

SOME PAST MEMORIES

I think I was a year old when our parents moved from Indiana to Atchison, Kansas. About the first I remember is we children gathering hazelnuts in the hills south of Atchison, hulling and drying them and our father being on the police force in Atchison

and how he would humor me by waking me up at midnight and taking me with him and putting me to sleep in a cobbler's shop that he used for his headquarters while he made his rounds on his beat. One item I might mention in his police duties, was that the police department got word that Jesse James was headed toward Atchison in a covered wagon and our father and his partner was sent to the Atchison bridge to intercept it. Well, no covered wagon showed up and they were very glad it didn't.

About the next thing I remember was going to school and working some in our father's butcher shop on South Fourth Street but here he failed to make good. He got what he had out on his books and had to quit business.

Now starts the unusual part of our family experience. Our father decided he wanted to go up to the Dakota's and enter some land. He thought he would get there by building a boat and going up the Missouri River. Well, he build a boat, as I remember it around 18 feet long, but when he got it loaded with the needed furniture, there wasn't much room for his family of five children ranging from one year to eighteen years - seven of us in all. We started up the Missouri River, I think in the Fall of 1878, as I was 12 years old. Of course we had to pull the boat with a tow line from shore, while one used the rudder to steer the boar. Just how long we were in getting to a point one mile east of Doniphan, Kansas, or around 8 or 10 miles from Atchison, I don't remember. We camped here on the sand bar, which proved to be the west end of an island, or was an island when the river was high, divided by what they called the Indian Chute from the main bottom land. There were several hundred acres in this island. A Mr. Steve Yett came to us and told our father that he and his family had lived on the west end of the island and that the family that had lived on the east end of the island had moved off and that there was a log house of one room and several acres of land cleared up and advised that we move in and take possession which we did. We had all of the up river moving that we wanted. Mr. Yett said that it was a common thing to see people moving downstream in most all kinds of boats but to see one moving upstream - there surely was something unusual to him.

We went to the bluffs two or three miles up the river and would fill our boats with rock and float back to the island to build a fireplace in the house. I well remember of catching the first rabbit. I suppose it was our first big snow after we moved on the island. My father and I went rabbit hunting. When we found a rabbit track my father said that a rabbit usually would run in a circle and for me to keep on his track and that he would wait there and shoot it when it came around. I kept on its track for some distance when I saw a bunch of fur in the snow. In looking ahead I saw that the track went no further so I knew that it was the tail end of the rabbit. I, being a city boy, didn't know if I dared to

take hold of it or not. Finally I mustered up courage and grabbed the rabbit and of course all the rabbit did was to squeal. I called to my father that I had caught the rabbit and if you ever saw a proud boy, I was that boy. While I have heard that a rabbit would often do that in deep snow to rest, yet this is the only time that I ever caught one and I have caught a good many rabbits. I used to trap them with a figure four trap.

In those days there were lots of wild geese and ducks on the river in the Fall and Spring and lots of fish in the river with no restriction on shooting or catching all you wanted. The largest fish we ever caught weighed 84-1/2 pounds. It was a channel catfish.

We found plenty to do cutting cord wood and clearing ground until the 1881 overflow. It is a matter of record that the 1881 overflow was largely from bluff to bluff with but very little bottom land out on either side. What happened to us and the island was that ice gorged in the main channel to the head of the island which changed channel down the Indian Chute. It wasn't long in cutting the island away and filling up the old channel after moving back for some time on the newly formed bar of the old channel. We built a houseboat and lived in it and made our living fishing and logging on the river. Quite a few steamboats went up and down the river. Some had steam calliopes which made fine music on the water. You could hear them for quite a distance up or down stream.

As I have said, we were living in a houseboat in the Fall of 1881 on what was called a Chute which was a small stream of water between the sand bar and the main land with the main channel of the river between us and Kansas. The main channel was considered the line between the two states so now we were in Missouri.

