothing as they were part of the public school program.

As for other studies, my penmanship was horrible, English, history and spelling not much better. I liked football, although our gravelly, behind the school, play field was hard on pants, shirts and sometimes skin. Then one recess, with the football tucked under my arm, I was tackled. In falling, I hit my head on the heel of a kid running in front of me. That knocked me unconscious. It also ended my football career. Mother was sure my hands would get mangled, if my brain didn't, then my music playing days would definitely be over.

Our grade school Principal was an older lady, (probably about 50) of German descent, whose name was Miss Buzzness. We all called her "Buzzy". But if she heard you, she would grab you firmly by the chin with the thumb and middle finger of her left hand, shake the bejabbers out of your head, while at the same time shaking the forefinger of her right hand menacingly in front of your eyes. She would then proclaim very loudly, and in a measured, staccoto voice "My-name-iss-Miss-Buss-ness-unt-I-mean biss-ness." After one such encounter, she never heard you call her "Buzzy" again.

Our Physical Ed. coach also taught wood working classes. I did pretty well in drawing detailed plans, but transforming them into the real stuff was not too good. I well recall one day when Coach was explaining a complicated drawing, using a blackboard. I was busy whispering to the kid next to me. Suddenly my conversation was interrupted by a stinging "shot" to my cheek. Coach had accurately thrown the chalk in his hand. That was followed by the immediate explosion of my last name and his admonition to pay attention when he was talking.

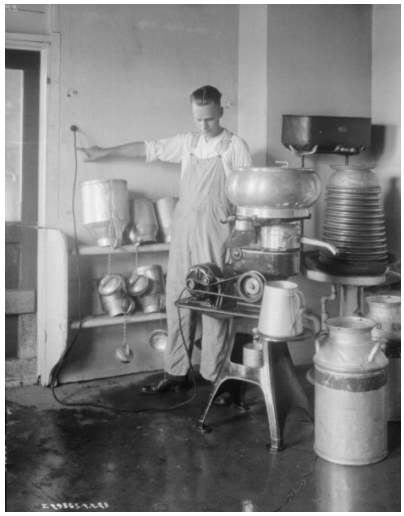
History was interesting, primarily because we got away with more horseplay and less studying. Unfortunately I don't remember the teacher's name. I do recall that she was tall and "well built". Not fat--just large proportioned. There were five of us boys who managed to be the thorn in her side. Often, it seemed, she was late getting to class. This gave us the opportunity to make and sail paper airplanes, throw spitballs, and act out "being teacher". I only recall two occasions when any of us got caught. Once my friend, Jim, threw a spitball just as the teacher entered the room. His punishment was to stand in front of the class, with his right hand extended while she held his wrist and slapped her flat ruler down on the palm. I know it hurt, but he was too old to cry. Another time, a second friend was caught sailing an airplane. When the teacher started to bring the ruler down, he jerked his hand free and hit her. He was immediately grabbed by the collar and marched to Miss Buzzness's office.

Those grade school years were also fun in the winter. Between lunch and the various recess periods we often built snow forts and had our snowball battles. I remember one particular battle, when my buddy Hal (he's the one who used the lawnmower on me) and I got into a real heated fight. I had a little stockpile of very hard snowballs, and fired one at him with all the force I could muster. Just as the missile arrived at his fort, he stuck his head up. The snowball hit him square in the mouth and broke a tooth. I suppose I received a reprimand for being so accurate with my throwing--but nothing else happened. I guess a broken tooth is as hard to replace as a chopped-off finger.

As I remember my years of ages eight through ten, the economy of our region wasn't all that bad. News then--like now--related to problems of feeding the poor and the hungry, both abroad and at home. European countries were having problems recovering from the effects of World War I. Many American farmers were in financial difficulty. They wanted, but could not get, relief from the Federal Government. In addition, Industrial America seemed to be going no where in particular. So, considering that I am writing this in 1992--what else is new.

Be that as it may, at our home in 1925 (when I was 10), mother's boarding house was doing fine. As I recall mother charged $30. per month for room and board, while boarders only paid $20. per month. The high school kids worked for their board and room. On any number of occasions their parents would bring mother either a ham, a 5-pound crock of butter, a hind quarter of beef and/or assorted vegetables, fresh or canned depending on the season.

Butter was churned from fresh, sweet cream after the whole milk had been "run through" the farmer's separator. The resultant butter milk was then poured off and the butter pressed into stone crocks of two or five pound capacity. These were often sold to the grocery stores. Sometimes, when purchased from the grocery, the butter had turned rancid and had to be thrown away. As for the beef, dad was good with a butcher's saw and knives. He could cut the hind-quarter up for easy storage in our ice box.


Milk Separator

In the winter, on more than one occasion, parents of the kids living with us were stuck in town because of blizzard conditions. By this time, most of them enjoyed the luxury of owning at least a Model T Ford. The radiator of the car would be drained, (Anti-freeze had not been invented yet) and blankets anchored over the hood. Under such conditions the car might sit in front of our house for several days. This was when the "spare" bedroom in the basement came into good use.

Such blizzard conditions, did not prevent us from going to school. Whether it was twenty degrees below zero or thirty, we were bundled in heavy socks, boots, sweaters and jackets, along with stocking caps and mittens. We always seemed to make it.

I particularly remember the winter of my 10th year because for some reason, that now escapes me, our 5th grade class had to go over to the south side to Lincoln school. That meant a walk of maybe two miles and going across a very large section of railroad tracks. Usually we had no problems, but every once in a while, a freight train blocked the crossing. Looking both ways I would check to see if there was any visible movement by the train's conductor or brakeman. If there was no apparent action, I would make a fast scramble under the coupling to get to the other side. Believe me, neither my mother nor my dad ever learned of that.

One advantage in going to school on the south side, my clarinet teacher (and band teacher) taught there. That meant I didn't have to make the usual extra trip to Lincoln school for my clarinet lesson, which always preceded band practice. Going home after band practice I almost always stopped at the Storeroom to visit my dad.

A railroad Division Point, in the days of the steam engine, was the location for all major repair work to rolling stock, as well as a point where trains could be made up by shifting cars from one track to another. In addition to the Storeroom, there was a Round House, huge coal

storage facilities, an ice storage house, large water tanks, a multitude of tracks, a passenger depot that housed both offices and baggage facilities, and a separate freight depot.

A railroad storeroom is similar to a very modern hardware store that also sells auto parts. "Dad's" storeroom was a large, three-story brick warehouse-type building with a full basement. Outside was an extensive storage area where big, bulky items, like wheels and tires for the engines, were kept. When dad received a requisition for grease, oil, or some replacement part--be it nuts and bolts or a big steel tire, I would tag along to watch him put the order together.

I was very intrigued when he had to go to the dynamite vault. All supplies of that nature were kept in a heavily insulated and fireproofed room, locked for maximum security. I imagined we were "breaking into Fort Knox" whenever I was lucky enough to be there.

I guess the "Torpedoes" caught my attention the most. Unlike Naval torpedoes, these were small caps, filled with blasting powder, and attached to a strap made of lead. They were carried by the train crews and would be attached to the rail according to a numbered-code signal.

"Torpedoes" with Lead Strap

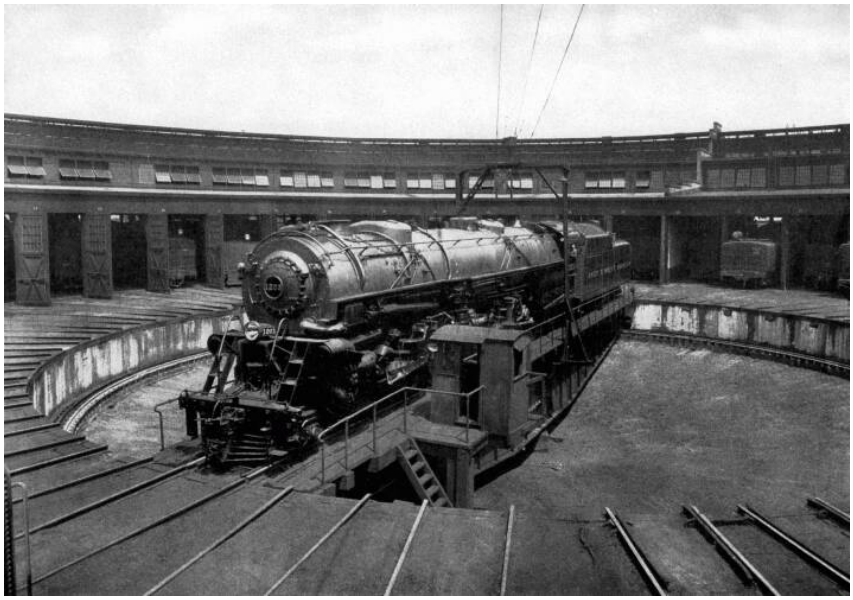
When a following train ran over them, the explosion was loud enough for the Engineer to hear. The number of explosions told him a train was ahead and to be alert for a specific emergency condition or problem. This whole experience of learning something about railroading" was a highlight to the weekly school event.

Water supply tanks were located at both the east and west ends of the main line tracks. They were supplied from the city's source. Near the bottom of the tank, was a hinged, hollow arm about 10 inches in diameter and approximately 12 feet long. It was spring loaded, and remained in a nearly upright position when not in use. A rope hung from the spout end. After the engine was in position, the Fireman pulled the spout down, and filled the engine's water storage tank.


Water Supply Tank

The engine's coal car was filled at the yard by conveyor. I have no idea how much coal it held. However, comparing it to the size of the coal bin at our house, I would guess it carried at around five tons. The coal was fed into the engine's fire box by some conveyor arrangement. (In the early 1900s the Fireman shoveled it by hand into the fire box. The first steam engines were fired by wood.) These fire boxes heated water transferred from the storage tank to the boilers, which, in turn, made the steam that powered the engines.

The "Round House" was so called because it was built in a half-circle with a turn-table on the open side. Engines, in need of repair, would mount the turn-table from whatever track they were on. The turn-table, which could rotate 360 degrees, was turned and locked to the track leading to the stall open to receive the engine. Once repaired, the engine backed on to the turn-table. It was then completely turned around so it could be moved off, head first, and on to any desired track.


Round House

Refrigeration, as we know it today, was unknown then. Railroad cars, designated to carry fresh fruit and vegetables from the West Coast to the mid-west and eastern markets, were called "Refrigerator cars", or "Reefers" for short. These cars were especially insulated and on top, at one end of the car, was a large "hatch" opening into which blocks of ice could be dropped. This kept the cargo, of fresh-picked berries, fruit and vegetables, from spoiling on the three- or four-day run to market destinations. A refrigerator train, made up of perhaps ten to fifteen cars, was given special right-of-way clearance. They had priority over every other train running, including passenger trains. At Division Point" stops, like Glendive, special crews were assigned to handle their servicing.

On occasion, in the summer, a refrigerator car "hatch" became a death trap. Transients, "bumming" a free ride, sometimes crawled into the freezer space to keep cool. If the hatch cover was not blocked open, it could lock shut and the transient would freeze to death before getting to the next stop. The cars were re-iced at every Division Point, each located about 250 miles apart. There the ice crew would discover the tragedy.

During the next two or three years (up through 7th grade) band, orchestra and school in general seemed to get better. My regular grades were still nothing to write home about, but music was always good for As. Of course weekends and vacations were the best, no matter what the season.

I recall one particular Saturday that started out a bit slow. I had nothing special going, so I took the opportunity to enjoy the swing on our front porch. I had "pumped" up to where the tips of my tennis shoes just touched the ceiling. During one such move, my buddy, Donald Larimar came along the sidewalk on his bicycle. He was carrying a "rubber band" rifle. (These were

common toys that we made ourselves. The rifle was fashioned out of a piece of 1" by 4" wood. The "bullet" was a piece of rubber, cut from an old inner tube. By stretching the rubber from the tip back to a point where the bolt would be on a normal rifle, the "marksman" could get pretty good distance. Accuracy was strictly a matter of luck). Just as I reached the apex of my ride on the swing, Donald lifted his "rifle" and "fired". Luck was with Donald that day. That piece of rubber flew some 25 feet and caught me, on the down swing, square between the eyes. I didn't fall out of the swing, but that "shot" sure stopped me.

Somewhere around Thanksgiving, every year, a vacant lot--maybe two blocks from our house--was banked around the perimeter with about three feet of dirt. Then the fire department would flood the area with five or six inches of water. Presto--within the next 24 hours of below freezing weather--we had a community ice skating rink. The rink was about 150 feet square and remained frozen all winter. There was space at one corner where we built a camp fire for warming purposes when the temperature dipped down to 10 or 20 degrees or below. If the rink was covered with snow, we brought shovels from home and cleaned it off.

All of the kids had ice skates that clamped on to their boots. Shoe skates were mostly found in metropolitan cities. Besides we'd outgrow shoes every year and that was an expense our parents didn't need. If there was no band practice, we'd hit the ice by five o'clock and skate until time to go home for dinner. After dinner, was study time. But on weekends we'd skate any and all hours by daylight--and in the evening by firelight--until we were too tired to go any longer.

Skating by the light of a full moon, on a clear, cold night was especially enjoyable. We liked to skate in pairs, holding hands with either special or an available girl friend; we formed what now would be called a "congo line"; and we played "snap the whip". That game had it's danger zone in that when the end skater was "snapped" off the line, he/she sometimes lost balance and crashed on the hard ice. Or the skater could be propelled hard into the snow-covered, and frozen, dirt bank that bordered the rink. A broken arm and a "cracked" head (concussion) were two incidents that I recall.

We also played ice hockey, using an empty tin can as a puck. The only damage from this game was a black and blue shin or two.

That winter someone in our school got the German Measles. Between the roomers and school kids, there were at least ten of us that had to be vaccinated. The vaccinations were all "scratched" on the arm, just below the shoulder, by our local doctor during one evening. Every week, for several weeks thereafter, we lined up around the dining room table where mother had an "assembly line" procedure for changing the dressing.

First the old bandage was removed; the arm was then checked to make sure the "wound" was healing properly; next came the "cleansing" and addition of new medication; finally a new

bandage was secured in place. It must have worked, because none of us caught the measles, and there were no ill effects.

In the dead of winter it was fun going out on the river to watch the Ice Company employees cut the big rectangular blocks of ice. The river would be frozen to a depth of at least two feet, and the blocks were then cut two feet wide and about four feet long. These were loaded on to horse drawn wagons that carted them off to the ice house, located one block north of our house.

Ice Sawing and Block of Ice

There the ice was laid down with sawdust between each block, then each layer again covered with sawdust. In the winter the sawdust was piled behind the icehouse where it could be mechanically scooped up as needed. From our big front window we could watch that part of the operation as it proceeded. When the sawdust was all gone, we knew the icehouse was full and ready for the summer season.

One thing always puzzled me. The Yellowstone River acquired its name because it was always a muddy yellow color. My question--how did this dirty river water become so extraordinarily clear and pure in the winter that, when frozen, the ice could be harvested for public usage?

In the summer, as the ice was used, the sawdust pile "grew" back. It then became one more play area for the neighborhood kids. The contents of the ice house were also of vital interest to kids and adults all over town. Twice each week the ice wagon made its rounds. Our icebox sat just outside our kitchen. Mother put a sign in the front window indicating whether she wanted a 25- or 50-pound block. The iceman, outfitted with a leather, open sided "poncho"-type apron, chopped out the desired piece with his ice pick, grabbed it with tongs, threw it over his shoulder, and brought it around to our back door. Here he would usually lift the ice off his shoulder, and climb the set of five stairs to where our icebox stood.

When mother planned to make ice cream, she would order an extra 25-pound block. This I wrapped in burlap "gunny sacks" and stored in the coolest portion of the basement until the week-end. A highlight of the ice man's appearance was the fact that while he was making his delivery in the house, the kids could grab any loose chunks of ice. These we sucked on for its cooling effect.

One of my chores was the daily emptying of the water pan beneath the ice box. The ice went in the top "hatch". Below that were two or three shelves protected by insulated doors that latched shut very tightly. The food that required refrigeration went on these shelves. Just above the floor was a hinged door, the full width of the refrigerator and about four inches high. Behind that door the water pan slid, via a grooved slot, into position to catch all water that drained from the melting ice. If I missed a day emptying out the water, the pan overflowed down the stairs and into the basement. It was a mess to clean up.

Using up that extra block of ice was a job, too. But the resultant gallon of ice cream or parfait was well worth it. I would take the sack of ice outside and on to a hard surface. There, I would beat the sack, with the blunt side of my hatchet, until the ice was thoroughly crushed. In the meantime, mother made up the ice cream custard and put it in the ice cream maker's container. When the ice was crushed, I got out the rock Salt. Mother would bring the filled container, and I would insert the "paddle", fasten it to the "turning-handle gear-box" and start the grinding procedure.


Ice Cream Maker

Simultaneously, I would alternate adding first the ice, then rock salt until the custard container was completely surrounded by the mix. After about forty-five minutes, the cylinder of ice cream would become too hard to turn. Now we were in business. Mother's home-made ice cream and parfaits were hard to beat because they were made with pure cream.

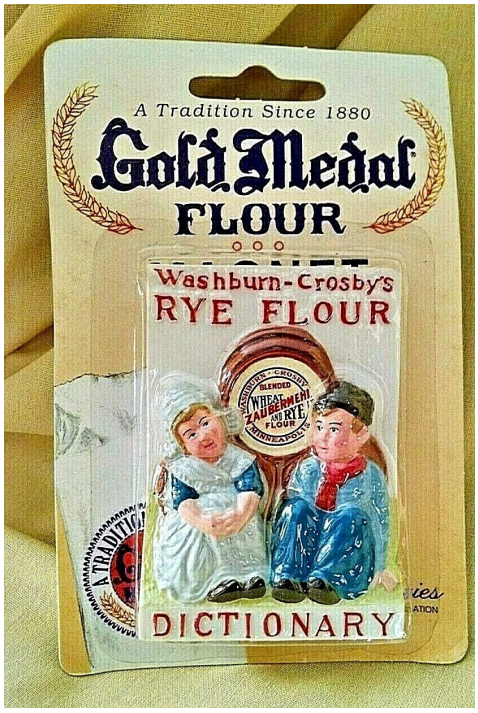
During this serious period of growth in my life, change was a constant factor. The Worthingtons retired and moved on; Mr. Thomas Lee moved in; and other boarders and roomers changed, thereby causing a continuing series of personality changes throughout the house. I suppose this also reflected, to some degree, the changing mood of the whole country. From 1925 (when I was 10) through 1928 (I was 13) the national economy was even more into the doldrums. Although there seemed to be little or no unemployment in our town, we were getting more transients coming to the door looking for "a handout" of food.

Yes, we considered them to be "bums" because their only mode of transportation was "riding the rods". This phrase came about because under each railroad car was a "bed"--so to speak--of rods, anchored in a fashion to keep the car braced. One or two transients could lay on this bed and get a free ride from one railhead to another.

There were, of course, other transients who rode inside empty box cars, on flat cars and aboard coal cars. Some, in real desperation, would jump onto the brakeman's platform of a passenger, or refrigerator train, engine, just as it was pulling away from the station. Such a spot, located at the end of the coal car behind the engine, was no more than 12 inches wide. Once on the platform the "bum" had to hang on to the hand railing, until the train stopped at the next station. If that stop was the Division Point, it was a long, tedious and especially dangerous ride, with no opportunity to relax. The primary reason for traveling in this dangerous manner was to get where they wanted to go, as soon as possible. People using this method were much more susceptible to being caught by the railroad "bulls" (police) and being hauled off to jail. Some couldn't hang on and ended up in a passing town's morgue.

Most transients, coming to our house, asked to do some work. Mother usually had them do odd jobs, like weeding or cultivating, in our garden, while she fixed a couple of sandwiches. Although there were no visible marks on our sidewalk, we always figured they had some sort of communication network that designated our house as a sure bet to get free meals. I know of no instance when mother turned a man down--especially when he offered to work. And he always received a cup of coffee to go with the sandwich.

I remember only one other incident demonstrative of the serious times we were then in. Neighbors, being good neighbors, never hesitated to ask another neighbor to borrow milk, eggs, flour, bread, or any other kitchen commodity of immediate need. On one particular day, a neighbor called (Mother was one of a small group in town who had a telephone--our number was 340W) to borrow a couple of eggs. When she came to the front door, I was delegated to open it. She was wearing a somewhat sheer dress, but her slip had been made from a couple of 100-pound flour sacks. Square over her stomach, in bold letters, was the word "CLIMAX", the trademark of a well known Flour Company. As I followed her into the kitchen, her back displayed another one--this time the distinctive trademark of the Gold Medal Flour Co., With its slogan "A Tradition Since 1880".



On the "up" side of economic trends, the airplane was becoming more prominent. Names like Charles Lindberg and Amelia Earhart and Richard E. Byrd were making news. The Graf Zeppelin was making regular flights from Germany to Lakehurst, New Jersey, and Congress passed the Air Commerce Act to provide funding for Airports and the fledgling Airlines. Glendive didn't, yet, have an airfield, but the Electric Power House did install a powerful, rotating "search light".

Graf Zeppelin

Since dad worked for the railroad, this was my primary method of transportation for getting beyond the confines of Dawson County. Mother and I (using the pass, granted to all railroad employees and their families) made special trips at Christmas vacation time to visit my sister. Her husband, Claire wilder, was a printer. I recall going to Billings, (a large Montana city about 250 miles west of Glendive) for one Christmas. We also went to Walla Walla, Wash. and several times to Seattle.

When in Seattle, Woodland Park and its Zoo were favorite haunts. I loved to ride the elephant there, and suffered a great loss when someone offered "my elephant" an umbrella. The animal tried to eat it and consequently died.

Another favorite haunt in Seattle, was the Fauntleroy Park area. The trolley cars ran there, and we usually went during the day for picnics, or to play on the beach. It was exciting to see the Ferry boats that crossed Puget Sound, as well as the huge Ocean-going freighters that traveled between Seattle and Tacoma.

On several occasions we went, late in the evening, to visit my sister's friend Gertrude Sullivan and her family, have dinner and visit a while. The Sullivans had a big two-story home with a large rock fireplace. At that time, the area was not heavily built up. It was a walk of several blocks from the trolley waiting stand, along a heavily tree- and brush-lined path, to their house. It was spooky too, because we had to skirt part of the forested Fauntleroy Park.

Although I have no recollection of where in West Seattle my Sister lived, it was always an enjoyable ride.

One Fourth of July vacation period, mother and I were in Seattle when "the fleet was in". Seattle, being a major port city, was visited this 4th by a Navy Battleship, a cruiser, and two destroyers.

Arrangements were made on these holidays for the Navy to permit visitors to board the ships in port. After waiting in line (longer than those at Disneyland) we lucked out and got to visit the Battleship. We rode out to the ship in a large power boat, and climbed the long stairway (they called it a "ladder", if I remember right) up and on to the deck. We roamed all over that ship for a couple of hours. Then we got in line again to climb down the ladder and board another power boat back to the Seattle dock. I knew right then and there I wanted to be in the Navy when I was old enough.

The train trips--especially the two night and one day trips to Seattle--were always special. Mother and I rode in the coach section, upon leaving Glendive. Then at night--for $5.00--we moved into the sleeper section. Meals, in the dining car, were great and I made a lot of friends among the Porters. When we went to bed at night (for some reason, I always got the upper bunk)

I would put my shoes under the heavy curtain and in the morning they were fully shined. I remember eating in the big, ornate, dining room at Seattle's King Street Railroad Station.

Seattle's King Street Railroad Station

The dining room had several Canary cages spread around the edge of the room. On one occasion we were served with finger bowls at the end of the meal. I was so pleased, because "now we get to water the Canaries". On another trip, in the same dining room I witnessed my first grandmother-type smoking cigarettes. It was a shock to see these two "old ladies" puffing away on their smokes.

Somewhere in this time frame, Claire and Ethel moved to Vashon Island to work for Peter Monroe and Agnes Smock at the Vashon News Record. Vashon is the primary town on Vashon Island, a seven mile wide by fourteen mile long piece of real estate located in Puget Sound half-way between Seattle and Tacoma. At this time, the Wilder clan, which included daughter, Betty Mae, and son, William (Bill) W., lives in a large, yellow, two-story house. From the front porch there was a commanding view of the Sound, where the ocean-going freighters, sailing to the Port of Tacoma, could be seen. It was a short walk down to the beach. There I would dig clams by the bucket full, and pick my fill of wild blackberries. I also enjoyed picnics on the beach, near the old Vashon dock, with the family. I recall one picnic when I found a watermelon in the nearby

creek. I was sure it had been lost and was now ours for the picking. I also garnered my share of nettles--a weed that causes a severe, itching rash.

On one two-night and one day trip--from Seattle to home--I went to the wash room soon after leaving Seattle. Three Negro porters were there (two from different cars). While I was washing up, one of the porters started to sing. I knew the song and began harmonizing with him. Immediately, the other two porters added their baritone and bass voices and we had a "going" quartet. I know I spent a good hour in that restroom, and we covered a lot of songs. It was a real highlight, because these three men had included me and made me their "top tenor" in that song fest. We continued the singing after dinner the next night, and attracted a small audience. My problem was that I had to leave the train--I was home.

During the Christmas vacation, when mother and I didn't go to see Ethel and her family, it was an equally festive occasion. We always had a nice Christmas tree, and Agnes Nylen, one of our roomers, played the piano and led us in the evening ritual of singing Christmas carols. On Christmas eve we opened our presents, and I received my fair share of toys and books.

Christmas day was the holiday. All the roomers were there as well as any boarders who could not travel to where their families lived. Early in the morning Mother and anyone else who wished to join in, started cooking and baking. We always had the biggest turkeys I've ever seen (usually a gift from one of the farm friends). Along with the bird, went all the trimmings plus home made bread and the pumpkin and mincemeat pies. One of the presents, discovered the night before, was a five-pound fruit cake--well marinated in brandy--a gift from one of the roomers.

After such a sumptuous meal, some of the roomers drifted off to enjoy a nap. Others, and any boarders left over, adjourned to the living room to play with my new electric train, and any other new toys. The family, and any one else so inclined, cleared away dirty dishes and pitched in to wash and dry them. That done, the living room soon became alive once more. If it was a sunny day--even at 20 degrees below zero--we could go over to the rink and skate, or just go for a walk. The evening meal was one of leftovers for all who came around. Then there were more games and more songs.

The vacation days were often filled with early morning jobs of clearing snow from our sidewalk as well as from those of the neighbors. From neighbors I received thirty-five cents an hour for the job. There were no dull afternoons either. Ice skating was always available; Church parties and other organized events were frequent; and other home parties were scheduled.

One memorable church event (we belonged to the Congregational Church) involved four toboggans "hitched", via four lariats behind a horse and buggy. It was a Sunday outing and each toboggan held three or four kids. Our teacher drove the horse and rode in the buggy. We travelled over several country roads and across open fields in this manner until it was time to return to the

church. There we had our sandwiches, after which we settled down to an hour of Christian Endeavor service. By the time I got home I was hungry again. With no effort, I could find others who were as hungry as I and we would proceed to fashion, and devour, a pile of onion sandwiches. They went down easily under several glasses of milk.

The rest of the winter was much the same. Except for the one year, previously mentioned, I went to the Washington school, only two blocks from home. Saturdays were special days, especially in the winter. The theatre was only four blocks from home and the Saturday afternoon movies were geared to kids. There were cartoons and usually a short serial. These were the "thriller" type where the villain tied the heroin to the railroad track, or to a bench where a buzz saw was about to cut her in half lengthwise.

The movies, themselves, were usually Westerns (Tom Mix and William S. Hart were my cowboy heroes). They were my particular favorites because they embodied a lot of fast horseback riding, fights and shootouts. Of course in that era, movie fights never left anyone bloody or grossly beaten. When the "bad guy" was shot, we all cheered. Any scars he may have suffered did not appear as wounds of great visibility.


Tom Mix


William S. Hart

In the silent movie period, I always sat in the front row with several friends and right behind the female piano player. She provided the background music for each picture. I liked the "love scenes", because she played songs I knew. I would sing along with her, but that wasn't to her liking. She would tell me to stop, in no uncertain terms, but she never had me thrown out.

I, and two friends, did get thrown out on one occasion, however. Sitting in our usual front row seat, we started blowing dried peas, through our "pea shooters", at the big white screen. Fortunately we didn't puncture the screen, but it did imprint a couple of marks. This happened before the show got started, so that was one show I missed. I didn't get my money back either.

Somewhere around the 7th and 8th grades, the Saturday afternoon movies took on new meaning. Several of us had "girl friends" and sought them out to sit with during our movie

matinee time. Naturally we always sat in the very back row. On several occasions l wanted to impress "my" girl, by taking her to the show. The problem was that l didn't always have enough money. To solve this financial deficiency, I sometimes "borrowed" from mother's "petty cash". Mother often left small change on the window sill over the sink. When I needed an extra dime or two for such an important event, it was a relatively simple matter to reach up and get it. This didn't happen too often, and I never did get caught in the act.

Another event was enjoying "The Firestone Hour", a weekly radio show. Our roomer, Thomas Lee, had the only radio in the house. Dad had helped him install a "ball-type" antenna on the roof, and Mr. Lee invited us to his room to listen to that program. Lee was one of the most meticulous persons I have ever known. You could "set your watch" to his every move. Because of this, I knew when he would be out. When he was out, I would lay on his bed and listen to his radio.

Glendive, being on the main line of a then major cross country railroad, was always a stopping point for vaudeville troops, the circus and chautauqua groups. I never missed a vaudeville show and often have wondered how many of today's great movie stars, who were then in vaudeville, are ones I may have seen.

One performance I remember clearly, was the day John Phillip Sousa and his band came to town. The Sousa Band performed on our theatre stage. At the end of their show, Miss Henniger, our band instructor, was invited to lead them in one piece. Then our school band took the stage and Mr. Sousa led us in the piece, for which he is most famous, "The Stars and Stripes Forever March". It was a thrilling occasion, never to be forgotten.

John Philip Sousa Band

Spring seemed to bring the best out of everyone. A primary factor was the weather, which usually would warm up to where we could discard the heavy boots and jackets. Even if it stayed down around freezing, we didn't mind, because we could still get in some ice skating.

The one Spring, I particularly remember, was the year the river ice broke up and then jammed several miles downstream from Glendive. I am certain it was over a weekend because the noisy grunts and booms of breaking ice had been prevalent for a couple of days.

As everyone knows today, weather conditions vary in different areas over the course of a frozen river. Melting may take place in one area and not in another. This, apparently, is what happened then.

From the noise, the ice was obviously melting in and around Glendive. But we didn't know that north, toward Sydney (about 90 miles away) the river was still tightly frozen. In our area, what had been a solid bed of ice over the full width of the rivers--about one quarter of a mile--now showed large cracks. In some places big chunks--and I mean pieces 50 feet square--were pushed into upright positions of varying angles. The Yellowstone river was definitely on the move.

By Saturday morning the river was flooding. The lowlands, north of the river were covered with three and four feet of water and ice chunks of varying sizes were scattered around the landscape.

Coming home from church Sunday morning, we heard stories of small sheds and even some farm animals being swept along by the flooding river. After lunch, everyone in the house migrated to the steel bridge about eight blocks away. The bridge spanned the river and we could watch the ice churning and grinding as it slowly flowed downstream with the river currents.

Yellowstone River Bridge, Glendive Montana

At the time of our arrival, there were no sheds, or farm animals, in sight. But seeing those big, big pieces of ice crashing into the bridge pier and breaking up into crushed ice, was awesome. Suddenly a yell--or maybe it was a scream--was heard.

Looking around, every visible hand was pointed up river. And there, coming straight for the bridge pier we were standing over, was a chunk of ice at least 50 feet wide and about 75 feet long. Why the screaming? Standing half way back from the center line of that 75-foot long hunk of ice was a horse. And there was not a single thing anyone could do to help that animal.

The horse seemingly had no fear, not even concern. But every person on that bridge was praying for a miracle. Then, without our knowing it, the miracle began to take place. Slowly that huge piece of ice began to turn. It kept turning until it was absolutely broadside to the pier. There it stopped turning. The horse, instead of looking at us, now stood looking across the river toward the north.

With that special ice platform still 300 feet from destruction, and slowly, but steadily, moving downstream toward the knife-edge of our pier, it looked as though the horse was doomed to be thrown into the water. All eyes were on that piece of ice and its cargo of living horse flesh. The deafening stillness of over a hundred silent prayers was broken only by the grinding crash of other big pieces of ice, as they broke against the bridge pier.

Suddenly it was over. There was no room left. With one sharp crack, that glistening piece of ice hit the pier--almost, if not, dead center. And the miracle came to fruition. The north-pointing half of his ice block broke up into a thousand pieces. The other half, with the horse, wobbled slightly and slid slowly around the pier to continue, unbroken, as it journeyed downstream. In one mass move, the crowd turned and rushed across the bridge. There we watched, unbelieving, as that remaining, horse-carrying chunk of ice, resumed its slow revolution until the horse stood facing us. The spontaneous cheer of thanksgiving, I'm sure, must have been heard all over town.

While we were in the midst of this heart-stopping event and, unbeknown to most people, about five miles downstream from the bridge, an ice jam had formed. Knowing the jam would cause greater damage from flooding, a group of miners worked to blow it apart with dynamite.

Meanwhile another group of men was following the horse to see if something could be done to rescue him (we knew he was a gelding). The second group arrived at the jam in time to halt any dynamiting, and everyone prepared for the rescue attempt.

When the horse, and his chunk of ice, slowed its downstream journey, two of the men scrambled over the jam. With lariats in hand, they waited. Finally that special chunk of ice stopped moving, because it was hard up against the frozen ice jam. Slowly the men with ropes, moved closer, until they could drop a noose over the horse's head. Obviously used to a rope, he made no attempt to move. The men were then able to get out on his chunk of ice, pat his neck, rub his nose, and verbally assure him that his safety was at hand. Carefully, they fashioned a hackimore (a loop of rope that was slipped through the neck rope and over his nose). With that, the men were able to lead the horse over the ice, and away from danger.

