` THIS IS THE HISTORY OF MY FATHER,
JOHN GIDEON PHILLIPS
by Waldo Phillips

First, a forward about Grandpa, WENDELL RUFUS PHILLIPS.

Grandpa was quite wealthy before the start of the Civil War, owning seventeen businesses in Phillipsburgh alone, as well as many acres of farmland, plus extensive other property. He lost it through no fault of his own (a quote from the archives of the History of Missouri).

Grandpa was known as the Great Educator, as stated on his tombstone. He built the first Academy (College, as they are now known) west of the Mississippi River. Grandpa saw to it that all of his slaves learned to read and write. He treated them as family, keeping them in his own home. His house had 22 bedrooms. When the Civil War started, most of his property was south of the Mason-Dixon Line. The South came in, confiscated all his business property, gave him a trunkful of Confederate money and called him into service. When the war was over, Grandpa, badly crippled, having been shot twice through the body, was left with a trunkful of worthless Confederate money. He still had his land left, which he gave to his slaves, keeping only a small acreage for himself. He bought a small band of sheep so that Grandma would have the wool for the spinning wheel, to make their clothes. Grandpa got $12.00 a month pension. He still saw to it that his children all got their education. Those were the conditions my father grew up in.

John Gideon Phillips was sixteen years of age when Grandpa died in 1898. With little promise for him in Missouri, with enough money for a ticket to Livingston, Montana, and with a good education for that day and age, he struck out. This good looking very athletic Missouri boy soon found out he still had a lot to learn, and I'm here to tell you, learn he did.

When the train stopped at Billings, Montana, two men got on that had bands under their chins, fastened to their hats in front of their ears. Dad had never seen anyone wear their hats like that before. He soon found out why when he got off the train in Livingston. Away went his hat. Setting down his suitcases, he started to run after it. There were three old men on a bench outside the railroad depot. One of them hollered out "Young man, you had better forget that hat and save your suitcases." Dad looked around to see both of his suitcases had come open and were tumbling down

the street, scattering all of their contents. The three old men helped him gather everything up. Dad even found his hat, where it had lodged against a building. Dad remarked “Boy, the wind sure blows here.” One of the men said, “Sonny, Livingston, Montana is the wind capitol of the world.”

Dad got a room at the Hotel. The next morning at breakfast a man next to Dad said “What are you doing here?” Dad said “I am looking for work.” “Can you drive a team?” Dad said “Yes.” “Can you drive four strung out?” Dad said “No, but I’d like to learn.” The man said “I will teach you. If you do well I will teach you to handle six or eight.” The man then told Dad that he owned a ranch up in the Shields River country, so they loaded up his buckboard (a buckboard is a heavy duty buggy with a fairly large box behind the seat) and headed for the ranch. As they drove through the yard at the ranch, Dad noticed a large corral with several horses and longhorn steers all down and tangled up. The horses had saddles on with a 40 foot rope tied to the horn and the other end around the horns of a steer. Both steer and horse were down, each of them tangled in the rope. Dad asked what was going on, as there was no one around. The man said “We’re breaking those horses. They will get untangled sometime before morning, and when they do they won’t let it happen again. They’ll respect that rope, then my cowboys will break them to ride.” The ranch turned out to be a large one, with thousands of sheep and cattle and many hired men.

Dad’s first job was camp tender, hauling supplies to the sheepherders, and to the line camps for the cowboys. He learned to rope, ride, shoot and to drive six and eight head of horses. He also started keeping the books on the sheep camps. The boss wanted to know what each herder was ordering and what everything was costing. The sheepherders were all single men. Basques, who came here from northern Spain. Dad said it didn’t cost much to feed them, as about all they would order was coffee, sugar, tobacco, bacon, matches and oatmeal. The oatmeal came in 50 lb. bags. The cowboys ate much better.

Dad did so well keeping the sheep camp books that by fall they had him keeping the other books as well. By that time, he was a fair cowboy, in that he could ride, rope and shoot, and a full fledged teamster as well. He carried a six shooter, a rifle and a shotgun at all times on his wagon and would shoot grouse and prairie chickens on his way to the different camps. He used the rifle to shoot coyotes and wolves. Dad was shooting every day, which is why he learned so fast.

The problem was, when winter came, the wages stopped. They would

only give you board and room, plus your tobacco and writing materials in the bunkhouse. There wasn't much to do as the cattle were out on open range, just break a few horses and play cards, unless a fierce storm came, causing problems for the cattle. The sheepherders started getting paid wages at lambing time. Dad was still doing a lot of bookwork so he complained about not receiving any wages, but the boss said "Then the other men would be mad." Dad said "Alright, then, if a better job comes up, at any time, don't expect me to stay." Dad got along well with all the men, especially the Basque sheep herders.

During the winter months, a Livingston newspaper had an ad in the help wanted column for a teamster who could drive four or six head of horses, hauling freight during the tourist season and offering wages more than double what Dad was getting at the ranch. After talking it over with the ranch owner, who treated him like a son, he answered the ad. The ranch owner told Dad that he would write a letter of recommendation for him to send with the application, and that he could stay and work on the ranch until the Park opened for tourist season, at which time the rancher would see that Dad got to work on time.

Dad found out soon after his arrival in Yellowstone Park why the previous driver had quit. All the food supplies came to the southern end of the Park, which meant he would have to haul food all the way through the Park to Old Faithful. At that time the road wasn't much more than a trail, quite dangerous in many places. A large portion of what you were hauling consisted of cured meat, such as hams and bacon, 100 lb. sacks of sugar, 50 lb. sacks of oatmeal, and tea and coffee. The meat, being brine cured and smoked, had a very distinctive odour, which attracted the bears. They had attacked the wagon on the previous driver's last trip, spooking the horses who are naturally afraid of bears anyway, causing a runaway. Horses and wagon ended in a pile-up, and one horse broke a leg.

Dad told the bosses that he would still take the job, and that they should know from his letter of recommendation that he could handle it, but it was worth more money, to which they agreed. One dollar more a day, and free board. That way he could save very nearly all of his wages as he had been able to do at the ranch.

Dad drove the horses around quite a bit before their first trip so that he would know more about each horse, and so they would gain confidence in him and get to like the sound of his voice. He found that they weren't very well broke. When they loaded up the wagon for the first

trip, Dad took a slab of bacon and cut it into small chunks to throw to a bear to keep him off the wagon. Dad had told them that he would need someone to
go with him the first trip, to throw to the bear, as he would have his hands full with the horses, keeping them on the road and getting them past the bear. He felt that after the one trip, the horses would have confidence in him to keep them safe from the bears, which was the way it worked out.