About this time a Mr. Cook that lived on what was called the Doniphan Point in the main bottom, told our father that just across on the bottom south of where we were, were a few acres of good land that was left of a farm that the river had cut most of it away. The man that owned it had gone back to Germany and had told Mr. Cook to look after it. Well, Mr. Cook told our father that he could move on it and could have whatever he could make out of it. Our father wanted to go down the river while our mother and older sister, Orie, wanted to go over on the 12 or 15 acres that Mr. Cook had offered us. Now our sister, Orie, was so anxious to get off the river and take Mr. Cook's offer of the land that she went out on the willow bar and prayed that our father would change his mind and go over on this strip of land. About the first thing our father said to her when she got back was, "Well if you and your mother want to move over on that place so bad, we will go." My sister, Orie, always said that she always felt that this was one of her direct answers to prayer.

We crossed the Chute, or small stream of water, and tied our boat on the aforesaid land and for a while still lived in the boat. A little later we built a large one room house in a grove of mostly box elder trees on the east end of said land. We were all glad to get into it and get off the river. Not

many families have the experience of being washed from one state to another (so to speak) by the changing of the channel. Our father was a soldier in the Union Army. He belonged to the 40th Indiana Volunteers and came to Atchison, Kansas in 1867. At that time there was a very bitter feeling between the people of Kansas and the people of Missouri over the slavery question. Our father used to say that the only way he would ever move to Missouri was to be washed over here, as he was, but he found it OK and became a Missourian.

I referred to still making our living largely by fishing and logging on the river. It might be well to explain what I meant by logging. At that time in the 1880's the bottom was well covered with large timber, mostly elm, cottonwood and sycamore trees, largely from two feet to three feet in diameter which were being cut into different lengths and taken to the sawmills and run into lumber as the ground was cleared for cultivation. All up and down the river timber close to the river was hauled to the river, made into rafts, and floated down the river to the towns that had a sawmill that would buy the logs for lumber. I remember quite well when Mr. Alf Fenton of Rushville was having the west end of a half section of land he owned just west of Rushville cleared, a Mr. Granville Turpin had a yoke of oxen that he hauled the logs to the river with. They ran the logs into rafts of perhaps twenty or thirty logs to the raft and put a large oar on the end of the raft and float it to the sawmill at Atchison. A raft is a number of logs laying along side of each other and tied together by a long pole across each end with a wood pin driven through the pole into the log. I might add here that later in life I rented and raised corn and wheat on this same land of Mr. Fenton's daughter, Miss Agatha Fenton.

I might add here an item that helps to show how treacherous the Missouri River was. I spoke of Mr. Cook living on what they called the Doniphan Point. It was called that because it was a long narrow strip of land running north to the river and Doniphan was a little town across the river in Kansas. This strip of land was around a mile wide and around three miles long with the river on both sides of it. The island that we were on lay northeast of this point. The old main channel of the river ran along the bend against this point but as I have stated, the ice gorged and blocked the main bed of the river in 1881 and the channel went through the aforesaid Indian Chute, cutting the island away, and filling up its old bed. As the river cut the island away it came south and partly into its old bed so that struck this more straight and, of course, with more force. In the Spring raise the river got high and overflowed the south end of this strip of land and it was not very long in straightening out its channel.. It roared as it made its new bed. It could have been heard at quite a distance. It formed quite a lake in its old bed at Doniphan. It was, and is, called Doniphan Lake. Another little item of interest was in the spring the ice in the river gorged somewhere up the river which caused the water in the river bed to sink real low. In going up the river we saw some heavy timbers sticking out of the water. On examining it we found it to be a part of a steamboat. We felt like it might be the Old Pontiac that was sunk in that neighborhood of the river in 1853. We marked the place and in the fall my father and his brother spent quite a bit of time and money in trying to resurrect the boat but the quicksand was so bad they quit.