Hackimore

Later in the day, the jam was blown apart, and the Yellowstone River with all its floating ice, moved on north.

My 12th birthday was another memorable event of this period. I had been reading a lot of "Tarzan" books and prevailed upon dad to let me have a "Tarzan" birthday. Some 15 boy friends gathered at our house, on that special Saturday afternoon. After cake, milk and home made root beer had been devoured, dad herded all of us up the street and across the bridge to an area loaded with young Willow trees. We climbed and swung from one tree to the next until we were completely exhausted. To our credit there were no accidental falls, and we all went home satisfied with our "Tarzan" experience. Less than a month later, Charles A. Lindbergh made his historic flight across the Atlantic ocean to Paris.

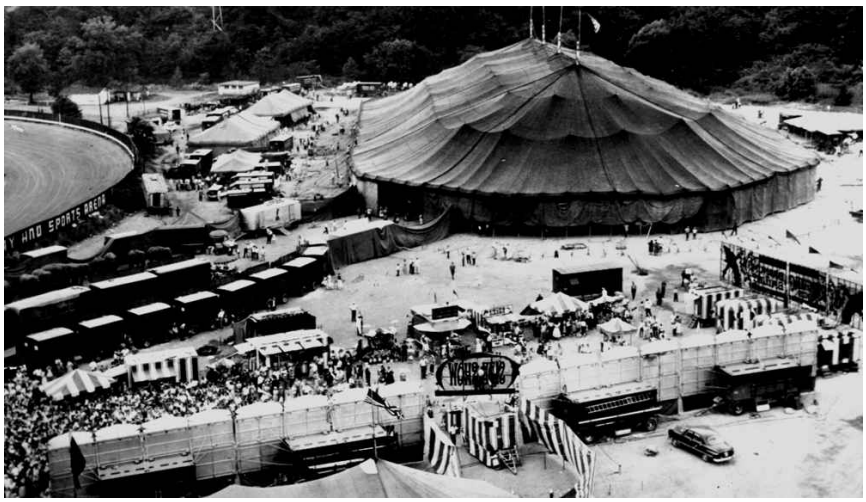
Roller skating was another activity that consumed hours of time during the Spring. The sidewalks were all made of concrete and we knew where all of the bumps and cracks were so spills were infrequent. The best skating was the big wide circle at the front of our Washington grade school. The surface was extremely smooth, permitting fancy turns, skating backwards and side-by-side skating with the girls.

Of course by this time I was getting more involved with bang and orchestra. Now being a regular member of the junior group we had to put in more practice time, as well as make a couple of appearances before school assemblies. For some reason, I never quite understood, every Spring seemed to bring on, what I called, "a mouthful of canker sores". These manifested themselves all along the inside of my lower lip. Consequently, blowing my clarinet was an episode of solid pain.

My only solution was to "fake it" by putting the mouthpiece in my mouth but not really blow. Whenever I did blow--and there were times when I really had to--the pain almost brought tears to my eyes. Anyway, I survived! Maybe it was the diet!

As the weather warmed up the trees and bushes began to put forth their new greenery and sweet-smelling flowers. Mother had a variety of flowers like Iris, Delphinium, and Holly Hock. Each took its own time to grow and burst into bloom. Throughout our area there was also a bumper crop of Dandelions every spring. While we were in no way dependent upon them, I had the job of regularly going out to dig them up before the flowers set. When I had a large sack full, I would go home, cut off the roots, thoroughly wash them and turn them over to mother. That evening we would have a grand meal of dandelion greens, along with a large, steaming bowl of navy bean soup, with bacon. Add plenty of home made bread and fresh churned butter--it was a meal thoroughly enjoyed by all.

As May turned into June, my thoughts primarily centered on those last days of school. Add to that the excitement of the initial newspaper ads for the Barnum and Bailey Circus and I knew that life was really worth while.


Barnum and Bailey Circus

When the Circus Train arrived, celebration time came right along with it. The initial unloading usually occurred during the early morning hours before any kids were up. East of town--near the Stock Yards--was a huge vacant lot where the circus set up. On the morning of its arrival, as soon as I had finished breakfast, I hopped my trusty bicycle and was off to get a job--any kind of a job--that would garner a free pass into the Big Top. Most of the time this meant carrying buckets full of water so the handlers could wash down the elephants. By ten o'clock in the morning the Big Top, and all of the Sideshow tents, were in place and it was "Let the Parade Begin" time.

Down Main Street they came in full regalia. Heading the parade were two pair of matched, white horses with a beautiful girl standing atop and between each pair. They were followed by another group of four horsemen carrying the American and State flags. Then came the Clowns who romped, turned cartwheels, and roamed the crowd passing out candy and balloons to all of the kids along the way. The Calliope played; lions and tigers paced pack and forth in their cages; the monkeys swung playfully around the inside of their cages, while the big baboon and orangutan sat stoically staring out at the crowd. The band marched and played from its position in the middle of the parade.

All cages and the calliope were drawn by beautiful teams of horses, interspersed by scantily gowned girls, posed atop their favorite horse or elephant. Then there were the "little people"; and some more clowns, as well as more elephants walking trunk to tail. Bringing up the rear was the ever needed set of clowns carrying scoop shovels and sacks to pick up the droppings from the horses and the elephants.

The 2:00 p.m. matinee was always crowded--and that was the hour that my free pass was valid. Usually I went alone, so I could sit way up on the top bench of the bleaches. For the evening show, I would go with the folks, or one or more of the roomers. They always bought seats in the Reserved Section. I liked the bleacher seat best because I had earned it myself. But never turned down the opportunity to see another show.

The Side Shows and associated Carnival events were especially exciting. For 10 cents an event, I got to see the "Tattooed Lady", the "two-headed calf", Sword swallowers, Fire eaters, and any other "freaks" or special events available. I also could ride the Ferris Wheel, Merry-Go-Round, throw baseballs at bottles, and toss rings to encircle knives for 10 cents each. If I was "lucky" on the latter two, I won a Cupey Doll. Whatever I did was fun, and it was usually around midnight before we all got home. The Circus performed for three days, usually. Then, like magic, they were all gone the next morning. How they managed to "set up" and "tear down" in such few, short hours, always mystified me.

Another tent oriented event that involved us, was the annual coming of the Chautauqua. This was more religiously oriented and to me the preaching events were terribly boring. Mother seemed to enjoy them, however, and I was usually stuck with going along. l did enjoy the special singing, dancing and comic routines that preceded and/or followed the religious speakers. Some of the latter were real "Hell-fire and Brimstone" talkers, while others were more Evangelistic that ended with the admonition for "All who now SEE the light, come forward. Your sins will be washed away and you can glory in the knowledge that you are now a child of God." I guess it was a powerful message because a lot of Glendive residents "were Saved". Since mother and I were already good Congregationalists, we stayed in our seats until after the last hymn and prayer.

The Chautauqua was a week-long event, but I never "burst my britches" getting there early on opening day. How long it took to button up and tear down the tent was of no concern to any of us kids either, or, I guess, to anyone else.

By the time these two events were over, it was well into time for getting the summer's fun activities underway. I had three particular farm friends of about my age. Bob Evens was the son of dad's partner in the Sheep Ranching. Dwight Atwood was the son of the rancher who delivered our milk. Harold Adkins was the brother of one of the high school girls who lived with us.

It was at these ranches where I learned to ride a horse and milk a cow. I do not recall spending more than a few days--maybe a week--on the ranch with Bob Evans. We went places with his parents, but that was by horse and wagon and then home the same day. I do remember trying to learn to shear a sheep. For me, and the sheep, it was a disaster. Normally the sheep is handled in a manner that has it laying quietly while the shearer clips away from head to foot. For me the sheep wouldn't stay still. Added to that was the fact that I never did master the art of holding sheep shears in my hand--let alone getting them started for that first cut.

Another event, solidly etched into my memory, was of one late summer's harvesting of the potato field. I know we were paid (by the sack) for our effort, but between filling the sacks, there was time for a game or two. There were at least five kids of Bob's and my age at this particular event. Potatoes are harvested by first having a plow run down each row, thereby turning the ground over and exposing the potatoes. Mr. Evans and his plow, having done their work, left the field. We kids were all dutifully engaged in our job too, the job of picking up the spuds and sacking them.

Suddenly someone dislodged a rattlesnake. The call went out and we all gathered in the snake's vicinity. We knew the danger involved, so our precautions were to arm ourselves with long sticks. When we corralled the snake, forcing it to coil into its striking stance. From then on it was a game of skill. With pocket knives at the ready, one kid would tease the snake into striking. With the snake stretched out, the rest of us then threw our knives at the snake's tall trying to pin it down. If no one succeeded the first time, the snake was teased into coiling and striking again, just so the pocket knives could be recovered. Eventually, Mr. snake was pinned down, killed, and its rattles removed. Of course its head was cut off first, and immediately buried, because its venom-filled fangs were equally dangerous whether the rattler was dead or alive.

On another potato picking day I dislodged a field mouse that had made its home under a potato plant. Frightened, the mouse made a bee-line for cover--which happened to be me. Over my shoe it scrambled and right up my pants leg. Believe me, I was jumping and dancing and so was the mouse. It crossed over my crotch and down the other pant leg, over the other shoe and away to a nearby hole. I made no effort to dig it out either.

I spent more vacation time at the Atwoods. There I first learned to saddle a horse. On one occasion I didn't get the cinch properly tightened.

Making believe we were chasing down cattle that had eluded our roundup, Dwight and I rode at full gallop in a wide circle around the house. On one such pass, my saddle turned. I tumbled headlong to the ground. Again, "Someone" was looking out for my interest, because, other than a few scratches, bruises and badly damaged ego, I was not injured.

However, it was a lesson every "Tenderfoot" has to learn. When tightening the cinch, in the course of saddling a horse, the horse has a natural tendency to push out (or bloat) its stomach. This makes the cinching more comfortable for the horse, but hazardous for the rider.

To eliminate the problem, the rider nudges a knee hard into the belly of the horse, while pulling up the cinch. The horse immediately relaxes its stomach and, simultaneously, the rider

gives a hard, final, pull on the cinch. The result is a tight saddle that will not turn, and is of no discomfort to the horse either.

The summer months of my 12th, 13th, and 14th years were combinations of traveling to Seattle, staying home, and spending two or three weeks on the Adkins ranch.

The Adkins were friends of our family of long standing. Their ranch was located about 50 miles north of Glendive, near a community called Bloomfield. I call it a community, rather than a town, because there was but one building which housed a small general store as well as the U.S. Post Office. All "residents" were ranchers who lived in the surrounding perimeter.

The Adkins family included two daughters--Vivian, who was married and lived in Richey, another town some 30 miles to the north of Bloomfield. The other daughter, Helen, came to live at our house when she entered high school in 1925. I was ten years old, and I guess she was then 14 or 15. We were friends at the beginning, and eventually Helen became more like a sister as the years passed. Because of Helen, her family became my "second" family, and I was as much at home there, as I was in my own home.

Mrs. Adkins' accent (I think it was Pennsylvania Dutch) got in the way when she pronounced a number of words. For example, she always pronounced my first name as "Jooston". Mr. Adkins lived by the Golden Rule. A wonderful gentleman, thoroughly intent on being a good family provider and a successful rancher. Their only son was Harold, one of my three farm pals, as previously mentioned.

Harold was a year older than I, and brothers could not have been any closer. The summers I spent on their ranch were filled with fun, laughter, and excitement as well as good, substantial "vittles". In fact there are so many memories of those various summers, that I'm just going to lump some of then together.

I seldom, if ever, spent less than two weeks on the Adkins ranch. Their home was a two-story, wood-frame structure, that stood on 6"x6"x12" wooden "stilts", set into blocks of concrete. The inside included a living room, two bedrooms and a large kitchen/eating area on the main floor. The upstairs room was one large loft, with a bed at either end and places to hang clothes. There was a window at each end of the loft too. Their hired hand, Mr. Palmer, (he earned $30.00 per month plus board and room, as I recall) slept in one bed, Harold and I in the other.

Mr. & Mrs. Adkins and Helen occupied the two bedrooms downstairs. The kitchen stove was a large, wood-burning affair, and a primary heat source for the house. A wood burning, pot-bellied stove was used to heat the "sitting" room in the winter.

Also in the winter, the entire outdoor perimeter of the house--from the ground to floor level--was dressed in heavy, black tarpaper on which was piled a substantial layer of dirt. This prevented cold air from circulating under the house, thereby helping to maintain warmth on the interior.

About 50 yards away was the "outhouse", and some 100 yards beyond that, a barn with a hay loft at one end and six stalls at the other. Off to the right of the barn was a corral and shelter where the cows were held for milking and where horses could be caught prior to moving them to the barn to be saddled or harnessed for the day's activities. To one side, and not far from the house, was a water well with a hand pump as well as a windmill. Attached to the windmill's water outlet was a large trough used to water the horses and cattle.

Close to the house, and to the left of the "outhouse" was a root-cellar. This was a shelter, dug into a small hill. It was large enough to permit five or six persons a place of refuge in the event of a serious tornado-like windstorm. It also was lined with wooden shelves for the storage of home-canned fruits and vegetables. Large, wood, double doors, sloped to match the shape of the hill, marked the entrance. Inside, on one of the support pillars, was a kerosene lantern, the only source of light. On a hot summer day, when there was nothing else to do--(on a working ranch?? ha, ha.) Harold and I would "hide out" there just to talk and keep cool.

We were all thankful for that root cellar one time that I know of. A summer storm, with black rain clouds and lots of heavy bolt lightening made its appearance. We watched it develop in the distance at first, then became more apprehensive as the winds picked up, the rain came down in sheets and lightening strikes were getting closer every few minutes. Just after dark, Mr. and Mrs. Adkins decided the winds were of such strength that it was more prudent to take cover than to take a chance. The six of us (their family, Palmer, and I) gathered up blankets, and drinking water, then carefully made our way to the cellar. Bill and the hired man, (we always called him plain old "Palmer") opened the doors and in we went. The kerosene lamp was lit, doors closed tightly, and there we sat out the storm.

It was very exciting to be that close to open exposure where I could hear wind, of such high velocity, blowing along with the rain pounding down right over our heads. Of course the deafening crack of thunder that followed each bolt of lightening didn't give cause for much comfort.

We didn't sleep and the storm blew over about midnight. With some apprehension we emerged from the cellar to gratefully realize the house was still standing. Bill and Palmer immediately made a quick inspection of the barn and corral area where they found everything, in place. That's as close to a tornado or hurricane as I ever wish to be.

About 50 feet away from the house, in a direction opposite from all the other buildings, Mrs. Adkins had her vegetable garden. It was her pride and joy, and large enough so she never

ran out of vegetables. Tomatoes, corn, squash, etc., were, of course, seasonal, but any vegetables that could be sequentially planted were always available.

On one occasion Mrs. Adkins spotted a yearling bull calf in her garden munching on a new crop of carrot tops. With broom in hand, she bounded out of the house, yelling at the calf. The calf turned its head and quizzically looked the lady over. Then it turned, but instead of running away, charged toward Mrs. Adkins.

Harold and I were just returning to the house, when we saw his mother turn, drop the broom and disappear around a corner of the house. The calf loped along behind her. It was one of the funniest spectacles we had seen for ages and we couldn't help but double over in laughter. Skirt flying, arms waving and yelling at the top of her voice, Mrs. Adkins bounded around the next corner where she spotted us. With the calf in hot pursuit, she changed course, running in our direction.

Knowing full well where our next meal was coming from, we immediately straightened our faces, and ran toward the calf. Recognizing that he was now outnumbered, the young bull headed off toward the corral where he'd come from. Mad, and breathless, Mrs. Adkins thanked us for "saving her life", then proceeded to chew Harold out for not keeping the corral in proper repair. It was our good fortune that she hadn't seen us laughing. Figuring we got off easy, we chased the calf back to the corral, got him inside, then found and repaired the break, through which he had escaped in the first place.

Mr. Adkins (Bill) spent most of his time plowing, seeding or reaping the results. On one of my summer trips, I was wearing a green-billed visor with cross straps over the top of my head. Bill took a liking to it, as it would be cooler than the Stetson he usually wore. So I gave it to him. The next evening, when he returned to the house after a day of mowing Alfalfa, he complained that his head hurt. What we hadn't realized was that I had a full, thick, head of hair. Bill was bald. With the sun beating down on his head all day, he was now sporting a badly burned bald head, except where the straps made a perfect cross over the top. Needless to say, I got the visor back.

On occasion there were side trips that were fun as well as educational. Running low on groceries triggered one such. It was about a one hour buckboard ride into Bloomfield from the Adkins' ranch. (A buckboard is a low-sided wagon with a slanted "dashboard" in front where anyone sitting on the seat can plant their feet when so desired.) Plodding along behind a gentle team of horses, on a hot summer afternoon, made the trip seem like an eternity. I'm sure, however, that the horses appreciated the change from having to pull a heavy piece of farm machinery. But, for our part, we sat high on the spring seat dozing, because the horses knew where they were going as well as we did.

There were a couple of short downhill runs, where the push of the wagon caused the horses to open up into a slow trot. Harold was holding the lines and usually sat on the right hand

side where he, as the driver, could also handle the brake lever. This time, however, he sat in the middle of the seat, with Bill on the right and I on the left. Since all three of us were half asleep we were unaware that the hill we were on was longer and a little steeper than others we had gone over.

Suddenly, there was a sharp crack and we woke up to the whistle of flying wood splinters around our heads. It was good that none of us had our feet on the dash board at that moment. Mr Adkins grabbed the brake lever, pulling it back to slow the wagon down. Simultaneously, Harold pulled back on the lines and the team eased back into a walk. We quickly checked to determine that no one was hurt. Then figured out what was going on.

Because the hill was long, the unbraked wagon had crept up onto the horses heels. One horse got skittish and kicked out his displeasure. His shod hoofs smashed the dashboard and sent the wood flying. We all agreed that good fortune was on our side, because the wood splinters had not touched any of us.

When we got into town, we watered the horses, hung feed bags over their heads and then ate our sandwiches. The store had cold drinks, so we were able to satisfy our thirst before stocking up on supplies.

Mr. Adkins took care of the shopping, while Harold and I looked over the candy counter. Then I spotted the Limburger cheese. Beside candy, I had developed a great fondness for this extremely odoriferous delicacy. Limburger is a soft, white cheese, made from soured milk (or maybe cream) that has been "bacteria--ripened".

Maybe my liking it, came from the constant exposure, in the summer time, to five- and ten-gallon cans of sour milk. Every day fifteen to twenty of these cans stood, for hours on the railroad platform, in the blazing Glendive sun. They were waiting to be loaded on the late afternoon express train that carried them to some creamery over in North Dakota. It was impossible to avoid the smell, if you were within close proximity of the railroad depot. And our house was only two blocks away.

Anyway I saw the two-pound brick of Limburger sitting on a back counter with one slice cut out of it. I showed it to Bill and asked him if we could get a piece. It turned out that he and Mrs. Adkins also liked it, so he agreed. Pointing, he told the grocer he would "like to try a piece of that cheese". The grocer looked askance at us and said; "You can have the whole darned brick for nothing, if you want it. I just opened it and it's obvious, from the smell, that it's gone bad all the way through. Even my dog won't touch it."

So Mr. Adkins said, "Well, all right, we'll take it off your hands and try it anyway. If it doesn't work out I can always feed it to the pigs." Believe me, the pigs never got a sniff of that

brick of Limburger cheese. Our trip home was just as long and hot, but we stayed awake all the way. And, yes, we could smell the Limburger cheese all the way home too.

Our Saturday night bath was always an event. In my home, in Glendive, we had a large bathtub with hot and cold running water at the turn of a tap. On the ranch, we had neither. A galvanized wash tub became the bathtub. The kitchen stove was fired up to heat several large pans of water, and the tea kettle. Most of the hot water was poured into the tub, then cooled to a survivable temperature.

Gingerly, I would step into the tub and sit down (I got first crack at the bath because I was a guest.) Soaping up didn't take long. Then Mr. Adkins would pour a pan of warm water over my head and shoulders as I slowly stood up. Stepping out of the tab onto a towel, then toweling off and getting into clean underwear, finished the procedure for me.

Harold went in next, with hot water from the tea kettle being added to warm up the soapy water I had just left. After Harold, Palmer got his turn in the tub, followed by Mr. Adkins, with one of us boys pouring the warm water over his head. We then emptied the tub, by throwing the water out of the back door.

The tub was given a quick, cold water rinse, and refilled with more hot water so Mrs. Adkins and Helen could get their bath. I presume the ladies followed a routine similar to ours, but "the men" were not around to help. The ladies did have one advantage, there was just the two of them so the water in the tub was, undoubtedly, cleaner.

The following day--Sunday--often turned out to be a day of unexpected, exciting and impromptu celebration. A working ranch, like the Adkins, always had calves to brand, young horses to be broken for riding or driving and sometimes pigs to be castrated and ringed. At harvest time neighbors gathered to "being in the sheaves" so to speak.

“Sheaves” of Hay

This particular Sunday started out quite normally. Harold and I were up at about 4:30 in the morning. We'd ridden out on horseback and brought in the milk cows. Mr. Adkins, Palmer and Harold did the milking. I had a go at it, but wasn't yet sufficiently proficient to class myself as a milker of cows. By 6:30 we'd finished the milking, fed the chickens, "slopped" the pigs, (I could do that!!) run the milk through the separator and had breakfast.

While Helen and her mother did up the dishes, the rest of us took on other jobs. As I recall, there were three horses to break for riding and about a dozen calves to be branded. Harold and I saddled up again and went out to round up the cows that had calves, as well as bring in the young horses. We had spotted the horses earlier that morning when rounding up the milk cows. With not too much effort we bunched them together and had them headed toward the home corral. Then we went after the calves and their mammas.

The cows seemed to have a sixth sense that morning, and knew we were out there looking for them. Consequently they proceeded to forage in and around thickets of bullberry and chokecherry bushes, both of which have long, needle-sharp stickers. By 9:00 o'clock we had eight of the critters out on the flat, bunched and headed for the ranch.



Bullberry and Chokecherry

The remaining four proved to be as elusive as a fox being chased by dogs. One cow in particular almost did me in. I had her moving, with her calf close behind. Suddenly she turned and took off into the deep brush--her calf still close behind. I decided to out flank her, and spurred my horse into a run, so I could get around the patch of brush and be on the other side when the cow emerged.

I was doing just fine until, totally without warning, my horse stopped dead in her tracks. My forward momentum was too great, and my attachment to the saddle not great enough. Over the saddle horn and over my horse's head I flew.

Coming at me, fast, was a very thick patch of wild rose bushes. The landing was reasonably soft but exceedingly excruciating. I had covered my face on landing, so only a couple of scratches were inflicted there. My legs were protected by leather chaps. But my upper body and, when I turned over, my backside from shoulders to hips received the full benefit of those thorny old rose bushes.

Above and behind, the horse looked down at me and I'll swear she had a twinkle in her eyes, and a smile across her mouth, that said "don't ever try to make me jump off a five-foot cutbank again."


Cutbank

I recovered, and got around to the other side of the brush just in time to see Harold gathering up my cow and her calf. I thought he'd die laughing when I told him where I'd been.

We got back to the corral with our stock just in time to see several teams of wagons and buggies pull up to the house. Down the road we could see more wagons and buggies coming in. Word had spread that Adkins were having a "ranch party". That meant the ladies all got together for a "hen party", the men put on an impromptu rodeo and branding party and kids of various ages did whatever they wanted to as long as they stayed out of everybody's way. Being a 13 year old city boy I sat on the top pole of the corral for the bronc-busting show and stood around while the calves were roped, tied, branded, and castrated as necessary.

I did get involved once. A two-year old heifer (female calf) had been branded, when Harold suggested it was time I learned to ride something wild. But first, he'd show me how it was done.

He roped the calf, snubbed it down to a nearby post and handed me the rope to keep tight so the calf couldn't pull loose.

Carefully he then secured a short rope (like a surcingle) under her belly, just behind the front legs, and up around to behind her shoulders. That accomplished, I put a lock on her head, with my arms, and slipped the snubbing rope off over her head. Harold threw his right leg up and over her back, tightened his left hand into the surcingle rope and told me to "let her go!".


Surcingle

When I released my hold the calf was supposed to take off on a bucking run. But she just stood there, apparently wondering what the two crazy teenagers were trying to do. Harold kicked her ribs, but still no action. So he got off.

That looked easy, I thought, and agreed to give it a try. Once on board, my legs weren't more than a foot off the ground. I figured that even if I fell off, it wouldn't be too hard a landing. That calf had other thoughts.

The minute Harold released her head, she kicked out and bucked with all her strength. On the first jump, with her tail end two feet up in the air, I lost my hold on the surcingle rope and went flying straight up and out. This time there were no "soft" rosebushes to land in. I came straight down and landed with my arms outstretched. Again, I didn't break anything, but I sprained one wrist and was sore in several spots for a couple of days. I knew then that being a rodeo rider was not one of the things I wanted to do in my life.

The day had been wonderfully entertaining, and a lot had been done to help the Adkins. But the best was yet to come.

With the work all done, the men washed up and gathered in the parlor while the ladies adjourned to the kitchen. Shortly they had a feast, fit for two kings, ready to eat. Everything from soup to mashed potatoes and roast beef. There was roast pork, and fried chicken; salads and several kinds of pie, as well as cake, for desert. It was, truly, a day to be remembered. By sundown all the visitors had departed for their homes. The chores were behind us and it was time to go to bed, for another day was dawning.

Up at the crack of sunrise once more, we had the chores all done and breakfast behind us by 6:30. When we brought in the milk cows, we also brought in an extra team of horses. Mr. Adkins had his day planned, using one team, and Palmer would use the other team, going to a nearby ranch to buy a load of hay. Harold and I opted to go with Palmer.

Going to pick up the hay was an uneventful ride. Once arrived, we traded greetings with the rancher. (He and his wife and kids had been at the "party" yesterday.) I tied the team to a nearby fence post, gave them some hay to munch on, then joined the others in loading the hayrack. With all three of us pitchforking the hay, it didn't take long to have the wagon half full.

We were invited to have lunch with the rancher and his family. I took the horses to water, and returned them to feed on some more hay.

Loading the last half of the hayrack, after lunch, didn't take more than a couple of hours. When finished, the hay was in a rounded configuration with the top center about two feet above the top of the rack. Palmer fashioned a seat, from a plank, while Harold and I hitched the horses to the hayrack. We thanked (and Palmer paid) the rancher and we were on our way home.

For Harold and me, going home was much more fun. We burrowed our way through the hay, going across the hayrack from side to side and end to end. Then we had a brilliant idea. In the middle of the hayrack we burrowed a hole straight down--probably about six feet. Like the two angels we were, we next tunneled our way to the back, and up to the top again. There we sat and discussed our plan. As we neared home, we started a "hay fight". Being careful to avoid the hole in the center of the rack, we never-the-less dutifully covered it over with a thick layer of hay.

Palmer, concerned that we would fall off the rack, made us stop fighting. So we sat up beside him for the rest of the trip. By the time we got home, and had taken care of the horses, it was time to do chores and then dinner. After dinner we read or listened to the radio until it was time to go to bed.

When we brought the milk cows in from pasture the next morning we were concerned that Palmer had discovered our practical joke. There he was, big as life, forking the hay from the top of the rack into the barn's hay loft. Since he was standing near the front of the hayrack, we decided there was a chance he had not discovered us.

We continued our watch. Positioning the cows we were milking (I'd learned the technique by now) so we could see the barn, we waited. I had finished stripping milk from the first cow and was working on the second, when Palmer suddenly disappeared. Just as planned, he had stepped into our hole and dropped to the bottom of the hayrack. We laughed so hard that there was no milking to be done for at least ten minutes. Moments later Palmer climbed to the top again, going about his work as if nothing had happened.

That night, when we went to bed, Palmer showed up with two lariats.

"O.K.", he said. "Which one of you guys wants to go first?" "What do you mean?", we asked--innocence written all over our faces.

"You know what I mean", he replied, "and I'm going to hang each one of you by your feet from the windows at each end of this room."

With that announcement, he "tossed a loop" and quickly had me roped and tied.

Harold and I knew we were doomed, and promised, with all the assurance we could muster, that it would never happen again. Palmer, however, roped and tied Harold anyway and left us lying on the floor while he opened the windows and removed the screens. Then he tied the other end of each rope to a leg of a bed.

With no effort what-so-ever, he picked Harold up and had him half out of the window before he paused.

All the while Harold and I were pleading that we would be good kids from henceforth on, and would never pull another joke on him--if he would just let us go.

I am sure Palmer had no intention of actually hanging us out of the windows, but his threat was well taken. He untied Harold's hands, then let him get out of his ropes the rest of the way to untie me. That was the end of our practical joking with Palmer.

When I got home from Adkins, mother informed me that she had our passes and we were going to Glacier Park to visit the Johns. Ed Johns was a steel worker, who had stayed at our house while working on the new Yellowstone River bridge.

Vivian was a local school teacher who also lived with us. Somewhere along the line they fell in love and were married--that happened quite often around our place.

Our route took us to Billings on the Northern Pacific Railroad. There we transferred to the Burlington and into Great Falls, Mont. Ed and Vivian met us with their Model T Ford touring car and we were off for the magnificent Rocky Mountains and Glacier National Park.


Model T Ford Touring Car

Ed's job was building bridges on the new "Going to the Sun" highway. Apparently, in those days, there was no "Company housing" for employees, because we all camped out within a large tent and did our cooking outside. It was my first experience at really camping in the rough" and it couldn't have happened to a happier teenager. Every day was a new adventure. Meals were the kind and quality one reads about--all cooked over an open fire. Nothing fancy, but very substantial.

Ed was, apparently, in a vacation mode, because after two days around the camp, we took off to see one of America's greatest parks--in fact I believe it to be the greatest of all parks, from a scenic standpoint. The mountains, with their numerous glaciers, run up to 10,000 and nearly 12,000 feet above sea level.

Our first stop was at the "Going to the Sun" Chalet, located on a very beautiful lake. Having been there again in 1987, I think that location is now called the "Many Glaciers Hotel" and is on "Wild Goose Lake". The hotel was built in l914 or 1915, so it must have been in business in 1928, the year I believe I was first there. Because the "Going to the Sun" highway was then under construction, we didn't get to see any of Ed's work.


"Going to the Sun" Chalet

From there we went on to Banff and then to Lake Louise. I'm certain the areas were as beautiful then as in 1987, although I am also sure many changes have taken place within that time frame.

Details of the rest of that excursion no longer seem to be recallable from my memory bank. Knowing mother's interest in getting home, I'm sure we stayed no more than a week. The rest of the summer was generally all play and little work, except what "chores" I had to do for mother--stuff like washing clothes, making beds, dusting and going to the store.

Swimming was one major activity that always took up several hours of every day. The city pool was about a mile and a half east of our house. Once a week the pool was emptied, cleaned, and refilled. Chlorination was accomplished by tying a fifty pound gunny sack of powdered chlorine to the end of the fill pipe and letting it wash into the pool. The pool was drained and cleaned after the midnight closing time. Filling was well in progress, therefore, by the time I usually went to the pool in the afternoon. Mother had a rule that I could not go swimming until at least an hour after lunch. (It was then believed that a person was very much subject to getting cramps if you went swimming on a full stomach.)

Our favorite games were underwater tag, just plain tag, races of various lengths, and diving. One older friend would show his skills by diving from the 10-foot board with a half-smoked, lighted cigarette in his mouth. As his hands touched the water the cigarette would disappear into his mouth, and then reappear as he broke from the water after his dive. I never learned that trick. In fact it took several summers before I screwed up enough courage to dive off the ten-foot board.

For whatever reason, I don't know, but once I was swimming across the pool with a sealed 50-gallon barrel in tow. Some friend came up behind me, called my name, and, as I turned my head to see who it was, gave the barrel a shove. It came up hard against my face, cut my lip and broke a front tooth. That ended my swimming for the day, as I immediately had to go home and get the tooth repaired. I still carry a nice gold-filled front tooth.

On one other hot summer day, mother decided it was time to have a mole removed from her cheek. Lacking today's "high tech" procedures, our Dr. Hunt made a house call. I brought a chair from the dining room out to the back yard for mom to sit in. Then I returned to the ice box and chipped off several large pieces of ice. Dr. Hunt used the ice to deaden the area around the mole. Then, using a large magnifying glass, he focused a point of sunlight on the mole. In just a few minutes the mole was burned off, more ice applied to cool the area, then a small bandage finished the operation. Today Dermatologists use liquid nitrogen to do the same process in seconds.

Sleeping out in my World War I pup tent was always a summer event. Several of us had these tents and sometimes we all slept on our lawn and sometimes at someone else's lawn. One 4th of July period a group of us had our tents pitched at Johnnie Martin's house. Firecrackers of every kind were available then, and we all had them. On this occasion, Johnnie decided to wake us up with a bang. While the rest of us slept, he slipped out to go to the bathroom. For fun he took along a "Cherry Bomb" with the intention of dropping it from the upstairs bathroom window.


Cherry Bomb with Waterproof Fuse

But his plan backfired. He lit the Cherry Bomb, then tried to open the bathroom window. The window, having been painted, was thoroughly stuck, and refused to open. But the fuse was

still burning. So, being the alert, resourceful student that he was, Johnnie dropped that hot Cherry Bomb into the toilet and flushed it. Unbeknown to Johnnie, the fuse was waterproof.

Fortunately it had a long fuse. The four-inch foil pipe, that drained waste from the second floor bathroom, was inside the wood-framed walls and covered by plaster. The bomb passed safely through the dining room area and made it into the basement. There the soil pipe was exposed for about eight feet before going underground and into the sewer line. After dropping about four feet below the basement's ceiling, the bomb exploded. Cast iron shrapnel was all over, but no one was in that room at the moment of detonation. I don't know how Johnnie explained it to his family, but he was one subdued teenager for several days. That didn't lessen the ribbing he took from the rest of us.

