

Following is a typed transcript of David Memoirs #06 of the Bob David Collection. The original journals are located in the Bob David Collection in the Western History Center. Accuracy in transcription was paramount and is evident in word choice, spelling and usage as well as in breaks mid sentence to reflect page changes in the small notebooks Bob David originally used.

This Journal covers Bob's life from March 1919 through the mid 1920s.

David Memoirs 06 - March 1919

1351 Missou Hines

1351-66 Early Casper 1922

1369 Powder River Post VFW #991

1394-1400 Cole Creek disaster 1923

1411-22 Casper Vigilantes

1430 Old letters from cattlemen

1467 Boney Ernest

1251.

That morning at breakfast I was told of the tremendous changes that were about to occur in the life of the David family.

Father had already bought a home in Denver at 2073 Bellaire, and we were moving immediately. They had been waiting for me to arrive before packing.

The Florence Hardware Company had been sold to a pair of Jewish brothers who had run a hide and junk place across the tracks for several years, and the home on the hill had been purchased by a rancher who wished to move to town.

Mother was very happy. She had at last prevailed on father to sell out and retire to Denver where she could be with her idol, Inez Richards. There, she would get into the high Society whirl, introduced by Inez, who now was married to a lawyer, named Kennedy, who had the reputation of being quite a playboy.

Any plans that I might have had were brushed aside. While I wished to find a

1252.

job, and get to work in order to marry Edna and start a normal life, they told me I would be needed for awhile to help them pack and move. They would buy me all the clothing I needed, and provide me with plenty of pocket money. After a few months we could sit down and figure my future.

Douglas had not changed at all since I left. A half dozen little buildings had been built, but it still remained a little ranch town whose business and politics were firmly in the hands of the retired "cattle kings" of a by-gone era. Conservative to a fault, the ruling element of the town would never allow anything to change and threaten their safe seclusion.

One large brick building had been built, a City Hall. I wandered down to see it one afternoon during a lull in the packing at home. I walked in the front door in my uniform, and was greeted warmly by everyone I met.

Hearing voices upstairs, I tip-toed

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up the steps, and into a large Council chambers, where I saw my mother sitting with a group of women Red Cross Workers, and busily sewing and knitting for the soldiers. They didn't seem to know the War was over.

I left quickly, and looked around another room across the hall. The women thought I had gone back downstairs.

I heard one of the women say, "You must be very proud to have Robert safe home again, Mrs. David."

Then came her characteristic reply, "Oh, he was always safe enough. He spent most of his time in the hospitals over there."

By this time I was mature enough to be able to grin to myself, and shrug my shoulders. "Mary B." absolutely could not stand to have nice things said of anyone other than herself.

We moved to Denver, and started to live in our new home on May 1st, 1919. It was a large frame house, single-storied, with an "Anne Hathaway" roof.

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Situated east of City Park, it was close to the extreme eastern edge of Denver.

One of its most interesting features was that I had to walk to the streetcar past the very house where the girl had tried to work the "Badger game" on me several years before.

She still lived with her family in the same house. Several times when I passed I saw them sitting on their porch or working on their lawn, and always I stopped to ask them for the number of their victims to date.

Never did I get an answer. Always, the girl blushed and went into the house, or the father or the young boy or his older brother gritted their teeth and maintained a sullen silence.

1919 will be remembered for several notable events. Andrew Carnegie, the great philanthropist and donor of public libraries, died as did the former President, Theodore Roosevelt.

On June 28th, the Treaty of Versailles

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was signed, marking the end of World War I. The American Legion was formed in Paris, and held its first National Convention. Paderoski, the great Polish pianist, became the first Premier of the Republic of Poland. Oregon became the first State to tax gasoline, and my cousin Bob Carey was elected Governor of Wyoming. Also, airplane passenger service was started in 1919.

My outfit, the 148th Field Artillery, returned home that fall. The boy who had feared the water so terribly before we went overseas, deserted, and had to be brought home in chains to get him back to America.

And, old Spick, the Battery mascot, walked up Sixteenth Street in all his glory when the Battery paraded for the last time. He was given to Mrs. Crosby, a wealthy matron of Denver, who had a special blanket made for him, relating to his battles. He was the Society dog of the city from then on.

