

A PATCHWORK
OF
MEMORIES

BY
DORIS BENTALL EMMERT

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OUR LIVES WERE DIFFERENT

We were born before television, before Penicillin, before polio shots, frozen foods, Zaxxon, plastic, contact lenses, Frisbees and the pill. We got married first and then lived together. How quaint can you be?

We were born before radar, credit cards, split atoms, laser beams and ballpoint pens; before party-hose, dishwashers, clothes dryers, electric blankets, air conditioners, drip-dry clothes—and before men walked on the moon.

I would like to dedicate this book to my four children Dennis Ray, Ruth Ann, Michael Robert, Chris Wayne, and their families, who have helped put this together by sharing their experiences both good and bad from time to time.

A journalist, I never was. Nor experienced in writing stories only for English Classes in High School. However, the memories in this book are of my Life Experiences and I have preserved them in my mind to share with my family.

To Cheryl Carleen, a granddaughter, I want to give special thanks for helping me put together this book and encouraging me in some of our conversations at night in bed when together. And to her Dad, Michael, who also helped with the book. I couldn't have done it without them.

*To my son Michael
who helped me put this
book together and to Lottis,
a lovely daughter-in-law
whom I love very much.
I love you both
Mom*

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In our time, closets were for clothes, not for "coming out of". Bunnies were small rabbits and rabbits were not Volkswagons. Designer jeans were scheming girls named Jean or Jeanne, and having a meaningful relationship meant getting along well with our cousins. We were born before house--husbands, gay rights, computer dating, dual careers and computer marriages. For us, time-sharing meant togetherness, not computers or condominiums. A chip meant a piece of wood; hardware meant hardware, and software wasn't even a word!

In 1940, "made in Japan" meant junk and the term "making out" referred to how you did on your exam. Pizzas, McDonalds, and instant coffee were unheard of. In our day, cigarette smoking was fashionable, grass was mowed, Coke was a drink and pot was something you cooked in. Rock music was a Grandma's lullaby and AIDS were helpers in the Principal's office. If we'd been asked to explain CIA, Ms., NATO, UFO, NFL, JFK, ERA or IUD we'd have said alphabet soup.

We hit the scene when there were five cent and ten cent stores, where you bought things for five and ten cents. Panther Store sold ice cream cones for a nickel or a dime. For one nickel you would ride a street car (trolley), make a phone call, buy a Pepsi or enough stamps to mail one letter and two postcards. You could buy a new Chevy Coupe for \$600, but who could afford one? A pity, too, because gas was eleven cents a gallon!

We are today's SENIOR CITIZENS, a hardy bunch when you think of how OUR world has changed and of the adjustments WE have had to make!



HOW IT WAS LONG AGO

It was Saturday, August 29, 1925, and my fifth birthday was going to be the next week on Wednesday, September 2. My parents, Ray and Pearl Bentall, my older sister Helen, Uncle Claude and Auntie Maurine Wagoner, had just returned from town (Adel) in our Model A vehicle. I was sitting on Uncle Claude's lap in the front seat and looking over across the corner to the little Country School House, Colfax #3, and saying to myself, "Next week on Wednesday I will be five years old and starting to school on Monday for the first time and I will start in the first grade."

COUNTRY SCHOOL DAYS

My parents boarded the country school teachers for many years because we lived 'katy cornered' from the school house. It was so close and handy for the teacher to be near, especially in the

winter time when they needed to start a fire in the stove of the one-room school house. On some of the very coldest days, Daddy would go over early and get the fire going before the teacher went to get things ready. Mother felt it was necessary for each teacher to put up her own lunch as she was usually busy at that time of the morning. One teacher, I remember, had trouble slicing bread as in those days bread was not sliced in the wrapper. Most of the teacher's preparation was done at the school house before coming home in the evening. They didn't need to bring much work home this way.



One year in the late 1920's a fight developed among the big boys at school. It was in the winter and our school yard was on a hill which made a nice place to use our sleds in the snow. At this time there were twin boys living in a Foster Home and coming to our school, but they did not have sleds of their own to use. It was easy to jump on the backs of another person who was starting down the hill and get a free ride. After a while some of the boys began to resent this and it started in fist fight. At the bottom of the hill it became a serious fight with bloody noses and such. The smaller boys tried to keep out of the way by climbing up a tree where they could

watch and still be out of the way. The teacher was a very small person and didn't know how to handle the situation so she sent for our father to help separate the boys and get them back into the school house. After some discussion, the teacher decided it was best to send all the people involved home for the rest of the day.

School houses in those days were one room buildings with wide wooden boards for floors. There were small desks in front for the small children and then gradually they got larger for the older children. Some of the games we played at recesses and noon were Jack's, Annie Over, Kick the Can, May I, and Soft Ball when the weather was nice. Since we lived so close to the school and could walk home at noon, my sisters and I seldom carried our lunches. Going home usually caused us to be late in getting back to school and the rest of the students were already outside and playing ball. By the time we came back we would have to start in left field and by the time we worked our way up to bat, the school bell would ring and we seldom got up to bat.

If for any reason Mother needed to be gone at the time school was over, we girls, Helen and I, would stay with the teacher and help wash the black boards, dust erasers, and spread sweeping compound on the floor to keep the dust down when we swept. I have a vivid memory of one particular time when we were to stay with the teacher and during our play hours my friend, Jean, encouraged me to walk home with her that evening since both of our mothers had gone to the same club that day. She had a good mile and a quarter to walk and I thought it

would be fun to walk with other kids going in the same direction. She wanted me to "cross my heart and hope to die" - and by doing this I was committed to go with her. It was fun walking with the school kids as they had fun together talking and playing along the way. Sometimes they would fill their dinner pails with grapes and apples from our orchard before starting up the road. My sisters and I were to stay with the teacher that evening until we knew Mother was home and since I had not done so, I needed to be punished. My mother came up to my friend's house and got me, but said I needed to go to bed without my supper. (However, I believe something was brought up to my room to eat before the evening was over.)



One teacher who boarded with us and knew I was skinny and very small for my age wanted me to gain some weight. The teacher had a chart and if I drank a glass of milk three times a day I could put three stickers (glasses of milk) on this chart each day. I think today that would be embarrassing to a child to do this in front of a school room of 20-30 students. It made me feel important, though, because it was something I got to do.

Country Schools had programs for holidays and this was an exciting time.

There were wires stretched out and put up on which curtains were hung to make a stage and two dressing rooms, one on each side of the stage. The parents sat at our desks and listened to the recitations, plays and songs which the teacher had given us to learn. We usually had two or three programs each year. Occasionally a Box Supper was held as well for our parents. The boxes were auctioned off to the highest bidder and they ate with the owner of the box. Some were really decorated very nicely, and the food inside was great. This helped earn money for the school to buy some needed library books and supplies.

One time the eighth grade class was to write a Description for English Class. This particular boy, I remember, described someone with two aprons on. Believe me, my face turned red while I was listening to his description. Mother asked me to wear an apron to school, or at any time. Girls always wore dresses in those days. But because we walked home for our lunch, I was to put on another apron to keep the first one clean. That is something I will always remember.

Diseases usually went through the schools fast as we were closely in contact with each other. I remember the Red Measles went through the school quite rapidly. Because of the measles, Helen and I both caught them at the same time. We were quite sick in those days with serious diseases. We were kept in the downstairs bedroom and the blinds pulled down to keep out the light. Helen was very sick to her stomach and I had lots of nose bleeds. Barbara was just a baby at that time and when she caught them from us, her baby bed was brought

down from upstairs and kept in the living room.

In the Spring and early Summer we had lots of wild flowers in the school yard. We picked violets and something we called Sheep Shanks. We learned we could eat the Sheep Shanks which we thought were quite good. In Winters we would cross the road to a frozen pond in one of the neighbor's pastures. We loved taking our sleds or even sliding in our boots on, onto this frozen pond.

Paved roads were not really very plentiful and there were not even many gravel roads. When rains came in the Spring the roads were very soft and had deep tracks. The maintenance crew would need to put planks in the tracks so the cars could get through some of the roads. I can remember my dad going up to the Speedway as the highway was called then, to go to church and driving on planks.

Mowing the lawn was done by pushing a reel mower. We had a large lawn and Helen and I would take turns pushing and pulling the mower. One would pull and the other push to make it easier. On hot summer days, we put a wash tub filled with water out in the sun to warm. Then in the afternoon we girls would put on our swim suits and cool off.

