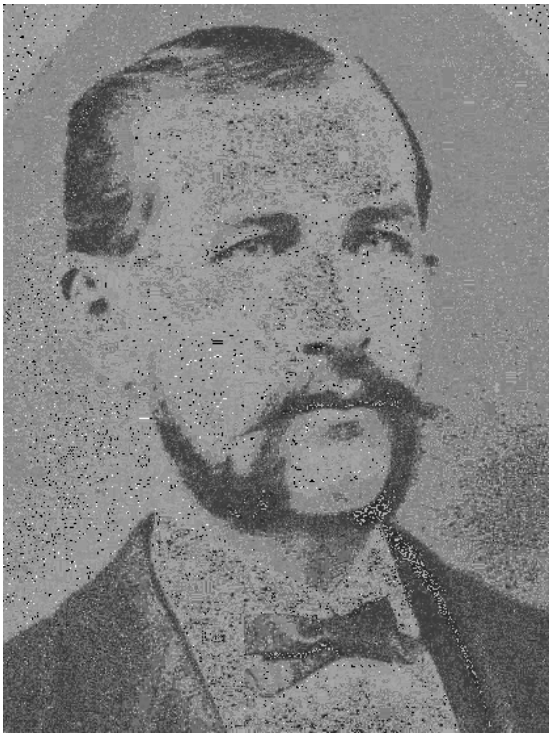
Memoirs

of

Enos K. Fluke

Dictated 1933-1934



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[Editor's note: These memoirs were transcribed from a typed manuscript in the possession of Bruce and Beatrice Gould. They appear to have been dictated by Enos in 1933-1934. The conversion from typescript to electronic form was done using FineReader 5.0 OCR, followed by hand-editing of the results. The OCR process can introduce errors, substituting a word that "looks like" another word. For example, "comer" substituted for "corner". In addition, the original typescript had typographic errors as well.

Enos Kelso Fluke was born June 17, 1845 near Orange (now Nankin), Ashland County, Ohio. He was the son of Henry Fluke and Margaret Switzer Fluke. He married Fannie Ward Hagerman, daughter of William Hagerman and Mary Bealby Hagerman, in September 1869. They had five children: Mary Kathleen, Rossiter, Grace Dorothy, Helen Frances, and Margaret.

Prepared by Dean Blackmar Krafft , October 6, 2002]

I am an old man nearing my eighty-seventh birthday and still going pretty strong. Said to be living on borrowed time by the on-coming jazz generation, though to say living on loaned time would be nearer the truth.

When I was born in that big log house, the world was not exactly without form and void; on the contrary the face of nature was at its very best in the middle of June. We had the same sun, moon and stars, the same glory of woods and sky and water that we have now; but there was an almost entire absence of the comforts and conveniences we enjoy today.

At that time, if a family had a spinning wheel and an outdoor bake-oven, it was sufficient; with yam for knitting garments and the oven for baking bread, pies and other goodies. Everything we have today, from cookstove to radio, has been invented in the eighty odd years that it has been my pleasure to live.

How fortunate to have been born just when the people of the earth were being awakened and stirred into making some use of the brains they possessed. As every day in the past century added some new device, one might expect that the inhabitants of the world would be struck dumb with astonishment. Not at all. We just wondered why somebody hadn't thought of that before!

I am a far long way from feeling satisfied with my ability to write the story of my life so that it will appear as interesting as it was in the living. So in this writing I am trying to give some-thing of a picture of the life of a little boy who happened to be born on June 17, 1845, in a log house that stood by the roadside a mile or so north of the village of Orange, Ashland County, Ohio. Not an ordinary log house, but a great big hewed log house, some fifty feet long by twenty feet in width, containing four spacious rooms - - two downstairs and two upstairs. In the center partition was a huge brick chimney with an enormous fireplace in each lower room, th3 big chimney answering for both. The one in the kitchen was equipped for cooking, having an expansive brick hearth, so that hot coals could be raked out for use of skillets, and the much used dutch oven, a sort of flat kettle with legs long enough to lift it slightly above the coals. Over the main fire was a long-swinging crane with hooks attached on which to hang tea-kettle, pots and attaching a spit. At the right, on the same hearth, was a brick oven for baking bread, cakes and pies. This oven had a chimney curling up over its back and entering the main chimney higher up, giving the appearance of a great squirrel. As my mother did not use this oven much, it made a fine place for cats to sleep. The walnut timber in that house, doors, door and window frames, cupboards and closets of solid walnut, would be worth a small fortune today.

At home we used a big spinning wheel as well as the small kind on used in spinning flax. Also the reel on which the spun yam was reeled. My mother spent much time at this kind of work, and I recall that later on I could operate the large wheel quite well, myself. Of course there was much home-made cloth in those days, but our manufacturing only covered socks, stockings and mittens.

Our house stood broadside to the road with a door to the kitchen and another to the parlor. In the enclosed grounds was a well with the usual old fashioned sweep and "old oaken bucket". By the front gate stood a large pear tree, and there were one or two cherry trees, and many currant and gooseberry bushes. There was much ground-ivy around our yard - - small, modest vines with a tiny blue flower. There was an old log barn with a thatched roof covering the entire building which included two hay and grain lofts separated by a threshing floor, with stables on either side for horses and cows. The thatch roof was of rye or oats straw made into small round bundles or sheaves closely bound together, and laid as we lay shingles today, overlapping. This barn must have been there several years before my time, for the outside of the roof was nearly black, but the inside or underside showed the straw as bright as if lately put on. Here was the kind of a place chickens and geese and cats loved. At my age, it was a mine of every kind of thrills.

An old goose had a nest in one end of this barn, and my sister, two years older than I, was disturbing the setting goose in some way, when the gander intervened. He flew at her, biting onto her lower lip, and whipping her with his wings. She screamed with fright and pain. Then up stepped my brother Wilson and Bang! That gander was knocked out and we hurried home to mother leading a scared little girl with a very large lower lip.

I have never heard anything except disparaging remarks about geese and how little sense they have. But as a very small boy I watched them swimming so easily, eating grass just like animals, or with their assembled red bills discussing matters - - talking as loud as germans - - And then think of finding a goose nest! For they hid their nests, carefully covering their eggs - - and such huge eggs. I certainly got a big thrill out of geese in those days.

Our house was situated in a valley bordered by young hickories, walnut, butternut and maple trees. Through this little valley wound a charming little creek with clear water, good fishing and swimming holes. Across the creek was our maple sugar camp containing several hundred large, hard maple trees - - hardly another kind of a tree among them. Here every spring we made a barrel or more of sugar and as many gallons of molasses as we could use. I cannot recall any sweeter memories of my long life than those of the spring days spent in the sugar camp. We often visited other camps in the neighborhood, where we spent the time telling stories, boiling eggs, and just enjoying every minute until it was time to bank the fires and go home.

I was the youngest of four children - - two girls and two boys - -and therefore had the usual advantage of learning much from those who were older.

Up and down our little valley (which carried a well-traveled high-way as well as the creek and everything included in what we called "the commons" - - an unfenced part of my father's farm) we knew by sight and sound. Many different birds, all kinds of small animals, many kinds of bugs, ants and creeping things. We knew more about nature study even then than do many grown-ups of today. Besides we were going to school in those years, and learning to read and write and cipher. Our high-way was a diagonal road, a part of the line between Cleveland and Cincinnati, and there was a mail coach four times a month. (Describe this mail coach). All cattle, hogs and sheep were driven to market some times on great droves of many hundreds. Now and then we saw a circus and menagerie - - a long train of animals and wagons, followed by a few elephants, zebras, camels, etc. I thought maybe sometime I might be wearing a uniform and driving one of those wagons drawn by six beautiful horses. Wouldn't that be the life!

When I had grown strong enough to carry a jug of water to the men in the harvest fields, I

remember that sickles were still used, but a great inventor had produced what was called a grain cradle, and father, being quite a wheat grower, got the first cradle in our neighborhood. Very soon after that the sickle disappeared. Just think! From the sickle and the cradle to the present combination harvester, thresher and sacker, all rolled into one, and drawn by a caterpillar tractor. All this progress in eighty years must be a part of some great plan which will end all right, but in all this nothing has been done that would add to the (abundance of child life) absorbing inter-eats and keen enjoyment of childhood, as I knew it.

We rambled up and down that little valley under the walnut shade trees, gathering nuts, learning the habits of birds, bees and insects, and the essence of beautiful wild flowers; reveling in the smell of dampened earth at evening; the hum of katydids, the sad, low voice of an (as yet unknown) bug, that was always present from June to November. Sometimes our mother would be browning coffee beans that gave forth such a lovely aroma. All these thrilling sights and sounds and fragrances became a permanent part of our lives.

Long days we played store-keeping on the pebbly border of the creek. There were little stones of almost every size, color and shape for merchandise, yellow sand for brown sugar, plenty of driftwood for building stores, and trade was always good. And then there was the covered bridge. When I was a little boy walking with my mother to visit a neighbor who lived to the south, we passed through a covered bridge, one end of which was on our land. As I remember it, the foundation timbers on which the planked floor rested were at least double the width necessary for the road. There must have been some intention to make a place of refuge and rest for the weary and heavy laden; The roof was made of what we called clapboards, such as my Pa made with his frow from a straight cut of oak.

I spent many happy days under the floor of this bridge where the robins and peewees lived. Imagine what a noise wagons and buggies made rolling over these dry planks. I wish I could hear that same noise once more!

When neighbors came to visit, our folks would be <u>so glad.</u> There was no worrying over what we should have for dinner with a smoke house full of meat - - dried beef, sausage, ham, and just everything. There was no wondering about how long they were going to stay, or anybody angry because we were not notified of their coming. Some difference between that kind of friendly feeling and as such things exist today. (On it.) And if they brought children with them, it was simply more pleasure for all of us.

I first went to school in a log school house which stood on the bank of the creek, a mile north of where we lived. (Describe this “eight-square” school house.) The teacher's name was David Heiffner, the son of Jacob Heiffner, who lived in a brick house on the hill not far away. (This house, by the way, was built of hand-made brick. Tell about.) About all I can remember of that period was that on Christmas day the teacher came at the usual time and brought a bushel-basket of apples, which he threw, all at once, on the floor. And hew the children all did scrabble to get as many as possible. Apples and a stick of candy for each pupil were the simple presents and they made us all happier than all the expensive gifts children now have on Christmas. Something radiant about the simple act of that teacher, and then his declaring it a holiday, remains in my memory to this day.

This school house had for seats slabs, or plank benches. Augur holes were bored at the ends, in which legs were driven, the front row of seats having short legs, and the height of these seats rising towards the back of the room, to accommodate the different lengths of legs of the “scholars.” At the back of the room, clear across, there was attached to the wall a wide desklike board with a proper slope for writing, with a level space at the top for ink and quill pens. Ink was not plentiful in those days, and much of it was made from pokeberries.

Very soon after that (?) a new schoolhouse was built on our land which was near the center of the district and then we had only a half-mile to go to school. And that was a half-mile of hills and hollows, on one side first a green field, then woods reaching to and ending at the schoolhouse. On the other side and along the creek were sycamore trees. One of these stood right on the edge of the creekband and was hollow. When we went swimming there, we used it for a dressing-room, as it was big enough for several boys to hide in at once.

The open land bordering the creek and highway was a favorite camping ground for moving wagons and people going from one part of the country to another. Also it was always just a paradise for Gypsies. This was especially so on our land, shaded by hills and valleys of fine trees. People came from far and near to trade horses, have their fortunes told, and traffic with these Nomads. My folks disliked and feared them, but they never thought of ordering them to move on. True, they bought some supplies of milk, butter, eggs and meat, but nothing we sold them was ever good enough for them. I am not so sure but that these people possess the qualities of witches. Persons dealing with them always got the worst of the bargain. A balky horse would be tried out and do honest work while the trade was being made, but just as soon as the white man undertook to work him, he would re-fuse to move.

One day when I was about three years old, Mother was busy in our best room, when there came three loud knocks on the floor above her as if struck by a man with a heavy maul. She was much frightened and went upstairs to see what had caused the sounds; but found nothing that could have caused anything of the kind. So she understood it to be a warning of some coming tragedy? and sure enough, the very next day a man on a horse came to inform her that her father was dying, having cut his foot, while chopping in the woods some distance from home, and perishing from loss of blood. Mother went to him, taking me with her. Of course the sad event is rather dim in my memory. Grandfather had been a soldier with General William Henry Harrison in the War of 1812, and he said, among other things, “To think of all the hardships I have been through, and now I must die from this little cut.” I think that in those early days everybody believed more or less in mysterious things. They were what we call superstitious. But when we stop to consider, it seems quite reasonable. Wasn't the Bible full of stories of dreams, handwriting on the wall, still small voices, and visions? There was no telegraph, no wireless, no radio at that time. People lived farther apart, and how else could they be warned of coming events? When good people who believed in God heard things - - mysterious sounds that could not be explained, they naturally believed it to be a warning.

I have always been afraid in the dark. There were places on the road not far from my home that tried my courage very much to travel at night. Why I should have been afraid I am unable to say. I knew there were no dangerous wild animals. Panthers were the animals I most feared, but i knew there were none left in that country. What was I afraid of? Who knows!

When I was a boy about twelve years old I used to sometimes go among our neighbors and work - - hoeing com, making hay, etc. Long steady days at fifty cents a day! Several times I went to work for a day or two for Jakie Heiffner - - a typical Penna. Dutchman. I remember it seemed a long ways from home to me. At meal time we had rather meager fare, but there would always be plenty of one thing I was fond of, and that was honey. When we came to the table Mr. Heiffner would bow his head and say grace in his own language, beginning (as it sound-ed to me) “Spicagut and silakinger”. Further than that I could never follow. A great big Russian was working with me in the field at that time, who was unable to speak much English. My knowledge of things in the world was rather limited, but I seem to have got the idea that the Russian had escaped from the Czar's country rather than be a soldier or run the risk of being sent to Siberia, which cruelties (?) were apt to trap young Russians.

I remember I was often homesick, when only across the creek at Uncle Dave's place! Aunt

Hannah was a good cook, and nearly always had fricasseed chicken for the base of the dinner; though if anyone had called it fricasseed in those days, I don't know what would have happened. Probably the table would have had a stroke. At Uncle Dave's there were several cousins and a bound Boy named Peter Rotes. A Bound Boy was common enough in those days. Simply an orphan or homeless boy, taken on with the understanding that he was to stay and have a home, schooling and work like the children of the family, until he arrived at the age of twenty-one, when he was to receive his release, and with it a horse, saddle, and bridle. Peter was only ten at the time I am writing about, but he never received these rewards. Some seven years later he and I went to Ashland to see a company of Volunteers starting to the Civil War. Peter took a sudden notion to join them and I would have liked to go with him; but I went home alone, and Peter died at Vicksburg with Grant's army.

The home life of a Bound Boy was generally as good and abundant as were the lives of the children of the family he grew up with. I am sure this Peter Rotes boy had a happy time while he lived at Uncle David's. Work aplenty was there to be done, but he shared all the pleasures that any of us had in those days. Going to school; going to town; to church; to political meetings; to pole raisings; fast horse races; fights and such things.

In those days, where I lived, one was a Democrat or Republican. There was no half-way ground. Before Presidential Elections there would be a day when speakers and pole-raisings would be advertised, and on such days people came in lumber wagons, many of them carrying great flags and the whole day would be given up to pleasure and Pole Raising. For Democrats a hickory pole was prepared, some times sixty or eighty feet long, straight and perfect, eight or ten inches in diameter at the base. A hole was dug for the pole to stand in; and then the work began. The small end was lifted as high as men could reach, then Pike (?) poles of different lengths were used with no lack of man power, and the pole was up. A long rope, passing through an iron ring at the top of the pole made it easy to send up the Stars and Stripes. But generally it was necessary for some husky young fellow to climb to the top to properly adjust the flag. O boy, that boy was a hero!

One time my brother and I went “across lots”, as farmer boys used to say, going through woods and fields to the home of Joel Mackerell to get a dog pup. We understood that the price would be fifty cents. We found Mrs. Mackerell at home and she took us out to look at the pups. The mother dog and family were under a “beegum” - -that is a section of the outer shell of what had been a large hollow sycamore tree. Mrs. Kackerell said, “Bull, come out here!” to the mamma dog, and Bull came! We picked out a beautiful pup - - brindle gray, with dark stripes from the backbone downwards, nose as black as ebony. He grew to be a large and very handsome dog - - one that people took a second look at and then wanted him. He was not only handsome, but <u>so wise.</u> We named him Lawyer, but we hardly ever called him by that name. We had other pet names for him, such as Doodum. When some of our family made a trip to Ashland, our County town, six miles away, our dog escaped from us and followed his beloved horses, much against our protests. We were much troubled and sad. In the evening when the team came in sight with no dog to meet our eager eyes, we were even more sad and worried. All Mother could say was that after their arrival in the town, they soon lost sight of Lawyer, and that they had made every effort to find him but in vain. This was on Friday and all day Saturday we looked and hoped to no avail. Sunday morning we went to church as usual. In the afternoon we children - - very unhappy - -went up the hill to the orchard, our eyes always on the road, when suddenly we were filled with joy. For we saw our lost one coming with long lopes! So there was great rejoicing on our part as well as on the part of the very tired but writhing, twisting, exhibition of Joy that was our returned friend. We were sure he had been kidnapped by some person, and had managed to make his escape. Bat he never told us anything about what had occurred, but we were glad, and the world went better with us then.

He was always quiet and loving to our neighbors and friends; but something about his countenance and rising bristles caused the would-be transgressor to hesitate and then move on.

Once about Christmas time, a man tried to steal one of our turkeys from their roost in a tree by the road; but Lawyer made such a hurrah that the turkey had to be dropped, and came home the next morning. After that our dog always growled when he saw Abe Mack going by. And later on Mack told us that he tried to get a Christmas turkey from our tree. Abe was good natured and held no grudge against Lawyer.

Mother was a very religious woman and we were brought up to attend church and Sunday school regularly, and have reverence for the Ten Commandments. I was crazy to fish in the fishing season, but not one of us ever went fishing on Sundays.

In early days there were many great revival meetings; and every summer there would be Camp Meetings in the woods, lasting several days and nights. People went long distances to attend these meetings. There was much loud preaching and praying, many conversions. These were the days of Lorenzo Dow, Peter Cartright and others of lesser note. When a service was about to begin, one of the preachers would step to the front of the high pulpit and give a few blasts on a tin horn to call the people together. Sometimes he would find the horn had been filled with soft soap, which was likely to scatter over the brethren occupying the front or Amen Corner. Tricks of this nature were the work of the wicked, for at all these Camp Meetings there was the rowdy element, mostly making up the outer edge of the audience. For Satan came also, as of old.

There was an old log church not so far from our home, where we sometimes went. The pulpit was high, and the preacher was short. One Sunday he remarked that it would lift him to a more exalted position if he had a log in his pulpit to stand on. Sure enough, the next Sun-day he found a long log there. That was the work of a gang of wicked young men living around there, who were always ready to make light of religious doings, and the ones who, when about to die, were quick to send for the minister. Well, this log in his pulpit didn't phase him a bit; he just stepped up on it and went ahead with his sermon.

Joyous times we had in those early days, going to singing schools, writing schools, apple-parings, com huskings, and especially spelling schools and just parties. All these activities were entered into with cheerful zest by all. In singing school we were taught to read the old fashioned buckwheat notes, and how to carry a tune with fewer notes than we use now. Writing and drawing were taught by Docton Diehl, who could and did know how to write beautifully, and draw with a pen - - a great picture of St. George slaying the dragon.

At these night schools our desks were lighted by short tallow candles. For candle sticks we had squares of walnut wood with auger holes in them to hold the candles. At such times a “snuffer” was a very necessary article. (Describe a snuffer.)

Apple-paring bees were very frequent before the appearance of the little old apple-paring machine, which killed the knife work.

Corn huskings were noisy gatherings with endless fun and frolic, where the farmer could get a whole field of com husked by his neighbors in a few dashing hours. It would have taken him all fall to husk that much corn alone. These huskings always ended with a banquet, and later just fiddling and dancing. The hero of the evening was the man who found the first red ear.

Spelling schools drew the greatest crowds, many people coming from neighboring districts. The spellers would take their stands around the wall. The teacher would then pronounce from the spelling book, and when a word was misspelled the one who missed had to drop out. Soon there would be only a few of the best spellers left, and then things became more interesting. Then teacher would find harder words, until the remaining few would dwindle. Finally only one speller remained; and my sister Amanda would nearly always be that one. She was nearly three years older than I, and is still living at St. Petersburg, Florida.

The gatherings we called “just parties” were meetings of young folks at some one's house where games were played such as, Charades, Button, Button, Who's Got the Button? Drop the Handkerchief, and ending in a supper about midnight. Most everybody walked to and from such gatherings, in great contrast to people now-a-days, who think they must ride if only going a few rods. Maybe after another generation or so people will be born with little rubber wheels on them, with only small knobs to indicate that they sometime in the past had legs.

Sometimes in the fall of the year we gathered a wagon load of apples - - the kind that would make good cider - - and father would take us with him to the home of Jakie Heiffner, who had a cider mill and press. The apple would be shoveled into the hopper and be ground fine. Then the pulp passed out of the mill into the press, which was a sort of box lined with bright clean straw The upper half of this box-like affair, operated by a great wooden screw, was twisted down on the pulp, and there was a little V-shaped valley at one side where the cider flowed out as the pressure was let down by the big screw. Soon we had a barrel of delicious cider to take home. Can you imagine anything more delightful than cider-making day like we had it? (Description of cider-mill is not very clear).

Our house being located so near the road, was a stopping place for various kinds of travelers. There were pack-peddlers carrying Irish linen table-cloths, only, and others with dry goods, and other articles such as suspenders, socks, pins, needles, combs and penknives. Then there was now and then a traveler carrying nothing but a small bundle tied up in a bandanna handkerchief. What this kind wanted was a bite to eat, and a drink of water or coffee. I can remember one such to whom Mother was ministering by setting out some cold boiled potatoes and other eatables. He spread applebutter on his potatoes, which was something new to us. Nobody knew where these walkers came from or where they were going, but they were harmless, so far as we could make out.

Father was always kind to the poor and needy; and there were such to be found, even in our neighborhood. I recall a time when he donated the wood, and invited several farmers with teams to each come on a certain day and haul one load, each, of dead and down timber to a poor widow's home. They made quite a frolic of it; and the widow had fire-wood enough to last her a year or two. Now among the teamsters was a married son of this widow; and after the frolic was over it leaked out that he took his load of wood to his own house, which was not far from where his mother lived. Our folks were indignant about it, but were too mild and easy to say anything to the bad man. Now I was about eight (?) years old at that time. So next time I went to town, I stopped and asked the man about it. He was much ashamed and said he would haul it to his mother. I look back to that act of mine with a feeling not of pride.

Once I was sent to this same widow's house with a sack of nice fresh meat. The widow and her elderly daughter were sitting at the table eating some crusts of bread, and weeping because it was the last morsel in the house. The widow said, “God bless Henry Fluke.” Perhaps this family was not so much to blame for being poor. They were “Mennonites”, and had been made to believe that the world was soon coming to an end. Therefore they made no provision for the future. In fact, not so long before that time, their church had set a date when all should be prepared to see the end. It was to happen at midnight on a certain date; it was told that this same woman and her husband, among other preparations had made ready a great hickory bark torch which could be lighted if needed. That night nothing unusual occurred until after midnight their little dog barked frantically. Mrs. Hartman (for that was their name) said, “My God, Hartman, get up and light the torch!” When the torch was lighted and nothing had happened, they felt....(O. K.)

Our house, besides being located on a well-travelled stage route road was also near the bank of a lively little creek with sufficient flow of nice, clear water for good fishing and swimming-holes; also enough falls so there were many ripples (riffles we called them) and water running over these

little falls made music in the springtime. This stream, during rainy seasons, was a source of trouble to farmers, as it often got too high for its banks, washing away fences and digging new beds for itself meandering and winding around. So for this reason there was quite a strip of land bordering it which was open ground --not fenced. This open land carried both the highway and the stream not only by and through some of our farm, but for many miles north and south of us. This open land was our playground. Our pigs and geese and some of our neighbors' cows roamed there and the grass was kept as short as a city lawn. There were trees on some of this ground - enormous sycamores, walnuts and hickories, with an occasional linden or basswood.

Across the creek was our sugar grove of two or three hundred hard maple trees, not another kind of a tree in the lot, and most of these maples were large — two to three feet in diameter and very tall. Later on (?) I learned all about making maple-sugar and experienced the exquisite pleasure that a boy could feel when sugar activities were in full blast: the tapping of the trees; gathering the sugar water after a good day's run. This was done with a team of oxen or horses, hitched to a sled, carrying a hogshead or two to hold the water. Then the camp-fire was started and the water boiling went on night and day, finally ending in "stirring off" every two or three days. Meantime there was joyous visiting at camps by night, wild story-telling about panthers and catamounts, adventures, etc. A sugar-camp was generally built of small logs, cracks caulked with grass or tow (or even left-over buckwheat cakes, as in one case I knew of) with side and back walls, shed roof and open front where the pan or kettles were over the fire. Before the time that sugar pails came into use, we used sugar troughs made with an axe. Just a small elm log two and one-half feet long, split in the middle, with the two sides hollowed like a small dug-out boat, made two troughs. These troughs were placed so as to catch the water coming from spiles.
While we lived in the big log house and transportation was con-fined to walking, riding horseback or perhaps in wagons, there were sometimes great droves of cattle, maybe 1000, driven by. At other times it would be hogs or sheep. While a sight like that gave us a real thrill, it also filled us with fear lest some of our pet calves, or Bluey and Baby, our pet pigs, would get mixed up with these strangers, and be lost to us. So at sight of passing droves, we hustled our pets to safe places.

Then, once or twice a year, the very greatest of all our excitements would appear. A show-circus and menagerie! Long trains of wagons, some with four and even six horses, little windows barred and wild animals looking out! Behind these came elephants, camels, zebras, some horses, all driven or ridden by show men. After such a spectacle what wonder we were filled with a desire to one day be great, too.

Living where we did, beside the road, and on this land bordering the creek which we called the "Commons", gave me an opportunity to learn many facts about Nature. I knew the different birds, squirrels, animals of all (?) kinds, something of all their habits, the kind of nests birds built, their notes and songs. That geese ate grass, pigs could root, dogs and cats lap milk and water. All these characteristics are to say the least a little strange, when one comes to think of it. This kind of education is easy to acquire because it's interesting; not like going to school and studying books. Then there was the world of bugs and insects of endless variety. I was well acquainted with many of the most common kinds, such as bumble bees, grasshoppers, crickets, and ants, June bugs, lightning bugs, and honeybees. These last I soon found, could sting when I thrust a splinter into our beehive one day.

On these commons grew various plants and bushes. There were mulleins, milkweed, jimpson, thistles; and such flowers as the purple boneset, oxeye daisy, pokeberry, four-o-clocks. While along fences were black raspberries, elderberry bushes. Dogfennel grew everywhere about our old barn and yards. Mother could make the best elderberry pies ever met with. And in the woods we had red and black haws, service-berries, wild plums, etc.

There were many hickory trees in our wood lands, and we gathered bushels of nuts every year. At that time no underbrush grew among the timber. I wish I could fittingly describe the landscape and the old house, the surrounding land we called the commons, the winding creek with its pebbly shores, the shady nooks, the wagon road winding among the hills. The picture would not be complete without the singing robins, thrushes, orioles, the croaking bullfrogs, saying, "You'll drown, You'll drown," the locust that said "Pharaoh", the humming of all the other insects. My memory of those days shows a picture which I lack language to convey or reproduce.

My brother and sisters began going to school in the old log school-house, which stood on the bank of the creek a mile north to where we lived. Sometimes I went with them, only as a visitor. The first teacher I can remember was a fierce man named Doctor Deihl. Away back in those days one of the requisite qualifications of a teacher was to be able to make a good goose-quill pen. This man Deihl could do more. He sometimes punished bad boys by hanging them to joists above, just so their feet could tough the floor enough to ease them a little.

When I was about seven years old, we built a new house across the road, and a little more under the big hill, which location was a protection from Northwest winds in winter, and was indeed a pleasant situation. Bat I never liked it as well as our dear old log house. Also about this time a new school-house was built on father's land, about half a mile north of our home on a shelf of land overlooking the creek and valley below. Here I attended school most of the time winter and summers until I was sixteen or more. In those days there were no grades, no report cards, nothing to discourage any child because of not being so avid about education as some other child. All we had to do was to keep pegging away as capably as we could. We had good teachers as a rule; girls in summer and young men in winter. We were not so much interested or engrossed in our lessons as we were in our plays during noons and recesses. We were also filled with little loves and hates. Children are cruel. And the matter of caste was always in evidence. A boy whose straw hat was patched with something which might have been dishrag, and his sister and some other of his relatives, could not be allowed to have part in any of our Playhouses, grass nests and such things.

Nearly everything in the way of inventions which we enjoy today have come into existence in my lifetime. We had the first cookstove in our neighborhood. It was shaped much like any cook stove, only it had a rotary top, so that while some of the lids were over the fire, others were cooling. I take it this stove was not a success, as I never saw one of the kind again. Nearly the first vehicle I ever saw, was the old Conestoga wagon Grandfather Fluke moved from Pennylvania. Next there were ordinary farm wagons, used for everything, and the whole family went to town and to church in, with chairs for seats. When some progressive man invented a light wagon with spring seats, some of the older people expressed the belief that they were dangerous to ride in - - too light, might break down. Later came buggies and a young man who could afford a horse and buggy was a lucky boy, and stood high with all the girls, Where would such be now.

I think I was about four years old when a man named Alfred White who lived in the village of Orange brought some run-away slaves, a colored man and his wife, to our house for shelter and rest and food. These were slaves making their escape to Canada from the South, being conducted by Abolitionist guides like Mr. White. They traveled by night, so we had them for one whole day. A black man was a curiosity in the North at that time. After that we saw and entertained a few more of them. Then it became dangerous to help escaping slaves, and woe be to the man who was found sheltering them. We must have lived on what was called the Underground Railroad, with guides and stopping places well known. A sort of human chain reaching from Kentucky to Cleveland was formed, but why we should have been in it, I cannot see, as my father was a notorious Democrat and had no knowledge of the in-side workings of the Chain. It must have been because he was a gentle, peace-loving man, who could be trusted in any case.

I remember a day - - a hot summer day - - when Martha Campbell was our teacher. There

appeared at the open door a colored man, asking in a gentle voice for a drink of water. The face of our teacher showed quite plainly that she was very much frightened, as she moved towards the water pail for the dipper of water. Just then there was a stir among the children, who, headed by Marge Heiffner, the largest and wildest girl, went out through an open window, alighting among some hogs that happened to be nosing around there just then. The scurried away with loud snorts, while the children also scurried to the woods for safety. Of course it was soon over, the Negro gone on his dangerous way, and the cowardly children back in the schoolroom. I did not rum, but stayed by the teacher. This sounds funny now, but I presume at that time neither the teacher nor any of the children had ever seen a Negro. I presume this was just another case of a slave escaping from bondage.

During the school vacations my time was taken up with going on errands - - carrying jugs of water to the men working in the harvest fields, gathering eggs, bringing in the cows, watching gaps (open gates) to keep out wandering creatures, - - occupations of blessed memory, but not so blessed then!

On the tenth day of September in 1862, Father and we two boys were cutting com in the field before our door, when there came a messenger riding fast, who was notifying everybody that Governor Todd had issued a proclamation calling on young men to bring their rifles and ammunition. That railroad transportation would be furnished from Wellington or New London to Cincinnati, O., where it was feared Morgan would attack and make a raid into Ohio. I was all for going, and arranged to meet the conveyance which was furnished to take volunteers to our nearest railroad station, Wellington, Ohio. The train, consisting of several coaches run for the transporting of the Squirrel Hunters (explain) to Cincinnati, came in about 10 A.M. It was already nearly filled; but on coach had been reserved for us, so that our party could be kept together. Of course we were unorganized, but were put in the charge of Major Fulkerson of Ashland, a man of military experience and the kind of man who could govern others without seeming to, and with the wisdom necessary to fore-see what would be needed as to our billeting, food, and what disposition should be made of us after we reached Cincinnati. To some of the boys it seemed a frolic, but many were extremely sober on this trip. Who could foresee what might happen? At Columbus and other large towns, we saw many soldiers in uniform. In fact the streets were crowded with them. On arrival at Cincinnati our men were marched to the Clifton House, where we were quartered during our stay.

This hotel building was apparently vacant, and taken over by the State. Our small rations were bro't in to us, and we sat on the floor of our rooms to eat and to drink our black coffee from tin cups. The streets were a mass of soldiers. The Ohio River was alive with the machinery of war; gun boats with long Dalghern guns with bores large enough for a man to crawl into. The suspension bridge reaching over into Covington Kentucky, was a wonder in those days. An open water space on the east side of the bridge gave a few of us a chance to try out our rifles, showing just how far they would carry. The river was about half a mile in width, the water calm. I think we received a kind of jar when we saw the short distance our guns would carry, when our bullets hit the water! There were rumors that the rebels were retreating, and we probably would not be needed. We made the best of our time for the few days we were there. (This story is evidently not finished. Papa intended to add more to it.)

In the early Sixties the Broad Gauge Atlantic and Great Western Railroad was completed and regular train-service began. Stations were established in towns and villages. The road passed near where we lived, and was a source of delight and wonder to me. (insert about first sight of train.) I was seized with a desire to learn telegraphing, which might enable me to get employment on that railroad. A young man named Carver, well known to our family, had prepared himself and been appointed Agent at Polk, a station three miles from my home.

I went to see him. At first he hesitated about teaching me, as he understood the Company did not allow students in offices; but finally he said he would set up a sounder and key in his home and I could practice there, and also spend some time in his Station office during each day. I was soon installed, and learning to pound out the dots and dashes, walking the three miles in the morning and back in the evening. And this new kind of education was interesting.

At that time they used what was called a register; and telegraphy was done by sight instead of by sound. The register carried a long narrow strip of white paper, run by clockwork or weights, and the dots and dashes were indented by a metal point on this moving strip. As it passed between two brass rollers and could easily be seen and read. After a few weeks of practice I was allowed to report the time of passing trains, and later on sent a message occasionally. By this time Mr. Carver must have considered me sufficiently experienced to handle an office, and he, wishing to be absent for a day or so, asked that I be permitted to relieve him, which request was granted. It so happened, that particular day, an Officer's Special was run, and the line had to be cleared so to give this Special right of track over all trains. All stations were notified, and right then the way-freight was due and coming into Polk. The wire called 20, Polk signal, and gave the train order signal. Was I scared? Yes, but I managed to write out the order in the proper book. The Conductor and Engineer signed it and I repeated it to the Dispatcher and got the "Correct" and I felt a great relief.

A short time after this, Frank Wilbur, day operator at Ashland, came to see Mr. Garver. Said he heard me working on the wire and could I come and relieve their Night Operator. Mr. Garver said, Yes", and it was arranged with the Superintendent's office. So I went to Ashland as night operator for two weeks. This was the beginning of my fifty years of Railroad work.

Next, I was sent to New Portage to relieve the Agent for a month. A village consisting of a few scattered houses on the side of a long sloping hill side. Along the foot of this hill, and running parallel with each other, were a wagon road, the A & GW tracks, the CZ & CY RR, and still lower down, the Ohio Canal, with its tow-path and mule power boats. There was not much station work, so a good part of my time was spent watching these canal boats passing. History tells that President Garfield was employed as tow boy on this canal in his young days. Probably about the time I was there. At that time he would have been fifteen. As I remember it there was but one industry in New Portage, and that was a Pottery right across the tracks from the Depot. There I learned something about the? making of jars and crocks, jugs and other stone ware - - Whirling disks, a ball of mud, educated hands to shape the articles.

The CZ & C Railroad was young and poor. They had no telegraph as yet and when an expected train failed to show up in a reasonable time, an engine with a man riding the pilot, would go looking for the lost train. Akron, now a great city was six miles East of Portage. One quiet day I heard a noise like distant thunder; and soon the Operator at Akron reported the blowing up of their powder mill; at an hour when all hands were absent at dinner, and the only loss of like was one mule that was having his dinner in or near the mill.

I hesitate to relate something which occurred during my short stay at New Portage - what I call my ghost story. One night I remained on duty at the station until about ten o'clock, and was starting to go to my boarding house, which was some eighty rods up the track. Just after leaving the platform and water-tank, as my eyes were becoming accustomed to the darkness, (there was no moon, only bright stars, so it was not very dark) I was able to see objects a short distance away. I saw that I was meeting something, not on the track on which I was walking, but whatever it was, was coming on the wagon-road, which was only a few rods to my left, and paralleling our railroad track. I stopped, stood still, until the object was immediately opposite me, where it also stopped. I saw some kind of a ghostly shimmering form, on a great beast of some kind unknown to me. The apparition, or whatever it was, made not a sound. I was very much frightened, but

took a grip on my senses - trying to find the cause. Was it a reflection by the water of the canal below, or could I be looking through vacant places among the trees further up the hill? No. The light was not of flesh and blood. It was supernatural. I just let go and ran with every atom of strength that I possessed, until I reached the door of my boarding house, where I was the only boarder, crawled into bed, pulled the covers up over my head, and shivered till morning. My readers may laugh; but it was not funny to me. I said not a word about this; but later on I learned that the long sloping hill, the location of the village, had a dark and mysterious history - - It had been the scene of past murders. A strange, haunted location, I suppose. That village was quite an important stopping station on the Ohio Canal before there were any railroads; and probably the inhabitants were what we would call "hard" citizens.

My stay at New Portage was shortened by a violent attack of chills, fever, and ague. The canal zone was not very healthful. After a week or two at home and a few doses of calomel, I was sent to Marion, Ohio, for a short time; and there I was considerably hurt and humiliated because the old register waa not working perfectly, and the battery was always weak. A fierce Train Dispatcher told me I ought to be put in a glass box for a show. However I lived through it all, and made friends of the men about the station. The Agent was very kind and sympathetic. Soon after this I went to West Salem as Night Operator.

West Salem was situated in the middle of the Third Division. The Station and eating house occupied the same platform, and all trains stopped twenty or twenty-five minutes for meals. This gave opportunity for unusual sight-seeing and amusement to the inhabitants of the village; especially in the evenings people came to see the trains come in. Maybe a President could be seen, or other prominent personages citizens. Theatrical companies, prize-fighters, and side-show curiosities, all had to eat!

At Seville, a station a few miles East of West Salem, lived Captain Bates, who was a giant over eight feet in height, and perfect in form; and his wife was nearly as large and well-formed, neither one being fat. We often saw these people, who (when not with the circus) lived quietly and sensibly on their farm near Seville. Think of people so tall that they had to stoop low to enter a coach, or an ordinary door!

Once a delegation of Indian Chiefs stopped for supper. Red Cloud, Spotted Tail, Hole-In-The Day and others were on their homeward trip from Washington, where they had been to see the Great White Chief regarding their troubles in dealing with the white men. They were all seated at a table of their own. Talk about eating <u>pretty!</u> One Indian, trying to make the waiter understand what he wanted more of, was asking for, stuck his fork into his neighbor's beefsteak and flopped it up and down. These Indians were only semi-dressed as white men, wearing buck-skin breeches, moccasins and blankets. Most of them were bareheaded, but one or two wore caps made of the skin of some animal. I wonder what they heard at Washington, and if the good promises, if such were made to them on this visit, were realized. For it was not so long after this, that these chiefs and their people were subdued and brought under subjection to the White Race, Man. About the last to be whipped was Geronimo - - the fighting Chief of the Apaches, on the border of Arizona. One amusing item of their visit to Washington, I remember, was that while the Indian Chief who was the spokesman, was in conversation with the President's Secretary, it came out that this Chief had five wives. The Secretary told him this would be displeasing to the Great White Father, and that one wife was all that could be allowed; that on his return to his people he should tell four of his wives to go. The Indian made a sad face and said, "You tell um."

When they were smoking the Pipe-of-Peace on Senator, when the pipe came to him, took out his handkerchief and wiped the stem before smoking, putting it in his mouth. When he handed the pipe to the Indian next in line, the Indian carefully shaved the stem with his picket knife before putting it to <u>his</u> mouth. (They probably did not have pocket-knives.)

At the fine Railroad Eating-house on the same platform with the Station where all trains stopped for meals, (repetition - - see p. 30) A man would appear on the platform to pound the gong on the arrival of trains - - a sound which will awaken old memories of good eating, as loudly announced by the head waiter.

I was soon pleased with my new position. The day operator was a young lady named Addica Reed, and she was extremely pleasant and lively. Just as I was beginning to get well acquainted with young people, and my surroundings, I received notice from Supt. Phillips to go to Windsor as Agent. This move to take place the first of the next month. I wrote him that I was well pleased with my present place and would prefer to remain there. To this he simply said my name had been sent in, and circulars printed, and I would have to go. I reckon Addica, with her guitar, her little songs, her blue eyes and peach-bloom face, and her brown hair, may have had something to do in the matter of my wishing to stay.

I found Windsor Station, situated at the edge of a woods. Also one store and bakery combined, and in this store the Post Office, one blacksmith shop, one farm home surrounded by becoming trees and shrubbery. Over half a mile away was the quiet little old town of Windsor; and 'way up on a long, sloping hill was a white church, which could be seen from far and near. My duties at this station were not to say very arduous. I had plenty of time for rest and recreation, until one day Mr. Phillips stopped off to look over the proposition of the filling up of a long, high trestle-work in the track just west of my station. This high trestle carried the track over a long, low bog; and the filling required two engines, and two trains of dump-cars for a year or more, working every week-day. A gravel pit was found near by, where steam shovels could load the dump cars. The two engines would require much water, and there was a large water-tank on the same platform with my station. A Caloric engine was installed to pump water, and my wages raised fifteen dollars per month to handle this Caloric Engine, in addition to my other duties. All this made Windsor quite important, and I had much train order business with the Dispatcher's Office, concerning my two wild-cab trains, which were always to be reckoned with.

My telegraph work required much talk and many messages between the Superintendent's office and the work going on at my station; and caused Me to discard my old slow register and do it all by sound. In saying Good Bye to the paper strip, I must say this in its favor: Telegraphy can be learned much easier and quicker when one can both see and hear the dots and dashes as they appear. During my stay at Windsor I got acquainted with many train men, especially with Engineers. One of these was Kike Ricksecker who was a wit; Joe Dando could ran an engine over the division and look as if he had just come out of a band-box; Horn Gurley was named Horn because of his big nose, and so on.

Not so long ago I was in Ohio on a visit, and saw some of these names on passing engines on the Erie (the A & G W having been made a part of the Erie) and men who were on the honor roll, had their names on the cabs of their engines - - the engines which had been assigned to them.

While at Windsor I witnessed, or became acquainted with, some of the dangers that were a part of railroad train work in that early period, before the invention of the airbrake and many other safety appliances that we now have. Ken were frequently hurt in coupling cars, and braking with hand brakes was often dangerous, because of unforeseen loss of nuts, or a broken chain or some giving way of the handbrake.

Many of the people living around Windsor were the descendants of English immigrants, who had settled there years before. There were such nice old names as Woodhouse, Ward, Hilton, Osbun (Osborne), Curtis, Hale. And the young men and women were usually lively and attractive. There was always visiting and other (festivity) diversion. At this time, our Civil War was nearing its end. Some of the young men had served a term at the front, and were now heroes; so soldier clothes were everywhere in evidence.