Dad said he always knew long before he came to a bear, as the horses could smell them a long ways off, but the bears could smell those cured hams even farther. Dad then devised a scheme where he didn't need to throw them the chunks of meat, if he came to them on a smooth straight stretch where he could run the horses. He carried a can of small rocks, and just before they got to the bear he would put the lines in his left hand, grab a handful of rocks and throw them in the bear's face to make him shy back, and by that time he would be far enough past to discourage the bear from trying to catch up. Dad, of course, couldn't use these tactics where he couldn't run the horses, and they didn't always work when he could. One big Grizzly got smart, and he could outrun the horses. He would catch up from behind, grab hold of the tailgate and pull himself up into the wagon, throw out some hams or bacon and maybe a sack of sugar, too, and then jump off. When this happened, Dad had no choice but to let him do it. He said there were a lot of trips when he wound up short of what he started with.

When the Yellowstone job ended that fall, Dad had to find a job for the winter. There was a help wanted ad in the paper, wanting men at the Crow's Nest Mine in British Columbia, so Dad bought a ticket to Missoula, and headed north, came to Ravalli and caught the horse-drawn stage to Polson.

After Dad worked in Yellowstone that summer, he never went back until 1946. I had a job for about four months every summer with the Northern Pacific Railroad, plowing fire guards, and doing other work as well, and my crew was working up by Gardiner. I had just bought a new Buick, so I asked Dad to go with me to check on the men. While we were there, we drove up to Old Faithful, to watch it erupt. Dad still remembered everything. As we were driving along, he remarked "When we go around this next curve, we will come to nine pipes. Let's stop and get a drink." Sure enough, in just a little ways, there was a sign "Nine Pipes".

There were nine pipes sticking in the ground with a small stream of water flowing out of each one, each with a different taste. It was soda water, and with a little bit of imagination you could think you were drinking different brands of soda pop.

The Government gave the N.P. Railroad every other section of timber land to build a railroad to Seeley Lake, through the Swan Valley and on up the east lake shore, to hook up with the Great Northern at Kalispell, as they had built a line from Whitefish to Kalispell and out west of there for about 30 miles, and turned down Wolf Creek Canyon,'till it met their main line , at a small town called Jennings. The N.P. never lived up to their part of the bargain. They received the land, and still own it, harvesting timber off of it for the last 100 years. Consequently, the Great Northern Railway took up their track, and abandoned the right-of-way after a few years, from Whitefish through Kalispell and on to Jennings.

When Dad got to Polson, he took the ferry boat up Flathead Lake to Somers, the stage to Kalispell, and then took the train to Jennings. From there north there wasn't much transportation. He stayed overnight at Rexburg, a town that was flooded when they built Libby Dam. He then went on to Canada and took the job mining coal at the Crows Nest.

That turned out to be a hard, dirty, unhealthy and very dangerous job. The labor laws were practically nil in Canada at the time, worse than they were in the U.S. The least little tremor of the earth would send down cascades of coal or rocks. You never knew when you might be buried. The men were dirty and breathing dust all the time. The men Dad worked with was mostly a motley crew of hard drinking single men who spent their money as soon as they received it. Dad was very careful about carrying much money with him, as you could easily get knocked in the head. He made up his mind that when spring came he was out of there, which he was.

Dad soon got a job blasting logs loose in the rivers, as he had learned to handle dynamite working at the mine. This was a high water job, when the logs would form a jam, instead of floating on down the river. He also did some driving of logs on the river. I believe it was the Priest River. He finally wound up at Couer d' Alene, Idaho, asking for a job at the big Diamond Match sawmill. They told Dad they were already filled up, but Dad begged for work even though he had plenty of money. He said "I will take the hardest job you have to do (knowing nothing there would be harder than working in the coal mine) at the lowest pay. I want to learn

the sawmill business. You will never be sorry that you hired me."

They gave Dad a job piling lumber in the yard, and within a month they moved him up to grading lumber and raised his pay. Then they moved him into the shop, where he learned to repair machinery, to file saws and sharpen tools. In the meantime, he told them he had a brother in Missouri. Dad had been corresponding with his Mother (and sending her money from time to time) ever since he had left home. Times were very tough for them back in Missouri, and Uncle Will needed a job. At any rate, they told Dad to send for him, so Dad wired him the money to come. I have a picture of Uncle Will and Dad, working together at the Diamond Match mill.

Dad had been saving his money (getting pretty well heeled by that time) and probably feeling a little romantic. He took a vacation, made a trip up the Bitterroot Valley. There he met my Mother, who had managed to avoid all the boys up until then. People said that none of them could catch her, because she could outrun anyone in high school. It was a short romance. Dad married her and took her back to Idaho with him. They rented a home in Hayden Lake and set up housekeeping. They had two children born in Hayden Lake. Esther, born in 1906, and a baby girl two years later who was born with severe breathing problems and lived just a short time. She is buried in the Hayden Lake cemetery, with just the name 'Baby Phillips' on her marker.

Dad became the head sawyer in the mill, and had a 1000 horse gutless steam engine, just to run the saw. By that time they had designed a steam cylinder to turn the cant on the log. That device was called a 'Nigger', I guess because so many mills throughout the U.S. had large black men as cant turners. After working up to the top wages as head sawyer, Dad decided to quit the mill and go to the Bitterroot Valley to farm. A lady over there who was a close friend of Mother's had lost her husband. She had a good irrigated farm, and she persuaded Dad to come and farm it.

Dad soon learned to become one of the best flood irrigators I have ever seen. He loved to handle water in large streams, and always seemed to be the most satisfied when he was spreading water, keeping things green. Dad really took to farming, and did very well financially, too. That was about the time that Marcus Daly and W.A. Clark (the two top Moguls in Montana) were fighting one another to become the 'Top Dog' business man in Montana. Daly was investing heavily at Hamilton, Clark at Missoula. Daly swore he would make grass grow on Higgins Avenue in Missoula, but it never happened.

Daly also imported some of the best blooded racing horses in the world, to his Hamilton farm. Dad really embarrassed him at a Fourth of July celebration, when Dad's mare, Bitterroot Bess, outran his fastest horse in a quarter mile race. Daly's horse and jockey, all decked out in their ranch colors, Dad with his Sunday suit on with coattails flying (in a picture we have that was taken at the finish line). Dad's mare was also a registered thoroughbred. Dad brought a colt out of her to the Flathead when he moved here.

My oldest brother, Wendell, was born in 1909, and Dad's landlady started going with a very nice man. The Federal Government decided to open the Flathead Reservation for settlement of the unalloted lands (the land the Indians hadn't taken). In order to get them to agree to accept less land, the Government promised to build them an irrigation system free of charge. They were also told that those who dug ditches to irrigate would have to file a claim with the State of Montana, stating the size of the outlet structure, the size of the ditch, the acre feet in the stream and the number of acres they intended to cover with the water. There were 347 claims filed, although many of them were never developed. The only valid water right on the Reservation must have been filed on originally by an Indian. Under these conditions, Dad decided he wouldn't enter the drawing for a homestead.