We seldom had a teacher for more than one year at a time, and that made several teachers in our eight years at country school. I'm not quite sure as to the reason, except it possibly could be because of wages, or even moving to a school closer to their home. When I was in the sixth grade, our teacher drove several miles to teach and she came to school by

horse and buggy, depending on the weather. She would tie her horse up to a tree at the bottom of the school yard. The next two years her brother, Clair Emmert, taught us. He was very good with math. On Friday afternoons, we would have a Spelling Bee or maybe work math on the board. Once a week we would have drawing and occasionally in the mornings we would open with Music and/or exercises while standing beside our desks. Country school was great and something anyone that attended one will always remember. We were required to take seventh and eighth grade exams at the County Courthouse in Adel before graduating and going on to High School. The student in town schools were not required to do this, but I'm glad we had the opportunity. In the seventh grade we would go for two days in February and again two days in May. Then also do the same thing in the eighth grade. This was a treat as I got to stay with my grandparents in town when we took the exams.

HIGH SCHOOL DAYS

I started High School when I was hardly thirteen years old and can remember some parents thinking this was a bit young. My parents considered having me take the eighth grade over just to make sure I was ready to start to High School, but when September 1933 came, there was a Bus starting a route to Redfield Consolidated School. This was bought an old time bus with bench seats along the sides of the bus. Sometimes there were more students than space to sit on the seats, so the boys would always grab one of the younger children or

a smaller person to hold rather than hold a larger or heavy person. I was small for my age so I was one that was held a lot of times. There were no heaters in the bus so the driver allowed us to take warm bricks (which we warmed in the ovens at home before starting out early in the mornings) with us to put our feet on and keep them warm. Our ride to school usually started at 7:30 A.M. and school started at 9:00 A.M. This made the rides long in the winter time. Before the ride home in the afternoons the Bus Driver would take our bricks into the furnace room at the school house and get them nice and warm for our rides home.

Some of the activities I took in High School were music which consisted of Mixed Chorus, Girls Glee Club, High School Operettas, Class Plays and Declam. The subjects consisted of Math, Science, English and either Home Economics or Manual Training. These were required the first two years, then the last two years we chose either Normal Training Courses, Secretarial Courses or College Preparatory classes. I tried out for Band my Freshman year as my grandparents loaned me a saxophone which had been my aunt's. But it was quite difficult to be in many activities when we lived in the country about seven miles from school. Most of the activities were practiced during school time hours except for sports. I tried out for Basketball my Freshman year, also, but it was difficult to get rides home since families in those days had only one car and it meant more miles to drive for them.

We didn't have hot lunches then so we took sack lunches each day. When I was a "green freshman" some adminis-

trators called one of us girls and one boy out in the hallway. Scared? Yes, but they only wanted to see if we were tall enough to reach the shelves they were putting up to place our lunch sacks on.

LIFE AT HOME ON THE FARM

My parents worked very hard on the farm. They raised chickens, geese, cows, horses, pigs, cats and we always had a dog. There was one barn, a corncrib, granary shop, garage, chicken house, brooder house, milk houses, and a cobhouse. In the mornings someone usually needed to go out to the pasture to bring in the cows for milking. It was a half mile out to the pasture and if the cows were at the far end, it could be 3/4 of a mile. Mother often went in the mornings in the summer time as it was a nice walk when the weather was good. As my sisters and I got older, then it was one of our chores, especially in the evenings. We had chores of feeding the cows, horses, chickens, gathering eggs, putting the separator together, and getting in the fuel for our heating and cook stoves. One of the chores I didn't learn to do was milk the cows. For some reason I couldn't get the milk to come and besides, I would rather do other things than milk cows. Our Daddy used to tell us that when we learned to milk cows, he would teach us to drive the car, but I decided it wasn't that important for me to drive and that I would wait until my boyfriend would teach me to drive. Gathering eggs wasn't a favorite chore of mine either. I just knew the roosters didn't like me anymore than I liked them. We had geese roaming the orchard and they would come right up to the gate which we needed to go through to go to the

outside toilet. They did a lot of honking which was something I didn't care for. For a while we had an incubator in the cellar and mother would fill it with fertilized eggs. We liked to look through the glass window and watch the little chickens hatch.

Our younger sister, Barbara, was born when Helen and I were six and eight years of age. We all grew up knowing how to help our parents with all the work. We learned how to work in the fields with horses and tractors later. There was corn to cultivate, oats to harvest and hay to make. I learned how to drive horses to cultivate corn along with Daddy close by with another team. I have ridden on the binder to cut oats and can remember it sometimes was necessary to cut oats on the fourth of July and we had to stay home to help. When the oats were ready to cut we rode the binder which tied the bundles by machine and then someone needed to set them up in shocks (several together) and then put one on top to keep the rain from getting the oats wet before threshing.

Our father owned a threshing machine and would go from neighbor to neighbor in our community doing their oats. There were approximately 10-12 men on the crew and each housewife would prepare a big meal for all the workers. A place would be set up outside for the men to wash before dinner. After the crew finished at one farm, the ladies would always ask what they had for dinner that day or days, as sometimes they would be at one home more than one or two days. The ladies didn't want to have the same things to eat so would plan their meals accordingly. There would be food and more food when it

was threshing time as they tried to outdo each other.

At haying time we sometimes drove horses or the tractor to pull the loose hay up in the haymow with a hay fork. This always smelled so good when the fresh hay was cut and time to be put in the barns. When we fed hay to the horses and cows, it was always loose hay and we would use a pitchfork to throw it down from the haymow to the animals.

It was fun to jump down from the haymow onto the piles of hay when we played in the barns. One memory I have was when my friend Jean, Barbara, and I were playing in the haymow and I jumped out first without very much hay down below. I guess I disappeared and the girls wondered what happened. They found me outside the door with my tongue hanging out and bleeding profusely. I nearly lost the end of my tongue and couldn't eat solids for quite a while.

Corn picking used to be done by hand and elevated into corn cribs. There would be young men going through the countryside asking to help farmers pick their corn. There were two young men from Missouri who came back two or three years as they liked working at our place. Their names were Arthur Bennett and Ralph Wilson. Mothers boarded corn pickers as well as school teachers.

We three girls had two aunts, Catherine and Jane Wagoner, who were Mother's sisters. Since they had no home as their Father had died several years before and Grandma Wagoner lived with her children, they also stayed with us and their brother Claude and family on

weekends. You can see we always had plenty of activity going on at our home. Since Uncle Claude lived only one and one quarter mile away we were very close. The men would cut each others hair and many times we would get together for butchering, making ice cream, shooting fire crackers etc. many times. We didn't have air conditioning or even fans in those early years. Sometimes at nights when it was very warm in our bedrooms, we would lay blankets down on the upstairs porch and sleep out there.

Butchering was a fun time for us youngsters. The men would hang the hog up after it was stuck and killed to bleed. It was then dipped into a barrel of boiling hot water and then scraped to remove the hair. After cutting up the hog the lard was rendered in an open kettle. The loins were fried down and put in crocks covered with fresh lard. Sausage was stuffed in casings which were cleaned with fresh lard. I can remember the pudding meat which we had on our pancakes for breakfast. The hams and bacon were cured and hung in the milkhouse until time to use. We usually had two large gardens and canned everything that could be. We also canned the fruit from our apple and cherry trees. We had lots of grape vines as well from which mother made grape juice to drink. In those days we didn't have pressure cookers but canned in a hot water bath in a boiler. Later mother bought a Conservo which was done by steam and this held eighteen quarts at a time.

