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When I started writing this story several years ago, I had no special reason for doing so except that our three wonderful daughters insisted that I put my experiences and life story in writing. It has been an enjoyable experience reminiscing about the past.

I had a wonderful heritage -- I was born of very good parents in a Christian home and community and was taught to be truthful and to enjoy life and look for the good in everything. I have tried to live my life in that way and to follow the teachings of our Lord, especially the Golden Rule - "Do unto others as you would that they should do to you".

It is my hope that this story will help our grandchildren, greatgrandchildren and future generations understand and know just a little more of their heritage.

Ray S Bentall

THE LIFE OF RAY SAMUEL BENTALL

I was born January 8, 1896, on a farm in Dallas County, Colfax Township, School District No. 3, Iowa. Although no one ever specifically told me, I presume the temperatures were down to zero and very likely it was snowing since January is one of the coldest months of the year in Iowa.

My parents lived eight to ten miles from any town and in those days doctors traveled by horse and buggy. I was the first of four children born to Robert W. and Effie Jane Walker Bentall. The next to arrive was Loren Lewis on September 26, 1899, then Edith Mae (Gnagey) born October 14, 1902, and Orval Robert on December 20, 1905.

My grandparents Walker came from Pennsylvania by train to Grandfather's brother who lived in Des Moines. They bought 160 acres of prairie land on which they built a house. They continued to stay with Grandfather's brother until the house was completed. (Leonard Boots' farm)

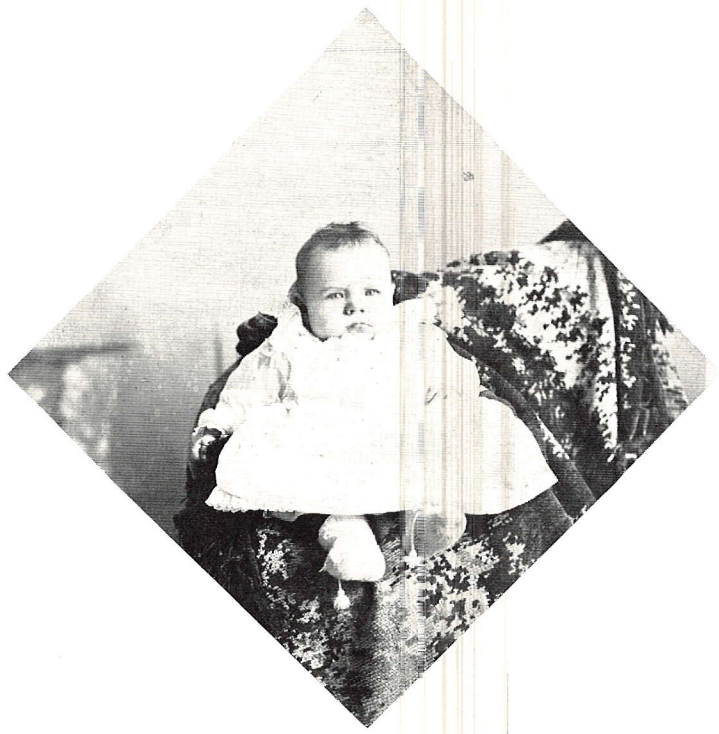
Each Monday morning grandfather would drive a team and wagon to Dallas Center, pick up a load of lumber and bricks and then, fording the Coon River, drive on to Panther where the land was located. This was ten miles west of Dallas Center or a total of approximately 30 miles from Des Moines. He worked all week until Saturday noon, then drove back to Des Moines to be with the family over the weekend. He continued this until the house was completed and the family could be moved out to the farm on the prairie.

This community, called Panther Creek was named for a stream of water running through the area by the same name.

My grandparents Walker had two sons, Ira and David, and two daughters, Mary and Effie, my mother. There was also a daughter by a former wife.

There was a Church in the community called the Dunkard. Later it was changed to the Church of the Brethren. At first they met in a school house and later built a church building. Also, there was a community store which carried the needs of the community, including groceries, clothing, hardware, furniture, all household needs, as well as some farm tools. There was very little farm equipment in those days so the tools needed were simple ones. There was also a tin shop that carried building needs. The local post office was also housed in this store. It later grew into a co-op.

Grandfather Walker was a hard working man; always up at 4:30 summer and winter. In those days they did not know what a calendar was so they would tie knots in a string to record the days. Mother said that one time someone made an extra knot in the string. They had the wash water on heating preparing to wash when a neighbor came in and said it was Sunday. Needless to say, they postponed the washing as it would have been quite improper to wash on Sunday.



Ray Samuel Bentall
Born January 3, 1896



Ray, Orval, Loren
Edith - December 20, 1904



THE WALKER FAMILY - 1900-1901

Front Center - Grandparents Samuel and Mary (Schultz) Walker
Couples left to right:

Charlie and Mary (Walker) Poffenberger

David and Alice (McNutt) Walker

Ira and Lena (Stover) Walker

Arthur and Annie Walker Hart

(Annie was Samuel's daughter by a prior marriage.)

Robert and Effie (Walker) Bentall

I remember going to Grandfather's house. He would go into the pantry and bring out a tobacco can filled with peppermint and wintergreen candy. What treat for a boy in those days. In the fall of 1901, Grandfather had taken the team and wagon out to fix some fence. He stopped to open a gate and the team started up. He tried to stop them and the wagon ran over him injuring him severely. They put a bed in our living room for him and there were two doctors working with him, but he lived only a few days. Since Grandmother could not live alone, the folks moved in with her. That winter they had a sale and sold off the equipment, livestock and grain. Some of the equipment was in the ox yoke times.

Grandmother lived with the folks until 1907 when they moved to Colorado; then she moved in with Uncle Dave Walker.

Grandfather Bentall was born in England and came to the United States when a young man. He met a young girl in Iowa, Harriet Hooks. They married and had two boys, Robert W. (my father) and Ernest. They took a young girl to raise but for some reason that I am not aware of, that did not work out and she was taken back to Des Moines where she came from.

My grandparents Bentall lived only one mile west and a quarter mile north of the folks. I only remember seeing Grandfather Bentall once. He was a small man with a black beard. After his death, Grandma Bentall moved to Perry, Iowa. The day father and uncle Ernest moved her to Perry, it was bitter cold and lots of snow on the ground. They took two teams and the bobsled with her furniture.

Ernest married Ida Peters and moved on the farm for a number of years until his health failed and he could no longer farm. They then moved to Palisades, Colorado.

I remember going with Aunt Ida to Redfield one summer day. She bought me some chocolate candy. On the way home I went to sleep and laid on the candy -- what a mess!

As a boy, the house we lived in was located on a corner of the farm. On the porch of the house was a box with pigeon holes to hold the mail for all the neighbors. Whenever someone went to the store they would bring all the mail, place it in the proper pigeon hole to be picked up by the neighbors.

I remember my mother telling of walking to the Panther store, a distance of three miles to get supplies when the men were too busy to go. There were no fences at that time so everyone walked across country.

Since my folks lived close to the school house, the teacher boarded with them. When I was four years old the teacher wanted me to start school in September. It was the fall term and there were few children attending during the fall term. The school year consisted of three terms -- fall, winter and spring, each three months long with several weeks break between each term. All the boys and girls would attend during the winter term; however, during the spring and fall terms attendance was very light as they had to work at home, either in the house or on the farm.

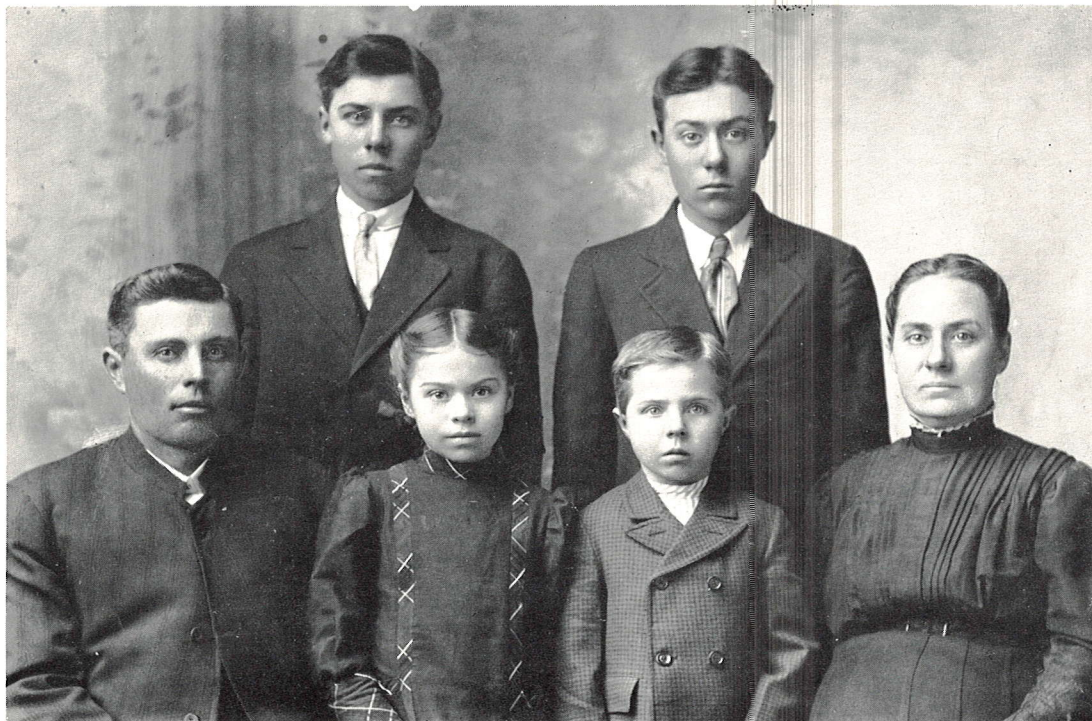


THE BENTALL FAMILY - 1835

Center - Grandparents Lewis and Harriet (Hooks) Bentall
Sons - Robert and Ernest
Foster daughter



Back Center - Ernest and Ida (Peters) and son Kenneth
Front Row - Robert and Effie and children



Robert Ray Loren
 Edith Orval Effie
1910

I remember one winter term when I was just a small boy, there was a girl who was in one of the upper grades sitting in back of me. I was using my slate pencil to scratch my back and she thought that was so funny. She was laughing and the teacher gave her a scolding for laughing during school time.