The Federal Government did a lot of false advertising, calling it the "former Flathead Reservation" and falsifying the quality of the land offered for the drawing. Dad wanted good quality land, while 90% of the land they offered for homestead was a very poor quality of soil that had never even grown a weed. Even after the irrigation project was built, the homesteader was told that he would only be able to buy water from the project, after the owners of the original Indian allotted land had taken what they needed for their own use, and then they would have to pay for it on an acre-foot basis. Dad wouldn't go for that, although he did make a trip to the Flathead in 1910, to look the valley over.

A salesman and promoter for The Vermont Loan Co., a subsidiary of the N.P. Railroad (who wanted more people to invest in the area so they would get their rail business), took Dad over into the Charlo and Round Butte areas, as they were the largest areas of unclaimed land that weren't allotted to the Indians. Of course, that area didn't appeal to Dad at all, so he went back to the Bitterroot to farm for two more years. Another son, Virgil, was born in 1911. By that time, Dad's landlady had re-married, and

wanted possession of her place for her new husband to farm.

Dad had accumulated so much by that time he decided to have an auction sale with most of it, but first he decided to make another trip to look over the Flathead Valley, again, and see what was going on over in the foothills, below MacDonald Peak. That was the only area that was green in the month of August, when he looked across the valley when he was there in 1910. Dad took the train to Ravalli and then went on up to St. Ignatius where he ran into an Indian lady in Beckwith's Store who had a beautiful team of black driving horses and a new top buggy, and who lived in the area where he wanted to go. Dad hired her to take him out to look the area over, and then back to Ravalli, so he could catch the train back to Missoula. Dad found a place out there that he could rent. It had buildings and an apple orchard on it, but the land was very rocky, to the point of being impossible to farm. The rent was cheap, and Dad figured it would be a place to live while he rented some better farm land that was under irrigation, and look for something to buy. He then headed back home to have the auction sale and move to the Flathead.

In the middle of the sale, word came through the telegraph office in Victor that his Mother had died in Missouri. Dad left the sale immediately, so he could catch the same train on its way back from Hamilton to Missoula, to go to Missouri and bury Grandma. Dad said that up to the time he left the sale, which was barely half over, he had been writing down in a notebook what everything was bringing, but when he got back to Montana and received the sale returns, they added up to little more than he had in his notebook, and most of the expensive stuff was yet to be sold when he left the sale. There wasn't anything he could do about it, however. Dad loaded up his family, possessions, and headed for the Flathead.

Dad moved his family and equipment from Ravalli to the Nubarr place, located about one quarter mile north of Elsie Bristol's. That was the place he had rented to move to, and in addition to the apple orchard, it had a good garden spot, and was near Indian land with water rights that Dad intended to rent and farm. Dad soon became acquainted with Billy Peone, who had the largest block of irrigated acres on the Reservation. Peone had two main supply ditches one quarter of a mile apart, diverting out of Dry Creek (now known as Ashley Creek), one mile long, with first irrigation rights on the stream. Billy Peone and a neighbor, Louis Larose dug those ditches by hand. What a job. They built flumes out of lumber to

get the stream out of the creek bottom onto land where they could dig a ditch, then they would keep a small stream following along with them as they dug, just giving the ditch enough fall so that the water would barely run (knowing that when they dug the ditch larger, the water would run faster. The 'A' canal, for instance, only has a fall of 5 ft. to the mile.

When the Reservation was thrown open for settlement in 1910, a man named Durant had looked Peone's place over and had told Billy that if he would sell him his allotment of 120 acres above (as Billy had built his house on his son Gideon's 80 below), he would change the point of diversion higher up the creek, and flume the water down the mountain to his upper ditch. That would give Durant 50 acres of farm land with free water right to farm, and 70 acres on the mountainside, with one quarter mile of creek. Durant also told Peone that he would build another highline ditch over to his wife's allotment so she would have 20 more acres of irrigation over there. By that time, Peone's flumes were in bad shape, and needing repair, and he needed money, so he sold the upper land to Durant. Durant moved in and did everything he said he would.. He first built a house at the foot of the hill, an insulated building a little ways away to keep their cured meat, canned fruit and vegetables, and ice box in, a chicken house, a long cow barn and a hog barn with a hayshed and calf pen between them, and ice house about 300 feet above that, and fenced off 30 acres above that with woven wire for hogs. On that 30 acres he built two more buildings, a corn crib with a self feeder hopper bottom, and quite a large shed for the hogs to go in at night. He planted alfalfa, the first alfalfa in the valley, and brought water over the hill in a large wood flume (made of 2 by 12 planks, and where it intercepted Peone's upper gravity ditch, he put up a building with a water wheel to grind feed for his pigs, and to run a large grindstone to sharpen his tools. The building was built on two levels, with a grain bin above with a hopper bottom to feed a burr mill grain grinder, and the ground grain went by gravity to a bin below. What an engineer he must have been. He could grind 200 bushels of grain with no one around. He also put in a fresh water pipeline all the way to the creek, for his house and his livestock. He did all this in two years. It was all in place when Dad came to the valley in 1913, and was only a mile from where Dad moved to with his family.

Dad went over and became acquainted with Mr. Peone, and told him that he would rent the two lower 80 acres from his children, Gideon and Esther, pay them cash rent in advance for as long as they wanted to rent it

to him, and continue to live where he was. The deal was made. Ava was born that year on the Nubarr place. Dad bought an 80 acres from J.A. LaCass, of Missoula, and rented an 80 west of it from Mr. O'Brien, also of Missoula. He also rented quite a large block of hillside pastureland from a fullblood Indian, Louis Redhorn (we called him Old Scotty). He was old and whiteheaded and lived in a log cabin at the foot of his land. Dad rented that land until 1925. That gave Dad enough land to start on.

Bear in mind that the only irrigation on the Flathead was done by those with a private ditch, filed on by an Indian, many of which were filed on as early as the 1880's, when the Federal Government told them they would issue them allotments and would build them an irrigation system. This promise caused a lot of problems in Washington, D.C. as our eastern Congressmen didn't want any money spent out in the western U.S. that wasn't reimbursable. They would ask our representatives "Where are you going to get the money to pay us back?" Most of the money paid in Federal taxes at that time came from the east, and eastern Congressmen considered it to be their money. Our Congressmen told them there were lots of minerals in the mountains on the Reservation and got a very small appropriation to start the irrigation project. At the same time, Congress sent a group of mineral engineers to the Flathead to find out if there were any valuable minerals there. They found none, so the next time our legislators tried to get money to continue construction, they were asked "Now where are you going to get the money?" They answered "From the sale of timber." The eastern men asked "Don't the trees belong to the Indians?" Our men said "We will sell the first growth trees, and let them have the second growth," all of which was contrary to the Treaty of 1855. The Federal Government double-crossed the Indians and lied to the white settlers. On investigation, the Congress found that you could buy lumber at the sawmills on the Reservation for five dollars a thousand, so there was no chance to get any money there. They then started using the dollar an acre that the homesteaders had paid, and the three dollars from the ones who had paid for the land. This was all contrary to the Treaty of 1855.