I certainly enjoyed my life at Windsor. All things considered, I can see that I was fortunate, or perhaps favored by Heaven, in having it for my first station. Nature was lavish there, in woods and fields, and streams; in friendly, joyous people with wisdom, and time enough for some sensible enjoyment of life. About half a mile East of my station, the track crossed the Blackfork, a stream of some considerable size, spanned by a wooden bridge. This bridge was at the bottom of grades, both from the East and the West; and although the structure was of heavy pine timber with every appearance of great strength. It gave way under a passing train, making an ugly wreck; but no injury to any of the employees on the train. Then the company replaced this bridge by a stronger wooden one - - an upright or overhead bridge, and inside of a year this bridge broke down while the Wayfreight Train was passing over it. This time a brakeman named Johnny Day was caught by one foot between the drawbars of the two flat-cars he was working on, and he was pulled down into the water until it was necessary for men to hold his head out of the water, while others got bars and pried his foot loose below.

The Story of a Dream:

A man named John Oswald living a short distance up the track from Windsor had a vineyard and raised many grapes. O, Say! Did you ever wander around in such a place, just eating your fill of luscious grapes? There is nothing so good. Oswald was quite a religious man; and one time when there were heavy rains, and high waters, he had a vivid dream of a washout of a small bridge or culvert which was located on his farm. The night was dark, and it was raining hard; but Oswald knew it was nearing time for the night passenger train East. He got up, dressed himself, and with lantern in hand, made his way to the culvert. Sure enough, it was just as he had dreamed. The culvert was gone! He ran up the track a little way just in time to flourish his lantern in the glaring headlight of the oncoming passenger train. For this service he was given an annual pass for a year (?) but I don't believe he ever used the pass, except on such trips as he would have taken when he was without it. In these days people were not looking for some place to go they thought they were already there; so Mr. Oswald didn't quit work and just ride his annual, but kept right on being a sensible farmer.

(One night when the air was cold and frosty, Conductor John Stumf was running the fast freight East, and was scheduled to meet No. 3 passenger West at my station at 10:20 P.M. Stumf was forward on his engine conferring with his engineer about things. When within two or three miles of Windsor, he started back to his caboose. He was coming down grade, and running very fast, much steam floating back from the engine, so that John failed to see that his train had broken in two, leaving only one car attached to the engine; so when he stopped for the second car, it wasn't there. He landed on the track and rolled over and over for a long distance; and as he afterwards said, he thought he was never going to stop rolling, When he did finally stop, he found himself between the rails and thought of the rest of his cars coming. He lost no time rolling himself outside the rails, just as the rest of the train whizzed by. There was a brakeman (or two) on this, and the engineer signalled them onto the siding, got me out of bed, and we flagged the passenger and held them while the freight engine and men went back up the grade, looking for the remains of Stumf. They found him lying by the track, partly conscious, and soon able to talk and tell us all about what had happened. We carried him into a sleeper on No. 3, and sent him to Galion, where he lived. A Brakeman was instructed to run the train for the remainder of the trip. At the hospital at Galion it was found that a cracked thigh-bone was the ex-tent of injury to Conductor Stumf. The survival of the toughest! For a <u>man</u> to step off the top of a car standing dead still, thinking to step onto another which was not there, would be almost sure death (in most cases). In about a month, John Stumf was back to work again. In those days, all railroad Section Men were Irish; living in shanties. The unmarried ones generally boarded with the Boss. I have always had a warm spot in my heart for the Irish. They're so full of gay life, going about their occupations as

though it were fun, instead of just work. Such families of bright, good-looking children; sprees not uncommon. If the grim reaper visited their home, there would be an all-night wake; some liquor; new clay pipes and tobacco. And later much crepe on men's hats, with signs of real grief. I lived to see the day when the gay and happy Irish were superseded by sedate (?) and hard-headed Swedes. But to me something bright, something interesting and likeable was gone forever from our railroads.

While I was employed as Station Agent at Windsor I began to realize to some extent the importance and satisfaction of being an operator. My days were filled with interesting happenings, not only up and down the hundred or two-hundred miles of wire on the division, but anything unusual taking place anywhere in the United States. President Lincoln was assassinated on the night of April 14, 1865, and I heard of it early next morning when I came on duty. The end of the Civil War, Grant at Appomatox - - much history was being made in these days. An Operator, say at Washington, would tell New York; New York would tell Cleveland; Cleveland would tell Cincinnati, and so on across the world in a few minutes. And of course we men between could hear what was passing on our wires. Some Operators never heard anything but what was addressed to them. Bat I was not one of that kind. I could work hard at my station duties and hear everything going on the wires. Even now I can remember just where I was when Garfield was shot; and when McKinley was shot by Czolgosz. I walked across the street and told the people of the blowing up of the Battleship Maine fifteen minutes after that happened over there in Havana Harbor, Cuba.

I am not anxious to relate many of the terrible tragedies that took place during my two or three years stay as Agent at Windsor. The Atlantic and Great Western was a six foot gauge railroad and its engines and equipment of every kind heavy and more difficult to handle than standard grade. A young engineer named Sam Myers handling the Local Freight, was coming into Mansfield one morning, and just when approaching a crossing over a narrow but deep little ravine, his drivers climbed the rails and his engine tipped down into the ravine. Sam was pinned to the boiler head and was dead before anything could be done to release him. His was the saddest funeral I ever attended. The company ran a funeral train over the Third Division and all railroad men who could be spared attended the funeral which was held at the home at Galion. Imagine a great railroad doing so humane an act now-a-days. One cannot.

When the steam shovel had finished its work of lifting ten acres of gravel (which ten acre tract should be described as high or hilly) onto dump cars and the dump cars had spilled it into the high trestle, work, so that now what had been a track set up on high piling was just a railroad on solid ground, then Windsor became a very quiet place again; and soon I had a feeling of Wanderlust. I talked to Superintendent Phillips. He said I could have a day off and gave me transportation to New York City and return, all of which I was pleased to accept, and later I resumed work with full intention to be good. Not long after this a boy named Charley Hewlett stopped off there and talked much about the high wages being paid operators on the Union Pacific Railroad, which was being built West from Omaha, Nebraska and was nearing completion west of Bitter Creek to the point in Utah where it would meet the Central Pacific building east from California. This Hewlett was perhaps a little older than I, city raised and not a bad sort. It was easy to see he knew more about the ways of the world than I did. He urged me to go West with him. The prospect looked good to me. So I sent in my resignation, and when relieved I met Howlett in Mansfield and we prepared to start at once. I had to buy my friend a few little articles, such as a shirt, socks, etc., and lent him one of my two guns; but he made all this and much more up to me on the way by his better worldly education. At Mansfield he said “Let's go up and see Mr. Booth”. Mr. Booth was Supt. of telegraph on the P F W & C Line. When he was told we were going to the U P he said he was authorized to furnish transportation to Chicago. And we were two happy boys as we boarded the train that night. At Chicago we called on Supt. Bliss of the C & N W Wires. He said he was

authorized to issue transportation to Telegraph Operators going to the U P. “Step in here and I will see if you are really Operators.” Howlett pushed me in ahead of him, and I was handed a pad of clip. A sounder called “F” which I answered and copied what came. Howlett did not copy, but told Mr. Bliss the substance of the message. We were furnished passes to Omaha, and again we experienced a feeling of pleasure and relief. We certainly struck good luck so far. We found we were hungry now, and were not slow in finding a restaurant with plenty of such food as tasted mighty good to us. Our trip from Chicago to Omaha was without incident other than that we witnessed the activities of gamblers and card sharks who were busy on passenger trains in those early days, seeking some poor sucker to hook. I did much looking out of the windows, and probably saw more things of interest even in that five-hundred miles than tourists do today in crossing the States with their eyes on the dashboard.

We arrived in Omaha in the evening and went immediately to the office of the Supt. of the U P R R. We carried a note from Bliss in Chicago. After looking us over, and asking us a few questions, he said, “I want you boys to go out on our train West, which leaves Omaha in one Hour. He handed us passes, Howlett's to Lookout Station, Wyo., and mine to Medicine Bow about fifty miles farther on. We were both to work as Night Operators. We took a look around, found the Railroad Hotel a little distance from the U P Station, and near to what appeared to be a half grown mountain. The Hotel made us think we were now out West. The expansive lobby had an overhead ledge all around, about four feet below the ceiling with large windows above the ledge. On this ledge were various mounted wild animals, such as Mountain Lions, Bighorn Sheep, Elk, Deer and Antelope.

We got aboard our train as the city was being lighted up; and by this time were very tired and sleepy, so we decided to take a sleeper. We were surprised to see the crowds of people who were traveling. We told the Porter we wanted to go right to bed. So he made up our upper berth. I don't believe either of us had ever been inside a sleeper before, and I must say I was embarrassed at going to bed in a brightly lighted car full of cheerful people. There were no curtains in those early days. I made the grade all right, but Howlett had the bad luck to catch on some unseen casting, tearing a large hole in his only pair of trousers. However we slept the sleep of innocents, waking up when nearing Cheyenne, Wyoming - - five hundred and sixteen miles west of Omaha. At that time it was a town of five-thousand inhabitants. Here all trains were changed or remade, and we were here nearly all day, with plenty of time to view this wonderful new little city made up of saloons, dancehouses, Faro banks, gambling dens, and wild life of every description. Of course it was a rail-road town, and that class (RRpeople) were probably about the only moral and decent citizens living there then.

The Union Pacific had a fine hotel and depot combined, and their passenger trains were much finer in appearance than any trains of later days. Late in the evening we left Cheyenne for our destinations West of Laramie. We were now in the Rockies, the Stations about fifteen miles apart and the country otherwise almost entirely uninhabited except for a wood choppers camp now and then, or a hunter's dugout. At Lookout Station I said Goodbye to Howlett with a feeling of sadness that my city-bred friend should thus be dropped off at this lonely station, fifteen miles from any neighbor and fifteen hundred miles from home. And then, what if Medicine Bow should be still worse?

I arrived at Medicine Bow about midnight. Two or three other men passengers got off the train here, too, which seemed encouraging. Mr. Moses, the Agent, met the train, carrying a very small U.S. mail bag. I introduced myself, and he expressed his pleasure in a quiet way as he preceded me through the waiting room into the office. How good it was to hear again the click of the sounder on that table, and talk in a language that I could understand! It made me feel at home at once. After the train from the West at 2 a.m. had passed, we both slept. In the morning I began taking a kind of inventory of my surroundings; the items that were to be seen and heard and felt

and enjoyed, or disliked, in what was known as Medicine Bow, Wyoming.

First, the altitude was very great and the air was entirely clear. Off there to the Southeast was Elk Mountain and Mr. Moses asked me how far away I thought it was. After taking a look, I said about three miles. I was thirty seven miles to the bad, for it really was forty miles to its base. Eastward from the Station, on the other side of Medicine Bow River was a great round smooth lift of earth that looked like a young world pushing its way into existence in space. 'Way off to the West could be seen high bluffs and the mouths of canyons. Some patches of pine timber were in sight everywhere. The Depot was quite a nice building, with seven rooms, including the Waiting Room and Office. All their Depots were built with the idea in mind that the y would be homes for the Agents and their families, at least through this mountainous region, not likely to ever be settled. The rooms were lathed and plastered. All windows had roller shades. A huge box stove in the waiting room and plenty of four-foot cord wood furnished heat. The office was located back of the Waiting room, instead of in front, as on Eastern roads. I mention this fact, because later on I often had to step over sleeping men in my trips to meet the trains and in attending to other work. Besides the Station, there was a Road-master's office only a few steps away, and across the track, on the outer edge of the right-of-way the company had a small stone Roundhouse -enough of it completed to accommodate five engines with necessary side-tracks and a Y to turn on. There were two Section Houses. One was fitted up with beds and cots for sleeping quarters. The other was a kitchen with a long dining table where the Section Ken and others ate. There were many of them (Section Men) in those days, and the rest of us boarded there also. An elderly Swiss man did the cooking and it was good. That was before the world had gone crazy on the matter of canned foods. For meat we had a variety of fresh beef, mess pork, bacon, salt fish. Hunters supplied plenty of Elk and Antelope meat.

I have here described only the buildings belonging to the U.P. In addition to these, there were two or three small buildings at the outer edge of the right-of-way grounds. One was kept by a mild kind of a Desperado named Jack Crews. Another shack with a big front was the Red Jacket Saloon and Pool Hall. A man named Crawford kept a little shop across the track from the depot where he sold cigars, candy, cookies, figs, sardines and such goodies. I remember buying three figs for twenty-five cents. That was the minimum price in Medicine Bow. There were several tents and shacks and a mile or two out in the hills. Trabing Bros. had a Wood-Choppers' Camp, furnishing the Railroad with wood for their engines. All engines burned wood in those days. These Trabing Bros. later on became famous Cattle Ken. At Medicine Bow Station Isaac Newton Moses was Station Agent and Postmaster. There were also Roadmaster Wilson; Henry Young, Roadmaster's Clerk; Hugh Daley, Night Watchman for Wilson's office, and Joe Budd, Night Watchman at the Station and Roundhouse. Then there was a man named Hiram Parish who worked at the big wood pile. Anson Crawford, a boy of about sixteen was keeping up fires and learning to telegraph. There were transients - - Conductors and Engineers and a few train men now and then as happened. So far as I can remember, this was the population of Medicine Bow at that time. There was a well at the Section House, but the water was bitter with alkali (?) - - would almost take the skin off one's face to wash in it. Of course it had to be used for cooking and making coffee and tea, but nobody was long on such beverages. At the Station we drank sulphur water brought to us by the Section Ken from a sulphur spring which they had discovered some distance out in the hills. We kept it in a tight beer-keg with a faucet, and even then its odor was present in every room in the house. It sure was hard to take, but said to be very healthful.

All stations were liberally supplied with guns and ammunition as protection against Indians. Section Men always carried as many guns as there were men on their handcars when going out to work. These guns were Prussian Needle Guns, using a cartridge a size larger than a 45-90 probably a discarded army musket which the railroad company had acquired at a bargain-counter in Germany. The Indians were on the War-path at that time and being hunted by the Government,

but we never saw any of them; but it's when they are on the War-path that they are so seldom seen. At night we Operators talked on the wires about Indians, keeping our window blinds well pulled down.

I sometimes went hunting with Hugh Daley, out North from the Station where there was quite a range of level land partly covered with sage brush and greasewood; but we never had any luck. However we saw numerous herds of game, but they had a way of keeping just a little too far away. Once I saw from the Station what seemed to me to be two-thousand antelope in one feeding drove. One day as I sat looking out the window a large buck antelope came meandering along and stopped on the Station grounds. I grabbed a Needle Gun, crawled out on the platform, drew a bead on him, pulled the trigger. The hammer drove the needle, but missed fired and the click of the hammer was enough to scare away the buck. Well, I was disappointed, but glad it wasn't an Indian I was trying to shoot.

About a half-mile west of the Station the track entered what really looked like the Rockies. 'Way down there on the south side, piled two or three hundred feet high, and reaching as far as the eye could see were rocks and rocks and more rocks - - just as they had been left after some terrific volcanic upheaval at some time in the eternal (?) past. There were formations there resembling almost anything one could imagine. An immense Cathedral, the comb of the roof of one long, straight cut stone and gables glittering in the sunlight. Sun shining on lava or moss-agates. I said cut stone, but broken stone would be nearer the truth. But I lack language to describe a fraction of the wonders to be seen there. Some miles farther on there was quite a long reach of almost level land on both sides of the track, looking for all the world as if it had once been the foundation of an immense brick kiln burned there. The earth was all brick red without a spear of vegetation in sight - - a desolate place made and left after the last hot blast of some volcanic eruption. Sometimes I wandered out to where there were great tracts of sagebrush not very far away from the Station, growing dense enough to make a most desirable cover for wolves, foxes and other animals, while the branches afforded shelter for numerous birds. I noticed many crows inhabiting these sagebrush sections, where they probably made an easy living by robbery and plunder as is their habit always. In the open places there were prairie-dog towns. At a casual glance one might think a dog town was an old fashioned potato-patch; but a closer scrutiny would show the potato hills were large, each one with an open door to the tunnel, the subway or underground road reaching every home. On our way from Omaha West near Grand Island, Nebraska, we passed through such a town which must have been five miles in length, with many of these little animals sitting on their houses, taking a look at the moving train. The sight bro't to my mind the time when I was a little boy at school and there began to be talk of a railroad to be built to California, we had a school song something like this: “The great Pacific Railroad to California hail, Bring on the locomotive, Lay down the iron rail.” The little dogs of dogtown will wag their little tails, They'll think there's something coming, A-riding on the rails.” And now here was I on that Great Pacific Railroad, and out there were the little dogs of dogtown, and there's more to follow.

Not far from Medicine Bow was a small Lake named Como which was so saturated with alkali that the shores were white and there was maybe an inch of such deposit on the bottom of the lake. Devil Fish (or what went by that name) inhabited this lake. These fish were about eight inches long and had four legs and eight horns slanting backwards on their heads. (?) I tried keeping three or four of them in ordinary water but they soon died from being fed on diluted water, I presume.

Speaking of wolves: The Section Men sometimes brought in several of them on their hand-cars which they had poisoned (that is, the wolves were poisoned, not the hand-cars). Some of them big timber-wolves, others coyotes or prairie wolves. The hand-car houses were both ornamented with skins tacked up on the walls inside and outside.

I was not long in becoming well acquainted with, and accustomed to my work and surroundings.

There was one Westbound Passenger Train at 12 o'clock noon, and the Eastbound at 2 A.M. And perhaps a freight train or two during the night. Wire work was light. Our community was small, but there was no lack of friendship and sociability. Mr. Moses and Henry Young spent more or less time almost every day practicing vocal and instrumental music, one playing on the violin, the other on guitar. Both could sing, and their music furnished enjoyable entertainment without that element of culture shown by noted musicians, which sort of separates them from the rules that govern the rest of the human race. (!) Theirs was just natural music.

These full days passed pleasantly. The air was so pure and clear that some days one could see Long's Peak and Pile's Peak from the Station platform. Fresh meat would not spoil, and it was the custom to just hang up quarters of beef and other fresh meat in the outdoors until needed. A dead animal left lying on the ground would simply dry up or mummify.

In the latter part of December the boy Anson Crawford began to complain of toothache; it ran along for several days, making him very miserable. The ticket fare on the U P was 7 1/2 cts. per mile at that time; so it would have cost Anson about fifty dollars to go to Laramie to see a dentist. I told Anson to see if anybody had a pair of forceps, and he was lucky to find one at Trabing's Camp - - an old rusty henbill forceps. I improvised a kind of dentist's chair in the Waiting-room, composed of a couple of office chairs. Anson promised not to yell. I prodded around the big molar with my jack knife (!!) took a death grip with the old henbill tongs and out the tooth came. What applause from the audience of four! And what a happy boy! (It's a wonder he didn't die of poison) I felt well paid without one cent of money changing pockets; for I could remember the time when a doctor in Orange, Ohio, performed a like operation for me which cost me ten cents.

The weather grew colder; and soon we began to have cloudy days with occasional flurry of snow. As winter progressed and the snow storms became more frequent, our night Passenger trains sometimes found it necessary to have more than one locomotive. The line from Cheyenne West was up-hill grade all the way to Sherman. Sherman was at that time the highest Railroad Station in the world - - some eight thousand feet above sea level. The engines were enormous for those days. Some times they used three on one train. The U P Was in no condition for such a hard winter. Cuts had not been widened, no snow fences now snow sheds had been provided. Trains found it harder and more difficult to keep moving every day until on Feb. the 12th the Night Passenger West was snowbound about forty miles East of Medicine Bow, and the Eastbound passenger was snowed in for 26 days in the center of an 80 mile stretch of dead railroad; and there was no let up to snow and wind! The wire was O. K., and it seemed a kind of life-line connection with the great outside world. I certainly was glad to be able to hear and communicate to others anything of interest passing. Sometimes at night I would hear long reports being sent to the War Dept. at Washington by General Nelson A. Miles of his day's doings with the Indians on the Little Big Horn River. His troubles with the Apaches and other tribes. Mr. Moses and Henry Young sang and played. (One dark day a Conductor sat on my table and sang "The Sword of Bunker Hill". Roadmaster Wilson entertained us with a jig dance; time passed pretty well, with not much work to do. Soon we began to have stragglers-- passengers going East from their snowbound train forty miles West of us. They had stuck to the dead train, hoping for relief of some kind, until food and fuel were exhausted. Then they decided to walk the eighty miles, or until they met some means of transportation.

We had a crew and one engine at Medicine Bow, and there was about ten miles of clear track east; so when four or five stragglers had accumulated (?) and were fed and rested, we gave them the ten mile lift. The younger and more vigorous of the lot came first, but later the older and better class. We had several noted travelers and Nobilities (?) who had been on their way to Washington to be at Grant's inauguration; and here they were on March fifth, I think it was. Agent Moses was very polite and hospitable to these, giving up our bed to some of them and doing every thing possible for their comfort. We enjoyed their stay; but, alas, we had not

reckoned on the unforeseen. Greybacks, as ever were! But most of us had made the acquaintance of this pest during the Civil War, so knew some remedy to apply in such a case.

A few days later, Supt. Campbell arrived with a train and many snow-shovelers, opening the road from the east to Medicine Bow. The men were very weary and Mr. Campbell gave them an hour for rest. During which time he stood them in a long line on the platform and dealt out to each one a moderate quantity of liquor - - just enough to brighten them up as they started on their work west. We were now in high hopes of soon being restored to the Natural State of Things again and soon began to have trains in a somewhat desultory way, as the weather dictated. I remember the first train from the East left us a very small U S mail sack; and that day Agent Moses was absent and we had no key to unlock the sack. One of the Section Hem produced a spike maul which answered the same purpose. There were several letters, but none at all for me, which was sad after waiting twenty-six days; but the next train brought more mail, and the world went better with us then.

About the first of May Mr. Hoses took a furlough for thirty days, and I was made Agent during his absence. And another operator from the East took the night job. Signs of Spring were appearing. Grass was starting to look green. Now could be seen lots of bulltongue cactus and another small variety of cactus which grew a few inches, high and had a beautiful flower on top. As there was never much rain here, vegetation was not very luxuriant, and grass only scanty and in bunches. There were tiny flowers of sorts unknown to me. I have heard that in later years there came rain enough in this region to make a great change, in the growth of vegetation and many cattle took the place of buffalo, antelope and elk that formerly roamed these elevated plains.

My duties as Agent at this Station were not very arduous; and the change from night to day work was indeed a source of pleasure. The new Night Man was quite uppish or at least he appeared to be different. Not in alliance with the ways of Western people. Only a few days after his arrival, while still little acquainted, he was moved to get a ladder and climb up on the Station rood, carrying a lantern attached to a long pole and line. This lantern he swung back and forth in front of my window at intervals, thus keeping me awake. I didn't think (consider) it so funny; so called Anson Crawford, who was still in the office, and had him remove the ladder. So that Mr. Operator had to stay on the roof until almost time for the Night Passenger Train, when Anson put the ladder up again. Next morning he looked pretty sad; and I was not feeling proud of my own behaviour. I am glad to think we grow less cruel as we grow older. When I was night-man, Joe Crews often brought letters which I mailed for him. This new Operator declined to do so; and after some scrappy back talk was knocked down and after picking himself up, made a hasty retreat. After that he agreed with the Scripture where it says something about making friends with the Mammon of Unrighteousness.

Mr. Moses returned almost before his thirty days leave had expired, and I was faced with the sad thought of going back to night work again. I had some conversation with Mr. Moses, and he said that if I would stay at Medicine Bow he would work half the night and half the day with me; but just then Supt. Vaughan wired me to come to Laramie, as he wanted me to relieve the Night Opr. at Cheyenne for a while. At Laramie I told him I was afraid the job was too heavy for me, as Cheyenne was a relay office for all telegrams from east and west. He said, “You can handle it. I have heard you work.” I found the work was pretty fierce up to ten or eleven o'clock - - continuous receiving and sending with hardly time to wipe the sweat from my brow for several hours each night; but from midnight till morning nothing much but keeping register of trains and cars coming in and going out. The U P had a fine Hotel on the same platform where all trains stopped for meals. Passengers were charged one dollar per meal. It seemed the Hotel had been having some difficulty in receiving its breakfast orders; and now that the line was open clear through to San Francisco, there would be sure to be an increase of business. I promised to keep them posted to the best of my ability; and Conductors were instructed to wire such reports (?)

from Sidney, Neb. Generally there were from fifty to one hundred and twenty-five for breakfast. And the grand rush at the ringing of the gong, the filling up of the tables, the lively voices of waiters yelling out the bill-of-fare, was, to say the least, exhilarating. My prompt delivery of meal orders was appreciated and my eating costs were reduced accordingly. At the arrival of this train about 8:00 A.M., the Elite of Cheyenne were wont to drive down in their fine carriages with beautiful horses, and all gaily dressed, just to see the train come in.

At that time there were still to be seen the old Stage Coaches with their four or six horses, drivers sitting high holding all the lines, historic whip in hand, ready for the trip across country. At Cheyenne I first saw people riding what they called "Velocipedes"-just bicycles. (Enlarge on this) Remember this was in the year 1869-over sixty years ago. To see fifteen or twenty people all riding abreast in the street was a pretty sight. Cheyenne was wide open all night; and there certainly was entertainment for everybody. One night the Hotel clerk and myself and one other whose name I have forgotten, made the rounds--visiting gambling houses, dance halls, saloons, shooting galleries — and we certainly had a time of it; twisting and squirming to avoid becoming too much interested in any of the sinful activities going on in all these places. If a dancing girl suddenly appeared at your elbow, asking you to buy her a drink, why you just had to do it and not wait for any further calls, but hurry on to the next side show. Every dance House had a bar and its counter along the wall — very handy.

P. J. Hecker was Station Agent at Cheyenne, and he had twelve clerks at ninety dollars per month each; and freight tariff rates were so high that it was not unusual to collect fifteen hundred dollars in charges on a single car of merchandise consigned to different parties in Cheyenne.

As stated before, somewhere in these memoirs, the passenger fare on the Union Pacific was 7-1/2 cts. per mile, while on the Central Pacific it was 10 cts. per mile. And there were many passengers going and coming at that time; for in those days the railroad and the telegraph were the two interesting and outstanding creations of man; for his convenience and pleasure as well as for the opening up of the vast prairies to settlement and homes for millions of people. We had then no telephones, no radios, no automobiles, no airplanes.---. (Evidently Papa intended to add more to this part)

I think the time I was Night Man at Cheyenne was about the most interesting period of my life; because it was there that I had some part or share in the great wave of new feelings that swept across the United States at the opening of the first great Transcontinental Rail-road. The Gold Spike was driven at Promontory Point, Utah, by the two Presidents of the Central and Union Pacific Railroads; and I handled some of the telegrams ordering the wines and refreshments for that occasion. When the line was newly opened many prominent men and women were making their first trips to the Pacific Coast. As all trains were remade at Cheyenne, and time was given passengers to see this new little city, you can imagine the life this would bring to the inhabitants. I being one of the inhabitants at that time. I have always been sorry that I kept no record of the names of all the great men and of those not so great, as well as of all the interesting events that came under my too casual observation at that time; but I was very young for one of my age. And it is not likely that I would have been much impressed if King Solomon in all his glory had appeared there. However, I remember seeing and having conversation with Wm. H. Seward, Secy. of State during the Civil War, and who was severely stabbed at the time President Lincoln was assassinated. George H. Pullman and wife were making a trip to the coast in one of his Pullman cars, something new at that time, and later, on their way East. Just outside of Cheyenne the train ran into a drove of cattle. The Pullman car was hard hit, and one whole corner torn away. Mrs. Pullman received some bad bruises; Mr. Pullman escaped injury. Of course they were delayed there several days.

One day I witnessed something unusual up to that time, at least. A train load of young women

going to Salt Lake City to join the Mormon Church. They were accompanied by Mormon missionaries, and I think they were of foreign birth; but I may be in error as to that.

Our own New England Yankees were always hunting for something new in the way of Churches to join; these may have been just Yankee girls of a romantic type; especially as Brigham Young was a New England Yankee, and still in the market. I think he had only twelve or fourteen wives at that time.

I verily believe I saw the first Chinamen who ever came to Cheyenne - two of them. They may have been man and wife. They were dressed just alike in Chinese costume. They arrived soon after the road was completed and started a small wash house or laundry in a shack not far from the Station. A few evenings after I heard terrible outcries and rapid movements over there, which turned out to be the wash-women of that part of town, making an attack on the Chinese with brooms and mop sticks and clubs. The “Chinks” ran and the women after them, until the police took a hand, and compelled the women to keep hands off the new industry.

About July first I was relieved at Cheyenne by the return of the regular Night Operator; so I went over to Laramie to see Supt. Vaughan. I told him I wanted to go to Ohio, that I had a date there to marry a fine young lady, who no doubt would be glad to accompany me back to Wyoming. Mr. Vaughan said that was just what they wanted their men to do. At that time the U.P. R.R. was two or three months behind with its pay day; and it so happened that the Pay Car was at Laramie that day. The Paymaster was agreeable to Mr. Vaughan's re-quest to “Pay this man all that is coming to him.” So I left the car with quite a roll. I was furnished transportation to Omaha, the pass reading E. K. Fluke and two Irishmen-naming them. At this time they were getting rid of all Irish Section Foremen, and taking on Swedes in their places; Mr. Vaughan said his reason for putting them on my pass was that they were apt to get thirsty and sell a pass, and later turn up asking for another.

I was soon on my way East, riding on the cushions in the First Class coach, while the two Irishmen took to the smoker 'way up next to the baggage car. Soon as the Conductor came to these two, they would hurry back and find me and stand by until the Conductor came. This thing happened at every change of Conductors till we reached Omaha. By means of a letter from the U.P. officials, I was enabled to get transportation to Chicago over the Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific R.R. Thus far I only felt a solid pleasure that I was having so successful a start, and nothing marred my happiness until I discovered a very large rent in my new pants which had cost me eight dollars in Laramie, only yesterday! About a foot of the leg seam had given way on the inside, but it might have been so much worse! I found ways of taking care of it, but was almost afraid to make any quick moves on the trip for fear the pants might just let go and fall off me. All this was before the World War made the world safe for dishonesty and crookedness. (?) (What connection with the pants?)

The train stopped at Davenport, Ia., and I wish to certify to the fact that it was the best dinner I ever sat down to. The menu covered about everything and then some; “This train will wait till all are satisfied.” I learned that these unusual favors were the result of rivalry between two eating-houses there.

At Chicago I decided to take the L.S. & M.S. R.R. to Cleveland. This line passes through lower Michigan — a country which is good to look upon because of its beautiful forests, fine farm homes, and lively attractive towns and villages. At Cleveland I stayed two or three days, while a tailor made me a suit of clothes. I spent my time there visiting places of interest, sampling different restaurants. I remember passing a saloon on East Superior Street where out on the sidewalk there was a barrel of whiskey; and on the head of the barrel was printed, “Not one cross word in this whole barrel.” I was almost tempted to go in and try it. Now my clothes being finished, I planned to visit my sister and her husband who lived on a farm near Rochester, a small

station on the C.C. & C.R.R. some forty miles southwest of Cleveland. Their farm was near the railroad, a mile or more below Rochester. I had been there and knew the lay of the land, and thought I could easily go to it, even though it was then nine o'clock at night when I left the station. So away I hiked on the track. When I was about the proper distance out, I couldn't seem to recognize any familiar road crossing, and after wandering up and down for some time, I found what I thought might be the right trail. The night was not so dark, but that I could see my way fairly well. I followed the wagon road south to what seemed a long distance until its intersection with an east and west road. Standing at the crossroads, I was almost sure I had been there before, so I walked west and passed a farm which was not the one. I had a mind to stop and knock. Then I started on west again and soon I came upon the house and barn I was trying to find. And wasn't I a glad young man! Well, it was then one o'clock and I didn't like to disturb this family at that late hour. So I just went up stairs in the barn and fell into the hay, and was lulled to sleep by the familiar noises which tell (to me) of peaceful, satisfied domestic creatures of the farm.

Early in the morning when my brother-in-law Sid came out to milk the cows, I came from the hay-loft and gave him the surprise of his life. Going to bed in the barn was not approved of, to say the least, but everybody was pleased to meet me in such an unexpected manner. That was over sixty years ago; and my sister Mrs. Sidney Vermilya who is three years my senior, is still living at St. Petersburg, Florida. She was ninety one her last birthday. Sidney died at the age of ninety-three. They moved to Florida some twenty years ago, after meeting with success in their affairs, at Bowling Green, Ohio, where they located after leaving Rochester. My home was about sixteen miles across country from Rochester, and in a day or two, I was being conveyed there by the Vermilya family. My people had been notified and were expecting us. I look back to those days as among the happiest of my life. I spent some time visiting friends and relatives, and especially at the home of my future wife, at Windsor. It seemed good to be among friends and neighbors again, and my folks were not pleased when I mentioned the matter of returning to Wyoming. I finally went to Galion to see Mr. T. A. Phillips, Supt. of the A & G W. He said, Yes he would give me a station soon as there was a vacancy. It was only a week or so till he wrote me to come to Galion, sending transportation. I found I was to go to Broadway Station as Agent and Operator - - a village on the Fourth Division. Mr. Phillips went there with me. On arrival there I entered the waiting room while Mr. Phillips followed the Agent into his office. Soon I was called in, and the Supt. was saying to the Agent, “This is Mr. Fluke; and I have brought him here to take your place. You have been drinking and allowing wild doings around the Station - - people doing as they please. Look at the way your Freight House shows up. Dirty and unkempt.” Boor man, I pitied him, as he sat down and great tears trickled down his cheeks as he protested, saying he could bring proof that no one had ever seen him under the influence of liquor. But what he said made no impression, and I was checked in at once, with the understanding that I was to compel these people to do business through the ticket window until the counter could be built. And he added, “If necessary use a club on 'em.” Broadway had a much better Station building than most places, and I found the citizens easy enough to deal with, after they recovered from their temporary hatred of me - - a feeling that I was some way guilty of taking a good man's place. Which was no fault of mine. I was only sorry for him and his wife and children.

This was a kind of backwoods country, the people still doing hunting and fishing for a living. The RR Co. did quite a business shipping walnut logs to New York and even some to Liverpool, England. A gravel-train was working near Broadway and in those days they had a telegraph operator with them. This train laid up there nights, and Frank Lake, the operator and I lived at the only hotel - - kept by one Ezra Tunks. We had enough to eat, and some fun there. I remember one day a fire broke out around the stovepipe in the Tunks' house, and Mr. Tunks was seen to run for a pail of water which he dashed into the pot-bellied coal stove. Later he attacked the blaze on the roof with better results.

Soon I was well enough acquainted to be invited to a wedding. A man of some considerable age named Elliot was marrying a widow. All I can remember about it was the short and simple ceremony, something like this: "Mr. Elliot, do you take this woman to be your lawful wife?" And the same words to the woman in regard to taking Mr. Elliot. They answered, "Yes". Then the Preacher said, "By the authority vested in me as a minister of the Gospel I pronounce you husband and wife". There were refreshments and much cheerful talk, and altogether it was a very enjoyable occasion.

This was quite a farming country (as well as hunting and fishing?) and the land was very good. Broadway Station did much shipping of butter, eggs, and other farm produce. There was a water mill on a stream not far from the village, and some flour and feed was shipped to nearby stations. There was not much telegraphing done there. We were in Union County, Ohio; and Marysville - - a town of some size -- was the County Seat. I am trying to give some description of this place because it was here I first (!) became a Husbandman. A married man, with a home of my own and a loving wife who traveled with me in all my wanderings, up and down the earth, and walking to and fro in it, as Satan said (O, My!). As I expect to remain in the employ of this railroad for a long period of time, I will give a description of the line, so that my readers may better understand my simple statements. The main line reached from Salamanca, N. Y., to Dayton, Ohio, the branch line from Leavittsburg to Cleveland, Ohio. Main line 1st division Salamanca to Meadville, Pa., 100 miles; 2nd Div., Meadville to Kent, O., 100 miles; 3rd division, Kent to Galion, O., 100 miles; 4th division, Galion to Dayton, O., 100 miles; Leavettsburg to Cleveland 50 miles; a total of about 450 miles, all six-foot gauge, connecting with the Erie at Salamanca, and at Dayton with the Cincinnati Hamilton and Dayton. The Erie laid a third rail into New York, so as to be able to handle broad gauge and standard gauge care in the same train, and the Cincinnati, Hamilton and Dayton did likewise, at Cincinnati connecting with what was then the Ohio and Mississippi R R for St. Louis, Mo. which line was also broadgauge, so that it was practically a continuous six-foot gauge, reaching from New York to St. Louis. (Explain about broad-gauge, narrow gauge, etc.) The Atlantic and Great Western was later known as the New York, P. and O. R.R. and is now owned by the Erie.

Broadway was located on the 4th Division, some 50 miles west of Galion. The Division Supt. and train Dispatcher's office was located at Galion, and Mr. T. A. Phillips was Supt. of the 3rd and 4th divisions. Fannie Hagerman and I were married in September, and began housekeeping in a nice little cottage which I had rented, and partly furnished. Of this furnishing I only remember that because of lack of proper chimneys. I bought about enough stovepipe to make a pipe organ for a church; and that I ordered six parlor chairs by calling up the agent at North Lewisburg one morning, and receiving the chairs that same afternoon, on the wayfreight. Just perfectly good black-walnut, cane-seated chairs with nicely carved backs, and costing me the enormous sum of two dollars each. And my wife said, "Oh, how nice! How could you get them so quickly?"

It was while I was Agent at Broadway that something happened that I believe has had no mention of in history. The through freight train coming east between Urbana and Lewisburg, was suddenly blown into a heap of rubbish, and a great pothole torn into the earth by a blast of <u>something.</u> What caused it? An explosion of nitroglycerine in one of the box cars, billed out of St. Louis, it was sent, as <u>salt pork!</u> As I remember it, one or two of the train crew were killed, and Jerry Wemple, Engineer, was blown for a rod or more out onto the ground, injuring his left arm badly. But he was not otherwise hurt. The cab of his engine was gone, the smoke stack was bent down over the front end of the boiler. I believe there were a few cars, next to the caboose, that escaped destruction. They said that the noise of the explosion was very terrific.

In those days the Pay Car came once each month, handing each employee not a check, but real money. Along towards Christmas Mr. Sargeant asked me to try to get him a wild turkey. I knew a man who was handy with his gun; and sure enough, I was able to send Mr. Sargeant a large and

beautiful gobbler. One day in the Spring of 1870, Charley Green, then running the wood train for the whole system, came to my station. I had been well acquainted with him when he ran the Wayfreight on the 3rd Division. He said there would soon be a change in Agents at West Salem, and he advised me to look into the matter - - to "Go after it." Which I did. Not many weeks after that I received notice that I was to be appointed Agent at West Salem. Of course we were pleased, as West Salem was a very desirable station in the middle of the 3rd Division, with an eating-house where all trains stopped for meals. Where an Operator and Clerk were allowed, and also a Night Operator. And best of all, it was near to our homes. My wife was delighted. Soon I received a letter from Mr. Phillip advising me of the day I would be relieved at Broadway, and asking me to report to him at his office at Galion. There I learned that I was to accompany him on No. 4 next morning. We arrived at West Salem about 4:30 A.M. On the way Mr. Phillips stated that the change was necessary because Moricino, the Agent, was drinking and probably was short in his ac-counts. I was instructed to go into the station and get the keys to the cash drawer and safe from the Night Operator, and to gather up and pocket every cent of money I could find; which I did. Think of that, brother. Agents of today, and compare such treatment with that practiced now. Now days the traveling Auditor first demands all the cash to count before commencing to check your accounts, and woe be, if you happen to overlook some of it, and you are short. Well, after break-fast, when the Agent appeared and was told that his time was up, he said "All right. I'm a good soldier." This man was a brother of the General Auditor in New York; and on this account had been more leniently dealt with than would have been the case ordinarily. However, when the accounts were checked and I produced the cash there was no great shortage - - less than a Hundred dollars, as I remember it.

We (my wife and I) found West Salem very different from Broad-way. Everything a-humming, all trains stopping for meals; and there were many passengers in those days. I was allowed a day operator who was also clerk - - helping with all station work. Then there was a man employed as pumper at the water tank, who helped us handle freight; also a night operator. We made quite a crew, and I will say we were all kept very busy. There were several industries on the tracks; an enormous warehouse, handling grain, wool and coal and almost everything. A flour mill shipping flour every day and something I have never met with since, was a loax mill where not only flax seed was produced (?) but many carloads of tow were shipped to eastern points. The tow was pressed and wired into bales weighing about 200 lbs. each. We had quite a heavy express business at this station and we often loaded as many as twenty or thirty kegs of butter, the kegs weighing about 100 lbs. each. One of my duties there was to watch the express cars while the messengers went to their meals. That was easy, and served as a time for relaxation, but you must remember that was long before the world was dominated by gang rule, as it is today. Much money was carried by express companies. I remember a messenger telling me to be careful, as he had $8500 in his little iron safe!

Not long after going to West Salem I received a package of money -- $1500 - - for a man named Geo. H. Williams; and I knew Geo. H. Williams. He called on receipt of my card notice, and signed for the package in the regulation manner, and that closed the incident, or at least I thought it did, until a day or two later; a stranger called, said his name was Geo. H. Williams, and that he was expecting a package of money. He was a cattle buyer with identification papers. You could have knock-ed me down with a hand spike. I confessed to him that I had received such a package and that I had delivered it to a man by that name living right in our town. The stranger showed no signs of excitement over the matter, and I said we will go and see Mr. Williams. He had an office up the street a little way - - a kind of insurance and real estate business. When we explained why we had come, he went to his safe and produced the package which he had opened, saying that when he had received it, he thought somebody might have sent it to him for some purpose, handed it to me and I delivered it to the proper Williams; and I believe he didn't even count the money to see if it was all there. I experienced such a glad feeling as I might have had if I had

suddenly inherited fifteen hundred dollars.

West Salem was quite a flourishing town with several churches including Methodist, Presbyterian, United Brethren, Dunkards, Soul Sleepers, and others. My wife and I were still young married people, and took active part in all the social activities of the place. I ran heavy to good clothes, even going so far as to don a silk hat sometimes, for which I have always been sorry. Bat the way I got rid of it was O.K. One day when helping train men unload freight from a box car, my high hat collided with the top of the car door every time I went in or out; so I made a present of it to Jerry Haggerty, one of the brakemen. And years afterwards I saw his brother-in-law wearing that hat on Sundays.

I feel I should have something to say about public schools in writing this history of passing events, but left to my own devices, I must confess that I cannot remember that West Salem had a school-house, but there must have been one; of course this was in the days before there was such a ting as the Consolidated School. Children, when they reached the proper age, just attended District School, and there were no grades (?) unless going to school all one could, might be called a grade from A B C to the Fifth Reader; from twice one is two to multiplication and division, and so on (!) Maybe some of these youngsters received a good knowledge of the elementals of education and that coupled with good horse sense would be much superior to book-learning on a rickety foundation, as is often the case. Natural acumen will have much to do with learning many things necessary to our future education, and it seems to me now that when a youth receives his graduation papers he thinks his education finished; but in reality that is where his real education begins.

