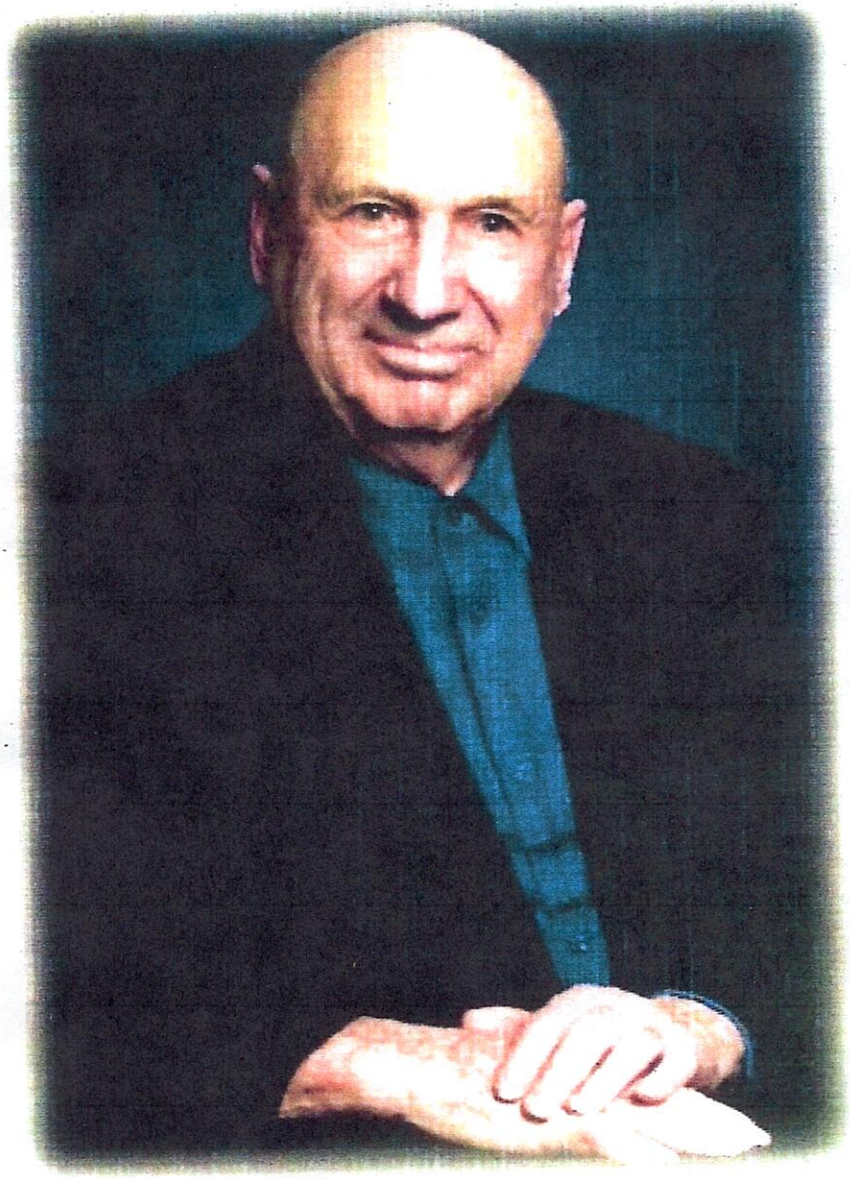

Celebrating the Life of

HARRY SEELMAN

January 21, 1922 - April 11, 2014

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FOREWORD

While writing this work I have changed my format several times as I become more familiar with the new computer medium. That is a factor as well as the fact that I did not know precisely where this story would take me as my memory unfolded. I then decided to include some essays and other writings as I deemed worthy to print.

I consider this work to be perhaps two thirds completed to date. However, that may also change.On this date, Nov.14,1996, there are thirty-eight subtitles varying from some 200 Kilobytes to one, a total of 1094 Kilobytes. I have withheld printing most of it, for I find myself frequently editing and adding. The labor of this attempt to put down more than three-quarters of a century of life is enjoyable to me. If only I had kept a few notes from the past-- but recollection is at least partially satisfactory, and adds a dimension which is unique.

1-30-97

At this point, I realize that this work has taken on a life of its own. Almost unnoticed and not recognized till now is the fact it has turned into an essay collection in addition to chapters. I find it easier to keep tab of the different subjects in that way. It also has provided a fruitful medium for formulating my different recollections-60 essays to today.

A matter of concern to me is the fact that many neighborhood stories could be a matter of embarrassment to innocent persons who may have relatives, living or dead,\who might be mentioned. I will endeavor to do all I can to disguise those personalities. There is, however, an element of familiarity in those stories which will be recognizable to many acquaintances and family members, regardless of my attempts at disguise. For that reason, I will endeavor to place those stories in a special section which should not be made public. I ask posterity to honor my wish.

1-1-99 I have deciced to add an appendix, and it will be located in the rear of the chapters, in this case page 35. In proof reading I found some material which needed further explanation. The appendix paragraphs will note the pages to which they apply.

CHAPTER ONE
ORIGINS IN COLORADO

A trout stream named Boulder Creek winds its way up beautiful Boulder Canyon in the northwest part of Boulder, Colorado. It begins in the high mountains of the Front Range and traverses the foothills near Boulder as it flows toward its confluence with the Platte, and at one point crosses the Red Rocks which adorn those foothills. It is at that point where lay the home which was my birthplace and that of my sister Esther. It may be said to be one of the beautiful spots onEarth. Today it has been transformed into Settlers Park, decidedly a White man's monument. It was the first encampment of the first White explorers to reach the region. The trail which winds its way up the canyon is named Pearl Street.

My name is Harry Seelman. I am 73 years old, and I was born in Boulder, Colorado on January 21, 1922. My mother's family name was Irene Rohret, born of Henry and Julia Eckrich Rohret. Their parents were pioneers to Iowa when it was still a territory. My father's name was Jacob Conrad and his father's name was also Jacob. His mother's name, Mrs. Jacob, was Cunnegunda Hoffman. Their parents were immigrants, although they arrived here only a little later than did the Rohrets or Eckrichs.

At least two of our immigrant ancestors came to America because of Napoleon. Wolfgang Rohret was conscripted into Napoleon's army while it was on the way to invade Russia. This was so even though Wolfgang was a citizen of Germany, but it was not yet a nation, still a loose organization of individual states. He was one of the few who returned from that ill-fated campaign. That gave him and his wife Katherine Schellhorn Rohret the incentive to emigrate to America after they were blessed with four boys. They did not want to face the prospect of these boys being subject to exploitation by the European military grist-mill. Thank you Napoleon for your part in making me an American!

I am mostly left-handed, but write right-handed. I throw a ball left handed, and use a scoop-shovel or hammer in either hand. I do most heavy work left-handed, and wear left-hand gloves out much faster than the other one. My weight when I graduated from high school was 165. Now it varies about two pounds on either side of 200. Somewhere it is printed that the ideal weight gain from that start is 45 pounds. I must have started too high, for I think I would be better off if I weighed 15 pounds less today. When young I was over 5'8" and am probably more than an inch shorter than that now. My eyes were dark brown when I was young, but they have changed to what I would call hazel today. Have you ever heard of such a thing?

I wear bi-focal glasses, and will have a new prescription pair shortly. (All of this talk about myself is embarrassing to me, and would not have happened were I not following a guide book on writing a history for family use.) (SS#482 42 8652.) Self employed people, including farmers, did not have a social security number until the Fiftys (?)

My wife's name is Lucille Crock Seelman. We will celebrate our golden anniversary on the third of October this year, God willing. We met in late 1944 when Lucy was in nurse's training at Mercy Hospital in Iowa City. And what a story that is! That is a story that I should leave to her!

The first awareness I have of anything was that of getting on the train to go to Iowa. I remember this scene; My climbing up the stair into the passenger car, and having second thoughts, I backed down. At that point a firm hand pushed me back up the stair, whereupon I put myself in reverse and backed down again. At that point I remember being picked up and carried onto the train. This occurred when I was age two.

The next recollection I have is that of meeting my grandmother in the farmhouse in Iowa. We had a neighbor in Boulder whose name was Mrs. Bream. My memory does not include her, but I do remember confusing her with my grandmother on that first occasion. I remember calling my grand-mother simply "Bream". Mrs. Bream was my godmother.

I have at least one more early recollection. Shortly after coming back to Iowa, my mother was afflicted with a serious, acute attack of arthritis. I do not remember any of those details, of course, but I do remember her going to the hospital (?) and getting into the car aided by what

appeared to me to be a huge pair of very crude crutches. My mother told me much later that I was very miffed by her blatant neglect of me. I remember a strong feeling of abandonment and alarm for what was happening to her when my mother was taken away on this occasion, which may explain what my mother described as my emphatically snubbing her for a time when she returned.

THE COLORADO CONNECTION

Why did our family arrive in Boulder, Colorado? Not long after my parents were married, my father experienced severe symptoms of tuberculosis. At that stage of medical knowledge the only cure "known" was a high-altitude dry climate. They ripped up their roots which had been a promising future on an eighty acre farm just west of Iowa City, sold out and moved west.Their first attempt, since my dad was a farmer, was to purchase a ranch just north of Boulder. That soon proved to be a poor decision, however, since the high altitude "cure" had no effect on the demon they were trying to deal with. So they once again disrupted their lives, bought a house in Boulder and moved again. That home I previously identified as the one on Pearl Street. Then my father established a tour business in the mountains to support his family.

It was in this Boulder home where my sister Esther and I were born, Esther arriving after our father passed away.

OUR FATHER'S PASSING

After all this time it is hard to imagine The aloneness my mother must have felt during that sad time. Tears are in my eyes as I write this sad episode. From all that she said to me and from all that others said, it was clear that my mother dearly loved my father. To be suddenly deprived of his emotional and physical support must have been a terrible thing. True, she had the children, but even Walter, who was the oldest, was very young, only twelve years old. One of the laws of life dictates that in times of crisis the young grow up quickly. And so it was that as he grew into the role, my mother learned to depend on his quick, steady, and accurate judgment. As events developed, the other children were called on, in their turn, to do likewise.

After Father's death the decisions my mother were called upon to make were these; with very limited resources, should she stay in Colorado? Or should she return to Iowa? If the decision was to return to Iowa, when? And where, with no way to support her family of five children, would they live? It was obvious that staying in Boulder was not an option. Under these circumstances the support of her family was the only option she had. Her parents, Henry and Julia Eckrich Rohret, were getting older, so the situation was less than ideal. But since none of the aunts were living at home at the time, there was room in the farmhouse for our family.

OF TEDDY BEARS

An early memory includes a constant companion; color him yellow, with a worn out spot where the sawdust began to sift out. I think the only name he had was Teddy. He was not as ingenious as Hobbes, but he was loved just as dearly. He always went to bed with me and that was all I asked of him. After Teddy developed that wound a strange thing happened which bothered me considerably and no one would give me a satisfactory answer. What happened to Teddy? He disappeared and I never saw him again. I grieved for what I remember to be a considerable time, and it seemed to me that no one else cared. I remember him still for his gentle nature, not at all like a real bear and certainly not like a tiger.

A FAVORITE PLACE TO PLAY

The old house my grandfather lived in was what I remember as home, every room and corner preserving some special memories. Much of its elegance was twisted and worn, the infamous tornado having done its work many years earlier.

Space under the east porch held special enchantment for me. I played many hours underneath it and thoroughly explored all of its space beneath the floor. At the north end there was enough room for me to set up a haymow, complete with hayrope and a hayfork. I had a small rope, pulley and other bits of equipment which served me well as a system patterned as closely from the real thing as my talents allowed. Revered and in awe I was of the one in the real barn. The hay which I made was harvested from the lawn after it was mowed by a push mower.

I recall the job which was never really done in the summertime, that of mowing the lawn

with a hand push mower, reel type. It pushed very hard, and one of the first mechanical abilities I learned was to adjust the blade for optimum cutting efficiency. There were two mowers in the line up, one a reasonably good one and the other being a "lemon". It was much harder to adjust and to push.

I remember the mower coming home from a shop which owner had sharpened and adjusted it, and it soon having lost its adjustment. That happened two or three times before I decided I could do as well as that shop operator. Indeed, I did do as well after only a few tries, learning how to do it by trial and error. From that point on it was no longer necessary to take the mower to a shop. Sharpening a reel mower was a misnomer, for a properly adjusted blade sharpened that blade simply by using the mower.

That was, to my recollection, the point in time when I became a do-it yourselfer. Much of my training was of the self- taught variety, taking longer than formal training, but learned well. I remember trying to observe how others did a task, to see if I could learn from them. Looking back, I realize I did that much more than I imagined at the time.

ANOTHER FAVORITE PLACE

There was a "pathway" between two rows of stately evergreens, starting just north of the house and travelling north toward the road, which was a favorite outdoor retreat for Esther and I. One of our toys was a red coaster wagon, stoutly built of wood and with roller bearings in the wheels. Yes, roller bearings!, of the type used in some farm machinery at the time. And the wheels were made of wood! They had spokes and felloes like a wood buggy wheel. Those wheels could not have been more than ten inches in diameter. The wagon was a work of art, and built very tough. The tongue could be folded up and to the rear over the front of the wagon box, so it could be steered by one sitting in the box. That system taught coordination, for movement of the tongue to the right made the wagon steer to the left, and vice-versa. Then, to pull the wagon to the top of the hill it was only necessary to swing the tongue forward and use it as a towbar. Modern steel built coaster wagons are identical, but not built nearly so well.

Many, many trips down that hill were made in free-roll, like using a sled to coast down a snowy slope. I wonder how many miles we put on that wagon. It did not wear out until I was a grown man. The enthusiasm with which we attacked that bit of play is still a vivid memory. Sometimes, to avoid a crash into a fence or a tree, we were forced to turn abruptly and wagon, kids and all rolled over more than once in a crash stop. That was fun enough to do over more than once. Tough wagon. I still remember the panic I felt when I felt responsible for the "frog" of the tongue being broken; it was the metal frame which connected the tongue to the front axle.

That same wagon was used to do many hauling chores and many were the loads of wood, garden produce, walnuts, feed, etc. It was called on to carry.

I remember the only coaster sled we ever owned. My brother Walter built it, and a good sled it was. No one else had one even close to it in appearance. It was not sleek, but handsome in many ways, so I did not feel that apologies were necessary. It was also ruggedly built, lasting over many years with not so much as a single screw needing replacement. The design was such to make it very maneuverable, with oscillating front runners and the body was perhaps three and one half feet in length. It was heavier than a manufactured sled, making it a bit harder to pull, but not enough different to be important. It did not possess the ability to maneuver on hard ice as did a commercially built sled, for the metal surfaces on the wood runners had chamfered edges. My brother had used metal trim then widely available to protect edges of wagon box sides as the metal runner surfaces.

Hard ice was a factor more than once. During the winter of 1936-37 we had perhaps ten inches of solid ice on the ground for a very long period. I reported that winter elsewhere in these writings.

Many of those old toys were done in by weather exposure, for young people do not understand the need for implements of wood to be stored where rain, snow, and sun cannot destroy them. I now regret their loss.

MY FIRST RETURN

I think it was the year 1956 or 1957 when my mother, Angela, Marie and I went to Colorado in our car, a 1952 Chevy station wagon. We visited J. I. Gilbert who still lived on the ranch he purchased from my parents. My mother said the ranch house still looked as it did when they lived there, as well as the other buildings. This trip to Colorado was the first time I had returned, so it was a new experience for me. The Great Plains of Nebraska, the high mountains, and the different lifestyles of the people made a lasting impression on me. Naturally, the different farming methods of the ranchers on the plains and in the mountains was observed with great interest. But my all too brief visit with Mr. Gilbert was of special interest. His obvious love of the land and our discussion of our occupational activity established a commonality of experience and understanding between us.

Upon leaving the Gilbert ranch we went to the house where Esther and I were born. Everything there was also much as when we lived there. So the timing of our trip was fortunate from that standpoint. But since we did not know the occupants, we did not disturb them, and did not see the interior. See picture attached. The house was located on a beautiful spot in Boulder Canyon which is called Pearl Street, adjacent to the Red Rocks, a narrow red sandstone formation which is more or less continuous north to south through Colorado in the foothills east of the Front Range.

While we were there we drove into the high mountains, and given the fact that the car did not have a high-altitude tuneup, it was about all it could do to climb the steepest parts of the mountain roads. I remember being astonished by the blue color of the air in the valleys, which was no doubt caused by the dark green color of evergreen trees on the mountainsides. Being on foot on a mountain trail and caught in a thunderstorm was both exciting and frightening, especially upon seeing and hearing lightning and thunder below you! From the way the lightning crackled, it seemed almost to be at arms-length, and the strokes could actually be seen and heard above and below almost simultaneously.

A family story/anecdote should be related here. The details were never quite clear to me. There is an irrigation ditch in front of the Canyon house, and the story relates that one fine day I, playing in the yard, fell in. My sister Regina, upon seeing my predicament, pulled me out. From here the story becomes ambiguous, for to this day I do not know if the ditch was filled with water. My perception was that the story was told both ways, and since chronology dictates that I was youngest when I first heard the story, I may only have created the worst case in my imagination. I do think I remember my mother telling me the full water version....?

The lucky timing of the 1956 trip became evident when we next returned to Colorado some years later. The Gilbert ranch was gone and in its place was row on row of houses. Inquiry produced the reply that indeed this area was once the Gilbert ranch. Also, upon our returning to the Pearl street house, it was gone, and usurping its place was Settlers Park, an historic landmark. A bronze plaque relates that the spot was where the first white settlers camped upon newly arriving to the area. With the Red Rocks for a West backdrop, it posesses a unique beauty. Of course, it must be remembered that the beauty of Boulder Canyon is already very great, so all else is icing on the cake.

Two things stand out in the stories my mother told me about the West. She hated the wild winds that blew too often. So powerful that when carrying a bucket of water from the well to the house, the bucket would be empty upon arriving at the house, the water having actually all been blown out. But she was captivated by the beauty. Colorado's beauty is the reason for the huge tourism the state enjoys. And she was enchanted by Cheyenne Frontier Days. It is held annually, and since it is not far from Boulder, my parents attended one year. I have long since forgotten what she told me about it but I can remember her enthusiasm as if it were yesterday.

Since we are of European extraction,we are Caucasion,Saxon. Bavaria remained true to the Church of Rome, although much of Germany followed Luther into Protestantism. Happily, we are Roman Catholic, accepted by our forbears as "A pearl of great price". I have very early memories of our family's devotion . On the rare occasions when, because of bad weather, we

were forced to miss Sunday Mass, we always said the rosary on our knees at home. In my mind's eye I can still see my grandfather on his knees and leading the rosary. My mother also made sure that our spiritual needs were met. I remember her helping me with my bedtime prayers many times.

A BEE STING-UNDESERVED

One of my earliest memories was a bee-sting. One of the basic activities on my grandparents' farm was a thriving bee colony. The collection of hives was located about one hundred feet south of the house, where the large evergreens are. The occasion was the day that honey was being taken from the hives, a two or three times a summer occurrance. This always upset the bees, and some of them were easily upset. There were, and probably still are, more than one variety of honey-bee commonly in use. These are the two that my grandparents had: One is equipped with black rings on the abdomen, and one yellow. I have since learned that the black-ringed ones are called German bees, and the yellow ringed are Italian. But my family had that identification reversed. There may have been a bit of bias here! True to their ethnic tendencies, the German bees were valued for their industry, and the Italian ones for their laid-back attitude. But the German bees, with their industry, were much more eager to defend the fruits of their labors. They may as well have been called African, for their disposition is the same.

On the previously mentioned day I still remember, I was sitting on the cement step of the house while observing the proceedings. A bee came, clearly looking for someone on whom to vent his rage, and stung me where bees always do when they are mad, which is squarely on the eye. What I remembered most about the incident was the injustice. After all , I was NOT the one who was taking the honey! It was a long time before I felt good about bees. In times of crisis, German bees do take the offensive, and I am certain that bee was one.

MENTOR

My next strong memory was Grandpa, and his kindness. He often held me on his lap. I do not know if it was his insistence or mine, but he often helped me learn my numbers and letters. He always was full of good humor. He always had time for us little ones. I adored him, and he taught me much. I couldn't wait to get outside to help him. In the urgencies of running a farm I often forgot some of his lessions in raising my own children. But life was slower then. Memory has dimmed; but I remember him always prefacing an order with "if you want-". More later.

The first world news I remember was Charles Lindberg's solo flight from New York to Paris. I remember the family talking about the event, and that would have predated my learning to read the newspaper.

MORE EARLY MEMORIES

One of my earliest memories was my reluctance to go to bed at bedtime. Even when I was almost asleep I would always go to bed with the same protest, thus, "I dont want to go to bed" repeated over and over. Even today my mind's eye pictures a little boy going up the stairs of Grand-pa's house with some help, under protest. Today my reflection tells me it was my fear of missing out on some family activity that sparked these revolts, as is probably true of little ones universally. I remember an enchanting Christmas at about this age,when half asleep I got a glimpse of the wonderful things around the Christmas tree. We always used an evergreen branch which served very well, and the aroma was unforgettable. I can still see that wood three wheeeler, brightly painted.

VISITING GRANDMOTHER

Tom and Ann Flannery lived north of what was then Coralville, about where the Industrial park is now located, not far from The Skelly filling station and restaurant. I know my memory of this matter is faulty, but that area is changed so much. My grandmother Seelman lived with them. Her husband Jacob P. had died late in the previous century [our grandfather.] We went to the Flannery place to visit, as I recall, fairly often. Since she died in 1928, I was only six years old the last time I saw her. I recall a spare lady who did not have anything to say to little boys. Looking back, I now appreciate my mothers's efforts to keep in touch.

Later we also visited grandmother Seelman's brother often at his farm. His name was

Alphonse [Phony] Hofmann. He did not own a farm, but rented, a common practice at that time. At one time, when we first lived on the farm where all of our children grew up, Phony lived on the place north of us on the IWV road. Later he lived on a farm south and west of the Everett Wiliams farm and school.

SCHOOL

The one greatest adjustment a juvenile has to make is starting to school. My kindergarten through sixth grade years were at Cosgrove. My kindergarten teacher was Sister Hugh, who was admirably suited for the position. She inspired me and her class with love for education, and that is the most important thing a teacher can do.

Travel to and from school was provided by the school district via horse drawn hack, an enclosed wagon body that was mounted on a high wheeled wagon pulled by a team of two horses. The capacity of these hacks was probably twelve to fifteen children, depending of course on the size of the occupants. Protection these vehicles provided the occupants amounted to fending off rain, snow, and wind. I recall not much protection against the cold, for once on a very cold day I remember being very cold, and the driver left me for the day at The Albert Hoffman home a mile and a half short of school.

The same mud roads that were the nemesis of car travel were also troublesome for hack transportation. A fully loaded hack was more of a load than a strong team could handle while climbing a steep hill, so the solution was often the unloading of the bus and all walking to the top of the hill, again proceeding after a suitable wait to rest the horses. All of this took place in mud much more than ankle deep. Overshoes would always have a rind of mud four inches wide and very heavy. Nothing was stickier than clay mud. Or heavier.

Much was learned about social skills on these school hacks, as is true today in school bus travel. Bullies existed then as now, and it was important for us to learn how to cope with less than ideal situations. Bullies always have the advantage of being bigger than their victims, but they always overplay their hand, and either the driver or a right thinking student intervened. So we survived. At school a larger number of bullies ruled, but only on the playground for the most part. There they had to deal with the ever watchful nuns, and being sent to the superintendent usually meant harsh punishment. I would be less than honest if I failed to mention a classroom discipline problem that did exist, and it was serious because it disrupted class, but it pales when compared to many present problems. Sister Eulalia was the principal, and well suited for the job. Sister Hough, Sr. Barbara, Sr. Monica, and at this point my memory fails.

I remember learning to read readily, but I was slow in arithmetic. No problem with accuracy, but slow. It was years before I was able to add and subtract rapidly, and by that time calculators were in common use. Perhaps it was because of a lack of individual attention, for in grades one through six at least, which was as far as I went at Cosgrove, each teacher had two grades. That placed the number of students for each nun at forty to fifty. The quality of teachers of the Sisters of Humility was as a whole exellent, but with that many to care for it was certainly less than ideal for both teacher and students.

Our living in time of depression was not lost on me, nor were my mother's frugal ways. I remember a habit I acquired early and which I carried till I was out of high school. When doing class and homework, I compressed it into the least possible space on that precious paper. Only one or two reprimands from my mother were necessary. Even then, at my early age, I felt sorry for the teachers who had to grade my papers. I often think of this when I see the prodigious use of paper today, wherever one looks.

At a certain time during my seven years at Cosgrove, we were given library privileges. I remember being eager to take advantage of this, and often reading books that were available. Credit for my enjoying reading can truthfully be given to an author named Hamlin Garland. He wrote about young people on the American frontier, and to me the nostalgia which he injected into his works was so real that it was almost as if I lived it myself. Today it is called virtual reality ! "The more things change, the more they remain the same ." (Old proverb)

A neighbor, Tom Taylor, did some farming with a Fordson tractor for my grandfather, and a number of times I was able to benefit from his teaching and example. On one memorable

occasion he allowed me to take the wheel while he was plowing the field west of the house. Once he took me with him when he was hunting rabbits, and he taught me the wiles necessary to hunt them with a rifle. He was very knowledgeable of the habits of wildlife and nature in general.

I recall this time in my life as a time of loneliness, since I did not have any boy companions nearby. I remember feeling that lack keenly, for Grandfather was the only other male person in the family. I was surrounded by aunts, sisters, and my mother, and although they were good to me, it did not substitute for male companionship. Also, about the time I was solidifying friendships with classmates at school, we had to rip up our roots when we moved to near Iowa City. Thus my friends were lost.

Adolph and Emma Zabloudil lived with Bill and Ethel Grabin in the early thirtys. Their mother had died when they were young, and the father had no way to care for them. The whole family, perhaps five children, were "farmed out" when they teached school age. St. Vincent home, an orphanage supported by the Davenport Diocese, cared for them when they were very young. Adolph was in high school and Emma was in my class. I adored Adolph, but there was little time for shared moments, the pressures of age difference and he having to milk many cows before and after school intervening. He later moved away and we completely lost contact, and the last I heard we was in poor health. Emma lives in Denver, and Esther maintained friendship with her.

We received word just now (June, 1996,) that Emma has passed away.

There was an old barn on my grandfather's farm, the first one he built. It was located almost precisely where our house is located today. When I was very young I spent much time playing in and about that barn. My grandfather's first car, a 1907 Cartercar, was stored within. It had not been used for many years, and I spent much time playing in and under it. That car was totally impracticle for Iowa mud roads, for it was far too heavy and did not have enough power to climb hills even in good weather. A huge drive chain connected the transmission to the rear axle. An even larger cast iron housing enclosed that chain, making a very heavy combination indeed. The tire size was 30" x 3-1/2" with no tread, being perfectly smooth. That was not a good feature for Iowa roads. It had a large four cylinder engine, but the great weight of the car was to muich for it to handle, it being a typical low performance type. My grandfather had a fixation for that car, he not ever recognizing its shortcomings.

MORE CHANGE FOR US

My grandmother is a person that I would select if I had the chance to visit her now. She treated me with a firm harshness that did not endear me to her. My mother's oft- expressed feelings to me of unhappiness because of her mother' coldness did not help. Aunt Marie's favored position in this mix was a key factor. This situation was well documented by people other than my mother. But I still would like to visit with her to find out what was behind it all. My mother, while we in my family were all at home, was scrupulously fair in our family living. And we always were aware of and felt her affection. Often parents provide for their children the things that were lacking in their lives when they were children. I am interested in what happened to my grandmother to cause her to be unfair to her o n. Visiting with her and asking the right questions might have provided the answers, and it is true that we will never know until our enlightenment in Heaven.

In the year 1932 my grandmother experienced health problems which under surgery proved to be caused by cancer. At that time medicine was powerless against cancer, so in a short time she passed away.

With all of grandmother's unfairness toward our family notwithstanding, she wittingly or unwittingly provided safe haven for us. With her illness and passing, Angela saw fit to return home and from the start it was clear that she would not rest until we were ousted. My mother was not by nature a fighter, so it was no contest. By that time my mother had the proceeds from the sale of property in Denver, which she used to buy a tract of land, 23 acres,near Iowa City, which is located south of Route No. 1 southwest of Iowa City. This is the land located south of the mobile home park, Old Capitol Motors, and the Mormon Trek - #1 intersection. The airport was being expanded at that time. My mother purchased a large old house on the airport site at

a bargain price and secured the services of the Mott house moving company, who then moved that house to a site on the 23 acre property. A foundation and basement had been prepared by a carpenter [the word CONTRACTOR was not in use yet] named Wm. Planck, who then proceeded to make a barn of a house barely livable. But it was home, and I remember it as such, complete with happy memories. But as things turned out, those memories had to wait yet a while longer.

The depression was in full swing, and the Gilbert mentioned earlier was affected strongly by it as were a lot of other people. We no sooner made the move to the new home [in the summer season] when word came from Colorado that Mr. Gilbert would be forced to default on his payments. At that point it became necessary for my mother to write down the agreed on price for the ranch. Since the collapse of the banking system made money almost unavailable for everyone, the wise and humanitarian thing was to make it possible for Gilbert to retain possession and eventually attain ownership. Like so many good people, many events were beyond his control. This produced another crisis for us, since these payments were depended on as the only source of income for us other than our dairy cows and a flock of laying hens, plus fryers in the springtime. I remember a tearful and stormy scene involving my mother and my two older sisters. None of us wanted this kind of outcome. All were apprensive, as my mother laid out our predicament. Again we were faced with a single bleak choice, which of course is not a choice. We must again move back to our grandparents' home, this time without our grandmother. Please see the entry titled, "Mother's letter to Bernice". It explains my Mother"s dilemma and the outlook better than I can.

We all knew what we were facing, as we remembered the very negative atmosphere which Angela created. In mind were the confrontations, with my sisters trying to take my mother's part, and everyone much upset.

But move back we did.

THE DEPRESSION AND ITS IMPACT

The house near Iowa City was rented out at a time when tenants were also suffering from the Republican depression. Often these tenants could not pay the rent. There was a reason why it turned into the Republican depression. President Hoover won a reputation as a humanitarian for his part in providing world relief by his efforts as chairman of the then world relief organization, years before he was President. This relief was directed to the starving victims of World War One to alleviate their suffering. However, at the onset of the Great American depression and all of its suffering, Hoover found it necessary to obey the dictates of the wealthy Republican oligarchy, and repeatedly declare that it was not the province of government to alleviate human suffering. So the people rejected Hoover and welcomed the New Deal. These acts of President Roosevelt's staved off the advance of communism, which at that time was making great strides in our country.

As the New Deal jump- started the economy, money again began to flow into the pockets of the people. This provided Mr. Gilbert with the option of borrowing the money he owed my family and paying us off. So we again were given the chance to try it on our own. In 1934 we again moved to the Iowa City home, this time to stay for six years, until I was out of school.

The varied nature of my education encompassed the Cosgrove Consolidated school through grade six; Summit Hill country school through grade eight; St.Mary High school, through grade ten; and University High School of the University of Iowa through grade twelve.

ONE ROOM COUNTRY SCHOOL

That little one room country school-kindergarten through grade eight, for the job it had to do, in my judgment ranked at" top of the class". I feel my varied education qualifies me for an opinion that carries some value. I think one of the reasons it provided quality education was that we were fortunate to have quality teachers, but also because of the favorable teaching climate. Each student was afforded the advantage of being exposed to the tutoring of eight other classes, often those class members receiving individual instruction. The younger children had a taste of their future education, and the older ones the advantage of review.

I remember my country school education as occurring at a time of tumult. Miss Klenk

taught us when I was in the seventh grade, and I remember her as a capable teacher. But since she had plans for marriage, and since teaching was at that time closed to married women, we had a new teacher the next year. Miss Pizarik then came on the scene. I think she may have had ability, but since there were romantic connections with her and the school board president's hired man, she was removed early in the year when she announced her intention of becoming Mrs. Walters. So enter Miss Morissey, one of the best teachers I ever encountered. She went on the following year to teach at Tipton, where it turned out that she knew but did not teach my future wife. It can be a small world.

My only classmate at Summit Hill was June Williams, a very pretty girl whom I soon fell madly in love with, my first crush. Unrequited love can at once be painful and mercifully short-lived, and soon other interests developed as I went on to high school.

Back to Summit Hill School

An incident at that school stands out . Anna May Riecke was in the fifth or sixth grade when I was in eighth. A very headstrong girl was she, and it so developed that the subject of pump handles and human tongues came up at recess. One mentioned and another confirmed that it would be very ill-advised indeed to place one's tongue on a pump handle in zero weather. We all agreed except Anna Mae, who declared she never before heard of such nonsense. The pump handle, zero weather, and Anna May's tongue were all available at that moment, and in spite of all we could do to dissuade her, the forbidden combination got together very quickly. The inevitable happened, and the ensuing separation occurred with difficulty, quickly, and with much pain.

Please do not judge the teacher too harshly concerning this event. She was there to teach, and she possibly saw the rare opportunity to do that to a difficult student. After all, being very stubborn, Anna Mae was an easy read. Although she could not talk at all well for a couple of weeks, she proved that where there's a will there's a way. Few other places in the world could have provided a more graphic lesson so easily understood by the entire school membership. There never was any doubt in my mind that this lesson was fully appreciated by all who were there, from the oldest to the youngest. That scene has endured through time, and well remembered was Anna Marie's look of defiance as she observed us all watching her through a schoolhouse window, just before her enlightenment.

THE WINTER OF 1936

The last year of my education at Summit Hill was memorable from another standpoint. The worst winter of the Twentieth Century descended upon the Midwest. On Christmas day 1935 we spent the day at Grandfather's house, and when it started to snow heavily we went home. We had a 1927 Chevy, an uncomfortable conveyance anytime, but especially in winter since it had no heater. I remember getting stuck in a snowdrift just west of of the now Finkbine golf club entrance. There was a low point in the then ungraded road in the small valley, and snow collected there.

But since we carried a scoop shovel for such emergencies, we soon were home. That was the last day any of the side roads were open that winter. They were narrow and unimproved, so the snow soon drifted deep in the cuts on the hill-sides. With no place to put the snow, there was no way to open them. The wind blew continuously and strongly that winter, so even if they had been opened, thirty minutes later they were again blocked. But this made no difference to our education, since we walked through the fields. Etched deep in my memory is the picture of a flat-bed Ford truck that was stuck on that road all winter. The only part visible was the top foot of the cab.

I recently learned who that truck belonged to. Hawkeye Lumber Co. had temporarily lost a truck on a snow-blocked road that winter, and that had to be it. Carl Swaigert, eventually the manager of Hawkeye Lbr., was Rose Marie Ruth's father, and that is how I learned to whom it belonged.

That winter was different from many standpoints. The powerful winds picked up so much snow that even on clear days the blue of the sky was visible only in a small circle directly overhead. In early January the winter season busied itself with high snowfall, and after that we had steady temperatures far below zero. I remember looking at the thermometer one day in late

winter, when we were long since sick of it, and mentioning to family members that perhaps something was wrong with it. However, a trip outside the door immediately confirmed that the problem was not with the thermometer. The Cosgrove school was closed for seven weeks that winter, since the greater distances and blocked roads made attendance impossible. No snowmelt occurred until Washington's birthday.

A part of nature made human inconvenience worse that winter. When snow was removed from a road or other area, the snowpile or ridge made an effective barrier for the wind which made the next snowdrift that much deeper. Oftener than not, the method of removal was muscle power, and even the most energetic individual found discouragement in the half hour or less it took the wind to erase the evidence of his labor. Farm gates were soon abandoned and chores accomplished in some other way for this reason. The state highway department was hard-put to keep the state system open, so that was the time they learned to depend on rotary plows. With that much drifting it made V plows nearly useless. If one wants to see what those country roads looked like then, look today, 1-30-96, at the ungraded one-half mile section at the east end of the Ridge road. We have perhaps a foot of snow on the ground. Most of the roads are open with few problems, but that road with its high banks and narrow roadway is deeply blocked. This is the section of road one mile north of the IWV at the north end of the gravel road which is eighty rods east of our driveway.

As I write this on the second of February 1996 we are having a taste of winter. In the last three days the temperature has stayed below zero. The next three days are expected to be the same. But at the moment there is no wind, and we are always thankful for that in the winter season. It was - 35 degrees this cold spell.

Our parish was St. Marys in Iowa City, and upon entering high school I was enrolled at St. Marys . The building was located where the Newman Center is today. The school was good quality in that age, offering a very standard fare of Latin, the normal offering of English, limited music, history, math, algebra, geometry, and not much else. I had a solid background in all of this, and I did well in all of my classes while I was there. Discipline was definitely a problem.

Some of the kids from Iowa City did not seem to appreciate the opportunity to learn. They would have been expected to torment and ridicule new kids like us, except for two reasons. Our appearance was rustic because of a very limited clothing budget, but because of the depression so they were also less than finely dressed. Also, because of our desire to learn, we country kids excelled in our respective classes. So we found it unnecessary to defend ourselves for the most part. "We were country when country wasn't cool."

It was here that I acquired three lifetime friends, the first close friends I had. Ray Reiland was from the city, and Carl Langenberg and Ray Cole were from the country. We occasionally got together at one or another of our farms to do some hunting or to visit. For various reasons Ray Cole and I drifted apart, and he passed away many years ago. I still count Ray Reiland and Carl among my friends.

A WRENCHING CHANGE

With very little income from our very small farm operation and several of us in school, even the cost of books was a crushing burden. That and the fact that I needed some practical education, since I was not making plans to go beyond high school, made University High School an attractive option. Books there were free, which was a strong advantage, not offered at St. Mary's. Science, Industrial Arts, and typing were all skills which would be needed in the work world. So Esther and I were transferred at the beginning of the 1938-39 school year.

This shift naturally placed a strain on friendships established at St Marys. The fact that the friendships mentioned above survived is witness to their solidity. That strain is evident at times today, since I neglected to set the record straight as to why we changed schools. Much of the strain surfaced in Father Strub and the nuns at St. Marys, and they never did understand it. I have resolved to take care of this bit of unfinished business with Fr. Strub and Carl Langenberg. It was never an issue with Ray Reiland. You who have read my mother's memoirs may remember the reason she gave for placing us in U Hi. The hardships she endured and our lack of resources made it truly necessary to take advantage of the free book offering. Looking

back, I realize how we kids tried to ignore or deny those difficulties.

A FRIEND PASSES

I had the above mentioned opportunity very recently- 1996- at the Francis Lynch funeral. John Alberhasky, Erma, Carl and I were visiting whereupon I opened the subject. The opportunity was especially fortunate because Erma was also a St. Marys classmate. Her family name was Petrock. Father Strub is the only one remaining on the pending list of those to enlighten.

Francis and Helen have been in very poor health for an extended period. I have been seeing him frequently at Lantern Park and last fall was the last time he truly enjoyed our visit.

SOME ROUGH SPOTS

I may have been only ten or twelve when it was decided that I was old enough to help with field work. So I was given charge of my grandfather's "plugs" one day to harrow some freshly plowed land. The word "plugs" was applied to an old team of horses. They were supposed to be pretty much idiot-proof. The equipment to be used was a two section harrow, which was a suitable load for two horses. The operator followed behind the harrow on foot, and controlled the team with the lines, two narrow strips of leather which were fastened to the bits in the horses' mouths. Much pride was the feeling as I was becoming acquainted with the control of power. Pride goeth before a fall, and so it was that day. The horses knew more about this job than I did. And they probably ignored me as they did the job as they knew was proper. But perhaps they were suffering from what humans call memory lapse, or forgetfulness. What they did was to turn too short at one end of the field. In most circumstances the consequences of this error would have beeen minor, but in this case there was a deep dead furrow which the harrow had to traverse.

Normally I, the driver, could have avoided disaster by stopping the horses. I saw the danger of malfunction as the end of the harrow drawbar engaged the vertical wall of the dead furrow. This event stopped completely the normal advance of the harrow, and I recognized the need to stop the horses so the sidewise pull on the harrow would not invert it. I was only successful in slowing , not stopping them, since I was fairly small and could not exert enough pull on the lines to produce the desired effect. I can still see the slow motion as the harrow inverted, thereby striking the rumps of the horses very forcefully and gouging one with a harrow tooth. The horses then did what horses have done since antiquity; they ran away. Thus ended my first attempt at farming. That turned out to be the only runaway I experienced although I had several close calls in later years. If any one is interested, I can identify the point of origin of that runaway, even today, with about 100 foot accuracy.

END OF AN ERA

Grandpa taught me much about farming and life. He was older and certainly was no longer caught up in substituting capital for labor. Almost all of the work done on his farm was by horse and man power. Nonetheless, when he was younger he and his brother Louis jointly owned a full-sized grain separator which was powered by a horsepower, and a later one powered by a steam engine. When I was young both separators, two horsepowers, and the boiler from the steam engine were on the farm. One was stored in the drive of the double corn crib and the newer one was stored west of the barn in the lot. World War two gobbled them all up. Much good quality cast iron was thus salvaged for the war, and a lot of it probably is at the bottom of the oceans today. If so, it was put there by German U-boats, for they sunk many allied ships which were carrying war material to Britian. When I came on the scene the Great Depression had taken its toll of my grandfather's fortunes. He was then forced to revert to labor intensive methods, as were many others.

Those two grain separators had wood frames, and they were works of art. The art was more advanced than the technology, that still being the age of craftmanship in manufactured products. The two machines were similar in several respects. They both used the same basic technology. Both had spike toothed threshing cylinder and concave, both had sieves and fan driven air blast- chaffer - grain separating system. They both used a raddle to remove the straw from the separating unit and transported the straw to the strawpile. The separator that was stored outside was the latest of the two. The greatest difference was in the feeder systems. The

older machine had a platform at the front of the machine at the cylinder intake,where a man stood during operation, cut the twine bundle bands, and pushed the grain laden straw into the cylinder. That work station was called "band cutter" and that was what the man who occupied it was then called. The second machine had the system that prevailed to the end of the grain separator era. It had a series of power driven knives, similar to field mower knives, to cut the sheave bands, and a raddle conveyor to carry the grain into the cylinder. It also had a grain measuring system to count the bushels harvested. Bushel basis was used to calculate the amount the farmer owed the separator owner when custom threshing was employed. I estimate the date of manufacture to be the late 1800's for the first machine and the early 1900's for the second.

I remember the equipment we used when I helped Grandpa haul manure. Much farm equipment at that time was in the development stage. But his manure handling methods predated any development. Thus; a low-wheeled wagon with the space, which was normally covered by a box, coveredb y one layer of two by four or six inch lumber, twelve feet long. The manure was piled on top of this platform with a manure fork. When the load was completed it was hauled to the field by horses, and then partially unloaded and scattered with that same manure fork. The remainder of the load was then unloaded by turning each piece of lumber on its side by hand, thus dropping the rest of the load to the ground. It was an effective method, but painfully slow. This was the method of manure handling which I used the first several years I was farming on my own.

AXE CULTURE

It has been said that the American wilderness was conquered with the axe, wielded by the indomitable pioneer. Nothing is more truthful. Saws, yes. But the axe was both the symbol and the tool that represented the symbolism and the work. Especially the work. Long after the pioneering was done the axe remained, into the present generation. It took the chainsaw to dethrone the axe. My grandfather used the axe constantly on almost every job. He used it in the timber for woodcutting, while fencing for shaping wood, an old axe for shaping frozen earth, driving stakes or posts, on building repair to shape wood or as a sledgehammer, chopping ice out of stock tanks, etc. The single bit axe was a multiple tool that he could not have dispensed with. I think he never owned a double bit axe. I recall the many hours he spent at the woodpile while splitting wood for the kitchen range, which was finiky about the size of the wood that it used. Since it was the only source of heat for cooking and did much of the winter heating of the kitchen, very much wood was needed. That same single bit axe did all of that wood splitting.

It has been said and written that the woodpile was once the best marriage preserver in human history. It was better than counsellors, better than confessors, better than meekness. it is a shame there is a shortage of woodpiles today. Many husbands terminated a marital crisis by "going to the woodpile".

Of course, I followed Grandpa's example and became proficient with use of an axe. A well sharpened axe, used by a qualified woodsman, can cut a log in a very short time. I acquired that ability, as Steve and Tom learned a number of years ago. Remember, boys?

ECONOMICS

The economic cow was milked from antiquity by this method; People of wealth were not content to make money the old fashioned way, by earning it. So a banking system was devised whereby cycles worked much faster for them. First, credit was relaxed and money made easy to get for people to obtain hard goods, real estate, etc. Then, when many people took advantage of easy credit and took on large debt loads, interest rates were raised and money was made much more scarce. Many people then could no longer service their debt, so the banks foreclosed. Then the banks had the best of all worlds, owning much property and in a position to begin the cycle over again. But in the Great Depression, they overplayed the advantage, and many banks went bankrupt as the economy spun out of control. Farmers were particularly hard hit in that depression. I am not in possession of accurate figures, but neighbors told me that at least ninety per cent of local farmers lost their farms. My grandfather should have been unaffected, for his farm was clear, but the Tiffin Savings Bank went belly-up and there went my

grandfather's savings. So in their old age things were very difficult for my grandparents.

Such was the state of the country and my Grandparents' affairs only a few years after we arrived in Iowa. One of my early memories was the concern I heard expressed by the adults in our household as these events unfolded. Fear was in everyones' faces as they were confronted by an uncertain future. Tom Davin told me once that only two farmers did not lose their farms on the IWV road at that time , from the county line to Iowa City; Martin Hoffman [the place at the north end of Greencastle Avenue] and our grandfather. I added a third, for Ben Hofmann bought that farm from Louis Rohret, and it was secure. Also, Albert Holzhauser and perhaps the Flannerys owned their farms.

Please read the book,"Lone Tree" by Bruce Brown. It is a story of a once wealthy farmer who became unhinged and killed his wife, a neighbor, his banker and himself , and it was triggered by the banker who withdrew his line of credit. That banker was my banker, John Hughes. I think these events occurred in 1985. Burr the farmer had nothing in common with the many people who were stripped of everything in the Great Depression.

OLD METHODS

I recall helping neighbors at least once to drive market hogs to Tiffin where there was a railhead for shipping market hogs to Chicago. That was the only place in this region that had slaughtering plants. The weather was warm, so the hogs were short-tempered, and needed frequent rest in the heat, even though we moved them early in the day. I remember the herd being perhaps forty head, and we numbered about five drovers. The hogs took advantage of every opportunity to scamper to roadside shade, so the trip was slowed considerably. The alternate method was to haul the hogs in a triple wagon box. As I recall, a wagon box could haul perhaps five or seven head, so that was a slow process. That long of a walk was an effective way to reduce a hog's weight, so truck transportation, then just beginning, soon caught on. The Chicago stock yards then had Swift, Cudahy, Morrel, Oscar Mayer, and at least one or two more packing plants. When packing became decentralized after the war Chicago declined in importance and closed several years later.

THRESHING

When I was perhaps thirteen, I remember my grandfather having a certain number of oats acres to harvest, and since I was old enough to help, he taught me the customary way to bring in the harvest. Much time and labor was expended in cutting the grain with a grain binder and then shocking the bundles,about twelve or fourteen bundles per shock. Then a threshing ring was agreed on by neighbors, and the owner of a grain separator was engaged to thresh the grain, each in his turn, until all were done. The labor was divided according to each farmer's abilities, or equipment, or skills. The first step was the pitchers' jobs, which was to use a pitchfork to throw the bundles from the shocks onto the hayracks pulled by horses about the field. The hayrack operator then rearranged the bundles to make a load perhaps eight or ten feet high, and it was an art to be able to make a load with true and plumb sides that would hold together during the trip to the grain separator,which was located at one end of the field or at the barn. Our prevalent side hills made that challenge much more insistent.

When the bundle hauler arrived at the grain separator , it was his job to toss each bundle of grain, evenly spaced, into the maw of the separator. The separator then did just that, and deposited the straw into a strawpile via a blower which used a huge oscillating pipe to distribute the straw in a stack. The length of the stack was adjustable according to the length of arc the blower was set to travel. The rate of blower travel was fixed at a speed commensurate with the ability of the men {usually one} to stack the straw as it was delivered to him. These strawstacks varied in size, but a typical one would be twenty-five feet long in an arc, and perhaps twelve feet high by ten feet wide.

This method obviously did not apply to in-barn stacking. Then the blower was extended into an upper door of the barn and the stack built in the haymow of the barn. This method was often avoided because of the huge amount of dust generated by the grain separator which of course was deposited in the barn. The heat was barely endurable, and since it was accompanied by dust and very irritating chaff, a very hardy person was sorely tried. The straw had to be mowed to trample some of the air out of the straw as well as to move it evenly about

the mow space. "Mowed", pronounced "mauwed" was the word used to describe what was done to the straw, or hay in haymaking,when it arrived in the barn mow. That was a very hot, uninviting job.

Another step in the grain harvest was handling the grain when it came from the grain separator. A grain wagon was located under the auger delivery pipe of the grain separator, and received the grain, a half bushel at a time and already metered, from the machine. Usually two men had the responsibility of tending the filling of the wagon,hauling the grain to the farmer's bin, and unloading it with scoopshovels. The ideal crew size was not always achieved. It would have been at least six to eight hayracks and operators for bundle hauling, three or four bundle pitchers, two grain wagons, three grain haulers, two men stacking straw, the separator operator, and of course the water boy, making sure all had a drink of cool water at least every half hour. Four women in the kitchen preparing the noon meal and in a few cases the evening meal rounded out the ideal crew. I forgot to mention at least twenty-two head of horses to make the eleven teams needed. There was nothing trivial about making that size opreration function. That it did function was a tribute to the cooperative spirit of nearly all farmers.

This system of harvesting small grain persisted until after WW2. Then the easier availability of machinery heralded the use of one man small grain combines for individual farms.

On the first summer which I remember being active in helping my grandfather with the grain harvest, he was no longer young and able enough to follow the threshing ring, so he reverted to the system commonly used when he was young. He enlisted my help to carry out this procedure, and it worked like this; We used a hayrack, called a bundle wagon when it was used to haul grain bundles, to haul the bundles to the barnyard, where we unloaded them onto the ground, neatly stacking them in small round stacks, spaced so the grain separator could be set between them for convenience in threshing. After this was done and when my grandfather's turn came to thresh, we did so. There was nothing about this system that made threshing easy or fast. When Hen [that was what everyone called Grandfather and that was how he signed his name] was young no one thought there was anything wrong with spending a large part of the summer to harvest the small grain crop, and indeed there was not, for it contributed a large part of farmers' income and needs.

There was another side to threshing economics. An old Irish farmer from Iowa County, Griffin, once told me that after harvest most farmers in their neighborhood were broke , their cash reserves having been used in buying supplies for the large threshing meals. Beer sometimes also had to be included, which further strained farmer's budgets.

MORE EARLY YEARS

Now back to earlier years on my grandfather's farm and those events. The first productive work I remember doing in the fields, perhaps the same year of the ill-fated runaway, was cultivating corn. We younger ones always had responsibility to do livestock chores after school in the wintertime, and both before and after school in spring and fall. In summer, in addition to the livestock chores we helped with fieldwork when we got older.

My grandfather had an extra team which he helped me to hitch to a one row walking cultivator. That way he was able to be nearby if I needed help. He had a "riding " cultivator which was equipped with a seat, hence its name. I remember my first encounter with Canadian thistles while cultivating corn. I was dispatched to the south forty acre field to help Ed, Paul, and Carl Eckrich in cultivating that field of corn. They had the corn ground rented, as was my grandfather's practice when he got older. We kids were always barefoot, and those bare feet found said thistles with great accuracy, for the operator walked behind a walking cultivator. I had never seen them before, so I pointed them out to Paul who was nearby, and he told me what they were.

The job no boy who was worth his salt escaped also became mine as I grew into it. That job was driving a team "on the hayfork". A doubletree was hitched to the tugs of the Horses' harness, and that doubletree was in turn coupled to the barn hayrope. The rope was threaded through a series of pulleys , track, carrier, and hayfork to deliver the hay from the hayrack to

the barn haymow. That hay carrier was the first partially automated device available to and widely used by farmers. It ran on a track located just under the roof ridge,and the full length of the haymow. An ingenious system of latch and lock was completely controlled by the rope that hoisted the hay into the barn and to the top of the mow. It was probably on a par with the reaper in saved human time and labor. The job the boy on the hayfork had was to drive the team with the rope attached to pull the hayfork load into the haymow, then return the team to the starting point to await the signal to repeat the trip. In good long stem hay this was repeated four to five times to get a rack load of hay into the mow.

That boy had a lot of responsibility. An experienced team made it easier, and it was not a job for a young team of colts with no experience. But he still had to start and stop the team on signal, turn the team at the end of the run, pick up the rope at the end of the run and pull enough on the rope against the team's pull to keep the slack out of the harness and tugs. This was necessary to keep the tugs and doubletree from getting tangled in the horse's legs, especially when turning. Then, upon approaching the barn, another turn of the team had to be made to face them out for the next forkful. This all had to be done by manipulating the team with the lines. An important detail was in turning the team in the right direction to untorque the rope,, for if the turns were made in a direction which "wound" the rope, eventually the rope would kink and be cut.

The first day meant a sore back, sore feet, sore hands, and various assorted stiff and sore muscles. The first few days were the hardest, before lessons were learned and muscles hardened. An advantage was that instead of being the water boy, he was on the receiving end of that ministration.

This account would not be complete without reporting the job of the man who "stuck the fork". His tools were the trip rope, which was used to trip the fork when the load, locked into the carrier on a special pulley, reached the proper place over the haymow . The trip rope's dual function was for the operator to then pull the fork back out to the load for the next trip. Commonly, the main hayrope was one or one and one fourth inch diameter, and the trip rope was one half inch. In later years when horses were no longer on the scene, a tractor took their place on the hayrope. In a pinch we even used the family car, and it did a creditable job. I remember that 1932 Chevy being used often for that purpose.

Many kinds of hayfork were tried and/or used to accomplish the desired effect. Single harpoon and double harpoon types were the first and only ones available when I was young, and later attempts were made to improve on them, with great success. Basket forks were the first, and since improvement was definitely needed, many were sold. They were heavy and cumbersome, so when grapple forks were developed and proved their superiority, they quickly became dominant. They made short work of a very tedious job. In dry hay the double harpoon fork was almost ineffective.

I almost forgot one of the hazards associated with this haymaking system. It was easy for the man who set the fork to unknowingly hook the fork on to a beam or floor part of the hay rack. More than one rack made a partial trip into the haymow. One or two such experiences induced the fork setter to extraordinary caution to avoid recurrences. The advent of grapple forks made this hazard more real.

THE TRAPPER

The above developments in my work life accompanied my perceived need to find a way to make a little spending money, and trapping fur bearing animals was one of the very few options available to kids then. But first I must relate an early experience and an early treasured toy. Early I wanted a BB gun quite badly. My mother soon learned of my "need" and so one Christmas she spoiled me by supplying it. I found its hiding place early, and spent some time caressing the end of the barrel. Looking back, I cannot believe I did not take it from its hiding place to more fully take early enjoyment. I think I was afraid of popping the bubble, sure that I was dreaming. Christmas came after an eternity that year, and sure enough, the present turned out to be mine. But this point in time brings us to another story.

Our aunt Agnes came home from teaching in Porto Rico some time before this, and having had a job there as a teacher, she brought some real money to financially strapped Iowa.

Perhaps someone knows what job she had when she returned . I remember her buying us things our family could not afford. They were little things, and I remember her giving but not the gifts. Agnes possessed a very generous nature. I accordingly, upon receiving that BB gun, stated to my mother the question that came to my mind, and grievously injured my mother's feelings. I remember regretting often the pain I caused my mother by this thoughtless act. Agnes was never aware of this. It always remained just between my mother and I.

Back to my fortunes as a trapper. I had no one to teach me the tricks of the business, and found in books some of the things I needed to know. I never had much success, and it was a rare muskrat, oppossum, skunk, and mink that stumbled into trouble caused by me. The money meant a lot though, for it was the first I had earned. The meager results were not for lack of enthusiasm. An important factor was the intense competition, for there were many adults who kept the wolf from the door in those days by trapping fur bearers. Many species must have been brought to the edge of extinction. The most prized catch was mink, for they were rare and canny. During season I awaked long before daylight, and made the long trip to Old Womans creek in the south forty and back before school. Once I remember meeting a skunk on the path in semi-darkness on a foggy morning. Both of us backed away from the barely two foot distance that remained between us at the point of awareness. These trapping experiences had to occur before I had reached seventh grade, for then is when we moved to the place near Iowa City for the second time.

The trapping life brings one close to nature in many ways. Here is one I remember. The water level in our creeks in fair weather is stable except the day before a rain. It is common for the water level to rise several inches in that event. I have only seen one explanation, scientific or otherwise. There are probably not many people who know it occurs. That credit, not proven, states that lower atmospheric pressure at the approach of a low pressure system allows ground water to rise more readily to the surface.

DRIFTWOOD

This memory is a small matter, but I feel its inclusion will help you to understand what life was like for us in the Great Depression. Every little thing we could do was important to survival. Present living enjoys so many layers of affluence that it is difficult, if not impossible, for one who has always had them to mentally transport oneself to the hardships of that survival situation.

We heated our home with wood, and if the weather was very cold that loose house took great quantities of fuel. Insulation was unheard of, so frost was held at arm's length by that room heater heating only the living room and kitchen. That was only during waking hours, for at bedtime the fire was allowed to go out. Coal provided a hotter fire, but that required cash outlay which we and others did not have. Whatever coal it was necessary to purchase simply meant that we did without something else that we needed. While travelling on the roads, my mother kept a sharp eye out for extra pieces of wood on banks and near the fence rows. When she spotted one she stopped the car and it was my duty to capture it and put it in the car. We then added it to our meager supply of fuel. I recall this occurring during our trips to my Grandfather's house or when we took Berniece to and from her teaching station. This may seem to be insignificant and unimportant, but it is so from the modern day vantage point of plenty, not from the Great Depression view of our needs. Oh yes, most of that "driftwood" had to be sawn into smaller lengths in order to go into the stove's firebox, so a sawbuck and a saw was the equipment I used before and after school to do that.

In observing our modern society and its attempts to grapple with waste and excessive use of resources, I often think of the depression and how we who survived it conserved the resources of the planet. My mother was forced by economic realities to conserve in ways which present day environmentalists do not even dream of. She purchased dried beans, for example, not beans out of a can. All of the yearly tin can waste of our family could have easily been placed in a five gallon container. Our family could have lived much better than we did on half of what a modern family throws away.

A GOOD SAMARITAN

After puzzling over the how of our existing through the last half of the thirtys, I

remembered something. That remembrance made it necessary to backtrack sixty years in my writing this account to add these thoughts. The awakening of these memories is almost a story in itself. I did not perceive the need to add this chapter until I had already written 215K of these memoirs, while writing the chapter titled, "The quest continues."

A man named Bill Villhauer did our mechanical work on the family car. That 1927 Chevy did not have the mechanical dependability of a modern auto. The miles involved were much less than a modern car travels, but also the roads were much more taxing than they are now. Dirt, mud, and gravel were the norm, not the exception. Bill used many innovative means to keep that car going and the cost to us at a minimum. I remember him filing the bearing caps of the engine to reduce the excessive clearance which wear and far too much age had caused in those bearings. Most of my early schooling in mechanical work I can credit to him. He allowed me to place my nose very near to the task and I learned almost all of what I knew to that point from him about mechanical work.

His efforts did not end with that car. When we got the 1932 Chevy he did the mechanical work that car needed. I have said in this work that air cleaners were not engineered well, and at one point it became necessary to completely overhaul the engine of that car. I also mentioned that because of the severe service the car was subjected to in pulling trailers and plowing mud roads, once it was necessary to repair the rear axle and differential ring gear and pinion. In my opinion ,the wonderful service he provided made him one of the heroes of the earth during the depression era. I only regret I did not avail myself of an opportunity to tell him how I feel. Indeed, it took much viewing from afar for me to recognize his value.

A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD

Accounts were already chronicled here concerning the reasons why we moved from our Grandfather's farm. It was a time of hardship for all of us, but it was especially so for our mother. The year was 1934; I was fourteen years of age, Esther was thirteen, and Regina was not long out of high school. She was soon to work in Iowa City. Bernice had graduated from Ottumwa Heights College with a monetary loan from the college and prepared to teach school.

The first job Gina had was in the Record room at the University of Iowa Hospital. It was the family's first acquaintance with Verna Crock, since she worked in that deparetment. Times then were truly hard, for the hospital expected and got free work for several weeks from Gina before they would put her on the payroll.

My mother had a small barn and a chicken house built on that Highway One property, and set up a small farming operation. Several milk cows were obtained, baby chicks, and later a sow which had a litter of beautiful pigs. I remember my mother's troubles with a disease that killed the chickens, and her frustration with the ineffective medications then available. That disease would strike when the chickens were about three-fourths grown or less, so some of the cost of raising them went into a lot of dead chickens when we could least afford it. But somehow we survived. That disease was called coccidiosis, a disease of the intestinal tract. I remember buying processed chicken feed and for a time before we could raise some corn, she rented corn ground on shares. We used that corn for milk cow and chicken feed.

The last year we were there we bought a Farmall tractor in preparation for farming the place near Cosgrove, so we raised our own corn crop there near Iowa City. This may all sound like pulling oneself up by the boot straps, and so it was. To help pay expenses I did some custom work for neighbors. I did that before and after school . The custom work was mainly doing mouldboard plowing and while that F-12 tractor was a step better than plowing with horses, it bore no relationship to plowing with later equipment, or indeed, some of the better equipment available at that time. Standard equipment was steel wheels all-around, the drive wheels having many sharp steel lugs bolted to the rim. The lessons I had to learn quickly were a mixture of both old and new, not much guidance, and little experience.

A family named Brenneman ran a truck farm near Iowa City. The buildings of that farm were located at the northwest quadrant of the highway 1 and 218 intersection where the Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise and So Fro Fabric Shop are now located. He owned all of the land where Pauls and Western World are located and indeed all of the land to the street named Hudson Ave. to the west and Douglas Street to the north. He needed someone to mouldboard

plow that land, and I got the job. Also, a neighbor to the south on the other side of the highway asked me to plow his field, and that included the land where Jacks and Slagers are located. The boundaries of that property adjoined the Iowa City airport which boundarys were almost the same then as now.

The Brenneman field had become overgrown with weeds, and I remember seeing many garter snakes scramble for cover as I plowed it. I am sure many of the homeowners to the north experienced some unwanted visitors. I actually have trouble in transporting my memory to that time, since that area has been so completely transformed.

PIANO TUNER

Soon after we moved to the place near Iowa City I had an experience of which I had no understanding until many years later. An itinerant piano tuner came to our place looking for - supposedly- a job to tune any piano we might have. Knowing the circumstances I am sure he did not tune the one we had. We certainly had no money for that luxury. Before leaving he managed to engage me in conversation in the garage. He declared expertise in medical knowledge, and asked me questions about private sexual matters. My suspicion was aroused when he asked me to perform masturbation in his prescence. After my refusal I fled , but because of my niavette I had no idea what he really wanted till many years later. I remember my mother's suspicions at the time, for she asked me what we had been talking about. I did not tell her. It must have been forty years later when I learned of the existence of homosexuals. I was perhaps thirteen or forteen years old at the time.

A LONE LUXURY

Since we did not have a radio, the whole family feeling that lack, [at this time I had a custom cultivating job of 40 acres of corn for a neighbor, Mr. Kelly] we decided to spend the earnings on a new radio. I recall the cost being twenty- three dollars, including the battery pack. At that time a new technology reached the market for people without power line electricity. This Zenith radio had an inexpensive battery pack, since low current drain vacuum tubes had just been developed. All earlier battery radios needed at least four batteries, and they were short-lived, the filament battery being a car battery that needed frequent recharging. That required two trips to town or two batterys, one being charged while the other was in service. There were also two B batterys and a smaller C battery which needed frequent replacement, which in the depression was costly to say the least.

Before we had this radio I often went to the neighbors, Howell and Lizzie Davis, in the evening to hear radio programs. They were brother and sister who had never married. It was easy for me to get there, for they lived directly across the road. Howell and Lizzie did not own a car.

Prior to our radio ownership our family's entertainment was obtained from a Victrola. It was a refinement of Edison's talking machine. It had a spring motor which had to be wound by a crank before the playing of each record. We had a selection of good music, Caruso being one singer whose record we wore out among others. Nowadays people will laugh at our taste, for it leaned heavily toward the classics. I never lost that desire to hear good music, and it led me into the programs that provided it on radio. I will list a few of the radio programs; The Voice of Firestone, The Cities Service Concert, Smoke Dreams, and I wish I could remember the rest. Of course, the University of Iowa's WSUI radio station also had good music.

A word about home lighting without electricity. We first used simple kerosene lamps and it was possible to read by them at very close range. With that aid we did our homework . Later, a company produced a lamp named Aladdin which used a filament heated to incandescence by a circular kerosene wick, like a Coleman camping lamp does today. However, the Aladdin used a larger single filament cage. We purchased one, and after that it was much easier to read and write. Several people could work and read in an area of lighting near one of them. The most effective adjustment of that lamp was just below the setting which deposited soot on the filament. That destroyed its lighting ability until it was adjusted low enough to burn the soot and again be turned up to the optimum point.

"PRIMITIVE" LIVING

I mentioned the house near Iowa City earlier, but I did not say what the living

conditions were like in that house. None of a modern house's necessities were incorporated into most houses at that time. There were no plumbing or electrical facilities. Central heating was an innovation which could not be afforded in the depression by most families even if it was a part of the house. Wood burning cook stove, room sized heating stove in one room only- the living room; a kerosene lamp, a kerosene lantern for outdoor chores, a privy in the yard, and a bedroom chamber constituted the comforts of life. Water was mightily conserved, since it all had to be carried to the house after being hand pumped from the well, which was 300 feet from the house.

Even at Grandfather's house the drinking water had to be carried from the well, located forty feet west of our present drive, to the house , perhaps 200 feet away. If the rainwater cistern went dry it meant that all water had to be carried there also. At our house near I. C. it included carrying all of the water for clothes washing and bathing.

House insulation was unheard of then, and the bed chamber, or pot, often had to be thawed out before it could be emptied. Bedrooms were the same temperature as the outdoors both summer and winter. Lack of insulation was a reason whole house heating was unaffordable. Summertime refrigeration was perhaps found in a corner of the basement. Sometimes critical foods like milk were lowered by rope into the well pit. The first convenience my mother chose after we moved to the house near Cosgrove was an L. P. gas powered refrigerator. What a godsend that was!

What a glorious feeling it was to awake to the first warm morning in the spring, and find the bedroom floor to be comfortable! And no frost on the blankets where one's breath escaped!

The one convenience we did have later was telephone service. I never lived in a modern house until we installed some of those conveniences after we were married. Our house near Cosgrove had a central furnace, hand fired however.

I often thought that house near Iowa City did little more than slow the winter wind a bit. The 1936 winter comes to mind first, because the wind blew strongly almost constantly. It had a standing seam metal roof, and some of the fasteners were broken. That roof clattered and rattled continuously that winter in the high winds. We were fortunate the steel cover wasn't torn off. If that had happened I don't know how we could have found the money to repair it.

ICE AND LOTS OF IT

The Winter of 1936- 1937 also turned out to be memorable. That was the first year I went to high school in Iowa City. We got a heavy accumulation of sleet pellets, perhaps ten inches thick, which was diabolically sealed down with freezing rain. Then it stayed cold for six weeks or so. Livestock and people alike suffered from immobility and injuries. I remember many who experimented with home made ice crampons, mountaineering style, for most could not have afforded them even if they were available. Coaster sled use was especially hazardous. The ice was so hard and smooth that control was impossible. I had a scar on my leg for many years caused by an out of control sled carrying me into a fence.

The difficulty of carrying all of our water down that steep, icy hill made life more miserable still, and that was the chore Esther was helping me to do when she suffered a broken arm from an icy fall.

To satisfy my curiosity and to establish accuracy, on Saturday while driving past our old homesite, I stopped and paced off the distance from that old well location to the site of that old house, and found it to be three hundred feet. Oh yes , the well and house are both gone now, but the well pit and the basement hole are both still there. That may not be far to carry one bucket of water, but it is a very long way to carry every drop one drinks, bathes, or washes clothes with. [Saturday was 2-24- 96.]

HARDENING PROCESSES

During this period we had a French poodle named Poochie. He had some endearing qualities, but I remember him mostly for his bad temper. That house had an entry deck which was equipped with the standard porch crawl space under the floor. That space was relegated to Pooch's bedroom,which he guarded jealously. His guard duties were more seriously attended if

he had a bone of any kind. Any one who dared walk on that deck was savagely barked at, so we kids often rose to the challenge. Perhaps that contributed to his temperament.One day I returned from school to the news that Poochie had bit a Press Citizen salesman and therefore would have to be shot. The salesman, Art Jones, threatened to sue,leaving us no choice in disposing of the dog. Since I claimed him as my dog I also got that responsibility. It was perhaps a bit unfair, since I am sure the dog belonged to the family. I could not question the need, and did not shirk the responsibility.

I should also mention here the conditioning I had in this regard. We were the right distance from Iowa City to be the receivers of a lot of unwanted dogs whose owners did not possess the kind of responsibility owners of anything should possess. Those dogs were a pitiful sight as they waited in vain for their owners to return. Since we did not have extra resources, the solution To our problem was without choice. We were eating corn meal muffins quite often so there certainly was not anything extra to provide food for an average additional dog a week in season and out. Our neighbors Howell and Lizzie Davis had a large number of such dogs, so that provided a barrier of sorts to an increase in their pack, resulting in our getting all of the increase.

ANOTHER LOSS

Several events coincided in 1938, 1939, and 1940. My grandfather had been in fairly good health, but since he used smokeless tobacco, his heart was being assaulted with nicotine caused stresses. We received word on January 13, 1938 from Angela that he had passed away, of heart failure. He was very dear to all of us. In my world it meant the loss of the only other remaining male family member. Gone were the opportinities to learn more from his teaching and example. Another human library burned. How often in the course of human events do we have to reinvent the wheel. The written word is not used nearly often enough to really do a good job of preserving human knowledge. Part of that knowledge loss is due to the limitations of language, but most is due to the failure to put it down. Had history enjoyed the use and convenience of computer word processors much of the loss might have been stemmed. One has to take into account the self taught nature of Grandpa's education. I am certain he was aware of the need to impart his knowledge to others as evidenced by his story telling ability. But nothing at all of what he knew was ever put on paper by him. I know he could write, for he often wrote when teaching me. But that was the extent of it.

My mother's share of grandpa's estate was to be eighty acres of the 120 he owned east of Cosgrove. Angela and Marie got the west forty. Also, by buying Agnes out they got 140 acres of the home place, and Mabel got sixty acres on the west side of the farm. Later Angela and Marie also bought that sixty from Mabel. The west forty east of Cosgrove was purchased by my Mother and I from Angela and Marie later.

OUR FIRST LAND PURCHASE

These events laid the foundation for what happened next, and that played out on another stage. Leo Rohret heard that my mother owned some property in Boulder,Colorado, which indeed she did. It was a six acre tract with a poorly built house on it, and since Leo was about to lose the farm here , he wished to trade his equity for that tract. He owed the Federal land bank 5,000 dollars on the Iowa farm. That amounted to fifty five dollars an acre. If I had been versed on the business aspects of that trade I would never have consented for reasons I will point out. At that time my knowledge of land values was non existent. The farm involved is one half mile south of the I W V road on Greencastle avenue totaling 90 acres. The fences had all collapsed. All of the buildings except the house were in a sorry state. The barn was partly built and the frame was exposed to the weather for two years. The house was six years old but poorly cared for. But worst of all, seventy acres of the ninety was so badly eroded and poorly cared for that it would not even raise grass, let alone corn. The value of the farm with the six year old house would not have been more than that 55 dollars an acre in 1940. The house replaced a house that burned on the same site in 1934. The major fault the new house had was that it was placed on a poorly prepared foundation, and the basement was partly a holdover from the old house. [Leo Rohret was Otto's brother, and though he had a family, he was the

most irresponsible person I ever knew. He totally avoided work, and in his spare time he chased women.]

The deed was done. We bailed Leo Rohret out, giving him six acres of land and a place to live for nothing in return. But the deal turned out well for us. Given a lot of hard work, a bit of money, the right treatment of the land for a change, the addition of the 80 acres from my mother's inheritance, etc., and the value of the twenty-three acres of land near Iowa City, it worked. The money came from the sale of that land to Hal Dane, who owned the farm across the road to the east. I don't remember the dollar amount, but it seems like it might have been four or five thousand . We purchased a lot of fencing materials, had Truman Schrader finish the barn, and in 1942 built the second barn.

A GROVE

A vivid series of memories includes that of harsh winds during Iowa winters. The farmstead is located on a hilltop which exposes it to those harsh winds, so one of the early priorities was to plant a windbreak. Fir and spruce trees were purchased from the Earl Ferris nursery in Hampton, Iowa, which specialized in evergreens. We spaced them in accordance with the nursery and extension service recommendations. That proved to be a huge mistake, although we did not know it until they had grown. The established grid located the trees thirteen to fifteen feet apart in both directions. That number is from memory, and it may be be easy for you who read this to prove me wrong by the use of a tape measure and a few minutes of your time.

Those numbers were fine when the trees were young and small, but as they grew it was more favorable to timber planted for wood and lumber production than windbreak use. There is a row of fir trees parallel to the road that was was mature when I was young and when we acquired the farm. The extreme south end is adorned by an unusually large tree, since it had all of the room and sunshine it needed. I once measured its canopy which proved to be more than sixty feet. The next windbreak I plant will be done with that in mind. The present windbreak will eventually lose all of its lower branches. Those are the ones which produce the very protection one desires. They should have been planted much more sparsely, and even had they been they should have been thinned more as they grew.

I remember our share of problems when we were getting that grove established. I used two fifty gallon barrels on a skid to frequently water those trees when the grove was young, but even then I had to replace many of them for the survival rate was not good. Had I known what I do now, it would have been wise to not have replaced many of them. Thinning them out as they grew would have been excellent culture, but it goes against the grain to cut down beautiful young trees. I think of all the Christmas trees we could have had. That grove must be planted four times as heavily as now needed when mature.

HISTORY LESSONS LEARNED

I consider myself a very amateur student of history, but since I did much of that study on my own it is perhaps not as tainted as formal education might have been. Two conclusions stand out. The first is how lucky Our Land has been that the North won the Civil War. One prime issue was whether individual states had the right to seceed from the union. Had the South won all states would have presumably gained that right. That would have opened the door for 48 individual soveriegn states to be born. Practically there would not have been that many, but even a far less number would have raised the same situation as existed in Europe. We could reasonably have expected them to have tried to settle their differences with constant wars in the intervening years, just as have European nations. The elimination of that prospect gives us the assurance that the Civil War dead were not in vain and eliminating slavery was a bonus, though cetainly necessary.

The second lesson is the realization that the German people have been on the cutting edge of the very best and the very worst of what has happened to Western Civilization in the last 200 years. Brahms, Beethoven, Schubert, Neitche, Luther and many more were at the forefront of Western culture. Scientific advances were developed by the German race to the point where even today a person embarking on scientific endeavor is seriously urged by educators in Science to learn the German language. Many scientific journals are written in

German.

On the other side of the coin are the two World Wars which almost wiped out Western Civilization.

ROMANCE

This brings me to the time when I met my wife Lucille. The boys I went to dances with when single lived in the immediate neighborhood, for we had no phone, and that limited the scope of acquaintances. The dirt road we lived on also had a limiting effect. In addition, wartime restrictions also suppressed my activity to less than one night a week away from the farm. Boots Hofmann, Gerald Neuzil, and Carl Langenberg were the most frequent companions. I remember some desolate times when, for example, the scenery on New Years day was that of snow blowing into travel stopping drifts, and nothing else. It seemed that we had a number of years when every New Years Day was like that. But it was a good feeling, after the livestock were cared for, to be in the warm house while watching the storm rage.