History records there were 337,649 "draft dodgers" during World War I, but if

1256.

many of them were like me, the number of real runaways from army service was much reduced.

Some of the boys told me that my name was listed on the wall of the Denver post-office as being a "draft-dodger," and I went down to see about it. Sure enough. There was my name up there, stating that I had ran away from serving in the army.

You will recall that at the time the first draft was inaugurated I was already in Battery B. You will remember that the Captain did not know if we should sign up or not, but had us all sign up anyway to be "on the safe side."

Then, when the Draft Board in Denver got to my name, and sent out for me, I was already in a hospital in France after the Battle of Chateau Thierry. Their letter ordering me to report for duty reached me in my hospital bed. I had waved it in the air and told the whole ward about it, and we had all had a merry time about it.

1257.

So, I presented my Discharge papers at the Postoffice, and had my name taken off the list, with proper apologies.

One rough incident occurred in Denver as a result of the War years. You will recall that Scholtz had been given a Dishonorable Discharge after his Court Martial at Camp De Souges in France, after my testimony of his drunken gun-waving. Now, it seems, he had returned to Denver, and was a "Big Shot" among the Chinese narcotics peddlers in the city's underworld.

One of the boys brought me word that Scholtz lived at an address down on Larimer, and that he had sent me a challenge to go to see him. I went there the same day.

I found his house to be in the most squalid part of the city, a run-down red brick home with sagging black porch on the front, with broken windows patched with dirty cardboard. I walked up the board to the front door and knocked.

A bland-faced Chinese opened the door.

1258

"A fellow named Scholtz sent me word that he wanted to see me," I told him. He bowed low, bade me enter, to remain in the black hallway while he shuffled away through a door in the rear. Presently he returned and led me back.

I entered a large room which had evidently been a luxurious living room in the grand years of long ago. I blinked my eyes with amazement at the sight of what it was today.

Everywhere was evidence of the richest Oriental arts. The thick rugs on the floor, the tapestries hanging on the walls, the mahogany furniture, - everything was beautiful in the blazing light from a chandelier overhead.

Seated across the room from the door was Scholtz in a Mandarin embroidered gown, sitting crosslegged on a wide sofa, with black skull-cap on his head, and his arms folded across his breast inside the wide folds of his sleeves. The gown was

1259.

His gown was of the richest silk. The scent of incense hung thick in the room. A hazy mist of the fragrance hung throughout the room, and beyond it the sinister black slits of eyes in the yellow face of Scholtz gazed across at me watching for some trace of fear.

I walked across the rug toward him, drew up a stool and sat down, as if at ease.

"All right, Scholtz. Here I am. I heard you wanted to see me," I told him.

We were alone. He gazed at me for another long moment without a word, then he smiled grimly, and reached out for a long pipe on a tray before him.

"I didn't think you'd have the guts, David," he growled. "There are a dozen Chinks in the house who'd knife you in a minute if I told them to."

"Oh, cut out the theatricals, Scholtz," I replied. "What did you want me for?"

He lit his pipe, and a sweetish smell

1260.

drifted over to me. He waved the match in the air to extinguish it, put it down carefully, and sat eyeing me again.

"All right, I wanted to scare you," he finally said. "But, seein' as you're the same as ever, maybe you'll tell me about some of the boys in the Battery. None of the rest of 'em will talk to me."

So, I sat there smoking my pipe with good American tobacco smoke cutting its clean trail through the dope smell, and told him about several of the friends he had known.

He, in turn, told me that he was King of the Chinese dope traffic in the city, and that he was slowly dying from the effects of opium. I thought he sounded as though he wanted some sympathy, but I never was much for flattery.

Finally, after about twenty minutes, I arose and left. The outside air almost staggered me with its cleanliness.

Sholtz [Scholtz] died about six weeks after that.

1261.

Once settled in their new home, father and mother now plunged into the whirl of Denver society. Every afternoon and evening they attended banquets, recitals, dinners, parties, and teas. Introduced by the wealthy Inez Richards Kennedy, they had the entree to the highest and the best that Denver had to offer.

Many of these, I was obliged to attend, for I had to drive the car while they sat in the back seat in their finery.