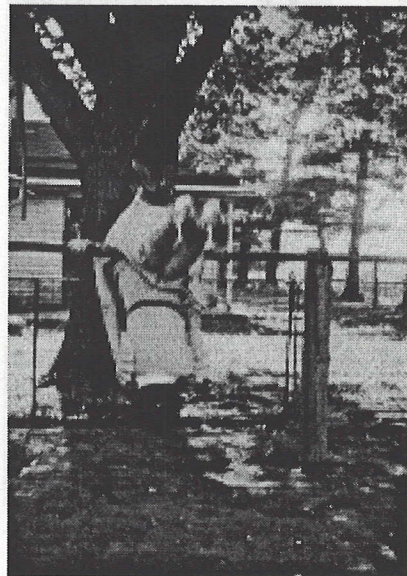
In the hot summers our cooking was done on a kerosene stove which had three burners. This made our kitchen a little cooler than the cook stove would have. We had a kitchen sink for washing

hands, but not dishes. After a meal our dishes were washed in dishpans on the table. There was a small hand pump at the sink from which we pumped water from the outside cistern into two reservoirs in the kitchen. This was then heated by the cookstove for baths in the bathroom. We had no furnace or basement, only a cellar below two rooms of the original house. This was a place to store our canned goods potatoes and things from the garden. We had no refrigerators, so our cream was stored in the cellar to keep it cool. This was picked up once or twice a week by a trucker who hauled it to the creamery. Some of the cream was saved for our use on the table and also to churn our butter. The cream was put into a wooden barrel-like churn and someone would turn the handle until the butter came. It was then worked in a large bowl until all the buttermilk was pressed out of it. We made our own cottage cheese as well, as it wasn't sold in stores then. Milk was saved and put in a large crock, then left covered until it soured. It would be put into a cloth bag and hung on the clothesline to drain. We learned how to dry sweetcorn in the sun and stored it for use later. On Saturday evening we used to go to town. We took eggs and sometimes cream to trade for groceries. I guess this is why they used to say they went to town to do the trading. We killed our own chickens to eat, but this was one thing our mother didn't feel she could do. When Grandma Wagoner was staying with us, she would kill the chickens unless our Daddy was around. Grandma would hang the chickens on the clothesline and using a butcher knife, cut off their heads and leave them hang for bleeding. One day Mother wanted fried chicken for supper and no one was

around to kill them for her, so I offered to do it. She really didn't know if she could trust me or not to get the job done. But I did it exactly like my grandma and found that it was my job after that, when no one was around.

Poppa Papered the Parlor. We didn't have a radio for quite

We girls took piano lessons from different ladies who toured the country and wanted to give lessons. These were people who were very good at teaching music and we only took lessons in the summers. Our lessons cost 50 cents for a full hour. I really enjoyed playing the piano but was accused of getting out of doing dishes and other jobs at times. My Aunt Catherine got me started playing the piano for Sunday School when she was directing the singing. Later the church purchased a pump organ and my friend Joyce Walker played the organ and I played the piano at the same time, which worked out very well.



Sundays were really busy days. I can't see how people got everything done and still went to church twice. There were lots of chores to do both in the morning and evening like washing the separator and dishes before going to church and

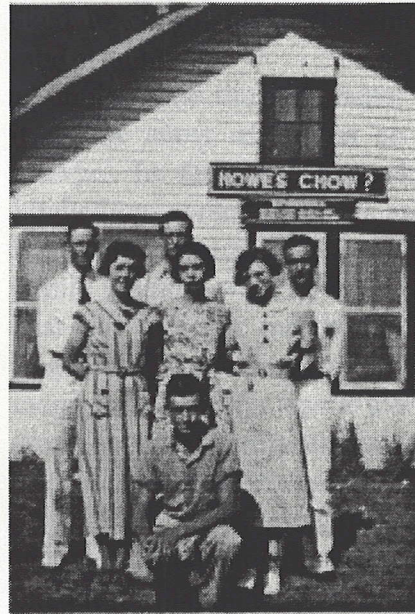
getting a family ready. After church sometimes we had company for dinner and had to do the cooking on the cookstove. This left a short time for visiting and then chores again before going to church in the evening. Our parents really worked very hard and we didn't have the conveniences that families have today. Sometimes us girls would invite our friends to come home with us and that was a great time. We had a hitching post outside our yard, which we used to tie horses up to when they were going to be used again. This was something us girls liked to play on. We turned flip-flops and all kinds of things. Daddy made a tennis court in the orchard for some of the young people that liked to play tennis and ball. Even though he didn't have any boys of his own, he like having the young people around. We girls liked to climb up on the chicken house and watch when the fellows were playing tennis. This was a no-no but we tried it when we thought no one was watching us.

Seed corn in those days wasn't bought. The farmers would pick out some really nice looking ears of corn when they were cribbing it from the fields after picking. These were stored upstairs in the granary and some rainy day in the winter the family would go out and hang those ears up by binder twine. Then before spring planting, we shelled those ears of corn and sacked it for planting.

To make rope, our dad used a home-made wooden frame fastened to the garage. He took lots of strands of binder twine just the length of the rope he wanted. There was a crank on this wooden frame that he could turn which twisted the twine into a tight rope.

We owned an Edison which could also be changed to make a Victrola for listening to musical records. I liked listening to our records and especially remember one "When Poppa Papered the Parlor". We didn't have a radio for quite a while but when we did, we spent many a nice evening after the dishes were done listening to the programs. Before we had a radio, I can remember going up to our close neighbors to listen to theirs which had a large horn on top of a box where the sound came from.

People didn't go on vacations very often in those days. A couple of times, our parents went to Annual Conference and another time they went to Pennsylvania to visit some of their relatives and see where they used to live before coming to



Iowa. Another time the folks took us girls along to Clear Lake for a few days vacation. Uncle Frank's, Mother's brother and wife, Uncle Ralph's, Daddy's sister and husband, and our two aunts, Catherine and Jane, went along with their boyfriends. We had a very nice time but I was quite young and Bar-

bara was just a small baby. One of the great times we had when we were Junior highers and youth was to go to Pine Lake Camp. There are many good memories about our times up there with some of our leaders. I went up as a Leader after I was married and had my family. This was one or two summers and it was a great experience.

Our Fourth of July picnics were important to everyone in the community. We used to go to the Lee Myers' pasture where there were tents set up and enough food for everyone. There were races of all kinds for the children and ribbons given for rewards. Some of these ribbons were made by my parents before going to the celebration. There was pop in bottles which sold for five cents. I can remember how us girls would shake the strawberry pop just to see it fizz. House cleaning was a big thing when we were growing up. One room was done at a time by taking the carpets outside on the grass or sometimes we hung them on the clothes line and used a carpet beater to get the dust out of them. We also put new wallpaper on the walls. Sometimes we would just clean the wallpaper that was already on the walls. We used a cleaner which looked like pink clay. We rubbed it over the walls and it cleaned the paper very well. When we cleaned the kitchen, it was a fun thing for us girls. We took everything out of the kitchen except the cookstove. Then we scrubbed the linoleum well, let it dry, and then varnished it. It took a couple of days to dry so we had to use the kerosene stove which was moved into the dining room

Snow storms were exciting times for the young. These were big storms because there weren't snow plows like we have today. The roads didn't have ditches to push the snow from off the roads into. It collected on the roads and we were snowbound for maybe a week at a time. One winter when we were snowed in at home and after the chores were done in the morning, Daddy came in and played card games with us girls. Mother worked at making rugs on a wheel and Helen helped her. We spent time playing out in the snow and sometimes we made ice cream out of the pretty white snow as it fell. I can't remember how it was made but mother would bring in some pretty white snow as it was falling and we would have some ice cream made with the snow. I have seen a few recipes since then but I am not sure how it was done.

One time the maintainer could not push the snow as it was so deep and heavy. In fact it was stuck. Daddy hitched up a team of horses and was going to try to see if they could pull it out. While the men were trying to decide the best way to get it out, the team was getting restless standing by and they decided to run. This was a team of good work horses but very excitable at times. They started running and ran the tongue of the hitch into the engine of the maintainer. This of course delayed getting it out of the snowdrift for another week or so which kept the road closed.

OUR COUNTRY CHURCH

Our church was nearly three miles from where my family lived in my childhood days. There weren't very many extra meetings during the week

like there are today. The building was heated by coal furnace and we needed to hire a Janitor to care for the church. There was one hot air register in the main part of the building near the pulpit in front. Our Dad was superintendent of the Sunday School for a while and this meant we had to get to church quite early each Sunday morning. All the adults had mail boxes at the back of the sanctuary and I remember folding the papers to put in these boxes before Sunday School started. There was a desk up at the front of the church which had several shelves above which held some reading material. Some were books for children to read as well. The baptistry was below the pulpit. The Sunday School classes for the youth and adults were held mostly upstairs on the main floor. The beginners were taught by Ida and Nina Messamer in the back room behind the pulpit. The Primary and Junior class, taught by Aunt Alice Walker, was downstairs. She was always called Aunt Alice by everyone as I remember and she really was my Great Aunt Alice Walker. Later in life when I was playing the piano for church services and in the young peoples class, we met in the south west corner room upstairs. The name of our Group was the C.I.C's. This meant 'class in the corner'. My parent's class was called the Livewires and the middle age group was called the Gleaners. Our grandparents were separated with the ladies in one area of the sanctuary, while the men were up in the corner of the sanctuary. Because of this the men were known as the A-men corner while the women were called the Willing Workers.