I am sure you wish to know how many girl friends I had and who they were. I dated several girls which some of you know. Betty Taylor, Miriam Meade, and Elaine Hoppe for example. You may know them by their married names; Michel, Toomey, and Langenberg. Also, I dated several U of I students, and several Westlawn Nursing school students. Marie Barber from Des Moines was one. Another was Jackie Hansen. I also dated some junior Farm Bureau girls whose names I have forgotten. They were good people, and some of them had warm personalities, some cool.

That brings us back to that Mercy Hospital School of Nursing student. Her personality was anything but cool. Except for a time after we were engaged, when she couldn't make up her mind who she wanted. I think she should tell you the details. My feelings at the time were dominated by those of insecurity since from my position things looked, at best, to be uncertain.

Boots [Paul] Hofmann knew a nurse from his stay in Mercy Hospital. His illness was variously diagnosed as Bangs disease or unknown. He wanted to give a party for that nurse when she returned from a training tour in another city. The party was to be in the form of a picnic, and when that day came several other girls were also invited. No one gave me a program, so I had no way of knowing which girl belonged to Boots. At any rate, I took a girl named Lucy home that night, and the rest is history. The date of that party was perhaps August , 1944.

It should be noted here that all-out war permeated every thread of the fabric of life. Most nursing students, including Lucille, were enlisted in The nursing corps, and they had uniforms and organization as well. So my wife was once in the army.

Meanwhile, Bernice, Regina, and Esther had all met their future husbands. Leonard Ebel was a staff member of the Navy pre-flight school at the University of Iowa. Marty Golden was also connected with the Navy. Esther was teaching school in Red Wing and Eddie was a native of that town. It was also a period of great adjustment for our mother, and her story of this period is in her memoirs.

ESTABLISHING OUR FUTURE

In the year 1946 my romance with that nurse blossomed into true love. The wedding date was set. On October 3, 1946, two became one, and our future's foundations were established. I think it is unnecessary to dwell on these thoughts, for the living of them established the course our lives took and are more effective than words. I have often felt that many good things have added up to our lifetime, and of course some bad events, over which we had no control, are elements of every lifetime. We are told during the wedding ceremony that they can be expected in our own. So it was.

MORE ABOUT THE FLANNERYS

Ann Seelman Flannery and Tom Flannery had three children. Two are deceased, Marjorie Jontz, and Raymond. Clifford is still living with his second wife Helen in Cedar Falls. We try to see them periodically, and Clifford is wonderful to visit as is his wife. He is now 87 years old and still mentally very sharp. I remember Tom, the father, quite well, for he died in 1941. I also remember our mother commenting negatively about some aspects of Ann's personal life. I will not mention those in print, for I wish to protect the innocent. I value these people

highly and would never do anything to hurt them.

Clifford's children are wonderful and so also the grandchildren. Ray's children are also very dear to us. Paul lives in California, and Karen lives in Cedar Rapids.

At Rita's funeral Marjorie and I enjoyed the only good visit we ever had. Only a year later she passed away. Much was missed between our families, for there was a personality clash between my sisters Bernice, Regina, and her. Her widower Larry lives in Cedar Rapids.

We just received word in early April, 1996 that Clifford has been placed in a nursing home. His eyesight has been failing, but I do not know , till we can inquire, why he can no longer live in his home. (Update;I just learned, 4-29-96) that Clifford became confused and is unable to care for himself, even with Helen's help.

Cosgrove in 1928

It occurred to me that you might be interested in some details of school at Cosgrove. The original school which my mother attended and where she graduated was where I attended first, second, third and fourth grades. There is a picture of that building before it was remodeled in 1941. There were two classrooms on the first floor, and the gymnasium on the second floor. There was a conventional outhouse northwest of the old building. The Kindergarten class I attended was in the northwest room on the first floor of the brick building. Fifth and sixth were in the southwest room. There was a more modern restroom facility separate from the main building for use of the occupants of the brick building. It had steam heat, with flush toilets and running water. It was located about fifty feet south of the main building. There was an additional outhouse below the steep bank perhaps two hundred feet south of the brick building. Some of those facilities were advanced then, but primitive by today's standards.

The 1941 remodeling of the old building was done by St. Peters Church, for they owned it. The basement was enlarged and equipped for school hot lunch. The second floor gym was then lowered to the first floor. Under an arrangement the school continued to rent that building from the church for a number of years. In the early years fire disaster was averted by the grace of God and alert custodians, and in later years by strengthening the fire code for public buildings. New fire codes played a part in the decision to remove the second floor of the old building. I provided labor on a number of days for that undertaking.

I remember one occasion when George Scheetz, Tony Klein, Father Frank Kelly, and myself were finishing the digging by hand of a cubicle in the basement. It was under the front entrance. George allowed that had Father known how much work he was getting into he might not have been so willing to accept the pastorate at Cosgrove. He jokingly replied that had he known he indeed would have asked those so and so's in Davenport a lot of questions.

When I attended Cosgrove all of the streets and playground area were dirt or mud surfaced. The improvement to hard surfacing was an evolutionary process, covering many years of slow progress. It involved streets, playground areas, and access walkways.

The Teacher Who Wore Bedroom Slippers to Class

Millicent F. Carpenter was the special English teacher at U Hi. He was a very heavy man who, it was rumored, could run three miles on tiptoe in his youth when a track student and much lighter. I remember him as an excellent teacher, always covered with duplicator ink, and always in good spirits. The duplicators of the day were not well engineered. He also filled the position of track coach. Because of a very fast classmate, Clarence Hightshoe, we won the track championship in my senior year, the only year I participated. Because of Hightshoe's speed, we won the football letterman's relay, and that is where my track letter came from.

The previous fall, under Paul Brechler's coaching, we won the conference championship in football. The only blemish on our record was a tie with Tipton. That was the only year I played football. It was a different kind of game then, for the same team played the whole forty-eight minutes. Upon going out for the sport, I quickly attained a first team position. I played part of the first game of the season, and after that I played all of every game at left tackle. That made me a football letterman. It was a brief sport career which ended upon my graduation.

How Was it Possible?

Nothing made less sense than the project we proposed to accomplish in 1939. Or was it the way we proposed to do it? Both were so completely intertwined that it was impossible to tell. First we proposed to establish a sizable farming operation with very little in resources. Also, we had completely inadequate equipment, methods, and knowledge to carry it out. We had nothing worthy of the task in the way of equipment to move the growing amount of material to the new farm. We had replaced the old Chevy with a 1932 Chevy in 1938. It was a car, not a truck, but the duties it was to be called on to perform over the next three years were well beyond what a car would reasonably be expected to do. Lacking a truck, the decision was made to buy a chassis of some nature and make a trailer to use in moving our belongings, both household and farm supplies. A very poor choice of chassis was made, an old (about a 1918 year) Maxwell truck stripped of its engine,cab, and box. (Choice of chassis was limited because of the depression). I made a box of sorts out of native oak, and the completed trailer weighed perhaps 2500 pounds empty. Also added by me was a tongue and hitch which adapted the front of the trailer so it could be pulled by that car. The car did not weigh any more than1800 pounds.

That Chevy had 38,000 miles and six years on it when we acquired it . We purchased it from an auto dealer for 200 dollars. Tom Abbot, who owned a share of Kelly Cleaners, was the previous owner. The greatest engineering deficiency cars at that time possessed was the lack of an adequate air cleaner. Considering the dusty roads that were the constant environment, the wonder is that they lasted any length of time at all. Those air cleaners stopped very little dust, and very large particles plus the dust passed directly into the engine. That was the car that successfully moved all of our belongings by pulling that large fully loaded trailer through many trips. The rear axle of that Maxwell, a necessary part of that four wheel trailer, must have weighed at least 500 pounds. The wheels were of wood and the tires had at least thirty inch rims.

Tractor manufacturers had necessarily developed effective air cleaners much earlier, and they did well in dusty environments. It was lack of imagination that caused auto engineers to overlook the need for good air cleaners on cars. The technology had already been developed, so it could have been applied easily. Effective air cleaners were not applied to automobiles until after the war.

WE SUCCEEDED, BUT HOW?

Looking back, the amazing thing is that it worked. We did get all material moved, and the car did serve as a family car as well. The challenges of our mud road had to be met too. All of our plans and everything we did should have failed. The fact that they succeeded had to be due to many prayers. That was the only thing we had going for us other than much hard work.

One of the first tools needed for farming was a team of horses. The horse farming era was almost over, but it was still necessary in that transition period to have both horses and tractor. Gilbert Haman lived on the farm now occupied by Bill Ball. He had a business of raising and breaking horses, and scheduled an auction to sell teams which he raised and broke to work. We purchased a team of Belgians at that sale. They were big as Belgians are, at my eye level at shoulder, and I named them Judy and Julie. They were not a perfect match, for one was almost perfect but the other one was lighter and not as good in every way. But they worked reasonably well together. The first work I did with them was to plant corn. They proved to be a reliable power source, and somewhat dangerous as all horses are, but doing everything asked of them. Over the years, they nearly ran away several times, but it always occurred when something badly scared them.

At first we did not own a set of harness. We are in debt to Burl Maxie, who loaned a set to us to get that first Cosgrove year corn picked, and by the next field work season we had bought our own new set.

Once I was picking corn when the neighboring kids, though a long way off, made enough noise to scare the horses into a run before I caught the wagon and stopped them. On another occasion I was waiting my turn with a load of oats bundles at the grain separator when we were threshing at John O'brien's place, north of our place on the IWV. I am sure the horses were bored and hoping something would happen, when a tire on the bundle wagon blew

out, terrifying them into an immediate gallop. Fortunately I had been standing at a spot where I could quickly intercept them by jumping in front of them and pulling down on their bridles to stop them. That lucky interception avoided certain disaster. They tried to maneuver around me as I got in front of them. Tractor operation is dangerous, but horses also injured and killed many .

"SIXTY ACRES" , THE BORING STORY OF THE HARVEST

I gave that team credit for two things; they caused me to "lose my religion" but also to whet my corn harvesting skills to the point af being able to pick 120 bushels of corn a day. They were almost always far ahead of me, and I tied them by the lines back so tightly that it seemed they were often pulling the wagon with the lines. It was necessary to pick corn rapidly just to almost keep up. That harvesting ability was not unusual, but it was done in addition to doing chores night and morning and shovelling that corn by hand into the crib. It meant being in the field and ready to go as soon as it was light enough. The last ear was picked just before dark.

My most brilliant memory of that job was the physical punishment involved. Upon waking in the morning the first duty was exercising hands and arms to restore feeling in them, for they would be "asleep" all the way to my neck. I had not heard of "carpel tunnel" involving arms and shoulders, but that side effect of corn harvest certainly was. The condition persisted till recovery after the last of the harvest was completed, some eight weeks or more after starting the job. It was possible to pick twelve rows a day, two rows at a time. Three trips across a forty acre field made a load, ten rows an acre, ten bushels per row. That computes to more than eight weeks. My corn acres were always in the vicinity of about sixty acres.

It would not be possible to efficiently harvest a modern field by hand, for heavily planted drilled corn leaves no place between stalks to throw the corn to the wagon. Because of the need to cross cultivate the corn for weed control, the fields were check rowed while planting. One did not have to look for a place to throw the corn. It allowed one to establish a pattern for movement. We knew about "motion studies" long before the term was invented. Indeed it was necessary to pay close attention to that detail, for the needed thousands of motions per day made it necessary to save every fraction of a second. One hundred twenty bushels a day required the picking of an average of twelve thousand ears. Each ear required the breaking of a very strong ear shank. Try it sometime. The repeated shock of that effort was the reason for all the above mentioned pain. Joints, muscles, tendons, nerves, all took a beating.

The husking wagon had several features to facilitate hand corn harvest. The position of the wagon in the field was to the right of the picker. The right side of the wagon had an extended side, called the bang or bank board which was twice as high as the left side. That made it easy for the flow of ears from the person picking to go into the wagon box with few misses. The rear endgate of the wagon box was called the scoopboard. It was hinged and coupled in an ingenious way which provided, when lowered, an excellent surface to shovel the corn into the crib without interruption. Endgate rods locked it in the closed position, and when opened they provided support at the right angle, nearly flat. The rods were perhaps twenty-four inches long. In the open position the verticle rear surface of the wagon box, the lower section of the scoop board, and the rods formed the removable leg of the triangle that gave support to the scoopboard. I am certain that Ray Rohret made many of those rods and associated hardware to farmers' specifications, and also the ones on my wagon.

Most husking wagon boxes were thirty-eight inches wide, the standard wagon bolster width. I felt that one five feet wide, built with the floor above the bolster stakes, would at once provide more capacity and make shovelling the load easier. It also made the load some eight inches higher, a definite advantage when shovelling into a high crib. The larger capacity was no problem, for the running gear, made from an old car chassis, allowed the horses to pull the heavier load much easier than possible on a steel wheeled gear. To make it possible for the team to hold the load back, I rigged one rear wheel brake to be applied at will when going downhill. It also was possible to use that brake at times to slow the horses while picking corn. A tire chain on that wheel made it an effective tool. The car chassis I used was made from a 1934 Ford. A man named Mr. McGinnis had a welding shop on the Coralville strip just west of

the now Riley law firm building. He built that wagon, for not many companies were building rubber tired wagons at that time. Jerry builders were the chief source, and the product had flaws, especially in steering geometry with the add on tongue. John now has that wagon and is using it as a utility tool with a small box. That wagon and original box, not the one John is using, was the forerunner to the modern so-called barge box. Equipment suppliers soon filled the need by manufacturing and marketing them. No one came to my farm on their behalf to observe or take notes for the following reason. It is obvious that this development was being advanced separately by other people in many places. That often happens when there is a need that many recognize. However, as methods and needs changed, the barge box in turn gave way to the now commonly used gravity wagon. Through our American history much development of new machinery and methods took place in the above fashion. The scoop shovel gave way to the grain elevator, and ear corn harvest gave way to shelled corn combining.

In 1945 we had so much rain that the Iowa river valley had a major flood. The above mentioned wagon with its design problems needed repair, so I returned it to the man who built it for that work. I remember reading news reports that the river was rising and would soon reach near record levels, so my concern led me to get that wagon, already repaired, and bring it home. It was haymaking time and I used that same wagon to carry the hayrack . True to predictions the river did reach near record levels, and Mr. Mc Ginnis' welding shop was flooded. I was therefore fortunate to have the wagon at home for haymaking use.

I do remember which labor saving method came to my operation first, a grain elevator. A corn picker closely followed the elevator. Both were obtained after we were married. [At about this time it evolved from My to Our]. The transition was not accompanied by new paint and fancy machinery. I purchased a worn out wood frame elevator from a neighbor. The storage facility being filled was a one thousand bushel single corn crib which I had built, and was about fifty feet north of the present elevator crib at the west place. That elevator had a speed jack and tumbling rod connecting it to the elevator. The speed jack was coupled to a power source, in this case that F-12 tractor, by belt. The speed jack was a gear reduction device to reduce the high speed of the belt drive to a slow fifty to seventy revolutions per minute speed needed by the elevator, and was staked to the ground next to the elevator. The tumbling rod was joined to the elevator by two large universal joints, about five inches in diameter. Usually the ends of the tumbling rod were square as were the receivers in the universal joints. But one of the ends of this partcular rod was round as was the universal joint receiver and accomodated a shear bolt. The purpose of the shear bolt was to protect the equipment if something jammed.

NEAR DISASTER

One day I was using that elevator to unload corn into said crib. The wind was strong, and I was wearing a jacket which had worn out button holes. It would not stay buttoned in the wind. I had finished unloading the corn into the elevator and was on the ground picking up some ears that had spilled. One of those button holes found that shear bolt, and before I could do anything to prevent it I was lying on my back with my clothing wrapped around that tumbling rod. Two fortunate things occurred, however. I was on my back in such a position that I could use my back strength to stop the elevator, and stop the elevator I did by forcing the drive belt to slip, the second bit of fortune. Several uncomfortable minutes passed in this stalemated situation when finally the drive belt slipped off the drive pulley. I remember trying to reach my scoop shovel which lay nearby, my intention being to encourage the drive belt off that pulley. However, every move I made was countermoved by that shaft, which tightened its hold enough more to prevent my doing so. When I disentangled myself I found that I had not been undressed, but every bit of my clothing was shredded. I had a scar about my waist for years where my leather belt had been tightened before it was broken. That is why power -take off as compared to belt drive accidents are so deadly, for there is no belt in that power train which can slip.

I recall another accident which occurred while filling that same crib. I was adjusting the elevator delivery spout from a position on a ladder when a wire supporting that spout broke, allowing me to fall forward to the ground. Fortunately I was not injured and that must have been due to my being in good condition plus God's care.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

That building was inadequate in design and storage capacity. The need for more storage was painfully evident for a long time. We stored much corn in temporary picket cribs, which are the same thing as snow fencing but placed in a circle. Corn would keep well stored through the winter, but would rot as soon as warm weather came. Each circle could hold 250 bushels of ear corn so a stack three high held about 750 bushels. I had a storage facility made of poles and lined with picket fencing with a wood floor, made in about 1942. The poles were spaced eight feet apart and in two rows 32 feet long, so that temporary storage arrangement held about 1,000 bushels. Its weather limitation was the same as round picket storage. It was located where the elevator crib is today.

We took steps in 1952 to build the permanent storage facility which is now there. Shelled corn storage had not yet become established. Few had the equipment and drying ability which shelled corn required. The ear corn storage building served us well for about eighteen years at which time we built the first steel bin.The elevator crib worked well for feeding livestock. I hired a person with shelling equipment to shell 1,000 bushels at a time as that was the capacity of one of the overhead bins in that building. Also, since I had no drying equipment it was important to feed that shelled corn before it spoiled if it was wet. That was no worry after about the first of July, since the ear corn was usually dried out by then.

The construction of that building was over a period of several years. We filled it with that old wood elevator the first year before it even had a roof, locating the delivery end of the elevator over the top of the eaves of the unfinished building. After corn harvest I sheathed the building and shingled it. At one point I had to wait for ice from an ice storm to melt off the sheathing before I could proceed, it being late November. I finished the shingling of that roof before winter really set in. The first roof was a cedar shingle one. The elevator leg and the cupuloa was added by myself before the next harvest. I obtained the leg from Kelly implement, a Meyer elevator made in Morton, Illinois. I powered it with the first multiple horsepower electric motor the farm could boast. It was a Craftsman motor, three horsepower, repulsion induction type, the only type then available for heavy duty starting applications. I obtained it through Sears catalog service, having to re-order it several times , for wartime shortages were still being felt. At this writing it is still in service. It failed and was replaced in 1997.

There were no overhead bins in the elevator crib at first . About two years after the initial construction we added them. I obtained the cottonwood three inch by twelve inch "stringers" or floor joists from Pete Eckrich at his suggestion, since the toughness of cottonwood was ideally suited for the heavy loads that a full bin of grain places on the floor. Peter ran a sawmill and knew much about the strength of woods. That proved to be all Peter said for the deflection of the floor when loaded is minimal and there is no permanent sag. After doing all of the work without such labor saving equipment these advances made it a joy to handle the harvest, a wellspring which still bouys me as I work with those aids.

OUR FIRST LAND PURCHASE
THE SECOND TIME AROUND FOR ME

At about this same time we purchased the ninety acre farm from my mother on contract. The price was $350 per acre. I never really did figure that one out, but of course it does not matter. Did I buy that place twice?

A word here about the financial end of buying land. We unwisely engaged the services of a lawyer to do our tax work and give us financial advice, and that was true for most of our lives. Many years ago we had Scott Swisher do our tax work, and later when he was jailed for tax evasion one of his associates did the work for a short time. Then we had Dan Boyle do our tax work for many years. Lawyers do no more than act as collectors for the Internal Revenue service. Their clients pay them to do this. My dissatisfaction with the situation did not manifest itself until about ten years ago when we engaged the services of Mike Latta, Washington, Iowa, a certified public accountant . The result of my delay in doing that was borrowing money at the bank to pay our income tax, and about the time I got that note paid off, another year came around. CP A services are not magic, but by taking advantage of all

allowable deductions it was possible to breathe a little easier, and there was a little more money available to apply to mortgage principal . CPA's attend seminars on tax laws and are experts in that field wheras lawyers do not have time or expertise relating to latest tax law. I now consider lawyers doing tax work as their practicing legal fraud.

We followed Art and Coleen's advice in locating Mike Latta. Mike has been very helpful. The necessity to operate on pre- 1947 commodity prices while paying 1996 operating expenses is proving to be more than most young farmers can accomplish. [The average age of farmers today is near to retirement age].

I may have said so earlier but I will say it again- the reason for this sorry state of affairs is the fact that no one in the U. S. ever went hungry for lack of food. Lack of money, yes, but never for lack of food. Food has become unimportant because of that fact. And of course it goes without saying that food comes from the supermarket, not from farms.

A good friend

Today, March 26, 1996 , we buried Lowell Zimmerman. A shock it was, almost without warning, from his being vital and active one day to a memory the next. The more we experience life the more often we learn that life is very fragile even if the world tries to make all of us forget that. I had meant to visit him one day this winter and now it is too late. I regret not having met them in Texas this winter. They both wanted us to come and no one else did.

BLESSED WITH A LARGE FAMILY

Looking back on the period of time when our children were born and grew up leaves me with the sense that it was a compressed time, when much happened quickly. Unspeakable joy and unspeakable tragedy. The unspeakable joy was in having perfect children entrusted to us. The first tragedy is well known to all of us, Allan's death. The second was that our children grew up too fast for us parents to fully enjoy. The daily care was burdensome for Mother and I but the memories of that time have a rich timbre which endures.

As the family grew in numbers so did the farming operation. Here is a good place to tell a humorous story that defines the compression quite well. We tried to provide a coaster wagon to all of our children, since it was both a teaching tool and a toy. One day said wagon was left on the drive where it was damaged by the family car being backed over it on one of the many trips that raising a family requires. I recall spending perhaps two or three hours making the necessary repairs to place said wagon back into service. The wagon was immediately used by several of the children no doubt, and on the very next trip the family car made, the location of that newly repaired wagon in harm's way caused it to be disabled again, this time more seriously. There was not much humor in this event then. Time and perspective is necessary to bring it out. Oh yes, I DID repair that wagon again.

If memory serves me well the family car then was a 1951 Chevy station wagon, obtained used in 1953. That must have been a good car, for it served in that capacity until about 1963, when we got a 1961 Ford wagon. My attention turned toward cars at this point because I remember that Chevy as the car which ran over that coaster wagon.

BARN REMODELLING

Time and the unreliability of one's memory muddies events and the when of their happenings. I think it was about 1954 or 1955 when we remodelled the barn which is nearest the house and converted its use from horse stalls to hog farrowing facility. John Schintler was hired to help accomplish the job. Horses had permanently left the farm, so it was time to build facilities for the need we had. We used the conversion to farrow pigs for many years.

RAISING THE ROOF

Our small house and the arrival of several new family members made it necessary to make plans to enlarge our living space. Again I am uncertain of the date but I believe it was about 1956 when we added the space on the second floor of the existing house. We hired John Schintler again to help us with that project. I remember going to an auction at a lumber yard in Joetown in a heavy snowstorm to buy the finish wood we used in that project. The yard owner was Orval Yoder's father. The full house dormer we added only required the removal of

half of the roof. It was a bit more involved than that, for the original roof featured truncated gable ends They had to be removed and full gable ends added. The overall result was satisfactory, but the addition, though insulated, was hard to heat. We should have added a gas wall heater.

HARDBALL POLITICS

The blessings of a large family soon impressed on me the duty to influence events in church, school, and community, and our family being only one of many postwar"Baby Boomers", the space pressure on the Cosgrove Consolidated School soon made the need to build evident. Therefore, in 1951 or thereabouts I realized that to do my community duty I should run for the school board. One unfortunate event occurred in that respect. A malcontent, Joe Blow, who was already on the board approached me a number of times and repeatedly urged me to run against an incumbent board member who he said was blocking the needed school building project. Hindsight is always better than foresight, but much grief could have been avoided had I ignored that improvident source of information. Inexperience again served me poorly, for lacking that was the cause of my making this mistake. But as before, hard work and staying the course brought good results from chaos. Enemies made by this move were converted to friends, and much was learned about life and human nature.

I did run against that incumbent and won, we did successfully pass a $125,000 bond issue, and we did build the school addition that was needed. I also lost the friendship of the malcontent that originally influenced me to run for that office. He clearly wanted me to be his yes man and I was not agreeable to that stipulation. The story does not end there.Several close neighbors were temporarily alienated during the " warfare" that existed before, during, and after that building project. My personal opinion is that the malcontent board member earlier mentioned caused most of the problems as they unfolded, and gave those problems a boost when they "needed it". Many of those problems were not helped by my inexperience. The community survived and was improved through it all and some of us, I hope, were enriched, a kind word for the experience that was gained. I served two consecutive terms on the school board at that time. The second term was won with opposition, and I will allow you to guess who pulled the necessary strings to get that man to run. His defeat, [the candidate] so severely impacted on his mien and personality that he sold his farm and moved from the community. I fervently hope it was not due to anything I personally did, for I held no ill will toward him.

Looking back, two terms-six years- seems such a short time to spend on a board, but so much and so many events were compressed into that time that it was indeed anything but short. I was glad to be rid of it.

The name of the architect for the school addition was Norman Keller from Davenport, the general contractor was Herbert Frantz from Iowa City, the mechanical contractor was from New London, and the electrical contractor was from Sharon or Kalona named Miller. Only a few mistakes in design or construction were made. The most serious was the flat roof on the classroom addition. Only recently has the general public been sufficiently aroused to preclude that design from new construction. They will no longer allow anyone to listen to architects' bad advice.

TRANSPORTATION , TAXI SERVICE, ET AL

When Barb reached high school age we felt it important for the children to receive a Catholic education, so the decision was made to send her to Regina High School in Iowa City. Father Harry Ryan was the pastor of Cosgrove, and he made the decision to send a daily bus from the Cosgrove Parish to that school, since several other parishoners expressed the desire to do the same for their children. That bus service endured for several years, but eventually it was discontinued. All of the children through Mary received four years of education at Regina. Coleen attended Regina two years and finished at Clear Creek.

We were sorry to discontinue the Regina education for the younger children, but sending that many became a financial burden in several ways. Tuition kept rising and there were other costs. Upon termination of the St. Peters bus service it immediately became necessary to purchase another car for to not do so would have required two more trips for us to make daily . It was necessary to have a car at home during the day for personal and business

use. At one time we owned three vehicles and I think for a short time we owned four. Several of the children had jobs and even with that many vehicles it became difficult to get every one where and when they had to be. Fuel costs, insurance costs, upkeep, tires, etc. were sizable to say the least. We had several cars during that time with nearly two hundred thousand miles on each. That size fleet soon teaches one which vehicles are the most economical to own.

PEOPLE WHO STAFF SCHOOLS

School buildings are important only to provide space for learning. School boards are also responsible for furnishing and providing teachers and supervisory leadership. Cosgrove was blessed for many years with teachers provided by the Sisters of Humility, Ottumwa, Iowa. They provided quality teachers and a principal to the school district at a very low cost. The nuns were for them ost part dedicated to their profession and truly interested in the welfare of the children. Sister Eulalia epitomized all that a principal should be, and served at Cosgrove for many years. She was the principal when I was a student there, and she was there before and after that. She even scheduled the hack routes, and today many districts have a transportation director to do just that and nothing else.

The time when I was a board member coincided with the drive by the state education department to place lay teachers in all of Iowa's public schools. That meant great changes for Cosgrove, Parnell, and the Melrose school district who had nun teachers provided by the Humility order. The added stress that issue placed on school board members can be imagined, especially when one remembers the stress just undergone by the same board that shepherded the first building program at Cosgrove since the twenties. I maintain that national politics is tame compared to school board politics. Personal feeling runs higher when the welfare and education of children is the entire issue. Periods of change can be especially trying for a board of education. I served on the Cosgrove board from 1952 to 1958.

MORE ON EDUCATION

Following the removal of the nuns, there was more than one vacuum to be filled. A pipeline source of teachers was non-existent. Also, the board had no experience in dealing with availability of teachers. I remember the first group we interviewed,perhaps five in number, all from the same two year school in Cedar Rapids. At least one could barely write a cogent application letter because of poor spelling and grammer skills. The interview was held in June or July during a violent thunderstorm. The power was interrupted, and we interviewed several of them in the dark. Pretty good symbolism!

We had a series of good, bad, and indifferent superintendents before, during, and after my board tenure. Mr. Hogan was an excellent man who was employed at Cosgrove a number of years long before I was on the board. He had since been employed elsewhere, and he applied for a simple high school teaching position at one of the first Board meetings I attended. We hired him for the position, but a very short time later he passed away, before the school year had begun. Richard Whalen was superintendent at first, but building programs withstanding, the political fallout cost him his job. Wayne Peters came on the scene at about that time. He was an excellent administrator and a fair teacher. Wayne was impulsive and that got him into trouble, but he survived quite well all things considered. He was possibly the best superintendent Cosgrove had administratively. I cannot remember what year he left Cosgrove to be superintendent at Coralville. After several years tenure there he accepted a position at Superior, Wisconsin and later at Lowell Massachussets. We have continued our friendship with the Peters family to now.

MORE STATE PRESSURE

At about this same time the Iowa legislature became concerned about equal education opportunity for each child resident. They began by establishing more stringent requirements for every school district. Then class and school size were looked at very closely, with an eye toward efficiency, tax burden, and class size as pertaining to individual competition. Small districts were encouraged to explore merger possibilities with neighboring districts. Incentives were installed in state code, one of them being forced mergers by the legislature, or worse yet by the Dept. of Public Instruction.

So it was that several of us formed a merger committee to explore the merger of Cosgrove,

Oxford, Tiffin, the east part of Union Township, and Madison township. Earlis Rohret and I spearheaded the project. We encountered various stages of enthusiasm and that is an understatement. It is a tribute to the favor average people of Iowa place on education that the proposed merger did take place.

CLEAR CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

We lost only the east end of Union Township to Iowa City, the rest of the area having unified and formed Clear Creek Community Schools. The new district faced many problems. Lack of space was pressing for solution, so the new board placed a proposal before the voters to add on to all three centers. It was offered by residents of Oxford and failed. It was very poorly thought out, for it provided for additions to all three high schools. That was the only issue that failed in the Cosgrove precinct. The next several issues located the high school at various sites, one of them on donated land by James Meade. They all failed, for Tiffin and Oxford were in no mood to vote the high school to the other town. Finally in desperation another petition to build the high school in Tiffin was placed before the voters. Surprisingly it passed when fatigue was displayed by the Oxford voters, the other districts doing their duty. Luckily the Oxford voters failed to turn out.

ILL GOTTEN GAINS AND COMPULSIVE GAMBLING

But the end was not yet. Some Oxford die hards filed suit in district court to block the bond issue. That group was led by Joe Kinney, who owned most of the shares in the Oxford bank and thereby controlled several inhabitants.

Joe Kinney's money originated from his illegal slot machines which operated thruout the county and beyond. A well oiled machine disseminated from the local sheriff's office properly timed warnings when state agents conducted raids intended to remove the slots. Several of those illegal machines were in the Cosgrove store, then operated by Lee Schneider.

I must include a story here about compulsive gambling. When I was still in high school and just after we obtained the ninety acre farm, a neighbor whom I shall call Jon Smith needed help to care for some livestock. My mother had left me at the farm to begin making order from that chaos on this particular day. After the work with this neighbor's livestock was done, I was of course asked to stay for dinner. With five small children and three adults, the only thing on that table was cooked mulberries, they being in season at the time.

The significance of that meal was not lost on me. Jon had a contract with the Cosgrove school district for a "hack route", and it was his responsibility to haul certain children to and from school at the proper times. This was done with horses pulling a hack in bad weather, and in good weather by Jon's family car, a model A Ford. [The car option required more than one trip.] Jon established the habit of going to the store after his morning route duties were accomplished, and trying his fortunes on the nickel slot machine. That usually occupied the whole day, and when it was time to take the children home he would do that, after which his work at home was then" done". He was observed on many occasions and by many people to exit the store, saying he would never play them again, whereupon he would proceed to cross the street, slow down, make a U turn, go back into the store and resume his quest for that elusive jackpot. He had too much invested to chance some one else getting it. Ever since that meal of mulberries I have been prejudiced about the business of gaming. More could and should be said about it but my personal view is unalterable.

Joe Kinney's name was of course not on the committee listed who filed the suit blocking the high school construction. Much delay occurred, and the issue was only resolved by the legislature passing a special enabling act. By that time inflation had eaten into the bond issue's capability, so an additional issue had to be voted to scrounge enough money to build the school. The shortage was lasting, forcing the school board to substitute a good central heating system with the counterfeit one that was installed, among other cuts. That deficient heating system alone was responsible for untold thousands of dollars in extra costs of operation over the years it was tolerated. Honeywell exacted $5,000 a year for a maintenance contract that made it barely and unsatisfactorily operable. When that system was replaced with a central boiler there was nothing of the original system that was even salvagable.

Incredible inefficiency was built into that system. When it was turned on in the fall, it

operated at top capacity continuously. When thermostats were satisfied, automatic system doors were opened which dumped all of the heat generated by the furnaces to the outside. How can a company like Honeywell get away with such fraud? So much for Honeywell gas fired rooftop heating units. And so much for Joe Kinney's ill-gotten fortune. It is perhaps neither here nor there, but inefficient small school districts would never have tolerated such gross nonperformance. What would they have done? They who were board members would have 'camped on Honeywell's doorstep'.

GOODBYE FOREVER TO FLAT ROOFS

After the Cosgrove building was sold to the Cosgrove Institute, I was personally involved in correcting the flat roof problem on that building. That was poetic justice, since I was on the board when the building was built. A new technology has been developed to solve the problem, and it does so quite neatly. A low pitch metal roof was installed which employs the use of on-site machine crimping of standing seam joints between the steel roof panels. The resulting roof has about four feet of pitch in sixty-five feet of run, in this case the pitch being all in one direction. Many engineering problems were skirted in this way. The labor input was intensive, for I remember counting at least four hundred 2x4 support studs for that roof, each individually measured and cut. There was a lot of volunteer labor donated for the project. Many people in the community who had institute membership did it, with supervision by a Mennonite contractor from Kalona. I feel comfortable in saying it is no longer necessary to build flat roofs. That is so especially from the economic standpoint, for the small increase in cost if any is easily offset by increased service life, lower maintenance cost, and leak free building space. The original cost may even be lower. Flat roofs are perpetually leaking, need continuous maintenance, and are uneconomic to do so. I always felt that flat roof repair consisted mostly in rearranging the leaks. I am guessing the date, and was it 1990 when the institute was formed?

A MEMORABLE TRIP

When the Peters family moved to Superior,Wisconsin in the dead of winter we took Charlie, their young son and a load of furniture to that place in a borrowed truck and trailer. Wayne borrowed a trailer from a teacher friend and a truck from Bob Burns. I think the year was 1965, a year when there was a record snowpack on the upper Mississippi watershed. That spring saw a record flood on the upper river as a result. On the way to Superior we noted the blue color of the ice, and ice it was, in the ravines bordering the highway. The blue color was caused by the great depth of the ice. Sleet and then rain from repeated storms had built the ice to depths seldom seen before.

On the way home our attention was absorbed by another problem. The worst snowstorm of that record winter had just started as we began the trip home with that truck and trailer. It was snowing hard as we left Superior,which then turned to sleet, which then turned into freezing rain. We were on the road continuously for thirty hours in some of the worst driving conditions I ever encountered. At about the Iowa-Minnesota line we were on glare ice in freezing rain for what seemed an eternity. Once, when climbing a very long grade which was covered with ice, at about two o'clock at night, we approached the crest where a semi truck was stalled. Just as we were about to pass that stalled truck a car came from the other direction which made it necessary to stop. Of course the only way we could again start was to back to the foot of that very long hill and try again. On glare ice, in freeezing rain, and In pitch dark to the rear of our truck and trailer, I somehow managed to do it. That trick must have taken at least a half hour, but we were not doing anything else at the time. The tandem axles of that trailer stabililzed it a bit, but any mistake under those conditions would have meant being stranded . The next attempt was successful, and that truck driver gave us a cheery honk and flashing of lights as we passed him. I like to think of him telling his children about the event.

An event which lengthened the trip and showed lack of judgment was my dear wife's insistence that we stop at the Red Wing pottery factory on the way past. It was perhaps four in the afternoon, so we pulled into the empty parking lot and promptly slid sideways, truck and trailer, nearly the full length of the lot, which was covered with glare ice. This incident was included in the above mentioned thirty hours. When we arrived home the storm was over and

the sky was clear. In fact, home in Iowa missed most of the storm. I never appreciated getting home more. Lucy, do you have a pottery memento of that trip?

I just thought of another bit of that trip's history. The Bob Burns truck, unknown to me, needed a brake lining job. The linings were spent before we started home. I did not discover the need until we were on the road at Superior in that snow storm. We ruined the brake drums on that trip home, to Bob's and my chagrin. It was fortunate that they did not fail completely, as it would have been most awkward and dangerous. The weather was enough inconvenience to deal with. The Lord took care of us again.

THE DRYEST WEATHER

Once, in the dry spring of 1957, a neighbor had forty acres of alfalfa sod which had been trampled by cattle when wet. He had a new Farmall Super M tractor and a three bottom pull type plow. He also had a Super C Farmall with a mounted plow. When he tried to plow that field it had turned dry and very hard. His big tractor could only spin its wheels. The small tractor with the mounted plow had trouble penetrating the hard ground. When it did it stalled the tractor. He asked me to try to plow that field. The W D 45 A C Tractor not only did so, but did it with flair. I did not have any weights on the front of the tractor, and that would have made it operate more smoothly, but they were not necessary to do the job. Sometimes the front end would lift clear of the ground by more than two feet, but continued operation was workable and advisable. No stalling or delay of any kind was experienced. When Jack Hoffmann was done trying to disk that field the new tires on the Super M were badly scuffed and worn with a strongly aged look. Those clods were too hard for that fairly heavy tractor to crush .

The years 1955, 1956, and 1957 were some of the dryest in Iowa history. That was not true statewide, but it certainly was on the Seelman farm. We missed most of the rains, and on a given day we might observe thundershowers to the south at Kalona, or to the north near Cedar Rapids. The climax of that selective situation occurred in July or August of 1957, a day I will not forget. Our corn crop was trying to tassel while not much more than waist high, already too late, when a heavy thunderstorm approached from the northwest. We observed the rain so hard north of the IWV road that it was washing oats straw many feet wide down the waterways of Jack Hoffmann's oat field. Old Woman's Creek went out of its banks. Another neighbor, Pat Rohret, had a field of corn downstream from our land, adjacent to said creek. The out- of- its - banks creek irrigated half of that corn field which consequently yielded one hundred bushels an acre. The other half, receiving no rain, had no ears on it. Nor did we receive any rain on our land. Those three years set back my operation for years, since our crop production was far below average. Never again did I see such variability in so short a distance. I was forced to buy most of the corn for feeding my livestock in those years. The axiom about one bad year needing three good ones to catch up came into play in a forceful personal way at that time. The forceful part of the equation came about because of those three drouth years back to back. The strange part of that history was the state of Iowa being in the worst of that drought in 1958, a year when I had above average crops and rainfall even compared to normal years.

A NEW FARM ORGANIZATION

Those tough years of weather caused hard times for farmers, and many farmers suffered acutely. It was a fertile time for unrest, since many farmers could not pay their bills and remain solvent. A farmer in northern Missouri, Oren Staley, was instrumental in forming a new farm organization with its stated purpose being that of collective bargaining by farmers for farm production with the processors and brokers of farm commmodities. The idea was not new, for congressmen saw the need for just that tool in 1919, when a law was passed to set up the legal machinery. The name of it was The Capper Volstead Act. More work was done in the next several years than had ever been done towards farmers organizing to that end. There were several meetings in Johnson County, and I immediately saw the logic of the effort. I became involved to the point of being the chairman of the county for several years. Even though the effort failed in accomplishing its stated end, there was much benefit to farmers, for the buyers of farm commodities and the political sector at once mellowed their positions to be more

Looking back, I think the most crucial reason for our failure was in not recognizing the jealousy which all of the vested interests had of their entrenched position. They recognized the need to rally all their resources to defeat the NFO movement. The abundant inexperience farmers had in setting up their program of action provided the opposition with plenty of ammunition. This they used most skilfully to turn farmer against farmer, and the farm organizations already in existence, feeling threatened by the new movement, were dupes of the powerful vested interests which had everything to gain to defeat collective bargaining by farmers. Recent events, the washing out of most young farmers, and the elimination of all farm programs demonstrates the wisdom and need of that attempt which we farmers made. In farmers facing the future today without any safety net at all, collective bargaining should have already been in place. Big business interests, representing the largest accumulation of capital in the world, finally got full control of federal farm programs, convincing Congress to abolish all price supports after seven years. In a real sense, the defeat of the collective bargaining movement has deprived farmers of the right to do so. The next attempt will be a very tough hill to climb.

The approach of farmers' average age towards retirement age of 65 makes the need for the right to use the collective bargaining tools much more urgent for those who must take up the job of feeding the world. Forget the large corporate entities for the task, for they know there is no money in it unless they can control production and prices beyond what the public will tolerate.

ANOTHER HILL TO CLIMB

Apologies for overworking the phrase, but it fits the need. We depended on hog production for much of our income and in the dry years when we had to buy corn to feed hogs, the feeding margin is what we had to live on, and we no more than got out of the drought when we were faced with another crisis. Our neighbor Pierce, or Percy Eckrich gave us the news that his herd had hog cholera. In the 1920's and 30's cholera devastated hog producing areas. In the fortys and fiftys it had been controlled with virus and serum, which gave the animals cholera and then immunized them by giving them serum, a blood derivative from hogs which had developed immunity. That in turn gave the receiving animal immunity, but also preserved a pool of infection in the whole region by use of live virus. Consequently, live virus had only shortly prior to the time in question been outlawed, with an attenuated virus having taken its place.

Upon hearing the news from the neighbor I vaccinated our herd with the attenuated virus, thinking that they would be protected, and they probably would have been except for the fact they must have already been exposed. In other words, the attenuated virus needed time which did not exist for my herd to develop immunity. Consequently, my herd developed cholera during an NFO holding action, a time when members held hogs off the market in an attempt to force packers to bargain for contracts. I was forced to revaccinate with serum and also to market some of the herd to cut financial loss, for infected animals died. I am sure this necessity caused some people to take unnecessary advantage and sell also, to get a higher price. It was almost two more years after this outbreak before I could raise baby pigs again. There was no way to establish immunity for those baby pigs and they simply died.

A few short years after that cholera crisis two more developed with almost as much impact. The first was the onset of another infectious disease in our herd called eresipilis. It was not as devastating as cholera, but still had a mighty impact on profits. It too struck mature butcher hogs the hardest, killing a number of them. The proper use of veterinary medicine finally controlled it.

Still another infectious disease in our swine herd caused another hard blow to our operation. After all this time it blurs a bit, but my recollection is that this disease followed the other mentioned ones. I may have to do some research to even recall the name of this one. It was a reproductive disease, causing pigs to be stillborn and not fully developed. After ten minutes of reflection I remember the name , leptospirosis. Again, following much loss of income we were able to control it with vaccine. That recollection may be incorrect, but I think that is how we did it.

A near disaster,and one that recurred often, was the collapse of hog prices in 1955.

Fallout from that one caused a number of our friends to temporarily work at another job. Amana Refrigeration Corporation was the choice of several who then pooled rides. I remember selling 120 hogs one day for 2500 dollars. That was at $12 per hundred pounds, and a month or less later they sank to about $10. Prior to that collapse , corn prices collapsed to levels low enough to cause farmers to raise more livestock to offset low grain prices. That relationship repeated itself many times in my farming career.

Then, as before and since, farm suppliers approached the US Congress for redress, because farmers had stopped buying inputs and farm capital investments, such as farm machinery. The cycle was then started again. The present high grain prices were a factor in causing Congress to tail off farm programs during the next seven years. The stage will then be set for a rerun of farm commodity price collapse and re-establishment of farm programs.

In 1987 it was not farmers who pressed Congress for the PIK program-it was the suppliers . Then, as at other times in the last thirty years, farm programs were written to aid suppliers and consumers much more than farmers. The transportation industry is more diverse than are the large grain exporters, and that sector will be hurt more. But neither will suffer the devastation that farmers will be forced to endure. I can remember when farmers were benefitted more by the wording and administration of farm laws.

LOSS OF FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR

Percy was a colorful character who had a restless nature. His early history was varied to say the least. He proved to be a good and interesting neighbor. His last years were filled with much physical pain, caused by lung cancer which was induced by a lifetime of tobacco use. Sometime before his passing he had purchased a new Massey Ferguson model 205 combine which he had never used. After his death Helena sold the combine to me. That was the first of three self propelled machines I have owned. The advent of shelled corn harvest to the Seelman operation was a huge change as it was for countless farmers .

The first year we shelled corn we did not have a drying bin. We complimented its use by also harvesting some corn with the ear corn picker. Then in 1970 we built the first bin, equipped with a dryer. It is the west 24 foot in diameter bin on the west place. (Hereafter I will call it the Section 18 farm.) It holds 5500 bushels to the eaves, with perhaps 700 bushels more in the roof when peaked.

With Percy's passing in 1968 his son Stanley tried his hand at farming the place but he did not like it. After one year he had a sale and I rented the place. I believe I rented it a total of six years. Since that represented a sizable increase in the size of our operation, it required some changes in our operational procedure. Also, while I rented the Eckrich place I had also acquired the farm from Aunt Angela, and when we lost Allan it made the whole operation an impossible burden. I was once again the only person there to do the work. After some unfortunate ocurrences I thereupon gave up renting the Eckrich place.

DISPUTE ON RECORD

Several of you may have noticed an addition to the land abstract of our property a codicil which documents a dispute with the Eckrich family. The last year I farmed the Eckrich place I had seeded a field which Helena disputed, and she refused to repay me for the grass seed I had applied . That unfortunate misunderstanding caused another problem, for Lucille thought she should be forced to pay. She spent much time in establishing a claim and having it attached to the Eckrich land taxes to obtain payment. This angered Helena, and she filed a counterclaim on our land. The result was much hard feeling and the fact that we did not get paid for that seed. In addition, there is a permanent record of the dispute on our abstract. It is often much better to absorb small losses than dispute them. Merchantable abstracts can be poisoned by very small matters if they are on record. Small details there can affect the merchantability of titles.

GARDENING FOR RECREATION

The old garden plot my grandmother used is the one where I plant our garden. In 1993 and again this year (1996) I find that drainage could be better, but in an average year it is ok. We had an almost record May for rainfall this year. Today is the first of June. The ground in the garden is again soggy, as seepage occurs and runs across the surface. It stops two days after rain, but this year the rains are so frequent that it seeps almost continuously. This in a year when newly planted oats laid in dry ground for one month. The wet weather is improper for my gardening by way of the mulch and no tillage system, since the ground drys out more slowly. For gardens, mulch and no till works much better in dry seasons. Again today it rained all afternoon.

MUD ROADS

It is important to describe and explain to you who never experienced them what mud roads were like, and how they impacted on our lives. Almost nothing that happened in Iowa during the mud road era can be dealt with cogently if the reader does not have this knowledge. However, words cannot adequately prepare you for that reality. I will begin by telling you of an experience I had in trying to explain mud roads to someone who always lived on paved streets. This happened to me twice, with two different people! I told them to try to picture a mud road soaked by rain; then traveled by tractors, horses, or cars which always produced deep ruts on its surface. In addition to that, clay had a very sticky quality, and any vehicle's wheels collected large "donuts" of heavy clay which would then fall off the wheel, making a very effective mud stack about knee high!

That barrier could be dealt with, but often this scenario took place during the late fall or winter rains. The next morning would often find the temperature far below freeezing. In that event these mud stacks, which could be numerous, acquired the solidity of hardened concrete. This situation gave the road surface the same quality and appearance of a field of very large boulders! Of course that limited travel on that road to horseback, travel on foot, or high-wheel wagon, the latter case being such a rough ride that only emergencies warranted it.

Now going back to these two aforementioned people, both of them, neither knowing the other, separately said exactly the same words,"Why, that never happened. You are simply making that up!" And they said it with conviction. But I assure you, dear reader, that the reality was much worse than my description.

At other times travel by car was possible, but barely. Travel during rainy periods in summer weather was possible by installing tire chains on the rear wheels. But at times when frost was coming out of the ground during a warm spell in winter or in the spring it was a different matter. Often the ruts were so deep and the mud so sticky that it would actually prevent the front wheels from turning, since the fender wells would be completely filled with mud.

When frost was partially out of the ground during a winter or spring thaw the mud had a shear, or separation plane at the strata between the deep frozen soil and the thawed upper layer. Because of the nature of thawing soil there was more moisture at that point, and that soil acted much like snow at thirty-two degrees. The mud could be rolled up to some degree, separating at the point where the frost was still in the ground. That quality made for very wide, heavy overshoes and car tires. Clay was worse than most other types of mud because it was stickier in those conditions. Clay at that stage would roll up almost like making a snowball .

Take a close look sometime at a pre-1934 automobile. Their fenders did not enclose the wheels tightly like the later cars did. So they were much better for mud roads than later models. But remember that donut? The one that rolled up on the inside of the wheel did not have so much room, so it often built up on the inside of the fender. When the front wheels could no longer turn it was almost impossible for the car to move. The only thing to do then if one wanted to go was to dig the mud out of the fender by hand. But that was not a big step, since all who were in the car were already covered with mud from putting on or adjusting chains, walking in the mud, or just being near it.

Many car axles, drive shafts, and rear axle gears were destroyed by those conditions. It did not take many of those experiences to convince people to stay home, which they did unless absolutely necessary because of an emergency. Toward the end of the mud road era many farm families established an allegiance to Ford cars because the model A proved to be one of the best for mud roads. It had the right combination of axle clearance, fender clearance, engine, transmission, and toughness. The smaller tires featured on the model A, as opposed to so-called balloon tires, were a strong advantage when the mud was sticky, as it always was in the spring.

My sister Bernice was teaching country school during the mud road era, and we often took her to and from the place where she roomed while on station. I remember her teaching near Lone Tree and also near Oxford, both a considerable distance from our home near Iowa City. (Remember the mud!) So I was taken along to help with the mud chores and as soon as I

learned how I also did the driving. I learned and had a drivers license at sixteen, shortly after a drivers license was required for anyone.

At that time the old Route 218 south of Iowa City was paved. That was a big help for the Lone Tree trip. But #I west of Iowa City was gravel, and the IWV was mud. So was the road south of Oxford. About that time the IWV was graveled, so the Oxford trip was considerably shortened in time. But the mud trip north toward Oxford was formidable.

I recall a happenstance dating to about 1929, when the IWV road yet boasted a mud surface. A refined petroleum pipe line was built parallel and adjacent to the IWV roadbed that year. An out-of-state crew, probably from Oklahoma or Texas, did the building of it. The workers were obviously not familiar with Iowa mud, and they applied many unkind remarks to its quality. After being stuck repeatedly and thoroughly immersed bodily in its medicinal properties, one was quoted as saying, "If I owned a farm in Iowa and a home in Hell I would sell out and go home". One may rightly conclude that those medicinal properties were not all of a positive nature.

STORMS IN DROUGHT YEARS

We have experienced droughts fairly frequently since the ones in 1934 and 1936. None had the vicious demeanor that those had. Frequent storms punctuated those years but they were made of dust, not rain. Small drifts of dust piled up on windowsills of houses far from the Dust Bowl. I once had the opportunity to talk to a Nebraska farmer and he told me a field he had plowed was completely removed a short time later by the wind. Everything, all of the soil that had been turned over by his plow had been blown away. Conditions were not quite that severe in Iowa, but much milder conditions than that Nebraska farmer experienced would not produce any food or feed. Those dust storms were savage enough to kill people a number of times. The kill factor was created by dust that made it difficult to breathe. If one became disoriented in a dust storm without a supply of drinking water the situation was immediately life threatening because of the extreme heat.

The heat was more severe and lasting than anything we have seen since. It was in the days before air conditioning, and the only thing to do was to suffer. Work was done with great difficulty. Horse power was widely used then, and many farmers hung a lantern on the cultivator or mower tongue, taking advantage of the very slightly cooler nights to get some work done. The heat was very hard on working horses, but it stayed hot all night, the only relief then being from the very hot sun. I remember a period in the summer of 1936 when the temperature regularly approached or exceeded 110 degrees.

PLANNING AND GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS- NEEDED TO PLUCK NATURE'S TEETH

I remember helping grandfather the summer of 1936. It was July when my grandfather attempted to counter the feed shortage by planting a field to corn for fodder. It was the land which lays on the south side of the creek in the south forty. I helped him cultivate that corn with a second cultivator and team. I remember later that fall asking him how it developed. He tersely replied that it didn't.

The years 1934 and 1936 were both severe droughts with extreme heat, and there was much hardship both on and off the farm. They were the early years of Franklin Roosevelt's administration when he was trying to "prime the pump" by legislative initiatives. The New Deal, the National Recovery Act, the Agricultural Adjustment Act, and others were tried, and some were declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court. Some of them were left in place to do a creditable job. Success was incomplete of course, and detractors said they were a failure. Not taken into account were the two terrible drought years which were challenge enough by themselves without the people also being forced to suffer through the collapse of the economy. The successes of those programs were most positively evident by all who endured severe hardship in situations beyond their control and who saw and experienced much improvement soon after the onset of the New Deal. Those who declared the New Deal a failure were those who did not suffer the terrible privation most people had to endure during The Great Depression. Indeed, many of today's detractors of the New Deal were still to be born.

I often appreciated how fortunate it was for our country that we did not have to fight The Great Depression and WW2 simultaneously. The war was unquestionably shortened by our country's economic recovery before our entering the war. Industry had recovered remarkably and had capacity in place which could be easily converted to producing war materials. An example of industry's recovery was the auto industry, which produced millions of cars before the war and untold amounts of war material when it was needed. Nine years earlier such was not the case, and it would have been an impossibility to convert to war production industrial capacity which did not exist. I remember an advertising spot in a magazine where General Motors stated they had built 200,000 Chevy cars in November of 1936.

An argument posits the theory that it took the war to bring our country out of the depression. There is no question that the war strongly influenced and stimulated the economy. However, there is abundant evidence which shows the economy had regained much vitality before the war. Did that GM ad sound like the economy was in the throes of the depression at that time?

CONSERVATION - IT HAD TO BE DONE

One of the life saving measures of The New Deal were the soil conserving measures which were initiated thereby. On the Great Plains, shelter belts of tree plantings to slow the winds and stop soil from blowing away were an important first step. Reduction of corn and wheat planted acres and indeed other shifts from soil depleting crops to crops of grass or trees changed the landscape in a considerable and positive way. In all of America it had become necessary, but not understood until Washington DC had experienced dust storms, to change the face of the earth. It became necessary in order to keep Mother Nature from destroying our land completely. Man had almost done it on his own. I am shaken by young people who have no appreciation for the fragile nature of our earth. I am also shaken by those who do not want the government to have any programs that conserve anything. To that group of people, you are enjoying the fruits of government programs which snatched our land from the jaws of catastrophe; please take heed. There are other potential catastrophes just ahead. Cripple conservation programs at your peril, for it could mean your own destruction.

Grandfather was a conservationist in many ways. His good horsemanship conserved the power with which he farmed. I remember his vocal protection of the snake population and his appreciation of the help they gave in making his farm more productive. He recounted the aid snakes provided in controlling the many rodents which attacked the crops. A sure way to encounter his animosity was to kill a snake anywhere, but especially one on his farm. The bee apiary was more evidence of how well he understood nature and the support each facet of it gave all the others.

As was true with many pioneers, he did not like government very much or the people who ran it. He was not politically active. He was a Democrat which I think may have gone back to the Civil War and his family's dislike for armed conflict. I will say no more on the subject, for that conjecture is all I "know" about it. He was thirteen when the Civil War ended.

Somewhere in my writings I recorded how strongly Hen hated what Hitler was doing to Europe. Remember that he died in 1938, so he recognized Hitler for what he was very early. I remember him so enraged that he would stand and shake the newspaper he was reading, declaring that 'HILTER' was destroying Germany and Europe. That spelling is how he pronounced it.

A MEMORIAL

When all is said and done, the best memorial to Henry and Julia Roehret is the stained glass window in the Church of St. Peter at Cosgrove. It is the second from the front on the left side, inside looking out. It has their names embedded in the glass. As are all of those windows it is a work of art.

RESPECT

A remnant of Hen's frontier heritage was his mortal fear of fire. On the frontier, fire which burned a dwelling in winter, even if the family got out safely, faced them with immediate danger of not surviving. Therefore, upon retiring he always poured water on the fire in the heating stove and made sure it was out. I imagine the fire in the cook stove would already be

out. However, I am sure he did not take that for granted. Also, he loudly warned all people who came to the farm to avoid smoking. Universal practice at that time was having wood shingle roofs on all homes. That fact made it imperative that heating and cooking stoves be operated in such a way as to prevent any sparks from emerging from the chimney. If that happened, those dry shingles were tinder waiting to be ignited. No amount of care in firing heating and cooking stoves was too much, given the consequences caused by mishandling or carelessness.

A FARMER

The man and the occupation are inseparable. I was farming since my first memories of working at anything. I was actively farming since my second year in high school, so I have completed almost sixty years of active work in one occupation. (1996)

I will admit to having been blest with" a wonderful twelve children." In one way or another, they have all contributed to what many would call a successful lifetime and marriage. Thank you, children! And your mother also pulled her weight and then some.

I hesitate to write of each child, but my pride forces me to do so. I wish to assure one and all that we tried to raise you as fairly as we knew how. If we did not completely succeed it was not because we willed it otherwise. Every human has shortcomings and parents are no exception. If God made any mistakes in casting the universe, the greatest one would have to be in not bestowing infallibility upon parents in raising their children. So please indulge me as I brag about each one of you.

Barbara

Barbara was the little girl who helped her mother raise almost all of her siblings. She always took that responsibility most seriously, looking after their needs and safety almost from the start. When Barbara was born we were just getting established in farming as a couple. At that stage of our operation I was picking corn by hand, and still renting the farmland from my mother. One of the very few vacations we had was a trip to Canada with Barbara. She was easily occupied, and I remember her on the floor of the car, between the front and back seat, using her pounding board and a wood hammer. That car, a 1948 Fleetline Chevy, the only new car we ever owned, had a spacious rear floor-just right for a little girl's play pen. Rear leg room was perhaps three times as generous as a modern car provides.

Dianne

Dianne came to live with us in 1948, and a very dear baby she was. She had a normal babyhood with only a few health problems. As she grew older she looked for things to do for her parents. I remember her as a very little girl doing little things to please her father and mother, unusual for such a little one. Then she became very interested in television, and became one of the first Iowa children, including her siblings, to be influenced by that medium.

My memory of dates is unreliable, but I place the first television set in our house at about 1955. TV came to Iowa about in 1951. They were all black and white sets then and color was not offered anywhere till some years later. Reception was only from Davenport and Rock Island at first. It was very snowy and poor in picture quality until Cedar Rapids stations went on the air several years later. The Cedar Rapids station [s] were airing when we got our first set.

Cynthia

Cynthia was born when we had some of the worst November roads since Iowa was brought out of the mud. 1950 was a wet fall, and the gravel roads became quagmires. We had the choice of the IWV or the Rohret road, both bad. When it was time for the event I had to choose between the two, and I chose the one I thought we would be most likely to get there by, the Rohret Road. We got stuck on the bottom near Lawrence Breese's place. He pulled us through that mudhole with a tractor, and there were some anxious moments, but Cindy obliged by waiting long enough to be born in the hospital. There were other mudholes but none quite as bad as that one. The car simply ran out of axle clearance, the ruts being too deep for the car to get traction. There was a 'frost boil' on the IWV road so deep and so high that it seemed the top of that boil was higher than the bottom of a car window. I wish I had taken pictures of that

one, a short distance west of what is now Bob Humphrey's drive.

A very healthy baby, Cynthia. I am writing this account without the help of my dear wife, so there might be some disagreement. I trust the basics are true. With the size of family we had, to have good health was important. Good genetics must have been at work for us to have had twelve children with no major health problems. Never forget that God also had a hand as there is always the efficacy of prayer. We had a lot of friends and relatives praying for us over many years. We also prayed a little. I do not think any of those prayers were petitions for us to have twelve children. But who of you who are our children would, at this point, say that we should not have had you? My fond hope is that life is sweet for each of you. All of you are living testimony that it is so.

Christine

Chris was a very sharp little girl for all of her mild manners. I remember an exchange when she was just able to talk. I was helping Mother to get the children to sleep, for Chris often climbed out of bed and extended her day by playing some more. I was in her bedroom trying to lull her when she told me what she thought of that plan in certain terms. "Daddy, go" was repeated several times by that little girl who had her own agenda, and it did not include her father interfering with her plans.

Allan

The memory of the next child, for memories are what are left, are very painful still. If bittersweet ever applied to anything it applies to Allan. It is a joy to remember him but bitter to know that it is all we have. We must always return to the emptyness which took the place of so much promise. There is a story I have already written which I will include here, as I will include the stories which any of you care to write. Barbara has already written her memories of Allan and I will include them. The lessons of his life have made all of us better, all of us knowing that no matter how many children we might have had, every one is very special. In God's special way. Allan has left a legacy much more powerful and meaningful than just memories.

Prayer

On this date, March 29, 1996, I read an article published in the Readers Digest, March 1996 issue, titled "Does prayer heal? I ask all of you who are taking the time to read this account to also read that article. By the way, the answer to that question is yes. Expert medical approach to this question cannot be labeled as biased, so may carry more weight with those who read it. The article cites medical opinion that miracles after prayer are the only explanation for many cures. There is hope for all of us. Miracles still happen to those who ask for them. Our God is a personal God and wants the chance to help us.

Mary

On September 22, 1952 Mary came to live with us. Our growing family welcomed her as one, and she was a very perfect baby. We all remember her as not being totally happy in return. We spent sleepless nights as she protested we knew not what. She soon outgrew that stage to become happy though different in temperament. We soon learned that she required different methods of upbringing.

Although Mary then thought it was part of her being disciplined, she was the one who once was left accidentally at home when the family went to visit neighbors. Mary, do you remember?

Looking back, the surprise is that none of you had trouble in adjusting to the learning environment at school. We tried to make you all understand its importance and value and we must have succeeded. Some preschool help perhaps made a difference.

Coleen

Two years later another darling little one joined us on May 24. Coleen was sweet and even tempered from the start and possessed a very inquisitive nature. As she got a little older she could not walk past a stone without overturning it to see what was under it. A short use of leg correctors straightened her inturned feet when she was very young. Later during her teenage years, upon being limited by her mother her favorite saying was that she did not ask to be born. Also, when complimented she replied with "I know".

Nan

Our last little girl came in time to be part of the Christmas season on Dec.18, 1956. The Christmas season was always special in a house with many little ones, and this one was even more so.

I don't remember the date, but when very young it was necessary to place Nan in the hospital for a serious but treatable illness. It was traumatic to see such a little one have to leave her family even if only breiefly. She liked the nurses so it was easier for her than the rest of the family. I think the nurses liked her too!

Dr. Lorrainne Frost

Mom's choice of our pediatrician was a very good one. Dr. Frost was both knowlegable and kind with her patients. The children all loved her and most important, her care was always medically sound. Her care of Nan was no exception. Although Nan's problem was serious it quickly responded to expert care and she was soon back home. My memory does not serve well, but I think Dr. Frost cared for all of our children except the first ones. Dr. Bennet was our doctor in those early years until he retired.

Steven

On May 24, 1958, Coleen's birthday, a second little boy came to live with us, Steven Joseph. From the first he was loved and cared for by the whole family, as were his older brother and sisters. He had a normal childhood, with more ear trouble than did his siblings. I remember him being a very devout Christian. He said the rosary nightly when he was perhaps ten years old. He became a problem when he was in high school. He had a very good car given to him by his parents which he did not take care of. More than one accident was suffered by that car and his parents. There were some other problems, most of them minor. His parents at about that time should have required him to walk much more. I am sure he appreciated this when he was older. Did you, Steve?

Tom

On November 30, 1959 a little guy whom we named Tom came to live with us. At first he did not seem to be adventurous but as time developed he showed a strong tendency toward independendence. I remember his first aspiration to be an airline pilot. He stayed with that desire for a number of years. His was that cute round face in many of our family photos, not losing that look until he was at least 13 years old.

Once the grain bin dryer was running and Tom, the only person nearby, saved the dryer and the bin full of corn from burning, plus the possibility of explosion. The dryer was running with the burner on when the electric power was momentarily interrupted. Tom had the presence of mind to look in the peephole provided to monitor the burner, and seeing that it was still burning as the fan motor was coming to a stop, he knowing there was a malfunction, proceeded to restart the fan. The automatic controls should have attended to that detail. Upon inspection I found a tramp screw in the gas valve which controlled the burner, thereby preventing it from doing its job. It was obviously carried there by gas flowing to the burner. The magnetic motor switch is what disconnected and prevented the fan motor from restarting as the power was immediately restored. At the time of that event Tom could not have been more than ten or twelve years old. Tom, do you remember?

Jim

As I look back to those very eventful years a most enjoyable part of my memory was the warm welcome all of the family gave all of our new members. On September 7, 1961, another bundle of joy came to the Seelman family. We named him James Michael, and a handsome baby he was. He at once became a favorite of the whole family. As with the others, Jim presented a different set of challenges and needs beyond those of body.

If any of you children remember differently, do not be too hard on yourself. In the long run everything worked out well for the most part.

As with the other children, those years passed all too quickly. I find myself easily depressed by that thought. Those years were difficult then, but now the difficult things recede and some of the nostalgia is in the rapid passing.

Mischevous Jim was, and the way his mother coped with that quality was to place him

on a chair in the corner of the living room. Several years later that bent placed him on the bad side of one of our frequent pets, a racoon which brooked no teasing or being used as the butt of joke material. The racoon's bad temper caused him to bite and tear Jim's nose, requiring a number of stitches by Dr. Mc Farland for repair.

I recall a cold day when we had all assembled in the shop to warm up. The racoon entered and since his eyesight was poor in addition to it being a dark day, he went to each person in the shop, taking a close look by standing on his rear legs. Upon finding Jim he pursued him to a standing position on the seat of a nearby tractor. Observing this, I felt things had gone too far, so I handed Jim a weapon of sorts with the instruction to teach the racoon a lesson. After administering the racoon a beating, life became easier for Jim, and I recall that as ocurring after the nose incident.

On another occasion Jim had tested the tolerance of a teacher, and I forgot the details, but it had something to do with his eyeglasses. On still another occasion there was the matter of a shirt and the football coach.

Through it all Jim developed well and accomplished much. His mischevous quality persists at age thirty-five, thank goodness.

John

In the year 1964, on July 7, the family welcomed the last one of us. John was a wonderful and adorable baby from the start. His mother had some health problems shortly after he was born and spent some time in the hospital. The family took excellent care of the new son and brother, and by the time Mother came home from the hospital to stay, John had gained some extra pounds. He had wanted for nothing in Mother's absence and the family indulged him every time he made the smallest noise with more to eat. So Mother placed him on a diet. I am sure the diet was not severely restrictive, but John did lose some of his ill-gotten weight. The spoiling he received did not affect his disposition, for he remained good natured under the new regimen.

John was to be the last of our very large family for the reason that while he was being born his mother's uterus ruptured. None of the medical team took note, and it was some weeks later that she became deathly sick from infection. Corrective surgery to remove her uterus brought her slowly back to health.

Later, I remember the first word John learned. As with large families in Iowa in the summer months, a fly swatter was an important tool in the efficient and comfortable operation of the home. Each time he heard the use of that swatter he uniformly proclaimed its effectiveness or lack with the word, "missed!"

YMCA OF THE ROCKIES

Still later the family took a vacation trip to Estes Park in the Colorado Rockies. It was about the year 1966, and John learned much about road travel on that trip, as did the rest of the family. Often when passing a road sign John would proclaim , "That says I-80!"

The family stayed at The YMCA of the Rockies during that vacation. Barracks type living was not new to the children, but John did not appreciate the day-care provisions for small children which the camp provided. Reports were that he spent much of the time crying when at that facility. I remember a mishap when Mother delivered or picked up one of the children while at the camp. John may or may not have been the object of a trip which resulted in a front fender of the family car being crumpled. Oh yes, the accident was not Mothers fault. We received insurance reimbursement from the other party's company.

I remember being irritated with some of the children when they were much more interested in game activities than in viewing the beauty of the surroundings. One trip on Trail Ridge Road, the highest continuous road in the continental United States, located in Rocky Mountain National Park, took Mary and I to a mountain directory on a high rock which was located at a high point of the Continental Divide. One segment of that directory pointed to a Mountain range in Wyoming 420 miles away! It was an uncommonly clear day when we were there and I remember saying to Mary as we were climbing the trail to the directory that those mountains were very far away. Their apparent red hue indicated that much of the other colors

of the spectrum were filtered out by the great distance the light from those mountains traveled in the atmosphere. Their direction from our postiton was to the Northwest.

I no longer remember the name of the range which the directory identified, so I must resort to a map. Calculating the proper distance tentatively identifies them as the Wind River Range. The Medicine Bow Range does not qualify, for it is too near to Rocky Mountain National park .

The Mountain directory consisted of a brass bowl with a rim wide enough to have imprinted material included, with a notch for each feature described. In the center of the bowl was a pin which was a bit higher than the rim of the bowl. Sighting the notch with the point of the pointer identified and located the various features for the viewer. I remember some of the other features which that directorty identified. Pikes Peak, Mt. Evans west of Denver, and nearby Longs Peak were included.

Another incident I remember involved a vista which was visible from the building where we stayed. Allan remarked that he would like to hike across the area and we consented, since there were no dangerous features, and after cautions to remember his location and the location of our building. That he did, but a mountain shower cut his trip short and made him wet.

I no longer remember the elevation of the YMCA. It may have been 8 or 9,000 feet. I remember the Colorado-Big Thompson Irrigation Project that was built by the federal Government and which constructed a tunnel through solid rock, bringing Colorado river water through the Divide to the East slope. From there the water is piped to the Big Thompson River gorge which delivers it to the plains for irrigation around Greeley and Longmont. The east end of the tunnel and surrounding associated works are open for public viewing near Estes Park.

Several years after our trip there the Big Thompson river had a major flash flood which took many lives and left permanent damage in the region. Much debris was deposited at the mouth of the canyon, and it was probable that missing persons were buried in that debris, never to be found. The nature of the vertical walls forming the sides of the canyon made it necessary for those unlucky to be there to outrun the flood waters to save their lives, and it was obvious that some did not make it. A later visit to the Big Thompson canyon showed scars and removed bark ten feet high on trees which were were ten to twenty feet higher than the river.

HIGH TECH FARM EQUIPMENT
A PARODY

My friend Bob Burns just told me a good joke, though admittedly it might be considered sexist by some . (2-17-97) We must keep in mind that all jokes poke fun at someone, but it is precisely what makes them funny.

An Indian went to a white man's trading post. The Indian observed a substantial bug making its way across the floor, and said this to the storekeeper-"Look, bug." The storekeeper then said, " Squa sh it." The Indian replied, "No, bug".

I have described some of the shortcomings of my first tractor on p.37, but it was a "honey" compared to some of the field machinery I first used. The corn planter, mouldboard plow, disk , mower, hayloader, wagon, all could have vied for last place in productivity, convenience, and ease of operation even by 1940 standards. Hydraulic controls were for the most part still on the drawing boards. Electric starting systems were for cars, and indeed they had been in common use there only about 25 years. The plow I owned was called an Oliver Fordson plow, since it was expressly designed for use with a Fordson tractor. It did have a mechanical clutch for the purpose of lifting and lowering it out of and into the ground. But the clutch drive wheel had a tougher job than its traction usually provided, so the raising of that implement was chancey at best. It should have had button lugs adorning the wheel rim, but someone probably removed them to make the implement ride better during road travel.

As with many other shortcomings of equipment in those years I did modify that plow with a makeshift improvement to give that clutch wheel better traction. I selected an old car tire, cut it in two at one point, and installed it on that wheel rim, securing it with several strands of number nine smooth wire which also tied the two ends of the tire together where it had been cut. It did improve the traction of the wheel and accomplished the desired result.

Lowering the implement was easy if the required fifty pound pull on the hefty trip rope

could be called that. That was the beginning of the rotator cusp problem in my left shoulder.

The old horse disk came from the Fred Schneider sale on the farm now owned by Effie Schneider, no relation. Probably the worst tool I had considering the challenge of the jobs it had to do was that 9 foot single gang horse disk. It originally had a horse tongue, rotted out, which I replaced with a wood 4 x 4 inch piece about four feet long. To do a barely acceptable job it was necessary to split the last pass made, disking everything twice to prevent severe ridging of the field. That meant the effective cut was reduced by half, or 4-1/2 feet. It was faster than the two feet cut of the mouldboard plow, but often in tough cornstalks or sod the field had to be disked twice [actually four times]. Even then the quality of the work was far below that of modern tillage equipment. After several years of using this piece of junk it was clear something better was needed. There was a Meyer Farm close- out auction sale near North Liberty, [remember the war and shortages] so I was fortunate to be able to buy a brand new Case tandem disk that was equipped with a clutch, an innovation for discs at that time. The price was only $135, no more than dealer price for that machine. [Later in the war as shortages became more critical, when there was more than one bid at the ceiling price the War Production Board allowed, it became a lottery, with bidding parties putting their names in a hat] The width of cut was 7 feet, and I never appreciated a new implement more than that one. It had shortcomings too, using later better equipment as a yardstick, but it was so much better than what I had earlier that several years passed before I became aware of them.

The field mower I had was an Adriance Platte with a six foot bar purchased at the Pate sale. (See story of O.B. Riggs) Early on I used it with horses, and it would mow, but it's dependability was poor. Another very poor implement was an old planter that cost perhaps 10 dollars at a farm auction. Its planting accuracy was non-existent. That it got any seed into the ground was only accidental. I replaced it early in my farming career with an International planter that was far ahead technically, for it closely counted and placed the seed. Those two planters, both horse drawn, used wire to space the corn hills for cultivating in two directions. The used McCormick-Deering planter price was 50 dollars. Later, when I got rid of the horses, I used that same planter for several years with a tractor.

For you who have no knowledge of corn planter wire, it worked thus; A "button", made of wire was located each and every forty-two inches of its length. A roll of that wire was mounted on a spool which had a friction wheel on the same hub as the spool. The friction wheel was so designed to unroll or roll the wire on the spool as needed, getting its energy from the flange of the planter wheel against which it bore at the demand of the operator. The typical spool of wire was eighty rods in length, but could be added or deleted by the use of special connectors which could be incorporated into one of the buttons.

The planter had a "check head" on either side of the planter which consisted of rollers to allow the wire to smoothly flow through the check head. The wire was secured by a planter stake at each end of the field, which was manuall;y repositioned laterally each time the planter reached the end of the field. That prepared the wire for the next pass of the planter. The wire flowed through a fork which was operated, or tripped when each button engaged the fork. The fork was in a forward, or ready position (in relation to the direction of travel of the planter) when the button engaged it, whereupon the forward travel of the planter caused the fork to be moved to the rear in the check-head some six or seven inches. The rearward position of the fork then caused the button to release the spring-loaded fork, it returning to be ready for the next cycle .