All this time, I was writing to Edna telling her all the news, and receiving her pitiful answers. For she was being very brave but doubtful about the whole situation. She was beginning to fear that my family's influence was something I could not long stand up against. My assurances were not enough, it seemed.

After all, Edna was a realist. She knew I had no job, no experience in anything except labor or clerk work, nothing with which to start a married life.

1262.

Father and mother were frankly out to find a wealthy wife for me. They answered my frequent reminders that I loved Edna and would marry no one else with the scoffing remarks that she was "a nobody," that her family had no money, and that I was to marry a girl who would bring me social position.

Edna now was living with her family on the Mountain Home ranch at Parkerton. Her father now had the name of "Mountain Home Smith," and was rapidly attaining a national reputation for being able to raise the highest grade wool from the wastelands. She idolized her mother, and was completely under her influence.

But, I knew in my heart that Edna was my only hope for calmness and peace in my life. Up to this time I had been somewhat wild, a tough, careless young boy outwardly, while in my heart I longed for a quiet home, and a stalwart, sensible little wife.

Finally, my mother met a very wonderful and very rich family whose name we will only

1263.

record as being Moore, which it was not. Both families conspired to throw the daughter and I together almost every day, getting tickets for us for entertainments and dances and parties.

Almost every evening, the big limousine of the Moore's drove up to our door, and I climbed into the back seat beside the sweet, little daughter, to be driven by the uniformed chauffeur downtown or to some big affair at a huge home.

One night this happened just after I had received an unusually despondant [despondent] letter from Edna. I climbed into the back seat of the limousine, and sat silent in one corner, saying nothing.

Finally, the girl faced me and asked, "Are you angry at something, Bob? You have been so silent. Have I done something to offend you?"

I felt desperate that night. I was being enmeshed in something that I knew would not bring happiness.

1264.

I whirled around in my seat to face her.

"Yes, there is something wrong," I snapped. "I'm in love with a girl in Wyoming."

I glared at her as the street lights shone into the car. She gasped. Then I saw her face light up with a glorious light as she jumped over to my side of the seat and clasped my hands.

"Really, Bob?" she cried. "Oh, thank Heaven. For, I am in love with a boy right here in Denver."

Immediately, the world all changed for both of us. Whereas but a moment before we had been a pair of young people who were blindly following our families' orders, we became conspirators. We asked the driver to take us through Cheesman Park while we sat with hands clasped and planned.

From that time onward, the limousine called for me, I hopped in, gave her the tickets, and got out downtown, to find my

1265.

own amusement while she hurried on to find her young man. Later she married him, and I never saw her after that summer.

We moved twice within a few weeks that summer. First, father got an offer for the house at 2073 Bellaire for an amount which was \$8000 more than he had paid for it. We moved to a house on High, and moved again because father got an offer for \$6000 dollars more, again.

By this time, he was tired of moving, so he found an apartment on Gaylord, the entire second floor, and he moved there, vowing he would never move again.

I was having a lot of trouble with my teeth after we moved to Denver. In the Army overseas, when the boys had toothache, the dentists didn't waste much time drilling. They merely filled the cavities with amalgum. I had lost one front tooth before I even went overseas, chewing on an apple, and had gone through the war that way. I had found it helped my accuracy for spitting tobacco juice.

1266.

So, father sent me to a dentist who decided to take out my teeth. I went down to have the job done at his office one morning. He had just received a new shipment of deadening stuff that morning that was far too potent.

He inserted a long needle that was bent in the middle so that its point would reach far up to the ganglia in my cheek, and I never felt a thing.

Afterwards, I walked out and up the street to catch a streetcar to Park Hill and home, when everything went black on the corner of Seventeenth and Champa. I awoke to find myself on the sidewalk, with a crowd around me, and an ambulance backing up to the curb.

Seeing a friend in the crowd, I called to him to take me home, and he did. When I got into the house, nobody was home, and I went out of my head, and smashed a lot of things before the family came home.

They put me to bed under the care of

[On the back of this page - handwritten - June 1919 Mill for father (lumbering)]

1267.

a red-headed trained nurse who spent three days and nights making love to me when the family were out.