Well, from here on our family life was pretty much the same as other early settlers. We managed to get a small span of mules, wagon and some farm tools, rented some more land, so we worked more on the land and less on the river. About this time a Lou Marshall from Iowa came and started a tent revival meeting at Rushville. The most of our family was converted and went into the Methodist Church where we became helpers both in the church and Sunday School. Our father helped in starting a Sunday School at the Lin Grove school house and later when the river got to it and they had to move the school house, he helped in organizing a Sunday School at the Gore school house close to the west end of Sugar Lake. I would think it was around three miles or more from where we lived. Of course, our little mules and the wagon was what we had to take us to Sunday School. At times some of our church members would go to the Gore Sunday School in the afternoon. I have often thought of our Methodist preacher, Brother Leeper, who would borrow a pony of Mr. Davis, one of our members, and come over to see us. We were two miles or over west of Rushville. He would tie his pony to a tree, come in and say

“I am home.” I well remember one time he looked around at the bare walls of our one room home and said “Well, Jesus can live in a home like this.” We have since lived in an eleven room home but we were never happier than we were back in those old days in our one room home.

I have referred to my father being a soldier in the Union Army. I might further state that his brother was wounded, lost a leg, in the battle of Chicamuga. He was an officer and enlisted in a regiment from Kansas. When he told them that he had a brother in the 40th Indiana they sent for father and sent him back to Nashville in charge of twenty some wounded officers. A little later they found that he was a good nurse. They took him out of his old command and fastened him in the hospital and put him in charge of nine rooms in the hospital in Nashville, Tennessee. Our father sent for our mother and older sister who was a little girl two or three years old. Our mother had to enlist as a nurse to stay there with our father. In after life this proved to be quite a help.

Around 1890 our father and mother both filed for a Government Pension. Later both received a pension, father receiving eight dollars per month for being a soldier and mother got twelve dollars for being a nurse. They got some back pay which helped to buy and make a payment on a sixty acre farm around a mile and a little south and west of Rushville, now owned by Harry McQueen. I might say that sister, Minnie, married a Wm. Marshall while we were living by the river and sister Daisy married a Wm. Petree. Brother Elmo married a Laura Ditmer while we were on the farm. I think we were on the farm around eleven years when our father sold it and moved to Rushville.

About this time your humble servant decided he would like to have Stella Dawson as his company, a neighbor for a number of years. So, we were married March 25, 1903 but it proved to be a very short wedded life of thirteen months and twelve days as Stella crossed over to the unseen world soon after our baby was born on May 6, 1904. Our baby boy, Willie S. only lived until August 9th and he to crossed over to be with his mother. Our old maid sister, Orie, took charge of the baby boy while he lived and learned to love him as well as even myself. She had most of the care of him and

she mourned his loss very much. I have often thought of her vision she said she had some time after our baby died. She was setting out on our front porch when she had a vision of Stella appearing in the horizon not so far out with our baby in her arms. She claimed that she was wide awake, it was no dream. She said it came to her that the baby was Stella's baby and she ought to have him and from that time on she stopped grieving for him. Well, whether it was a vision or a day dream, it did good.

I was farming at that time and raised corn and wheat for several years in the bottom. Our father died January 30, 1906 at age 69 years of age. In 1914 I quit farming and opened up an office in Rushville and went to selling real estate and fire insurance. Mother crossed over the silent river to the great beyond September 18, 1918 at 80 years of age. Our mother's sister, Aunt Mollie Russell, came to live with us in 1922 and crossed over to her eternal home in 1932 at the age of 94 years.

In thinking of the above, my mind runs back to our first river experience. I have always thought that our father was gifted with an average of good sense and judgment and just how he could get it into his head that he could make the trip from Atchison, Kansas to the Dakota's in a boat that was pretty well filled with necessary furniture and a family of five children who mostly would have to walk and pull the boat with a tow line and to have that trip end in around ten miles with a home and some cleared land waiting for us is really food for thought. Again, when this home was cut away by the river and we kept moving back as the old river bed filled up and we found ourselves in Missouri and there again, as stated before, we had a strip of good bottom land offered to us for a home, to my mind these two instances were very extra ordinary to say the least. As I have stated, we as a family were largely raised up in the Southern Methodist Church. From their standpoint it was a coincidence or happenstance or was it? I was always quite a hand to try to reason things out but when it comes to life and nature, just how far can we get with our little one horse minds?