The shoe design of the planter consisted of two valves, they retaining the seed which was received from the planter plate until the trip fork released it at the proper time. One valve was at the top of the shoe next to the metering plate, and the other valve was at the bottom of the shoe next to the bottom of the formed slot in the soil where the seed was then ejected. The sequence was such that the top valve collected the seeds, two to four as per the operator's setting and metered by the seed plate, until the ejection cycle moved those seeds to the lower valve, they then being deposited in the soil at the next cycle.

The purpose of the check row technology was to allow the row crop to be cultivated in two directions, for those buttons in the planter wire caused the corn to be hilled, having rows

transverse to the direction the field was planted as well. Since cultivation was the only method of weed control available before the advent of chemical control, it was an important part of crop culture.

I must tell you about my second hayloader. Although it was better than the hayloader my grandfather had, the wood construction was getting old and tired. Wood could suffer from fatigue and rot, so it was a constant cause of the haymaking being stopped, often before a rain which then degraded the hay that otherwise would have been in the barn. It was a carbon copy of the steel hayloader made by New Idea which I owned later, for it was made by that same company. That steel loader was a fine piece of machinery. Even that wood hayloader was far better than the first one we had and I no longer remember where we got either of them. The first one was also made of wood, but a lot less ruggedly built. It was actually less productive than loading by hand.

I purchased a manure spreader from a neighbor that turned out to be an exercise in frustration. Made of wood, it had a raddle made of wood and joined by #55 steel chain. It should have been accompanied by a warning to never fill more than one-third full, for that is all the raddle chain could stand. I remember the brand name was Litchfield, probably made in that Minnesota town. When I purchased that new Farmall H in 1948 I also purchased a new manure spreader, a model 200 International. I had used the F-12 ten years, far too long for that inadequate tractor considering the work I had to do.

I remember an incident after I had owned and was harvesting by the then new combine method. I was helping a neighbor thresh, and Cyril Rohret was the vendor with his old and antiquated Woods Brothers threshing machine. Worse yet, it was poorly maintained, for many of the spike teeth on the cylinder and concaves were missing (they are the parts which literally give the machine its "teeth" to remove the grain from the straw.) At one point I was in the vicinity of the straw-pile and could hear grain steadily hitting the surface of the straw. The straw blower was of course threshing the grain which the cylinder missed and depositing it with the straw in the straw-pile.

At that point I availed myself of an opportunity to open the access door at the rear of the straw walkers and seizing a handful of straw, proceeded to observe all of the unthreshed grain in the straw. Earlis also observed the wasted grain and expressed amazement. Only after explanation did he understand the reasons why he and his father failed to previously note that failure, they having always checked for un-threshed grain in the straw-pile after the blower finished the threshing job. That was the last year they operated the grain separator.

One of Cyril's weaknesses by his own admission was baling wire. On more than one occasion, upon successfully repairing a machine, Cyril then grinned expansively and declared to all, "I couldn't farm without balin' waare!"

MORE ABOUT FARMING

The first corn picker I owned was a well worn Case one row snapper in about 1947. The war generated machinery shortage was still controlling the market. I bought that machine used from a dealer in Packwood, Iowa, a small town not far from Ottumwa. I used it until about 1950. It had poor harvesting efficiency because of its tendency to shell the ends of the ears, which shelled corn then fell to the ground. It also had no provision to take shucks off the ears. Many of these shortcomings were overlooked by me and other farmers who appreciated the end of hand harvesting.

I dealt at length with my first farm tractor in chapter 2, p. 37, as well as the first toy one. I traded the Farmall F-12 in 1948 for a new Farmall H tractor. It was a beautiful model, convenient to drive, but lacking in power for farming in our clay hills. The list price was about fifteen hundred dollars plus two hundred for a two row cultivator. I also purchased a new model No. 200 International manure spreader at the same time, all on borrowed money. The spreader was a two hundred dollar item. With credit for the trade in tractor I think the money borrowed was perhaps $1800, a huge amount at that time. I remember the bank loan officer, M.B. Guthrie of the Iowa State Bank and Trust Co. almost having a heart attack- feigned of course. My devotion to paying back that loan forever earned his respect.

I already had a new mouldboard plow equipped with two fourteen inch bottoms, which was a full load on hills in clay soils. In a situation where alfalfa was plowed under, the cutting of those tough roots by the plow shares increased the load by perhaps thirty percent. It could handle the previously mentioned seven foot tandem disk fairly well and somewhat faster than could the F-12.

After I purchased the new Farmall I began to do all of the tillage operations on the contour. Doing that produced a new set of problems in field operations. Plowing a field on the contour required many maneuvers to get a field covered, since the one directional demands of mouldboard plowing found one doing much empty travel, often actually plowing a short distance accompanied by much idle travel when finishing a land and/or triangle. Not much could be done about the idle travel, but a new method was needed to make it easier to handle the equipment. The plow I then owned was a McCormick Deering two bottom fourteen inch model with a rope controlled clutch on steel wheels. At one point I converted it to rubber tires by cutting down and welding tire rims in place of the steel wheels. The frequent raising and lowering of the plow was difficult so I used a hydraulic cylinder which was designed to lift the mounted cultivator and designed a mounting system to apply that style cylinder to the mouldboard plow. Nothing of this nature was yet offered by any manufacturer. The adaption was very sucessful. However, earlier offerings for that purpose were for SAE cylinders.

The Case disk limitations, wear, age, and need of more flexible equipment to meet the demands of contour farming made it necessary to get a new disk, and here I must guess the year, probably 1952 or therabouts. Wheel disks were becoming popular, and I purchased a nine foot Kewanee wheel disk from Cline Equipment Company. That was the first really good disk I owned. It taxed the power of the Farmall, but it did better than I expected. I had at about that time installed "M and W Add Power" pistons and sleeves in that tractor, and while it did not add a lot of power, in that low powered tractor a little more power made a lot of difference. The Farmall had what was called an under- square engine, meaning that the bore was smaller than the stroke. It was engineered by International with grey cast iron pistons. The new M and W pistons were newly engineered, much lighter and therefor placing much less stress on bearings and crankshaft. Long stroke engines such as this have high piston speeds and therefore more piston ring wear. The result was almost unlimited life for crankshaft and bearings, but fairly frequent need for piston ring replacement. When I traded that tractor, it had the original crankshaft and standard bearings, but I had to replace the piston rings about every two years. It had fourteen thousand hours on the meter at that time. By the way, the M and W pistons were aluminum, much lighter than the original cast iron ones.

The next picker I owned was a two row model number 24 IHC which mounted on the Farmall H tractor. The H was known as a "two plow tractor" and that corn picker was a three plow load. It should have been built only for the M Farmall, a three plow tractor. I did, however, use that combination for many years, worrying through the harvest for so long only because I had to make do with what I had for a lifetime. The factor that made it possible to use that size tractor was contour planting, making it unnecessary to go uphill for the most part.That machine also did very little to remove extra husks from the ears of corn. It had a blower similar to the earlier one row snapper which removed loose debris only. It did have husking rolls on the same shafts as the snapping rolls, but they were not long enough and without any mechanism to force the ears against the rolls. The result was the same as the previous machine.

After the horses left the farm it was obvious that another tractor was a necessity. I therefore acquired a B Allis Chalmers tractor for pulling loads of corn from the picker to the crib. That was made possible by using the picker tractor to pull the loads of corn to higher ground before pulling them to the crib with the much too small B A-C. I had a mounted six foot sickle mower for the little tractor, and by leaving it on the tractor it gained some 500 pounds of much needed weight. It was also a valuable addition to the machinery lineup, for that mower was well made and was a very efficient mowing machine.

CLIMBING SLOWLY

The increasing production and need for more efficient use of time showed the need for more power. In 1956 I traded the B A-C to Kelly Implement Co. for a one year old WD 45 Allis Chalmers tractor. I had that tractor for many years, and I remember the cost-including the plow at about $1800.

It was a very rough riding tractor, exacting much physical abuse upon the operator. It had smaller than normal diameter rear tires but worse yet it had the seat mounted nearly two feet behind the rear axle. That seat position amplified the ground roughness. I often came into the house so shaken up that I had to rest before I could eat.

I had a three bottom mounted plow for that tractor, and a good plowing unit it was. It would plow any nature of ground, no matter how challenging the conditions. When I was shopping before I purchased it, I had Cline Equipment Company demonstrate a Farmall 300 with a mounted plow in the same field as the A-C tractor with its mounted plow. The conditions were favorable for the A-C, and it handled the job nicely, but the Farmall could not even operate at all. It could do nothing but spin its wheels.

During one of the dry years in the middle fifty's, Jack Hofmann lived on the farm one-half mile north of our place. He had a field of alfalfa which had been trampled by cattle when wet. It then turned dry, and the ground was so hard he could not plow it with his machinery. He had a new Super C Farmall with a mounted two bottom plow and a new Super M Farmall with a pull type three bottom plow. The plows usually skidded on top of that hard ground. Occasionally the mounted plow would enter the ground, but the Super C had not nearly enough power to pull it, stalling the tractor. The pull type plow also would occasionally enter the ground, but the Super M could then only spin its wheels.

At that point he invited me to help. I did not have new plow shares on the A-C mounted plow and they were worn considerably, but plow adjustment allowed for offsetting that lack. Therefore the plow entered the hard ground readily. The Traction Booster system provided the tractor with more than adequate traction, allowing the tractor to do a creditable job. Often the front end of the tractor left the ground to a height of three feet or more, but in continuing without interruption it returned gradually to the ground. That was probably one of the very few systems available-perhaps the only one- which had the ability to plow in such conditions.

When Jack finished disking that plowed field the tires on that new Super M looked like old tires, having been scuffed and scarred by the hard clods eight to fourteen inches in diameter. The weight of that tractor was not enough to break them. How much a rain would have been worth!

In one of those difficult years we had a rain which was noteworthy from several points. The field north of the house on Greencastle was in corn, and it was trying to tassle in the parched conditions when, from the east, a one inch rain fell. The topsoil in that field was loose and dry to the point of no plant available moisture whatever. The rain did moisten the top several inches, but there being no soil moisture before the rain, that newly arrived rainfall did nothing but evaporate quickly. No lasting benefit whatever was noted.

I remember a year, probably in the late 50's when we had a lot of rain at the time of corn harvest. It was when we had the Farmall and the mounted picker. We also had the WD 45 Allis Chalmers tractor. I got stuck with an empty wagon while trying to pick a wet area of a field. I then made a pusher out of a heavy wood beam mounted in vertical position on the front of the AC, and with Mother driving it and pushing on the back end of the wagon we finished harvesting in very difficult conditions.

I wish here to comment about the quality of manufactured equipment before and a number of years after the war. Much of it lacked the refinement badly needed to deal effectively with the many challenges of crop variability, weather, soil, and topographic conditions which was daily fare. Quality improved dramatically in the Sixtys, and of course the quest continues as I write this. Before that I was often faced with making my own modifications in order to deal with problems. That happens yet today, but much more rarely.

THE QUEST CONTINUES

The heavy work load in perhaps 1964 of a larger livestock operation and more intensive crop production made it necessary to be more productive for each hour I worked, since I hired almost no additional help. The next step was to get a tractor with more power. That turned out to be trading the Farmall to Benda Equipment Co. at North Liberty for a used Minneapolis Moline Model U tractor. That tractor had a powerful engine, it having been the largest available row crop tractor when it was introduced in the early 1940's. I also obtained a four row cultivator for it. That trade meant I needed to get a different corn picker, since I no longer had the Farmall to power the tired and always inadequate model 24 IHC picker. I then located and purchased a used mounted corn picker for the Allis Chalmers tractor. It was the model with the large husking bed, not the underslung model which was in some ways similar to the International model which I had just discarded.

That move proved to be a huge step backward, however, for that model, supposed to be much improved, proved to be a lemon of major proportions. Compared to it, the inadequate International picker was a jewel. The AC engineering of that model was terribly sloppy, making it virtually inoperable on hilly land like ours. The snapped corn elevators which took ear corn from the snapping rolls to the husking bed were so steep that they could not do their job if the picker faced only a little downhill. Only one improvement was most worthwhile on that machine, that being stripper-plate snapping rolls which eliminated excessive shelled corn loss. After suffering its use for several years, my next harvester was a self-propelled combine.

In 1952 after Anselm's death I purchased his hay baler at the farm sale. It was a model 76 New Holland Automation automatic tie machine which he bought new in about 1948. He did a lot of custom work with it and it was a good machine but with far too many parts. It weighed five thousand pounds. A four cylinder Wisconsin engine drove the machinery. The greatest drawback of that machine was the canvas feed conveyors. In long hay the system was not aggressive enough, causing a lot of feeding problems. The twelve years I used it seemed much longer.

A word is needed here to fully explain the strengths and weaknesses of four cylinder Wisconsin air cooled engines. They were used for many years to power pulled implements, mainly combines and balers. They were powerful and long lived, but had a starting problem because of design deficiencies. (1),The starting crank was dangerous when used by an incautious operator, for it could be ejected quickly by the engine whether the engine started or not. It could then injure the operator by hitting him forcefully on the head. (2),The magneto was attached directly to the engine with no provision for ventilation. Moisture often migrated from the crankcase to the inside of the magneto because of an imperfect shaft seal. That caused operating problems which were usually manifested by hard starting. The solution was to remove the distributor cap from the magneto and allow it to air dry. If that were done when the engine was stopped at the end of the day the problem was solved, but if it was not done before starting the engine for the next day of use, delay could be most frustrating . Also, many people did not recognize the problem or the solution.

The year 1964 marked another advance in farm equipment. I purchased a new New Holland model 268 Hayliner baler which we still have, and a wonderful machine it is. I am sure it has made more than a million bales. Maintenance has been very minimal. A few pickup teeth and perhaps one knotter bill hook plus a welded needle, and not much else in more than thirty years is not much repair cost. Today that baler does a productive job in the field, but of course we now do most of the haymaking with Steve's large round baler.

When Angela became inactive in operating her farm I bought her Allis Chalmers model B tractor and equipped it with a Woods belly mower. Once again I had an AC tractor.

BIGGER AND BETTER

The shortcomings of the tractor which was engineered in the thirtys, the MM model U, were evident, so in 1967 I traded it to the Gingerich Implement Co. for a MM model 670 Super. The engine size was the same as the U tractor, but the tractor was balanced so much better with a seat forward perhaps three feet from that of the old tractor, making it much better to

ride. Also, it had many more conveniences, such as improved hydraulic system, independent live power take off, and Ampli-torque transmission. The difference between the 670 and the 670 Super was the change to all-hydrostatic power steering. The older 670 had mechanical steering with power steering assistance. (I added the above for information only, for I had never owned a 670.) The price was 4,500 dollars. That was when I transferred my banking business to Hills Bank. Albert Droll, the founder, was still the chief loan officer, and a good man. The tractor and the bank both proved to be valuable additions to our farming business.

That tractor proved to be even better than the WD 45 tractor for plowing as well as all other tasks. I obtained an IHC four bottom, sixteen inch plow for the tractor, trading a three bottom plow I used with the U tractor. I built a hydraulic control for the tractor drawbar to keep the plow at the optimum relationship to the last furrow plowed. It worked beautifully in all conditions of contouring, soils, and contour curves. It did take continuous adjustment in those conditions which varied constantly, but was worth it because of the uniform job that resulted. It also made the tractor work better, for the load was always balanced, making the tractor pull straight and with near perfect balance in draft and traction. That was an accomplishment since the tractor was already at a disadvantage with one rear wheel in the furrow at least 8 inches lower than the other. The wheel ' on the land' was equipped by me with a dual wheel to help balance weight and traction. Its effect was remarkable, as that outboard location provided maximum benefit. A more generous budget would have allowed for a semi-mounted plow, having all of the mentioned advantages and being much easier to operate.

NEW ERA

In the first several years of my farming career I used the grain binder and separator method for harvesting small grain. I did not own a grain binder, for I saw that its use would soon be outdated. I hired or borrowed one from neighbors in the interem. I first owned a used combine in about 1945. It was an Allis Chalmers All Crop Harvester. It was well designed but also well worn, so I traded it the next year for a new International model 52 combine. I combined a lot of grain and grass seed with it and wore it out over a period of more than ten years. That combine was both well designed and poorly designed. The cylinder drive was advanced for its time, as it was the first application of variable- radius belt sheaves that I know of on farm equipment. It was a variation of modern torque converter applications in common use today, built so cylinder speed could be controlled and changed at the will of the operator. Modern gear drive combines use that same system to control ground speed. [Most modern combines use hydrostatic ground drive transmissions, a superior system.] But other parts of that model 52 Harvester Thresher could have used improved design. It employed a Scoop Shovel type header, so called by the implement manufacturer because it was tapered to a smaller width at the rear to fit the width of the rest of the combine. It was a good system for a manufacturer who built combines, but a nemesis for a farmer in a field of tall grain that had lodged, which required that almost the full length of the crop had to be cut and funneled into that scoop shovel design. Bridging on the sides of the header then occurred, and that effectively stopped or slowed the harvest. Later addition of an auxilary reel helped, but did not fully cure that bottleneck.

The last pull type combine I owned was a well used Gleaner six foot machine which I obtained used in about 1960. That was a very good and well designed machine. I used it until I obtained my first self propelled combine. Its machinery was powered by an on-board Wisconsin.

GRAIN DRYING AND HANDLING

The first grain handling system I owned which was adequate for the job was the elevator corn crib we built in 1950. The crib width was seven feet on each side of the drive, making ear corn dry down more rapid and dependable than the standard eight foot width of most cribs in our area. That did result in loss of capacity, however. Truman Schrader helped us finish the building, and the mistake he made was in placing x-braces and horizontal braces every two feet, not leaving much room for corn. Of course the building was much stronger than conventional construction. I added railroad ties to each end at about the eight foot level, eliminating the common bulge many cribs had in the end walls after use and presure from stored corn forced

them outward. After 1970 when we built the first grain tank, or steel bin, we no longer used the ear corn storage areas for that purpose, and that is when we removed the crib siding and replaced it with solid "car siding", a tongue and grooved wood siding named because of its use for siding on rail cars. Later still in about 1985 we covered the wood siding with red painted steel siding. That made for a good-looking and weather- tight building.

The first grain bin we built was 24 feet in diameter and 16 feet high at the eaves, holding about 5500 bushels. It was equipped with a drying floor and grain dryer, with a ten horsepower fan and LP gas burner. We also installed a stirring auger which helped to equalize drying from top to bottom. But that equalizing was the greatest shortfall that in-bin drying unit possessed. The top grain layer-if there was more than two feet of grain in the bin- received all of the moisture from the lower levels of grain. A drying front had to progress upward until it reached the surface. As that event occurred, the lower layers of corn were considerably overdryed and there was little that could be done to correct it. We built bin #1 in 1970.

The stir auger system was an attempt to correct the problem but it applied the wrong technique, that of mixing wet upper layers to the dry lower layers of corn. Only in very slow drying methods did that work even poorly. With what was called equilibrium heat used to slowly dry the grain it was possible to very slowly dry a bin of grain evenly. The method was somewhat technical but it amounted to furnishing the proper temperature and humidity of air to the grain to attain the equilibrium needed to dry the grain to the desired moisture content. Theoretically the grain would never get any drier than the desired content, but it was painfully slow in drying a bin of corn, weeks being needed to accomplish the task. If the corn went into the bin in a high moisture state, the corn on the top of the bin, the last to be dried, would spoil before its turn came to be dried. I do not know what that number practically was, but the safe storage moisture had to be in the low twenty's when the corn was placed in the bin.

With those limitations in mind and the need to have a faster system to handle our production I added a batch dryer to our operation in 1975 or 1976 when I purchased the farm from Angela Rohret. We tried a Kansun hybrid dryer from Jim McCrabb which was made of two standard Kansun dryers, one stacked on top of the other. It was impossible to move it in its assembled form since it stood perhaps twenty-two or more feet high. I needed a unit we could move from one farm to the other, since we had storage on more than one place. McCrabb was obviously determined to sell me the unit, for he demonstrated it complete with an operator, Bill Bream. He furnished the unit for the whole season, so by paying him for the service, I gave him a forceful NO to the sale offer.

The stacked design of the dryer caused the lower section or unit to develop large wrinkles in the outer jacket, making it easy to say no to the sale. The unit simply was not adequately designed for the stacked configuration. The following year found Bill Bream in business for himself, and when he offered a Farm Fans model AB 8 unit with an integral holding tank which was mounted on transport wheels, it filled the bill for us, so I acquired it.

The AB 8 is a completely automatic unit which will operate so long as there is grain in the holding tank. It fills, drys, and refills automatically. We use it in what is called the dryeration mode, a system developed at Purdue University. This is how it works; Corn is dryed down to about 18 % moisture in the normal drying mode but the corn is not cooled in the dryer. The latent heat is allowed to remain in the batch of corn and the dryer dumps the grain in the bin hot where it is allowed to steep for about eight hours. That equalizes the moisture in the grain. Then the bin aeration fan is turned on, getting rid of the last two or three points of moisture simultaneously with the latent heat in the grain. Both time and drying efficiency is gained at once. It is doubly so since it is the last three points of moisture which is most difficult and costly to remove. That also frees fifteen minutes of cooling time in the dryer which the dryer applies to drying the next batch. Management is more critical, but the gas and time savings are substantial. Using this system we can dry about ten bushels, on average, with one gallon of LP gas. That is nearly twice as much corn dryed as compared with the conventional method. A half cent per bushel for electricity completes the drying cost.

A hail and wind storm in about 1978 (?) did considerable damage to the system. The auger which delivers corn from the dryer to the bin was destroyed, and the dryer control panel

was severely damaged by lightning. The timer was burned out, and the timer for the loading auger as well. After much delay in diagnosing the problems, which I had to do myself, we got the system back into operation. The Tipton company which sells them will not come this far to service them. Certain electricians are now gaining enough experience to do so. Steve Rohret is garnering considerable know-how, but so far I have not had to call on him.

HISTORY OF CORN PLANTERS ON THE SEELMAN FARM

You may be interested in seeing a list of the planters I have used and mostly worn out.

Planter #1 was that worthless one which had no accuracy, even after some personally added successful modifications. It was a two row horse pulled unit. I cannot recall the brand name, long since extinct.

Planter #2 was the International Harvester two row horse planter. It was the one I converted to tractor use. The conversion including shortening the tongue and using a bolt-on tractor hitch which raised the tongue to level the unit, necessary for proper depth control and accurate wire cross-checking. It was also the planter I used in the transition to power hill dropping when wire was no longer used. The conversion also included a lever extension which made it possible to raise and lower the planter from the tractor seat. I also tried a liquid fertilizer attachment on that planter with limited success. I used Me-Jon Liquid fertilizer in that applicator.

Planter #3 was a front mounted 2 row unit for the Farmall H. It too had wire check capability but I used it only in drill or power hill drop mode. It was raised and lowered by hydraulic power, a great improvement in operator safety and ease of operation. I obtained it used fom Palliotet Implement Co. in Riverside.

Planter #4 was my first four row planter. It was carried wholly by the tractor when in transport by the use of the added three point hitch on the Farmall H. It was a step back in seed handling from the IHC horse planter. The seed plates had too few cells, requiring too much plate speed for good accuracy. However, it was a maneuverable unit. That planter was built by Minneapolis Moline.

Planter #5 was a model 450 IHC tractor planter. I believe it still had runner openers, the last planter I owned with that feature. It had good seed handling systems but compared to later planters it had an inferior transport and frame design. It did have a fertilizer attachment, the first dry system on a four row planter which I owned.

Planter #7 was an IHC model 456 four row, the first rugged tractor planter with an adequate fertilizer unit. It had an inadequate marker control system which I replaced with an independent system controlled with separate hydraulic cylinders which I personally designed. It was equipped with disc openers, much better than the old runner system and the first I owned. I equipped it with a monitor and that was a great feature.

Planter #8 was a Model 400 IHC air planter with fertilizer, and it was factory equipped with a monitor. The greatest drawback was its inability to plant and cover in tough conditions. The air metering system was a definite improvement, and especially so when seed companies had moved to much higher prices for plate graded corn.

Planter #9 brings us up to date with the ownership since 1990 of a model 800 IHC planter, in my opinion the best planter on the market. My unit is equipped with the Model 900 updates. Some of the offerings of large planters provide choices of row widths with the touch of a lever. One such machine, called the Black Machine, has just been purchased by Ron Loan. But back to the 800. It has no-till capability unmatched by any other planter. Since I owned it I have been planting all of my corn and beans by that method. It will plant and cover seed in any manner of hard ground, closely controlling seed depth. And it will do it with out any attachments. The reason for its superior performance in those conditions is the staggered discs of the furrow openers, allowing the lead disc to penetrate hard ground and heavy crop residue where other planters cannot. That is a patented feature which no other planter can use. In addition to that, the air planter dependability over many years is far ahead of second best. Simplicity is the overriding quality of the air planting system.

The ability af that planter to plant and cover paid off in a big way this spring, 1996 when

I took off all of the trash whippers, avoiding any problems from the torrential rains we had soon after planting. The planter did in a very real way fool Mother Nature, she (large amounts of runoff water) not finding the planter rows. Had she found them, much soil would have been lost, and many crop seeds would have been washed out. Crop residue was neatly replaced over the rows and did an excellent job of protecting them.

There is an article in Nov. 96 FJ or SF magazine which introduces a new International planter with folding and narrow row capability comparable to any other offering. As with others, it can be formatted to plant in wide rows or narrow rows at the touch of a lever.

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MISINFORMATION BELIEVED

I consider my mother to have been very enlightened regarding tolerance and fair mindedness. There was a period late in her life when she was misled. It came from an ultra right wing of the Catholic Church in the form of some distorted views and lies which originated in a place called Bayside, New York. People controlling a printing press there went amok and covered a large range of issues, including the "renegade popes' illegal decision" to eliminate the Latin Mass and the "fact" that the Holocaust "never happened". My mother believed that last falsehood to the end. No doubt it had its roots in her gentle nature, she refusing to believe people were capable of generating such horror, and least of all the people of her origins.

My own view of such horrors is that they are made possible by the failure of most people to study history after they become mature adults. Were they to do so, the realization of certain facts would become apparent to them. Those facts are rooted in the Golden Rule. The most certain way to protect one's own rights is for all of us to protect others' rights and dignity. A founding father of our country said it well; "I may not agree with what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it". Therein also lies the solution to our country's racial problems.

Presently we see these truths being challenged by many people who should know better; these people calling themselves conservatives and protectors of our liberties. It is difficult to watch many who abuse their freedoms by irresponsible words and actions, but the solution to their excess and lack of truth is in exposing their false positions with the truth instead of denying their right to do so.

Liberal positions are being attacked today as we have not seen, but our country's founders were liberal to the core. That is why they stood out in history, and today that fact is being buried by those trying to protect their privileged positions. It required an uncommon amount of courage on the part of the Framers of the Constitution to attack the positions of privilege which were much more firmly entrenched then than they are now. The 'divine right of kings' was a tough habit to break. Breaking it was truly a liberal stance which was challenged every step of the path our forefathers took.

The disheartening fact of our society today is the re-establishment of a privileged elite. Big city living does not foster the kind of love for liberty which the frontier so ably developed. That elite group is not being challenged by anything approaching the degree which the pioneers did. This elite is allowed to benefit greatly without contributing anything important to society. Exploitation of workers is an integral part of those benefits.

As of the first of December, 1996 we had the opportunity to see Naples, Florida close up. It is a picture I am not proud of, with all of that wealth bunkered behind closed and locked gates. It seems to me that the wealthy lack a prime requisite of wealth, that of peace of mind. Without it one is poor indeed. In Naples, even those not so wealthy must emulate that insecurity with gates of their own.

U-HI SOCIAL LIFE

University High School did everything in fashion, for it was a showcase and learning tool for students in the College of Education. We had as a regular feature the services of a practice teacher in every class for at least two weeks each reporting period.

For our class partys we had the use of the facilities at the Iowa Memorial Union. I remember the pride we had in that advantage over other schools in the area, a step in making

snobs of us.Our Junior- Senior banquet was held in the River Room. The school administration saw to it that we had an orchestra for the event.

For me there was a bitter-sweet quality in it all, for I had neither the clothes nor the inclination to capitalize on whatever advantage that may have held. I remember having a date with a classmate for the Senior prom, and that turned into an embarrassing situation for us both. My date had wanted to be asked by another classmate, so neither she nor I were happy that night. I must give her credit for being civil, but barely. To spare her further embarassment in the unlikely event she should read this I will not record her name.

The setting, however, the building, the room, the river to the west, the music- were beautiful.

THE 1940 ARMISTICE DAY BLIZZARD

I am astonished by the torrent of events which befell our lot in such a brief time period at this time in our lives.

I had just graduated from High School in the spring of that year, and had launched headlong into my lifetime career of farming in a very short length of time. We had not yet moved to Cosgrove, but I had already planted a crop of corn on twenty acres of the land east of Cosgrove. We had borrowed a team of horses from Tony Klein, I think, to pick that corn that fall. I had been commuting from the place near Iowa City to do the farm work .

We had built a single corn crib in which we were storing the corn crop I was harvesting. A very beautiful fall day began that November 11, warm and sunny, with no hint of what was to follow. Late in the day a wall cloud approached from the northwest, and as it advanced a most severe snowstorm enveloped all of the Midwest. I had been picking corn that day, and as the weather worsened I quit and went home. Many duck hunters were caught in the open and not a few lost their lives as the temperature dived to levels unimagined a short time earlier.

I remember not being able to get back to Cosgrove Farm until several days later because of blocked roads. Ralph Klein was living on the farm since he was newly married and had it rented that year. It was fortunate that he was there to tend the horses.

An effect of that storm was the loss of many apple trees in Iowa because of the sudden drop in temperature. To date the Iowa apple industry has not recovered to its pre- November 11th production.

I remember the spot in that corn field where those horses, possessing a balky nature, had trampled much of the standing corn where they refused to pull the wagon with a partial load and making it necessary to turn around in the corn field to proceed up a less steep hill.

I recall that watering horses on the farm at that time was a very simple operation. The horses were led to a half-barrel next to the well which was filled by a pump handle operated pump. Today I tire just thinking of all the changes that I made to make that farm economically viable.

FIRST FARM IMPROVEMENT

The first farm improvement was to repair the brick lining at the top of the water well. I relaid the top several courses in mortar to secure them. The well then had to be cleaned.

The second improvement on the farm was purchasing a New Idea three horsepower cast iron gasoline engine for use in pumping water from that 50 foot dug well. A salvaged belt driven cast iron pump jack completed the combination. However, as the farm operation and number of livestock increased in size, water production from that well soon became inadequate. That lack became critical when electricity came to the farm in 1943 after a jet pump was installed in the well. Dennis O'Leary helped me with that. He was an artisan and farmer who could do anything, and at that time was eighty years of age. At that time I had also installed water pipe to the livestock lots.

Later, I used that same pump jack on the well on the south place. However, it was first necessary to repair that well. The brick lining of the top four or five feet had collapsed, partially filing the well with brick and earth. I had Otto and Dean Rohret help me when I cleaned it. The first step was to rebuild the top brick lining, I having previously done that before the day we cleaned it. Using a tripod, rope and five gallon bucket, we went as deep as it was possible, the

limiting factor being the rapidity which the well filled with fresh water and my inability to stay ahead of it. I was able to clean it about four or five feet into the wood curbing, which started at the base of the brick lining at about 15 to 18 feet. When done I rode the bucket to the surface, and found that the rope had kinked many times at the tractor clevis, cutting through all of the strands except one tiny remnant. It could not have lasted through more than one added cycle.

I used a one horsepower Lausen engine very successfully on that pump, watering cattle on pasture for many years. A wire from the spark plug to the water tank full- water level served as automatic shut-off.

Today Tom is using that well for all of his water needs. It is an excellent source, as it refills very rapidly during and after use. The water tastes good and the mineral content is low.

PAYBACK

This year, 1996, started in an atypical way. A small inner voice urged caution, so I took the trash whippers off the planter before going to the field. I was also more cautious in administering no-till operations. That included not using anhydrous ammonia, applying nitrogen in liquid form to avoid the ammonia applicator knife slots.

I could not have been more pleased. Those who plow-planted and even those who used conservation tillage without contouring had major damage. Soil erosion was extreme, including severe crop wash-out. I am reminded once more why I have been contouring these fifty years. Some neighbors' fields have three or more gullys for each crop row. They were; tractor and implement tracks, planter marker, and planter seed trench.

That small voice was no doubt fueled by the knowledge that we have not had severe erosive rains at the most vulnerable time in many years, making the odds for that occurrence more likely in 1996. The trash whippers I used previously and removed are the Yetter trash whippers, small finger wheels about twelve inches in diameter, two per row, which remove crop residue from the area over the seed. Both of the fingers operate at about a thirty degree angle to the direction of travel which picks up and removes from the row most of the crop residue. The purpose is to reduce the effects of alelopathy on new seedlings which depresses growth; shading of the ground by the residue also lowers soil temperatures and depresses growth.

The non-use of trash whippers protected the seed in all of my plantings. Seed simply was not washed out. Erosion was reduced to a very small minimum. The clean path provided by the trash whippers also opens a way for water to flow during heavy rains, causing erosion in the place where it can do the most damage in areas where rows are not precisely on the contour.

Alelopathy is the poisoning or autotoxicity caused by crop residue which acts negatively on new same crop seedlings the following year.

On the tenth of May I dumped 1.5 inches from the rain gauge. That was a drought buster, for till that time we had received almost no rain since we planted oats in early April. New oat growth had been spotty and minimal. The next morning I dumped another 4 inches. One day later I dumped another 1.5 inches.

HOW TO ESTABLISH ENVIRONMENTAL ATTITUDES OR PULLING ONESELF UP BY HIS BOOTSTRAPS

It is said that experience is a dear teacher. So it proved to be in my learning how to reclaim the worn out and badly eroded land which I had under my stewardship. Many moves were required to bring our farm back to productivity after depleting and erosive practices allowed it to wash away. Previously mentioned was the seventy acres-more or less- that was badly eroded on the ninety acre farm. In addition to that, twenty acres of the west forty on the south 120 acre tract had suffered the same fate. Great Uncle Matt, Hen's brother, once told me that Hen must have had a grudge against that field --he having rented it often to neighbors for corn production. Causes for soil loss were the universal practice at that time to plant corn 'on the square' regardless of the direction of the slope. An additional contributor was the use of corn planter wire which established a planting pattern that could be cultivated in two directions. No matter which way the crop was planted, the consequence was that cultivation

laid the land open to intense erosion on hilly slopes. This is the system which I used the first five years. That, and the prior intensive row crop planting of that ninety acres, not giving the land a chance to heal itself under grass hay and pasture crops, caused the devastation which occurred to that point.

A fortuitous situation existed on eighty acres of the south place, for my grandfather used it exclusively for pasture for his herd of Angus cattle. When I started to farm it the fertility had built up under pure bluegrass for many years. A further plus was my switch to contour farming soon after. The accumulated fertility on that eighty allowed me to rest the eroded land on the ninety until I could re-establish its fertility.

This is how it was accomplished; Since the land was too depleted to grow a corn crop, we had it limed to correct its acidity, necessary for the good growth of legumes, whereupon I plowed the land and planted alfalfa. After several years of hay production and spreading livestock manure, especially on the poorest areas, it was ready for a contoured crop of corn. In 1946 those fields yielded 100 bushel corn, when not many farmers were getting yields that high on the best land. Ever after that land is fragile, subject to erosion, and in need of careful application of soil conserving practices. It was also necessary for me to spend untold hours in repairing and seeding gullys on that eroded land. See addenda, p 35.

BETTER MACHINERY

A word is needed here to describe the technology that made no till workable. In 1990 I purchased a model 800 International planter. That planter has the capability to successfully plant a crop in any nature of hard ground. That model planter is still the only one that can do it, made possible by the staggered arrangement of the disk openers.One blade leads the other by about an inch, providing much more penetrating power. Other makes must use attachments to make it possible. True, I use attachments on the 800, but they are for the purpose of making a more favorable seed environment, not to plant that seed. At present the only attachment I am using is trash whippers in cornstalk land when following with corn. They help to remove cornstalks over the row, helping to reduce the adverse effects of alelopathy, or autotoxicity. No till planting conditions produce a certain amount of abuse to the planter which would not exist in conventional planting conditions. It is important to slow down, and to maintain the parts that produce and close the seed trench-with little else needed maintenance-wise. Those parts just mentioned have to be in contact with hard ground and are necessarily subjected to greater strains. The planter is built ruggedly enough to stand it, but the wear on the earth metal and opener bearings has to be countered by proper maintenance.

I am adding this line on 5-24-96 to say that I did indeed wear the opening coulters on the planter completely out while planting corn which was completed on about May 8,'96. They failed after just starting to plant soybeans, and I found some of them worn so thin that pieces of the coulters actually broke out of the disks. A top of the head estimate is that the $350 it took to replace them probably saved $3500 dollars in wear and tear on tractors, tillage tools, tires, and diesel fuel had I planted by conventional tillage procedures.

I have owned the planter at this writing six years, and it was several years old when I purchased it, so that much wear and that length of coulter life is really very good performance.

EARTHWORM CULTURE

More needs to be said about earthworms. The beneficial effects of these lowly creatures have been ignored too long by midwest agriculture. They require no investment in costly equipment, no expenditure of diesel fuel, and less fertilizer. Need more be said about the reasons for their neglect? The qualities just mentioned are anathema for our entrenched agricultural supply system. Earthworms do a far more perfect job of soil aeration than tillage at no expense, their castings enrich the soil, and organic matter content goes up rapidly where they live. Why do they need to be repopulated? Tillage of any kind depopulates them. It destroys their bores and buries their food, which is crop residue. Jim Kinsella, an earthworm advocate in Illinois, says that even one tillage pass does lasting damage to their populations. When cropland is in grass or is no tilled their numbers rebound. The sharp rise in organic matter under no till has

not been explained, but is a safe bet it is connected to high earthworm population. Researchers marvel at the organic matter rebound, which has been steadily declining since the white man has farmed the prarie. The use of herbicides necessary for no till has no effect on earthworms. One corn insecticide, Lorsban, is safe for earthworms. It also happens to have the safest rating for human applicators.

There has been an observed lag in good results immediately following the switch to no till. After about five years, the lag disappears and even now it has not been explained. I predict it will be found that the rebound coincides with re-establishment of the earthworm population.

A very late news scoop. We had torrential rains just two days ago (today is May 11 1996) getting 7 inches in two days, which ended our mini-drought.Old man's creek was out of banks, and I found many earthworms on the road next to submerged areas. I now have a supply which I will add to the fields. I collected them at daybreak .

In Jim Kinsella's experience he tells us that it is necessary to artificially reseed earthworms on the land, since they will not readily do so on their own. The involved distances are too great for them to traverse. Unseeded land remains free of earthworms so benefits are not enjoyed. Not seedng them can lose valuable time.

REBUILDING THE LAND

The farm operation began to recover when the land started to heal, but there was an immense amount of work to be done to make the farm operation what it should be. No standing fences existed as far as the eye could behold. No lot fences, no standing field fences, no standing border fences. That included poor fence on the eighty acres of my mother's inherited land which required removal before new fence could be built. One hundred seventy acres of land had to be fenced before the livestock operation could successfully get off the ground. We had both cattle and hogs, and they each presented a separate set of challenges as applied to fence.

The first need was to get a stockpile of lumber established and fence posts cut. We were soon to be at war so even if there had been enough money to buy supplies at lumber yards, very soon it became unavailable.

We were able to get wire which the lumber yards had on hand and that met our most pressing needs. Charles Graef had many timber acres of the Ensminger timber south of Cosgrove and wanted to convert some of it to farmland, so we purchased the standing timber on one acre. The price was almost nothing by today's standards, $50, and from that acre came the lumber for all of the lot fences we needed, the frames for the chicken house and machine shed, many of the fence posts for the miles of fence needed, and we used a lot of firewood to heat the house. Many hours of work converted those trees to the various wood products mentioned. I did most of the work with a one man crosscut saw and an axe. That saw is still in the machine shed at the west place.

The job of hauling many logs to the sawmill in Windham or on Kite Knowling's place on the Black Diamond road was also done with a wagon gear and tractor as well as hauling the newly sawn lumber to the farm. Since this lumber was all oak, (dry oak could not readily accept nails since it was too hard) it had to be used before it dried out, and Schrader [the carpenter earlier mentioned] used some of it to build the chicken house and machine shed, which have all oak framing and sheathing. We hired a man named Joe Panzer for a short period to help in cutting trees.

At the stage of farm technology covered by this time period, the only material commonly in use for lot fencing was "one by six" oak boards, and that explains why we needed fence lumber.

Doing that much work with hand tools made it necessary to own and know how to use saw sharpening and setting tools, for much more work could be done with a properly sharpened saw. The saying, "the work tells you how to do it" applies with force to saw sharpening skills.

Needless to say, building all that fence whetted my fence building skills. I recall one spring day, the ground being moist and prime for digging, having dug 43 holes in 75 minutes including any brief rest period I may have taken. They were a full 30 inches deep, more like 32 or 33 inches. One hundred four seconds per hole. A Westclock pocket watch did the timing. The only tool used was a long handled digging spade.

MINIMUM TILL-LEARNING MORE

When we lost Allan I was again faced with short labor to run the farming operation. We had a fair hog and cattle operation with no labor saving buildings, and it seemed that we could save time by eliminating mouldboard plowing from the tillage operation. That first year with Coleen's help we got the crops planted and learned how to do so without mouldboard plowing. I still feel guilty for putting an unwieldy and difficult to manage unit in her hands. The tractor was short of power and not well balanced, making it difficult to drive. The imbalance was caused by a three point sprayer mounted on the tractor's three-point hitch, to apply herbicide while disking the land. Thank you Coleen for getting us past a difficult time. You were always more than willing to do anything, no matter how difficult.

That year we used the disk exclusively for corn stalk land planted to corn. It worked well considering the shortcomings of the equipment and that was at a time when we did not have the larger Massey Ferguson tractors, so horsepower was not plentiful. We taxed the ability of that 670 MM beyond its design limits. In addition to pulling a 15 foot disk we had a 275 gallon tank mounted on the three point hitch for one trip application of herbicide. That required the application of weights to the front to balance the tractor. We expected the tractor to carry a heavy load in addition to pulling one in hills. The disk was a full load in itself for that tractor when applied to our steep hillsides. It may sound as if I were placing too much emphasis on hillsides, but the operation of our equipment would have been easy on level land. After one or two years of this, we got the MF 1105 tractor. It turned out that I never did use the larger tractors to mouldboard plow.

For the record, the MM 670 tractor was rated at 73 horsepower on the power take off and perhaps 67 horsepower on the drawbar. The MF 1105 was rated at 100 Horsepower on the pto, while the 1135 was rated at 115 horsepower, more difference in power than the F-12's total.

FARMING WITH MASSEY FERGUSON POWER

The advent of the Seelman farm operation to larger tractor power was done in a gradual evolutionary way, not big steps. A reason was to transition to larger machinery without the need to make those purchases of larger farm machinery all at once. The low profit margins in farming make it necessary to limit debt. Farmers who did not make that a major consideration very often went bankrupt. The MF 1105 tractor did not have so much extra power that it would have been necessary to make those purchases immediately to maintain operating efficiency. For that reason the 1105 proved to be a good buy. It also had good fuel economy, a very welcome feature for any tractor. That being the first diesel tractor on the Seelman farm, I soon learned what good fuel economy was. Compared to the MM 670 gasoline tractor which was average, that MF1105 does do twice as much work for a dollar's worth of fuel.

If conservation of cash had not been a top priority, it would have been wise to buy a large tractor first. Later when Jim purchased an 1135 tractor and subsequently made the decision not to farm. I purchased it from him. The additional power it has over the 1105 is impressive. It handles loads easily which the 1105 must struggle to handle. Now that I am no-tilling I find the extra power to be not nearly so important.

When I first had the first M F tractor we had purchased a chisel plow which we used in lieu of the mouldboard plow. At first I had a fully mounted Graham Hoeme twelve foot chisel, but that proved to be abusive to the tractor. It was a heavy load for the three point hitch to lift. On level ground that system would have worked, but on our steep sidehills the strain on the three-point hitch was very great. The chisel plow was heavy, and the centering blocks (on the tractor's three -point hitch) were the receivers of much wear and abuse. It also required many front end weights to balance the tractor by keeping the tractor front end on the ground, thereby lifting the plow instead of the front end of the tractor. It was such a strain on the tractor that it was necessary to equip it with eight bolt front wheels and hubs, the six bolt wheels having been broken repeatedly before replacement with the heavier ones. The wise change was to add wheels and tongue to the chisel, making it a pull type implement. That eliminated abuse to the tractor, and we made this change some two or three years later. When we metamorphosed that machine we also increased its cutting width to some fifteen feet. By purchasing a special hitch we were

able to take advantage of a feature which was furnished by MF engineers called Pressure Control. Through use of the three point hitch some of the pull-type implement's weight could automatically be transferred to the tractor. That solved the traction problems which would have been caused by pulling that larger implement.

RELEARNING FARMING

I had tried no till planting of corn two different times earlier, probably in the 1970's. The first attempt was hiring Calvin Colony to plant about ten acres of alfalfa land from which I had just harvested a crop of hay. That was according to the best recommendations at the time. Calvin had a heavy Kinze planter which was supposed to be the best equipment for no till. The planter failed to plant the seed deep enough, did not cover adequately, and did not provide good seed-to soil contact. In addition to that, no till planting following removal of a hay crop was very unsound culture for several reasons.

Several years later, the second attempt was in soybean land planted to corn. It was a failure, chiefly because I did not own a planter which had no till planting capability. The result was that the corn was not planted deeply enough nor was it covered well. I had a model 400 IHC air planter which had inadequate opening and covering equipment.

After careful study I determined that no till deserved another test, which I carried out in 1990 after those two previous failures on a small scale. The most important part of that decision was in the proper preparation for the change, which was to get a model 800 IHC planter. That planter does the job because of an inherent design exclusive to it. It needs no attachments. There are compelling reasons indeed, not to use any attachments, ever.

For a variety of reasons I find it important to set up the planter in such a way which leaves the field as undisturbed as possible after planting. Note these; 1. Even if planted on the contour it is necessary to camouflage the corn rows and seed trench to prevent water, in the case of heavy rains, from finding the rows and washing them out. 2.Weed control is better in soil which is as undisturbed as possible. 3.Soil moisture is conserved, making it easy for the newly planted seed to find adequate moisture. 4.After initial no till adjustments which the soil makes when given the chance, alelopathy is no longer the disadvantage it is at the beginning, according to some people. I can vouch for that benefit. Sidewall smearing also ceases to be an issue when the soil regains its tilth after several years of no tilling, and I can vouch for that.

The needed encouragement to try the new method came from a field day sponsored by the Soil Conservation Service under the guidance of Wayne Peterson, the technician at Iowa City. He took a busload of farmers to the farm of Jim Kinsella, a no till advocate east of Bloomington, Illinois. The focus of that exposure was so favorable that I became an enthusiastic practitioner and promoter. Since observing the effects I confidently state that until using no till I accomplished nothing of a positive nature in soil conservation while row-cropping. True, fertility was built during years the land was rotated to grass, but the land could barely hold its own in the years it was row cropped, even though it was contoured. I have further taken the step of seeding the land with earthworms. For health reasons I have not done this for two years, but this year I intend to resume the practice. Earthworms are plentiful for the taking in parking lots in Iowa City, at break of day after April to June rainy nights. Earthworm farming methods have also been encouraged by Kinsella.

Further reasons why sidewall smearing problems are solved; The seed trench sidewall has shown that tendency early in no till operations. As the soil begins to regain its original texture it "gets over" that habit, probably because the soil develops more of a granular, or "flocking " quality. That quality was destroyed by heavy tillage in the past. The increase in organic matter which is a direct result of no till strongly improves the granular quality of the soil. These reasons are always given by marketers for the need to use devices which remove crop residue from over the row: alelopathy caused by crop residue, especially in corn following corn; shading of the soil surface causing the soil to remain too cold for good germination; cited is need to prepare the land for uniform depth control of the seed; need to loosen the soil over the seed for better seed covering. My experience has, at this point, eliminated that fear.

MOTHER'S LETTER TO BERNICE-1933

When we went to Steve Ebel's place in January,1997 to get pictures which are wanted by the Seelmanns in Germany, Steve gave us a whole box filled with many pictures of the past which were of our family. I did find the picture of Conrad and Anna Maria Froehling Seelmann in that box, the only one of them in existence, so far as I know. I found the following letter in that material. (The name Froehling was supplied by the Seelmanns in Germany.)

The above written by Harry Seelman in Feb. 1997.

Tiffin, Ia.
Apr. 2-33

My Sweet Girlie;-I am glad you got the box of cookies. I was wondering if any were broken. I sent the blue dress yesterday. You ought to get it tomorrow. I had washed it, and it was wet when I sent the others so couldn't send it then. I am sorry you can't wear the bronze dress. We will have to make it over I guess. I thought maybe with the brown, but we'll see later.

Helen Meade had their baby baptized today. I spoke to her about you kids wanting to work, and she said yes. Rob told her and she would be glad to have one of you, but didn't say anything about wages. I will have to go to see her. Gina wants to work too. I don't know where I can find a safe place for her too. I went to see Hogan today, but he wasn't home. Mrs. H. said he never hires a teacher till after their meeting July 1, but suppose he will give it to her again. He is sweet on her anyway. It isn't her father that is director but her brother and not her home school. I stopped at Mary Ball's too, to see if she wanted help this summer, and get a line up on the school situation. Gina heard her girl is leaving, but Mary said she doesn't know how long she will stay, and then Helen spoke for the place. Mrs. Jim Meade is sick again, and wants full help now, but a girl would have to be experienced and take full responsibility. And I heard that she has to do the washing on the board. Too hard for the pay they give now. I guess the goose is cooked on the school deal, but I will try to get both of you a place for the summer. I didn't know Gina felt so about it too. She doesn't say much but today she said she would rather work anywhere than stay here this summer. I don't know where to go next. I guess Marguerite H. wants help this spring, but Helena Miller will stay there. I don't imagine she would be very nice to work for. Mrs. Rob M. has a girl now, but the way Mary talked she isn't satisfactory, and she will let her go as soon as school is out & she can get one of you. Gina will be out May 12. When will you get loose? Shall I let Gina go there as soon as school is out, and then you take it when you come? I wish I could get another safe place. Will try a while yet. I sure feel for you kids.

Gilbert drilled or bored a well on the Colo. place. It didn't cost as much as I expected. $10.00 for material and $11.00 for work which comes out of the next payment.

Clark wrote that he had to fix the garage over into a place to live in order to rent it. Floor and tin pipe for stove, he also wants a pump. He will get $10.00 a month but of course everything will have to go right back into the place for a while, and then he won't live there in winter. So there is some pull there too. I do wish things would go better for us. Hope and pray it will some time. Do you feel well?

Easter will soon be here. Sorry we can't be together then. It won't be long till vacation. Hate to see you go back there next year, but this year passed quickly, and next year will too. You know when things bothered Thomas A Kempis he consoled himself by saying, "This too , shall pass away."

Well, honey I know you pray hard for us, and our business affairs. These hard times are given us for a purpose. We must learn all we can. Have patience and hope and pray for better days.

Lots of Love, Mama

The following by Harry;

I find mixed feelings in writing this epilogue, a painful task for me. The pain and

frustration, desperation and feelings of helplessness in the above letter literally leap off the page. Angela had in later years helped Lucille, our family, and me on many occasions. We found in her a true ally. But nothing can obliterate the terrible hardship she caused my mother and her family, which was us; Bernice, Regina, Esther and I.

To begin with, when our family returned to Iowa my grandmother Julia and grandfather Henry were living at home, still operating the farm where they lived all of their married life. My aunts Marie, Angela, Agnes and Mabel had for the most part been living their own lives with jobs elsewhere.

They were the vanguard of liberated women, the first generation. Sister De Lourdes-Julia, was of course long since a Fransiscan and part of the order. The aunts still called the Rohret Home their own. It was at once their wellspring, their vacation retreat from the world, and all else which a parent's home is.

My recollection is that Marie, though the oldest, was the last to leave when she undertook the discipline of nurse's training at Mercy Hospital, Iowa City. I remember her graduating in perhaps the Fifty's. If that is in error it might even have been in the Sixty's. Earlier Marie had taught school in the schoolhouse which is still located on the farm. When it was a school it was located on the Louis Rohret farm now occupied by the PatGreen family, the building then having been located across the road from the Wehrle tenant house.(It is the farm located immediately west of our place on the IWV).

Angela had been living and working in Sandusky,Ohio, nursing at a hospital.

Agnes had been teaching,I believe, in Porto (Puerto) Rico.

Mabel had already been through nurse's training before she had been married in 1929.

Upon the death of Julia in 1932 Angela saw fit to come back home to live. Her plan soon became obvious to us, and that was to oust us from her parent's home. I was ten years old and the nature of the situation was most plain to me. Many occurrances of her conflict with my mother surfaced, and my recollections are of my sisters- especially Regina- siding with my mother in most unpleasant exchanges.

On one especially lucid instance I remember my grandfather being in the thick of the fight. It must have been painful for him, for he did not like that kind of confrontation. This particular event occurred after we had already tried to make it go on our own, having been defeated and finding it necessary to again live at my grandparents' home.

I remember my mother saying something to the effect-after a bitter attack by Angela- that we must again move out to live in our own place. Angela retorted that we had tried that tack before. My Grandfather then replied that Angela had also done that- he referring to her outburst- before, and that she would do well to stop it.

It was, then, this backdrop that my sisters were reacting so vehemently against, they not wanting to live at home again when faced with those conditions. And it explains my mother's desperate attempts to at once hold her family together and disperse it.

I find that letter my Mother wrote to Bernice to be the most defining of any work I have come upon to date of that dark period in our history. I wish to again say how the desperation she was living literally leaps off the pages of that letter. The money for Bernice's college tuition was borrowed from Ottumwa Heights College which Bernice paid back after she had a teaching job.

The reference she made to Clark was in regard to the lot in Boulder-later traded to Leo Rohret for his "equity" in the Section 18 farm. Clark was the person who was tending that place for her. Mother has documented most of this in her memoirs. Read later chapters for an account of Leo Rohret's "equity" in that farm.

PATE SALE

Ed Pate, a farmer who farmed southwest of Iowa City, was killed by a corn shredder accident in the late thirtys. We attended his farm auction and got the high bid on a hayrack, a mower , planter, etc. and it being a muddy day, the dirt road was badly torn up. Several days later I endeavored to get the purchases with the tractor after a sharp cold spell, freezing the ground thoroughly. That road was about as rough as anything can get, and although I proceeded slowly, the front bolster of the tractor was sheared by a particularly large rut, allowing the front

end of the tractor to fall to the ground. It was necessary to have it replaced before the tractor could be moved.

A wear bushing was located at the bottom of the front end casting. The walls of that bushing were 5/16 of an inch thick. The manufacturer knew of the weakness, and the repair, removing the bushing and replacing the broken shaft with a new one 5/8 of an inch greater in diameter at that point, effectively solved the problem. No more trouble at that point was experienced. The tractor was that first one we owned, a Farmall F-12. See chapter 2 for a full description of its capabilities and shortfalls.

Jury Duty

I have been called for jury service a number of times. I served on only about two trials in all of the times I have been called. One was a damage case as a result of a car accident. The other was a matter which I cannot recall.

The memorable events were two cases which went to trial, but were settled out of court after each jury of which I was a member was selected. In both cases the mendacity of the court was shameful, for the jury waiting for the trial to start was lied to by the judge. In both cases the judge said we were waiting for a key witness before the trial could begin. The truth was that the cases were both being negotiated. They were both settled before the trials could begin. The judge then announced to the jury in each case that it was settled out of court, and he did not apologize for the lie either time. I am sure the two judges were different men.

I have thought about those cases many times. I pose the question thus; If one cannot depend on a judge and the court system to be honest, who can one trust? It was a matter of little consequence, but if the stakes had been high, would not the incentive to lie be much greater? If I had seen a lie by the court only once I may not have been so interested in that lie. The pattern was too obvious to ignore.

REMEMBERING ALLAN

December 1, 1992 Foreword Addition 3-1-96

The rapid passage of time forces one to see the need to write down memories. It has been twenty-one years since Allan was last with us. That is a longer period of time than he lived. A life as noteworthy as his should be noted. I still feel inadequate for that task. So it is with the knowledge that words on paper can never do justice to any life; nevertheless, it is necessary to write them. The question of how to organize this material brings to mind a chronological approach, with flashbacks .

With the inadequacy of one person's memory in mind, I invite family members and friends to join the attempt.

We are most fortunate to have a story of Allan written by my Mother, titled Allan's Last Day. I will include it in these writings. We have a handwritten original which she put in a neatly packaged notebook.

In remembering Allan's early life, both his joys and his hardships come to mind; his first bb gun, and the abandonment of a personal habit in order to get it. His determination to learn how to swim; those cold summer mornings when he once told me, after coming home from a lesson still blue from cold, "I feel like I won't ever get warmed up again." His diminutive size. He didn't grow much until he was a junior in High school. He grew in two years from 4 feet 6 inches to over six feet. Not bad for two years!

Once his playfulness got him in trouble with his dad. There was a wagon load of corncobs parked near the chicken house. He- and I suspect one or more of his sisters-made corncobs fly, and unloaded the top of that load onto the ground. His father caught only him at the scene, and told him to reload them. He willingly complied while his dad went to the field with a tractor. Upon returning some time later, Dad found him still loading a few remaining cobs. His father had a pang of remorse at the severity of the punishment, and told the chastened but compliant seven year old that the job was satisfactorily completed.

Perhaps it was when Allan was an early teenager that we did some hand fishing in the floodwaters of Old Man's Creek. Ten or more neighbors participated on Earlis Rohret's property. We fished pools which were cut off from the main channel as the water receeded, and then ate the catch which we cooked by campfire on the bank. Allan hugely enjoyed the outing, saying repeatedly that it was the most fun he ever had.

Allan's small size until his junior year made him an unlikely candidate for sports, as well as the problem of distance and the difficulty of providing a car for practice. Not once did he ever complain about that lack. At Regina the only sport then available was basketball. After he was out of high school he did play some basketball at the Cosgrove gym, and it was my observation that he had some talent for the game.

As with any father who is trying to make a living, I lacked the time and energy to fully enjoy my family. As Allan became older he sensed this. He often initiated a plan for his brothers and sisters, both at work and at play, and helped to carry it out. I remember his authoritarian but kindly way in getting his brothers and sisters to proceed with a project. It always gave me a good feeling to know that here was a young man who truly had the welfare of his family at heart. I would like his brothers and sisters to add their own experiences to this. My regret is not having told him how I felt about his ability to do better at that than I could.

When he became a teenager he acquired by birthday or Christmas present a 20 gauge single shot shotgun. Of course he was very proud of it and I remember the first time he used it. Several people were here to hunt pheasant and I invited him to go with us. He declined, saying that he certainly would not get anything with all that competition. I persuaded him to come anyway. It turned out that he was the only one who got a bird. That experience launched him on the way to being a very good and enthusiastic hunter.

Later, he carried a gun on the MM tractor while hauling grain from the combine. He was so quick that he was able to stop the tractor and shoot almost every pheasant that flew. As everyone who knows pheasant habits is aware, that situation gives one very little time. The last year Allan was with us he said he counted 138 bagged pheasants for our table and neighbors.

I remember a self taught acrobatic trick Allan mastered when he was ten or twelve. I

wish I could remember in exact detail the nature of the trick. It looked to be impossible. From lying on his back on the davenport, using the recoil of the seat springs, he could do a flying summersault to a sitting position. Does any one remember if this is an accurate description? Has any one else in your acquaintance been able to do this?

When Chris and Allan reached high school graduation the principal imposed a requirement for graduation which Allan viewed as unreasonable. I don't remember its nature. It had nothing to do with grades or academic achievement because he had good grades. Allan held his ground and did graduate!

Like many men of his generation, he was faced with being drafted for service in the Vietnam war. Rather than wait for that call, he enlisted in the National Guard where he hoped Vietnam duty would be delayed or averted. He cheerfully went for basic training, telling us that it would be a vacation. He told us that we would be the ones that must really work. His homesickness was immediate and lasted the entire six months of his training. It did not impair his performance, but manifested itself in the letter he sent us for each day of the entire six months. When he arrived home he was often asked what he intended to do with his life. He always said, "I've looked around and the best place I found is right here, so here I'll stay!.

He learned and grew up while he was in basic. As all kids, before basic he would rather ride than walk even for short distances. After basic there were occasions when we needed a tractor that was in the field. I often offered to drive him to the tractor, but he usually said, "I'll run over after it. No big deal".

Allan had a way of making one look at oneself. I often overmanaged and excessively explained details of our work. He often brought me up short by simply exclaiming "Duh!".

While he was in basic, Allan sustained a very bad ankle sprain. Though he was on crutches, he insisted on performing his training duties. We received a letter after his death from one of his training buddies, who explained how he earned the admiration of the whole company for his devotion to duty.

The equipment we had for feedmaking comprized a stationary feed mill and two wagons. One wagon was for whole grain and the other was to receive the ground feed from the mill. Grinding livestock feed always involved shoveling the grain by hand into the feed mill. It was not a smooth operation, for it involved loading a wagon with grain, locating the wagons with a tractor, and belting the tractor to the feed mill. When the feed was processed, the procedure had to be reversed. When we finally obtained a feed grinder-mixer, it was Allan's pride and joy, for it made that chore so much easier and faster. He was eager to do that job thereafter.

A best friend in high school and afterward was Tom Kriz. They loved to be together. Tom was so terribly affected by Allan's death that he [to my knowledge] never found another close friend. I know Tom always felt a heavy responsibility for Allan's death.

The most defining part of Allan's gentle nature was his refusal to use profanity or crude language, and his discouraging its use by others. He often made me wish I did not.

What have I not said? It seems that I should just be getting started, and here I am closing.

The following is an excerpt from a letter I sent to my sister Regina, which she included in the Seelman family history, dated sometime in 1971. .

We are partially consoled by the confidence that Al accomplished his life's work--that of saving his soul. He was a good man, and since he has accomplished this, it is all that really matters.

We who were so close to him pray and feel sure that his life's example and tragic death can and will be a dynamic force for good to all who knew him and us.

I know that, had you known Al the man, you would have liked him and what he was. He had courage in abundance. He was totally honest. He honored responsibility first of all. He loved hard work, but would not work unnecessarily on Sunday and discouraged all around him from doing so! He was not petty and discouraged this trait in others. Yet he was compassionate and forgiving to a fault to those he loved. He was, of course, many more things.

Here I am making him out to be perfect! Of course he wasn't, but the balance was so much in his favor that it overwhelms us, as we pray it will his God.

Of course the way we can go on is to build walls around this grief. They keep crumbling. God averts many tragedies for all of us, especially when we pray from our hearts.

The following was added by Regina;

"We feel sure that all our beloved family who have left this life are together in God's beautiful home, where no sorrow can ever touch them again. "

In those years when Allan was with us, We were doing Angela's chores and tending the place. He thoroughly enjoyed doing that and often checked things on his own.

I should mention the Chevelle Super Sport car that he loved. I can't even remember the model year; Kids,help me. Was it a '69? Also, the loving care it received. Often the yard was full of his friends, each one caring for his car and receiving help from everyone else.

3-1-97

The land was parched and the weather very warm that early summer. On the eve of the fateful day Allan and Tom had camped at the edge of the field on our land east of Cosgrove. They woke too late for attendance at first Mass at St. Peters, and after talking to his mother he and Tom went to Iowa City. A heavy thunderstorm developed, soon covering the highway with water. As happens under those conditions a slippery film formed from oil and rubber deposits on the road surface. Tom's Chevy Camaro had been equipped with oversize tires which created the conditions setting up the accident. The light weight of the car, the oversized tires, and slippery road surface combined to cause the car to waterplane and slide broadside into the oncoming lane of traffic, passenger side leading. An oncoming car struck theirs at the left door, invading the space where Allan was sitting, killing him instantly. (I have only now summoned the courage to print the facts of the accident).

I have often remembered how Allan was concerned about the mini- drought we experienced in the weeks before his death. Hayfields which were harvested in the weeks before that July 4th were still as bare as when they were mowed because of lack of moisture. More than once in that period Allan asked me what I thought would happen, thereby expressing his concern. There is irony in the fact that the two inch rain which broke that drought also destroyed a most beautiful flower of the earth: a flower overflowing with love for his land and his people.

Allan Ray Seelman
By Barbara Ann Reiter
May 10, 1990

Standing by the large pine tree in the early spring brings back so many thoughts. It has been 18 years. Now the hopes and dreams are gone but the memories are still there.

Seems like whenever I come here the grass is mowed and sounds of nature are surrounding me. Robins, blue jays, and cardinals are all busy getting food for their young; slimy purple-brown earthworms are being pulled out of the ground. A grove of trees supplies the cover for so many of nature's little furry creatures. The shade of the trees and the wind whispering through them gives a feeling of serenity. The marble grey stone with his name and the dates reminds us of what a short time we had to know and love him.

Our family does not celebrate the 4th of July in the traditional way. The family, all 38 of us, attends early Mass on that day and remembers. All of us have our own memories and some of those memories we share as a family.

It is hard to forget the time Mary and Allan had just had baths and were "supposed" to be brushing their teeth. Instead they sneaked out of the house and decided to seek an adventure. For my little sister Mary, doing what she wasn't supposed to be doing was a way of life. We know that Allan merely went along for the ride. The night before it had rained, so muddy puddles of water were standing everywhere. Mary and Allan decided to take advantage of all this water. They covered their little round cherub faces with mud; all you could see was their black eyes with the white pupils. Allan was a toehead and Mary had black hair but they looked so identical with all that mud on their faces. Photographs are so wonderful because I don't know if you remember the incident as much as the image on paper. Mother in her infinite wisdom was able to take a picture of the two little earth creatures before cleaning them up.

With a large family of twelve, forteen including my parents, it was difficult to go any place without being noticed--especially church. We always sat close to the front of the church so we weren't distracted. Did Mother ever think of what a distraction we were to everyone else? Allan was about three years old and wasn't able to see over the pew in front of us. All during church, every Sunday, he chewed like a little beaver the wood off the pew in front of us. So insetead of a dark walnut wood stain a line of light wood was visible after time. From the back of the church, you can see the pews that are unofficially reserved for our family. One Sunday, Mother brought a bottle of Old Dutch wood stain and a rag to cover up the chew marks. Then it was our responsibility to "watch" Allan during church.

This is another church story about Allan...he had left church early one day because he was "bored". The car was parked in the front of church and he was racing his older sister Chris to the car. While running from the hard slippery pavement to the loose large gravel he fell, causing a goose egg to appear on his head. While we were all in the car going home Allan wanted to know, "Did you hear the spreading of the gravel while you were in church?"

A week after the car accident Mom and Dad were attending Mass when Allan's pet racoon, Raquel, made a surprising visit to church. She had hidden under the hood of the car and during church had decided to do some exploring. Exploring right down the main aisle of the church. Racquel was a huge furry fat racoon that had never wanted for a thing in her whole life. She was very sociable, mainly because our family had raised Racquel and Allan had spent a lot of time with her. A church, in comparison to our family, was a very subdued environment that needed a little excitement. Racquel was about to give it. Annie McGillian yelled from the back of the church, "Get that groundhog out of here!" Well Racquel knew she wasn't a groundhog, so it wasn't her they were referring to. Mother nudged Dad, he always gets gets all of his information second hand from Mother. Mother said, "That's Racquel, get her out of here!". So Dad picked her up and off to the car they went. I could picture Allan right behind Racquel, just prodding her down that aisle and laughing. Allan was no longer able to create memories anymore but Racquel his fat furry racoon did.

The car accident on July 4, 1971, a wet rainy Sunday, changed our family forever. I think of the life that he might have had, and his favorite saying when Mother would caution him to drive slow, "The good must die young." He loved the ourtdoors and our family. Would he

be farming with Dad and planting corn or soybeans in the fields of our family farm? Should they tile this field or buy another tractor to replace the old Farmall? Would Allan be married and have children of his own? When Dad is out in the field and Mother is gardening do they remember.....what dreams they had for Allan that would never come true? The memories are forever with us. Thank you Allan for teaching us how to celebrate the really important things....and especially how to love.

APPENDIX

PAGE 2 Explanation of Seelman children's first train trip.

Angela and Marie had, on their trip home from teaching school in Arizona, detoured to Colorado to accompany Bernice, Regina, Harry and Esther to Iowa by train. Esther was a baby and too young to enjoy the trip. So was Harry. Our mother and Walter drove the family car to Iowa in primitive conditions and roads, in an Allen touring car with an 'open' top.

Mother wrote in some detail of that trip in her memoirs. An example is that they did not ask what road to take to get to Iowa. They learned to ask the way to the next city or town.

P. 16 Rainfall in drought periods.

It is common, as per my experience, for rain clouds to progress opposite to normal travel when drought is the prevalent mode of weather conditions. Since in the mentioned conditions there was no moisture in the soil, and the dust mulch was some great thickness, the soil did not hold any of the moisture which fell in that rainstorm. There were no rains following spring field work that year, so the plow layer, loosened, mulched thoroughly and dried completely, was almost wholly involved in the dust mulch. Corn production was almost zero in that field that year.

Page 18- I had started to build the elevator crib while waiting for Schrader to get to the job. When he arrived I had the studs in place on the concrete foundation, poured integrally with the floor on the ear storage areas. I also had much of the crib siding in place.

P. 19 - It was fortuitous that the dryer failed structurally before McCrabb had an opportunity to try to sell it to me. It made my decision easy to make.

P. 20- I have never owned a new planter. Now many farmers have thrown caution to the wind, for they are buying units that cost more than thirty thousand dollars. In the coming period of lower still commodity prices there will be more financial crises ahead.

P. 20, bottom- Other makes than IH Case are experiencing problems of operation in heavy mulch conditions, for their disc openers hairpin the residue, not allowing good depth control in placing seed.

P. 22 Water well wood curbing

The wood curbing is made of oak boards nailed vertically in barrel fashion. It is about

two feet or perhaps 30 " in diameter. I believe the total depth of the well to be thirty feet, but do not know precisely.

Addenda to p. 24

The reasons why waterway gullies are counterproductive are these; Machinery cannot cross them, requiring the turning of tractor and implements on either side of the gully; Much space is required in order to make those turns, making that space unproductive; the gullies tend to propogate new gullies; resultant machinery damage; unsightliness and disruption of fieldwork flow in those areas.

It always requires a modicum of luck to heal and establish seeding on repaired waterways; heavy rains often require reshaping waterways before reseeding if rains remove earth and seeding before it becomes established.

The Big Picture

2-12-99

Politics and politicians do make a difference. If something is not done and soon, the entire Midwest will be in the throes of another great depression. Why is this so?

In place today is the Freedom to Farm Law which has precisely the same provisions which were in place during all past farm crises. The farm economy did collapse in those previous events, but at those points the law was changed which did put us back on the road to recovery. That was engendered by enlightened Midwest and Iowa politicians who saw the need for law change.

At present, our Iowa Republican politicians in Congress see nothing wrong with the law, and indeed declare that the law needs more time to work! They did this in Iowa City in October of last year.

What is wrong with the Freedom to Farm law?

1. It encourages unlimited production of farm commodities. Every unlimited production farm law in the past has failed. Why? When farmers are faced with low commodity prices, the only option they individually have is to increase production in order to maintain income and pay their bills. That increase forces prices lower still.

2. The present law is trying to provide a safety net through crop insurance. That route is through uncharted waters, bound to fail when large losses bankrupt the insurance companies by making unprofitable that coverage.

3. An important provision of the Freedom to Farm law is that of dumping our surpluses on foriegn markets. That too is destined to fail for these reasons; The countries who are wealthy enough to pay for those commodities do not want them, for the people of those countries know what hunger is. In the lifetime of many of them they experienced hunger and starvation from the lack of food, not from the lack of money to buy it. They have empowered their farmers because they know how important those farmers are to the general welfare. They simply are not going to allow us to dump our surpluses there.

Developing countries who have the starving masses cannot afford to buy our surpluses. In a climate of retraction of foriegn aid by many in our country who call themselves conservative, what is going to happen to the potential of those markets? No one who has any credibility can suggest that farmers alone bear that burden.

What, under Freedom to Farm, is left? The Great Midwest, which under those provisions face privation of a very great nature, must demand better. Layoffs of a magnitude much greater than any recently seen will be the inevitable result. Freedom to Farm lays all of the Midwest open to the mercy of the very impersonal world market. If we expect justice at that marketplace we are truly babes-in-the-woods and will perish.

I propose; That we re-establish a realistic farm program which reasonably controls production; must be in concert with a food aid progam for the starving people of the world; that aid program must be supported by all taxpayers. It must, above all, be designed to benefit farmers rather than the fortunes which control the grain trade. Freedom to Farm has already helped them more than any entity of wealth has any right to. Surpluses directly feed their profits.

A program to control production must be established in any event, for historically it has always been necessary to do that following all unlimited production scenarios, whether generated by unwise laws or their lack.

The most recent previous disaster was under Ronald Reagan with Earl Butz at the helm of the Fencerow to Fencerow program. That and the aftermath soured taxpayers to all farm programs, for rescue of the agricultural economy at that time proved to be most expensive. PIC certificates were a disaster to all but the grain trade, which reaped fortunes at the expense of taxpayers. PIC was a most inefficient way to correct those imbalances.

It will not be possible to establish a sustained beneficial Agriculture Policy for the Midwest and our Nation until there is a majority in the Congress of the Party of the People. Though that party is imperfect, our only recourse is to return Congress to the Democrats. It has been proven that the Republican party is controlled by the concentrations of wealth, at the very great expense of John Q. Public.

Food Factories

The following article was copied from the January 1995 issue of Successful Farming Magazine. A studied reply by a dirt farmer follows the printing of it here

Understanding the Controversial Issues of Food Factories.

At a recent meeting of agricultural journalists, Ron Plain, Extension economist at the University of Missouri, spoke of the many controversial issues surrounding the changing structure of U.S. agriculture, especially the hog industry. He released this tongue-in-cheek list of opinions he's encountered from farmers and journalists in the last few months.

1. Corporate Structure: Incorporation is fine for retailers, newspapers and advocacy groups, but it should be outlawed for farms.
2. Employment: It is fine for you and me to have a boss, but it is demeaning for a farmer to be an employee of anyone.
3. Income: It is fine for self-employed farmers to work 3,000 hours a year and make $15,000; but it is exploitation for a corporate farm to hire someone and pay them $20,000 a year plus benefits.
4. Manure: It is organic farming when a small farmer uses manure to replace commercial fertilizer, but it is environmental rape when a corporate farm does it.
5. Hog odors : How bad hogs smell depends on who owns them.
6. Specialized farming: If you don't raise corn, you shouldn't raise hogs.
7. Borrowing money: It is fine for an independent farmer to borrow $100,000 and invest in buildings with no certainty they will ever return a dime, but contract growers should have an iron-clad guarantee they will pay off their buildings.
8. Motivation: Corporate farms do not care about their animals, land, workers, neighbors , environment or community; their only objective is to drive independent farmers out of business.
9. Heritage; If your daddy didn't farm in this county, then you shouldn' be allowed to farm here.
10. Property rights: Big corporations shouldn't be allowed to construct a building across the road and disturb your view of the sunset.
11. Environment: Who owns the hogs determines the environmental risk.
12. Regulations: Enviromental regulations should be more restrictive for big farms than for small farms.
13. Farm management: All independent farmers are good managers.
14. Financial returns: Anything over a 4% return on investment is immoral.
15. Land grant colleges: It is the responsibility of land grant colleges to

work with all farmers, except of course, those who are incorporated.