Once a year an evangelist was invited to come to our church for two weeks of

meetings. I was twelve years old when I joined the church and was baptized.

We used to get Sunday School papers for our Junior Sunday School Class. Sometimes on the back of these papers there would be quilt patterns. There would be one each week and we saved each one until we had them all. After transferring them onto material my sister Helen and I would embroider them. Included was a pattern for a picket fence. This was only partly finished and I think my sister has it in her chest today.

We had several lay ministers at church, rather than one pastor as we do today. There was Orlo Messamer, A.M. Stine, J.B. Spurgeon, O.F. Shaw, L.A. Walker, T.U. Reed and Mrs. Reed filled in sometimes. We young children liked when the Reeds spoke as it was a much shorter service. Sometimes the others got carried away, especially with their prayers. In those days we knelt at the benches for prayers and we got very restless during the long prayers.

YOUTH DAYS

One of the times I went to camp I rode up with a boyfriend I had dated some, and his sister and her boyfriend. But I would have preferred to have gone with Bob Emmert. While at camp he did ask me to ride home with him though and from then on it was like we were a couple. Bob was working for his sister and brother-in-law, Anna Mae and D.L. Royer at this time.

After High School graduation, I went to A.I.B. Commercial College and stayed with Aunt Jane and George who



were living in Des Moines. I usually came home on weekends - sometimes by bus to Adel, and then on Sunday evenings after church Bob would take me back to Des Moines again. About the first of the year in 1938, I was offered a job in Adel so I didn't go back to A.I.B to finish my year. I worked at several jobs in Adel that year and until 1940 I stayed with Grandpa and Grandma Bentall while there. Bob and I were dating during this time and after we had been dating a couple of years, we thought about getting married. But we didn't have big jobs and no place really to live, so we kept working with the idea of marriage in our minds. We went to a few movies for entertainment, played table games at home and went to the State Fair with other couples. We didn't have a lot of money but we enjoyed doing things with our friends who were dating. Christmas Caroling was fun even though we didn't have heaters in our cars, and we had to use blankets to keep our legs and feet warm.

from Bob. He was working in a factory (Burgess Cellulose) and was making wages that he felt we could live on and so he asked

I was working for Grandma and Grandpa Bentall in Adel when the movie *Gone With the Wind* was released. Everyone was going to see it. However, it was in the big theaters and this meant we needed to go to Des Moines to see it. Since prices were cheaper during the daytime hours, Bob and I decided we needed to go in the afternoon. The movie was a longer one than usual during these days and the cost was more. It was a great movie and we felt good that we could afford to see it.

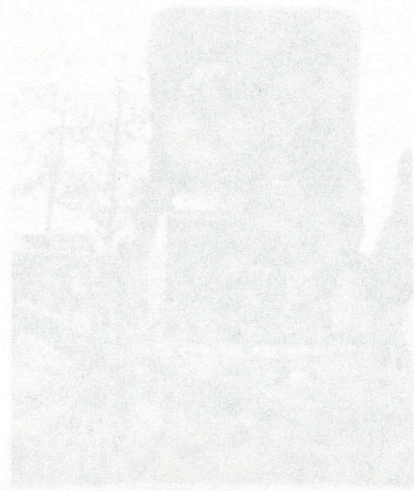


In 1940 Bob had an offer to work for a farmer in Illinois where one of his sisters lived. He could work for \$40.00 a month which was \$10.00 more a month than he was making at home. He decided to take the job and so started out in his car, a Nash which had been given to him by his mother. It was the one his family used many years as their family car. But the Nash had lots of problems and conked out on him a few miles east of Des Moines. He decided to take the train then and his car was towed back to Adel and I really think junked. But he arrived in Freeport, Illinois and his sister

and husband Charles met him and took him out to the farm where he was going to be working. This was a dairy farm and the people were very good to him. On weekends he would hitch a ride into Freeport to spend some time with his sister and family. We kept the mailman busy with letters back and forth for that year. I was working in Des Moines at that time for a Florist and his wife. Bob left Iowa in March of 1940 and I was asked to come to Freeport over the Fourth of July to spend some time with him. I stayed with his sister Vera and family and we had some great times together. I went by train and it was my first train ride. I guess I really didn't know very much about traveling at that time as when the conductor walked through the cars asking if anyone would like to have a pillow (it was a night ride), I said yes, but could not understand why he kept standing there and looking at me. I found out later he was expecting a tip. Yes, I was a little country girl and didn't know all these things I was expected to know. Then in the last part of August, I was surprised when I walked back into Aunt Jane's where I was living while working in Des Moines, and found Bob sitting in the living room. I dropped to the floor with surprise. He had hitched a ride from Freeport to Des Moines and I was never so glad to see him. We were getting ready to go out to Adel to help Grandma Wagoner celebrate her birthday. Mine was coming up in a few days, so it was a double surprise for me. He didn't get home for the Christmas holiday that year but we used the mail to correspond and to keep in touch. In February I had an exciting letter from Bob. He was working in a factory (Burgess Cellulose) and was making wages that he felt we could live on and so he asked

me to set a date. It didn't take me very long to do so and we were making plans then - back and forth by letter to have a wedding on April 27, 1941. He had found an upstairs apartment and it was ready for us when we were married. We were going to live in Freeport, Illinois.

we left my parent's home. It was evening by this time so we drove to Ames, Iowa, ate at a little restaurant and spent our first night in a Hotel. The next day we drove as far as



Dubuque and stayed that evening in a little cabin. There weren't Motels in those days like we have today. The next morning we left for our new home. It was very nice. It had a large kitchen, good size bedroom, walk-in closet and our own bath. There was another room on this floor also but the owners of the house had a daughter who used this room. On Wednesday morning Bob returned to work at the Burgess Battery Factory where he had a job and I had fun unpacking our wedding gifts and making our little apartment look homey and comfortable. We had the use of a vacant lot for a garden and there was a Nursery down at the corner of our block where

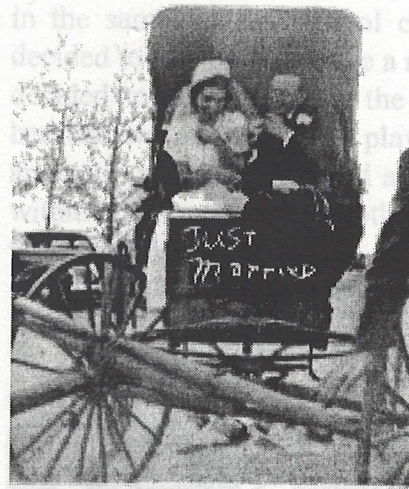
WEDDING DAYS AND LIFE AFTER



It was a beautiful Sunday and my folks were very involved with our plans for a three o'clock wedding at the Panther Creek Church. My sister Helen was the maid of honor and Bob's brother, Dale, was best man. Joyce Walker played the piano and Jean Myers sang *I Love You Truly* and *Because*. We were married by Lawrence Walker who was one of the ministers at the church at the time. The reception was held in the church basement and when we came out to take pictures a buggy was waiting to take us



for a ride. This was pulled by a car instead of horses, however. The roads were gravel and very dusty, so after a couple of miles, they stopped and Jean and her fiancé took us to our car. After changing clothes and packing the car for our trip to our new home in Illinois, we left my parent's home. It was evening by this time so we drove to Ames, Iowa, ate at a little restaurant and spent our first night in a Hotel. The next day we drove as far as



Dubuque and stayed that evening in a little cabin. There weren't Motels in those days like we have today. The next morning we left for our new home. It was very nice. It had a large kitchen, good size bedroom, walk-in closet and our own bath. There was another room on this floor also but the owners of the house had a daughter who used this room. On Wednesday morning Bob returned to work at the Burgess Battery Factory where he had a job and I had fun unpacking our wedding gifts and making our little apartment look homey and comfortable. We had the use of a vacant lot for a garden and there was a Nursery down at the corner of our block where

we could buy seeds, plants and flowers to plant. We had a beautiful garden and Bob really enjoyed working there in the evenings when he came home from work. In the back yard of our Apartment was a park. This was called Taylor Park, and they had 4-H fairs and also circuses there from time to time. Sometimes I walked in the park with Mrs. Giles, the owners of our apartment, and we would look for dandelions. Mrs. Giles taught me how to cook these greens and they were really quite good. I learned to can vegetables which kept me busy. We had the use of the laundry room in the basement which was handy.