Things have happened in my own life that is baffling to the human mind. One of which I might start to describe by stating that a Mr. Lee DeWeese moved to Rushville in 1919 with his family of four girls and one boy and wife. Most of them of real help in our church. Later Mr. DeWeese as superintendent and Beulah as teacher of one of the girls classes. Of course, as workers in the church we became good friends and visited back and forth with each other. My old maid sister, Orie, and our Aunt Mollie, was the size of our family. After our mother died it left sister Orie quite nervous and it seemed to help her a good deal to have Beulah with her. She would often call Beulah to come over. Her folks lived around one half mile south of Rushville. I believe I could be safe in saying that when Beulah was around nineteen years old, it began to dawn on me that Beulah was thinking more of me than as a friend or neighbor. I can say here that during the twenty-odd years that intervened since Stella's death, I had no desire to remarry or put anyone in Stella's place as a company in my life. I told myself it wouldn't do, there was too much difference in our ages. She should find herself company of around her own age. Well, for around the next two years there seemed to grow a mutual feeling of understanding between us without any words being said and I might add, actions either, from either of us. I talked to sister Orie about what she thought of taking Beulah into our home as wife and she felt as I did that Beulah would ring true and would take care of us both when we got older. In taking

Beulah home one evening I said "Beulah, if you want to set the date, you may." She understood and responded by setting the date just a few days ahead. We were married August 12, 1928 in the Methodist Church, Beulah being twenty-one years old. She was a teacher of a girls class at the time and myself teaching the adult men's class. We had dinner at our home and supper at her parents home. As we walked home that evening Beulah said, "Willie, I felt like life would hardly be worth living if I hadn't gotten you." Of course that sounded pretty good to me but the strange news was yet to come. I have stated before that Mr. DeWeese moved to, or near, Rushville in 1919 from DeKalb and as they worked in the Methodist Church in DeKalb they came to the Methodist Church at Rushville. They got to church a little before we did. Beulah said as I came in that I ran my hand through my hair straightening it out, and that there was a thrill ran through her and that she had a feeling of jealousy for sister Orie, supposing that she was my wife. Now this was in March and Beulah would not have been twelve years old until May 25th. Of course Beulah soon learned that Orie was a sister. Now Beulah carried that feeling for me for the nine years that elapsed between the time that she first saw me and we were married. She also said if she would think of going with any boy she would have the feeling that Mr. Baker would not want her to go with any other boy. Now the real strange part is that a mere child of twelve years would fall for a man past middle age, a man older than her father, and that at first sight and carry that affection for nine years until she obtained her goal. It is and always has been all right for me to tell her that she is Stella sent back for she has not only tried but has taken Stella's place in my life for the last twenty-six years and raising a family of six children. She has been all to me that any wife could be even at the same age. Age has not made any difference. Beulah will tell you today that she still feels that she was made to be my companion in life. Strange, yes, we can't understand it. This old world is chuck full of things that we can't understand.

In looking over things that happened in my own and my father's life, there comes to my mind his experience when he first came to Kansas to enter land before the Civil War. He was a single man at that time. he and a Mr. David Patton boarded the Lucix, a steamboat, at St. Louis to come up the Missouri River. The Lucix carried the horns as being the fastest boat on the river. There was a company of soldiers coming up to Leavenworth and both the Lucix and another boat, the South Western, expected to carry soldiers to Leavenworth. The South Western went across to East St. Louis and landed in front of the main street. A little later the Lucix went across and landed just below the South Western. The captain marched his company down to the foot of the loading dock, looked down and saw that the Lucix carried the horns, stopped his company and marched down and on the Lucix. A little later when the South Western got ready to go, she went out in the river, turned her boat around three times and fired a cannon. That was a challenge for a race. The Lucix did not start for some time so they were some distance up the river before they caught up with the South Western and the race began. They passed each other three times with those on either boat going nearly wild with cheering as their boat would pass the other one. The third time the Lucix passed the South Western, the captain got out on the bow of his boat and called and told them that they had passed them for the last time and it proved as they saw no more of the South Western. We can imagine the excitement that a race like that would make as those on both boats would want their boat to win.