The above article was so prejudiced as to need a reply. It is a very insidious piece of work, for it at once delivers its strongly biased message and declares the article to be of a joking nature, so presumably not a serious bit of work. Herein I will deal with each statement as I think it should be addressed:

1. Retail, newspaper, and advocacy Corporations have not always been responsible administrators of environmental issues. However, they have been subject and obedient to environmental laws to a degree not demonstrated by corporate hog producers anywhere. To the contrary, corporate hog producers have as a group shown over and over that they are not interested in the environment, and have broken those laws and regulations repeatedly, in addition to other laws. Return to investors with a decided and persistent myopia is their only interest.

2. Farmers by the very definition of the word are not and therefor cannot be employees. When they cross over to being employees they then cease to be farmers.

3. Few employees of hog corporations make $20,000, but by the labor they furnish and by the shortcuts effected in the production process, that worker normally makes it impossible for several independent producers to continue. One important effect is the verticle integration from grower to retail.

4. That comparison is like putting a village and New york City in the same basket. Of course a village is damaging to the environment. But to the same degree as New York? This comparison only shows Mr. Plain's contempt for an honest approach to the issues which here surface.

5. The proper reply to this one is the same as for No. 4.

6. This complaint does not deserve a reply.

7. Mr. Plain's reply ignores the fact that the investors in corporate hog production enjoy protection which they are unwilling to give to the men who do the work.

8. This one is a total misfit. Corporate farms are interested in only one goal; the bottom line. Community, environment, workers, land, neighbors etc., are only tools or obstacles to that end. Mr. Plain was either not listening or too biased to hear the message.

9. Why should corporate farms be concerned about those communities? Their employees are too underpaid and too harrassed by the demands of their jobs to be contributors to local communities. The corporations' unconcern for the community weighs on more than that individual worker.

10. This answer is fittingly the same as for No. 4.

11. It is not the investors who will have to breathe polluted air and drink polluted water, and let us not mind the damage it does to the view. Again, this shows corporate disregard for communities and Mr. Plain's bias more than anything else.

12. Refer to No. 4.

13. Refer to No. 4 again. Remember the pictures of barge loads of New York city garbage being hauled to sea for dumping? Perhaps corporate hog operations should by legislation be allowed only next to water transportation.

14. Poor management in a small operation does not involve the environmental risks of corporate mismanagement. Remember the devastating spills right here in Iowa, and they were not small producers who did that.

15. The immoral part of maximum return on investment is the single minded pursuit of that goal at the expense of all other values. Who does that profile fit?

16. Land grant colleges have a sacred responsibility to advance community values in rural America. They have abdicated that responsibility. They spend much time giving lip service to our rural roots and values, but erode them at many turns. The bottom line is the only goal of the entities they are supporting. Our land grant colleges are at once proclaiming the virtues of those values they are destroying.

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More About Freedom to Farm

About eighteen months ago the new Republican Congress passed what they called their "Showcase Legislation " named THE FREEDOM TO FARM law . They waxed eloquent about the benefits that law was supposed to accrue to farmers .

All who have lived through other disastrous farm laws know it is only a warmed over version of the 1980 law , which created mountains of unused grain all over the Midwest , forced corn prices to new lows in real dollars, and caused the Farm Crisis which bankrupted many young farmers.

At this point , grain prices are again heading for the basement , and on August 26 corn at the local elevators is quoted at $1.70 per bushel .

This turn of events has prompted me to propose a new farm organization called "Ditch Diggers of America". The purpose of the organization is to provide an organized medium for hand ditch diggers . They will be in competition with backhoe and excavator operators , but will use only hand spades and shovels . The income thus generated will of course be used to feed their families and store up retirement funds . It may even be necessary for the organization to conduct seminars for the Ditch Diggers on how to invest all of their new-found wealth .

The only requiremen will be that they must agree not to raise corn or other commodities in their spare time .The hand spade income would not be nearly enough to subsidize crop production in any event .

Before you scoff at this proposal , remember that the money they would make in this fashion would all be theirs . They would not have to pay big prices for fertilizer , fuel, chemicals or land , not to mention heavy machinery outlays.

In addition to that , think of all of the opportunity created when the neighbors take up the slack , and farm the land freed up by the Ditch Diggers .

It would be only a short time till all of the new entrepeneurs would go broke producing under the Freedom to Farm law. Then , when a hungry America does away with Freedom to Farm , a new farm program would provide opportunity for the Ditch Diggers . They could then climb out of the ditch , mount their tractors , and feed the hungry world again . Perhaps a chastised America would learn the lesson , and begin again to take proper care of those who feed them .

Europe has long since learned that lesson , so it may be possible for us to import enough food from them to stave off starvation in the interem

More must be said of the probability that production will increase under FAIR, the new farm law , causing commodity prices to fall even farther .

Many farmers do not control their own destinies , for they have many masters . Bankers hold significant amounts of assets against many farmers , and cutting production in the face of lower prices is not an option for those farmers . The debt those farmers have must be serviced , and the only way they can do so in the face of lower commodity prices is to increase production . The alternative of course is that the banks will foreclose on those farmers .

Landlords are insistent in their demands , and the only way they can maintain return on their investment is to continue that land in production . The same is true for those farmers who own their land . Those pressures are only increased in the face of lower commodity prices .

Suppliers will be alert to any signs that production may be cut and the consequent lowering of demand for crop inputs . They can be expected to be out in force to prevent that from happening .

Living expenses continue to increase , so in order to try to maintain their already low standard of living the only option left for farmers is to increase production . Already known is the fact that 88 % of net family farm income is derived from off farm sources . (source, Farm Journal statistics page , November, 1998 , page 42). That fact effectively removes the option of significantly increasing income from off farm sources .

The last point is the fact that under previous farm laws which reduced commodity prices , the above factors engaged to increase production every time lower commodity prices occurred . It can be said unequivocally that FAIR will put in motion those factors which will increase rather than decrease production of lower priced commodities .

Harry Seehuus

Farm Bureau No-till

To the Editor;

Regarding the August 29th article on fewer no-till acres by Colleen Schneider of NRCS :

Every year new people are moving to no-till. At the same time even more people who have been into no-till, have decided it just doesn't work and they are moving on to other management practices .

Also what many are calling no-till actually includes some form of tillage . No-till has been around for a considerable amount of time . If it were half as good as its zealots claim it to be, Iowa farmers would have ninety percent of our crop land in no-till by now .

The reality is that ninety per cent of the longer term no-till fields give substandard results . They are hard with poor soil structure, they do not have satisfactory water infiltration, soil erosion is still a problem, biolife is inadequate, plant health is poorer, insect pressures are greater, and plant diseases are more prevalent .

When looking at the whole soil erosion picture, surface residue plays a somewhat minor role in prevention. Enlightened fertility management practices and building soil quality are much more important . No-till is chemical-intensive and fertilizer inefficient . No-till is poor at recycling natural nutrients and poor at fixing carbon into the soil .

For every pound of carbon added to the soil, it can hold another four pounds of water . Soil water erosion starts when the soil can no longer infiltrate water . Exudates of decaying soil microbes provide the glues to give soil its crumb-structure . This combats wind and water erosion . Electromagnetic stability from fertility balance does the same .

One good indicator of a healthy and truly fertile soil, a soil that is more erosion resistant, is rapid biodegradation of the crop residue .The crop residue is converted to humus, which contains biologically stable carbon and nutrients. (Carbon and natural nutrients are being recycled.

There is much less biodegradation in a no-till scenario . Instead, far too much of the carbon in the crop residue slowly oxidizes (just like a slow, invisible fire) and is lost into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide .

No-till is often counter-productive . No-till is not environmentally positive .

Darel Hein, Stockton .

Reply by Harry Seelman, to Darel Hein, Stockton , in the Sept . 26 Spokesman;

There are two obstacles to the credibility of Darel's article, apart from a very inaccurate statement of no-till's effectiveness . He makes a huge effort to discredit no-till by declaring that organic matter is worsened by no-till .

The opposite has been proven, for all data gleaned from long standing no-till land shows a dramatic reversal of the slow decline of organic matter since the advent of white man's farming in iowa. For the first time in Iowa history very strong reversal of that decline is a proven fact .

Experts have not been able to explain the rebound , but some, including myself, think it may be partially due to recovery of earthworm populations in no-till land . Also to be considered is the probability that those who fail with no-till are not doing anything to encourage or to increase earthworm populations .

High earthworm populations will dramatically improve soil tilth if allowed to develop . They will do a much better job in that regard than can tractors and implements , all without the great expense of tillage .

Important is the fact that tillage destroys earthworm bores and buries their food, which is crop residue , making it unavailable to them. They then die out , which is proven by the lack of earthworm populations in tilled land in Iowa . Note the fact that earthworm bores are an important enabler of water infiltration which Mr. Hein so strongly describes as among the benefits of tillage.

I have not yet addressed the fact that many no-tillers , including myself ,are experiencing consistent yields on our farms which are well above those when our land was in full tillage.

As to the claimed reduction of soil conservation in no-tilled land which Mr Hein claims, I have pictorial and observed proof of the exact opposite . Several years ago we had seven inches of rain in three days when corn had just emerged , the most vulnerable time of all . Full tillage just across the fence from my land suffered at least ten tons loss per acre, perhaps twenty tons from that single time period , when my own farm land did not lose any soil at all ; zero tonnage under no-till. How much more dramatic can the difference be?

Wed control is mentioned as more costly in no-till than in tillage . With modern average weed pressures, there is decidedly no disadvantage in no-till practice, for in all tillage systems, weeds take over without chemical use . Our weeds are far too aggressive since the alien weed called giant foxtail invaded Iowa. And to date, our farm has not been

invaded by wild proso millet or wooly cupgrass .When that happens, chemicals will be even more indispensible .

Granted, there are subtle nuances of management which are necessary for success in no-till, but none of them are more than workable challenges to concientious Iowa farmers . We can, we must trust in that collective concience for the future/success of our country and its people .

1-17-99

Serfdom With Vengeance

Most of us have been exposed to serfdom while studying history of the Dark and Middle Ages of Europe. From that we know of serfs who farmed the land and were in fact bought and sold as part and parcel of that land. They had no rights except those which the landlords saw fit to give them. They were subject to flogging and imprisonment if they withheld fruits of the land beyond what landlords gave them, even if those gifts were insufficient for survival and sustenance.

What has that to do with us? It may be said, looking at the facts, that with our new Technology fees and contracts, farmers today are taken far beyond the bondage heaped upon those serfs of yore. Serfs did not have to purchase the land; did not have to pay taxes on the land and be subject to dispossession if not paid; did not have to be responsible for making the land profitable in order to stay on that land.

Today American farmers must do all of those things. But in addition to being subject to technology contracts, we are losing all of the freedoms so embattled and won by the Minutemen of the American Revolution.

The short list; when we plant the seed which is at the heart of those contracts we; cannot plant the fruit of that seed on our own land; cannot sell any of it for seed to anyone else; must offer it for sale to those who have control of the grain trade, and only to them; forfiet all rights but that sole one for the plenty which we produce.

If we do plant or sell any of that crop for seed we are subject to; heavy fines, imprisonment or both; destruction of the entire crop we produce; SURVIELLANCE far into the future to guarantee our compliance of those provisions. May I say that the serfs of yore had it very good in comparison.

I think the most discouraging nature of these developments is the fact that we farmers are expected to surrender our rights without even protesting their loss, and certainly implied is the loss of those rights without any recourse.

I know it will be said by our oppressors and even by farmers that we are not required to plant seed which is under these restrictions. However, experience has shown that all who do not use late accepted technology will soon be left behind because of loss of production and economic viability. Who could survive today if use of fertilizers and chemicals were left out of their program? Those people have been sorted out many years ago.

How much blood will need to be shed to regain those dearly won rights which the Minutemen so sorely won? Is it already too late for those rights to be repossessed without resort to that? If we ignore the loss of our rights, what will that gain us other than bondage? I am reminded of an old saw; we are placed squarely between a rock and a hard place.

Eighty-eight percent?

In the November issue of Farm Journal, page 42, there is a statistics page which deals with some of the facts of agriculture. Everyone who depends on agriculture should be ashamed of one of those numbers. It is only a review, but this is what it says ; "The American farm family, on average, derives 88% of its income from off-farm sources. " It follows that only 12% of that family's income comes from the farming operation. It also means that many of those families are far below that number, while some are above it.

I cited these numbers to a farmer neighbor, asking him , "Where is the outrage?" "If and when food prices go up two percent, you will find out", was his insightful reply.

Some would argue that it shows nothing new. There have always been sub-standard farms with sub-standard income. That point would be defensible if the above number was respectable, but the numbers are so terribly low that no amount of isolating the top percentage of farms can place even them in a good position . Stated another way, one would have to place the cut so high that almost no farms would be in a viable position as regards farm income.

Another argument states that as long as those farm families are receiving a "decent" total income, there is nothing to worry about. The rejoinder so important to make is that the result is pressure placed on the land,and it makes that situation unsustainable. We hear so much today about "sustainable agriculture" and how important its practice is in order to gain good stewardship. Under the current system there is no way ANYTHING about agriculture can be sustainable.

An old truism declares the best fertilizer to be the footsteps of the farmer. Those footsteps are becoming further and further apart on every acre of our land. The average small farmer has an off-farm job ,so procedures like weed control, soil conservation, environmental protection, fence and building repair and all the other ingredients of infrasructure are simply neglected.. The same is true of the farmer who is operating one, two , or three thousand acres. He cannot be everywhere at once. Site specific technology is a cruel joke for him. The two discliplines are totally opposite and incompatible.

Many countries in the world have a much more efficient agriculture than do we. For example, it is known by those who have looked that China exceeds our production in every category except production per man. They have very high production per acre (three hundred percent of ours) because among other things , much manpower has been applied to that purpose.

China's food production efficiency exceeds ours in all categories except production per man.

Those of us who are on the cutting edge of food production know the above mentioned infrastructure ingredients must be maintained in order to keep production high. The recent rash of manure spills and their resultant environmental damage are a direct result of the collapse of only one part of that infrastructure. If the trend is unchecked it will only get much worse. But there should be a warning here; that intervention must be intelligently and creatively applied. The best minds have so far failed to solve this dilemma, but the stakes are very high. Collapse of our bountiful food production system will surely be the result if we fail.

How do we know such collapse may be in our future? An example; our high use of chemicals, used alone and without supporting cultural practices, is developing superweeds because of those chemicals' selective effect. The one or two percent of escapes soon becomes a much higher number, simply because of the enormous number of seeds produced by each weed. Such progression can develop after only a few years. A moderate increase in manpower to rogue those escapes could produce great dividends in the long haul, but those manpower hours are no longer available for such purpose . The price of food has been forced so low as to preclude such labor resources to be so used.

The irony is the fact that down the road food prices will eventually skyrocket, because it is not possible to raise abundant food and many weeds at the same time in the same place. At that point the alternatives will become very much narrowed, and humanity will be destined to suffer much. The "horseshoe nail" which lost our nation may turn out to be a comparatively few weed rogueing crews that we do NOT have and cannot now afford. This is but one example

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of loss of infrastructure. There are others of equal importance.

Now farmers are facing yet another threat;that of removal of all farm programs after seven years. But that may be even more threatening to farm suppliers. Farmers cannot buy what they cannot afford, and it is plain that removing a very significant source of farm income will have effects far beyond the farm gate,one being the threat to our food supply.

We all appreciate and enjoy cheap food. The pendulum has , however, swung much too far in that direction, and the swing back to proper balance will be preceeded by a counterswing in the opposite direction, its effects only dimly forseen.

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A Progressive View

The history of Western Civilization is filled with the failures of Elite governments. As events unfold in our United States it is becoming more and more clear that the Elite is ruling this country, and that they are making the same mistakes which were made by earlier Western nations.

Amid all of the discussion of "liberal" and "conservative" views and policy , almost no one today is espousing so-called "liberal" views anywhere in our land. To me that is frightening, for it puts our nation on a plane with pre-revolutionary France, pre-revolutionary Rome, pre-revolutionary Russsia, and pre-revolutionary England. Please let me tell you why.

In my view, conservatives have been the cause of every one of the above revolutions, and nowhere has history documented more conclusively the reasons for their happening. Just as in present-day America, in those societies the elite ruling class came to detest and blame the poor, the hopeless, yes, even the oppressed for their plight. The only difference is that in our country today many of the middle class have joined its thinking with that of many of the elite.

In ancient Rome the elite provided bread and circuses for the oppressed. That example is the only one where the collapse came from without, since it was the hordes from the north which ended that evil empire, not the oppressed from within. In Rome,disrespect for the poor (Christians) even went so far that the rulers were feeding them to the lions for entertainment.

In pre-revolutionary France the Bourbons ,Marie Antionette in fact, said when a staffer told her the people had no bread, "Let them eat Cake." Again , no respect for the oppressed. The result was that eventually all of the Bourbons and many others lost their heads, literally.

In pre-revolutionary Russia the Czars again had no respect for the plight of the poor masses. The result was the same except that a far more repressive ruling class rose to power. It was reaction to the excesses of the Czars which caused the excesses of the Communists and Stalin. In the Collectivization process Stalin killed more of his own people than did Hitler .

The elite of England did no better. It so happened that many of the oppressed there came to America, and England's revolution was then fought on American soil. The correction of Englands' problems was therefore somewhat muted, a result being that England kept her monarchy, if in name only, but another concrete result was that she eventually lost most of her World Empire.

Our American Patriots were not fooled . They knew instinctively that England's Empire was built on exploitation of its colonies, and they would have no more of it.

The above examples of mistakes in the past are being repeated by the freshmen in Congress, the Republican "wave of the future".

How honest can we be when we say our wealthy are not exploiting the people at the bottom rung of the ladder? Underpaid jobs? Lack of educational opportunities for those people to insure a labor supply for those underpaid jobs? More cuts in upper income taxes paid for by more cuts in welfare programs? Corporate bottom lines have taken the place of economic justice. How many more Watts riots must we have before we gain respect again for those who have nothing, and again provide them with opportunity? "---and crown thy good with brotherhood---"

Are there more cuts in welfare ahead, insuring a lifetime in the ghetto for those without the resources, in education and otherwise, to get out? Those next in line may be the progeny of the middle class, for they often face the same lack of opportunity as do ghetto children.

Hypocritical to the last degree it is that we revere the accomplishments of minorities in sports,awarding them huge contracts, yet accord the people of their origins with crumbs from the economic table and grudgingly giving them that much. The result is to make the inequity even more evident, and to make the have-nots even more discontented, as they should be.

Harry and Lucille Seelman
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A New Kind of Iowa Storm

Monday , June 28 , 1998 has earned a place in records as a date when Iowa received a new kind of storm . It began as a light rain at about 12:30 P.M. After some thirty minutes of that a wall cloud approached from the west . Very high winds were accompanied by torrents of rain . I had gone to John's and then Tom's place , for Steve and Doug Eckrich had been baling and had taken the balers to shelter , and I was checking to see if they needed help .

Upon leaving Tom's place I was overtaken by the storm . When I reached the corner at the south end of Greencastle Ave . I was pinned down by the storm's intensity , for I could not see past the truck's windshield . There I waited it out for a full thirty minutes , until visibility improved enough to see the road . The wind threw the rain so forcefully , and the rain was so copious (precisely the elements of a hurricane) that visibility did not extend beyond the truck windows .The wind was so strong that I repeatedly considered driving into the deep ditch east of the intersection to prevent the truck from being capsized . The rear of the truck was facing the wind which made it stable , so I did not need to exercise that option .

As I proceeded the fury of the storm was soon made obvious , for the Eckrich barn was completely obliterated , and a large piece of it lay on the roadway , perhaps five hundred feet from the barn site . I could not drive into John's place because the drive was blocked by fallen trees . As I proceeded I saw more and more damage . Every place had many trees down with building damage . As I passed the Scheetz place I saw Steve's truck in the ditch , so I turned in the drive just as a resident there returned from taking Steve home . Steve's truck was severely damaged , for he hit a large tree which was laying across the roadway .

When I arrived home both drives were blocked by fallen trees , but I was able to drive to the house via the lawn . Almost every large tree proved to be broken off , and a few were uprooted . Both houses were ok , but the barn was seriously damaged . The lower or shed roof on the barn's west side was crushed downward about eight feet at one point . The lane west of the house was covered with down trees to a depth of at least 20 feet . A previous storm had removed some of the sheet metal roofing on the old corn crib, and the rest of it was now neatly removed . The house on the west place where John lives has water damage from a broken upstairs window .

Of course I do not yet have a count , but I feel sure we lost four hundred trees , many of them very large . The largest tree of all is the large white pine in the yard east of Steve's house (the old farm house) with a trunk about three feet in diameter , and perhaps seventy feet high . All branches were removed by the storm except several small ones at the very top . We feel duty bound to hold a ceremony when we remove that tree.

We dragged most of the trees which were laying in the drive and the immediate vicinity of the house into the field to one large pile by tractors . That left a windrow perhaps one to two feet high , and made up of small ground up parts of trees on either side of the drive past the shattered barn . Just the cleanup of those windrows alone took hours .

To this point , nearly a week later , we have disposed of perhaps one fourth of the trees . The rest of them will be piled and burned where they are. We will also have that very large pile of trees to burn in the field .

We are drained physically and emotionally at this point . At once we are grateful to God that no one was injured , angry that a relaxed summer is now only a dream , frightened at the violence of the storm , living in insecurity bred of the possibility that it could happen again tomorrow , and planning and hoping that we will get an equitable insurance settlement !

We also have crop insurance and will need it , for some of the corn crop exhibited more potential before the storm than we usually see . It was ahead of schedule , being taller than our heads but now only one in six, or sixteen percent standing . Yield may be cut by that same number . Many broken stalks are attached to the root stump by a small flap , and as the stalk goosenecks to an upright position the flap, having no strength , allows the stalk to again fall to the ground . Therefore it is certain that all broken corn will contribute nothing to production .

A frightening part of the storm was its widespread nature . From Des Moines and Marshalltown to Ohio , and Iowa ,Johnson and Washington Counties locally . Washington , Iowa was struck again by this storm . A tornado did much damage there in May , as it did in

south and east Johnson county . The damage path of this storm extended in width from Linn county to the Missouri line . The nature of the storm apparently was a straight wind with embedded small tornados . Many homes were obliterated in Oxford and many neighbors suffered home damage , some severe . Several farmsteads were demolished nearby , and I can name ten or so barns lost , also nearby . Barns lost are those on the Klein place , Vernon Brogla's , Neuzil places and Rogers place east of us . Bob Rogers lost nearly every farm buillding on both places.

There also was damage in Iowa City , including a freight train blown off the Iowa river trestle , and dangling from the trestle or in the water! NW Mutual/JC Mutual insurance adjuster said the damage was far greater than a known case of one hundred mile- an hour wind . A local person was said to have recorded 150 mile winds . East of us and halfway to Iowa City an interstate 345KV power line is down with more than ten crumpled steel towers. There are many homes on the Rohret road toward Iowa City which lost attached garages . Two of three WSUI radio towers are down .

Dale Campbell's house lost an attached garage; the house is twisted .

Haymaking , a disaster all summer , is stalled again with water having covered many windrows in the field east of the house and no prospect of immediately getting it made . The area north of the creek is partly baled , with mud in the rest of the hay , and the bales having been in water up to a foot deep . We are feeding the bales to forestall their spoilage . We have removed the bales already made in only one field . In the week since the storm we have received another soaking of rain on at least three days , including today .

Update; the hay in the above mentioned field will be left there; next year the field will be planted to corn.

As time unfolds the story we will learn more .

Bill and Mary Michel just moved into a new home on Greencastle Ave . , but a tree is said to have gone through all three floors .

While viewing crops about two weeks ago, We noted the advanced and excellent state of the corn crop , and especially the fields on Section 24 . (east of Cosgrove) I said to Steve that it looked too good , and was a candidate for disaster . All of the corn in that field was so tall , more than six feet , that it was damaged severely . The corn on our other fields was slightly smaller and as a consequence is in much better shape . Only a little more than a foot less height made an enormous difference in the damage suffered .

Cleanup is very slow , for there is so much to be done . We have 40,000 dollars of coverage on the big barn here , but of course that would not replace it . Almost all of the trees suffered major damage . We had much help from all of the family , and Steve's fiance Ann recruited many of her friends from the Solon area . She also knew Schmidt Electrical Service , and by early contact we were able through them to rent a 25 KV alternator , which made life much easier than it otherwise would have been . We were without regular service almost a week , and it was restored late on Friday evening, July 3 . The alternator is owned by Elmer Hahn . Rent charged was 100 dollars a day .

We powered the alternator with one of the Massey tractors equipped with a 1000 rpm shaft plus a 540 rpm adaptor. That allowed the tractor engine to run at only 1200 rpm with much fuel saving .

The price of a new alternator is 3000 dollars , and it would make sense to have one . The storm Canada had last winter "could have been us ". They were without power for months , for there were many transmission towers crumpled by much ice .

This morning I made a small amount of progress in cleaning up nails in sheet metal from the crib , until the day became too hot for an old man . 7-11-98

The insurance company wants a bid from a contractor to repair the barn . If it is high enough they may consider razing it . If that happens we will replace it with a modest pole building . The adjuster said we will be taken care of , whatever that means , but it will take time .

The Republican Party and Big Tobacco- a Wedding

The Republican Party , true to its love for Big Business , has been courting Big Tobacco for years , so why should we be surprised at the announcement of the wedding ?

We who want the best for our kids have been appalled at the brazen announcement , nevertheless . At the wedding the Republican leadership predictably bleated and parroted the concerns of Big Tobacco about what they call Big Government . They both protest way too much , for the people can easily see how that marriage will founder on the shoals of rejection of tobacco by young people . Youth has caused collapse of marriages before in different circumstances . In this case it involves the lifeblood of a bad-blooded -to understate it- marriage . Both parties of the wedding recognize and are trying to undercut that threat .

We are witnessing the most expensive smokescreen in history embodied by advertizing directed at what is called big government and a massive tax bill . Big Tobacco is concerned about John Q . having to pay it because of what they call his addiction .

What a metamorphosis! Only two ore three years ago Big Tobacco and Republican leadership was denying that those products were addictive !

But there is a much larger issue behind the smokescreen . The projected cost to J.Q. in proposed taxes is as nothing compared to the taxes of death Big tobacco has imposed and will impose on him . One only needs to go to any hospital or clinic to learn the truth which has so long been denied by Big Tobacco . That truth convicts Tobacco as the single most costly , in lives , of any of man's addictions on the face of the earth .

Never in history has the Republican party picked a bigger loser .

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Fair

More must be said of the probability that production will increase under FAIR, the new farm law , causing commodity prices to fall even farther .

Many farmers do not control their own destinies , for they have many masters . Bankers hold significant amounts of assets against many farmers , and cutting production in the face of lower prices is not an option for those farmers . The debt those farmers have must be serviced , and the only way they can do so in the face of lower commodity prices is to increase production . The alternative of course is that the banks will foreclose on those farmers .

Landlords are insistent in their demands , and the only way they can maintain return on their investment is to continue that land in production . The same is true for those farmers who own their land . Those pressures are only increased in the face of lower commodity prices .

Suppliers will be alert to any signs that production may be cut and the consequent lowering of demand for crop inputs . They can be expected to be out in force to prevent that from happening .

Living expenses continue to increase , so in order to try to maintain their already low standard of living the only option left for farmers is to increase production . Already known is the fact that 88 % of net family farm income is derived from off farm sources . (source, Farm Journal statistics page , November, 1998 , page 42). That fact effectively removes the option of significantly increasing income from off farm sources .

The last point is the fact that under previous farm laws which reduced commodity prices , the above factors engaged to increase production every time lower commodity prices occurred . It can be said unequivocally that FAIR will put in motion those factors which will increase rather than decrease production of lower priced commodities .

Harry Seelman

1-27-98 Independent Prosecutor

Many Republicans are questioning the existence of the office of Independent Counsel since it was established to investigate Whitewater. A more recent doubt was expressed by Robert Novak, a Republican political pundit, who declared the Counsel is serving our country very poorly. The same in slightly different words was stated by John Sununo, an avowed conservative.

In the political rough -and -tumble reporting of the 1800's , nothing of a personal nature about candidates or office holders was withheld from public scrutiny . During most of the late1900's much more discretion was exercised by the media. Presidents and others in politics were treated in a genteel way which allowed them to be role models for our youth.

In reviewing that policy and comparing it to the present climate, it is my view that the former climate was much the better, for allowing role models to stand unbesmirched was so much more important than whatever need there is for the public's desire to know all. It may even turn out that many revelations now circulating were politically motivated lies.

If that turns out to be the case, it may be Kenneth Starr who lands in jail. Indeed, if what Susan MacDugall says from her jail cell- where Starr acting as prosecutor , judge, and jury has placed her, is true- jail for him would be almost too kind a fate. Susan has repeatedly and unwaveringly claimed that Starr offered her freedom if she would testify by lying against the Clintons. Perhaps the spotlight will eventually swing around to that injustice if that is what it is.

It is astonishing to me that Starr has been allowed to trample on people as he has. We are supposed to pride ourselves on our democracy and freedoms, yet we allow Starr to operate as a despot. Even if what he says about Susan is true, what Starr is doing is completely at odds with our declared tenent of all being innocent until proved guilty. He belongs in a police state; not in our Land of Freedom. His tactics and successes ,to now, are a precise blueprint of how police states begin.

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Harry Seelman

Hi Dear —
you may find this useful.
Love, Dad

Harry and Lucille Seelman
2451 IWV Rd. S.W.
Oxford, Iowa
52322

— love The printer
wore out cartridge #1 already

A Dynasty From Love, or From Something Else??

There is a country song which has a line that goes, "That union will never last, but then again, it might." The following is a story which is one of these.

There was once born of a farm family a young girl who had many ambitions; restless, doing her share of the work which is necessary by all family members in order for that family's fortunes to progress. Alice did many chores on the farm and in the house as she grew toward womanhood; she observed the extraordinary effort of her parents to make that family farm successful as compared to that of her city friends in their endeavors. An idea then grew in her mind which was later summed up by her as a resolve to never marry a farmer. Many years later, George Ruppert, a man Alice and Leo double dated with, said to Leo that he thought Alice would never marry him, based on her oft stated feelings.

To establish her own life's work, Alice entered nurse's training at a local hospital and distinguished herself in her diligence to be a good nurse. Those who knew her, including her several teachers, the doctors she worked with, and the patients she cared for, all recognized in her the qualities which make for excellence.

Paul was one of those patients, a young man who was diagnosed with undulant fever, and who developed romantic feelings about this unusual young woman who nursed him, he calling her a "heller on wheels".

As a part of her training, Alice was sent away to a psychiatric hospital in another state. Paul dreamed often of this young woman, and established a correspondence with her. He went to much personal effort to set up a picnic/party for Alice on her return. Several persons were invited, as Paul attempted to establish a balance between young men and women when invitations were tendered. So the party had friends of both Paul and Alice;the date must have been about July 4, 1944.

A friend of Paul who had no inkling of the roles being played by either Paul or Alice did get Alice's attention. Since she did not reciprocate Paul's feelings toward her, she felt no obligation to return his attentions. Alice made plain her attraction to Leo, who reciprocated those attentions, taking her home that night and following up with dating Alice more than once.

But as time went on, Alice realized that there was one discrepancy in her attraction to Leo which did not conform to her long-range plans. He was a farmer. But another problem developed in the form of a romantic attraction of Alice to Leo. It was plain that Leo reciprocated his feelings to Alice.

Communication then was nowhere nearly as convenient as today, for Leo's home did not have a telephone. Alice saw nothing wrong with calling Leo to set up dates, and on this particular occasion she did so. But since that procedure involved calling a neighbor's telephone to do so, Leo suffered the misfortune of not having been advised of the date. And this was quite early in the relationship, which helps to account for the problems which developed.

As Alice was waiting for Leo to come, George entered the picture. He was a pre-flight cadet at the US Naval training school at Iowa University. He was looking for companionship at the Nursing school waiting room, which Alice graciously provided. Alice saw the opportunity to do something about the problem of Leo's occupation, and began to date George. She then had the luxury of having two boy friends, and of course was the envy of her classmates.

Conciously of not, she started to feed Leo tidbits of her relationship with George. They were of course unsettling for Leo, who did not know how to handle the problem since he had already fallen at least partially in love with Alice. But George's relocation provided a temporary solution to Leo's problem. His courtship with Alice proceeded to engagement, with Alice getting a ring from Leo.

Nearly two years later, George came back to see Alice, who dated him on the spot, they having taken up where they left off. But only for that day. Alice made sure that Leo was advised of the meeting. (She and George were seen walking cuddled together on the Iowa river bridge by Leo's aunt and uncle, Anselm and Mabel. They did not mention it until many years later.) It was plain to Leo that George could be a problem for Leo any time he so chose. But George had the decency to recognize that Leo and Alice were engaged to be married and said his final goodbye. That was done in a letter some weeks later.

For Leo, something ineffably tender and important to him in his relationship with Alice was irretrievably lost. It was plain to him that had George not taken himself out of the situation, Alice would simply not have been able to make a choice. That was obvious in the detail she conveyed to Leo in her many frank discussions with him about her physical and romantic attraction to George. Of course, all of these disclosures to Leo were most unsettling to him. He felt that his pain was quite unimportant to Alice, then or later.

That loss was embodied, literally, by the presence of George in all of Leo and Alice's dates. Each time Leo tried to put his arm around Alice, she withdrew. George could not have been any more present than if he had been sitting between them.

Again Leo was sorely tempted to break off the relationship. His love for Alice stood squarely in the way, not allowing him to do so. Leo felt at that timie that if he had done so, Alice would not have cared greatly. Today, Leo yet does not know what was the truth. As freely as Alice talked of her relationship with George at the time, she was very reluctant to talk of it after marriage.

A Dynasty From Love, or Something Else?

At the time Leo felt very alone and without support, for he knew no one with whom he felt comfortable to discuss such delicate matters, as he perceived them, of the heart.

Was that a good basis for a lifelong marriage? History shows that it was. "But then again it might." Leo often had painful memories of the woman who two-timed him. And he often speculated, but only to himself, on how he should have handled the situation. For him to maintain a balance in the relationship it would have been necessary for him to break off the engagement, if only temporarily. That would have been fraught with hazards but later Leo felt that it would have been worth all of those hazards. At the time he was far too much in love. Or was he, simply put, too naive?

Alice kept and treasured that final letter from George until her death. And that final meeting of Alice and George occurred at almost the exact time of year of Alice's death.

A Large Family

A wag, George Rohret, once said of their large family, that they would not take a million dollars for any one of their children, but would not give a nickel for another one. In our age of large families that summed it up, but the present age almost demands more satisfactory explanations.

As is quite well known, our religion at that time demanded that the only acceptable form of birth control was a practice called the Rythm method. Practitioners like us called it the Church's Rythm and Bingo system. We practiced Rythm and Bingo ! Pregnant!

That system required that the woman maintain a complicated set of records of daily body temperature, theorizing that ovulation was accompanied by a rise in body temperature, thereafter followed by a sterile period before menstruation.

Our experience repeatedly proved that to be wrong. I developed a somewhat different theory which neatly fit the facts as they nearly always developed. The problem with my theory was that it only explained pregnancies, not how to prevent them. To wit; Body temperature did in fact vary. If no sperm was present in the vagina, ovulation was delayed until sperm was deposited in intercourse, thereby triggering ovulation and often, if not always resulting in pregnancy. I have never read any such theory or heard any one else elicit on such a possibility, but that was precisely our experience. How long would ovulation be delayed? Was it a second ovulation after the first ovum expired? How many days were in the window? All unknowns to us. The number of days for all of this to occur was of course limited by the length of the woman's period, so one week delaying copulation used up the open, so called safe time in the cycle.

In today's religious and social climate the above questions are no longer raised as issues.

Devil Story September, 2001

This is a true story. It happened, as well as I can recollect, in 1997.

I had a vivid dream, so vivid and so graphic that I woke trembling in fright and terror, and was unable to go back to sleep.

This is the story.

Mom was in my room and said to me, "Harry, look out the window."When I did so I saw the nastiest apparition I had ever seen. There was a something outside and making all sorts of threatening gestures, as if it wanted to get in the house. There was true fire in its eyes, and its countenance was more frightening than anything I had ever seen. Its skin was black, with the texture of a very rough looking lizard, but with a man's appearance.

I am not one to take stock in apparitions, but what was it? Why did so many tragedies and near ones occur after that? The 1999 storm, Steve's divorce, remarriage, and second divorce? Mother's illness, culminating in her death? Just one of those events was terrible enough, but all? The storm was unearthly, and quite unlike any natural phenomenon before. What evil icon or entity was present which could have accounted for these events? I have been speculating as to why, and I come up with several unsettling possibilities, always the children of unknowns. I suppose I should write about them to break their supposed grip, but I hesitate to do that.

I have been praying often, petitioning Our Lord to release us from whatever evil gripped us. I pray for it to be behind us, no more to plague our family. I invite all of our family members to also pray for that release.

Sept. 5, 2001

Lucille at the Hotel

I was only recently reminded of a story Lucille told me shortly after we met, after one of her friends reminded her of the incident in my presence. It serves to remind one of the committment which Lucille's guardian angel had in taking care of her.

Lucille had met a cadet, location and occasion unspecified, upon which the cadet invited Lucille to a party. They arrived at the supposed location of the party which was the Dunkel Hotel in Iowa City. Never mind that all seven year olds in Iowa City knew the reputation which this fine hotel had, it being that of a dive of the worst kind. Upon arriving at the room where the party was, Lucille found that she and the cadet were to be the only ones in attendance. Lucille also related that a man who saw them going to the room remarked that another young girl was going to her ruin, causing Lucille, according to her own account, to be angered.

At this point, Lucille powdered her nose, and realizing the circumstance, said she was ready to go home. She recounted that the cadet obliged.

Several things come to mind about this circumstance. The first one is that if he had tried to rape her, given the environment which they were in, the cadet would have had far more help to do that than Lucille would have had for her defense. The kind of people who might have heard her cries for help would more likely have helped the cadet to do his dastardly act. By the time help for her might have arrived it certainly would have been too late, and that would have especially been so since she would have had to find it herself.

Was that the only time Lucille's guardian angel needed to save her? Most certainly not, if we take into account Lucille's trusting, outgoing nature. That angel must have had an outstanding nature, given the unusual person who was entrusted to her care.

Oxford, Iowa
August 30,01

Dear Wayne and Jeanne,

I find words hard to find in addressing old friends. I have written several stories about Lucille's and my life, but somehow they do not seem appropriate to share with you. Somehow I do not understand that, for I am able to share them with friends face to face. Perhaps it has something to do with grief, although I seem to be able to handle that. Some friends might say that I am coping well. For the most part I suppose I am. Of course there are countless moments when I do not. Nearly fifty-eight years is a hard habit to drop.

I am yet overwhelmed when going through the attendance roster of friends who signed in at Lucille's visitation. I have no memory of some of our dearest friends being there, although my family assures me that they were. There are almost a thousand names in that book.

I have many eyes watching almost my every move. I cannot get away with anything! The family hovers over me, but I would be dishonest if I denied enjoying them doing that.

My and the family's greatest comfort is that Lucille is no longer wracked with pain. It has been at least five years since she felt good and pain free. We have the confidence of knowing she is now in a much better place. But I still find it compelling to frequently stop activity and mourn a bit more, even knowing it can be bad for my health. I wonder if she and Bob are getting on better?!!!!

As rending as this has been for me, it does not have the futility of feeling that the loss of Allan had; his whole life was stretching out before him; Lucille's was rich and full of accomplishment. With Lucille's passing, what is there to be sad about? Nothing. Yet, it was so hard for us to give her up. And the tears do flow as I write this. We were lucky to have known her. Of course there were disagreements and regrets, but that was part of the dynamic person she was, and I am thankful for the whole person, not wanting to change any of it.

A hint to you- we found a letter Lucille had saved which she received from a competitor at the time of our courtship. It was dated only three months before our wedding! An engagement nearly got postponed/cancelled. That is a story! And she often told me she would never marry a farmer! She knew first hand of the struggle her parents had in stewarding the land. She helped her parents, both inside and out, when she was a girl at home.Think of the adjustments she had to make in marrying that farmer! And think of the temptations she had, to follow through with her intent!! Retrospectively, I am sure some of her moves were calculated to do just that.

None of George's competition was a surprise to me, although I was chagrined in having to share her affections with him. She shared with me his affections to her to the point of saturation. Yet history shows the dynasty she and I created must have been solidly based. And she could not have been more loyal.

Good bye, dear one!

Wayne and Jeanne, I hope this letter meets with your affection and interest. I think I have an epic tale, and I have done several essays on our marriage. I also hope this letter finds you in god health and spirits..

My love to you both.

The story of our courtship is for me a conundrum, and I of course was too close to it all for me to be objective. Lucille was nothing if not dynamic, and I was hard-pressed often in order to cope with some of her moves. I had the feeling then, as I yet do, that many of her moves were attempts to carry out her determination to not marry a farmer. Did her heart get in the way? Probably.

That heart of hers was a wonderful thing, and it was natural for me to be dismayed at having to share it with a rival for her affections. Lucille was always pushing the envelope. That was plain to others, but I found that I was slow in recognition of that. It was often verbalized by friends thus, "How did you ever get Lucille to be your wife?" Even up to six months before the wedding it came razor close to not happening. Some events were solid ground for cancellation of the engagement on my part. And in retrospect, they were probably designed by Lucille to do just that. Those friends who asked the question obviously did see it.

Some say I should write about Lucille and I, not including George in the story. But that would be next to impossible, for Lucille even injected him into our honeymoon. She speculated aloud as to what George might be thinking about our consummating our marriage. And given the fact that Lucille was very physical in all she did, I have solid ground for my speculations. The word "sweet" has connotations not ordinarily suggested when viewed in this framework.

Our courtship was, for the most part, mundane and without highlights, for it revolved around her training regimen and hours. No cruises on the Mediterranian or trips to Hawaii were taken. In those days they would not have been circumspect or done by respectable unmarried couples in any event. Most were made to the Mechanicsville farm, which Lucille loved to do. Many were the flat tires on that trip, for in WW2 tires were very poor. And it was often a hurried return trip to get her to the Nursing school before deadline at 10 p.m. Thus began Lucille's (illogical?) complaints about high speed driving.

Another thing she liked to do was to park downtown on Saturday nights to "people watch". She could spend hours just doing that.

Lets see; An evening starting at 7:p earliest, with a 10 curfew allowed for no more than three hours for a Mechanicsville visit, including time to drive fifty miles. Was that performing a feat or what?

Thus, George was not the only problem. Oh yes, since George occupied Lucille's weekends, our dating had to be accomplished during the very limited week. It also eliminated people watching on Saturday nights.

Perhaps that partially accounts for our large family. Our romancing had to wait for marriage.

However, I do recall having given Lucille a dozen roses on an occasion, whereupon she then gave a rose of that dozen to each of her friends. I was at first taken aback, for I perceived that gesture as her not placing a value on the gift. Soon I realized that it was the essence of Lucille, she sharing her gift/good fortune- with her friends!

For our honeymoon, we stayed at the Jefferson hotel overnight, and proceeded at a liesurly pace toward the Lake of the Ozarks south of Jeff City. We spent some time at friends of the family, the Banks', mother, father, Grandmother and all of the children. The eldest, Viona Mae, was a classmate of my sister Bernice at Ottumwa heights at Keokuk. We stayed that night at Mexico, Mo. Years later Mrs. banks told me of her youngest daughter, then 18, having been very favorably impressed by me, and having admitted it to her mother! She quoted her daughter saying,"He is the most handsome, charming man I've ever seen!" All just from a glimpse of a happy but subdued man on his honeymoon!

On Sunday we attended Mass at a cathedral in Jefferson City, and had to drive there, for there was no church of our persuasion in Mexico, Mo. We arrived at the Lake of the Ozarks and had a boat ride on the lake, whereupon Lucille got very suddenly homesick, so we went home. It was a good trip, and yes, we had a flat tire, documented by a picture.

The avid curiosity shown by my children regarding George's letter may yet manifest itself in questions directed at available friends of Lucille and I at that time.

All of this left me truly wondering at this woman, this miracle, whom I had taken for life.

Pre-marital Friends August 27, 01

At the urging of one of my children, I will here write about some of the women friends and dates I had when young. I most definitely did not marry the one and only , but I also did not have dozens of girl friends. Those I did date and can remember were; Jackie Hansen and Marie Barber of Westlawn Nursing school; Jenny Bell of Iowa University; A woman from Cedar Rapids, name forgotten; Helen Wieman of Muscatine county; a woman from La Moille Illinois, name forgotten: a divorced member of the Braverman family in Iowa City , name forgotten, A widowed woman from Iowa City, name forgotten.

Jackie was a spirited little woman but there was no spark. She passed me to Marie Barber, whom had the misfortune of arriving on the scene at about the same time as Lucille, and since I was a one woman at-a-time man, that relationship died aborning. She was a Catholic and a beautiful woman. Her parents were grocers in Des Moines.

Jenny Bell was a striking woman, and of parents with some wealth, since Jenny had access to a family airplane and had a pilot's license. She was definitely above me in some kind of status.

Helen was the daughter of dairy farmers. I met her at a Junior Farm Bureau camp, as I did the La Moille woman a year or so later.

I met the widowed woman in Iowa City years later, and she reminded me of our earlier acquaintance, saying that I probably forgot that we met.. I yet had the luxury of telling her that I had not.

The Braverman divorcee, as I remember it, did seem to be interested in me, but I was not, and I remember some embarrassment on my part as I extricated myself from that situation. That was at a time when I was quite young and had not acquired social grace, perceiving much more obligation than existed.

I remember having met and being most interested in a beautiful young woman who was engaged to a local man, and being unaware of that, made an unsuccessful play for her attentions. Francis Lynch was present at that event, and made sure he reminded me of it at convenient times later, he getting no small enjoyment out of it, since it was his brother who was the other half. That also happened several other times, when the particular woman I was interested in at the time was full of no's.

Resume for Farmers

Farmers are always selling themselves short, but especially so when they decide to apply for a job in another career. Typically a farmer will not place his accomplishments on a resume. Normally he has many skills, and usually enough to more than qualify him for many occupations.

Let us take ,for example, the repair of a livestock fountain. That need usually manifests itself on a cold day with wind chill far below zero. The materials to be dealt with are electricity, water under pressure, ice, frigid wind, and a very bleak climate. The job involves plumbing, electric wiring, electric and/or gas heating thermostatically controlled, varied insulation, varied water dispensing equipment, concrete pits and abutments, water metering systems,etc. It also involves ordering, purchase and inventory control of the many parts necessary to complete the job.

The average farmer takes all of the knowledge needed to repair such for granted. He should in fact word his resume to cover all of those abilities in this manner; Experience in installation, repair and maintenance of synergistic electric over hydraulic cryogenic systems and engineering of same, and he should include the fact that he is doing so at the same time as he is excelling at the job of Comptroller. Also, he well could be qualified as an electrical and/or gas heating engineer. If he so applied and at the same time could hold a straight face he would certainly get related jobs with no trouble. I almost forgot to add the acquired qualifications for Polar Explorer,especially if he must deal with snow-blocked roads simultaneously.

As has been pointed out by others in different circumstances, if one gets no respect long enough it becomes catching: One begins to think he does in fact not have any skill to sell. In this enlightened age there still are those who think of farmers in those terms.

Conventional Wisdom

In 1943 the only practical material available for building water lines was galvanized pipe. The war was not a factor in that limitation. At that time there simply was nothing else available for that purpose. Indeed, that material was superb in any situation except that created by the hard, corrosive water which came from the Devonian -Silurian aquifer which our well provided. The hard work I experienced in digging water line ditch was to install one inch diameter galvanized water pipe.

After only several years of use I experienced a reduced flow of water delivered to livestock . The cause was iron and lime deposits which built on the inside surfaces of that pipe. A temporary solution was in using an air compressor to force air and water simultaneously through the pipe to dislodge those deposits. Another problem soon surfaced, however. Leaks developed in that pipe which required digging up the pipe and installing repair sleeves where the leaks existed. That service was provided by the Morgan Backhoe service, since it was most difficult to hand dig in the mud created by the leak.

After many of those repairs it became clear that a more permanent solution was needed. Therefore , we decided on a plan which did not make it necessary to dig up all of the pipe. By digging where there was an elbow or a tee and applying a chain to the pipe, by using the hydraulic power of the machine it was possible to pull out the corroded pipe and simultaneously pull new plastic pipe, which was by then available and fastened to the opposite end of the pulled section, into place. The plan worked successfully, and that problem was solved.

At the time when we installed a bathroom in 1947 or 48 the conventional wisdom was that cast iron sewer pipe was the Cadillac of all that was available. Accordingly, we used it in the house and for the first fifty feet beyond the basement wall. At that point, being past the roots of a large maple tree my farm-depression tempered cost saving mode kicked in, and I finished the sewer line with lower cost vitrified clay bell tile.

As that system aged slightly, trouble began to develop but not in the section where I had used cost-saving measures. That same build-up of undesirable deposits which occurred in the galvanized water pipe earlier mentioned also developed on the inside of that cast iron and blocked the pipe. In order to unplug the system it was necessary to dig it up next to the house. Upon inspection the problem was obvious, for the pipe was clogged except for a very small area, too small to allow adequate flow.

I then purchased a sewer cleaner, a flexible steel rod with well designed sections that could be added or deleted. A cutting head and hand crank completed the system. I tried to clean the line from the lower end, but those deposits were too hard for those sharp blades to clear. By then trying it from the house side I was able to do it, for the backed up water and sewage provided the lubrication necessary to prevent a repeat of blade destruction which occurred on the first lower end try. The second set of blades did the trick.

That fix was short-lived, however, because of another problem. The cast iron pipe had deteriorated to the point where it was so corroded that one could force a wood stick through the pipe walls. It became necessary to replace all of the iron pipe both inside and out of the house. By that time Tom was in the business, and he dug the pipe up and we replaced it all. Also, by that time plastic sewer pipe was available so that is what we used. It is apparently a superior product.

That is not the end of the story. The cost-saving vitrified clay bell tile was as good as new, with no build-up of lime or any other deposits. It was as clean as a whistle. That section of pipe is still in service perhaps fifteen years later. (late 1996) So much for conventional wisdom!

Computer Story #1

I have been captivated by computers and the thought of getting one for the last several years. Before I owned one I long appreciated the capabilities of the word processor function and record keeping abilities of the spread sheet . I did not know of the existence of the Data Base function.

In the fall of 1995,some events made it possible to get a computer. Dianne wanted to update to a new model, and she offered to sell me her old Macintosh. Mary also had been pushing me to get one. Accordingly , the deal was made, and now I am sorry I did not have one much sooner. Chris,Dianne and Mary offered to teach me the basics if I promised to write my memoirs. That I am doing, and I still find things I need help with. No one- not anywhere- prepared me for the enormous amount of storage it has. One computer literate person suggested that perhaps it was not storing material, since it keeps reporting variously 98 to 100 percent of storage still available after nine months of storing all that I have written. I know that is false, since I often call all of that material up for information and updating. Another valuable feature is the ease of locating and accessing that material.

4-15-97

On the date of this added note the computer is still giving me the same message-98 to 100% of memory available!

Most appreciated is the ease of writing and correcting when using the word processor. The ability to at any time update and add to any document is something not even dreamed of when I learned typing in high school. Before ownership I fretted long about my imagined difficulties in adapting to the keyboard, since the typwriters I learned on were the old mechanical ones, requiring a heavy touch to operate.

Since ownership, I find those difficulties to be non existent. I have added a wrist pad, raised 1/4 inch by additionalpadding, total about one inch, in front of the keyboard which solves most of the heavy-hand problem. The ease of removing spurious letters from a document is appreciated even more since the correcting of mistakes on the old typewriters was time consuming and difficult. That consisted of using a typewriter eraser and reprinting a messsed up document. Also, the ability to use the computer as a duplicator is much appreciated . The ability to print out any document , no matter how long it is in storage, is uncanny and very valuable.

Much appreciated is my ability to use a skill which I learned nearly sixty years ago, and though I have used that skill very little until now, finding it completely useful and recallable.

I am attracted by the added possibilities of getting on the internet, but have little desire to do so, because of the garbage which proliferates there. The time it would take to sort it out makes that task daunting to me. Also, the cost of getting on line is not reasonably dealt with by our phone company.

I have therefore accomplished something I did not expect to do, which is becoming, after a fashion, computer literate.

Change 1996 8-96

A large corporation has proposed, and the plan has been accepted by the city of Coralville, to build a huge mall at the Northeast quadrant of the Highway 965 and 6 intersection. A second smaller mall at the same location has been approved. This decision has sealed the fate of Western Johnson County. It will be primarily an urban area in twenty years. This is the area now occupied by McCabe Implement and a truck-trailer rental business that is located where Cline Farm Equipment company was earlier . Construction is to begin momentarily.

(Today, 10-23-96, much of the earth work has been done on this project.)

The size of the large mall is supposed to be greater than any in Cedar Rapids. The anchor stores are as yet not determined. Or rather they possibly have been, but it is not yet announced. Accompanying this growth will be opportunity, but lost will be the unique flavor of our region. Also lost will be the comparatively good neighborhood and lack of big crime. Progress cannot be stopped . One may feel that it cannot even be slowed.

A consequence is the decision by the cities of Coralville and Iowa City, and the State Highway Commission to extend Highway 965 straight south to Highway One. Almost straight south, that is. Iowa City and Coralville were disputing whether to follow an easterly or westerly course. Iowa City wants the easterly one, Coralville the other. A typically ambivalent solution was therefore chosen. Both will be built. Cost is no object.

The growth potential for this area is explosive. This is so even before any of the developments mentioned above have begun. Many times young people ask me if I know of any land available to build. The Percy Eckrich farm has been parcelled several ways since it was placed on sale; 1. The eighty acre parcel behind the buildings . 2. The buildings with several acres. It is owned by Mark Muller. 3. The forty acre tract north of the farmstead. 4. The eighty acre tract fronting on the IWV road. Tract No. 3 has as of 1995 a large pond complete with an island. As of 1996 it has a new house. The owner is Roger Mast, and the day they moved in, Spring 1996, he was laid off at Rockwell Collins. 94-15-97 note: That land , house and pond is now for sale, the debt being too much of a burden. Tract no . 4 has a large new house as of spring 1996. I do not know the owner. The house is located a quarter mile from the road. That person has some education to catch up on about snow.

A driving factor in this neighborhood growth is the high cost of living in Iowa City. Walnut Ridge just east of the 218 interchange on Melrose is offering lots at 79,000 and 89,000 dollars. They are moving briskly. Many new homes are already in place in that subdivision. People who are in the housing market can come to the country and buy forty acres for less money than that. Up to now many of them find the desired seclusion that does not exist in city settings, although of course that will change.

Everything has its price, and the price of new retailing outlets is the loss of money from our area. The large malls now under construction are financed by out -of -state money , and the profits generated by these new outlets will also leave the state. Virtually the only income which will stay here is the money earned by minimum wage employees and sales people.

3-29-97

An article in yesterday's paper outlined the scheduled progress . Construction is to start momentarily and opening is scheduled for next spring. The size in acres was stated. About ninety. Iowa City is well on its way to becoming a suburb of Coralville.

A person in North Johnson County is opposing development of rural land . I said to him that he will make no headway when there is so much pressure for development. He replied that the answer might be in inflating the value of farm land. I then added that it would be a sure way to make it unavailable to farmers. Young people cannot make farm land pay even now, with out that added dimension.

Color Them Grey

Several years ago Zip and I were talking about the loss of our friend Gene Rohret. Lowell remarked that Gene had a bad color, a non-color really , for some time before his death. I had to agree, for I also had observed the pallor in his appearance but had said nothing to anyone. The thought struck me that I had noticed the same pallor in Lowell Zimmerman's complexion for some time. A short time later Lowell also passed away, perhaps from mismanagment by medical caretakers when he was on the operating table.

Since those events I have done some musing and have decided that Lowell knew of his own condition. By his calling attention to Gene's appearance he was trying to tell us something about his own health. Of course no one can really know . Both had what I understood to be heart ailments.

I have noticed the same kind of pallor in other people who lived with it for much longer periods. The unusual thing about Gene and Lowell was the short time each lived after their appearance was noticed by others. I cannot remember the length of time I observed it in them, but it was not an extended period, perhaps a year or so. Lowell's condition was of course complicated by diabetes.

As time unfolds, we realize that medical science has learned much but still has much to learn. Those in medicine often say when one's time is up there is nothing that can be done to save a patient.

There was a man who was a member of the Johnson County draft board in World War 11, Glen Hope. He lived many years with a pronounced pallor.

Bill

One who always has been a part of the local scene , (deceased about five or more years ago,) was Bill. When we were in third or fourth grade when he came from the playground with a broken arm, the first one I had ever seen. Later,there was a parish function which involved some duties which we in my class were responsible to carry out. Bill found something which he did not like about the job, whereupon he disengaged himself from the scene. I remember it because I was the one left to do the job. Had I more experience, hindsight tells me I should have confronted Bill with his omission. I am amazed at how often I allowed people to take advantage of me. Also, this rift developed into full scale alienation of Bill from his church for most of his lifetime. Only in the last year or so of his life did he "come back to the church". To his credit he was proud of that last accomplishment, he telling me personally about it.

While in school and shortly afterward , he and I had a good working and social relationship for the most part. That was of course disrupted by our moving to the Iowa City area, and later Bill spent time in the service. He received an injury while in service, a chemical burn when a technician carelessly ignited an aircraft engine starter while Bill was working on it.

I remember having hired Bill to help me on at least one occasion. We had to move the tractor , so we towed it from one place to the other with the car; it was that old reliable 1932 Chevy. The noteworthy part of that story was the fact that the tractor was still equipped with steel wheels, the Farmall F-12. The road was still ungravelled dirt. We in our youthful exhuberance went fast enough to clear the accumulated hard packed dirt from the lugs of those tractor wheels!

Many years later, when I was on the school board and when the malcontent I have named Jow Blow* was sowing his wild cane, some of it took root in Bill. The hardball nature of school politics manifested itself , and nowhere did it devastate friendship more completely than between Bill and I.

The effects of that period were most temporary. We soon became friends again, and that unpleasantness is best forgotten. I learned more about life and human nature; nothing can take that away.

Worthy of note was the fact that another near neighbor who "was on the same side as Bill" in that school fight later developed enmity between he and Bill, which existed until Bills' death, and caused in part the moving of that neighbor from the community.

Bill was most successful at most of the enterprises he attempted. He sold and applied fertilizer, bought livestock, and even traded in machinery for a time.

The last few years of his life Bill had to be on oxygen, for he had advanced emphysema. Since he did not smoke or use tobacco , some other cause existed. He once told me when he must not have been more than forty years old, that his doctor told him he had a body of a sixty year old man.

*Please refer to the chapters on school.

Bob Rogers

Bob told me a story not long ago which bears repeating

When he was young his family had a "G" Allis Chalmers tractor equipped with a one row cultivator. He was helping a neighbor , Joe Hurt cultivate corn with that tractor, when Joe said to him, "Take a look at that one row you are cultivating. One day there will be tractors with sixteen row cultivators, but the farmers who own them will only be allowed to keep the product of the one". Joe could see far into the future, the place where we are now. Bob remembered the story and appreciated its prophecy.

Bob was a legend in himself. A more helpful neighbor never lived. He was not prudent with machinery or land investment, and at one time had more debt than almost anyone. I do not know if he was the beneficiary of any write-downs. He was known to have driven a combine into Clear Creek as the result of exhaustion, and I remember a Hills Bank executive, Gordon Hines, saying that if he died tomorrow he would have lived a hundred years. He may have been sixty at the time.

During some of his lifetime he wrote his own laws. He once stopped where an acquaintance was planting corn and asked that neighbor for a part off his planter. Of course the man refused, but in so doing he may have lost more than if he had done so. Bob never forgot a good deed. The man told me of the incident, it having made that much of an impresion.

At least once he aroused the ire of landowners by doing some outrageous things during deer hunting season. He acted as did some pioneers in going when and where he wished. That included the whole clan and all who were in the hunting party. Such elements in a life is the stuff of legends.

Age of Steam

I consider it to have been a high privilege and an honor to have belonged to the generation which experienced the last of the Age pf Steam. Steam locomotives were the only form of power the railroads had when I was young. I remember when the first diesel-electric locomotives were an innovation.

The reason Diesel-electric technology was popular had to do with the enormous inertial forces a locomotive had to deal with. Gear driven engines were totally impractical, since the inertia involved would have been destructive of both the engine and transmission. Diesel-electric power first came to the railroads in the late 1930's if my recollection is accurate. The Rock Island Rocket, Great Nortern's The Empire Builder, The New York Central's Twentieth Century Limited; Pennsylvania RR's Broadway Limited; Burlington Railroad's Zephyr; Union Pacific's Overland Limited and City of Los Angeles; The Golden Gate Limited and others were the first passenger trains pulled by diesel engines in an attempt to raise speeds and shorten schedules. Even individual trains were given exotic names like "The Golden State" of a Rock Island passenger train.

The reason diesels were first used to pull passenger trains was the higher speeds they could practically attain. Steam engines were capable of attaining any speed, but their unbalanced driver wheel weight was destructive to roadbeds at high speeds. Since roadbed maintenance was one of the great costs of running railroads, it was an important consideration.

After the companies absorbed the cost of that first change, it was only a matter of time when diesels were put to work on freight trains. The more efficient diesel power meant the elimination of many costs and facilities which were necessary to keep steam engines on the road. That sealed the fate of steam power for rail transportation.

I do not know from experience how much coal it took to operate a steam engine on a threshing machine, but I have heard it was high. I do know that a ton of coal did not last long in a freight engine under way. That was a lot of energy .

On the farm, steam power was used to drive sawmills and to power grain separators till about World War Two. The labor shortage caused by the war effectively ended steam power on the farm. Steam was not an efficient user of either labor or energy. A full-time tender was needed for the engine because it was necessary to keep steam up in order to power a threshing machine. That meant keeping a hot fire in the firebox at all times. Sawmill power was not quite so demanding , and it was routine to saw slabs to size suitable to be used in the engine firebox.

I remember once having seen a steam engine driving a sawmill. I was with my grandfather when we got some lumber from Herbert De France. His steam powered sawmill was in operation on that day. As I recall, that sawmill was set up southwest of Cosgrove in that timber. I remember being captivated by the smooth, quiet performance of that engine. The quiet and seemingly effortless, even melodious "choo-choo" of that engine when it was under load was in contrast to the great engines on railroad trains, to cars, and to gasoline powered tractors then becoming common on grain separators. Between cuts being made on the logs, the only sound it made was a quiet hiss of steam. It truly was a beautiful picture to anyone , and especially how it must have been to those who lived that era.

There were one or two steam holdouts which I experienced later on grain separators. I was on duty at a station on those occasions, and did not have as much appreciation of those events as I would have today. I remember our awareness of it being the end of an era, but youth is not impressed. I am sure older people noted it more strongly.

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9-1-96

Story #2

Computers have had an attraction to me for a long time. I repeatedly made the decision to have nothing to do with them, but that did not lay the issue to rest. When it became time for some of my children to up date to second generation computers (for them) the opportunity and pressure built to critical mass for me, and when they offered to help me learn the ropes, I bowed to the inevitable.

I now own Dianne's old Macintosh LC2 and it has far more capability in function and storage than I will ever need. Even my children are skeptical when I tell them how much storage it tells me it has. When I turn it on it variously tells me it has 98 to 100% memory still available. This after writing and storing on the hard drive all that I have written since December of '95. No one prepared me for that much capacity. Now after adjusting my mental processes to its enormous capacity I am learning to use that storage to advantage , for there seems to be no need to save, or be conservative in its use.

The reason I was attracted to a computer in the first place was the word processor

function. That has proved to be marvelous beyond all imagining. I learned typing in high school on a mechanical typewriter, that being long before electric typewriters were invented. I knew the manuscript often being messed by mistakes erased with a messy erasor, with the corrected character having to be retyped over the area erased. It required a master typist indeed to not make any mistakes. Of course, it did not allow for one to compose on the typewriter. One was more efficiently disposed to compose in longhand and transcribe to the typewritten page. I find the edit, delete, add, etc., ability of the word processor to be far superior.

I am now at the mental stage regarding the internet in comparison to my frame of mind concerning computers about ten years ago. I do not say I will never be interested, but to me the problem is in doing all of the editing that would be necessary to find useful material. Currently I am not willing to spend that much time. My question is, will I ever be? The conventional wisdom is that there is a world of junk amid a modicum of worthwhile material. Many persons who are on line are turning out junk at top speed, and that is mixed in with offerings by people who know their subject.

At present I have not mastered the use of the spread sheet or data base functions. I intend to try again this coming winter.

The broad view awes me as I put to use, after a lifetime of disuse, a skill I learned in high school, with a 1990's technology no one even dreamed of in the 30's.

Print 4-4-97

MEMOIRS OF HARRY SEELMAN January 20, 1996

FIRST MEMORIES

The first awareness I have of anything was that of getting on the train to go to Iowa. I remember this scene; My climbing up the stair into the passenger car, and having second thoughts, I backed down. At that point a firm hand pushed me back up the stair, whereupon I put myself in reverse and backed down again. At that point I remember being picked up and carried onto the train.

The next recollection I have is that of meeting my grandmother in the farmhouse in Iowa. We had a neighbor in Boulder whose name was Mrs. Bream. My memory does not include her, but I do remember confusing her with my grandmother on that first occasion. I remember calling my grand-mother simply "Bream". Mrs Bream was my godmother.

I have at least one more early recollection. Shortly after coming back to Iowa, my mother was afflicted with a serious, acute attack of arthritis. I do not remember any of those details, of course, but I do remember her going to the hospital (?) and getting into the car aided by what appeared to me to be a huge pair of very crude crutches. My mother told me much later that I was very miffed by her blatant neglect of me, of course. I remember a strong feeling of abandonment and alarm for what was happening to her when my mother was taken away on this occasion,which may explain what my mother described as my emphatically snubbing her for a time when she returned.

MY FIRST RETURN

I think it was the year 1956 or 1957 when my mother, Angela, Marie and I went to Colorado in our car, a 1952 Chevy station wagon. We visited J. I. Gilbert who still lived on the ranch he purchased from my parents. My mother said the ranch house still looked as it did when they lived there, as well as the other buildings. This trip to Colorado was the first time I had returned, so it was a new experience for me. The Great Plains of Nebraska, the high mountains, and the different lifestyles of the people made a lasting impression on me. Naturally, the different farming methods of the ranchers on the plains and in the mountains was observed with great interest. But my all too brief visit with Mr. Gilbert was of special interest. His obvious love of the land and our discussion of our occupational activity established a commonality of experience and understanding between us.

Upon leaving the Gilbert ranch we went to the house where Esther and I were born. Everything there was also much as when we lived there. So the timing of our trip was fortunate from that standpoint. But since we did not know the occupants, we did not disturb them, and did not see the interior. See picture attached. The house was located on a beautiful spot in Boulder Canyon which is called Pearl Street, adjacent to the Red Rocks, a narrow red sandstone formation which is more or less continuous north to south through Colorado in the foothills east of the Front Range.

While we were there we drove into the high mountains, and given the fact that the car did not have a high-altitude tuneup, it was about all it could do to climb the steepest parts of the mountain roads. I remember being astonished by the blue color of the air in the valleys, which was no doubt caused by the dark green color of the evergreen trees on the mountainsides. Being on foot on a mountain trail and caught in a thunderstorm was both exciting and frightening, especially upon seeing and hearing lightning and thunder below you! From the way the lightning crackled, it seemed almost to be at arms-length, and the strokes could actually be seen and heard above and below almost simultaneously.

A family story / anecdote should be related here. The details were never quite clear to me. There is an irrigation ditch in front of the Canyon house,and the story relates that one fine day I, playing in the yard, fell in. My sister Regina, upon seeing my predicament, pulled me out. From here the story becomes ambiguous, for to this day I do not know whether or not the ditch

was filled with water. My perception was that the story was told both ways, and since chronology dictates that I was youngest when I first heard the story, I may only have created the worst case in my imagination. I do think I remember my mother telling me the full water version....?

The lucky timing of the 1956 trip became evident when we next returned to Colorado some years later. The Gilbert ranch was gone and in its place was row on row of houses. Inquiry produced the reply that indeed this area was once the Gilbert ranch. Also, upon our returning to the Pearl street house, it was gone, and usurping its place was Settlers Park, an historic landmark. A bronze plaque relates that the spot was where the first white settlers camped upon newly arriving to the area. With the Red Rocks for a West backdrop, it posesses a unique beauty. Of course, it must be remembered that the beauty of Boulder Canyon is already very great, so all else is icing on the cake.

Two things stand out in the stories my mother told me about the West. She hated the wild winds that blew too often. So powerful that when carrying a bucket of water from the well to the house, the bucket would be empty upon arriving at the house, the water having actually all been blown out. But she was captivated by the beauty. Colorado's beauty is the reason for the huge tourism the state enjoys. And she was enchanted by Cheyenne Frontier Days. It is held annually, and since it is not far from Boulder, my parents attended one year. I have long since forgotten what she told me about it but I can remember her enthusiasm as if it were yesterday.

Since we are of European extraction,we are Caucasion,Saxon. Bavaria remained true to the Church of Rome, although much of Germany followed Luther into Protestantism. Happily, we are Roman Catholic. I have very early memories of our family's devotion . On the rare occasions when, because of bad weather, we were forced to miss Sunday Mass, we always said the rosary on our knees at home. In my mind's eye I can still see my grandfather on his knees and leading the rosary. My mother also made sure that our spiritual needs were met. I remember her helping me with my bedtime prayers many times.

A BEE STING-UNDESERVED

One of my earliest memories was a bee-sting. One of the basic activities on my grandparents' farm was a thriving bee colony. The collection of hives was located about one hundred feet south of the house,where the large evergreens are. The occasion was the day that honey was being taken from the hives, a two or three times a summer occurrance. This always upset the bees, and some of them were easily upset. There were, and probably still are, more than one variety of honey-bee commonly in use. These are the two that my grandparents had: One is equipped with black rings on the abdomen, and one yellow. I have since learned that the black-ringed ones are called German bees, and the yellow ringed are Italian. But my family had that identification reversed. There may have been a bit of bias here! True to their ethnic tendencies, the German bees were valued for their industry, and the Italian ones for their laid-back attitude. But the German bees, with their industry, were much more eager to defend the fruits of their labors. They may as well have been called African, for their disposition is the same.

On the previously mentioned day I still remember, I was sitting on the cement step of the house while observing the proceedings. A bee came, clearly looking for someone on whom to vent his rage, and stung me where bees always do when they are mad, which is squarely on the eye. What I remembered most about the incident was the injustice. After all , I was NOT the one who was taking the honey! It was a long time before I felt good about bees. In times of crisis, German bees do take the offensive, and I am certain that bee was one.

MENTOR

My next strong memory was Grandpa, and his kindness. He often held me on his lap. I do not know if it was his insistence or mine, but he often helped me learn my numbers and letters.

He always was full of good humor. He always had time for us little ones. I adored him, and he taught me much. I couldn't wait to get outside to help him. In the urgencies of running a farm I often forgot some of his lessions in raising my own children. But life was slower then. Memory has dimmed; but I remember him always prefacing an order with "if you want-". More later.

The first world news I remember was Charles Lindberg's solo flight from New York to Paris. I remember the family talking about the event , and that would have predated my learning to read the newspaper.

MORE EARLY MEMORIES

One of my earliest memories was my reluctance to go to bed at bedtime. Even when I was almost asleep I would always go to bed with the same protest, thus, "I dont want to go to bed" repeated over and over. Even today my mind's eye pictures a little boy going up the stairs of Grand-pa's house with some help, under protest. Today my reflection tells me it was my fear of missing out on some family activity that sparked these revolts, as is probably true of little ones universally. I remember an enchanting Christmas at about this age,when half asleep I got a glimpse of the wonderful things around the Christmas tree. We always used an evergreen branch which served very well, and the aroma was unforgettable. I can still see that wood three wheeeler, brightly painted.

VISITING GRANDMOTHER

Tom and Ann Flannery lived north of what was then Coralville, about where the Industrial park is now located, not far south of The Skelly filling station and restaurant. I know my memory of this matter is faulty, but that area is changed so much . My grandmother Seelman lived with them. Her husband Jacob P. had died late in the previous century [our grandfather.] We went to the Flannery place to visit, as I recall, fairly often. Since she died in 1928 , I was only six years old the last time I saw her. I recall a spare lady who did not have anything to say to little boys. Looking back, I now appreciate my mothers's efforts to keep in touch.

Later we also visited grandmother Seelman's brother often at his farm. His name was Alphonse [Phony] Hofmann. He did not own a farm, but rented, a common practice at that time. At one time, when we first lived on the farm where all of our children grew up, Phony lived on the place north of us on the IWV road.

SCHOOL

The one greatest adjustment a juvenile has to make is starting to school. My kindergarten through sixth grade years were at Cosgrove. My kindergarten teacher was Sister Hugh,who was admirably suited for the position. She inspired me and her class with love for education, and that is the most important thing a teacher can do.

Travel to and from school was provided by the school district via horse drawn hack, an enclosed wagon body that was mounted on a high wheeled wagon pulled by a team of two horses. The capacity of these hacks was probably twelve to fifteen children, depending of course on the size of the occupants. Protection these vehicles provided the occupants amounted to fending off rain, snow, and wind. I recall not much protection against the cold, for once on a very cold day I remember being very cold, and the driver left me for the day at The Albert Hoffman home a mile and a half short of school.

The same mud roads that were the nemesis of car travel were also troublesome for hack transportation. A fully loaded hack was more of a load than a strong team could handle while climbing a steep hill, so the solution was often the unloading of the bus and all walking to the top of the hill, again proceeding after a suitable wait to rest the horses. All of this took place in mud much more than ankle deep. Overshoes would always have a rind of mud four inches wide and very heavy. Nothing was stickier than clay mud. Or heavier.

Much was learned about social skills on these school hacks, as is true today in school bus

travel. Bullies existed then as now, and it was important for us to learn how to cope with less than ideal situations. Bullies always have the advantage of being bigger than their victims, but they always overplay their hand, and either the driver or a right thinking student intervened. So we survived. At school a larger number of bullies ruled, but only on the playground for the most part. There they had to deal with the ever watchful nuns, and being sent to the superintendent usually meant harsh punishment. I would be less than honest if I failed to mention a classroom discipline problem that did exist, and it was serious because it disrupted class, but it pales when compared to many present problems. Sister Eulalia was the principal, and well suited for the job. Sister Hough, Sr. Barbara, Sr. Monica, and at this point my memory fails.

I remember learning to read readily, but I was slow in arithmetic. No problem with accuracy, but slow. It was years before I was able to add and subtract rapidly, and by that time calculators were in common use. Perhaps it was because of a lack of individual attention, for in grades one through six at least, which was as far as I went at Cosgrove, each teacher had two grades. That placed the number of students for each nun at forty to fifty. The quality of teachers of the Sisters of Humility was as a whole exellent, but with that many to care for it was certainly less than ideal for both teacher and students.

Our living in time of depression was not lost on me, nor were my mother's frugal ways. I remember a habit I acquired early and which I carried till I was out of high school. When doing class and homework, I compressed it into the least possible space on that precious paper. Only one or two reprimands from my mother were necessary. Even then,at my early age, I felt sorry for the teachers who had to grade my papers. I often think of this when I see the prodigious use of paper today,wherever one looks.

At a certain time during my seven years at Cosgrove, we were given library privileges. I remember being eager to take advantage of this, and often reading books that were available. Credit for my enjoying reading can truthfully be given to an author named Hamlin Garland. He wrote about young people on the American frontier,and to me the nostalgia which he injected into his works was so real that it was almost as if I lived it myself. Today it is called virtual reality ! "The more things change, the more they remain the same." (Old proverb)

A neighbor, Tom Taylor, did some farming with a Fordson tractor for my grandfather, and a number of times I was able to benefit from his teaching and example. On one memorable occasion he allowed me to take the wheel while he was plowing the field west of the house. Once he took me with him when he was hunting rabbits, and he taught me the wiles necessary to hunt them with a rifle. He was very knowledgeable of the habits of wildlife and nature in general.