In 1914, Congress, realizing the situation was in a terrible mess, decided to straighten it out once and for all. They did a very good job, by passing the Reservation Acts of 1914. The preamble to those acts states "Any act passed, before or after these acts, contrary to the full intent and meaning of these acts, shall be null and void. These acts also gave the

person who had bought an Indian Allotment the same rights the Indian had, through the law of successors of interest. This made it very tough for the homesteader. He was given nothing but the poorest of land, with only the promise of water for irrigation if there was a surplus of water over and above the needs for the Indian Allotments. There never has been enough water, in the entire history of the Reservation, for all the land.

When the homesteader received his land and put up some buildings, the tax assessor came out to place his property (buildings and livestock) on the tax rolls. Most of those who didn't come here with a fair amount of money fell by the wayside without irrigation. Some of them didn't get any water for 15 or 20 more years. The ones, however, who had private streams, were doing well. Dad, of course, was one of these, and a neighbor who was also renting Indian land with private water rights near by both raised bumper crops.

In 1914 Billy Peone moved to town, so Dad moved his family into the house on Billy's son Gideon's allotment. I was born there in July, 1915. In that short time (three years), Dad had become one of the largest operators in the Valley. The largest were the Jesuits, and the Sisters of Providence, which, while both Catholic organizations, operated separately.. Joe Grenier was a large dry land grain farmer. He wouldn't sell George Beckwith wheat if he wouldn't buy at least 1000 bushels. Dad raised a variety of wheat called Scotch Fife. You could plant it in either fall or spring. He also planted Marquis seed wheat in the spring. They were both hard, good milling varieties. The oat varieties were Victory and Swedish Select. Dad was running several hundred head of cattle, and had to employ a lot of men, as everything was done with horse power. He installed a large Fairbanks-Morse truck scale, so that both he and the buyers would know exactly what they were getting.

The first thing Dad did on moving to the Peone place in 1914, was to put up several more buildings. The first was a large horse barn, stalls on each side, a hay mow in the center with a Meyers overhead cable track to pull the hay up into the barn, and a lean-to box stall for his stallions. Dad already had quite a few Percheron and Shire mares. There were Big Belle and Bess, Babe and Lotty, Maude and Daisy, Beauty and Fanny, Gip and Strip, and of course, several teams of geldings. Dad would work the mares right up to when they were to foal, as long as they were doing something that didn't require a hard pull, like a mower, rake or binder. He also built a large granary with a lean-to blacksmith shop connected on the east side.

Dad had all this done by 1916.

The years 1915 and 1916 were two of the best years, weatherwise, that we ever had in the Valley. Nice weather to till your land and plant your crops, with plenty of rain in June. It rained 29 days in June of 1916, and the prices were good. The dry land farmers had a ball. They laughed at Dad and Joe Doyle for being irrigators,and ask them if they took their boots off when they went to bed. Dad would answer, "The hardest job I have is getting my crops to market, hauling to the railroad at Ravalli or D'Aste. How come I never seem to pass you on the road?" At that time there was no elevator in St. Ignatius, so everything had to be hauled to Ravalli. It was very difficult getting down Ravalli hill with a heavy load, keeping it held back so it didn't run over your horses. Your wheel team, (the horses closest to the wagon) were the only ones that could hold the wagon back on a hill, so they need to be large, strong and well-trained. In all these regards, Dad's horses excelled. Dad also had a 3 and 3/4 Berg wagon with 4 inch tires. The tires were the steel rim that goes around the wooden wheels. This was a special heavy freight wagon, with a specially designed heavily ironed tongue, suspended about 3 feet in the air with springs, so the wheel team didn't have to hold it up with their necks. It also had an extra heavy braking system, with large hardwood blocks to rub against the 4 inch wide tires. Dad could get down Ravalli hill with 100 bushel of wheat easier than others could with 50 bushel. Dad could make one and a half trips a day, and stay in Ravalli every other night. He stalled his horses in the livery barn there, which had a good handler to groom Dad's horses, which he was of course very proud of, and Dad would stay in the hotel overnight. Ravalli was quite a going town in those days. Even after Beckwith built an elevator at St. Ignatius, he would pay you much more if you hauled to Ravalli, to the railroad, so he wouldn't have to re-handle the grain. Beckwith bought a large FWD truck with hard rubber tires and a chain drive, built a 300 bushel grain box on it, and hired Skip Gillett to drive it. It wasn't very successful, as it could only operate on very hard ground when it was loaded. It still made a lot of trips between St. Ignatius and Ravalli.

Dad decided to improve the quality of his horse herd. He wanted a heavier, shorter legged, stronger animal with a more docile disposition that would make them easier to train. He decided on the Belgian breed to cross his mares with so he contacted a man known as Studhorse Riley, who had a large sales barn in Grand Island, Nebraska, and who shipped in

registered horses from Europe. Dad told Riley to get him the best registered Belgian stallion that money could buy. Riley said that there was one for sale in Belgium right then. There was a mare with a 6 months old stud colt, and if Dad would pay $1600.00 for the colt he would buy the mare. They made the deal as the colt was old enough to wean and already weighed 1000 lbs. His name was Briston, and he soon became the pride and joy of the family, but especially Dad and I. Dad trained him as good as most people could train their dog. When he was a year and a half old, he weighed 1800 lbs., and when he was full grown he topped the scales at 2500 lbs. with no fat. He must have been the strongest horse ever on earth. Dad started putting me on his back when I was only two years old, and he could turn Briston into a corral full of horses, and Briston would pay no attention to them as long as I was on his back.

Some of the men working for us had their beds in a nearby granary. They were Joe Maclure, Willy White, Gus Cantrell, Homer Drake, Frank Davis, Rhenold Davis (no relation) and Jim Lawler. The year was 1915, and the 80 acre allotment where Bill Delaney built his house was laying vacant, so Rehnold Davis rented it for summerfallow. He got permission from Dad to use Big Belle and Bess, a large team of Shire mares, and a walking plow to plow it with. The weather stayed wet, and he got that whole 80 plowed, in his spare time, with a 14 in. walking plow. The next year, 1916, was wet again, so he planted wheat and harvested a bumper crop of 2700 bushels. The price was high, as war was starting in Europe. Davis earned all of this in addition to the wages he received from Dad.

Davis liked the Shire horses best and he became so attached to the big team that he was trying to buy them from Dad, but Big Belle, pawing at some other horses across a fence from her, caught a front foot over a barbed wire, sawed it back and forth trying to get loose, cut an artery and bled to death. What a loss! She was one of the finest animals anyone could ever own. It was the talk of the country. Dad had lost one of the leaders of his 6 horse team, which was famous throughout western Montana.