Our father and Mr. Patton got off the boat at Kickapoo, a little town just below Atchison, on their way to the land office to file for land. They saw a building with a grocery store sign over it so they went in to get something to eat. They found that it was a saloon with four men at a card table playing cards with some money and a revolver at each man's elbow. Mr. Patton had been out west before so he took the lead in what to do. While neither one ever drank, Mr. Patton went to the bar and called for the drinks, went back and watched the men play cards for a few minutes and then went out. There were two roads leading out of town not far apart. I think my father said they took the north road but kept watching behind. When they saw the four men come out of the saloon and look up the road where they were so they went a little farther and hid themselves and watched the men. Two of the men took a turkey trot out the other road so Mr. Patton told father, "it's up to us to go faster than them two men" so they started running and ran around a mile and found as they expected, the two roads came together. They had beat the other two men but they ran on for some distance before they felt safe. This was in the day of the wild and woolly Kansas.

As my mind runs back over my life and my father's life in farming, there was a great improvement. When my father was a young man they cut wheat with a cradle, bound it by hand and tramped it out with horses. Of course they only raised a few acres each and would help each other back in Indiana and Illinois. While in my own younger days we had our binders that would cut the wheat and tie it in bundles. Then we would put it in shocks until it dried enough to be thrashed. Our threshers were real good in cleaning or getting most all of the wheat. It took lots of help to run them. Of course the neighbors would help each other. As I remember, it took about eight bundle wagons to haul the wheat to the thresher. It took four men pitching to load the wagons, a man that fed the wheat into the thresher, two band cutters, one to handle the half bushel, one to hold sacks and help load wheat into the wagon, one or two in the straw, the separator man and those that hauled the wheat to the granary or elevator. It took around twenty or more men and they all needed to be fed. The man having the wheat thrashed fed the bunch while they were on his job. As a boy or young man, my first job was cutting bands or on the straw stack at seventy-five cents a day. A little later when we got a dollar a day, that was doing fine and was good pay.

I well remember helping put up ice on Sugar Lake. Armour and Woods both had a house to be filled when Sugar Lake proved thick enough for them to handle it. Little did we think in those days that ice would ever be made in hot weather. Little did we dream in those days that we would ever talk or fly around the world, or make atom bombs that could destroy large cities and many other unthinkable things.

I think it was in 1902 my father and I went to the Omaha Trans Mississippi Exposition. There I saw my first automobile. It was more like a buggy with a motor to run it. The driver would take you for a ride in it for so much. I think it was the next summer that the G.A.R. had their National Reunion

at Chicago and my father and Uncle David, his brother that lived in Atchison, had a brother in Chicago, Uncle Joe, and as they could get half train fare, they went to see their brother. I went with them.

I remember one day we ate our dinners on a lake front. Across the street was a garage with different kinds of cars going in and out. I could hardly eat my dinner for watching the cars. While there we took a trip on the lake which was the most interesting part of our trip. The Whale Back was the largest passenger boat on Lake Michigan making regular trips from Chicago to Milwaukee. It started early in the morning and got in around nine at night, as I remember it. The day that we went to Milwaukee the lake was very calm. We were out in the lake several miles and we could just see a streak in the distance but we knew that streak was land. I was anxious for them to pull out a little farther so I could say that we were out of sight of land, but they didn't. Of course, we were out of sight of land looking across toward Michigan.