I recall this time in my life as a time of loneliness,since I did not have any boy companions nearby. I remember feeling that lack keenly, for Grandfather was the only other male person in the family. I was surrounded by aunts ,sisters, and my mother, and although they were good to me, it did not substitute for male companionship. Also, about the time I was solidifying friendships with classmates at school,we had to rip up our roots when we moved to near Iowa City. Thus my friends were lost.

Adolph and Emma Zabloudil lived with Bill and Ethel Grabin in the early thirtys. Their mother had died when they were young, and the father had no way to care for them. The whole family, perhaps five children, were "farmed out" when they teached school age. St. Vincent home, an orphanage supported by the diocese, cared for them when they were very young. Adolph was in high school and Emma was in my class. I adored Adolph, but there was little time for shared moments, the pressures of age difference and he having to milk many cows before and after school intervening. He later moved away and we completely lost contact, and the last I heard we was in poor health. Emma lives in Denver, and Esther maintained friendship with her.

We received word just now (June, 1996,) that Emma has passed away.

There was an old barn on my grandfather's farm, the first one he built. It was located almost precisely where our house is located today. When I was very young I spent much time playing in and about that barn. My grandfather's first car, a 1907 Cartercar, was stored within. It had not been used for many years, and I spent much time playing in and under it. That car was totally impracticle for Iowa mud roads, for it was far too heavy and did not have enough power to climb hills even in good weather. A huge drive chain connected the transmission to the rear axle. An even larger cast iron housing enclosed that chain , making a very heavy combination indeed. The tire size was 30" x 3-1/2" with no tread, being perfectly smooth. That was not a good feature for Iowa roads. It had a large four cylinder engine, but the great weight of the car was to muich for it to handle, it being a typical low performance type. My grandfather had a fixation for that car, he not recognizing its shortcomings during his lifetime.

MORE CHANGE FOR US

My grandmother is a person that I would select if I had the chance to visit her now. She treated me with a firm harshness that did not endear me to her. My mother's oft- expressed feelings to me of unhappiness because of her mother' unfairness did not help. Aunt Marie's favored position in this mix was a key factor. This situation was well documented by people other than my mother. But I still would like to visit with her to find out what was behind it all. My mother,while we in my family were all at home, was scrupulously fair in our family living. And we always were aware of and felt her affection. Often parents provide for their children the things that were lacking in their lives when they were children. I am interested in what happened to my grandmother to cause her to be unfair to her own. Visiting with her and asking the right questions might have provided the answers, and it is true that we will never know.

In the year 1932 my grandmother experienced health problems which upon investigation proved to be caused by cancer. At that time medicine was powerless against cancer, so in a short time she passed away.

With all of grandmother's unfairness toward our family notwithstanding, she wittingly or unwittingly provided safe haven for us. With her illness and passing, Angela saw fit to return home and from the start it was clear that she would not rest until we were ousted. My mother was not by nature a fighter, so it was no contest. By that time my mother had the proceeds from the sale of property in Denver, which she used to buy a tract of land, 23 acres,near Iowa City, which is located south of Route No. 1 southwest of Iowa City. This is the land located south of the mobile home park, Old Capitol Motors, and the Mormon Trek - #1 intersection. The airport was being expanded at that time. My mother purchased a large old house on the airport site at a bargain price and secured the services of the Mott house moving company ,who then moved that house to a site on the 23 acre property. A foundation and basement had been prepared by a carpenter [the word CONTRACTOR was not in use yet] named Wm. Planck, who then proceeded to make a barn of a house barely livable. But it was home, and I remember it as such, complete with happy memories. But as things turned out, those memories had to wait yet a while longer.

The depression was in full swing , and the Gilbert mentioned earlier was affected strongly by it as were a lot of other people. We no sooner made the move to the new home [in the summer season] when word came from Colorado that Mr. Gilbert would be forced to default on his payments. At that point it became necessary for my mother to write down the agreed on price for the ranch. Since the collapse of the banking system made money almost unavailable for everyone,the wise and humanitarian thing was to make it possible for Gilbert to retain possession and eventually attain ownership. Like so many good people, many events were beyond his control. This produced another crisis for us, since these payments were depended on as the only source of income for us. I remember a tearful and stormy scene involving my mother and my two older sisters. None of us wanted this kind of outcome. All were apprensive, as my mother

laid out our predicament. Again we were faced with a single bleak choice, which of course is not a choice. We must again move back to our grandparents' home, this time without our grandmother.

We all knew what we were facing, as we remembered the very negative atmosphere which Angela created. In mind were the confrontations, with my sisters trying to take my mother's part, and everyone much upset.

But move back we did.

THE DEPRESSION AND ITS IMPACT

The house near Iowa City was rented out at a time when tenants were also suffering from the Republican depression. Often these tenants could not pay the rent. There was a reason why it turned into the Republican depression. President Hoover won a reputation as a humanitarian for his part in providing world relief by his efforts as chairman of the then world relief organization, years before he was president. This relief was directed to the starving victims of World War One to alleviate their suffering. However, at the onset of the Great American depression and all of its suffering, Hoover found it necessary to obey the dictates of the wealthy Republican oligarchy, and repeatedly declare that it was not the province of government to alleviate human suffering. So the people rejected Hoover and welcomed the New Deal. These acts of President Roosevelt's staved off the advance of communism, which at that time was making great strides in our country.

As the New Deal jump- started the economy, money again began to flow into the pockets of the people. This provided Mr. Gilbert with the option of borrowing the money he owed my family and paying us off. So we again were given the chance to try it on our own. In 1934 we again moved to the Iowa City home, this time to stay for six years, until I was out of school.

The varied nature of my education encompassed the Cosgrove Consolidated school through grade six; Summit Hill country school through grade eight; St.Mary High school, through grade ten; and University High School of the University of Iowa through grade twelve.

ONE ROOM COUNTRY SCHOOL

That little one room country school-kindergarten through grade eight, for the job it had to do, in my judgment ranked at" top of the class". I feel my varied education qualifies me for an opinion that carries some value. I think one of the reasons it provided quality education was that we were fortunate to have quality teachers,but also because of the favorable teaching climate. Each student was afforded the advantage of being exposed to the tutoring of eight other classes, often those class members receiving individual instruction. The younger children had a taste of their future education, and the older ones the advantage of review.

I remember my country school education as occurring at a time of tumult. Miss Klenk taught us when I was in the seventh grade, and I remember her as a capable teacher. But since she had plans for marriage, and since teaching was at that time closed to married women, we had a new teacher the next year. Miss Pizarik then came on the scene. I think she may have had ability, but since there were romantic connections with her and the school board president's hired man, she was removed early in the year when she announced her intention of becoming Mrs. Walters. So enter Miss Morissey, one of the best teachers I ever encountered. She went on the following year to teach at Tipton, where it turned out that she knew but did not teach my future wife. It can be a small world.

My only classmate at Summit Hill was June Williams, a very pretty girl whom I soon fell madly in love with, my first crush. Unrequited love can at once be painful and mercifully short-lived, and soon other interests developed as I went on to high school.

Back to Summit Hill School

An incident at that school stands out. Anna May Riecke was in the fifth or sixth grade when I was in eighth. A very headstrong girl was she, and it so developed that the subject of

pump handles and human tongues came up at recess. One mentioned and another confirmed that it would be very ill-advised indeed to place one's tongue on a pump handle in zero weather. We all agreed except Anna Mae, who declared she never before heard of such nonsense. The pump handle, zero weather, and Anna May's tongue were all available at that moment, and in spite of all we could do to dissuade her, the forbidden combination gott ogether very quickly. The inevitable happened, and the ensuing separation occurred with difficulty, quickly, and with much pain.

Please do not judge the teacher too harshly concerning this event. She was there to teach, and she possibly saw the rare opportunity to do that to a difficult student. After all, being very stubborn, Anna Mae was an easy read. Although she could not talk at all well for a couple of weeks, she proved that where there's a will there's a way. Few other places in the world could have provided a more graphic lesson so easily understood by the entire school membership. There never was any doubt in my mind that this lesson was fully appreciated by all who were there, from the oldest to the youngest.

THE WINTER OF 1936

The last year of my education at Summit Hill was memorable from another standpoint. The worst winter of the Twentieth Century descended upon the Midwest. On Christmas day 1935 we spent the day at Grandfather's house, and when it started to snow heavily we went home. We had a 1927 Chevy, an uncomfortable conveyance anytime, but especially in winter since it had no heater. I remember getting stuck in a snowdrift just west of of the now Finkbine golf club entrance. There was a low point in the then ungraded road in the small valley, and snow collected there.

But since we carried a scoop shovel for such emergencies, we soon were home. That was the last day any of the side roads were open that winter. They were narrow and unimproved, so the snow soon drifted deep in the cuts on the hill-sides. With no place to put the snow, there was no way to open them. The wind blew continuously and strongly that winter, so even if they had been opened, thirty minutes later they were again blocked. But this made no difference to our education, since we walked through the fields. Etched deep in my memory is the picture of a flat-bed Ford truck that was stuck on that road all winter. The only part visible was the top foot of the cab.

I recently learned who that truck belonged to. Hawkeye Lumber Co. had temporarily lost a truck on a snow-blocked road that winter, and that had to be it. Carl Swaigert, eventually the manager of Hawkeye Lbr., was Rose Marie Ruth's father, and that is how I learned to whom it belonged.

That winter was different from many standpoints. The powerful winds picked up so much snow that even on clear days the blue of the sky was visible only in a small circle directly overhead. In early January the winter season busied itself with high snowfall, and after that we had steady temperatures far below zero. I remember looking at the thermometer one day in late winter, when we were long since sick of it, and mentioning to family members that perhaps something was wrong with it. However, a trip outside the door immediately confirmed that the problem was not with the thermometer. The Cosgrove school was closed for seven weeks that winter, since the greater distances and blocked roads made attendance impossible. No snowmelt occurred until Washington's birthday.

A part of nature made human inconvenience worse that winter. When snow was removed from a road or other area, the snowpile or ridge made an effective barrier for the wind which made the next snowdrift that much deeper. Oftener than not, the method of removal was muscle power, and even the most energetic individual found discouragement in the half hour or less it took the wind to erase the evidence of his labor. Farm gates were soon abandoned and chores accomplished in some other way for this reason. The state highway department was hard-

put to keep the state system open, so that was the time they learned to depend on rotary plows. With that much drifting it made V plows nearly useless. If one wants to see what those country roads looked like then, look today, 1-30-96, at the ungraded one--half mile section at the east end of the Ridge road.. We have perhaps a foot of snow on the ground. Most of the roads are open with few problems, but that road with its high banks and narrow roadway is deeply blocked. This is the section of road one mile north of the IWV at the north end of the gravel road which is eighty rods east of our driveway.

As I write this on the second of February 1996 we are having a taste of winter. In the last three days the temperature has stayed below zero. The next three days are expected to be the same. But at the moment there is no wind, and we are always thankful for that in the winter season. It was - 35 degrees this cold spell.

Our parish was St. Marys in Iowa City, and upon entering high school I was enrolled at St. Marys . The building was located where the Newman Center is today. The school was good quality in that age, offering a very standard fare of Latin,the normal offering of English,limited music, history , math, algebra, geometry, and not much else. I had a solid background in all of this, and I did well in all of my classes while I was there. Discipline was definitely a problem.

Some of the kids from Iowa City did not seem to appreciate the opportunity to learn. They would have been expected to torment and ridicule new kids like us, except for two reasons. Our appearance was rustic because of a very limited clothing budget, but because of the depression so they were also less than finely dressed. Also, because of our desire to learn, we country kids excelled in our respective classes. So we found it unnecessary to defend ourselves for the most part. "We were country when country wasn't cool."

It was here that I acquired three lifetime friends, the first close friends I had. Ray Reiland was from the city, and Carl Langenberg and Ray Cole were from the country. We occasionally got together at one or another of our farms to do some hunting or to visit. For various reasons Ray Cole and I drifted apart, and he passed away many years ago. I still count Ray Reiland and Carl among my friends.

A WRENCHING CHANGE

With very little income from our very small farm operation and several of us in school, even the cost of books was a crushing burden. That and the fact that I needed some practical education, since I was not making plans to go beyond high school, made University High School an attractive option. Books there were free, which was a strong advantage, not offered at St. Mary's. Science,Industrial Arts, and typing were all skills which would be needed in the work world. So Esther and I were transferred at the beginning of the 1938-39 school year.

This shift naturally placed a strain on friendships established at St Marys. The fact that the friendships mentioned above survived is witness to their solidity. That strain is evident at times today, since I neglected to set the record straight as to why we changed schools. Much of the strain surfaced in Father Strub and the nuns at St. Marys, and they never did understand it. I have resolved to take care of this bit of unfinished business with Fr. Strub and Carl Langenberg. It was never an issue with Ray Reiland. You who have read my mother's memoirs may remember the reason she gave for placing us in U Hi. The hardships she endured and our lack of resources made it truly necessary to take advantage of the free book offering. Looking back, I realize how we kids tried to ignore or deny those difficulties.

A FRIEND PASSES

I had the above mentioned opportunity very recently- 1996- at the Francis Lynch funeral. John Alberhasky, Erma , Carl and I were visiting whereupon I opened the subject. The opportunity was especially fortunate because Erma was also a St. Marys classmate. Her family name was Petrock. Father Strub is the only one remaining on the pending list of those to enlighten.

Spell out

Francis and Helen have been in very poor health for an extended period. I have been seeing him frequently at Lantern Park and last fall was the last time he truly enjoyed our visit.

SOME ROUGH SPOTS

I may have been only ten or twelve when it was decided that I was old enough to help with field work. So I was given charge of my grandfather's "plugs" one day to harrow some freshly plowed land. The word "plugs" was applied to an old team of horses. They were supposed to be pretty much idiot-proof. The equipment to be used was a two section harrow, which was a suitable load for two horses. The operator followed behind the harrow on foot, and controlled the team with the lines, two narrow strips of leather which were fastened to the bits in the horses' mouths. Much pride was the feeling as I was becoming acquainted with the control of power. Pride goeth before a fall, and so it was that day. The horses knew more about this job than I did. And they probably ignored me as they did the job as they knew was proper. But perhaps they were suffering from what humans call memory lapse, or forgetfulness. What they did was to turn too short at one end of the field. In most circumstances, the consequences of this error would have beeen minor, but in this case there was a deep dead furrow which the harrow had to traverse.

Normally I, the driver, could have avoided disaster by stopping the horses. I saw the danger of malfunction as the end of the harrow drawbar engaged the vertical wall of the dead furrow. This event stopped completely the normal advance of the harrow, and I recognized the need to stop the horses so the sidewise pull on the harrow would not invert it. I was only successful in slowing , not stopping them, since I was fairly small and could not exert enough pull on the lines to produce the desired effect. I can still see the slow motion as the harrow inverted, thereby striking the rumps of the horses very forcefully and gouging one with a harrow tooth. The horses then did what horses have done since antiquity; they ran away. Thus ended my first attempt at farming. That turned out to be the only runaway I experienced , altho I had several close calls in later years. If any one is interested, I can identify the point of origin of that runaway , even today, with about 100 foot accuracy.

END OF AN ERA

Grandpa taught me much about farming and life. He was older and certainly was no longer caught up in substituting capital for labor. Almost all of the work done on his farm was by horse and man power. Nonetheless, when he was younger he and his brother Louis jointly owned a full-sized grain separator which was powered by a horsepower, and a later one powered by a steam engine. When I was young both separators, two horsepowers, and the boiler from the steam engine were on the farm. One was stored in the drive of the double corn crib and the newer one was stored west of the barn in the lot. World War two gobbled them all up. Much good quality cast iron was thus salvaged for the war, and a lot of it probably is at the bottom of the oceans today. If so, it was put there by German U-boats, for they sunk many allied ships which were carrying war material to Britian. When I came on the scene the Great Depression had taken its toll of my grandfather's fortunes. He was then forced to revert to labor intensive methods, as were many others.

Those two grain separators had wood frames, and they were works of art. The art was more advanced than the technology, that still being the age of craftmanship in manufactured products. The two machines were similar in several respects. They both used the same basic technology. Both had spike toothed threshing cylinder and concave, both had sieves and fan driven air blast- chaffer - grain separating system. They both used a raddle to remove the straw from the separating unit and transported the straw to the strawpile. The separator that was stored outside was the latest of the two. The greatest difference was in the feeder systems. The older machine had a platform at the front of the machine at the cylinder intake, where a man stood during operation, cut the twine bundle bands, and pushed the grain laden straw into the

cylinder. That work station was called "band cutter" and that was what the man who occupied it was then called. The second machine had the system that prevailed to the end of the grain separator era. It had a series of power driven knives, similar to field mower knives,to cut the sheave bands, and a raddle conveyor to carry the grain into the cylinder. It also had a grain measuring system to count the bushels harvested. Bushel basis was used to calculate the amount the farmer owed the separator owner when custom threshing was employed. I estimate the date of manufacture to be the late 1800's for the first machine and the early 1900's for the second.

I remember the equipment we used when I helped Grandpa haul manure. Much farm equipment at that time was in the development stage. But his manure handling methods predated any development. Thus; a low-wheeeled wagon with the space, which was normally covered by a box, covered by one layer of two by four or six inch lumber, twelve feet long. The manure was piled on top of this platform with a manure fork. When the load was completed it was hauled to the field by horses, and then partially unloaded and scattered with that same manure fork. The remainder of the load was then unloaded by turning each piece of lumber on its side by hand, thus dropping the rest of the load to the ground. It was an effective method, but painfully slow. This was the method of manure handling which I used the first several years I was farming on my own.

AXE CULTURE

It has been said that the American wilderness was conquered with the axe, wielded by the indomitable pioneer. Nothing is more truthful. Saws,yes. But the axe was both the symbol and the tool that represented the symbolism and the work. Especially the work. Long after the pioneering was done the axe remained, into the present generation. It took the chainsaw to partially dethrone the axe. My grandfather used the axe constantly on almost every job. He used it in the timber for woodcutting, while fencing for shaping wood, an old axe for shaping frozen earth, driving stakes or posts, on building repair to shape wood or as a sledgehammer,chopping ice out of stock tanks, etc. The single bit axe was a multiple tool that he could not have dispensed with. I think he never owned a double bit axe. I recall the many hours he spent at the woodpile while splitting wood for the kitchen range, which was finiky about the size of the wood that it used. Since it was the only source of heat for cooking and did much of the winter heating of the kitchen, very much wood was needed. That same single bit axe did all of that wood splitting.

It has been said and written that the woodpile was once the best marriage preserver in human history. It was better than counsellors, better than confessors, better than meekness. It is a shame there is a shortage of woodpiles today. Many husbands terminated a marital crisis by "going to the woodpile".

Of course, I followed Grandpa's example and became proficient with use of an axe. A well sharpened axe,used by a qualified woodsman, can cut a log in a very short time. I acquired that ability, as Steve and Tom learned a number of years ago. Remember, boys?

ECONOMICS

The economic cow was milked from antiquity by this method; People of wealth were not content to make money the old fashioned way, by earning it. So a banking system was devised whereby cycles worked much faster for them. First, credit was relaxed and money made easy to get for people to obtain hard goods, real estate, etc. Then, when many people took advantage of easy credit and took on large debt loads, interest rates were raised and money was made much more scarce. Many people then could no longer service their debt, so the banks foreclosed. Then the banks had the best of all worlds,owning much property and in a position to begin the cycle over again. But in the Great Depression, they overplayed the advantage, and many banks went bankrupt as the economy spun out of control. Farmers were particularly hard hit in that depression. I am not in possession of accurate figures, but neighbors told me that at least ninety per cent of local farmers lost their farms. My grandfather should have been unaffected, for his

farm was clear, but the Tiffin Savings Bank went belly-up and there went my grandfather's savings. So in their old age things were very difficult for my grandparents.

Such was the state of the country and my Grandparents' affairs only a few years after we arrived in Iowa. One of my early memories was the concern I heard expressed by the adults in our household as these events unfolded. Fear was in everyones' faces as they were confronted by an uncertain future. Tom Davin told me once that only two farmers did not lose their farms on the IWV road at that time , from the county line to Iowa City; Martin Hoffman [the place at the north end of Greencastle Avenue] and our grandfather. I added a third, for Ben Hofmann bought that farm from Louis Rohret, and it was secure.

Please read the book,"Lone Tree" by Bruce Brown. It is a story of a once wealthy farmer who became unhinged and killed his wife, a neighbor, his banker and himself , and it was triggered by the banker who withdrew his line off credit. That banker was my banker, John Hughes.

OLD METHODS

I recall helping neighbors at least once to drive market hogs to Tiffin where there was a railhead for shipping market hogs to Chicago. That was the only place in this region that had slaughtering plants. The weather was warm, so the hogs were short-tempered, and needed frequent rest in the heat, even though we moved them early in the day. I remember the herd being perhaps forty head, and we numbered about five drovers. The hogs took advantage of every opportunity to scamper to roadside shade, so the trip was slowed considerably. The alternate method was to haul the hogs in a triple wagon box. As I recall, a wagon box could haul perhaps five or seven head, so that was a slow process. That long of a walk was an effective way to reduce a hog's weight, so truck transportation, then just beginning, soon caught on. The Chicago stock yards then had Swift, Cudahy, Morrel, Oscar Mayer, and at least one or two more packing plants. When packing became decentralized after the war Chicago declined in importance and closed several years later.

THRESHING

When I was perhaps thirteen, I remember my grandfather having a certain number of oats acres to harvest, and since I was old enough to help, he taught me the customary way to bring in the harvest. Much time and labor was expended in cutting the grain with a grain binder and then shocking the bundles,about twelve or fourteen bundles per shock. Then a threshing ring was agreed on by neighbors, and the owner of a grain separator was engaged to thresh the grain, each in his turn, until all were done. The labor was divided according to each farmer's abilities, or equipment, or skills. The first step was the pitchers' jobs, which was to use a pitchfork to throw the bundles from the shocks onto the hayracks pulled by horses about the field. The hayrack operator then rearranged the bundles to make a load perhaps eight or ten feet high, and it was an art to be able to make a load with true and plumb sides that would hold together during the trip to the grain separator,which was located at one end of the field or at the barn. Our prevalent side hills made that challenge much more insistent.

When the bundle hauler arrived at the grain separator , it was his job to toss each bundle of grain, evenly spaced, into the maw of the separator. The separator then did just that, and deposited the straw into a strawpile via a blower which used a huge oscillating pipe to distribute the straw in a stack. The length of the stack was adjustable according to the length of arc the blower was set to travel. The rate of blower travel was fixed at a speed commensurate with the ability of the men {usually one] to stack the straw as it was delivered to him. These strawstacks varied in size, but a typical one would be twenty-five feet long in an arc, and perhaps twelve feet high by ten feet wide.

This method obviously did not apply to in-barn stacking. Then the blower was extended

into an upper door of the barn and the stack built in the haymow of the barn. This method was often avoided because of the huge amount of dust generated by the grain separator which of course was deposited in the barn. The heat was barely endurable, and since it was accompanied by dust and very irritating chaff, a very hardy person was sorely tried. The straw had to be mowed to trample some of the air out of the straw as well as to move it evenly about the mow space. "Mowed", pronounced "mauwed" was the word used to describe what was done to the straw, or hay in haymaking,when it arrived in the barn mow. That was a very hot,uninviting job.

Another step in the grain harvest was handling the grain when it came from the grain separator. A grain wagon was located under the auger delivery pipe of the grain separator, and received the grain, a half bushel at a time and already metered, from the machine. Usually two men had the responsibility of tending the filling of the wagon,hauling the grain to the farmer's bin, and unloading it with scoopshovels. The ideal crew size was not always achieved. It would have been at least six to eight hayracks and operators for bundle hauling, three or four bundle pitchers, two grain wagons, three grain haulers, two men stacking straw, the separator operator, and of course the water boy, making sure all had a drink of cool water at least every half hour. Four women in the kitchen preparing the noon meal and in a few cases the evening meal rounded out the ideal crew. I forgot to mention at least twenty-two head of horses to make the eleven teams needed. There was nothing trivial about making that size opreration function. That it did function was a tribute to the cooperative spirit of nearly all farmers.

This system of harvesting small grain persisted until after WW2. Then the easier availability of machinery heralded the use of one man small grain combines for individual farms.

On the first summer which I remember being active in helping my grandfather with the grain harvest, he was no longer young and able enough to follow the threshing ring, so he reverted to the system commonly used when he was young. He enlisted my help to carry out this procedure, and it worked like this; We used a hayrack, called a bundle wagon when it was used to haul grain bundles, to haul the bundles to the barnyard, where we unloaded them onto the ground, neatly stacking them in small round stacks, spaced so the grain separator could be set between them for convenience in threshing. After this was done and when my grandfather's turn came to thresh, we did so. There was nothing about this system that made threshing easy or fast. When Hen [that was what everyone called Grandfather and that was how he signed his name] was young no one thought there was anything wrong with spending a large part of the summer to harvest the small grain crop, and indeed there was not, for it contributed a large part of farmers' income and needs.

There was another side to threshing economics. An old Irish farmer from Iowa County, Griffin, once told me that after harvest most farmers in their neighborhood were broke , their cash reserves having been used in buying supplies for the large threshing meals. Beer sometimes also had to be included, which further strained farmer's budgets.

NEW ERA

The first several years of my farming career I used the same grain binder and separator method for harvesting small grain. I did not own a grain binder, for I saw that its use would soon be outdated. I hired or borrowed one from neighbors in the interem. I first owned a used combine in about 1945. It was an Allis Chalmers All Crop Harvester. It was well designed but also well worn, so I traded it the next year for a new International model 52 combine. I combined a lot of grain and grass seed with it and wore it out over a period of more than ten years. That combine was both well designed and poorly designed. The cylinder drive was advanced for its time, as it was the first application of variable- radius belt sheaves that I know of on farm equipment. It was a variation of modern torque converter applications in common use

today, built so cylinder speed could be controlled and changed at the will of the operator. Modern gear drive combines use that same system to control ground speed. [Most modern combines use hydrostatic ground drive transmissions, a superior system.] But other parts of that model 52 Harvester Thresher could have used improved design. It employed a Scoop Shovel type header,so called by the implement manufacturer because it was tapered to a smaller width at the rear to fit the width of the rest of the combine. It was a good system for a manufacturer who built combines, but a nemesis for a farmer in a field of tall grain that had lodged,which required that almost the full length of the crop had to be cut and funneled into that scoop shovel design. Bridging on the sides of the scoop shovel header then occurred, and that effectively stopped or slowed the grain harvest. Later addition of a second reel helped, but did not fully cure that bottleneck.

The last pull type combine I owned was a well used Gleaner six foot machine which I obtained used in about 1960. That was a very good and well designed machine. I used it until I obtained my first self propelled combine.

MORE EARLY YEARS

Now back to earlier years on my grandfather's farm and those events. The first productive work I remember doing in the fields, perhaps the same year of the ill-fated runaway, was cultivating corn. We younger ones always had responsibility to do livestock chores after school in the wintertime, and both before and after school in spring and fall. In summer, in addition to the livestock chores we helped with fieldwork when we got older.

My grandfather had an extra team which he helped me to hitch to a one row walking cultivator. That way he was able to be nearby if I needed help. He had a "riding " cultivator which was equipped with a seat, hence its name. I remember my first encounter with Canadian thistles while cultivating corn. I was dispatched to the south forty acre field to help Ed ,Paul, and Carl Eckrich in cultivating that field of corn. They had the corn ground rented,as was my grandfather's practice when he got older. We kids were always barefoot, and those bare feet found said thistles with great accuracy, for the operator walked behind a walking cultivator. I had never seen them before, so I pointed them out to Paul ,who was nearby, and he told me what they were.

The job no boy who was worth his salt escaped also became mine as I grew into it. That job was driving a team "on the hayfork". A doubletree was hitched to the tugs of the Horses' harness, and that doubletree was in turn coupled to the barn hayrope. The rope was threaded through a series of pulleys , track, carrier, and hayfork to deliver the hay from the hayrack to the barn haymow. That hay carrier was the first partially automated device available to and widely used by farmers. It ran on a track located just under the roof ridge,and the full length of the haymow. An ingenious system of latch and lock was completely controlled by the rope that hoisted the hay into the barn and to the top of the mow. It was probably on a par with the reaper in saved human time and labor. The job the boy on the hayfork had was to drive the team with the rope attached to pull the hayfork load into the haymow, then return the team to the starting point to await the signal to repeat the trip. In good long stem hay this was repeated four to five times to get a rack load of hay into the mow.

That boy had a lot of responsibility. An experienced team made it easier, and it was not a job for a young team of colts with no experience. But he still had to start and stop the team on signal, turn the team at the end of the run, pick up the rope at the end of the run and pull enough on the rope against the team's pull to keep the slack out of the harness and tugs. This was necessary to keep the tugs and doubletree from getting tangled in the horse's legs, especially when turning. Then, upon approaching the barn, another turn of the team had to be made to face them out for the next forkful.. This all had to be done by manipulating the team with the lines. It meant a sore back ,sore feet, sore hands, and various assorted stiff and sore muscles. The first

few days were the hardest, before lessons were learned and muscles hardened. An advantage was that instead of being the water boy, he was on the receiving end of that ministration.

This account would not be complete without reporting the job of the man who "stuck the fork". His tools were the trip rope,which was used to trip the fork when the load, locked into the carrier on a special pulley, reached the proper place over the haymow . The trip rope's dual function was for the operator to then pull the fork back out to the load for the next trip. Commonly, the main hayrope was one or one and one fourth inch diameter, and the trip rope was one half inch. In later years when horses were no longer on the scene, a tractor took their place on the hayrope. In a pinch we even used the family car, and it did a creditable job. I remember that 1932 Chevy being used often for that purpose.

Many kinds of hayfork were tried and/or used to accomplish the desired effect. Single harpoon and double harpoon types were the first and only ones available when I was young, and later attempts were made to improve on them, with great success. Basket forks were the first, and since improvement was definitely needed, many were sold. They were heavy and cumbersome, so when grapple forks were developed and proved their superiority, they quickly became dominant. They made short work of a very tedious job. In dry hay the double harpoon fork was almost ineffective.

I almost forgot one of the hazards associated with this haymaking system. It was easy for the man who set the fork to unknowingly hook the fork on to a beam or floor part of the hay rack. More than one rack made a partial trip into the haymow. One or two such experiences induced the fork setter to extraordinary caution to avoid recurrences. The advent of grapple forks made this hazard more real.

THE TRAPPER

The above developments in my work life accompanied my perceived need to find a way to make a little spending money, so trapping fur bearing animals was one of the very few options available to kids then. But first I must relate an early experience and an early treasured toy. Early I wanted a BB gun quite badly. My mother soon learned of my "need" and so one Christmas she spoiled me by supplying it. I found its hiding place early, and spent some time caressing the end of the barrel. Looking back, I cannot believe I did not take it from its hiding place to more fully take early enjoyment. I think I was afraid of popping the bubble , sure that I was dreaming. Christmas came after an eternity that year, and sure enough, the present turned out to be mine. But this point in time brings us to another story.

Our aunt Agnes came home from teaching in Porto Rico some time before this, and having had a job there as a teacher, she brought some real money to financially strapped Iowa. Perhaps someone knows what job she had when she returned. I remember her buying us things our family could not afford. They were little things, and I remember her giving but not the gifts. Agnes possessed a very generous nature. I accordingly ,upon receiving that BB gun, stated to my mother the question that came to my mind, and grievously injured my mother's feelings. I remember regretting often the pain I caused my mother by this thoughtless act. Agnes was never aware of this . It always remained just between my mother and I.

Back to my fortunes as a trapper. I had no one to teach me the tricks of the business, and found in books some of the things I needed to know. I never had much success, and it was a rare muskrat,oppossum, skunk, and mink that stumbled into trouble caused by me. The money meant a lot though, for it was the first I had earned. The meager results were not for lack of enthusiasm. An important factor was the intense competition, for there were many adults who kept the wolf from the door in those days by trapping fur bearers. Many species must have been brought to the edge of extinction. The most prized catch was mink, for they were rare and canny. During season I awaked long before daylight,and made the long trip to Old Womans Creek in the south forty and back before school. Once I remember meeting a skunk on the path in semi-

darkness on a foggy morning. Both of us backed away from the barely two foot distance that remained between us at the point of awareness. These trapping experiences had to occur before I had reached seventh grade, for then is when we moved to the place near Iowa City, for the second time.

The trapping life brings one close to nature in many ways. Here is one I remember. The water level in our creeks in fair weather is stable except the day before a rain. It is common for the water level to rise several inches in that event. I have only seen one explanation, scientific or otherwise. There are probably not many people who know it occurs. That credit, not proven, states that lower atmospheric pressure at the approach of a low pressure system allows ground water to rise more readily to the surface.

DRIFTWOOD

This memory is a small matter, but I feel its inclusion will help you to understand what life was like for us in the Great Depression. Every little thing we could do was important to survival. Present living enjoys so many layers of affluence that it is difficult, if not impossible, for one who has always had them to mentally transport oneself to the hardships of that survival situation.

We heated our home with wood, and if the weather was very cold that loose house took great quantities of fuel. Insulation was unheard of, so frost was held at arm's length by that room heater heating only the living room and kitchen. That was only during waking hours, for at bedtime the fire was allowed to go out. Coal provided a hotter fire, but that required cash outlay which we and others did not have. Whatever coal it was necessary to purchase simply meant that we did without something else that we needed. While travelling on the roads, my mother kept a sharp eye out for extra pieces of wood on banks and near the fence rows. When she spotted one she stopped the car and it was my duty to capture it and put it in the car. We then added it to our meager supply of fuel. I recall this occurring during our trips to my Grandfather's house or when we took Berniece to and from her teaching station. This may seem to be insignificant and unimportant, but it is so from the modern day vantage point of plenty, not from the Great Depression view of our needs. Oh yes, most of that "driftwood" had to be sawn into smaller lengths in order to go into the stove's firebox, so a sawbuck and a saw was the equipment I used before and after school to do that.

In observing our modern society and its attempts to grapple with waste and excessive use of resources, I often think of the depression and how we who survived it conserved the resources of the planet. My mother was forced by economic realities to conserve in ways which present day environmentalists do not even dream of. She purchased dried beans, for example, not beans out of a can. All of the yearly tin can waste of our family could have easily been placed in a five gallon container. Our family could have lived much better than we did on half of what a modern family throws away.

A GOOD SAMARITAN

After puzzling over the how of our existing through the last half of the thirtys, I remembered something. That remembrance made it necessary to backtrack sixty years in my writing this account to add these thoughts. The awakening of these memories is almost a story in itself. I did not perceive the need to add this chapter until I had already written 215K of these memoirs, while writing the chapter titled, "The quest continues."

A man named Bill Villhauer did our mechanical work on the family car. That 1927 Chevy did not have the mechanical dependability of a modern auto. The miles involved were much less than a modern car travels, but also the roads were much more taxing than they are now. Dirt, mud, and gravel were the norm, not the exception. Bill used many innovative means to keep that car going and the cost to us at a minimum. I remember him filing the bearing caps of the engine to reduce the excessive clearance which wear and far too much age had caused in

those bearings. Most of my early schooling in mechanical work I can credit to him. He allowed me to place my nose very near to the task and I learned almost all of what I knew to that point from him about mechanical work.

His efforts did not end with that car. When we got the 1932 Chevy he did the mechanical work that car needed. I have said in this work that air cleaners were not engineered well, and at one point it became necessary to completely overhaul the engine of that car. I also mentioned that because of the severe service the car was subjected to in pulling trailers and plowing mud roads, once it was necessary to repair the rear axle and differential ring gear and pinion. In my opinion ,the wonderful service he provided made him one of the heroes of the earth during the depression era . I only regret I did not avail myself of an opportunity to tell him how I feel. Indeed, it took much viewing from afar for me to recognize his value.

A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD

Accounts were already chronicled here concerning the reasons why we moved from our Grandfather's farm. It was a time of hardship for all of us,but it was especially so for our mother. The year was 1934, I was fourteen years of age, Esther was thirteen, and Regina was not long out of high school. She was soon to work in Iowa City. Bernice had graduated from Ottumwa Heights College with a monetary loan from Aunt Marie and prepared to teach school.

The first job Gina had was in the Record room at the University of Iowa Hospital. It was the family's first acquaintance with Verna Crock, since she worked in that deparetment. Times then were truly hard, for the hospital expected and got free work for several weeks from Gina before they would put her on the payroll.

My mother had a small barn and a chicken house built on that Highway One property, and set up a small farming operation. Several milk cows were obtained, baby chicks, and later a sow which had a litter of beautiful pigs. I remember my mother's troubles with a disease that killed the chickens, and her frustration with the ineffective medications then available. That disease would strike when the chickens were about three-fourths grown or less, so some of the cost of raising them went into a lot of dead chickens when we could least afford it. But somehow we survived. That disease was called coccidiosis, a disease of the intestinal tract. I remember buying processed chicken feed and for a time,before we could raise some corn, she rented corn ground on shares. We used that corn for milk cow and chicken feed.

The last year we were there we bought a Farmall tractor in preparation for farming the place near Cosgrove, so we raised our own corn crop there near Iowa City. This may all sound like pulling oneself up by the boot straps, and so it was. To help pay expenses I did some custom work for neighbors. I did that before and after school . The custom work was mainly doing mouldboard plowing and while that F-12 tractor was a step better than plowing with horses, it bore no relationship to plowing with later equipment, or indeed, some of the better equipment available at that time. Standard equipment was steel wheels all-around, the drive wheels having many sharp steel lugs bolted to the rim. The lessons I had to learn quickly were a mixture of both old and new, not much guidance, and little experience.

A family named Brenneman ran a truck farm near Iowa City. The buildings of that farm were located at the northwest quadrant of the highway 1 and 218 intersection where the Kentucky Fried Chicken franchise and So Fro Fabric Shop are now located. He owned all of the land where Pauls and Western World are located and indeed all of the land to the street named Hudson Ave. to the west and Douglas Street to the north. He needed someone to mouldboard plow that land, and I got the job. Also, a neighbor to the south on the other side of the highway asked me to plow his field, and that included the land where Jacks and Slagers are located. The boundaries of that property adjoined the Iowa City airport which boundarys were almost the same then as now.

The Brenneman field had become overgrown with weeds, and I remember seeing many

garter snakes scramble for cover as I plowed it. I am sure many of the homeowners to the north experienced some unwanted visitors. I actually have trouble in transporting my memory to that time, since that area has been so completely transformed.

PIANO TUNER

Soon after we moved to the place near Iowa City I had an experience of which I had no understanding until many years later. An itinerant piano tuner came to our place looking for -- supposedly- a job to tune any piano we might have. Knowing the circumstances I am sure he did not tune the one we had. We certainly had no money for that luxury. Before leaving he managed to engage me in conversation in the garage. He declared expertise in medical knowledge, and asked me questions about private sexual matters. My suspicion was aroused when he asked me sp? to perform masturbation in his prescence. After my refusal I fled , but because of my (flavette) I had no idea what he really wanted till many years later. I remember my mother's suspicions at the time, for she asked me what we had been talking about. I did not tell her. It must have been forty years later when I learned of the existence of homosexuals. I was perhaps thirteen or forteen years old at the time. > reverse these sentences

A LONE LUXURY

Since we did not have a radio, the whole family feeling that lack, [at this time I had a custom cultivating job of 40 acres of corn for a neighbor, Mr. Kelly] we decided to spend the earnings on a new radio. I recall the cost being twenty- three dollars, including the battery pack. At that time a new technology reached the market for people without power line electricity. This Zenith radio had an inexpensive battery pack, since low current drain vacuum tubes had just been developed. All earlier battery radios needed at least four batteries, and they were short-lived, the filament battery being a car battery that needed frequent recharging. That required two trips to town or two batterys, one being charged while the other was in service. There were also two B batterys and a smaller C battery which needed frequent replacement, which in the depression was costly to say the least.

Before we had this radio I often went to the neighbors, Howell and Lizzie Davis, in the evening to hear radio programs. They were brother and sister who had never married. It was easy for me to get there, for they lived directly across the road . Howell and Lizzie did not own a car.

Prior to our radio ownership our family's entertainment was obtained from a Victrola. It was a refinement of Edison's talking machine. It had a spring motor which had to be wound by a crank before the playing of each record. We had a selection of good music, Caruso being one singer whose record we wore out among others. Nowadays people will laugh at our taste, for it leaned heavily toward the classics. I never lost that desire to hear good music, and it led me into the programs that provided it on radio. I will list a few of the radio programs; The Voice of Firestone, The Cities Service Concert, Smoke Dreams , and I wish I could remember the rest. Of course, the University of Iowa's WSUI radio station also had good music.

A word about home lighting without electricity. We first used simple kerosene lamps and it was possible to read by them at very close range. With that aid we did our homework . Later, a company produced a lamp named Aladdin which used a filament heated to incandescence by a circular kerosene wick, like a Coleman camping lamp does today. However, the Aladdin used a larger single filament cage. We purchased one, and after that it was much easier to read and write. Several people could work in an area of lighting near one of them. The most effective adjustment of that lamp was just below the setting which deposited soot on the filament. That destroyed its lighting ability until it was adjusted low enough to burn the soot and again be turned up to the optimum point.

"PRIMITIVE" LIVING

I mentioned the house near Iowa City earlier, but I did not say what the living

conditions were like in that house. None of a modern house's necessities were incorporated into most houses at that time. There were no plumbing or electrical facilities. Central heating was an innovation which could not be afforded in the depression by most families even if it was a part of the house. Wood burning cook stove, room sized heating stove in one room only- the living room; a kerosene lamp, a kerosene lantern for outdoor chores, a privy in the yard, and a bedroom chamber constituted the comforts of life. Water was mightily conserved,since it all had to be carried to the house after being hand pumped from the well, which was 300 feet from the house.

Even at Grandfather's house the drinking water had to be carried from the well, located forty feet west of our present drive, to the house , perhaps 200 feet away. If the rainwater cistern went dry,it meant that all water had to be carried there also. At our house near I. C. it included carrying all of the water for clothes washing and bathing.

House insulation was unheard of then, and the bed chamber, or pot, often had to be thawed out before it could be emptied. Bedrooms were the same temperature as the outdoors both summer and winter . Lack of insulation was a reason whole house heating was unaffordable. Summertime refrigeration was perhaps found in a corner of the basement. Sometimes critical foods like milk were lowered by rope into the well pit. The first convenience my mother chose after we moved to the house near Cosgrove was an L. P. gas powered refrigerator. What a godsend that was!

What a glorious feeling it was to awake to the first warm morning in the spring, and find the bedroom floor to be comfortable! And no frost on the blankets where one's breath escaped!

The one convenience we did have later was telephone service. I never lived in a modern house until we installed some of those conveniences after we were married. Our house near Cosgrove had a central furnace, hand fired however.

I often thought that house near Iowa City did little more than slow the winter wind a bit. The 1936 winter comes to mind first, because the wind blew strongly almost constantly. It had a standing seam metal roof, and some of the fasteners were broken. That roof clattered and rattled continuously that winter in the high winds. We were fortunate the steel cover wasn't torn off. If that had happened I don't know how we could have found the money to repair it.

ICE AND LOTS OF IT

The Winter of 1936- 1937 also turned out to be memorable. That was the first year I went to high school in Iowa City. We got a heavy accumulation of sleet pellets, perhaps ten inches thick, which was diabolically sealed down with freezing rain. Then it stayed cold for six weeks or so. Livestock and people alike suffered from immobility and injuries. I remember many who experimented with home made ice crampons , mountaineering style, for most could not have afforded them even if they were available. Coaster sled use was especially hazardous. The ice was so hard and smooth that control was impossible. I had a scar on my leg for many years , caused by an out of control sled carrying me into a fence.

The difficulty of carrying all of our water down that steep, icy hill made life more miserable still, and that was the chore Esther was helping me to do when she suffered a broken arm from an icy fall.

To satisfy my curiosity and to establish accuracy, on Saturday while driving past our old homesite, I stopped and paced off the distance from that old well location to the site of that old house, and found it to be three hundred feet. Oh yes , the well and house are both gone now, but the well pit and the basement hole are both still there. That may not be far to carry one bucket of water, but it is a very long way to carry every drop one drinks, bathes, or washes clothes with. [Saturday was 2-24- 96.]

HARDENING PROCESSES

During this period we had a French poodle named Poochie. He had some endearing qualities, but I remember him mostly for his bad temper. That house had an entry deck which was equipped with the standard porch crawl space under the floor. That space was relegated to Pooch's bedroom,which he guarded jealously. His guard duties were more seriously attended if he had a bone of any kind. Any one who dared walk on that deck was savagely barked at, so we kids often rose to the challenge. Perhaps that contributed to his temperament. One day I returned from school to the news that Poochie had bit a Press Citizen salesman and therefore would have to be shot. The salesman, Art Jones, threatened to sue,leaving us no choice in disposing the dog. Since I claimed him as my dog I also got that responsibility. It was perhaps a bit unfair, since I am sure the dog belonged to the family. I could not question the need, and did not shirk the responsibility.

I should also mention here the conditioning I had in this regard. We were the right distance from Iowa City to be the receivers of a lot of unwanted dogs whose owners did not possess the kind of responsibility owners of anything should possess. Those dogs were a pitiful sight as they waited in vain for their owners to return. Since we did not have extra resources, the solution To our problem was without choice. We were eating corn meal muffins quite often so there certainly was not anything extra to provide food for an average additional dog a week in season and out. Our neighbors Howell and Lizzie Davis had a large number of such dogs, so that provided a barrier of sorts to an increase in their pack,resulting in our getting all of the increase.

ANOTHER MUD ROAD LEGACY

An event that occurred in 1940 should be told here. At an auction sale some four miles southwest of home, an Ed Pate estate sale took place, and since we needed equipment, my mother and I purchased a hayrack and a mower at that sale. [Pate was killed by a corn shredder accident.] It was a muddy spring day, and with all of the sale generated traffic, the mud road was thoroughly torn up. That night a cold wave arrived, and that mud road became a formidible barrier, as I described in the mud road chapter. After that occurred, I proceeded with that steel wheeled F-12 Farmall tractor to bring home the newly purchased hayrack and mower. That day I did not arrive at the site of the sale. The mile or so of concrete like ruts and piles of frozen mud proved too much for that tractor. The tricycle type front wheels struck one too many of the many frozen piles of mud, and snapped the steel bolster supporting the front of the tractor. That ended that day's expedition.

The broken bolster was fabricated from a steel shaft perhaps one and one half inches in diameter at the point of highest stress where it emerged from the front casting. That is where it broke. The repair, outlined in an International Harvester repair bulletin, was prudent and effectively corrected that weak point. The wear bushing that was inserted in the casting at at that point was about one fourth inch thick or more,and by removing that bushing a half inch or more was added to the diameter of the replacement bolster there.That extra diameter proved to provide the extra strength needed for no trouble was ever experienced at that point again. Wear was not a factor, since bolster movement occurred only when the tractor steering wheel was turned.

ANOTHER LOSS

Several events coincided in 1938, 1939, and 1940. My grandfather had been in fairly good health,but since he used smokeless tobacco, his heart was being assaulted with nicotine caused stresses. We received word on January 13, 1938 from Angela that he had passed away, of heart failure. He was very dear to all of us. In my world it meant the loss of the only other remaining male family member. Gone were the opportinities to learn more from his teaching and example. Another human library burned. How often in the course of human events do we

have to reinvent the wheel. The written word is not used nearly often enough to really do a good job of preserving human knowledge. Part of that knowledge loss is due to the limitations of language, but most is due to the failure to put it down. Had history enjoyed the use and convenience of computer word processors much of the loss might have been stemmed. One has to take into account the self taught nature of Grandpa's education. I am certain he was aware of the need to impart his knowledge to others,as evidenced by his story telling ability. But nothing at all of what he knew was ever put on paper by him. I know he could write,for he often wrote when teaching me. But that was the extent of it.

My mother's share of grandpa's estate was to be eighty acres of the 120 he owned east of Cosgrove. Angela and Marie got the west forty. Also ,by buying Agnes out they got 140 acres of the home place, and Mabel got sixty acres on the west side of the farm. Later Angela and Marie also bought that sixty from Mabel. The west forty east of Cosgrove was purchased by my Mother and I from Angela and Marie later.

OUR FIRST LAND PURCHASE

These events laid the foundation for what happened next, and that played out on another stage. Leo Rohret heard that my mother owned some property in Boulder,Colorado, which indeed she did. It was a six acre tract with a poorly built house on it, and since Leo was about to lose the farm here , he wished to trade his equity for that tract. He owed the Federal land bank 5,000 dollars on the Iowa farm. That amounted to fifty five dollars an acre. If I had been versed on the business aspects of that trade I would never have consented for reasons I will point out. At that time my knowledge of land values was non existent. The farm involved is one half mile south of the I W V road on Greencastle avenue totaling 90 acres. The fences had all collapsed. All of the buildings except the house were in a sorry state. The barn was partly built and the frame was exposed to the weather for two years. The house was six years old but poorly cared for. But worst of all, seventy acres of the ninety was so badly eroded and poorly cared for that it would not even raise grass, let alone corn. The value of the farm with the six year old house would not have been more than that 55 dollars an acre in 1940. The house replaced a house that burned on the same site in 1934. The major fault the new house had was that it was placed on a poorly prepared foundation, and the basement was partly a holdover from the old house. [Leo Rohret was Otto's brother, and though he had a family, he was the most irresponsible person I ever knew. He totally avoided work, and in his spare time he chased women.]

The deed was done. We bailed Leo Rohret out, giving him six acres of land and a place to live for nothing in return. But the deal turned out well for us. Given a lot of hard work, a bit of money, the right treatment of the land for a change, the addition of the 80 acres from my mother's inheritance, etc., and the value of the twenty-three acres of land near Iowa City, it worked. The money came from the sale of that land to Hal Dane, who owned the farm across the road to the east. I don't remember the dollar amount, but it seems like it might have been four or five thousand . We purchased a lot of fencing materials, had Truman Schrader finish the barn, and in 1942 built the second barn.

A GROVE

A vivid series of memories includes that of harsh winds during Iowa winters. The farmstead is located on a hilltop which exposes it to those harsh winds, so one of the early priorities was to plant a windbreak. Fir and spruce trees were purchased from the Earl Ferris nursery in Hampton, Iowa, which specialized in evergreens . We spaced them in accordance with the nursery and extension service recommendations. That proved to be a huge mistake, although we did not know it until they had grown. The established grid located the trees thirteen or fifteen feet apart in both directions. That number is from memory , and it may be be easy for you who read this to prove me wrong by the use of a tape measure and a few minutes of your time.

Those numbers were fine when the trees were young and small, but as they grew it was more favorable to timber planted for wood and lumber production than windbreak use. There is a row of fir trees parallel to the road that was was mature when I was young and when we acquired the farm. The extreme south end is adorned by an unusually large tree, since it had all of the room and sunshine it needed. I once measured its canopy , which proved to be more than sixty feet. The next windbreak I plant will be done with that in mind. The present windbreak will eventually lose all of its lower branches. Those are the ones which produce the very protection one desires. They should have been planted much more sparsely, and even had they been they should have been thinned more as they grew.

I remember our share of problems when we were getting that grove established. I used two fifty gallon barrels on a skid to frequently water those trees when the grove was young, but even then I had to replace many of them for the survival rate was not good. Had I known what I do now, it would have been wise to not have replaced many of them. Thinning them out as they grew would have been excellent culture, but it goes against the grain to cut down beautiful young trees. I think of all the Christmas trees we could have had. That grove must be planted four times as heavily as now needed when mature.

HISTORY LESSONS LEARNED

I consider myself a very amateur student of history,but since I did much of that study on on my own it is perhaps not as tainted as formal education might have been. Two conclusions stand out. The first is how lucky Our Land has been that the North won the Civil War. One prime issue was whether individual states had the right to seceed from the union. Had the South won all states would have presumably gained that right. That would have opened the door for 48 individual soveriegn states to be born. Practically there would not have been that many, but even a far less number would have raised the same situation as existed in Europe. We could reasonably have expected them to have tried to settle their differences with constant wars in the intervening years, just as have European nations. The elimination of that prospect gives us the assurance that the Civil War dead were not in vain.

The second lesson is the realization that the German people have been on the cutting edge of the very best and the very worst of what has happened to Western Civilization in the last 200 years. Brahms, Beethoven, Schubert, Neitche, Luther and many more were at the forefront of Western culture. Scientific advances were developed by the German race to the point where even today a person embarking on scientific endeavor is seriously urged to learn the German language. Many scientific journals are written in German. Educators in science so advise those who wish to enter a scientific career.

On the other side of the coin are the two World Wars which almost wiped out Western Civilization.

ROMANCE

This brings me to the time when I met my wife Lucille. The boys I went to dances with when single lived in the immediate neighborhood, for we had no phone, and that limited the scope of acquaintances. The dirt road we lived on also had a limiting effect. In addition, wartime restrictions also suppressed my activity to less than one night a week away from the farm. Boots Hofmann, Gerald Neuzil, and Carl Langenberg were the most frequent companions. I remember some desolate times when , for example, the scenery on New Years day was that of snow blowing into travel stopping drifts, and nothing else. It seemed that we had a number of years when every New Years Day was like that. But it was a good feeling , after the livestock were cared for, to be in the warm house while watching the storm rage.

I am sure you wish to know how many girl friends I had and who they were. I dated several girls which some of you know. Betty Taylor, Miriam Meade, and Elaine Hoppe for example. You may know them by their married names; Michel, Toomey, and Langenberg. Also, I

dated several U of I students, and several Westlawn Nursing school students. Marie Barber from Des Moines was one. Another was Jackie Hansen. I also dated some junior Farm Bureau girls whose names I have forgotten. They were good people, and some of them had warm personalitys, some cool.

That brings us back to that Mercy Hospital School of Nursing student. Her personality was anything but cool. Except for a time after we were engaged, when she couldn't make up her mind who she wanted. I think she should tell you the details.

Boots [Paul] Hofmann knew a nurse from his stay in Mercy Hospital. His illness was variously diagnosed as Bangs disease or unknown. He wanted to give a party for that nurse when she returned from a training tour in another city. The party was to be in the form of a picnic, and when that day came several other girls were also invited. No one gave me a program, so I had no way of knowing which girl belonged to Boots. At any rate, I took a girl named Lucy home that night, and the rest is history. The date of that party was perhaps August , 1944.

It should be noted here that all-out war permeated every thread of the fabric of life. Most nursing students, including Lucille, were enlisted in The nursing corps , and they had uniforms and organization as well. So my wife was once in the army.

Meanwhile, Berniece, Regina, and Esther had all met their future husbands. Leonard Ebel was a staff member of the Navy pre-flight school at the University of Iowa. Marty Golden was also connected with the Navy. Esther was teaching school in Red Wing and Eddie was a native of that town. It was also a period of great adjustment for our mother, and her story of this period is in her memoirs.

ESTABLISHING OUR FUTURE

In the year 1946 my romance with that nurse blossomed into true love. The wedding date was set. On October 3, 1946,two became one, and our future's foundations were established. I think it is unnecessary to dwell on these thoughts, for the living of them established the course our lives took and are more effective than words. I have often felt that many good things have added up to our lifetime, and of course some bad events , over which we had no control, are elements of every lifetime. We are told during the wedding ceremony that they can be expected in our own. So it was.

MORE ABOUT THE FLANNERYS

Ann Seelman Flannery and Tom Flannery had three children. Two are deceased,Marjorie Jontz, and Raymond. Clifford is still living with his second wife Helen in Cedar Falls. We try to see them periodically, and Clifford is wonderful to visit as is his wife. He is now 87 years old and still mentally very sharp. I remember Tom,the father, quite well, for he died in 1941. I also remember our mother commenting negatively about some aspects of Ann's personal life. I will not mention those in print, for I wish to protect the innocent. I value these people highly and would never do anything to hurt them.

Clifford's children are wonderful and so also the grandchildren. Ray's children are also very dear to us. Paul lives in California, and Karen lives in Cedar Rapids.

At Rita's funeral Marjorie and I enjoyed the only good visit we ever had. Only a year later she passed away. Much was missed between our families, for there was a personality clash between my sisters Berniece, Regina, and her. Her widower Larry lives in Cedar Rapids.

We just received word in early April,1996 that Clifford has been placed in a nursing home. His eyesight has been failing, but I do not know , till we can inquire, why he can no longer live in his home. (Update;I just learned, 4-29-96) that Clifford became confused and is unable to care for himself,even with Helen's help.

Cosgrove in 1928

It occurred to me that you might be interested in some details of school at Cosgrove. The original school which my mother attended and where she graduated was where I attended first, second, third and fourth grades. There is a picture of that building before it was remodeled in 1941. There were two classrooms on the first floor, and the gymnasium on the second floor. There was a conventional outhouse northwest of the old building. The Kindergarten class I attended was in the northwest room on the first floor of the brick building. Fifth and sixth were in the southwest room. There was a more modern restroom facility separate from the main building for use of the occupants of the brick building. It had steam heat, with flush toilets and running water. It was located about fifty feet south of the main building . There was an additional outhouse below the steep bank perhaps two hundred feet south of the brick building. Some of those facilities were advanced then, but primitive by today's standards.

The 1941 remodeling of the old building was done by St. Peters Church, for they owned it. The basement was enlarged and equipped for school hot lunch. The second floor gym was then lowered to the first floor. Under an arrangement the school continued to rent that building from the church for a number of years. In the early years fire disaster was averted by the grace of God and attentive custodians, and in later years by strengthening the fire code for public buildings. New fire codes played a part in the decision to remove the second floor of the old building. I provided labor on a number of days for that undertaking.

I remember one occasion when George Scheetz, Tony Klein, Father Frank Kelly, and myself were finishing the digging by hand of a cubicle in the basement. It was under the front entrance. George allowed that had Father known how much work he was getting into he might not have been so willing to accept the pastorate at Cosgrove. He jokingly replied that had he known, he indeed would have asked those so and so's in Davenport a lot of questions.

When I attended Cosgrove all of the streets and playground area were dirt or mud surfaced. The improvement to hard surfacing was an evolutionary process, covering many years of slow progress. It involved streets, playground areas, and access walkways.

The Teacher Who Wore Bedroom Slippers to Class.

Millicent F. Carpenter was the special English teacher at U Hi. He was a very heavy man who, it was rumored, could run three miles on tiptoe in his youth when a track student and much lighter. I remember him as an excellent teacher , always covered with duplicator ink, and always in good spirits. The duplicators of the day were not well engineered. He also filled the position of track coach. Because of a very fast classmate, Clarence Hightshoe, we won the track championship in my senior year, the only year I participated. Because of Hightshoe's speed, we won the football letterman's relay, and that is where my track letter came from.

The previous fall, under Paul Brechler's coaching, we won the conference championship in football. The only blemish on our record was a tie with Tipton. That was the only year I played football. It was a different kind of game then, for the same team played the whole forty-eight minutes. Upon going out for the sport, I quickly attained a first team position. I played part of the first game of the season, and after that I played all of every game at left tackle. That made me a football letterman. It was a brief sport career which ended upon my graduation.

How Was it Possible?

Nothing made less sense than the project we proposed to accomplish in 1939. Or was it the way we proposed to do it? Both were so completely intertwined that it was impossible to tell. First we proposed to establish a sizable farming operation with very little in resources. Also, we had completely inadequate equipment , methods, and knowledge to carry it out. We had nothing worthy of the task in the way of equipment to move the growing amount of material to the new farm. We had replaced the old Chevy with a 1932 Chevy in 1938. It was a car, not a

truck, but the duties it was to be called on to perform over the next three years were well beyond what a car would reasonably be expected to do. Lacking a truck, the decision was made to buy a chassis of some nature and make a trailer to use in moving our belongings, both household and farm supplies. A very poor choice of chassis was made, an old (about a 1918 year) Maxwell truck stripped of its engine,cab, and box. (Choice of chassis was limited because of the depression). I made a box of sorts out of native oak, and the completed trailer weighed perhaps 2500 pounds empty. Also added by me was a tongue and hitch which adapted the front of the trailer so it could be pulled by that car . The car did not weigh any more than 1800 pounds.

That Chevy had 38,000 miles and six years on it when we acquired it . We purchased it from an auto dealer for 200 dollars. Tom Abbot, who owned a share of Kelly Cleaners, was the previous owner. The greatest engineering deficiency cars at that time possessed was the lack of an adequate air cleaner. Considering the dusty roads that were the constant environment, the wonder is that they lasted any length of time at all. Those air cleaners stopped very little dust, and very large particles plus the dust passed directly into the engine. That was the car that successfully moved all of our belongings by pulling that large fully loaded trailer through many trips. The rear axle of that Maxwell, a necessary part of that four wheel trailer, must have weighed at least 500 pounds. The wheels were of wood and the tires had at least thirty inch rims.

Tractor manufacturers had necessarily developed effective air cleaners much earlier ,and they did well in dusty environments. It was lack of imagination that caused auto engineers to overlook the need for good air cleaners on cars. The technology had already been developed, so it could have been applied easily. Effective air cleaners were not applied to automobiles until after the war.

WE SUCCEEDED, BUT HOW?

Looking back , the amazing thing is that it worked. We did get all material moved, and the car did serve as a family car as well. The challenges of our mud road had to be met too. All of our plans and everything we did should have failed. The fact that they succeeded had to be due to many prayers. That was the only thing we had going for us other than much hard work.

One of the first tools needed for farming was a team of horses. The horse farming era was almost over, but it was still necessary in that transition period to have both horses and tractor. Gilbert Haman lived on the farm now occupied by Bill Ball. He had a business of raising and breaking horses, and scheduled an auction to sell teams which he raised and broke to work. We purchased a team of Belgians at that sale. They were big as Belgians are, at my eye level at shoulder, and I named them Judy and Julie. They were not a perfect match, for one was almost perfect but the other one was lighter and not as good in every way. But they worked reasonably well together. The first work I did with them was to plant corn. They proved to be a reliable power source, and somewhat dangerous as all horses are, but doing everything asked of them. Over the years, they nearly ran away several times, but it always occurred when something badly scared them.

At first we did not own a set of harness. We are in debt to Burl Maxie, who loaned a set to us to get that first Cosgrove year corn picked, and by the next field work season we had bought our own new set.

Once I was picking corn when the neighboring kids, though a long way off, made enough noise to scare the horses into a run before I caught the wagon and stopped them. On another occasion I was waiting my turn with a load of oats bundles at the grain separator when we were threshing at John O'brien's place, north of our place on the IWV. I am sure the horses were bored and hoping something would happen, when a tire on the bundle wagon blew out, terrifying them into an immediate gallop. Fortunately I had been standing at a spot where I could quickly intercept them by jumping in front of them and pulling down on their bridles to stop them. That

lucky interception avoided certain disaster. They tried to maneuver around me as I got in front of them. Tractor operation is dangerous, but horses also injured and killed many.

"Sixty Acres," The Boring Story of the Harvest

I gave that team credit for two things; they caused me to "lose my religion" but also to whet my corn harvesting skills to the point af being able to pick 120 bushels of corn a day. They were almost always far ahead of me, and I tied them by the lines back so tightly that it seemed they were often pulling the wagon with the lines. It was necessary to pick corn rapidly just to almost keep up. That harvesting ability was not unusual, but it was done in addition to doing chores night and morning and shovelling that corn by hand into the crib. It meant being in the field and ready to go as soon as it was light enough. The last ear was picked just before dark.

My most brilliant memory of that job was the physical punishment involved. Upon waking in the morning the first duty was exercising hands and arms to restore feeling in them, for they would be "asleep" all the way to my neck. I had not heard of "carpel tunnel" involving arms and shoulders, but that side effect of corn harvest certainly was. The condition persisted till recovery after the last of the harvest was completed, some eight weeks or more after starting the job. It was possible to pick twelve rows a day ,two rows at a time. Three trips across a forty acre field made a load, ten rows an acre, ten bushels per row. That computes to more than eight weeks. My corn acres were always in the vicinity of about sixty acres.

It would not be possible to efficiently harvest a modern field by hand, for heavily planted drilled corn leaves no place between stalks to throw the corn to the wagon. Because of the need to cross cultivate the corn for weed control, the fields were check rowed while planting. One did not have to look for a place to throw the corn. It allowed one to establish a pattern for movement. We knew about "motion studies" long before the term was invented. Indeed it was necessary to pay close attention to that detail, for the needed thousands of motions per day made it necessary to save every fraction of a second. One hundred twenty bushels a day required the picking of an average of twelve thousand ears. Each ear required the breaking of a very strong ear shank. Try it sometime. The repeated shock of that effort was the reason for all the above mentioned pain. Joints, muscles, tendons, nerves, all took a beating.

The husking wagon had several features to facilitate hand corn harvest. The position of the wagon in the field was to the right of the picker. The right side of the wagon had an extended side, called the bang or bank board which was twice as high as the left side. That made it easy for the flow of ears from the person picking to go into the wagon box with few misses. The rear endgate of the wagon box was called the scoopboard. It was hinged and coupled in an ingenious way which provided ,when lowered, an excellent surface to shovel the corn into the crib without interruption. Endgate rods locked it in the closed position, and when opened they provided support at the right angle, nearly flat. The rods were perhaps twenty-four inches long. In the open position the verticle rear surface of the wagon box, the lower section of the scoop board, and the rods formed the removable leg of the triangle that gave support to the scoopboard. I am certain that Ray Rohret made many of those rods and associated hardware to farmers' specifications, and also the ones on my wagon.

Most husking wagon boxes were thirty-eight inches wide, the standard wagon bolster width. I felt that one five feet wide, built with the floor above the bolster stakes, would at once provide more capacity and make shovelling the load easier. It also made the load some eight inches higher, a definite advantage when shovelling into a high crib. The larger capacity was no problem, for the running gear, made from an old car chassis, allowed the horses to pull the heavier load much easier than possible on a steel wheeled gear. To make it possible for the team to hold the load back, I rigged one rear wheel brake to be applied at will when going downhill. It also was possible to use that brake at times to slow the horses while picking corn. A tire chain on that wheel made it an effective tool. The car chassis I used was made from a 1934 Ford. A

man named Mr. McGinnis had a welding shop on the Coralville strip just west of the now Riley law firm building. He built that wagon, for not many companies were building rubber tired wagons at that time. Jerry builders were the chief source, and the product had flaws, especially in steering geometry with the add on tongue. I still have that wagon but we no longer use it. That wagon and box was the forerunner to the modern so-called barge box. Equipment suppliers soon filled the need by manufacturing and marketing them. No one came to my farm on their behalf to observe or take notes for the following reason. It is obvious that this development was being advanced separately by other people in many places. That often happens when there is a need that many recognize. However, as methods and needs changed, the barge box in turn gave way to the now commonly used gravity wagon. Through our American history much development of new machinery and methods took place in the above fashion. The scoop shovel gave way to the grain elevator, and ear corn harvest gave way to shelled corn combining.

In 1945 we had so much rain that the Iowa river valley had a major flood. The above mentioned wagon with its design problems needed repair, so I returned it to the man who built it for that work. I remember reading news reports that the river was rising and would soon reach near record levels, so my concern led me to get that wagon, already repaired, and bring it home. It was haymaking time and I used that same wagon to carry the hayrack . True to predictions the river did reach near record levels, and Mr. Mc Ginnis' welding shop was flooded. I was therefore fortunate to have the wagon at home for haymaking use.

I do remember which labor saving method came to my operation first, a grain elevator. A corn picker closely followed the elevator. Both were obtained after we were married. [At about this time it evolved from My to Our]. The transition was not accompanied by new paint and fancy machinery. I purchased a worn out wood frame elevator from a neighbor. The storage facility being filled was a one thousand bushel single corn crib which I had built, and was about fifty feet north of the present elevator crib at the west place. That elevator had a speed jack and tumbling rod connecting it to the elevator. The speed jack was coupled to a power source,in this case that F-12 tractor, by belt. The speed jack was a gear reduction device to reduce the high speed of the belt drive to a slow fifty to seventy revolutions per minute speed needed by the elevator, and was staked to the ground next to the elevator. The tumbling rod was joined to the elevator by two large universal joints, about five inches in diameter. Usually the ends of the tumbling rod were square as were the receivers in the universal joints. But one of the ends of this partcular rod was round as was the universal joint receiver and accomodated a shear bolt. The purpose of the shear bolt was to protect the equipment if something jammed.

NEAR DISASTER

One day I was using that elevator to unload corn into said crib. The wind was strong, and I was wearing a jacket which had worn out button holes. It would not stay buttoned in the wind. I had finished unloading the corn into the elevator and was on the ground picking up some ears that had spilled. One of those button holes found that shear bolt, and before I could do anything to prevent it I was lying on my back with my clothing wrapped around that tumbling rod. Two fortunate things occurred, however. I was on my back in such a position that I could use my back strength to stop the elevator, and stop the elevator I did by forcing the drive belt to slip,the second bit of fortune. Several uncomfortable minutes passed in this stalemated situation when finally the drive belt slipped off the drive pulley. I remember trying to reach my scoop shovel which lay nearby, my intention being to encourage the drive belt off that pulley. However, every move I made was countermoved by that shaft, which tightened its hold enough more to prevent my doing so. When I disentangled myself I found that I had not been undressed, but every bit of my clothing was shredded. I had a scar about my waist for years where my leather belt had been tightened before it was broken. That is why power -take off as compared to belt drive accidents are so deadly, for there is no belt in that power train which can slip.

I recall another accident which occurred while filling that same crib. I was adjusting the elevator delivery spout from a position on a ladder when a wire supporting that spout broke, allowing me to fall forward to the ground. Fortunately I was not injured and that must have been due to my being in good condition plus God's care.

IMPROVEMENTS NEEDED

That building was inadequate in design and storage capacity. The need for more storage was painfully evident for a long time. We stored much corn in temporary picket cribs, which are the same thing as snow fencing but placed in a circle. Corn would keep well stored through the winter, but would rot as soon as warm weather came. Each circle could hold 250 bushels of ear corn so a stack three high held about 750 bushels. I had a storage facility made of poles and lined with picket fencing with a wood floor, made in about 1942. The poles were spaced eight feet apart and in two rows 32 feet long, so that temporary storage arrangement held about 1,000 bushels. Its weather limitation was the same as round picket storage. It was located where the elevator crib is today.

We took steps in 1952 to build the permanent storage facility which is now there. Shelled corn storage had not yet become established. Few had the equipment and drying ability which shelled corn required. The ear corn storage building served us well for about eighteen years at which time we built the first steel bin. The elevator crib worked well for feeding livestock . I hired a person with shelling equipment to shell 1,000 bushels at a time as that was the capacity of one of the overhead bins in that building. Also, since I had no drying equipment it was important to feed that shelled corn before it spoiled if it was wet. That was no worry after about the first of July, since the ear corn was usually dried out by then.

The construction of that building was over a period of several years. We filled it with that old wood elevator the first year before it even had a roof, so locating the delivery end of the elevator over the top of the eaves of the unfinished building. After corn harvest I sheated the building and shingled it. At one point I had to wait for ice from an ice storm to melt off the sheating before I could proceed, it being late November. I finished the shingling of that roof before winter really set in. The first roof was a cedar shingle one. The elevator leg and the cupuloa was added by myself before the next harvest. I obtained the leg from Kelly implement, a Meyer elevator made in Morton, Illinois. I powered it with the first multiple horsepower electric motor the farm could boast. It was a Craftsman motor, three horsepower, repulsion induction type, the only type then available for heavy duty starting applications. I obtained it through Sears catalog service, having to re-order it several times , for wartime shortages were still being felt. At this writing it is still in service.

There were no overhead bins in the elevator crib at first . About two years after the initial construction we added them. I obtained the cottonwood three inch by twelve inch "stringers" or floor joists from Pete Eckrich at his suggestion, since the toughness of cottonwood was ideally suited for the heavy loads that a full bin of grain places on the floor. Peter ran a sawmill and knew much about the strength of woods. That proved to be all Peter said for the deflection of the floor when loaded is minimal and there is no permanent sag. After doing all of the work without such labor saving equipment these advances made it a joy to handle the harvest, a wellspring which still bouys me as I work with those aids.

OUR FIRST LAND PURCHASE
THE SECOND TIME AROUND FOR ME

At about this same time we purchased the ninety acre farm from my mother on contract. The price was $350 per acre. I never really did figure that one out, but of course it does not matter. Did I buy that place twice?

A word here about the financial end of buying land. We unwisely engaged the services of

a lawyer to do our tax work and give us financial advice, and that was true for most of our lives. Many years ago we had Scott Swisher do our tax work, and later when he was jailed for tax evasion one of his associates did the work for a short time. Then we had Dan Boyle do our tax work for many years. Lawyers do no more than act as collectors for the Internal Revenue service. Their clients pay them to do this. My dissatisfaction with the situation did not manifest itself until about ten years ago when we engaged the services of Mike Latta, Washington, Iowa, a certified public accountant . The result of my delay in doing that was borrowing money at the bank to pay our income tax, and about the time I got that note paid off, another year came around. CP A services are not magic, but by taking advantage of all allowable deductions it was possible to breathe a little easier, and there was a little more money available to apply to mortgage principal . CPA's attend seminars on tax laws and are experts in that field wheras lawyers do not have time or expertise relating to latest tax law. I now consider lawyers doing tax work as their practicing legal fraud.

We followed Art and Coleen's advice in locating Mike Latta. Mike has been very helpful. The necessity to operate on pre- 1947 commodity prices while paying 1996 operating expenses is proving to be more than most young farmers can accomplish. [The average age of farmers today is near to retirement age].

I may have said so earlier but I will say it again- the reason for this sorry state of affairs is the fact that no one in the U. S. ever went hungry for lack of food. Lack of money, yes, but never for lack of food. Food has become unimportant because of that fact. And of course it goes without saying that food comes from the supermarket, not from farms.

A good friend

Today, March 26, we buried Lowell Zimmerman. A shock it was, almost without warning, from his being vital and active one day to a memory the next. The more we experience life the more often we learn that life is very fragile even if the world tries to make all of us forget that. I had meant to visit him one day this winter and now it is too late. I regret not having met them in Texas this winter. They both wanted us to come and no one else did.

BLESSED WITH A LARGE FAMILY

Looking back on the period of time when our children were born and grew up leaves me with the sense that it was a compressed time, when much happened quickly. Unspeakable joy and unspeakable tragedy. The unspeakable joy was in having perfect children entrusted to us. The first tragedy is well known to all of us, Allan's death. The second was that our children grew up too fast for us parents to fully enjoy. The daily care was burdensome for Mother and I but the memories of that time have a rich timbre which endures.

As the family grew in numbers so did the farming operation. Here is a good place to tell a humorous story that defines the compression quite well. We tried to provide a coaster wagon to all of our children, since it was both a teaching tool and a toy. One day said wagon was left on the drive where it was damaged by the family car being backed over it on one of the many trips that raising a family requires. I recall spending perhaps two or three hours making the necessary repairs to place said wagon back into service. The wagon was immediately used by several of the children no doubt, and on the very next trip the family car made, the location of that newly repaired wagon in harm's way caused it to be disabled again , this time more seriously. There was not much humor in this event then. Time and perspective is necessary to bring it out. Oh yes, I DID repair that wagon again.

If memory serves me well the family car then was a 1951 Chevy station wagon, obtained used in 1953. That must have been a good car, for it served in that capacity until about 1963, when we got a 1961 Ford wagon. My attention turned toward cars at this point because I remember that Chevy as the car that ran over that coaster wagon.

More about Barb

When Barbara was born we were just getting established in farming as a couple. At that stage of our operation I was picking corn by hand, and still renting the farmland from my mother. One of the very few vacations we had was a trip to Canada with Barbara . She was easily occupied, and I remember her on the floor of the car, between the front and back seat, using her pounding board and a wood hammer. That car, a 1948 Fleetline Chevy, the only new car we ever owned, had a spacious rear floor-just right for a little girl's play pen. Rear seat leg room was perhaps three times as generous as a modern car provides.