All these things happened in May and June. Sometimes it seemed to me that a lot of things always happened to me in an awfully short time.

On July 1st, father sat me down in the front living room and informed me that he had a job for me.

"I know you have been trying hard to find work, son," he told me. "But, times are not good and there is a lot of unemployment, and you haven't been fortunate. You and I know we wouldn't agree having you take the few jobs you did fine. So now, I have decided to have you go up and take charge of "The Mill."

For your information, the Mill was a sawmill up in the Laramie range in central Wyoming, northwest of Laramie Peak. It set in the midst of a great expanse of fine native pine, on the headwaters of

1268.

Boxelder Creek.

"As you know, I have employed old man Shippen to saw the logs, and he has his son, Pick, handling the timber crew. But, they are a careless outfit, and aren't getting enough lumber out in proportion to the expense. I want you to go up there and run the whole thing. I will pay you \$75 a month and all expenses. I have a fine cabin there for you, and will stock it with your food and everything you need. The Shippens have their own cabin."

So, I said goodbye to Denver, and Dad drove me up to the Mill. I found it to be a beautiful place.

Father had paid the Olin boys \$5000 to build a road in from the little siding on the railroad named Inez, after Inez Richards, and fourteen miles direct to the mill site.

The little settlement consisted of the sawmill, and four cabins. The mill shed was open around the bottom under the long, sloping roof, and an old thrashing-machine

1269.

provided the power which ran the saw, the carriage, and the planer. Heaps of fresh sawdust were piled around the mill building, with their never-to-be-forgotten fragrance of freshly sawed pine.

The timber that hemmed in the camp was thick and virgin. The story was told that mountain lions and wolves stalked the thickets, and that one man had wandered away during the previous summer and had never been found. They had discovered his hat and some blood.

The trail out led down the little creek past my cabin, and on down north through the winding valley to the plains. Above the settlement, the road was rough and led south about four miles to "the Funnel," which was a spot where the Laramie Plains pressed back into the timber in a funnel shaped meadow.

The Shippens lived in their cabin with their women and a bunch of dirty children. I began to live down the road in my own cabin.

1270.

Beside the Shippens and me, there were fourteen timber workers in camp, including one to ride the carriage, an off-bearer, a swamper, four teamsters, and seven fallers and buckers.

Old man Shippen had a beard and a great propensity for shutting down the saw at every opportunity. He ran the milling, while Pick was out in the timber keeping the logs rolling. The Shippens had lost money for every man they worked for, and now they threatened to "break" father unless they were kept at work.

I was able to get Pick on the job in fast order, but the cranky old man was always a problem. No carriage man ever satisfied him as to the proper way to handle "the dogs," which were the steel hooks which kept the log in place when the carriage moved the log back and forth through the saw. So, I soon found that I had to handle that part of the work to keep an eye on the old man.

1271.

Within two weeks, the native lumber began to pile up high in the little yard. Dad had contracted with Ed Reavill, the building contractor in Douglas, who agreed to take all the lumber we could get out, and everything ran smoothly, - except when I tried to push old man Shippen. But we finally reached a middle ground of mutual respect.

Edna and I were writing now almost daily. Her letters were coming to me every time the lumber wagons drove up from Inez. Perhaps, we thought, this little job would become big enough for us to get married some day.

Meanwhile, she was engaged apparently to a boy named Hawley, while Stella Clark in Ellis, Kansas, and I were writing back and forth, and she considered herself engaged to me, she said. She had gone to a lawyer to get a divorce.

Edna and I were living up to our 1912 agreement that we would be engaged in

1272.

our hearts, and tell nobody. We could still play around with the other boys and girls, but we had thought we would be married in this year of 1919. But now, the chances seemed far away. Perhaps next year -----.

July went by fast. I went out once, to a dance at the Marshall's over by the Peak, riding horseback through the woods, the ten miles. It was an all-night affair, and I rode back next day in the hot sun very tired.

Coming to a break in the mountains which was known locally as Panther Pass, I got off finally, and lay down for a nap. I learned then why they named the place as they did, for panthers screamed on all sides all the time I was there.