One fall day a man called to see about shipping seventy Angora goats to New York City. Well, that was something new again. At that time I doubt if any other railroad agent in the United States had ever heard of Angora goats, much less been asked to loop up a tariff to fit the case. I finally wired the General Freight Agent for instructions, stating the particulars of the case: that the shipper wished to accompany the goats, and ride in the same car with them! Some conversation with the shipper revealed the fact that he had driven the goats from the western part of Ohio; that his name was Diehl, and that he had been Consul to Asia Minor during Abraham Lincoln's administration, and that he had brought a pair of the goats from Angora and these seventy were a part of the increase. In their native country they produced silky hair eight or ten inches in length, but these raised in this country have deteriorated and the silky hair is not so long, climatic conditions here being not so agreeable as in Asia. Since then, or since the day I met Mr. Diehl with his little flock of goats, I have seen many Angora goats, but they all lacked something that these seventy goats possessed. They were not so white, not so plump, their hair was not so long, tails not so long and round. In short, they had lost that Asiatic appearance and in some way become Americanized. I never heard anything as to how Mr. Diehl stood the 800 mile trip to New York in a stock car with his goats, but if he lived through it he must have been a strong man in more ways than one. When I was at West Salem the Atlantic and Great Western R.R. was in the hands of Jay Gould and Jim Fisk; and although everybody doubted their honesty in the handling of the property, they were much liked by employees of the company. Of course our wages were not high by any means, but as a rule we received fair treatment, and everybody was satisfied and contented. One day I received a letter in my rail-road mail, returning a twenty-dollar bill and requesting me to send good money to cover. The treasurer giving date of my remittance which carried the counterfeit. The idea of such a loss made me feel pretty sad; and my dinner was not relished that day. However, I began to look over my station cash book to see if the man who passed the bill to me could be located. In the first place, I found that my remittance to the treasurer had been made eight days ago, and among the names of consignees paying freight that day I found one that I distinctly remembered had given me a twenty dollar bill in payment for a five dollar freight charge; and therefore I had handed him fifteen dollars change. This man was

handling a small foundry and blacksmith shop, and was considered a good man. I walked around to his shop and found him pumping at his bellows, blowing up the fire to heat an iron rod. I said, "Good afternoon, Mr. Peters. On a certain day you gave me a twenty dollar bill in paying freight. It has been returned to me as counterfeit." I saw at once that he was guilty, because he was not shocked or surprised, but gave another pump or two at his bellows, look-ing downcast. Then he took the bill from my hand, saying "Yes sir, that is the bill I gave you, and I knew it was counterfeit. Don't say anything to anybody, and I will bring you good money this evening." I was relieved and glad. Several months after that as I was passing the Hotel some of our town men were discussing something as they stood in a little bunch on the platform; and one of them said as I approached, "Here's a man that ought to be a good judge of money. Wouldn't you take this to be a good bill?", producing that same twenty dollar bill. I looked it over and said, "No, I would not take that bill. It is counterfeit." Later in life I became quite an expert in detecting bad money, partly by sight and more by the touch of paper or coin. This was in the period after the Civil War, when most of our currency was paper notes, ranging three cents to one thousand dollars. There was a three cent, a five cent, a ten cent, a fifteen cent, a twenty and a twenty-five cent, and a fifty cent note, which facilitated the making of change for amounts up to a dollar. But I remember that these small notes, being handled so much, soon became ragged and worn, to such an extent as to be a nuisance. I always had a pocket in my cash drawer where I kept the most worn and ragged of these small notes; and when selling tickets, the man who hunted through his billfold for his most worn five or ten dollar bill, got his change from that pocket and what a face he would make. But to give and take's the gospel, and he had to call it fair.

West Salem had a Bank owned by citizens of the county and village; and a man named John Helman was cashier. Captain John Helman was one of the best liked officers in his regiment during his Civil War army life; and his family life was apparently happy and without blemish. But one night he vanished-disappeared-- as did also all the funds of the bank. And so far as I know, has never been seen or heard of since. Such a disappearance as that could hardly happen in this day and age of the world; but then, if a criminal was able to escape into Canada he was reasonably safe, and even safer in Mexico on his way to South America or South Sea Islands.

We bought us a nice little home; a house and an acre of land, situated at the outer end of a street which ended at a grove of timber, so we could enjoy something of country-as well as town-life. I managed to get away from my station work about four o'clock each evening, and took pleasure in cultivating a garden in which we raised many vegetables, and some flowers. I remember that home with mingled feelings of pleasure, sorrow, hope, despair, remorse, love and romance. While living there, Fanny's mother came to visit us for a few days, her first visit since our marriage. Next morning at breakfast I noticed that the biscuits were not quite as good as usual, and thought to apologize to Mother-in-law about it. I was somewhat puzzled by the look she gave Fanny, but not a word was said by either one; later I learned that Mother had made the biscuits. Well, I reckon she considered it a compliment to her daughter, and not at all detrimental to her, she being in a strange place using tools she had never used before. She was a Saint, and I am sure she will have place in the first resurrection. I don't believe that any member of her family, or indeed anybody else ever saw her show a shade of anger or irritability, no matter what the provocation. At her home both she and her husband had always been in the habit of making friends with the Mammon of Righteousness (?) by keeping a kind of soldier's home or stopping place for Methodist Preachers on their various circuit-ridings and meetings in those days. I have seen a hungry preacher trotting up the path there, rubbing his palms together, and saying, "Just a bite, sister, just a bite." I wondered how he would act if she had taken him at his word, and prepared and offered him a single bite. Once I saw one trying to sell her a bottle of patent medicine for cash, after enjoying her free hospitality from Saturday till Monday morning. She simply said that she had no use for medicine. I am inclined to believe that this circumstance - being brought up so well acquainted with the small faults and unlovely traits of ministers - (while off duty) and seeing

only that, and perhaps overlooking other good qualities, produced an effect on their children which caused them to shy at sight of ministers of religion. One day little Charlie was cornered by one of these traveling preachers who said to him, "Ah, you have a bright eye, Sonny. How old are you?" Charlie answered, "Twelve years old." "And do you enjoy religion?" A very quick, compact "No!" which sounded as if he hadn't any of his own and didn't enjoy what he saw in others, was Charlie's answer.

When we lived at West Salem the Livery Barn was at its best. Anybody who wished to go somewhere, was likely to get a horse or a team of horses at the Livery. People had never dreamed of the days we live in now, when half the inhabitants of the earth live in cars! But I believe we had more pleasure, and saw more in a fifteen mile trip in a high-wheeled top buggy, drawn by two beautiful horses, than people do now, going two or three thousand miles.

After I had been at West Salem over two years, Mr. Phillips asked me if I would like to learn to be a Train Dispatcher and go into his office at Galion, where all trains on the 3rd and 4th Divisions were handled. Of course I said "Yes", as that would certainly be a step upwards in the scale on a railroad; and he said he would arrange it when there was a vacancy. At that time an Operator named Charlie Kinniman was with me at West Salem, and overheard some of the talk between Supt. Phillips and myself. Charlie was a smart young man, and good worker as a rule, but just then he was terribly and hopelessly in love with a nice girl who lived not far from the depot; and her home had to be passed every time we went up town. This caused Charlie to do much brushing of his boots and his shiny pants before going forth. Soon Mr. Phillips was looking for a man to send to Urbana as telegrapher and way-biller, and I suggested Charlie. No, he wanted a married man for that job. I said, "That's just what Charlie is going to be very soon." So he got the job, and I got a new operator who wasn't love-sick; but that was not the end of my troubles, for one evening the Chief Dispatcher asked for me on the wire. As it was after I had gone home, nothing more came of it; but the next day Charlie Kinnaman was transferred to the Superintendent's office — the job which I had expected to have. I was sorely disappointed and angry, and I was young. I made a hasty and probably a bad decision that day, viz, to go away. Go West. "Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate, all but the page prescribed, their present state." However, it would be necessary for me to stay at this station until I could arrange many affairs, like the disposal of our little home, and other matters. When I at length sent in my resignation, Mr. Phillips came and talked nice to me, trying to persuade me to stay with him, promising all manner of good things, and asking me why I wanted to go West. To all of which I made replies evasive or not giving my real reason for wanting to go. And so it transpired, that in the fall of 1872 I was on my way West, going down through Cincinnati, and thence over the Ohio & Mississippi RY. to St. Louis, Mo., where I visited some railroad headquarters but was not pleased with any thing I was offered; and so I traveled on to Kansas City, where I visited the General Headquarters of the Kansas Pacific Railroad, now a part of the Union Pacific; and when 1 had answered some questions as to past experience as agent and operator, I was taken on and sent to Brookville, Kansas, about two hundred miles west of Kansas City. This was a division Superintendent's and Dispatcher's office with several operators and dispatchers on hand; part of my work was keeping the train sheet, or chart locating trains, which was not easy, as it was new work to me; and being entirely unacquainted with the names of stations my condition very embarrassing; but I tried to keep my head, and do the best I could; and withal I think I made a good impression on the boys. This was late in the fall of 1872, and when not on duty I spent much of my time out west of the town listening to the voices of the insect world, which seemed to be so in harmony with my homesick soul. If there is any place where there are more cicadas and other singing bugs and insects than Western Kansas, I have not been there.

On my return to the office, after one of such communes (?) with the remnants of Paradise, I found a note on my desk to the effect that I was to be sent to Rossville, Kans., as Night Operator for a

while. I did not relish the idea of working nights, but otherwise was glad of the change. As Rossville was only 16 miles west of Topeka and that seemed nearer to the

I now began thinking of the possibility of my budget running low before I should be permanently and solidly placed at some good-paying situation. One of the despatchers had taken quite a fancy to my Hansard Case gold watch, even asking me what I would take for it. I had bought this watch from a friend, at a discount. It cost me forty-five dollars, but really was worth more. I explained this to him, say-ing he could have it for the forty-five dollars. So my budget was in-creased. Then I owed for my board at the Hotel. In those days one could sell ones time. I gave the landlord an order for what I had earned at Brookville - - some $35. He shied at paying me the difference, as the RR Company was beginning to object to paying orders; but when I told him he could draw the whole amount and could send me the difference after pay day, he was pleased. So I was getting away without paying out my money, and with $45 to the good.

Soon I was on my way towards Rossville, where I arrived at 2:00 A.M., the only passenger getting off there. The station was all dark. The only sign of life was that of a man carrying a kerosene lantern, who asked, was I looking for a Hotel. “Come with me,” he said, when I told him “Yes”. And he led the way to what was really a boarding-house, the only place in the town where travelers could put up. And a strange place I found it to be. When nearing the location the place we heard terrible outcries, as of persons in great distress. I asked, “What's the matter in there?” to which my conductor replied, “Oh, we have typhoid fever at our house, and one or two are delirious. At such a time of night, and such in surroundings, I could almost feel my hair getting ready to stand up; but there seemed no remedy in sight, so I climbed the few steps with my escort, and entered a house of what appeared more like death than a house of rest and peace. The sleeping rooms were all on the same floor, surrounding an open space in the center, lighted by some kind of an opening in the roof; but at this hour by kerosene lamps. After being shown to my room I had time to recall all the stories I had read of such places as the Bender Death Farm in Indiana. Of beds that dropped victims to caverns, and all kinds of robbing - - nightmares. So I made careful search of everything and saw that my gun was in good working order, and my money was in my belt. I don't believe I took the risk of going to sleep that night, and the babbling of the delirious made it easier to keep awake. Oh, how welcome the daylight when it came! Soon there was much clatter-ing of tin wash basins on an outside porch where men were washing up, ready for the breakfast which was being prepared. This was Sunday morning and daylight showed a fair sized town. After paying for my night's lodging and breakfast, I went to the station where I found the Agent. He was friendly, and in our conversation he told me that were undergoing a scourge of typhoid fever, and that there were many deaths. Now if there was anything I was afraid of, it was that fever, for just before my entering railroad work, I had been brought so near deaths door that I could see without my eyes, and hear without ears, all that was going on around me; and I have always believed that my life was spared because of the prayers of God's people. And now here I was face to face with that terror again. I certainly felt like fleeing from it. Remembering that I had been visiting relatives in Iowa when I contracted the fever before taking it home with me to Ohio, only made me more uneasy now. Of course we know now that such a one is immune, and in little danger when exposed; but people did not know that then. If I had known it, I might have stayed in Rossville, Kansas, and been of some use and help to people in their sufferings, instead of doing as I did. I strolled around the town until noon. Then I went to the station and called the Chief Dispatcher at Brookville, told him I could not stay at Rossville. He asked why, and I told him I was not ready to dis; that everybody there had typhoid, and that it didn't look good to me and I simply could not think of staying there. He ex-pressed regret, but said he had nothing else to offer just at that time. So I was left to my lonely reflections on that bluest of all Sundays. I tried to sleep, but my hypochondriac mood was not conducive to rest. Along about 3:00 P.M. a light extra, an engine and caboose headed east stopped at the water-tank. I grabbed my “grip” and over-coat, walked down the platform and boarded the caboose. The

conductor was out talking to the engineer, and we were moving before he came in. He eyed me and said, “Where you going?” I said, “Just down to Topeka.” He said, “Fifty cents.” In Topeka I went to a homelike small Hotel where I relaxed and thought out what course to pursue next. I quickly decided to try the Union Pacific.

Next day found me on my way to Omaha. After a short examination there, I was sent to Laramie, to be made use of where needed. Soon I was sent to Sherman, Wyoming, to work nights for a short time. At that time Sherman was the highest railroad station in the world, being some 8000 ft. above sea level. It was some comfort to be located at such an exalted station, at least; but alas, I soon found that one night was to be the limit of my time at Sherman; that I was needed at Big Springs, Nebraska, as Relief Agent for an indefinite period, as Mr. Meagher, the Agent there, had suddenly been called away. Well, this news of change came to me early in the morning, giving me nearly all day to observe objects of interest at Sherman. While I was at breakfast at a Wild West restaurant a man rushed in saying he had just seen a mountain lion entering the mouth of a small canyon, about thirty rods down the railroad tracks. He snatched up his repeating rifle, as did two or three others, and away they went; but they were not gone long, not having any luck finding Mr. Panther.

Across the track, and a few rods west of the Depot, was an immense rock, nearly or altogether the size of a city black, but much higher than most city buildings. As far as I could make out, this formation across from an almost level surrounding foundation of ground, or rock. There were all kinds of pockets or cavities on square sides; and I noticed that on one side, or face, at least, there were ladders and short stretches of stairways which had been erected probably by the railroad, so that tourist traveling by the U P could better inspect this wonder of nature, the Grandfather of all rocks.

I arrived at Big Springs, Nebr., at about ten o'clock at night. There I met a young man who introduced himself as Gallagher. He in-formed me that the Agent had left on the same train that brought me there; that he, Gallagher, was left in charge, with orders to turn over to me on my arrival, which he now did. Among other things I learned that as Agent I would be required to meet two night trains, mostly because of handling the U. S. Mail. And then I was shown a bunk and some blankets where I was to sleep. And an alarm clock which was to rouse me in time for trains. Reader, you may well imagine me as sorry I ever left my soft job at West Salem, Ohio, for this wandering nightmare of a life; but cheer up, the worst is yet to come! (And in all this time, since he left West Salem, where is poor Fanny? Not one word about her, so far) Big Springs on the Union Pacific, was a station in Western Nebraska located seventy miles west of North Platte, and situated in a country that was almost entirely given over of cattle ranges. Hare I first saw cowboys, corrals, cow ponies and all the other equipment as was necessary on cattle ranges. The young man Gallagher was all round head man and foreman for Mr. Meagher who in addition to being Station Agent was also engaged in cattle raising.

I found my station work easy enough, and was soon on very friendly terms with Gallagher, whose whole life, up to this time, had been spent on the frontier; and besides being everything else around there, he did the cooking for himself and me. Our first breakfast together was tender buffalo steak fried in a big, old-fashioned skillet, with enough bacon to give it unusual flavor, neither too vivid nor too tame. The meat of buffalo is tender as compared with that of cornfed beef; and so also is the meat of wild Texas cattle. A steak cut from either, and properly cooked is almost as tender as liver. Gallagher was also a hunter, and kept everybody well supplied with game. We had a fine brass telescope at the station, about three or four feet long when fully extended; and through this Gallagher would search the surrounding country before riding away. Looking through this glass, down over the Platte valley, I have seen (in one line of vision) buffalo, two or more kinds of deer, herds of antelope, and perhaps other wild animals. One day, soon after my arrival, Gallagher came in from his hunt with a hind quarter of buffalo balanced

across his pony by two antelopes which hung down on both side of the saddle, being attached to the buffalo meat by rawhide thongs. Gallagher said he could have gotten more if he had been using his own gun, but his own gun had just been sent to the shop for repairs. I was invited, yes, urged to accompany him on some of these hunting trips, but I declined. He offered to pick for me such a pony as would be safe and true; well trained for the buffalo hunt, so that when (as sometimes happened) a wounded bull would charge or pursue the hunter, the pony would turn quickly and run away to a safe distance. Right there, I told Gallagher, "Is where I would be very apt to fall off and be at the mercy of the mad bull;" and I quoted the old saying that "I'd rather be a live coward than a dead hero."

One day my friend stood fondling his favorite pony and feeding it a left-over biscuit or two, an Indian came along and stopped, making it clear that he would like a biscuit. Gallagher said, "Not good for Indian." The Indian said, "Good for horse, good for Indian." But not a morsel did Gallagher give him. He said to me, "Just beggars; if you give them anything they will come back the next day for more. I asked him, "Aren't you ever afraid of Indians?" At that question he tilted back his head and laughed. The idea of anybody being afraid of Indians was more than he could understand.

The place bearing the name of Big Springs was so called because there were some big springs not far away. The R.R. Station and other buildings, and several small sod houses made up the "town". I hardly know who lived in those sod houses - perhaps hunters and trappers, and maybe two or three railroad laborers. These sod houses were not large. The one or two that I visited were entirely of sod, rounded up like an old-fashioned bake oven. The door frames and doors were of wood, with transoms above, filled with glass bottles to give light. But these houses were quite warm and comfortable. One Sunday some of us went to the springs and held a kind of stag picnic. The dinner consisted of game birds and soup made of beavertails. And I want to tell the world that the tail of a beaver, when made into soup, is a delicacy that would have caused Old Man Epicurus himself to sit up and ask for another helping.

I had not been long at Big Springs until I perceived that there was a very different attitude between the management and the employees of the Union Pacific from that which had existed when I had worked there in 1869. Since then the pendulum had swung from kind and humane, to a rigid and exacting treatment, with great reduction in help and some reduction in salaries. I could easily see that much of this was necessary, and only good business; but I had a sort of intuitive feeling that something was not right; and that I had better not accept service with a corporation whose word was law and whose law might be anything they chose to make it.

Many of its stations were situated in uninhabited areas, and there was no limit to the time one could be required to work in those days as for instance what I was compelled to do here at Big Springs; meet two night trains in addition to being on duty all day. Now when I had been here only a day or two, I wrote & letter to J. C. Boyden, General Passenger and Freight Agent of the St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad at St. Paul, making application for a station on his line, and giving him some idea of past experience in Ohio. I was led to make this application because some friends of mine had moved from Ohio to Worthington, Minn., a station on the St. Paul and Sioux City a year or two before, and had urged me to come there. Soon I received a letter from Mr. Boyden saying that if I would come to St. Paul he thought he could give me a station, probably Worthington. I must be there by Nov. 25th. It was now Nov. 12th, so I immediately asked to be relieved. I knew very well that such a request at such a time when I was only being tried out as a relief agent, would meet with apposition, and make trouble for me. But there was the strong urge and fierce desire to obtain this — the very position which I had so often thought about but never hoped to gain. So I just resolved to make a determined effort to get away, and so gave notice that I must go by Nov. 24th, even after I had been told that they could not release me at that time. It is not easy for me to write unpleasant things which occurred in my wanderings; and especially these

passages that are not to my credit; but how can I write a true narrative of life and omit any part, whether pleasant or unpleasant? When the day came that I wanted to start, no word had been received. I talked the matter over with Gallagher and he advised me to stay: but said he could handle the station except the wire work, and he could do a little at that if transmitted very slowly. I sold myself a ticket to Omaha, paying Gallagher, packed my grip and boarded the eastbound train. The weather was now growing cold; so I took the seat next to the stove. At exactly midnight the train reached North Platte. A man came in through the door which I faced, paused by me and said, "I guess you are the man I want. I am the sheriff." I began some protest, but he said, "Come along with me." And I went. Waiting on the platform was the Division Supt. who gave the sheriff orders to hold me until the station accounts at Big Springs could be examined. I pleaded to be allowed to go back with them, not because anything might be found wrong with my accounts, but the fact that I was not properly installed by a Traveling Auditor at Big Springs led me to fear that I would be charged with errors or crooked matters — the work of men that were there before me. I had no misgivings about Gallagher. I was sure of his friendship; and later on I had good proof that I was right. The Supt. said, "We don't need your help. The Sheriff will take care of you for the present." On my entering the jail I was relieved of the contents of every pocket in my clothing — money, gun, knife and unused portion of my ticket to Omaha, and other articles. By the dim light of a candle I made out that I was not alone; that the jail contained one other prisoner, whose acquaintance I was not overly anxious to cultivate. I do not recall that there was even a cot to lie on; but there were a few blankets. I spread one on the floor and laid me down, hut not to sleep, for I was never wider awake in my life than I was the remainder of that night. In the morning the jailer's wife brought a pan of good food and a tin of coffee which she pushed through the wicket to me, my fellow prisoner having been called out to help do chores around the place. I was much troubled as to what might be the outcome of all this. Here I was, in jail with a horse thief, and the future dark. Just then I received a visit from one of the operators at the depot, bringing me a good cigar and saying cheerful things; and assuring me of the sympathy of all the boys. And did I wish to telegraph my friends? I wrote out a message addressed to Mr. J. C. Boyden, St. Paul, saying, "Am coming but unavoidably delayed here for a day or two. Please hold the position." Later the sheriff's wife came again and invited me to dinner! saying it would be all right for me to remain outside in the yard, that her husband had told her that as soon as he saw me he knew I was not guilty of anything very bad. So my first day in jail was made easier by kind deeds of strangers. Next day an editor came to interview me, and he had a pleasant talk and my story appeared in his paper that day. The editor only commenting, that aside from his committing an indiscretion in leaving his station without permission, even though no attention to his requests had been given, it would probably be found that Mr. Fluke was innocent of any wrong-doing. During the afternoon of my second day in jail, the sheriff received a telegram to release me; that examination of accounts at Big Springs showed everything O.K. Now I was supremely happy as I had been low down miserable before. My property was all restored to me, and soon I would be on my way to Sioux City and Worthington.

Snow was falling during my night journey to Omaha and also as I boarded the morning train for Sioux City; but I was happy, like one who has lost a heavy load. What a feeling of relief! To be sure, up to this period in my wanderings, there was nothing visible (?) to feel proud about. No success, not one cent of pay so far. Although I had earned something like seventy-five dollars on the U.P., there might be doubt as to when it would be paid, if ever. Arriving at Sioux City and locating the St. P. & S.C. Depot, I was pleased by the cheerful, friendly attitude of everybody, and the lively activities going on there. I introduced myself to the Agent with the remark that I might be the Agent for Worthington, provided that I was not arriving too late, and he immediately wired Mr. Boyden at St. Paul, advising him of my arrival, ready for duty. Soon I received a telegram saying that an Agent for Worthington must be a first class railroad man in every respect — a good sound operator, temperate in habits, etc. "Can you fill the bill?", signed J. C. Boyden.

To which I made answer, "Yes sir, I can fill the bill", sending this message myself. The Operator in General Office who received it said, "Glad to meet you, Mr. Fluke." What a friendly lot of railroad men, thought I!

The Way freight was making up and nearly ready to start North at this time, so I decided to go to Worthington on this, as there would be no passenger train until late in the night. It was still snowing hard and growing colder. To ride ninety miles on a slow-going wayfreight train, even in good weather, was considered a hard trip; but I was glad to be on my way to something that seemed to me as if it might be a good, permanent place on a fine railroad. The snow continued to fall, and soon the railroad cuts (fast filling up) began to bother the progress of the train to such an extent that the conductor expressed fears that we might be snowbound; and so notified Supt. Lincoln at St. Paul. At Sheldon we received telegraphic orders to lay up for the night. Next morning the road was cleared by ordinary snowplows and men with shovels. The night passenger trains had been held up for this clearing of the tracks, and our train arrived at Worthington some time before noon on Thanksgiving Day. A glance at the depot, inside and outside, showed nothing displeasing. Rather pleasantly located between two lakes, viz. Wall Lake and Okahena, Worthington at that time was a town of eight hundred population. A Colony town, sponsored by a body of cultured men and women from Cleveland and other Ohio points. Professor Humiston of Cleveland was President and manager of this Colony. I soon met people I knew, and was invited to the Thanksgiving dinner being held in the Town Hall with <u>everybody</u> invited. Turkey and cranberry sauce and all kinds of goodies, and above all, such friendliness as seemed to exist there, was enough to warm the cockles of a frozen heart. My first sight of Worthington as it was that day-buried in snow, and with temperature thirty below zero, was not so good; but turning my attention to the situation of affairs at the depot, I found it was being handled by a Mr. Alien and his son George, who were only temporarily in charge, the Agent having been suddenly called away because of sickness in his family. This was in the days before railroads had become top-heavy with overlords, and simplicity was the rule. All the blanks were easy to understand, and I was delighted with things in general. How different all this when compared to the past few weeks of wandering. I liked the town. Even the farmers (many of whom came to the station) appeared to be wide awake, well informed men — maybe more book farmers than real dirt farmers, as was later proven, because most of them finally gave up and left the country, saying that the land was sour and worthless. This land has since sold for three or four hundred dollars per acre.

The St. Paul & Sioux City Railroad had favored this colony town by building a hotel there, a very fair and comfortable house, which was rented to a man named Dan Shell, a member of the Colony. At the Station I was allowed a clerk and a man to keep up fires and do the handling of freight — a helper wherever needed. Then the company had a large wood yard and sold stove wood to the settlers. I had one man who took care of this business, bringing in the accounts and cash every day. The company had also a large coal house filled with coal, which was for their own use wherever needed.

The Roadmaster had his office in the Depot. His name was John MacMillan, and he had charge of all section men on his Division. Of course the snow coming so early made much work for MacMillan and his army of men. Snow continued to fall until the handling of trains became almost impossible east of Worthington. And early in December the passenger train from Sioux City destined for St. Paul was snow-bound at Worthington, with over a hundred passengers aboard. The weather was extremely cold; and some were not warmly dressed. I remember one elderly man from Santa Barbara, Calif., going to New York, carrying an armful of some kind of plants. He was without an overcoat, and when not by a hot stove, shivered so his teeth chattered. Besides the people, there was unloaded from the baggage and express cars many trunks and other baggage, forty or fifty cases of beer, boxes of oranges, lemons, bread and oh, everything. With all this horde of people after me to know what the railroad was going to do about it, it surely was

bedlam all in one lump. I wired the situation to headquarters, and asked for instructions; received reply that the company was not responsible in such a case, but that I should see that the passengers were comfortable and did not suffer. No advice was offered as to how this was to be accomplished. When the passengers realized that they were really snowbound, and there was no prospect of moving in sight, things ironed out to some extent. Some passengers went to our hotel, others to less pretentious hotels and boarding houses. Of course most of the people were well-to-do; but there was one little family — husband, wife and two children — bound for Howard Lake, Minn., on their way from the west coast where they had fought a losing battle with adversity, and aside from their tickets were about destitute. I gave them the keys to the ladies' waiting room and furnished some seat cushions from coaches. I had a nearby boardinghouse bring them food. Next day the man went out as a snow-shoveler, the woman and her two children remained in that waiting room forty days and forty nights. The men's waiting room and every foot of space about the depot which could be utilized, was made into sleeping quarters for snow-shovellers, all such spaces being first filled with hay. I wonder if this wasn't the place where originated the smart saying, “to hit the hay”. For as these tired, frozen snow-shovelers were brought in each evening after dark, they simply fell into the hay.

On going to my hotel on this first night of increased inhabitants, I found little more than standing room in the lobby. Several drummers were furnishing entertainment. One of their number named Sprague was playing the organ, while the others danced and played Circus-jumping over broomsticks and cavorting around in various ways; and these performances were kept up till far into the night; and there was much gayety for several nights, or until the storm had subsided and the sun once more shone. One sad case that put an end to the gay activities of these traveling men was the sudden sickness of a young man named-traveling for a boot and shoe house in St. Paul. Dr. Kraft was called and pronounced it spinal meningitis. He was taken sick one evening and died the next day. His companions hired a sled and had the remains taken to Mankato, at which point the road was open to St. Paul. Several of his friends accompanied his remains; and gradually a part of our passengers found ways of transportation out of the snowbound area, and the weather was generally fair with enough sunshine to melt the snow on the tracks men were trying to clear, so that it was more like ice than snow, and required to be cut or chiseled before it could be removed. Sometimes a snowplow engine making a swift dive at a snowbank would run right up on this hard ice, and was lucky if in backing out it came down on the rails again although the usual duties of the Station were nil, I was kept very busy answering all kinds of questions, and hearing sad tales. I sold all the perishable express goods unloaded there, except the forty cases of beer, as Worthington was a bone dry town. So most of the beer was frozen or drunk (?) by thirsty people. I remember that I received words of praise from the Express Company for the way in which I handled the sale of their goods in this case.

The weather was shifty and changeable, and the work of clearing the tracks progressed slowly until January 6th. When it appeared certain that road could be opened by the seventh. So after the crews of work-men had gone out, we assembled the old, original passenger train which had rested quiet so long, and what passengers were left, including the old man from Santa Barbara and my waiting-room woman and her two children and many others, and there was much gaiety and handshaking. The sun was shining, and it was almost a perfect day for the opening of the road, everybody feeling cheerful and happy. About nine-thirty I heard the operator at East Orange report a terrible blizzard raging there. East Orange was a station over in Iowa, forty-five miles west of Worthington. And just forty-five minutes later the storm was upon us!

The train which we had started out so full of hope and cheer only a short time before, had seen the signs, and now came backing into the long siding behind the Depot; and had they been five minutes later, they could not have accomplished it, as the air was so full of snow by now, that one could see no more than on the darkest night, and that condition lasted for fifty-five hours, with

not one period of let up. The telegraph wires and poles were a heap of ruins. The air seemed to be charged with electricity, so that when one's fingers touched metal there was a spark and a snap. Thermometers did not register very severe cold, but men's noses and ears turned white quickly when exposed to the storm.

An Engine Crew that had been putting the engine in out little round house came by and stopped in to thaw out noses and ears already badly frozen, while the storm outside roared end the wind whistled through every crevice. We three, George Allen the Clerk, myself and the Preston man who had charge of wood sales, remained in the Station all day. Preston who was a married man with a wife and two children, lived in a small house across the lake from the Station, and in plain sight in ordinary weather; but now he could not venture to try finding his way there — not withstanding his anxiety and fear for their safety. Such a wind might easily wreck or carry away their flimsy buildings. At the end of fifty-five hours, when the air began to clear by spells, he rushed home where he found not only his family all safe, but a team of horses and two men in the lean-to kitchen! They had found shelter in his little house, and had been saved from sure death thereby. In the evening of the first day of the storm, the fireman and a brakeman came down from out hotel and rescued the old gentleman from Santa Barbara who had been left in the coaches since morning. Soon after that I found my way to the hotel with several tumbles, and with eyes and ears covered with ice, but I was young and husky, and thought it quite lark. There was only standing room in the lobby. An Old Soldier's who lived on a claim some miles out, said he could find his way home. Buttoned up his Soldier's Coat, and started out against the protests of all. When the storm was over, he was found only about eighty rods out of town, partly frozen but still, alive. Later it was found that his feet and ankles only, were frozen, but the Doctor had to perform an amputation. And the man lived to tell the story.

A family of four-parents and two children, lived across Lake Okabena. The man was out on the lake fishing through a hole in the ice when the storm came on, and he was unable to locate his home. His wife, after waiting many hours in terrible fear and anxiety, as we may be sure, put the children to bed, donned some of her husband's clothes, including his high hunting boots, and started out to try to find him. Her body was found at Round Lake, just across the Minnesota line in Iowa. When the storm melted off in March, her husband (who had found safe shelter at a homesteader's shack which he happened to stumble into) came to his home and found his two motherless children still in bed, and all safe; but where was Mamma? Not so wonderful that she acted as she did. No such deadly storm had ever been, or ever will be again, perhaps.

A pretty well-to-do farmer living just west of Washington, was caught away from his home, and failed to appear when the storm was over. Of course it was feared that he had perished. A neighbor went there to help the family, and while working at the barn, clearing snow away and making the cattle and horses comfortable, who should appear but the missing man. The neighbor said, “Why John, we thought you were lost! Frozen dead!” The man replied, “I am. You will find my body a mile and a half south west of Hersey.” And then he vanished. When the snow melted in March, his body was found at place he stated. Hershy (?) was the next station east of Worthington, a distance of seven miles.

When the storm was over, the Governor sent out Colonel Evans of Garden City accompanied by two or three other good men, to make careful examination of the extent of damage and loss of life caused by this storm. They made Worthington their headquarters, and with an excellent team and sled they made a house to house visit among the settlers for miles around. Their sled was well supplied with warm furs and buffalo coats and robes. In those days a good buffalo coat could be purchased for ten or twelve do dollars, and a large robe for five to eight dollars. Any one of such articles today would cost a hundred dollars.

I am sorry to acknowledge that I have forgotten the names of many of the persons who were

interesting figures in this fiercest of all storms. A young man driving what we called the Stage between Worthington and Luverne, Minn. (Luverne being thirty miles west of Worthington) left W. At about (9:00 a.m. on the day the storm struck us, and finding it impossible to tell anything as to directions, quickly decided to stop and make an effort to find his way to some kind of safety. He unhitched his team removed their bridles, leaving their halters on, with which he tied the horses to the sledbox-an ordinary wagon box. Then this young man struck out, going with the wind as that would be much easier than against a storm like that; and he was lucky, and ran smack into a settler's shack, where he remained until the storm ceased. As soon as possible after the storm had abated, he located his team, finding both horses alive and still tied to the remains of the sled-box. I say remains of, for the horses in their agony, had chewed away much of the box, and this together with their pawing the earth under them, had doubtless saved them from freezing to death. The young man was greeted by loud and glad shinnies of the poor creatures when they saw him coming. This young man escaped injury with the exception of a frozen strip clear around his neck which his old-fashioned "Comforter" had failed to cover properly.

Colonel Evans reports showed that most of the settlers came through in safety, even though many of them were without fuel of any kind except hay to bum (Tell how this was done — by twisting, etc.) but most all had stoves made for burning hay, and all had good supplies of it; and as they were fond of saying that they could twist enough hay in a morning to last all day in less time than they could chop wood, if they had it, they did not worry about the matter of fuel. Town people were more dependent on wood or coal, and I noticed that coal was being taken from the Company coal house; so I made reports of such doings to the Superintendent; but received no answer, or instructions. So I presumed the Company expected this at a time of great emergency like that, when the Railroad was closed up because of snow and cold.

Ex-Governor Stephen Miller, who was in charge of the Company's land sales, with offices in the Depot, was good company. A man of great experiences, and a lonely man. I have the impression that he was never married. He was the opposite of garrulous in speech, but when he talked, it was always interesting. He was very fond of a quiet game of cards, and as we each had time on our hands in this show-bound condition, he induced me to join him in such pass time games. He was a ready teacher; and I soon learned more about cards than I had ever known before; this not withstanding the fact that I had been brought up to think that where there was card-playing going on, the Devil was not far away; and I still think there is a lot of truth in that belief. And now I do not know one card from another!

At the time of the Indian outbreak here in Minnesota, in 1862, Governor Miller was a Colonel under General Sibley. Something like one-thousand white settlers were killed, and many more Indians lost their lives in this uprising. It reached its climax and ending with the hanging of 38 Indians one scaffold at Mankato. Colonel Miller had charge of this terrible hanging, and his hand moved the lever that dropped the 38 traps at the same instant — causing the death of 38 Indians. So far as I can remember, he never spoke of this matter during our acquaintance. Ex-governor Miller passed away at Worthington about the year 1878.

That winter of 1872-3 was one long to be remembered because of its severity and long duration. I should have mentioned the fact that in his reports to the Governor, Col. Evans showed that many animals-hogs, sheep and calves, perished of cold and hunger. I doubt if the outside world ever heard much of the calamities this storm caused to this early settlement of southern Minnesota and Northern Iowa. Newspapers said little because of the bad effect it would have had on future settlement of that locality. I know that many people left there in the spring of 1873.

Living at our hotel was not so perfect that long winter. Men had to double up and sleep two in a bed, because of the over-crowded hotels and boarding houses. I was packed away with Conductor Tom Berkheimer, a philosopher, and as full of funny stories as Abe Lincoln. Our room was cold,

and beds were rather scantily furnished with proper mattresses and comforters. It was a common sight to see some railroad man coming down stairs in the morning in his night-shirt, carrying his clothes to be put in the lobby by the hot stove. A funny thing happened here one night. A man in one of the upper, cold rooms, asked to be furnished a warmer one. He was told that the rooms were all alike. To this he replied that he could not sleep where he was, and could he come down and sit by the office stove? This was of course allowed. About two o'clock, as he sat dozing, a man came in from a thirty mile drive and was standing near the big stove, thawing the ice off his mustache and whiskers, when our man came out of his doze and peering around the stove, he caught sight of the ice-clad man "Great guns", he exclaimed, "What room did you have?"

Late in the month of March, when the mild south winds began to blow, and the sun shone brightly again, snow melting and water trickling in gutters, Worthington found itself almost completely stripped of food. Stores had sold nearly every sack of flour, nearly all their canned goods. In short, their shelves were empty of anything eatable when the first train dug its way in from Sioux City. Lo and Behold, they bro't us only one car and that was loaded with barrows and other farm implements! I wired Supt. Lincoln saying we had received the car of barrows, and were rapidly consuming them; to please hurry some-thing more palatable. However, the tracks were soon clear, and trains running, and now we were receiving cars of merchandise, the waybills showing dates as far back as Nov., 1872, to the present — March 1873. By this state of affairs, any railroad agent can understand, that although most people's troubles might have been over, mine had just begun. An onrush of new business, mixed up with several months delay-ed business-short, over, and damaged — make all work and no play for an Agent. One may think his lot in life is hard, but a few glances around at the condition of his fellow travelers, and his own lot looks quite endurable; in short, the lot we have drawn is always good for us, no matter what it may be. A great General, I do not remember which one it was, used to say, when in a tight place and everything going against him, "All this will pass". And so, after while this terribly hard, cold winter passed.

Sometime in early March, before the railroad was cleared of snow-drifts Professor Humiston decided to make a trip to St. Paul, and thence East to Cleveland, Ohio. The earth was still deeply covered with snow, and the first ninety miles would have to be made by team and bob-sleds. Now I had been wishing for a chance to go to Mankato, and here was my chance. So I handed the keys to George Allen, the Clerk, and joined the party, consisting of a driver, an inventor with a model snow-plow which he was intending to demonstrate to railroad officials in St. Paul, Prof. Humiston and myself. The weather was fine-that is to say fine, clear winter. We made good time the first day, driving forty-five miles, and arriving at Mountain Lake Station about sundown, the only delay being caused at the crossing of the Waltonwan (?) River, near Windom, where, because of deep, hard snow in a valley, with no broken road, we had to unhitch, and lead the horses for some distance, and bring our sled by manpower. At Mountain Lake we drew up in front of an immense sod house. The professor knocked on the door, which was opened by a lady. The bland professor said, "Sister Yale, do you still continue to entertain travelers here?" She answered, "Yes, we do. Come right in. My man will assist in taking care of the team." We were ushered into the most commodious sod house I had ever seen. Stopping place, and the only one in many miles at that time. Supper was just ready in the dining quarter, and there were some other guests, among them a pair of newly-weds. And the supper was good, and we had a most pleasant evening.

Mountain Lake Station on the St. Paul & Sioux City R R, was the center of a large settlement of Mennonites--Russian peasants — and not a bad class of immigrants. Hard working farmers who always had stores of food, such as grain, potatoes, cabbage, rutabagas, carrots, beans, peas, honey. When other settlers found themselves in need of any of these things, they knew where they could always be bought.

Next morning we got an early start on the next forty-five miles, which would bring us to Mankato, arriving there at sundown. Forty-five miles per day was fast driving those days. Now that distance is little more than the wink of an eye, I presume the present swift means of travel has something to do with the purposes of Man's Creator that knowledge should be increased, and is the fulfillment of one of the prophesies of the Bible. But for real pleasure I would choose the forty-five miles a day with two-horse power. Nothing of great interest occurred to me on this trip, and I was goad to be soon back to work at Worthington.

Some time towards the last of March or the beginning of April, I was possessed with an impelling desire to go home to Ohio, where my young wife was living with her parents, and where all my own people where enjoying their peaceful lives. I suppose it was just a fit of homesickness that caused me to do so, but I was soon free of my burden and on my way East. Working on railroads at that time was very different from the same kind of service now. Then, thousands of miles of new railroads were being built every year, and nothing was so easy to find as a job; hence the absence of fear and anxiety as to unemployment. Arriving home thus in early springtime, I spent much of my time visiting my relatives, and best friends, all seeming to be glad to see me, but all were exceedingly busy at this season of the year, and I was not long in discovering that this is no world for just easy, luxurious pleasure. One must work and be busy at some lucrative occupation, or be like one who is very good - - lone-some. So I soon went to see Supt. Phillips of the good old A & G W RR, with the result that I was sent to Kent, O., as telegrapher until something better could be turned up. What about this Kent? Well, only that it was the Division town between the Second and Third Divisions, with a yard composed of tracks enough to hold five-hundred cars and cabooses and engines. There were boiler shops and a machine shop where at that time a locomotive was being built. All this was interesting to me. The town was not large, but beautifully located on a river bordered by a pleasing number of large old maple and other trees. There were not enough of these to hide the view of some old water-mills, an old retired dam with its sluices reaching out to where the mill-wheels once had been. I think the town had originally been named Franklin Mills and then changed to Kent. The place has since become well known because of its being the home of Three Doctors, with active members in many states, always ready to answer call for help.

I think opportunity knocked at my gate in the short time I work-ed there, and as usual, I walked right away without answering the call. I was almost urged by the Dispatchers to come and be one of them; and Mr. Phillips met me at Wadsworth Station one day, offering me a nice position as inspector of coal at a mine - - just to see that the rail-road company were treated honestly on every car of coal furnished by the mines. I just shoved all this aside, went down to Windsor where my wife and her family live and to the Station where I had really began my railroad work. There had been little change here, except that a spur track had been laid out to a stone-quarry in the hills where the railroad Company were procuring sandstone for building all their culverts and bridgework on the 3rd and 4th Divisions. This made quite a business. I found that the Osbun boys wanted to sell their store, and I was not long in making up my mind to buy it. The idea of owning a country store in a beautiful location on the corner of a wooded hillside, sloping down towards it and ending where green meadows began - - The temptation was too much and I fell for it.