In January, Mr. Durant told Dad that his wife was having trouble with her heart, and the doctor told them they needed to move to a lower altitude. That was the common explanation given to heart patients in those days. They moved the ones in high altitudes to lower ones, and vice versa. At any rate, the Durant place was for sale, so Dad bought it and moved Uncle Will here from Missouri. By that time he was married and

had three children, Dorothy, Bill and Woodrow, who was only six months old. We didn't move up there, as the house was too small. Instead, Dad had Oscar Box build two more rooms onto the house where we lived.
Times were booming, World War I was on and money was easily obtained, as the homesteaders who had proved up could borrow money on their land. Rhenold Davis bought 80 acres on the road east of Hillside School (not there then) and rented several Indian 80's to farm. The Mission State Bank told him they would loan him all the money he would need, and of course he needed a lot. He built a large barn and granary, and a small house on the land he had bought. He also bought Shire horses to compete with Dad's Belgians.

Dad was expanding, also, but he was doing it largely on his own money. He had bought a Studebaker car in 1917, and once a month he would take a carload of single hired men into Missoula to party. They would go in on Saturday, stay at the Shepard Hotel, party all night and come home Sunday afternoon, with Dad paying all the bills, which Mother didn't approve of. Liquor was not allowed on the Reservation, so Dad always cautioned them never to bring any back with them. On one trip one of the men hid a gallon of liquor in the car. Jack Curtis, the Revenue Officer, had set up a road block opposite Bob Schall's. When the man who had hidden the whiskey saw his car he threw the jug out, but it didn't break, so Curtis had the evidence. He took Dad's car to Dixon and kept it quite a while. Dad found out that they were using his car, so he went to Missoula and hired the best lawyer in town at the time, named Mulroney, to go after them, as they had no right to use his car. Dad had taken down the mileage, and had it verified, when they took possession of it. They had put 1600 miles on it, which was a lot of miles for a car back in those days, and the car had suffered a lot of abuse. Dad told Mulroney to make them put all new tires on his car and he would call everything square, which they did. Dad figured he still got off lucky, as they could have cancelled all of his Indian leases if it had gone to Federal court, and Dad was guilty, with no defense.

Things were really booming in St. Ignatius. The town had grown to include four grocery stores, two hotels, and two butcher shops, with the Buckhouse brothers, George and Joe, and the Stewart brothers, George and Bob, as owners of Quality Meats, and Chris Feucht with City Meat. Chris Hoshun built a fairly large Mortuary building where the Post Office is now, The Royal Order of Masonry formed a local chapter and built the Masonic

Temple. John Dishman, Elliot, W.H. Megglason and a Mr. Bennett put up a large building on Front and Mains Streets, housing an auto dealership, garage and gas station, with a movie theatre, a general merchandise store,and a bar and pool hall all facing Front Street (the highway) and the drug store facing Main Street. This large structure was all connected, and fairly well built, all at the same time. The drug store was owned by the Bennett family who had a very beautiful daughter named Cordelia. She later married Dr. Tom Matthews. The Duguay's built a building on the corner of Front and 3rd Streets, housing the St. Ignatius Post, a boarding house, and City Meat Market on the north side and their living quarters on the east. The MacFails owned the printing business, and had a beautiful daughter my age. All of us boys in first grade fell in love with her when we started school together. We all used to write her love notes. It broke our hearts when her folks moved away the next year. She had long blonde curls and blue eyes, a lot like my future wife, Mildred.

The farmers in the area banded together and formed The Farmers Equity, and built a fine building on lots given to them by George Beckwith. It had a 16 foot high wainscoat, suspended ceiliong, beautiful hardwood floor with an elevated stage at the east and a large screen for showing movies. The new order elected Dad as their secretary. He ordered in supplies by the carload for the members at great savings.

That same year The National Bison Range was established, and Frank Rose was its first manager. He came to Dad and asked him to provide feed during the winter for the animals. He wanted Red Clover hay, put up a bit on the green side so it would burn a little and still retain its food value, and wanted Dad to feed the animals as needed. The winters were long in those years, with lots of deep snow. Some years there would be as much as four months that you wouldn't be able to see the ground. That gave Dad a lot of extra income, clear up until the mid-twenties. We had a key to the Park the year around, and Dad and Mr. Rose developed a great friendship for one another over the years.

The United States entered the World War in 1918. This kept the economy going, and the Indians were allowed to mortgage or sell their land, and even that of their children. That should have never been allowed. One Indian got drunk, sold one of his children's 80's, bought a new car, wrecked it, sold another child's 80, bought another car and wrecked it, too. All in the same day. Every new Indian child was given an allotment soon after birth, and the fathers were allowed to sell them. What a

terrible mismanagement of the Indians.

In 1919, Uncle Will went to work for Rehnold Davis, and moved his family closer to his work. Dad then hired Oscar Box to to build an addition onto the house he vacated, and we moved up there. The only things I remember as a three year old was when Dad backed over my new little red wagon with his Studebaker. And then there was the time that Gus Cantrell came into the house and saw me playing with my pet mouse. I had a string tied to a hind leg, and he stepped on it with his hobnailed boots and killed it. He said "Kids shouldn't be playing with those damn things. They carry disease." He was right, but it didn't make me feel any better at the time.

Dad's main income was from his hay sales, mostly Timothy and Alsike Clover mixed, for horses, as everything was done with horses then, on the farms and in the woods. There was also a great demand for oats. Dad was able to raise quite a heavy crop even on his dryland, as Timothy doesn't mature until July when the rainy season is over, and he would still get some late fall pasture for his cattle.

Dad's method of stacking hay was unique. He used a derrick pole 60 feet long, which stood upright, with an arm 32 feet long fastened to the upright 24 feet up. Guyed in place and strung with pulleys and cables, this derrick could lift the hay into the air and swing it onto the stack. We built hay boats with an 8 foot by 16 foot platform on two 8 inch poles for it to slide on. It was easy to put a ton of hay on one. We used six of these hayboats when going at full speed. It was quite an engineering feat to stand that derrick in the air. It took four head of horses to pull it up. Once it was up, and set just right, it was beautiful to stack with. We could put up a 60 ton stack of hay in a 10 hour day with a crew of good men. The loggers would come out of the hills for the month of July and work for Dad. They didn't like it in the hills when it got so hot. They could sure pitch hay. As soon as I was old enough, I drove the big stallion on the derrick.