I attended this school through the first eight grades except for one year.

The year of 1907 my folks moved to Palisades, Colorado for Loren's health. Loren had asthma and had a difficult time breathing. We went by train. Father's brother, Uncle Ernest had moved there previously for his health.

The schools in town were graded with two grades in each room. This was quite different from the country school I attended in Iowa where all eight grades were in one room. All the boys in my grade seemed to have a nickname and they gave me the name, "Bulldog". I guess I must have looked pretty mean to them!

The folks bought a peach orchard close to town. I will never forget eating those ripe peaches right off the trees and how sweet and good they were.

I had a bicycle which I made good use of when not in school. I remember when the circus came to town I watched all the unloading and setting up the big tent. I was too young to go to the show alone and the folks did not go.

Another passtime I recall, some of us boys would put straight pins on the railroad tracks forming an X. When the wheels of the train would run over them it would make a nice pair of scissors. What fun! There weren't many toys in those days so we made our own entertainment.

Loren's health improved so the folks decided to move back to the farm in Iowa. In February, Orval got the mumps so the folks packed up and headed for Iowa before the rest of us kids got them. But after we got to Iowa all of us got the mumps and how I remember that too!

In 1907 while we were living in Palisades, Grandma Bentall passed away. Father and Uncle Ernest went to Perry on the train for the services, disposed of her furniture and sold the house. After they were back home only a short time, the folks got word that Grandma Walker passed away, so Father and Mother went to Adel for her services. We kids stayed with Uncle Ernest and Aunt Ida while they were gone.

While living in Palisades, the folks, we four kids, Uncle Ernest, Aunt Ida and their only son, Kenneth, went on a fishing trip up into the mountains. We took a team and wagon with tent, food, and fishing equipment. It took two days to reach the lake and some of the roads were so narrow and steep that they had to stop and block the wagon wheels for the horses to rest. After several stops we made it to the top. Father and Uncle Ernest made a raft, took it out on the lake and fished from that. They caught some mountain trout and

were they ever good out of that cold mountain water. Loren and I tried to do some fishing near the dam. The water was so clear we could see fish but they just swam away from our bait. It apparently discouraged me as I've had no desire to fish since.

During my boyhood days while attending country school, our noons in the spring were spent hunting snakes or playing ball, black-man, or any game that was suggested. In the winter there was skating on a frozen stream across the road from the schoolhouse. We would be there every noon and recess. Then after school and after my chores were finished, I would be back there again as long as it was light enough for me to see.

I remember in the fall of 1902, father had a telephone put in. He had to set the poles for someone else to string the wire on. This was a party line with several families on the same line. When the telephone rang, everyone on the line ran to the phone to find out who was calling and to hear the news. I thought that was a wonderful invention to be able to talk to someone miles away on one wire. And what a way to learn all the gossip in the neighborhood!

I remember when I was about ten years old, the Church Annual Conference was held in Des Moines at the fair grounds. Uncle Dave Walker was involved with the conference and would come home some nights. One day he took Irl Walker, Loren and me with him. Loren and I went the one and a half miles to Uncle Dave's home, then he drove his team and carriage five miles to Kennedy Station where he left the team and carriage in a shed. From there we took the train to Des Moines. When we arrived in Des Moines we took the street car out to the fair grounds and all this was very exciting to me. I don't remember anything of the conference, but I do remember eating my first ice cream cone. We returned home the same way. In later years I read in the paper that ice cream was first put on the market in 1904, so we go in on a "first".

I recall a Thanksgiving day dinner at our house when I was quite small. All mother's brothers and sisters and their families were there. The dining room table was pulled out the limit, extending about 16 feet. Some of the food was on the table and for some reason it had to be moved a little. Just then the center gave way and all that food -- our whole Thanksgiving dinner slid down to the center of the table and onto the floor. After some time, everything was picked up, sorted over, some barrels and boxes brought in to support the table and everything was back on the table ready for all to devour. No one got hurt, only mother's feelings. And in all that commotion, Uncle Charley Poffenberger passed his hat around to take up a collection for mother's feelings and the broken table and everyone contributed. When all was back in order and the meal over, there had been lots of joking and fun. Of course the folks refused to take any money so then the joke was on Uncle Charley because he nor any of the others knew how much they had dropped in the hat. Consequently, he had a problem returning the money. It was a wonderful day getting together with uncles, aunts and cousins and a day that I will never forget.

During my boyhood days, farming started in the spring before the ground was completely thawed out. The first job was to get the corn stalks off the ground. They were broken down by different methods. Some of the men used a railroad iron with a team on each end and would drag that across the field. Then the stalks were raked into wind-rows and burned. At night the sky would be lit up from fires burning all around. But my father disked them down and plowed them under which was good for the soil. The plowing was by a single plow with three horses. Later we got a gang plow, or two plows and pulled that with five horses; three on the plow and two in the lead. This was a great help but even at that it was a slow process. After the plowing, the field was disked and harrowed. This was in four sections of 20 feet each and pulled by four horses. We walked behind on the soft ground or the dust if it was dry. When night came we were ready for a good supper and bath!

After the ground was ready for planting, the oats were seeded and the corn planted. The corn was planted with a two row planter drawn by two horses. When the planting was completed, the ground was harrowed to kill the weeds. Later we got a harrow-cart so we could ride and no longer had to walk. After the corn was tall enough so it wouldn't be covered, we started cultivating and continued this until the corn was so tall we had to quit. It seemed the cultivating was a neverending job. As a boy I started out with a walking cultivator, then progressed to the riding kind which was a big help. Later we had a two-row cultivator which was pulled by four horses. As soon as the corn was "laid-by", we started to harvest the grain. This was done with four horses on the grain binder. The weather was usually hot so we would change teams every two hours and let the first four horses cool off. Then by hand, the bundles of grain were set up into shocks until time to thresh the grain. As I said, this was the time of year when Iowa summers were hot and muggy so we always had several jugs of water in the field with us. Needless to say, ice water was unheard of then.

In 1908 my folks built a new barn. It was interesting watching the carpenters cut out the big timbers and wooden pins to put the frame together. The next highlight was when the neighbors came in and had the barn raising, and that is precisely what it was. The frames had been cut and put together with the wooden pins. Ropes were tied to the frame and they were pulled into an upright position to frame the barn. These were then pinned together. This barn was 40 feet by 50 feet -- 20 feet to the square with a big metal cupelo on top. It was built for horses and cows and hay storage.

There were stalls for 14 horses, stanchions for 12 cows, and also stalls for some calves. There were two grain bins to store feed for the livestock and a big hay-mow which would hold a lot of hay and straw. It was wonderful to do the feeding and care for the livestock in the warmth of that barn and not have to go out in the cold winter weather.

Filling the hay-mow was a big task in the summer time. There was a steel track in the gable of the barn reaching from one end to the other. A wagon of hay stood on one side of the barn, and

here was a grab-fork which we plunged into the hay. A rope attached to the grab-fork ran to pulleys on the steel track and then on to a team of horses on the other end of the barn. It was the team of horses who actually pulled the fork full of hay up into the mow, the fork was tripped letting the hay fall into the mow, then the fork pulled down to the wagon for another load.

In later years I helped new calves and colts come into this world and what a help it was to have a good barn for shelter in the winter. But even with a good warm barn, we still got cold hands and feet while milking the cows.

There was no electricity in the country while I was growing up so we carried a light at night wherever we went. We had kerosene lamps in the house and lanterns outside. One Saturday, one of the weekly chores was filling and cleaning the lamps and lanterns.

Of course, neither did we have running water which meant no bathrooms, but a nice "three-holer" just back of the house. There was always a Sears or Montgomery Ward catalogue handy and you might even find a picture hanging in them or wallper on the walls! You could depend on it being quite airy when those cold winter winds blew. And there were times when you had to wait your turn -- especially with six in the family plus a hired girl. Then when company came, it could mean even going to the barn!

As I said before, as a young boy I enjoyed ice skating and when I was older and old enough for parties, we had ice skating parties on various ponds near by. There was Long's pond, Willow pond which covered about 15 acres and another pond about three miles away. But all werewithin walking distance so we never lacked for a place to go skating. We would hitch up the team and buggy, drive to the pond, then tie and blanket the team and spend the evening on the ice in the moonlight. Sometimes there would be 15 or 20 at these parties.

Since there were no movies, all our entertainment was group parties. We would have house parties in the spring and fall at various homes, playing games, and before returning home we always had something to eat and drink. We never missed these parties if we could hlep it.

In the fall someone would have a "hard-time party" where everyone was supposed to wear old ragged clothes. This was usually at corn picking time. I remember at one of these parties, one fellow had several pair of ragged overalls on. They tore six or seven pairs of pants and shirts off him before they got to a good pair underneath all those others. What fun it was!