The store building was long, as it had originally been a cracker bakery, in addition to the store, and this space now vacant, could be used for living rooms; and we were not long in taking possession of them. There was also an upstairs over the store, with room for two beds, and altogether we soon found ourselves very comfortably situated, right among friends and relatives and acquaintances. What could be better? Then I was also Postmaster. Which office, while not very remunerative, had a bright side to it. Who writes letters and who do not? Who receive letters and who receive none? Yet always asking for mail! Everyday I had to meet the train to trade mail sacks, and in this way I was able to keep, if only ever so slightly, some contact with the railroad. I

had not much more than just got stocked up on new goods, with some additions like peanuts, ginger ale, and pop, when some turn of the wheel of fate made it necessary to change Agents at the station. I do not remember why Mr. Derr gave up the Agency, but at any rate I asked for the job and was soon the Station Agent at Windsor again. My store was next to and only a few steps from the Depot, so by employing a clerk I could easily handle both. A young man named Ira Haverfield wanting to learn telegraphy, and station work, was my first helper. He soon learned the calls and was able to be very useful in many ways; besides he was handy with tools, and among other little activities, he made me a nice desk all of black walnut lumber.

There was certainly a feeling of peace and comfort about all this. To be thus settled at last, right near home, was pleasing to me after the trying experiences of the past several months. And my wife was next door to her mother and her family. My store business was all I could wish; and soon I had such an interesting place that sometimes it became necessary to inform the customers, or rather the story-tellers, when it was time to close at night. The people who composed the community there were certainly above the average in education and culture; but like every community it had a few odd specimens; and there were certain places which were haunted. One such place was located up on the big hill where the tall chestnut trees grew, back of the stone-quarry where there was an old, deserted brick house. No one could tell much about it, only that at times a tramping noise and clanking of chains could be heard; and it was said that a murder had been committed there. Just a little way up the road from us lived Mr. Lilly and his wife. He was an Englishman, Aged perhaps sixty-five. He claimed to have been a powerful man, that is before "E Ad Is ead urten". He told about a fight he once had in which he was forced to run for his life; and when he came to a wide, deep stream (he said) "I gived a might jump and I saw I wasn't going to make it. And so I just gived myself an awful boose while in the air, and then I landed square on the farther bank. "O, I was a man before I ad my ead urten." Mr. Lilly was not lacking in business ability. He had great friends with "Brother and Sister Hagerman," my wife's father and mother. He had been telling them that he was expecting an increase in his live-stock. Then one day he called and said, "Well, my cow has gotten a calf, but my mare hasn't." This is only one or two of the many odd sayings and doings of Mr. Lilly. Almost every young fellow in the neighborhood had some story to tell about him, even to the repeating of his prayer at church.

Sometime that first year we were at Windsor there came a night when I lost some sleep; and it happened in the following manner. We had gone to bed shortly before ten o'clock, and I was just dozing off to sleep, when I heard the Westbound night express train roaring through; and when the last sleeper had passed the station a few rods, there was a sort of rumble and all was still. I said to my wife, "There, that means a call for me." In about five minutes, Boom, boom, boom on our door and the voice of my friend Charley Green, Conductor, saying, "Fluke, get up. I want you at the office." I slid on my clothes and lost no time getting there. There were no foolish formalities in those days; and Green was a man who knew what to say and do in any case. "Tell the Chief Dispatcher, Train 3 is off the track just west of the station. Tender and three coaches derailed; the coaches zigzagged but not far from rails and none turned over. Nobody hurt. Send wrecking outfit. Will not take very long to pick up and rerail with proper tools." A wrecking outfit consisted of a derrick car, about ten men, a caboose, and a bunk car for the men, and all manner of tools and rerailing shoes, etc, In a little over one hour they hove in sight and at 3: a.m., just when the cocks began to crow, that night express was again on its way and I back to bed. Could such work as that be done now, after fifty years of experiences? Not likely. Inside the last year I have seen the Great Northern run a wrecker over two-hundred miles to rerail one freight car with twisted trucks under a freight train, causing much delay to other trains thereby.

To show that there has not been much change in the human race in all these years, let me tell you about a neighbor boy of good family, who lived with his parents and brothers and sisters, a short distance away from my store. This boy was in the habit of loafing there almost every day. He was

about twelve years old. My clerk told me that he believed that the boy was till-tapping. So the clerk bored a gimlet hole through the door which let to our living quarters. The very next day the boy sat on a bench by the stove when I took the mail back to the ten o'clock train. My clerk went out into the hall with his eye to the hole in the door. Then he saw the boy reach over the counter, pull oven the money drawer under the counter, help himself to a hand-full of "shin-plasters". That was not long after the Civil War, and we had only paper money. No Specie of any kind. It made no noise in the handling. Soon my clerk was back in the store, and I was there, and customers came and went. Mr. Boy went leisurely home. Then I heard what had transpired, and it troubled me. But something would have to be done about it. Next time the boy came I was alone in the store; and when he had seated himself on the bench I walked over to his side and in softest speech accused him of taking money from the drawer. At this his face grew livid, and he was certainly an object of fright as he whispered his confession, that it was true. I did not talk of punishment, or ask him to return any of the money, didn't try to find out what amount he had taken. He was just at the age when a boy has no way of earning money, and probably had never had a cent before. His folks never knew about this false step. Some years later I met him in Akron, Ohio, where he was suitably employed, well dressed, and as he shewed me around the city, he recalled the sad incident as stated above, expressed lasting gratitude for the was I had dealt with him. Said it made a man of him. No more mis-steps for him, after that lesson.

One rainy day when my store had many customers or loafters (probably more loafers than customers) I saw a boy whose name was Shunk, help himself to a plug of tobacco. I kept my tobacco on a shelf at the back end of the room. Soon the boy came passing me where I was behind the counter, waiting on a buyer. When he was right opposite to me, I said, "Here Shunk, dig up that plug you have down there in your pant's pocket. He squirmed and said, "I got nothin' in my pocket." I said, "Yes, you have. Bring it out quick." And he slowly drew it forth. All covered with shame he left the place, and it was quite a while before he ventured to come to my store again.

A Narrow Escape.

There were wholesale groceries in our County-seat town of Mansfield, only seven miles away, and I bought my supplies there. I was in the habit of driving over there when in need of goods, starting after the 10:00 a.m. mail-train had passed, as this was a time when there were no regular trains scheduled and not much doing at my station. One day when returning from such a trip at 3:00 p.m. I was surprised to see a locomotive on my siding headed west. Well now, I thought, I'm in for something. After stabling my horse, I went to the office and the engineer said he had been there since 11:00 a.m. He had a train order which he had received at the station east of Windsor which read, "Not pass Windsor without orders." I called the Despatcher's office and he said, "Well, you have got around, have you." "Wherever have you been?" I said, "I have been hunting." That I thought there would be nothing doing and so stayed too long. I knew the Despatcher and he liked to go hunting himself. I <u>was</u> hunting, but not with a gun. He went ahead with running orders for the engine and said no more. I was relieved when the Engineer remarked that his engine was crippled, and just going to the shops. I expected to hear more about this, but I never heard a word.

In those days, time didn't count. A man could be worked 24 hours a day without his pay being increased.

Sometimes the ten o'clock train would bring one or two coach loads of picnickers to Windsor-people from Ashland, the County-seat of Ashland Co., some twelve miles east of Windsor. An occasion like that might be expected to be a blessing, a happy day, for the inhabitants of our quiet neighborhood. And ordinarily it would have been, had all the visitors been angelic, meek and

lowly instead of over-stuffed with belief in their own importance. They were the kind of people who make free with remarks about anything which attracted their attention, freely invaded private yards or grounds without saying "By your leave." One stood in the door of my store and said, "O, what a healthy looking place!" Father Hagerman had the only well, and thirsty ones kept the pump going until the well was dry. When one of the boys padlocked the pump, then there was much loud and hostile talk from the picknickers. When the late afternoon train took them away, and quiet and peace was once more restored, we underwent some such feeling as the people of the West had when they saw the last of the grasshoppers fly away. What can't be cured must be endured. With the dusk of evening began the music of the insect world, saying, "Katy did, Katy did, she did, she did." Crickets chirped together with the hum of lesser fry; and the smell of ripening corn. Such soothing sensations as belonged only to Ohio soon effaced all memories of anything unpleasant.

Keeping a grocery in 1873 was very different from keeping grocery now. Then there were no paper bags, no canned goods. If a customer wanted a dollar's worth of sugar, we grabbed a square of coarse brown paper, about two feet square it was, weighed the sugar in the scale-hopper, poured it onto the paper, and then came the time to exhibit one's expertness or awkwardness in wrapping it up. Almost anything sold had to be tied up thus, and one just had to become expert or quit. Later on I grew in knowledge to the extent that I kept a few packages of the most called for goods-sugar, coffee, etc., tied up, ready for delivery; and this was quite a relief. But compare that to today's flipping with the left hand any needed size of paper sack, and filling it with the right hand, and bless the man who invented paper sacks! I had always to keep well stocked up on 2 and 3A smoking tobacco, which came in big yellow paper packages, and plenty of long-stemmed clay pipes, as these articles were both in demand at all times, but especially when there would occur a death among the Irish people who resided in shanties and worked on the railroad. A wake with much smoking and more drinking, was always to be held. These wakes were soon over; and broad crepe bands on the relatives' hats and bonnets were worn for quite a period as symbols of sorrow. I had much acquaintance with these long-ago Irish people and cherish the memories of their merry hearts, their simple hospitality, their quick and witty repartee, their pretty, bright-face children.

The Atlantic and Great Western Railroad at this period was beginning to lose traffic because it was a broad gage (Explain what this means) while all the other roads, those in operation and those being built, were the standard gauge; and soon it was taken over by Jim Fisk and Jay Gould at a bargain price. And when they got around to it, a year or two later, the road was changed to standard gauge. The work was planned and carried out by the Chief Engineer, Chas. Lattimer. Some necessary work such as adzing the ties (explain) at the proper spot to fit the gauge, was done in advance, and then a Sunday was set on which the change was to be made-making the entire road from Salamanca, New York, to Cleveland and to Dayton, Ohio, standard gauge; and this included switches, side tracks, car yards, and all tracks. All officers--Roadmaster and Section Fore-men, had orders instructing them where to be at four o'clock a.m. on that Sunday, and just what tools they should need. Men enough were furnished to finish a certain distance per four. I was not in their employ when this happened, and hence I was not on the inside as to what was said and done; but it certainly was an historic event that so far as I know has never been mentioned since. Beginning the later part of the week preceding that Sunday, all A & G W Rolling Stock between St. Louis and Salamanca, N.Y., was being moved East, where to I can't say. All day Saturday and Saturday night this was going on until not a coach, box car engine or any kind of broad gauge car was left west of Salamanca. The work was so perfectly planned, the weather as if made to order, apparently not an error or miscalculation of any description was found in Mr. Lattimer's plans and about four o'clock on the afternoon of that Sunday, the old six-foot broad gauge A & G W R R became standard. And would you believe it, the night passenger trains — the one from the East at ten p.m. and the one from the West at four a.m.-both went

through on time! I never was able to figure out how this could be accomplished, nor could I tell what became of all those broad gauge engines, coaches, flat cars, box cars, in short everything that rolled on wheels. Where could they store them? What disposition was finally made of such? Well, I have always been glad that I lived when all these things happened. Few people living today ever heard of the Atlantic and Great Western Railroad. Later the name was changed to New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio (NyP&O for short) and now it is a part of the Erie system. This is a world of change or it was before this depression hit us.

When we were at Windsor (1873 to 1876 I think it was) there were still shoemakers and tailors and blacksmith shops, and tan yards and many industries that are now as extinct as the dodo. This was more than ten years after the Civil War, and the United States had not resumed specie payment and were not worrying about the gold standard. And farmers were prosperous. Sixteen cents a pound for fat hogs on foot. Wool one dollar or more per pound. Wheat never below a dollar. All this made the farmer happy, even though the paper money was said to be only worth about 43 cents in gold. The paper money Lincoln made to carry on the war with, the greenback, was more valuable than gold, because it was like Government Bonds- not taxable. The Gold Standard is for the millionaire and that's why we have it. And that Gold Standard, coupled with protective tariffs, which always rob our own people, may be why farmers are losing their farms today.

Now when we had lived at Windsor about two or three years, and were the parents of a little girl two years old and a fine baby boy, I began to think about our future, and all the time I had the urge to go back West, where life looked more interesting to me than this country store and such a quiet little station. Too easy. So in the beautiful month of June, June sixth to be exact, I dressed in my best frock coat and white vest with real pearl buttons. Thank Heaven, men in those days didn't wear short coats, that make the wearer look like a shanghai rooster with his tail pulled out — the latest style just now. Just think, or imagine Geo. Washington or Benjamin Franklin or any of our Great Ken dressed in one of these fly-up-the-creek coats!

When I arrived at St. Paul the weather was cloudy and wet and cool, so much so that I shivered and my white vest didn't seem to fit the occasion; but I called on Mr. J.C. Boyden of the St. Paul and Sioux City Road - the man who had hired me before and he treated me with more respect than I expected, considering the manner in which I had cut my former service short. If he mentioned any vacancies, they were not such stations as I wanted, and it was not my intention to stay at that time and so it was agreed that when he had a good station to offer, he would let me know, taking my Ohio address. After visiting Minneapolis and other places, I returned home feeling almost certain that sooner or later I would be called. I think it was sometime in August that Mr. Boyden wrote me to say that if I could be there by Sept. 1st, I could have Lake Crystal Station, a good station as I knew; and the salary was at least double that which I was receiving at Windsor. I found former Agent Joe Derr at his home in Burbank, and I knew he would like to have Windsor Station again. Said I, “If you will buy my store I can get you the station.” I saw that he was pleased with this idea; and I was able to accomplish the arrangement in short order. My wife's brother, Oliver Hagerman, who had worked with me at West Salem as Operator and clerk, was now running a saw mill nearby, and working too hard. So I got after him to accompany my little family to Minnesota later in the fall, as I would need to be going at once. At first he demurred; said he was still some in debt for the mill, but I said “Let that go to pay later. I can get you a good station out there.” Finally it was all arranged — that they join me about November first, or a little later.

I found Lake Crystal to be a thriving village, located a little distance back of Crystal Lake, with a border of timber between the village and the lake. A pleasing location. And something that struck my fancy was the fact that the depot was right in the center of the town. In those 'phoneless days, this was a great advantage to the agent in his many steps and transactions with the public. Crystal

Lake, I found, was one of three lakes which composed a small chain connected by thoroughfares, beginning with Lilly Lake, west of town — the smallest of the three- then Crystal Lake and Loon Lake. The latter was farthest east and the largest. Loon Lake was separated from Crystal by a narrow strip of land over which a wagon road was maintained. All the country surrounding Lake Crystal Station was pretty well settled; and I soon found that some certain locality was all Welsh, Willow Creek all German, Rapidan all Irish, and so on, all good farmers and wheat the principal crop, but not to the exclusion of everything else. These farmers marketed almost every kind of produce — pork, beef, butter and eggs, poultry of the finest kind. Especially did the Welsh excel in such products.

The Depot was large — much larger than ordinary country town depots. I believe it was originally the depot on the levee at St. Paul; and for some reason (probably a changed location on the levee) it was moved to Lake Crystal. A commodious platform which was the same height as the box-car floor made loading and unloading freight easier and baggage handling almost a pleasure. Them the roof extended far out from the building, affording protection from rain and snow. A short distance down the track was a large grain-elevator that farmers were always driving up to with loads of wheat, and I was not long in finding out that I was to be very much concerned with it, in my station work. The St. Paul and Sioux City Railroad owned and operated the elevators. I was soon checked in and getting acquainted with my work, which is always interesting. A Station-agent has to know more people than any other man in a community. I put up at the Oakley Hotel; and Mr. Oakley and his family were very friendly, making me feel quite at home, When Mr. Oakley learned that I was from Ohio, he said he ran a locomotive out of Bellfontaine, Ohio, 'way back when, instead of iron rails, they had wooden rails with a strap of iron on the top for the wheels to run on. At the station my hours were long - - from early morn till nine p.m. Some of the work was new to me. There was an inspector at the elevator who received the wheat from the farmers, issuing to each a ticket or check for the number of bushels received, and showing the grade - - viz., No. 1, No. 2 or rejected, as the case might be, and the dates. The elevator had his lead or loads of wheat, and the farmer had something that was as good as cash anywhere at the prevailing price for that day; and if the price was likely to advance, he could hang onto the check as long as he desired; but if these checks were held over ten days, then there was a storage charge accruing. There were regular wheat buyers and store keepers who bought these wheat checks from farmers and others, and when these buyers wished to surrender their holdings, they brought their checks to me, and I figured the storage due on the whole lot, and collected the amount and the trader could then dispose of the tickets to any of the city buyers or flour mills. Figuring the storage on these tickets was a grind; and almost discouraged me right in the start; but I stuck to it till after a while it was almost easy. Finally these tickets landed in the hands of the big corporations, who would call on Mr. Boyden to ship from one to twenty cars of wheat. Mr. Boyden would order me to load and bill out cars – the number required – and this was only a side line to my work as Agent at Lake Crystal. I was allowed a helper in the person of a man named Phillip LeClaire, a Canadian Frenchman, aged about fifty-five or sixty, a solid, strong, intelligent, active man, who could neither read nor write. But the adventures of that man's life, if told as they must have occurred, would make an interesting book. How he came over from Quebec alone at the age of eleven; his acquaintance and life with the Indians; his experiences later in the employ of General H.H. Sibley as a kind of traveling trader of such articles as blankets, trinkets, anything the Indians needed or wanted, for furs, hides, feathers, ponies, etc. When not out on such trips he was coachman for the Sibley and Frank Steele families in and about the cities, and he saw much of the doings in high life in those early days when St. Paul was only a large town and St. Anthony Falls (Minneapolis) only a village. But of this man, more anon.

Early in November, when my little family accompanied by my wife's brother, as had been planned, arrived, I was well adjusted to my work and surroundings. Up to this time there had not been a sign of winter — just fine clear quiet days, and this condition remained with us until

sometime in February when we had a few little snow flurries. Farmers were plowing and sowing wheat in February and March. This first winter for my folks in Minnesota was the only one of that kind ever known, before or since. I had been telling Ms. Boyden about my brother-in-law and he premised to keep him in mind; and it was perhaps a month after his arrival, that he was called to come to St. Paul. Mr. Boyden wanted to see him. As a matter of fact, Oliver had never handled a station, but had worked with me in Ohio, and was naturally smart. And he was made Agent at Le Seur, a larger town and better paying Station than Lake Crystal.

Of course my folks were pleased with everything. Prairie country was a new sight to them, and the view to the south and southwest was just one vast rolling prairie far as the eye could see. To the north-east stretching far away as Northfield and Redwing, was a solid timber country, mostly hardwood such as oak, sugar maple, ash and birch. Our little chain of lakes seemed to be a kind of dividing line between the timber and prairie land. Lake Crystal to Mankato was thirteen miles; and half way between was Minneopa Falls, all wild and brushy at that time, but now a beautiful State Park of many acres, under the care of Foresters, who protect trees, wild life and all the property belonging to the state.

The Northfield, Minnesota Bank Robbery

It was during our first year at Lake Crystal that there occurred the robbery, or rather I should say, the attempted robbery, of the Northfield Bank by Frank and Jesse James, Cole and Bob and Jim Younger and others. A matter of that kind happening now and being reported by radio, would hardly cause a ripple. Not so at that time. There was only the telegraph to depend on in those days, and we knew about it almost as soon as it occurred, as well as the manner of attack. While three or four of their men rode swiftly up and down the streets firing their army revolvers to terrorize the people, others entered the Bank. One with gun pointed, demanded the keys to the vault. Cashier Hayward hesitated and was shot dead. By this time the town was aroused; and men who lived there had had experience in warfare with Indians in 1869; and now they grabbed repeating rifles. In almost no time, one robber — Bill Chadwell - - rolled from his horse and others were wounded. The men came from the Bank, took the gun belt and cartridges from the dead Man's body, mounted their horses and made their escape, going south-west. These robbers found bank robbing in Minnesota was different from that kind of work in Missouri or the Southwest. Most of them made their escape from Northfield, but that was not the end of their troubles. They were followed into the big woods, by fierce men who were determined to avenge the murder of Hayward and to show to such robber bands that outrages of that kind could not go unpunished in Minnesota. The news of the bank robbery and the pursuit spread about as quickly as it would now when we have radio in every other house; and the pursuers increased and reported all the facts as they transpired. The second or third day out they found the outlaws were abandoning their horses, the easier to keep together and hide from their pursuers; and no way of caring for the horses made them a burden instead of a help. All reports showed the robbers were headed towards the Southwest, which, if continued, would bring them out into the open country at or near Lake Crystal. While this hunting went on in the big woods (and I believe, it lasted ten days) I do not remember that any one of the hunters ever got a sight of the robbers. They occasionally found where an attempt had been made to build small fires to cook something, but they had evidently been scared away before the cooking could be done. New the interest began to grow in Mankato and in our Lake regions, where it seemed likely that the outlaws would appear. At night a few men were posted in different places to give the alarm, should the robbers be seen or heard. Were they making for the prairie country? It would be necessary for them to cross the Minnesota River which ran near Minneopa Station, and was spanned by an iron bridge, the crossing of our railroad. I was keeping my ear out all day and much of the time nights now, and so I came to the station at 2 a.m. on this night and Mankato was calling, “Ca, Ca, (me). I

answered and he said, "The robbers have crossed the bridge." The big Swede who was picked there had run away as soon as he saw them coming. Nobody blamed him for so doing. Our East-bound passenger train was due at 4:00 a.m. I went around town pounding on doors and notifying the right kind of men that the robbers had crossed the bridge; to get their guns and go to Minneopa on the train; and I believe every man I called on went. All returned on the 8:00 o'clock evening train, reporting a thrilling day of hunting in the brushy lands around Minneopa, and finding tracks and signs that the robbers were there. But none of them had been seen by any one of our men. All were anxious to go down there next day, and did so, with no better luck. By the third day, many St. Paul Police came to Lake Crystal to have part in capturing the robbers. Our quiet little village was over run with all kinds of wild men. Armed sentinels were placed at such points between lakes as were likely to be used by the robbers. Sometime between midnight and morning, the Sentry on guard at the road crossing between Crystal and Loon Lakes, saw what looked to him like two men on one horse coming on the road. He waited until he was sure such was the case and then fired his gun at them. The two men slid off the horse and running a short distance, entered a convenient cornfield on the other side of which lived a family named Roberts. In the barn were two gray horses which were conscripted by these two men, who afterwards proved to be Jesse and Frank James. They rode the gray horses to near the Missouri line, and turned them loose. I had seen Mr. Roberts driving this team many times before this, and I saw him using them after they had become distinguished by carry-ing the James boys to where they were safe among friends. As I remember it, Mr. Roberts went down and brought the horses home.

Next day after the escape of the Jameses, came Supt Lincoln and other officials with a little train run by Conductor Jack Dixon, which, Mr. Lincoln said, was to be used when and wherever needed in pursuing the robbers. General Pope of Mankato was put in charge of all the activities and my station was headquarters for the little army. I believe it was the next day after the escape of the James boys that a man taking care of some cows a few miles southwest of Lake Crystal found himself face to face with the little band of outlaws. I reckon these men saw a chance to get milk, being almost starved, and threw caution to the winds. They parleyed as to what disposition to make of the cow-man. Some were in favor of shooting him, but Cole Younger was headman among them, and he said "No." That such a course would be unwise, and increase their own danger later on. The man premised them that he would not tell that he had seen them, and Cole Younger said "Will you take an oath that you will not tell?" The man replied, "Yes." So Cole said, "Hold up your right hand." And a solemn oath was taken; but as soon as the robbers were out of sight, this man hastened to Mankato and told his employers - - Folsom and Shaubrit(?) Bankers, the whole story. Very soon everybody knew that the robbers were in the open country. The next day after this, two men called at the home of a Norwegian farmer and asked for something to eat. They were ragged and dilapidated looking and ate ravenously of the food provided, and seemed uneasy. When they were gone the twelve-year old son said, "I believe they were some of the robbers." His father said, "Son, if you think that just keep still about it." But the boy soon made his escape from home, going to the town of Madelia, which was not far from his home, and was the next station west of Lake Crystal on the railroad. On receipt of this information Major Murphy, a Civil War Veteran, gathered a few men with repeating rifles and struck out, soon locating the robbers in the brushy lining of the Watonwan River. Seeing they were discovered they flourished their revolvers, saying, "Come on! We can kill a thousand of you." Major Murphy gave orders for his men to fire on them. The distance was long, but after a few shots it was evident that some of the shots had taken effect; and this firing continued until all of the robbers were dead or wounded except one of the Younger Brothers - - I think it was Bob - - who put up a rag on a pole as a sign of surrender. Of course the robbers fired their long revolvers in the fight, but without effect as their guns could not compete with long-distance rifles. They were at a disadvantage. One killed and nearly all the rest wounded more or less severely, they were glad to end their long struggle to escape. Crowds of people saw them brought to town, and

doctors came to examine and dress their wounds.

My station soon ceased to be headquarters as General Pope and his staff took our waiting train for Madelia, feeling disappointed at having no part in the capture. Many of our Lake Crystal people also board-ed the train to have a look at the robbers. At Madelia the Town Hall was turned into a kind of hospital, and the railroad ran a special train from St. Paul to Madelia to accommodate visitors. Cole Younger, who, it was said had been educated for the ministry, was spokesman; and his art of using soft but eloquent speech, had the effect of turning wrath into pity; and as he handed our doctor Herring a souvenir in a diamond stick pin he said, "I saw you at Minneopa. In fact, you were within ten feet of me once." And then they pointed out others of our men who had been hunting them in the brush at Minneopa. Which made our boys feel glad that the robbers had not been hunting them. For, if they had been, they surely would have been taken. It was maybe five or six days before the wounded men were able to be moved, and then they were taken to the penitentiary at Stillwater, to serve life sentences there. While these men were held at Madelia, they talked freely and among other things told how some of them had been all through this country previously planning the robbery, and mapping out the course of their escape and gathering any facts they should know. And Cole Younger had this map, showing that they were following the course as shown by this map; ant that the James boys disagreed with the other members, saying that the whole state being aroused, made it unsafe; and they were right for they only escaped by taking a course which lay through a more thinly settled part of the state. As a kind of echo of this story, I will try to put down something which I heard Dr. Ozier of Sioux City relate as we sat in the hotel lobby one evening in the winter of 1876. He said he had been called to visit a sick woman some twenty miles southwest of Sioux City in what was then a thinly settled country; and was on his way returning home, when he noticed that he was meeting two men, and that they were the James boys. When they met and came to a stop, one of the men asked, "Who are you?" The doctor said, "I am Dr. Ozier of Sioux City." The one who had asked said, "I am Jesse James, and this is my brother Frank. You are just the man we wanted to find." They slid off their horses, Jesse explaining that Frank had a wound near his elbow which needed attention – was hurting him badly. The doctor examined and dressed his would as well as possible under such outdoor conditions, and both showed signs of relief. "They examined my buggy," said Dr. Ozier, "to see if there was anything they could use, taking a sheepskin robe and a few leather straps. Jesse thanked me, saying "Now get in your buggy and go; and don't look back. And you bet I didn't look back!" Sounds like a long story in this year of our Lord, when such bank robberies are as common as schoolhouses.

I think it was in this same first fall of our residence in Lake Crystal that a peculiar thing happened. The almost simultaneous blowing up of three of the largest flour mills in Minneapolis, occurring at intervals of a few seconds apart, and with no apparent cause. As I remember it, there was no loss of life or at least only one or two men perished. It happened at a time when a shift of employees had just left and at that particular shift there was always a short recess before the next shift came on. On the evening this happened, I was waiting the arrival of our Westbound Passenger train, knowing that the official car was attached thereto; and hearing all this news since the train had left Mankato, I saw my opportunity to hand out a thrill to my employers. Of course they were intensely interested, and astonished, as I told them that nobody knew what caused the catastrophe, as yet, whether it was the work of men or of some mysterious act of mature which would be brought to light later on.

We were well pleased with everything, this beautiful late fall season at Lake Crystal. My work was hard, with long hours, as I have said before, but on the other hand, there were periods of interesting occurrences and happenings which I am glad to remember now, after all is long past.

Phillip Le Claire was an expert at hunting and fishing; and Crystal Lake was full of fish - - Walleyed pike, pickerel, bass, and others. Ducks and game-birds were plentiful. Phillip lived near

the lake and was always bringing us fish, ducks, and other good things. I do not recall that there was such a thing as a game warden in those days. The millions of laws enacted by legislatures since then, all of them in some way interfering with the rights of the people in their pursuit of life, liberty and happiness, as promised in our constitution, had not appeared. Our Sundays we ramble around the lakes, finding familiar flowers; the nice Sumacs we knew at home in Ohio, many of the same birds we knew, seeing schools of fish from the shore of the lakes, our children so happy, all of us coming back to our home, glad that we lived in such a beautiful country. In the summer following our coming to Minnesota, we decided to build us a house; as up to this time we had been living upstairs over W. C. Davis's hardware store, which for various reasons, was not so pleasant. So I purchased lots from Mr. Oakley, adjoining his hotel. Nice, high land, and good location; and soon we were living on our own cottage, where the children could play outdoors, and we felt very prosperous. I remember putting up a picket fence in front, the gate opening onto the sidewalk, and which fence, I soon discovered, was too high, and the pickets too large — out of proportion to the house. Then I had the pickets removed and replaced by others that were just correct in every way. I recall that not long after this, that an Italian came to town leading an enormous brown bear; and when walking on our sidewalk, passing our place, the bear's back was higher than our fence. I relate this just to give some idea of the height of our new fence; but a man exhibiting a performing bear was a great show for children, and even older children who were able to furnish the Dago with a few pennies now and then. The Italian and his bear, the man with a barrel organ, and the monkey passing the cup, these were the movies in those days. This was a good year for farmers and everybody. Merchants were prosperous. Produce of all kinds coming into town. Long lines of wagon loads of wheat waiting their turns to unload at the elevator. Business at the Depot was rushing. I often made a dollar or two before breakfast express commission on shipments of butter and eggs. That was in the days before egg cases had been invented and store-keepers, who were the shippers, used all kinds of containers such as baskets, sugar barrels sawed in two at the middle made two good containers when they were equipped with rope handles, and strong hoops. Nearly all such express shipments went to different firms in St. Paul and Minneapolis. With weighing every package of these permiscous [sic] articles, and way-billing each different consignment, I was certainly on the jump. Plenty of work; but I wish to testify and tell the world, that here was a railroad and also an express company, that knew how to treat employees so that every man was loyal and ready to work early and late if necessary. Think of an army of men working joyously every day with no cause of complaint, and then turn to 1933.

The Fall of a Young Man

A young man whose name I have forgotten, but who was brother to the wife of one of our friends, was buying wheat tickets in a small way, when there was a prospect of a raise. This young man was not very friendly — sort of proud, we thought him. One day a wheat ticket was surrendered by a firm, that called for 110 bushels. Now the elevator had a rule that no ticket should be issued for over 100 bushels. This showed that it had been raised and comparison with its stub at the elevator proved that it was issued for 10 bushels. Further examinations brought to light several raised tickets of less amounts all at our elevator. It was an easy matter to discover the author of these changed tickets; and soon there came a night when I was called by the special agent of the company to be present at the arrest of the aforesaid young man. I remained at the Station while the sheriff and special agent Robinson went to Joe Kieffer's Hotel to get the young man. At my office they asked him some questions. He was so badly scared that he could only answer in whispers. He confessed his guilt; and a Judge at Mankato sentenced him to two years in the penitentiary at Stillwater. I was sorry for him, and am glad to relate that his behavior in prison was such that he was released at the end of a year, and a half, and that he came right back home to Lake Crystal, and proceeded to live down the error of his past life; and very probably he was thoroughly cured, and sinned no more. How vastly much better such a course than if he had

followed out the usual attitude of such men, and had blossomed out into a hard boiled criminal.

It must have been in the fall of the second year of our life at L. C. that a tornado struck that part of the state. I was at the Depot, and the time was maybe three o'clock in the afternoon, when there appeared a dark cloud coming from the west. I made things safe at the Depot, and ran for home, and none too soon, for I barely got inside the door before the full force of the wind mixed with heavy thunder and lightning, was upon us. Our house fairly rocked, but was somewhat sheltered because of the location of a larger, more substantial house in the next lot to ours and in the direct line from which the storm came. Of course it was of short duration, and when we were able to see around, there appeared to be wrong, more than the fact that a neighbor's barn had landed just outside of our back fence; but then came a boy to tell me there was something the matter with the Depot. Hurrying down there, I found the wind had ripped off the southwest corner of the roof, leaving an opening of ten or twelve feet, and extending up to the ridgepole. As it was still raining, I found it necessary to remove such goods as would be damaged, to dry quarters under the remaining roof. But what was I going to do about a wide open Depot like that? It would certainly be several days before the carpenters could get there to make repairs. Then I bethought me of a young man living out in the country a short distance, who had been wanting me to take him in to learn station work. I sent for him, and told him that if he would stay at the Depot nights till repairs could be made, I would take him as a student. Nothing could have given him more pleasure, he said. His name was Anson Chandler Green-leaf-Whitman, and in all the time he was with me, I never saw even a shade of anger or dissatisfaction on his face. He had attended Telegraph School at Janesville, Wis., His movements and appearance were like his name, peculiar. He had a heavy, dark mustache which grew so stiff and strong that it had to be clipped on the under side giving it the appearance of a porch roof. When writing he grasped the pen holder at the middle instead of near the pen, like other writers. More anon about him. He was as good as gold, and I gave him a start that I hope finally resulted in a bright and interest-ing employment for this young man in later years of his life.

While we were at Lake Crystal we had two years of grasshoppers that destroyed all crops to such an extent that farmers (and indeed almost everybody) were nearly destitute. These insects suddenly appeared, coming from nowhere, and in clouds so thick as to almost darken the sun; and woe be to the locality where they began to alight. Of course there were always places, but not extensive tracts, that escaped. We on the railroads had little to do except to report by wire at special hours, giving information as to grasshoppers — which way they were moving, high up or low down, whether they were alighting, or if they were laying eggs; and later what farmers and others were doing to fight them. The railroads were very good to the settlers, carrying all kinds of clothing and other goods for grasshopper sufferers, entirely free of charge. I remember that many farmers were wearing soldier's overcoats and other army clothes in those hard years, all furnished by the State. We called them Grasshopper Generals.

But finally when people were almost ready to give up in despair, the pests disappeared as mysteriously as they had come, and no man knew where to.

During these two years of ruin by the grasshoppers our lives went on in a kind of monotonous way. Trains were running as usual, our salaries were not reduced, no stations closed. How different from today; bit a railroad is in many ways like a government. And at that time had not grown top heavy with complicated accounts, and unnecessary contrivances. Everything was as simple as possible. I remember that the St. Paul & Sioux City Railroad handled its Accounting Department at St. Paul, with a force of five to ten men; and I know that a rail-road doing the amount of business they did, now, would have maybe fifty or one hundred men. Departing from simplicity is always departing from simplicity is always departing from good sense in any kind of business.

While we were living in rooms above the hardware store, we drew water from a fine deep well by means of a rope running over a pulley, located above our door. While one oaken bucket of water was brought up to our door, another bucket descended to the water in the open well beneath. This well was topped with a board encasement about three feet in height, with no cover on top. One day a little girl came along there accompanied by her beloved small dog. A dog with yellow and white, smooth hair, and about as large as a good sized cat, but with longer legs. This dog mistook the boxed-in well for a fence and made a leap evidently to go over; but instead landed in the water far below. The little girl screamed in alarm at such a fate. And then began an effort to save the beloved dog. Jim Bridges came from the store with a long rope with a loop in the lover end which he dangled down, and which was immediately seized by the dog's teeth and then he would hold onto the rope until we could almost grab him, but just then he would become so glad and excited that he would let go his hold, and fall back into the well again. Several times this maneuver was repeated, with the very same result. Then Jim brought a small basket which he fastened on the rope, and then the frightened little terrier was rescued, to the great delight of the weeping little girl. I will not dwell on what necessarily had to be done in order to clean and purify our well again!

In the little grove sloping down to the shore of the lake, it was the custom to hold Camp meetings each fall of the year. I do not remember what religious organization held these meetings, but they were certainly full of life and activity, always ending up with a grand flourish of the preacher's coming down from the high pulpit or platform, singing, “Onward Christian Soldiers,” or some other lively hymn, and marching round outside of the acre of planked seats. The whole congregation falling in and following the ministers, and all singing; and at the end of two or three of these circles around the camp, the ministers would come to a stop in front of the pulpit, and the congregation would pass, shaking hands and bidding them “Goodbye”. There was something about all this that had the effect of working on the emotions of the people, or perhaps I do lack the proper language to describe the feelings of the people on these occasions.

Our first winter at Lake Crystal, which was so mild as to be almost no winter at all, was no precedent to what followed. I remember that one October 16th it began snowing early in the day, and continued until night, and all night. I heard the Wayfreight reported out of Mankato about 7:00 p.m., and of course I might expect it to arrive at my station about 8:00 o'clock; so there was nothing for me to do but wait for it, which I did; and I waited all night, but no Way-freight arrived. Next day it was found that this train was snowed under at Minneapolis. Their engine had died for want of fuel. All engines were wood burners at that time. That snow storm coming thus early in October, did great damage, the weather becoming fierce cold after this heavy snow; and its effects were with us until the next spring. In places the drifts were as high as the telegraph wires and of course were slow in melting away in the spring. We found Minnesota winters hard, but the summers were exceedingly fine, compensating in large measure for the fierce winters. Lake Crystal was an interest-ing town to live in because of diversity of its citizens. Over there on the corner is the General Store of Larson and Davis, doing much business when farmers swap their butter and eggs for articles needed on the farm. Larson is a Swede, Davis an American. Next to them is the Drug Store, owned by Franchere and Son, lately from Santa Barbara, Calif.-gentle folks well worth knowing. Farther along is a Hotel with bar run by Joe Kieffer from Cork, Ireland, And next below on the street, Thomas Norton, an Englishman, with a kind of a Bake Shop and Restaurant. Morton was a local preacher. On his wall was a square of brown paper on which was inscribed, “I have made lemonade.” “Well, said I,” what of it? Lots of people have made lemonade.” He only meant to say that he had it ready, made. Across the street from him Mr. Kelly kept a grocery. Kelly claimed to have once been a locomotive engineer, and that he had often spent time in telegraph offices, but said he had never been able to read a word of it. As if a man could learn telegraphy by being around an office? Maybe that was the reason why he was keeping grocery instead of handling a locomotive. Near Kelly's place was the Post Office, and the

Postmaster's name was Crane. Crane and his family were Mormons, or Latterday Saints. They wished people to understand that they were not polygamists. Well, that was all right with me, only I could see no good reason for espousing the Mormon religion, with the kick taken out of it. Or why prefer the mystery Bible found behind a rock by Jas (?) Smith, to our Bible in general use in most of the world. Maybe it was because they originally came from Vermont, and so also did Brigham Young.

Across the Railroad — the western part of the village-were a few stores, and places of business. A Thirst Parlor kept by one Steve Thorne. This man was so perfect in exquisite form and movement, that description is beyond me. Except to say that his hair was black, and his mustache was exactly correct for such a face-not too large nor too small, black as night, and trained to a proper droop. Any King might have been glad to swap looks with Steve Thorne. I believe he was well educated; and later was elevated to places of trust and honor by the votes of his fellow citizens. Further along on that street was the General Store of Marston and Perry, where we did most of our trading. Mr. Perry was a jolly merchant, who liked children; and our little boy, Rossie, who was now big enough to do errands like being sent to the store for little articles needed by his mother, was a particular friend of Mr. Perry's. Which friendship often resulted in candy for the boy. It might be said our house was on the residential street running west from the Oakley Hotel. However, there were more vacant lots along that street than there were residences. We were located next to the Hotel; than came W. C. Davis's place; then several vacant lots, and beyond on the corner of the next block was the residence of Dr. Herring — a cultivated, good-looking man, and very friendly and well liked. One fine summer night when it had been raining and I had been kept late at the Depot and got home about 9:30, and had gone to bed some later, I was just dozing off to sleep when I was awakened by the loud screams of a woman in the direction of the Herring home. I pulled on my pants, grabbing my pistol. And in my bare feet I hurried up the wet pavement. The sky had cleared, and the young moon was shining. When nearing the Herring house what should I see, but the doctor coming obliquely across vacant land on the opposite side of the street, hurrying to his home. At this I just turned round and went back home. Next day we heard that Mrs. Herring had been frightened by a man prowling around and looking in her window, but all the description she could give was that it was a man in his bare feet!! Well, as I turned back before reaching the Herring house, Why smile at me?

At L. C. there was a young man named Lorin Cray who had some minor part or position with the Land Department of the St P & SCRR Co., and of course was often with me at my Station. He was a well-mannered, serious acting person, who had been a soldier in the Civil War, was wounded in his left arm in such a way that it was much weakened, though hardly noticeable in any other particular. He was receiving a small pension at that time, which was doubtless raised later on. He married a Miss Murphy, whose family lived just across the lake from town. While at Lake Crystal he studied law; and later was admitted to the Bar. After practicing a few years he was appointed District Judge at Mankato. Judge Lorin Cray died at Mankato in 1928, leaving an estate valued at about $122,000. Another interesting man working with me at L C was Mr. Blakeley, the Grain Inspector at the Elevator. He was a brother of Russel Blakeley of St. Paul, one of St. Paul's most influential and foremost citizens at that time; but our Mr. Blakeley's life had not been so successful. He had been one of the Forty-niners in California, with every good prospect of making a fortune, not by mining gold, bat by taking up land and lots in San Francisco and other promising cities. California was neither a state nor a territory of the United States at that time, and we must remember that news from the States in 49 was exceedingly slow and scarce; so Mr. Blakely and his three comrades took possession of their holdings under the old Spanish Regime. There were rumors that the United States would claim California, but these boys thought it was too far away to ever be a state; so they concluded to just wait around, and enjoy life while they waited. With a horse apiece, and a few cooking utensils, guns and ammunition, they spent their time exploring up and down the coast, camping out nights, cooking game and some salt

meats and bacon, eating when hungry and enjoying their young lives as suited them best; visiting mining camps and gambling dens. Once they were present at a play given by probably the first travel-ing group that had ever reached the Coast. In the audience was a woman with a baby. When the orchestra struck up a lively overture, the baby cried. An old be-whiskered Forty-niner rose up in the audience and shaking a heavy fist at the orchestra, yelled, "Stop that noise. We want to hear the baby!"

Well, to make a long story short, after these boys had waited long months, it turned out that California was taken by the United States, and that their Spanish holdings were declared worthless; and by now many people were arriving and grabbing everything, including all their lots and lands, leaving them penniless. Mr. Blakeley was well educated and always a gentleman; but in this young life had contracted habits and tastes that were unbreakable. He drank liquor, but I never saw him under the influence or incapable of attending to his business. He chewed tobacco, too, and once when his brother Russell came to see him, I heard him ask "How much tobacco do you use in a day?" Mr. B. Answered, "Ten cents' worth." Said Russell, "How much does that amount to in a year?" And Mr. B. replied, "Oh, I don't know. I'm no hand for mental arithmetic."

Once there was a Freight Train wreck just east of Lake Crystal which made it necessary to hold the early morning Passenger Train at my Station for an indefinite period of time; and many of the passengers as well as the train crew, took breakfast at the Oakley House. Of course at such a time, I was kept very busy at the key, and when Conductor Geo. Hunsaker came back from the Hotel, I said to him, "Did you have a good breakfast?" He replied, "Oh, Yes. But I was seated right across the table from a large fat woman and a strawberry blond." By now I was repeating a train order, and so George walked over to Mr. Blakeley, who was seated there, and said, Who were those people?" Mr. Blakeley replied, in a perfectly gentlemanly way, "That was my wife and my daughter." George said, "Oh, I beg your pardon." in a voice that showed complete humiliation. Hunsaker was a near relative of the Superintendent, and was the most popular passenger Conductor among them all. I liked him, and always called me Commodore. All of these interesting persons are long since passed to the Great Beyond.