On another 4th of July it was "raining cats and dogs". Lyle Harvey and George Arnold were two auto mechanics that lived in the house. They spent "a fortune" (at least $30.00) on fireworks, getting all varieties of sky rockets, fountains, roman candles, and pin wheels that existed. Because of the rain, the pin wheels and fountains were not tried. Fire crackers of several sizes, and cherry bombs were thrown, with a resultant "big bang", by being held long enough to be certain the fuse was well started. The first couple of packages of small fire crackers fizzled out, so the rest were set aside.

Rockets and roman candles were excellent. The two men built a trough, with tripod legs in front, angled so the rockets would explode high in the air over any adjacent homes. Roman candles were hand held and, of course, aimed toward the sky. We must have spent a good hour getting all that stuff fired off, and we still had more to use up on a night that it wasn't raining.

No summer, in a Montana town of a reasonable size, would be complete without at least one cattle drive. The stock yard and railroad loading shoots were located out on the Eastern edge of town near where the Circus always encamped. The ranchers, who had stock to ship to market, were located north of the Yellowstone River. This meant they had to gather their stock and drive the herd across the bridge, over to Main Street, then east on Main Street through the center of town.

By the time the herd had arrived at Main Street, every kid in town knew they were coming--dogs too. It must have been some challenge for the cowboys driving the herd, to keep the cattle away from the dogs, and keep strays from loping off on their own down some side street. The event brought out a crowd of sidewalk bystanders, and we kids always followed the drive clear through town and part way out toward the stock yards. When it became too hard to ride our bikes, we gave up the chase.

Railroading, as well as ranching, was integral to the life of Glendive. Many of our friends worked for the Northern Pacific. One friend, Mr. Will Gehrig, was an Engineer, and the whole town knew when Will was coming home. His was a freight "run" between Glendive and the next

Division Point, either to the east or West. When he was about two miles from Glendive, on his return trip, he would pull the whistle cord so the whistle screeched it's highest tone. Then he would gradually release the cord until the tone faded completely away. That signal informed his wife, (and everyone in town) that Will Gehrig would be home within the hour. To my knowledge, he was the only Engineer to ever use that signal.

There also were times when Will was assigned to be Engineer on one of the many "goats" (switch Engines) used to shuffle freight cars around when making up a full train. Sometimes this required that he stop his engine in the middle of a busy cross street at the Western edge of town. Several times, usually at night, some inebriated auto driver (Prohibition was in force, but hard liquor was available albeit illegally) would run smack-dab into Will's engine, even though he was standing stock still, with every available light glowing.

"What's the matter with these crazy drivers?" he would growl, when recounting some incident. "How big do you have to be before they can see you?"

There seemed to be no answer to his questions, as such accidents continued--granted, they were infrequent.

The fall of my 13th year, 1928, was the first time I recall paying any attention to the world of politics. I knew that Calvin "Silent Cal" Coolidge was then President, and that he had determined not to run for another term. What brought the Presidential politics into focus was the fact that Herbert Hoover was running against the Democrat, Alfred E. Smith, "that Catholic governor of New York." The local politics, or even Statewide, seemingly, were of no great concern. The problem in our town, and the rest of the country, was fear that if Smith became President, the Catholic Pope would actually be running the country from Rome, Italy.

To heighten such concerns in our area was the fact that a new Catholic church was being constructed on one corner of the street, kitty-corner from our house. There were many jokes running around town, since most of the folks were Methodists, Lutheran, or Congregationalist, The majority of Catholics lived on the south side of town. One story I remember came from one of our boarders. He was an Irishman from Butte, Montana. With his brogue, he pronounced it "Boot", Montana. His name was O'Reilly "sure and a brick-layer I am, working on the Catholic church".

Everyone working on this job was Catholic. Because he was Irish, the Priest assumed O'Reilly was too. Accords to O'Reilly, the Priest made his rounds every morning to see how the work was progressing. As he would pass, and greet each worker, the man would return the greeting with a "Good morning to you, Father."

After a few weeks of this, our Mr. O'Reilly got tired of working there, so he responded to the Father's greeting, the next morning, with a: "Hi 'ya Pop!"

His remark was not well taken. When the Priest found out O'Reilly was not even Catholic, he was promptly fired.

Anyway, the majority of people in our town were glad when the November elections were over and Herbert Hoover was the new President.

Hoover took office in January of 1929 and faced the problem of getting the country's economy resolved. Although the ranchers and farmers from around Glendive were having economic problems, the banks and commercial businesses seemed to be hanging in there. Dad was working steady, and there never was a dearth of roomers and boarders.

Helen Adkins was in her Senior year of High School, so mother added another girl, Viola Pederson, to help. Our school system was on some kind a standard that permitted students to start and graduate at mid term. It was a definite hazard, to my way of thinking.

For at least a couple of years, I had been ice skating, roller skating and sitting in the back row of the theatre on a Saturday afternoon with "my girl" Maxine. When I returned to the 8th grade in January 1929, Maxine wasn't there. She had graduated and was now a Freshman at Dawson Co. High School. I guess I must have survived, for the next five months passed in the usual way. For the rest of the winter, I ice skated alone and went to the shows with boy friends. So it was when boy lost girl friend.

Spring took on new meaning and new things to do. The empty lot next door was no longer a place to build tunnels. It was converted into a play ground. We set up pegged standards so we could place a bar across for high jumping and pole vaulting. Our poles were one inch bamboo, previously used as the center core of new 8 foot by 12 foot rugs. They were quite flexible, but often broke when the weight of a vaulter was more than the pole could take.

I was also into "flying" erector set airplanes. My friend Leighton Davis lived across the street. We attached a wire to the chimney of his house and ran it to the ground. He climbed up, slipped the wire into the pulley on the airplane, and let it "fly" down to me. As a sport, it didn't last too long. Leighton, however, went on to the U.S. Military Academy and ended up as a Lt. General in the U.S. Air Force.

Learning to play tennis was another "out" to burn up energy. We had to go to the High School to play--which was about a one-and-a-half mile walk, or bike ride, from the house. Since this was basically a weekend sport, it was more for fun than anything else.

I recall one morning in particular. Donald Larimar and I had scheduled a tennis practice, starting at 6:00 a.m. that Saturday. He made it up on time, and came to the window of my room. For some reason, I was "dead to the world" and didn't hear him calling. I was rudely awakened by a sharp slap to my back side by mother. "Donald's outside", she said. "Get up and get going." I got up and got going--fast!

Spring eventually came to a halt, and I too graduated from the eighth grade. Life would now get out of "second gear".

That summer was much the same as the others--a couple of weeks in Seattle, two or three weeks on the Adkins ranch, swimming, hiking and sleeping out.

My time at the Adkins was mostly riding and working. I was now much more proficient in milking cows. Harold and I were living up to our pledge not to play practical jokes on Palmer. Yes, we knew the consequences.

One ride, I do remember. For some reason we went out to get the milk cows, one morning, riding double on one horse. I was the one seated behind the saddle. In the course of going after one cow we had to cross a small creek. The cow we chased ran through the creek with no hesitation. I assumed the horse would do the same. The horse thought differently. Getting to the edge of the water, he went airborne to jump over the creek. Having nothing to hang on to, I found I was sitting on air, but there was no horse under me. Consequently I landed in the middle of the creek. It rattled my teeth and soaked my bottom, but no damage. Harold came back for me, amid much merriment, and we finished driving the cattle home.

I had had my 14th birthday in April, so I knew I was ready for High School whether anyone else did or not. The next four years were destined to be the best yet!

I started High School, certain that Maxine and I would get together again. It was not to be. She had found a boy friend who had a car. What a difference that made--so I had to be content enjoying life without a girl!!

On the scholastic side, I registered for my classes with the usual Freshman uncertainties. Although parental involvement in the child's educational likes and dislikes was not a significant question in my family, mother definitely was going to have a say in my high school curriculum. At her "suggestion", (read that direction) I signed up for English, Latin, Algebra and Physics plus chorus, band and orchestra--electives I knew I would enjoy.

My real "put-down" came when I was called to the Counselor's office and told that my grade school record in English was so low that entrance into the Latin course was out of the question. This did not make me unhappy, but it sure made my mother unhappy. She marched me

up to the school the next morning and thoroughly explained to the Counselor that Justin was going to take Latin, whether they liked it or not. Maybe not quite that strong but, whatever she said, the effect was the same--Justin was reinstated into the Latin class.

It was a good move. I learned more about the English language, from taking that class, than I did in the regular English class. Anyway mother saw to it that I studied and, as a result, I didn't get thrown out. I'm sure my grades weren't all that good, but sufficient, anyway, to hold on.

Helen Adkins had graduated in May of that year, and was then hired by the High School as a Secretary. She stayed at our house, now, as a paying roomer. Viola Pederson took her place--as I mentioned before--working for mother, so there was little change in the routine. I still went to the Saturday show, but didn't sit in the back row. I remember it was somewhere in that fall that John Wayne's first picture "Stagecoach" played in our theatre. He immediately became a star in my mind, equal to Tom Mix.

Not counting grades, those first months of my Freshman year were pretty good. Of course the nation's economic problems were not in that category. President Hoover was having nothing but problems and then came the Stock Market crash that October. I had a newspaper route by then, carrying the Billing's Gazette. It wasn't a great big newspaper, but it was a daily--and the headlines blazed with news of the crash. For weeks there were repercussions with news of people in the East jumping out of windows and otherwise committing suicide when they lost their monetary fortunes. To my knowledge, no one in Glendive had any such problem. We had a number of wealthy individuals, but the snide remarks pointed at them were "they made their money either stealing horses or rustling cattle" and had invested in the huge ranches they owned.

One rancher, besides owning a bank as well as a big, fancy (by our standard anyway) home in Glendive, raised Shetland ponies on his ranch. His son was the envy of the rest of us, when he drove a team of Shetlands, hitched to a shiny black buggy, with red wheels, around town. Guess our primary problem was that none of us kids were ever invited to ride along.

That problem, as well as President Hoover's, was of minor importance, however, as the month of October dwindled to a close. October 31 was a day designed just for kids--especially kids of all high school ages. It was HALLOWEEN!

The Halloween stories we knew were all of farm country origin. For instance there was the time a bunch of kids decided to move the farmers "out-house" to a spot two feet behind its usual position. The farmer got wind of the plot, moved the out-house himself and the first kids on the scene (in the dead of a pitch black night) fell into their own trap.

Then there was the time the kids disassembled the farmer's hay wagon and reassembled it on top of his barn. The farmer heard the commotion, slipped out of his house and joined the

group in their work. The next day (having made note of all participants in the prank) he called the kids together and, this time, watched them put his wagon back where it belonged.

Our Halloween prank took about as much manpower, but we didn't get caught doing it.

Across the street from our high school was a farm machinery sales office with all sorts of equipment in their big storage yard. There were at least 50 of us in this gang, so with some effort we first moved a large threshing machine across the street and up to the school's front door. (Remember, at this time in history, Glendive did not have a lot of cars running up and down the street--so our "in the dead of night" work was accomplished without being observed.)

That horse-drawn thresher pretty well blocked off the big, double front doors. But we took no chances and plugged any spaces large enough for a teacher to gain access, with small buggies and a couple of rowboats. Mowing machines, haying rakes and dirt moving equipment served well to plug up all other entrances to the school.

Glendive, then, had only one policeman. Just as we completed barricading the doors, our "look out" signaled a warning and we all scattered. I made it to a hedge next to a perimeter sidewalk. I hid there at least 30 minutes and was just planning to depart the scene when I heard his heavy foot steps coming up the sidewalk. Needless to say, I remained silent and hidden until the policeman was gone.

I don't know how all the equipment was returned to the Sales Yard, but we had a one-day holiday while it was being done. No one at our house ever knew I was involved in the prank either.

Soon thereafter, thanks to my dad and mother, I became the proud owner of a 1922 Model T Ford Coupe. I wish I could remember the price of a gallon of gas, then, but I think if was somewhere around twenty-five cents. I know I never lacked funds to keep it running and I made at least one 100-mile round trip, so it must have gotten good mileage. I remember writing to my sister and telling her that it would go 35 miles per hour.

1922 Model T Ford Coupe

For information purposes, the Model T Ford--Henry Ford's first car, built on an assembly line--did not have the conventional gear shift that other cars had. On the floor board, three pedals protruded, each attached to a separate round "band". On the left was the clutch, in the middle was reverse and on the right the brake. Each pedal, when pushed, tightened the band and engaged it's designated portion of the transmission.

The driver pushed the clutch pedal, to start the car moving forward. That pedal was held down, while he manipulated the gas lever (on the right side of the steering column) until the initial speed was attained. Then the clutch pedal was released, and the car purred along at desired speed.

These bands, like modern brake bands, would wear down to where they did not perform. Then they were changed. It was also possible, when putting in new bands, to interchange the clutch and reverse designations. This happened to me on a trip one time (I always carried spare bands for just such emergencies). Anyway, when I had completed the mechanics and started the engine, I stepped on the clutch pedal, expecting to go forward. Instead, I "shot" backward. Before I could get my foot on the brake, I had backed through a barbed wire fence. The rear wheels also dropped into a ditch. Believe me, that only happened once. Naturally, I had to spend more time, then, to change the bands so I could work my way forward and out of the ditch. I left the damaged fence for some farmer to repair.

Another unique feature of the old Model T was placement of its gas tank. Fuel pumps were an unknown factor, so getting gas to the carburetor was a matter of gravity flow. Consequently the gas tank sat up front, over the engine and just in front of the windshield. When I was low on gas, and happened to come to a reasonably steep hill, I proceeded to turn the vehicle around and back up the hill.

About two weeks after I got my Ford Coupe, I went to a used car auction at the nearby Haskell Chevrolet garage. Used cars, then, were generally sold at auction, rather than as is done in modern time. At the conclusion of the auction, there was always a raffle, with some older car given as the prize. The prize, this day, was a Model T Ford, 4-door "touring" car. I was the lucky holder of the winning raffle ticket. The minute I got "on stage" and accepted the key to my car, I was besieged by friends. We all piled in, on, and around (cars then had running boards) the car and drove off to the hoots, hollers, and applause of the remaining audience.


Model T Ford, 4-door "Touring" Car

This particular Ford, I found out when I got home, had a Bosch magneto ignition system and a self starter. Those were extras that the vintage Model Ts didn't have. The disadvantage was its open air qualities. I was now accustomed to the quiet and weather protection afforded by my glass enclosed coupe.

So there was nothing else to do but strip both cars down to their frames, put the coupe body on my newly acquired touring car (and vice versus) then put both back together. In the process of reassembling the coupe, every bolted connection was cushioned with pieces of rubber, cut from old innertubes. This made my car practically squeak proof. With the help of friends, it only took about ten days to complete the switch. Now, I really had a car.

There must have been a dance at the High School soon after that, because I remember going to such an event with Viola Pederson. (Nope, Maxine and I were no longer an item!) When we got home, we were parked just outside the kitchen window, talking, (I'm sure). The window opened and mother let it be known, in no uncertain terms, that it was time we came into the house. That was the only "romance" my Model T Ford ever experienced.

For some reason, driving to school was not essential to getting good grades. So my car remained parked beside the house much of the time while I, and the other kids, used "shank's mares" (foot power) to get to school. Of course, usually by Thanksgiving time, the weather was so cold that our cars wouldn't function anyway. One major problem was that anti-freeze had not yet been developed. If the water in a radiator and engine block froze, the block cracked. Then the car was totally inoperative until repaired, which involved a lot of work.

Taking a Model T Ford to a garage for repair was unheard of. It was common knowledge, that any and all mechanical repairs could be made by using a pair of pliers, a monkey wrench and whatever baling wire was necessary. (Baling wire came in roles and was used in the harvesting and marketing of hay.) If my car had a leaky radiator, the first try was putting in some corn meal to plug the leak. The second try was to solder the hole. If that didn't work, I went to the city dump and looked until I found a matching radiator in good enough condition to be fixed.

Throughout the winter, however, there were many times when "Betsy" (all cars had pet names) could, and would, be cranked up for whatever the reason. It took two or three teakettles of hot water to fill the radiator. Then, while I cranked, and someone stepped on the starter button, our joint effort turned the engine over fast enough for the spark to ignite the gas and get the engine running smoothly.

Always of particular concern was a "backfire". When the gas was ignited on the wrong cylinder rotation, the engine "kicked" backward. If I was holding the crank in "normal" fashion (thumb on one side and my other four fingers on the other) that "kick" was sufficiently powerful

to throw the crank and break my arm. Therefore I always held the crank with all five fingers on the same (out) side. Then if there was a backfire my hand slipped off and no damage was done.

Anytime the temperature was at, or above, 10 degrees below zero, it was safe to drive during daytime hours, unless I was going to let the car sit for over a two-hour period.

Under such freezing conditions, a Saturday outing was a favorite sport. At the western end of Main Street, the concrete terminated in a large turnaround area that always had a good surface coating of smooth ice. Several would enter that area--one car at a time--at as fast a speed as the driver dared. By turning the steering wheel and simultaneously hitting the brakes, the car would spin. The winner of this game was the driver who caused his car to spin the most number of times.

I never won that contest because I was afraid I would hit a curb, during a spin cycle and break the wheel's wooden spokes. I did make three revolutions once, but do not recall who had the best record.

Because I had no garage to house the car, it's fate was to sit out the winter and endure the cold, but always be ready to go when the radiator was full of hot water. On one occasion the car performed above and beyond its expectations. The outside temperature had warmed up to around zero. I poured in the hot water, set the spark lever to its proper position, set the gas lever accordingly and turned the key. Presto, that familiar sound of spark igniting gas sounded, and old Betsy was swaying to the tune of an engine hitting on all four cylinders. I had not touched either the starter or the crank.

My car had been in "cold storage" for at least a couple of months but the engine valves and rings were so tight that it held its compression. When I turned the key, the spark touched off the residue of gas fumes and Betsy danced. I had had that experience several times when the engine and outside temperature were both hot, put never under these conditions.

I do not recall, specifically, whether mother and I travelled to Seattle for the 1929 Christmas holidays. If we did, I know we had a wonderful time. If we didn't, I know we had a great time too. I believe that was the Christmas that "Santa Claus" brought me my new "Flexible Flyer" sled. If it was--we stayed home that year.

There were many good sledding hills near our home. The Yellowstone River was frozen over by then, so we could--on some of our hills--slide down at a fast clip, and right out onto the river's ice. Contests were also normal events. On a nice, level sidewalk, that had not been cleaned of ice, we would take turns running, as fast as possible, along the snow covered sidewalk edge, with the sled up in our arms. Dropping the sled to the ice, we'd "belly-flop" on, to see how far we could coast.

Flexible Flyer

Long hills, where the snow had packed down, thawed slightly, and then frozen, were the best. There we could utilize the "Flex's" steering capability. Either sitting up, or lying down, the driver operated the cross-bar steering handles to avoid rocks, brush or trees. Sitting up, I could accommodate two additional passengers on my sled. This gave me sufficient weight to better increase my momentum and therefore travel farther.

I, also, was now old enough to go ice skating on a slough within the Yellowstone River. This particular slough was about two miles long and separated from the main river by a peninsula of land. Because it was protected on two sides by trees and brush, the water froze smoothly, thereby making for great skating. Sometimes, just after freezing over, there would not be any snowfall. That made for an ideal condition. Light snowfall, we could skate through. A snowfall of over six inches required shoveling.

One fellow in town--probably about 25 years old--had a pair of racing shoe skates. Because he was somewhat of a "showoff" the rest of us didn't pay him much attention. One day he wanted to show off his speed capability and asked some of us to follow and time him over the length of the slough (as I said earlier, about two miles). He took off from, what I guess was a racing stance, and tore down the slough at a speed none of us could keep up with. When we did catch up with him, he was sprawled over a patch of snow covered ice, behind a log that had fallen across the narrowing end of the slough. He had tried to jump the log, but both skates jammed the log throwing him head first over the log. Needless to say, the front end of his racing skates were all bent out of shape--as was his ego and disposition. One of the fellows went back to the starting point, and retrieved his walking shoes so he could get home. We never saw him out there skating again.

During that winter school term, I met two new kids, who turned out to be among my best friends. The Woodwards moved into a home just a block and a half from our house. Mr. Woodward was an Engineer with the Montana State Highway Dept. Mrs. Woodward kept the home fires burning. Their son John was my age and in all my classes, including chorus. His sister Alice didn't get into High School until a year later.

The other friend was Earl Powell, son of the new Methodist minister. Earl, too, was in my same classes.

Earl and I always managed to "get by" in our class work, John was the brain. Fortunately I sat next to John in both Algebra and Physics. Without his help (unknown to the teachers (I think) and my mother) I, probably, would have flunked both classes.

John's proficiency got him into trouble in our Algebra Class. He always finished a test well ahead of all the rest of us. This puzzled our teacher. On the next test she had all questions posted on the black board before we got there. Then she stood off in one corner at the back of the room.

John told me later he had a sneaking suspicion he was being watched. But, on this day, he had carefully slipped his small slide rule into his hand anyway. That was all the teacher had been waiting for. She walked up beside him and quietly removed the little gadget. Then, in her usual teacher's voice complimented him on his skills, but explained he was using an unfair advantage over the rest of us, because she had not taught the art of using a slide rule.

She asked him where he had learned it. He explained that his father taught him. She gave the slide rule back to him after the test, but admonished him not to use it again.

While John was the whiz in math and science we all shined in chorus. We had good, strong voices, mine being the tenor; John, baritone; and Earl, the basso profundo.

It wasn't long before we formed a trio. Since we all lived in close proximity, we got in a lot of practice. For the most part, we met at John's home because Alice played the piano and accompanied us during our practice sessions. Once we learned the songs, our practice sessions came about while we walked to and from school. I guess it was that cold, winter air that helped to "fine-tune" our songs, as we travelled along. We made a number of appearances before school assemblies, church groups, and the Ladies Aid Society. We also had parts in the school operetta that first year. Neither John nor Earl played instruments, so we didn't get to participate, together, in band and orchestra.

As Winter turned into Spring, I celebrated my 15th birthday, but with no particular fanfare. My grades were of sufficient quality, so I could continue to participate in all normal activities. It was, of course, basketball season and Friday night games usually involved the band. When the band wasn't scheduled, we always attended anyway.

On one of the occasions, Helen Adkins was getting over a cold, which had settled into a stiff neck. She didn't want to go to the game, but we talked her into it anyway. It was a good thing. By the time the game was over, so was her stiff neck. The game was so exciting, she forgot about her ailment and kept following the play back and forth over the court. The constant twisting of her head from right to left and back again, overcame the stiff muscles and made everything right.

My birthday was followed by Jim Dion's birthday, on May 4th. That meant we had another party. I don't know what there was about birthdays, but the mothers of our group never failed to throw us a party of some sort.

Then came the time parents proudly discussed and kids shuddered to think about--Mrs. Farnum's annual piano recital. This particular year, I had two solo pieces plus a duet with Bill Lowe. My practices, with Bill, had gone well and, reluctantly, we knew there was nothing we could do to get out of participating--so we elected to make the best of the situation. If nothing else, our parents would be proud.

We did neglect to consider one factor--divine intervention-- as a way out!! It came about on the day of the recital. (Talk about waiting until the last minute.) And it almost worked. But, in this instance, Mother-Power was greater than that of the Divine Spirit.

Bill had a brand new Indian Motorcycle which he wanted to demonstrate. He offered me a ride home, and I gladly climbed up on the seat behind him. He decided we would take the long way home, and ride up and around "The Heights"--which meant going three or four miles out of our way.

Indian Motorcycle

It had been raining, but the road was now dry. However, the ruts that car tire tracks made into that "gumbo" mud during the rain, had dried out, and were very, very hard. Sailing along at 30 miles per hour, the motorcycle's front wheel dropped into one of those ruts. Bill tried to steer out of it, but couldn't. Over we went into the dirt road. We had no broken bones, but the motorcycle was well scratched and so were our hands, arms and legs.

True to the adage, "If you get thrown off a horse, you get back in the saddle and try again". We did, and got home in time to explain the scratches and torn clothes. We also tried to convince the ruling powers (translated, mothers) that we just couldn't perform at the recital that night. Needless to say, it didn't work. Bill and I performed as expected--scabs, bandages, stiff muscles and all. We didn't look good, but apparently we played well enough.

The rest of that school year was routine. Mother supervised the nightly study periods, but the next day was made difficult by trying NOT to get called on in class, because I couldn't remember what I had learned the night before.

The weekend activities of fun and games, often included hikes into the hills around Hungry Joe--our local "mountain". There also were Rebekah organization and church social activities, band appearances and the annual school-ending operetta. After final exams, we tossed our books in the air and went home singing, "No more pencils; No more books; No more teacher's dirty looks!" Of course it was a very pleasurable time, because I had passed all my tests and would now be a Sophomore. I also had the summer to look forward to, as dad had ordered the annual passes for mother and me to go to Seattle.

The summer of 1930 started in usual fashion--my two or three week "vacation" out on the Adkins' ranch. Harold and I remained friends with Palmer, the hired hand. We did a lot of horseback riding, and, of course, we split up those "chores" that could be split, such as slopping

the pigs; bringing in those horses to be used that day; bringing in the milk cows; doing the milking; and feeding the chickens.

Working with Harold and his dad, I learned how to handle a team when mowing Alfalfa, or raking it up into windrows. I can't say I was proficient at those jobs, but I did cut and rake in a well formed line, be it straight, circular, or in conformance with some odd shaped piece of terrain.

I almost had an experience with a gang plow, but "good fortune" stepped in. I had ridden my strawberry roan "Ruby" out to the field with Harold--he driving a buckboard--to where he had finished plowing the night before. I unhooked the team from the buckboard and, in turn, hooked them up to the plow while Harold did the required maintenance (oil and grease) on the plow.


Strawberry Roan

We talked about my handling the team, but changed our minds. So Harold started his plowing, following the patterned lines from the day before, and maintaining a depth of about eight inches. Suddenly a snake of some sort popped out of the ground, spooking the team. They took off at an oblique angle, running across the field that had just been plowed. Harold's first reaction was to pull the plows out of the ground and get the team under control. That was a mistake. Now the horses had no load to pull against, so they upped their running effort to a panic gallup. How Harold hung on, I'll never know because that plow was bouncing, first one end in the air and then the other.

Harold was pulling hard on the lines with one hand and hanging on to the plow seat with the other. Realizing he wasn't getting anywhere with the team, he decided not to worry about the plowed field. He braced his feet, pulled back hard on the lines, and grabbed the lever that controlled the furrow depth. In less than a second, while he held his balance, he pushed that lever

full forward, causing the plow shares to dig in to their full depth. The effect was immediate, forcing the team to slow to a controlled walk, then stop.

The whole show lasted no more than about one minute, but it was a shaken up farm boy that climbed off the plow's seat to catch his breath, and stretch the knots out of his stomach, legs, and arms.

Throughout the ordeal, I had been riding at a full gallop along side, shouting to Harold to hang on for dear life. Had he been thrown from his seat, he would have been chopped to pieces. I knew that, but I wasn't a sufficiently accomplished rider to force myself in to grab the bridle of the nearest horse. I could help now, however. Getting back in the saddle, I rode to the buckboard, filled a bucket with water and went back to the plow. Harold had the first drink, then let his team drink. While they relaxed from their "run", Harold rubbed them down and talked to them. After that, it was back to the unplowed sod and finish out the day's schedule.

Later on in the week, we were riding across an open field. I was riding a young stallion with only a hackamore instead of a normal bridle. A hackamore is nothing but a makeshift halter with an attached rope. Something spooked my horse and he took off, running as hard as he could I was pulling on the rope, but not being attached to a bit in his mouth, he paid no never mind to whatever I did. We were within a hundred yards of a barbed wire fence (and I didn't know whether he would jump that fence or not)

At the same time, Harold had spurred his horse into a full gallop and was pulling up beside me. I handed him the rope, which he snubbed around his saddle horn. Then slowing his horse to a walk, he pulled my horse to a walk also. I was one relieved kid, but--after it was over--had to admit that I enjoyed the "race" while it was going on.

By the time I got home (in Glendive), our "passes" to Seattle had arrived, so all we had to do was pick a day, pack and be on our way. The trip was basically uneventful. This being a two-day and one-night ride, we packed enough lunch for the two days of riding in the coach. At night we moved to the "sleeper"--"first class" section. Since we were riding first class, that night we ate dinner in the dining car, with a repeat for breakfast the next morning. We always enjoyed the dining car because the service was good, the silver was "sterling" (which we didn't ordinarily see much of) and the food was excellent. After breakfast we moved back to the coach section to finish out our trip.

Being long and experienced train passengers, we had a system worked out that permitted us to occupy double seats all the while we were in the coach section. It was a very simple system, but it always seemed to work. Coach seats were reversible, the idea being that each seat would be occupied by two people, facing toward the front of the train. Our "system" was to reverse the seat in front of us thereby giving each of us a full seat--one looking forward and the other looking toward the rear. The second benefit from this arrangement was that we had a place

to store carry-on luggage. (When we pushed the forward seat-back to the front, it formed an inverted "V" with the back of the next seat, thereby providing space we could use for hand luggage.)

In order to keep the two seats we would lay down and pretend to be sleeping whenever our train came to a station stop. Once the train was moving again, we "woke up", stretched, yawned and again enjoyed the scenery as it flashed by at some 50 or 60 miles per hour.

Seldom was there so much traffic that the car we were in was completely occupied. But, in using this ruse, we didn't have our space crowded with an extra body, plus his or her baggage. Each train had, as least, three sleepers and three or four coaches, so no one was deprived of a place to sit.

I usually sat facing toward the engine. Since the cars, then, had no air conditioning, I could open the window, and stick my head out to catch the wind (as well as cinders from the coal-fired, steam engine). Of course I didn't get to wash my hair until after we had arrived at my sister's house, but that was a matter of minor importance.

It did bother me some, however, when a cinder lodged in my eye. By the time those small cinders got back to our area, they were cold, and not hazardous to the eyes. It was the nuisance of having to blink them out, or have mother take one out with a handkerchief--paper tissues (like Kleenex) had not yet been discovered, so linen and cotton handkerchiefs were the style.

Somewhere, about now, I had learned any number of swear words. On this particular trip, Mother and I, as usual, had moved into the sleeper car for the night. Again I had the upper bunk, and being a typical teenager, was soon sound asleep. Mother didn't go to sleep as quickly and was to become thoroughly chagrined from the language voiced by her only son that night. According to mother, every time the train stopped at a station, quiet would prevail. At that moment I would mouth-off with all the cuss words I had ever learned.

Mother was not only embarrassed, but most discouraged with me, but there was no way she could reach out from her lower bunk to poke, shake, beat, or in any other way wake me up for immediate chastisement. Me?? I was innocent of it all. So I talked in my sleep! I didn't even remember where or when I might have learned such words!!

I'm certain I said "I'm sorry"! But there was no way I could guarantee that it wouldn't happen again. I don't think it ever did.

Arriving at the King Street Station, in Seattle, we were met by Claire and Ethel. Claire was now working on the newspaper in the town of Enumclaw (sometimes referred to as "Enumscratch"). It was a pretty, and very busy, small town, nestled in the foothills just below Mt.

Rainier. That first summer in Enumclaw was one of exploration. Consequently I spent most of my time swimming at a nearby lake and playing tennis on the high school courts. I met a number of kids my age, both boys and girls. We paired off to play doubles at tennis, and made a couple of double dates to go to the movies.

Mother had to go home soon after we arrived, because Dad had hurt a leg and was in the Northern Pacific Hospital. My stay with Ethel, lasted about two weeks, total, then I went over to Walla Walla in Eastern Washington to visit my uncle, Henry S. Brewer and aunt "Gerty" (mother's sister Gertrude).

That visit was rough. Uncle Henry had a small farm outside of Walla Walla where he raised alfalfa and black walnuts, along with the assorted animals that go with a farm. Alfalfa was the major crop, and I was there just at the time of harvesting the current crop (alfalfa can be harvested two and often three times during a season). While I assured Uncle Henry I could relieve him and do some of the mowing, he was certain that no 15-year-old city-bred kid could handle a team of horses and a mower--so I was relegated to following him around the field on foot. He was always yelling at me to stay clear of the mower, as if I didn't know where the cutter blade was working.

I did learn how to break open the black walnuts and shuck the meat out of their extremely hard shell. At first I didn't wear gloves, and my hands were stained green (from the outer shell) in no time. Gloves eliminated that problem. They were also very helpful in protecting my hands while using a hammer over the anvil to crack open the inner shell. Once I had a pile of cracked shells, I used a steel pick to pry out the meat. It was a tedious job, but better than tramping around the alfalfa field following the mower.

Another "educational event" for me, was an afternoon of waiting and watching to see Uncle Henry's cow get bred. On the Adkins' ranch the procedure was no big thing. Their bull ran with the herd and he had his pleasure when and wherever he and his choice of cow decided the event should take place. At Uncle Henry's place, it had to be an "arranged marriage". The bull was trucked in from a neighboring farm. He was released into the corral where the cow was already ensconced and calmly chewing her cud. Then the "fun" began. The bull made his advances, the cow walked away. This "dance" went around and around within the confines of the corral, with no progress being made toward a consummated event. I watched this procedure for at least one half an hour. It was hot, the "ritual" was going no where, so I walked over to the water trough and pumped up water for a drink. I didn't take my eyes off that bull once, during that moment in time, except to tip up the tin cup and drain off the last drop of cold water. It was a moment I regretted. As I lowered the cup from my lips, (where it also had blocked my vision) the bull lowered himself from the back of the cow--a most satisfied expression on his face. I continued to stare at them for a few minutes, but the "show" was definitely over. My one chance to watch a registered bull perform, and I had missed it!! Now I had nothing else to do but return to my mundane job of cracking open black walnuts.

Aunt Gerty was short and fat--a real live "five by five" as the comics say. She was a marvelous cook, and there was no excuse for anyone leaving her table unsatisfied. Her personal craving was ice cream. She could, and sometimes did, eat a whole gallon at one sitting. Beyond that, she was a kindly, loving person, always willing to help out a friend or relative. She also liked to read, and during my stay with her, saw to it that I did my share of reading--actually there wasn't much else to do, other than listen to the radio.