Our first visitors from Iowa were my grandparents, grandma and grandpa Bentall. We borrowed some single cots and put them up in our kitchen and let our company use our bed. My parents came with my two sisters later in the summer. Bob's mother, Ida Zuck came to visit us as well as her daughter Vera and family. They had two little boys, Emmert and Robert. Vera and Charles and family were very close to us and we spent lots of time together. In September Jean and Homer Burgus came to spend a couple of days with us on their Honeymoon. We didn't get out to Adel to their wedding, as I was having a physical problem. I had a miscarriage and things were not going too well.

During our first few months of marriage, however, we made several trips to Iowa. The first one was to Bob's sister, Ada's wedding. She was married to Dick Johnson and they were going to be living in the state of Maine. We were there for a few days before going back to Illinois. Later in the year we returned to Iowa for my sister Helen's wedding to

Cecil Reed. This was in December and it was cold and snowy.

Our apartment was on the east side of town and across the street was a vacant lot which has some ponds in it. At night we would go to bed listening to the frogs croak and it was so relaxing. Sometimes in the evening we would drive up town and watch people. This was some of our entertainment.

We became acquainted with three other couples from the Brethren Church in Freeport. They were all our age and in the same Sunday school class. We decided to get together once a month and decided to call ourselves the V-8 club because we met regularly playing cards and eating. Each of us had a little baby within six months of each other and they were all boys.



In the next Spring Charles was doing some remodeling on a house only half a block from their home and asked if we would like living in it until he had it finished. This gave us more room so we decided to make the move. I was pregnant with our first child, Dennis, at this time and we were going to be needing more space.

During the late summer and early fall Bob had an accident at work. He was

unloading stacks of paper from a rail car when some of the stacks of paper, which were frosty and frozen, began to slide. They knocked Bob down and he ended up with a concussion. He was taken to the hospital where I would be going to deliver our baby. I stayed with Vera and Charles at nights as we had no phone and it was my due time to deliver. I would walk up to the hospital in the day to spend time with Bob while waiting for my time to deliver. The evening of October 7, I realized the time was near so my Doctor told me to check into the delivery floor. I was on the third floor and Bob was on the first. Dennis was born the next day about five p.m. Vera had spent the night with me and then Charles would stay with their little boys. During our time in the Hospital Bob and I would write notes to each other and the nurses would deliver them back and forth for us. Since Vera was with me during delivery, I have always said she was playing the part of Dennis' father. After ten days the whole family went home together. My mother came to Freeport with some friends and she took care of all of us for several days. Daddy, Barb and Grandma Wagoner came to Freeport to take mother home then and to see the new baby.

In 1947 and 1948 we added two more
In the Spring of the next year, 1943, Bob was offered a job on a dairy farm outside of Freeport, so we moved again into a two story farm house. He was doing what he had done most of his life again, milking cows and working in the fields. This was a little different for us as we needed a cookstove and a refrigerator. In town we had used ice boxes and bought ice to keep our food cold. We bought a fridge -a Stuart-Warner-one of the first to have a freezer area in

the bottom. We borrowed money from Vera and Charles to pay for our new fridge and paid them something each month.

Sometimes on our days off we would go out along the railroad tracks just a short distance from our home and pick up coal that had fallen off the rail car as it went around the bend. Other times we would drive along the roads and find asparagus and berries of all kinds. While living here on the farm near Freeport we had another little baby. A girl this time and we named her Ruth Ann. Mother came back to help out this time also. While there we had learned of another dairy farm needing help which was in West Des Moines, IA. Our parents felt it would be nice to have us closer to home, so after we had checked this our we decided to pack up again and move to Iowa. I rode home with Mother and Daddy since they had a good heater in their car and we had two little children to take with us. Bob waited until the next day and drove our car through then. We had sent our furniture out with Delbert Wicks who had a stock truck and was in the area at that time.

We had a nice little country home in West Des Moines on the same grounds that the Manager and his family lived. We had a very large garden spot where Bob spent a lot of his time off and he loved to experiment with different things such as peanuts, sweet potatoes, cauliflower etc. He always had a good garden and plenty of vegetables to give away. We received half a hog every so often and all the milk we could use. We lived there for two years and then talked with a planning committee of the Panther Creek Church about buying our own

farm. They helped us and we made a down payment on an eighty acre farm which was five miles west of the town of Adel. And about the same distance from the Panther Creek Church of the Brethren which is where we both went to church in our growing up years.

Some of the neighbors and friends of the community helped us get started by giving us a breeding hog etc. The house was old and in need of repairs, so the minister, Paul Miller, recruited some help and replaced the shingles on the house. We added electricity as well. Later we did more repairs and put in running water and a bath in the mid 1950's. We were fortunate to have an excellent spring on the farm and this made it easier to put running water into the house. Some of the improvements that we made to the farm were putting in terraces on the land which were set up by the A.S.C.(agricultural soil conservation service) office. This went well until we needed to hire our harvesting to be done by persons with larger equipment than we had. The larger machines couldn't get through the rows when it was terraced so eventually they were taken out.

In 1947 and 1948 we added two more little boys to our family. Michael and Chris. This made expenses more and Bob took to the road by selling seed corn, nursery stock and encyclopedias. I started working in town during the winters so I could be home in the summers with the children. This worked out quite well as the children grew and when they were older, I worked full time. The children found jobs with the farmers making hay, mowing lawns etc. They would walk down the road one to one

and a half miles pushing the mower just to earn some money. They made hay for the neighbors and did odd jobs which they could find.

Some of the ways Bob worked to support the family was raising Hy-line chickens. We fixed up one of the buildings to house several hundred baby chicks. Then after they were raised and laying eggs, we sold the eggs to the Hy-line Company. The chickens needed to be watched for any diseases. Not having running water meant carrying water from the well to the chickens every day.

Bob also sold for Stark Bros. Nursery. He loved selling and did quite well in different products. He planted apple, peach, and cherry trees on our farm. One year I canned ninety some quarts of peaches. The Bing Cherry and Royal Ann Cherry trees he planted in our front yard. Many times the neighbors would stop and get a hat full of cherries to eat on their way home. They were delicious! We didn't have a basement but we had a cave, so all these fruits and vegetables were canned and stored in the cave.

To help out with finances, Eva York asked me if I would work for her a few days a week. We cleaned house and did some canning and things like that. She paid me \$.50 and hour. One day she took me to Des Moines to buy some material to sew for my family. I bought some printed flannel and made shirts for Bob and all three boys just alike. Chris was going to Kindergarten at this time and he would get off the school bus at the York's about noon. Maybe take a nap in the afternoon and be ready to go home with me in the late afternoon.

Verle was picking corn at this time and he came in for dinner one day saying he had found a red ear of corn and this meant he got to kiss the cook. I got the kiss that day.

I worked for the news office by typing a Drug Catalog, working for Conard Freight Lines, and one day I was called and asked if I would be interested in working for the County Superintendent's office in the Courthouse. I started working there in January of 1964.

We usually had some farm cats and a dog. Michael was really attached to our dogs but we lived on a busy gravel road which later was black topped and we lost a couple dogs from cars etc. going by. One time after losing the pet dog, we took Michael to the animal rescue place to choose another pet. Since everyone was gone from home during the day time, the new pet broke his chain and ran away. We put an ad in the local paper and found it in Earlham, IA. The local veterinary in Adel had a friend who was a vet in Earlham and between the two of them, we found our pet again.

For several years - at least seven - the Wagoner family would bring ingredients to someone's home (usually Aunt Jane who lived in Des Moines and she had larger stoves and two ovens) and we would make lots of Christmas cookies. In the afternoon when the cookies were all baked, we would sit around the kitchen table where everyone could help decorate Christmas cookies. It was fun to see how the others would make faces on Santa Claus and the other shapes. Then we would put everything out on the dining room table and divide them equally. This consisted of Grandma

Wagoner, Aunt Jane, Aunt Catherine, Aunt Maurine, Mother, Helen, and I. This was done before our parents moved to Arizona and then afterwards also.