While I was Railroad Agent at Lake Crystal, and at a time when I was exceedingly busy, there came a day when something happened that I cannot forget. As before mentioned, the Depot platform was high — level with box-car floors. At the corner of this platform, which was most convenient for approach, there were four or five plank steps up. On this day I saw that one of these steps was broken, and it was in the back of my mind all day to get the Section men to repair it; and no one was inconvenienced by it during the day. But that evening, as I was receiving and checking freight by lantern light, people came, just out of curiosity to see the train, and hear what they could of passing things. Among these was my neighbor Mr. W. C. Davis, a man with whom we had had many amicable dealings. Our sincere friendship included Mrs. Davis, also, and her mother Mrs. Folsom, who lived with them, and was our excellent nurse at the birth of two of our children. There was only a low fence between their house and ours. Mr. Davis was a good Methodist Brother. All the same he reported that he had fallen over the broken step, tied up one arm in a sling, and hired a clerk; and when sufficient time had elapsed, he sued the railroad company. The trial was held at the Courthouse in Mankato. Of course I went as a witness, but was not called because I could say nothing which would help our case. The company employed Dr. Murphy of St. Paul, a noted surgeon, who took Mr. Davis onto the platform, stripped him to the waist, lifted his arms to unite over his head, kneaded the shoulder, which claimed to be damaged, and not a wince or squeak came; so the surgeon pronounced him sound. Trial was by jury of his peers, and they were not long bringing in a verdict of guilty, and placing the damage at fifteen hundred dollars. Which the company paid. That was many years ago, and only one of many such cases as have happened since then. I understand that there have been men and women who have made a business of robbing railroads; in fact, I have since had experience with such

cases on a small scale. The Davis case did me no harm, not a word was ever said to my by any official regarding the episode.

My memoirs would not be complete without some description of a business man whom I will call Fox, though that was not his real name. I do not remember that this man had a warehouse or store or any place of business of his own. My depot was large, with a platform scale built right into the freight house floor-handy to weigh heavy articles handled on trucks; and this man bought dressed pork, beef, poultry, hides — in short almost anything. Dealt in whatever was for sale. He was friendly, lively always cheerful and so popular that farmers with anything to sell, were always looking for Fox. I frequently saw him rush in a little ahead of his victim, say one with a sled load of dressed hogs, and twist the ball on the scale so it would cheat the seller out of many pounds. I did not like it, but what could I do? There were other buyers who were honest, but not so well liked. I have certainly had occasion to observe how gullible is the ordinary man. Of course in the case of Mr. Fox, he could only fool part of the people all the time. One windy day I went out to collect on my freight expense bills, and about the last man I collected from was this Mr. Fox. He was up on a wagon unloading something something, and handed me the amount — maybe fifty dollars. I clutched the wad in my left hand, glancing over the amount to make sure it was correct, and hurried to my office. I recounted the money in my left hand and found a counterfeit ten dollar bill. Easy to see it was bad. I just went out where Fox was still unloading and said, "You gave me a bad ten dollar bill," waving it at him. He said. "Zat so?" Well, just take it in to Larson and Davis' store and they will give you another." I did so, and Larson smiled a crooked smile which meant that kind of business was not uncommon with Mr. Fox.

I have not said much about the Minnesota winters except that our first winter at Lake Crystal was almost no winter at all. That was fortunate, but every winter since that mild one, has been more severe than the previous one. Snow fell and drifted to such an extent that cuts had to be cleared by men with shovels in order that trains could be moved; and in that part of the state, the snow had a way of hardening almost like ice. I recall that at our house I could walk right out on hard snow over the fence into the street. I kept a saw on the front porch, and sawed out such blocks of snow as we needed to fit pails or washboiler, or stove reservoirs. Very handy. Of course there were no electric washing machines in those days, and I don't believe we had ever heard of galvanized washtubs. All tubs were made of wood, then. If we had had the metal tubs at that time, it would have been easier to melt snow for a bath. A wooden tub could not be heated on a stove, you see. There was tinware at that time, but mostly small articles such as pans, cups, dippers, candle molds, graters. Tin pails were used when we milked cows.

When I had been at L. C. about four years, the railroad company decided to build a branch road to Blue Earth City, starting at Lake Crystal. Well, that meant more work for me, there could be no doubt about that, and early in the spring, men and materials began to arrive on almost every train. The contract was taken by a young engineer named Mitchell Vincent - a very bright, open-watch faced!, well built young man. He had permission to open headquarters in my station, which he did. He moved in his flat-topped desk, big books, blue prints, etc. He was cheerful, and often whistled, going about his work; and I remember that just then "The Sailor's Life for Me," was popular. And so that was often the tune he whistled. His men soon were setting stakes, and wire-men erecting poles, as the first thing necessary is the telegraph. Boarding houses were being located at points where they would be needed, grading was soon under way, and dirt was flying. Mr. Vincent informed me that he would pay all bills for labor as well as all boarding-house bills, and other expenses. And, said he, "Will you handle that part of the business for me?" Said he did not like to handle money, would rather not have anything to do with money, and he would make it right with me if I would do so. I was thus made Pay master for the building of the Blue Earth Branch R.R.; and when Mr. Vincent received his wads of money, he just handed them over to me to do the counting and disbursing. I liked to handle money, but in accepting this responsibility, I

doubled my work. However, I was always given to simplicity in all matters handled, and with the opening of these large accounts, I simply used a cash book, with simple pages of Debtor and Creditor, together with what I called a Blotter. In this Blotter I noted all transactions first, and at my leisure carried the items to the cashbook. All this building of the branch increased the station accounts in many ways- more freight, more cars, more merchandise to handle and store. My helper Phillip LeClaire, was always on hand and dependable to the limit. Some way he gave me a feeling of safety and security every day. In fact, there was at Lake Crystal in that early day, a bad element, mostly foreigners, who drank bad liquor and were quarrelsome and troublesome at times. One day two or three of these characters came to the station with some-kind of a grievance, which was kept up until my patience gave out, when I showed them the door, using my right foot to hasten their exit. That evening when the wayfreight came and we were unloading merchandise, and I was checking the items from the waybills as carried out by the train crew and Phillip, suddenly we were surrounded by five or six men, some of them the men I had chased out that day. Evidently they were for fighting. Phillip signaled me to step into the boxcar we were unloading from, which I did. And then bang, bang went Phillip's fist and he was dancing around and shouting, "Come on, you cowards! I can whip a million of you." Of course that gave me courage enough so that I stepped boldly out and gave them one minute to clear the platform. They went. That night when we were about ready to leave for home, three of these men came to the window, inviting us to come out, but Phil. threw open the door and said to them, "Come in, if you want anything; but we will not come out." So they came. They displayed the white flag, as it were. They had sobered off, and said they wanted to be friends in the future. I certainly felt sorry for one of them. I often met him and I think his nose was permanently injured by the impact of Phil's great fist. However, I think he was a better man and citizen from that day on. One other evening when I was paying off a gravel-train crew, a brakeman took offence at something I said or did — I never knew what it was about — and he became very insulting and loud; this humiliated me, as there were some of my friends in the office at the time. I was pretty handy with my tongue, but I couldn't compete with that brakeman. I threatened all kinds of hurting him, at which he laughed. I realized I was no pugilist, so just opened the ticket window and asked Phillip, who I knew was there, to come in. The waiting-room door opened so that Phillip came right out where the belligerent man was standing. At this the brakeman said, "Well, what do you think you are going to do here?" Phillip said, "Mr. Fluke told me to come out here to keep you straight, and I am going to do it." Brakey squared around and began to say, "Let's see you do it," when Bang! went Phil's fist again and Brakey was knocked several feet, landing in the doorway to the platform, and Phillip astraddle of him, Clutching his throat. I had to rush in and beg Phil not to hurt him, as we mustn't do anything to cause a lawsuit. A day or two later this man came to my door and said, "You keep a buffer here, do you?" I said, "Yes, for just such fellows as you." He said, "I'll get even with you yet." But I never met him again.

And there were other times while I was at Lake Crystal when Phillip LeClaire fought my battles for me. Perhaps you are thinking Phillip LeClaire was a roughneck. Nothing of the kind. He was always a gentleman. Always doffed his hat when speaking to a lady, was strictly honest, Was married and had a nice family consisting of wife, two sons, and one daughter named Sophia. He had come from Quebec to Minneapolis Minnesota when very young, making his way alone, until later on he was employed by General Sibley as Indian trader. He could talk French and any kind of Indian language, but very broken English. He was peculiar in some ways. Was much afraid of dogs, which struck one as strange, because he wasn't afraid of anything else in the world. He explained that he had once been attacked and bitten by a fierce dog. When walking on the sidewalk or any place where he approached a corner, he would step out a step or two before reaching the corner. This was a habit he had formed in ins younger days, not to be taken by surprise at a corner or passing a large rock, tree, or what not. Phillip was in the army under General Sibley at the time of the Indian uprising in 1862, working as a scout and interpreter; and

later on settled down at Lake Crystal, pensioned for life as were all Minnesotans who fought in the Sioux uprising.

The next spring after Mr. Vincent's arrival at L.C., the Blue Earth Branch was ready for business, and the stations Garden City, Vernon Center, Amboy, Winnebago City and Blue Earth were opened. A mixed train was put on running from Mankato to Blue Earth and return each day via Lake Crystal--in all about fifty miles. After the year of overwork I concluded to lay off for a spell, and for a change I accepted the job of Express Messenger and Baggage Master on this little run between Mankato and Blue Earth and return every day. Could see some of my family when passing Lake Crystal — nearly as good as being at home. I was well acquainted and on good terms with Conductor Vanderwater and Engineer John Censorbex(?) and altogether we had lots of fun all the day long. On this run I made the acquaintance of all the Station Agents.

At Amboy was J. F. Bander, Agent, who lived in the Depot with a wife and two or three nice children. They seemed to be a very happy little family. As Amboy was situated not far from Winnebago, which was a station on the Milwaukee R.R. and in competition territory, Mr. Bander was authorized to buy wheat, using his depot or cars as warehouse. In my capacity of express messenger I often brought him packages of money-one or two thousand dollars every few days — which was furnished by some Grain-elevator Company in St. Paul. I had met Mr. Bander at Lake Crystal previous to my train work. He had much the appearance of a sincere Presbyterian Minister, but for all that, he was a number one good Agent and Operator. I have given you this description of Mr. Bander because we shall meet him again later on.

Along in the fall when I had tired of this train work and gone back to my station, I received word from Supt. Lincoln, saying he would like to have me go to Worthington as Agent; and if I would go there and run that station right up to the handle, my salary would be higher than it was at L.C. A nice offer, but it made me feel sad, for some reason. There was a rumor abroad that the St. P. & S.C. R.R. was going into the hands of the Omaha Ry. Co.. and that might not be so good for us. In fact the idea was distasteful to everybody in the employ of the St. P. & S.C. However, I decided to go, but not to move my family down there at that time; just go and see how I Liked it, before moving. We were living in our own house, and no rent to pay, but Oh, how I hated to go! When at length the Auditors came and checked me out, and all boarded the night train, I believe I would have been glad if the train had been wrecked before reaching Worthington, and I one of the killed.

It didn't take me long to see what ailed Worthington Station. The people had been running it instead of the Agent. My first day was like a battle, a kind of warfare against everything that had existed during the reign of my predecessor, as it were. The situation at this time was as follows: The Sioux Falls branch had lately been completed--Worthington to Sioux Falls, S.D. The Depot had been re-built and very much changed since the time I was Agent there in 1872-'73-telegraph office upstairs, Operators on duty days and nights, my office below was large and commodious. A rather low, wide-topped counter extended clear across it. A section of the top of this counter was hinged to open and shut, making a good kind of gateway. It was evident that this gate had never been kept closed, as on this first day the public came right in. As I remember it, the weather was growing cold, and one or two women carrying books which they could read while loafing by my warm fire, seemed to feel very much at home. Men who brought goods to ship unloaded their stuff without asking me where I wanted it placed. Others helped themselves to articles they were looking for without paying any attention to me, much less paying the freight. Some of these activities might have been allowable after the Agent was well acquainted with all the people who came to the Depot on business, but not otherwise. All was chaos; but I was not without experience in bringing order out of chaos. I dug up a nice little tin sign, painted black with gold letters which said, “Stay Out,” and tacked it on the shut gate in the counter. The sight of this sign gave everybody something like cramps; and there were sinister looks in my direction; but I lived

through it and before long some of the people who were most hostile at first, became my best friends.

Sometime during the month Mr. Lincoln came to Worthington, looking everything over. His face showed plainly that he was pleased. He said, “Fluke, is there anything about the station, any changes you would like to have made? If so, I will have the carpenters do it right away.” I told him that I was well pleased with the layout as it was.

Snow began falling early that year, and by December 10th was causing much trouble in the handling of trains. Passenger trains had to carry snow-shovelers to help them through drifts. The line from Worthington to Sioux Falls was badly crippled. (Interruption: the radio giving the Police Signal says, “Notify all police and sheriffs the First Nat'1 Bank of Brainerd has just been robbed by three bandits. $40,000 taken. Particulars later. Men escaped in car going North.”) I am writing my memoirs at home in Walker, Minn. and this is October 23rd, 9:20 a.m., year 1933. Quite a long period between the year 1881 and now, in 1933.

Well, as I was saying, we were having plenty of snow that winter of '81. I am sure the railroad company spent fifty thousand dollars trying to keep the road open between my station and a mile west, where the Sioux Falls line switch was located. An army of men cleaned out the drifting snow one day to find the same task to tackle the next. The weather was exceedingly cold, and engines often died for want of care, or fuel, or water, and it sometimes became necessary to haul a dead engine in, by ox-teams- several teams to move one engine and mighty slow work at that. At that time all their locomotives were wood-burners and not large like they are at present.

That part of the St. P & S C west of Mankato was partly closed all that winter, but there were portions of the line that could be used most of the winter. The company could not be accused of carelessness or lack of energy in the matter of trying to keep the road open. If an individual had made an equal effort to do as impossible a thing, he would have been pronounced foolish. I was living at the Railroad Hotel, Dan Shell proprietor, and by this time owner, having purchased it from the railroad company. Mr. Shell rented the place from me as agent when I was there in 1873 and soon after that the Sioux Falls line was built, and that proved to be as good as a gold mine to Shell's Hotel. Everybody going West, had to tarry at least one night in Worthington, and their name was legion. Dan Shell bought farms, had herds of cattle, in short was soon a rich man. Later on he went into politics and was elected to the legislature. The land around Worthington which had been branded sour and worthless by early settlers, Row proved to be just excellent farming and grazing land. It was easy for a man like Shell to pick up these mortgaged farms from people who thought the land almost worthless. I hope my talk about Mr. Shell will not result in shell shock to any one who may happen to read it.

Almost as soon as I was sent to Worthington, the Omaha RR took over the StP & SC, and everything was changed. The Accounting Department furnishing us with new and very much more complicated blanks covering every phase of station work. And besides all the rest. the Auditor ordered all stations to furnish a recapitulation covering all freight received and forwarded during the last ten months preceding the time the Omaha took charge. That made us all sick; and most of the agents at the larger towns sent in their resignations. One of my telegraphers named Charlie Spencer, who had previously been a clerk in the General Store-keeper's Office, came to my rescue and offered to make up this report during his leisure time on his night trick. He liked that kind of work, and I was glad to have him do it at a nominal price. By so doing, I figured I could hang onto my job till spring, and that should end my stay with the Omaha. The winter was one of the worst for snow we had ever seen. Men in shoveling out some of the deeper cuts found it necessary to have about three limes of men - - one line at the bottom passing the snow to the line farther up, and so on to the top. The snow in some places was drifted so one could step over the telegraph wires, which were the usual height on the poles.

Not long after coming to this station, I got into some trouble by delivering an express package to Mr. Dash which was addressed to Mrs. Dash. The couple were separated, but I didn't know that, not being personally acquainted with them. I learned about it when very soon I received a letter from Express Supt. at St. Paul attaching this woman's letter and asking me how about it. She certainly showed me up as being a nonentity or something worse. I simply answered that I, being new there, and not knowing the particulars regarding these people, made delivery to the man, ending my remarks by saying I hoped the Superintendent would be more merciful to me than this woman had been.

In the spring, when I was about being relieved, this Supt. came to Worthington and remarked that he was sorry he had not heard that I was leaving. He said the Express Co. was well pleased with the way I had handled their business. Said he would like to have me for his private secretary, referring to this correspondence as the item that awakened his interest in me. He said his secretary was now at a hospital for an operation which was likely to terminate his work. He invited me to call on him when I was at liberty, all of which was pleasing to me.

Well, going back to the passing winter. Much of the time was passed by intervals of just waiting. One passenger crew had made Worthington and laid up there awaiting further developments in open-ing the road to the East. In the baggage car was a keg of brandy which the conductor tapped, and every day invited a certain number of us (only such as were temperate) to partake, and only once a day, mind you. And thus passed the snowiest winter ever known in that country. One sad thing I should have mentioned was this: once a freight-train coming in from the west, on which were two or three carloads of stock cattle, stuck in the snow almost in sight of the station. It was there nearly all day. The day was fiercely cold; and when after dark it was shoveled out and released and unloaded at the stock chute, many of the animals were severely frozen, so that their ears and tails broke off in the terrible unloading. All this caused me much anxiety as the cattle were just let to go where they would. Later I was relieved to find that the men in charge of them had been able to have most of them coralled. But just think of the cruelty, both to man and beast.

After January 10th when the days lengthened, there was more sun-shine. This made a coating of ice on the snow which reflected the rays of brightness in such a way as to cause men's faces to become blistered, and also affected their eyes so that some of the snow-shovelers had to quit work. In March the weather grew milder; the snow began to melt and soon water was seen in little rivulets coursing down to lower levers, until streams and roadside ditches became running rivers. Spring was coming right along fast. I had sent in my resignation and felt better. I was tired of controversy with C. D. W. Young, auditor of the Omaha. Alphabet Young we called him. My family was still at Lake Crystal. There was a possibility that our abandoned passenger train, which had been waiting so long for the road to open, could start west any time now. I decided to go home on it, as there was nothing doing at my station, and could not be until other parts of the track were cleared. Now it was raining, and streams one could step over in ordinary times, became roaring rivers. I handed the keys to George Alien, telling him to carry on till I returned - - I would be gone only two or three days.

Our train started east about 9 A.M. All went well until we came to the Watonwan River, which was just near Windom Station. Pete Calvin, Engineer, slowed down and stopped, saying there was something wrong with the bridge. Of course we got out to see what was the matter.

The bridge was upright steel construction, very strong. And as the land was low on our side there was quite a long approach of piles and trestle before coming to the real bridge. Now the stream was a frantic, swift-running river, carrying blocks of ice the size of a small room: and these had been striking the sills of the bridge with such force as to warp the whole structure out of line, and hence it was unsafe for passage. Now most passengers decided to walk over the bridge and take chances on future moves. We got section men to bring their push cars and transfer all trunks and

mail across the bridge as it began to look as if the bridge might go to pieces. I went to a hotel in Windom, and while I was eating my dinner, the word came that the bridge was about to fall. I hurried down there just in time to witness the collapse. The two high sides had tipped over to a slant of about 45 degrees and appeared to be held thus only by the steel rails and fish plates (?) of the track. Somebody not far from where we stood loosened the fish plate on the outside rail and over went the bridge into the river. I remember there was a dog right in the middle at the time. Everybody shouted at such a sight. In a minute the dog was seen swimming down the river, landing safely on the bank below.

How was I to get to Lake Crystal? was what interested me at this period. There were several passengers going to points further along on the line. The Agent at Windom so informed the Superintendent at St. Paul, and soon an engine and coach was sent from St. James to carry us as far as three miles east of Madelia, where another bridge crossing the Watonwan was impassable. Now there were five of us who concluded to walk along the east side of the river in hopes of finding some means of crossing over. So we could at least walk on the railroad, if no better means of travel showed up. After proceeding about a mile we came to a deserted shack. Near the river bank was a straw stack. We could see some kind of a ranch across the river and a man or two observing us. We called, and made signals that we wanted to cross over. The river here was very wide and the distance too great to be heard. We climbed the strawstack and just waited. Must have been up there an hour or more when we saw the men bringing a boat down to the river. One man rowed us across. It was too heavy a load for that old boat but Glory Be, we were across, and safely on our pedestrian way! With sore feet I reached my home a little after dark. My wife and kiddies were not expecting me, as you know. I was only on this trip without permission, but it was a happy meeting at our house.

Next day after breakfast I went to the depot, where I was well acquainted with Agent Billy Nash. Here I could hear all that was said on the wires and keep posted as to the prospect of the line being opened or not. I think it was about my fifth day at home, when going to the office I heard a message being sent to Mr. Boyden saying that Fluke had left Worthington; to investigate! This message was signed Lincoln, Supt., and showed that he was at Sioux City. It was evening when I heard this message. I also learned that a work train was being rigged up to go west from Mendato early the next morning. That was my chance to start for Worthington and I was on hand when they arrived next morning. The bridge near Madelia had been repaired so we kept on going till we reached Windom, from where we could go no further with this train. I learned from the agent that Peter Calvin was still there, and his engine and crew were about to go to Worthington. I lost no time getting a boatman to carry me across the gap where the steel bridge had been, climbed up the ragged timbers of the remaining approach just in time to get aboard the moving train. I learn that a train coming from Sioux City is expected to meet us at Worthington. I can only hope our train may reach there first, and it does. George met me with the keys saying everything was in good shape. Just then the train from the west pulled in. Mr. Lincoln stepped off saying, “How de do Fluke,” as though he was not surprised to see me there. I inquired as to when he could relieve me. He said, “Oh, in a day or two.” I have always remembered that as my lucky day. Of course I do not think it would have harmed me much to be caught away from my station under such circumstances, but I was glad they found me there when they came. In a few days I was relieved, going straight home to Lake Crystal, where I was determined to enjoy my freedom in a vacation of my own choosing, visiting with my family and friends and just resting up before even thinking of the future. My work with the Omaha people had disgusted me with railroading. Could I find another railroad like the good old St. Paul and Sioux City? Not likely. However, I would not worry.

I had been at home about ten days when the agent at Mankato was taken sick; and I went there as relief for a few days. I remember there was also a change in telegraphers. The new man's name

was Geo. Smith - - a first class station man and operator. H. C. Hope, the operator in the Superintendent's office at St. Paul, was a peculiar sender. It was somewhat difficult to receive from him at first. We had much business to and from his office, the first message coming to Smith. I noticed that after Hope had got quite a start in the message that Smith opened his key and said, "Are you sending anything to me?" Hope said, "Yes, damn you," and began all over again. Well, after that George could take from Hope without a break. Later on Hope was appointed Superintendent of Telegraph for the Omaha system.

I think it was about the second or third night of my stay at Mankato (I was rooming at the Salspaugh Hotel) anyway, it was on a night when I had quite a wad of Railroad Money on me, and I went to bed feeling a little nervous, thinking how easy it would be for some robber to hold me up. About 2:00 a.m. I was awakened by a cold hand on my face. I sat up quickly, grasping the hand which had disturbed me, when lo, I found it was my own left hand which had been sticking up above my head when I fell asleep. That arm and hand became numb, and fell, causing the scare.

My relief work at Mankato was soon over. Back home at Lake Crystal I took the older children out walking. Sometimes we went fishing on the lake with Phillip LeClaire, passing the time pleasantly for a month or more, until finally I felt the impulse to go to St. Paul where I could investigate my chances for future employment. Naturally I first called on the Express Supt. who had expressed interest in my work at Worthington, found that his secretary had partially re-covered from his operation, and was back at his desk again. A new position was being considered by the company, which would require a man as Transfer Manager down on the Levee, where all trains unloaded express for all points. My job would be to separate and forward all such goods, and see that they were properly reloaded towards their destinations. Now that would certainly require a man with a nimble brain. The salary mentioned was good. However, this would be a newly created position and there was no certainty just when it would begin. By this time my former employer J. C. Boyden had left the Omaha, and was now with the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul R R as General Northwestern freight Agent. His office was across Third Street from the Merchant's Hotel. Going over there, I was well received by Mr. Boyden, he being all alone in his office at the time. He urged me to come and try working on the Milwaukee, writing me a pen and ink letter to carry to General Manager C. H. Prior at Minneapolis, say-ing as follows, "Have you any good station to offer E. K. Fluke the bearer of this letter? He is competent to fill the bill anywhere. He is temperate at all times and strictly reliable" Signed, J. C. Boyden. With this letter in my pocket, I went to Minneapolis, called at Mr. Prior's office, learned he was out on the line. I got into conversation with the man who presumably was Mr. Prior's Chief Clerk. I said I was looking for a job as Station Agent. He said, "Where did you work last?" I said, "Worthington." He replied, "Nothing doing. We had one man from there, and he stole everything that was loose." I had not shown him my letter from Mr. Boyden to C. H. Prior, and what this man said made me so angry I just made a few savage remarks and walked out; which was a very foolish thing to do. Either of my two visits - - the one to the General Express Co or this one to Mr. Prior's office - - held possibilities of good positions for me, had I handled them in a sensible manner. Instead I went home, talked matters over with my always sympathetic wife, and decided to go back to Ohio, where our children would probably have better educational advantages than were attainable in the Vest at that time. I was not long finding a buyer for our house, sold for much less than cost. The greater part of our household goods were sold to our neighbors. While this was going on, wife and I were stocking up on the matter of new clothing for ourselves and the children. It pains me now, to think that I could have been guilty of such a daring move - - so reckless and entirely unwise. Going back where jobs were harder to find, salaries likely to be lower, no home of our own back there, would probably have to park the family among our relatives until I could find a location. Soon after our arrival at my mother's house in Ohio, the children were taken sick, breaking out in very dark blotches or rash, and scaring my mother, who had always been afraid of

smallpox. The doctor came, and after careful examination, pronounced it black measles, which was bad enough, but all were glad it was nothing worse. No doubt this disease was contacted on our trip from the West.

Now, after visiting around amongst our nearest relatives and friends I began to investigate the possibilities of finding something to do. I found that my former stand-by, T. A. Phillips of the Atlantic & Great Western RR, was no longer there. That even the A & GW was no more, but was now the New York, Pennsylvania and Ohio - (NY P&O) for short. All my former friends of the Despatcher's office who had been with Mr. Phillips, had departed. I was struck with a lonesome feeling. I made little trips through the country and one of these took me to Norwalk, where I learned about a new railroad being built, and almost finished, between Wheeling, West Virginia, and Toledo, Ohio. The Wheeling & Lake Erie RR. This road passed through Ohio, not far from my old home. I immediately called at their headquarters office which was located there, met Mr. Oliver, the General Manager, and made application for a station on his road, when it should be completed. He asked me where I had worked, and if I had any letters or recommendations. I replied that I had been working in the West, on what had been the St. P & S C Ry, and produced the letter which Mr. Boyden had given me to Supt. Prior of the C M & St. P. He seemed impressed, and asked me to call on him later, saying he thought they would open several stations in about a month from that date. I mentioned Wellington as the station I would like to have, it being nearest to where we were now living. Needless to say, I left his office feeling better, hurried home to tell or our new hopes, for I felt almost sure that I would get what I asked for. Of course my folks were glad; and next day being Sunday, we had chicken with dumplings for dinner!

I managed to keep tab on the progress the W & L E was making towards completion so as to be on hand with my next visit, to see Mr. Oliver. When the time arrived, I was told, "All right, move your family to Wellington. We open the station there on May 1st. You will be allowed one man as clerk and helper."

The Depot was bran new, smelling much of paint. This I remember because it was so severe as to cause pain and redness of my eyes and nose for several days after moving in. I believe this was my first experience in taking charge of a splinter new depot on a splinter new railroad; and it was an interesting occasion when a freight train loaded with new station furniture, also the Official Car, pulled in and proceeded to unload office desks, cupboards, ticket cases, ticket stamps, settees for waiting-rooms, stoves, gang planks, four-wheeled-trucks, tank trucks-in short everything necessary for use at a station. There were plenty of men along to install this furniture. All the stationery was contained in a large box, the opening of which, and careful examination of each lot, and proper storing of all, was my first work at Wellington. I was glad to find that the depot was located quite a little distance out of town. It is always an advantage to see who or what is coming. One needs to guard against being taken by surprise.

Wellington was the junction with the Cleveland, Columbus and Cincinnati Railroad, with connecting tracks to their station; and I was soon to learn that it was an important point, because much of the traffic to and from our road was to move via Wellington. Many of the towns on the W & L E purchased their supplies from wholesale stores in Cleveland. Wellington was situated on what is called the Western Reserve, a portion of this reserve was land given to people who had lost everything they possessed in some great conflagration that occurred in New England some years before, and the federal government came to their relief by donating this Ohio land to them. The land was mostly yellow clay, not so good for farming, but good grass and orchard land. These Eastern Yankees were smart enough to use it to the very best advantage, raising such crops as could be grown, with dairying as chief occupation. Wellington was one of the largest cheese shipping stations in the country, if not the largest.

The W & L E Depot was quite neat, with windows reaching almost to the floor, everything new,

and here was I, Agent for a railroad at Wellington Ohio, the town where years before, I had got my first sight of a railroad in operation - - The CC & C.

The Yankees were bright, active people. I guess it was during my first week there that one who came to have a look around said, "How did you come to be appointed Agent here?" and Added, "Our business men have been recommending the appointment of Henry Biggs, one of our citizens here." "Oh," I replied, "I just called on Mr. Oliver, told him of my experience, where I had worked, that was all." There were several good stores and firms in the town, such as Baldwin, Laundon, (?) Windecker & Co., Horr, Warner & Co. and many others. There were good mills, warehouses and so forth, good schools and my four children soon attending them. I had much business with Tim Herrick, the father of Myron T. Herrick, who later on was elected Governor of Ohio; and after his term as Governor, was appointed Ambassador to France, where he was during the World War (No. 1). It was he that dared to stay when Paris, fearing the Germans, was running away. 'Twas he that welcomed Lindbergh on his safe arrival in France. He was beloved by the French people. He remained as Ambassador at Paris until his health failed and death soon followed. A modest monument marks his grave in Wellington Cemetery.

I think Wellington was my first station to have a telephone to contend with. While it was a great convenience to me in many ways, till it kept me pretty busy answering questions about the freight rate on cheese to all parts of the United States. A week or two after taking charge of this new station, my helper, whose name was Harry Odell, was sleeping on a cot in the office, his head near one of those low windows. He was just dozing off to sweet dreams when, Zoop! A knife cut the putty from one of the large panes of glass in a window only a foot or so from his head. Odell let out a war whoop, and gave chase, it being moonlight; but the man was soon lost in the car yard. Odell came to my house to ask what more should be done. I said, "Drop it. If we caught him it would only make me a lot more work, writing and telegraphing." So that ended that little flurry.

Wellington supported a night marshal. And one night when making his rounds, he found a burglar just entering a jewelry store. The burglar, instead of sticking up his hands as ordered, shot the officer dead, and made his escape, leaving no clue as to his whereabouts. I remember the Marshall had a nice little family, and was well liked in the community. Great excitement and indignation prevailed. Hand-bills were printed and posted throughout the country, as fast as horses could carry them. There were no automobiles at that time! I said the Marshall was shot dead - - mortally wounded. But not instantly. He was able to walk across the street to his home, where he succumbed, first giving some description of his murderer. Next day a freight train on the LS & MS RR stopped at Elyria to take water. A brakeman climbed down, sauntered into the Depot waiting-room. He read this handbill describing the killer, and offering five-hundred dollars reward for his arrest. Brakey climbed the box-car again as the train moved away; and while he slowly walked back to the caboose, stepping from car to car, he noticed a bum riding on the bumpers between two cars. This was no unusual sight but something about this man caught his attention. Something about his clothes, especially his hat, was like that handbill had described. So the brakeman invited him to come up on top, where he was, saying it would be all right, and much better than riding the bumpers. The brakeman was so sure this was the fleeing killer that he took the proper steps necessary to have an officer on hand at their next stopping place. This officer took charge of the prisoner, returning him to our sheriff at Elyria. Next day he was brought to Wellington for preliminary examination. A crowd of more than one-hundred citizens gathered and there were cries of "Hand him! Get a rope!" One or two of the most solid men pleaded with the angry crowd to have some control and let the law have its course; and while this was going on, the sheriff and others assisting, managed to have the prisoner secretly transported through some residences that lined that street to a conveyance which carried him to jail at Elyria. I believe that was the only time I ever came near to seeing a lynching party. I didn't enjoy it, was very glad it turned out as it did. Later the case was tried, and the penalty was paid for murder.

One day as I was on my way to the depot, I met the barber who was looking sick, and making queer little noises in his throat. I asked him what was the matter. He said, "Poison!" Said he had stopped at Doc Smith's office to get something for his cold, that Doc gave him a teaspoonful of medicine, saying that it would fix him up. The barber, on tasting it, spewed it from his mouth, exclaiming that it was certainly poison. At this the doctor laughed, and to show he was telling the truth, he swallowed a spoonful out of the same phial; then his face changed, for he found it was indeed poison. He grabbed proper emetics, 'Phoned his house, gave instructions to get a certain physician from Cleveland and other Wellington doctors quickly. Instead of the mild medicine he thought it was, the phial had contained aconite! All the doctors came, and by working over Doc Smith all night, they saved his life.

My work at Wellington was, to say the least, not easy, and growing more exacting and burdensome as the W & L E became better known and appreciated. Rebilling merchandise coming from Cleveland to stations on our line, required many hours of my time, often keeping me at the depot till ten o'clock at night. And now the road was being extended on vest of Norwalk, its present terminal. Much steel and other car-load freight such as stone, lime, cement for construction purposes, came via Wellington. I asked for more help and more pay. My pay was raised, but I got no more help.

Mr. Oliver ordered me to waybill a certain carload of material to a point west of Norwalk, and I did, which transaction, for some reason, displeased Mr. MacKinley, the General Freight Agent. He sent me a savage, insinuating telegram, which made me feel very small, but angry. So I sent a copy of the telegram to General Manager Oliver, attaching a copy of my answer to MacKinley. In reply Mr. Oliver said that he didn't approve of my language to MacKinley, an officer of the company, but added that it had done me no harm now, now should it do me any harm in the future.

The Wheeling and Lake Erie, when completed, was a nice young road running three passenger trains each way daily except Sundays through this old, well-settled country. This was still in the eighties, and before the automobile had come to rob the railroads of their passengers. The W & L E was also a coal-road. At this time they had very few box cars, but were well equipped with gondola or coal cars. Of course foreign freight cars found their way onto the W & L E. That arrangement was good, for an agent was free to load and use any foreign cars he had, or could get hold of. On well-organized old roads, cars needed for loading must be ordered from the car distributor, who will furnish cars suiting the requirements in each case, and sometimes this causes a long delay. The W & L E having as yet but a limited number of boxcars, allowed us to use foreign cars. This was easy.

There were several churches in Wellington. My family attended the Methodist. As I remember it, there was a good minister, a good choir, Sunday school, etc. These Yankees - - at least the men folks — were sort of backward in their attendance on divine services. I heard one of them say he was careful about sitting in damp churches. It wasn't good for his health. However all these people were good, cheerful, friendly citizens, seven days of the week practicing their faith in the slogan that "To give and take's the gospel", with emphasis on the take in most cases.

When I had been at Wellington about a year, I took, as it were, a kind of mental inventory of my situation with reference to my present position and what I might look forward to in the future. Would the next year be a repetition of the year just passed - -heavy work and light pay? As to expecting promotion, there was not much hope in that direction. A railroad Station Agent is not often promoted to positions in other departments of railroad work, and a small station is more to be desired than a large town station. Not very much difference in pay, much less work at the small station. Thinking these things over, I just decided to try some other kind of work. I sent in my resignation and awaited with a feeling of relief whatever should follow. It was several days

before I received any answer, and then I was advised that Henry Biggs of Wellington, would succeed me as Agent. During the interval between the time of sending in my resignation and waiting for answer and relief - - several days -- I made no remittances of money. And I believe that the Accounting Department probably expected to find me short in my accounts, which I knew was not the case. Instead of sending the Traveling Auditor, as is the usual procedure, the General Auditor himself came to make the transfer. He was a nice gentleman, and so able. There were no adding machines in those days, but this man could add two columns of figures at a time, instead of one. When the checking was completed, he said "Fifteen hundred dollars." I remember his look of relief as I reached down in my pants pocket and took out the exact amount, placing it before him.

My successor, Mr. Biggs, was a clerk at the C C & C RR Station. The man who had been boosted for the W & L E Station when it was handed to me the year previous.

I shrink at the thought of having to narrate the course of my next move, but I thought I was very tired of railroad work, and indeed I was. For that was still in the days when there simply was no limit to what constituted a days work, or time required on Sundays or holidays, nights, or any other time. So I would try something else for a change, at least. I found a grocery store for sale in town, which, by digging up most of my birthright I was able to buy; and soon I was a full fledged merchant, doing quite a fair amount of business. I had one clerk named Plum. I certainly enjoyed more freedom there than I had ever felt while in the employ of any rail-road.

Some notable things happened while we were living in Wellington. One was the establishing of standard time in zones across the United States - - Eastern, Central, Mountain, and Pacific. Up to this time there were many devices for marking time - - sun dials ? ? ? etc., Railroad Conductors sometimes carrying two or three watches in order that they might agree with some others reckoning further east or west, with whom they connected. I recall that in 1869, when I was on the Union Pacific, a Mr. Dowd had the telegraph wires connected so that there was a continuous circuit from Portland Maine, to San Francisco, the completed line attached to the clock at Portland, so we heard the tick distinctly all the way. This was probably the initiative (?) of the dividing of the space into zones, separated one hour apart from East to West.

It was in the year 1883 that Grover Cleveland was elected President, taking his seat March 4th, 1884. For a Democrat to be elected President was something out of the usual. At that time there were only four Democrats in Wellington - - Mr. Bush, his two sons and myself. We thought this a proper occasion for staging a jollification program, and we did it. The day was set, and we four dressed in all the gorgeous array that we could gather out of attics and old chests, took charge, and marched at the head of the procession (made up of whom besides these four?). Bands played, speeches were made. I re-member that I was an object of interest because I was wearing an enormous black hat with one side pinned up by a golden spread eagle, and decorated with a beautiful ostrich feather over all. Evidently this had had once belonged to a Mason of high degree. At night we burned turpentine in a huge hollow stump which we had set up in the public square. I shall always remember this as a gala day in my life. Our Republican friends, whom we might have expected to be displeased or even hostile, turned right in doing everything possible to make it the merry day it was. Our rejoicing was not long-lived. Soon after Cleveland was elected President, the country experienced what was then called "Hard Times." Now we call it Depression. Nobody seemed to know the cause. I reckon that all our capitalists withdrew their support from whatever business was going forward at that time. All such had been fattening up during several years of Republican Administrations. Naturally they wanted no change. Whatever may have been the cause, it played the cat and banjo with my grocery business. Most of my customers were people working in shops and on railroads, etc. People who paid their bills when they got their monthly pay. Many such lost their jobs; result, I had either to trust these idle workers or lose their trade. I lost much trade. Luckily I was able to pay all my outstanding

obligations, and after living as much as possible on the unsold groceries, I traded the remainder for a farm, located near Mount Pleasant, Michigan, which farm I never even went to see, having the impression that it was almost worthless. I sold it for one hundred dollars. Now after long years have passed since that transaction, I learn that any land around Mt. Pleasant, Mich., is very valuable.

By the time we were through at Wellington, brother-in-law Oliver had disposed of his property at Neche, and moved to St. Paul, going into Real Estate there just in time to be on hand for the great boom which struck the Twin Cities at that time. Now he had been there a year, and doing well. He wrote me saying that if I would come to St. Paul, he would open up a hardware store in some country town, where we could jointly make some money. Settling my family at Windsor, I hurried to St. Paul, located his office at 316 Jackson St., just across the street from the Merchant's Hotel. Several of the most successful Real Estate men in the city had offices on the same floor. I found Oliver almost too busy to pay much attention to me. Towards evening he said, "Well, let's go home." I walked with him to the livery barn where he kept his horse and buggy, and soon we were on Wabasha Street, passing Old Hope Church and Commodore Kitzen's (tell about C K) residence, and out onto Summit Avenue, where resided the great and the rich, beginning with Jim Hill's mansion. We traveled a mile or so on this beautiful avenue, Oliver pointing out and naming the owners of the different residences, until we reached a street that led on to Lincoln Avenue, where he was living at that time. I was warmly welcomed by Mary and the children. There was no lack of interesting conversation this first evening of a long visit. Next morning after breakfast we again rode behind the speedy, trotting black horse to Oliver's office in the city, where I felt very much out of place. After making some trips about the city, where I felt very much out of place. After making some trips about the city, where Oliver had interests, I was given some writing and copying to do around the office, which, I felt was not well done.

Boom times are sure to bring to a city many forms of amusement such as circuses, theaters, museums. This was before the day of movies. Oliver seemed in no hurry about starting a hardware store, so I began spending much of my time visiting these places of amusement. When weary with walking the streets, I could drop into one of these ten cent museums, and stay an hour or more, seeing some of the mistakes of nature such as Jo-Jo the dog-faced man. A little boy formed like a turtle, moving about like a turtle covered with a huge shell, only the head and face and nimble speech were human. Many visitors, especially women, tarried at this wonder. Barnum's What - Is - It, Mr. and Mrs Tom Thumb on the same platform with Captain Bates and his wife — both giants over seven feet tall. The Siamese Twins, all these and hundreds of other strange curiosities of men and animals could be seen here. Oliver was too busy to think of going with me to look up a location just now. Lately he had purchased 47 lots between the cities, where the Northern Pacific shops were about to be located. When he pointed out a map of this block of lots I expressed my doubts that he would be able to turn them over very soon. Inside of five days he sold half of the 47 lots for more than he paid for all of them! I am repeating this single transaction to give some idea of the Real Estate business at that time. Soon we took a trip to Perham, Minn., found they were having grasshoppers around there, so we went to other towns, ending up at Park River, way up on the border, but something was the matter there. Finally we gave up for this trip, promising to look further some day soon. Well, one day I went to the Great Northern General Offices to see if they had need of Agents. They said yes, and sent me to St. Cloud to see Mr. Bryan who was Chief Dispatcher there. When I was finally admitted, he asked me a few questions and then said they wanted a man to work nights at Osakis, making a very low wage. "Oh, "I said, "That will not do for me." He said, "What do you expect?" I answered that I had always worked for say eighty five to a hundred dollars per month. He replied, "You'd have to work here a good while before you could get a job paying such a salary as that." However, he seemed impressed; and said if I would go to Osakis, he would see what could be done later on. I was tired of loafing and so I went.