One night we were sitting around the living room, after dinner, when a heavy thunder and lightning storm came up. We walked out on the glassed-in porch to watch the lightening, for a few minutes, then returned to the living room and our reading. Suddenly there was an extremely heavy jolt of lightning close by, and the telephone, which hung on the wall across the room, gave forth with a sick little jingle. We all looked up and at that moment a bright, yellow ball of fire rolled out of the telephone mouthpiece. We watched, spellbound, as it continued its slow roll across the room, only to disappear at, or by going through, the window.

The telephone was the old fashioned type that required the caller to first pick the receiver off its hook, then crank once to contact an operator. When she (all telephone operators, then, were ladies) answered, you gave her the number (or in a small community, the name) of the party to be contacted and she did the rest.

We all examined the phone to see if there was any visible damage, but could find none. Uncle Henry "rang up" a neighbor to see if it worked, and it did. In fact neither the operator nor his neighbor had noticed anything out of the ordinary. We also looked at the window glass and could see no evidence of a burn or other damage. It was simply a mystery that was never solved.

As the days slowly passed, I was getting harder to live with, but there wasn't much I could do about it. The frustration of having nothing to do but follow Uncle Henry around--no kids to play with, no horse to ride, going nowhere--was now showing.

Finally, after about a week, mother returned. Never did anyone look so good. We had all driven into Walla Walla to meet the train and when mother stepped on to the platform, I took off like a Gazelle being chased by a Lion. I had been one homesick boy and no longer hesitated to show my relief at having that period behind me.

I suspect mother's arrival was greeted by Uncle Henry and Aunt Gerty equally as joyfully. However, with Gerty's sister on hand, we began to "do things". We visited other friends (who had kids my age), we went shopping for groceries, and we took a tour of the Washington State Prison.

Such a foreboding "palace". All that was lacking was a moat and drawbridge leading up to the heavy steel doors that guarded its entrance. When that gate clanged shut behind me, I knew I was in a prison. The people we met, mostly inmates who were not the hardened criminal variety, were very friendly. Our Tour Guide, of course, was a prison guard. We were shown a cell block which, as I recall, was not in use. We were shown the dining room--a very large room with row after row of tables and benches.

Our tour ended at the Gift Shop, where we were shown all the handicraft items made by inmates and which were now on sale. I remember buying a small fold up pocketbook for dad. It was the kind he always carried, and I knew his present one had one or two small holes.

When we were through browsing and buying, our guide escorted us back to the main gate. This time, when it clanged shut, with its very solid bang, I was glad to know I could go on and do the things I wanted to do. Within a day or two, mother and I were aboard the train, and on our way home.

Even in a time of depression, Glendive looked good. Our big, old house was there waiting, with dad and all the roomers and boarders glad to see us. Dinner, that first night, was a good question and answer time, telling one and all about our exploits. Mother, of course, had to recount my bout with homesickness--much to my chagrin--and everyone was interested in my "ball of fire" story. Dad had recovered from his banged up leg. (Somehow the bruise from hitting his leg on the baggage cart had caused an infection in the marrow of the bone.) He also liked the pocketbook.

Best of all everyone was glad to once again enjoy the taste of mother's home cooking.

Getting ready to start the new school year--as a Junior--was big stuff. Friends all had to be contacted; our trio had to learn some new songs; there were clothes to buy, "and all stuff like that there".

I was notified that practice sessions for band and orchestra would start the week before school, which meant doing some beforehand clarinet practice. I also had to contact Mrs. Farnum and start my piano lessons. I guess nothing was left to chance--I know nothing was left to chance since Helen Adkins was still Secretary to the high school Principal, and mother was riding herd on everything going on in my life.

That first week of school was always interesting too. I had successfully completed the course in Latin, thank goodness, and was now about to embark into the fine art of speaking French. What other courses I took that year, I don't recall. Miss Lucille Hennigar, our band and orchestra director, had interesting news for me--I was to be the First Clarinetist in both groups.

That meant I had an "out front, first chair" and would be responsible for sounding the "A" note to which all instruments were tuned.

Our house now had two more Pederson girls--Marie and Willma (we called her Willy)--who joined their sister Viola in helping mother. Also added was Herbert (Herby) Tilton. Herby and I shared a room that year and the Pederson girls shared a room. Other than that, mother had a full house of roomers, plus the boarders.

All of us teenagers, pulled kitchen duty, which meant setting the table, serving, clearing the table and washing dishes. I was the only one involved in band and orchestra, so I did get out of most everything except washing dishes.

We had a pretty good routine; the girls took turns washing and rinsing while Herby and I dried. Whichever girl was not washing or rinsing, was delegated to putting the dishes away. The china and silverware went smoothly, but pots and pans slowed us down.

Mother took care of "packaging" the leftovers and storing them in the ice box. Once the "chores" were out of the way, we got our books and sat around the dining room table to study. With mother close by, believe you me, there was no horseplay.

On weekends and holidays, Herby and the Pederson girls often went home to their folk's ranches. An important high school game was sure to keep them in town, however. If they didn't go home, for whatever reason, we never lacked for something to do. In the fall we did a lot of hiking over the hills around Hungry Joe. Dad and Herby and I sometimes took our .22 rifles and went hunting cotton tail rabbits. Herby and I also went fishing for Catfish down by the Yellowstone River. I think the largest I ever hooked was a five-pound "Cat".

Sometimes we all went down to the river and just wandered along the bank for several miles hunting Agates. These are very hard stones that have been rolled and tumbled by the river current over a period of time--perhaps centuries. Those found along the Yellowstone are called "Moss Agates". Some are huge chunks, of as much as five pounds, or more, and generally rounded. They have a hard, gray-colored, but smooth outer surface. These can be carefully broken or sawed into thousands of pieces. They usually have scenes or designs. When professionally cut and polished they can be made up into a ring, broach, belt buckle or some other desired piece of jewelry.

One of our neighbors, Bob Larimer Sr., had a jewelry store in town. He would travel to Billings, rent a rowboat and drift down stream with the river current, stopping wherever he wanted to in search of quality agates. He had five daughters, and over the years found an agate, for each girl, that had her first name initial in the design. These, of course, he cut and polished to make into a ring.

In the back portion of his store, he had all of his cutting and polishing machinery. His son Donald (one of three sons) and I spent many a Saturday afternoon cutting and polishing stones to add to the store's inventory.

Somewhere around Thanksgiving the first snow would fall, and we knew winter was upon us. Mother was very active in the Rebekah organization so I and our trio were invited to sing at special occasions. These always involved a pot-luck dinner--a meal that was hard to beat. During these events, mother would have her boarding house dinner all planned out and prepared, and leave the serving to the high school girls who lived with us. The girls were excellent and there were never any complaints about mother not being there.

Sometimes, especially on a week-end, the pot-luck continued with dancing after the meal. These were joint meetings with the Oddfellow Lodge. By this time I was quite proficient as a piano player and had picked up being able to play by ear--not requiring a sheet of music to play a song. Consequently I was often drafted to provide music for the evening dancing. It was a lot of fun and I enjoyed every minute.

I was always glad, however, when the group decided to have an old fashioned Square Dance. Then they had a fiddler do the music and calling so I was able to dance.

One night, after the dance, ten of us piled into Harris Long's car--a sedan--for the ride home. Harris and I lived within two blocks of each other, while the rest of the gang came from the Heights--several miles away. Being winter, the windshield had frozen over. We scraped off most of the ice in front of the driver, but as soon as we all got in the car, the heat of our bodies and breath fogged the windshield on the inside.

There were five of us in the front seat--three, including the driver, on the seat and two sitting on the laps of the other two front seat passengers. Five more were cuddled up and doubled up on the back seat.

We started out at a reasonable rate of speed because the street was covered with snow and ice. Before long, it was quite noticeable that our speed had increased and was getting faster every few minutes. Occasionally, Harris would reach up, with his gloved hand, and wipe away the condensed air that fogged over his only peep hole through the icy windshield.

Finally the girl sitting beside Harris spoke up. "Don't you think you're going a little fast for this icy road?" she asked.

Harris looked at her, smiled and replied, "Well, I'm just doing the steering, and so far there hasn't been any particular problem."

"What do you mean, 'steering'?" she shot back, "you're going too fast and you know it."

"I thought about slowing down a couple of miles back," he said casually, "but I couldn't shift gears or put my foot on the brake because you keep pressing my foot to the gas pedal. Therefore I can't slow down. Now, if you'll take your foot off of my foot, then I will slow to a respectable speed."

With that exchange, nine of us started laughing. The tension broken, the girl moved her foot. Then she also laughed and we were delivered safely to our respective homes.

Delivering a morning newspaper in the winter was no great joy. Of course I was dressed for it, but that, sometimes, only added to the discomfort. I wore "long johns" as the first layer. My pants were either wool or corduroy, with a wool shirt tucked in. Over that was my heavy, sheepskin-lined corduroy jacket with its large sheepskin collar.

I wore a woolen stocking cap, pulled down over my ears and wool-lined mittens to protect my hands. My feet were encased in heavy wool stockings, and knee high leather boots whose soles were waterproofed.

Generally it took about an hour to tramp through the snow, slide across the icy sidewalks and pick myself up from an accidental tumble in order to deliver my forty papers. I thing I received a nickel per paper per week, which provided some spending money of my own.

One reward was the opportunity, on occasion, to pilfer a "stick" of frozen cream. The milk man made his delivery about two hours before I came around. Being whole milk, and bottled the previous night, the cream had risen to the top three or four inches of the bottle before the milkman started his route. Milk, in glass bottles, freezes easily. The freezing process expanded the milk, thereby pushing the cream above the rim of the top. This made it a readily available target for removal.

"Stick" of Frozen Cream

When such an opportunity knocked, I carefully hand delivered my paper, instead of throwing it. As I backed off the porch, that "stick" of cream just disappeared. I always replaced each bottle cap, too, thereby making it appear that there hadn't been much cream in the bottle that morning.

The excitement of Christmas started soon after Thanksgiving. There was a church pageant to be involved with, usually a major orchestral presentation at high school, and at least one appearance by our trio. In addition there was the anticipation of our usual trip to Seattle. This particular Christmas trip was scheduled to be one of the most interesting and exciting ever. Mother and I just didn't know it.

Our railroad passes were in hand and we were scheduled to leave Glendive early on the morning of December 20th. That would get us into Seattle around 9:00 p.m. on the 21st. On the night of the 19th, we were ready. Our bags were packed and, in addition, we had a well wrapped, 30 pound turkey destined for our Christmas dinner at the Wilders. It was a gift from one of our farm friends.

Considering the typical cold weather of that period, our train arrived on time. Ten minutes later we were settled in a double seat and on our way. That morning, we broke our general rule--we had breakfast in the diner--mother had business to attend to. As soon as we had ordered, she asked to speak to the Chef. He came to our table and mother told him about our turkey and "can we please store it in your refrigerator for our trip to Seattle?"

I was surprised, when he said "yes", but mother wasn't. She knew the Northern Pacific Railroad had the best dining car crews of all the railroads and the Chef in this crew would be an example. Before our breakfast could be served, I had skedaddled back to our coach seat, picked up the turkey and returned to the diner. From then on it was a normal trip. We moved into a sleeper car that night, and back to the coach after our second breakfast. Soon we would be in Spokane and that night into Seattle. That's what we thought!

We made it to Spokane all right, but "Because of the heavy rain", the Conductor said. (and it was coming down by the bucket full) "there will be a one-hour delay."

You can't fight it, so we went into the Depot, bought magazines and settled down. As the end of the hour's delay approached, we boarded the train again.

"I'm afraid I have bad news", the Conductor reported. "Our trip has been cancelled due to severe flooding on most of the rivers in Western Washington." Then he continued, "Everyone will get off the train here, and you will have to find your own accommodations. I suggest that

you contact the Ticket Agent, in about 36 hours, for information as to when passenger service can be resumed."

What a low blow! Well, first things first. I made my way to the dining car and retrieved our turkey. Baggage in hand, (one suitcase each) and the turkey we walked out to the street. Mother knew of a hotel, not too far away, so we headed there. We were given a room and once again mother talked the restaurant Chef into storing our turkey.

She called Ethel, with word that we'd be there when we could get there, "but not tonight as planned."

As soon as we had finished lunch, mother said, "Let's walk back to the depot." So we did. A quick question to the ticket agent and she was on her way to the stair case. "You wait here," she said to me, "I'll be right back." I did. And she was.

"I've made contact with the Division Superintendent" mother reported. "I am to call him in about an hour. A new problem has developed, which they are trying to fix."

The problem, we learned later was a group of some 400 students at Washington State College, in Pullman. It was Christmas vacation for them too, and they had to get to Tacoma and Seattle to enjoy it. So the railroad was figuring a way to get them there.

Mother got to the "Super" an hour later and he assured her a solution was being developed, but it would take a little time. "Call in the morning about 9:00," he said. "I'll have an answer by then."

Mother did and he did. "Get down here right away," was his answer. "I have a coach leaving in 20 minutes. I'll meet you at the ticket counter."

Again I gathered up Mr. Turkey, while mother paid the hotel bill. Thanks to a taxi waiting just outside the hotel door, we were in the depot and at the counter with ten minutes to spare. We boarded the train and found that, other than the Superintendent and a Conductor, we were the only passengers. I learned then that, sometimes, it pays to know the right person. The rest of the passengers on our original train could wait 36 hours if they wished, but mother planned to be in Seattle before Christmas. And she knew what contacts to make if it was going to be at all possible.

Pullman is about 70 miles from Spokane, so about an hour and a half later we were there. Since there are no major railroad maintenance facilities in Pullman, the Superintendent had arranged for a train, of some eleven coaches and two diners, to be backed into Pullman from Portland, Oregon. That train arrived about one hour after we did.

The word had been given to the college and all the students were there. What a mob. As it turned out, there were two chaperons for each car of students, so everything was well under control. Getting on board was orderly, and there were two passengers for every seat. (No feigned sleeping this time!!)

Our baggage went into the overhead rack, But I held the turkey on my lap. Dinner went surprisingly smooth too, and once again mother talked the dining car Chef into storing the bird.

Everyone in our car was through with dinner by 8:30 p.m., then we all settled down to reading, playing cards, or just plain talking.

There were quite a number of boy-girl pairs, but no heavy "petting" was visible. Thank goodness the portable radio and "boom box" had not yet been invented. The noise level was tolerable.

Shortly after ten o'clock, the chaperons announced that the lights would go out at 11:00 so we could all get some sleep. A resounding cheer went up with that statement. Then "the other shoe was dropped."

"Please pay attention", said the teacher. "All girls are to remain in this coach. All males are to move to the next coach to our rear."

An audible groan went up. There was discussion, but immediately the chaperon again asked for order.

"From the coach to our rear," she continued, "all girls will move up to this station and the men students will remain."

With the end of that announcement, the decibel level of conversation erupted. Some arguments were attempted, but all to no avail. The chaperons had the last word, and everyone knew it. Mother and I, however, were not included in the separation process. Once the shifts had been made, the students settled down. Lights went out at 11:00 and before long the majority were sound asleep.

Morning arrived with the rain still falling. It had been a long, slow ride because of the weather. Groans were prevalent as cramped bodies--legs in particular--were stretched into normalcy. Hearty yawns added to the noises of that 5:00 o'clock hour. The diner's steward soon came through, ringing his chime to announce "Breakfast is now being served in the dining car ahead." Since we were in the car right behind that diner, it didn't take us long to get into line. By 8:00 everyone on the train had been fed.

With everyone in a better mood, the Conductor came through to announce that we would be in Portland in about 15 minutes. He added that "There you will get off the train--with your baggage--and board the waiting buses. They will take you across the Columbia River to Vancouver, Washington. Another train is waiting to complete your trip."

One student held up a hand and was acknowledged: "Can those of us living in the Portland area, stay?" he asked.

The question drew a groan of disbelief from the rest of the crowd. "Only if your parents are there to help you off the train," the Conductor replied, with a straight face. He then moved on to relay his message to the next car.

Once again I retrieved Mr. Turkey, and, baggage in hand, we got off the train in Portland. Mother found a telephone, and called Ethel, giving her an estimated time of arrival in Seattle as 9:00 p.m. She only missed it by two and a half hours.

Our transfer to the buses was slow, but efficient. We convoyed, at well spaced distances, across the Columbia River bridge and on to the railroad station in Vancouver. Our train awaited, so we were able to board immediately.

The trip north was slow and fraught with anxiety. We had noted, on boarding, that attached to the head end of our engine was a railroad flat car--not a normal occurrence. From our new Conductor we learned that it was a safety procedure. Due to the rain, and in many places flooding rivers, some very long sections of road bed were totally covered by water. In order to be sure the road bed had not crumbled, leaving the tracks suspended in air, a Brakeman was riding at the head end of that flat car. Whenever the water was so deep, or murky that the Brakeman couldn't see the track, he signaled the Engineer to stop. The Brakeman dropped a sounding line (a lead weight attached to a long piece of rope that was marked to show feet and inches) thereby determining that it was safe to continue.

Those stops were not too often, and for much of the route we traveled at near normal speed. The slowing down, and then the stop, was always of concern, because we were usually "out in the country" and away from any form of communication. (Railroads, then, did not have engine to station radio contacts)

By 10:30 that night we were in Tacoma. It had been a long day with only a limited supply of "Snacks" to assuage our stomachs since that early morning breakfast. We resupplied with snacks during the thirty minute stop in Tacoma, and consumed most of them over the next one hour trip into Seattle.

It was a great relief to see Claire and Ethel on that King Street Station platform. It was also a great relief to have Claire carrying My Turkey. Our trip of two days and one night had turned into four days and three nights. Actually, we were thankful that we had made it at all, under such rotten weather conditions.

When we arrived in Enumclaw, Claire and mother poked, sniffed, and otherwise thoroughly looked over, every ounce of that 30 pound turkey. We were relieved when they pronounced it safe to cook.

We had a wonderful Christmas with the family, even though it was several days short of what had been planned. I also enjoyed renewing some of the friendships previously made. Our trip home to Glendive was routine. The rains had ceased and the railroad had inspected the route so we returned home without a hitch.

Starting the new year (1931) seemed just like the old 1930. My winter sports activities continued where I had left off. The ice skating on the river was just as good and skiing on the hills had its excitement.

One ski run was a long hill, well covered with cactus. Once when I fell, I landed in such a patch. Although the needles penetrated my clothes, all except one was immediately removable. That one had gone into my right knee. It broke off when I tried to pull it out. Short of an operation, I was told, there was no way to I could get it out. However, if I would suffer a little discomfort, it would work through, and eventually come out.

Since the pain was bearable, I figured that was the best way. Sure enough, several weeks later, the point made its appearance on the back side of my knee. With the help of a pair of pliers it was pulled out. A splash of iodine covered the spot where the cactus needle had been, and I had no further problem.

My skis, like all others, had no bindings. I simply slipped my street boots through the toe strap and that was all there was to it. The slope, I just mentioned, terminated at a cutbank (small cliff) where the next ground level was about 20 feet lower. Some five feet out from the edge of the cliff was a four-foot high barbed wire fence.

When the snow was just right, it was an exhilarating run in which, at the edge of the cliff, I took off into the air to soar over the fence. If my skis stayed on, I, like all others, slid to a stop well away from the fence. Sometimes I landed in a heap, too close to the fence for comfort. I never broke anything, but did have several near misses with the fence.

Tobogganing was another great winter sport. On one occasion, however, fun almost turned into disaster. A favorite hill, ended at the edge of a small backwater slough in the river.

When the slough was frozen and covered with snow, the sliding capability was good for another 20 or 30 feet.

On this particular day a group of us gathered, with our well waxed toboggans, at the top of the hill. The first one down, was (I'm quite positive) Gordon Mullendore. He had a good "head of steam" when he hit the edge of that icy slough--then he disappeared, toboggan and all. There was a gasp from each of us, that turned into a rush for the spot where he had gone under. Just as suddenly as he had disappeared, he reappeared. Like a movie shot, where a person dives into the water head first; the film is reversed and the diver comes back out of the water feet first.

We grabbed the toboggan and Gordon, pulled them up on the bank, got Gordon out of his water-soaked heavy jacket and into another dry jacket. Two of the guys escorted him home. That ended our toboggan run for that Saturday. Believe you me I never used that hill again without first making sure the ice was solid from the edge of the slough to several feet out.

Another toboggan run was about 5 miles to the north of town. One afternoon it was suggested that lighting would make it useful at night.

The Montana Power Co. plant had a search light on its roof that continuously circled the sky every night, ostensibly for the benefit of airplanes. Glendive had no real airport--just a smoothed over field with a windsock in place. That light was simply decorative, because other than an occasional barnstorming pilot, there was no airplane traffic.

The plan was to focus the light on "toboggan hill" so we could see where we were going. The Power Plant Superintendent, Simon Freeman, was a boarder at our house. I talked to him and found he was amenable to the idea. Reporting my success back to the others, it was agreed that we "toboggan under the lights" the next Saturday night.

When the day arrived, several of us went out to the site and laid down material for two bonfires. The fires were to be about 60 feet apart, straddling the toboggan run. After dinner I, and some others, drove out to the site, lit the bonfires and waited. Within minutes, the light stopped its rotation and was aimed in our direction. I know Simon couldn't hear us, but we let out a loud shout of approval, and waved our hands in appreciation.

Simon said afterward he could see us dancing and waving our hands, so he knew the light was properly focused. We slid down that hill until about 11:00 p.m. and had a great evening--even better than on a night with a full moon. On the way home, I stopped at the Power House, and told Simon our fun was over so he could put the light back into its normal rotation. When I got to the house, the whole gang--12 hungry teenagers--was waiting.

To my surprise the night of excitement wasn't quite over. The gang was standing on our front sidewalk, looking into the northeastern sky. It was a beautiful, clear, very cold night, and the Northern Lights (Aurora Borealis) were the best I ever remember. There were the normal flashes of light playing on both the left and right, but square in the middle, was a group of lights that had formed a perfect wheel. It had a "hub", evenly spaced "spokes" and circular "rim". In their play, the "spokes" would first protrude a bit beyond the rim, and then recede to just inside the rim, but the changing colors and movements of those heavenly lights was a spectacle I have long remembered.

Some people say that Northern Lights are a signal for a big change in the weather. I doubt there is any scientific proof for such thought, but as soon as it warmed up that Spring, a lot of rain fell. It came at a good time. The ranchers had their crops all planted.

After witnessing that beautiful heavenly show, we were even more hungry. Trying to be quiet, we went around to the back door, walked up the steps to the kitchen, and proceeded to make hot cocoa and sandwiches. Mother, of course, heard us and came out to see what was going on. As long as we were quiet, there was no problem, so she went back to bed. Once our starving stomachs were satisfied, all who didn't live there went home, those of us who did went to bed. It had been a wonderful Saturday night.

Somewhere in late February or early March, two new roomers joined us. They were both very pretty young ladies, about 21 years of age. The girls both worked at our local Woolworth's five and ten-cent store. One was the office manager, and the other, a clerk. Unfortunately there were no really eligible men in the house, so everyone got to enjoy their company. Virginia Taylor was the prettiest of the two, (I don't remember the other girl's name.) and it didn't take long for word to get around that they were in town. I also remember how their presence made my 16th birthday much more enjoyable.

That particular birthday came in the middle of the week, so there wasn't much excitement. When I came home from high school for lunch, mother had dressed the place up a little with a couple of balloons. When we finished eating, mother, then, trotted out one of her masterful Angel Food cakes topped with 16 burning candles. Then the fun began. Everyone there had a gift, but when Virginia and her room mate gave me theirs, I also received a delightful and long remembered kiss. That, from two pretty girls whom I hardly knew, was inspiration.

My feelings, however, were soon brought down to earth. One of the Auto Mechanics, Lyle Harvey, was a large man, with hands the size of a small baseball catcher's mitt. He had backed away from the table, and now called me over to his side. My mind being on kisses and presents, I willingly obliged. When I got to Lyle's side, he quickly put his one arm around my shoulders, and before I knew it I was laying bottom up across his knees. While one hand held me down, the other spanked me. That was the worst spanking I ever had in my life. Try as I might, I could not hold back the tears--not a flood, but just enough to embarrass me. When that ordeal

was over, I stood up and was in the process of wiping the tears away. Lyle's hand (the one that had been holding me down) came up suddenly, and pulled my shirt collar open from behind. His other hand came up (by this time I didn't now what to expect) and, one at a time, he dropped sixteen silver dollars down my back. I was no longer an unhappy 16 year old. In fact that was one of my very best birthdays.

By now I had a new girl friend, Doris Lease. She, her sister and another girl, Lois Gaynor, lived in the home of our high school Science teacher. They, like the kids at our house, came from nearby ranches and were working for their board and room. Doris's sister became ill and passed away that spring. Soon after, Doris came down with the Chicken Pox. Since I had already endured that disease I was allowed to visit Doris and did.

Lois's boyfriend was Norman Robinson. He and I became very good friends, and in our Shop class, combined talents to build a racing body for his Model "T" Ford. It turned out to be a "classy chassis" to drive around town. Doris and I double dated with Norm and Lois, that year, for both the Junior and Senior Proms.

Another dance I went to that Spring had, both an exciting beginning and a funny ending. The Pederson girls were all going home one weekend and, because there was a dance in their nearby village, asked me to go along. Viola and I had gone out some, so that was another reason for my going.

Mr. Pederson had purchased a brand new Chevrolet sedan several weeks previously, and we were enjoying the privilege of riding in it. It was after dark when we left home, and raining, but that was no problem--we thought. It turned out to be a problem when we came to a curve in the road. A car, coming from the opposite direction, came around the curve, with its lights up bright. It was a two-lane, gravel road and, with these new-fangled, electric windshield wipers flashing in his face, Mr. Pederson wasn't sure how much room he had.

Consequently he moved to his right, and over the edge of the grade ditch. The car was rolling over. It was an easy roll, but the car ended up on its top, with the Pedersons, their daughters and me all in a heap. We opened the doors, climbed out, and determined that no one was hurt--not even a scratch.

Somehow word was relayed back to Glendive and soon a tow truck arrived. The operator parked along the edge of the road parallel to our overturned car. That was a mistake. The tow truck driver reeled in the Pederson car, getting it back up on its four wheels. But the brakes on the Chevrolet had not been set and it started to roll. The truck driver frantically tried to release his cable, but to no avail. Over on its side went the tow truck. It was another hour of delay before a second tow truck came and finally we were on our way. We went on to the Pederson home, then to the dance and early Sunday morning made it to bed.

I had worn my brand new grey suit. In the accident nothing had been torn, so I wore it to the dance, and carefully hung it up when I went to bed. When I got up in the morning that grey suit was spotted all over with little and big red dots that disintegrated when touched. In the roll over, battery acid had spilled and my suit got the brunt of it. No one else was hit, but my suit was a total loss. Mr. Pederson had a pair of coveralls that came close to fitting me, so I had something to wear going home Sunday afternoon. Oh, the dance was great and we all had a very good time.

Later, that Spring, I had another lesson on the value of keeping all four wheels of a car on the ground. Several weeks after the Pederson accident, a group of us journeyed to Miles City, some 75 miles west of Glendive. The purpose of this trip was to attend a Christian Endeavor conference--which we did. But we also decided, during a "free" period that night, to explore the area. Judd Walker was the driver--it was his dad's car, a Plymouth sedan. We had completed our "exploration" and were now looking for a back road into town.

Somehow Judd missed a turn. He ended up driving us along a double cowpath, which looked like a road, but wasn't. We were virtually crawling along in low gear, but the fact that the cowpath on the left went off into space eluded his eyesight. The left front wheel left the "road" unnoticed. When the left rear wheel followed, over we went. This time the car made a complete roll, coming up on its four wheels.

There were four of us in the car, two girls, Judd and I. After brushing ourselves off, and checking for injuries--none--Judd and I inspected the car. One side window glass was broken out and the left front fender crumpled. We pulled the fender away from the tire, but the headlight was cockeyed. The motor was still running. Judd tried it in low gear and the car moved. We then explored the area on foot, and found the road we had been looking for. Low gear got us out of the hole, so we went on to the church and our final Christian Endeavor meeting.

I guess we looked a little disheveled, because people expressed concern. They were sympathetic, but as long as no one was hurt, that's as far as it went.

The trip home was a little slower than it might have been, but not much. Judd drove the first hour, then I spelled him. Our only problem was the cockeyed light. It threw a distinctive shadow, that resembled a pile of sand, across the road. Because of the late hour and, I suppose, unconscious concern about what Judd's dad would say, that "sand dune in the road" would get magnified and make me think I had to slow down. We did get home safely, and had that much more to talk about in school the next day. Oh yes, Judd's dad was very understanding.

One other subject that was the talk of our School at that time, related to our History teacher. His one passion was horseback riding. He had a beautiful bay mare that must have stood close to 15 hands high. (The word "hands" is a measurement designation peculiar to horses. It is generally accepted as equal to four (4) inches. Measurement is made from the ground, behind the front feet, to the "withers"--the highest point of the horse's shoulders.)

The teacher in question was always immaculately "duded" up in a bright colored shirt, multi-colored scarf, riding britches and English riding boots. He also carried a riding crop (short, leather whip) in his right hand. The discrepancy was that he used a regular Western saddle. To his credit, he sat ramrod straight in the saddle, and with his horse's head held high, her tail arched, and moving at a prancing gait, they made quite a picture.

To those of us who knew the teacher, it was a laughable picture because of his mix of English type "habit" (clothes) and Western "tack" (saddle, etc.).

His teaching methods did not endear him to us either. Maybe, had we studied more, our attitude might have been different. One particular incident fixed our feelings "in concrete". As was his habit, he would ask a question (related to our day's assignment) and point to the first student in the left hand side of the room. If that student didn't know the answer, he'd go to the next kid in the row, and on, until somebody came up with the right answer.

On one particular day, the Principal, Mr. Kidder, chose to visit our history class. The teacher (I don't remember his name) asked his question and pointed to the first kid in the left hand row. She didn't know the answer, so up the row he went. At the end of that row, there was still no answer. Down the next row the question continued. This kept up until he'd covered half the class before an answer was obtained. With that, he looked up at the Principal and said: "I'm sorry, Mr. Kidder, but I seem to have all the dumb ones on one side of the room. I'll try and get them scattered out tomorrow."

A second question was then asked and the next student in line didn't know the answer. That kid happened to be the son of a local sheep rancher, so the teacher snapped off: "Mr. Kidder, you have to expect less from some of these Sheepherders."

The student shot right back. "Mr. Kidder, l would rather be a genuine Sheepherder than a Sears and Roebuck cowboy."

Before another question could be asked, Mr. Kidder walked up to the teacher and whispered something in his ear. Then the Principal left the room.

After class, our teacher was seen entering the Principal's office.

In Montana, that last month before the end of school, had one element I have never been able to recapture--the profusion and aroma of a mass of Lilacs in bloom. The Spring time budding out of trees and shrubs was always a subject of discussion. But mother had a fifty-foot hedge of Lilac--all purple--along the eastern edge of our property. When that hedge was in full bloom, everyone stopped to admire the sight and absorb the delicate fragrance. Others, in town,

had one or two single bushes, but ours seemed to be the only extensive garden. One thing we knew, when the Lilac was in bloom, summer vacation was fast upon us.


Lilacs in Bloom

Summer follows Spring, but the Summer of 1931 had meaning--I was now a Junior in High School. I had passed all my tests, although I certainly didn't make the honor roll, and for the next two years I could look forward to enjoying some "electives". At the moment I had no idea what "electives" I wanted, but there had to be something.

For starters, mother had to make a quick trip to see Aunty Gerty. Why I cannot recall. What I do recall is the fact that I was to be Chief Cook and Bottle washer on the home front. With school out, the Pederson girls were gone, so that left dad and me in charge of the house--and dad worked nights and slept during the day. Our roomers and boarders all worked during the day and did whatever they did at night. Good fortune was still on my side. Helen Adkins offered to help in any way she could.

Our first job was to plan meals for the week that mother would be gone. Cholesterol and salt intake was not a problem. All 15 boarders liked meat, eggs and bread along with potatoes and gravy and most vegetables. Desserts might be a problem.

Whatever Helen and I figured out was o.k. with dad. So the first meal was going to be my choice--liver and onions. Since Helen worked during the day, the noon meal was mine. I bought the liver, peeled the onions and cooked up some vegetables. Whether I forgot the potatoes or just left them out, I don't know. The meal was a success, though, and no complaints.

For the night meals, Helen did some of the cooking, when she could get away from her school job early. I did the cleanup for her. Between the two of us we cooked up a storm--steak, chops, (both veal and pork) and a couple of roasts too. For breakfast, my mainstay was bacon and eggs with toast and jam or jelly. I was pretty good at cooking oatmeal "mush" too. I did have one problem, baking an angel food cake. It rose beautifully to the top of the pan. What happened after that I don't know. When next I looked, it was still beautiful on one side, but the other had sunk almost to the bottom of the pan. We didn't get the cake I planned anyway.

Two days before mother's scheduled return, a new gentleman showed up. I told him the situation, suggested the food must be pretty good, because I still had 15 boarders, and told him what mother charged. He accepted and when mother returned there were 16 boarders. That made a real good start for my summer. The next three weeks were on the Adkin's ranch.

One advantage in being 16 years old, I could drive myself when I wanted to go somewhere. Helen Adkins had vacation time coming, so we went out to her folk's ranch in my car. Because there were no gas stations around, and the Adkins had no motorized equipment, "Betsy" just stayed put while I was on that vacation.

The summer activities were normal--working in the field, milking, and riding horses to do specific chores. After I had been there about a week, Harold asked his folks if he and I could ride over to Richey to his sister's farm. Harold had a slightly ulterior motive, in that he had a girl friend in that vicinity, and there was a dance scheduled for that Saturday night.

The answer was affirmative, so Friday morning, after breakfast, we saddled up and took off--about a 20 mile ride. Half way along we spotted an old line shack, which looked like a good place to rest for lunch. It had a water trough, so we watered the horses and staked them out to graze, then started toward the shack. Just as we were coming up on the place, we spotted a large Bull Snake slithering up the two steps and through the open front door.