SOME FAMILY TRIPS

There really wasn't a lot of time or money to go on many trips with the children, but one of the first trips taken was when Dennis and Ruth Ann were very small. We wanted to go back to Illinois where we had first started out as a family. We decided to go at night when the children could sleep in the car. We made a bed on the back seat for Dennis and filled the floor space in the back with comforts to make another bed for Ruth Ann. When we got into the Cedar Rapids area we were hit by another car who had slid on an icy spot and slid into our car. This was a shock as we couldn't drive our car anymore on this trip. It had hit the back door and glass shattered all over the back seat. I had taken Ruth Ann up to the front seat during this time so she was okay but I am sure things could have been much worse had she been on her bed spot. Dennis was covered with broken glass but was also okay. The patrolman took us to the depot where we decided to go on with our trip but by the train. I was pregnant with Michael at this time and we knew we wouldn't be able to go back to Illinois again for some time.

One weekend we drove with the children to Clear Lake to spend some time there. We stayed in a Motel and I remember we could use a television in the room by putting quarters in the box. They really didn't run very long but it was a treat. Another time we drove to

Chicago to take the children to the National Science and Industry Museum. They enjoyed seeing and watching all the interesting things in that building. We had taken food along to cook on the way and would stop at picnic areas. We made pancakes for breakfast and the children liked this.

Twice we drove to Arizona for Christmas when my parents had moved down there where my sister Barbara and her family lived. The children tried to make up some of their studies ahead of time so they wouldn't get behind by being gone a few days. The first time we took them through the Carlsbad Caverns on the way home from Arizona and also into Old Mexico. In 1959 we made plans again to take a trip to Arizona for Christmas and decided to extend the trip by taking the children to California to see the San Diego Zoo and Disneyland, which we all enjoyed. Then we drove back to Mesa for Christmas to be with my parents and both my sisters and families. This was a Big Vacation for all the family and by spending special time with our four children. We went overboard in expenses and were running short of money coming back home, so we decided to drive straight through which was a long and hard trip. Our house was very cold as we had turned off the heat and also the water to keep it from freezing while we were gone. But it felt good to be home again.

On our trip to California we had an experience I'm sure all the children will remember. We stopped at the beach of the Pacific Ocean and were walking out in the sand. Some young boys behind us were really laughing and having a great time. Soon a huge wave came up on the

beach and we all had wet feet with lots of sand in our shoes. We had sand in our car for days afterward.

The children graduated from Adel High School and went on to college. Three graduated from McPherson College in Kansas. Chris decided that he only wanted to see what college life was like and wanted to pay his own way. After this he found jobs of different kinds and went into BVS (Brethren Volunteer Service) for two years. He was in N.I.H. (National Institute of Health) for six months during a mumps study and had his wisdom teeth extracted while there. He later went to Bridgewater, Va. where he did the remaining time at the nursing home there.

Dennis was married to Marcia Yoder in December 1964 after graduating from McPherson. They chose to then go to Africa on a three year term of BVS. This was a new experience for them and the packing was quite an ordeal. They left in 1966 and during this time they talked Bob and I into coming over to see them and as to what they were doing.

ACCIDENTS AND TRAGEDIES

Ruth Ann had taught school in Freeport, Ill. her first year after graduating from McPherson. Her boyfriend, Dave Peters, was working in Chicago at this time. They were engaged and decided to marry in June 1967. It was a beautiful day after a very bad electrical storm the evening before. After the rehearsal dinner when everyone had gone home, our family was sitting in the family room when the lightning struck the house. It came in on the washing machine sitting in the kitchen which was next to the wall of the family room. This caused some excitement for a while as Bob and my

Dad cut into the wall and got the fire out. The next day however during the wedding which was taped by Linnie Royer, we could hear the birds singing their little hearts out and the sun was shining brightly. Dave and Ruth Ann left then after the wedding and headed to Chicago where Dave was working.

Chris was next to get married. He had met a lovely girl, Connie Pepple at the Bridgewater Retirement Home while they were both working there. They were married at Bedford, Pa. which was Connie's home town, and where her church was located. It was a very beautiful wedding on April 25, 1970 and Bob and I drove to the wedding with Ruth Ann and little Daniel Ray who was our first grandchild. He was only eight weeks old. After the wedding we drove on up to Bath, Maine where Ada, Bob's sister, and her husband lived. It was a lovely trip and everything went well.

The next and last one to marry of our four children was Michael. He had gone to Tanzania after college graduation for his Volunteer Service. He was there two years when he acquired Hepatitis - the contagious kind. After he was well enough to travel, he was sent home to rest until he could get his strength and rehabilitate himself. He had met a lovely girl, Lottie Stevens, when at McPherson College and they had kept in touch with each other. She was born in Colorado and had spent part of her college years in Texas as well as McPherson. They were married in August 1972 in Kansas where her family was living at that time. It was a small wedding with an outdoor reception. My parents were on their way to Arizona after spending some time in Iowa and decided to stop in

Kansas to also be part of Mike and Lottie's wedding.

It has been good to know our four children have found their own homes now and have started their own families. Ruth Ann started our list of grandchildren. They have Daniel Ray born March 1, 1970, Nathan Scott born April 13, 1975, and Norita Joy born May 11, 1977. Dennis has a family of two - first Jeffrey Wayne born April 10, 1971, and Sherilyn Sue born March 13, 1973. Michael's family of four started out with Cheryl Carleen born January 25, 1976, Timothy Robert born April 8, 1978 and then a surprise to all of us were the twins Jonathan Michael and Nathaniel Mark, born February 24, 1983. Chris' family now consists of Eric Wayne born August 20, 1973, Shon Christofer born August 4, 1976 and Jody Patrick born October 4, 1978. After many moves for each of our families they are now located as follows: Dennis in Pennsylvania, Ruth Ann in Arkansas, Mike in Ohio, and Chris in Iowa.

ACCIDENTS AND TRAGEDIES

One of the first jobs Bob found to do to help out with expenses was helping the ASC to build portable grain buildings which the county was putting up north of Adel to store corn. These were put up in the fall and early winter. The ground was hard and Bob put his foot on the spade to sink it in the ground and ended up hurting his back very badly. From then on he had much pain at times and used treatments of all kinds to help. In later years he needed and had back surgery.

Dennis was young and one night before going to choir practice, he was out doing chores. It was getting dark and the hogs had gotten out. Our fences weren't very good and always needed repairing. This time he was chasing the hogs and trying to keep them corralled when he ran into a barbed wire fence and it hit him in the face. He carries the marks yet and has said many times, "I hate pigs! "

OUR CHILDREN'S DISEASES

Ruth Ann was always our little one to go barefoot and step on nails, glass etc. One time I drove down to the country school where Dennis had started kindergarten to pick him up after school was out. Ruth Ann and Michael went along. When we got back home, and I was helping the little ones out of the car, the car door was slammed on Ruth Ann's thumb. It was very painful and I tried to doctor it the best I could. I rocked her in the chair and decided we needed a Doctor's help with this. He needed to put several stitches in the thumb and she has to this day a damaged thumb.

Another time, she and Dennis went with their Dad out to the field to pick up corn. This was after the corn was picked and we needed to pick up the corn that was dropped by the picker. Ruth Ann was steering the tractor down the row and Bob and Dennis were picking up the ears on the ground. Ruth Ann's little foot slipped off the clutch and she fell towards the front of the wheel. Her Dad saw this in time and saved her from a terrible accident.

Michael was 22 months old and out of doors when his older brother and sister were going across the road to see the neighbor boy riding the horses. They did not see Michael nor did they think about watching him. He too ran across

the road and was hit by a car coming over the hill. He was thrown into the ditch and the driver of the car picked him up bringing him into the house. I had just gotten back from the doctor's office from taking the baby to the doctor with a cold, but we needed the doctor here now. When he came he told us it was a broken femur. He was taken into Blank Hospital where he lay in traction for three weeks, and then wore a cast for three weeks. He needed to learn to walk all over again.