Then in May we hung May baskets filled with treats and flowers. These would be hung on the door knob or set on the steps of a friend and then we would run and hide. The person receiving the basket had to find the person who delivered it. It was fun to tie a string on someone's dinner bell, then get out in the field or behind the barn and ring the bell. One night a group came to our

house and rang our dinner bell until I caught them. Then I hitched a team to a light wagon and we started up the road picking others up as we went along until there must have been about 14 altogether. From there we went to a school house close to the home of a very crabby man! Three of the boys put a string on his dinner bell, went out in the field and started ringing. It made the man pretty mad and he yelled out to them that he was calling the sheriff to have them arrested. The rest of the group who were at the school house heard him also. All of us were having a good time when suddenly we heard a team and buggy coming up the road. Someone said, "Here comes the Sheriff"! Some of the girls became quite frightened and one of the girls fainted, then another, and even one of the boys had to go out in the road because he felt like he was going to faint too. As it turned out, it was just a fellow who had been to see his girl and was on his way home. I took part of the group home and another fellow took the others home in a car, (a Jackson) and that ended the May basketing for that night.

One summer father gave us some money and said we could go to Redfield to the Old Settlers' picnic which is held each year. My cousin went along with us. It was the first time we had ever seen a merry-go-round and we put in a lot of time there, taking some girls for rides also. There were other rides but the merry-go-round was the most fun.

One Saturday I took Claude Wagoner to Adel. We went into the drug store and I bought him a malted milk for a treat. The man at the fountain was making the malts and in those days they were shaken by hand. All of a sudden the top came off his container and malted milk spilled all over Claude. Of course he apologized and did his best to make Claude presentable.

Another party that we had were "box-suppers". The girls would fix a delicious meal, then decorate a basket or box to put the food in -- each one trying to out-do the other, both in food and decorating the box. Then the fellows would bid on the boxes or baskets. Not only did they get to eat the food inside the basket they bid on, but they also had the privilege of eating with the girl whose basket he'd purchased. Of course all the fellows tried to sneak around before the night of the party to find out how their girl's basket was decorated.

There was also a roller skating rink in Adel in an old mitten factory across the street from the railroad depot. That was ten miles traveling to get there and that was quite a trip with horse and buggy.

Back to my school days. I passed the eighth grade exams, but I'm not certain why they passed me. The folks wanted me to go to Mt. Morris College. Perhaps they thought a Church College would do me some good. However, the courses at Mt. Morris were very similar to those in High School including Bible.

Before I left for Mt. Morris, the folks had a group of 15 or so young people in for dinner one Sunday after Church. It was a nice day and that added to making the day a perfect one. The afternoon was spent playing games and toward evening some went home, but for those who stayed, Mother fixed a lunch. A friend of ours and his girl started to Church. I had a nice black team which I thought was the best, but our friend also had a team of blacks which he thought was the best. So naturally, being young kids, this led to a race to prove just which team really was the best. We had several races, in fact, but neither team came out ahead every time so we never did prove which team was best! I took my girl home later that night but never went with her after that.

So in September, 1913, I got ready to go to Mt. Morris. My trunk and bags were packed and the folks took me to Kennedy Station by team and wagon to board the train. Others who went from our community were Bessie Reiste and Etta and Ray Spurgeon so I had some company for which I was grateful. Needless to say I was a bit "green" traveling such a distance for the first time.

We left Adel at 6:00 a.m. and arrived in Leafriver, a town about eight miles from Mt. Morris, the next day. At Leafriver there was a hack to take us to Mt. Morris. My beginning as a college student didn't get off to a very good start. First of all, it was raining when we arrived and I was completely turned around in directions. Ray Spurgeon took me to the President's office and then to my assigned room, and that was the last I saw him for two weeks. He was so involved with his own work and studies he didn't have time to even talk when we did happen to meet on campus, and how I longed to talk to someone I knew. I was too bashful to talk to the girls and wouldn't even go near the girl's dorm. I just wouldn't take the chance of meeting 100 girls -- I probably would have fainted. My roommate was most helpful and that made me feel better. He was a young man from Michigan who had lost one hand in an accident the previous winter. He was feeding a fodder shredder and as they stopped for dinner he got his hand too close while cleaning the machine. This happened the twelfth hour of the twelfth day of the twelfth month in the year 1912. He was a prince of a fellow and I could not have asked for a better roommate.

But in spite of this I was so homesick I was miserable. I had never been away from home before and no one had any sympathy for a new green freshman. If it had been close enough I would have walked home. I think that during that time I wrote letters to everyone I knew hoping to get letters from home. But together with another freshman, I soon got over this and later could meet anyone or anything. The upper classmen tried to tell us we had to keep a record of our trips to the bathroom or shower.

We rented bicycles and rode to Oregon, a town seven miles away where we played pool -- you couldn't play pool in Mt. Morris.



Ray
Winter - 1914-1915
at Mt. Morris College
(Illinois)



Basketball Team

Ray

I finally got weaned away from home and made it through to Christmas. While at Mt. Morris I took Bible, Agriculture, Grammar and English. I also played basketball and was on the track team and these were what I enjoyed most! I wanted to play football also, but the folks said, "no".

I got a job and worked on Saturday for extra money. The food wasn't like Mother cooked at home and I needed candy bars to fill in for those things that I didn't much care for in the dining hall. I worked two different Saturdays out in the timber on my knees planting ginseng. They told us it would take seven years before they could pull it for use. I completed that year at Mt. Morris and feel it helped me grow as I was a mere boy when I entered college.

That summer I was back on the farm helping with the farm work. I enjoyed farm life. It was that summer that I met Pearl C. Wagoner. The Wagoner family moved from Pennsylvania when some of their relatives insisted on them bringing their family of eight -- four boys and four girls, and settling in a farming community. Pearl and I first met at a gathering of young folks at my uncle's home on a Sunday afternoon. We took an interest in each other and started dating from that time on.

In the fall, the folks apparently thought it would be good for Loren and me to be closer home while attending college so they held a public sale, sold all their livestock and machinery and moved to Mt. Morris. Our cousin, Irl Walker, was also planning to attend Mt. Morris so the first of December, Loren, Irl and I started for Mt. Morris in the folks' recently purchased Reo automobile. We left uncle's place one foggy morning; however, the weather was nice for that time of year -- not cold and no snow on the ground.

In 1914 there was no pavement and very few road signs. Sometimes we would drive 25 or 30 miles before we would see another sign. It took two days of driving until after dark before we arrived in Mt. Morris, a distance of approximately 400 miles. The folks traveled by train and soon found a house to live in. Irl stayed with the folks that winter.

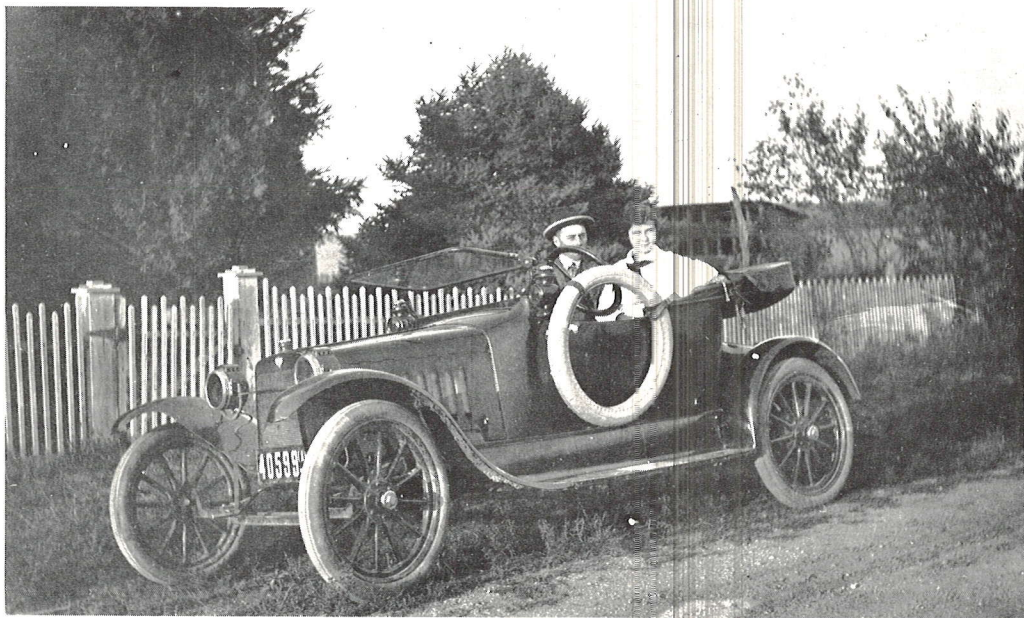
That winter, Pearl and I corresponded by letter, but in the spring when I returned, we made up for lost time!

Irl and I returned to Iowa in the spring by train. I got work on a farm four miles north of Dallas Center at \$30 a month, working from early morning until late in the evening. The fellow was a nice person to work for, but it was quite different from working at home. One thing that was very different was the large threshing crew -- it was made up entirely of hired men except for one farmer. But everyone did their share and no one was guilty of cheating by getting the clean side of the feeder.

On Sundays I would drive a team to Panther to Church then be with some of my old friends and always to someone's place for dinner. The evenings were spent with Pearl and at midnight I would start for my boss's home. One day my boss said, "If you ever go to sleep on the road, the team will run away with you." So as I would leave

-1916-

Courtin' Days of
Ray and Pearl



the Wagoner home I tied the reins to the buggy bow so that if they did decide to run I would know where the lines were. I figured I probably would drop off to sleep, and I usually did. One night I found myself in a man's yard where the horses had wandered. Not knowing where I was, I drove around in the yard until I found the road.

It took the team four hours to go the 14 miles and they never hurried. Several mornings I was putting the team in the barn as the sun was coming up. Needless to say, Mondays were somewhat of a bad day.