Bull Snakes are not a dangerous specie for humans, but they do have to eat. Harold suspected this one was looking for its lunch, too, so we quietly stepped up to the door and peeked inside. There was Mr. Bull Snake, face to face with a cornered Rattle Snake. Mr. Rattle Snake was rattling his tail like mad, but Mr. Bull Snake was not the least bit impressed because he knew a rattler's bite could not bother him.

The rattler was coiled to strike, and did. But as he sank his fangs into the Bull Snake, the Bull immediately wrapped himself around the rattler and the battle was joined. There was a lot of writhing and squirming by the rattler, but he couldn't escape the constrictive pressure being applied by the Bull Snake. We knew the Bull would have a satisfactory lunch, so we retreated to a shady spot outside by the horses to enjoy ours. That evening we arrived at Vivian and Glen's place. After dinner Viv decided they would also go to the dance, so we all rode together in their buggy.

From my standpoint, the dance was no big thing. I didn't have a date and no interesting girls seemed to be around. Harold and his girl had a good time, though, and that was the primary reason for going.

The next day being Sunday (we didn't go to church), and since Harold and I were there, Glen decided this was a good day to "ring" a litter of little pigs. As I recall the ring was put in the nose of the boar (male), so he could be more easily handled. Thus the saying evolved "led around by the nose". Doing it at this early age, made it much easier for the farmer. Anyway that was our chore for the day. It sounds easy, but don't you believe it. An old sow (female) guards her babies like a mother bear. And all the little pigs had to be caught in order to ring those that were boars.

In this litter there were twelve little pigs about ten weeks old. The pen they were in was about fifteen feet wide and fifty feet long, with a water soaked mud hole near the end farthest from the entrance gate. As soon as we entered the arena, the sow and her kids made for the far end. Harold and I had only one job--keep the sow away from Glen as he picked up each piglet to do what he had to do.

Grabbing the first ten piglets went fairly easy. Harold and I were armed with sticks and we would chase the sow off to one side, while Glen cornered and caught a little pig by its two hind legs. If it was a little female, he stepped outside the gated pen and released her immediately. If it was a male, he was ringed (They have a pliers like gadget that holds a ring in its jaw. One quick squeeze of the hand puts the ring in place.) then the baby pig was put outside the pen with the others. They all stayed close, too, because they knew where their mother was.

The old sow was getting much more combative when we got to number eleven. Her brood was outside the pen, squealing their heads off, and mamma was inside trying to defend the remaining two piglets. Consequently it also took Glen longer to corner the number 11 little pig. I might add that Glen was getting tired from chasing the pigs around while at the same time avoiding the sow, whenever she got away from Harold and me. Toward that end, Glen won the contest.

Then came number twelve. The sow was gruntin' mad. She chased Harold, she chased me, and she chased Glen. We beat her off as best we could, until finally Harold and I got the sow corralled in one corner. In another corner Glen made a dive and grabbed the piglet by its two hind legs. Just as Glen got the squealing little fellow, the sow broke out of its corner and took after him.

It was no contest, and Harold and I broke down laughing. For the first ten feet Glen was ahead by four feet. Then he slipped in the mud at the edge of the wallow. Hanging on to the pig,

he recovered and took off again, hollering at Harold and me to prepare to open the gate. He was going through.

By this time the sow was no more than two feet behind Glen, both of them going at full gallop. But the distance to the finish line was too great. As he ran, Glen held the pig out behind him, hoping that would slow the sow. It didn't work. With every four-footed leap, the sow was gaining and there was no way anyone--specially two bent-over-laughing teenagers--was going to stop her from reclaiming her baby.

Glen was still 10 feet from the gate, with no chance of getting there. So, rather than let the sow knock him down and, probably, grab a huge bite out of his leg, Glen dropped the piglet. (A disturbed sow will knock a person down, and bite under such circumstances.)

Glen was not happy with either Harold or me, but realized we probably could not have kept the sow away from him. After resting up from his ordeal, we chased the sow out of the gate to join her eleven "children". Then that last little Pig was corralled and had a ring put in his nose. Yes, that piglet did turn out to be a boar.

Monday morning, Harold and I set out for home. Again, we stopped at the old line shack for lunch, but there were no snakes around this time. With our horses watered, fed and rested, and our own sack lunches gone, we continued on.

Harold wanted to see some property farther to the west of us, so we changed direction. It was a great day for riding. Not too hot, and we were in no hurry. We found the area Harold wanted to see and all in all had been riding about two hours since our lunch stop.

Off in the distance a small animal appeared. At first we thought it was a coyote. It acted strange for a wild animal, though, as it kept heading straight for us. Then we realized it was Harold's dog. Although we were still several miles from home, he had heard us coming (maybe felt is a better word, through ground vibrations) and knew we were coming from a direction different than the one when we left home.

Mrs. Adkins told us later, she saw the dog trot off, and knew we were on our way and from which direction.

Soon after my Adkins vacation, I was on my way, alone, to Seattle. As we entered the outskirts of the city I could see what all the newspapers had been talking about--poverty and the homeless. There beside the railroad track was "Hooverville", a city of shanties, some made from cardboard boxes. How many people lived there, I don't recall. It certainly was a "played up" feature in the Seattle and Tacoma newspapers. It also was the political hot potato. I couldn't help

but be thankful that our little town of Glendive didn't have a similar problem. There were still transients coming through every day, but none of them stayed.

Claire met me at the King St. station and we were on our way to Enumclaw. This was my first trip to the area alone. It was exploratory in some ways, because it was the first time my sister and I really had an opportunity to get acquainted. We had a number of long talks related to our individual childhood experiences, as well as comparing high school activities. Through it all, we seemed to narrow that 14-year gap in our ages. Of course, she was married, with two kids, so we had many differences to discover. We did grow closer.

After a day or so, I was back to the local swimming hole and high school tennis court renewing acquaintances from the year before. One evening Claire called my attention to an ad in his paper, recruiting teenagers to pick raspberries on a ranch outside the nearby town of Auburn. He and Ethel had talked it over, and if I was interested, I could use their car. I was interested. Driving to Auburn was my first experience with a "Whippet". A small car, stick shift, with a button on the steering wheel that controlled the lights as well as the horn.


"Whippet"

I found the ranch, with a huge field of raspberries, and was hired immediately. I would get two cents a box. There were a number of "do's and don'ts" but most of them pertained to using common sense and not horse around. There were six of us, as I recall, and we could easily pick the field in one day. Then we waited a day for the next batch to get ripe. So every other day I drove to Auburn and picked raspberries.

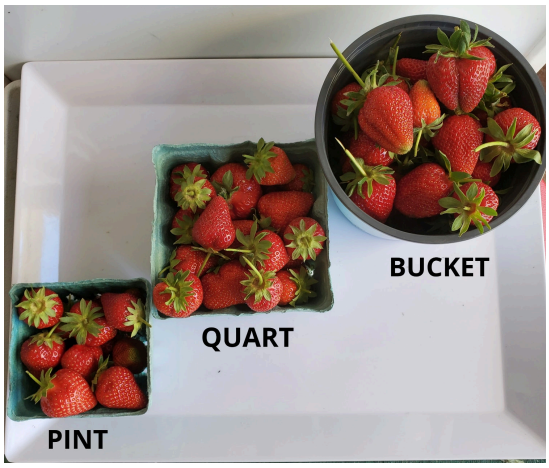
I have no recollection as to how much money I made, but it was enough to pay for my gas and some extras. Two kids, a brother and sister team, became good friends. We usually picked together and on one occasion spent a day in Seattle together.

We took separate buses into town and met at the L.C.Smith Tower. At that time the 42 story Smith building was the tallest structure in Seattle. We went to the top and admired the scenic city. I could even point out Vashon Island where Claire and Ethel had once lived.


L.C.Smith Tower in Seattle

From there we "did up the town". Ethel often laughed that we saw more in that one-day visit than she had seen in all the years they lived in the city. I remember going to Pike Place Market. I bought a pound of small, cooked (in the shell) shrimp, then, a pound of peanuts. We went down the street shucking and eating nuts and shrimp. It's good that litter laws had not been invented, because we sure littered the streets with our shucks.

Another delicacy remembered was strawberries. The variety available in Enumclaw was large, red and very sweet. They sold at four pint boxes for a quarter.



But all good things have to come to an end. My summer with Claire and Ethel ended about the same time the raspberry season did. I was on the train and headed home. That trip was highlighted because one day a young lady and her four-year-old son sat in the seat opposite mine. The youngster was bilingual and chattered away with his mother half the time in English and the other half in Russian. It was my first experience hearing a child that small speak in two languages.

School started on schedule. The only real change I remember was taking French instead of Latin. I liked French from the beginning, and that enjoyment continued for the next two years. As for other activities there was no spare time. Once we had a new repertoire, our trio never lacked places to go. Band and orchestra consumed many hours in practice and performances. Mother's Rebekah and church socials kept me engaged either as a singing soloist or playing piano for dances. I believe this was the year I joined DeMolay, the male youth organization of the Masonic Lodge. Oh yes, Rex McAnally and I were elected to be Cheer Leaders for the school's sports activities. That entitled us to wear white sweaters with a red megaphone emblazoned on it.

A Cheer Leader's job, then, was just what the words say. We didn't do cartwheels or pyramids. We had no girl counterparts. We were just two guys trying to stir up school spirit. Our big job was organizing the Snake Dances for the Friday night before the Saturday afternoon football game.

For these, nearly the entire student body (about 400) turned out. We gathered at the High School, and led the bunch in several cheers. Then everyone joined hands and we started "snaking" our way down Main Street, zigzagging from one side to the other. When a car stopped for us, we danced around it, holding the car up until everyone had passed. We wound our way around homes, through empty lots and finally into downtown. The hotel and every store that was open, was invaded by our dancing, singing, yelling horde of students. In no instance was there any vandalism or damage done. We were out to have a good time and let our team know we were behind them. The snake dance ended around a big bonfire in a vacant lot at the west end of town. To be sure I was "a little horse" the next day, but all over it by game time.

Mother's Ladies Aid Society, as mentioned before, was a group of women that often invited me to sing. I especially enjoyed their pot-luck dinners. So did my neighbor, Edith McIntyre. She was a strange one. Her kids could do no wrong and she was always right. When given the opportunity, to mooch a meal, she was ready and able. I often wondered it that was her primary purpose in belonging the the Ladies Aid.

Often at the end of each affair, which included food, Mrs. McIntyre would fill another plate with leftovers. Plate in hand, she would corner the hostess and inquire, "Is it all right if I take this plate home to my hubby?" No hostess ever deprived her the privilege, but many would have liked to.

That fall I became well acquainted with Clifford Vance. He was a frequent visitor to the house because of Virginia Taylor. In fact several years later they were married. I don't know what Cliff did for a living, but he was very much into music. Under his direction a theatre group was formed. The first production was a comedy with a lot of black faced individuals singing (a la Al Jolson) and dancing. I was one of the group. I blackened my face, chalked my lips and wore white gloves during a singing and dancing routine. I had learned to tap dance. I believe that one production was all that Cliff ever put on, but everyone involved had a good time.

As I have said before, Halloween was a mainstay feature of Fall. I could not let October 31 go by without thinking about it. Of course about that time sweet corn was also on every one's mind--and, around Glendive, farmers grew the sweetest of yellow sweet corn. Mother steamed it up to serve with dinner several times, but everyone asked for more.

One night, about 11:00 o'clock, Lyle and his buddy came in, via our back door, their arms piled high with sweet corn. Mother said "thanks", and no questions asked. The "no comment" sign was out for the rest of the kitchen help, including me. The next evening for dinner, corn on the cob with lots of real butter, was the only item on the menu. Everyone of those sixteen boarders had their fill and enjoyed every bite. What farmer contributed, no one ever knew and no one ever asked.

Getting back to Halloween. On November first of 1931, I awoke to find my Betsy had disappeared. I had parked in front of the house the night before (Halloween), with no thought of Goblins and their pranks. Now Betsy was missing. Where would I look to find her?? The words "auto theft" were not in our dictionary (in Glendive, that is), so a call to the police never entered my mind. Indeed no one else in the house was the least concerned. "Don't worry," one fellow said. "she'll show up."

I can't say that attitude helped me much, but I knew there was only one thing to do. After breakfast (it was a Saturday) I climbed on my bicycle and started pedaling. First I searched the nearby Streets--no results. Then up to the Heights and around the swimming pool--nothing! After lunch I started to go search the "south side" area, when I ran into a friend. I told him Betsy was missing and the places I had been to look for my car. He suggested that I look around the dump before doing the south side. I did, and there, on a nearby street, Betsy waited. It had taken most of the day, but the reward was worth it. I made a thorough inspection. Nothing was missing and no damage had been done. Obviously, it was just a Halloween prank.

I never did know who the culprit(s) was/were, but suspected the friend who directed me to the dump, was either in on the heist, or had some other insider knowledge. Whoever it was had simply hot-wired the car and driven it away.

The next couple of months were strenuous with activities such as ice skating, singing engagements, band practices and going to football (and later, basketball) games, as Cheer Leader, and with the band. In addition we started practice for the annual operetta. These more than kept me busy until Christmas vacation. Then mother and I were once more off for Seattle, leaving the house in the hands of the Pederson girls.

This particular trip, from Glendive to Seattle, was one of my most interesting. All of Montana (it takes a train 24 hours to cross the State) was under a weather system that had dropped the temperature to much below freezing. There had been a lot of dry, powdery snow. Consequently the Rocky Mountains were very beautiful in their almost total covering of the white stuff.

I believe it is somewhere out of the town of Thompson Falls, Montana that the train enters a tunnel, approximately five miles long, to cross under the Bitterroot Range. That range of mountains separates Montana from Idaho. When we came out of the tunnel we were near Sand Point, Idaho and the edge of Lake Pend Oreille.

What a difference. Northern Idaho also had experienced a heavy snowfall but, because of warmer temperatures, their snow was not dry. Here the branches of their beautiful, tall, pine trees were loaded down with six to eight inches of glistening, wet snow. Such a scenically, gorgeous contrast. In a few short miles of underground travel, we had gone from dry, brown and white mottled mountain peaks into a vividly green forest covered by extraordinarily wet snow. It was outstanding. It also was breathtaking because the change, in weather and scenery, had come so suddenly.

Only through train travel could such a magical, scenic diversity take place in reality. Continuing on, the snow cover became patchy, as we followed the rails down to the city of Coeur d'Alene, crossed Lake Coeur d'Alene, and into Spokane, Washington. From there to Seattle was a ride of about four hours. In that time I viewed some 300 miles of differing landscape. As mile after mile coursed by, I saw hilly flat areas, with checkered spots of white, (it had snowed in Eastern Washington too) into first the Cascade Mountains, then the heavily wooded, green of the Puget Sound area.

Because of the cold, that year, "Spats" became a fad, apparently peculiar to Montana. Spats are like gloves for your ankles. Made of grey felt, they fit over my oxfords. A leather strap went under the instep, and four buttons fastened them, going down the side of my ankles.

I wore them to Seattle that Christmas. Once there, I could see they were not "the rage of the town". No other teenager or adult male wore them. They were not to be found in any store. I was an obvious freak. So the spats came off (until l got back To Montana).

"Spats"

One thing Seattle does have is "pea soup" fog. I went shopping one day with Ethel and mother. By late afternoon, we had finished buying and went to the curb-side bus stand at Rhodes Department store to get a bus back to Enumclaw. Standing on the curb, I looked down and **could not see my feet.** Cars, of course, had their headlights and fog lights on, but it must have been miserable driving. The bus arrived and, as soon as we were away from the proximity of Puget Sound, the fog was gone.

Later in the week, we all drove into Seattle for dinner and a show. Going home that night the sky was clear until we got to the town of Kent. Between Kent and the next town of Auburn, the pea soup settled in. Even with fog lights, it was impossible to see the road.

Traffic, then, was nothing, as compared to what it is today. It seemed no cars were on the road other than ours. There was only one solution. I got out of the car with a flashlight in hand. I then walked in front of the car, shining my light down to see the yellow divider line on the highway--a simple two-lane road. With all lights burning, Claire could see me. I must have walked a good two miles, before we got out of that fog. From later experiences, there seemed to be a pattern. If it was foggy between Kent and Auburn, it was clear from Auburn to Enumclaw. If

clear between Kent and Auburn, it could be foggy between Auburn and Enumclaw. Either way, it is miserable driving in heavy fog.

That Christmas vacation was strange. When we were not out driving or walking in heavy fog, it was raining on whatever we did. In a country where this is a normal weather pattern, one gets used to it. I wasn't used to it, and it grated on my nerves to some extent. I wanted to play tennis, or go somewhere. Instead we stayed home. If mother, Ethel and Claire went out for an evening, I was elected to stay home and baby sit. I got along great with the little kids, but it was not my idea of a good time.

I was happy when Christmas Eve finally arrived. The Christmas tree had been up, and decorated, for nearly a week. That evening, after dinner, I played with Bill and Betty Mae until the folks finished "redding up" (cleaning up) the table and doing the dishes. Then it was time to open our presents. Most of them went to the little kids, with one for Ethel and Claire thrown in. Finally, one with my name surfaced.

From the size and shape, I knew it was a book. I expressed my pleasure at the thought, and said: "Great! Just what I needed. Now I'll have something to read on the train going home, and I'll read every word of it."

I carefully unwrapped the book, anticipating that it would be an exciting novel. With the last vestige of wrapping off, the book sat face down on my lap. I rubbed the colorful jacket and carefully turned it over. In large, bold print its title exclaimed **"Webster's Dictionary".**

I didn't know whether to laugh or cry. But Claire did. With a hearty chuckle to go with his words, he said: "I'm glad you are such an avid reader. I know you will devour every word in that book during your trip home!!" I had no reply, except to say, "uh-huh".

Truthfully, I didn't stand by my word. I didn't look at that dictionary once during the trip home. In fact, the book was packed where I couldn't get at it if I wanted to. At that moment I wasn't into the usage of words. Furthermore, I had no insight into the fact that eventually I would make my living using words.

The trip going home was uneventful. Soon after we arrived, I was back into the usual routine of school, and all the good things that went with it. Band and orchestra and the trio were primary activities, while cheering on the basketball team consumed a number of Friday nights. In the dead of winter we did no Snake Dancing!

I remember one road trip to some nearby town. Our team and Cheer Leaders travelled by bus in a snowstorm, and the road had a heavy coating of ice. Twice the bus almost slipped off the road. But our driver was very capable, thereby preventing an accident. When we got to the

visiting high school, the shock really set in. Instead of the high ceilinged gym that was normal in ours and all other schools we had visited, the ceiling of this gym was no more than five feet above the basket. I fail to recall any score, but there was a definite "home court advantage" in that game.

As it had every other year of my life, Winter was scheduled to turn into Spring. But first there were things to be done. None of these events were of great magnitude, just the usual going here, there, and/or otherwise being continually on the go with musical events of some nature. Study and the various practices consumed many hours. Ice skating, skiing, and toboggan slides pretty much filled up the leisure hours. After basketball, there were no more sports events to cheer for (baseball wasn't in the cards then).

March turned real warm, ending all other winter recreational activities. That left school dances and the Oddfellow-Rebekah pot-luck dinner dances to fill the void.

April came and passed, ending with my 17th birthday. As I recall that event was of no great significance, except to me. I was shaving regularly now, and that was a big event. Practice for the school's operetta had started, and I had a secondary lead part as one of the pirates in the Pirates of Penzance.

The month of May started warm and normal. In two days the weather turned to rain. The night of the 7th of May was freezing cold and I woke up on the morning of the 8th to a heavy snowfall. That was bad news for many ranchers.

Because of the warm Spring, ranchers had turned their cattle and sheep out to range. This sudden cold and snow caught them by surprise--too late to bring the herds back from the range.

For self protection against the cold and snow, many groups of stock bunched up under the nearest cutbank. Then came a driving wind that drifted the new snow right up and over the animals. Thousands of head of cattle and sheep were caught in that freak snow storm and thereby smothered to death. It was one more tragedy that ranchers face when weather turns against them. If it doesn't rain, crops dry up. If it rains too much, a flood can wipe out some crops. If the weather turns cold during a rain storm, hail will beat a crop, ready for harvest, right into the ground. It's the risk (and price) all Eastern Montana dry-land farmers and ranchers face.

Later that month, Helen Adkins asked me to drive her out to the ranch, so she could meet a friend and go to a dance. It sounded good to me, so off we went on a Saturday afternoon. Because of the heavy rains and melting snow, the road was exceedingly rough. Suddenly I hit a pot hole that bounced us around. Betsy's motor sputtered, and stopped.

When I looked under the hood, the rubber hose, that connected the radiator to the block, had pulled loose. It was a short hose, but by wiggling it around I got it back to where both ends barely made a connection. I had a five gallon can of water in the car, which I used. While I cranked, Helen stepped on the starter, and Betsy came alive. That lasted about five feet. The hose pulled loose again.

We were not more than five miles from Helen's place, but it was almost dark and nothing I did would make the car go except in low gear. There we were, no more water, a slow go, and up against a deadline. I could do only one thing, and I did it. Pushing the left hand pedal to the floor board, we moved along at five miles per hour in low gear. It was a long five miles, with every minute a question as to whether we would be walking after the next minute. When the lights of the ranch showed up, I breathed a sigh of relief--we could walk if we had to. But we made it.

As soon as we were in the yard I turned the motor off, got out of the car and lifted the hood. The engine block was totally red! I dropped the hood, shrugged my shoulders in despair, (what else could I do?) and off we went with Helen's boy friend to the dance. When we got home, we ignored my car and went to bed.

The next morning, after breakfast, all of us gathered around Betsy to see what ailed her. We soon found that she had a broken frame. That pot hole in the road, aways back, had "done her in".

My main concern was the engine. Would it start? We knew the frame had to be fixed first before even trying, so we scrounged around for something. An old, wooden, singletree turned up. (A singletree is a shaped wooden bar, with a hole at its center, permitting it to be attached, from a hitch, on any piece of equipment, i.e. a plow, or a stoneboat.) Normally there is a large ring at each end to which the traces (we called them "tugs", others call them "straps") are hooked. In this instance, the end rings were removed.

A Singletree

(For information purposes, a Stoneboat is a large sled, usually with 4" x 4" wooden runners, shaped at the front to slide over the ground. Hooked up to one horse, with a Singletree, it is used to transport large rocks, a barrel or two of water, or other large objects that must be moved from one place to another. This is before the advent of the now, highly prized Pickup Truck.)


A Stoneboat

Returning to Betsy--I jacked the front end of the frame into position, pounded the singletree into the open side of the U-shaped frame, straddling the break, and wrapped it tightly in baling wire. Dropping the jack, all was o.k. I connected the hose, filled the radiator, added oil to the motor, and stepped on the starter. What do you know? Betsy purred like a kitten.

Apparently the natural cooling of the previous night, kept the engine block from warping in any way. Whatever it was, Helen and I were thankful. As soon as we had lunch, we loaded up and drove the 50 miles back to Glendive with no farther problem.

During the following week I and several friends, scoured the dump until we found a frame that was a close match to Betsy's. With some help, I stripped everything off the old frame, installed it all on the new (old) frame (with rubber inserts at every bolt and nut connection) and my car was ready to go. There were several spots where new holes had to be drilled for the engine mounting, but that was no problem. When I cranked the car up, everything worked. I was pleased with the job I had done.

Near the end of May, an airplane landed at the Glendive "airport". The pilot, Martin Jensen, was barnstorming around the country and taking up passengers. It was a single engine, four-place, cabin job, but I do not recall its make.

Several months prior, Mr. Jensen and his plane had entered the San Francisco to Honolulu, "Dole Races". Jensen Won second.

I had hung around the airport all day. The charge was $15.00 for a fifteen minute ride. Every time I tried to be a passenger, he seemed to have a full party of three, so I couldn't go.

Finally, near the end of the day, my neighbor, Kenneth Larimer showed up. He was a photographer. Jensen wanted to fly out to look over a ranch, near the town of Lindsey, that he hoped to buy. He wanted Kenneth to take some photos. Since there would only be Jensen, his wife, and Kenneth, it was decided I should go along. What a thrill. The ride turned out to be one half hour each way. We landed on the edge of a wheat field. Kenneth got pictures from the air and on the ground, with his 16mm movie camera. When we returned, Kenneth took pictures of me around the nose of the airplane. I really had my money's worth.

Activities for that Spring ended on another high note. Francis Andrews and I were chosen to represent Glendive in the All-State Band. Details of the event escape me now. I do recall that we travelled to Billings, and stayed in the Northern Hotel. I believe we were there for only a couple of days, first to practice and then present a concert. I have no recollection of meeting, or making friends with, other kids, but it has to be a foregone conclusion that I did. Francis also played the clarinet. For this event, she played our regular B-flat clarinet, and I played the bass clarinet.

Those Spring activities, apparently, were a precursor of what the Summer would be--busy. Primary to the cause was the completion of my Junior year of High School. I was seventeen and had to decide soon what I planned to do in the future. Not being one to worry about such detail, I took the pass dad had ordered, and headed out for another "vacation" in Enumclaw.

At Bozeman, Mont. a number of students from Montana State College boarded the train. They were great kids and we all got acquainted and had a good time. One group, in our car, got off the train at Helena. One kid, however, was sound asleep. Dead to the world, describes it better. He had his head back against the seat and, with his mouth wide open, was snoring away when the train pulled into Helena.

Consequently he didn't hear the Conductor call out his stop, as he continued his undisturbed sleep. That's when the fun began. As all of the other students passed by him, first one girl and then another, stopped to decorate his face with their lipstick. After several of the girls had gone by, his face looked like an Indian all painted for participation in the Battle of Bull Run.

His dream was broken, finally, when one of the men dropped two cigarettes into his open mouth. He awoke with a start, chomped down on the tobacco, and tried to figure out what was happening. His friends urged him to hurry and grab his baggage so he could leave the train. He did. I have often wondered what he thought when first he looked in a mirror after getting home.

Two days after my arrival in Enumclaw, I was back in the raspberry field. In the meantime I met three fellows, about my age, whose home was across the back alley from Claire and Ethel. The big attraction was their band. Together, with another friend they had a four-piece combo. I could hear them practice, so one day I ventured around the block to get acquainted. We hit it off immediately, and when they learned I played piano, I was in. We did several gigs at both the Green River Gorge and Five-mile Lake resorts.

Between working the raspberry field, and practicing and playing in the dance band, I had very little spare time. But I had a good time. On a couple of occasions I walked out to Five-Mile Lake to go swimming. It wasn't too hot and along the way was an orchard of Yellow Delicious apples. With no hesitation, I could slip between the strands of the barbed wire fence and return to the roadway with an apple in hand.

Another time, the band, and a couple of their girl friends, were driving out to the lake. Speeding along at a good clip, one of the girls suggested turning at the next corner, as a short cut. The driver said nothing, and did not reduce his speed. When he reached the corner, he exclaimed: "Oh, you wanted to turn here?"

With that remark, he slid his hands loosely down the steering wheel, as if going to make that corner at the speed we were traveling. The girls screamed, the rest of us held our breath, until we realized it was a hoax. Had it been for real, that car would have rolled over several times, and we'd probably all have been dead.

Another fun activity, with my new found friends, was picking huckleberries. Some 10 miles out of Enumclaw, on the road to Mt. Rainier, was Huckleberry Mountain. We backpacked in, each carrying a tarp and blankets for staying overnight (sleeping bags either did not exist or were too expensive) along with an empty five- gallon can, placed inside an empty flower sack.

From where we parked the car, it was about a one-and-a-half mile hike, almost straight up the side of the mountain. The trail was well worn and once I got to the top, the view was extraordinary. Best of all was the availability of the huckleberries. The bushes were absolutely loaded, and I had never seen any so large. The majority were the size of the fingernail of my middle finger, with many of the size of my thumbnail.


Huckleberries

Arriving at the site, we chose a spot for our bedrolls that was large enough to accommodate all of us. They were bears in the area (they like Huckleberries too) so it seemed there might be some safety in numbers. By this time we were hungry. I removed the sandwich sack and thermos from my pack and joined the others, sitting on a small log that lay nearby. Lunch didn't take long. With our constant chatter and a plethora of berries to pick, the afternoon went fast. By dark I had my can half full. Cloud cover began to settle in on us, making it difficult to see through the fog. Besides, the clouds were loaded with moisture, making it too wet to pick any more. I tied off the top of the flower sack, and pulled the canvas cover of the back pack over the can, so the berries wouldn't get wet. Then it was back to camp.

Getting ready for bed was quite simple. I had joined the group, at our log, to devour a second set of sandwiches and more coffee. It was too damp for any prolonged conversation, so we didn't linger longer. Because there was no nearby stream, or other source of running water, washing up was no problem. The tarp protected my blankets. I quickly peeled off my leather jacket, my boots and my pants. With one move, I crawled between the blankets, and simultaneously stuffed my jacket, pants and boots under the tarp. The tarpaulin was long enough to serve as a "ground sheet" as well as a top cover. Where it came up from the ground and over my blankets was the protected spot for my boots and clothes. I pulled the top end of the tarp over my head, scrunched up the bottom blanket to make a pillow and was soon sound asleep.

I awakened in the morning, about 6:00, to a beautiful blue sky and full sun. Mt. Rainier stood out in all its glory and seemed close enough that I could, in one jump, be on its snow covered slope.

The other four guys were soon awake. We talked, while we dressed. My boots, stiff as a board, were difficult to get into. Once dressed, I straightened out my bed, and then joined the others at the log for "breakfast" of more sandwiches and coffee.

Because of the beautiful morning, picking berries seemed to go much faster. By 11:00 o'clock I had my can filled. Within minutes all of us were ready to go. Before starting the trek down the mountain, it was vital that I tightly tied the top of the sack, and secured the pack's flap, so the berries could not escape in event of a slip or fall. By then, the top of the tarp, from my bed, was dry. I rolled it up and tied it over the top of the can for added protection. Believe me, after working that hard for five gallons of huckleberries, I was not going to lose a one.

The trip downhill took about half an hour. We travelled as fast as we could and the spikes in our boots helped to insure the footing. I slipped once, when I stepped on a small rock slab, but did not fall. There was evidence, on the trail, that others had fallen. Because their berries were not secured in a sack-covered can, they were left as proof. Soon after noon, I was home where I could display the success of the trip, take a hot shower, shave, brush my teeth and have something besides a sandwich for lunch.

Ethel canned most of the berries, but I did get some for breakfast a couple of times, as well as in a pie. (mmmm-good!!!)

A few days later, Claire suggested we go fishing. It sounded good to me, but when he "armed" himself with a gunny sack instead of fishing poles, l grew suspicious. As it turned out, this was a fishing expedition, and the gunny sack was the only equipment.

Leaving Enumclaw by car, we ended up at a Fish Hatchery in the town of Kent. There the hatchery officials were in the process of stripping Roe from the female Salmon.

Once a Salmon has laid her eggs, her only destiny is to die. The procedure here permitted local residents to "catch" the fish before they went into their death-deteriorating state.

An official would net a beautiful, large salmon, (apparently they were all female) and by using his thumb and forefinger, squeeze out her eggs, (Roe) as his hand slipped along her belly. That procedure completed, he would throw the salmon toward some person standing along the edge of a small pond that bordered the main tank where he was working. If that person caught the fish, it was his/hers to keep. Those that were not caught, and fell back into the small pond, were given to a local charity's kitchen to help feed the poor.

Claire did the catching, in this case, and only missed one of the several that were thrown his way. I held the gunny sack open. The minute Claire had his "catch" in his arms, he turned and plopped the fish into my sack. We ended up with six or eight very nice Salmon. One was served for dinner that night, the others were immediately canned.

One adventure that summer, I did not talk about. The Weyerhaeuser Timber Company had a saw mill in Enumclaw. They cut their logs on another mountain area beyond Huckleberry mountain. To get the logs down to the saw mill, they were first bunched in an upstream holding pond, then fed, one log at a time, into a flume. The flume ran out of the upstream pond, and along side of the main road, down to the mill pond. From there a crew, with long pike poles, directed each log to a "slip", where it was pulled out of the water, mechanically, and made ready to be sawed into lumber.


Log Flume

The fun began by driving up the road to a spot where easy access could be had to the flume. One of the fellows stayed with the car, the rest of us walked up to the spot where a narrow

service bridge crossed over the flume. At that point we waited for a log. I watched two of the guys jump on their individual logs as it emerged from under the bridge. Then, it was my turn.

The big logs (about four feet in diameter) had less than a foot of clearance as they passed under the bridge, so it wasn't a long leap. The "skill" was landing with my spiked boots solidly set, so I didn't cause the log to roll. I made it all right.

Once on board, riding the log was all balance. If I lost my balance, it behooved me to push off, over the flume, and onto the ground--about a four-foot fall. (There really was no choice. If I fell into the flume, I'd end up, someplace, "squished" between two logs.)


Four Foot Diameter Log

That first ride was a real thrill. I guess it lasted about a half-mile, at a speed of maybe 10 miles per hour. Coming to another bridge, I leaped off, ran across the bridge and jumped back on the log for another half-mile ride. There I jumped off, and met the other two. We waited for the last man, and from there, home. I never told Claire or Ethel (or my mother) about that excursion.

Something else I never told Claire or Ethel--the Navy didn't want me. The family had gone into Seattle and left me to my own devices. By chance, I was passing by the Navy Recruiting Office. I remembered being on a battleship, several years previous, and thinking, then, that I wanted to be a sailor. So I went in. The Recruiting Officer was glad to see me, and suggested I fill out an application. I did.

One of the questions was: "Do you walk in your sleep?" I recalled mother telling someone that when I was a youngster of four or five, she was awakened one night and found me walking around the dining room table--sound asleep. That recollection was my downfall. Being a "good, honest, Christian" boy, I had to tell the truth. I answered the question, "Yes".

The Recruiter was nice about it, but explained that the Navy simply could not take the chance of having me "walk off a ship, in the middle of an ocean, some night, while I was asleep." I was crushed, but I survived. I told mother about it, later, but was too embarrassed to tell Ethel and Claire. That ended my "Navy aspirations".