At another time I was in the kitchen and heard his cry. Knowing it was trouble, I hurried into the living room and found him standing on a chair with his middle two fingers in a light socket. He had taken out the bulb and for some reason put his fingers in the socket. I grabbed him and the current went through me but released his little fingers. He carries the scar yet. As I have always said he too was one that got into situations. He was climbing one time and found a burr of some kind in one of the buffet drawers. Of course this went in his mouth and I knew he was choking, so I quickly grabbed him by his feet, patted him on the back and it went flying across the room.

THINGS THAT I WILL ALWAYS

Chris was in the hospital twice when he was less than a year. He had phenomena both times. The last time he was coming home from the hospital my parents who were still living in Adel said they would keep the baby for a couple of weeks until the others got over their colds. Then he tells me after many, many years that when he was in college he went to the Physics or Chemistry room to do some experimenting on his own. He learned everything he now knows

because he read on his own and was very interested in how things were made and constructed. But this one time his experiment blew up in his face. It caused him some blindness for a short time along with some burns. From what I have learned he knew how and what to do for those, so he has no marks today.

OUR CHILDREN'S DISEASES

Mumps went through the family rather quickly. Ruth Ann was the first to come down with them after her kindergarten picnic at the end of the year. Guess who was next - her mother. This was scary as they wanted me kept down in bed which was very hard with four small children, a garden to take care of and during hay making time. Mother Zuck came out to help which wasn't easy for her either. The next one to come down with mumps was Dennis. He was quite sick with them and we were concerned about this, but everything ended up being okay. Chris had them later, but we never did feel that Michael ever had the mumps.

Measles went through the family also but at different times. I think they all picked them up from school chums and if we kept the other children away from them, they didn't get them at the same time.

Chicken Pox was another disease that hit the family. Ruth Ann always had each disease the hardest and I remember bathing her and putting ointment on her pox to keep them from itching. We did for all of them but she seemed to take things the hardest. Mike was a baby -six months old- at this time and he even had them. He was learning to sit up and

would fall over against the screen on his little bed and break the scabs off.

This little bed I mentioned used to be my parents when Barbara was a baby. It was on wheels and had a screened top which could come off. This bed was used a lot and especially when our little sister wouldn't go to sleep and Helen and I were supposed to rock her to sleep. It had wheels and we would lay underneath so she couldn't see us. Later it was loaned to some neighbors, also Uncle Claude's when their twins, Donna and Donald, were born. When Bob and I were married and were living in West Des Moines we needed a bed for one of our little ones. Ruth Ann being just a few weeks old, she got the screened bed to use. Dennis had the crib. We also used it for Michael and I think we did a little while for Chris, but it was beginning to show A LOT OF WEAR!! The bottom which held the mattress was wobbly and would fall out sometimes if we weren't careful. I think that Ruth Ann can tell the story of shaking the bed for one of her little brothers when the corner slid out of the track and the baby was falling too. It really scared her.

THINGS THAT I WILL ALWAYS REMEMBER

When I was born, they tell me my hair was quite black. And in those days people always thought babies lost their baby hair and it would come in a different color. Someone had told them that if they would rub whiskey on my hair and head, that it would not come out and it would stay black. My parents had some whiskey at that time in the cupboard as my Grandfather Wagoner, who died be-

fore I was born, had been very ill and in lots of pain. In those days they gave them whiskey for severe pain when Doctors didn't have strong enough medicine for them. He was kept at home and the family were trying to make him comfortable.

The depression in the 1930's was very hard for everyone, but of all the things I remember my parents talking about the one I remember most is them talking about loosing many head of cattle because the feed they needed to buy did not have the nutrition that their stock needed.

One of our neighbors we had when our girls were growing up, raised sheep. In the Spring we could always hear the little lambs calling for their mothers. Occasionally one lamb would be rejected by its mother for some reason and our neighbor would ask us if we would like to feed it and raise it as our own. These were always fed by the bottle and after this one got quite good sized it began to cause some problems in the yard. When we wanted to play we could lead it outside by pretending we would give it some milk from the bottle. This time Barbara was leading it out of the yard when it made a lunge and caught the nipple in its mouth. Of course it swallowed the nipple and a day or two later we found the lamb had died.

In my younger days our telephone was on what we called "a party line" which could be for as many as eight to ten people. We knew each persons ring and sometimes would listen in to see what the neighbors were doing. When there was a fire in the community, they would ring a very long ring and everyone

would pick up their phones to find out the problem or where we were needed.

I planted a little garden one year since there was a space left over after Mother got everything in her spaces. She had some red beet seed and some salsify seed left over. I planted these and they grew very well. Later in the summer I made beet pickles out of the beets and then made salsify soup from the vegetable. We girls had a play house outside in an unused building, so I had a party and we had salsify soup and beet pickles.

We liked to go down to our grandparents for Christmas in Adel. One Christmas there was a sheet which covered the corner of the room and we were curious but not allowed to peak. Later we found out that the four oldest grandchildren each received a pretty red tricycle and we went down to the basement to ride them in the afternoon.

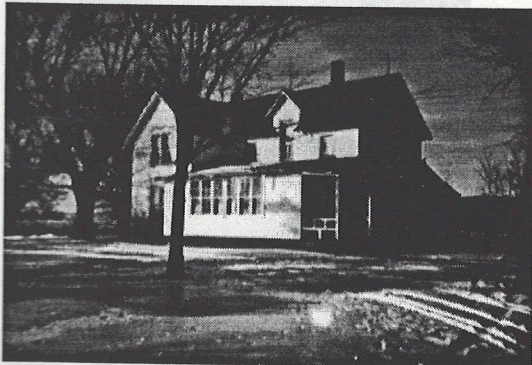
In the summer we usually washed our hair outside and then our Aunt Catherine would put waves in our hair. She would make a wave set out of flax seed - cooked it and this thickened which was used to set our hair.

I was interested in doing some embroidering when growing up and we of course used what we had to do this. We took seed corn sacks which were very coarse and would bleach the writing off these before we could mark anything on them to embroider. We sometimes needed to put them out in the sunshine on the grass to bleach those letters off. Then we would wash them several times before we could feel they were ready to use. Grandma Bentall taught me to cro-

chet and I made lots of doilies when living at their home in Adel.

During World War II there were several things that were rationed. Some of those items were sugar, gas, and tires. We were allowed only so much sugar per person in the household. When Ruth Ann was born, I remember Bob went down to the rationing board the same day so we could be allowed to get more sugar. Since tires and gas were rationed also, Bob and I came to Iowa once when we were living in Ill. with Vera and Charles to save both gas and tires.

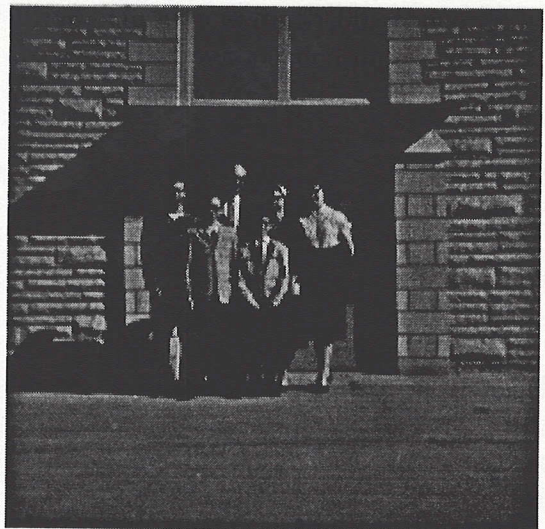
The price of food has gone up in price a lot over the years. One time we were taking our four children to the state fair in Iowa and we stopped at Custers Last Stand on the east side of Adel to pick up some hamburgers to eat on the way. We bought five hamburgers for \$1.00. Since there were six of us we needed more, so we bought ten for \$2.00.



The children liked pets and one we had for them was a parakeet. This was a real pet and would talk to me while I was hanging clothes up in the house in the winter time, but when the children would get home from school in the evening they would let the bird out of the cage and let it fly around. This time it got down on the floor with them when

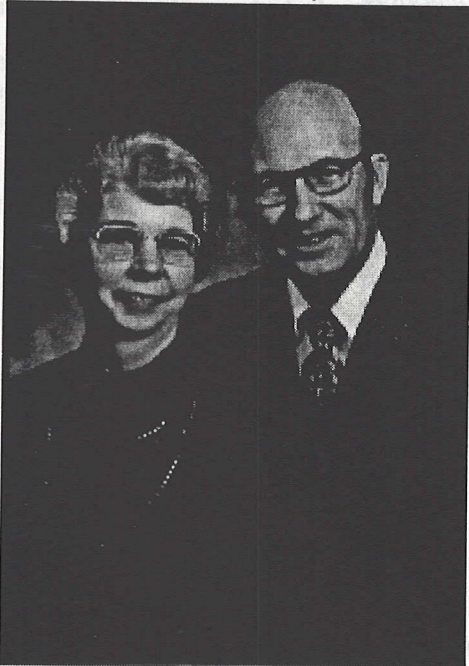
they were reading the funny page and when someone went to get up, the bird was in the way and got stepped on. There were lots of tears that evening.