In September I went back to Mt. Morris where the folks still lived and to college. I was in school there until March when the folks decided to move back to the farm. I worked for them that summer and working for them was much more pleasant than working for someone else. I didn't have to get up as early or work as late in the evening and on rainy days, I might even take a nap in the hay-mow. And there was time to take the gun and go hunting during duck and rabbit season.

That fall, Pearl and I decided to get married the following June, so in the spring of 1917, I started farming on my own. That farm was one-half mile east of where the folks lived.

I started farming with three horses -- one a road driving mare and a team of work horses which father gave me. He had promised he would do this if I did not use tobacco or liquor. I'm glad that I never used either.

Pearl and I were married at her parents' home on the evening of June 6, 1917. Rev. A. M. Stine performed the ceremony with our families and a few close friends in attendance. Pearl's mother had a very nice dinner after the wedding. Later in the evening all the young people of the neighborhood came for a shivaree -- a custom of ringing cowbells, horns, banging on tin pans and even shooting off a shotgun -- anything to make noise. This continued until treats of candy and cigars were passed out by the newlyweds. The next day we started out on our honeymoon trip to Wichita, Kansas where the Church of the Brethren was holding their annual conference. We were on the train that night arriving in Wichita about noon. We started looking for a room and found one to our liking and stayed there a week. In those days there were no motels, only hotes, so we looked for a rooming house.

After returning home we stayed with my folks until we could get some furniture together to set up housekeeping. The manager at Panther Store gave us an order in Des Moines where we went to pick up some furniture such as a cook stove, bed, dresser and some living room furniture. This was quite meager compared with what the young people start out with today, but we were happy to get into our own home.



WEDDING BELLS

June 6, 1917

Our livestock consisted of four cows, several sows which later had pigs, and some chickens. The money from the sale of the cream from the milk and the eggs from the chickens bought our groceries. We did most of our buying at Panther Store as we were ten miles from Adel. We would drive the roan mare to Adel occasionally to do extra shopping for items they didn't carry at Panther.

One August Saturday night we went into the Ford garage in Adel and put in an order for a Model T Ford car. This was during World War I and the dealers didn't have cars on hand and didn't know when they could get us one. That was a good year and prices were good, but we didn't have any corn or hogs to sell until winter.

While I was picking corn that fall (November), a man came to the field to tell me he had my car -- the one we had ordered in August. I just laughed at him and told him I didn't have any money until later that year. He suggested we go to the house and see if we could make a deal. The price of the Model T was \$400. He made out a note for that amount, I signed it, took him back to town and the car was ours. With the good crops and good prices we paid for the car that winter.

As I said, this was during World War I and that winter Uncle Sam called for an interview -- my number had come up. When they learned I was farming on my own and Pearl was pregnant, I was exempted from the service.

That winter was a cold one and the old house got very cold. I would get up in the night and put more coal on the fire to keep things from freezing in the house. Some mornings the covers would be frozen around our faces, but we didn't let that bother us as we were young and healthy and able to take it.

Spring came and I put in another crop as that was the only way I knew to make a living.

On June 19, 1918, our first-born arrived -- a girl, Helen June! She was the first grandchild on both sides of the family so there was always someone around to give us plenty of help and offer advice which I'm certain we needed badly. We had plenty of company that summer as I had two brothers and a sister and Pearl had three brothers and three sisters and they all wanted to help!

In August, 1918, my folks moved to Adel and Pearl, Helen and I moved in the home on the corner where I was born. Loren stayed with us that winter and we farmed both farms together that year. Then Loren got married and moved into the house we had moved out of which was one-half mile east, and we continued to work together.

On September 2, 1920, our second daughter was born, Doris Jean! Since by this time there were other grandchildren, Doris probably didn't receive the attention that Helen had.



-1921-

Doris Pearl Helen Ray

Six years later, on December 5, 1926, Barbara Ann was added to our family. Another girl -- and not at all what we had ordered, but she was a cute little bundle and got the name "Bobby" for many years.

Being a part of the Panther Community we were members of the Church of the Brethren and attended each week and nearly all functions during the week. Pearl and I, along with several other couples our age attended the Sunday School Class known by the name, "live Wires". We also had monthly Sunday School class parties. There was always a business meeting then time spent playing games of all kinds and of course, the evening ended with refreshments of some kind, but quite often a freezer of homemade ice cream. One night the party was at my brother, Loren's house. We were having a hilarious time playing games and for some reason, Pearl got quite "put out" with me, so she took the car and went home without me, leaving me to "hoof" it on foot. She apologized and has never left me since then.

We lived on this farm for 24 years -- some of which produced good crops and others nothing to brag about.

During the 30's we experienced the depression followed by a drought. We had two very bad years, one of which we had no crops at all, not even grass for the cattle. One year we were infested with chinch bugs which ruined the corn crop and also poisoned the cattle as a result of our feeding them the corn. My neighbor and I cut over 100 acres of corn with one horse and sled. This was a V shaped sled with knives on each side. We sat on the sled -- catch an armful, then stop and set the armfull up in shocks. I fed this corn as fodder to my cattle with some sandbur fall grass that was shipped in from farther north where they had received a little rain. The government loaned us money to buy this "no-good" feed. We lost about 20 head of cattle that winter which was a financial blow along with the depression.

It was during those years that the banks closed. This meant that the little money we did have on deposit in the banks was unavailable. It was lost! So, in order to have money to buy food, we picked up a few old hens from the hen house, took them to town and sold them to have money to buy groceries. Of course, as well as no crops, neither was there a garden. That winter corn was so cheap that we burned it for fuel part of the time. Credit cards were unheard of in those days. Another way of saving money was a gathering of neighbors to cut each other's hair. Another of those unheard of things then was long hair!!

During our farming years, I helped to remodel the Panther Church. I also served as Sunday School Superintendent for several years.

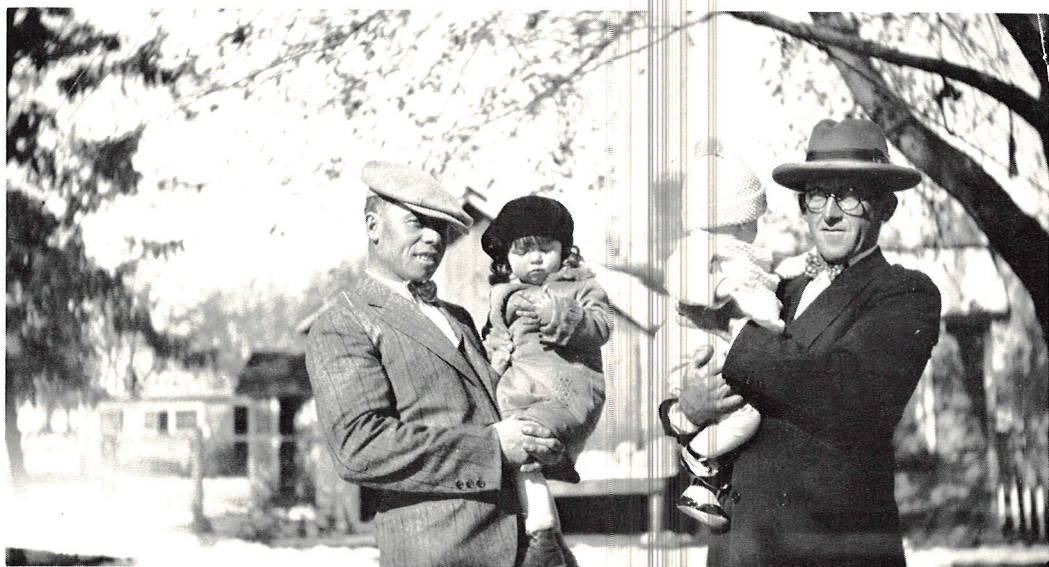
I was also one of the Directors on the board of the Panther Co-op Store. During my time on the board we hired two different managers. This was a big job because during those particular years the country store was not as profitable as it had been in earlier years.

Pearl and Helen
on Sampson tractor



Barbara - Spring 1928

Doris 7 yrs, Barbara 6 mos, Helen 9 yrs



Ray and Barbara

Paul and Claude Wagoner

One year I put my name on the Republican ticket for the Clerk of Colfax Township. I was elected and served for several years. This job meant handling all the money for the Township and serving as one of the Clerks on the Election Board.

The November, 1932, election was a memorable one. This was the year Franklin Roosevelt was elected President. It was a nice balmy morning when I left home for the Center School House of Colfax Township where people of the community came to cast their ballott. But before long the weather turned cold and it started snowing. By four o'clock that afternoon, the roads were blocked and the only people who could get through were those with horses. There were five of us on the election board and we were snowed in there at the school house for the night. We carried coal for the stove and kept plenty of coffee on hand but those benches got just a little hard after being there all day, through the night and part of the next day. I drove the car about a half mile, then walked over three miles home...arriving there about noon.

Pearl was at home alone with Barbara -- Helen and Doris were at school in Redfield. The bus left school to take the kids home but never made the rounds. Three boys got off the bus about two miles from our house and started to walk to their respective homes. One stopped at the first farm house and stayed there all night and the other two made it to our house where they too gave up to seek shelter for the night. Pearl was glad to see them. She got them some dry clothes, fed them and let them warm up, then they went to the barn with her, one carrying Barbara on their shoulders, and helped to milk the cows. They also chopped wood for fuel which was badly needed because there were no storm windows on yet! The next morning after again milking the cows and eating a hot breakfast, they walked on home. Those boys and girls on the bus who hadn't gotten off, were taken by the bus driver, Sam Cluts, to his home where they housed several kids that night. After I got home I took the team and sled and went to pick up Helen and Doris. Needless to say, we were all glad to be home and together again.