Osakis was a great summer resort, at least I had reason to think so when the night passenger came in and unloaded maybe 100 trunks, and tents, and tent-poles, also several row-boats. And such was the case almost every night. Depot full of people, nasty hard-boiled young men all mixed up. It looked to me as if some just made the depot their night stopping place. I tried to break up this state of affairs, and for my pains I received about the same courtesy as was shown to that prophet of the Bible when the children came down the mountain calling "Old bald head." Only I hadn't any bears to destroy them with. Osakis Lake was only a stone's throw from the depot. A beautiful lake some twenty miles in length and one to three miles wide. It afforded good fishing. At that time, there was a small steamboat making trips for tourist and other trade. I got acquainted with the wild skipper, and deadheaded with him when I wished. The end of the lake next to town had a sandy beach sloping down to the water. Back of this sandy front were long, comfortable board seats, generally occupied by groups of people. Out door life it was. Of course there were times when I was the only lonesome one there, gazing out over the lake.

When I had been on this night work nearly a month, I called up the Chief at St. Cloud, asking him what prospect there was of my being placed at some good paying job. If there was nothing in sight, I wanted to be on my way. He said, "I will send a man to relieve you, and you come to St. Cloud and meet Supt. Rice who will be here Friday. Perhaps he can place you." At this time the G N was just finishing the cut-off branch between Willmar and St. Cloud; and Mr. Rice said the new division was given to him and that he would give me a station--Paynesville or Cold Springs. He gave me a pass to St. Paul, saying to call at his office there tomorrow. I did so, and Mr. Rice informed me that the new branch was added to the Breckenridge Division instead of to his. Therefore he could do nothing for me just at present. With a little pay check for work at Osakis, I walked out. In the city I learned that the Stickney Railroad (the M & N I think they called it) already being operated, from St. Paul to Austin & Mason City Ia., was now under construction from Hay-field Minn., towards Dubuque, Ia. and was planning to open several stations tomorrow. I immediately went to their General Headquarters, where, after answering a few questions, I was told to call again at One o'clock, at which time other applicants were coming and selections would be made. Quite a few applicants appeared and after some questioning and reading of our credentials, five or six of us were selected. I am sorry I cannot now remember names of any of these men. We were furnished transportation to Hayfield, where the new tracks began and where we would receive farther instructions as to getting to our stations. The Chief Dispatcher on this new line was occupying a box car at Hayfield and was holding a work train there which was to take us to our destinations. This work train didn't even have a caboose, so we climbed into the rear box car which was partly loaded with ties and tools going to the end of the track. The conductor had his orders as to our dispositions. First station out was Sargeant. I think there was but one house there besides the station. We gave "Goodbye and good luck" to the young man who drew this place. Next was Renova, where nothing was to be seen but the station and rolling prairie. We jollied and cheered this Agent as he sauntered towards his new position, but really all felt sorry for him. Next was Elkton. Here there were a few houses, the beginning of a village, at least. The next place, Taopi, was mine. It was quite a little town, was the crossing of the Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul R R, and looked more like civilization. Near the town I could see fine farm buildings, wind mills and so forth. It was about 2:00 P.M. when I arrived. The sun was shining. Something about the whole scene was pleasing. The station and platform were brand new and comfortable. On the platform stood a youthful man with an empty tin pail and a sad look on his face, who had just been wiring the office and setting up the telegraph instruments. "But", said he, "for some reason the instruments will not work". I said, "Let's take a look at 'em" "No use", he said, "I have had the Milwaukee Operator over, who could do nothing." I sat down at the "key" and soon discovered that these new instruments were not properly adjusted. They only needed a little loosening up, and away they went; and I was re-porting my arrival to the box car dispatcher. The line man was happy and almost ready to embrace me. Such was my very pleasant return to

many more years of the life of a railroad Station Agent on different roads.

Taopi, Minnesota, named after a famous Indian Chief, was located about five miles north of the Iowa line. The land was mostly rolling prairie and of good quality-fine farm and stock raising country. Here was what was called the Wood farm, embracing several hundred acres with fine buildings. I realized that I had the advantage over the boys who had been assigned to the other stations, for I was in a real town, with a Post Office with daily mail brought by the Old Milwaukee R. R. Furthermore, I had to be Postmaster for all of them, sending and receiving all their mail, until such time as Post Offices could be established at these new stations. Taopi had one hotel run by a man named Bell, and sometimes it was good and sometimes it was hell. (That's a rhyme!) I had the best room, the one in a corner of the upstairs, so I was safe on two sides at least. I say I was safe because at that time there was much drinking and fighting among the hardboiled young element, still remaining after the finishing up of our railroad. Once or twice I heard Mr. Bell's savage voice as he took his nightly walk of inspection, saying. "Here, sir, you can't go to bed with your boots on like that. Get up and undress." Soon after I became agent there, the company established its lumber-storage yard at Taopi, containing all kinds of such dimension timbers and other material as would be needed as the road building progressed. A young man named George Adrian Iselin was placed in charge of this yard, with office in the Depot. This member of the select "Four Hundred" of New York City was highly educated and far-traveled, always & gentlemen but unfortunately he was a drink addict. He was never seen drunk, was always able to attend to business, was my best friend, and gladly shared with me all the good things his sisters sent him, such as books — all the strange fiction of H. Rider Haggard and others — large packages of finest smoking tobacco, clothing, slippers, socks. I was fortunate in having a friend like George Iselin. From him I learned something of the inner life of the wealthy, and "Upper Ten"; and what he said about his parents convinced me that they were just like other fathers and mothers.

At Christmas time there came a large package by express plainly addressed to me. Pleased that my folks had thus remembered me, I quickly opened it and Lo, the first article was a large red corset! The card on it said, "This is for Mary Ann." Other presents were for other members of the same family. I was disappointed and sad. But later on I was able to find the people it belonged to, and made delivery to the glad family. But to this day, I know not why the package bore my name, nor the explanation as to how such a thing could possibly happened.

While at Taopi, I made a trip to St. Paul to see Supt. Dupuy? about a better job, going all the way on a freight train. The train men were very kind, rigging up a sort of bed in the caboose for my comfort. We arrived in West St. Paul about three A.M. After disposing of the train, the conductor and I started to walk across the Mississippi River on the ice. When we were nearing the city, a voice coming from a watchman on a bridge above said, "Look out, you fellows down there. Open water just ahead of you,". And sure enough, just a few feet ahead of us was no ice at all, but smooth, still-running water. The voice directed us which way to go to be safe, and soon we were on Third Street, the Conductor going to his abode, and I to the Merchant's Hotel for rest. After breakfast I called on Mr. Dupuy, who said he was soon going to open stations south-west of Oelwein, where the Des Moines extension was now being constructed. He thought he could place me out there. So I went back to Taopi feeling encouraged. On this trip I was wearing a pair of black broadcloth pants which friend George had loaned me for the occasion, my own being somewhat the worse for wear by that time. I say by that time because on that happy day when I first saw Taopi, I was wearing good clothes, made to order by a tailor on 3rd St. in St. Paul — a blue frock coat and vest, with gray pants, and derby hat. At that time, frock coats with neat, short tails were still fashionable, (and were certainly more becoming than the short sack coats now worn, which make a man look so like a Shanghai Rooster with his tail pulled out. This sack will probably remain with us until the crack of doom, which I feel is soon to come) Omit.

Not long after my trip to St. Paul, I was ordered to go to Fair-bank, ? Iowa, to open that station. This was another new station ten miles southwest of Oelwein, just being finished. In fact, but partly furnished when I took charge, for I recall that I had only nail kegs for chairs at first. Mr. Stickney aimed to build his railroad through a country without large towns on old roads. A country that would appreciate and be made glad. Fairbank was like that. It was a small inland town with nice, friendly people primitive, but so live and cheerful all day. The town was without hotels. A Mrs. Morrow kept a Boarding House, but when I applied for a room, I was told the place was full. Then she relented, saying, "Yes, I guess we can accommodate you." Afterwards when we were better acquainted, I heard her telling some of her boarders that when she saw that good Methodist face, she could not turn me away. And what a comfortable place it was! There was everything to eat, and we slept in feather beds. Many people came to see what the new Depot was like, and especially the Telegraph Instruments. Some sent messages to friends. I showed them how to get a shock from the wires, which proved so interesting to a lady and her daughter, that they came every day or two, claiming that it was good for their health! The telegraph wires had not been taken over by the Western Union as yet, and we were at liberty to send telegrams free. I went to Fairbank with the understanding that I would be furnished with a speeder car, and have charge of two stations--Fairbank and Dunkerton, the latter about ready to open. Bat fate changed these plans so that when I had only been at Fairbank less than a month a wire came from St. Paul advising me to go to Elma as soon as possible, and that an Agent was on his way to relieve me.

I arrived at Elma the morning of March 6th, and found the traveling Auditor already there. And together we began to explore the situation. We learned that Mr. Talmadge, the Agent, had disappeared two or three days before our arrival. Everything was in disorder. Books and papers covered desks. Under the table a tin pail about one third full of whiskey, with long-handled tin dipper in it, was ready for use. Of course freight of various kinds had been arriving in these days since the Agent had left. Waybills were everywhere in pigeon holes about the office. We assembled these and made expense bills ready for collection. When presented to consignees for collection, we found the greater part of them had been collected by the departed Agent. Some cars of lumber with high charges we found had been collected by Mr. Talmadge, leaving no record of these transactions. It was an awful mess that required several days work of the Auditor and myself to put the station in anything like working order. Later on other losses came to light, which made work and trouble for me for a year or more. One transaction I will narrate. A man whose name I have forgotten, came to trace a package. He had sent a package containing $500.00 to Oswego, Ny., by express. Then received word that it had not reached Oswego. I examined the book of express forwarded which showed the package as being sent to Owego, Ny., instead of to Oswego. Tracing disclosed the fact that no such waybill or package had ever been sent! (and so we draw our own conclusions). This man Talmadge was a beautiful writer, and his book-keeping was perfect.

Well, let's take a look at Elma, a "bran" new town located twenty-four miles south of the Minnesota line in Iowa, 131 miles from St. Paul, It was the Division Town between the St. Paul and Dubuque divisions. The railroad had trackage to hold four-or five-hundred cars, around house with stalls for many locomotives, a huge coalhouse. Other buildings were being built. Among them a Clubhouse for employees which will be described later on. The R R was nicknamed The Red Stack because locomotives on this road burned coal (unusual in that day) and had small, red stacks.

A part of the town of Elma, at least some of the residences, were located on land sparsely covered with natural forest trees. This open timber land bordered the Wapsipinicon, or Little Wapsie River, which wended its tinkling, winding way past the town. The Depot was large. Besides office rooms there was a Conductor's room, public waiting room, and Trainmaster's office. Later

on, as the road reached Dubuque, we had telegraph men on duty day and night, a switch-engine and crew, yardmaster, call boys car checkers, and so forth. At this time, as I remember it, there were only myself and Operator, W. B. Harrison, to carry on. Passenger trains from St. Paul were turned here ready returning to the city again. Elma had large territory from which to draw trade. The adjoining land, because it had been far from railroads and therefore cheaper, had been settled mostly by Irish emigrants years before. Many of the tombstones in the old grave-yards told that Patrick So-and So or Terrence So-and-So bum in County Cork, Ireland sometime in the early eighteen hundreds, rested there. Now land in the vicinity of Elma, in fact all the land which was traveled by the new railroad, was being rapidly bought up, the prices going from almost nothing to fifty dollars per acre since the railroad came. Mr. Stickney had regard for the care and comfort of his employees; and with this thought in mind, had planned to build what he called a Clubhouse on the Station grounds. This building was almost finished at the time I took charge of the Station. It was of red brick, windows and doors capped with out stone; in size it was perhaps 40 feet by 50 feet, containing 26 sleeping rooms upstairs, the lower floor furnished with lounges easy chairs, writing tables. At the rear of this Rest Room was a well-stocked library, and two or three bath rooms. Then there was a full-sized basement with laundry equipment, janitor's office etc. Conductors engineers, firemen and brakemen in good standing, could become members of this club and enjoy all its benefits by paying one dollar per month. In this I am getting ahead of my story, for as yet the clubhouse had not been dedicated. This ceremony I will relate when it occurs in my story.

As soon as I felt well established as Agent at Elma, I sent for my family, which had remained in Ohio a long year while I was finding a suitable place to bring them to. I met them in Chicago, and the meeting was joyful except that our youngest little girl, who was a baby when I left Ohio, not knew me not, and squealed when I reached out to take her. To again have a home and be living with my beloved family, was bliss; and I resolved to be careful in the future that there should be no more separations, if I could help it. We lived in a house which was situated on an imaginary street running straight west from the Depot. I say imaginary, as at that time I think there were only a few houses separated by long open spaces, without sidewalks or street work of any kind. Our place was shaded by oak trees on one side, and on the other, stretched a large, level meadow. Across the street from our front door were some good neighbors — Mr. and Mrs. Over-field, their two sons and two daughters, all nice, cultured people. All these young people were grown up, while our oldest was but fourteen. However, our children and these older children seemed to be objects of interest to each other, adding to the pleasure of all.

Of all the places we have lived, I can think of no place more ideal for growing children than was our home on the Wapsipinicon at Elma, Iowa. The memory goeth back!

Soon the railroad was completed through to Chicago, and renamed the Chicago, Great Western. Our Clubhouse now finished, General Stickney named the first Sunday in June as the dedication day, when he would present it to the employees. His train, trimmed with banners, and carrying a number of his employees, arrived early. Fitting ceremonies were held. Then a business meeting was held. Officers of the Club were named, viz, M. D. Flower of St. Paul, President, E. K. Fluke Secretary, and Treasurer O. O. Winter assistant Secretary. Mr. Flower was President of the South St. Paul Stock Yards, which was an enterprise of Mr. Stickney's. O.O. Winter was then a brakeman on freight trains. Besides these. Mr. Flower brought along a Janitor named Boxell from St. Paul, whose duties were to be various in this clubhouse,-such as housekeeping, maintaining order in everything, talking care of rooms, making beds, taking care of bathrooms. Out of the dues I collected from the members, we hired such help as Mr. Boxell needed to keep the place clean and in order. Of course all this in-creased my duties, but what was to the good, it increased my salary. Later on Mr. Flower came down, and he and Mr. Winter and I selected and ordered the books for the Club Library. Books such as Gulliver's Travels, Don Quixote, Jules Verne's

Twenty-thousand Leagues Under The Sea, Novels of Charles Dickens, Works of Alexander Dumas, Wilkie Collins' Moonstone, and many others, also papers and magazines. I have always been glad to have met and associated with Mr. Flower. He was a man of singular ability, with a record of interesting adventures. Once he told me which accounted for his being in the employ of General Stickney, was to the effect that when young, and not long after being married, he had over five-thousand dollars in the bank. That he contracted with the Federal Government to buy and transport five-thousand dollars worth of supplies to a body of soldiers at a small fort located on the Sun River in Montana. Insurance companies refused to protect. his transport farther than to the point where the Sun River joined the Missouri. All went well until the day they were nearing the end of their journey on the Sun River, when off there in the west there appeared a little cloud which rapidly grew larger and came nearer. The wind began to blow and almost immediately the cyclone wrecked the boat. Mr. Flower and his wife, who had accompanied him, managed to get a long plank to which they clung until they landed on the sandy shore. Mr. Flower said that as they walked out his wife picked up a nickel from the sand, which some soldier had lost. “There,” he said to his wife, “Is what is left of our fortune.” “And,” said he, “We preserved that nickel and have it yet for a keepsake.”

It was then that Mr. Stickney came to his rescue and for a beginning made him manager of his Summer Resort Hotel at Lake Elmo, later to his present position as President of the South St. Paul Stock Yards.

It was when I was Agent at Elma that railroads discarded padlocks on Box-car doors, and began the use of seals. The first seal invented was a strip of tin less than half an inch wide and about ten inches in length, with a lead rivet near one end of the strip. This rivet was permanent and its beak was long enough so that when attached to the hasp it fitted into a hole near the opposite end of the tin strip. The Agent was furnished what was called a seal punch, which pressed the station number on the head of the lead rivet. The tin strips also bore numbers. A seal-record book was kept showing car number, seal number and punch number. Only the Agent or his deputy could seal or unseal cars. This would insure a perfect record of the fastenings of all cars.

Elma had a fine creamery not far from our Round House, and shipped quantities of tubs of butter. Right after we began using these car seals, I received a lot of butter for shipment, which was loaded into a car on our industry track near the Depot. The car would go out next morning. The Conductor checking up ready to start, came to me saying my car was not sealed on one side. Sure enough, it was not. So we checked all that butter and found it short two tubs - - about 120 pounds. I marked his way-bill short, resealed that door, and after the train had gone I found the missing seal on the ground where the car had stood. The seal had simply been cut with a knife. My report brought a special agent. First move he made was to see if I had a good record of the sealing. I said, “The record is O K, but that will not help you to locate the thief or the butter. That car should have been locked. Even though you may find the thief and secure him punishment, the company will probably have to pay for that butter.” I am writing this many years after that occurrence, and railroads are still using seals.

A division town! Where trains are always coming in and unhitching, as it were, and adding their cars to those already in the yard to be shunted into other trains by the Yard Crew; then to continue their rolling on to different destinations. To be Agent at such a station is interesting. About as soon as an incoming train is set out, people begin to appear from nowhere. Some just Hobo Bills, some not looking so Hobo, riding the rods and trucks, even under the cow-catcher. And once I saw one emerge from an iron sewer-pipe, asking, “What place is this?” Traveling telegraphers were likely to lean in at the window and say, “Do I eat?” Two passing pedestrians. One comes to the window and says, “Boss, report two empties going south.”

The life of a Station Agent and his family at a Division Town is very different from life at a Way

Station. Here are scores of employees, some with families and some without. The Round House foreman has many helpers, mechanics, hostlers. The hostler is the young engineer who brings out the engines needed to take out trains made up by Yard Crews, or passing Passenger Trains requiring change of engines. He also takes care of incoming engines, putting them in the house as a farmer would stable his horse after the days' work. Then there are always Train Crews, Conductors, Engineers, firemen and brakemen. Some have families and homes in the town. This was the kind of a town Elma was when we lived there. The railroad circle was large; and as in any other community, there were among its members some who were well worth knowing, and others who were - - well, not so cultivated, but mostly good. Of course I knew all the people living there, and especially those in the railroad employ, as I had the monthly pay checks to hand out, always taking receipts as was required.

While the C G W was still young and its officers often changed – as is generally the case on new roads - - there came a rainy day when there was a lull. After we had finished getting out the morning trains and only Operator Harrison and myself were there, he at his telegraph table and I at my desk, a traveling man appeared at the window and asked to have his trunks checked out. As there was no train until some time late in the afternoon, I said we'd check them shortly before train time. He said, "I want those sample cases checked right now." Harrison said a word or two in argument. He was smoking a pipe, and laid down the book he had been reading. The Drummer said in a fierce voice, "Smoke your pipe, Bead your novel! I'll get even with you! I'll make it hot for you gentlemen!" I do not now remember whether he came to have the trunks checked later, but I believe he got a team to take him to Riceville, the first station north of Elma. In a few days I received a letter from Supt. Wilbert Irwin enclosing a long and terrible letter, written to Pres. Stickney by our traveling salesman, on letter heads of one of Elma's hotels. Stickney's Sec'y requested Mr. Irwin to investigate. Mr. Irwin was an operator and showed sympathy; but said that coming from such a source, he hoped I would be able to make satisfactory explanations. Otherwise it might go hard with me. In my answer I did not deny anything I was accused of, but said that I could see no reason why the company should become responsible for baggage several hours before train time. That such work gave the traveller a chance to go by team or some other way, and therefore the railroad would be out the fare. That held for a time, but soon the correspondence came to me again asking more questions and the whole thing looked hostile and bad. I could think of nothing to say more than I had already said, so I shoved the correspondence into a pigeon hole in my desk, reckoning my official life would last at least till somebody stirred up the matter further. I felt that I was doomed, when what should happen but the firing of the general Superintendent and one or two Division Superintendents. Wilbert Irwin resigned. I just transferred that correspondence from the desk to the stove, and never heard another word. That same traveling man, on his monthly trips, came and went, and he still saw us there. It was not long after this time that the C G W as well as other railroads posted notices saying that hereafter baggage would not be checked more than one hour before train time.

While I was Agent at Elma I took on a boy named Eli Brinkman to do errands, check cars in the yard, etc. in short to learn railroad work. He was inclined to be wild-tempered when things went wrong, as things often do, so that I feared this fault might wreck his future as a railroad man unless he took a (hitch on himself). About five years ago I traveled to Des Moines, Ia. going out of St. Paul on the C G W Ry. And who should be in charge of that train but Eli Brinkman, The chevron on his sleeve showed twenty-five years as Passenger Conductor! I was glad on this trip. I asked him so many questions that I have been ashamed of myself ever since.

I think it was in the year 1891, my duties being very burdensome, I was troubled with pain in my face, which I at first thought was toothache; but after having two or more of my good teeth extracted with no lessening of the pain, I consulted our doctor who pronounced it neuralgia; and prescribed entire rest with not too much food. But I said to him, "I want to keep on working. I

cannot think of laying off just at this time." "Well," Said he, "If you must work, you can take a grain of morphine mornings and evenings. Possibly that will enable you to continue work until there is some change." Next day about nine o'clock, when the pain was almost unbearable, I began the morphine treatments, taking a morsel the size of half a grain of wheat, as the Doctor had instructed. In a few minutes I seemed to feel it coursing through my every vein, to the tips of my fingers and toes. The pain was gone, entirely gone! I realized that, although there was some change in my existence (?) rather pleasurable than otherwise, the effect was in no way like that of intoxicating liquor. Now for many hours I could work and my intellect was unchanged. This was all right during the day, but O, what a difference in the evening! Talk about gloom! I cannot describe the terrible feelings that possessed me when the opiate had died out. Then, at bed time I always took another dose to carry me through the night. At the end of thirty days I decided this practice must cease. I reported myself sick. The Relief Agent came, and I went home and to bed. Not another drop of opiate would I take. My neuralgic pain was more fierce than ever. A move of any kind seemed to increase the pain. Much of the time I lay entirely still. My wife was a lovely nurse. She tried little simple home-remedies, sang to me in a low, sweet, soothing voice. One song I remember was, "One little cot only" (The Moor It Is Lonely) and another was "The Miller of the Dee." One application of camphor to my face one day really seemed to give an atom of relief; and of course this easy remedy was followed up until I was sure of its virtue; and before long I was able to enjoy the blessed feeling of being tired and needing rest - - something which had been impossible while under the influence of "dope". Let everyone rejoice when he feels tired. To feel no need of rest is horrible (?). From that day to this I have not tasted morphine.

When I was almost fully recovered, I went to St. Paul to visit Oliver Hagerman, who by this time was quite well off, and had acquired a home of his own at Highwood a few miles out of the city on the C B & Q Short Line. He was not very busy now, and therefore we spent much time visiting places of interest, hunting in the woods around White Bear Lake, attending theatres. And one day we went across the Wabasha Bridge, out into some open country where we met a Mr. McComber to try out his new invention of a tin pigeon for trap shooting. While McComber and Oliver were setting up the trap and cleaning their guns, I fell on the grass to continue my resting. They did some shooting, with several hits each, but rather more misses than hits. After a while Oliver asked me to try it. Just to be polite I suppose, I said I had not expected to do any shooting. I got to my feet, and taking Oliver's shot-gun which I had used in the woods, I missed the first pigeon, and then shot down eleven, hand running. On the ride home behind the (same black horse) Oliver was very quiet. When we were nearing home he said, "How did you do that?" I replied, Maybe it was because up to the time of this visit I had always practiced rifle and pistol shooting, which required much more accuracy than shooting with a scattering shot gun.

Once when we had been to the woods, and arrived at the St. Paul Union Depot late - - about ten p.m. - - a time when all the rush was over and only a few darkies were there cleaning up, we carried a few gray and black squirrels, and you should have seen how those darkies gathered around at sight of black squirrels. Evidently they had never known there were black squirrels as well as black men!

The memory of that visit remains with me; for when I spoke of go-ing home to Elma, Oliver begged me to stay with him longer and we would go chicken hunting over in Dakota. But by that time I was anxious to get back to work. I believe he went over into North Dakota for a few days hunting; and then one morning, as he sat reading his daily paper at his home in Highwood, he died from a "Heart Attack". Then I lost the best friend of my life, and my wife lost her best-loved brother.

At Elma I was wearing a ring which I had purchased back in Ohio about the year 1867 - - quite a showy gold ring with a cameo set. There came a day when it was missing from my finger. I had hardly ever lost anything that I had not been able to find, but in this case all my searching failed.

One pay day I was handing out checks to a couple of women, the wives of Night-Men at the Roundhouse. When Mrs. - - took the pen to sign the roll, there on her finger was my ring. I said, "Where did you get that ring?" She said, "My brother-in-law gave it to me." I told her it was my ring which I had lost some time before. She said she would ask her brother-in-law about it. She showed plainly that she wished to keep it. I later tried to persuade her to give it up. She always had some excuse to offer; promising to bring it over in a day or two, until one day I got the town Marshall to go to her house and demand the ring, assuring her that if she refused to give it to him he would have to arrest her. This brought her to terms, quickly.

Some two years after the disappearance of former Agent Talmadge he was arrested near Niagara Falls, brought back, tried and sentenced to two years in the Iowa State Penitentiary. It was said he had become tired of hiding around over in Canada, and that his coming back was only an invitation to come and get him. Well, that would end his career as a Station Agent, because a Station Agent must be of good character and be able to give bonds. Very likely he would find an official position where bonds were not required.

Our first year at Elma was filled with life and activity. Much building going on, population of the village jumping from almost nothing to twelve hundred or more. A new brick school building was built, a good brick Hotel and Town Hall. Near the locality of our home was being built a beautiful Catholic Church. And on the same plot of ground was the residence of the Reverend Father Gunn, the settled Priest in that vicinity. Father Gunn was evidently exercising some kind of a fatherly oversight or care over other Priests and churches in Northern Iowa, as he often entertained men who were of the nobility class in other parishes of the Diocese. When the new church building was finished and a day set for its dedication, it brought to Elma men of note in the church. One I remember was Father Sherman, who was a son of General Tecumseh Sherman. Much against his father's wishes he had become a Catholic Priest.

By this time our oldest daughter Kitty was attending school in St. Paul, Son Rossiter and his sisters Dorothy and Helen went to school at home in Elma. We had acquired a white pony and a high-seated dog-cart. The children named the pony "Popcorn". He was very white and he was good-looking, and altogether about as dependable as a grain of popcorn - - too quick. Besides we had a dog. A very intelligent dog which I had brought home with me from Highwood after attending brother Oliver's funeral. His name was Max. When he came to live with us he was only about half-grown, Oliver's folks loved little Max, but felt that they could not keep him now. But for us to have <u>him</u> would be almost as good as having him themselves. Max was the constant companion of our children. We also had a Tom-cat named "Boom-de-aye", and for a wonder, the dog and cat were friends, Boom-de-aye allowing Max to drag him around as if he were a rag.

Elma was a boom town, and as such, naturally attracted all kinds of traveling entertainments and shows. Phrenologists. Johnston the Clairvoyant, the man who, blindfolded, could find hidden articles by taking the hand of the person who had hidden them. Medicine Shows came also. One I remember was the Kickapoo Indian Sagwa Medicine Co., headed by Doctor Jim Sale selling Kickapoo Indian Sagwa. Quite a company, with good programs and lots of fun, and large audiences every night, the bottles of Sagwa going like hot cakes. Warranted to cure all pains. Dr. Jim was a fine looking man, well dressed, with long black hair which fell to his shoulders, not stiff like that of Indians, but fine, soft and fluffy, ending in an outward and upward roll. People must be entertained, and such were the "movies" of the days when we lived at Elma.

A little spur track barely long enough to hold two locomotives, or say one locomotive and two cars, extended back from the main track near the Station which was used for parking south-bound passenger engines, as all passenger trains changed engines at Elma every day. The Klemme brothers kept a lumber yard a short distance from there, and sometimes I would spot a car of lumber on that spur for unloading. One day when young Ben Klemme was unloading there, and

the outgoing passenger engine backed in on his car, he undertook to make a coupling for some reason. With the result that a goose-neck casting on the back of the tender sheared off three fingers of Klemme's right hand, leaving only the thumb and little finger; which was sad indeed, but it could have been worse - - much worse.

A boy named Fred Richards was in the habit of loafing around the depot and watching the yard-crew at their work. Notwithstanding the fact that he had been warned repeatedly to keep out of the yard, there came a day when his curiosity caused him to go in where the switchmen were throwing cars down onto several tracks at the same time. Cars were moving everywhere when this young man walked in just in time to be caught by a moving car while he was watching another track. He was knocked down, wheels crushed one of his ankles; men carried him into the Depot. Dr. Dunn was called, and later amputated the foot, making the boy a cripple for life. This caused much sorrow for his family. There were personal injury reports for me to fill out, damages to pay by the railroad company - - all because an idle boy would not heed oft-repeated warnings to be careful.

All railroads practice gathering and properly caring for old iron, as it accumulates along their tracks. On the CGW it was the custom to take the Section-Crew or most of it - - six or eight men at any rate - - once a month or once in two months as necessity required, going over the division on the Wayfreight and loading such old iron pieces of rails, broken pins, rods, broken brake-shoes, etc., which had been gathered and stored at stations ready for them. There came such a day when our Section Crew went out to cover the Duvuoue Division South. It was found necessary to send out an extra train to clear our yard of southbound loads. And so about one hour after the Way Freight had gone, we sent out this extra. Here I quote from Pope: “Heaven from all creatures hides the book of fate. All but the page prescribed their present state.” At New Hampton, twenty-five miles south of Elma, our Wayfreight had been delayed by work, and all the men had climbed into the caboose to start, when our extra came around the curve, the engine whistling for brakes, but too late for they crashed into the caboose, reducing it to kindling wood, and killing or wounding every man that was in it. Our Section Boss, McCarthy was alive but was mortally wounded, some of his men were killed outright, two were only slightly wounded. This was in the days before we had the air brake. Only hand brakes were in use. There were no telephones, so it was my day duty to go about notifying the families and friends of the terrible disaster had befallen their men. Father Gunn and the wives of some of the men were hurried to the scene by special train. The railroad management did every kind act possible to assist. It was a day of weeping and wailing in our town. Such a sudden, grim terror cast a gloom on our entire community. Yesterday had been filled with life and cheer. Today bro't death and disaster.

At that time John M. Eagan was General manager, and I remember that an annual pass was issued to Father Gunn, whose help would surely be needed in the settlement of claims for death and injury. Most of the people concerned were of his church, and for that matter, so was Mr. Eagan. Father Gunn, while accepting the transportation and other kind offers, never the less stood firmly for justice in every particular towards his people who had suffered. Mrs. McCarthy received five-thousand-dollars cash and a new house built for her. All others were satisfied with their settlements. Father Gunn proved himself to be not only a father in name, but a father in deed among his people in this hour of trouble.

One day as I sat at my desk which faced towards the spacious window and counter where conductors came to sign the train register, who should appear there but my friend of long ago, J. F. Bauder, the man who was agent at Amboy, Minnesota, when I was running as express messenger on the Blue Earth Branch. You will remember that I said we should meet this man again in our travels. Well, he hadn't changed at bit in looks. That pious Presbyterian countenance was still there. I took him to dinner. He said he had been doing yard work in Kansas City. Times were hard down there. In fact jobs were not plentiful any where, as I well knew. He asked what I

thought about work on the CGW. I said, "I will give you a note to Mr. Scott, our Supt. of telegraphers at St. Paul. Perhaps he can do something for you." We had a freight train due out at 8:00 p.m. for St. Paul. Our yard crew made up the train on time, the conductor taking the car numbers in his train book, and came in to check up and get his waybills. I introduced him to Mr. Bauder, saying, "He will help you check up." Bauder took the stack of waybills and fitted them to the train list with such dexterity and ease as to astonish the train crew. I signalled the Conductor to take him along. He said "You bet." Next day Bauder called me on the wire, saying they were sending him to Elmhurst, Ill., a station 25 or 30 miles out of Chicago. He asked me to meet him at the midnight train that night, which I failed to do. When he had been agent at Elmhurst about thirty days, he made arrangements with his night operator to work until the next evening, when he, Bauder would be back, adding that should anything happen to delay him longer, to not worry, as he surely would not be gone over two days. Of course the night man would remain quiet for a day or two, but when the second day had passed without his return, the boy reported the matter. The Auditor came and found that Bauder had lifted about everything takeable: money, packages, had collected for freight and express, delivered. To make a long story short, Mr. Bauder stole every cent he could pick up, including two books of Express Honey-order blanks, which had a value of $2000, or could be issued for that amount. Everything went to show that his movements in Chicago had been very deliberate and delusive. He had issued many Express Money Orders in his own name as Agent at Elmhurst, most of them for quite large amounts under fifty dollars, made out to breweries, stores and saloons. Investigation showed small purchases with much change to Bauder. Further detective work uncovering his past life, showed that he had stolen one thousand dollars at Amboy, ten years before. Also, that the United States Express Company had made every effort to find him without avail, and that the same man was Supt. of Express then and now. Of course Mr. Bauder had been travel-ing under an assumed name until he met me at Elma, and then he had to use his own name again. Evidently he figured that whatever he did must be done quickly, before some sleuth recognized him. The Express and Railroad Companies immediately got very busy, but so far as I could learn, they never found him. I read Express Magazines for years after that, expecting to meet Bauder again, but No. I received no words of censure for my part in the recommending him. But right there I quit recommending men I had not seen for ten years.

In the year 1893 the World's Fair was held at Chicago; and in September of that year I took my family (all but the oldest girl, Kitty, who had other plans about going) to see the fair. Altogether this was quite an undertaking and required much getting ready on the part of all of us. Surely it was expensive enough to have given pause to any thoughtful man, but we accomplished it, and I have always been glad that we did. Of course we were furnished transportation to and from Chicago, which would have been quite an item saved but even then, I felt that it would be wise to practice some economies in order that our stay at the fair might be as long as possible. We arrived in the city early in the morning; and leaving the other members of the family at the Depot, Rossie and I began to investigate the outlook for a place to stay. We found an advertisement of a camp which was situated on the Elevated Railroad, the road which was the connective line between the city and the fair grounds. On going out there, we found a village of tents covering several acres, laid out like a town, with streets, avenues and a tabernacle. Everything was spick and span, with nice cots and mattresses. One (?) of these tents would be our home at a very reasonable price per day or week. We secured one, moved our folks over there at once. We could eat wherever and whenever we pleased. There were restaurants on the fair grounds, but we often just ate fruit, like bananas. We greatly en-joyed the delicious peaches that could be bought for thirty-five cents a basket - - and not a skimpy basket, either. The world had not reach-ed the period of skimpy containers at that time. After a long day at the fair, to come home to our tents and just tumble down on our cots was bliss. As I remember it, every tent was occupied. There was much promenading in the well-lighted streets of nights, but no disorder. Sometimes there was preaching

at the tabernacle. A walk of only a few rods from our tents brought us to the Station on the Elevated, where each morning we boarded one of the ever-moving little trains going to the fair.

The tracks of this elevated railroad were laid on substantial trestle work wide enough for the two tracks which composed it - -all trains going to the fair on one track, those coming from the fair on the other. The stations were on the ground below with stairways to platforms above. These platforms were spacious enough to accommodate trains de-training and en-training at the same time, as often happened. In short, the trains operated like an endless rope moving on two pulleys, one at each end. About the second day or our stay, we climbed the stairs just as two trains met, and there were several people getting on and off. One or our little girls got on the wrong train and nothing could be done about it. Son Rossiter got off at the next station, going back to the city, while the rest of us continued on our way to the fair-grounds. We described the lost girl to the train men and guards, and all were sympathetic, and promised to watch out for her. Of course we were in great distress of mind; but the mother, being the most levelheaded woman I have ever known, made no scene nor outcry. At the terminal station I took my stand where I could see every passenger coming from the trains as they each passed a certain gate. My wife and others found a bench not far away where they just waited. Soon Rossie had made the rounds without finding any trace of the lost girl. By this time he was known by many of the train men and was passed free in his hunt. After notifying policemen at the city station, and riding train after train, it occurred to him to go back to our tents. And there he found his lost sister! She said that when she found that she was on the wrong train she decided that it would be the proper thing for her to just go back to our station and wait there, which she did. What joy we felt when Rossie came bringing her! Three or four hours of terrible suspense vanished in wink of an eye. And here we were all walking down the streets of Mid-Way Plaisance, viewing the most interesting sights of our lives. Down there loomed up the great Ferris Wheel 250 feet in diameter, lifted on a foundation platform fifteen feet above the ground, making the total height of wheel 265 feet. It was capable of carrying 520 passengers each trip in thirteen swinging carriages. I expected to write a whole lot about the sights we saw at this great exposition, but words fail me. Electric lighting was only in its infancy then, but all the buildings were trimmed with lights and there were many of the high lights on poles at outer edges of the park grounds. There were so many interesting things to see that one doesn't know where to begin. I will say that the whole landscape, and waterscape, the immense white buildings, all must have made an excellent copy of Venice with Gondolas and Italian Gondoliers navigating lagoons and water-fronts, carrying such persons as desired trips of the kind, and all made up a beautiful and impressive sight.

Comparing that exhibition with that of the Century of Progress which is now on at Chicago - - well, I have not yet seen the latter, but I think the Columbian Exposition in 1893 was much more enjoyed by everybody. At that time people were still sane and in a proper mood for visiting such an exhibition. They had not become automobile and air minded like they are at the present. These people have been everywhere and seen everything, or should I, seen nothing much but the roads they were eating up. Perhaps after a few generations more, people will be born with wheels on instead of legs; or better still, with wings. The great Ferris Wheel was a symbol of the wheel-going age just then beginning. Some of the things that I remember seeing at that exposition were trivial to many, such as seeing Major General Nelson A. Miles and Wm. McKinley riding around the race track, Gen. Miles in full Army Uniform and McKinley wearing a high silk hat. The Krupp Gun Works of Germany, showing the heaviest was implements then in existence. The United States had a great display of wax figures, featuring memories of our Civil War. There were the Army Wagons drawn by mules, men of wax wearing the blue uniforms, all kinds of guns, cannons and shells, explosives, etc. Once or twice we visited the Hagenbeck Shows, where, from the amphitheatre we witnessed such scenes as a team of six large Bengal tigers hitched like three teams of horses to a great golden chariot in which was seated on a sort of throne, a immense hog, wearing a crown and decked out in a beautiful shining robe. This wonderful outfit moved

slowly around the ring, in the Arena, driven by the ringmaster (?) who was assisted by several Great Dane dogs whose business seemed to be to travel around just outside and out of reach of the teams of tigers, keeping up growls which had the effect of compelling the tigers to move along and attend to business. It is no use, my trying to describe anything so complete and wonderful as was this 1893 World's Fair. I must hasten on, as I have many years of the ups and downs of life yet to relate. So on the evening of our eleventh day at the fair, we boarded the train at the foot of Randolph Street, and arrived home at about four a.m., all very glad as was also our loving dog Max, who must have thought we had deserted him. I could wish that humans were able to express and show such sincere rapture as did our faithful dog that morning.

I think we remained at Elma about one year after that before something happened that sent me adrift again into the cold, unfriendly world, looking for a job. My Supt. Ben F. Egan, was always kind, and I had no enemies among the officials, so far as I knew. But one day I found myself superseded by Phillips, who had been my yard-master for the last two or three years. To this day I know nothing as to the cause of my going out. I was too angry to investigate or look further. Suppose it was a case of boring from within, as the Socialists used to say, but soon after my going forth, there arose a great Railroad strike with much activity at Elma, all my good train-men friends striking and resorting to any kind of measures to prevent trains from moving. My boy, Eli Brinkman, used the knife on train line couplings, and Agent Phillips carried two revolvers, working against the strikers. The strikers gained the day in the end, but the company made many changes and one was to lengthen the Division, making Oelwein, Iowa, the Division town - - that is, St. Paul to Oelwein, and doing away with Elma, except as a way-station. That was a sad day when men came to tear up the tracks of the yard and to move everything that could be moved to Oelwein, even the platform from the Depot, using cinders in its place. Elma which had been so alive all the time I was there, was now dead. Well, I was glad that I was not there when all this happened. By the time I was out of Elma my Brakeman friend O. O. Winter (?) had found favor in the eyes of James J. Hill of the Great Northern, because of Winter's ability to handle trains and impossible Car Yards like Minnesota Transfer, and he was now Division Supt. of the Breckenridge Division, comprising several hundred miles of road. Mr. Winter said he had no good station to offer me, just then, but if I could accept a small station I could go right to work until something better could be provided. I chose to go to Lennox, S. D., a station about eighteen miles south-west of Sioux Falls. It was a crossing of the OM & StP Ry without track connections. A nice village in the treeless prairie country, but the town's principal streets were shaded by good, healthy Box Elders. The station was nearly a mile away from town, with no buildings between. The country was settled by Holland Dutch. The land was good farm land, except that in low places there was some alkali. The town was not dead. Stores did a rushing business selling much merchandise necessary in a farming community. Just everything was on sale, including wooden shoes. It was not unusual for Lennox to ship a full car-load of butter and eggs a week, as well as grain, flour and seeds all the time. These people were workers. I lived at a Hotel(or perhaps it was more boarding-house than hotel) kept by a man named Daley, who was a veteran of the Civil War, and one could almost believe he had done most of the fighting, judging by his nightly narratives of the different battles he had been in, and finally ending up as a Mounted Military Police, up and down Pennsylvania Avenue in Washington, D. C. Mrs. Daley was a tall, vigorous woman who had lost one leg, and used an old fashioned wooden crutch which went thump, thump as she skipped around her kitchen. Nothing slow about Mrs. Daley. There was a married daughter also, whose husband was a musician - - one who traveled about giving lessons. It was too bad he was a drinker, and so had been banished by Mr. Daley. But sometimes he would arrive during the night and kick the door till Mr. D. had to get up; and then we would hear a war of words. Next morning the wife could be heard singing “God be with you till we meet again” as she went about her work.

Lennox was on the Yankton line, 45 miles east of Yankton. One day the Wayfreight crew brought

a homing pigeon with them from Yankton. They arranged with the Operator at Yankton that they would free the pigeon at Lennox, and I was to report to the Operator at Yankton the time the bird started. When the pigeon was let out, it flew up onto a high windmill that was at my Depot, took a look around and struck out straight towards Yankton. I noted the time of its starting to the man there, who reported its arrival in just 45 minutes. A mile a minute was fast flying in those days.

South Dakota was a windy country when I was there, and there were evidences that showed that it was always so. I noticed that their hay wagons were all built with high sides and ends - - great crates open at the top. Otherwise the carefully gathered hay might have been blown over into Iowa or Minnesota. That was a hot, dry summer with scorching winds, which did great damage to crops. There was no rain, not a cloud in the sky. I do not remember how it cam about, but a rain-maker was sent to Lennox with a couple of cars of his equipment, and these were set out near my Depot. His movements were not open to the public, and all one could be sure of was smoke issuing from a small smoke-stack on one of his cars. In a day or two after his arrival clouds appeared, and about the third day there came thunder and lightning, but no rain. Then after a few more days of trial without avail, the Rain-maker took his departure. I have stated that this was a treeless prairie country, which statement I will correct to the extent of saying that later I found many fine groves, mostly of cottonwoods which had been set out some years before by the farmers when tree claims were in vogue. I often rode with Jim Lang who drove a sort of taxi between town and the station. His taxicab was a commodious three-seated spring-wagon drawn by a fine team of gray horses, and accompanied by his greyhound dog. Often this dog would be taken on the wagon with us, and at such times, Jim looked for Jack rabbits, which were plentiful in those days. If one was seen, Jim would stop the team, put one arm over the dog, and point out the rabbit to him. And then we saw a race. The Jack would soon find that the Greyhound was too swift for him, and generally took to the shelter of a cornfield for safety.