Entering the city of Milwaukee was sure interesting. As we got inside the harbor a tow boat met us and towed us up the Milwaukee River to her dock. As I remember, it was three blocks from the harbor. The bridges at each street had to be opened and our little tow boat would blow his whistle to have the bridge opened so we could get through. There was a crowd at each street that cheered as we passed through. Of course, the crowd on the boat cheered back which made it quite exciting. I think they allowed us around an hour to go up town and see a part of the city of Milwaukee, then the whistle sounded and we had to get back to the boat.

In coming back, the big boat didn't need the tow boat as there was a little current in the river and the boat came on through the harbor and into the lake. It was interesting to watch the signal lights as we came back into Chicago. They were different colors. Of course the sailors knew where they were by the colors as they passed each signal light. I think it was round nine o'clock at night when we got to Chicago.

I think it was this same fall, 1903, that our father sold his farm and thought he might like to go to Oklahoma. We took a trip down to Muskogee and McAlester and on to Red River, the line between Oklahoma and Texas. We came back and he bought the Canter place in east side of Rushville, so we landed in Rushville. I farmed by renting land outside. I quit farming in 1914 and bought an office building in Rushville and went to selling real estate and fire insurance. Like most real estate dealers, I felt like the cheap land in the sough would be a good investment so I felt anxious to get hold of some of it. My first venture was in the Mississippi bottom. An Illinois firm had bought up a large tract and had cut it up in small tracts and reselling it. They picked out an 80 acre tract along the Wyoming River. I made the down payment. Later when I went down to see what kind of an 80 acres I had, I found that there was a low strip running across a part of the land that would overflow when the river was up. I wrote the company about it and they said they would return my payment if I wasn't satisfied, which they did later.

On this trip of inspection, I wanted to see the Mississippi River so I went across to Memphis, Tennessee. The river there is surely a nice clear stream but what I saw of the city was not so nice. In going up town to find a motel, I walked several blocks with several saloons. Men were in front of these saloons begging the passersby to go in their saloons. I had never seen anything like that before. It being Christmas Eve, perhaps I saw Memphis at its worst. I asked an officer where I could get a hotel for the night. He gave me the name of a hotel two blocks on up the street and said that was the closest that I would be safe. I should have stayed over Sunday and gone to church and seen some of the better side of Memphis as I surely had seen the devil side of it. Aunt Lacy Francis and her husband had moved to this new bottom so I had a visit with them.

A Mr. Brown wanted to buy a home in the east end of Rushville which was the place that I had bought of Joe Elliott and wanted to trade a 60 acre tract of land he had in south Missouri north of Hartville for \$600 so I traded with him and kept it around ten years paying taxes and finally sold it to a man that owned land joining it for the \$600 so that was a poor deal.

My next venture was in McCurtain Co., Oklahoma. The government allotted the Indians a quarter section each and sold what was left to the white man. Frank Jones and I went down and bought a tract. I kept that quarter several years finally selling it to the Dierks Lumber Co. of Broken Bow. That figured around fair interest on the investment for the time I had it. I should have done all my investing in Rushville for I did buy different places in Rushville, work them over and resell them and did very well with them.

I bought the old Dr. Culver home on the west side of Rushville in 1925. Later I built a store building on lot 4 south of the home, finishing it in 1936. We ran a grocery store in it for eight years. There is a real good well of water south of the house on these lots with a good vein of water coming in on the southeast side of the well. My wife's father and I were out to the well and he went and got a small forked stick and wanted me to take the forked stick and show him where the water came in. I told him that fork would not work for me. He insisted that I try, so to please him I took the fork, held it up and walked around the well. Of course, nothing happened. He told them to call Elizabeth, my wife's sister, as the fork would work for her. They have her the fork, she walked around the well and when she got where the water came in the fork dropped over. He father then asked me to hold one side of the fork and Elizabeth hold the other side. Well, to please him we did that and to my surprise the fork bent over a good deal and me holding against it trying to keep it from bending. Why I tried to keep it from bending, I don't know, just some of my contrariness I suppose. My wife reminded me a while back in talking of it that I had held the stick so tight that I had twisted the bark on the end of the stick that I was holding. I had forgotten that. Just some more of the unseen influences that are around us.