The economy lasted for a while after World War I was over and then the bottom dropped out. We had a real severe winter and hay went up to $60.00 a ton. Dad had 600 tons on hand to sell, while cattle prices dropped to almost nothing. He couldn't see feeding $60.00 hay to $10.00 to $20.00 cattle, so he shipped most of them to Omaha, thinking he'd get better prices there. The receipts hardly paid the freight. On the way home from Omaha, Dad was thinking "I am still well off. I still have most of my hay to sell, and I have my new scales to weigh it over." The bank in

Missoula had already repossessed several hundred head of livestock, so they bought all of Dad's hay and agreed to pay him extra for feeding it to their cattle. Dad put up signs along the road "NO MORE HAY FOR SALE - PLEASE DON'T BOTHER". When they came to get their cattle in the spring, they told Dad to come in the following week and they would pay him what they owed him. When Dad went in to get paid, their doors were locked, with a sign on them "UNDER LIQUIDATION". The bank had gone broke. Dad had just shipped a carload of oats and a carload of spuds, and had instructed the buyers to mail their checks to that same bank, which they had already done, so that money was lost,too. Instead of Dad being worth about $100,000.00, he was $24,000.00 in debt. It almost knocked the props out from under Dad. It took him 20 years to recover.

The highline ditch (A Canal), was dug by our place the following year. The things I vividly remember in 1919, as a four year old, were when we moved to our own house, and Dad hired a man named Thermon Sousely as ranch foreman, to live in the house we moved out of. They had two children about my age, so he built a swing for them to play in. I would go down there almost every day to play with them. Mother demanded that I should always come home by eleven o'clock so that I wouldn't be there for dinner. Dad had the field between our places in oats, a variety that grew real tall called 'Common'. On the way home one day I left the road and wandered about 50 yards off the road into those oats that were taller than me. I didn't know which way to go. I was lost and started to cry. Just then a little voice came into my head, "Just turn around and walk towards the sun". I did that and was soon back on the road, and knew which way to go. When I got home Mother could see that I had been crying and asked why. I told her that I had been lost in the oat field. She asked, "How did you find your way out?" I told her about that little voice giving me instructions on what to do. Mom got a strange look on her face and replied "That was the Lord talking to you. Always listen when He tells you something." I also told Mom that some of her chickens had gone back down to where we used to live and that she should go get them. Mom laughed and informed me that lots of other people had Plymouth Rock chickens (a very popular breed at that time, as they were fairly good layers, and still had lots of meat on them for eating).

The other thing I remember about 1919 was soon after school started I came down with the mumps, a very contagious disease that causes the glands in your neck to swell up. Mine had swollen so bad the

glands were clear up in front of my ears, so Dad decided to get the doctor, T.A. Matthews, to look at me. I sat by the bedroom window watching for him to come, as I sure didn't want to miss seeing his new 12 cylinder air cooled Lincoln. The Mumps, Measles and Chicken Pox were all kid's diseases. Not really serious, but very contageous. Adults very seldom came down with them because they generally had them when they were kids, and once you had been infected, you became immune, except there were several different kinds of measles.

The hard winter didn't hurt the little guy as much, since he didn't have much to feed and therefore didn't have so much to lose. The Bank at Pablo went broke. The Security Satae Bank in Polson, owned by Johnson and Hanson, was secure. The Ronan State Bank was owned by C.H. McLeod, who also owned th Missoula Mercantile, and the Mission State Bank was just incorporated in 1918. A.P. Morse was the first President. His folks were pioneers in the Blackfoot Valley and his brother Dave located in the Round Butte country. None of the three Valley Banks went broke at that time, and then it was only the Mission State Bank, in 1929.

Dad still continued to operate on a fairly large scale for several more years, as the person who had bought his notes at the defunct bank sale wasn't pressing him for payment. By that time he was breaking the colts from his prize stallions, and also collecting a lot of stud fees. The demand was up for well broke logging horses to skid with. The cross between his Belgian stallion and Percheron mares turened out to be a natural one. The colts were smart and strong, easy to handle and good for any purpose. Dad's horses were so strong that he started having a harness maker in Missoula make his harness for him, as ordinary harness from a store or a catalogue wasn't good enough. If anything broke on a hard pull, you wound up with a ruined animal.

Those, I believe, were the best social times our Valley ever experienced. Celebrations, fairs, harvest suppers, pie socials and picnics, there was something going on all the time, everyone having a good time, good music available all over the Valley, and many traveling orchestras, too. People from as many as seven States came here for our big shows. They were bigger than the ones held in Pendleton, Oregon at that time. We had a large stadium and a rodeo grounds on the north side of town. Our Valley was full of good Indian cowboys, as good as any in the world. The Beaverhead had as good a thorobred race horses as could be found anywhere. The racetrack where they trained their horses was around that

pothole on the west side of the highway by Lower Crow Creek. It is exactly 1/4 mile around it.

Dad would enter his two stallions, his race mare Dinah, and also his six horse team in the driving (teamster) contest. His black Percheron stallion was a real show stallion and a noisy animal, and Dad would get the blue ribbon with him. He wasn't hal;f the horse as his Belgian, who would get the red ribbon, as he would remain real quiet, and walk with his head down, as he was trained to do. Joe Maclure would win first in the 1/4 mile, and either first or second in the novelty race, riding Dinah. He also usually win first in bronc riding. Frank Allison would win the most of the time riding steers. They didn't ride bulls in those days,rode steers bareback without a surcingle. If you stayed on 10 seconds, you were paid $10.00.

The driving contest was the biggest event of the day. Dad entered a red, a white, and a blue team, all dolled up to match their color. His harness maker from Missoula would bring him out a whole trunkful of trappings to use. You had to lope your horses into the ring, hooked to a heavy wagon, and then cut a figure 8 with no slacking of their tugs and when you turned back on the 8 figure the cramped wheel was to constantly ride softly against the wagon bed, without racking the wagon bed up and down. Dad was the only one who could do it. He would also win the blue ribbon for the best horses, and also the best dressed. Dad could really handle a six, as they called them, as he had all that early training at the ranch and in Yellowstone Park.

There were some very hard times in the 20's. Not enough money to go around. People got to chiseling on each other, prohibition came into effect and people started sneaking around. People would send their mares to get bred with their children, so Dad wouldn't have anyone to ask for the stud fee. If they borrowed something, like as not they would bring it back broken and say nothing, and we wouldn't find out it was broken until we needed to use it again.

We had five close neighbors, however, who were not like that. They were what you called square shooters. We sure traded a lot of work with them, all of it enjoyed. Us kids were getting big enough to do a lot of work in the gardens and orchards, in the fields and in the cowbarn. I never complained, but I always felt that Dad was such a good feeder that if we would just sell the grain we were feeding those darn cows, and let the calves suck their mothers instead, we'd make more money. We were only

getting $2.00 for a five gallon can of cream. I made up my mind that when I grew up, I'd find some other way to make a living. We didn't do much milking after I got married and went into business for myself.