After about three weeks of that carefree life, mother called. I had to go home. Grandma Bauder had passed away. So I packed up, said my goodbyes to the band, called the raspberry field owner to arrange for my check to be mailed, and was on my way. When the train I was on, got to Glendive, Grandma's casket was loaded into the baggage car and mother joined me. We were on our way to Chicago. That trip took only a night and the next day. Mother's cousin, Ella Larson met our train. An undertaker from Sterling, Illinois cared for Grandma.

It was a fast week. We stayed in the home of another cousin, Nina Kempson. It was an old, but large, house. The only thing I remember about it was the toilet. The water closet was fastened to the wall some five feet above the toilet. When I pulled a handle, at the end of a chain, the water was released into a pipe. The pipe connected to the toilet bowl and, by gravity forced flow, flushed the toilet. It was an old fashioned concept, but seemed to work. I, just had never seen such a contraption.

The day after we arrived, Grandma's casket was brought to the home of Nina'a brother, Clair J. Bauder, and set up in the living room. A number of other relatives came, dutifully passed by the open casket and remained for the funeral. Grandma was buried in the cemetery in Sterling. Following the burial ceremony, the customary reception was held back at the home of Clair and Bessie Bauder.

Clair owned and operated a Machine Shop that manufactured some variety of nuts and bolts. While we were there, mother and I, along with other members of the family, were entertained at the Bauder's "lodge" on the nearby Rock River. It was a lot of fun and the steak dinner was fabulous.

The trip back to Glendive was uneventful, except for one twenty-minute stop in Mandan, North Dakota. There, a group of Indians from the Mandan Tribe performed several of their festive dances. It was my first opportunity to see their dancing. The music (drum beat) and costumes were great. The women's dresses were long and white and made of (I guess) deer skin. They were elaborately beaded and beautiful.

Painting of Mandan Tribe Indian

As to the men, some wore leather leggings trimmed with feathers, beads and leather fringe. Some wore only breech cloth. The upper bodies and faces of the men were all painted. Some wore very fancy, feathered, head dress. Others wore just a band around their head, with a single feather at the back. Even the little kids, four or five years old were included in the dance. For the most part, they danced in a circle. The men carried tomahawks, bows (with a quiver of arrows slung across their back) or javelin like spears. It was a piece of history "come alive" for me.

The rest of the summer was, to some extent, a job hunt.

The first thing that came along was the result of dad's putting in a good word. Summer was the time the N.P. Railroad burned weeds along the right-of-way in order to prevent hot cinders, from an engine, setting off a brush fire. A friend, Joe Heitz, and I filled out applications and we were accepted. We were given passes and told to report to some supervisor in Billings. This we did.

This, of course, was my maiden voyage, alone, into that big, real world of blue-collar working. To send me out into this cold environment, dad gave me nine words of advice: "Keep your fly buttoned shut and your zipper up."

There were three of us on the weed burner--a foreman, Joe, and I. The machine was operated by the foreman. As it rolled along the track, (Joe on one side, me on the other) we directed a small flame of oil into those weeds adjacent to the track. The job was smelly, and dirty. Whenever a passenger or freight train came along. We had to maneuver the machine off the track. This wasn't very often, during our eight-hour shift--thank goodness.

How far we travelled, I do not remember. I know the job only lasted about two weeks. I know, too, I had no regrets that the work was over. It, definitely, was one job I didn't need!!.

Next door to our house, was a small garage that housed two buses. Ira Dean, was the Owner-Operator of the bus line. When I told him I was looking for work, he suggested I help him. That was something down my alley.

Every night after he returned from a run to Sydney, it was my job, first to clean up the inside of the bus, and wash the windows. It was exasperating when I came upon a very messy window where the latest occupant of the seat had, thinking the window was down, spit out a wad of brown tobacco juice. (Maybe that was a compliment to the window cleaning job I was doing.) However, there were rewards too. Taking up the seat cushions, to clean under them, I often found quite a bit of small change. Ira told me: "Whatever you find, you may keep". It was an added incentive.

After cleaning the bus, I drove it to a gas station where I filled the tank with gas and checked the oil. Boy, did I feel important driving that big bus around town! Mr. Dean also had me help him grease both vehicles. It was dirty, but a nice dirty!

The second bus was much smaller, and only used in a pinch. One of those pinches came one day, when the big bus broke down, out on the road. Ira called me at home and asked me to drive out to meet him. In my haste to comply, I neglected to secure a rope, used to anchor baggage into the rack on top of the bus.

Flying along at a good 50 miles per hour, that rope shook loose. It trailed behind the right side of the bus, whipping along the ground, out of my line a vision.

Ahead of me was a farmer driving a team of horses hitched to his wagon. As I passed, the rope flashed out and smacked the rump of the nearest horse. Startled, the team took off on a dead run, causing the farmer much concern until the team was, again, under control. I proceeded on, not realizing the havoc I had created.

Shortly, thereafter, I arrived at the farm where Mr. Dean was stalled. He had found the problem in his bus, and fixed it, but was not sufficiently at ease, to drive his passengers on to Sydney. We transferred the passengers and their baggage. However, before he got away, and I could get going on my return trip, the farmer, whose horses I had startled, arrived. It was his farm.

By this time the farmer had cooled down from being irate. But he sure lit into me and let Mr. Dean know what he thought of kids driving buses. Later, at the garage, Ira gave me a lesson on how to check a bus before leaving on a trip. I drove the big bus back to the garage at a much more sedate speed. I did enjoy working for Mr. Dean that summer and had no further problems.

In my spare time, I hiked into the hills with friends, killed a couple of rattlesnakes in the process, as well as getting in some target practice with my .22 rifle. I also managed to shoot a cotton tail rabbit or two, which I skinned and mother cooked for dinner. But all such good goings on have to end, and so it was back to school for my last year of high school.

I remember nothing extraordinary about the beginning of that year. I had a fill course of study. I also was involved in my usual extracurricular music activities of band, orchestra, chorus and our trio. I often told my folks, that: "As long as I carry my clarinet, I can get into most any event. If I am not playing, I can, at the very least, up-end the clarinet case and sit on it".

I guess the most memorable event was finding a new girl friend. Soon after school began, auditions were held for the operetta "Robin Hood". I won the male lead, as Robin Hood, and Bernice Hansen won the female lead, "Maid Marion". We seemed to enjoy each others company right away, and attended a couple of school dances together. After operetta practice, I usually walked her home (sometimes we took Betsy). As it turned out, it was the beginning of a short relationship, but fun while if lasted.

In between operetta practice, there were band and orchestra practices and concerts; the trio was in demand; and I was often called on to sing at church, or at Ladies Aid events. The Oddfellow-Rebekah dinner-dances were continuing enjoyable activities.

One event, in that time period, I didn't see, but it was the talk of the town. My neighbor, Kenneth Larimer, bought a new Reo. As I recall it, the car had an open cockpit, styled like a racing car. I know it was considered to be an especially fast vehicle.


Reo

On one particular day, Kenneth was driving on the main road, going West, toward Billings. Some driver in front of him refused to let Kenneth pass. Knowing he had the power and speed, Ken whipped to the right, jumped a grade ditch, passed the errant car, got back on the highway and raced out. Then he had a better thought. He slowed down, causing the guy behind him to also slow.

Whatever the other driver did, to try and pass, Kenneth countered. Tired of playing games, Ken slammed on the brakes and came to a dead stop. The driver behind, plowed into him.

The Reo of that vintage was well built. Hitting Kenneth's car caused little or no damage. It did wreck the radiator and front end of the other guy. With that mission accomplished, Kenneth immediately took off and continued his trip to Billings.

As we settled into fall, politics, once again, was the big item. This time Franklin Deleno Roosevelt was running against Herbert Hoover. As it turned out, at the November election, it was no contest. The economy was so bad, Hoover didn't have a chance. Of course, no one knew what the Democrats would do either. (They promised a lot, but could political promises ever be believed?) Anyway, whatever happened, at least it would be a change. As for the farmers, ranchers, and townspeople around Glendive, it made little difference. Life went on as usual.

It was around this time that "Dan Cupid" showed up.

The ring of wedding bells was not an uncommon sound around our house. The first that I remember was a school teacher, Gladys, and her gentleman friend, Madison Baker. Baker was a brakeman with the N.P. Railroad.

Gladys lived in our house. Baker had a home of his own nearby, but boarded with us. When they started going together, I fail to remember. I do remember that Baker liked to kid with the girls in the house, even though he and Gladys were considered "an item".

On one occasion, one of the other single girls, who roomed with us, commented on his day-old growth of beard. That prompted a quick tussle and soon Baker was rubbing his unshaven chin over the girl's cheek.

Watching this, Gladys became a bit miffed at the attention the other girl was getting. Finally, she could stand it no longer. Tugging at Baker's arm, and with a half smile and half pout on her face, she cried out: "Baker! If you have to whisker somebody, why don't you whisker me?"

When Gladys and Madison were married, I do not recall, but they did "tie the knot" and lived happily ever after.

Also about that time, another couple, both of whom lived in the house, became engaged. Like Gladys, Viola, too, taught school. Her finance, Thomas Lee, worked in the railroad's office as a Supervisor. (It's strange why I can recall the first and last name of most of the men, but not the women.)

Tom was the first one in our house to have a radio. Dad helped him install a "ball-type" antenna on the roof and wire it up to the radio. In return, he would sometimes invite some of us to his room to listen to a particular program.

Mr. Lee's movements were precisely timed--so much so that one could set a watch by him, and I did.

I was particularly enthralled by a program called "The Firestone Hour". It was a wonderful program of really great music, played by an outstanding orchestra. The start of its broadcast came soon after Mr. Lee left the house, and ended about the time he returned from wherever he went. Anyway, it gave me enough leeway to sneak up to his room, where I would lie on the bed and listen to some of the most beautiful music I had ever heard. Because of his punctuality, I was able to do it very often.

I guess others in the house knew what I was doing, but enjoyed the music enough to not give me a bad time. I never was caught by Mr. Lee coming home too soon. I often wondered how that particular trait worked out for him in married life.

To celebrate Viola's and Tom's engagement, mother decided a "Mock Wedding" should take place. Who dressed up as whom, I haven't the haziest. I know there was a bride, resplendent in a beautiful white dress; a groom, all tuxed out; along with a best man, bridesmaid, and a minister. I'm certain that Agnes Nylen played the wedding march, and I sang, "O Promise Me". The ceremony went off with only one hitch.

It being a warm night, one dining room window was open. While all the hoopla was going on, mother spotted Edith McIntyre coming across the vacant lot to where she could push herself up and under that open window in order to hear what was going on.

Quietly mother repaired to the kitchen, filled a large dishpan with cold water, came back to the dining room and threw the water out of that open window. There was a slight scream, noticed only by mother, then she saw Mrs. McIntyre executing a fast retreat to her own home.

The "wedding" was a huge success. All roomers and boarders had been invited as guests, if not participants. As spectators, Tom and Viola were delighted. They married not long after that.

Another wedding that had its beginning at our place, but culminated long after I graduated from high school, was that Helen Adkins and Simon Freeman. They were special people in my life and I was glad they had a great life together.

Thanksgiving and Christmas came and went in their usual fashion, except that I didn't go to Seattle. The new year of 1933 dawned and Mr. Roosevelt took office with promises of getting the national economy going again. The first thing I knew about what he intended, was the inauguration of a mess of "alphabet soup" Agencies. There was the WPA (Works Progress Agency), the PWA (Public Works Agency), NRA (National Recovery Act), the CCC (Civilian Conservation Corps) and probably others I have forgotten. The PWA, as I recall, got the most notice because it had people working at huge reclamation projects like Hoover Dam, on the Colorado River, Grand Coulee Dam on the Columbia River and Fort Peck Dam on the Missouri River. It took a lot of man power to build those projects and they resulted in the control of floods and provided irrigation water for farmers, as well as Hydroelectric Power throughout the Western States.

Then came the "Bank Holiday". Banks were closed throughout the nation so their functions and books could be audited. Some banks did not open again, because they had many poor risk loans.

We had three banks in Glendive, and all of them were in good shape. I remember how proud the people of our little town were when every one of the banks reopened as soon as the "three-day bank holiday" expired.

The rest of the winter season was filled with school activities, skating parties, and dances at the Oddfellow's and Masonic (DeMolay) halls. The operetta "Robin Hood" consumed many hours of practice. I also spent a lot of week-end evenings at the Hansen's where, Bernice played the piano and we sang. Then came the operetta dress rehearsal which went well. The next night--our big night--culminated in a very successful presentation, which made our families and friends, and ourselves, very, very happy.

The Junior Prom was next on the scene, and I remember it well. My car didn't have a heater, so I talked Ira Dean (He had sold the bus line, and now operated a garage.) into loaning me a car with a heater. That accomplished, I picked up Bernice and off we went.

As we left her home, I could feel a "chill" in the air and it wasn't the weather. Something was wrong. It wasn't the corsage. I kept probing until I finally learned--it was my tie. I wore a blue suit, with a white shirt and a red tie. Bernice's dress was some shade of purple. In her mind my tie and her dress "Clashed". The dance was half over before I got out of the "dog house", but I made it.

Easter vacation and my 18th birthday came close together that year, and mother and dad surprised me by getting passes, so we could go to the Chicago World's Fair. There was only a week to take it all in, but we covered a lot of territory.

Mother's cousin, Ella Larson, again met us in Chicago and this time we stayed at her house in the city of DeKalb. On one day, we all went to the fair together. We walked our feet off looking at exhibits, but only two do I recall. One was Ford's model of the new Mercury, billed as "the car of the future." It was streamlined to the "Nth" degree with a periscope for a rear view mirror. That's the feature I particularly remember. The other exhibit was the Swift Meat Co.'s assembly line for making "hot dogs". I was fascinated watching the meat being forced into the casing, then tied off at regular intervals.

On one other day, I took a train, by myself, into the Fair. The point of greatest memory, that day, was sitting high up in Soldiers Field Stadium to watch a series of marching bands and flag-bearing groups doing their routines. It was very impressive. I'm certain I saw other exhibits that day, but what they were now escapes me.

From the Larson's, Ella took us to Malta, Ill., where we spent the rest of the week. There I met all of dad's brothers, Rob, Am and Irvin, together with their families. It was a mess of

cousins to meet all at one sitting. Uncle Rob had two adopted daughters. There also were cousins Henry and Worden, and others. Of the bunch, Henry is the only one I ever knew very well.

Malta, of course, is the home area where the Mace Clan lived. Dad was born there, July 12, 1871. Mother was born in nearby Sterling on July 7, 1878. When mother graduated from high school, she went to South Grove Township, Ill. where she taught school for several years. That's where the two of them met. They were married in South Grove Township, on June 27 1900. My sister Ethel was born there, August 12, 1901. (This documentation comes from a publication, "The Bader-Bauder Family of The MohawkValley", compiled and published by Peg Bauder Nielsen in 1976.) My niece, Jane Pitrat gave me a copy of the publication.

All in all it was a great Easter vacation. Going home was just another train ride until we got to Mandan, N.D. again. There the Indians put on their "Pow Wow", for benefit of all. Whether the dances changed any in the year since I had last seen them, I don't know. A real Indian Ceremonial Dance is marvelous to see.

The rest of that school year went very fast--too fast. When the Civilian Conservation Corps started, it was supposed to benefit young men, 18 and over, whose families were on welfare. When I joined the CCC, it was like going into the Army, except that the work was building roads. There was no military training. The pay was $30.00 per month, of which $20.00 was sent home.

Just after the Easter vacation, my friend, Harris Long talked me into signing up for the CCC. Because my family was not on welfare, I assumed the recruiter would not take me. I was wrong. A few days later I learned I was number 31 on their list, and they would only accept 30. Good! Harris, who wanted to go, and whose mother was on welfare, was number 32.

A couple of days later I was informed that number 30 had backed out. That put me in! What the heck, I had no other job, so I let my position stand.

I had only 30 days before leaving, which meant I would not go through the high school graduation ceremony. That was a disappointment to my mother.

But first things first. Two weeks prior to going to Chicago, I had sold the old Ford touring car for $15.00. I put Betsy up for sale at $35.00 and got it. Then came the hard part. The Senior Prom was coming up and I didn't want to leave Bernice high and dry. After some discrete discussion, it was arranged that my buddy, John Woodward would be her escort.

I was now free to concentrate on studies. A major English assignment was to write an essay on the subject of the American flag. The whole school was involved in this one, with final judging to be done by a committee from the American Legion. I had accomplished most of the

research prior to Easter, so I went to work writing. I finished the essay, turned it in and forgot it. I took all of my final exams early, and forgot them. I said good bye to all the important people in my life and was ready to depart on a new adventure.

The final notice from President Roosevelt, as to when and where I would report for induction into the Civilian Conservation Corps, came quickly. All 30 of us boarded a train one sunny afternoon and were soon bound for Fort Missoula, Montana. I didn't even have to have my usual pass to ride the train.


CCC Camp

At Ft. Missoula we were housed in Army barracks, issued Army clothing and gear (except rifles), and fed Army chow. The next day we were given medical exams, had our names registered with the Finance Officer, ate more Army chow and learned how to make up a bunk, Army style. Once all the rudimentary details were accomplished, three of us from Glendive (Jimmy Gilday, O.V. Hansen, and myself) were included in a "Company" of 200 men, formed as one working group. The Company I was in had an Army Corps of Engineers Captain as Commanding Officer along with a GI First Sergeant and two "Buck" Sergeants. One of the Sergeants was the Mess Sergeant, the other an Aid to the CO. A Senior Forest Service civilian employee, who served as a Foreman, filled out the staff.

After the fourth or fifth day, our Company was loaded into a fleet of one-and-a-half-ton trucks and shipped off to Alder, Montana, on the Ruby River. There we set up camp. Prior to our arrival, someone, a civilian Contractor, had constructed our headquarters building, which included recreation hall, latrine, and the wooden foundation for our tents. Once assigned to an eight-man unit, we erected the tent over our designated foundation.

Our job, basically, was to build roads where there were no roads. It was pick and shovel work, with jackhammers thrown in to drill holes for the professional "powder monkeys"--the Forest Service men who could handle dynamite.

I was assigned, right off, to handle a jackhammer. The first day went all right. I don't know how many steel drills I broke but, until I got the hang of it, I broke a number. After that first day, it was a tired bunch of men that chowed down for dinner. Somewhere during the evening I began to feel a soreness in my wrists. I didn't think much about it until morning. By that time my wrists and arms were so sore, I could, in no way, button up my trousers or shirt. It took several days, before I was back on that job. It didn't stop me from pulling KP--"Kitchen Police" duty.

During that "off" time, I learned there were two truck driver jobs opening up. I applied and got one of the slots. My truck was a one and a half ton Chevrolet dump-body with an extra low gear and 4-wheel drive capability. I took good care of that truck too. The interesting part was getting to drive all over that southwestern portion of Montana taking work crews out to build roads. I would take a crew out at 6:00 a.m. and bring them back about 4:30 p.m.

In between I would drive to some nearby town for supplies. Twin Bridges was the largest of all these towns, but our work area was primarily between Sheridan and Virginia City.

Driving for supplies, I got to the towns of Dillon, Butte, and Anaconda, as well as Missoula. I generally went to Missoula, to get a load of dynamite. Believe me, I drove that load back very carefully.

My first (and only) drink of "rot-gut" whiskey was on a trip to Butte. (Prohibition was still in effect.) The Mess Sergeant was with me as we were after a load of kitchen supplies. Like all good Mess Sergeants he knew his way around town. Before we picked up the supplies, he steered me to a back street speakeasy. One drink was enough for me. Since he wasn't a heavy drinker we got out of there fairly soon. After loading the truck, the Sergeant and I were on the road back to camp.

A few days later I was given leave to go home. My relief driver had a scheduled trip to the town of Whitehall, so I rode with him. There I caught a train for Glendive--my first experience at paying cash for a railroad ticket.

It was great to sit down to a home-cooked meal, and then get out to look up friends. I also learned that mother was my stand-in at the high school graduation ceremony. She not only received my diploma, I also had won the American Legion Essay contest. For that, I received a certificate and a medal, which mother was pleased to accept on my behalf.

I already knew that Bernice had gone to Spokane and enrolled in Secretarial School, so a girl friend was out of the question for this visit. One contact was with a school friend who had also gone into the CCC, but was assigned to another Camp. We were standing on the curb in front of the local ice cream parlor. Our conversation was typical camp jargon, well laced with cuss words.

Just as a close neighbor, and friend, passed by, I sounded off with a sentence full of "bleep" words. My friend stopped, slowly turned, looked me in the eye. He didn't say a word. Then he turned back to continue on his way.

That look shrunk me to midget size right there on the sidewalk. I highly respected that gentlemen and knew, immediately, I had lost a lot of his respect. It was a good lesson. From then on, I never used "latrine" language in public. When in camp it was difficult not to, but away from camp I knew better.

I also made contact, on this trip, with a printer friend. I suggested he print up some stationery with our camp address and the color logo of the CCC. He thought it to be a good idea, so I placed an order with him for a dozen packages, all attractively boxed.

My leave was soon over, and back to camp I went. About a week later the stationery arrived. I showed it to the CO (Commanding Officer). He liked the idea and bought the first package. The rest of them sold out soon. I could now be classified as an entrepreneur!!

I remember a number of trips that required staying over night. I had no travel allowance, but always carried a sleeping bag (a somewhat recent invention) in the truck. Those early sleeping bags had no zipper. They were sewed tight on both sides and one end. I crawled in from the top. They were water repellent, and in event of rain, the top bib could be pulled over my head. On those occasions I was usually at a "spike" camp (temporary camp where the crew was working) and everyone slept in the open in sleeping bags.

On a couple of trips I was fortunate enough to be within 100 miles of another camp, located in Yellowstone Park. Knowing I could not get back to my camp in time for dinner, I detoured to the Yellowstone Park camp. They had a Mess Sergeant that couldn't be beat. What his connections were, I never found out, but you could always count on his Friday night Mess, serving steak and beer. There were a number of us truck drivers that knew about his steak and beer dinners, and we never hesitated to take the detour when the opportunity arose.

My wildest ride was returning from Missoula with a load of food supplies. Somewhere along the way I realized the road was completely covered with sheep droppings. I had failed, however, to note when I first saw them. I didn't know whether the flock was ahead of me, or whether they had already gone off the road.

Clipping along at about 50 M.P.H. I topped a hill and found the answer. That bunch of sheep must have numbered 500 head.

A man on horseback, with two dogs, trailed along behind the bunch, but he had not bothered to put out any warning signs. I knew I didn't dare plow into the sheep, so I hit the brakes. With all the droppings on the road, I immediately started to slide, and to the left.

Ahead of me was a guard rail and a very steep drop off. I didn't like that choice. I released the brakes, turned my front wheels to the right and before I could do anything else, the truck shot out into space off the right hand side of the road.

It was about a 25 foot drop, and nary a wheel touched the side of that grade as I settled down. In landing, my right hand set of wheels were on solid ground. My left hand set were in a bog of totally saturated gravelly ground. I rolled forward maybe five feet, bumped an old bog-eaten stump, pushed it over, and stopped. Neither I, the truck, nor my supplies suffered damage.

Two hours later a Motor Pool Lieutenant came out from Ft. Missoula (I had asked a passing motorist to contact the Fort) to survey the situation. After looking everything over, he turned to me and said: "Mace, you are either a hell of a good driver, or a damned poor one."

The Lt. had brought a wrecker with him. Once they had me out of the bog, I was on my way. I never did know which of his comments went into the accident report. I told my story, I guess the Lt. told his, and I kept my job.

On a trip to a Spike Camp near the old Western Town of Virginia City, I was surprised one day to see the cowboys wearing guns and carrying rifles in a "boot" on their saddles. I stopped to talk to one of the cowboys and expressed my surprise.


Rifle in a Boot on a Saddle

"Believe it or not," he replied, "we still have a lot of cattle rustlers working this area." Continuing, he said: "One big difference now, they use trucks. They run several critters into a blind canyon, back the truck in, unload a portable chute, and, presto, truck, chute and cows are gone." It was another bit of Montana history "come alive."

A month or so later, our camp was moved to a spot on the Clark Fork River near Paradise, Mont. Our job there was to build a road that connected the town of St. Regis with Paradise.

One advantage to this change of location was the sulphur hot springs resort close to our camp. The management opened their doors to us. I don't think we ever exceeded our welcome, but we did enjoy being able to take a "boiling" hot (yes, it was smelly) bath once in a while.

From the Paradise camp my trips to Missoula were a bit shorter. The road into the Hot Springs, from the main highway, (two miles) was basically a single lane, with a couple of turnouts. From there into camp, it was single lane period. Since the only traffic involved the comings and goings of our two Army trucks and one Forest Service "Stakebody", no serious problems evolved. However, with the river on one side and a sheer mountain wall on the other I drove that road very very carefully.

Stakebody

I specifically recall one trip. The owner of a building in paradise was tearing the structure down and offered our Commander the resultant lumber for free. I think the bed of my truck was

eight feet long. Every stick of that lumber was from 14 to 16 feet long. Loaded, the majority of pieces extended the length of the bed of my truck beyond the tailgate.

Returning to the base I traveled at no more than 15 miles per hour. On pavement, it wasn't bad. But the narrow road between the paved highway and camp was something else. Every few feet there would be a bump of some sort and the weight of the lumber behind would lift the truck's front wheels off the ground. Because my seat was about dead center, it was a balance. By leaning forward I could keep the front wheels on the road, except when there was a bump. When I got into camp, I had another guy stand on the front bumper until part of the load was off.

One weekend Jimmy Gilday and I decided to take a three-day pass and go into Spokane. I knew mother was coming back from Seattle, so I figured I could kill two birds with one stone--visit Bernice and see mother. Neither Jimmy nor I had much cash, so we decided to "ride the rails." Jimmy was an old hand at this, and I figured it wouldn't be too bad.

Hitching a ride into Paradise, we found an empty box car on a freight train going in the right direction. We climbed on board, suitcases and all. Daylight travel wasn't bad, but it was a very cold night, and my long GI-issue overcoat barely kept me from freezing.

Somewhere around noon, the next day, we were in Spokane. When the train stopped, off we went, Jimmy to wherever, while I headed for that hotel where mother and I had been stranded several years prior. It was a Saturday. I called Bernice (surprise!) to make arrangements for dinner and a show. I showered, and shaved, then I lay down on the bed to rest, but fell sound asleep.

The ringing telephone woke me up at 9:00 p.m. It was Bernice, (surprise!) wondering what had happened to me. I did get to see her for about half an hour, but needless to say, the whole event was a dud. That ended another romantic chapter in my life.

Sunday morning Gilday and I got together to figure how we were going to get back to camp. We checked every source we knew, only to find there were no freight trains scheduled to leave that day. We didn't want to be AWOL (Absent Without Leave), so it was imperative that we find transportation. By late afternoon we still hadn't found any. Then mother's train came in. It was only a 20 minute stop, but in that time mother obtained a pass for me (I was still 18 and eligible) and a ticket for Gilday. It was a much warmer trip back to Paradise. From there we finagled a ride into camp.

The next week-end I came down with a cold. It was providential. Our CO had arranged for 40 of the Company (two truck loads) to tour Yellowstone Park on that Saturday and Sunday. Because I was in "Sick Bay", my relief driver took over.

Early Saturday morning benches for 10 people on each side, were installed in the trucks. Immediately following breakfast the chosen 40 assembled for boarding. Everyone was dressed in his best clothes. The men took their seats on the benches along each side of the truck. Hand baggage, bed rolls and boxed, two-day supply of sack lunches were loaded in the center of each truck bed. The CO and the two driver made a final head count and the trucks were on their way. We didn't see them again for ten days.

A phone call from the CO informed the Foreman they had been requisitioned to fight a forest fire. We learned later that the bunch had part of Saturday to enjoy the park, before the fire erupted in West Yellowstone. At that point the men and their equipment (two trucks) were diverted, to join Forest Service crews to fight the fire.

When they did return, their good clothes were a mess--shot, in fact--and they were one very, very, tired group of men. They did get to see some of Idaho, when the fire crossed the border!!

During my entire CCC experience (a total of about eight months) I never saw, or was involved in, any kind of a "fracas". There were a couple of potentials, however, both involving my friend, Jimmy Gilday.

Jimmy was short and slender, but muscular. He was well liked by everyone. There was one man in our bunch who thought he knew just about everything there was to know. When he sounded off, most of us nodded or did something to end the conversation and walk away. Not Jimmy. The two of them got into an argument, one Sunday morning, and the longer they talked, the more heated they got.

Physically, Jimmy was no match for his competition, and it was obvious blows were about to be exchanged.

In our Company were 50 fellows from Butte. They were all former miners and extremely well built, as well as being tough as nails.

The aforementioned argument happened to take place in front of the tent where eight of these Butte guys lived. The antagonist had his back to the tent, with Jimmy facing him. As the argument had been heating up, all eight residents from the tent quietly exited, to stand in front of the tent and behind "Mr. Blowhard".

Jimmy now knew he had protection, so was deliberately egging the other guy on. Just as Mr. "Blowhard" (I don't recall his real name) was about to release a first punch, he caught sight of one of Jimmy's protectors, turned his head a little more and realized he didn't have a prayer.

Had he thrown that first punch, all eight of the Butte contingent would have been all over him. Recognizing that fact, he turned and walked away.

On another occasion, some 30 or 40 of us went into Paradise one night to attend a public dance. I drove one of the trucks. I guess jealously provoked the problem, because Jimmy Gilday was in trouble with the boy friend of the girl he had been dancing with. The guy threatened dire results: "If I catch you dancing with my girl once more."

One of the Butte fellows overheard the dispute. He called Jimmy aside and told him to "dance with the girl anytime you feel like it." Jimmy did. For the rest of the evening, whenever Jimmy and the girl danced the benefactor circled the perimeter with them. Nothing more ever came of that potential fight either.

A fight of major proportions was, later, averted through the deft action of our Commanding Officer. As mentioned earlier, our camp was 100% Montana men--from every corner of the State. In addition, our group, although divergent, was cooperative and had exhibited the ability to get along under any circumstance. This trait was well known among the Camp Commanders, nation-wide.

We had seen newspaper stories about some of the camps in the East where fighting among the "troops" was a constant problem for the various Commanding Officers. It wasn't long after one such event made news, that our Commanding Officer received a request, from one of his eastern counter parts, suggesting: "It would be a great idea to exchange 50 men from my outfit for 50 from your Montana contingent."

Our CO immediately fired back: "Go ahead and send your 50 men, if you so desire. My 200 men will greet them at a point about four miles from camp. I can guarantee that your 50 easterners will never reach my Montana Company's grounds." There was no further communication on such a suggested transfer.

By late fall the weather had turned inclement. The stretch of road our men worked on was solid rock, being carved out of the mountain beside the Clark Fork river. Once that heavy rock-work section was completed the remaining road work was the stretch between our camp site and the main paved highway going into Paradise. This was the single lane section I mentioned earlier. After several days of rain this portion of the road was passable only in either low, low gear, or, often, by dropping into four-wheel drive. Driving truck, under such conditions, wasn't conducive to great good cheer.

By Thanksgiving I was getting anxious to be somewhere else. The weather remained miserable and living in tents, surrounded by mud didn't make it any more desirable. In short, I wanted out.

The only way I could get out, was to find a paying job and have the Company I would work for contact my CO in writing. I knew I had no desire to live all my life in Glendive, so I set the wheels in motion by contacting my brother-in-law, Claire Wilder.

He had moved from Enumclaw, to take over the print shop of Aggie Smock's Vashon Island News Record, across Puget Sound from Seattle. He answered my request with an offer of a paying job as a "Printer's Devil" starting January first 1934. He would contact my Commanding Officer. I couldn't have been happier.

My mind was greatly relieved, but I still had a job to do. That final month of December was miserable, weather-wise. The very worst was a trip back from Missoula, with a load of kitchen supplies.

Some 20 miles from camp, I was engulfed in a wind-driven blizzard of snow. The windshield wipers couldn't take it off fast enough to provide adequate vision. Consequently I had the driver's side window rolled down, and the Mess Sgt. had his passenger side window down. By sticking our heads out, each of us could at least see the road. But we were disposed to traveling at a veritable crawl.

Two hours later, we spotted our camp-site turn off. From that point on the misery level doubled. It was totally dark, and the blizzard conditions were so heavy that the truck headlights could only penetrate a couple of feet ahead.

After getting off the main highway, I stopped the truck for a conference with the Sergeant. Should we leave the truck and walk, or should we try it? It was agreed that we would try it.

On the passenger side, was a sheer drop off into the river. On my side, was a mountain with countless rocks jutting out, just itching to tear the canvas top off my truck.

The single lane road was no more than eight feet wide, and totally saturated from recent rains. I had no chains on either front or the back tires, and with the conditions present, was not about to put them on. If I got stuck, the Sgt. and I would walk.

The Sergeant opened his door and stood on the running board. I put the truck in four-wheel drive, set the hand throttle so we would barely move, opened my door and stood on my running board to see, while I steered the truck.

The Sergeant's mission was to keep us from going into the river--there were no guard rails. Mine, keep from snagging rocks off the side of the mountain, while steering as close to the middle of a mud-saturated road as I could.

At that speed and under those conditions, it took me four hours to "drive" four miles. The lights of camp, when we got close enough to see them, were a very welcome sight.

I have no recollection of Christmas that year. I'm certain it was spent in camp, getting ready to leave. The CO had received Claire's letter and made arrangements for my discharge. At the end of the month, I received my final pay check, and a train ticket to Glendive. I went home, spent maybe a week and, with the pass again in my hand, was on my way to Seattle. Claire met my train. We drove to the Fauntleroy Ferry and were soon on Vashon Island.


Ferry

Never before had civilian clothes felt so good. I looked, now, like all other 18-year-old men. I also had a job. It didn't pay much, but together with board and room, was more than the $30. from the CCC. Besides I had access to a car.

Claire and Ethel lived, this time, at the McGrath place, a large two-story house on the beach near old Vashon Dock. It had a rock fireplace with a fire box at least six feet wide, and three feet deep.