Perhaps most of us have our close calls, so to speak. Well, I too have been within one step of eternity. In going out to see Fred Fenton on a matter of business, who lived out on North 22nd St. in St. Joseph, I took the Frederick Avenue streetcar and getting off at 22nd St. I walked behind the streetcar and started to cross the street. Just then someone hollered and a horn sounded close to me. I stopped and threw up my hand which struck a heavy truck as it was passing. The back of my hand was tender for sometime from striking the truck. One more step and I would have been run over by the truck. When I told Fred Fenton and his wife of how near I came of being run over, Mrs. Fenton said "it was your Guardian Angel that stopped you, that is the way we believe it in our church." I believe she belonged to the Unity Church. Well, I felt that the man that hollered and the horn so close was what stopped me, yet I like her idea of a guardian angel. One can find many references in the Good Book where the angels are given as ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation, Hebrews 1:14. One that hasn't given much thought to the guardian angel would be surprised to run the reference on this line of thought in the Bible.

Politically, while I was raised a Republican, I have tried to vote for good men regardless of party. I have been a temperance crank. About the first question I would ask "is he wet or dry". Naturally I began by voting the Prohibition ticket and stayed with it until we got prohibition. When World War I broke out in 1918, my friends used to tell me that I was throwing away my vote. I always felt that a vote for principle was never thrown away. I would like for my children to follow my example in voting as there are good and bad in all parties.

I might mention that in 1920 no one filed on the Republican ticket for Representative in the third district as it was around 3,000 Democratic. No one cared to waste any time or money on trying to get the job. John Brown from St. Joseph, came down and asked me to allow them to use my name on the ticket as it looked bad to have that place vacant on the ticket. I gave my consent and they placed my name on the ticket as their candidate for Representative of the Third District. I am quite sure that I never asked anyone to vote for me, feeling it was no use, but in 1920 there was quite a landslide and that 30000 was cut to 1216. I felt after the returns were in that if I had gotten out and worked I might have been elected.

Another item of experience that I ought not to of ever had. I let the businessmen of Rushville talk me into being Justice of the Peace for Rush Township. I did tell them no the first time they asked me but gave in the second time when they promised to help all they could. We had a justice but he lived in the country which made him unavailable often when he was needed. His name was W. Bunten. I was appointed Justice of the Peace for Rush Township on December 15, 1919 and resigned July 11, 1925, feeling that I had my share of an unpleasant job.

I might mention that while in the real estate work I took three prospect so see the Long Bell land in Louisiana but none bought. My brother, Elmo, and I went to the Black Water Valley in the panhandle of Texas where they had the best water at 12 feet. They could raise vegetables and most

anything but they were too far from market and the land and irrigation came too high. It was of little use to try to sell any of it.

In March 1945 we sold the stock of groceries and moved to a 120 acre farm that we had bought in 1937. The farm was located around a mile east of Easton, Missouri. We attended the Easton Presbyterian Church while there. We were on the farm three summers and then sold it and went to Plattsburg to get better school for our children. There Rachel, Elizabeth and Martha graduated from high school Aldon had graduated from the Easton High School. We helped in the Baptist church while in Plattsburg.

After living in Plattsburg nearly six years, we sold our property and at Rushville and put it in on an 80 acre tract between Hemple and Stewartville where we can now be found. I wish to add here that sister Orie passed to the great beyond November 20, 1954 at 94 years. We laid her remains away in the Sugar Creek cemetery southeast of Rushville.

It might be well to state that while in Rushville I belonged to both the Odd Fellows and the Masonic Lodges for a good many years. I still have a tie pin with the three links on it given me and others that had been members for twenty-five years and in the Masonic Lodge I finished the degrees January 12, 1920 and I quit paying my dues in 1952. Both are good orders for doing lots of good in life.

END

William Aldon Baker

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to his death in April 1955.