There was a lot of discussion and meetings held, with the main topic complaints the the County officials weren't spending enough of our tax money in our area, the Flathead Reservation, and many wanted to withdraw from Missoula County and have a County of our own. Dad would say "You can't hardly blame them. The only taxes they are getting from this area is from the land, and most of the the land and all the good land, belongs to the Indians who pay no taxes, and they get very little taxes from the Homesteaders. The way you have this new County designed, it's practically all Reservation, and the County officials (mostly from Missoula) will not agree to give us much of the railroad (to tax) and the branch that will come through your disigned County is not taxed as mainline, and doesn't pay much taxex, anyway." He also asked "Where are you going to get good officials to govern this new County?" Stanley Scearce asked Dad "Gid, why don't you think we can find good officials?" Dad answered, "The more you divide, the less chance of getting the best, and besides, those people are tax spenders, not tax earners. Someone else has to create the dollars they spend.. We need fewer Counties in Montana, not more. We have too many counties already."

A vote was taken, a County was formed, and the real battles began. Where to locate the County seat, where to locate new schools, what kind of schools to build, how to get the children to them, etc., etc. There were a lot of meetings held all over the new County to decide these things. Polson wonn out for County Seat, much to the bitter disapointment of Stanley Scearce, who wanted it in Ronan. Dad voted to have it in Ronan, and that's where it should have been.

The State wouldn't let the new county bond heavily enough to build both new high schools and grade schools, so they just built grade schools. They did put gyms in the new schools in most areas, but none were of regulation size. Only the schools in the towns had central heating (steam), which was much healthier than what we have now, and they had to use outside toilets. The outlying schools still had wood stoves and the teacher had to start and keep the fire. They let contracts for hauling the children to the larger schools in whatever way the contractor could, to get them there on time and get them home again in the afternoon.

Our neighbor, Joe Doyle, won the bid for $40.00 per month. We lived

a mile from his house, off the main road, so we had to walk that distance, morning and afternoon. I was just starting to school that year, the new school wasn't completed, so I went to school in the old school building on the corner, with the bell tower on top. The Methodist Church wasn't built yet, so their congregation used the building on Sundays. It was also used for other meetings unless the crowd was too big, and then they used the Equity Hall. Our school wagon that Mr. Doyle used was new, 8 by 12 feet in size, with chair height benches down each side for the bigger kids, and two lower benches back to back for us little kids down the middle. It had steps in the back to get in, bows over the top with a white canvas covering, and lettering on each side that said "SLOW BUT SURE". Mr. Doyle had a beautiful team of white mares he pulled the wagon with, and he drove them himself. It was the nicest school wagon in Lake County. We went to school that way for two years, then, in 1923, the County went broke and couldn't afford to pay for school transportation. You had to get to school any way you could.

That was a real problem for my Father and Mother. I was a third grader, Ava a fifth grader, Virgil a seventh grader, Wendell was in the ninth grade, and Esther was in the eleventh. They sent Esther to Spokane to live with Uncle Lovell and go to North Central High School. Wendell rode his horse the seven miles to Mission, and Ava went to stay with Uncle Walter and Aunt Leah in Mission. Virgil and I went to the school at Hillside, by our own transportation. It was horse, walk or run. That's where we learned to run, and we both became very good runners. We soon found our that it was much easier to run downhill than uphill. We all missed Esther and Ava very much that year. The next year the County was able to float some more bonds, and more of the former Indian lands were getting on the tax rolls, so the County was able to provide school transportation again. Ava still stayed with Aunt Leah during the school months. Aunt Leah had a business degree fron Kinman in Spokane. She was so smarthe that she had finised a one year course in six months, before she married Uncle Walter, and they lived only a block from the school, in a nice modern home.

Dad still fed the buffalo until 1934, but by that time they had the Park cross-fenced, so they could keep them off the south slopes in the summer, and where the snow melted off more in the winter, to save that grass for winter pasture. There was also more grass growing in the Park, so he lost that contract. By then, Esther had married Alfred Hilton, and

every time she had a baby, Mother would have one. Gideon, Vivienne, Audrey and Richard, four more, and all nine of us from the same Mother and Dad. We were quite crowded in our little house, but we always had plenty to eat and Mother saw to it thatn we were clean, with our clothes ans well as our habits. She was as good a woman as ever lived on the face of this earth. She and Dad were really respected by everyone who knew them.

Dad was really interested in politics, but would never run for any office himself. He knew Governor Dixon, Senator Thomas J. Walsh, Senator Dolan, and he became a personal friend of Senator B.K. Wheeler, who also became a good friend of mine in the 40's and 50's. When Senator Wheeler would come to Montana to straighten something out on the Flathead Reservation, he would stay at the Newton place. They had a nice house, and he and Joe Newton had punched cows together in Kansas, before either of them had married. Dad would know when he was coming, so he would go to Newton's and they would visit until the wee hours. Senator Wheeler had Dad on the 'Free Franking' list, so he received the Congressional Record every day and every other publication that was important as to the goings on in Washington, D.C. I really believe that Dad was as well informed as to what was going on there as anyone else in Montana, as he always read everything that came. He kept everything that pertained to Montana in a closet under the stairway in our house. Anyone who attempted to argue with Dad, and many did, was at a great disadvantage when it came to politics, although many came to him for his good advice.

Dad was an excellent stockman as well as a farmer. If one of his animals got sick and he didn't know what to do, he'd hire the best Veternarian available (he like a man named Stevens, from Missoula best) to come treat his aninal, so he could learn from him. He was always wanting to learn, so he would know what to do the next time it happened.

Dad raised the first soft wheat in the Valley. It was especially needed for pastry flour, and he had to send away for the seed. It was a variety called Declo, a very heavy yeilder, but it had a long straw and was bad to go flat in a windstorm. Dad sold all of the first two crops to Martin's Flour Mill at Ronan, and got 25 cents a bushel above market price. Dad would irrigate it three times. If any of it was down at harvest time, Otto Detert, a neighbor we traded a lot of work with, would bring his Deering binder (Mc Cormick and Deering hadn't formed one company yet), which had a left-hand cut. Our binder was one with a right-hand cut. Dad

and Otto would cut the same field, going in opposite directions. When one would come to some wheat that was down the wrong way (away from them), they would pull out and go around that spot before they started cutting again. The one coming from the other way would have no trouble picking up that downed grain so when they were done with a field it was almost as 'clean as a hound's tooth', as the saying goes. Dad and Mr. Detert liked to work together, as both of them were expert at what they were doing. That left a bunch of us boys to shock, and there were enough of us to shock it faster than they could cut it. The shocks were almost as tall as I was. We raised that variety for only two years, until the experiment stations came out with a new variety called Federation that had a much shorter straw, was just as heavy a yeilder, and was even better for pastry flour. It had a beautiful red color when it was ripe. Dad raised enough the first year to plant 118 acres the second year, which averaged 80 bushels to the acre. In doing that, he flooded the market and could only get the market price for wheat.

Dad won the contract to haul the school children to school and bought a Model T truck with a hardwood bus body and roll-up windows. The winters were long and cold, and us three boys would milk the cows and do all the chores while Dad was trying to get the Model T started. He would build a fire under the oil pan, and bring a tea kettle full of boiling water out to pour over the manifold to warm it up. He didn't dare put any water in the radiator until he knew the motor would start, as it would freeze. There was no anti-freeze back in those days. Somehow, he always seemed to get us to school on time.