Being "snowed-in" was not too uncommon during Iowa winters, especially if you lived in the country. During the winter of 1933 the roads were blocked for several weeks. Only the highways were open and we were one mile from that. We were short of coal at that time and I carried some coal from the school house across the road for several days. Then father Bentall brought some coal in his pickup out to within a mile from our place and I took the team and sled, drove across the fields to pick it up. The snow covered the fences so it was unnecessary to follow the roads. The neighbors would take turns with team and sled going to Panther Store for groceries. For a week we only did the chores, making certain the livestock was fed and warm, then we would play games, pop corn, and just enjoyed ourselves at home. Mother and Helen made several wagon-wheel rugs that winter and Doris, Barbara and I played a lot of Lindy. After the storm subsided it was hard work shoveling and getting things back in working order. Several of the neighbors went out and helped open up the roads, digging through drifts several feet high.



1930

Pearl Ray
Helen Doris
Barbara



December 1936

Doris Helen
Ray Barbara Pearl

During my early years of farming all farm work was done with mules or horses and everyone raised a few colts in order to keep the horse population going. It seemed I was always breaking in a younger horse for work or to ride and I thoroughly enjoyed this. It was fun and exciting to hitch a young horse with an older one to a wagon and start down the road. This is the way we did before putting them in a team of four hitched to an implement in the field. We would work them for several years before putting them on the market for sale. There was always a demand for good young horses. Some people had mules, but I stayed with horses. I think if I had been a young man in today's world I would probably have gone west and worked as a cowboy or ranch-hand.

While I was still at home, the neighbors went together and formed a company and bought a steam engine and a large grain separator to do the grain threshing. This consisted of ten neighbors within a four mile radius. We would put in some long days during the threshing season as everyone was anxious to get their grain in before rain or frost came. The wives would get together and cook, and at noon we sat down to a feast. Of course we men were always hungry from the hard work so we thoroughly enjoyed all that good food. We always had a good time on the crew working together, even though there were always a few who would figure a way of getting on the "clean" side of the separator. Sometimes there was a wrestling match going on or anything fun to break the monotony of work. The crews consisted of a man with a team and rack to haul the bundles up to the fellows on the racks. Then there were two box wagons to take the grain from the machine to the grain bins. There was a separator man, an engineer, and a water man to keep water for the steam engine. After several years of service, the machine reached the point of needing repairs so the company sold out and dissolved the Panther Threshing Company.

When the gasoline tractor came into use on the farms, Loren and I bought a Sampson tractor which was similar to the Fordson only better in some ways. The tractor took much of the hard work off the horses, especially plowing. After all, it could go all day and night if you wanted, so long as you gave it gas, without your needing to be concerned about overtiring it!

The first gasoline was delivered to the farms by horses, but they soon converted to trucks. We did all of our own service and repairs. There was no service in the country and it was unhandy to drive your tractor eight or ten miles to town to have it serviced.

Later I bought Loren's interest in the Sampson and traded it in on an International 10/20 which was larger and could be used to grind feed for the stock cattle. I also bought a small Wood Brother grain separator as I could do my own threshing as well as the neighbors'. This did not take a large crew like the big steam engine rig. This worked out quite well with a few neighbors close by. Since I was on the the separator all the time, I needed a tractor boy and used neighbor boys -- after all, all my boys were girls!

Later Barbara was my tractor "boy" and she was a very good operator. I put a shade on the tractor so she didn't have to sit in the hot July and August sun. She enjoyed the dinners the same as the men because she was out in the heat and as hungry as the men. There was always someone there to fill in for her when she felt the need to visit the farm "out-house". It was always a relief to get the threshing completed because then each farmer could be home to take care of the various other work that had accumulated over the summer. There were always jobs to be done such as weed cutting and manure hauling. There were jobs to prepare for the coming winter.

This was also the time of year for the Iowa State Fair -- a big event and everyone went for at least a part of it. There was cattle judging and displays of machinery, the ladies had quilt and handwork displays as well as food and canned goods. In later years my mother won several blue ribbons at the State Fair for her quilts. There was also horseshoe pitching, horse racing and the night shows along midway.

One year, Pearl and I, along with three other couples, took a tent and spent several days at the fair. One night, two of the couples went to the night show, but Pearl and I and one other couple stayed in the tent. We were very glad we did because a rain storm came up and how it did rain! Since we were unaccustomed to tent life, we failed to ditch the water around the tent, consequently the rain ran right through our tent and everything, including us, got wet! One of the girls was mad and quite upset when she saw that everything was wet, but we survived and had a lot of laughs about it in later years. We enjoyed the rest of our stay at the fair along with camping out.

The last of October and November were spent picking corn. That job was all done by hand. We would get up very early -- do our chores before day-break so that we could be in the field by the time the sun came up. We would have a wagon load of corn by noon...go in and unload it, eat lunch, and then back out to the field until dark for another load. We would come in, unload it and then do the chores by lantern light. After a good hot supper we were ready for bed. Some mornings the frost would be so heavy that our mittens and clothes would get wet and cold -- other times the sandburs would get in our mittens or perhaps the team would not stop when you told them to which made for some frustrating times. One time my team didn't stop and ran through two fences before I could catch them. This of course, delayed corn picking and did not help the disposition. I usually hired some boys or young men who would come up from southern Iowa and Missouri at this time of year specifically to find jobs picking corn. We got some very good ones. One fellow always knew when the water pail was empty and would go to the well for a fresh pail without being asked. But then there were a few of the other kind also! One fellow sprained his wrist and could not pick corn for several days. He did nothing during that time but sit in the dining room in the rocking chair and let Pearl mop

the floor around him. And then there were those who used the window rather than going outside or to the bathroom. We always felt we were lucky if we got our corn out by Thanksgiving -- then how we would enjoy our Thanksgiving dinner which was a big event and we had much for which to be thankful.

A few years after the depression, things got better and I traded the 10/20 tractor in for an Oliver row crop. I could do all the farm work without horses then. I sold all but one light team that I could ride and do light work with. With this tractor, I bought a pull-type corn picker. What a relief not to have to go out and pick that corn ear by ear. I would pick my corn with one person to bring the loads in and dump them in the crib. Then I would go and pick my neighbor's corn for him, and he would do the unloading. This helped out on the gasoline expense. There was one bad feature about those pickers -- if you were not careful, you could lose a hand, or arm and that did happen to a few in the community. This machine picked two rows at a time and with good corn you would soon have a wagon load! No more two wagon loads per day. But you couldn't pick when it was muddy or when the corn was frozen as you would knock the ears off the stalks before they got to the picking rollers.

The years were rolling along and we were getting older and hopefully wiser. Of course our three girls were growing up and getting older along with us. Doris had been dating Robert Emmert for some time. Robert was a local boy but was working and living in Freeport, Illinois. Robert and Doris decided they wanted to get married and start their own home, so Robert took some time off and came to Adel for the occasion. They were married at the Panther Creek Brethren Church on April 27, 1941. Rev. L.A. Walker, a cousin of mine and minister at that church, performed the ceremony. After the wedding, Doris and Robert left for Illinois that same day. They lived in Illinois for several years and on October 8, 1942, Dennis Ray arrived to join their family. Dennis was our first grandchild, and Pearl being a typical grandmother, thought it best that she be there to help. Later, Barbara and I drove back to get her and of course, had the exciting experience of making the acquaintance of our first grandchild and nephew. They were still living there when their second, a girl, Ruth Ann, was born.

As I mentioned previously, my parents had moved to Adel and owned what we then called a "produce station" where they bought cream, eggs and some poultry from the farmers. They had a garage and a pen at their home in Adel and that is where they kept the chickens until a buyer came and they would sell the poultry to him. It was getting too much for them to handle and they asked Pearl and me if we would come in with them as partners. We made the decision to join them and move to town and in December, 1941, we had a farm sale and sold our livestock, feed and farm equipment. We bought a house in Adel which was in a very run-down condition and in need of repairs, which included a basement to be dug out. I worked at the house during December getting it ready to live in. We continued



BENTALL PRODUCE - 1945

Ray, Ralph Lindsley, Les Powers, Nola McKibben, Verdie Poffenberger,
Pearl, Goldie Pearson, Betty Hutzell, Edith Brower

to live on the farm and I was driving to town each day. On January 1, 1942, it was snowing and blowing but I started out for town and managed to get through the snow drifts. The roads were blocked for several days but I was in town and could work on the house. Within a week the roads were clear and we moved into the house in Adel.

Helen had been dating Cecil Reed who had also lived in the Panther community during part of his boyhood and they decided to get married that winter. They too were married at the Panther Creek Brethren Church on December 28, 1941. They stayed with Pearl and Barbara on the farm and Cecil helped on the house until they moved on a farm in March which they had rented.

The house we bought was next door to the folks home and I could work on the house and be close by when a buyer came to pick up the poultry. We put in a lot of time on the house during the spring and summer when I wasn't needed at the produce station. As I said, the house was one of Adel's older houses, well built, but in need of repair. I was told when I bought it that it was about fifty years old then and it is still in good condition today (1978) which makes it nearly ninety years old.

All went along fine until March, 1943 when father had a fatal heart attack. That left us without a partner and too much work for us to handle and Mother did not want to continue on with the business. We contacted my sister and brother-in-law, Edith and Ralph Gnagey who were living in Wisconsin at the time and asked them if they would like to come in as partners in the business. They decided they would and made the move to Adel. The business was located in the back of the United Grocery Store and was a small place to handle all the business which was increasing.

The store on the corner of Main and Tenth Street was vacant and we rented it and moved the business there. It was a large building and provided ample room to handle the cream testing, egg grading and also the poultry. Later we bought the building and remodeled the building to our needs.

During this time, World War II ended and the government was sending heifers to Europe for relief. The Church helped with donating the heifers and several people were going along to care for the cattle on the trip to Europe. I had the opportunity to go on one of these trips and jumped at the chance.