Clair had a two-man crosscut saw, and every weekend he and I were out sawing up old drift logs, or picking up bark that had come in on the tide. Sometimes I tried sawing logs with eight-year-old Bill Wilder. It was an exercise in total patience. He could not pull the saw toward him without bending it. Consequently it would bind in its groove, and stop. I'm not sure that we ever did saw a complete cut on any log.


Two-Man Crosscut Saw

The best fire wood came from logs that had "escaped" from a passing log raft. Loggers to the north--between Everett and Bellinghom--made up huge "rafts" of loose logs "surrounded by a controlled "boom". Once rafted, the boom was fastened to a Tug boat and towed all the way to a saw mill in Tacoma. The McGrath house looked out on that shipping channel.

Once in a while, when the raft was buffeted by heavy swells because of very strong winds, a single log would slip out of the raft. Eventually it ended up on somebody's beach. If it was spotted in the surf, Claire and I would row out, tie a rope around one end and tow it back to our beach. There it was secured until we could strip off the bark and saw and split it up into fireplace sized pieces.

The McGrath beach was also a great place to dig clams. Almost every week-end there was a bucket of clams, totally immersed in salt water, sitting on the porch near the kitchen door. By morning those clams had purged themselves of sand, and a ring of water extended across the porch four feet out from the bucket.

One memorable meal started with clam chowder, followed by a feed of clams, steamed open and in the shell. The meal ended with a platter of fried clams. What a feast!

As recounted above, the porch on this house was very wide. It extended to two sides of the house. Its primary purpose was as a lovely place to lounge, in deck chairs, on a beautiful day. From this vantage point we could watch the ships, and tugs, towing barges and rafts of logs, making their way through the channel to the ports of Seattle and Tacoma. It was also used to store wood for the fireplace, and bark for the kitchen Stove.

One evening Claire and I came home from work to find that Ethel had made a great looking chocolate pie. At the end of our dinner, we ate it. It was delicious.

"About that pie," Ethel commented, with a mischievous grin on her face, "It started out to be a banana cream pie. But in the course of adding bark to the fire, I dropped the stove lid. You know, a big patch of black soot, bounced off that lid and right into my pretty, white, pie custard." She continued, "So I put in some chocolate, and presto, I had a pie of a different color, and it wasn't black." There was no need for further comment from Claire, me, or the kids. We had enjoyed the pie, soot and all.

It was at this time in my life that I met two of the Garvin girls. Their father was the local Undertaker, and the family was good friends of the Wilders.

I first remember meeting the girls at choir practice in the Presbyterian Church. Irene was an attractive red head, and I asked her if I could take her home. She had a date, but introduced me to her sister, Elsie. That cute little blonde accepted my offer, and she's been a part of my life ever since.

Elsie tells a different story. She says I was wearing a bright, yellow, Angora sweater, one day, and we passed on the street in front of the Print Shop. She spotted me immediately as "a new guy in town", liked my looks and decided then and there that "He's the man I'm going to marry." What chance did I have?

Working on the Vashon Island News Record was the beginning of a career I would always enjoy. For the most part, I cleaned the hand type, after a press run, broke down the ads that would not run again, as well as the last issue's headlines. I redistributed the type to its proper place in the proper case. If I dropped a case, I had a "pie", which was a very tedious, and an exacting job to clean up. I also did a lot of sweeping up.

Vashon Island News-Record

To Procure Signatures to Referendum Petitions

Excellent Program Given at C.C. Meeting

Met-Co Garage Is Being Replaced

England & Petersen Start New Building

Meeting Held to Discuss Formation of New County

A. Rielschnider Makes New Start

Orthopedic Plant Sale Saturday Afternoon

Golf Club Members to Enjoy Pot Luck Dinner

April 27th 1933 Edition

In addition, about once a week, it was my job to melt the old lead, from the pages of type, skim off the dirt and ink and pour the hot lead into a mold of small blocks. One by one these blocks were later fed into a hot box on the Linotype for reuse. This was the life of a Printer's Devil.

Eventually I learned the different sizes of type, and some of the different type faces. From there I graduated to hand setting type for the newspaper advertisements, headlines and sub-headlines.

The Vashon News Record was a weekly paper, so there was ample time between every Thursday's press run and the next week's run to tear down and build up. I was immediately fascinated by the "Linotype" that Claire operated. It, too, had various fonts (cases) of type. It had a keyboard similar to a typewriter, but in a different format. When he pressed a letter's key, it released a brass "mat" with that letter's designation. Once Clair had a line of such designated type (hence the name "Linotype") in place, a stream of hot lead was forced against it. That created a lead bar, imprinted on one edge.

Linotype Machine


Brass "Mats"

That lead bar slid into a container called a "stick". Simultaneously the mats that figured in the making of that bar, were mechanically picked up, returned and redistributed to their proper place in the font.

When his stick was full of type, he emptied it into a long, narrow, steel tray called a "galley". Type from the various galleys, along with headlines, and the type-set advertisements, were placed in a steel frame, the size of a newspaper page, tightened down and thus made ready for final printing. (This is a very simplified description, but gives some idea of the process.) It was this process that I was determined to learn.

Combining the headlines, galleys of lead type, and advertisements, was the job of the Printer--in this case Claire.

Before this could be done, each galley had to be "proofed". To do this, it was my job to make sure the type was secure in the galley. The type was inked up, a narrow strip of paper placed on it, and, with a wooden mallet, I lightly tapped a wood "proofing block" over the length of the galley. This caused the type to imprint the paper.

An editor or reporter read each galley-proof, marking it up wherever an error occurred. The error was then corrected. When the printer had all eight pages "locked up", the paper was ready to be "put to bed". (Note: Today, (in 1992) proof-readers are no longer used, because word processors and computers have "spell right" features that are supposed to make the writer infallible to spelling errors. The problem is that some words like to, two, too and do, or dew, are passed, as o.k. in this computer age, because each "sounds" like the other.)

The "press run' was another factor. Two pages were locked on to the bed of the press--a large rotary drum type. As the drum rotated, a sheet of paper was inserted, turned with the drum until it met up with the pages of type. The paper was imprinted, continued on and then released. After the first run, the pages of type were changed, and the process repeated. This continued until all eight pages had been printed. (I should point out that each run printed enough papers to cover the known circulation figure, plus extras for "walk-in" sales.)

My sister, Ethel, was the primary reporter, but Claire and I also gathered information and wrote it up for the paper. Aggie Smock and Ethel did the editing and rewriting. There were very few photographs used, because the cost was prohibitive for such a small paper. Some ads and stories arrived, with photo plates included. These, of course, were run as requested.

It wasn't all work, however. After that first meeting with Elsie Garvin, I made a regular practice of escorting her home from choir practice and church. Then we had Sunday dinner at each other's home. She was in her Senior year of high school, so dating was limited. I was too

late to get a date for the Junior prom, but Elsie lined me up with another girl. We did manage to get in a number of dances. As Elsie recalls, I kept us far apart during those first dances. But my memory is that when I wasn't dancing with Elsie, I danced my partner around the floor in close proximity to her.

Then came a dance at the Community Club. It was the last dance, lights were low, and we danced cheek to cheek.

I was not too late for the Senior Prom. By this time we were much better acquainted so I could enjoy closer contact during all of the dances. Several times, in company with her sister, Irene, and her boy friend, Baxter Calloway, we went to the public dances at Burton Pavilion.

One Sunday afternoon, six of us boarded a small sail boat for a ride on the Sound. We departed from the beach at Ethel's, and were having such a good time that we forgot to check for landmarks. When it became dark we were lost. Eventually we found our way back, but Ethel and Claire were not happy that we had been out on the water so long. In truth, the six of us were more than the boat should have carried. Had winds come up, we could have swamped. Of course we carried no life preservers either.

On another afternoon outing (it was Elsie's last day of school) we had to be rescued by her Brother-in-law, Bruce Brinton. Bruce had an out-rigger canoe which we borrowed to go on a picnic. Launching the canoe, and paddling to a spot on the west side of the Island, was no problem. We enjoyed the picnic and the company of each other. Then it came time to return

Elsie was seated in front, I had the rear seat, with our picnic basket and blanket in the center. I shoved off, jumped into the canoe, and we both started paddling. Our intent was to make a right turn and go along the coastline, approximately five miles, back to Bruce's house on the beach. If didn't work that way. The tide had changed and our effort to return the canoe against the tide didn't work. All we could do was go straight out from the beach. Out and back we went for at lease a dozen times, while we tried different things. I sat in the front, and in the middle, with Elsie in back or in the middle. Nothing worked!

Finally, we decided to beach the canoe and walk back to the Brintons. But I didn't want to leave the canoe unattended. We had just decided that I would walk back, and Elsie stay with the canoe, when we spotted Bruce walking toward us. Because we weren't back by 5:00 p.m., he had assumed we were having some kind of problem, so he came looking for us. What a difference it made, when Bruce took the bow seat. We got away from the beach, and easily made that right turn, against the tide. It was an experience to be remembered.

Upon Elsie's graduation from high school, she enrolled in a Cosmetology school in Seattle. I was busy learning to be a printer. The result was that we didn't see much of each other

during the day time. I also had a lot of wood cutting and bark gathering chores to take care of, to help defray the cost of my board and room. Besides, I was learning how to operate the Job Press, as well as the big rotary press.

Except for some mechanical breakdown, the newspaper press was, for the most part, a matter of coordinated timing--to feed both edges of the newsprint into position simultaneously. At times, when there was a lot of static in the air, that maneuver could prove to be difficult. I also had to check the ink supply to make sure the reservoir was full and that distribution was correct, so the resultant printed page was neither too black or too light.

I believe the job everyone disliked the most, but which was a vital necessity, was folding the newspapers after the final Thursday night run. Eight pages meant putting one sheet on top of the other, jogging it to be certain the corners were even, then making the fold in the center, and the final fold so the Masthead was at the top of the finished paper. With several hundred papers to fold, everyone on hand took part. Our effort was to get them folded and properly addressed so I could get them to the Post Office in time for distribution that same night. Sometimes it was close, but, unless there was a severe press breakdown, we weren't late. Out of town mailers were left until the next morning.

The Job Press was much smaller. Instead of having a rotating drum, there was a large, steel plate, that moved in and out. Above this back plate, was a round piece of steel, called a "platen". Type for items such as calling cards, stationery, letter heads and other small printed needs was locked into a stationary frame at the front of the press. The platen was inked up and when set in motion, a rubber roller ran over the platen, then down over the type. While this movement was taking place, I had to feed the blank pieces into position, so that when the back plate pressed the paper to the inked type, the finished product was properly positioned, and attractive. I then reached in, removed the completed piece, and inserted another blank. That routine continued until the job was done. When there were several such jobs to do, it could be a long day of standing.

Of course it was some time before I was permitted to handle the job press by myself. I learned by cleaning the platen and rollers, after a "run". If there was to be a change of ink color, I had to clean the platen and rollers between runs as well as when the day was done. I had a number of "hands-on" trials, with Claire supervising the action. Now that I was getting the hang of the operation, I began to feel like a printer. Dirty hands and a smudge or two on my face (plus an ink-stained printer's apron) gave some indication that I was "getting there".

That winter there was a very heavy, wet snowfall. Because there was a short, steep hill from the driveway out to the road, it was impossible to use the car. The cold weather that accompanied the snow kept it in the garage for nearly a week. During that time, Claire and I walked to work, trudging along a wet and slippery road for about three miles.

Some of my activities broadened because of Elsie. Quite often there was need for singing during a funeral. Mr. Garvin called on either Elsie or me, and sometimes we were asked to be a duet. We were also asked to sing at some joint Eastern Star-Masonic dinners, since Mr. Garvin was a Mason and Mrs. Garvin an Eastern Star. We also sang for joint Oddfellow-Rebekah events, as both of Elsie's parents were members of these respective organizations. Before too long, Elsie joined the Eastern Star and I became an Oddfellow. (That's not a pun!)

The most interesting activity was going out with Mr. Garvin on a "pickup". Elsie and I would be visiting, late in the evening after her folks had gone to bed. Suddenly the telephone would ring. In a few moments Mr. Garvin would call out: Justin, you still here?" (Knowing full well that I was)."Yes", I'd reply. "Go warm up the wagon," he'd continue, "I'll be right out." That ended a perfectly good evening.

Three of those events were something to remember. One Sunday afternoon we picked up a lady from her second floor bedroom. She had to weigh a minimum of 200 pounds. Getting her on, and strapped to the stretcher was bad enough. Negotiating a three-foot wide staircase, with one 90 degree turn was the payoff. I didn't drop my end of the stretcher, when I had to lift her over my head to get over the banister, but it was close.

The second event was a hanging. Again it was a Sunday afternoon, when the call came in. I had the fortunate part of holding the body, while Mr. Garvin cut him down. He wasn't a big man, but when the rope was cut he was "dead weight". Had he not slumped over my shoulder, I'm sure I would have dropped him in the dirt.

The worst was a "floater". An apparent transient, he had drowned somewhere, only to float in on the tide to a beach on the east side of the Island and about two miles south of the lighthouse. Mr. Garvin and I drove to the lighthouse, borrowed a rowboat, and rowed to the point of reference. The stench was atrocious. Because the body hadn't deteriorated too much, we had little problem getting it on the stretcher. We placed the stretcher across the prow of the boat and had to row back to the lighthouse. The night breeze came right at us and every breath crossed over that corpse on the stretcher. That was the hardest, longest, and most odoriferous two miles I have ever traveled.

Once we got the stretcher loaded in the hearse, we still had a good ten miles to the mortuary, with no sign of fresh air anywhere. Even rolling the side windows down, was of no help. The only answer was time--months in fact--before the odor of that dead body was to be cleared from my nostrils.

I often thought, afterward, of a comment from my brother-in-law, Claire. In World War I, he had been assigned to a burial detail after some major battle. "The only reason I, and the rest of the detail, was able to accomplish that mission was because we had access to an unlimited supply of good French wine."

The rest of the year was a continuation of work and play. I was getting more proficient as a printer, and Elsie and I continued in the company of each other. Our group of friends all enjoyed safe and sane home or beach parties, and almost all of us went to the same church. Several of us sang in the choir.

For some reason or another, during the Spring of 1935, I decided to have a new photograph made up. Going to Rhodes Department Store, their photographer posed me in my topcoat, scarf and hat. It came out a winner. So much so that they placed a framed copy on display in their main, front window. Since it was just across the sidewalk from where the Vashon Bus stopped, a number of people (including Elsie) saw it. I do believe it was one of the best photos ever made of me.

About that time, I learned of a Work-Study program at a College in Billings. I applied to Billings Polytechnic Institute (BPI) and was accepted. I enrolled in June of 1935 for a Business Administration course, and a job in the school's printing plant. In the meantime, Elsie had finished her Cosmetology Course and opened her own Beauty Shop with quarters in the Vashon Barber Shop. It was hard to leave Vashon, for school, but I knew it was an opportunity that shouldn't be passed up.

Arriving at BPI, I was housed in Tyler Hall. The room was just large enough for a pair of bunk beds, two desks, and closet space for clothes. During that summer, I Worked in the Print Shop full time. My roommate was also a student printer, Harvey Borgen.

In the shop, we were a crew of five and sometimes six. I worked all phases, from Linotype, to hand-setting type for headlines, ads and flyers, and running the presses. Our biggest job was publishing a cook book for a group of ladies in one of the large churches in Billings.

One thing I didn't have to worry about was my laundry. Every week I would send my laundry home to Glendive in a mailing carton made especially for that purpose. And every week, when mother returned the carton, it not only contained my laundry, but a supply of chocolate chip cookies. My dorm roommate, Harvey Borgen, and another one of the print shop gang, Charlie Frost, soon became well aware of my laundry routine. One afternoon, when I came to work, the laundry case was sitting on a counter, just inside the door. Knowing there would be a note from mother, I opened the case. I found the note, but sitting on top of it was one cookie and another note.

"Your mom sent a couple dozen cookies this time, but they were so good, we couldn't resist. We did save you one!" That note was signed simply "your print shop buddies!" I must admit, that one remaining cookie was delicious.

Thinking of Charles Frost--he was a total non-smokers. Every so often, Borgen, Frostie and I would go into Billings to see a show. After the show we always stopped for a special plate of spaghetti and a mug or two of beer. Then we called a cab for a ride back to our dorm. On the way out of the Spaghetti House, Harv and I would each buy a "Rum Crook" cigar. Once in the cab (and we always worked it so Charlie sat between us) we lit up the cigars. Poor Charlie would huff, puff, and cough all the way back to school, while Harv and I thoroughly enjoyed our "Rum-Crooks". The last I heard, Charlie Frost is still going strong, so I guess the little bit of cigar smoke, he got from us, didn't do him in.

The ensuing school year was exciting in many ways. The only course I didn't care much for was German. But having had Latin and French in high school, I managed to keep up in German too.

I was also active in band, orchestra and choir. From the latter group Delmar Dunham, Newell Wilder, George Armstrong and I formed the Billings Polytechnic Quartet. Armstrong's mother, was our mentor and accompanist.

We started out slowly, but were soon recognized as being pretty good. Consequently we received a lot of invitations.

One, that I particularly recall, was an invite to sing during the dinner meeting of a group of downtown business men. It was late November and light, slushy snow was on the ground. Dressed in tuxedos, we were going into Billings, when the car had a flat tire. There was nothing to be done, but change it. That we did, very carefully. We must have been "favored sons", because the job was completed without soiling nary a shirt nor a jacket.

I went home--to Glendive--for Christmas in 1935 to spend some time with my dad. I got there on Saturday, the 21st of December. Because of the severely cold weather in the East I also enjoyed being with mother that day. She was scheduled to leave for Seattle (Vashon), to be with my sister and her family. The cold weather delayed her train until late that night, so we were all together for a few hours.

One change that surprised me was the snow. When I left Billings, it was clear and cold, but all previous snow had melted away. In contrast, Glendive was totally blanketed in snow. I knew there was supposed to be snow on the ground for Christmas, but I didn't think there could be such drastic changes in 250 miles.

Only one boarder remained, so dad and I had a number of dinner invitations. In fact one day we had four invitations. I prepared a meal for the boarder. After the dishes were cleared away, dad and I were free to enjoy our invitation out. Since dad didn't go to work until around 11:00 o'clock, we had plenty of time.

We had several days of what, today, would be called "quality time" together. Probably one of the few times dad and I really visited and discussed what I was doing and where "I was going" with my life. On Christmas Eve, dad and I exchanged gifts. After another few days of talk, visiting (over dinners) with neighbors and other enjoyable times of being together, it was time to go. I returned to school before mother came home. Once there, it was back to the grind of work, study and sing.

While working in the "Poly" Print shop that next Spring, I learned of a ranch, owned by the School President, Senator Eaton. Called "Beehive", it was located in the foothills, near the town of Absarokee. During the summer, Poly sponsored a four-week outing for boys 16 and 17 years of age. It had a typical "dude ranch" flavor that included lots of horseback riding and fishing.

The man in charge, also happened to be the one responsible for the campus dorm, where I lived. I talked to him several times throughout the Spring. At last he agreed to make the necessary arrangements for me to be a part of Beehive's program. I was also given the assignment to be correspondent for the school paper.

After school was out, I stayed on campus continuing to work in the Print Shop. When it came time to go to Beehive, I made a quick trip to Glendive. There I picked up a bed roll, and borrowed a pair of leather chaps, as well as a Stetson hat.

Returning to Poly, I rode up to Beehive with Bob, the Director. I was assigned to a bed in a cabin and introduced to the rest of the staff. Within a couple of days 16 young men from various major cities like Seattle, San Francisco, even Chicago, arrived as scheduled. It was to be a grand four weeks.

The young men learned to ride; they took part in a small cattle roundup, and learned to tie "flies" for fishing. Since the river ran adjacent to our camp, we all did a lot of fly fishing.

The climax came about the middle of the third week, when we took the boys on a ten-day pack trip through Yellowstone Park.

On the second afternoon out, we ended up at the outskirts of the town of Redlodge, on the eastern edge of the Beartooth Wilderness. It was raining, as only it can rain in the mountains. Searching the area, we found a building that once had been a bar, but was now empty. Bob located the owner and got permission for us to spend "one night in a bar". But we did our cooking outside.

I was the elected cook for that meal and came up with a "Mulligan Stew"--sliced potatoes, onions and bacon. With a lot of patience, I finally got a fire going. When the fire was well established, I brought out a very large frying pan, heated it up, introduced it to the bacon, then the potatoes and onions. Salt and pepper added, I kept up the stirring. If the liquid cooked off, all I had to do was tip my hat down, The rain water poured in, under control, and the cooking continued. The rain was gone when we got up in the morning. That night we were in Yellowstone Park.

A tour of Yellowstone Park, on horseback, is an experience totally different from any other. Added to our privilege, was the fact that a trio of singing, trumpet-playing men from Poly were performing at Old Faithful Lodge. They drew up a rough map showing where there were trails leading to geysers and hot springs that could only be reached by hiking or on horseback. Since we had the horses, we covered a lot of virgin territory, not usually seen by the tourist crowds.

A special event occurred, one night, after we had all gone to bed.

As is well known, bears roam the area in some abundance. Aware of this, our major food supply was packed, securely, and odor free, in large tins that, when traveling, were carried by the pack horse. That night our planned breakfast was separated out. To safeguard it, the food was carefully packaged, and a rope attached. Knowing the package could be sniffed out by a bear, the rope was thrown up and over the most slender branch of a nearby tree. A bear could climb the tree, but would know, instinctively, that its weight was too much for that particular limb.

Somewhere in the early morning hours, I awoke to hear a commotion of grunts and growls outside the tent. Looking around I saw Bob holding the tent flap and peering around it to see what was going on. Without making a sound--and, as it turned out, the others in our group were doing the same thing--we silently watched as the Mamma Bear directed one of her two cubs to climb the tree, go out on the slender limb, and steal OUR Breakfast.

As a correspondent, I wrote a couple of stories about our pack trip to Yellowstone Park. The bear story was one.

The day after our pack train returned to camp, it was learned that two of Poly's just graduated students, (Lee Koyker and his fiancé, Elaine) had married and chose Beehive to spend their honeymoon. On their first night in camp, Lee was "kidnapped" from their cabin and "thrown" into a make-shift "jail". It was all part of the shivaree staged for their benefit (and the entertainment of the rest of us).

As I recall Lee was confined until sometime after midnight, while Elaine stood outside pleading, with anyone who would listen, for his release. I can't say that either Lee or Elaine were

the most happy campers at the time, but after a couple of days, they began to smile and see the humor in the happenings.

The day camp broke up for our group of junior "dudes", one of the boys asked me if I would trade my cowboy boots for his pair of high-top English riding boots. Since our feet were the same size, I agreed. A few days later, I boarded a train in Billing to go home. I carried my bedroll and, astraddle that, I had thrown my chaps. I wore my borrowed Stetson and the English riding boots, but the boots showed from under my Levis. As I walked down the aisle, to find a seat, I passed an older couple. She spotted my "get-up". "Look at them boots!" she said to her husband. Then she added: "Boy! There's a "Drug Store" cowboy for you!" She should have seen me a week later, when I was all dolled up in my tux to sing in a Knights of Pythias quartet engagement.

I didn't belong to the Knights of Pythias, but was recruited by three fellows who did. They were in the process of forming a quartet, but needed a tenor. Since we all sang in the Congregational Church choir, I was asked to join them. We not only sang at their lodge activities, but did a number of other gigs for some of their business associates. Between the two quartet groups, school and work, I was now keeping a very busy schedule.

Returning from Beehive, I again worked full time in the print shop. Our big project that summer was the school annual. We also published a weekly newspaper and completed a steady variety of small jobs.

School stared in September. Immediately, upon getting together, our Poly quartet was in business again. For this second school year, however, we decided that the group should have a name more germane to our character. After various samplings, we agreed on the name "Three Men and a Tenor". Delmar, Newell and George were all over six feet tall. I, the Tenor, was only five feet-ten inches. That was the basis for choosing the name, and we had a lot of fun with it.

Before I hardly had time to crack a book, the Quartet was asked to sing at political rallies for a dozen or more County and State Republican candidates. Of course we also "represented" Alfred Landon, the Republican candidate for President in 1936. Mr. Landon never showed up at any of our rallies, but we appeared for a State Representative, Sheriff, County Surveyor, a District Judge, County Attorney, Coroner, and a County Auditor, among others. For these engagements we sang A Cappella, because we were going around to different cities in Yellowstone County. How many of "our Candidates" won their election, I have no recollection. I do know that Alf Landon was thoroughly defeated by the incumbent, Mr. Roosevelt.

In between our weekend rallies, there was a lot of study, and, of course, I did have a job in the Print Shop. Somehow it was all taken care of and my grades didn't suffer. One thing that, often, did suffer was sleep. Completing printing jobs sometimes ran over the midnight hour. When I was on the road for the political rallies, it was, often, a late hour getting home. Most of

such events were simply taken in stride. On late night Quartet events, however, we had one fan who was a blessing in disguise. She was the Chef for the school's dining room, Mrs. MacGovern. When we knew we would be very late getting back to school, (any time after 11:00 p.m.) all we had to do was tell her. Immediately, Govie would say: "Drop by, when you get here, I'll be up."

She had a basement room under the dining hall. As soon as we knocked on her door, she would let us in, and escort us up stairs to her kitchen. There we made ourselves comfortable while she cooked up a steak for each, together with a small salad, and coffee. To my knowledge, no one else on campus received such special treatment.

Beside school engagements, the "Three Men and a Tenor" sang for PTA meetings, a "Preaching Mission", Women's Clubs, Radio Station KGHL, and a number of funerals. Come to think of it, I believe we were invited to only one wedding.

The "donations" we received from the Republicans, from funerals and a number of other commercial engagements were sufficient to help pay those school expenses not covered by our work scholarships.

In addition, I was a soloist in the First Congregational Church choir. I also sang at special dinners put on by the Methodist and Christian churches, as well as a number of school functions. In one instance, the Sawyer (grocery) stores sponsored a singing contest on radio station KGHL. I entered, let everyone in Glendive know about it, and won. I think the prize was $25.00, but nothing else ever came of it. Of course, I hoped for a long term radio contract. Sure I did!

A very special memory was being selected as one of two Tenor soloists to sing in a Christmas presentation of "The Messiah". Representing all the churches in Billings, a 100-voice choir was selected for this production. It was staged during Christmas week at the First Congregational Church. For that event, I sang three of the five Tenor solos. Charlie Ide, Poly's Director of Music, sang the other two. To sing such a production, backed up by a large Wurlitzer Pipe Organ and an orchestra, was an experience that really raised the "goose bumps".

Because I knew those special secular solos, I was asked to sing for Christmas events in other local churches, as well as at Poly's Christmas program.

Just before our Christmas vacation started, Mr. Ide and his Fiancé were married. I was invited to sing "O Promise Me".

I went home to Glendive, again, that Christmas to "batch it" with my Dad. Getting there was my problem. It was an extremely cold day, so I bummed a ride to the Northern Hotel in Billings. There my suitcase and I sat waiting for the train from the West. I did not have a pass but, because I knew all of the Conductors on this run, that was no concern.

What did concern me was the weather. Going from the hotel to the railroad depot was a matter of only three blocks. When I learned that the train was due within the hour I started out. As I left the hotel, a nearby outdoor thermometer informed me that it was 60 degrees below zero. And that was before the "chill factor" had even been thought of.

I wore a hat, overcoat, scarf, gloves and spats, which protected the majority of my bodily parts. Exposed were my ears and nose. With my suitcase in one hand, I kept the other hand rotating from one ear, to my nose, to the other ear, and back again. It was a losing battle. I frosted the tip of both ears. Had I gone another two blocks, I'm sure all three extremities would have been frozen rather than frosted. Once inside the depot, my ears quit tingling.

As I relaxed at home, it seemed that the whole previous year had been just one long rat-race. It was hard to slow down after such a pace, put I managed.

One difficulty in being at loose ends during a week of cold winter weather is boredom. Dad still worked the night shift--12:00 midnight to 8:00 in the morning, which meant he was off to bed right after breakfast. The high school kids were gone, and, this time, there were only two of mother's roomers--no non-rooming boarders--who stayed over the holiday. Cooking, therefore, was not much of a chore, but did provide welcome diversion. Dad would get up around 4:30 p.m., so we had time, then, for some more good visits. Dad and I were invited out for Christmas dinner, as were the two roomers. I didn't have to worry about that meal.

Beyond that, there was no other place to go, and, in below zero weather, I didn't have much inclination to go for a walk. I did get in a lot of good reading, while my dad was sleeping.

I returned to school the day before mother got home. Knowing her train would stop in Billings, I had a 20 minute "hope you had a Merry Christmas and now will enjoy a Happy New Year" visit with her at the depot. That brought me up to date on the Wilder clan and goings on in Vashon. Mother was also sporting a new permanent that Elsie had given her just before she left Vashon Island.

Two days later the winter quarter was off to a good start. In addition to classes and working in the print shop, the Knights of Pythian Sunshine Girls invited our Pythian quartet to sing for one of their programs. "Three Men and a Tener" were also practicing, as the Music Director, Mr. Ide, had arranged for us to go on a school recruiting trip. That not being enough, George Armstrong and I were elected to participate in a mixed quartet for several school programs.

There was something about studying, for me, that was pure drudgery. I am sure that was not the right attitude, because what the teachers attempted to impart was supposed to lodge in my

brain and be of benefit throughout my life. To a great degree, I now believe, my brain was reasonably absorbent and, regardless of the drudgery, I did benefit.

Work was not only fun, but I could actually "see" progress in the different skills involved. I liked words, and the methods of putting words together on a Linotype, even when hand set, was a challenge.

"Setting" an article in these two mediums, required "spacing" so each line of type could be "justified" to a specific length. If a line was short, "spacers" were inserted between words and often between letters. If the last word of a line was too long, that word had to be hyphenated--at times eliminated--to make it fit in. The line could then be "spaced" out to an exact length. That is the Mechanical side.

Writing copy was even more fascinating. For one thing it required a knowledge of synonyms; sometimes a creative play on words; and could involve structuring to change innuendo to fact, or vice versus. Of course the knowledge of good grammar was essential. There were instances when a word change was necessary in order to fit a certain space, but not change the meaning.

Here, I must admit, my studies in English, Latin, French and German were probably the key to any proficiency I had in putting words together. Seeing them "come alive" in print was the "pièce de résistance".

Another facet of writing--which I learned in the newspaper business--was the editing process. Prior to the days of computers and word processors, writing was either by hand or typewriter. I always enjoyed editing, albeit its tediousity. It is interesting to make two sentences out of one when the original two sentences are simply joined by the words "and" or "but". It's a challenge to shorten a sentence when an unnecessary word or phrase has been included. It's an exciting exercise to excise a whole paragraph--even a page--when a second or third reading casts doubt on the validity of that paragraph or page.

It's a delight to move a sentence, paragraph or page from one position to another, in order to give a statement greater strength of meaning.

Working by hand and typewriter I double space, or often triple space, each line in order to make room for editing. I always prefer writing the first draft by hand. When editing makes that draft unreadable, except to me, I make a typewritten rewrite--at least double spaced. Once the whole manuscript is typed I do a final editing job and then a final draft.

Fast forwarding to this present-day effort, I am now privileged to use a word processor. As I mentioned earlier, spelling problems are, for the most part, eliminated. When I misspell a

word, a bell rings. I touch a key, the correct spelling appears in a box on the screen. I touch another key and the correctly spelled word, replaces the misspelled one. It's magic!

I can also edit by pushing one button to identify the word, sentence, paragraph or page to be changed or moved. I push another key and, presto, it's accomplished. Similarly, I can push one key, the page goes blank, after the point where I placed the "curser", and I am free to add as many words, paragraphs or pages as I wish.

However--maybe I'm just old fashioned--I still have to edit the final draft on paper. That means printing my word processor copy, double spaced, proofreading it, and editing it again, before making the final draft. It's a much faster process, but I still insist on proofreading, before "going to press". It's the procedure I learned in school and, as a printer.

In sharp contrast, singing was the most enjoyable and uplifting of all my college studies and experiences. School programs, along with quartet work, started the Winter Quarter off.

As the weeks progressed, "Three Men and a Tenor" found themselves invited to a Chrysler Dealers dinner; Kiwanis luncheon; Methodist Church supper; Christian and Congregational church affairs; as well as functions at the Elks Club and a dinner program for the Hudson-Terraplane automobile dealers. (Remember those cars?)


Hudson-Terraplane Automobile

But our work was only beginning. The initial recruiting program was a two-day trip that took us first, to Wyola, Montana and then, to Sheridan, Wyoming. On this tour we travelled in Mr. Ide's car. The new Mrs. Ide also accompanied us.

Travel was arranged to include a student assembly on the afternoon of the first day. The quartet presented a half-hour program, followed by Mr. Ide's presentation relative to the benefits of making Billings Polytechnic Institute the student's college choice. After that it was a "get acquainted" meeting, wherein the quartet and the Ides visited with one and all.

As this session ended, the school Principal introduced us to the student whose parents had agreed to host us for dinner and overnight lodging. Leaving Wyola the next morning, it started to snow, and the snowfall continued for the whole 40-mile trip into Sheridan. Our performance went well. We met with a lot of kids, enjoyed another wonderful home cooked dinner and, this time, instead of staying overnight, headed right on out for the 140 mile trip to Billings. It was still snowing.

The road was a two-lane gravel affair (later to become US-90) that crossed the Crow Indian Reservation. By the time we passed the Wyola turnoff, it was dark. After going another 30 miles, Mr. Ide was suddenly confronted with a plodding, light-less, Indian-owned horse and wagon. In the black of night and a heavy snowfall, there was nothing else to do but hit the brakes. Determined not to hit the Indian and his wagon, Charlie simultaneously turned the steering wheel to the right, thus heading the car into the grade ditch.

Be the ride wasn't over. Reflex action caused Mr. Ide to reverse the turn of the steering wheel. Now, however, with the car's brakes locked up, we were simply sledding over the snow, the left half of the car targeted straight for the rear right end of the Indian's wagon, as well as the drainage ditch.