In that windy state many tumble-weeks grew; and when nature they would be loosened from the earth to go rolling across the prairie, looking much like large, live animals, especially when seen in the dusky evening or on dark cloudy days. In some places great stacks of these weeds would be found where they had met with some obstruction like a wire fence or a growth of hazel-brush. Fanners owning land upon which they had thus lodged, made great bonfires of them on the seldom-occurring, still evenings in the fall of the year.

During my stay at Lennox there were many “hobos” traveling on the railroads, camping along streams and living on what could be picked up. My station, located so far out of town, with always some empty box-cars near by, was a favorite rendezvous for such men. The last train kept me until after dark each day; and when I had reported its departure, made everything secure and blown out the lights, believe me, I always held my ready gun in my right hand as I faced out through the door, and sometimes I fired a shot or two just as a warning. One morning on my arrival at the station I found a window of the waiting-room had been pried open and a trunk which I had left in that room the night before, had been opened. The contents (such as had not been taken) were scattered all over the floor. The ticket-office door stood open, the money drawer lay upside down on the floor, the ticket-case stood wide open. As I remember it, there was not much loss: a few pennies, the Express Company revolver, my razor, and perhaps a few other articles were gone. This sounds like a small matter, but the settlement with the trunk owner, the report to the company, correspondence and so forth, ending with praise of my part in settlement - - Well!!

When I had been agent at Lennox about three months, I received notice that I would be transferred to Herman, Minn., a Station on the line forty miles east of Breckenridge. On the day I was released at Lennox the train going to Willmar had Mr. Winter's private car attached, and I was invited to ride with him. He said he thought I would like Herman. That there were nice people there, but it was rather quiet as to business just at present. My arriving at Herman about

midnight gave little chance for seeing the country or the village which was to be our home for a time. I noticed there were quite a number of people on the platform, come to meet the train, notwithstanding the late hour, a condition which was prevalent at all stations on that line. Next morning, looking in any direction from Herman, I saw beautiful, rolling prairie meeting the horizon. There were a few small lakes to be seen at that time, and here and there small groves of tree-claim trees, planted by settlers. Main, or the principal street of the town ran parallel with the Station grounds, and the Station therefore stood out across the vacant grounds from Main Street.

Two or three large grain elevators occupied places on the track near the Depot. I found there had been complaint lodged against Mr. Dennis, the Agent, because he was almost always absent from the Depot. Now he was hostile, and loud in his assertions that I would not be there long. In fact he was so sure that he would be needed, that he continued to keep all his personal belongings cluttering up my cupboards and pigeon-holes for thirty or forty days before he could believe that he was really defunct.(?)

I was pleased with the lay of everything about my new situation, and especially with the people, who were all so friendly and cheerful. There was only one passenger train each way each day, or rather each night, as both were due at Herman not far from midnight. No. 9 West at 11:55 p.m., and No. 10 East at 1:00 a.m. A lady operator named Ida Record (on duty nights) took care of both these trains, handling all express, US mail and baggage, besides doing much writing in books. In day time I had only the Way-freights, one each way daily, and sometimes an extra freight or two. This was a wheat-raising country and not long after my arrival at Herman, harvesting began, with a demand for harvesting machinery of all kinds. There was a great increase in telegraph messages, more express business, and soon threshing outfits were moving in. So that what had appeared to me to be a dead town, now became very much alive. Soon wheat was pouring into our elevators. These wheat farmers were in the habit of running their bills at stores, and promising to pay when they marketed their wheat. So now the merchants were right on hand to see that such accounts were paid. Failure of crops often resulted in the merchant placing a mortgage on the delinquent's farm. Up to this time all this beautiful land could be bought for about five dollars per acre. The Great Northern being a land-grant road, was selling land for even less than five dollars, with long years in which to pay. When such a farmer wished to make a payment on his land, all he had to do was to go to the Station Agent, who held a copy of his contract, and would credit his payment on the contract, remitting the amount to the land department of the company. This was something new to me, but nothing to be scared about.

It was during my first year at Herman that two young men came out from Minneapolis to work in the harvest fields, by name Dan Blue and John Prosser. They seemed to be friends, keeping together, or as near together as possible. When the harvesting was over they remain-ed, one to work for Peter Nelson, and the other to work on an adjoining farm close to town. I think it was about a month later that John Prosser decided to go home. So he drew his pay, and went over to visit his friend, Dan Blue. Together they spent the day hunting and just having a good time. A few days later Dan Blue went home. When more time had elapsed Mayor Cater received a letter from Mrs. Prosser of Minneapolis inquiring about her son John, and saying that she had not heard from him, also stating that she had talked with Blue who claim-ed that John had gone to South Dakota from Herman. Mr. Cater took a little gang of men out to investigate, going to the Nelson place where Dan had been plowing when Prosser disappeared. They soon located what proved to be John Prosser's grave. At the Court trial Blue told how he had walked behind Prosser on that day, shot him, took his money, then stepped over to Nelson's to get a shovel. He said that when he had finished hiding the body he continued plowing near the grave all that afternoon and the next day. I believe his punishment was temper-ed by mercy to some extent because the Defense established the fact that Dan Blue was of unsound or feeble mind.

Along in the fall of 1894 when wheat was moving and money was being shipped to buyers by

express, all Agents between Herman and Breckenridge were notified by wire that a package containing $2000.00 addressed to the elevator Agent at Doran, was missing. What did we know about it? The Express Messenger claimed that he had had it when he was at Herman checking such packages. To which we all replied "Not here", or "We know nothing". Next day detectives arrived on the job. Most of us were soon cleared of any suspicion, but there was a young fellow whose name I have forgotten, working as Relief Agent at Tintah for a day or two, who probably looked guilty, so the "dick" pushed him hard, and finally he confessed that he had found the package in an empty chicken coop which the train messenger had unloaded there. He produced the pkg. with the money intact. But he had opened the envelope, and perhaps his next step would have been worse. Think what a temptation to a boy to find such a lot of money in a hen-coop! As I remember it, the matter was hushed up because he was well-liked boy of good family, living down the line. Certainly no young man ever had a better invitation to become a thief without danger of being caught.

I am now writing in Hay, 1934, and at this time the radio people are much given to programs of old songs and melodies. How they carry me back to the place where I first heard them. Lately "The Man on the Flying Trapeze" is very popular. We had that at Medicine Bow, Wyoming in 1868. "The Mocking Bird", "Daisy Dean" and others at Windsor, Ohio in 1865. "Sweet Bunch of Daisies", Herman Minn., 1895. I notice that many words in these songs have been changed, and are always poorer or not so good as the original words. Besides some of the songs are jazzed to such an extent as to be almost unrecognizable. Let us be glad we do not have to hear the spelling used in this age of "Advanced Education"(?)

The rolling prairies in every direction from Herman were good to look upon. The settlers who had chosen this land on which to make homes were above the average both in looks and behavior. So bright, cheerful, friendly, and hospitable! Moose Island was a station, or rather a side-track, long for the convenient meeting of trains, five miles east at Herman. There was no station building, but just a grain-elevator there. Perhaps sometime in the past there may have been moose there, but certainly no sign of an island. Nevertheless it was an interesting place because it was here that General Barrett and his family lived. There was the "Ranch House", or residence, and many other buildings to accommodate a small army of working men. For Mr. Barrett owned 17000 acres of this prairie land. We under-stood that the General, had once been employed by the Federal Government as Surveyor General, and had taken this land as pay for services instead of cash. I became well acquainted with the family as they naturally came to my station to transact railroad business. I cannot recall a single instance of any unpleasant word or deed while dealing with any member of this gentle, cultured, and good-looking family.

One day I took in a One-hundred-dollar bill, which looked so clean and new because bills of large denomination travel much slower than bills of smaller value. I thought I would show off a little, so I crossed the street to the drug-store and displayed my big bill, using it to clean my glasses with. While passing jokes with Mr. Cater and Bliss Upham, they were sufficiently entertained, and I went to the Depot to make up my cash remittance to the Express Company's Bank at St. Paul. Said remittance included the One-hundred-dollar bill. In a day or two the Bank sent it back, with a request that I remit other money in its stead, but made no statement that the bill was counterfeit. I took it to our bank. Mr. Snyder, the cashier examined it under his magnifying glass and pronounced it counterfeit. I thought differently, and so included it in my next remittance to the rail-road company's Bank, and that Bank also promptly returned it with the same request that other money be sent to cover. Now I began to realize that something would have to be done to relieve the situation. So I hired a livery team and drove out to see the farmer who had paid me the bill. Of course he and his family were much disturbed about the matter, saying that they had received the bill in part settlement of an estate a year or two ago. He said he had not sufficient money on hand to pay, but would go with me and try to arrange it with the Herman Bank, which

he did. Then the Bank sent the bill to the treasurer of the United States at Washington, who returned other money, replying that the bill was good, but that there had been a counterfeit of that particular bill which was so well executed as to be almost perfect, and ordinary bankers took the safe course and rejected all bills of that number and denomination.

In the fall of '95 a sleuth or special agent of the Great Northern came to Herman to investigate a matter concerning Zyllo (?) the Section Foreman. Some one had written an anonymous letter to the General Offices at St. Paul charging Zyllo with several minor discrepancies, and of stealing coal for his own use from the tank which the company furnished at Norcross. The sleuth asked me if I knew anything about it, and if I had any idea as to who wrote that letter, to which questions I answered that I did not know. Then he went along Main Street into merchants' offices, catching sights of their handwriting, until 'way down at nearly the last chance he called on shoemaker Johnson, took a glance at some papers and said, "Mr. Johnson, Why did you write that letter to the Great Northern about Zyllo?" Johnson chewed his tongue for a moment, then replied that he had written it because a friend had asked him to write it, said friend claiming that he had been working on the section for Zyllo, and that Zyllo fired him without good reason. It was all spite work. Zyllo lost his job. None of the things he was accused of were of much importance, and he was a much better man than those who followed him. This same sleuth stood by watching the train men unload merchandise where I was checking. A brakeman named Morrison extracted a small bunch of grapes from a basket he was handling. I spoke sharply to him to "cut that out". I noticed all the men seemed surprised. And as soon as the unloading was over Morrison came to me to see why I had spoken so fiercely. I said, "Didn't you know that stranger was a Special Agent?" He said, "You don't think it will do me any harm, do you?" "Yes," I said, "You will hear from its And he did, and lost his place for taking a bunch of grapes.

Special Agents like other employees of railroads must show that they are not idle. A catalog grocery firm in Minneapolis was permitted to ship all goods subject to examination before delivery could be made, thus making life a burden to an agent, and it was also detrimental to merchants, as such goods came only to farmers. There came a day when several men and women were boring around in my freight room and I was working in the office, when a man named John Kloos came out talking cockeye to me. I just said, "Get away. Get out of here." He went through the center gate cursing and call-ing me bad names. There was an old-fashioned beer glass on that counter, one of the kind that would weigh a pound or two. Kloos grabbed that glass, and I took refuge behind the pot-bellied coal stove, for I felt sure he would stop at nothing, being crazy mad. The corner of my high desk was at my shoulder and my revolver was in the drawer next to me. I just pulled the drawer slightly open till I was able to get the gun, then I stepped right out with the drop on him, and said, "Now put down that glass and move along." The sight of that weapon changed his attitude very quickly, and he hurried away. Later on I had dealings with Kloos which went to show that he was not all bad. He just displayed an uncontrollable temper at times.

The year 1896 was a year in many respects. There was a double crop of wheat, flax and other grains. The sales of farm machinery had to keep pace. Threshing outfits were moving towards Herman from every direction. Railroad business increased, likewise Western Union work. When the hot days came on and life was difficult, the painters came to paint the inside of my Depot, including the telegraph table on which we worked. Those were certainly days full of tribulation and hard work, saturated with the smell of paint; and not only the smell. Once in a careless moment I walked against a freshly painted table, leaving a two-inch dark brown stripe across the front of my brand new, nice gray trousers!

One morning I woke up to find that a threshing outfit had come on a night freight. Besides the steam engine, thresher, water tank, etc., there was a long cook shanty occupying two flat cars. Now there was nothing in our property list covering such a shipment, and the forwarding agent wrote me that the rate he used was guess work. So I held the outfit and wired for proper rates; but

the wires were burdened beyond control, and after waiting all day with no answer, I decided to collect charges as billed. The owner had promised to pay if the amount should be changed later on. Nearly a month had passed when I learned that the Accounting Department had corrected that cook-shanty waybill, raising it fifty dollars on me. Now it was up to me to find this threshing outfit and collect the undercharge. On making enquiries as to their location, I learned that on the day I received the correction, their engine had exploded, wrecking their machinery to such an extent that the owners had abandoned everything and gone away. When I explained this to the Accounting Dept. I received no answer; but after a long period the station was relieved of the deficit, and not a word said concerning the matter. All is well that ends well.

During that same busy harvest and threshing season, a prominent farmer named O'Brien died. His farm was some miles out from Herman, and the funeral was somewhat delayed waiting for a sister to come from St. Paul. The train that brought her arrived about 2:00 p.m. That train unloaded an unusual lot of express, including several boxes of flowers for the O'Brien funeral, all to be delivered to the lady at once. The team which had come to convey her out of town was in wait-ing. There was much hurry and confusion; and after all the people had left and quiet was restored, I discovered that I had failed to deliver a large paper box of flowers. I was much distressed, but nothing could be done to rectify it. The lady on her return was not very kind; and I gathered that my error would probably cost me twenty-five dollars. In a few days I received a letter from the Ex-press Supt. saying that unless I could furnish some satisfactory explanation he would have to expense me with three dollars and fifty cents to pay for the flowers. I wrote on that letter, “If the loss of three or four nights sleep and the payment of three dollars and fifty cents would settle it, by all means expense me.” Looking back after all these years, I believe such trifles should not have worried me as they did.

Herman was quite a noted station for shipments of game. In fact all the prairie and small shallow lake country was in the line of the migratory birds. A stopping place in their long flight between the far north and far south. A feeding and resting ground. Wild geese, wild ducks, brandt, (pelican) and other native birds, such as prairie-chicken, grouse, and plover were plentiful. I was always busy until nearly midnight with shipments of such game. All had to be properly tied, tagged and billed out; so that the night-man or woman had only to cart them to the express car, and load them. I remember a young man named Dan Rose who claimed he nearly kept his father and mother and other members of the family by his game shipments. And that makes me think: Dan had a brother-in-law named Bob Alexander who was a dog trainer. His activities contributed much to my busy life at times. Not that they increased my express commission, as nearly all the dogs that came from far Eastern and Southern states to be trained, were dogs belonging to high officials of some railroad or express company, and therefore they were sent checked as baggage, or came on passes of one sort or another. Some of the crates were very artistic. Of course the dogs were nearly all bird dogs. Alexander was always receiving foods for his dogs. One kind I remember, was something that looked about like a large truck wheel; only it was just cracklings from some meat packing company. Cracklings from which the lard had been pressed out. About as soon as one or two of these wheels had been unloaded onto the platform at the depot, one could see dogs coming near, doubtless led on by some scent they could not resist.

Changing the subject, I jumped over twenty-five or thirty years to the present. Our house is on the south shore of Lake May at Walker, Minnesota. Just now a fisherman in a little duck-boat pull-ed up to our landing , and signalled to me to come down, saying he had caught “a big one.” Sure enough, he had hooked a Great-northern pike weighing twenty or twenty-five pounds. So fierce and heavy the man said he found it impossible to land the fish in his boat, so troll-ed him to our landing, which is a nice sloping, sandy beach. People living in this vicinity had thought Lake Hay was fished out; but I venture to bet that there are <u>more</u> good fish where this one came from. This is July 3rd, 1934. A perfect day here among the pine-bordered lakes. But I must hop back to

Herman and my Memoirs. As a kind of summary of our lives at Herman, I will say that my family and I enjoyed the friendship and hospitality of many good people living there at that time. Social activities never ceased. About every other Saturday afternoon we gathered at the Race Track, just at the edge of town, to witness horse racing as conducted by Mr. Goodell, a veteran lover of fine horses. Keep in mind that this was in the days before the automobile's appearance, and fact traveling had to be done with horses. There was much gathering at each other's houses for parties, suppers, plays and so forth, especially Church suppers. Good Schools (?) and just a happy lot of people, composed of many different nationalities, made for well-being. (This is a question, too)

When I was made Agent at Herman, that country was very quiet and inactive. Land was held at five dollars per acre, with no buyers. Merchants did much business because the village was the center of a large farming and stock-raising country. I was congratulating myself on finding such an easy and withal such an interesting station, when all at once there came a market change. Land began to sell. The Railroad was hauling more cars of everything, including numerous cars of fat cattle from Montana to the Stock Yards at South St. Paul and Chicago. Then came the Alaska Gold Rush, which caused much talk and excitement. Several men went from our town and vicinity. One perished of exhaustion before reaching the land of gold and another, a Traveling Auditor for the Great Northern, was caught in one of those awful snow slides. Now we began to have Land Offices; and land buyers came to look at the country. A new and up-to-date Flour Hill was erected. One day I Heard by wire about the blowing up of the Battle-ship Maine in Havana Harbor, killing 360 men. I walked right over town to spread the news; and you know that was the beginning of the war with Spain. Soon we were having all kinds of traveling shows-merry-go-rounds, shooting galleries and such attractions. One day an unusually nice-looking Merry-go-round asked for permission to locate on the Station Grounds, between the Depot and Main Street. I wanted to see the fun, so said, “Yes, but for two days only.” I knew it was my duty to take such matters up with the Supt's office, but that was likely to cause delay. I always had a soft spot in my heart for any kind of shows and entertainments. So I risked it. Lo and behold, the Merry-go-round hadn't much more than got established, with the music going and everybody having a good time, when who should appear but our Division Superintendent! He came over to where I was standing and with a rather stern expression he asked, “Who gave them permission to occupy that ground?” With a guilty countenance I answered, “I did”. After a moment's silence his face changed to a smile, and he remarked that people must have their fun. I reckon that if a similar case were to occur today, an agent giving such a permit would be suspected of collecting a concessionary (?) fee for himself; but no such thought occurred to me, nor do I believe the Supt. thought of it in that way.

The winter of 1897 was remarkable for snowfall and long-continued cold weather, the mercury standing about 38 degrees below zero for a month at a time. I remember that in the earlier part of that winter, when the snow was coming down thick and fast, that I sometimes waded through snow in the street up to my waist. One night when the West-bound Wayfreight was hours late, I stood checking the merchandise being unloaded in such a snowstorm. Next day I found I was short two bundles of farm harrows, the wooden frame-work of these harrows being 12 ft. in length, I could not believe that I had erred in my checking of the unloading; but they could not be found. So I re-ported them short; but along late in March when the sun shone, and the snow was going, the harrows appeared! They had simply been buried under four or five feet of snow! That winter it was found necessary, to send out a train of empty flat-cars and men to dig us out of the snow. The men would load the flats with snow from our station and elevator tracks, haul to the nearest fill on the line, unload and re-peat until our tracks were all opened up; and these trips to dig us out continued all that winter.

When cars of wheat at elevators were loaded and billed out, I would take my car seals and seal

tools, lie down on the snow and reach down to attach the seal to the hasp on the car door. Now in summer, or when there was no snow on the ground, one had to reach very high or have a short ladder in order to attach the seal to the hasp. It was astonishing the way this snow covered the ground. Looking out South from the Depot one could see a great hill almost as high as the telegraph poles, seeming to form hills and canyons on the level ground. Many houses could be approached only through tunnels cut out of this hard snow - - everywhere hard enough to walk on without fear of falling through. That was after storms were pass-ed, and we had a day or so of sunshine. Let us hope that such snowy winters are a thing of the past. I very much doubt if Herman has endured a similar winter to this day.

In the four or five years that I was employed as Agent at Herman, I believe we had a change of Division Superintendents about every year. O. O. Winters, who placed me at this station, was soon promoted to Assistant General Supt., and the sent out to the coast. Some of the men who succeeded him were humane, and such men never lasted very long. It is not becoming or pleasing for me to criticize the policies of my employers, but I do not believe that the frequent changes of Railroad Supts. is productive of feelings of loyalty on the part of employees, nor efficiency in producing business for the company. About the year 1899 a new Division Supt made his appearance, nosing around the live to see where he could lop off an employee or two, and thereby put a feather in his cap. Now up to this time I had been very well satisfied with everything in connection with my work at Herman. The Station business had grown and Herman enjoyed the reputation of being the Model Town! Peculiar because we had no passenger trains in day-time, only freights - - a Wayfreight each way and perhaps some extras. Fine Passenger Trains, one East, one West, came in the middle of the night; and that was what made the nights interesting, lively, full of cheer. A nice young lady named Ida Record, and later a Miss Hattie Stokes, sold tickets, checked baggage, handled Express - - all this was just the life of the town. Now all this was changed. The girls were taken off, and a young man put on to take care of all the night work. His salary was fifteen dollars per month. He was entirely without railroad experience of any kind. The girls had done much writing in my books, and it was necessary too, as we all had to hustle to keep up the work. I protested, but without avail. I forbade the new man to sell tickets. Ticket work was not for yokels, but required much intelligent care. During the daytime my work was increased so much that life was only a burden at the end of a month. My monthly local ticket report showed 65 cents instead of its usual amount of over one hundred dollars! I knew well enough that something would come of all this, but I would be glad if it did. Let come what would. I heard not a word from headquarters, but one night a <u>man</u> came to take my place. All the business-men in Herman sent a signed protest, asking to have me reinstated, but “nothing doing”.

I was not long out of work. Joe Sylvester, a land-office man, produced fifty dollars expense money and asked me to go to Iowa and get men interested in our Minnesota land. At first I found it uphill business. They said it was too far North. I argued that there were more hours of sunshine up there than they had in Iowa, and the land was as good or better than theirs. That the Minnesota land could be bought for about fifteen dollars per acre now, and was sure to rise in price, and would soon reach fifty dollars per acre. All of which was truth, and quickly verified by what followed. This was new business for me, and not much to my liking. However, I met with some success. There was competition, and one had to be careful not to “horn in” on another man's prospective buyers.

Trains were always interesting, both going and coming between Herman and St. Paul. Crowds of people were in the habit of going to the Stations at train-time for fun, or business, maybe some for tragic or sad meetings. In the berry season I have known trains to be delayed an hour or more just to load berries, at Howard Lanke and other stations east of Willmar. When making my first trip, I think it was, there was lots of room in the day coaches. I turned two seats and thought to take a nap. When I was flat with my head on my grip and gesturing to sleep to come, I was surprised to

find that someone was carefully covering me with a blanket. Of course I was startled, looked up suddenly. The lady saw that she had tucked in the wrong man (Not her husband!) She was covered with confusion and uttered a stifled scream as she grabbed off the blanket, and ran away up the aisle!

When I was not out on these man hunts, I assisted in the office and drove land-seekers out to show what we had for sale. For such trips we had a good team of horses hitched to a light spring wagon. Automobiles had not come into general use at that time. I was glad to be employed for by this time we were quite well established at Herman. Our second girl, Dorothy, was attending Normal School at Winona. My son Rossiter was in charge of an elevator at Moose Island, buying wheat for a Grain Company, and Helen, another daughter, was teaching a country school a few miles out from town. Our youngest daughter, Margaret, was a little girl in grade school.

By some trade in the land business, I had come into possession of a horse and buggy which enabled Helen to board at home, and drive to and from her school each day. This gave her much pleasure and experience. The Interstate Grain Company, (by which he was employed) furnished Rossiter with a horse and buggy, so he came home every night, too. This gave us some anxiety, as he was often late arriving. Parts of the five-mile road over which he travelled were bare of inhabitants, much of the way was through brushy land, and he always carried much money. It would have been so easy for a robber to way-lay him. But in those days our Minnesota was not infested with bandits as it is today. But one day, something unusual did happen. An insane man known to have escaped from the "Asylum" and to be "at large" suddenly appeared at Moose Island and stood in the open door of the Elevator confronting Rossiter with his very sinister presence. How Rossiter handled this "scary" situation makes a good story. Why not include it, here? Of course he carried a gun, which might have helped had the robber been slow on the trigger. (?)

The horse Rossiter drove was a Morgan, rather high strung, with correctly pointed ears and fine appearance. When our married daughter, Mrs. Kitty Blackmar, and her two babies were visiting us, R. hitched up this horse, The Honorable Peter Sterling, and took them for a ride on a beautiful Sunday afternoon. They went south on the Wheaton road. About an hour or two later we were horrified to see the horse come galloping into town with only the bare running gears of the buggy attached. Of course we were in great distress, but very soon many people were starting out to locate the trouble. My wife went with friends, but I stayed at home (with the children)?! I never lived a more anxious hour than that one. But after what seemed a life time, the folks were brought back, safe and sound and without a scratch. They said that just when they thought they had gone far enough into the country and were turning around to start home, something frightened the horse so that he gave such a spring that it stripped the body seat, top, and all the people flat on the road; but no one was hurt, as they watched Peter disappear with only the chassis! Well, we were as happy and thankful that evening as any little family could be when recovered from fear and dread to find that all was well.

After working with the Sylvester Brothers for maybe a year in land business, I went into partnership with George Lamberton, or Lamberton Brothers, I believe it was. I was furnished a team of ponies and a light wagon, and sent to Forman, Sargent Co., North Dakota, where I opened a land office. Forman was the County Seat town situated on the Soo Line Railroad. I put up at the principal hotel of which I cannot now recall the name, but the Proprietor was named Dewey. He was a first cousin of the Admiral, whom he greatly resembled. It was a good hotel where land office men and other met, and everybody smoked Potentate cigars. I was not long in getting my share of buyers. Land was held at about ten dollars per acre. It was good soil! but quite rocky. There were artesian wells. One in town was piped down 800 ft. This was fine water, but always warm. There were several land offices in town and all had lists of unsold land, these lists were exchanged among us and I have sold tracts of land which I did not own. But in such

cases I would find a telephone station, call the one who had it for sale, and if he still had it on his list at the price shown there, I would accept, saying "Will send you a remittance tomorrow." Of course the buyer would immediately hand over earnest money or acceptance of the contract for deed, which was the usual way of procedure in such land transactions. It always requires time to furnish a deed, but a contract can be made quickly. To make a long story short, just when I was beginning to like the land business, the bottom fell out of it, and nobody wanted land at any price. I waited a reasonable length of time, hoping for some change for the better, but to no avail. I then drove the team of ponies home to Herman, to admit my defeat to the Lamberton Land Co. I sold my share of land among the numerous land agents, but my expenses were too heavy, tho' occasionally there came days when my profits were hundreds of dollars; but such days only occurred now and then, while expenses had no holidays. I am sorry that I shall never again have another opportunity to engage in such a business. I am also sorry that I did not discover that most interesting and lucrative business at its very beginning, instead of waiting until it was very near its everlasting end. There was honest money to be made and one's powers of observation were sharpened as he visited courthouses in pursuit of records covering some piece of land to be transferred, often finding flaws in abstracts, and taxes not paid; all of which would have to be corrected before a deed could be made. No wonder Mr. Lamberton could be seen leaning over his desk, his face in his hands, saying, "Oh, I have so much trouble!" Even so, he said he liked the land business.

I now decided to go back to railroading again. But where could I expect to find Station work? Well, I had never tried the Soo Line. While at Forman I often went to their Depot, just to visit with the Agent and hear the telegraph instruments clicking. It was the only place where I really felt at home. The Soo Line's Superintendent's office was located at Enderlin, N.D. and I was not long about call-ing on him. I was questioned and carefully examined by a doctor as to every physical condition - - arteries, blood-pressure, etc., as well as ability to endure. I learned that they had many openings where I could be used, but salaries were low. Finally the Supt. said he would send me to Hankinson, to relieve the Agent there for a month or so, Hankinson being one of their heaviest stations. As I was entirely unacquainted with their system of doing business, I asked to be sent to a smaller station to start with. He said, "Then you can go to Kenmare, N. D." The Soo Line runs diagonally across the State of North Dakota, south-east to northwest, entering Canada at Portal. Kenmare was the second station east of Portel. When my train was within a hundred miles of Kenmare, I began to hear the name on every hand. Even tho' spoken in some foreign language, it was Kenmare, Kenmare; and then I wished I had gone to Hankinson. On arriving near midnight, I saw a very small station, one of the kind that could be transported from place to place on flat cars. That was all right, but all around it, on the ground, was piled freight of almost every description: machinery, stoves, pumps, merchandise, coops of fowls. Much snow had lately fallen and Oh, how cold it was! Sick at heart I followed a man with a lantern to a hotel, and was soon in bed doing more thinking than sleeping. After breakfast I went down to the depot to see what I was up against. The Auditor was on hand and I was soon checked in; which procedure showed me to be not only Agent at Kenmare but also at Donnybrook, Corpedt (?) Foxholm, Burlington and maybe one or two other stations, the names of which I do not now remember. All these stations were in active settlements, and doing business. All waybills for such points came to Kenmare to be taken to account. The little office was packed with old records, and it seemed that every old baggage check had been carefully preserved. The Auditor instructed me to file them away out of sight. So when he was gone I filed all such in the pot-bellied stove! It had often been my job through many years to straight-en up stations, but I never saw one like this. However, that was not to be wondered at. There simply had been more work than any one man could do. As Kenmare was the only open station west of Minot, I had to be on duty for passenger trains till nearly 2:00 a.m. Then the Wayfreight from the East was due about 8:00 p.m. and there was no way of knowing where it was until you saw it coming. On this my first day, or night, it came at

10:00 p.m. Snow was falling fast and the Conductor handed me a wad of waybills of merchandise to be unloaded, saying, “Can you check freight?” I said, I never had seen a man that could check freight and do it right. The top waybill was a full blanket size, pen written, with two items in each line. That evening a stock shipper had loaded five cars of cattle to go east. How he appeared, asking to have the five cars moved to a different sidetrack. To this I began to demur because I should have been told about it before the train arrived. Said he, “You do this or I'll see that you lose your job.” I replied, “My dear man, if you can get me out of here tonight you will do me a great service and be my best friend.” This pleased the train crew so much that they said, “As soon as we get through unloading here we will place your cattle where you want them.” That night when the East and West Passenger Trains had passed and I had carried the sacks of United States Nail to the Post Office, I went to bed. Even here in this little Depot there was a cubby hole for a bed. I was too cold and miserable to sleep. About four o'clock the East bound Wayfreight came, and they kicked on my door till I had to get up. They had picked up a car of Lignite at the mines, and wanted it billed, so as to save setting it out. I have given only a part of what was doing at Kenmare on this first twenty four hours as agent. Now I could understand why they examined so carefully into my health condition at Enderlin. A man would need to be a brother to a wolverine to endure this for long.

After a few days I wrote to the Supt. a scathing letter about conditions saying that was not a one man station. Then a young man with one arm came as helper. Of course he was only half a man, but was agreeable and willing, and helped much in various ways. By this time I had taken a severe cold and head troubles to such an extent as to give me much distress and suffering, a remnant of which I am still feeling after these forty years. This will give some idea of my experience working for the Soo. I will say however, that I have never met a finer lot of train men than I found there and I feel that the case of Kenmare was unusual, an oversight of the management not properly brought to light by the retiring Agent.

Some notes as to the town: It was well planned with a large, old-fashioned Public Square, The people were friendly, hospitable, very cheerful. Many of them had come from Iowa. There was but one well in the town, at that time and the water was clear and very hard. The earth Was one lignite coal mine, and every body burned it. There was a long deep lake ending near town, walled in by round sloping hills. The water of this lake was almost like soap suds, colored and soft, and was of no use as drinking or cooking water. Lakes of Minnesota, when hard freezing sets in, make quite a crashing noise, but nothing to compare with the awful shrieks and agonizing groans to be heard there when ice covered that strange lake. The weather was changeable, Kenmare being nearly on a line with Pembina might be expected to be cold, but they frequently felt the Chinook Winds there. One or two days of snowfall would suddenly melt and then maybe we would have a balmy day or two caused by these warm winds reaching us from the coast. As I was only at Kenmare to relieve the regular Agent, the time finally passed, and the Traveling Auditor came to transfer the Station and when he was through, he checked me eighteen dollars short, which gave me a scare, as in all my years before I had never been short. Haley said that I could examine his figures, but he was sure there could be no errors. He went to dinner. I went through the settlement and found where an express C.O.D. of $21.75 had been credited to the incoming Agent which belonged to my accounts, thereby making me $3.75 over, instead of short $18.00. Wasn't I happy! I find my short connection with the Soo Line Railroad has made quite a story, and not at all drawn.

The difficult things we meet with in the predicaments of life are the ones which we remember best. I was soon on my way home, where I was glad to rest and recuperate in some measure from the hard knocks received at Kenmare, N.D.

Now Rossiter and the girls were employed, and we passed a very pleasant winter at Herman. And in the spring I became interested in taking a homestead as many other men were doing, going

North into cutover timberland around Akeley, Minn. I found a 160-acre tract only two miles from town and in sight of the Great Northern Ry, which the records showed had been taken by a man named Murphy who had died. Different men had been trying to get it, employing lawyers to investigate what would be necessary. The Clerk of Court at Park Rapids advised me to file on it, as he believed that Murphy had no heirs. I did so and met with no obstacles, and was soon a homesteader occupying the Murphy Shack. There were advantages at this place. One was a spur track where cars could be loaded or unloaded. The shack was near a small lake, and the lake was located between my cabin and the railroad. At Akeley was one of the most up-to-date Sawmills in the state, employing several hundred men. This mill was the property of The Red River Lumber Company. At any time of the day or night there could be heard the roar of the swift moving saws and machinery, and the raucous voice of the enormous steam whistle. Living alone in the woods, if not in sight of these things but at least in hearing of them, was not entirely a Life of solitude. The cabin was among some young pines at the south side of a clearing of three or four acres which sloped down to the lake. This open land had been cultivated but now was in grass. Altogether it was a desirable place. In season, there were acres of wild straw -berries, raspberries and blueberries. Wild animals- - bears, wolves, wild-cats, though hardly ever seen, still left tracks. Deer were plentiful and there were no game-wardens to shun. Neighbors were almost too numerous, but at least they were real neighbors if you were in trouble or needed help of any kind. A man named Dave Hall, whose claim cornered on mine, was a regular lumberjack from Michigan; and I remember that he was considered pretty wild. He often came to visit me, and I liked to call on him, too, sometimes. His cabin was always well stocked with smoked bacon, as well as canned blue berries of his own gathering. One night in coming home from town I lost my bearings and soon I realized that I was really lost. I moved about from place to place, but no, I had never seen the ground I was on now. I thought I could just smell wolves. I mount-ed a log and let out a yell, when lo, the voice of Dave Hall answered; and never had I heard a more welcome voice! I quickly trod the forty rods to his house, where I was the recipient of some jokes by Dave and Joe Hess, a young homesteader of the neighborhood who was spending a few days helping Dave. After I had rested and felt recovered, I spoke of starting home. D.H. said, “Joe will go with you; for I know that when a man is lost be wouldn't recognize his own dooryard, much less a well-known trail.” Walking home with the and gentle Joe Hess as pilot gave me an inside view of how kind my woods neighbors were.

This living in the woods and on my own land, with no over-lard boss to order me around, was certainly a change, and a great pleasure to me. There was plenty of work if I felt like working. A part of my land had been burned over, leaving unsightly stubs standing upright. I provided myself with an excellent double bitted ax with which I attacked these stubs, soon making the surroundings more beautiful. At that time there had been little clearing north of Sauk Center. The weather during this my first summer on the land, was natural, the lakes were full. There were many days of heavy rains accompanied by crashing peals of thunder which I remember well. I remember well our first Fourth of July. Akeley had made great preparations for a gala day, but it was almost completely rained out. My son Ross was visiting me at the time, and during a short period of the day we made our way to town and in spite of bad weather we had much exhilaration and fun. My first ride in an Automobile was made during that visit of my son. A young man named Giles had a car, and for a dollar he took us out to the claim. We seemed to just fly. But the road was rough, and the car was old before its time, and had no top. I reckon one would hardly be proud of a ride in such a car in this day of closed palaces.

Tim Beech, another neighbor, had a team of good horses and was quite a farmer. I got him to plow my cleared land, and I planted com, potatoes and garden stuff which grew and flourished. I had a tolerably good old cook stove and no lack of good wood to bum. I soon learned to make good pies of raspberries, blueberries, and strawberries which were growing everywhere.

My family was still living at Herman; and when my wife came on her first visit she was delighted with our woods home (???) Together we explored the land, and by now I was well acquainted with the beauty spots, and exact lines of our land; so that these walks were a pleasure indeed. All about our cabin there were young pine trees offering shelter and shade, where when tired we brought our chairs and rested as much and as long as we desired. The result of this visit and other considerations finally brought about a complete change in our affairs. Later on Rossiter resigned from his grain buying position at Noose Island with the intent-ion of bringing his mother to the claim to live; and it was then I decided to turn the claim over to him, while I would seek some kind of a job on a railroad, whereby I could help my people financially in their efforts on the claim. At that time the Minnesota and International Railroad was extending its line towards the Canadian Border, and had just reached the town of Blackduck. Their headquarters were located at Brainerd, Minn. So I went there on a day when neither Mr. Gemmel or his trail-master Mr. Strachan were at home. The Chief Dispatcher examined me as to ability, saying they had no vacancies, but they might use me on the North end. I waited until Mr. Strachan came. He said they were about to open a temporary Station North of Blackduck at Hovey Junction, now called Funkley. Tracks were already as far north as what is now Kelliher. Other tracks led out from this Kelliher line to the many logging camps already at work in these forests. A train crew would be put on whose duty it would be to visit such logging camps daily, bring the cars of logs to the station where my job would be to waybill the logs to all kinds of destinations, keeping records and making reports of same to the Auditor at Brainerd. Every night a regular train crew would be sent up to Hovey to take away what logs were ready. I was informed that it would be pretty rough and wild up there, and "Did I think I would like to try it?" I said, "Yes, it sounds good to me". At this time Blackduck was the Northern terminus of the road, which distinction it had just recently acquired. It was a village of four or five-hundred inhabitants, with several hotels and restaurants and about forty saloons, a lively little city especially at night when everything was well lighted and wide open. There was much music, as many saloons had pianos and victrolas were something new. Finding myself dropped into such surroundings almost reminded me of former days and nights in Cheyenne. I put up at The Golden West Hotel for the night, and next morning early I was aboard the work train for a look at my future layout. When arrived there, I found a neat little station built entirely of Cedar logs about fifteen by twenty feet square, in the center of which was planted a galvanized heater of some size. This stove was just like a great inverted funnel, the small end up being a continuation of stovepipe to the chimney above. There was a comfortable work-table with telegraph instruments already placed thereon. As I remember it, I was the only one to get off at Hovey Junction that morning. It was barely daylight as I gazed at the disappearing train going on through the cleared slit in the primeval forest, which was the right-of-way. Realizing that I was the only inhabitant, I felt very lonesome. However, I saw there was work enough to be done to keep me out of mischief. Where would I sleep? How could I exist? Well, for the present I decided to go back to Blackduck every night until better equipped with some house-hold articles here. I gathered chips and started fire in my funnel-stove, which soon gave out a most pleasant warmth and cheer. Now I began to plan a sleeping place, for with a bed it would not be necessary for me to go to Blackduck nights, which would be expensive. Soon I found material enough to erect not a four-poster, but a one-poster, using a corner of the room for the other three posts. The floor of my bed was about four feet above the floor of the cabin. So callers could not sit on my bed! This first day I cut cedar branches enough to make quite a soft foundation, and next day a lumber-jack came by with a wagon load of baled hay, and I begged one bale from him. And this mixed with my cedar branches made a good bed. What could be better than this aroma- - cedar boughs and new-mown hay. A few blankets purchased in Blackduck completed my sleeping arrangements. The nights I had spent at Blackduck were most interesting , just wandering around with Conductor Jim Smith visiting dance halls with roulette wheels. There was no lack of life in B, in those days, as every train brought in more and more homesteaders, and their belongings consisting of old cook stoves, boxes of household articles and

farming tools with which to till the ground. All around the Depot the ground was covered with every kind of plunder, including live poultry and quarters of beef, and other perishable freight. I noticed that the Agent was without sufficient help, so that almost his entire time was taken up answering the questions of a crowd of people wishing information about endless subjects. Finally came Mr. Gammel and Mr. Strachan with Station supplies for my Depot at Hovey Junction, the installing of which was a short job. On the same train were a few new settlers - - just track men and a pair of newly weds, Jim Heller and wife, who came to start a boarding house. The Main Line track was now nearing Northome, seventeen miles North of Hovey Junction, and each morning the work train came out of Blackduck with flat cars loaded with steel rails and other supplies necessary for the day's work. They were not supposed to carry any passengers, but for all that, the caboose was packed and the kegs of spikes on the cars of iron each made a seat for a man or maybe a women, on their way into a new home. I travelled on this train to and from Blackduck, which was their lay-up station for the present time, and I guess the train crew gathered in a few sheckles from us passengers. I spent much time exploring the forest around my station. A short distance out on the Kelliher branch, say forty rods, Was a bridge over a nice little stream and this creek was bordered by grassy banks and rushes. On either side a favorite place deer and other animals. One of the logging camps was located two or three miles down stream from this bridge. A nice thing about the woods country up here was the absence of underbrush - - tag alder and such. One could see over quite a space all around in this forest. Now the log train was on, and my real work began. Much of it was at night. Sometimes I went out to the camps with the train crews, where we were all treated as guests rather than just ordinary men. If dinner was going on, we were invited to sit right up to the table. All camps had good cooks, and tables loaded with good food. Every camp had a huge dining and cook building, where there was a long table which would seat from twenty-five to one-hundred men. Of course there was always an enormous range and the cook had to know how to use it; and woe be to the cook who was late with a meal. Tables were liberally furnished with sweets such as prunes, raisins, english currants, and much sugar and syrup, because men liked such food and would consume less meat which was more expensive.

I remained in the little cedar station throughout the winter. The Hellers had put up a small shack across the track from the Depot, and I with some track men sat on cold slab benches there while "Sweetheart" Jim helped us to coffee and such food as was provided. I was displeased with a Section Boss who invited himself to make a sleeping bunk under my high bed. I could hardly refuse to allow this; but after two or three nights of his sleeplessness and pipe-smoking under me, I was beginning to plan some way of escape, when he was removed for some reason. I thought, "Now that shall not happen again." But soon an injured lumber-jack, his hip probably broken, was unloaded there to await his removal to the hospital at Bemidji. For some reason two or three trains came and went without taking this poor man. His groans were pitiful. Then Mr. Strachan came up and when his log train was leaving he hesitated about taking the man, making an excuse of some kind. Then I rose up in my might, and he said to the men, "Stop the Caboose right here and take on the man." So now I was greatly relieved to be rid of my tribulations.

I could not be lonesome as there were always people walking on the track, some going into the woods and others coming out; and many of them stopped at my door to pass a word or two. I judged that the people going to start new homes in the woods, had a feeling that they were escaping from something- - failure, unsuccessful life of some sort. The great forest is indeed a shelter and refuge. Winter was already on when one evening a man called who was quite intoxicated. I urged him to keep on his way towards Blackduck, and he went. Next morning the track men found his dead body on the track near Blackduck. I have always felt guilty about that; but how could I know that he was unable to take care of himself. I afterward learned that he was a discharged cook from one of the lumber camps.