On December 13, 1946, Earl Deardorf of Panora, Iowa and I, took the train from Des Moines to Newport News, Virginia where the cattle were being shipped from. We arrived at Newport News on December 15, and were ready to sail...but, no hay. The ship that we were booked on happened to be mules rather than cattle. Since it takes a lot of hay to feed 856 mules all the way to Europe, needless to say, they didn't leave port until the hay arrived by train which was 13 days later. During those 13 days we watched the loading of other ships and also some of the sights near there.

A man from southern Iowa and I bunked together while waiting for orders to be shipped out. This was the Christmas season, so we attended a candle light Christmas service at a nearby Church. I spent Christmas day at the Army U.S.O. where they had a very nice Christmas dinner and a dance and program that night. It was my first Christmas away from home and very different from any that I had experienced before. But I called home on Christmas day which helped to brighten the day.

During the stay at Newport News we were sent across the bay to Norfolk to get our passports and sign the government papers because if anything went wrong, they could hold us for one year. On December 24, they started to load the hay on the ship and the next two days they loaded the mules. The night of December 26, everything was loaded so we checked in our baggage and boarded the ship for our first meal and were assigned to our deck. Then on December 27, we were given our orders as to duties and what we could expect. About 2:30 p.m. two tug boats pushed the ship away from the dock and we were on our way!

This was a victory ship which had been used during the war but had been transformed to haul freight. It was 455 feet long, 63 feet across the deck, its capacity was 16,000 tons and had a crew of 56 Merchant Marines. It carried four decks of mules, all 856 of them penned in stalls of different size depending on the space in the ship, two decks of hay and grain and the boiler and engine room was below that. The Captain's quarters and equipment were on the top deck, including the kitchen, dining room and locker for all food. There were 30 so-called "cowboys", not "mule-boys", and \$200 of food on board for each of the 86 men aboard. The food was the best but sometimes not cooked to my liking.

I was seasick the second day out but after that I was fine even when the water got rough and it did get rough at times with the ship rolling 40 degrees.

Since this was shortly after World War II, there was a Merchant Marine whose job it was to ride in the bow of the ship to spot any mines that might be floating around. He made the remark one night that he wished we would hit a mine because he would get more than double pay. He said that he had been on two other ships that had run into mines. But neither my partner nor I agreed with him.

My duty was at night from 10:00 p.m. to 6:00 a.m., checking the mules to see if everything was OK. We would go from deck to deck every three hours. We only lost three mules on the way over.

We were on the water 13 days and I enjoyed all of it. I enjoyed being on deck each night watching the stars and moon. Sometimes there would be schools of dolphins or porpoise following the ship. It was interesting to see them play or swim through the swells back and forth. It was also interesting when we passed several islands and when we would meet another ship to watch them

signal back and forth in Morse Code. We passed through the Straits of Gibraltar at night on the way over and during the day coming home. It was nice sailing in the Mediterranean Sea.

When we left Newport News, the ship was billed for Athens, Greece, but as the ship neared Athens, a small boat came out to our ship with a chart telling the Captain to go on to Salonika which is the same city referred to as Thessolonika in the Bible. We docked at Salonika on January 9, 1947. This city has not changed since Bible times. The streets were all of cobblestone, the stores were open on to the streets, even the meat markets, and there was no sanitation. In the harbor there were parts of ships sticking up out of the water, the result of the war. It was a sad looking place.

There were no pens or yards to unload the mules so about 50 men gathered to make a circle until they had about 200 mules unloaded within that circle. The mules were then driven through the town and up into the mountains. We never found out their final destination. The mules were unloaded one day and men came on board the next day and cleaned the ship. They took the manure some place and we presumed to the small farms around there.

After being on the ship 13 days, all of us had some letters we wanted to mail. Another fellow and I went into town to find a place to mail our letters when we suddenly found ourselves surrounded by a dozen people. We couldn't talk to them nor they to us. There were a lot of idle people everywhere and they were quite curious about strangers in town. Some of them thought we were English and at that time their feelings toward the English weren't particularly friendly. Then one of the fellows said, "America", and I pulled a letter out of my pocket. One of the Greeks then motioned for us to follow him. We did, not knowing where he was taking us -- perhaps to jail for all we knew, but it turned out to be a place called a post office. It was on the second floor of a building and there was nothing giving us an indication that it was a post office; however, they took our letters and sent them on to the United States.

Our Captain told us the ship would depart on January 12, so that left only two days for the cowboys to do any sightseeing or shopping. I visited several old Churches and almost all of them were damaged or nearly destroyed. One Church was so badly damaged that about all that was left were large pillars about 20 feet tall still standing with nothing between them. However, the people were working on it to restore and rebuild what little was left.

The ship pulled out on schedule and all of us cowboys were on board. We were 13 days on the water coming home. Since we didn't have a load coming back, the ship rode somewhat higher on the water. We had orders to do some cleaning and scrubbing on the ship and it needed it! When we weren't working, we would sit on the upper deck and enjoy the sunshine. There were some good books on board to read and some otherwise! Some of the fellows played cards and other

games to pass the time. We got into a storm with high waves on the way home, but I enjoyed all of it. I saw water on each end of the ship but at different times. At times the ship rolled to 40 degrees which told us a little of what a bad storm would be like on the water.

On January 22, we sailed by the Statue of Liberty. All of us were glad to see the shores of the United States. At 2:00 p.m. the ship docked at New York and we spent the afternoon getting our release from Umragh Shipping Company.

Four of us fellows walked the streets of New York until 3:00 a.m. to see the sights. Then we went to the depot to get a little rest and catch a few winks before boarding the train for home. At 9:00 that morning we boarded the train for home and on January 24, I landed in Adel and was happy and grateful to be home. It was good to be back in the store and on the job after a good vacation.

Ted Taggart had gotten out of the service just before I left for Greece. He and Barbara had planned to be married when he returned, but they put their wedding off until I got back from my trip. So on February 28, 1947, we had another wedding -- the third and last! And that left Pearl and me just where we started thirty years earlier. Ted and Barbara moved to Waterloo, Doris and Robert lived in Illinois, and Helen and Cecil on a farm west of Adel.

During the years living in Adel we saw some good times and some not so good. I was elected to the Town Council for several terms, then later I was elected Mayor for two terms. This was an interesting experience with plenty of ups and downs working with the people of a town. There were always a few "againers" who were against anything new that might benefit the town.

I belonged to the Rotary Club while I was in business and also was a member of the Chamber of Commerce for several years. Both are fine organizations that work for the town and community.

During the year 1947, Ralph and Edith dissolved their partnership and Pearl and I bought out their interest in the business. They took a vacation and looked for another place to settle, deciding on a small ranch in Siloam Springs, Arkansas where they raised broiler chickens, some sheep and shetland ponies.

Ted and Barbara moved back to Adel and went into the business with Pearl and me. As the years went on, the cream, eggs and poultry business began to decline. The farmers were selling off their cows and chickens as the market was such that they could not afford to continue, so we sold off the produce equipment and went strictly into the feed business for awhile. That too declined due to co-ops and business getting larger and they were delivering feed and mixing it right on the farms. So we closed out the feed business and sold the building. Ted and Barbara loaded their family and belongings in a U-Haul Trailer and moved to Mesa, Arizona in September, 1956.

In February of 1957, Mother and I made a trip to visit them and found them hale and hearty and enjoying the Arizona sunshine. We found the weather to be to our liking and decided we too would enjoy living there. So we returned home, sold our house, had a sale and sold part of our household goods, stored some that we didn't want to dispose of and loaded the rest in a J-Haul trailer and headed for Arizona. Ralph and Edith were living in Arkansas and we stopped to visit them for several days. As we got closer to Mesa, it got hotter and hotter! Remember, it was February when we visited and this was August. We arrived in Mesa on one of the hottest days of the year. Ted and Barbara had just rented a larger house and were moving in the day we arrived. This was a new experience for Pearl and me -- moving to a place that seemed almost outside the U.S.A.

We soon found a house to rent and with the things we brought and buying other pieces of furniture, we started up housekeeping in a new part of the country. I started to look for work which was not too plentiful for an older person. For a short time I sold cemetery lots. Then I had a chance to work at Arizona State University doing custodial work. The building I was assigned to was offices and class rooms and was a three story building. There was plenty of work for two men. I worked there four years from 10:00 p.m. until 6:00 a.m. It wasn't hard work -- cleaning floors and the class rooms and I had two different partners during those four years. I would get home shortly after 6:00 each morning and Pearl had breakfast ready for me, then I would go to bed. Pearl didn't complain about being alone at nights or going to be alone, but was glad to see me when I got home. I would sleep until about 1:00 p.m. then we would have dinner and I would work around home the rest of the day -- sometimes in the yard or refinishing furniture. During the time I worked at A.S.U., we bought a house which was being built in Tempe. We moved in on March 1, 1959. This was closer to my work and I had time in the afternoon to fix the yard and add some finishing touches to the house. I set out several fruit trees and shrubery.