Dianne

Dianne came to live with us in 1948, and a very dear baby she was. She had a normal babyhood with only a few health problems. As she grew older she looked for things to do for her parents. I remember her as a very little girl doing little things to please her father and mother, unusual for such a little one. Then she became very interested in television, and became one of the first Iowa children ,including her siblings, to be influenced by that medium.

My memory of dates is unreliable, but I place the first television set in our house at about 1955. TV came to Iowa about in 1951. They were all black and white sets then and color was not offered anywhere till some years later. Reception was only from Davenport and Rock Island at first . It was very snowy and poor in picture quality until Cedar Rapids stations went on the air several years later. The Cedar Rapids station [s] were airing when we got our first set.

Cynthia

Cynthia was born when we had some of the worst November roads since Iowa was brought out of the mud. 1950 was a wet fall, and the gravel roads became quagmires. We had the choice of the IWV or the Rohret road, both bad. When it was time for the event I had to choose between the two, and I chose the one I thought we would be most likely to get there by, the Rohret Road. We got stuck on the bottom near Lawrence Breese's place. He pulled us through that mudhole with a tractor, and there were some anxious moments , but Cindy obliged by waiting long enough to be born in the hospital. There were other mudholes but none quite as bad as that one. The car simply ran out of axle clearance, the ruts being too deep for the car to get traction. There was a 'frost boil' on the IWV road so deep and so high that it seemed the top of that boil was higher than the bottom of a car window. I wish I had taken pictures of that one, a short distance west of what is now Bob Humphrey's drive.

Cynthia - 1949

A very healthy baby, Cynthia. I am writing this account without the help of my dear wife, so there might be some disagreement . I trust the basics are true. With the size of family we had, to have good health was important. Good genetics must have been at work for us to have had twelve children with no major health problems. Never forget that God also had a hand as there is always the efficacy of prayer. We had a lot of friends and relatives praying for us over many years. We also prayed a little. I do not think any of those prayers were petitions for us to have twelve children. But who of you who are our children would , at this point, say that we should not have had you? My fond hope is that life is sweet for each of you. All of you are living testimony that it is so.

Chris - 1950

Christine

Chris was a very sharp little girl for all of her mild manners. I remember an exchange when she was just able to talk. I was helping Mother to get the children to sleep, for Chris often climbed out of bed and extended her day by playing some more. I was in her bedroom trying to lull her when she told me what she thought of that plan in certain terms. "Daddy, go" was repeated several times by that little girl who had her own agenda, and it did not include her father interfering with her plans.

Allan

The next memory of the next child, for the memories are what are left, are very painful still. If bittersweet ever applied to anything it applies to Allan. It is a joy to remember him but bitter to know that it is all we have. We must always return to the emptyness which took the place of so much promise. There is a story I have already written which I will include here, as I will include the stories which any of you care to write. Barbara has already written her memories of Allan and I will include them. The lessons of his life have made all of us better , all of us knowing that no matter how many children we might have had, every one is very special. In God's special way. Allan has left a legacy much more powerful and meaningful than just memories.

PRAYER

On this date, March 29, 1996, I read an article published in the Readers Digest, March 1996 issue, titled "Does prayer heal? I ask all of you who are taking the time to read this account to also read that article. By the way, the answer to that question is yes. Expert medical approach to this question cannot be labeled as biased, so may carry more weight with those who read it. The article cites medical opinion that miracles after prayer are the only explanation for many cures. There is hope for all of us. Miracles still happen to those who ask for them. Our God is a personal God and wants the chance to help us.

Mary

On September 22, 1952 Mary came to live with us. Our growing family welcomed her as one, and she was a very perfect baby. We all remember her as not being totally happy in return. We spent sleepless nights as she protested we knew not what. She soon outgrew that stage to become happy though different in temperament. We soon learned that she required different methods of upbringing.

Although Mary then thought it was part of her being disciplined, she was the one who once was left accidentally at home when the family went to visit neighbors . Mary , do you remember?

Looking back , the surprise is that none of you had trouble in adjusting to the learning environment at school. We tried to make you all understand its importance and value and we must have succeeded. Some preschool help perhaps made a difference.

Coleen

Two years later another darling little one joined us on May 24. Coleen was sweet and even tempered from the start and possessed a very inquisitive nature. As she got a little older she could not walk past a stone without overturning it to see what was under it. A short use of leg correctors straightened her inturned feet when she was very young. Later during her teenage years, upon being limited by her mother her favorite saying was that she did not ask to be born. Also, when complimented she replied with "I know".

Nan

Our last little girl came in time to be part of the Christmas season on Dec. 18, 1956. The Christmas season was always special in a house with many little ones, and this one was even more so.

I don't remember the date, but when very young it was necessary to place Nan in the hospital for a serious but treatable illness. It was traumatic to see such a little one have to leave her family even if only breiefly. She liked the nurses so it was easier for her than the rest of the family. I think the nurses liked her too!

Dr. Lorrainne Frost

Mom's choice of our pediatrician was a very good one. Dr. Frost was both knowlegable and kind with her patients. The children all loved her and most important, her care was always medically sound. Her care of Nan was no exception. Although Nan's problem was serious it quickly responded to expert care and she was soon back home. My memory does not serve me

well, but I think Dr. Frost cared for all of our children except the first ones. Dr. Bennet was our doctor in those early years until he retired.

BARN REMODELLING

Time and the unreliability of one's memory muddies events and the when of their happenings. I think it was about 1949 or 1950 when we remodelled the barn which is nearest the house and converted its use from horse stalls to hog farrowing facility. John Schintler was hired to help accomplish the job. Horses had permanently left the farm, so it was time to build facilities for the need we had. We used the conversion to farrow pigs for many years.

RAISING THE ROOF

Our small house and the arrival of several new family members made it necessary to make plans to enlarge our living space. Again I am uncertain of the date but I believe it was about 1956 when we added the space on the second floor of the existing house. We hired John Schintler again to help us with that project. I remember going to an auction at a lumber yard in Joetown in a heavy snowstorm to buy the finish wood we used in that project. The yard owner was Orval Yoder's father. The full house dormer we added only required the removal of half of the roof. It was a bit more involved than that, for the original roof featured truncated gable ends They had to be removed and full gable ends added. The overall result was satisfactory, but the addition, though insulated, was hard to heat. We should have added a gas wall heater.

HARDBALL POLITICS

The blessings of a large family soon impressed on me the duty to influence events in church, school, and community, and our family being only one of many postwar"Baby Boomers", the space pressure on the Cosgrove Consolidated School soon made the need to build evident.

Therefore, in 1951 or thereabouts I realized that to do my community duty I should run for the school board. One unfortunate event occurred in that respect. A malcontent, Joe Blow, who was already on the board approached me a number of times and repeatedly urged me to run against an incumbent board member who he said was blocking the needed school building project. Hindsight is always better than foresight, but much grief could have been avoided had I ignored that improvident source of information. Inexperience again served me poorly, for lacking that was the cause of my making this mistake. But as before, hard work and staying the course brought good results from chaos. Enemies made by this move were converted to friends, and much was learned about life and human nature.

I did run against that incumbent and won, we did successfully pass a $125,000 bond issue, and we did build the school addition that was needed. I also lost the friendship of the malcontent that originally influenced me to run for that office. He clearly wanted me to be his yes man and I was not agreeable to that stipulation. The story does not end there. Several close neighbors were temporarily alienated during the " warfare" that existed before, during, and after that building project. My personal opinion is that the malcontent board member earlier mentioned caused most of the problems as they unfolded, and gave those problems a boost when they "needed it". Many of those problems were not helped by my inexperience. The community survived and was improved through it all and some of us , I hope, were enriched , a kind word for the experience that was gained. I served two consecutive terms on the school board at that time. The second term was won with opposition , and I will allow you to guess who pulled the necessary strings to get that man to run. His defeat,[the candidate] so severely impacted on his mien and personality that he sold his farm and moved from the community. I fervently hope it was not due to anything I personally did, for I held no ill will toward him.

Looking back, two terms-six years- seems such a short time to spend on a board, but so much and so many events were compressed into that time that it was indeed anything but short. I was glad to be rid of it.

The name of the architect for the school addition was Norman Keller from Davenport,

the general contractor was Herbert Frantz from Iowa City, the mechanical contractor was from New London, and the electrical contractor was from Sharon or Kalona named Miller. Only a few mistakes in design or construction were made. The most serious was the flat roof on the classroom addition. Only recently has the general public been sufficiently aroused to preclude that design from new construction. They will no longer allow anyone to listen to architects' bad advice.

TRANSPORTATION , TAXI SERVICE, ET AL

When Barb reached high school age we felt it important for the children to receive a Catholic education, so the decision was made to send her to Regina High School in Iowa City. Father Harry Ryan was the pastor of Cosgrove, and he made the decision to send a daily bus from the Cosgrove Parish to that school, since several other parishoners expressed the desire to do the same for their children. That bus service endured for several years, but eventually it was discontinued. All of the children through Mary received four years of education at Regina. Coleen attended Regina two years and finished at Clear Creek.

We were sorry to discontinue the Regina education for the younger children, but sending that many became a financial burden in several ways. Tuition kept rising and there were other costs. Upon termination of the St. Peters bus service it immediately became necessary to purchase another car for to not do so would have required two more trips for us to make daily . It was necessary to have a car at home during the day for personal and business use. At one time we owned three vehicles and I think for a short time we owned four. Several of the children had jobs and even with that many vehicles it became difficult to get every one where and when they had to be . Fuel costs, insurance costs, upkeep, tires, etc. were sizable to say the least. We had several cars during that time with nearly two hundred thousand miles on each. That size fleet soon teaches one which vehicles are the most economical to own.

PEOPLE WHO STAFF SCHOOLS

School buildings are important only to provide space for learning. School boards are also responsible for furnishing and providing teachers and supervisory leadership. Cosgrove was blessed for many years with teachers provided by the Sisters of Humility, Ottumwa, Iowa. They provided quality teachers and a principal to the school district at a very low cost. The nuns were for the most part dedicated to their profession and truly interested in the welfare of the children. Sister Eulalia epitomized all that a principal should be, and served at Cosgrove for many years. She was the principal when I was a student there, and she was there before and after that. She even scheduled the hack routes, and today many districts have a transportation director to do just that and nothing else.

The time when I was a board member coincided with the drive by the state education department to place lay teachers in all of Iowa's public schools. That meant great changes for Cosgrove, Parnell, and the Melrose school district who had nun teachers provided by the Humility order. The added stress that issue placed on school board members can be imagined, especially when one remembers the stress just undergone by the same board that shepherded the first building program at Cosgrove since the twentys. I maintain that national politics is tame compared to school board politics. Personal feeling runs higher when the welfare and education of children is the entire issue. Periods of change can be especially trying for a board of education. I served on the Cosgrove board from 1952 to 1958.

MORE ON EDUCATION

Following the removal of the nuns , there was more than one vacuum to be filled. A pipeline source of teachers was non-existent. Also, the board had no experience in dealing with availability of teachers. I remember the first group we interviewed,perhaps five in number, all from the same two year school in Cedar Rapids. At least one could barely write a cogent application letter because of poor spelling and grammer skills. The interview was held in June

or July during a violent thunderstorm. The power was interrupted, and we interviewed several of them in the dark. Pretty good symbolism!

We had a series of good, bad, and indifferent superintendents before, during, and after my board tenure. Mr. Hogan was an excellent man who was employed at Cosgrove a number of years long before I was on the board. He had since been employed elsewhere, and he applied for a simple high school teaching position at one of the first Board meetings I attended. We hired him for the position, but a very short time later he passed away, before the school year had begun. Richard Whalen was superintendent at first, but building programs withstanding, the political fallout cost him his job. Wayne Peters came on the scene at about that time. He was an excellent administrator and a fair teacher. Wayne was impulsive and that got him into trouble, but he survived quite well all things considered. He was possibly the best superintendent Cosgrove had administratively. I cannot remember what year he left Cosgrove to be superintendent at Coralville. After several years tenure there he accepted a position at Superior, Wisconsin and later at Lowell Massachussets. We have continued our friendship with the Peters family to now.

MORE STATE PRESSURE

At about this same time the Iowa legislature became concerned about equal education opportunity for each child resident. They began by establishing more stringent requirements for every school district. Then class and school size were looked at very closely, with an eye toward efficiency , tax burden, and class size as pertaining to individual competition. Small districts were encouraged to explore merger possibilities with neighboring districts. Incentives were installed in state code, one of them being forced mergers by the legislature, or worse yet by the Dept. of Public Instruction.

So it was that several of us formed a merger committee to explore the merger of Cosgrove, Oxford, Tiffin, the east part of Union Township, and Madison township. Earlis Rohret and I spearheaded the project. We encountered various stages of enthusiasm and that is an understatement. It is a tribute to the favor average people of Iowa place on education that the proposed merger did take place.

CLEAR CREEK COMMUNITY SCHOOLS

We lost only the east end of Union Township to Iowa City, the rest of the area having unified and formed Clear Creek Community Schools. The new district faced many problems. Lack of space was pressing for solution, so the new board placed a proposal before the voters to add on to all three centers. It was offered by residents of Oxford and failed. It was very poorly thought out, for it provided for additions to all three high schools. That was the only issue that failed in the Cosgrove precinct. The next several issues located the high school at various sites, one of them on donated land by James Meade. They all failed, for Tiffin and Oxford were in no mood to vote the high school to the other town. Finally in desperation another petition to build the high school in Tiffin was placed before the voters. Surprisingly it passed when fatigue was displayed by the Oxford voters, the other districts doing their duty. Luckily the Oxford voters failed to turn out..

ILL GOTTEN GAINS AND COMPULSIVE GAMBLING

But the end was not yet. Some Oxford die hards filed suit in district court to block the bond issue. That group was led by Joe Kinney, who owned most of the shares in the Oxford bank and thereby controlled several inhabitants.

Joe Kinney's money originated from his illegal slot machines which operated thruout the county and beyond. A well oiled machine disseminated from the local sherriff's office properly timed warnings when state agents conducted raids intended to remove the slots. Several of those illegal machines were in the Cosgrove store, then operated by Lee Schneider.

I must include a story here about compulsive gambling. When I was still in high school

and just after we obtained the ninety acre farm, a neighbor whom I shall call Jon Smith needed help to care for some livestock. My mother had left me at the farm to begin making order from that chaos on this particular day. After the work with this neighbor's livestock was done, I was of course asked to stay for dinner. With five small children and three adults, the only thing on that table was cooked mulberries, they being in season at the time.

The significance of that meal was not lost on me. Jon had a contract with the Cosgrove school district for a "hack route", and it was his responsibility to haul certain children to and from school at the proper times. This was done with horses pulling a hack in bad weather, and in good weather by Jon's family car, a model A Ford. [The car option required more than one trip.] Jon established the habit of going to the store after his morning route duties were accomplished, and trying his fortunes on the nickel slot machine. That usually occupied the whole day, and when it was time to take the children home he would do that, after which his work at home was then" done". He was observed on many occasions and by many people to exit the store, saying he would never play them again, whereupon he would proceed to cross the street, slow down, make a U turn, go back into the store and resume his quest for that elusive jackpot. He had too much invested to chance some one else getting it. Ever since that meal of mulberries I have been prejudiced about the business of gaming. More could and should be said about it but my personal view is unalterable.

Joe Kinney's name was of course not on the committee listed who filed the suit blocking the high school construction. Much delay occurred, and the issue was only resolved by the legislature passing a special enabling act. By that time inflation had eaten into the bond issue's capability, so an additional issue had to be voted to scrounge enough money to build the school. The shortage was lasting, forcing the school board to substitute a good central heating system with the counterfeit one that was installed,among other cuts. That deficient heating system alone was responsible for untold thousands of dollars in extra costs of operation over the years it was tolerated. Honeywell exacted $5,000 a year for a maintenance contract that made it barely and unsatisfactorily operable. When that system was replaced with a central boiler there was nothing of the original system that was even salvagable.

Incredible inefficiency was built into that system. When it was turned on in the fall, it operated at top capacity continuously. When thermostats were satisfied, automatic system doors were opened which dumped all of the heat generated by the furnaces to the outside. How can a company like Honeywell get away with such fraud? So much for Honeywell gas fired rooftop heating units. And so much for Joe Kinney's ill-gotten fortune. It is perhaps neither here nor there, but inefficient small school districts would never have tolerated such gross nonperformance. What would they have done? They who were board members would have camped on Honeywell's doorstep.

GOODBYE FOREVER TO FLAT ROOFS

After the Cosgrove building was sold to the Cosgrove Institute, I was personally involved in correcting the flat roof problem on that building. That was poetic justice, since I was on the board when the building was built. A new technology has been developed to solve the problem, and it does so quite neatly. A low pitch metal roof was installed which employs the use of on-site machine crimping of standing seam joints between the steel roof panels. The resulting roof has about four feet of pitch in sixty-five feet of run, in this case the pitch being all in one direction. Many engineering problems were skirted in this way. The labor input was intensive, for I remember counting at least four hundred 2x4 support studs for that roof, each individually measured and cut. There was a lot of volunteer labor donated for the project. Many people in the community who had institute membership did it, with supervision by a Mennonite contractor from Kalona. I feel comfortable in saying it is no longer necessary to build flat roofs. That is so especially from the economic standpoint, for the small increase in cost if any is easily

offset by increased service life, lower maintenance cost, and leak free building space. The original cost may even be lower. Flat roofs are perpetually leaking, need continuous maintenance, and are uneconomic to do so. I always felt that flat roof repair consisted mostly in rearranging the leaks. I am guessing the date, and was it 1990 when the institute was formed?

A MEMORABLE TRIP

When the Peters family moved to Superior,Wisconsin in the dead of winter we took Charlie, their young son and a load of furniture to that place in a borrowed truck and trailer. Wayne borrowed a trailer from a teacher friend and a truck from Bob Burns. I think the year was 1965, a year when there was a record snowpack on the upper Mississippi watershed. That spring saw a record flood on the upper river as a result. On the way to Superior we noted the blue color of the ice, and ice it was , in the ravines bordering the highway. The blue color was caused by the great depth of the ice. Sleet and then rain from repeated storms had built the ice to depths seldom seen before.

On the way home our attention was absorbed by another problem. The worst snowstorm of that record winter had just started as we began the trip home with that truck and trailer. It was snowing hard as we left Superior ,which then turned to sleet, which then turned into freezing rain. We were on the road continuously for thirty hours in some of the worst driving conditions I ever encountered. At about the Iowa-Minnesota line we were on glare ice in freezing rain for what seemed an eternity. Once, when climbing a very long grade which was covered with ice, at about two o'clock at night, we approached the crest where a semi truck was stalled. Just as we were about to pass that stalled truck a car came from the other direction which made it necessary to stop. Of course the only way we could again start was to back to the foot of that very long hill and try again. On glare ice, in freeezing rain, and In pitch dark to the rear of our truck and trailer, I somehow managed to do it. That trick must have taken at least a half hour, but we were not doing anything else at the time. The tandem axles of that trailer stabililzed it a bit, but any mistake under those conditions would have meant being stranded . The next attempt was successful, and that truck driver gave us a cheery honk and flashing of lights as we passed him. I like to think of him telling his children about the event.

An event which lengthened the trip and showed lack of judgment was my dear wife's insistence that we stop at the Red Wing pottery factory on the way past. It was perhaps four in the afternoon, so we pulled into the empty parking lot and promptly slid sideways, truck and trailer, nearly the full length of the lot, which was covered with glare ice. This incident was included in the above mentioned thirty hours. When we arrived home the storm was over and the sky was clear. In fact, home in Iowa missed most of the storm. I never appreciated getting home more. Lucy, do you have a pottery memento of that trip?

I just thought of another bit of that trip's history. The Bob Burns truck; unknown to me, needed a brake lining job . The linings were spent before we started home. I did not discover the need until we were on the road at Superior in that snow storm. We ruined the brake drums on that trip home, to Bob's and my chagrin. It was fortunate that they did not fail completely, as it would have been most awkward and dangerous. The weather was enough inconvenience to deal with. The Lord took care of us again.

STEVEN

On May 24, 1958, Coleen's birthday, a second little boy came to live with us. We named him Steven Joseph. From the first he was loved and cared for by the whole family, as were his older brother and sisters. He had a normal childhood, with more ear trouble than did his siblings. I remember him being a very devout Christian. He said the rosary nightly when he was perhaps ten years old . He became more of a problem when he was in high school. He had a very good car given to him by his parents which he did not take care of. More than one accident

was suffered by that car and his parents. There were some other problems, most of them minor. His parents at about that time should have required him to walk much more. I am sure he appreciated this when he was older. Did you, Steve?

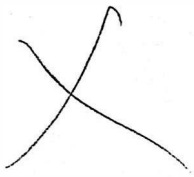
THE DRYEST WEATHER

Once, in the dry spring of 1957, a neighbor had forty acres of alfalfa sod which had been trampled by cattle when wet. He had a new Farmall Super M tractor and a three bottom pull type plow. He also had a Super C Farmall with a mounted plow. When he tried to plow that field it had turned dry and very hard. His big tractor could only spin its wheels. The small tractor with the mounted plow had trouble penetrating the hard ground. When it did it stalled the tractor. He asked me to try to plow that field. The W D 45 A C Tractor not only did so, but did it with flair. I did not have any weights on the front of the tractor, and that would have made it operate more smoothly, but they were not necessary to do the job. Sometimes the front end would lift clear of the ground by more than two feet, but continued operation was workable and advisable. No stalling or delay of any kind was experienced. When Jack Hoffmann was done trying to disk that field the new tires on the Super M were badly scuffed and worn with a strongly aged look. Those clods were too hard for that fairly heavy tractor to crush .

The years 1955, 1956, and 1957 were some of the dryest in Iowa history. That was not true statewide, but it certainly was on the Seelman farm. We missed most of the rains , and on a given day we might observe thundershowers to the south at Kalona, or to the north near Cedar Rapids. The climax of that selective situation occurred in July or August of 1957, a day I will not forget. Our corn crop was trying to tassel while not much more than waist high, already too late, when a heavy thunderstorm approached from the northwest. We observed the rain so hard north of the IWV road that it was washing oats straw many feet wide down the waterways of Jack Hoffmann's oat field. Old Woman's Creek went out of its banks. Another neighbor, Pat Rohret, had a field of corn downstream from our land, adjacent to said creek. The out- of- its -banks creek irrigated half of that corn field which consequently yielded one hundred bushels an acre. The other half, receiving no rain, had no ears on it. Nor did we receive any rain on our land. Those three years set back my operation for years, since our crop production was far below average. Never again did I see such variability in so short a distance. I was forced to buy most of the corn for feeding my livestock in those years. The axiom about one bad year needing three good ones to catch up came into play in a forceful personal way at that time. The forceful part of the equation came about because of those three drouth years back to back. The strange part of that history was the state of Iowa being in the worst of that drought in 1958, a year when I had above average crops,even compared to normal years.

A NEW FARM ORGANIZATION

Those tough years of weather caused hard times for farmers, and many farmers suffered acutely . It was a fertile time for unrest, since many farmers could not pay their bills and remain solvent. A farmer in northern Missouri, Oren Staley, was instrumental in forming a new farm organization with its stated purpose being that of collective bargaining by farmers for farm production with the processors and brokers of farm commmodities. The idea was not new, for congressmen saw the need for just that tool in 1919, when a law was passed to set up the legal machinery. The name of it was The Capper Volstead Act. More work was done in the next several years than had ever been done towards farmers organizing to that end. There were several meetings in Johnson County , and I immediately saw the logic of the effort. I became involved to the point of being the chairman of the county for several years. Even though the effort failed in accomplishing its stated end, there was much benefit to farmers, for the buyers of farm commodities and the political sector at once mellowed their positions to be more accomodating towards farmers' needs.



Looking back, I think the most crucial reason for our failure was in not recognizing the jealousy which all of the vested interests had of their entrenched position. They recognized the need to rally all their resources to defeat the NFO movement. The abundant inexperience farmers had in setting up their program of action provided the opposition with plenty of ammunition. This they used most skilfully to turn farmer against farmer, and the farm organizations already in existence, feeling threatened by the new movement, were dupes of the powerful vested interests which had everything to gain to defeat collective bargaining by farmers. Recent events ,the washing out of most young farmers, and the elimination of all farm programs demonstrates the wisdom and need of that attempt which we farmers made. In farmers facing the future today without any safety net at all, collective bargaining should have already been in place. Big business interests,representing the largest accumulation of capital in the world , finally got full control of federal farm programs, convincing Congress to abolish all price supports after seven years. In a real sense, the defeat of the collective bargaining movement has deprived farmers of the right to do so. The next attempt will be a very tough hill to climb.

The approach of farmers' average age towards retirement age of 65 makes the need for the right to use the collective bargaining tools much more urgent for those who must take up the job of feeding the world. Forget the large corporate entities for the task, for they know there is no money in it unless they can control production and prices beyond what the public will tolerate.

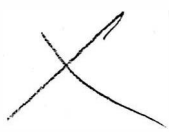
ANOTHER HILL TO CLIMB

Apologies for overworking the phrase, but it fits the need. We depended on hog production for much of our income and in the dry years when we had to buy corn to feed hogs, the feeding margin is what we had to live on, and we no more than got out of the drought when we were faced with another crisis. Our neighbor Pierce, or Percy Eckrich gave us the news that his herd had hog cholera. In the 1920's and 30's cholera devastated hog producing areas. In the fortys and fiftys it had been controlled with virus and serum, which gave the animals cholera and then immunized them by giving them serum, a blood derivative from hogs which had developed immunity. That in turn gave the receiving animal immunity, but also preserved a pool of infection in the whole region by use of live virus. Consequently, live virus had only shortly prior to the time in question been outlawed, with an attenuated virus having taken its place.

Upon hearing the news from the neighbor I vaccinated our herd with the attenuated virus, thinking that they would be protected, and they probably would have been except for the fact they must have already been exposed. In other words, the attenuated virus needed time which did not exist for my herd to develop immunity. Consequently, my herd developed cholera during an NFO holding action, a time when members held hogs off the market in an attempt to force packers to bargain for contracts. I was forced to revaccinate with serum and also to market some of the herd to cut financial loss, for infected animals died. I am sure this necessity caused some people to take unnecessary advantage and sell also, to get a higher price. It was almost two more years after this outbreak before I could raise baby pigs again. There was no way to establish immunity for those baby pigs and they simply died.

A few short years after that cholera crisis two more developed with almost as much impact. The first was the onset of another infectious disease in our herd called eresipilis. It was not as devastating as cholera,but still had a mighty impact on profits. It too struck mature butcher hogs the hardest, killing a number of them. The proper use of veterinary medicine finally controlled it.

Still another infectious disease in our swine herd caused another hard blow to our operation. After all this time it blurs a bit, but my recollection is that this disease followed the other mentioned ones. I may have to do some research to even recall the name of this one. It was



a reproductive disease, causing pigs to be stillborn and not fully developed. After ten minutes of reflection I remember the name , leptospirosis. Again, following much loss of income we were able to control it with vaccine. That recollection may be incorrect, but I think that is how we did it.

A near disaster,and one that recurred often, was the collapse of hog prices in 1955. Fallout from that one caused a number of our friends to temporarily work at another job. Amana Refrigeration Corporation was the choice of several who then pooled rides. I remember selling 120 hogs one day for 2500 dollars. That was at $12 per hundred pounds, and a month or less later they sank to about $10. Prior to that collapse , corn prices collapsed to levels low enough to cause farmers to raise more livestock to offset low grain prices. That relationship repeated itself many times in my farming career.

Then, as before and since, farm suppliers approached the US Congress for redress, because farmers had stopped buying inputs and farm capital investments, such as farm machinery. The cycle was then started again. The present high grain prices were a factor in causing Congress to tail off farm programs during the next seven years. The stage will then be set for a rerun of farm commodity price collapse and re-establishment of farm programs.

In 1987 it was not farmers who pressed Congress for the PIK program-it was the suppliers . Then, as at other times in the last thirty years, farm programs were written to aid suppliers and consumers much more than farmers. The transportation industry is more diverse than are the large grain exporters, and that sector will be hurt more. But neither will suffer the devastation that farmers will be forced to endure. I can remember when farmers were benefitted more by the wording and administration of farm laws.

LOSS OF FRIEND AND NEIGHBOR

Percy was a colorful character who had a restless nature. His early history was varied to say the least. He proved to be a good and interesting neighbor. His last years were filled with much physical pain, caused by lung cancer which was induced by a lifetime of tobacco use. Sometime before his passing he had purchased a new Massey Ferguson model 205 combine which he had never used. After his death Helena sold the combine to me. That was the first of three self propelled machines I have owned. The advent of shelled corn harvest to the Seelman operation was a huge change as it was for countless farmers .

The first year we shelled corn we did not have a drying bin. We complimented its use by also harvesting some corn with the ear corn picker. Then in 1970 we built the first bin, equipped with a dryer. It is the west 24 foot in diameter bin on the west place. (Hereafter I will call it the Section 18 farm.) It holds 5500 bushels to the eaves, with perhaps 700 bushels more in the roof when peaked.

With Percy's passing in 1968 his son Stanley tried his hand at farming the place but he did not like it. After one year he had a sale and I rented the place. I believe I rented it a total of six years. Since that represented a sizable increase in the size of our operation, it required some changes in our operational procedure. Also, while I rented the Eckrich place I had also acquired the farm from Aunt Angela, and when we lost Allan it made the whole operation an impossible burden. I was once again the only person there to do the work. After some unfortunate ocurrences I thereupon gave up renting the Eckrich place.

DISPUTE ON RECORD

Several of you may have noticed an addition to the land abstract of our property a codicil which documents a dispute with the Eckrich family. The last year I farmed the Eckrich place I had seeded a field which Helena disputed, and she refused to repay me for the grass seed I had applied . That unfortunate misunderstanding caused another problem, for Lucille thought she

should be forced to pay . She spent much time in establishing a claim and having it attached to the Eckrich land taxes to obtain payment. This angered Helena, and she filed a counterclaim on our land. The result was much hard feeling and the fact that we did not get paid for that seed. In addition, there is a permanent record of the dispute on our abstract. It is often much better to absorb small losses than dispute them. Merchantable abstracts can be poisoned by very small matters if they are on record. Small details there can affect the merchantability of titles.

TOM

On November 30, 1959 a little guy whom we named Tom came to live with us. At first he did not seem to be adventurous but as time developed he showed a strong tendency toward independendence. I remember his first aspiration to be an airline pilot. He stayed with that desire for a number of years. His was that cute round face in many of our family photos, not losing that look until he was at least 13 years old.

Once the grain bin dryer was running and Tom, the only person nearby, saved the dryer and the bin full of corn from burning, plus the possibility of explosion. The dryer was running with the burner on when the electric power was momentarily interrupted. Tom had the presence of mind to look in the peephole provided to monitor the burner, and seeing that it was still burning as the fan motor was coming to a stop, he knowing there was a malfunction, proceeded to manually restart the fan. The automatic controls should have attended to that detail. Upon inspection I found a tramp screw in the gas valve which controlled the burner, thereby preventing it from doing its job. It was obviously carried there by gas flowing to the burner. The magnetic motor switch is what disconnected and prevented the fan motor from restarting as the power was immediately restored. At the time of that event Tom could not have been more than ten or twelve years old. Tom, do you remember?

GARDENING FOR RECREATION

The old garden plot my grandmother used is the one where I plant our garden. In 1993 and again this year I find that drainage could be better, but in an average year it is ok. We had an almost record May for rainfall this year. Today is the first of June. The ground in the garden is again soggy, as seepage occurs and runs across the surface. It stops two days after rain, but this year the rains are so frequent that it seeps almost continuously. This in a year when newly planted oats laid in dry ground for one month. The wet weather is improper for my gardening by way of the mulch and no tillage system, since the ground dry's out more slowly. Mulch and no till works much better in dry seasons. Again today it rained all afternoon.

The most impressive part of this year's weather is the continuous cold. We did not have much pasture until the middle of May. Given the fact that most growth of grass occurs in May, we have lost growing season that will never be regained.

Our soybean planting season has hung for almost a full month. May saw almost daily rains when there was little or no dry-out between . We just finished planting them yesterday, June 4. Today it is raining again. If this pattern continues, it will be difficult indeed to make hay, and equipment will be getting stuck in hayfields.

ANOTHER DISASTER- FIRE

July 12 update 5:00 am

Hay making has turned out to be a dry weather operation, with no rain of consequence since the last writing above. Steve was trying to finish baling yesterday, and a bad bearing caused a fire which destroyed the baler. In his panic he stopped the unit with the tractor facing downwind and we almost lost the 1105 tractor as well. I saw the fire from where I was mowing in the field southeast of the buildings . Steve had driven the tractor with baler attached toward home , trailing a blazing baler which made a spectacular scene. The first help to arrive was a

Johnson County road maintenance truck . While Steve had gone to the house to call for help I relocated the tractor and baler so the wind blew from the side rather than toward the tractor. This made it possible to save the tractor. Some debris on the tractor axle had caught fire and burned through a hydraulic line. It was necessary for me to move the tractor forward twice to get it away from burning pools of oil and it was at that point when I received much needed help from the road maintenance people. Their fire extinguisher did so on the tractor fire. As hot as the fire was in the baler, the fact that the wind was no longer blowing toward the tractor made it possible to work on the tractor fire with reasonable success and safety.

The county maintenance people had also called for the Tiffin fire department on radio. The baler was consumed by the time they arrived . After putting out the baler fire , Doug Campbell told Steve to check the field where he had been baling for fire, and there was one burning in the fence row between the Eicher farm and ours. They then extinguished it before leaving.

Lessons learned involve providing more fire extinguishers on equipment and perhaps keeping a water tank with pump full and ready during the summer months.

These events are taking place at a bad time since we have much hay down and ready to bale. All of the hay west of Tom's house is down and it is very heavy on the ground. It has not been made the last few years for the most part, since it has variably been diverted in the farm program.

SCARE OR FOR REAL? July 12,1996-

As I write this account we are experiencing continuation of the drought we had in March and April. The weather is unusually cool and this is especialy so , as in normal conditions dry weather is accompanied by above normal temperatures. Generally, the corn and bean crops look good, since the critical time will be in the next three weeks. Because of the cold spring corn is only about four feet high. My corn crop was all planted before May 7. Bean developmnent is also slower than normal at knee high or less. On tilled land there are areas in fields where there is rolling of the leaves, showing that tillage removed moisture which the crop now needs. Those areas will continue to grow in size until we get rain. I have seen the estimate that each tillage pass can remove one inch of moisture from the ground. Provided, of course, that the moisture is there to lose. It is hard to realize that this is the year we received seven inches of rain about the tenth of May.

This updated paragraph is being written on Wednesday the 17th of July 1996 and since I wrote the above paragraph we have received two good rains , .85 on Thursday the 11th, and another beautiful rain this morning which ended just a few minutes ago. I just heard thunder , so we may get more. The "scare" is receding.

LIVING ON THE EDGE

There is a bit of sweatshirt philosophy walking about which says ,"If you are not living on the edge you are taking up too much space." I feel the reality of living too close to the edge. We had some very unwelcome excitement on Wednesday the 10th . While Steve was baling hay in the south 40 here at home and while I was mowing opening rounds in the oats field south of the house, a hot bearing started a fire in the baler. I was in a good location to see most of the disaster, seeing black smoke coming over the hill to the west. Steve was trying to get near a hydrant but wisely abandoned that attempt when the baler turned into a ball of fire. He would have set the bale yard afire had he passed near it. He left the tractor and baler to call the Tiffin fire department, and in his haste he left the tractor in the downwind position to the northeast with a 10 or 12 mile wind. Seeing the situation, I went to the scene and with smoke and flames on the right side of the tractor and smoke on the left or door side, proceeded to move the tractor and baler to a crosswind position. There being a chaff fire on top of the tractor axle which

burned through a hydraulic line to the three point cylinder on that side, a puddle of burning oil developed under the tractor at that point. I moved the tractor forward several feel to get it away from that burning oil and while trying to extinguish the flames with green weeds, I had to deal with that burning oil puddle a second time , moving the tractor forward a third time. Also , the wiring for the planter monitor was burned out and will have to be replaced. The rear of the tractor was quite hot, having melted the two plastic reflectors at the outer rear corners of the cab. The tires must have been close to the ignition point. After I moved the tractor the third time a Johnson County Maintenance truck came and those two men helped me put out the remainder of the tractor fire. By that time the baler was completely destroyed, and shortly after that the fire truck arrived and put out the baler fire. Doug Campbell arrived with the second truck and told Steve to go to the field to see if there was a fire there. He returned saying that there indeed was a fire. They then went to the field with the truck and extinguished the fire which was burning in the fencerow between Eicher's land and ours. The fire was proceeding towards the creek where there was plenty of fuel wood and dead grass which would have burned.

Johnson County Mutual , Bob Scheetz adjuster, settled for $5700 for the baler, and settlement for the tractor is pending. Bob thanked me three times for saving the tractor, that being equitable since I saved the tractor three times. This makes three times in the last 20 years that I called upon them to pay a substantial claim.

Upon recalling the event I realized the fortuitous position which moving the tractor to a crosswind position turned out to be. Had I placed the tractor in an upwind position there would have been enough backdrafting to make it impossible to save it. Also, trapping the heat between the tractor and baler would have contribluted to a very difficult situation.

The two other times they paid substantial claims were first , the time Jim Prymek was burned when a keg with gunpowder ignited in the shop as Tom repaired a motorcycle muffler. Steve and his friends had been loading shells and had left a keg with a possible inch of powder sitting near the vise. Second, Steve was raking hay with the then new 510 Long tractor when bolts securing the starter worked loose, allowing the starter electric cable to touch a steel hydraulic line, burning a hole in the line and igniting the oil . The tractor was consumed and there was some $14,000 damage, but I believe the insurance company collected some of the loss from the manufacturer, since it was a new tractor. The total insurance claims for the three losses was at least thirty-five thousand dollars.

More--

Since the baler fire another unwelcome event took place on the Seelman farm. I am writing this on the 14th of August, and the 26th of July we lost twelve head of cows from bloat. Steve had turned them into the middle twenty acre field where alfalfa regrowth had occurred after earlier pasturing. Within 45 minutes two more had died and we did not have time to save the others, since it happened so quickly. We lost precious time in trying to get a garden hose down their throats, and when I got a knife we were able to save several by sticking them. The total lost to bloat is now twelve cows and one calf.

Steve has not told me this but when he was baling the first time with the replacement baler (same make and model as the fire destroyed one) he apparently was thinking of recent events and allowed his attention to be diverted from the baler operation. In any event, the replacement baler was damaged when the movable roller arm became bent and the baler was again out of operation. Much more time was again lost in placing it back into service. We pray that this will be the last of this run of luck.

REMEMBERING ALLAN

December 1, 1992 Foreword Addition 3-1-96

The rapid passage of time forces one to see the need to write down memories. It has been twenty-one years since Allan was last with us. That is a longer period of time than he lived. A life as noteworthy as his should be noted. I still feel inadequate for that task. So it is with the knowledge that words on paper can never do justice to any life; nevertheless, it is necessary to write them. The question of how to organize this material brings to mind a chronological approach, with flashbacks.

With the inadequacy of one person's memory in mind, I invite family members and friends to join the attempt.

1

In remembering Allan's early life, both his joys and his hardships come to mind; his first bb gun, and the abandonment of a personal habit in order to get it. His determination to learn how to swim; those cold summer mornings when he once told me, after coming home from a lesson still blue from cold, "I feel like I won't ever get warmed up again." His diminutive size. He didn't grow much until he was a junior in High school. He grew in two years from 4 feet 6 inches to over six feet. Not bad for two years!

Once his playfulness got him in trouble with his dad. There was a wagon load of corncobs parked near the chicken house. He- and I suspect one or more of his sisters-made corncobs fly, and unloaded the top of that load onto the ground. His father caught only him at the scene, and told him to reload them. He willingly complied while his dad went to the field with a tractor. Upon returning some time later, Dad found him still loading a few remaining cobs. His father had a pang of remorse at the severity of the punishment, and told the chastened but compliant seven year old that the job was satisfactorily completed.

Perhaps it was when Allan was an early teenager that we did some hand fishing in the floodwaters of Old Man's Creek. Perhaps ten or more neighbors participated on Earlis Rohret's property. We fished pools which were cut off from the main channel as the water receeded, and then ate the catch which we cooked by campfire on the bank. Allan hugely enjoyed the outing, saying repeatedly that it was the most fun he ever had.

Allan's small size until his junior year made him an unlikely candidate for sports, as well as the problem of distance and the difficulty of providing a car for practice. Not once did he ever complain about that lack. At Regina the only sport then available was basketball. After he was out of high school he did play some basketball at the Cosgrove gym, and it was my observation that he had some talent for the game.

As with any father who is trying to make a living, I had a lack of extra energy to fully enjoy my family. As Allan became older he sensed this. He often initiated a plan for his brothers and sisters, both at work and at play, and helped to carry it out. I remember his authoritarian but kindly way in getting his brothers and sisters to proceed with a project. It always gave me a good feeling to know that here was a young man who truly had the welfare of his family at heart. I would like his brothers and sisters to add their own experiences to this. My regret is not having told him how I felt about his ability to do better at that than I could.

When he became a teenager he acquired by birthday or Christmas present a 20 gauge single shot shotgun. Of course he was very proud of it and I remember the first time he used it. Several people were here to hunt pheasant and I invited him to go with us. He declined, saying that he certainly would not get anything with all that competition. I persuaded him to come anyway. It turned out that he was the only one who got a bird. That experience launched him on the way to being a very good hunter.

Later, he carried a gun on the MM tractor while hauling grain from the combine. He was so quick that he was able to stop the tractor and shoot almost every pheasant that flew. As

everyone who knows pheasant habits is aware, that situation gives one very little time. The last year Allan was with us he said he counted 138 bagged pheasants for our table and the neighbors.

I remember a self taught acrobatic trick Allan mastered when he was ten or twelve. I wish I could remember in exact detail the nature of the trick. It looked to be impossible. From lying on his back on the davenport ,using the recoil of the seat springs, he could do a flying summersault to a sitting position. Does any one remember if this is an accurate description? Has any one else in your acquaintance been able to do this?

When Chris and Allan reached high school graduation the principal imposed a requirement for graduation which Allan viewed as unreasonable. I don't remember its nature. It had nothing to do with grades or academic aschievement because all of the kids had good grades. Allan held his ground and did graduate!

Like many men of his generation, he was faced with being drafted for service in the Vietnam war. Rather than wait for that call, he enlisted in the National Guard where he hoped Vietnam duty would be delayed or averted. He cheerfully went for basic training, telling us that it would be a vacation. He told us that we would be the ones that must really work. His homesickness was immediate and lasted the entire six months of his training. It did not impair his performance, but manifested itself in the letter he sent us for each day of the entire six months. When he arrived home he was often asked what he intended to do with his life. He always said, "I've looked around and the best place I found is right here, and here I'll stay!.

He learned and grew up while he was in basic. As all kids, before basic he would rather ride than walk even for short distances. After basic there were occasions when we needed a tractor that was in the field. I often offered to drive him to the tractor, but he usually said, "I'll run over after it. No big deal".

Allan had a way of making one look at oneself. I often overmanaged and excessively explained details of our work. He often brought me up short by simply exclaiming "Duh!".

While he was in basic, Allan sustained a very bad ankle sprain. Though he was on crutches, he insisted on performing his training duties. We received a letter after his death from one of his training buddies, who explained how he earned the admiration of the whole company for his devotion to duty.

The equipment we had for feedmaking comprized a stationary feed mill and two wagons. One wagon was for whole grain and the other was to receive the ground feed from the mill. Grinding livestock feed always involved shoveling the grain by hand into the feed mill. It was not a smooth operation, for it involved loading a wagon with grain, locating the wagons with a tractor, and belting the tractor to the feed mill. When the feed was processed, the procedure had to be reversed. When we finally obtained a feed grinder-mixer ,it was Allan's pride and joy, for it made that chore so much easier and faster. He was eager to do that job thereafter.

A best friend in high school and afterward was Tom Kriz. They loved to be together. Tom was so terribly affected by Allan's death that he [to my knowledge] never found another close friend. I know Tom always felt a heavy responsibility for Allan's death.

The most defining part of Allan's gentle nature was his refusal to use profanity or crude language, and his discouraging its use by others. He often made me wish I did not.

What have I not said? It seems that I should just be getting started, and here I am closing.

The following is an excerpt from a letter I sent to my sister Regina, which she included in the Seelman family history, dated sometime in 1971. .

We are partially consoled by the confidence that Al accomplished his life's work--that of saving his soul. He was a good man, and since he has accomplished this,it is all that really matters.

We who were so close to him pray and feel sure that his life's example and tragic death can and will be a dynamic force for good to all who knew him and us.

I know that, had you known Al the man, you would have liked him and what he was. He had courage in abundance. He was totally honest. He honored responsibility first of all. He loved hard work,but would not work unnecessarily on Sunday and discouraged all around him from doing so! He was not petty and discouraged this trait in others. Yet he was compassionate and forgiving to a fault to those he loved. He was, of course, many more things.

Here I am making him out to be perfect! Of course he wasn't, but the balance was so much in his favor that it overwhelms us, as we pray it will his God.

Of course the way we can go on is to build walls around this grief. They keep crumbling. God averts many tragedies for all of us, especially when we pray from our hearts.

The following was added by Regina;

"We feel sure that all our beloved family who have left this life are together in God's beautiful home,where no sorrow can ever touch them again. "

In those years when Allan was with us, We were doing Angela's chores and tending the place. He thoroughly enjoyed doing that and often checked things on his own.

I should mention the Chevelle Super Sport car that he loved. I can't even remember the model year; Kids,help me. Was it a '69? Also, the loving care it received. Often the yard was full of his friends,each one caring for his car and receiving help from everyone else.

3-1-97

The land was parched and the weather very warm that early summer. On the eve of the fateful day Allan and Tom had camped at the edge of the field on our land east of Cosgrove. They woke too late for attendance at first Mass at St. Peters, and after talking to his mother he and Tom went to Iowa City. A heavy thunderstorm developed, soon covering the highway with water. As happens under those conditions a slippery film formed from oil and rubber deposits on the road surface. Tom's Chevy Camaro had been equipped with oversize tires which created the conditions setting up the accident. The light weight of the car, the oversized tires, and slippery road surface combined to cause the car to waterplane and slide broadside into the oncoming lane of traffic, passenger side leading. An oncoming car struck theirs at the left door, invading the space where Allan was sitting, killing him instantly. (I have only now summoned the courage to print the facts of the accident).

I have often remembered how Allan was so concerned about the mini- drought we experienced in the weeks before his death. Hayfields which were harvested in the weeks before that July 4th were still as bare as when they were mowed because of lack of moisture. More than once in that period Allan asked me what I thought would happen, thereby expressing his concern. There is irony in the fact that the two inch rain which broke that drought also destroyed a most beautiful flower of the earth: a flower overflowing with love for his land and his people.

Allan Ray Seelman by Barbara Reiter

May 10, 1990

Standing under the large white pine tree in the early spring brings back so many thoughts. It has been 18 years . Now the hopes and dreams are gone but the memories are still there.

Seems like whenever I come here the grass is mowed and sounds of nature are surrounding me. Robins, blue jays, and cardinals are all busy getting food for their young; slimy purple-brown earthworms are being pulled out of the ground. A grove of trees supplies the cover for so many of nature's little furry creatures. The shade of the trees ane the wind whispering through them gives a feeling of serenity. The marble grey stone with his name and the dates remind us of what a short time we had to know and love him.

Our family does not celebrate the 4th of July in the traditional way. The family, all of us, attends early Mass on that day and remembers. All of us have our own memories and some of those memories we share as a family.. .

It is hard to forget the time Mary and Allan had just had baths and were supposed to be brushing their teeth. Instead they sneaked out ot the house and decided to seek an adbventure. For my little sister Mary, doing what she wasn't supposed to be doing was a way of life. We know that Allan merely went along for the ride. The night before it had rained, so muddy puddles of water were standing everywhere. Mary and Allan decided to take advantage of this water. They covered their little round cherub faces with mud; all you could see was their black eyes with the white pupils. Allan was a toehead and Mary had black hair but they looked so identical with all that mud on their faces. Photographs are so wonderful because I don't know if you remember the incident so much as the image on paper. Mother in her infinite wisdom was able to take a picture of the two little earth creatures before cleaning them up.

With a large family of twelve, fourteen including my parents, it was difficult to go any place without being noticed- especially church. We always sat close to the front of the church so we weren't distracted. Did mother ever think of what a distraction we were to everyone else? Allan was about 3 years old and wasn't able to see over the pew in front of us. All during church, every Sunday, he chewed like a little beaver the wood off the pew in front of us. So instead of a dark walnut wood stain a line of light wood was visible after time. From the back of the church, you can see the pews that are unofficially reserved for our family. One Sunday mother brought a bottle of Old Dtutch wood stain and a rag to covre up the chew marks. Then it was our responsibility to "Watch" Allan during church.

This is another story about Allan.... He had left church early one day because he was "bored". The car was parked in front of the church and he was racing his older sister Chris to the car. While running from the hard slippery pavement to the loose large gravel, he fell, causing a goose egg to appear on his head. While we were all in the car going home he wanted to know, "Did you hear the gravel spread?"

A week after the car accident Mom and Dad were attending Mass when Allan's pet racoon , Racquel, made a surprise visit to church. She had hidden under the hood of the car and during church had decided to do some exploring. Exploring right down the main aisle of the church. Racquel was a huge furry fat racoon that had never wanted for a thing in her whole life. She was very sociable, mainly because our family had raised Raxquel and Allan had spent a lot of time with her. A church, in comparison with our family , was a very subdued environment that needed a little excitement. Racquel was about to give it. Annie Mc Gillian yelled from the back of church, "Get that groundhog out of here!" Well Raquel knew she was'nt a groundhog, so it wasn't her they were referring to. Mother nudged Dad, he always gets all of his information second hand from Mother. Mother said, "That's Racquel, get her out of here". So Dad picked her up and off to the car they went. I could picture Allan right behind Racquel, just prodding her

down that aisle and laughing. Allan was no longer able to create memories anymore but Racquel his fat furry racoon did.

The car accident on July 4, 1971 changed our family forever. I think of the life that he might have had, and his favorite saying when Mother would caution him to drive slow, "The good die young". He loved the outdoors and our family. Would he be farming with Dad and planting corn or soybeans in the fields of our family farm? Should they tile this field or buy another tractor to replace the old Farmall? Would Allan be married and have children of his own? When Dad is out in the field and Mother is gardening do they remember... what dreams they had for Allan that will never come true? The memories are forever with us. Thank you Allan for teaching us the really important things... . and especially how to love..

I copied this essay from the 1990 work Barb gave us then. I am adding it to my Memoirs on 3-1-1997. To recall our memories of Allan is as emotionally wrenching as ever. .. Dad.

Ability Not Fully Rewarded

The first tractor I owned , the Farmall F-12, did not have a hydraulic system. Nor did the third one, the Allis Chalmers B. Several later tractors did have them, but in various stages of development.

The Farmall H did in fact have a hydraulic system. It was designed primarily to operate a cultivator, and was not designed ruggedly enough for additional duties. Operating pressure was 800 #/sq. in., and when properly equipped could do other tasks, but it was not built well enough for continuous use. It soon wore out. At about that time add-on units were being made available, so I purchased a unit which attached to the timing gears between the magneto and the drive. A tribute to the well designed gear timing system drive is the fact that I never had any trouble with that drive. The beauty of that application was the live operation it provided. The original "belly pump" died when the clutch was depressed, just when hydraulic power was often needed.

That added application used the original belly pump reservoir, and to do so required the drilling of a hole in its bottom where an oil suction line to the pump was attached. The addition of a Char-Lynn external valve and suitable return lines completed the installation.

No system, factory designed or added , ever gave better performance than that system. When I traded the tractor the system was as good as ever, with the possible replacement of the Char-Lynn control valve being the only maintenance.

The next tractor I owned, the Allis Chalmers WD45, also had hydraulic system deficiencies. It had a high-pressure pump built into the belly of the tractor, and was efficient for snap-coupler tools and their control. Its use for pull type implements and loaders was a severe compromise, so I installed the same type system on that tractor which I had earlier put on the Farmall H. Both had Webster Electric Company pumps, extremely well built units which were trouble free. I left the original system in place, and therefore had a good dual hydraulic system, better than most tractors of that time. It was possible by the use of a splitter to use that same add on system to operate a power steering unit in nice shape, also an added unit.

An error was made by the company which designed the kit for the WD45, they designing the reservoir for under the hood placement on the tractor where it could not get rid of heat. After replacing the pump once and relocating the reservoir no more trouble was experienced. It did a world of hydraulic duty when that tractor had a loader as well as many other duties.

Another tractor I owned which had an inadequate system was a D-19 Allis Chalmers. That model was the first tractor in history to sport a factory equipped exhaust turbocharger. But the company forgot to do their homework on the hydraulic system. It was a good basic system but would not operate at a certain angle on sidehills. After inspection of the details I determined that relocation of the intake line to the pump might solve the problem. Drilling and tapping a new hole in the reservoir to accomplish that did in fact make a good system without the earlier flaws.

A very early hydraulic system I owned was a power take off pump I purchased used for the Allis Chalmers B. It was needed for the hydraulic dump wagons I used for harvest. It was already worn a bit and with not enough power to easily lift a loaded wagon, so when I got the WD45 there was added incentive to install the above mentioned add on system. I used the tractor a number of years in that capacity, it doing a good job for that purpose. We still have the dump wagons we used for many years, their hoists still in place.

The first hoist I had was one I built myself. I patterned it after a Lundell wagon hoist, and while it did not have quite enough power to easily lift a loaded wagon, we used it sucessfully for many years. There were several engineering applications in that hoist which extended my available technology a bit, mildly put.

The second hoist was an improved model, built by The Energy Company of Monticello.

Therein is a story of note. I went to Slager Hardware Company with the intention of making that purchase, and I by chance arrived when Jerry Pasker, the president and chief engineer of The Energy Company was giving free helicopter rides to those who made a two hundred dollar or more purchase that day. I qualified and was given an extra ride to the airport for fuel.

I enjoyed the rides very much, but less than a month later the pilot was killed in that same helicopter when he flew it into the Mississippi River. To this day I do not know what went wrong. It may have been a control or counter-rotor problem. A report stated the machine inverted. Jerry was an experienced pilot with many hours of helicopter time. It was a great loss, for he was talented in many things.

I remember thinking it was extending safety a lot in the way the machine was designed. Jerry invited me to accompany him in a quick pre-flight safety check, and I made a mental note that a lot depended on the open V-belt counter-rotor drive. Perhaps that had nothing to do with the accident.

All later models of tractors I owned had most of the bugs engineered out of the hydraulic systems. The MM 670 tractor I bought in 1967 did not have enough reservoir storage capacity for large remote cylinders on hoists, but otherwise was a good system. It has the same cam gear drive of the earlier add on units with their dependability. The three point hitch control was not as well designed as that on the AC tractors built earlier.

A later Allis Chalmers XT190 which I owned had a reasonably good hydraulic system, but that was about the only good thing other than the engine that could be said about that tractor. It had basically the same transmission as the D-19 I owned earlier, with a more powerful engine. It had at least three different fluids in the drive train, with nothing built heavy enough to stand the strain. All of the fluids mixed together but worse yet , the transmission and final drive gears were not nearly strong enough to be trouble free. We spent about fifteen hundred dollars on one gear breakdown with Hal Knowling standing half of the bill. I thereupon made haste to divest myself of that tractor, replacing it with the MF1105. The hydraulic system of the Massey Ferguson tractor is state-of -the-art even today.

HIGH TECH FARM EQUIPMENT

My friend Bob Burns just told me a good joke, though admittedly it might be considered sexist by some . (2-17-97) We must keep in mind that all jokes poke fun at someone, but it is precisely what makes them funny.

An Indian went to a white man's trading post. The Indian observed a substantial bug making its way across the floor, and observed to the storekeeper thus-"Look, bug." The storekeeper then said, " Squash it." The Indian replied, "No, bug". The above date applies only to the joke, not the following material.

I have described some of the shortcomings of the first tractor I owned,but it was a "honey" compared to some of the field machinery I first used. The corn planter, mouldboard plow, disk , mower, hayloader, wagon, all could have vied for last place in productivity , convenience , and ease of operation even by 1940 standards. Hydraulic controls were for the most part still on the drawing boards. Electric starting systems were for cars, and indeed they had been in common use there only about 25 years . The plow I owned was called an Oliver Fordson plow, since it was expressly designed for use with a Fordson tractor . It did have a mechanical clutch for the purpose of lifting and lowering it out of and into the ground. But the clutch drive wheel had a tougher job than its traction usually provided, so the raising of that implement was chancy at best. It should have had button lugs adorning the wheel rim,but someone probably removed them to make the implement ride better during road travel.

As with many other shortcomings of equipment in those years I did modify that plow with a makeshift improvement to give that clutch wheeel better traction. I selected an old car tire, cut it in two at one point, and installed it on that wheel rim , securing it with several strands of number nine smooth wire which also tied the two ends of the tire together where it had been cut. It did improve the traction of the wheel and accomplished the desired result.

Lowering the implement was easy if the required fifty pound pull on the hefty trip rope could be called that. That was the beginning of the rotator cusp problem in my left shoulder.

The old horse disk came from the Fred Schneider sale on the farm now owned by Effie Schneider, no relation. Probably the worst tool I had considering the challenge of the job it had to do was that 9 foot single gang horse disk. It originally had a horse tongue, rotted out, which I replaced with a wood 4 x 4 inch piece about four feet long. To do a barely acceptable job it was necessary to split the last pass made, disking everything twice to prevent severe ridging of the field. That meant the effective cut was reduced by half, or 4-1/2 feet. It was faster than the two feet cut of the mouldboard plow, but often in tough cornstalks or sod the field had to be disked twice[actually four times]. Even then the quality of the work was far below that of modern tillage equipment. After several years of using this piece of junk it was clear something better was needed. There was a Meyers close out sale near North Liberty, [remember the war and shortages] so I was fortunate to be able to buy a brand new Case tandem disk that was equipped with a clutch, an innovation for discs at that time. The price was only $135, no more than dealer price for that machine. [Later in the war as shortages became more critical,when there was more than one bid at the ceiling price the War Production Board allowed, it became a lottery, with bidding parties putting their names in a hat] The width of cut was 7 feet,and I never appreciated a new implement more than that one. It had shortcomings too, using later better equipment as a yardstick, but it was so much better than what I had earlier that I barely noticed them.

The field mower I had was an Adriance Platt with a six foot bar purchased at the Pate sale. Early on I used it with horses, and it would mow,but it's dependability was poor. Another very poor implement was an old planter that cost perhaps 10 dollars at a farm auction. Its planting accuracy was non-existent. That it got any seed into the ground was only accidental. I replaced it early in my farming career with an International planter that was far ahead

technically, for it closely counted and placed the seed. Those two planters,both horse drawn, used wire to space the corn hills for cultivating in two directions. The used McCormick deering planter price was 50 dollars. Later , when I got rid of the horses, I used that same planter for several years with a tractor.

For you who have no knowledge of corn planter wire,it worked thus; A 'button" , made of wire was located each and every forty inches of its length. A roll of that wire was mounted on a spool which had a friction wheel on the same hub as the spool. The friction wheel was so designed to unroll or roll the wire on the spool as needed,getting its energy from the flange of the planter wheel against which it bore at the demand of the operator. The typical spool of wire was eighty rods in length, but could be added or deleted by the use of special connectors which could be incorporated into one of the buttons.

The planter had a "check head" which consisted of rollers to allow the wire to smoothly flow through the check head. The wire flowed through a fork which was operated , or tripped when each button engaged the fork. The fork was in a forward , or ready position (in relation to the direction of travel of the planter) when the button engaged it, whereupon the forward travel of the planter caused the fork to be moved to the rear in the checkhead some six or seven inches. The rearward position of the fork then caused the button to release the spring-loaded fork, it returning to be ready for the next cycle.

The shoe design of the planter consisted of two valves, they retaining the seed which was received from the planter plate until the trip fork released it at the proper time. One valve was at the top of the shoe next to the metering plate, and the other valve was at the bottom of the shoe next to the bottom of the formed slot in the soil where the seed was then ejected. The sequence was such that the top valve collected the seeds,usually three as the plate individually metered them out, until the ejection cycle moved those seeds to the lower valve, they then being deposited in the soil at the next cycle.

The purpose of the check row technology was to allow the row crop to be cultivated in two directions, for those buttons in the planter wire caused the corn to be hilled, having rows transverse to the direction the field was planted as well. Since cultivation was the only method of weed control available before the advent of chemical control, it was an important part of crop culture.

I must tell you about that hayloader. Although it was better than the hayloader my grandfather had, the wood construction was getting old and tired. Wood could suffer from fatigue and rot, so it was a constant cause of the haymaking being stopped, often before a rain which then degraded the hay that otherwise would have been in the barn. It was a carbon copy of the steel hayloader made by New Idea which I owned later,for it was made by that same company. That steel loader was a fine piece of machinery. Even that wood hayloader was far better than the first one we had and I no longer remember where we got either of them. The first one was also made of wood, but a lot less ruggedly built. It was actually less productive than loading by hand.

I purchased a manure spreader from a neighbor that turned out to be an exercise in frustration. Made of wood, it had a raddle made of wood and joined by #55 steel chain. It should have been accompanied by a warning to never fill more than one-third full,for that is all the raddle chain could stand. I remember the brand name was Litchfield, probably made in that Minnesota town. When I purchased that new Farmall H in 1948 I also purchased a new manure spreader, a model 200 International. I had used the F-12 ten years, far too long for the work it had to do.

NEW ERA

The first several years of my farming career I used the same grain binder and separator method for harvesting small grain. I did not own a grain binder, for I saw that its use would soon

be outdated. I hired or borrowed one from neighbors in the interem. I first owned a used combine in about 1945. It was an Allis Chalmers All Crop Harvester. It was well designed but also well worn, so I traded it the next year for a new International model 52 combine. I combined a lot of grain and grass seed with it and wore it out over a period of more than ten years. That combine was both well designed and poorly designed. The cylinder drive was advanced for its time, as it was the first application of variable radius belt sheaves that I know of on farm equipment. It was a variation of modern torque converter applications in common use today, built so cylinder speed could be controlled and changed at the will of the operator. However, it was necessary to stop the forward travel of the machine but not the rotation to accomplish it with a hand-wheel adjustment. Modern gear drive combines use a variation of that same system to control ground speed. [Most modern combines use hydrostatic ground drive transmissions, a superior system.]

Other parts of that model 52 Harvester Thresher could have used improved design. It employed a Scoop Shovel type header ,so called by the implement manufacturer because it was tapered to a smaller width at the rear to fit the width of the rest of the combine. It was a good system for a manufacturer who built combines, but a nemesis for a farmer in a field of tall grain that had lodged,which required that almost the full length of the crop had to be cut and funneled into that scoop shovel design. Bridging on the sides of the scoop shovel header then occurred, and that effectively stopped or slowed the grain harvest. Later addition of a second feeder reel helped, but did not fully cure that bottleneck.

The last pull type combine I owned was a well used Gleaner six foot machine which I obtained used in about 1960. That was a very good and well designed machine. I used it until I obtained my first self propelled combine. That machine was built before Allis Chalmers acquired the company.

I remember an incident after I had owned and was harvesting by the then new combine method. I was helping a neighbor thresh, and Cyril Rohret was the vendor with his old and antiquated Woods Brothers threshing machine. Worse yet , it was poorly maintained, for many of the spike teeth on the cylinder and concaves were missing (they are the parts which literally give the machine its "teeth" to remove the grain from the straw.) At one point I was in the vicinity of the strawpile and could hear grain steadily hitting the surface of the straw. The straw blower was of course threshing the grain which the cylinder missed and depositing it with the straw in the strawpile.

At that point I availed myself of an opportunity to open the access door at the rear of the straw walkers and sieze a handful of straw, and proceeded to observe all of the unthreshed grain in the straw. Earlis also observed the wasted grain and expressed amazement. Only after explanation did he understand the reasons why he and his father failed to previously note that failure, they having always checked for unthreshed grain in the strawpile after the blower finished the threshing job. That was the last year they operated the grain separator.

One of Cyril's weaknesses by his own admission was baling wire. On more than one occasion , upon successfully repairing a machine ,Cyril then grinned expansively and declared to all, "I couldn't farm without balin' waare!"

MORE ABOUT FARMING

The first corn picker I owned was a well worn Case one row snapper in about 1947. The war generated machinery shortage was still controlling the market. I bought that machine used from a dealer in Packwood, Iowa, a small town not far from Ottumwa. I used it until about 1950. It had poor harvesting efficiency because of its tendency to shell the ends of the ears, which shelled corn then fell to the ground. It also had no provision to take shucks off the ears. Many of these shortcomings were overlooked by me and other farmers who appreciated the end of hand harvesting.

I already dealt at length with the first farm tractor I owned, as well as the first toy one. I traded the Farmall F-12 in 1948 for a new Farmall H tractor. It was a beautiful model, convenient to drive, but lacking in power for farming in our clay hills. The list price was about fifteen hundred dollars plus two hundred for a two row cultivator. I also purchased a new model No. 200 International manure spreader at the same time, all on borrowed money. The spreader was perhaps a two hundred dollar item. With credit for the trade in tractor I think the money borrowed was perhaps $1800, a huge amount at that time. I remember the bank loan officer, M.B. Guthrie of the Iowa State Bank and Trust Co. almost having a heart attack- feigned , of course. My devotion to paying back that loan forever earned his respect.

I already had a new mouldboard plow equipped with two fourteen inch bottoms, which was a full load on hills in clay soils. In a situation where alfalfa was plowed under, the cutting of those tough roots by the plow shares increased the load by perhaps thirty percent. It could handle the previously mentioned seven foot tandem disk fairly well and somewhat faster than could the F-12.

After I purchased the new Farmall I began to do all of the tillage operations on the contour. Doing that produced a new set of problems in field operations. Plowing a field on the contour required many maneuvers to get a field covered, since the one directional demands of mouldboard plowing found one doing much empty travel, often actually plowing a short distance accompanied by much idle travel when finishing a land and/or triangle. Not much could be done about the idle travel, but a new method was needed to make it easier to handle the equipment. The plow I then owned was a McCormick Deering two bottom fourteen inch model with a rope controlled clutch. The frequent raising and lowering of the plow was difficult so I used a hydraulic cylinder which was designed to lift the mounted cultivator and designed a mounting system to apply that style cylinder to the mouldboard plow. Nothing of this nature was yet offered by any manufacturer. The adaption was very sucessful.

The Case disk limitations, wear, age, and need of more flexible equipment to meet the demands of contour farming made it necessary to get a new disk , and here I must guess the year, probably 1952 or therabouts. Wheel disks were becoming popular, and I purchased a nine foot Kewanee wheel disk from Cline Equipment Company. That was the first really good disk I owned. It taxed the power of the Farmall, but it did better than I expected. I had at about that time installed "M and W Add Power" pistons and sleeves in that tractor, and while it did not add a lot of power, in that low powered tractor a little more power made a lot of difference. The Farmall had what was called an under- square engine,meaning that the bore was smaller than the stroke. It was engineered by International with grey cast iron pistons. The new M and W pistons were newly engineered , much lighter and therefor placing much less stress on bearings and crankshaft. Long stroke engines such as this have high piston speeds and therefor more piston ring wear. The result was almost unlimited life for crankshaft and bearings, but fairly frequent need for piston ring replacement. When I traded that tractor, it had the original crankshaft and standard bearings,but I had to replace the rings about every two years. It had fourteen thousand hours on the meter at that time. By the way , the M and W pistons were aluminum, much lighter than the original cast iron ones.

The next picker I owned was a two row model number 24 IHC which mounted on the Farmall H tractor. The H was known as a "two plow tractor" and that corn picker was a three plow load. It should have been built only for the M Farmall, a three plow tractor. I did , however, use that combination for many years, worrying through the harvest for so long only because I had to make do with what I had for a lifetime. The factor that made it possible to use that size tractor was contour planting, making it unnecessary to go uphill, for the most part. That machine also did very little to remove extra husks from the ears of corn. It had a blower similar to the earlier one row snapper which removed loose debris only. It did have husking

rolls on the same shafts as the snapping rolls, but they were not long enough and without any mechanism to force the ears against the rolls. The result was the same as the previous machine.

After the horses left the farm it was obvious that another tractor was a necessity. I therefore acquired a B Allis Chalmers tractor for pulling loads of corn from the picker to the crib. That was made possible by using the picker tractor to pull the loads of corn to higher ground before pulling them to the crib with the much too small B A-C. I had a mounted six foot sickle mower for the little tractor, and by leaving it on the tractor it gained some 500 pounds of much needed weight. It was also a valuable addition to the machinery lineup, for that mower was well made and was a very efficient mowing machine.

CLIMBING SLOWLY

The increasing production and need for more efficient use of time showed the need for more power. In 1956 I traded the B A-C to Kelly Implement Co. for a one year old WD 45 Allis Chalmers tractor. I had that tractor for many years, and I remember the cost-including the plow- at about $1800.

It was a very rough riding tractor, exacting much physical abuse upon the operator. It had smaller than normal diameter rear tires but worse yet it had the seat mounted nearly two feet behind the rear axle. That seat position amplified the ground roughness. I often came into the house so shaken up that I had to rest before I could eat.

I had a three bottom mounted plow for that tractor, and a good plowing unit it was. It would plow any nature of ground, no matter how challenging the conditions. When I was shopping before I purchased it, I had Cline Equipment Company demonstrate a Farmall 300 with a mounted plow in the same field as the A-C tractor with its mounted plow. The conditions were favorable for the A-C , and it handled the job nicely, but the Farmall could not even operate at all. It could do nothing but spin its wheels.

THE QUEST CONTINUES

The heavy work load in perhaps 1964 of a larger livestock operation and more intensive crop production made it necessary to be more productive for each hour I worked, since I hired almost no additional help. The next step was to get a tractor with more power. That turned out to be trading the Farmall to Benda Equipment Co. at North Liberty for a used Minneapolis Moline Model U tractor . That tractor had a powerful engine, it having been the largest available row crop tractor when it was introduced in the early 1940's. I also obtained a four row cultivator for it. That trade meant I needed to get a different corn picker, since I no longer had the Farmall to power the tired and always inadequate model 24 IHC picker. I then located and purchased a used mounted corn picker for the Allis Chalmers tractor. It was the model with the large husking bed, not the underslung model which was in some ways similar to the International model which I had just discarded.

That move proved to be a huge step backward, however, for that model, supposed to be much improved, proved to be a lemon of major proportions. Compared to it, the inadequate International picker was a jewel. The AC engineering of that model was terribly sloppy, making it virtually inoperable on hilly land like ours. The snapped corn elevators which took ear corn from the snapping rolls to the husking bed were so steep that they could not do their job if the picker faced only a little downhill. After suffering its use for several years, my next harvester was a self-propelled combine.

In 1952 after Anselm's death I purchased his hay baler at the farm sale. It was a model 76 New Holland Automation automatic tie machine which he bought new in about 1948. He did a lot of custom work with it and it was a good machine but with far too many parts. It must have weighed five thousand pounds. A four cylinder Wisconsin engine drove the machinery. The greatest drawback of that machine was the canvas feed conveyors. In long hay the system was

not agressive enough, causing a lot of feeding problems. The twelve years I used it seemed much longer.

A word is needed here to fully explain the strengths and weaknesses of four cylinder Wisconsin air cooled engines. They were used for many years to power pulled implements, mainly combines and balers. They were powerful and long lived, but had a starting problem because of a design deficiency. (1),The starting crank was dangerous when used by an incautious operator, for it could be ejected quickly by the engine whether the engine started or not. It could then injure the operator by hitting him forcefully on the head. (2),The magneto was attached directly to the engine with no provision for ventilation . Moisture often migrated from the crankcase to the inside of the magneto because of an imperfect shaft seal. That caused operating problems which were usually manifested by hard starting. The solution was to remove the distributor cap from the magneto and allow it to air dry. If that were done when the engine was stopped the problem was solved, but if it was not done before starting the engine for the next day of use, delay could be most frustrating. Also, many people did not recognize the problem or the solution.

The year 1964 marked another advance in farm equipment. I purchased a new New Holland model 268 Hayliner baler which we still have, and a wonderful machine it is. I am sure it has made more than a million bales. Maintenance has been very minimal. A few pickup teeth and perhaps one knotter bill hook plus a welded needle,and not much else in more than forty years is not much repair cost. Today that baler does a productive job in the field.

BIGGER AND BETTER

The shortcomings of the tractor which was engineered in the thirtys, the MM model U, were evident, so in 1967 I traded it to the Gingerich Implement Co. for a MM model 670 Super. The engine size was the same as the U tractor, but the tractor was balanced so much better with a seat forward perhaps three feet from that of the old tractor, making it much better to ride. Also, it had many more conveniences, such as improved hydraulic system, independent live power take off, and Ampli-torque transmission. The difference between the 670 and the 670 Super was the change to all-hydrostatic power steering . The older 670 had mechanical steering with power steering assistance. (I added the above for information only, for I had never owned a 670.) The boot price was 4,500 dollars. That was when I transferred my banking business to Hills Bank. Albert Droll, the founder, was still the chief loan officer, and a good man. The tractor and the bank both proved to be valuable additions to our farming business.

That tractor proved to be even better than the WD 45 tractor for plowing, as well as all other tasks. I obtained an IHC four bottom, sixteen inch plow for the tractor, trading a three bottom plow I used with the U tractor. I built a hydraulic control for the tractor drawbar to keep the plow at the optimum relationship to the last furrow plowed. It worked beautifully in all conditions of contouring, soils, and contour curves. It did take continuous adjustment in those conditions which varied constantly, but was worth it because of the uniform job that resulted. It also made the tractor work better, for the load was always balanced , making the tractor pull straight and with near perfect balance in draft and traction. That was an accomplishment since the tractor was already at a disadvantage with one rear wheel in the furrow at least 8 inches lower than the other. Of course, The wheel ' on the land' was equipped by me with a dual wheel to help balance weight and traction. Its effect was remarkable, as that outboard location provided maximum benefit. A more generous budget would have allowed for a semi-mounted plow, having all of the mentioned advantages and being much easier to operate.

SELF PROPELLED COMBINE FARMING

The first combine I owned was a 205 Massey Ferguson combine , equipped with a two row corn head and thirteen foot grain table. It had an underpowered Chrysler industrial slant six engine, the smallest of two offerings by that company. The machine's capacity was adequate

for corn and beans if the beans were not weedy. Oats harvesting with it was challenging, for it had neither power nor capacity for average oats fields where weeds could be expected as a matter of course. The thirteen foot cut of the grain table then proved too much. Weeds demanded much increased threshing capacity and engine power which the machine could not supply. Because our operation was limited and the saving in labor over ear corn harvest was substantial, the net gain in our farm's productivity could tolerate that combine's limitations. I recall the cylinder and separator width as being 28 inches.

THE NEED AND FRUITION

When I purchased the Rohret farm in 1974 it became a problem to match machine capacity to our much heavier work load, that being especially true in grain harvesting. The following year we had the 1105 MF tractor, and as I previously showed, it was a compromise. We did manage to operate fairly well with it by using careful management practices.

Harvesting was another matter, and when the Massey Ferguson combine became tired I traded it for a Gleaner model G combine. Thw grain head was the same width, but the corn head was a four row instead of the two row size of the MF. Important was the increase in size of the threshing and separating machinery. It had a forty-eight inch cylinder and separator, which was a huge increase in size over the small MF combine. It also had a much larger 300 inch blown Allis Chalmers diesel engine, developing well over one hundred horsepower. With that engine I never experienced any lack of power to do a job. I continued to use that combine long after it was obsolete.