Our daughter, Ruth Ann, really enjoyed the life on a farm. She could be found in the chicken house talking to the chickens - maybe even sitting in the corner holding one of the hens and talking to a particular one. She had always talked about wanting a horse and really wished her dream could come true. When she was in High School her Dad and I talked seriously about buying her one to ride. We eventually did and she had her white horse which she named Lady. Later on when she went to college and was home very little, she decided to sell the horse and use the money for her college education.



It was in the late 1950's when the children had gone to choir practice, Bob was at work in Perry and I had gone to Minburn with Jean to practice with Jeannette Reiste for a special musical number on Sunday. There had been a very severe rain storm during the evening and the children arrived soon after and found that a tornado had gone through our

building areas. The electric wires were all down and the barn was totally destroyed. Some of the calves were still inside under the debris. It didn't do damage to the house or other buildings, however, Ruth Ann's horse was pretty stoved up for a while because of being hit with flying timber from the barn. The neighbors could not believe this had happened as they felt nothing of the strong winds. Across the corner lived a Japanese lady with her husband and two little girls. She was alone with her girls at the time and could describe the storm exactly although she had never experienced a tornado before. It took two large pine trees from their front yard, removed their front door and she recalled hearing very strong winds, the quiet before she thought she heard a freight train going through the area. I am sure she couldn't have described the tornado better if she had known what it really was.



Miller, the pastor. Before he enrolled in a denominational college, preparatory to entering the ministry, he studied in an agricultural college. When the pastor goes calling, he carries his coveralls in his car. He works in fields and barns along with the man he is visiting. Sickness in the home will bring him to comfort the ailing and to milk the cows and feed the hens.

Even the parsonage has a farmhouse air. It stands in an eighty-acre plot purchased by the church and freed from debt in a single year. The land is farmed as the Lord's acre and profits go into the church purse.

Last year twenty-four persons joined the Panther Creek Church of the Brethren. The Sunday worship services and the monthly fellowship meetings draw good crowds. A Sunday-school class for young adults has been expanded into two sections. Demonstrating its faith in the farm family has brought to the church a greater enthusiasm for its good works among the members and increased respect in the community.

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Article from the Gospel Messenger

Land is the Tie That binds

Ralph A. Felton

The Panther Creek Church of the Brethren in Dallas County, Iowa, is bringing young families into its congregation by helping them get a start in farming. Under the guidance of the church placement committee, fourteen have purchased land, thirteen have been encouraged to form father-son partnerships and several others have set up homes on rented farmsteads.

The program started in 1945, when men were being released from the armed forces. Many wanted to farm but there were no lands for them in Panther Creek. During the war years, small acreages had been consolidated. The few farms on the market had been snapped up by investors who have always liked the good black soil in this section and who had cash to pay top prices. So the young men came home, looked around and moved on to other communities which offered more immediate opportunities.

Members of the Panther Creek Church were concerned about the exodus. Over the years they had seen four neighborhood churches fail when old standbys in the congregations retired, died or sold their lands and moved away. The same fate could befall their own church within a single generation if they allowed it to be stripped of future leaders. If they could offer a place in the community, they reasoned, young families would stay. And they would find a place in the church.

So Panther Creek Church set out to help young farmers. The initial step was to appoint a placement committee. Its duties were to locate farms, appraise the value, help secure purchase money, advise and supervise farm practices--without fee. Three churchmen accepted

assignments. New appointments, one each year, are for three-year terms. Pastor Paul Miller is the fourth committeeman.

Almost at once the committee held a waiting list of new families who were asking for assistance. Typical of the applicants were the Robert Emmerts.

Robert and Doris Emmert had gone to work on a dairy farm twenty miles away. But they wanted to come back to Panther Creek. The committee scouted an eighty-acre farm, and agreed that it was offered at a fair price. They arranged to borrow ninety per cent of the purchase price from their national church board. The young couple made a down payment of ten per cent.

The pastor and his men painted the house and put on a new roof. The committee sawed lumber and build a corncrib. Brood sows were a loan from a farmer in the congregation.

The Emmerts came home in 1946. Four years later they had six dairy cows and 340 chickens. Bob Emmert was selling fifty hogs a year. He had contoured his fields and had build one and one-half mile of terrace. Each spring and fall the committee reviews his progress and counsels him on the work ahead.

The Emmerts, now the parents of four children, are active in the church, and Doris, a good musician, plays for the services. They are quick to acknowledge their debt to the placement committee, and Doris adds, "Bob and I hope we can help some other young couple get started here in the same way the church helped us."

No two families present the same problems and counselors often have to dig deep for the right solutions. That is when their own farming experiences have been valuable. No amateurs were writing the rules for Verle York when he made hogs pay for a forty-acre farm in two years. Much of the credit for the church-farm program must go to Paul

Miller, the pastor. Before he enrolled in a denominational college, preparatory to entering the ministry, he studied in an agricultural college. When the pastor goes calling he carries his coveralls in his car. he works in fields and barns along with the man he is visiting. Sickness in the home will bring him to comfort the ailing and to milk the cows and feed the hens.

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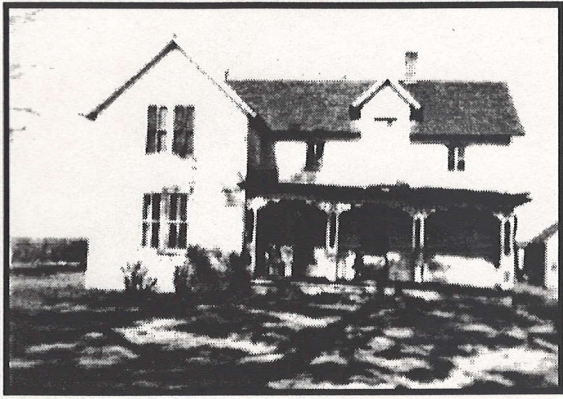
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Car owned in 1946

Ruth Ann, Chris, Michael and Dennis in 1950



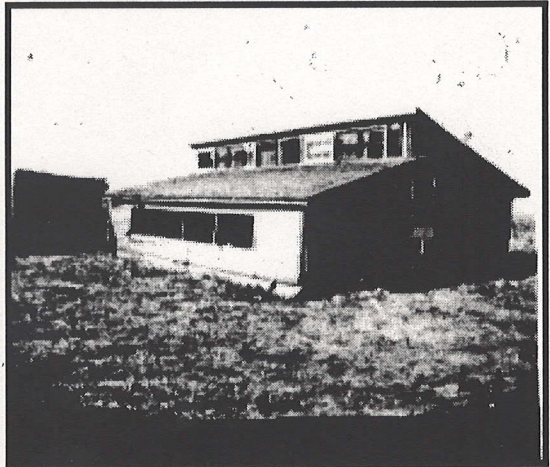
Front view of house bought in 1946



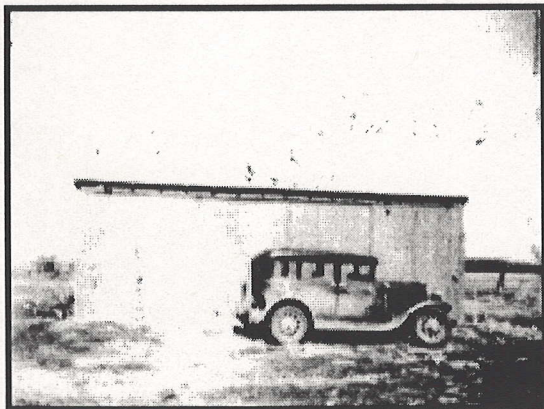
Back view of house bought in 1946



Bob, Dennis, and Ruth Ann in front of machine shed



Chicken House



Car owned in 1946



Ruth Ann, Chris, Michael, and Dennis in 1950