While I was working at A.S.U. and in talking to one of the professors and my partner, I learned they had been going to a summer resort to work. This sounded like something I would like to do. So after working at the University four years, I reached that magic age, "65" and retired! I started to look for summer work elsewhere. I got acquainted with some people who had been working for the Government at Grand Teton National Park in Wyoming and found they were interviewing in Phoenix at the time. Pearl and I went to see them, received a contract for that summer of 1961 and in May, we loaded our car with clothing and equipment we felt we would need to partially keep house, and started out. We landed at the Grand Teton Lodge, not knowing a soul, but were taken to the room assigned to us which would be our home for the summer. I started working at once, but Pearl's work didn't start for two weeks. The lodge was 35 miles from Jackson, Wyoming, the nearest town of any size and 100 miles from any railroad. It is located



December 1957

Ruth Ann, Dennis & Robert Emmert, Cecil Reed, Ted Taggart, Bonnie Sue Reed
Helen, Ray, Pearl, Doris, Barbara
Harold Reed, Craig Taggart, Mike Emmert, Bud Reed, Chris Emmert, Pam Taggart

out in the woods in the most beautiful mountains we had ever seen, the Tetons. Our contract was from the middle of May until the last of September. The lodge closed around September 20, but we had to stay on to clean and put everything away for the winter. This usually took from ten to fifteen days, depending upon how many of the employees remained to clean and put things in storage. They hired many college students who left early to enroll for the fall semester. There were approximately 400 people working at the lodge, people from all walks of life and all ages. We met some very fine ones in all age groups and made some lasting friendships. Our contract called for six days of work and we were always glad and ready for the one day off because we had worked hard those six days. We also looked forward to that day because we could take our lunch and drive around and explore that beautiful country. Our food and lodging was furnished and the food was the best; however, you can't satisfy everyone so there were always a few who complained about it. We lived in a dormitory built to accommodate 40 people with separate showers and restrooms for the men and women. With that many people in one building, all from various parts of the country and all with different personalities, not always did everyone see eye to eye, but on the whole, everyone got along very well. In our dorm there were several couples who got together every evening for a gab fest and some food. On Sunday evenings they gathered in our room to share popcorn. The work was quite different from what some of the older people were accustomed to and that, combined with the 7,000 foot altitude took some getting used to.

There would be snow banks all around when we arrived but they soon melted. We usually started right away getting those 385 rooms ready to accommodate the 1,200 guests and during the height of the season, all those rooms were full. Pearl worked as an inspectress and parlor maid. For two years I was a house boy, then I was made head houseman and responsible for seeing that the work was done according to the way the bosses wanted. Sometimes that was more work than doing it yourself. Some of those boys and men came only for a good time and a vacation and weren't all that interested in the work.

As I mentioned previously, we always looked forward to our day off. Pearl and I would get our box lunch from the kitchen, then take off up into the mountains or to Yellowstone to see the wonders there. Sometimes we would take a hike on the trails up in the mountains or to Hidden Falls. There was always something new to see and always it seemed more beautiful than what we'd seen before. There were always wild flowers growing from the time the snow melted until it came again in the fall. In the fall the Elk would start coming down from the higher mountains to winter in Jackson Hole. There was a wild refuge there where the Elk were fed during the winter months. It was always interesting to drive through the forest at night and watch the Elk and also hear them bugle.

Whenever friends or relatives would visit the area, which they frequently did while we were there, I always enjoyed driving them around on our day off and showing them the sights.

In the fall of 1963, after the lodge had closed for the season, we received word that President Kennedy would be stopping off there. What flurry and excitement! We even had to call in some of the help that had gone home. The President arrived in one of two large Government helicopters that landed in the parking lot. I got some pictures of that event. All of the telephones but one were connected directly to Washington D.C. Secret Service men were there days before his arrival and had everything inspected. There was security at every corner of the building and on all incoming roads. They arrived just before sundown, stayed overnight and had breakfast before leaving around 8:30 the next morning for the airport where his plane was ready to take off from Jackson Hole.

That was the fall I had the misfortune of having my foot broken by a portable stage falling on it. I finished the season out with a cast on my foot and leg. We left the lodge the same morning that the President left. We drove to Iowa from there, hoping to get the cast off in Iowa. But the doctor in Iowa said to leave it on until I got back to Mesa. After nine weeks of wearing that cast, I was mighty relieved to get it off.

Pearl and I both enjoyed our seven summers at the lodge which were both hard work and good times. Since the years were moving on and the high altitude seemed to affect Pearl's health, our last summer spent there was in 1968. We made some fine and lasting friendships during those years which still continue.

It was difficult to get someone to look after our house during those months when we were away so we decided to sell our house in Tempe. We sold it and some of our belongings, storing the rest and moved in with Barbara and Ted during the winter of 1964. We moved a small sleeping trailer in their back yard where we slept, eating our meals with them. Then in January of 1965 we bought a mobile home in Alma Gardens Trailer Park and enjoyed mobile home park living. The park has 112 spaces and is one of the nicest, cleanest parks in Mesa with a lot of friendly people living there.

During the winter of 1968 I worked at the Biltmore Hotel in Phoenix located on 24th and Missouri Streets, and worked there for four winters. It was one of the first hotels built in Phoenix and is on the Wrigley Estate. I was one of the receiving clerks on the dock and we checked everything that came into the hotel, including furniture, linens, clothing, food, soft drinks, beer, and liquor. We would check in as much as \$100,000 worth of merchandise and food in a month's time. It also included checking the guest's baggage and shipping it out when they left. Sometimes the guests would arrive by plane ahead of their baggage which was sent by express. One time I had to try to locate some baggage for a man from New Jersey and this took eight days. This was terrible as it was his golf clubs and he needed them badly so he could play golf in the Arizona sunshine. The hotel was 18 miles from our home, but since my hours were from 7:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., I avoided the heavy traffic.

One summer, after the winter season was over at the hotel, I was trimming some trees for a very dear friend and former neighbor of Ted and Barbara's. It was a hot day and almost noon. I had just a little more trimming to do and decided I would finish the job so that I didn't have to return the next day. Apparently that was the wrong decision -- it seems I blacked out and fell to the ground, and that's where Mrs. Schlechten found me. I remember nothing although she said I did talk to her; however, I couldn't get up. She got hold of Barbara at the bank and Craig was there at the time. They came at once, Barbara called an ambulance and Craig went after Pearl. The ambulance took me with Barbara to the hospital. I had a couple cracked vertebrae and seven cracked ribs. I was in the hospital two weeks on my back. I was measured for a brace which I wore until November. I could get around without it hurting in a months time. I didn't do any more work that summer but we did pack up and drove to Iowa. I was very fortunate to be able to walk again and do all the things I do today. The doctor told Pearl I was a "tough old buzzard", but she didn't think she liked that comment very much.

One winter I worked at Velda Rose Mineral Bath House. The winter guests would come in for the hot whirlpool baths. We were required to treat them in hot packs also. After putting them through the whirlpool bath, they went into the eucalyptus vapor room, then into the heat room for a short time and finally on a cot to cool off before going out. It was a nice place to work but it meant working Sundays which I didn't care about.

From there I started working at the Maricopa Motel in Mesa as maintenance man, doing whatever needed to be done. This was just two miles from home and took only a few minutes to get to and from work. The hours were from 7:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m. Part of my work was near the pool and cleaning it every day was also one of my jobs. It was very interesting to watch both the young and "mature" ladies hang around the pool, getting in and out to put more suntan lotion on, but I never had to pull anyone out. Needless to say, I didn't have swimming privileges.

In August, 1973, we took a scenic trip up in the White Mountains with Edith and Ralph. We went to McNary where we took the excursion train trip that runs from McNary to the top of the mountains, through the pines. It was a beautiful and scenic trip but so steep in places that it seemed we would have to get out and walk. But the old "iron horse" finally made it. We drove on up to Show Low to visit Mrs. Rhue, who had been my boss when we worked at Jackson Lodge. She had a summer home up there. We stayed that night in a rustic cabin at Greer, a tiny town in the White Mountains. It was cold that night and we felt the wind coming through the cracks in the cabin. A couple who lived there served meals in their home since there were no other eating places in town. They were interesting to talk with as they had lived there many years and had tales to tell of some of the early days. They also had some interesting relics around their place.

After having breakfast the next morning we took the road through the mountains known as the "Coronado Trail". This was a very winding road but very scenic. I enjoyed the trip very much as Ralph did the driving and Edith was the navigator. At the end of the trail we landed in Safford. It was raining and chilly so we found a motel and had a warm room and good bed for that night. The next morning after a good breakfast, we headed for the valley of the sun, and back to our usual chores of watering, pulling weeds and getting ready to put in the winter garden which I enjoy doing.

In June of 1974, I decided that I wanted more time to do some of the things I enjoy doing around home and in my little shop so I retired again -- officially, this time! In August, 1969, we had purchased a larger mobile home in the same court and had space for a garden. The garden spot is 16 feet by 20 feet and produces plenty of fresh vegetables for Pearl and me. We plant two gardens a year and the winter garden is started in late September after the intense heat is over. I usually plant several rows of flowers so that in the spring we have lots of pretty color. We enjoy these and the neighbors seem to enjoy them also. Also, our grapefruit tree gives us lots of grapefruit which lasts up until the first of July.

Then each spring the water cooler has to be gone over to make certain it is in working order for the hot Arizona summers. I also help out several of our neighbors by coating the tops of their trailers with Kool Seal to help keep them cooler in the summer. There are also several widows in the court who call on me for repairing broken doors, plugged drains or any handy-man job they have. I enjoy helping whenever and wherever I can.

In June, 1974, our three girls had planned a family reunion in Colorado at the Brethren Church camp grounds. On June 3, Ted, Barbara, Pearl and I headed for Colorado Springs, Colorado. The first night we stayed at Santa Fe, New Mexico and the next morning took in some of the sights of the town. This is the capitol of New Mexico and is the oldest seat of government in the United States, founded in 1610. The town is full of old history and very interesting. From there we headed toward Colorado Springs where reservations had been made for almost a year in advance. This was graduation time at the Air Force Academy and our grandson, Harold Reed was graduating after spending four years there. We met Helen and Cecil that evening and Harold had tickets for ten to attend the banquet in honor of the 800 graduating cadets. This was an elaborate affair and we were very honored to be included. At the banquet, they served 5,000 people. Then on June 5, at 12:30 a.m. we were in the room when Harold received his wings and was commissioned a Lieutenant. That was a short night, as it was 1:00 or 1:30 before we got back to the mote for some sleep. Then at 10:00 a.m. on the 5th, everyone that had gathered for the family reunion attended the graduation exercises. The address was given by the then Vice President, Gerald Ford, after which they received their diplomas.