One of its lacks was no grate or raddle under the cylinder for immediate separation of grain from straw or stover. When the cylinder bars became worn it did considerable damage to grain quality, especially in corn.

When I went to Colfax, where a large combine salvage yard was located to get used parts, it became apparent that most farmers did not tolerate obsolescence to the extent that I did. All of the combines there, which use had long since been discontinued, showed far less wear than did the one I had at home. Where corners had become rounded on my machine by the passage of much grain and crop, the corners on those discarded ones were still square and sharp. Indeed, the floor of the grain tank on my machine had worn out more than once, the floor actually having a sizable hole worn in it from the passage of grain over it. The patch also had a hole worn in it, and had to be replaced. I did not retire that machine until 1994. While the early corn pickers I owned lost income because of grain harvest losses, the G combine lost income in a limited way by that route, but also by grain damage. The fact that the cleaning shoe and straw rack had to separate all of the grain from all of the cobs and stover in corn was a factor. Side hills also had an effect on its separating efficiency. Since our hillsides are much more prevalent than level land, that was an important matter even though the machine was equipped with a side hill blower. The job of the blower was to use an air blast to force the grain on the cleaning shoe to the upper side. That function increased capacity and efficiency of the shoe, preventing much grain from exiting the combine via the low corner of the shoe. The blower on that machine used three inch pipe and hose air delivery systems which were simply not big enough to handle the volume of air needed to do the job properly.

Another shortfall of that machine was lack of sufficient strength in the main frame. We had both the front end and rear end of the machine reinforced and rebuilt several times. I am sure that side hill strains were a source of the problems we had in that area.

TO DATE, THE PRESENT MACHINE

In September of 1994 I attended an auction in Coggon, Iowa where I purchased a Gleaner model M2 combine that was built in 1979. It had a fair number of hours on it, 3700. It can be called state-of-the-art, since it has all electric over hydraulic controls. The competition has just now advanced to that system. The consignment auction was held by a John Deere dealer,

and before I bid on it I talked to the previous owner. He gave me a true picture with one exception. The hub, shaft, and sheaves which drive the separator were worn out. After repairing that unit I ended with a cost of ownership of about 15,000 dollars, still well under book price for that model.

I have been more than satisfied with its performance. It is a modernization of the old C model, with thirty-six inch width of the thresher and separator. The improvements give it more capacity than the old G combine. The side hill blower uses a four inch tube and hose air delivery system, making it do a much better job on sidehills. It has an under -cylinder grate and raddle, allowing most of the grain separation to take place there. The straw walkers are ten feet long instead of the G's six foot length. That prevents any grain from exiting the combine over the walkers.

In 1995 we combined beans with it for the first time, since we had no beans in 1994. Lacking was smoothness of crop flow,and I attributed that to worn grain table sickle guards, not cutting the crop cleanly. It was apparent that the ragged cutting job was not freeing the stems so the crop could flow evenly. Hopefully, a set of new guards will remedy it. We have the new guards on hand. The grain table is wider, cutting fifteen feet.

After troubleshooting the automatic header control, we found it to be a great improvement. Again, it is electric over hydraulic with the use of microswitches in the header. The problem was a loose screw in the wiring of the power supply system.

The alternator is a huge 125 ampere unit, and since I do not know its history I will have it serviced this summer. Instrumentation includes a voltmeter with a low voltage warning device. The electric clutches will not tolerate low voltage, thus that protection. The machine is furnished with two electric clutches, for the header and for the thresher.

A standard remark I make is the combine's ease of operation for one who has tired and aching muscles. Electric rocker switches are much easier and more precise than hard to operate levers. That design also eliminates many hydraulic lines. The hydraulic lines do not need to go to the control valves at the operator's station, since electric wiring does that.

A very great improvement is the hydrostatic transmission. It is smooth, powerful and so easy to operate it is best to keep hands off the control except when necessary to change the setting.

Instrumentation includes a fuel restriction warning, unloader out warning, and full compliment of shaft rotation warning lights and horns. Full lighting equipment includes turn signals as well. The machine is a pleasure to operate, and the air conditioning system is useful to keep dust out of the cab in addition to providing a very comfortable environment. Wisely, the air conditioner condenser is separated some distance from the engine, providing two electric fans for air circulation. Also, there is a provision which automatically cleans the chaff screen by gravity when the unit is turned off.

The greatest change over the old machine is the improvement in productivity. In average crop conditions it is possible to cover more acres a day with much improved efficiency in harvesting. The operator also feels much more rested while doing more work. Also, the convenience of power extending and retraction of the unloader is a time and labor saver. With the older machine it was difficult to extend the unloader, as it had to be wrestled into position by hand, a trying exercise and with no place to brace one's self to be effective.

NEW ERA

The first several years of my farming career I used the grain binder and separator method for harvesting small grain. I did not own a grain binder, for I saw that its use would soon be outdated. I hired or borrowed one from neighbors in the interem. I first owned a used combine in about 1945. It was an Allis Chalmers All Crop Harvester. It was well designed but also well worn, so I traded it the next year for a new International model 52 combine. I

combined a lot of grain and grass seed with it and wore it out over a period of more than ten years. That combine was both well designed and poorly designed. The cylinder drive was advanced for its time, as it was the first application of variable- radius belt sheaves that I know of on farm equipment. It was a variation of modern torque converter applications in common use today, built so cylinder speed could be controlled and changed at the will of the operator. Modern gear drive combines use that same system to control ground speed. [Most modern combines use hydrostatic ground drive transmissions, a superior system.] But other parts of that model 52 Harvester Thresher could have used improved design. It employed a Scoop Shovel type header ,so called by the implement manufacturer because it was tapered to a smaller width at the rear to fit the width of the rest of the combine. It was a good system for a manufacturer who built combines, but a nemesis for a farmer in a field of tall grain that had lodged,which required that almost the full length of the crop had to be cut and funneled into that scoop shovel design. Bridging on the sides of the scoop shovel header then occurred, and that effectively stopped or slowed the harvest. Later addition of a second reel helped, but did not fully cure that bottleneck.

The last pull type combine I owned was a well used Gleaner six foot machine which I obtained used in about 1960. That was a very good and well designed machine. I used it until I obtained my first self propelled combine.

GRAIN DRYING AND HANDLING

The first grain handling system I owned which was adequate for the job was the elevator corn crib we built in 1950. The crib width was seven feet on each side of the drive, making ear corn dry down more rapid and dependable than the standard eight foot width of most cribs in our area. That did result in loss of capacity, however. Truman Schrader helped us finish the building, and the mistake he made was in placing x-braces and horizontal braces every two feet, not leaving much room for corn. Of course the building was much stronger than conventional construction. I added railroad ties to each end at about the eight foot level, eleminating the common bulge many cribs had in the end walls after use and presure from stored corn forced them outward. After 1970 when we built the first grain tank, or steel bin, we no longer used the ear corn storage areas for that purpose, and that is when we removed the crib siding and replaced it with solid car siding , a tongue and grooved wood siding. Later still in about 1985 we covered the wood siding with red painted steel siding. That made for a good-looking and weather - tight building.

The first grain bin we built was 24 feet in diameter and 16 feet high at the eaves, holding about 5500 bushels. It was equipped with a drying floor and grain dryer, with a ten horsepower fan and LP gas burner. We also installed a stirring auger which helped to equalize drying from top to bottom. But that equalizing was the greatest shortfall that in-bin drying unit possessed. The top grain layer -if there was more than two feet of grain in the bin- received all of the moisture from the lower levels of grain. A so-called drying front had to progress upward until it reached the surface . As that event occurred, the lower layers of corn were considerably overdryed and there was little that could be done to correct it.

The stir auger system was an attempt to correct the problem but it applied the wrong technique, that of mixing wet upper layers to the dry lower layers of corn. Only in very slow drying methods did that work even poorly. With what was called equilibrium heat used to slowly dry the grain it was possible to very slowly dry a bin of grain evenly. The method was somewhat technical but it amounted to furnishing the proper temperature and humidity of air to the grain to attain the equilibrium needed to dry the grain to the desired moisture content. Theoretically the grain would never get any drier than the desired content , but it was painfully slow in drying a bin of corn, weeks being needed to accomplish the task. If the corn went into the bin in a high moisture state, the corn on the top of the bin, the last to be dried, would spoil before its turn came to be dried. I do not know what that number practically was, but the safe

storage number had to be in the low twenty's when the corn was placed in the bin.

With those limitations in mind and the need to have a faster system to handle our production I added a batch dryer ot our operation in 1975 or 1976 when I purchased the farm from Angela Rohret. We tried a Kansun hybrid dryer from Jim McCrabb which was made of two standard Kansun dryers , one stacked on top of the other. It was impossible to move it in its assembled form since it stood perhaps twenty-two or more feet high. I needed a unit we could move from one farm to the other, since we had storage on more than one place. McCrabb was obviously determined to sell me the unit, for he demonstrated the unit complete with an operator, Bill Bream. He furnished the unit for the whole season, so by paying him for the service, I gave him a forceful NO to the sale offer.

The stacked design of the dryer caused the lower section or unit to develop large wrinkles in the outer jacket, making it easy to say no to the sale. The unit simply was not adequately designed for the stacked configuration. The following year found Bill Bream in business for himself, and when he offered a Farm Fans model AB8 unit with an integral holding tank which was mounted on transport wheels, it filled the bill for us, so I acquired it.

The AB8 is a completely automatic unit which will operate so long as there is grain in the holding tank. It fills , drys, and refills automatically. We use it in what is called the dryeration mode, a system developed at Purdue University. This is how it works: Corn is dryed down to about 16 % moisture in the normal drying mode but the corn is not cooled in the dryer. The latent heat is allowed to remain in the batch of corn and the dryer dumps the grain in the bin hot where it is allowed to steep for about eight hours. That equalizes the moisture in the grain. Then the bin aeration fan is turned on, getting rid of the last two or three points of moisture simultaneously with the latent heat in the grain. Both time and drying efficiency is gained at once. It is doubly so since it is the last three points of moisture which is most difficult to remove. That also frees fifteen minutes of cooling time in the dryer which the dryer applies to drying the next batch. Management is more critical, but the gas and time savings are substantial. Using this system we can dry about ten bushels, on average, with one gallon of LP gas. That is nearly twice as much corn dryed as compared with the conventional method. A half cent for electricity completes the drying cost.

A hail and wind storm in about 1978 (?) did considerable damage to the system. The auger which delivers corn from the dryer to the bin was destroyed, and the dryer control panel was severely damaged by lightning. The timer was burned out, and the timer for the loading auger as well. After much delay in diagnosing the problems, which I had to do myself, we got the system back into operation. The Tipton company which sells them will not come this far to service them. Certain electricians are now gaining enough experience to do so. Steve Rohret is garnering considerable know-how, but so far I have not had to call on him.

You may be interested in seeing a list of the planters I have used and mostly worn out.

Planter #1 was that worthless one which hsd no accuracy. It was a two row horse pulled unit. I cannot recall the brand name,long since extinct.

Planter #2 was the International Harvester two row horse planter. It was the one I converted to tractor use. The conversion including shortening the tongue and using a bolt-on tractor hitch which raised the tongue to level the unit, necessary for proper depth control and accurate wire cross-checking. It was also the planter I used in the transition to power hill dropping. The conversion also included a lever extension which made it possible to raise and lower the planter from the tractor seat. I also tried a liquid fertilizer attachment on that planter with limited success. I used Me-Jon Liquid fertilizer in that applicator.

Planter #3 was a mounted 2 row unit for the Farmall H. It too had wire check capability but I used it only in drill or power hill drop mode. It was raised and lowered by hydraulic power, a great improvement in operator safety and ease of operation.

Planter #4 was my first four row planter. It was carried wholly by the tractor when in transport by the use of the three point hitch. It was a step back in seed handling from the IHC horse planter. The seed plates had too few cells, requiring too much plate speed for good accuracy. That planter was built by Minneapolis Moline. However, it was a maneuverable unit.

Planter #5 was a model 450 IHC tractor planter. I believe it still had runner openers, the last planter I owned with that feature. It had good seed handling systems but compared to later planters it had an inferior transport and frame design. It did have a fertilizer attachment, the first dry system on a four row planter which I owned.

Planter #7 was an IHC model 456 four row, the first rugged tractor planter with an adequate fertilizer unit. It had an inadequate marker control system which I replaced with an independent system controlled with separate hydrauluic cylinders. It was equipped with disc openers,much better than the old runner system and the first I owned. I equipped it with a monitor and that was a great feature.

Planter #8 was a Model 400 IHC air planter with fertilizer, and it was factory equipped with a monitor. The greatest drawback was the absence of its ability to plant and cover in tough conditions. The air metering system was a definite improvement, and especially so when seed companies had moved to much higher prices for plate graded corn.

Planter #9 brings us up to date with the ownership over the last six years of a model 800 IHC planter , in my opinion the best planter on the market. My unit is equipped with the Model 900 updates. Some of the offerings of large planters provide choices of row widths with the touch of a lever. One such machine , called the Black Machine, has just been purchased by Ron Loan. But back to the 800. It has no-till capability unmatched by any other planter. Since I owned it I have been planting all of my corn and beans by that method. It will plant and cover seed in any manner of hard ground. And it will do it with out any attachments. The reason for its superior performance in those conditions is the staggered discs of the furrow openers, allowing the lead disc to penetrate hard ground and heavy crop residue where other planters cannot. That is a patented feature which no other planter can use. In addition to that,the air planter dependability over many years is far ahead of the second best. Simplicity is the overriding quality of the air planting system.

The ability af that planter to plant and cover paid off in a big way this spring, when I took aff all of the trash whippers, avoiding any problems from the torrential rains we had soon after planting. The planter did in a very real way fool Mother Nature, she (large amounts of runoff water)not finding the planter rows. Had she found them, much soil would have been lost, and many crop seeds would have been washed out. Crop residue was neatly replaced over the rows and did an excellent job of protecting them .

There is an article in Nov. 96 FJ or SF magazine which introduces a new International planter with folding and narrow row capability comparable to any other offering. As with others, it can be formatted to plant in wide rows or narrow rows at the touch of a lever.

At this writing , 1-1997, It will be necessary to temporarily retire the Minnie -Mo 670 tractor until we can renovate it. It has many oil leaks caused by; A worn rear main engine bearing; bad seals in the power steering ram in the front end; An engine knock caused by that rear bearing fault; and other wear and tear needing attention. Not bad for a thirty year old tractor. When I was young there were no tractors half that age in use.

ANSELM AND MABEL

Anselm and Mabel had begun operation of their farm in Windham at about the beginning of the war. After we were married we visited them and they us frequently. Our friendship developed into helping each other with the farm work. A camaraderie developed between us, and our mutual interests and aid made light work of our many activities. We combined our equipment resources which helped us both very much. Anselm was fun to work with and we also played cards many nights, passing the time in a very pleasant manner. He and Mabel were good livestock producers and they taught me many things about the business.

Anselm loved children and had a winning way with them. He had no trouble establishing a fine relationship with our little ones, and thoroughly enjoyed all of them. All, that is , except Mary . The more he tried to win her the more she rejected him, and so it ended.

A CHARLATAN

Anselm and Mabel rebuilt their place completely, building by building, the first few years they lived on the farm. When they bought it all of the buildings were old and badly in need of replacement. They wisely replaced the farm buildings first, and had that program well advanced when they decided it was time to replace the very old and dilapidated house. They were contacted by a man named Fry, not a descendent of the people who established Frytown. He was in possession of a liquid building material which he claimed could be used as a cement to bond building materials together, as a paint or protective coating against the weather, as a wear surface, and any other purpose one had need for. But best of all it supposedly had lifetime lasting properties, never needing to be renovated, resurfaced, or replaced. As Anselm and Mabel were both very knowledgable and possessed excellent business sense, it was astonishing that they accepted this product and sales pitch on its face. I remember Lloyd Rohret and I discussing the situation at the time. We agreed that if the product in question was only half as good as the charlatan said, it would have been the most revolutionary material in history.

Against all good judgment, they contracted for that man to build their house, using his material and procedure. The house construction was modified to take advantage of the "superior " properties of the revolutionary new product. It is the only house I know of that has a solid four inch thick deck, or sub floor , made up of four by four inch timbers, cemented together by that product which was called My-Fry-Ca, and I guessed at the spelling, for I never saw it in print.

True to his bad faith, after the completion of the sub floor just described, Mr. Fry disappeared, Not to be seen again by my aunt and uncle. He was also in possession of a substantial amount of their money, the amount which was never disclosed to me, which was supposed to be applied to building the house . Anselm and Mabel then did what they should have done at first. They hired the Amelons to finish the house. The poignancy was that Anselm had very few weeks left to live in that new house, much less to enjoy it.

I remember that material which was applied to their dog house. That permanent lifetime material, which was to revolutionalize the lives of mankind, was almost completely destroyed by the elements in six months.

Looking back, if any case of fraud needed prosecuting that one did. I do not know if there was any money available for restitution, but certainly there should have been criminal charges. Had Bonnie Campbell or Tom Miller been on the political scene that step would have been easy. They have been activists in such matters. Miller served a number of years as an aggressive State Attorney General. Campbell has also held a number of State offices.

ANSELM'S ILLNESS

We were naturally dismayed by the onset of Anselm's illness. He developed Hodgkin's lymphoma, a bone marrow type of cancer, and as it progressed he was progressively disabled. At a point only one or two months before his death it was decided to take him to Montreal where a Benedictine friar, Frer Andre, had established a reputation for miraculous healing. A shrine

had been established, and it was to this shrine that the hopeful came in their quest for good health. I was asked to acompany him and Mabel on that pilgrimage, which was accomplished via a small four seat airplane chartered from the Iowa City airport. To those who know planes, it was a Navion. The trip was ill-advised from at least one standpoint, the critically ill condition which Anselm suffered. It became necessary to hospitalize him in Montreal. He then had to be returned to Iowa by commercial airline on a stretcher. I am sure he suffered greatly because of forced travel in his condition. However,no one was ever more stoic than he under any and all conditions. He was an inspiration to all who knew how much he suffered. His suffering was great as the disease progressed and took its toll, his ups and downs being a part of his final illness. He needed and was administered frequent blood transfusions which artificially kept him alive.

We who knew Anselm and Mabel well always felt that this business reversal in which My Fry-Ca was pivotal acted adversely on Anselm's health. Or it may have been the reverse. It was only a short time after that bilking when he became ill.

So it was that on August 23, 1953, he died , and several days later we laid him to rest.

A COMPELLING REASON

Those of us who had to watch Anselm die were strongly impressed with the damage tobacco use does to one's health, quality, and length of life. He had been a heavy smoker all of his life, and the medical profession did not mince words in pointing out the cause. His was a very slow and painful death, occurring at the prime of his life. No one is ever ready to die, and neither was he. If any of us who has watched a loved one die by an avoidable cause becomes insistent about quitting smoking, please understand where we are coming from.

LATE RECALL OF AN EARLY EVENT

Only recently did I think of an incident soon after Anselm and Mabel were married. Since they were married on November 26, 1929, I was only seven years old when we children (Berniece, Regina, and I, and I do not remember if Esther was present, but since she was only six years old she may not have gone with us) followed Anselm and Mabel to the bottom of the lane hill to "give them a chivaree". Their car was there, no doubt because of bad weather which made the hill impassable by car. By the way, that was the year the IWV was graded and gravelled, if I remember correctly.

I recall a snowball exchange which ended with Anselm threatening to wash our faces with snow. The only payoff I remember was the satisfaction we had in administering the ritual. A rule of chivarees was that the couple provide a form of entertainment for the chivaree administers. That we did receive.

A matter of small importance is my memory of Anselm raising and feeding to his cattle a crop of Mammoth clover. It is a crop worthy of its name, for it grows exceedingly tall and rank. I am sure I helped him harvest it and put it in the mow, but that is not what I remember. With my "manure loader" I helped him clean the barn in its need, and the manure was matted liberally with the long stems of that hay at one end of the barn. The barn and the nearby lot having been covered with concrete, it made it possible for the Farmall with that loader to pick up the whole area of manure , covering an area perhaps fifteen feet wide and at least twelve feet long , and transporting it out of the barn in one piece. There I deposited it on the concrete floor whereupon I extracted three spreader loads of manure from that one for·kful!

Appreciated 2

Contouring - a Revolution

In about 1945, the Soil Conservation Service stepped up their publicity for conservation practices which they said was needed by the land in order to preserve it. Most farmers appreciated the amount of soil lost by erosion, but most were not ready to change farming practices in order to reduce it. I knew something had to be done, for after only a hundred years most of the topsoil on Iowa's rolling land was gone. That argument was used as leverage by the agency to convince farmers to make a change in their farming practices.

So it was that shortly after I was married, I took steps to change to what was then a very revolutionary system of row crop farming. To discard the corn planter wire was anathema to all we had been taught to revere , a fact which still is remembered by some of the older neighbors. In discussing it with Clete Scheetz, he reminds me that I said "The only place for wire is on a fence". Corn planter wire was used to make it possible to hill plant corn in a rigid grid system. The wire had "buttons" spaced equidistant lineally to the distance between the rows, making it possible to cultivate the crop in two directions. It was an imperfect system but it did allow for cultivation to remove most of the weeds. The destructive quality it possessed was that of its laying the land open to soil erosion in rolling land regardless of which direction the crop was planted.

If there is anything which is self evident these many years later, it is the basic necessity of planting row crops on the contour regardless of which method is used. Those methods are; full tillage, conservation tillage, ridge tillage, or no-till. No till is by far the most protective of the soil and the crop, but if it is planted other than on the contour it is subject to severe erosion in the weeks just after planting. If heavy rains occur during that period the crop will be washed out and much soil lost from the planter slot, that being the area weakened by the opening equipment of the planter. Until there is success in developing "spoke planting" methods, until now not successful, that vulnerability will persist.

The Soil Conservation Service began to promote the idea, for it was necessary to plant without planter wire in order to plant on the contour. Corn planter wire has not been generally used by any farmers in Iowa for at least thirty years.

To that moment and later it was not possible to control weeds by any other method than grid planting, herbicides belonging to the future. Although we thought differently at the time, weed control was not nearly so challenging then as today, for we had less weed varieties then and they were not so competetive. I remember well when Giant Foxtail came to Iowa in the Sixties. It advanced across Iowa in a veritable wave, first showing up near fencerows, usually near trees. Birds had a part in transporting the seed- that was obvious. After much experience in combatting it I have personally recognized it as our worst weed ever. More general use of fertilizers , especially for corn, was a key factor in weeds becoming more vigorous and harder to control.

And yet , many crop experts say that Wolly cupgrass and wild proso millet are worse than foxtail. We hear that cupgrass is already in Johnson County, so we will know what it is very soon.

Detractors of No-till say that weed problems become worse in that method of farming, but I find in my personal experience that the reverse is true . Following the year that has become known as "The flood of '93', it became necessary to use the disc to fill ruts made in the mud of many side hill seep areas. Those areas that were tilled to remove those ruts were precisely the areas where weed control was the poorest in 1994. That was especially the case in dealing with giant foxtail.

Another truism I have observed repeatedly is that not one of our crop production systems, either new or old, are nearly intensive enough to prevent or control the advance of either new or existing weed species. Is it possible to eradicate any of them? Absolutely not.

For example, Chinese Millet is another name for Giant Foxtail. In China there are literally hundreds of workers per acre, and I have no doubt they have the manpower to eradicate any weed. They may even have use for that weed, for it produces much dry matter, possibly to use as biomass or livestock feed.

On one square foot of Iowa soil, on a warm day in May, it is possible for as many as several hundred Giant Foxtail seedlings to emerge. If there is a corn seed mixed in that mess, it will surely emerge, but sans herbicides or cultivation that corn plant will be completely suppressed, not producing an ear. It will produce only a very small stalk, not as big as any one of the competing weeds. In fact, giant foxtail escapes will grow, even if it is suppressed by herbicides, as tall as the tallest corn.

I wish to paint a profile of my experience with that weed: A successful spray program will remove all but one to five of the above mentioned giant foxtail plants (per square foot). That chemical program will variously cost from fifteen to thirty dollars per acre. In corn, those one to five plants will grow as tall as the corn and be strong competetors for nutrients, sun and moisture. Since there are 43,560 square feet in an acre, a planting rate of 30,000 corn seeds per acre, considered a high rate, allows more than 1.4 square feet of land per plant. It can easily be seen that a successful spray program leaving only one foxtail plant per square foot leaves almost two foxtail plants to compete with each stalk of corn. That five to seven foot tall foxtail plant will have many seed heads, each one with more than a hundred seeds. The future of the weed is assured. It seems to be an impossibility to have a spray program that is one hundred % successful. That experience holds true with all other weeds to a greater or less degree. (Spray programs are variously successful /unsuccessful with all weeds.)

Please remember that to the above picture one must superimpose the fact that cultivation is anathema to No till procedure. Even one cultivation destroys most if not all of the benefits of no-till. In addition to that, the row crop cultivator is the single worst tool in soil erosion. That fact effectively removes the cultivator as an option, in no till or anywhere else.

I have had no experience with any of the new style no-till cultivators. I am not sanguine concerning their impact on soil erosion. They have been given good grades by some, but I am skeptical. It appears to me that they disturb far too much soil.

More About Weeds and Erosion

When we purchased the Angela Rohret Farm in 1975 we were already well into contour farming, and the lack of it was very evident on that place. Fences in low areas were partly buried, and many of the field fences were barriers to good contour farming practice. We removed the worst offenders and relocated many to places which complimented contour practice. I also reshaped many waterways which had become choked with soil. Two large waterways were real problems in the south forty, the best land on the place. I trained the one on the west side to proceed straight to the creek and parallel to the west fence, no longer flooding several acres where the water spread out on the relatively flat land near the creek. That change required the moving of much soil in order to make the waterway low enough to contain the water collected by that waterway.

The large waterway in the east-central part of the forty also had been choked with soil to where it had divided, a sub waterway having developed on the east edge of the alluvial fan. As time and resources permitted, I built a diversion terrace to return the errant water to the main waterway. A heavy rain spilled water over after the first attempt, so I had to raise the berm about one more foot. I estimate the crest of the berm to be about three feet above the base of the old secondary watercourse.

Early in our ownership of this farm I contracted with Roy Yoder to tile the low ground in four fields: the field east of the house on the north side of the creek; the low land in the

southeast field comprising the land near the southeast facing waterway; the land in the south forty on the north side of the creek. That project was the last which Roy Yoder did. A month later he passed away.

Later we re-tiled some of the land on the south side of the creek in that same field, and retiled some of the land in the middle west twenty. An existing concrete tile line had partially collapsed in the middle west twenty as well as one in the field north of the creek which is near the road. This is some of the best land on the farm, and those tiling projects soon paid off.

The first year we planted corn in the south forty, cultivation proved to be a nightmare because of bindweed. While cultivating that field I found it necessary to repeatedly dismount and clear by hand the bindweed vines which clogged the cultivator. We had long since eliminated that problem from our other two places by the use of rotation and 2-4-D on corn land.

The second crop year I planted soybeans, and before planting I allowed the bindweed to emerge well and then sprayed the field with 2-4-D. That was a most successful event, for we never again had any bindweed in that field. We delayed soybean planting following that spray application by only a few days. No carry-over or soybean damage was experienced.

To an Earlier Time- Again

I had forgotten until now the work that was required to shape the land on the Leo Rohret, or first farm on Section 18. There was a large alluvial fan on the Northeast field facing the creek. The waterway laying in a Southwest- Northeast direction and draining to the Northeast to the creek had eroded and had a large uncontrolled gully in most of its length. The soil which came from that gully , plus much rill erosion from its drainage area, is what formed the alluvial fan.

In 1950 I purchased a five foot drag scraper from Anselm called a tumblebug, so named because it was designed to roll 180 degrees to alternately cut and fill , and then rotate another 180 degrees to dump. I used it for some time in an attempt to shape some of the many eroded and gullied waterways. It was not very efficient, nor was it an easily managed tool.

I had observed Leverl Michel using a one yard Lundell scraper to move dirt on his place, and it occurred to me that with some work , some steel, and a sizable welding and building project, I could remake that tumblebug into a carryall. I collected some auto wheels and axles, some used steel, a new hydraulic cylinder for a Caswell loader, and other parts. I soon had a working one-yard carryall which I used for many earth moving projects, including rebuilding many waterways.

I soon learned that there was too much weight on the drawbar of the tractor when the machine was loaded, whereupon I designed and built a two-wheel dolly for the front end of the carryall.

That eliminated the problem, but not until I was forced to replace a major component. I first used a hitch ball from a junked Woods Brothers threshing machine as the pivot for the dolly. On the very first try to use the machine with said improvement that ball snapped, it not being designed for that much strain. I then located and bought a heavy duty ball and socket which was salvaged from a truck pup trailer. Orville and Wayne Yoder were the previous owners.

The design weakness which caused me to discontinue its use was the inadequate latch design to control the bucket. I may have been using it today had it not been for that problem. Even today I am studying the machine, and when I come up with a workable solution I may renovate and modernize the machine for further use.

The first front end loader I owned was a Caswell , a rather clumsy unit and quite heavy on the front end of the Farmall H. I had two of them in rapid succession. The first one had an offset frame made of four inch I -beam or channel iron but poorly engineered. The frame quickly buckled the first time I used it and the supplier, Cline Farm Equip. Co. replaced it with a

straight frame loader. The offset frame was designed to be used on a wide front axle tractor. I think it was the year 1950. That was a good loader, I having worn it out over a period of a number of years. It was niether neat nor easy to handle, and the bucket was manually operated. It had a trip lever operated by a rope; no hydraulically operated bucket. The bucket was nose heavy, so it tripped violently . Because of that nose-heavy bucket, I learned how to dig dirt early in its use.

I am discussing that loader at length, for it was the advent of capability of my equipment to deal with gullys, and that ability to do so was an early benefit. I soon learned how to make it effective in filling that need.

Now back to that large alluvial fan. I used that loader in shaping an extension of that waterway to the creek, thereby controlling runoff water and reducing its adverse effect on the performance of crops by unwanted water far from the place where the waterway should have been if properly built and maintained.

Crop growth on many areas in several fields were suppressed by excess runoff water drowning crops and considerably reducing production and yields from precisely this cause. The north and the northeast hill field on S-18 and the south forty, west side on S-17 were suffering the worst from that ailment. Since the correction of that problem yields in the affected areas have rebounded.

That was only the beginning. Many other waterways had to be shaped, and that increased the land's productivity considerably. A reason for that is the inability to effectively farm land near gullys which cannot be crossed by farm machinery.

I recall a statement by an older farmer at a field day somewhere in the county. Ross Barnett, an early soil conservation technician in the Johnson County Soil Conservation office,had many educational meetings on soil conservation of which this was one. I think it was Mr. Jesse Fuhrmeister who said he found it useful to stagger the outer edges of waterways with a mouldboard plow while plowing a field. He also recommended plowing through waterways while plowing a field, doing that for perhaps ten feet in a linear direction relative to the waterway. In his opinion that prevented to a degree the formation of a second and third gully developing parallel to and outside the main waterway. From that point forward I used that practice in my own operations, and found it most helpful indeed.

I recall neighboring young people commenting on how gully and rill-free all of our farm land is, and there is no question that the use of that practice in conjunction with many other conservation measures did in fact eliminate much soil loss. Gully elimination had a major impact in creating a better work environment for farm machinery, sharply reducing breakage and repair costs.

Erosion problems were not present in the eighty acres on Section 24, for it had been farmed very little before my tenure. But the west 40 on S-24 was a different matter. Matt Rohret, my grandfather's youngest brother, once told me that Hen must have had a grudge against that land. He repeatedly rented it to tenants who raised corn on it , and much of it was eroded to the point where nothing , including grass , would grow on certain areas. Those areas were gullied to the exclusion of any crop growth or travel by farm equipment.

When we acquired that forty acre field several years into my farming career, the first need was to get those gullys stabilized and get grass to grow . That Caswell loader and the Farmall was again the prime mover. It worked so well that today even I have trouble in pointing out precisely the places where they were. I do however, know very well the general location of every one of them. A reason they are hard to identify is that some of them are located where there should never have been any gullys, ever.

Nothing beats the arm exercise provided by a row crop front end tractor equipped with a loader but no power steering.

A number of years later I traded off the Farmall, and that created the need for a loader to fit the Allis Chalmers Tractor. I got a loader which accomodated a wide front end, and that was a strong improvement, for I also equipped the tractor with a power steering Char-Lynn add-on. The name of that loader manufacturer was Freeman. I had reinforced that loader frame more than once, and when I traded it I remember it as being in reasonably good shape.

During my farming career it became obvious to me that manufacturers, and especially loader manufacturers, considered farmers fair game, they marketing and selling farmers anything that looked like a loader. Quality and stamina in the best front end loaders available to farmers were far below the quality of comparable industrial units. On the other hand , builders countered that farmers would not pay the extra dollars it took to build quality into those units. It was a long time before both sides came to a meeting of the minds in that regard. My candid opinion is that farmers had farther to go and had to adjust their thinking more than the opposing view. My demands on a loader were far beyond the average farmers'.

I used that tractor with the loader for many years, not trading it until 1980 when I got the Long tractor and loader. In the winter of 1978-79 I moved a world of snow. I installed the three- point Snap-Coupler tongue for the subsoil ripper (in place of the drawbar) and hung a string of suitcase weights on it . That effectively balanced the weight of the loader and made an aggressive snow handling machine. The home-made bucket I built was six feet wide, providing room for the tractor in deep snow. Its dimensions were 42 inches deep and three feet high. That totalled about one cubic yard and made snow handling easy. I had also converted the loader to hydraulic bucket control. The balanced design of the bucket was an important factor in its success. I built deep pockets in the back side of the bucket for the mounting beams of the loader, and that feature effectively reinforced the bucket, it not having any structural problems because of that . The pivot hinges were some twelve inches forward of the rear of the bucket.

We had a snow storm in January of that winter which reached epochal proportions. It buried completely some hog sheds with 120 pigs in them, and the loader paid for itself several times in getting them dug out and to the barn. The pigs had all gone into one coop where they were warm and secure. There was a small air hole to the outside, the only visible part of that coop. Their feed and water were buried which created the need to move them. It was most difficult to persuade those pigs to leave their warm bed,but the pigs' foresight in moving to and occupying only one coop prevented the loss of a single pig.

The snow in that storm was all old snow, it being a high wind only. That gave the new drifts a quality which is not often observed. The drifts had a uniform density thruout their depth, there being no soft snow in them. Digging through them was almost like digging through earth, for they were very solid. One could jump on top of them and only leave a small mark.

That done, we dug the road open to the IWY through drifts seven and eight feet deep. The people south of us on our road, and the people on the road east, were snowbound for another week to ten days. Terry Michel attempted to open it with Leverl Michel's four wheel Drive Oliver and V plow but failed. It was finally opened by Bill Grace with a bulldozer.

At one time in January we ran out of a place to put the snow in our yard. It became necessary to push eight foot piles of snow back some distance to provide room for more snow, and the WD 45 did it with ease. Much of the success of that snow machine was due to the large homemade bucket and the weights which balanced the unit. I also had chains on the drive wheels. The tractor was powerful as older tractors went, and in second or third gear, pushing deep snow it had enough traction if the ground was kept clean (no more than one or two inches of snow or ice)to stall the engine.

Most of the snow that winter fell in December and January. We were fortunate that it quit snowing at the end of January, for there was no more room to put it. That winter plus several others had so much snow that we had to dig out long stretches of fence in order to

prevent livestock from walking over the fences and going where they wished.

I remember a time when I had three long and deep gullys(sixty to eighty rods total) which needed filling, they being caused by raising hogs on pasture. Earlier I had those gullys under good control. I contacted a contractor from Solon who estimated the cost at seven hundred dollars. It was reasonable enough, but as happened so often I did not have the ready cash, so I used the Lundell five tooth subsoiler pulled by the MF 1105 tractor to loosen the dirt and then push the gullys in with that AC tractor and loader. I recall doing the job in a short day and having enough time to go to the Oxford livestock sale. It included shaping those gullys properly, the cross section being the same as that of a saucer. Total width of that cross-section was from ten to twenty-five feet. Variation was dependent on steepness of slope and area size which drains into a waterway.

Nothing I ever owned saved so much labor and improved the land so much as those front end loaders did for me. I remember the criticism from my father in law when I got my first loader , he having envisioned it only as a tool to get out of work. The labor savings in using a hand operated manure fork was his only thought. Front end loaders marketed to farmers were known at first as "manure loaders" and they were billed as such by the industry.

Upon starting to farm the Section 18 or Leo Rohret farm we were faced with severe erosion on most of it. Much of that erosion was caused by field fences dividing the land on the west side of the creek into four fields. Every one of those fences divided the land regardless of slope, they being located in such a way that erosion was radically increased. I removed all of them, for in addition to that drawback,they were in an advanced state of disrepair. I then relocated all of them to make three fields plus a large lot near the barn. That relocation program was done with an eye to making them manageable to farm on the contour. That in turn paved the way to make a start toward improving soil fertility. The first phase was thus largely complete.

If there is anything I wish to be remembered for, I hope people can say that I left the land and the world in better condition than I found them.

The Early years, and the years Between.

If anyone remembers happenings that involved them early in life, almost never does it concern our first years. But after our fifteenth to eighteenth month we can often remember events or even very unimportant small happenings that interest no one but us.

I have no way to determine my exact age, but it is certain that I was quite small when my father came upstairs early in the mornings, and hoisting one on each shoulder, carried Marie and me down to breakfast. The spot at the head of the stairs seemed so high and fearsome; I could touch the ceiling; what if I would fall. I didn't wiggle. ~~It was such a happy event.~~

I remember fighting Marie for her shoes because they were bigger.

In the spring when the doors were open we ran to meet papa when he came in from the field for dinner. After he had washed up, and was seated to wait for the meal to be put on the table, I always climbed into his lap.

These were the happiest days of my young life, but too short. As soon as the meal was finished he went out to work in the barns or fields.

The first two years after my parents were married they lived in an old house near the road, which like many houses of that time was cheaply and poorly built. They had no ship lap or paper lining under the siding and a brick foundation that was stacked with a mortar made with slacked lime. The climate of wet and then extreme cold caused this to deteriate and soon crumble away, leaving open spaces between bricks, so the north wind had its way. Then all houses were heated with wood burning stoves that were ~~swamp~~ fed during the night, and by morning the house was as cold as outside.

In the summer of 1889 they built a new house farther up the side hill, and was finished in time for my coming. It had two rooms on the first floor and two rooms on the second, with a chimney on each end. and the stairway in the middle, and a front porch on the side to the road. We had graded a flat place on the side of the hill but there was not enough drainage and water ran in the cellar, so they soon became dissatisfied with

this location. They decided it must be moved higher up to the top of the hill. In that year 1885 and the next he planted a huge grove of pine trees, white pine, spruce and the juniper called arbor vitae. These last were all planted in six or eight rows down the hillside to the road and grew into a beautiful copse.

At that time houses were nearly all built without screens, some had half screens, but all, for some obscure reason had to have outside blinds, or shutters, always painted green on a white house.

Early one summer morning, when I was twenty one months old - it happened to be the fourth of July, Marie and I awoke earlier than our parents, and got up and were playing on the floor. The shutters were closed but not latched, and the window open. I sat on the window sill, leaned back, made a somersault and hit the ground many feet below. I only had my breath knocked out, but soon came to. I do not remember anything about the fall, only what was told me.

The neighbors across the road had a grove where wild raspberries grew, and they had told my folks to go there to pick some. My father carried me, and laid me

on a blanket, Altho I remember not feeling up to par, I wanted to go with them into the berry patch, but they made me stay on the blanket. I often wonder if the fall may have affected my hearing. I have never had acute understanding hearing and find much difficulty unless I am close to the person speaking, and they speak plainly, and I can do lip reading also.

This was the last time I ever got sympathetic attention. My mother did not seem to be very fond of children, being more dedicated to work than to her family. All of us were often very sick but she did not know it. Fortunately for us papa liked children, but he had a 160 A farm there and was out in the barns or fields, and came in only in the evenings or meal time. He always worked as long as he could see. His older brother, Uncle Louis had a 160 A farm adjoining his on the west, and they did much of their work together. They came from a very happy home and grandma Rohret told me herself, that she did not know that they ever quarreled. Grandpa and grandma Reichard had twelve children, and lost five children; three infants, one with whooping cough, and also a grown son and daughter. They were immigrants from Bavaria

germany, and were honest, thrifty, and hard workers and very religious.

Altho this is not connected with my story, Aunt Kate Robert told me that her mother, my grandma had two great prides in her life: that her father was mayor of the small town of Priesendorf germany, and that her hair never got gray.

I heard papa say many times that he never knew his father ever to bring home any alcoholic drinker, and this was handed down to his sons. They were not teetotalers, but were not fanatical about it. Would drink a glass of beer now and then, but only as a social gesture. They had no need of it, Their lives were full without it.

Papa & Uncle Matt often told about the years the Tampa Indians came and camped along the creek. Being confined to a reservation was endured during the winter, but when warm weather came the urge to be on the move took hold.

Not all the land was fenced, but only some where crops were raised. Even stock were belled and then could go where they pleased. So the Indians true to their old instincts followed the streams and camped on their banks. Uncle Matt said when the news was passed around, "The Indians are Coming!"

Buckboard could not pull hard enough, but every day they must visit the Indians. The Indians liked company and begged corn for their horses, bread, flour, beans, meat of any kind, cigarette. I remember just once an Indian with a team and wagon passed our school just as school was letting out. They stopped at our place which was just a short distance away, and we ran as fast as we could go, so we could see the Indians. These were the first Indians we ever saw, as they seldom had come up so far away from the big creeks. By now, all fields were fenced, so they had to keep to roads.

My father

The summer of 1894 he built the big barn.

my mother bought some first Readers and started Marie and me to learn to read. The fall I was five years old, 1895, we started to school. The teacher then was Mary Campbell and I opened my eyes in wonder to see her chase Jake and Adam Scheetz around the room with a stick, as they dodged around the seats. They finally gave up. At that time there were three terms of school, a fall term of two months, winter term, four months, spring term three months, with about two weeks vacation between, so school closed at the end of June.

Mary Campbell was married about this time and the spring term was taught by Elizabeth Schneider, an older sister of Mrs. Martin Hofmann, and of course stayed there.

In the winter the big Scheetz boys, Nick, John and George, John and Rob Campbell came to school. They were all in their teens and Liz petted them all, never reprimanding them for anything. Her policy was to "give the little kids a good beating every so often, and scare the big fellows."

The little kids were her whipping boys and one or more had to get it every day, I always wanted to please her, and certainly wasn't smart enough to play tricks, but I got it as well as the others & I never knew what for, but it may have been for whispering to some one. But I know it was nothing serious. I remember once my mother bought some hatpins, that came in a long hollowed out wooden tube, (no one ever saw plastics then.) I had a slate that had to be washed often, and had to go to the place where the basin and waterbucket were kept to wet a rag. If I put some water in the tube, I would not need to go up to the basin to wet a rag. But the next morning my pretty red tube was cracked, I felt so bad I could cry. Somehow L.B. saw it, and gave me the third degree, and finished it off with, "I have a notion to whip you." But somehow she didnt and my fear subsided. She ruled the little ones with a hand of iron, but the big boys were allowed privileges that we would never get. We were told to hold up our hands if we wanted to leave the room. Small kids must go out often, and every time I held up my hand she said "Is it necessary",

I was so afraid she would not let me go, I always began to cry. But by the time I came back, I had quit, you tried so hard to please big people, but they were never pleased with anything, and you could make them so mad without meaning to at all, or knowing why, and they could beat you black and blue. You could not stop them.

I often awaited suffering until school was out, when I could run to the outhouse as fast as possible. Then those pets would throw bricks at the outhouse hitting it with a crashing noise. But they got away with it. Would I? Whew!

Once I remember at recess, they got to talking about names. I was not old enough to get all that was said, but heard this. Nick S. said "Our name is Schitz." Liz S. said in a soft voice, "Oh no, your have a nice name. Schultz is a nice name." Nick said "Naw taint, its Schitz." She said no more. Could any of the smaller kids have said that? She would have beaten that one half to death.

Some time after, in 1905 or 6, Pete Klein got to be director and he gave her the school again. I was then going to Cosgrove, but Angela & Julia were going to the country school, and Loretto & Pauline about 8

Brick throwing stopped only when they stopped school.

Schultz, Frank Klein & Ben Hofmann.
Pauline S. was quite outspoken like
some kids are. Some one in the
school missed something and Pauline
said "Maybe Ben Hofmann stole it".
L. S. got so mad she yelled, "Bennie
never took anything, not from his
mother or father, or aunts or uncles",
etc. and beat her until Pauline
screamed so Mrs. Holzhauser heard
her. Then after that she would give
Pauline a beating almost every day.
Mrs. H. asked my mother about her screams.
There is a little aside I would like to put here.
Ben married Clara Robret, and bought
Uncle Louis place, which was put in Clara's
name and it was said that Charley paid
for the place. Then Ben borrowed $10,000 from
Aunt Lizzie. Don't ask what for, but
he gave her a note. She knew what could
happen, and it did. When the note matured,
Ben would not pay. It was impossible
to get the money without suing for it.
So she donated the note to St Ambrose
College, Davenport. Draw your own conclusions.

Then after several years Marguerite Scheetz started to school. She was not yet five and was quite restless. On her first day L. S. made her go up and stand beside her chair. She cried a while, but stopped long enough to turn to L. S. and say, "You old piefaced." Everyone laughed. She did not get a beating that time, but she got plenty later.

I do not know how it started, but we had started home, and in the first hollow Jake & Adam Scheetz began to pull Marguerite's hair. She was about six or seven, younger than they were, but she tried to run from them. There were some big willows on the south side of the road, and they picked up sticks and beat her with them, and continued to pull her hair. Then the three ran over a small hill, and when I got to the top, I saw that they had tired abusing her, and gone on ahead, and left her crying. Clara her older sister was with Marie & me, so they went on together, and we were at our gate.

The next day Jake & Adam told L. S. that Marguerite had said "Damn you" to them. But did they tell why? Or did L. S. try to find out why, or ask a question about it? Not one L. S. gave in a savage beating.

Ups and Downs with geese.

My parents with their family, lived on a farm, ten miles west of Iowa City. The house sat on the summit of a steep hill, from which a wagon road descended north through a big orchard, down to the main road.

My mother kept a flock of geese, from which we took one for each of the big feast days, Thanksgiving and Christmas; in between, the rest of the young geese were sold. The ganders were very cross, and chased away from his geese, every living creature. The dog especially had to be very careful. In the spring, when the goslings were small, the flock was allowed, for their safety, to stay in the house yard, which was very large.

At the time of this incident, Mabel was a very small child, 20 months of age, and when no one was looking, she stepped off the porch to admire the goslings. when the flock came near the house. Immediately, with a great blow of his wings. the ganders knocked her down, and began to beat her with his wings. I threw him away, picked up the child, and saw

that her face was bleeding from a wound where the gander had bitten her. But happily she was not badly injured. An angry gander has such strong wings and a wicked beak, that he could easily kill a small child, by beating with his wings, and also biting.

One evening when Angela was nine years old, and Julia seven, carrying a small bucket went to the old barn to get the eggs. This barn was also a shelter for the geese.

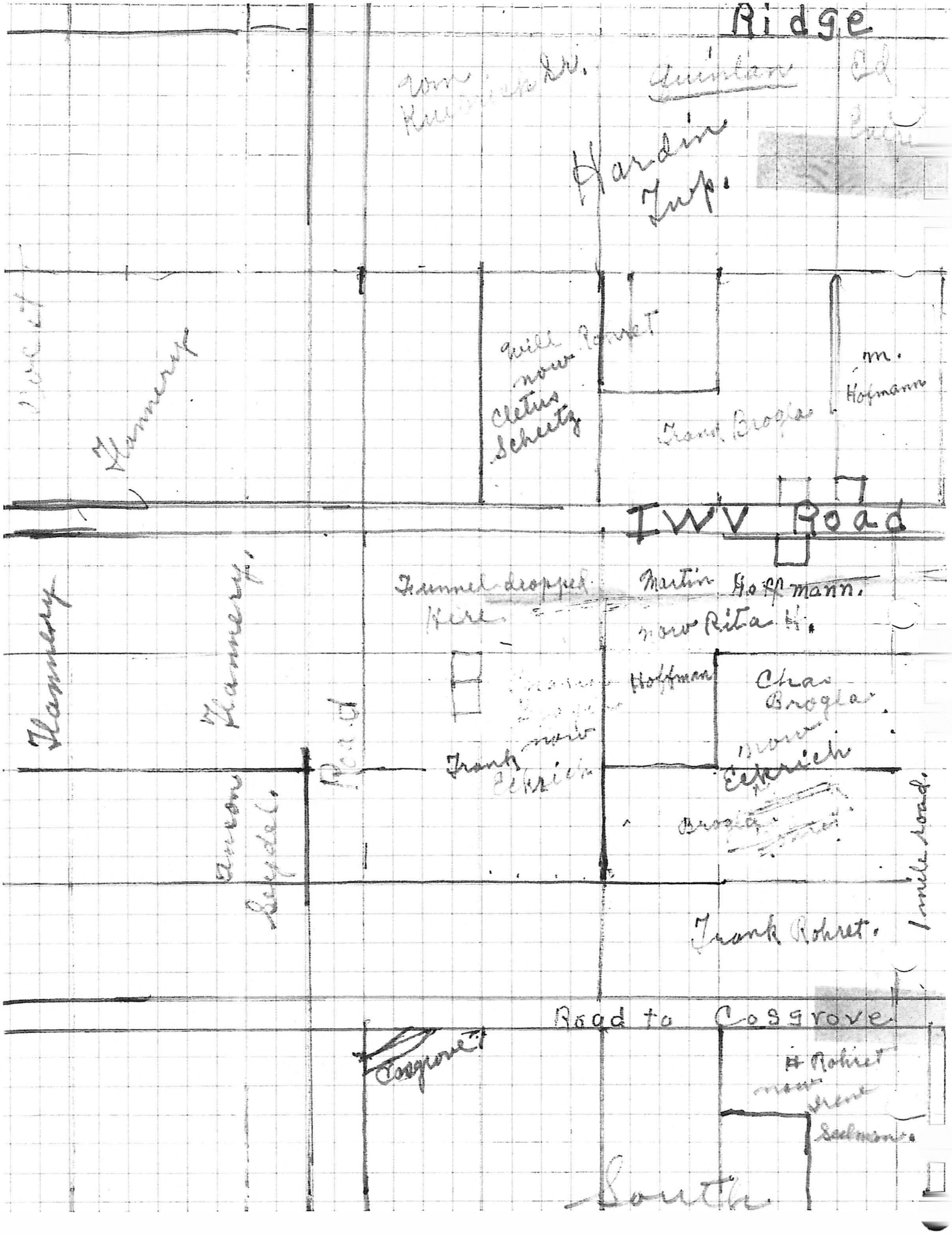
As he always did, the gander came running toward him, but they knew how to handle him, and were not a bit afraid of him. Angela with a quick movement, put the bucket handle over his head. It terrified him, and he ran down the drive, fell, and with the bucket rolled over and over to the bottom of the hill. The kids were laughing with so much noise and glee, that I went to see. He had lost the bucket and was coming up the hill gabbling and screaming his indignation. After this humiliation he never accosted the kids again.

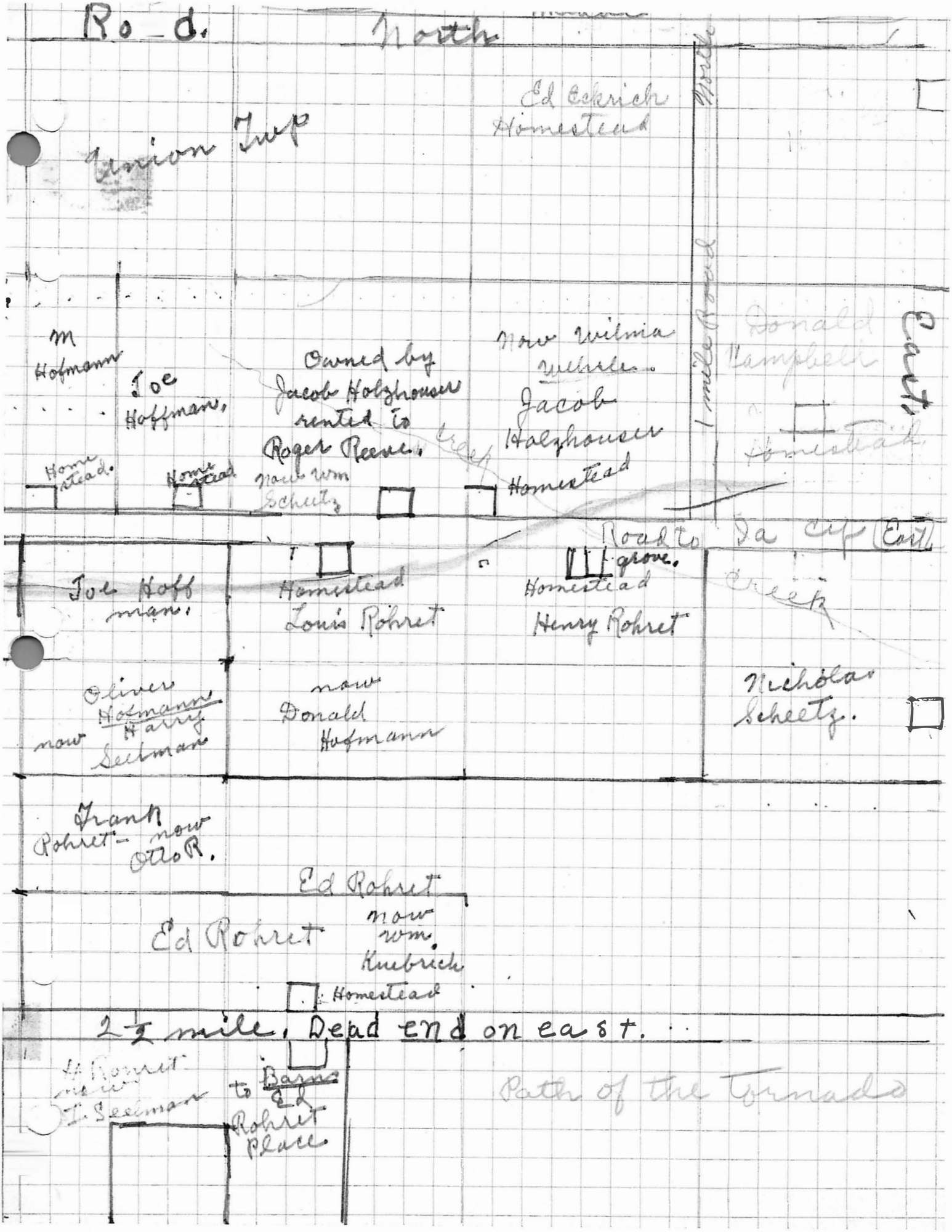
When the goslings became larger they were returned to the pasture where the gander chased the hogs, cows and horses! They gave him the field.

One evening as we brought the milk cows into the corall, the flock of geese also came in. We were busy with the work, when I noticed the gander creeping up behind a peaceful unsuspecting cow. As I looked, he bit her on the heels; which caused her to bellow with pain and rage. She gave a great jump, and at the same time threw up her heels and struck the gander so he went flying without the power of his wings. He fell to the ground in a small heap, never to rise again.

What a sad end for such a brave valient bird. That year we took our roast goose for the feasts without a battle.

D. Leelmon.


Ridge
Hardin Twp.
Hammerly
Hammerly
Hammerly
Frank Broglin
Martin Hoffmann
Hoffman
Frank Broglin
Frank Rohret
IWV Road
Road to Cosgrove
South


Rd.
North
Union Twp
Ed Eckrich Homestead
1 mile Road
East
M Hofmann
Joe Hoffman.
Owned by Jacob Holzhouser rented to Roger Reese.
now Wilma Wilhelm.
Jacob Halzhouser Homestead
Donald Campbell
Homestead
Home stead.
Home stead
now wm Scheetz
Creek
Road to grove.
Da Cip (East)
Joe Hoffman.
Homestead Louis Rohret
Homestead Henry Rohret
Creek
Oliver Hofmann now Harry Seelman
now Donald Hofmann
Nicholas Scheetz.
Frank Rohret- now Otto R.
Ed Rohret
Ed Rohret
now wm. Knebrick
Homestead
2 1/2 mile. Dead end on east.
H. Rohret now L. Seelman
to Barns & Rohret Place
Path of the Tornado

The Monster of the Prairies.

We have read many of the fairy tales that originated in the European countries, several centuries ago, and find that every country abounded in tales about "Creatures of Terror": giuffins, trolls, witches, dragons, wolves, bears, devils, bogey men, good and bad fairies gremlins, etc. to no end. These imaginary creatures were often brought out to scare the youngsters into being more tractable, or to tell horror stories, or just for entertainment. We here have horror movies for those who like that kind of entertainment but we have enough excitement, that we do not need to have our imagination excited by unreal creatures. But so long ago those people had no other entertainment. They had no steam locomotives pulling a long line of cars on two rails, no cars, no planes, no movies, no telegraph, no telephone, no TV, not even equipment for photography, to make life exciting and above the mundane life.

But we of mid-west America have a real "Creature of Terror" that causes in one swoop, enough excitement to give us entertainment for the rest of our lives, when he picks on us to be his victims. We call him "The Monster of the Prairies" and compared to the imagin-

of the European terrors, he has immense powers, seemingly supernatural. He travels with great speed, and can gobble up farm steads, with its animals, cities, forests, factories people, or anything else in its path. I had often heard my parents talking about a cyclone that demolished and killed. A huge funnel shaped cloud dropped out of a bigger cloud that had been hovering in the sky, and sowed destruction and death.

Spring 1899: I was nine years, & 8 months of age. Spring is always beautiful in its clean green dress, and everyone loves it.

Sunday May 28th 1899: Like any Sunday, we had all the chores to do, the same as any other day, breakfast, cleaning up, and papa harnessed his team, and hitched them to the old spring wagon, and we drove the three miles to church. There was but one Mass, and that at 10 A.M. We were out at 11, & home at 12 noon P.M., and then dishes and clean up, and a short rest until evening chores. It was after 5 P.M. We had started the evening chores, and mama took Angela about 5 yrs old, and started after the cows.

My father came in and stood on the back porch and looked intently at a very black cloud in the west. I could see he was worried. Suddenly he stepped down and called "Mama, come home". She turned, wondering, "Hurry up!" So she hurried back. They both looked at the west a short time, then mama came in and said, "We'll have to go to the cellar. There is a cyclone coming." Then she dashed upstairs, shut a few windows, and was back. We all started for the cellar door which was on the floor of the back porch. By now it was quite dark from the lowering clouds and it was getting very windy. Papa was there and opened the door, they pushed Marie and me down, and the door slammed shut. Mama reached for Angela, the wind was taking her, she grabbed her dress. Papa had the door open again. They pushed Angela and Julia down, and the door slammed shut again." I was on needles, why didn't they come? Another shaft of gray light, and down they came, at last. They went to the west wall with Angela & Julia, but Marie and I did not get close enough to the wall.

Immediately I heard something pounding against the side of the house, big heavy things, hitting hard. More and harder pounding. Glass shattering, something hit a window.

Then gray light on the upper southeast corner of the cellar. What was happening? Why the house was lifting off the foundation! The hitting stopped a moment and the house settled down again. Then something terrible happened, the house just went up in the air and flew away leaving us with nothing overhead: then a load of boards came tumbling down upon us. I was knocked down, got up, knocked down again, and again. I lost count, wouldn't you, but I remember three times before the wreckage stopped falling in on us. As soon as it stopped papa ran up the steps, no door to open, it wasn't there, and pointed to the N.E. and said "There it goes". I followed at his heels, and saw only an immense ball of dust thrashing over the neighbors fields. 1/4 mile away.

Then we looked for the house. What was left of it was about one hundred feet away from the foundation."

The roof was gone, windows all gone and the corners were bursted out like a very heavy box dropped from a height. I said "Look at our house". But we did not go in. A big black cloud was coming from the north, and heavy drops were falling. It would be no shelter, so we started for the barn, that looked as if it were ok. But it began to rain so fast and heavily that we soon were wet. The wind was blowing the rain and us toward the barn, but then we could see how badly it was wrecked. The doors were all gone, and the roofs were pulled away from each other leaving a space over a foot wide. Another whiff and the Monster would have it too. Only papas grove of pine trees saved it. The roof at the comb was pulled apart, and the sheds were pulled away from the center section 12 to 18 in nearly all around. It is a pole barn, and the center poles are very long, being buried deep in the ground, and going 20 ft high and holding up the roof. Some of these poles were lifted out of the ground making great humps on the roof. And the cupola with the big

steel horse weather vane was gone. We saw this later, the horse was ok. Marie and I got the measles at school several weeks before, while Angela + Julia were just over them. We were all wet and shivering so when the rain stopped we went to the house, hoping to find some dry clothes. The porch and steps were gone so we had to climb to get in. Dishes had fallen out of the cupboard and the broken pieces were on the floor. The wardrobe was on its face, the clock was on the floor, and the stove pipe had fallen, covering all with a pall of black soot.

Upstairs it was worse. Each chimney was broken off at the line of ceiling, and the enormous brick logs had fallen on the ceilings, breaking all the joists. They were still sinking and were cracking dangerously. I was afraid to pass it, but somehow we found some dry clothes.

Uncle Lon had noticed that they couldn't see the roof of our house so he came running. Some one said "Uncle Lon is here." Papa called "We are all right." He came

and I saw he was crying. Not a talkative person he said nothing, Papa said "Maybe you can change Angela." She was wet and sitting on a rain soaked bed and shivering. But his hands were shaking so he could not open the buttons. so I took over. Then papa had changed clothes, so they went out to get some sticks to ~~sh~~ brace up the chimneys.

By now, Uncle Ed, mamas brother who lived on the paternal Ehrich farm, a mile north, ran down through the fields. He was also shaking so he could not talk.

Sunday afternoons were the hours day off, or rather half day, as they had to take the families to church in the mornings. Then they were turned out to pasture, and sometimes it took a little time and choice feed to coax them to be snared, so it was quicker to use your own legs, if the trip was under a mile.

We all walked over to Uncle Louis to sleep that night. Papa did not walk with us, but came later. He may have fed the hogs, but our cows did not get milked.

Then we heard Uncle Lous story. His good double monitor barn was gone. His team was still tied in their stalls, with a piece of roof almost down on their heads. His team did not get their half day, but when they were untied they ran out snorting and would not come in for days. He had tarred the roof of the barn, the only one in the county so treated, and some tarred shingles were found near Solon. He rebuilt the barn exactly as it was.

Neighbors, Mr. + Mrs. Jacob Holzhauser who lived between our two places, but on the north side of the road, were visiting at her sisters family near Tiffin that day. Their barn was gone too, but they did not come home that evening, as they had received word of the storm, and that they could not get through on account of trees across the road. The trees were ~~ass~~, a row of maples along the road, that now were all lying across it. Only one was not uprooted, the one near the gate, and it was broken off about ten feet above the ground.

John Scheetz, Marguerite and Clarus father went in and looked around the Holzhauser farmstead. A section of roof was left. He peered under and found the bull that was tied in a stall, was under the piece of roof that was still slipping down on him. He was on his knees. John loosened him and put him out in the pasture. Jakie Holzhauser, (He was so small he was always called Jakie.) also rebuilt his barn. At that time farmers did not carry wind insurance, so they all suffered a total loss.

At home there was work to be done. Neighbors came and moved the cook stove into a small summer kitchen, also cupboard table and chairs. Incredibly, this summer kitchen, built when the house was moved up to the top of the hill, only about thirty feet from the house was left there. Then they began tearing down the wrecked house. All the rest of the furniture was taken to the barn for the time being. With the materials from the house they built a shack where we could sleep, and our beds were put in that.

Papa said the barn had to be taken care of first, for if it stood that way any length of time, the strained timbers would soon set, and could never be straightened. It was corn planting time but that had to wait, until he and some neighbors spent that week getting the barn back to normal. Not all the neighbors came every day, they alternated. They had to dig deep holes along side of the poles that had been pulled up, and let them down where they should be. He got from somewhere, big ropes and pulleys and pulled the sheds back to hitch onto the monitor. But it was never the same, and there are still big spaces, between the monitor and sheds.

Then came corn plowing, haying, and harvesting. He asked some neighbors to haul lumber and building materials for him, called bees. At that time lumber yards did not bring lumber to you, you had to haul it yourself, by team and wagon. But papa did most of it.

Sometimes it was late when he came, and I always worried about him. I thought of everything that could possibly happen to anyone, and I went down to the top of the hill in the orchard, to see if he was coming. I could see as far as Scheetzes corner, and I knew him that far. Also he had a Schutler wagon, and if it was even dark I knew the rattle of his loaded wagon. He always gave his tired horses a rest just as he turned into the gate, a breather for the last hard climb. Then when they felt ready, without a word or flick of the rein they came on. I was always so relieved to know that my beloved father was safely home again.

He hired an elderly man to help with the farm work, we had to put a bed in the barn for him, But he always had to leave on Saturdays. He started out walked and some one would pick him up and haul him to town. To a cr. 9 mi east. He hitch-hiked his way back the same way. Once he did not come back. On Monday papa had to go to town on one of his frequent trips for building supplies, a horse drawn wagon can not haul very much, and the roads had little care. Frequent

rains caused washes and they were often very badly rutted besides.

When he got to town he was told that John Myers had been found dead, Bacchus had betrayed another victim. He did not hire another farm hand for that summer!

He had hired a young man who had rented the farm just west of Jakie's house, and that Jakie had bought, — to start building the house. My father He helped him set up the studdings on the old foundation, fortunately The Monster could not take that. He helped when he could, but he had his farm work to do, and now all the hauling, and besides another big job was coming up. He was school director, and the school had been pulled off its foundation and one corner badly smashed. When school began this had to be ready, and he had to see that it was, and help with the work too. He called several men in the neighborhood, who had children going to school, to help. They gathered

big ropes, pulleys, jacks, spades, everybody bring your spade, hammer & saw. The first thing was to set a big post very deep, to hitch the pulley onto, then as it moved back, another and another. The school had faced east but Monster had pulled it around so it faced almost south. If he wanted it that way, then ok, let it face south. The foundation had been wrecked in spots, so they built a new foundation to fit the building. Then the man who was fixing our house Roger Reeves, did the carpenter work, and school opened on schedule. He also had to build a coal shed and two new rest rooms that the Monster had gobbled, and papa had to haul for that. I often wonder how he ever got through that summer.

We were just as busy. At that time, when you hired a man to do carpenter work, he lived at your house, and ate at your table. That was one reason he hired Roger R. He lived nearby. He only ate dinner with us, but there were others. the masons, the tinners, the lathers the plasterers, the painters, ad infinitum.

Money was scarce, so we had to raise what we ate, so we had a monstrous garden that we had to hoe. The small garden was near the house but the big one was farther out, often in a field. There we planted sweet corn, beans, cabbage, tomatoes, cucumbers, musk melons and sometimes watermelons, until vandals got in and for several years in succession, destroyed our hard won melons. Once they split open every melon big and little in the patch. So we quit.

we not only cooked the meals, we raised it too.

At this time a house was four walls and a roof, so no time was wasted installing electric wiring, plumbing, or heating fixtures. By fall it was plastered and when the trim was on, the kitchen we moved in. The rest of the trim was put on later, also the painting. It was now late fall, and getting cold. The only field work to be done now was the corn husking. One man and two horses could not raise much corn, so he never planted more than thirty acres. But people now, who plant

and harvest several hundred acres with their big machinery, cannot realize what working a farm with one man and two horses was like.

Now that we are in a house again, and after a year of loss, ~~crucifying~~ spiritual, mental, and corporal crucifision and that we have our home life more or less back to normal, we will go back to that terrible evening when that in five minutes the Monster caused us so much pain.

When papa called mama to come back home, what did he see? What made it so urgent?

Ten or twelve years before, there was bad cyclone in Grinnell. He said that he had been in that town several days before, and the idea that he might have been there when it happened seemed to follow him.

Then in 1891 we had a hailstorm that topped all hailstorms so far. He had a boy working for him that summer, and they were both in the field. It was in May. I must digress a little: He loved horses, and raised a number of colts each year. They were As they arrived at age three, he broke them to harness and to team, so that he never had but a few old mares that

~~E~~ helped in breaking a colt. He drove them round and round in a circle for a day or two, depending on the old mare to guide. The colt He was tied tightly to her hames, but he was so clumsy and awkard, and she became worn out. But papa rested her now and then. I remember seeing him hitching up a team of an old mare and a colt. He was so clumsy he stepped on the tongue and neckyoke, while she stepped into place without touching either.

I remember counting thirty horses in the field.

Papa always watched the clouds, for altho papa was the best horseman in the country and never had an accident with horses, he never pushed his luck either. What could be worse than to be caught in the fields with a team, or maybe a four-in-hand hitched to a harrow or a disk, and maybe several of them colts. Horses frighten easy, a newspaper blowing in the wind, or someone carrying an umbrella can do it. It was too horrible to think about.

He called to the boy, his name was Orville, and told him to come in. He got in a little behind papa, and mama closed the shutters before the storm hit. We had no broken windows, but many of the neighbors did have. The chunks of ice were very large, some as big round as a cup. The hailstorm we had April 15, 1968, was a good mate, except in the latter one the chunks were more jagged.

Back to 1899. Papa kept his eye on the cloud. It looked strange. There was a crosspiece on the west end of the porch which he climbed, and looked a long time. There was a spot where the clouds were wild. He had never seen anything like it before. As he looked the blackness took form, and he saw a chunk plummet to the ground, pulling the black cloud with it, so that it took the shape of a monstrous funnel. that hovered over the entire district. Later we found that it dropped about one and one half miles to the west, in open pasture, owned by my mothers brother, Wm. Eckrich.

Then two smaller funnels formed, one on each side, and the whole was furiously agitated, and lightning flashed. The tip of the tail lashed from side to side like that of an angry cat. Then it started coming, directly toward us. This tail lashing caused a vacuum, that pulled all things toward it.

People would hardly believe that it had two children. One half mile east of where it dropped there is a north and south road a sharp hill sloping to the north, where, by grading down, a deepcut was made in the roadway. The funnel crossed the road at exactly the quarter mile line; it was dragging the ground now; dropped in the cut and in climbing out, tore off the east bank in three places four ft deep. It could do this, as the field just east of the road had a steep slope to the east. The middle gap was about twenty feet long, and the two vacancies on the sides about ten ft.

Then it crossed a field then owned

by Oliver Hoffman, my husbands uncle where two horses were out on Sunday pasture. Strangely this place is now owned by my son Harry Seelman.

As the wind began to pull or push them toward the east, they braced themselves by stiffening their front legs, leaving deep cuts in the ground that their feet had plowed. This is probably what broke their legs. The Monster had now torn much barb wire off the fences it went through and he wrapped the horses up in this. When Oliver H. found them they had the flesh stripped from their broken legs, and head and body, and many terrible cuts. One was disemboweled and was dead. The other had to be put out of its misery.

When I first got this farm it was in very poor condition. In the first place the land had been exploited with no return to itself. Fences were down, Corral fences were disintegrated and the small barn just east of the house was just a skeleton but had recently been put up. ~~finished~~ but not finished. The ones decent thing was a new bungalow built

Harry was always a hard worker, which he apparently got by birth and by training while my father lived. We moved there in the spring of 1941, and by his hard work brought it back to normal productivity.

That summer one afternoon a fierce storm came up, and the wind became wild and strong. I quickly shut the west cellar windows, and bedroom windows, which were on the west side. It was vacation and Esther was home too. The two older girls Bernice + Regina had found jobs in town and had rented an apartment, at North Dubuque St. near here.

I heard something like a loaded truck climbing that steep hill to the north. In this storm? No just another Monster, but higher. I said "Listen a cyclone going over." "Now its gone." We saw the corn crib roll over. Harry yelled, "there goes the corn crib". Some hog coops were also rolled over, breaking roof edges and doors, not much damage. Just a passing kiss.

Emotionally, I did not recover from the effects of the 1899 cyclone, for many years. A black cloud could make me tremble and put a big lump in my throat. Sometimes at night I would awaken which was very unusual. I wondered why, then I would hear a low muttering. Getting up I looked out a west window and saw a black cloud low in the west. As there were no cars or tractors or airplanes then, it had to be thunder. In the country where all is so still, one can hear any unusual sounds and I was as sensitive to thunder as a scared dog.

Excuse the wanderings.

1898 again. The monster finally tired of our neighborhood took a sky ride, and hopped five miles northeast, then dropped down and completely demolished the farmstead of George Cole. Then it climbed back into the clouds, and returned to the elements from which it came.

over.

Irene Robret Seelman.

When one hears the cry, "get for the Cave, a cyclone is coming." can strike such terror into the heart of every man, woman and Child as is unequalled by only one other. "Fire!"

A Terrible Tragedy

It was Sunday, Oct 17, 1899.

On the farm, our Sundays were as busy if not more so, as any other day of the week. Chores,- milking, feeding and watering the chickens, or other stock, breakfast, washing dishes, and all the milk buckets, Then cleaning up ourselves. Papa had the team to harness, and hitch up to the buggy or spring wagon. Mass was at 10 A M, so we had to start by 9 a m. The horses always walked to church, they never ran. We were out at 11 00 and home at 12 00. If mama stayed home with the younger children, which she frequently did when it was cold, or if someone was sick,- we could soon have dinner. Then cleaning up, and a short time to study or read, and chore time again. Sometimes we went out to see a new calf or colt, or to visit Edna Rohret, daughter of Uncle Lou, and our cousin or Ethel Holzhauser who lived between us.

This Sunday, papa, Marie and I had gone to church in the one seated top buggy. We were always a little early.

Holghousers were always a little late, and this day Mrs. H. came in and went up to Uncle Low, whose pew was just ahead of ours. She whispered something to him, Mass had started and we were kneeling. He got up and went out, but soon came back and stayed until the end of the Mass.

After Mass we heard the awful news that little Paul Rohret, son of Ed, who lived where Wm. Kubrich now lives, was shot, and was in serious condition. Mrs. Ed Rohret (Minta) was in poor health, and was taken to the hospital, (state) now called East Hall. Their children were Raymond, 11, Paul 8 yrs 4 mos. Marguerite 7, Edward 5, Clara, deceased, Muriel age 3.

Eds brother Will, married Mintas sister Jane, who had no children, so Ed + Minta gave Muriel to them and they raised her as their own. She was born Aug 9, 1896. Mr. + Mrs. Will Rohret lived in the house now owned by the Eckermans. The house was built by Albert Rohret, who went to live in Oxford.

Paul kept house and went to school. Liz Schneider asked him about his mother and who did the cooking. He said he did. She pinched his cheek and said he must be a good cook as he had fat rosy cheeks. He was eight years old. The next week Paul was buried.

That day Ed had gone to town to see Minta, and left the two boys at home, instead of taking them with him as he should have done.

Frank Rohret Sr. lived next to Ed. They were cousins, and their boys were friends. Ray ran over to their place crying, and said that Paul had shot himself. Frank went over and found Paul in a pool of blood on the kitchen floor. The Seelman family were going to church. Frank stopped them and told them the story, so they went back home, and Jake, who later became my beloved husband, got on a horse and rode to Iowa City to call a doctor.

There were no telephones then, so there was no other way.

After mass everyone was bugging with the sad news, so on the way home pap a drove over. There was a number of vehicles there. Eds sister Ella Everett was there and Paul was in bed unconscious. They lived on one of the places Charley Knebrich bought, on the Ridge road. I went into the kitchen with her, and saw the pool of blood on the floor, and nearby the fallen broom and a little pile of sweepings. Paul had been sweeping the floor. Raymond had been playing with his fathers loaded gun, a rifle, and the usual thing happened. The door had been shut, so there was a bullet hole through the door.