As the car's front wheels arrived at the top edge of the ditch, the broad side of the right-front wheel snagged a well embedded piece of frozen gumbo. Like riding a carnival bumper car, the bump caused the rear end to swing around, and all the way down into, what turned out to be, a sloping grade ditch about two feet deep. It was the start of a 30-second thrill ride.

At exactly the right instant, the front wheel obstruction broke loose, thereby freeing the car. The car continued its sideways slide in the snow. In this mode the car, with us in it, passed the wagon and the horse.

Startled, when the car's headlights suddenly enveloped him, from the side, the Indian pulled up on the reins and stopped his horse. The car continued its sideways slide for at least another ten feet. Just as suddenly as it had all began, a right rear tire hung up on another glob of frozen gumbo. That caused the front end to pivot forward about 90 degrees, putting us on a straight, but tilted course. There the grade ditch leveled out. Brakes were released, power applied and, with a gradual turn of the steering wheel, the car was back on the road. We now had another 70 miles of snow and "washboard" highway, but never did we encounter any more Indians.


“Washboard” Highway

Although "Natural" conditions had a lot to do with both the problem and recovery, we praised Charlie Ide for his skillful driving. But it was close.

The snow storm we had travelled through broke, the sun came out and within a few days most flat surfaces were dry. But another storm was brewing. I remember this one especially because leaving the dorm that next morning I encountered another "freak of nature". Fifty feet from the dorm's entrance was a tennis court. Through some miracle the ground was totally devoid of snow from the dorm's front steps to a point half way across the tennis court. The snow fall, that night, had completely covered the other half of the court--length wise.

Because the Wyola recruiting trip turned out to be successful, the school's Administrative hierarchy suggested that Mr. Ide arrange another tour for the Spring Quarter. This, of course, made us all quite happy.

With the traveling troubadours back on campus my educational pursuits continued, including musical, religious, and practical. At the time of my enrollment, Billings Polytechnic Institute had a reasonably close relationship with the Congregational Church. I recall only one required religious course during each quarter. It definitely was not a "party" school. And, while we had several campus "Societies", there were no Sororities or Fraternities.

For the record, the college changed its name after I graduated. The change came as the result of an earthquake that destroyed the Intermountain Union College at Helena, Montana. The two schools (BPI and IUC) joined, to become Rocky Mountain College.

As the Winter Quarter continued, I, as a soloist, as well as our quartet continued to be busy. Work in the print shop also picked up because of small jobs. Our instructor was competent

at bidding for this work, and it showed. Several times it was two or three o'clock in the morning before I got to bed. In fact once we worked all night, finishing up at 6:00 o'clock in the morning. The job was delivered on time.

A heavy singing schedule developed when I was designated to sing solo parts in the "Seven Last Words of Christ". This was another cantata, to be sung as a Good Friday presentation by the Choir of our First Congregational Church. There were many hours of practice involved. Added to that was the practice sessions for the school's production of HMS Pinafore. I had a lead part as Captain Corcoron. In fact all quartet members had major roles. In between acts "Three Men and a Tenor" presented specialty songs. All in all it was a case of work, study, sing. Sometimes it was sing, work, study. As I came up to the end of the quarter, it was study, study, STUDY, for final exams, then work, and sing, sing.

Not having enough to do, our Music Director, Mr. Ide, decided a Dance Band should be created. From the regular band and orchestra, a ten-piece dance band was formed. I was selected to be the leader. This was a whole new experience, but proved to be a lot of fun. Unlike the bands of this era, we did not have microphones, amplifiers, or synthesizers. We played foxtrots, waltzes, and some "jitterbug". I sang and played the clarinet, often using my "slip stick" as a "baton". Since we played only for school dances, there was not much demand for our group, but it was a great bunch and we all had a good time at every "gig".

Edging on toward Easter, my involved singing schedule got more hectic. I was invited to sing a solo for the Billings Rotary. The girl accompanist, with whom I had been practicing, suddenly became ill, and couldn't participate. Mr. Ide agreed to substitute, although we had no opportunity to practice together. I knew Ide was not an accomplished pianist. I just didn't know how unaccomplished he was.

At this time I do not recall the title of that particular piece of music, but it was not a song with which Ide was familiar. It also was a song which no one else in the audience would ever become familiar. The first few bars went pretty good. Then Mr. Ide started playing notes and chords that did not resemble anything written on the page.

As everyone knows "the show must go on", so I improvised. I tried to match my words with his musical phrases. At the same time I had to sing either in tune or in harmony with the tones he was producing. It was an ordeal I hope never to experience again. I got through the song, and we received the usual compliments on our performance. Whether any of the Rotarians knew there was a problem, I'll never know.

Two or three weeks before Easter, the quartet was invited to sing for a program at Eastern Montana Normal School. This was a college that specialized in educating students to become teachers. Our appearance was strictly social (not recruiting) and a good time was had by all. The

student body was predominantly females, but no lasting contacts were made from that one engagement.

Another area where the quartet was often invited, was funerals. Most of them were simple things, where we sang one or two songs early in the service and out in front of everyone attending. One Masonic funeral was different. The service was held in a church, but we were to sing from a room just off the sanctuary. Prior to our cue each one of us was demonstrating, for the others, a "handy" movement. That's an exercise where one forms different "animal faces" with the fingers of one or both hands.

As we heard the minister start the prayer, that meant we were "up next", George Armstrong removed a wad of gum from his mouth. He parked it on the fingernail of his right hand index finger. Holding his hand up, all fingers curled under except the curved and extended index finger, the hand bobbed from his wrist. It was the "handy" symbol for "a swan with the hiccups".

All four of us cracked up. The prayer ended, Mrs. Armstrong, our accompanist, started playing and we tried to sing. After several bars of four-part harmony, two of us dropped out, silently laughing. We started singing again just as the other two started their laughing spree.

How we got through that song, is still a mystery. It surely was the strangest rendition of "Rock of Ages" we ever performed. Mrs. Armstrong kept the whole thing together, but if looks could kill, we all would have died on the spot. I am certain no one in the audience knew what was going on, because we received the promised gratuity.

Another memorable event of that Spring occurred at the church following a practice session. The four of us were standing on the steps talking when a very poorly dressed transient came along. He stopped and then asked: "Does this church have a pipe organ?"

We answered in the affirmative, and he said: "Would anybody object if I played it?"

We looked at each other, and decided there would probably be no objection, "but we had better come in with you, in case someone comes by to see why the organ is being played at this time." With that, we all went in.

Who the man was, we never found out--didn't even learn his name. But he could play the organ. We sat spellbound for at least a half an hour while he played religious and semi-classical pieces that we were all familiar with. It was an outstanding concert.

At the end, he simply turned the organ off, thanked us, and walked away, leaving us always to wonder whether or not he could be an organist of renown--simply "down on his luck".

With that episode behind us, the quartet was now prepared to participate in the Music Department's production of HMS Pinafore. On the afternoon, of our "Opening Night" performance, the four of us walked into downtown Billings. We did some shopping. In the course of our travel, we agreed that the constant exercise of our vocal chords was causing them to tighten up. Then, what possessed us I do not know. Anyway, we stopped at a State liquor store and bought a pint bottle of Scotch. Our next purchase was four packages of Sen Sen--a potent little "pill" designed to remove evidence of "bad breath".

On the walk back to school, we each took one short drink. That's all. But immediately it was noticeable that our throat muscles were warm and seemed much more relaxed. (Let me add here, that was the first time any of us had imbibed in even one drink of liquor.)

Now the problem was what do we do with the bottle?

Going on and off stage during countless practice sessions, I was well aware of an antique, square, grand piano stored in an "out of the way spot" near one of the curtained, stage wings. I mentioned it, suggesting we hide the bottle of Scotch in a corner, just under the piano's top lid. The other three guys jumped at the suggestion and handed me the bottle for disposal.

I managed the procedure, without getting caught. That night HMS Pinafore was brilliantly performed. On occasion, when it could be done surreptitiously, each of the four of us browsed by that square grand piano. Carefully lifting the cover, we would manage a quick, short swig, followed immediately, by the consumption of two or three Sen-Sen.

The bottle replaced, the cover lowered, and each, on cue, was ready to return to the stage. Never had we sung any better. Our vocal chords were well oiled (no pun intended!) and loose as a goose. From my standpoint there wasn't a high C, in either the operetta or in the specialty songs sung during intermission, that I could not reach with ease and alacrity.

By no means did we finish off the bottle that night, but no effort was ever made to retrieve it. To my knowledge it was never found before graduation. The Sen-Sen seemingly did its job, too.

The school's major musical production out of the way, our quartet's final recruiting road trip was scheduled. It was a whirlwind tour that took us to four South Dakota towns and an overnight in my home town--Glendive. With Mr. Ide driving, we travelled straight through to Spearfish, S.D. We made the afternoon performance and student conference and stayed overnight. The next morning we drove to Sturgis for a morning session, then to Deadwood for a noon assembly and finally to Lead.

On this tour we carried tuxedos for the quartet performances. When we arrived in Lead, we were shown to a basement room which was to serve as our dressing room. All went well until we started to get into the tuxedos. That's when the lights went out.

Who or what blew the fuse, we never knew. Trying to put buttons into stiff shirt and add cuff links, in a totally black room, is an exercise always to be remembered. We were dressed, however, when the lights came on again and the purpose of our trip was successfully accomplished. We stayed overnight there. The next morning we were on our way home.

My home in Glendive was the next stop. By late evening we arrived--hungry. Thankfully we did not have a performance to put on. Going straight to the house, mother greeted us in typical Montana fashion by asking "When did you eat last?". I told her. Within minutes food was on the table and our hunger pangs eliminated. That accomplished, we visited, then off to bed in the big basement room.

There were two double beds and a cot. Mr. Ide got the cot. Next morning, after breakfast, the car was gassed up and we were on our way back to Billings. It was a tiring trip, but we had fun. Now we knew, to some extent, what performers went through in their traveling "one night stands".

Practice sessions for the Easter service had some drawbacks. I was going with Ruth Rieneker, a girl who often accompanied me on the piano, when I had solo engagements. Since I had no car, we used her parent's. The drawback was that she had four brothers, who were very possessive of their "little" sister.

On an earlier occasion, Ruth invited me to go on a picnic. All of the brothers accompanied us. Whenever Ruth and I had an opportunity for a conversation one-on-one, one or two of her brothers instantly showed up. It was so exasperating that it was almost funny. She was a good accompanist though, and we got along very well.

On the last Sunday practice before Easter, Ruth and I came out of the church, got in her car, and I turned on the key. There was a muffled "boom" under the hood, followed by an outpouring of smoke. One of the brothers had rigged a smoke bomb to go off.

I often wondered if Ruth ever managed to get married.

The Easter Services, with several churches participating, were held in the Fox Theatre. To a packed house, the combination of all church choirs performed the cantata, "Seven Last Words of Christ." The whole production, including my solo parts, went off without a hitch. Like the "Messiah", at Christmas, it was done with organ and orchestral accompaniment. Another thrilling event!

That Fox Theatre had one other special interest to me, for it was there that I first saw Jeanette MacDonald and Nelson Eddie in the movie "Maytime".

Because many of our Quartet appearances and some of my solo engagements were reported in the Billings Gazette, I often received "fan mail" from Glendive residents who subscribed to the Paper. Of course mother and dad told me about every item they read. But those from other friends were greatly appreciated. One, in particular, was a letter from my first piano teacher, Mrs. Farnum.

After Easter, Mr. Ide expanded my activities by setting me up to play clarinet solos for two Musicale Programs, as well as an additional gig singing in a mixed quartet. By mid April of that year, I counted some 70 engagements in which I sang solo, played solo clarinet, appeared with the dance band, or sang with the two male quartets and the mixed quartet.

I celebrated my 22nd birthday by winning Second Place in an all school, English class sponsored, Essay Contest. My subject was "Having one or two hobbies to fall back on at retirement".

Looking back, it was a prophetic subject, considering the fact I had yet to have a job outside of school; and when I did retire, fifty years later, I had followed my own advice by having the suggested couple of hobbies.

At the time, of course, I was looking for work. My first effort was a letter written to the Harley Davidson Motorcycle Co. "Three Men and a Tenor" thought it would be great community relations for them to hire us, provide cycles for our travel, and arrange appearances throughout the United States. The proposal was received with interest, but "No thanks.". Maybe, had I not suggested they pay us a salary, if might have gone over!!

My second effort was placing an ad in the Chicago Printer's newspaper, extolling my qualifications as an available printer.

While that ad was in the mill, I was getting on with the last week of school and graduation. I knew my grades were o.k. and I would graduate with an Associate of Arts (two year) degree. I was also up for a scholarship, but the monetary value was insufficient for the requirements I knew necessary to continue on. So I made peace with myself, knowing I simply had to find a paying job.

But first things first. For the last Musicale Program, I had a clarinet solo, a vocal duet and took part in the final school performance of "Three Men and a Tenor". This was an outdoor event. Since we had, through a friend, access to horses, we rode into the amphitheater on

horseback; performed with the horses as background; and rode out astride the steeds. It was good showmanship and we received a standing ovation.

From then until the first of June the quartet wound down with about a dozen engagements. These included appearances on Radio station KGHL; a couple of recitals; an appearance on stage at the Babcock Theater; a Mutual Life Insurance agent's dinner meeting; a Masked Thespeans Treasure Hunt (I found a miniature horse's head. For reward, I was asked to lead the group singing.)

Commencement week ended June 2nd of that year 1937. I packed my bags, said my goodbyes, mounted a car behind the "Iron Horse", and headed back to Glendive. It had been a remarkable and wonderful two years.

A "barnstorming" printer had little problem getting a job, in those years. It wasn't necessarily great paying work, but it payed for board and room. In Glendive my board and room came for free, so the salary received from the job I landed on a small local weekly paper, was ample for my needs. It didn't last long. About two weeks after graduation, I received a reply from the Chicago Printer's ad. The U. of Michigan's Daily wanted me.

Pass in hand, I entrained for Ann Arbor, Michigan. Upon arrival I made contact with the paper and lined out a work schedule for the summer. I also found a rooming house. I ate either in the University cafeteria, or a nearby student oriented restaurant owned by the lady who also owned the rooming house where I lived.

Most of my time was taken up by work. I made up (hand set whatever type was necessary) advertisements, and headlines. I did page make up (placing type, heads, and ads in their proper locations within the metal page frame). Because the paper was a morning daily, I worked the night shifts--either 4:00 p.m. to midnight or midnight to 8:00 a.m. I did not enroll for the Summer Quarter.

Tryouts were posted for the Operetta HMS Pinafore. I borrowed a copy of the play and had it promptly stolen while I ate lunch in the school cafeteria. Because I knew the play pretty well, I tried for the part of Capt. Corcoran--the role I had played at BPI. It was soon obvious that I was in a different league. Many of these singers had much better formal training than I. Needless to say I didn't get the part.

Because of my work schedule, I decided to forego any attempt to even sing in the chorus. I replaced the stolen book.

I met several kids at the rooming house, one of whom had a car. He took some of us out to a nearby lake, one summer afternoon. It was a hot, muggy day, with the outside temperature at

83 degrees. I remember it distinctly. After suiting up, I dove into the water. It was like diving into a hot pool. The water temperature that day was also 83 degrees. That was my last try at swimming in that lake.

While working in the school printing plant, I saw some of the most ferocious lightning storms. Bolt after bolt flashed down from the sky, sometimes with only seconds between each strike. Of course every flash was followed by thunder that really shook the building. In that part of the country, every home as well as all other buildings were equipped with "Lighting Rods". Is was a good thing they were that night, because old "Thor" the "God of Lightning" was really throwing his weight around. The way the ground shook, he was making one accurate strike after another.

To augment my income, I got a job washing dishes at the school cafeteria. That worked out pretty well, especially on days when there was some special meeting of a University Women's group. Invariably the women were served a shrimp cocktail. Obviously many of them didn't care for the taste of shrimp. When I arrived on the job, there would be any number of untouched shrimp dishes, so I, and the other dishwasher, would help ourselves. Part of my pay included a free lunch every day.

Eating in the school dining room was another experience. I would sit at a table with the same group of five or six students every day. Being one of those affable characters from Montana, I was used to getting acquainted quickly and enjoying good conversation. That was not to be at the U. of Michigan. Six of us started the meal in silence. None of the other five said "boo". So, I would open a conversation. There was no response. If I said something about the weather, the subject died with the last sound of my voice. I would start another subject. It, too, died. After three tries, I gave up the effort.

I changed tables and promptly ran into the same procedure. This went on until I decided to also eat in silence. That "weren't my nature, by gum," but "when in Rome, do as the Romans do", so "I dood it".

That attitude, along with the hot muggy weather, began to get to me. Then my job was changed from printer to pressman. I liked the printing, but didn't care much for the press room work. The crew, like the dining room bunch, were more aloof and hard for me to get used to. I decided Michigan was not for me.

I still had a pass in my pocket so, at the end of the summer session, I resigned my jobs, gave up my room, packed my bags and hopped the first train out of town.

The only positive experience I had that summer involved a trip into Detroit. One fellow with whom I had become well acquainted, wanted to buy a white, summer suit. They were on

sale at some store in Detroit, so we drove in to find them. Upon arrival, the sale was in full progress and there were racks and racks of white suits. The problem was, most of them carried SOLD signs, but remained on the rack waiting for the tailor to make the specified alterations.

After searching and searching for a suit he liked, one finally showed up. He tried on the jacket, it fit. He tried the trousers and they, too, fit, except that they needed to be shortened and cuffed. The only real problem was that this suit also carried a big red tag marked SOLD.

"Let that not bother us today," my friend said. With that thought, he carefully removed the red tag and any other tell-tail marks indicating the suit had been previously sold, paid for and marked for alterations. Then, with the suit over his arm, we found a clerk. My friend expressed his great desire to own the suit, produced the cash to pay for it, declined the generous offer to make necessary alterations, and we left the store. I saw him later, after the suit was altered, and it looked good.

Three days later, and one more stop in Mandan, N.D. to watch the Indians dance, and I was back in Glendive.

During that three month excursion, things had changed at home. Dad was about to retire from the railroad. Over the last year, mother's boarding house had changed into a home for some 45 young men of high school age. I do not know the details of the financing, but under one of President Roosevelt's "alphabet" programs, the kids apparently were subsidized. What mother had done alone, for two or three youngsters, could now, with Federal Aid, be done for forty five. I was never around long enough to learn how it was done, nor see how and where the students were "bedded down" and studied within the house itself. It was obviously a success. I know mother was not only a good cook, but an excellent disciplinarian. No growing young man could have a more understanding and loving "house mother".

Helping mother in this project, was Mrs. Bill Evans. Her husband was dad's partner in sheep ranching in the days before I was born. With dad about to retire, Mrs. Evans purchased the house, and planned to continue on with the established program.

My sister and I had been encouraging the folks to move to Vashon when dad retired. Ethel and Claire had a big house, with plenty of room for all. There were ten acres of land, so dad could farm and raise chickens, as he had longed to do. Mother could have her wished-for garden. They were about to make a move.

I helped pack up those belongings the folks planned to take. I also loaded dad's newly purchased 1929 Model A Ford coupe. Once that was accomplished, I said good bye to nostalgia, and drove down North Meade Avenue for the last time as a "home boy". And for the first time, in my 22 years, I was to make a trip to Seattle without using a Pass for travel on the N.P. Railroad.

My first overnight was in my old room in Tyler Hall at Billings Poly. It was late when I drove in and early the next morning when I left, so no one ever knew I had planted my bedroll on a bunk bed mattress for that night. My second night, was somewhere along the road. I pulled off under some trees, unrolled my bed beside the car and slept the night away. By the third night I was on Vashon Island and home. The folks used their pass for the last time, and arrived several days later.

One of the first things I did, upon returning to Vashon, was to visit Elsie Garvin at her Vashon Beauty Shop. And upon seeing her, I took her left hand in mine. She was not wearing an engagement ring. It was a marvelous feeling, because I knew I had one at home that I intended to give her. That evening we had a date. While visiting with her parents, I was recounting my trip from Glendive. In the course of the conversation I said something to the effect that: "My Ford was loaded down with everything from toilet paper to a Singer Sewing Machine".

Elsie flushed, and immediately left the room. Later I was to learn that when she was around her parents, we did not talk about toilet paper. I survived that night, and several nights later asked her to be my wife--once I had a job. She accepted my ring, and that was the beginning of a long and wonderful relationship.

So many things happened that fall, it is difficult to sort them out. In September, Elsie's sister, Irene, and her fiancé, Baxter Calloway were married. I returned home from the wedding to find my sister Ethel pacing the floor in anticipation of birth contractions. Of course Claire, as well as mother and dad, also were standing around in an anxious mode. It wasn't long before the birth was apparent. The doctor was called, and before the night was over, little, Miss Jane Wilder was born.

Shortly thereafter I answered an ad in the Seattle Times and was soon on my way to Tonasket, Washington. The weekly newspaper there needed a printer, and I was it. It didn't pay much, but I could board and room at the owner's home.

Tonasket is a small mountain town, on the Okanogan River, just west of the Olympic National Forrest. It also is close to the Canadian border. Hunting season was starting, so there were a lot of new faces in town. For a small paper, any new face meant a possible news story.

I also took a trip across the Border to Penticton, British Columbia. I really didn't spend enough time there to know much about the city. That whole area, on both sides of the border, raised a lot of wonderful Delicious apples, and apparently provided good hunting. My problem with the hunters was liquor. The ones I saw, seemed to have consumed too much. I know of no hunters being shot, then, because they were mistaken for a deer, but any number of the townspeople had vocally expressed concern.

l think it was the "call of civilization" that got to me. Anyway, about two weeks before Christmas, I was back on Vashon Island, and once more looking for a job so I could marry that Garvin girl. For the next six months I worked variously at the Vashon News Record or as a laborer doing odd jobs around Vashon. In June, 1938 I landed a reasonably good paving job ($85.00 per month) as a warehouseman, clerk and bookkeeper for B.D. Mukai and Son. This was a strawberry packing plant. Due to President Roosevelt's National Recovery Act (NRA) plan, strawberries had to be graded. Anything three-quarters of an inch, or under, in size, was dumped into a garbage pit. No one that I knew ever understood that regulation, but he and his advisors thought it was one way to prime the economic recovery machine. On many occasion I, and others, salvaged a bucket full of those undersized berries. We took them home to enjoy for several meals. That job was "seasonal" and lasted only two months. My next job payed $5.00 a month more and lasted about a year.

It was August of 1938 that I went to work with Carl Swain at his father-in-law's Pedigreed White Leghorn chicken ranch. Those chickens were pampered and preened like nothing I had ever seen before. Every hen's egg-laying was carefully recorded. Every rooster had his physical features constantly under review, until it could be documented that he should be sold for a premium price, as a breeding rooster, or sold on the market for consumer consumption. I recall one rooster that strutted his stuff around the hen house until he was sold to a Japanese buyer for $1,500. It was documented that he came from a long line of hens who had consistently produced 360 eggs per year. It seemed the Japanese liked the White Leghorn chickens, and would pay top price for a top breeder with such a documented pedigree.

Claire and Ethel were now living in Petersburg, Alaska, where they owned the Petersburg Press. Mother and dad managed the farm and were having a ball doing what ever they wanted to do. They had a one-acre patch of Youngberries, from which the fruit could be sold at the local grocery stores. Mother had her vegetable garden, dad his chickens and a milk cow named Rosie.


Youngberries

I lived with mother and dad, spending as much time as I could, after work, courting Elsie. This arrangement made it possible for me to save some money. Enough, that I asked Elsie to marry me. She said "Yes", but first she wrote a poem.

To my Fiancé
by
Elsie Garvin

Although you're not a father
You're more than one to me.
You're the man I'm going to marry
And that means lots you see.

You've got the sweetest disposition
Each little thing you do
Makes me see how much I need you
And what a dear I have in you.

I pray you'll always love me
Just as much as I'll love you
For my life, alone, without you
Would a heartache only be.

You'll be my only sweetheart
As the days fade into years
But with you close beside me
You'll conquer all my fears.
I love you.

We were married on the 21st of October 1938 (her parent's anniversary) at 8:00 p.m. It was a small wedding, held in the living room of the Garvin home. Elsie's sister, Irene, was Matron of Honor. Deanie Snow played the Wedding March. Bob Snow, Deanie's husband, was my Best Man. Other than the Minister, Reverend Mergler, all other guests were family.

After the ceremony and reception, we drove to Seattle, where we honeymooned at the Huntington Hotel for three days. We both had to return to work, causing that special event to be very short. A few days before we were to be married, Elsie's Aunt Nina had passed away. The house she lived in belonged to dad Garvin. Dad offered the house to us, rent free. We accepted. Ethel purchased a new davenport for the folks house, and gave us the one being replaced. She

and Claire also gave us the old Oldsmobile, our first car. With that start, we "set up housekeeping".

We lived in Aunt Nina's former house for about eight months. It then became apparent I was not going to get anywhere as a chicken-house-cleaner-outer. Elsie had saved up about $350. I borrowed that, took out a bank loan, and enrolled in the Metropolitan Business College in Seattle. (I paid the bank loan off in about 10 months; I'm still paying off the loan from Elsie!) From then on everything went right and it was a downhill ride.

Our next move was into a spare room at the Garvins. Because of dad's great generosity, this arrangement also was rent free. While we lived with the folks, I commuted to school in Seattle.

Commuting was another fun experience. I boarded the bus in front of our house at 6:00 a.m., which in turn caught the 6:30 ferry. That got me to school by 8:00 a.m. The bus was always full, generally with the same group of passengers. Most passengers were on their way to work. Only two or three of us were students. Five of us usually occupied the rear seat, from where we continually enjoyed playing tricks on the bus drivers. The drivers were our good friends and, probably, enjoyed the pranks just a smidgen less than we did. Of course, we "pulled" nothing that would ever endanger the safe operation of the bus.

One particular trick that I recall involved drilling a tiny hole on the floor in front of our seat, but out of view from the driver's rear view mirror. This was accomplished during the 20 minute ferry trip. Once the hole had been drilled, a fine wire was threaded into the hole. On the other end of the wire we tied a half-gallon paint can, in which several rocks had been placed. The can was then pulled up to the underside of the floorboard of the bus. After the bus left the ferry, on the Seattle side, the can was lowered, letting it create a very noisy rattle as it bounced along Fauntleroy Avenue under the bus.

Our bus driver was Johnny Staples. He pulled the bus over and jumped out to find the problem. As he left the bus, the bucket was pulled up so it was out of sight. Johnny looked all around and under the rear end of the bus, found nothing, and started out again. Ten minutes later, the bucket was again lowered to the street where it bounced and rattled along. Johnny again made his inspection, and found nothing. Shaking his head in disbelief, he returned to his driving. This went on for one more stop, until a flash of insight made Johnny realize his back seat contingent of pranksters were at it again.

This time he stopped the bus, but instead of getting out, turned and came back to our seat just in time to see the wire being pulled up.

That ended the fun. Johnny clipped the wire, the bucket dropped to the pavement for it's final rattle, and our last laugh for that trip.

One other incident had its humorous and sad side. One of the regulars was Mrs. Gorsuch. She had a small farm where she raised produce, raspberries and rabbits. Every morning she would board the bus loaded down with carryall bags of produce which she took to the Pike Street Market on the Seattle waterfront. There she had a small stall from which she sold her wares.

One morning, in addition to produce, she carried a flat of raspberries. These she placed in the overhead rack, then took the window seat below. At the next stop a gentlemen boarded our bus, wearing a white suit and a white Panama hat. He sat in the aisle seat next to Mrs. Gorsuch. The humorous conclusion is obvious, I'm sure. Within minutes after he was seated, a large red drop of raspberry juice dribbled down the side of that white Panama hat--all the way to the brim.

Naturally the gentlemen moved to another seat immediately. The sad part was hearing Mrs. Gorsuch's apology, knowing she did not have the resources to replace that Panama.

Crossing Puget Sound is, normally, "a piece of cake". The ferries are large, well operated and provide sustenance for those who need it. On several occasions, during my commuting, high winds created some safety concerns, as well as seasickness. Two specific instances I remember well.

The first involved heavy winds. Coming straight out of the north, the winds kicked up very deep wave formations. Sitting by the window, I noticed the rolling motion immediately after we cleared the dock. Upon leaving the land-mass protection of Vashon Island, the degree of rolling increased. Looking out of the window, I realized I was seeing nothing but water. As the ferry rocked back on the next wave, I saw nothing but sky. It was an eerie feeling.

At the snack bar, dishes were crashing. Some passengers were heading for restrooms to "upchuck" breakfast. I decided to go down to the bus. If the ferry was going over, we'd all go together.

Down on the car deck, the rolling motion was much less noticeable, but it certainly was THE topic of discussion for the rest of our bus ride into town.

The second event involved a "pea soup" fog. Our ferry was about half way between the Vashon and Fauntleroy docks when its fog horn started to blow at a much faster cadence. Noting the change, I joined a couple of friends and moved outside toward the prow of the vessel. There we could hear several other fog horns, seemingly not too far away.

It was also noted that our ferry had considerably slowed its forward progress. Suddenly the Captain of our boat reversed engines, bringing the ferry to a complete halt. Almost as suddenly the giant, grey form of a U.S. Navy Battleship loomed up on the Port (left) side. Two Destroyers followed in its wake. Had our skipper not stopped, the ferry would have been demolished. It was a chilling experience.

On another foggy morning, Chuck Lowry was driving our bus into Seattle. As he made the turn from Spokane Avenue on to First Avenue, the fog began to lighten up. When the sun broke through, Chuck had clear vision straight ahead, but fog still blanketed everything from the hood of the bus down to the pavement. It was a comical sight to look ahead of the bus and see only the top portion of the cars. It stayed that way for several miles before the fog lifted completely.

During the sixteen months that I attended Business College, I had a couple of "spare time" hours between the end of school and the time my bus departed for home. One afternoon I stopped in at Radio Station KOL to look around. In some manner, I struck up a conversation with the lady who headed up the Continuity Department. I told her I was interested in such work, and, to gain experience, I would be willing to work for nothing during my spare hours period. She agreed to try me. I worked there for about six months, writing 30- and 60-second commercials for toothpaste, denture powders, tobacco, special store sales, and anything else that came along. I did get payed for one day (a Saturday) of work, when the rest of the crew took off for a freebie trip to a nearby Hydroelectric Power Plant. I was also invited to participate in a game show, aired on that station. I answered all the questions right, and for my effort, won a hat.

With my payed up Business College education about completed, I was, once more, needing to find a paying job. I went out on several interviews, but I never did pass the 120-words-per-minute requirement for Shorthand. I also filed applications for three or four Civil Service positions. One of the latter paid off. In September of 1940 I started work as an "Under-clerk", with the U.S. Army Engineer Department, Seattle, District. I was assigned to work at the Government Locks out in Ballard. The job paid $1260 per year, which was a tiny step up from the $1080 I had previously made cleaning out houses for Pedigreed chickens.

With that raise in pay, Elsie and I moved into a small house in Ballard, at 2031 West 6th. It was within walking distance of the Locks, where I worked, as well as to a grocery store, and church. It wasn't the biggest place on the block, but it had a white, picket fence, and we were no longer living with relatives. That moving day was, truly, one of the greatest days in our life.

By this time, all of the family knew we would have our first baby before another year rolled around. We were having a ball. I liked my work, we had our own home, we were paying our own way. Life, indeed, was good.

Elsie and I now, for the first time, were Methodists. That was a switch, but we both sang in the choir and enjoyed our new life together. For Mother's Day that year (1941) I wrote her a poem.

To my Loving Wife

Although you're not a Mother,
You are about to be.

And that is all I can remember. Somewhere around home I know there is a copy. When I find it, I will insert the rest of it.

I think, at this point, I will bring this volume of "Justin A. Mace Remembers--An Autobiography" to a close. My reasoning is that I have pretty good documentation for the next 30 years. Therefore I would like to organize that data so I can "remember" the story in a more factual manner.

To summarize the next volume, I must start with the birth of our first son, David Dinsmore. On the night of June 9, 1941, Elsie and I took a taxi from home to the Locks--this is in the middle of the night. My boss, B.P. Nyline, had offered his car for our transportation. I got him out of bed to get the car from the garage, and then we were off for Maynard Hospital. David was born the next day, June 10th.

December 7, 1941 was a day marked indelibly on our Nation. My little family of three had just returned home from church. I turned on the radio at the instant President Roosevelt intoned "My fellow Americans" and then he announced that the Japanese had bombed Pearl Harbor in Honolulu, Hawaii. I wanted to enlist immediately, but after talking it over at work, and weighing my family obligations, decided to wait.

My work progressed. I took an Accounting Course at the U. of Washington, as well as starting a Correspondence course in accounting, all with the intent of becoming a Certified Public Accountant. That never materialized.

Our second son, Gordon Justin, was born August 18, 1943. Soon thereafter we moved into a larger house on 17th South West. When I received notice of my impending induction into the Army, we sold that house. Elsie and the boys moved back to Vashon to live with mother and dad Mace on the farm. They were there "for the duration", and enjoyed their first "in the country" living.

March 10, 1945 (Elsie's birthday) I went into the Army. I took basic training at Camp Roberts, California and, after 13 weeks was assigned to Fort Bragg, North Carolina. I was discharged in June, 1946 and returned to my old job at the Lake Washington Ship Canal Locks.

Soon after my discharge from the Army, I became Public Information Officer for the Seattle District office. We purchased a home on 37th South West (in West Seattle) and started our second family. Thomas Newell was born November 11, 1948 and Frederick Garvin joined the family on September 7, 1950. A year later I transferred to become Public Information Officer of the South Pacific Division, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, located in San Francisco. Every move, and with the birth of each son, I seemed to receive an increase in salary. We purchased a home in Menlo Park, permitting me to commute by train into San Francisco. We lived there for 20 years until I retired January 15, 1971.

The preceding pages, for the most part, have been written strictly from memory. For that reason I ask that readers not hold me to factual proof as to the dates and sequences of the happenings I have recorded. However, the pages related to my two years at Billings Polytechnic Institute were "remembered" utilizing information from a "Scrap Book", as well as from memory.

I have put it all in perspective for the reason stated in the Preface. As "Old Blue Eyes" would Say, "I did it my way".

God Bless.