One trip, when I was in the fifth grade, we were going to school on the road opposite where Doc Cordis built his house, and where they had made a cut when they were building the road. A tie-rod came off the steering mechanism, the bus left the road and ran up the side of the cut before Dad got it stopped. Dad turned to us kids and said "Everyone get on the upper side to keep the bus from turning over." I was sitting in the front seat on the lower side, so I stood up to get to the upper side. The kids on the upper side stood up, too, and caused the bus to flip over. The bus didn't have individual seats in those days, just benches down the sides and in the middle. A big kid from the high side hit me, knocked me backward, and put my doubled up arm through a window just as the bus came down on its side. Both ends of the bus were off the ground and it was only supported in the middle, with my arm between it and the ground.

All this happened while the bus was at a standstill. Dad and the other kids lifted the bus back on its wheels, where it was able to stay upright. If the kids on the upper side had stayed where they were, the bus would never have turned over. Dad put the tie-rod back on the knob it came off of, wired it in place, got the bus back on the road, loaded us all up and took us on into town. He left the other kids at school and took me to Dr. Armour.

My arm was a mess. It had torn loose a lot of muscle above the elbow, rolled the elbow forward towards my hand, and pushed the muscle below the elbow farther towards my hand as it slid down the sidehill resting on my arm. Dr. Armour said the arm wasn't broken, and put it in a sling and sent me home. It shouldn't have ever been put in that sling. Just a few days later, on taking it out of the sling, I had an arm at almost full cramp that I couldn't straighten out, no matter how hard I tried. I could still grip with my hand. I still milked my share of the cows. I had to hunker down to reach the tits closest to me with my bad arm, and milk the two off tits with my other hand. I carried everything with that bad arm to help straighten it out. I quit using the cart to haul milk the 100 yards from the barn to the milkhouse where we separated the milk. My arm kept getting straighter, little by little. It took a year, but I got that arm as straight as a die, and real strong, also. I went through a lot of pain though, carrying those heavy weights until the arm got straight, but when it did, and it didn't hurt when I lifted something heavy, I knew I'd won the battle.

Dad had a .32/20 Colt revolver, and a nice holster. I only saw him use it twice, to enforce his right of possession. A sheepman from Dixon contracted with Dad to winter 1000 head of sheep, as we had lots of hay to sell. We put them on a field two miles north that we owned, know as the LaCass 80. We would feed them two big loads of hay every day, seven days a week, which kept two men busy. He had to furnish a herder, to keep them together and to protect them from the coyotes and wolves. There was a 40 acres to the south that joined our land and that Dad rented, the Dan MacNeal 40. It had an empty granary on it, so Dad put a cookstove in it, and took over enough wood to last all winter. The building was on a rocky knob in the north east corner of the 40. They set up a circular fence around the building, about 300 feet in diameter, with panels the sheep owner furnished. The herder stayed with the sheep day and night. He didn't seem to mind being alone. When lambing time arrived, they set up a

real large tent with small cribs in it just large enough for a ewe and a lamb. A neighbor lady would send him over apple pies when they were lambing. That way she received all the bum lambs. I think that some of the lambs she got weren't really bums. When spring came, the owner came to get his sheep without any money, so Dad refused to let him take possession of them. He wasn't about to let himself get into the same position he was in when he fed all those cattle five years before. The sheep owner remarked "I own those sheep and I will be here with the Lake County Sheriff to get them." I was with Dad at that time. When Dad got angry he would never raise his voice. His face would redden a little, but he would talk in a soft tone of voice, and that was when he was the most dangerous. He always told his sons "You can never do your best when you're mad or angry." Dad asked the sheepman in a sweet voice "Would you mind telling me what day and what time that will be?" "We will be here tomorrow at nine o'clock in the morning" he said, and left. Dad didn't trust him, so he guarded the sheep that day and night. The next morning I begged Dad to let me go with him and he said "Well, all right, maybe you will learn something." Dad buckled on his Colt six-shooter, and we went to where the sheep were. Sure enough, the Sheriff and the sheepman arrived about nine o'clock, each in his own car. The Sheriff, of course, had his gun on him. He said to Dad, "I came here with this man to get his sheep." Dad asked in a very quiet voice, "Have you got a court order?" He answered "No." Dad said "Then you won't take them." The Sheriff said in a very loud voice, "We came to get those sheep, and you try and stop me," and he took a step towards the wire gate. Dad hadn't drawn his gun, but he was ready. He said in a very cold quiet voice, "You take one more step and put a hand on that gate, and I will shoot it off." The Sheriff backed down, both men left, and I had really learned a lesson that helped me many times in later years. The sheepman came back three days later with his brother, who was a much larger operator, and an honest man, who paid in full, and they took possession of the sheep.

One other time, about seven years later, I had been fishing up at Stillwater, an area about a mile east of our house that had some good fairly deep fishing holes in it. On my way out I ran into some sheep with no one around. Dad strapped on his sixgun and said "Let's go up there." I had a Chesapeake dog that Acie Brooks had given me that went everywhere I did, so of course he went along. When we got to the sheep, the herder was there, holding a rifle across his arm. About that time, old Sport, who

had never been around a sheep, started chasing a ewe, and got hold of her hind leg. The herder started to make a move with his gun, to shoot my dog. Dad still hadn't drawn his gun, but he said "Don't do it. You make one more move and you're a dead man." Dad's remark just froze that sheepherder in his tracks. He was so scared he didn't even wiggle. Dad then said "Now get your sheep off of my place and don't ever come back." They never did.

By that time the depression was on, and the Mission State Bank was broke. I stayed out of school to help on the ranch for two years, before I went back to finish high school. One half of the land in the County was off the tax rolls. The County sold 80's for as little as $200.00 each, no interest, and four years to pay the balance, just to get them back on the tax rolls. Dewey Walker came to the Valley in 1937, bought 80 acres for $200.00 and then bought the 80 next to it for $400.00 two years later. We all soon learned to love the whole Walker family. I had been married to Mildred for two years and was farming quite extensively by that time, so this is where I will end this story.

Please don't think I am trying to make my Father out to be a martyr. I am not. I just want you to know that he was a good man, devoted to his wife and family, clean in his habits and his language. He would not lie or cheat, would help anyone in need, was admired by all of his neighbors, and I think he almost hated a thief. I just want you to know that I think, and feel, that when The Good Lord weighed him in the balance, he was not found wanting.

Dad used to say "If you can't pay your own way, don't go," and "Don't fight anyone. If he is in the right and you are in the wrong, you might kill him, but you will never whip him." Also, "Try to go to bed with a clear conscience. You will sleep better."

Mother was a wonderful woman. I can never say enough good things about her. If there are angels on earth, she had to be one of them!