I was glad there was a woman there, but we could do nothing, and those in charge were waiting for the doctor. We went out, and as we came to the gate, the doctor came. The horses were covered with sweat and foam, nostrils blowing, and sides heaving. He grabbed his case, threw the lines to Charley Seelman, and said "Here Charley drive my team around till they cool off a bit," and ran into the house. he jumped out and

We went home with heavy hearts. That night little Paul died.

This traumatic experience seemed to make Ray feel that he had the mark of Cain upon him, and to weigh more heavily upon his mind as the years passed. A man I knew well was walking with Ray one night, when he said, "I don't have a gun. Maybe we ought to carry sticks."

My grandmother Rohret died in ~~March~~ Feb. 10, 1928, age 97, just when everything was mud. The road from the IWV to Cosgrove was still not surfaced, and they had to get teams to pull the hearse and mourners to Cosgrove, and back out again to the main drag. Ray said to papa, "It looks as if the Lord has something against the Rohrets. They all have to be muddied in." He was married in St. Marys Rectory, and had all his daughters baptized, but he did not go to church for years. Everyone liked him, and I was told that he had many praying for him. When Fr. Kelley was at Cosgrove he returned to the Sacraments. He bought the house

at Cosgrove because there were Sisters there and they taught school there. He stayed in the church until he died. Dec. 1968. Annie, his wife became a Catholic when he returned.

The Desert Years 1934 and 1936

We in Iowa, usually get rain enough to give us a crop of oats anyway. When we get a long dry spell and worry about it, we always hear some one say, "Why worry? We always get rain!" "Do we?" They are people who had no personal knowledge of the years of 1934 and 1936. Perhaps they grew up in Town where no one wants rain at any time.

They were too young of their parents did not live on a farm,

Beginning Jan 1, 1934, we had the mildest most comfortable winter that Iowa may have ever known. Like on the desert, warm sunny days, and no snow or mud. Leaving out early mornings and evenings, one could work in a light coat or jacket, or no coat during the middle of the day. It was wonderful and we all rejoiced about our lovely southern winter transferred to Iowa. No snow at all the entire winter, we did not worry, the spring rains would come. They always did. That was one thing that no one living had ever known to fail.

Winter went into early spring, late spring, and no rain. Some day it must rain. The oats was planted and drawing on the seed moisture in the ground, some came up, but the sparse growth of the shallow rooted crop could

stood still
not grow without moisture.
Corn was planted deeper and most came up, but it soon was stunted too.
Many days a bank of clouds formed in the west, renewing our hopes, but they separated and blew over without giving us rain.

It became hotter day by day until the temperatures were always in the high 90's, and sometimes over 100°.

One Sunday morning as I went after the cows, I saw that a spring in the hollow over the big hill had broken out and made a small puddle. O sign of rain coming! The sun came up in a glassy sky. Was it playing a joke on me? That day was as hot as any that went before, but by late afternoon a cloud showed in the west. Our hopes were dashed, why even mention it. But thunder and lightning drove us inside, and the storm came up on a terrific wind. It began to rain and the wind became a hurricane that lasted an hour. When it was over trees were down everywhere, and the big white pine grove that my father had planted was over half down. We were thankful for the rain, and in about two weeks later we got another storm just as severe, that leveled all the trees but about one fourth in the south-east corner, where there was some protection.

But this one also gave us hail. The trees near the house saved the windows, but how the poor birds got it!

I went down to look at the damage, and found many birds, old + young that had been hit with the hail; but the sad ones were still living. Apparently they had been hit on the head so that their eyes popped out of their heads, and were hanging by strings. I could do nothing for them but leave them. The next day I went down again, but found no birds. The rats probably got them all.

That year the farmers gathered enough to winter their herds, but they had to be much reduced, so there would be enough feed for a small holdover.

That fall 1934 we moved to our small place of thirty acres near Iowa City west of the airport. In June 1934, Bernice graduated from Ottumwa Heights with a teachers certificate, and got a school near Oxford, and Regina got a scholarship to Briar Cliff, Sioux City, Jan 1, 1935 Esther broke her arm.

and Harry and Esther went to a country school about 1½ mile to the S.W. They walked.

Bernice had to have an operation that spring for appendicitis, so she went to business school that summer, and Regina went job hunting. After looking for several months she got a part time job at the State Hosp. filing room.

The year 1935 was a normal year: that is, we got about the usual amount of rain, and everyone put the derelict year 1934 in the discard. Iowa was normal again.

Regina came home from Sioux City at Thgvg and Christmas. She had to work as well as study, and she lost much weight.

But she did not tell me until after, that she had not felt well.

There was quite a lot of snow that winter, and I went after Bernice when I could, perhaps once a month, perhaps twice, depending on the weather. The roads were not cleared as often or quickly as needed.

We had some milk cows and some laying hens, but the price was so low that it was hardly worth while. I had applied for and granted a mothers pension of $15.00 per month for each of the children under 16 yrs, and this was a big help. And for several years, small holdings were tax free, which was a lift.

That spring I had the east ten acres planted to alfalfa, which later was a life saver. Bernice had the Offord school for the 2 school years of 1935-36.

Then Christmas day 1935 we got our first good snow storm. We went to the old home and had a bad time getting home. We were afraid of the cross roads, so went to Iowa City, then south, then west. We got stuck in the snow where the Amish Club now is. There was a house there then, and we asked the man who lived there, Mr. Christianson, to help us out. We got home OK.

Harry and Esther walked to school, and Harry had to carry her lunch pail as well as hers,

so she could protect her arm. The cross roads were not plowed out then, so it was tough going, both on foot and by car.

Then 1936 came in on a stormy period, the bad example winter of all time, so far. Snow and wind piled the snow in great drifts wherever it could settle, and that seemed almost everywhere you had to go. The county had but small snow plows, and not enough of them. When they were plowed out it was only a single lane through the drifts, and the walls of snow got as high as a 1 story house. I always prayed when I entered a tunnel of snow, that I would not meet any one. There was not much travel luckily, so I never did, as only those who were pushed out on the road ventured out. Our way to town was not drifted, but the road to Oxford was, and so I did not go after Bernice very often. As Jan slid into Feb, the wild blizzards came every three or four days, I worried about Bernice. One day we woke up to a raging blizzard. I kept H. & Cet home and hoped Bernice did not go out either. I read once that when these raging storms come to the Dakotas, one gets a strange unrest, and will walk the floor all day. That day I had it, and then I understood. The cold was intense, 20 to 30° below zero for nineteen days, and for the rest of Feb, mostly zero, rarely even a few degrees above.

Now would I ever back out. The two wheel tracks were good but off that down grade. and

That year, even March was welcome, as the mercury raised a little as each week passed. But we got no April rains, and as one month slipped away and another came, it grew drier and warmer, until June 10 registered 103°, and never went below 100°. The hot dry, dry summer was here. A few dry clouds blew over but no rain. The grass stopped growing, oats died, and the corn that came up, hardly moved. This was much worse than 1934.

Farmers still worked horses, but only at night. If there was a moon it was luck. If not a lighted lantern was hung on the end of the tongue. It was not safe for man or beast to work in the heat of the day. They had to find rest then. There was no hay, no harvest. Hope for the corn dwindled day by day. Pastures were nipped to the roots, and dust storms came on every wind. It sifted into every tiny crack, it drifted under doors and on window sills in hateful little piles, into the pockets under furniture; if you moved anything you were choked with it; your clothes hanging in the closet were covered with it. It came from a

(Dust came from far away, a)
a place called the Dust bowl, in Oklahoma and Kansas they said, far away.

Small streams dried up completely, the larger ones had only pools of water here and there. They had quit running weeks ago. Wells went dry, and many farmers had to haul water from the rivers.

Did you plant a garden? You hung on the gate and watched it die. The corn tried to grow; it tasseled on scrubby stalks. You looked at the curling leaves, the brown ones at the bottom. The tassels drooped, and each day the plants grew whiter. Then whole fields were white, in long straight rows like crosses in a military cemetery. No use to look now. Too late for rain for this.

The few ears that started developed dumbos.

But every day we still scanned the sky for the rain clouds that never came. Yes there were clouds, dead, gray, lifeless, but they could squeeze out not a drop of rain.

Five days in July the thermometer registered 112, 109, 106, 110, 106, and for ten days more above 100°. Too hot to sleep day or night. The bed was baking hot, and night temperatures were often windless 90°.

The weeds along the road were dying, and on driving a short distance to the S.W. there was nothing, not even weeds. And the depression was still on. Farmers sold every animal that could walk, and got almost nothing for them. Some saved a few animals for a start if this drouth ever gives way to moisture. No money to pay the taxes.

My father sold twenty head of cattle at twenty dollars a head, and it was not enough to pay the taxes. They were not thin. August was a little cooler, but still no rain. September, a very little rain. The grass and leaves were covered with dust, and to walk through the dead grass raised a choking cloud of dust.

At last when it looked as if it had given up for good, we got some rain, and the starved grass began to grow; enough so that the stock got a little juicy greenery before winter strode in.

Fall 1936 and Winter 1937.

About Christmas time it grew very cold, and snowed some, then warmed up and rained, not only once but a number times, so that the entire terrain was covered with a glaze of ice.

Young people tried skiing, sledding, but if they got started down hill, there was no guiding or stopping. It was wicked, and many got broken bones or other injuries.

But here in the hills we were not so bad off. Down along the big rivers on low ground, they had ice too, but also floods. The ground covered with ice, absorbed no water, and all had to run off, so low lying ground was flooded. Families had to get out, and try to get their live stock to higher ground, over the ice. Many animals fell, broke legs and had to be shot. They had a terrible time. When it melted the water ran into buildings because the ice was higher than foundations

Anyone wanting to get more information about these difficult years may go to the office of any daily newspaper and ask for the issues of Jan. and Feb. 1937. Or earlier for the drouth.

In My scrap book of Hobbies."
Page 24
Leaf 12

1936 - That was the Summer that was.

Taken from a newspaper, probably Iowa City Press-Citizen,

June 20
1936 - 103°

This is from the pages of a diary kept by Edith Harwood - Washington Ia.

For 15 consecutive days in July the mercury was above the 100° mark, and enough other days to make it 27.

Crops on most Iowa farms, at least in the southern part were a total loss, on account of the blistering heat and lack of rains.

July 11. - For nine consecutive days the thermometer has climbed above 100°. 104, 106, 108, 102, 105, and so it goes, and most of those days a southwest wind has blown over fields and gardens searing everything like a blast from a furnace.

This is the kind of heat that gets into one's bone and muscle, turning strength to weakness; makes fingers tremble and eyeballs burn: that gets into one's head and presses outward with an ever-increasing power. One feels that the normal behavior on such a day should be screaming, tearing one's hair and frenzied dashes, (especially to the water pail) without direction or purpose.

July 13 - Two more days of it. In the dead air dust hangs like a pall over the earth. - Morning is no longer beautiful. Brilliant, harsh and strident, it crashes through the darkness with its powers full blown, and we awaken, stifled and unrefreshed.

July 16. The government thermometer at Washington, Iowa county seat, recorded 115° yesterday.

July 17. Shrubs are dying, pastures are brown. The corn - is now almost wholly given up for lost. Discouragement is almost seeable, touchable, tastable as dust. Some farmers are digging deeper wells, many are selling hogs and cattle for whatever price they can get, some are hauling water from a distance - from a more favored community, or from the river. I cant think of anything except rain, to smell it, to see the trees bend beneath it, to feel a wild wet wind on my face, to lay my hand on the wet earth and to feel it fresh and cool again. - healed of its sorrow.

July 19 Cooler at last, but still no rain. This evening we rode out into country

southeast of town (Brighton). Field after field of corn forced into tasseling before its time, then scorched by the blistering heat, presented white crowns, white and bent. There will be no pollenization. And as if that were not enough, field after field eaten by grasshoppers, looked like old battlefields, only poor broken stumps remaining.

July 28 The cornfields stand like rows and rows of aged penitents, with bowed white heads. Under the glare of the sun the chinch bugs and grasshoppers do their work of destruction silently.

Sept 1. There will be no harvest here, no fattened stock to sell. Many a man and woman in the countryside hereabouts are lying wakeful at night trying to manoeuvre figures, that will not lie, into a pattern that says "We can go on. We can keep what we have. We can wait and hope for a better year to come!"

From the Des Moines Register.
Wed. July 16, 1969.

From the Lamar Picture Big Book.

If you think its hot, review 1936.

The mercury topped 90° in Des Moines Tuesday, for the fourth day in a row, and many residents complained of the heat. Perhaps they were too young to remember 1936. Few who lived through that scorching summer, would stoop to complain about the puny little heat wave now. The last time the temperature reached 100° in Des Moines was three years ago, July 10, 1966. At a time when only a few stores and theatres were air-conditioned, temperatures in July, 1936, climbed to 100° or above for 29 days in a row, and reached a top of 109° in Des Moines, and 117° at Atlantic and Logan.

The great heat wave, worst since records have been kept in Iowa, began on Friday July 3, and continued through Friday July 17.

July 13. Temperatures reached 115 at Washington Ia, 111° at Ames, 113 at Cedar Rapids, 112 at Creston, 110 at Davenport, 109 at Des Moines, 112 at Fairfield, 113 at Leon, 111 Marshalltown, 110 Mt Pleasant, 112 at Ottumwa, and 110 at Storm Lake.

A total of 432 persons died of the heat

1936

and related causes during that 10 day period. The total for the nation came to 4,492.

As many as 500 persons a night slept on the State Capitol lawn, and thousands of others sought out parks all over the state.

July 14 — July 14, when it hit 108°, in Des Moines for the second day in a row, as many as 63 persons died in the state four institutions for the mentally ill. Accounts said many of the inmates went raving mad with the heat. Prairie fires broke out over the state and drivers were warned against tossing matches and cigarettes by the roadside.

Cattle and hogs died by the hundreds, and the states corn crop was reduced by an estimated 235 million bushels as corn plants shriveled in the heat.

Pres. F. D. Roosevelt attended a drought conference in Des Moines that fall. Rivers and creeks dried to a trickle. The mighty Mississippi shrank to one of its lowest levels on record, and barge traffic came to a standstill.

Dramatic end.

The great burn came to a dramatic end on Sunday, July 19. Huge black clouds towered over Iowa, and blasted the state with winds of 70 M.P.H. or more. D.M. was struck by a storm that ripped off the roof of the State Fair Grandstands. Some 4,000 persons attending a sunset service in Waubonsie State Park on the Missouri River Bluffs. 9 W of Sidney, fled in terror when they saw a billowing black cloud approaching across the valley. Tornadoes struck at Missouri Valley and Blencoe.

The 1936 heat wave was the more remarkable because it followed one of the severest winters in Iowa's history. That January the mercury stayed continuously below zero in many parts of the state for 15 days in a row. Snowfall during a 30 day period averaged 43 inches and many homes ran out of coal because of drifted roads.

Iowa's record high temp. stands at 118°, recorded at Keokuk July 20, 1934. Des M. record high is 110° set Aug 4, 1918.

Charles W. Reed, chief of the Des Moines Weather Bureau, announced rather petulatly his office was refusing to give out hourly temperatures to individual callers. The readings would be announced for all to hear by the City's radio stations, he said.

Des Moines good Park Swimming Pool was inagurated while the temperature stood at 109°. It had to be closed a few days later, because of leaks.

Doctors warned of heat prostration and what to do about it: of drinking too much ice water too quickly. (it cools the stomach and causes cramps); of sleeping in the basement, (it is unhealthy, dampness and stale air).

Factories closed until cooler weather. Air cooled theatres were crowded night after night, it didnt matter what film was shown. Shoppers crowded in air cooled stores, (there were a few), but with little increase of sales. Toward the end of the heat wave, attendance at D. M. swimming pools receded, because the water became coated with a scum of sun-burn lotion, or oil.

FAMILY OF SEELMAN, CONRAD & MARIA ANNA.

The family of Conrad Seelman emigrated from Schönbrun Germany, (Bavaria) in the 1850's and settled in Union Township, Johnson County, Iowa, with their son Jacob P. born in Bavaria.

They bought a farm in Union Twp. 1½ miles east of what is now Cosgrove. But St. Peter's Church was not there at this point then, and not until the year of 1890.

They worked hard, like most emigrants, from Germany, and paid for this farm, then bought another west of it, then later another 80 acres (unimproved) across the road to the north.

No more children came to them, so they took a boy by the name of Charles Boyd, who was at the County Home,

There was a strange story about this boy, which was believed by all the people of his age, but which I could not prove.

It was said that he was stolen by gypsies, and brought to this part of the country, when he was three years old. He knew his name, but nothing else. For many years gypsies roamed the roads of the U.S. every summer, and we were very frightened of them. They could steal any of us.

They were said to sell them to people who wanted them for workers when they grew some older. No one seemed to know where he came from, so they all believed the story, that he was stolen.

At first, he was taken by a couple near Tiffin, and stayed until he was about ten years old, when the wife died. The husband did not want to take care of Charlie alone so took him back to the County Home. The Seelmans heard about him and took him to their home, and adopted him, probably in 1871. as the records of St. Marys church show he was baptized May 16. 1871.

He was assumed to be about ten years old, and in the year May 16, 1871, he was baptized in St. Mary's Church, Iowa City Iowa , and adopted by the Seelmans. Jacob P. Seelman, sponsor. He died Jan. 16,1947, at the County Home where he had begun his life in Johnson County, Iowa, at about age three.

About the year 1892 or 1893, the Elder Seelmans moved to Iowa City, Iowa, and retired from farm work, leaving the farm to Charlie.

Jacob P. Seelman had married Oct. 20, 1874, and moved to the farm west of that occupied by the elders. The George Hofman family lived on the road running east and west, just a mile north of the Seelman families. The second daughter, who called herself Josephine, but baptized Cunegunda, was now eighteen years old, and as they all had the customs of the old country , the parents arranged a marriage for their daughter with the young son of Conrad and Anna Seelman. Josephine did not like the name of Cunegunda, so took the name of Josephine in confirmation, and was known by that name for the rest of her life.

The elder Seelmans bought a house on the corner of Gilbert and Bloomington Streets, Iowa City where a Standard Oil Station now stands.

Charlie never married, so he farmed the place until nineteen hundred ~~five~~ three or ~~six~~ four when he sold all his personal property and moved to Iowa City.

Maria Anna had died Aug.26,1895, and several years later he married Theresa Weiland. (I have not been able to find a record of this marriage in the records of St. Mary's Church)

Conrad died Jan. 7, 1900, and Charlie seemed to own the home farm after that. No one seemed to know when he began to drink, but after going to town, he could not hold a job, and took the most menial work for very small wages. He would get a crush on certain people, and shower them with expensive gifts. He gave Dr. Smith a fur coat and fur robe, and once he brought another family three step stools at once. He became friendly with the Fred Bock Family, and rented the farm to them. Mrs. Bock died that summer, leaving two small boys and a girl who was the eldest. Fred went back to town and lived with his motherm who cared for the children. One night Fred and two other men had a drinking party along the river, and went for a boat ride, and all were drowned. Charlie continued to favor the Bock children, until they were grown, and had his picture taken with them.

He worked for Graham & Murphy, who ran a livery stable. He was a hard worker, and when able he never refused to do the hardest and dirtiest work. This building is in the 200 block on South Capitol St. on the west side. Now there is an appliance shop in that building.

They had a number of horses and carriages, an old hearse, Pall bearers rig, and cabs or hacks, as some called them. As it was told to me, they saw that motor cars would soon take the place of the horse drawn rigs, and they gave Charlie some liquor, and sold him allthe horses and old horses and vehicles. They called it having fun with Charlie. He may have mortgaged the farm, as soon after

that the farm slipped away from him..He continued to drink and depreciate until he became a derelict. I heard even men say that they did not like to be seen in his company.He became very disgusting, and if he would find you in town, he would lay on the hood of the car and talk endlessly. How to get away, that was the problem. He had to be taken out to the County Home, and lived there for a time, and died Jan. 16, 1947.

Josephine Hoffman, daughter of George Hoffman Senior, (baptized Cunegunda),lived on the road running east & west just north of the Seelmans. True to old world customs the parents felt that they had the right and privilege to select their childrens marriage partners. So Josephine Hoffman and Jacob P. Seelman were arranged to marry. They were put on the farm west of the elder Seelmans, After eigh eighteen years the son of Conrad & Maria Anna had six children, and very poor health. He had a liver disease, which made his skin yellow, and may be what is called now hepatitis.

Elizabeth, the eldest daughter had been married to Charles Steyaert, and lived for a time east of Iowa City, near what is now the Scheller factory.He sold the farm for $10,000,and moved his family to Great Falls, Montana.

Frances was retarded, and needed care all her life. Anna Hoffman married Henry Buck, who was a well driller, and repairer. They came to Iowa City, and bought a house on north Johnson Street, where he died, and where the younger daughter lived until recently. Eunice joined the BVM's.

George and Joe Hoffman were twins, and neither ever married. After the death of the father, the mother and Frances went to Iowa City, and lived in an oldischack on north Gilbert St. owned by the Stachs. The boys were spoiled and paid her no rent, so it was impossible for her to live there. So Joe took her back to the old home, and cared for her as long as she lived. Then he had Franced to lookafter.

Geroge bought a 160A farm east of the home place, and went to farming, but he had no luck. and soon sold out, all his live stock as well as the farm.It was very close to our home and George often came to visit my father. He had yellow eyes, and we had an old rooster that had eyes just like him,I thought. He went to live with his brother Oliver, who had married Liza Kuebrich, andhad improved the large tract of land across the road from the home place, containing 182A. A well was dug, a house built, barn crib, and other bldgs. The south half is the farm that Harry Seelman now owns. George Sr. was born Oct. 23,1826,and died Dec. 5,1880. He had good luck, and got to own 180 acres on the north side of the road, plus the east 80 of the Martin Hofman farm, plus 180A on the south side of the road.as far south as the present Ott Rohret place.

Oliver married Liza Kuebrich, but had no family. They took two children ,a brother and sister from St. Vincent's home, Anna and Leo Larson, ten and eight.It seemed t that they were too permissive, and spoiled them badly. Leo became very hard to live with, and they told him to leave, but he came back at any time, and demanded money from them

so he had them badly frightened. He was picked up in some town in Ohio, for vagrancyand drunkeness, and was found dead in his cell. Cliver got a brain tumor, and the State Hospital encouragedan operation, but he took a sinking spell during the operation, so it was not finished, and he died the next day without recovering consciousness. It was about the year 1929. Liza had a sale, and moved to town , into her fathers house. on north Linn Street. Her father died soon after that, and she had George Hofman, and her brother George who was very quarrelsome and hard to live with, as he began quarreling with George Hoffman. Annie Hoffman Married a man by the name of Pinquette, and they had a son named Bobbie, but were soon divorced. SHe then married a man named McGreevy, They ran a tavern or some such business, and had a very nice home. However she was found dead in that house, her clothing nearly all torn off, and no clue to the perprator of the crime, and it is still one of the unsolved crimes of the state. I saw this in the Des Moines Register, with her picture, and the seven more unsolced crimes that the state has on file.

George worked for Oliver almost his entire life, except for about two years. In 1910 or 1911, he and Jake Hofmanndecided to work together, and rented a place near Altoona. But after one year the project was abandoned, and George went back to Oliversand worked for him agin for a time. In 1912 or 1913, he again left Oliver and started to work for Hugh McCabe. The arr arrangement may have been for share rent, or cash rent, or just a hired man, but from the beginning he was besieged by

bad luck. He lost several horses and one broke his leg. He got a vet to set it, and strange to say the horse recovered. Josephine kept house for him, and they lived in the small house that now belongs to Frank Eckrich. That 80 Acres then belonged to McCabe. It must have been unsatisfactory, and grandma got tired of her bargain too, so they broke up the arrangement. and again George went back to Olivers. When Oliver died, he went to town with Liza, and then her brother George came to her too. He had a violent temper, and could not get along with his wife and daughter. The wife was dead, but the daughter Annie came home, and kept house, until he took a tantrum, and gave her such a beating that she had to go to the hospital for a week. Them she left him, never to return to him again.She got a job of some kind, but she had hidden talents, She advanced until she got to Kansas City in charge of a large Club, where she finally became its super visor. To date she is now retired, but still living in Kansas City.

George again went back to Oliver's and grandma went back to her house at 321 South Madison St. It seems to me thet he did not try to go on his own again. He was getting older. Liza was in town now, with the two Georges, and as her brother George did not try to get along with George Hofman, they quarreled often. Liza applied to the County Home, to have George H. taken there, But now he became sick and died, Mar. 10, 1938. On Mar. 1938, Liza died. George K. had died a few years before.

When I was a youngster under twelve, the George Hoffman family seemed to be quite close, and during the nice weather of spring, summer and fall, they had a dinner at one or other of the homes, on Sundays. We went the mile east of Cosgrove, and if they went straight east from the first corner, the dinner was at the Seelmans. We did not need to see the people in the buggies, we knew the buggy, team, hats coats, etc, as far as we could see them. If the buggies turned north at the corner, they were going to Oliver Hoffmans. My mother would say, The dinner is here today, " or "The dinner is somewhere else today". Then there was no such thing as refrigeration, the chickens had to be killed after they came home from church, and the women would all fall to, and soon have them ready for the pan. The Kuebricks were related so got in on these dinners too. Old Conrad Seelma was an uncle to old Mrs. Kuebrick. This day Charlie K. seemed to be quite near when the chickens were beheaded, and one of the ~~to be quite near a~~ctivated creatures jumped close to him, and of course to keep himself from getting spattered with blood, he ran away, but the creature followed him. He jumped from one place to another, but the beheaded chicken followed him wherever he went, with the entire audience raoring with laughter. No matter which way he went, the bloody creature followed him. When they got to the table, they could hardly eat the chicken, they all had to laugh so. No doubt Charley said enough during his ordeal.

Alfonso, or Fony as the family called him, married "ell Burke, around 1903. They lived on the old Hoffman farm while the mother Hoffman and Francis were in town, Then Fony bought a farm south of the county home and near the farm owned by her father .Her mother died and the father and John, lived on there until Nell took the father to her home, several years later. Soon after they moved there their only child, Raymond was born. When Mr. Burke died, the farm was sold, and with Nell's share they built a beautiful large house. In about 1907 they sold the farm for $300.00 per acre, $36,000 in all. They bought a house in town, and must have had quite some left, which was in a bank, no doubt. Fony was perhaps about fifty years old at that time, and after coming to town he probably worked at something but I never knew what, as that was the years that we lived in Boulder. When F. D. R. took reign, he closed the banks the day before his inauguration, tying up all funds of every kind. No doubt th they had some money tied up, and as time went on the economy fell to its lowest, and many farmers lost farms that they had bought in better times, and that were mortgaged too high. So the banks wanted to get rid of the farms, and offered them to people who had some money tied up, that could be put against the value of the farm, plus a big mortgage. Fony took a farm, located south of the Hal Dane farm, where they lived for several years, until he lost it, Then he took bankruptsy, and rented the Martin Hoffman place for two years. He was Now in his 60's, and in putting up hay he was pulling on the hay fork, the rope broke and he fell off the wagon, breaking a vertebrae. He was all summer getting over that, and when they wanted to

renew the lease, Florence asked $9.00 per Acre, (they had been paying eight), they knew that it was time to quit. They had a sale, and bought a house in town, across the street from the Court House, facing south. This block has been condemned for the new Post Office that will be built , probably this summer, So Ray will get a good sum out of it, enough to keep him the rest of his life. He never married, so is now retired. He was bookkeeper for the John Deere Company of Iowa City, for a number of years.

When we lived north of the County Home, and Flannery's lived south , we went down there for the thrashing. The men ate first, and went out after supper, and a shower came up. Raymond was about ten years old and he was worried about his f father, "Where's papa" he asked Nell many times. She lost her patience, and said"Oh, keep still;'If anything happens to this papa, I'll get you another papa". That did it.

We were still on the ranch in Colorado and was about the year 1918.

Although Ann had written to us that Tom was coming out to look at land with a view to coming out to live, he did not say a word about land or if he had looked at any, or if he intended to look or buy. After he got home, Ann wrote that he had bought a place at Sterling, Colorado.

Mrs. Flannery did not want them to move so far away, as she knew too that they would not stay, and only come back again, worse off than ever, so she offered them 80 acres of hers, the east 80 along the road, where that old house is falling down. I came back that summer, and when they thrashed I went there, and Ann was in a rage all day at them all, especially Bessie. How she stormed at them, and grandma kept telling her "But Ann, its your oats". You have to take care of it all". No go.

They lived there for a yearm and by that time everybody was tired of everybody else, so they bought a place south of Cosgrove called the Heed place, where young Will O'Brien lived for several years of late. I do not know just how it is designated now.

Bruce Mahan had just gotten a job with the university, and they bought the house at 303 Melrose Ave. from Josephine.

So now Flannery's needed money, and Josephine had it, so let's have it. She must have given them all she had, for I do not thin k that Flannery's had any at a ll, but in about two years they lost that place and all of grandma's money. Helen wrote about it to Jke and said that they would pay her back, a little at a time. I said "O yeah", which was not nice of me.

They wanted to buy a house in town, but Ann said that they could not find anything at all. She should have said that no one would give them a house, for I am sure that they did not have anything to pay down on a place. Finally they found a house in Coralville that they could buy for $800.00 down, which somehow they wangled out of poor old George Hoffman. Guess how much he got back.

Tom got a job working for the state, and lasted for a while. Then he got laid off, and Ann had to find a job. She worked for the elks cooking, and also cleaning for society people in town.

In the summer of o923 Josephine got a atroke and fell while washing at the washboard. She fell to the floor, and Joe called in the neighbors to help him, and they put her to bed. After about a week she became conscious, and wanted to know what h appened. She finally got up, but was not able to do anything. Ann said that she had to come and live with her, although she did not want to do so. So Ann picked up all the chickens that she raised and everything else that she could get and took her to Coralville. So Joe sold the farm to Albert Holzhauser, and took Frances and they went up to Dubuque, to St. Anthony's home for the aged, where they both died and are buried. Joe died in March 1928.

Josephine lived with Flannery's for five years, and died on Christmas night, 1928.

After Joe H. sold the farm, Ann saw where she could get a nice windfall, so she hired a lawyer, and sent him afterJoe, to get the wages that he owed Josephine, and never paid her, This lawyer threatened to sue him if he did not pay $3000.00. I had heard Josephine say many times that she did not want pay, because that would tie her down, and she did not want that. She wanted to be free to come and go now and then if she wanted to. So she is-
sisted that she would not take any money. Pony and Oliver

and he and Frances went to [illegible]
for the aged and later died there. Ann sued Joe for wages for her mother, and the balance of the farm money he gave to the Mercy Sisters to keep them for the rest of their lives.
Grandma of course got none of the money A. got from Joe.

After Joe's money was gone, Ann had to find a job again. She got a job caring for a farm woman, who had become sick, and who lived out northeast of here on the Solon road. There were two sons, neither married, but almost middle aged. The older was made guardian over the younger, as the latter was not considered completely normal. She died and the older got a house in town, and got married, while the younger got the farm. He kept Ann as housekeeper after the mother died. Then stories began to seep through and you could hear anything, anything at all. I did not see anything first hand, so can speak only from hearsay. But I do know this, I saw in the paper that Ann had filed suit for divorce from Tom, but it was dismissed. Wilbur Wieder's neighbors demandedthat he get rid of that woman. Someone who I felt might know told me that Tom thought of a better deal, they would all go out and live off Wilbur. They farmed together, and at least it lasted for a time. But soon they got restless, and they either sold the farm or lost it to a mortgage holder. They then bought a farm up near Mt. Vernon, and lived there for two years. Margie took beauty culture in Waterloo, and had been married by a justice of the peace and to a protestant. Clifford had married Portia Quinlan at Waterloo, and Margie staid at their house, for a time, but she did not pay them for her room, so she had to leave. and they lived at her parents home, so Margie felt free to stay there free of charge.

heard of it, but too late, and wrote to him not to sign anything, but he had already signed it, the check for $3000.00. They should have telephoned. Joe was easy scared.

Well Flannery's bought two new cars, a new stove, an electric washing machine, (few people had one then) , and Margie got all the new clothes she wanted.

When Mrs Flannery rented them her 80 acres, then Tom had to sell the Sterling ranch that he had bought, and he made another trip to Sterling and sold it. He went home and told Ann that he made a pile of money on the deal. Personally, I think that he lost money instead, as by that time land prices had come down.

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Clifford had come down here from Waterloo, and got a job working

Clifford had come down here from Waterloo, and got a job working for the state. He and Wilbur had bought a farm south of the county home, and Wilbur worked there part of the time.

In the meantime Mrs. Flannery had died, and Ann was looking for a grand windfall. This happened in the last 30's, and the effects of the depression had not yet worn off. And shortly after this Tom got a stroke, and was confined to his bed. The Flannery boys and Nellie told Ann that they would give them $3800.00, and Ann told me that that was not enough, and she would make them give more. However, I think by what I heard, that they accepted that much. She built a house out on Franklin Street with the money, and she had Tom there for a time, until the children saw that she was neglecting him. Then they took him up to Waterloo for Portia to take care of, as she was a nurse. I do not remember just how long he was there, but in May ~~(or early June of 1941)~~, he got another stroke, and died May 14, 1941.

Ray and Ann, and I think Marguerite were driving up to Waterloo, to help in making the funeral arrangements, and had an accident. Ray had borrowed Dean Jone's car, and it was wrecked, and Ann was hurt , badly enough that she could not go to the funeral. They brought her back here as soon as they could, but as I was living in the country near Cosgrove at the time, I did not get to visit her. She took a room with Mrs. Rosella Murphy, south of the R.I . depot, and I went to see her once there. Then she traded her house out on Franklin Street for a house on Wolf Avenue, furnished, and with true Ann luck got a great bargain. I think she rented it for a while, and then Clifford and Portia came down here and went there to live. Later Ann went there to live too, and then Wilbur. Some time before , when they were still living in Coralville, Ann had some kind of disability, that turned into a paralysis of the right arm, Although she was not disabled otherwise, at least for these intervening years, now since her accident, it seemed to gradually grew worse, until she was confined to her room, which was upstairs, and as she could not walk very well without help, her activities were from chair to bed and bed to chair. As she became increasingly difficult to care for, both physically and mentally, they found her a place with Mrs. Farnsworth, who ran a nursing home at 317 Iowa Avenue, where she stayed for seven months, then had another stroke and died June 26, 1948.

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Another phase of Ann's life was this, when they still lived in Coralville, Her family , especially after she filed suit for divorce from Tom decided that she had gone far enough for this time, and must do something about it. Wilbur's brother also took him in hand and sent him to some relatives in a southern state, but he soon came back. This brother and wife got a divorce and a short time later he died. So that left Wilbur entirely on his own.

Ray and Helen dicided to send Ann to the sanitarium at Mt. Pl Pleasant, where she staid for several months. Inseptember when I took Bernice down to Ottumwa to school, I stopped to see her on mynway back, and she was terribly depressed and bitter, especially at Ray, whom she blamed for the whole mess. Soon after that they brought her home.

Mary Everett was here then still, and one day she called me down to Coralville, saying that Ann was so bad that no one could do anything with her. I went and found her crying most of the time, and taking shaking spells. She was talking wild, and seemed to take it the hardest that Wilbur left without saying goodbye to her. She got some money when Mrs. Flannery died, and she bought a house on Franklin St. Tom had had a stroke and was bedfast. He died. She traded this house for a little one on Wolfe St, where she and Clifford's family went to live with her. Clifford traded this home for a farm south of the County Home.

Sometime before she died she deeded the house to Clifford, and Wilbur continued to live with them. He and Wilbur had bought a farm south of the County Home, and at first Cliff tried to farm, but he did not know enough about it to do very well. Wilbur got a job at the state, then they traded jobs, and Wilbur did the farming, for a time. Then they tried farming exclusively, sort of one horse style. Cliff and Portia had a son born in Sept. 23, 1944. Early in Nov. Jimmie got a summer flu, and did not seem very sick, but in a few days Portia got what appeared to be the same thimg, but much worse. The Dr. ordered her to the hospital, and made the necessary examinations and found that she had polio, that was rapidly showing the symptoms of the bulbar type. In about two days she was dead. November 4, 1949.

Ray and Rita had bought and sold at different times around town, and were now living in a large house at 517 Iowa Avenue, that had an extra apartment. Cliff and Jimmie came here to live, and staid nearly a year, when Cliff met and married Helen Regina Laughlin, Married June 30, 1951, in Cedar Rapids. They went to the Wolf Avenue house to live, and fixed it up beautifully, and then sold it, for over $13,000.00, a huge profit. They all went out to the farm, Wilbur too, and fixed that place up , quite nice I heard, but I had not yet been there. But between moves they, Cliff, Helen and Jimmie, went down to either ~~of~~ New Mexico or Arizona and lived there during that winter, 1951-1952. They came back & lived on the farm there during the year 1952, and then sold that farm and bought a farm west of Mount Pleasant. Their address is Selma, Iowa, but have never been there. To date, July 15, 1956, they still live there. They sold that farm and bought another at Pulaski and moved there in the spring of 1956.

A little girl Mary Helen, came to live with them May 19, 1953.

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Mary Everett was here then still, and one day she called me down to Coralville, saying that Ann was so bad that no one could do anything with her. I went and found her crying most of the time, and taking shaking spells. She was talking wild, and seemed to take it the hardest that Wilbur left without saying goodbye to her.

Sometime before she died she deeded the house to Clifford, and Wilbur continued to live with them. He and Wilbur had bought a farm south of the County Home, and at first Cliff tried to farm, but he did not know enough about it to do very well. Wilbur got a job at the state, then they traded jobs, and Wilbur did the farming, for a time. Then they tried farming exclusively, sort of one horse style. Cliff and Portia had a son born in Sept. 23, 1944. Early in Nov. 49 Jimmie got a summer flu, and did not seem very sick, but in a few days Portia got what appeared to be the same thing, but much worse. The Dr. ordered her to the hospital, and made the necessary examinations and found that she had polio, that was rapidly showing the symptoms of the bulbar type. In about two days she was dead. November 4, 1949. She was taking instructions to become a Catholic, realizing her danger asked for baptism and had a funeral mass and was buried in Catholic cemetery

Ray and Rita had bought and sold at different times around town, and were now living in a large house at 517 Iowa Avenue, that had an extra apartment. Cliff and Jimmie came here to live, and staid nearly a year, when Cliff met and married Helen Regina Laughlin, Married June 30, 1951, in Cedar Rapids. They went to the Wolf Avenue house to live, and fixed it up beautifully, and then sold it, for over $13,000.00, a huge profit. They all went out to the farm, Wilbur too, and fixed that place up , quite nice I heard, but I had not yet been there. But between moves they, Cliff, Helen and Jimmie, went down to either ~~or~~ New Mexico or Arizona and lived there during that winter, 1951-1952. They lived there during the year 1952, and then sold that farm and bought a farm west of Mount Pleasant. Their address is Selma, Iowa, but have never been there. To date, July 15, 1956, they still live there.

A little girl Ma y Helen, came to live with them May 19, 1953.

From the farm From Josephine

When they moved away Tom had had to get a job, and the only thing he could do was to drive a team, as all hauling was done with horses.

After a few months Josephine found that she could not stand it once more, and bought them out again. Flannery's rented the Eggenberg place, ~~on Melrose Avenue~~, consisting of about fifteen acres, ~~and~~ on the corner of Melrose and Koser Avenues, and known now as the Leamer place, ~~of which only the house is left now.~~

Hugh McCabe lived at Cosgrove, and owned the Leeney place, with half on the south side of the road, and 80 acres on the north side. Uncle Will Eckrich bought the north 80, and is now owned by his son Frank. George Hoffman got tired of working for Oliver, so rented from Hugh, on shares ~~perhaps~~. He got the small house to live in, and grandma went out to keep house for him. She always said that she could live with anybody, but the proof was that she could not. She soon got tired of George too. She did not get paid anything. Although George was not lazy, and took good care of everything, he had such bad luck. He had to buy machinery and horses, and horses were expensive then. One or two died, and a third broke a leg. Usually a horse that breaks a leg is destroyed, the vet put on a cast, and the horse got well, but of course he was out of use for many months, and George had to buy another horse. After a year. George was tired of it all, and quit McCabe, and Josephine went back to town. She took in several boomers, one of them being Jake Hofmann. In a very short time she had sold that house, and bought with Jake, another at 303 Melrose Avenue. It d did not have a furnace, and the first thing they did was to put in a furnace.

Frances was living with Joe Hoffman on the place that E.J. Ho Holzhouser now owns, east of the Martin Hofmann place, and she had had a stroke, so Joe brought her in to Josephine to take care of. One day Martin met Jake in town and grumbled to him that they were keeping Frances there. I could not see just what it meant to Martin.

While she was keeping house for George, she left the house on Madison Street vacant, although she could have rented it furnished for 30.00 per month. Malloys, the next neighbor to the south, did not like toe people that wanted it, so talked grandma out of renting it to them. One day Jake was in town, and saw the agent, and he told him to rent it to them, and for a while she got that money. She allowed other people to talk her out of pocket.

Soon she was tired of Jake Hoffman, and wanted to quit him. Now it was fall, and 1915, and we sold our farm, and had a sale, and went to Colorado. So she and Jake H. sold the house, and she and Frances went out to Joe Hoffman's to keep house for him. Again without pay.

In 1916, Flannerys rented Ella Everett's 80 acres, where the new golf grounds are now, and again she had Ray f. come to stay with her at night. They were there for about a year.

Ann F. became tired of this place, and because we were out in Colorado, and far away, she got the notion that we had it better than they did, so she started to again look over the fence, where the grass was greener. She got Tom enough interested to at least want to take a look. So one fall while we were on the ranch, Tom came out. As he always did, he fell on the cot in the living room as soon as he got done eating, and just got stuck there,

Jake asked him if he wanted to take a ride up on the hills. He did not seem interested, and staid on the cot. while Jake went out and got two horses saddled and bridled, Finally he got up and went out, mounted a horse and rode up in the hill pasture with Jake.

Chapter 12.

Jacob Seelman I, son of Conrad and Anna Maria, Married Cunigunda Josephine Hoffman on October 20, 1884., and took the 160 Acre farm just west of Conrad and Maria Anna. Cunegunda was her baptismal name, and not liking it, she took the name of Josephine at Confirmation, and called herself by that name afterward. She told me that, after the fashion of the old countries, the parents arranged the match, and she obediently made no objection.

Here their six children were born, one, Mary, died, and then April 5, 1893, Jacob also died, aged 42 years, 1mo. 6 da., as the tombstone speaks. St. Joseph's Cemetery, Iowa City, Iowa. Mary C. born December 8, 1886, died April 25, 1889.

After Jacobs death, Conrad presented Josephine a note for $3000.00, signed by Jacob, his son, and wanted the money. She sold half of the farm (80) Acres to Nick Scheetz, to raise the money to pay this note, and the next year, she bought it back for the same price. The next winter after Jacobs death, the house burned. I was three years old the fall before, and I remember one night being awakened by the folks talking, and standing by a window on the south. They were looking at a fire. and I got up and also looked at the red glow against the dark sky. Josephine then borrowed some money from Adam Rohret's to carry on.

Then when Dora was but seventeen, she decided to marry Bert Everett, against her mother's wishes. She went to live with Will Rohret, (whose wife was Bert's sister), until they were married.

Debts were not so easy to pay then, and in 1901, there was still $1600.00 debt on the place. The two boys were now grown, and Jake especially wanted to stay on the farm, but she had the idea that they had too much debt, and sold out to her brother Oliver Joffman, for $60.00 per Acre. They had built on the 90 Acres where Harry Seelman now lives. George Hoffman, who never married, lived with them and farmed together under some arrangement, so that year they farmed both places. Josephine bought the house at 303 South Capitol Street, and with her family moved to town and took in student roomers.

Conrad had bequeathed to Will and Jake Jr. each a 40 Acres of the 80 Acres on the north side of the road. Jake bought Will's 40 Acres, and Will invested his money in a house in town, located on Jefferson Street, where the music building of the university now stands.

Before a year was up, Josephine was tired of town, so she bought the 91 Acres that Oliver had improved, for $60.00 per Acre, getting a farm about half as large, and also not as good.

She was no t blessed with good business ability, soon tiring of a situation and getting the urge to change. When Jake Sr. died, corn was .10¢ per bushel, but they all dug in, and pulled almost out of debt. Then when the boys were grown, and the worst was over, she suddenly became tired, of it all, and quit, It seemed that the greater the challenge, the greater was her courage and ability. She couldn't stand prosperity. Jake told me that he begged her not to sell,; they had sufficient machine ry and stock, and prices were better, but she was quitting, just when they were in a position to do well.

Jake built a house and barn on the 80 Acres he owned, and Ann kept house for him, and Josephine and Will and Helen lived on the 91 Acres she bought from Oliver Hoffman. They moved to this farm in the spring of 1903.

April 6, 1902, Dora died at the home of her mother in Iowa City. Will had obtained a job at Coast's, a men's clothing store in Iowa City, and Jake went back to the home country, and hired to Ed Rohret, and Matt Rohret. Then in 1903 or 1904, he improved his farm.

On September 26, 1905, Ann married Tom Flannery, and they rented Charlie Seelman's farm. Then Jake's health failed, and he sold out his personal property, and rented the farm to Tom and Ann Flannery. He went to Great Falls Montana, where the Steyaerts lived, and worked for Matt Kranz, husband of Ann Steyaert, who owned a greenhouse. Later he got a job with the Northwestern, that was building a short line between Lewis town and Belt, I believe. He was with the surveying crew, and when the line was finished he came home in late 1907.

3. When grandma S was with Joe she fell one day while washing. She had suffered a stroke. So Joe had to make a change. He sold the place to Bert Holzhauers ..... and entered a home

We were living in Colorado and the Tom Flannery family were living on the Ed Everett place where the golf course in now. They had rented the west 80 acres, and were trying to get a start at farming again. There was a small house there and a very small barn, and Tom went around to farm sales to buy up stock and things that he needed to start farming. This was in about the year 1918. Ann got the notion that if they only could come out to the west they would be happy, and get rich. She kept talking about it until Tom started out and came to Colorado, and as I stated before to our place when we were living on the ranch. He said nothing about buying a place or where he intended to look, but after he got home Ann wrote that he had bought a farm at Sterling, which is a town in eastern Colorado on the Platte river, and when we went out to see Esther and family in the summer of 1955, we went through the town of Sterling, and found that it was a beautiful town, and that many farms around there were irrigated, with water taken from the sands of the Platte River, and that they grew wonderful crops there under irrigation. But the green belt was not very wide, and outside of it was the dry farming area. This ground is disked or harrowed after every rain during the summer, but every other year it is not planted to a crop, but must lie fallow. I do not know where Tom bought , but irrigated farm land has always been very high priced, that I do not feel that he bought there.

Mrs. Mary Flannery, Tom's mother felt sure that they would not have the stamina or the backbone to make a success of it, so she begged them not to go out there, and that if they would stay she would rent them have the east 80 acres where the old house was, and she would let them have it for very cheap rent. So in the next spring they moved there. Tom told Ann that he sold the Sterling place for a big increase, and she told that around to everybody. But I always felt that he only made a down payment, and then let it go by default, and instead of making a lot of money, he only lost all he paid down.

Then Tom really started on a buying spree. He bought a new tractor, and plows, and other machinery that they would need as well as some live stock, and either forged his mother's name to a check or a note. She was so fed up by it all that she told my mother all about it one day at church. She was always a very friendly person, and always would speak and talk. She said that she could have put Tom in the pen for all that he did, and that in the one year that they lived on the east 80 they cost her the neat sum of $11,000. She said that if she had not got money from her father's estate she did not know how she could have paid it. I heard later about the forged checks and notes.

Then they bought the place south of Cosgrove that was always known as the Heed place. They lived there for one year I think, and lost that. Then they moved to Coralville.

When I was young, they all grouped together, and would have a dinner at one of the homes and the yard would be full of buggies and men. The women would be busy at the job of getting the dinner for so many people. Coming home from church during the summer my mother would always say " The dinner is here today", or"The dinner must be somewhere else today". As there was no such a thing as refrigeration, the chickens had to be killed after they came home from church, and the women would all fall to and soon have them ready for the pan. I do not remember the details of the story or just where the dinner was held that day, but Charlie Keubrich was there. You know that Grandma Keubrich was a niece of old Conrad Seelman, so they were often in the group. I do not think that Charlie was married then yet, I am quite sure of that. This day as they killed the chickens Charlie seemed to be quite near, and one of the beheaded animals took after him, jumping like a jackrabbit and spraying blood over the landscape. Charlie jumped to get away from the wild beast, but it followed him, He ran further, jumped aside, back, front, jumped again, ran again, while everybody roared. No matter which way he went the bloody creature followed him, spurting him again and again. I can not imagine Charlie being silent all this time, but the entire company had the time of their lives.

for the state. He and Wilbur had bought a farm south of the county home, and Wilbur worked there part of the time.

In the meantime Mrs. Flannery had died, and Ann was looking for a grand windfall. This happened in the last 30's, and the effects of the depression had not yet worn off. And shortly after this Tom got a stroke, and was confined to his bed. The Flannery boys and Nellie told Ann that they would give them $3800.00, and Ann told me that that was not enough, and she would make them give more. However, I think by what I heard, that they accepted that much. She buolt a house out on Franklin Street with the money, and she had Tom there for a time, until the children saw that she was neglecting him. Them they took him up to Waterloo for Portia to take care of, as she was a nurse. I do not remember just how long he was there, but in May or early June of 1941, he got another stroke, and died May 14, 1941.

Ray and Ann, and I think Marguerite were driving up to Waterloo, to help in making the funeral arrangements, and had an accident. Ray had borrowed Dean Jone's car, and it was wrecked, and Ann was hurt , badly enough that she could not go to the funeral. They brought her back here as soon as they could, but as I was living in the country near Cosgrove at the time, I did not get to visit her. She took a room with Mrs. Rosella Murphy, south of the R.I depot, and I went to see her once there. Then she traded her house out on Franklin Street for a house on Wolf Avenue, furnished, and with true Ann luck got a great bargain. I think she rented it for a while, and then Clifford and Portia came down here and went there to live. Later Ann went there to live too, and then Wilbur. Some time before , when they were still living in Cornalville, Ann had some kind of disability, that turned into a paralysis of the right arm, Although she was not disabled otherwise, at least for these intervening years, now since her accident, it seemed to gradually grew worse, until she was confined to her room, which was upstairs, and as she could not walk very well without help, her activities were from chair to bed and bed to chair. As she became increasingly difficult to care for, both physically and mentally, they found her a place with Mrs. Farnsworth, who ran a nursing home at 317 Iowa Avenue, where she stayed for seven months, then had another stroke and died June 26, 1948.

quarter section to t e west, which their son Jacob took over a after his marriage October 20, 1874. Then they bought the 80 Acres on the north side of the road. They moved to Iowa City in the year 189__, and bought a house on the corner of Gilbert and Bloomington Streets, in the 300 block. The Standard Oil Company has an oil station there now, and owns the lot.

Shortly after this, Maria Anna died at the age of 69. Her tombstone says that she w.s born March 10, 1826, and she died August 26, 1895. Then Conrad married Teresa Weiland,

Then March 3, 1908 she married John Seelman of Hills, a nephew of Conrad's.
Then on January 7, 1900, Conrad died. In an attempt to save his life, the doctors amputated a leg, and then two more amputations, each time higher, to try to get ahead of the gangrene, but to no avail.

Then on March 3, 1908, Teresa married John Seelman, a nephew of Conrad's, and he went to live with Teresa.

Teresa Wieland-Seelman-Seelman died November 18, 1923, aged 71, and John inherited the house. He lived there alone for a time, and then sold it to Standard Oil Company, which tore down the house and buily a gas filling station. He got a job as janitor in one of the State buildings, which he kept for quite a few years. He cretired and went to live with his daughter Mary, Mrs. Ed O'Brien. He died Aug 1 1936.

Grief and Bereavement
Alike and Inseparable

Grief is uninvited, is self-made, a creature which has its own will,
does as it wishes.
It treats its victims as pawns—not caring for their welfare;
it is not concerned about its devastation;
does not look out for the future
for those on whom it trods.

Grief creates fantasies for its victims of what was;
what had been;
what could have been;
what should have been.

Grief forces its victims to remember the past
in many familiar objects;
in many familiar places;
in many written works;
in many future experiences;
in many memories.

Grief forces its victims to remember and
cherish many threads from the past,
however tenuous or painful.

—and in the end,
grief endears itself to those on whom it forces it embrace.

Harry Seelman
January 2002

My 92 year old father, Harry Seelman, has been an enormous influence in my life. At this time he is nearing the end of his life and my family is celebrating the legacy of an amazing man. When he first started farming in Johnson County over 70 years ago he had a team of Belgian horses. Farming has changed a great deal over my father's lifetime but the values he instilled in me have never changed; hard work, honesty, perseverance, respect, and caring for others are just a few of the many virtues I learned from him. In the end he has let us know how much he has loved us and that we have the strength to carry on with out him. I know in my heart he is right but I also know how much I will miss him. Thank you, dad, for all you have done for me, our family, and our community.
You made a difference!

Mary Mascher
April 2014

In loving memory of Dad

April 14, 2014

Dear Dad,

You know how everyone remembers a favorite teacher. Well, for us, Dad, that favorite was our first teacher – It was you. You were a natural at it, and you taught us invaluable life lessons from the beginning to the end. No doubt it was your example that inspired five daughters to become teachers, and for all of us to be lifelong learners with a thirst for knowledge.

Chris remembers being just 4 or 5 years old, outside with you on the farm and you enduring her endless questions about the nature that surrounded us. "What's that," she would ask, over and over again. Instead of telling her, you inspired her to think."What does it look like, Chris," you would ask back. "Look at the leaves. Does it look like maybe something you would eat?" "Lettuce?" Chris answered. And you patted her on her heart, answering, "Good. Yes. Wild lettuce."

Just a few days ago, in the hospital, you assured us that with God's help, the family would be OK, and you kept the lessons coming. "Remember," you said, "you need to take care of yourself before you can take care of others."

As we say goodbye to you today, and you take your place in heaven beside Lucille, Allan, your mother and all those you loved who got there before you, we want to thank you from the bottom of our hearts for the thousands of lessons you passed on to us over the years, and that sustain us – your children, your grandchildren, your great-grandchildren, your daughters- and sons-in-law, your scores of family and friends. Lessons we promise to pass on to others.

The first lesson: Never miss an opportunity to connect with others.

You definitely loved to talk. Mom and we kids often waited in the car as you finished one last conversation. At your 40th anniversary Mass, the Kiss of Peace went on and on, as you walked up and down the St. Peter's Church aisle greeting all who came. We were at the front of the church acting a bit exasperated, and church members smiled and lovingly chuckled as you made your way back, at your own pace. You believed everyone there deserved a smile and hello.

Savor the simple things in life.

For you, that included chocolate, nuts, beef steak, a good book, tractors, trains, steam engines, a golf cart, your yard, a good lawnmower, a reliable rain gauge, a handy pliers, St. Peter's and all the parishioners.

Your love of chocolate – anything chocolate – ran deep. When we were kids, you'd hide your stash of candy bars from us. And we'd make it a mission to find them. Most of the time, we would eventually succeed. But you didn't really mind.

Never buy a John Deere tractor or a Ford vehicle. And never stick a screw driver in the welding machine.

Enough said.

Love and protect nature, except weeds.

You really hated weeds, and even in recent trips through the field on your cherished golf cart, you would ask to stop repeatedly to pull them. But you loved nearly everything else about nature – the wildlife, the stars, the weather. Now we love it, too. For proof, take a look at Coleen's beautiful gardens and Chris' devotion to conservation causes as a member of numerous boards and committees.

You'd never let us kill a bee, which got you in trouble one day while out on the farm with the boys. You were by a corn crib by a pond, and gypsum weed and bumble bees were everywhere. You told the boys not to worry. "They won't hurt you," you said. Apparently the bees weren't listening. They started after you, and you took off running. You took cover in some gypsum weed (not a good idea), bolted up, and were off running again, The boys were in stitches – just as you would have been.

Not long ago, you were on one of your golf cart trips with great-grandchildren Lucy. Lizzie and Neva, taking a tour of the farm. It was a beautiful day, and when you reached the top of a hill in one of the fields you paused to take in the sight. It seemed like you could see forever, the sky was blue and the clouds were fluffy white. By then, even your great-grandchildren embraced nature. Lizzie asked, "Are we on top of the world."

For you, it truly was. You loved your farm, and passed that down to all of us, including Allan, who was with you for way too short a time, and Steve, Tom, Jim and John.

Always keep your sense of humor, and you did until the end.

One of your favorite lines: I'm Harry, better known as Hairless.

One of your nurses in the hospital, a bit on the plump side, was getting to know you, enjoying your company, when you told her that your wife, our dear mother, was a bit overweight. "My wife weighed 240 pounds," you exaggerated. Then you quickly added: "But all in the right places." The nurse was touched. "I hope my husband says that about me someday," she said.

If you can drive into a ditch, you can always drive out.

Whether it was because of a foot of snow or gazing out into neighbors' fields to see how their planting was coming along, you had a knack for driving into ditches – and driving right out. That skill saved the lives of Allan, Mary, Coleen, Nan and Steve one day, when an electrical truck on the IWV backed out right in front of us, as we were going about 50 miles an hour. You told us to hold on and we headed for the ditch. You drove along the fence line for awhile until you found an opening to drive back onto the road. We were all shaken, especially the utility truck driver who came running our way. But you pulled it together, and on we went into town.

With a little ingenuity, you could fix almost anything, tinker with almost anything to make it work better, invent almost anything.

In the neighborhood, many knew you as the fix-it guy – whether mechanical, electrical, plumbing – it seemed like you could do it all. You constantly tinkered and manufactured, making an earth scraper, building wagons, fixing the boiler at the school, tackling and tweaking a new farming technique.

From that, we learned never be afraid to tackle anything. Even in failure there are lessons.

And make it easier on yourself. Always use the right tool for the job. And for God's sake, never put them away dirty.

If you could find the right tool. You hated it when you couldn't find something you needed – usually something the boys didn't put back in the right place or downright lost. They would often buy you tools for Christmas and your birthday, and you would

joke that you didn't think you got such a good deal. They were simply replacing your tools that they broke or lost throughout the year.

Always be open to new things.

Whether it was checking out a book from the library to learn how to lay brick for Lucille's new house; or reading a book three times – Steven Hawkins' "Brief History of Time," a book few humans attempt to read even once; or sitting down with a University of Iowa astrophysicist and James VanAllen to find out about the latest discoveries related to Black Holes. Your curiosity was endless, your intellect on a different level, your deep understanding of the world so amazing.

The world is fascinating, embrace it.

You led life fully and with passion. Your life even impressed those who hardly knew you. "Seelman is certainly an Iowa classic," a Time magazine writer wrote in 1988.

Among the things you couldn't get enough of: Politics (a love you passed on to your daughter, Mary, a longtime state representative, and to Coleen and Jim, both serving their communities), FDR, Harry Truman, (notice they're both Democrats), history (particularly Lincoln and the Civil War), machinery of all kinds, astronomy, the weather and traveling (Hawaii with Mom, Alaska and South Dakota with Mary, your native Germany with Dianne, Texas for your sister's funeral with Coleen, following the Mississippi River to New Orleans and back with John, and so many other trips).

Always help others.

Besides traveling the community to help neighbors fix things, you always reached out to the less fortunate. When Mom died, there was some money left in her Memorial Fund, and you told the church council exactly what you wanted done with it. Give a hundred dollars here, two hundred there to parishioners who were a little down on their luck and needed a helping hand. Spread it around as much as possible, and don't ask a lot of questions.

Cherish the beauty – and the power – of the written word.

Your mother was a writer, and so were you. Good writers, thoughtful writers. Your letters to the editor to the Press-Citizen and Gazette were frequent and almost always published. The professionals appreciated your intelligent and reasoned commentaries.

Later in life, you learned how to use a computer – kind of – to write our family memoir.

You had such a talent for putting your thoughts into words – and we can't tell you how much we cherish having those words to remember you by. We're sharing one of your poems today with everyone here – the one about grief that you wrote not long after Mom died.

And finally, family always comes first. Love them with all of your heart.

Granddaughter Mandy says your devotion to Lucille taught her about true love. She said every man she met she always measured against you. She wanted to find someone who talked lovingly about her long after she was gone, just as you did with Mom. Near the end of Mom's life, you were so proud to be her caregiver, so happy that she needed you and you were there.

When it became time for us to take care of you, you were so grateful. For Barb's gentle grooming – shaving your beard and cutting of your toenails, for Cindi's loving daily care that allowed you to stay in your beloved home until the end. For Dianne's holiday pies. For Chris, Mary, Coleen and John's weekly lunches or dinners. For Nan's tuck into bed. For Steve's repairs of the golf cart and lawn mower, for Tom's plowing of the snowy lane, for Jim's rides to church.

We felt very lucky, like many children of farmers do, that we got to be with you so much because home was your workplace. We worked along side you, often complaining of course, but establishing a bond that only farm families can appreciate. Dianne remembers trying to be the first up in the morning, sneaking down the stairs with shoes in hand so no one could hear, so she could be the one who got to ride on the tractor with you that day. We all remember the picnics Mom would pack for all of us so we could have dinner with you even when you were working late in the field.

Even though your memories started fading in your later years, we were so unbelievably fortunate that your memories of us never left you. You acknowledged each of us – daughters, sons, grandchildren and great-grandchildren, daughters- and sons-in-law – right until the end, showing just how deeply you loved us. We will cherish that always.

So Dad, you were our first teacher, our best teacher, our most-beloved teacher. We are so blessed to have had you as our father.

So as you told Mom when she died, Good-bye, dear one. We'll see you later.

God and Jesus were especially important to you in recent months. And we always took comfort in how your faith comforted you.

Your courage, strength, determination and devotion live in us.

You and Dad had to dig deep for courage and strength when your son and our brother, Allan, died. But it was there, and though the pain was sometimes unbearable, you and Dad found strength in each other and your faith. And you made it a priority to keep Al's memory alive – insisting on a Mass and a family gathering for him every Fourth of July.

Yes, your determination got results – including one of the things you enjoyed most these past 16 years: your house. Your persistence and persuasion finally convinced Dad a new house was a must. It turned into a well-remembered family project. We always laughed about how you finally got the house with three bathrooms and four bedrooms – but only after the 12 kids were all gone. But it still was worth every square foot, because of all the family gatherings, bridge parties, the visits from those who didn't live close by, the grandchildren's slumber parties, and the frequent guests in the "apartment" downstairs.

Your devotion to your husband, children and great-grandchildren is probably what lives in us most brightly.

You and Dad promised to stay beside each other through good times and bad, for richer or poorer, through sickness and health. You certainly stayed true to those vows, and we will be eternally grateful to both of you for that.

In the end, Mom, we had a chance to show our devotion to you. And you so appreciated that, even though helping you was something we didn't even question, and that we wanted to do so much.

So Mom, trust that you still and will always live in all of us, in so many ways. We can only pray that each of us will leave the remarkable, enduring legacy you have left us.

We love you, Mom. God speed.

Your sense of community and you compassion for others live in us.

You always told us we didn't have a right to complain if we didn't get involved. And heaven forbid that we'd give up our right to complain.

So out of that advice evolved a state legislator, a couple of school board members, a conservation board member, and a block of voters highly sought by everyone from wannabe presidents to candidates for county supervisor.

Mom, you helped shape your world through your political involvement and community activism. You helped candidates win hard-fought campaigns, and never gave up the fight when your favorites lost.

Your interest in the world around you endured to the end. CNN, in particular, was your window to the world.

Despite your busy life – the family, the farm, politics, hobbies – you always had time to help others. Even your choice of careers – nursing – reflected your compassion. Though our house always bulged at the seams when we were young, there was always room for another plate at the table for a lonely senior or another bed for a troubled kid who needed a temporary home. You never forgot a friend's birthday or anniversary. And there was always time for the wedding or graduation of a friend's child. You loved those occasions, being with people, having fun.

The importance you placed in your friendships lives in us.

You taught us what it means to be a good friend, and you had so many, to numerous to mention here.

You treasured your times with them: playing cards, shopping, celebrating each others' birthdays, taking day trips, just enjoying their company.

We will find comfort in hearing their stories of your times together, as we continue to celebrate together, for years to come, your remarkable life.

Your love of God and your church lives in us.

You taught us the importance of faith and prayer, and of belonging to a church community. You so cherished your deep involvement in St. Peter's – from the Foresters to the Altar and Rosary Society, from teaching Catechism to helping at Pork Day.

Your business savvy lives in us.

You taught us early how to earn money for honest work, paying us for picking up broken glass around the farm – a nickle, dime or quarter, depending on the size of the can we'd fill. We would try to trick you once in a while by filling the can mostly with rocks and putting broken glass on top, but we couldn't get that by you. The key phrase here: honest work.

You also knew how to help Dad get the most from the family farm by managing the checkbook and shopping for the best prices for grain and livestock. You also weren't afraid to get dirty, taking special interest in raising chickens, pigs and some ducks once in a while, and an occasional sheep.

Your sense of responsibility lives in us.

Those times we got in trouble, and there were a fair share of those times, you always made us take responsibility for our actions. You stood beside us to help us through, but you wouldn't let us off the hook if we messed up.

You encouraged us to take charge of our lives, through education and hard work. You were so pleased that so many of your daughters had college degrees, because, you would remind us, "You can't always expect there will be a man around to take care of you."

Your sense of humor and love of fun lives in us.

You so enjoyed laughing and having fun. You found humor in simple things – like the time Allan and Mary got covered in mud. Instead of getting mad, you took pictures. And those pictures are among the thousands you made sure we have to remember all the good times.

Your sense of fun included a love of competition. You loved watching your children and grandchildren compete in sports, and you were a big fan of the Iowa Hawkeyes. On a trip you and Dad took to Rockford, Ill., to see Nan, there was a big Iowa-Indiana basket game scheduled that you could only see via a satellite dish at a local bar. So Nan and you went to the bar to cheer the Hawkeyes, and Dad stayed home with a good book.

But your flowers, plants and trees were you true joy. You loved each spring when we helped you bring your garden to life, tending to the old and planting the new. It was your outdoor paradise that you shared so often with family and friends.

Your passion for bridge – sometimes three times a week – was fun to see. You eagerly shared tales from your bridge club parties – who won high, who won low, and the prizes you often proudly brought home.

And shopping. There was no one better at finding a bargain, and you loved the hunt. The sales clerks at your favorite stores knew that, and often would call you to let you know that something you would like was going on sale. Nan remembers the day you and she were together running errands. You were on the 10th stop. Nan was in her 40s and exhausted; you were in your 70s and still had a few places you wanted to go. There were your favorites: Younkers for clothes; Walgreen's and Shopko for prescriptions; Aldi for grocery bargains; Hy-Vee for recycling. And always a timeout for lunch – at Red Lobster for shrimp linguine or Appleby's for Oriental chicken salad or Godfather's for pizza.

Your crack organizational skills live in us.

You definitely knew how run a household. You could juggle so many things at once, including making sure we contributed our share. We each had a suppertime assignment: setting the table, scraping the plates, clearing the "middle things," washing the dishes, drying the dishes and bathing the little kids. There were the chores outside, too: milking the cow, baling hay, cleaning the barn, collecting eggs, mowing the lawn. You made it clear that to make this family work, we all had to pitch in.

You had tricks for dealing with a brood of 12. We remember you tracing our feet (it tickled) and taking those footprints to town to buy us school shoes. Much easier than hauling us all to the store. And those Easter outfits – all laid out in the row, ready for us to put on bright and early Sunday morning.

There were a few slips on the organizational front – mostly involving one daughter, Mary, who forced us to turn back on at least two occasions after she was accidentally left behind; once at church and once at home after the rest of us piled in the car for a family outing. Usually, though, Mom, you successfully had us do our own roll call to make sure we were all accounted for.

We definitely would attract attention when we were all together. We got pretty quick at holding up our fingers at stoplights to let gawkers know just how many kids were packed into the old station wagon.

In loving memory of Mom

June 7, 2001

Dear Mom,

Even though you're not with us today on Earth, as you look down upon us from heaven, trust that you live on in all of us here in so many ways.

We see, hear and feel you in what you have left with us – your love, so much love; your courage and strength; the joy you found in beautiful things; your compassion for others, your sense of humor and sense of community; your passion for life.

Your love of family lives in us.

That love was there at all the family barbecues, birthday celebrations, brunches at the Amanas and slumber parties for the grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We saw it in the decorations you displayed for nearly every holiday – not just Christmas, but Valentine's Day, St. Patrick's Day, Easter, Halloween and Thanksgiving. In our youth, your love translated into the gifts every Christmas and the new outfits every Easter, even when times were a bit tough.

We felt your love in the frequent gatherings in your cherished gazebo, where every once in a while we'd select a member of the family for a special roast of sorts, and each person there would describe what made the roastee special and why they were loved. For Dad, he loved you, Mom, most for how you loved him.

We felt your love in your persistent, tireless discipline: The way you insisted we behave around others; the flash of the barn or porch light, sometimes both, when the girls stayed too long in the car with their dates after a night out; the curfews; the constant checks on where we were and who we were with; the places that were off-limits with boys – Swisher dances and the drive-in movies.

Your passion for your hobbies – gardening, bridge and shopping, especially – lives in us.

In the early days, the huge vegetable garden you and Dad planted fed your growing family and many neighbors and friends. Later, Dad tended a smaller garden, and you prepared and proudly served what it produced.

So God Made a Farmer

And on the 8th day, God looked down on his planned paradise and said, "I need a caretaker."
So God made a farmer.

God said, "I need somebody willing to get up before dawn, milk cows, work all day in the fields, milk cows again, eat supper and then go to town and stay past midnight at a meeting of the school board."
So God made a farmer.

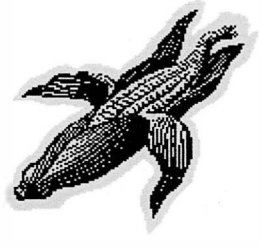
"I need somebody with arms strong enough to rustle a calf and yet gentle enough to deliver his own grandchild. Somebody to call hogs, tame cantankerous machinery, come home hungry, have to wait lunch until his wife's done feeding visiting ladies and tell the ladies to be sure and come back real soon -- and mean it."
So God made a farmer.

God said, "I need somebody willing to sit up all night with a newborn colt. And watch it die. Then dry his eyes and say, 'Maybe next year.' I need somebody who can shape an ax handle from a persimmon sprout, shoe a horse with a hunk of car tire, who can make harness out of haywire, feed sacks and shoe scraps. And who, planting time and harvest season, will finish his forty-hour week by Tuesday noon, then, pain'n from 'tractor back,' put in another seventy-two hours."
So God made a farmer.

God had to have somebody willing to ride the ruts at double speed to get the hay in ahead of the rain clouds and yet stop in mid-field and race to help when he sees the first smoke from a neighbor's place.
So God made a farmer.

God said, "I need somebody strong enough to clear trees and heave bails, yet gentle enough to tame lambs and wean pigs and tend the pink-combed pullets, who will stop his mower for an hour to splint the broken leg of a meadow lark. It had to be somebody who'd plow deep and straight and not cut corners. Somebody to seed, weed, feed, breed and rake and disc and plow and plant and tie the fleece and strain the milk and replenish the self-feeder and finish a hard week's work with a five-mile drive to church.
"Somebody who'd bale a family together with the soft strong bonds of sharing, who would laugh and then sigh, and then reply, with smiling eyes, when his son says he wants to spend his life 'doing what dad does.'"
So God made a farmer.

By Paul Harvey



Prayers of the Faithful
Harry Seelman's Funeral Mass
St. Peter's Cosgrove
April 14, 2014

Harry was nourished at the table of the Savior. Welcome him into the halls of the heavenly banquet. We pray to The Lord.

For his beautiful wife, Lucille, and beloved son, Allan, that they may be reunited again. We pray to The Lord.

For farmers and a bountiful planting season this year. We pray to The Lord.

For those that can't be with us today. We pray to The Lord.

For government officials and that they make good decisions, promoting peace and justice. We pray to The Lord.

For our deceased relatives, friends and for all those who have helped us, that they may have reward for their goodness. We pray to The Lord.

For those that have traveled to be with us today, they they have a safe return home. We pray to The Lord.

For the family & friends of Harry - that they may seek comfort & consolation. Heal their pain and dispel the darkness and doubt that come from grief. We pray to The Lord.

Read and Written by Amanda Seelman

Do Not Stand At My Grave And Weep

Do not stand at my grave and weep
I am not there. I do not sleep.
I am a thousand winds that blow.
I am the diamond glints on snow.
I am the sunlight on ripened grain.
I am the gentle autumn rain.
When you awaken in the morning's hush
I am the swift uplifting rush
Of quiet birds in circled flight.
I am the soft stars that shine at night.
Do not stand at my grave and cry;
I am not there. I did not die.

By Mary Elizabeth Frye

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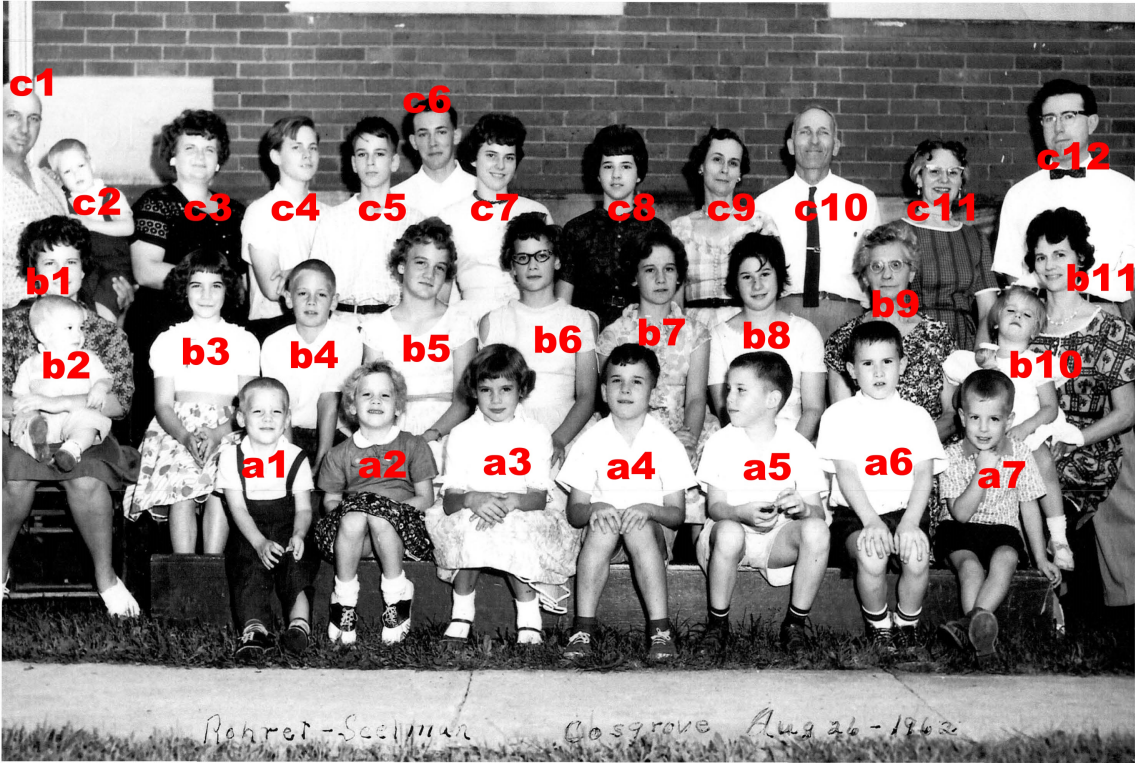
Rohrer - Seelman Cosgrove Aug 26 - 1962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