After the graduation, part of the family took off for the mountains and the camp ground that had been reserved for five days. We settled in for that night and the next morning after breakfast, everyone got ready to head back to Colorado Springs for Harold and Pam Wicker's wedding. It was a rainy morning but that didn't stop a wedding. We were pleased to be at their wedding as there were four of our grandchildren, plus a great grandson in the wedding, besides the bride and groom of course. A reception was held later at the bride's parents' home. It was dark by the time we returned to the campground so that was another full day. But what a wonderful and glorious time the next five days!

The campground was high up in the mountain -- 7500 feet and located some fifty miles from Colorado Springs. It consisted of dormitories, a large kitchen and dining area, and a three room bungalow which was the nurses' quarters. This is where Pearl and I bunked and I think we fared a little better than some of the others. It was cold there at night and we burned a lot of wood those five days. In fact, that rain turned to snow during the night and we awoke to a winter wonderland! It was a beautiful sight because the snow was wet and it clung wherever it fell. We had a great time together and spent some time throwing snowballs, building snowment, playing cards by the fire and talking. On Sunday the sun was shining in all its glory and the snow started to melt. The fellows shoveled a path through the snow to the picnic area where we had a weiner roast and lunch -- in our shirt sleeves. There were 23 of our family at that reunion, some at various times, but what a wonderful and enjoyable time we had with our family -- something we will never forget.

On Monday the 9th, the women put all the left-overs out for the noon meal, our last at the campground. That afternoon each one started home, each in a different direction. Ted, Barbara, Pearl and I drove as far as Colorado Springs and got a motel there. It had been a full five days and we decided a good night's rest would help us all before starting on toward Arizona. The next day we drove as far as Ouray and spent the night there. We decided to take one of the jeep tours up into the mountains before heading on home. It was a rough and rugged road and since it was still very early in the season, there was lots of snow and melting snow on the road. We had an excellent driver and it was a wonderful trip. Since Pearl doesn't care much for high mountain roads, she was a bit nervous part of the time but she made it through like a real trouper. When our driver helped Pearl out of the jeep, he asked her if she thought she would ever get back to the motel again! He was quite aware of all his passengers and sensed her uneasiness.

We arrived back in Mesa on June 11th, to be greeted by one of the hottest days of the year -- it was 115 degrees and QUITE a change from that snow and cold mountain air. Arriving home meant getting back to taking care of things around home that needed attention, such as trimming outside and cleaning up both inside and out. And as soon as people knew we were back home, I started getting requests to do trimming and cleaning at some of the other trailers. And then too, it was time to spade up the garden and flower beds.

In December of 1974, our family wanted Pearl and me to spend Christmas in Iowa for two reasons. One, we had only spent one other Christmas back there since leaving Iowa in 1957, and two, our oldest grandson, Dennis and his family who lived in Pennsylvania and whose children we had never seen, were also going to be in Iowa that Christmas. One nice December day, Ralph and Edith took us to Flagstaff where we stayed in a motel that night and the next morning boarded the train (Amtrack) and headed for Iowa. The temperature that morning in Flagstaff was minus eight degrees and that was quite a change from what we left down in the valley the day before. We arrived in Kansas City the following morning, then took a bus from there to Des Moines where Helen, Bonnie and great-grandson, Matt, met us at the bus depot.

What a wonderful Christmas spent with lots of relatives and friends. This took some of the edge off those cold northwest winds that can blow during Iowa's winters as well as the ice and snow which I don't fancy any more.

We stayed there until February 11, which was longer than we had planned when we left Arizona. But Craig and Judy Taggart were living in Ames at the time where Craig was attending the University. They were moving to Riverside, California where Craig had been employed by the Bureau of Land Management. Judy planned to fly out with their new three week old son, Mason, and Craig was driving his car pulling a trailer. So Pearl and I decided to wait and ride along with Craig. It was cold in February but we made it fine with no trouble. Once again, home looked mighty good to us and we were happy to see that Arizona sunshine once again.

Several summers, we spent a few weeks in the Wendt's cabin in Strawberry, Arizona. They were still working so weren't up there all the time and they were gracious enough to share it with us. Ralph and Edith would usually go along and it was a welcome reprieve from the hot summers in the valley. Also, while we were up there, our friends the Kittles and Randles who we met while working at Jackson Hole, would come up and spend a Sunday with us, bringing all the food and homemade ice cream. What an enjoyable time we would have -- reminiscing about our days spent at the Lodge. Our days were spent watching the birds and squirrels, taking walks, and playing games in the evening.

Early in 1977 our dear girls started planning a celebration for us as this was the year that we would be celebrating our 60th wedding anniversary. They made lots of telephone calls back and forth and did lots of writing to make the plans. They decided that the open house would be held here in Arizona at Ted and Barbara's. On June 2, we drove to the airport in a blinding dust storm to meet seven of our family flying in from Iowa -- Helen, Doris, Claude Wagoner, Jane Wicker, Dale Emmert, Pauline Fentall and Donna Wagoner Hogle. Ted and Barbara drove over also, so we had two cars to bring them all back to Mesa. Then on the 3rd, we returned to the airport to pick up Pearl's other brother, Frank Wagoner and also Bonnie, Randy and Matt McElroy. Between our place, Barbara's and Edith and Ralph's we found beds for all of them.

On Saturday, we had them all at the hall for brunch where we served cake and ice cream for everyone. We had our family all at a special table -- there were 21 of us. Of course we received lots of special attention and everyone sang to us.

On Sunday, our family attended Church together at Grace Methodist Church where Ted and Barbara were members.

And on Sunday afternoon the girls had open house. They served punch, coffee and cake to approximately 60 guests. Everyone was dressed in their long dresses and looked very nice. Craig was always there with his camera taking lots of pictures -- both serious and cutting-up. That evening, Bonnie, Randy and Matt left for California to spend time with Randy's folks.

Later that evening, when only the family remained, we had lunch at Barbara's and they started taking pictures. I think everyone was tired, because they really let their hair down and had a lot of good laughs.

Monday, Frank flew back to Iowa and that evening, Edith and Anna Mae Royer had a big meal at Anna Mae's for all those who were still here.

Wednesday evening, Ted loaded his pickup with food and the group -- four in front with him and the rest of us in the back and we headed for Saguaro Lake for a picnic. It was a beautiful evening for a picnic, and from there we drove on over to Fountain Hills and watched the fountain with the lights on it. We had lots of fun singing and talking in the back of the pickup. On Thursday the rest of the family returned to Iowa. It was a wonderful week spent with our dear family.

Then on October 14, 1977, I boarded the plane for Iowa. The seagoing cowboys who went to Greece were having a 30th reunion at the Panther Church on Sunday the 16th. There were others from the Church who had also gone overseas at various times and it was a reunion for all of them. I was the only one from the western part of the United States, but there were others from Maine, Pennsylvania, Ohio, Iowa and Kansas. I had not seen some of the men on that trip since we returned to the states. It was an enjoyable week spent with family and friends.

For many years I had suffered with a bad hip joint. It was getting progressively worse and the girls wanted me to see a doctor and find out whether anything could be done about it. I got an appointment with Dr. Dupont, an orthopedic surgeon who was highly recommended and he told me that I had two choices -- to live with it and probably in a wheel chair, or have a hip replacement. There wasn't any question in my mind which I would choose. On January 14, we went to Dr. Dupont's office and his surgical nurse explained the whole surgical procedure the doctor would use and gave us instructions regarding recuperation.

I entered the hospital on January 24, and had surgery on the 26th. I was in the hospital until February 6, when I was released to come home with lots of instructions of do's and don'ts. For thirty days I was grounded -- I had to sleep on my back with a pillow between my legs so that I could not roll over on that hip, no car driving or bicycle riding. At the end of those long thirty days, I went to the doctor for a checkup and was then given the go-ahead to do certain things such as drive the car, ride my bicycle and start doing some easy activity. I got along very well and no longer have any pain. I now have better hips than I've had for forty years and can do things that I could no longer do such as climb mountains and walk for long distances.

In October of that same year, I went back into the hospital for prostate surgery. Again, I got along very well, but the doctor said no bicycle riding, so I was grounded somewhat again.

So that brings us up through 1978. It has been a good life and I have been fortunate to have lived during a period of time when I have seen so many firsts -- the first automobile, electricity, the telephone, the first tractor and even to space travel and walking on the moon! We've both been richly blessed with good health and a wonderful family. We have nine living grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren at this time. They are:

<u>CHILDREN</u>	<u>GRANDCHILDREN</u>	<u>GREAT GRANDCHILDREN</u>
Helen June Bentall Reed (Cecil)	Bonnie Sue Reed McElroy Howard Lee Harold Evan	Matthew Reed Shelby Kathleen Kimberly Lee Chamaine Ray
Doris Jean Bentall Emmert (Robert) * (John Peterson)	Dennis Ray Ruth Ann Emmert Peters Michael Robert Chris Wayne	Jeffrey Wayne Sherilyn Sue Daniel Ray Nathan Scott Norita Joy Cheryl Carleen Timothy Robert Eric Wayne Shon Christofer Jody Patrik
Barbara Ann Bentall Taggart (Ted)	James Craig Pamela Ann Taggart Hermanutz Kim Alan (1951-1952) *	Mason Andrew Kelsey Anne

* Deceased