I spent the winter in this little cedar station, working more at night than in the day, and often having long conversations by wire with Mr. Strachan at Brainerd. The company now sent up carpenters and began building a permanent Depot. And I remember that when they had about finished the frame work one of the log trains, in backing around there during the night, got out of control and struck the new frame, knocking it four or five feet north, and clear off its foundation blocks. The carpenter in charge was greatly distressed. He wired John Baker, the Master Builder for instructions. Baker came up next day, took a look at the wreck and said, "That's nothing to worry about. Bring me six jacks." With these he jacked the warped frame to a level, put it on some skids, and a locomotive with a chain from its drawbar quickly drew it back where it belonged. Soon the new Depot was finished, and I moved in. Now in the early spring came Mr. Lewis, civil engineer in charge of the extension of the track north, and established his household in a great tent near the new Depot, said household consisting of himself, wife, two children, and four or five young men assistants. They were fine people. And now Hovey Junction was a place of cheer as compared to my lone days during the winter.

As spring progressed the work train going to the end of the track showed more and more homesteaders going into the woods. Let us hope they found peace and safety, something like refuge, sanctuary escape. There were only a handful of us there but I remember that we had a delightful Fourth of July, The day was fine. I found some snow in a place where the sun never shone, and we had ice-cold lemonade. Mrs. Lewis had everybody to dinner. We had cannon fire-crackers, and some other fire-works, besides lots of brush bonfires in the evening.

Sometime towards the last of July I was offered Walker Station, as Agent Hammer was resigning, but with a proviso that he might re-turn within a reasonable time. Mr. Strachan thought his return very unlikely, so I accepted. That was over thirty years ago, and Walker was still quite young. Charlie Kinkele was Landlord at the Lake Shore Hotel. The Spencers kept a kind of homelike Hotel on the site now occupied by the New Chase. John Sempf held forth on the corner where he dispensed Sunnybrook Whiskey, and plenty of Anheiser, Budweiser, Busch Beer to the thirsty. Bert Chase was proprietor of the Old Chase at that time. That was in the days before the railroad handled the people. I soon found myself almost swamped, as it was just the time when tourists were starting to their homes. The platform was alive with people, there were tickets to sell, and everybody had some kind of baggage to be checked, ranging from the traveling man with one-hundred sample cases to a lady with a "reticule". Walker Station was certainly a beehive of work at that time, and I was pleased with it; but this was of short duration, for at the end of about six weeks Mr. Hammer returned, and of course claimed his rights to be reinstated. Mr. Strachan said I could go to Pine River, which didn't fill me with pleasure. I asked to be permitted to go and take a look at it, and this request was granted. Now Pine River was older than Walker, and the country well settled., and business flourishing in the village. There was something very pleasing about the whole landscape. The town was situated on a lively little river named Norway Brook, which flowed out of Norway Lake, some two miles northeast of the town, and this brook joined Pine River a mile or so southwest of town - - it was really only a line of thoroughfare connecting Norway Lake and Pine River. There was a large cleared grassy tract in this point which was a favorite camping ground for Indians during their yearly blueberry hunts. Most of these Indians came from points north, but there was evidence to show that all this Pine River Country <u>had been</u> a favorite home of the Red Men. I noticed some graves along the road near town. Little box-like frames on the ground they were, and covering the grave a sort of sarcophagus, only made of wood instead of stone.

Well, I was soon checked in and found I was not only Agent at Pine River, but had Jenkins on my South and Mildred North to handle. There was no lack of work and I liked the people. They were <u>so</u> friendly and helpful in many ways. Often the freight train would come late and cover my station platform with all kinds of freight. Then it would be just like a lot of young fellows to come

and make a frolic of storing this freight into my freighthouse, thereby relieving me of much hard work.

Something was always happening at Pine River. A tragedy which had occurred some little time before my arrival there was still felt by the inhabitants. The proprietor of their best hotel - - a well-known and respected early-day lumberman named Barclay, had been shot dead as he sat leaning back at a column in his hotel lobby. The shot came through a window which faced towards the railroad Depot, the Depot being not far away. A young man who was employed there on that night was questioned, but seemed to have know nothing about the occurrence. So far as I remember, the matter quieted down. However, there was much ill feeling against a man named Dawes for the reason that he was soon seen in company with the widow, and once when they were crossing a bridge together, a shot was fired that was supposed to have been in-tended for Mr. Dawes. Later on I was well acquainted with all parties concerned, and they were no different from other people on the earth.

I slept on a cot in the office in my station, and I remember when a man - - a doctor he was - - named Murphy, shot himself near my platform, and his body was stored just on the other side of the thin partition from my cot! Twice during that night I had to go in there for fuel to keep up my fire. Of course it gave me a queer feeling, but I saw no reason for being afraid of the dead. I had been at Pine River a year, and was boarding at Churchill's, just a few steps from the station. One day the southbound passenger train came in at noon, and I sold quite a number of tickets. On this particular day I noticed nothing unusual about the surroundings. I think I had about fifty dollars all in silver, For convenience I kept this money in a small drawer which I left in the ticket case on this day. After taking dinner at C's, I sat on the board sidewalk for a short time. Then, on going back to my office, I found the ticket window broken, the door standing open and ticket case had been jimmied, drawn and money was gone. I notified the proper officers, who got busy, but could find no trace of the thief. I wired the Supt. and Mr. Downey. The Auditor came to check the accounts. By his check the loss to the Railroad was $32.50. But I knew that I had had $15.00 of my own money in that drawer, which 1 was sorry to part with. I informed Mr. Downey that I would not pay the $32.50. He said the Co. would have to charge it up to profit and loss. I recall the fact that Mr. Downey was in a peaceful mood and together we had a nice visit as we sat in a boat that happened to be on the platform that evening.

A Stranger Appears

One day when the northbound passenger train had pulled out, a young man called on me, asking some questions relative to hotels, summer resorts, fishing, and the peculiarities of the people, if any. He might have been about thirty years old, was well-formed and well dressed, good looking. In face his appearance was all to the good. I accompanied him to our best hotel where he made a good impression by inviting everybody to the bar. Next day I saw him getting acquainted around town. Then he began taking little trips on the railroad, to Brainerd and toner nearby stations. When he bought a ticket, if there was change coming to him in payment, he always said, “Never mind the change”, and shoved it back to me. He was not long in becoming very well liked and popular with everybody; and this continued for several months.

Then a grand “Blow-out” Stag Party was planned and carried out at the residence of a bachelor ex-cowboy named Davies. Of course we all were invited, and we arrived at the party at about eight o'clock in the evening. As we entered the door we were met by a well-chosen young man bearing beautiful trays of different kinds of liquor. Yon could take your choice. When all the guests had arrived, we were ushered to a long table which was well supplied with such delicacies as oysters, lobsters, turtle soup, plenty of rye bread, sliced ham, black coffee, champagne, beer or what will you have. After the banquet there was much singing of beergarden songs, becoming

more hilarious all the time. I made an excuse that I was wanted for a freight train at eleven o'clock. And when I started away, I was surprised to find Mr. Dawes staggering towards me, claiming that he needed assistance to get to his hotel. This was not true, for as soon as we were clear of the place he said, “Fluke, I feel very grateful to you for helping me to get out of that party. 'Twas too much for me.” Now, as a rule, Mr. Dawes was a tough old bird. So you can judge that this was indeed a wild party, when such a man was glad to get away from it. A day or two after this “Blowout” another stranger came to Pine River, which was nothing unusual. But on his arrival our genial and liberal Mr. Roe disappeared - - nobody knew where to or why. It soon became known that this was an officer of the law, sent from Cleveland in search of our friend, who, it was claimed, had stolen $40,000 of insurance funds while in the employ of some Insurance Company. The young man was soon found and taken into Custody. We were all sorry, but as I remember it, he escaped without any severe punishment through the help of influential friends. Perhaps that $40,000 was better spent the way it was, than if it had gone to the Insurance Company. All this made a good item for publication in the “Pine Tree Blaze”, a weekly paper issued by Editor Holman. This man was a good friend of mine. Many a Sunday we spent wandering in the piney woods, and up and down the streams. Sometimes on Thursday nights when his paper went to press, I stayed up with him and his two helpers until midnight, all very busy except for the rest spells, when we drank tea and consumed candy.

I was while I was at Pine River that young fellows began addressing me as “Uncle”. This always made me angry, and once in a while I would say, “Don't call me Uncle. Somebody may think it was true.” Later on everybody that came to the ticket window said, “Listen.” Then came “You know what I mean.” Now everybody and everything is “O K.” We meet people on the street and it's always “Hello” instead of a dignified salute. Behold how the mighty have fallen!

One of the most difficult jobs which a Station Agent has to con-tend with is checking freight. Now to explain what I mean by checking freight: The freight-train pulls up to your station platform. The Conductor hands you the waybills showing the merchandise to be unloaded. The men open up the cars and begin bringing out boxes, cartons and whatnot, each man calling off the name of consignee and what the box or pkge. contains. There may be several waybills for the same car, end the agent must act mighty quickly to find the items called off, and make check on his waybills. Much merchandise came to Pine River; and once I made some little error like checking a package that was really short but soon followed on what we called “Over and Short” waybills. When this waybill reached the Auditor's office they felt called upon to write me a rather sarcastic letter about the matter. This I answered in a few (?) carefully chosen words, (?) and ended by saying, “No man is infallible save His Holiness the Pope, and even he would not last long checking freight at Pine River.” I learned afterwards that this expression made me almost famous, the whole management being Scotch and at least leaning towards Calvinism.

Pine River Station shipped each year during the deer hunting season something like fifty carcases. At that time the hunters came in Lumber-wagons or maybe Democrat Wagons, Buckboards or a-foot, but the shipped the game by express if it were going any distance. In blueberry season I shipped hundreds of crates, the bulk of them to the city markets, but numerous crates to individuals in various places. This made much work looking up rates, tagging, etc., but it also in-creased my Express Commission, and that was some compensation. Our Passenger Train from the north arrived at Pine River at 11:50 which was near my dinner time, and as a rule I made short work of anything that might hinder me from going at 12:00. But on one memorable day the train had brought an interesting-looking woman who was waiting for me when I came in from the baggage room. She said her name was Robinson, and produced an original bill-of-lading for a shipment of house-hold goods which has been on hand at my station for several months. I never received any replies to my card notices and the trace for shipper said, “Party unknown”. So I had placed the shipment in a storage room, and now the freight and storage amounted to fifty dollars.

The woman said she didn't know what she was going to do, for, said she, "I haven't got enough money to buy my dinner." She recited a sad story of how she and her husband had been traveling across country in a lumber wagon expecting to reach Pine River from the north, but that somewhere north of Laporte her husband was taken sick and died. That she was obliged to sell the horses and wagon, and other articles to pay doctor bills and funeral expenses. The woman was middle-aged, fairly well-dressed, of good general appearance. I did a little quick thinking. I said, "How would you like to get married?" Her face lit up at this. "But" I said, "Not to me. I know a man here, a well-to-do, honest man about sixty who, I know, wants a wife." She said modestly, Oh, it is so soon after what has happened." I took her to a boarding house for a place to stay, with the understanding that she would return after dinner and go with me to be introduced to the man. In the meantime I grabbed off a few bites of dinner, then went to Mr. Edom's grocery store to inform him of what was likely to happen. I could see that he was pleased with the idea. When Mrs. Robinson returned, I accompanied her to Mr. E's store and introduced them. Mr. Edom just beamed with pleasure, and Mrs. Robinson acted very becomingly in every way. So I went to my work, leaving them to become better acquainted. Before the day was over, they both came to the station and Mr. E paid me fifty dollars. They gave me to understand that the marriage would take place in a day or two, or as soon as the house-cleaning could be finished! There were one or two rooms on the ground floor back of the store, and some bed-rooms upstairs; and it is easy to imagine what kind of condition they would be in, with only a lone man as housekeeper. Next day I was over there on an errand, and noted that both of them were very busy with mops, brooms, pails of water, cans of Old Dutch Cleaner. A happy day with everybody on the rush.

I think it was on the morning of the third day of this clean-up project that Mrs. Robinson suddenly became ill. Said she feared the return of a former complaint which she had hoped she was entirely free from. She wanted to go to a hospital that she knew about somewhere in Wisconsin. However, she was able to begin packing her trunk, and at the same time showed plainly that she had changed her mind about marrying Mr. Edom. He, poor man, was almost struck dumb at the collapse of all his hopes. Talk or persuasion had no effect. She kept right on preparing to go. I think her illness was simply an overwhelming revulsion of feeling - - a comparison of what she was about to do with some happy and gay times in her past life, and an irresistible desire to escape before it was too late. After she had gone Mr. Edom discovered that she had taken his gold watch and chain, a diamond brooch, his best pair of black broadcloth trousers, and other articles. After a few days he received a letter from her advising that she would soon let him know where to ship her household goods to. This frightened Mr. Edom so much that he hurried to ask me what I thought about it. I told him to answer that he would give her ten days in which to remit the fifty dollars freight he had paid on her goods, and another fifty for the articles she had lifted. If the money were not received inside of ten days, he would proceed to dispose of the goods. She was not heard from again, so we took a look at what composed the household articles. There were crated chairs, lounges and boxes as is usual in such shipments, all in good condition, nothing shabby in the lot; but in one of the boxes we opened we found complete caparison of splendid design for woman and horse, which seemed to indicate that she had once been a circus rider. Well, both Mr. Edom and I found that she had been an actress. If I hadn't thought her perfectly honest and sincere, I certainly would not have introduced them. All summed up, she was the loser and we the gain-era. I had my fifty dollars freight charges, Mr. Edom had the house-hold goods worth more than all he lost in the transaction. Let us hope that he soon recovered from this short love affair.

I think it was in the spring of 1906, when I had been at Pine River about two and one half years that I decided to resign and go home to my family who were living happily on the claim near Okeley. But now came Mr. Strachan, Supt. of the Division, asking me to go to Northome as Agent, as they were making a change there and setting forth the advantages, better salary, etc. I protested that the work was too heavy up there, but said he, "You will have help." And so,

although it almost broke my homesick heart to give up going home, I finally consented to go and tackle the job at Northome. I was check-ed out of Pine River at the end of March, on a strange, gloomy day when snow was in the air. We got aboard the afternoon train. I believe there were two traveling auditors, both young, and the ex-press auditor a man of about my own age. His name was Newcome. By now the snow was falling fast, and I didn't like the attitude (?) of my company very much, except that of Mr. Newcome. He was a gentle-man. We arrived at Northome at about dusk. Mr. Schultz, the Agent, met us on the platform, and the Auditor said to him, "How long do you think it will take to strike a balance?" And Mr. Schultz replied, "We should be able to strike a balance in half an hour." Though what they meant by striking a balance I knew not, but that these upstarts would be able to transfer this station to me in half an hour. My Eye! Mr. Newcome said to me, "Let us go get supper." Which we did, he paying all bills in such a spirit of friendship. Then back to the work. At 11:00 o'clock I went to bed, and when I came in the morning, all were still working, having found that the half hour had lengthened into twelve hours, with still more to follow. Most of the forenoon was gone before I really became Agent at Northome. It was easy to see what I was up against, as to the work; but I was pleased to find that the Depot was very different from others on the M & I. It was very commodious with two waiting rooms, upstairs living rooms, and a large paved platform - - all located in a beautiful spot. The street on the east lead up to town, while to the west was a vast green forest, mostly of hardwood with patches of cedar and tamarack. Now a happy thought struck me. I could have part of my family come, and we would keep house in the Depot. But first I must become well acquainted with the townspeople. I had a helper named Chester Palmer, an exceptionally nice young man, ready and willing, but lacking in rail-road experience. The work was heavy.

I believe it was on the evening of my first day there, that I waybilled 40 carloads of logs - - a full train - - for the Crookston Lumber Co. A matter of that kind was only a drop in the bucketfull, as to my duties there.

I liked the people very much; and they showed by their acts that they were well pleased with their new Agent. I think it was about the middle of July that my wife and daughters, Dorothy, Helen and Margaret, came to visit me. What a joyful occasion that was! I re-member that in our efforts to get our living rooms in order, I found it necessary to mount a seven-foot stepladder. The ceilings were high in these upstairs rooms, and while my attention was on things above I felt the stepladder beginning to move forward under my feet. At the second of time in which I was losing my balance, I jumped upwards and backwards, so clearing the stepladder and lighting squarely on my feet on the floor. But oh, what a jar shook the whole house! Helen and Margaret came running, and when they learned what had happened, and that I was not hurt, they gave way to prolonged, hysterical laughter. But if I had not made that jump there might have been tears instead of laughter.

Backus and Brooks lumber men, and one third owners in the M & I RR, sent out men to lay out a spur track towards some timberland which they owned a little northeast of town. The land they would need to cross in order to reach this timber belonged to a young lawyer named Aad Tone. When he saw them beginning to set stakes on his land, he warned them that they were trespassing, and that they could not build anything there without his permission. To all of which they just laughed. However, next morning they found Tone there ahead of them with his rifle, threatening to shoot if they didn't leave at once. Then the Boss came to my office and wired his company for instructions. I wired headquarters about what was happening. Next day came Mr. Gemmel and Supt. Strachan, meeting and conferring with the Backus Brooks Co., who claimed the right to have land condemned when needed for Railroad Right of Way. To this Mr. Strachan replied that such a proceeding could be utilized (?) only in the building of main-line tracks, but could not be used on spur tracks, such as they were trying to build. And so Backus and Brooks were compelled to buy Aad Tone's land at Aad's price. Now I have reason to believe that there

was little friendship between the officials of the M & I and the B & B Company, for soon after the above occurrence Aad Tone was made Attorney for the H & I in that northern territory of the road.

My family soon became smaller as Dorothy and her mother went back to Okeley after staying at Northome for two or three weeks. I am sure that everyone enjoyed their visit in such an interesting country. Helen and Margaret decided to remain with me for a while, and were soon well enough acquainted to be received and welcomed into all the various activities, clubs, plays, picnics, churches and schools. Helen was soon employed as a teacher in the public schools, while Margie did light housekeeping for us upstairs, that is when she wasn't otherwise engaged in visiting with the Shook girls, Mrs. Ward or the Cook family. And that brings to mind a tragedy that occurred in that family. Mr. Cook was engaged in lumber and pole business. The family lived in quite a large house some 40 rods north of the Depot. One night after all had retired fire broke out in the basement of the house, and in almost no time the whole house was in flames. Their oldest son, perhaps about seventeen years of age, made trips into the burning building to rescue his Mother and younger members of the family. When all were safe, the boy apparently thought to save some articles of furniture, went back into the house and was overcome with smoke, and perished there, giving his life for others.

One night when Helen and Margaret had gone to the Juldee Club, and Chester Palmer and I sat dozing at ten or eleven o'clock waiting for the northbound Way Freight, we were suddenly startled by a fierce scream which sounded like one of our girls might make if in great distress or agony. We jumped to our feet, but now we heard it again, and evidently farther away, showing it to be only the cry of a wild cat. Soon the girls were home and had heard nothing scary at all. You can see by this that a railroad agent could be kept on duty all day and all night. When I think of that slavery as compared to the present eight hour day, and the condition of railroads now - -Well, I think it was very unwise policy to thus treat the very men who stood between the railroads and their customers, the Public.

About the last of August, Northome held a Fair, which sounded like a joke to me. What, in the name of sense could there be exhibited in such a wild, new country as this? The location chosen for the exhibits was very pleasing. An immense vacant log building which had served its time as an eating house, and home for Lumber Jacks. This and a space around it constituted the fair grounds. The vegetables, potatoes, root crops, in fact everything on display were away above the average both as to size and quality. Besides, there were pomegranates, vine peaches (?) various kinds of flowers and other unusual things; strange geese, ducks and speckled chickens native to China; some small animals like Belgian Hares, Guinea pigs. Many inhabitants of the vast domain of woods which stretched in every direction from the village attended. One of these, often calling for freight at the Depot, was John Cainsarbox, who was engineer on that little train running between Mankato and Blue Earth pity thirty-five years ago. He said he had been running on many roads since, including that one above the clouds in So. America. Tome outside and see my horses and wagon. I like my quiet home in the woods," he said. That fall Northome was made the Northern Terminal, and all trains ended their runs there. I do not remember just why this was done, but I know that it increased my work very much. All merchandise for stations north of my station had to be rebilled and once or twice a week an extra was run to such stations. I generally went with these trips, and this was interesting.

At the approach of winter, every passenger train brought in more Lumber-Jacks. Some times some of them would be found to be too drunk to unload themselves, and would have to be just dragged out onto the platform, where they could sober up when they pleased.

When the camps were filled and active work began, it increased the freight amazingly. Oftentimes the goods unloaded from the Way-Freight filled the shed, and completely covered

every foot of out large platform. Eighty quarters of beef was not unusual. Barrels of pickles, vinegar, pork, molasses, kegs of everything that could be eaten; sacks of flour, sugar, prunes, raisins.

This was a winter for snow, which kept falling until it covered the earth to a depth of four or five feet; and of course the track had to be kept clear, and the ridges along in front of our depot were almost impassable. Some lumber-camps took care of their stocks of potatoes by just burying them in snow. When handled in this way they can be kept perfectly good as long as the weather stays cold. All this may not be very interesting but it is ancient history. As the winter progressed the work increased, and my help was entirely inadequate. I began to have sick spells; and one day when Mr. Strachan came I was lying on a table. I had been asking for relief without any promise that it would be provided; so now we had it out. I called his attention to the fact that I came to Northome at a time when I was ready to go home, against my wishes. He said he could not relieve me just at this time. Then I said, "I must be relieved, and make it permanent." I think this occurred about the first of February. I was very sorry to give up Northome, as I certainly loved the town and the people; and besides, Helen was teaching there and her term would keep her there until May. Soon we - - Margaret and I - - were packing our few household articles, preparing to move to the "Claim" at Akeley; and we were furthermore rushed because my successor had come with his wife, and was wishing to occupy the rooms that we were using upstairs, over the Depot.

We had accumulated only a few pieces of housekeeping furniture while at Northome, and this we took with us to Akeley. We also had most of a hind-quarter of beef which one of the lumbermen had given me. This I boxed up and sent. There was plenty of snow at Akeley, so we cut large slices of the round steak, buried them in the snow, and yum, yum! What cheer at meal-time on the claim. Well, I certainly appreciated my sudden liberty from burdening cares, and proceeded to just relax. Sleep, Why not? Here we were on land that was ours, where plenty of food could be raised by work which was only a pleasure in such a situation. I think our arrival at the claim was in Feb., when there was still too much snow on the ground to admit of much exploring of our farm. So we just remained indoors listening to the Chickadees saying, "Clear day, clear day!" which is always their song to announce the coming of Spring. These little hardy birds stay with us all winter instead of going South like the Martins, Swallows and other feathered friends. Now we began to see an occasional crow. Crows are the birds that make us happy only twice. When they come and when they go away.

Not far from our cabin there was a huge, old and tall pine-stub which evidently had been dead for many years; and within its trunk lived a pair of real Hoot owls. On moonlight nights these owls made cheerful (or was it sad music) (?). In those early times we often heard the howling of packs of wolves as they rushed through the timber in pursuit of deer or other game. This claim of ours was certainly ideally located. For thrills the woods furnished the wilds. (?) What would life be without any wild life? Across our little lake we could see passing trains on the Great Northern. All day and all night we could hear the clang and clamor of the greatest sawmill in the State. I was delighted to find my wife - - our "Little Ma" so much in love with her surroundings. She had been living here with Rossiter, our son, for two or three years now, "off and on". "Rossie" having built for her some cozy living-quarters with big windows that let in lots of sunshine, and through which one could always enjoy a wonderful view of woods and fields and sky, even on dark and rainy days. There was one thing that was unpleasant to me. Our land did not take in any of Deer Lake, the North and South line passing only a few feet from the water front. So we scurried around and bought the forty acres which encircled the lake. This land had been owned by a timber company. We thus came into possession of not only the lake, but of acres of the finest Jackpine trees to be found anywhere. Besides this, our land took in the Great Northern loading spur track -- which was a matter of great advantage to our place.

Now, when the snow was melting and Spring was here, I found myself wondering what I could

find to do that would add to our revenue, as the new 40 which was a source of satisfaction to all, was not fully paid for. So I called upon Mr. Strachen of the M & I who said, "No vacancies; but you can go to Blackduck as operator and clerk for the present, if you want to." So I was soon at work there; and altho the salary was not so high and the work was heavy, I was glad to be on the line once more. And as time went on, and I became better acquainted, I liked the job very much. I was free from the responsibility that rests upon an Agent. I lived at the Merchants Hotel, kept by a gentle Scandinavian who believed that "Heat and grease are the things to eat", and my dinner plate often showed more meat than a modem day banquet would produce for ten.

Blackduck was not so wild as it was when I first saw it, but was still a busy little city doing an amazing amount of timber, telegraphpole and fence-post business. Besides, the stores sold much merchandise to a vast out lying territory. The Wayfreight from the South near the noon hour was apt to stay an hour unloading merchandise; and sometimes we would stop unloading and go to dinner and finish when we returned. There was no rush or fierce actions there. One of the conductors whose name was Dave Phillips, maybe in his twenties, was always humming some popular song, often "When the Harvest Noon is Shining On the River" when he came in. I never saw him angry. And all the train men up there were very much like that - - good natured and friendly. Boor Dave. He perished long ago in some railroad accident out in the West. Except that I was homesick when not rushed by work, I enjoyed my life at Blackduck very much. I found a friend in a young man named Gis Bolander and on Sundays we generally wandered around together. Quite often we went out to Blackduck lake which was a mile or so south west of town, and was reached by a good wagon-road bordered by timber. In this grove were many of the largest popple trees to be found anywhere. Then there were acres of Red Cedar also tamarack. The approach to the lake-front was just a gentle slope dotted by a few boat-houses, where one could take passage to the more interesting other side of the lake. Here picnickers and pleasure-seekers foregathered to spend the day. Over there a promontory (?) extended into the lake - - quite high and comprising several acres covered by timber. Some of the trees were very big and old. It was an ideal place in which to find recreation. There was good fishing in this lake, but we never cared for fishing. Our hotel landlord knew all the tricks of a fisherman. His tables sometimes certified his skill in handling of the rod. In the latter part of June and in July when warm weather was on, many kinds of berries and other wild fruits were ripening. It was a great sight to see the women and children coming home in the evenings carrying tin pails, cans and other containers full of strawberries, june-berries, blue-berries, wild goose-berries, black currants, raspberries, and other things. That was in 1907; and now, in 1935 scientists say that some of these plants cause diseases and death of the White Pine trees. So now the woods are full (?) of Government men, out to destroy these dangerous growths. It might sound to a layman as if there were enough dangerous shrubs around Blackduck in those days to have killed the whole National Forest.

While my work as Operator and Clerk at B. was very pleasant during the summer season, I could easily see how very different conditions would be with the coming of winter. I wondered, "Why not try the old G. N. again. It might possibly be that by this time they would have forgotten my past history with them while at Herman. I was proud of all my career as Agent at Herman; and so I applied by letter to Division Supt. F. Bell at Melrose, and stated that I would like to have Walker or Akeley or Nevis Station. Of course I wished to be located as near as possible to our Akeley home. Soon I received Mr. Bell's reply, saying that I could have Walker Station by September first. What could be better? I hastened to sever my connection with the M & I, and rushed to our home on the Claim, where I could have a day or two before going to Walker to be checked in as Agent.

Now that I am to be Agent at Walker I take note of the situation there. True to Great Northern type that Station is located almost a mile out of town, while the Minnesota and International Depot is right in the center of town, and also has its own telegraph wires; this shows that I will

have to handle all the Western Union Messages. That is not so good. However, I am pleased with the location of the Depot. Standing on the front platform we have a great view of the surrounding country. 'Way over there to the North we catch a glimpse of Leech Lake. Straight across the intervening low lands can be seen the tops of the higher buildings in Walker. One of these is the Court-house. Walker being a County-seat town. Up on the hill south of town the new Schoolhouse is just now being built. Looking to the right we see beautiful Lake Hay. At this time it was almost completely bordered by timber such as pine, birch, maple, linden, with some other trees and shrubs.

On Leech Lake Captain Nathan Dally was still running his Steam-boat, named for his daughter, "The Leila D.", and I can recall that there were several motor-boata as well as row-boats, also Indian birch-bark canoes. Of these latter there were many. I found that the B. F. Nelson Company was building a large sawmill on the M & I tracks just south of town; and near the lakeshore. At first sight of this I said to myself, "This will not concern me at all." But later on I found out that it was to be my chief concern, as will be shown up when I come to it. Looking further, I found men constructing a transfer track to the M & I half a mile north of Walker Station at a point where the G N and M & I main tracks ran parallel for some distance. That must show that the G N was interested in that sawmill, or would be when all these works were completed.

When I came to Walker in 1907 the water in Leech Lake was eight or ten feet higher than it is at the present time. People were able to catch fine strings of fish while standing on the old, shabby dock, and using only bamboo poles and lines. With this little talk about things outside, let us see what the inside is like. I do not remember who the outgoing Agent was, nor the Auditor who transferred the Station to me. But I remember one little inconsequential thing he said. It was, that he was pleased to find that we three agreed about what kind of neckties were right to wear; Windsor. I judged from the appearance of things (the terrible jungle of accounts) that there must have been a change of agents about every three months - - ever since the death of Robert Williams more than a year before this. The windows were very dirty. Five or six old kerosene lamps with cracked chimneys or none at all, and little black cinders where the wicks had been almost completely consumed. However, I liked the inside of the Depot better than the outside. It had a plank platform, and I saw how I could make it attractive. (How?) The waiting room was large with good iron-trimmed settees. The office was large - - a cross section ten by twenty feet with a good bay window where the telegraph table was placed. This fine glass front faced to the south and from this work table the landscape view was very pleasing. To the southeast could be seen the tops of some of the houses in the village. Most of the land between was low-lying, and covered brush resembling Western sage, only coarser. Our shortest road to town was cut through this brush. It had been an old logging-road bed. This road connected with the M & I. Of course the brush had grown closer and closer to this track until it had almost the appearance of a rat hole, or at least the entrance to a tunnel. Where the schoolhouse now stands was Kinkele's Hill - - all covered with fine timber. Just across the track from the Depot grew a beautiful grove of young trees which was often used as a camping place for Indians. At times when a number of them were going on a berrying trip, or on one of their pleasure journeys, they would foregather there the night before starting. Later on I had a better acquaintance with the Indians, and I liked them when they were sober. They were all gentle. Never ugly or quarrelsome. They seemed to be very agreeable people. At times when several of them came to the station to take the train, the squaws would sit flat on the floor near the stove, smoking old, long, black pipes and talk-ing in such apparent peace. Sometimes they had a cat or two with them; and they had a way of tying a cat up in a handkerchief, so that it seemed to be perfectly comfortable, with only its head and tail visible. Having no use of their legs, they were as easy to handle as a hank of yam. All of this will show the reader that Walker was quite young when I came here. I think that I was sixty or more; but it never occurred to me that I was old. I know now that I was only about my prime, or I could not have worked and prayed and sworn my way through the next twelve years which embraced the

life of that hellish sawmill, the World War, and the great increase in Western Union telegraphing. Almost every day somebody would ask me “Didn't I get awfully lonesome out here?” ! !

In town Charlie Kinkele was still proprietor of the Lake Shore Hotel in a fine location fronting towards Leech Lake; and one could always be sure of getting plenty of good, well-cooked food at this place. The family consisted of two boys and one girl, all good-look-ing, named Frank, Tom and Agnes. The Lobby was at one side, and this was furnished with a well-stocked bar - - a favorite lounging place for Lumber-Jacks. A few doors west of this Hotel was the establishment of Brumund and Kulander. Two men who traded (?) with the Indians, and so had on hand a fine assortment of furs, feathers and beautiful beadwork, as well as many other interesting Indian relics. Then came Charlie Carlson's little place, as he was just starting in business. Charlie Carlson, the Strong Man. In his small room with only a shelf or two containing a few pies and do-nots, a customer had to be careful what he said because Charlie was a little hard of hearing, and once in a while thought he heard some accusing word. And woe be to the speaker of that word. Then came the Pine Tree Hotel kept by Albert Carlson - - brother of Charlie. This was a very lively place in those days and well-kept.

Walker was fortunate in having a famous carpenter and builder in the person of Archie Lavigne; and for proofs of this statement it was only necessary to examine the interior of this Pine Tree Hotel, so perfectly equipped it was in every way for the comfort of its workers, and guests who enjoyed its hospitality. On the high point of land now occupied by the New Chase Hotel stood the modest one kept by the Spencer family. And it was indeed a kind of family home; but always there were rooms and beds for all who came. Of this nice family, Emma, Edna and Lucy still remain. Two brothers net tragic deaths - - one by an exploding gasoline engine, and the other was killed in the World War in France. Now it occurs to me that I should have begun my Walker items by introducing Pat McGarry, a man who did things. He built the first Chase Hotel and named it. In fact Pat had something to do with about everything going on in early days, and later on. About 1908 he opened a resort at what was then called The White City, and afterwards Glengarry. This was located on a beautiful point of land extending out into Leech Lake, covered by timber, and it had mineral water springs. Here he erected a huge clubhouse with many rooms and long dining room, built several cottages, installed many boats. I think his was the first summer resort existing on any of these lakes. Bat was also a politician, and became a State Senator. In those days, when the White City was a gay place, and the cottages were all occupied, I had an enormous amount of business with the McGarrys. I say McGarrys for the reason that Pat's daughter Edna was always his immediate secretary and assistant, taking care of bills payable; and for that reason I was moved to be very friendly with Miss Edna. P. H. McGarry died about a year ago in California, probably at the home of his daughter Edna, who married a man of wealth.

Somewhere in these pages I mentioned the name of John Sempf, and his Sunny Brook Saloon. Besides running his saloon, John was a man of affairs. He had a number of nice horses and buggies - -a Livery in fact, although Walker had but one road in those days - -the road to Akeley, and it was sometimes so bad that he would not use it. Both Mr. Sempf and his wife were lovers of animals. They never sold a horse. But when their horses grew too old to work, they were turned into green pastures. They had two large dogs, and several cats. I remember seeing John in his work-room, down on the floor washing his cats' faces, and saying that they had sore eyes. This work-room was a place where he washed and oiled and mended his harness, making sure that all harness would be free of any rough or rubbing surfaces. Mrs. Sempf had a large black and white house-cat that she claimed was wiser than human beings.

Once a man came to Walker with a hydroplane, his object being to take people up for short rides in it. His price was ten dollars; so not many people felt that they could afford such trips, and many were afraid. One dark and stormy day Mrs. Sempf decided to go up. There gathered quite a crowd on the lake shore to see her off. She came forward, dressed just as usual in her clean,

starched house-frock; and I remember, as she scrabbled into the cockpit the wind whipped her skirt so it stood up almost like an inflated balloon. But her courageous flight, although of such short duration, was much admired by her friends. The Death Angel called for this man and woman several years ago. Let us hope that they may reach a Heaven where they will be welcomed by the souls of the many animals they cared for while here on earth.

At the time I was appointed Station Agent for the Great Northern at Walker there were still some wild animals in localities close to town. A black bear had his home about a mile north-east of the Station, near a cleared place where years before there had been a brick kiln. This clear spot was a very pretty picnic-ground until its beauty was destroyed by the devilish road-builders. Once when Rossiter was coming to visit us after we were living here, he was walking on the Rail-road track, and late at night, when somewhere near Lake Alice, he was surprised to see ahead of him what he thought was a man walking; but as he came nearer the supposed man dropped down on four feet and tore away into the woods. He was a bear! Deer were plentiful, as were many small animals such as beaver, Mink, weasels, etc. Backs of wolves could still be heard chasing deer and making night hideous with their howls. But now that is all changed. The wolves found they could make a better living off the farmer. A lone wolf comes near the close of day, seats himself where he can observe the different animals and fowls as these find their several sleeping and roosting places. Mr. Wolf can take his choice of the farmer's food; and how much easier than his former wild chasing through forest, probably ending in only the strongest getting the game.

You will remember that when I came from Ohio to Lake Crystal I almost compelled my brother-in-law Oliver Hagerman to give up his old saw-mill and come West with us. Now, after he had been Agent at LeSueur three or four years, had married and saved some money, we find him located at Pembina, N.D. engaged in Hardware and Farm-machinery business. We thought him crazy when we heard that he was making such a move; but later on we saw that he was not. Pembina is situated on the Red River of the North, in the Northeast corner of North Dakota, near the Canadian borderline. There was at that time a rush of emigration from Canada and Minn. for homesteads in that territory; and all these required some outfitting at Pembina. Oliver was just in time to gather the cream of this trade situation. Selling goods all day, and often till ten o'clock at night, he and his tinner, Mr. Dumble, were both working long, hard hours to wait on customers. But in a new country like this, conditions change. The G N RR built a new line striking the Canadian border at Neche, only sixteen miles west of Pembina, and this took much of the trade from Pembina. By this time Oliver was losing his health; and soon realizing that some-thing must be done, he sent for me to come and handle his business, so that he could go away for treatment. This word reached me at a time when I had left one job and was wondering what next to do; and so I settled my family in Ohio and hurried to Pembina, arriving on the first of November. I found that there were endless things for me to learn and learn quickly. Double-entry book-keeping, for one thing. There are more articles in a hardware store, price unmarked, than in any other kind of a store. Oliver used short-hand characters as price marks, on things which could be marked; and these pothooks and kinks I had to master at once. Then I didn't even know the names of some articles. I well remember that my first customer, a Canadian, said: “I want a cockeye.” I had to confess, with shame, that I did not know what a cockeye was. He hunted it up, and I sold it to him - - simply the hitch on a harness tug. But one learns fast when compelled to. And I soon became better acquainted with my store and also the people.

Pembina is about the coldest place in the world. 60 degrees below zero was not unusual. At that time there was a fort there, some soldiers, signal service (?), and of course spirit thermometers. (?) Red River Carts were still in use by some of the Indians, coming in from outlying places. The origin of the Red River Cart, or who made the first one, and where, is uncertain. Norman E. Kittson established a Trading-post at Pembina for the purpose of handling furs for Governor H. S. Sibley at Mendota, Minn. Five of these carts had been tried, and had made the trip between

Pembina and Mendota at a loss; but these pioneers persisted until there were hundreds of these ox-carts, in use. A Red River Cart (describe in detail, also more about the primitive hotel)

Hotels were noted for bountiful tables. Meat-markets were stock-ed with such game as bear, deer, birds; and there was frozen fish of some large kind, piled up like cordwood. All these in addition to the ordinary meats usually found in such shops.

When Oliver went away he expressed the hope that I would sell the store-building and goods, or move what goods I could not sell, to Neche, as that was sure to be a better location for trade in the near future. I was instructed as to the handling of his Estate in case he should not come back. He thought then that he was likely to die. There was a rival hardware-store in town, run by a Mr. Strong, who was in some way connected with the Wholesale Hardware Co. of Strong, Hacket & Co., of St. Paul. I went to see this man and offered to sell to him. At first he was not interested; but I kept after him until he took the matter up with his folks at St. Paul; and this finally resulted in a trade satisfactory to all, in which I was able to realize the original cost of our building, and that of a portion of machinery and shelf goods. In looking over accounts, I found that a Church (I think it was a Methodist Church) owed 125 dollars for sup-plies - - paint, oil, glass and other articles - - which account had been running for two or three years, and was considered hopeless. A new Minister taking charge, was shocked to find an eight-hundred dollar debt on his Church, and he determined to have that debt re-moved before trying to convert sinners. He visited among his members, preached about the disgraceful unpaid debt, and issued cards to everybody on which we were to write the amount we would subscribe. These cards were printed and bore the statement that if, when they were handed in on a set date, the total amount was more than $800. the subscribers would not be required to pay. This was an interesting idea; but nobody expected that it would succeed. On my card I wrote, “Twenty-five dollars, provided our full debt would be paid to us out of first money collected!! On the evening when the cards were hand-ed in at the Church, the Minister and two of his best members were on the platform to receive, check and value amounts. After consulting, they announced that the total was more than $800. Whereupon there was much cheering, and everybody was happy.

Soon I made a trip across country to Neche, where I rented a store-building from Jud LaMoure, an enterprising border-line Politician and business-man at that time. The day I made this trip, with a livery team and driver, the weather was clear, calm and 30 below zero. I dressed in very warm clothes, fur coat over all, and even then my nose was slightly frozen. Back at Pembina Mr. Dumble, our Tinner, was boxing and crating up the goods, ready to be moved. I hired a few Finlanders at less than a dollar per day to do heavy work. We were not long - - maybe about a week - - moving everything to Neche. I lived at the finest Hotel in the village, because it was the one and only Hotel there was, quite primitive in some ways, but comfortable. There was a bar and plenty of good liquor, but very little drinking. Many of the young men employed up there were Scotch. And you know they like strong drink, but they like money even better. Neche was the terminus of the Great Northern Ry, which made it interesting, as there were Conductors, Brakemen, Engineers, Mail Agents, even some of their wives at times stopping at the Hotel. Enough funny things in conversation at table to keep everybody in a good humor, no lack of wit and repartee there. Him Hill said the farther North a crop could be grown, the better the quality; and the same may be said of human beings and animals.

At Pembina there was a man named Holmes (who, by the way, was a friend of Oliver's (Hagerman) and was the man who taught him Double-entry Book-keeping). This Holmes was so smart that I was afraid of him. Although I often wanted his assistance in my bookkeeping, I could not bring myself to consult him.

Dogs - - I never had met with such intelligence as dogs displayed along that Northern boundary line. Altogether, I look back to my sojourn at Pembina and Neche as a very interesting period.

Then travel-ing salesmen were princes - - carrying many trunks of samples, drawing high salaries, always welcome visitors with news from everywhere. At Pembina there were winter sports on the ice of the Red River, such as fast-driven sleighs, boys with dog teams, skating and much display of fur coats by both gentlemen and ladies. When I had moved to Neche, I was probably about thirty or forty years of age, and had only a primitive mind. For now I know, after all these years, that it never occurred to me to think how this strange, simple family should be keeping Hotel there on the border. The house showed evidence of having been enlarged all around to accommodate the trade. Where did these people come from? Using old-fashioned articles such as bone-handled knives and forks, teaspoons made of copper and about the size of half a Robin's egg. A half-breed girl doing the cooking. When mealtime came, the "guests" including train men, mail agents, some of their wives, brakemen, there was lots of fun and repartee, with everybody feeling gay. But the cooking, O my! Pancakes looking good but filled with raw dough. I was given the "high-faluting" title of Old Drouth because I let off with dry remarks about the food. During the day, when all these men were gone, the women amused themselves playing all kinds of tricks on each other and on me. Once while I was sleeping, they stood up one of those immense dog-fish against my door; then, when I opened the door, it fell into my room, making a terrible racket. Such was life at the only Hotel in Neche at that time.

Sometime in March Oliver Hagerman returned, having spent much of his absence at Danville, New York, under the care of Doctor Jackson, who presided there - - a doctor who used no medicine, but carefully investigated every condition of his patients - - mental, physical, spiritual - - good or injurious habits, etc., then prescribed the proper diet, rest or exercise that would be best, what kinds of baths to take, and how often. Every day this doctor sat on his raised platform and gave a lecture to his patients, and told them many interesting and instructive things. He told them that years before he had been a total wreck as far as health was concerned; that he had restored his own health by the methods and processes he was now using on others. Oliver was very careful about obeying the directions to the letter, and so came back looking and feeling like a new, well man. On April first I started home to Ohio.