Then August came, and Dad came up from Denver to see how things were going. He was very pleased with everything, but told me to go in to Douglas in a few days with a truck to get some new mattresses for the men.

1273.

It was August 16th before something broke down in the sawmill, and we had to shut down for repairs. I decided that now was the time to go to town for the mattresses. I thereupon drove into Douglas during the afternoon.

There, I purchased what were needed, wandering around town in my old soldier pants which now were covered with pitch from the logs.

However, I in the afternoon met Charlie Zimmerman who had married Mildred Metcalf, and who now lived in the big DeDorest Richards house. He invited me up for dinner that evening, saying that he and Mildred were going to a dance down at the Fair Grounds building that evening, and that we would all go, and that he would get another young lady for me. I agreed.

So, that evening after dinner, I went with them, apologizing to everyone for my perfectly terrible appearance.

We parked outside the building where

1274.

from which the sound of dance music came. As we entered the door, I saw Edna dancing with Hawley, and my mouth dropped open with surprise. It was the first time I had been able to see her since I got back from overseas, and she looked beautiful, as usual.

Immediately, after the music stopped, I walked over, took her dance card, erased several names, and replaced them with mine.

The next number I took her in my arms, and glided away into the crowd. She told me she was having a house party up at the Mountain Home ranch, thirty miles away, and that they had all decided on the spur of the moment to drive down for a couple of hours of dancing.

Then, also, before we had danced half way around the room, we had told each other that we still loved each other with all our hearts, and that we must absolutely get married right away in spite of anything.

We danced together several times before the dance was over. Then, she left

1275.

with her guests for the ranch, and I was let off at the LaBonte Hotel by the Zimmermans when we drove into town.

That night in my hotel room I could find no rest. I tossed and got up time after time trying to figure what Edna and I should do. There seemed to be no way out for us.

She was entirely dominated by her mother, who did not like me. She was now teaching a little school in Parkerton near the ranch. I was working for my father who would fire me in a minute if I went against his wishes. And, times were not good, so that other jobs were scarce.

Next morning after breakfast, I walked wearily over to the home of the Episcopal minister, Mr. Howard Brinker, a good friend of my family's, to ask his advice.

"Come in, Bob, glad to see you," he greeted me. "Sit down here in my study. What's on your mind?"

I told him all about my trouble, how

1276.

I hadn't slept a wink the night before, and what was I to do?

"Hell's bells, Bob. Why don't you marry her?" he exploded.

I looked at him aghast.

"Why, look at me," I replied. "I haven't any decent clothes. I have no money. I am dependent on Dad for my job. I'm not in any position to marry anyone."

"Oh, those things don't matter," he scoffed. "Here, take this phone here on my desk. Call her up. Tell her to come down on the afternoon train, and I'll marry you right away."

Stunned, I took the phone, and told the operator that I wanted the Mountain Home ranch at Parkerton.

The situation at that moment at her ranch was this. They were having a late breakfast after driving back from the dance. About twenty of them were just sitting down at the table when the phone rang in the corner.

1277.

One of them answered.

"I wish to speak to Edna Smith," I told her. Then I waited trembling.

"Hello," her voice said, quietly.

"Honey", I told her. "I am [at] Reverend Brinker's house. I have told him all about us. He says if you will come down on the afternoon train he will marry us right away. Will you come?"

"Yes," she answered matter - of - factly, and we both hung up.

I dropped into a chair, shaking.

"How can you do this? "I asked the minister. "Dad is the mainstay of this church, and has been for years. He'll raise the roof with you when he discovers that you helped us."

"Don't you worry a bit about anything," he replied. "Now, you just go down to Daniels'. and get the wedding ring, and find some good girl friend of hers to meet the train with a car, and whisk her off to some home until the ceremony. I'll marry

1278.

you right after the train gets in at 4."

"But, how ----. What will I do about --", I tried to argue.

"Never mind about all that," Brinker broke in, "You'll never marry her if you don't do it now. You'll never have another chance."

So, I stumbled down town to the jewelry store. Mr. Daniels sold me the wedding ring on credit. I happened to see Henry Bolln outside on the street, and on the spur of the moment asked him to be my best man, pledging him to secrecy. I hardly knew Henry, but everything was all mixed up, anyway. Then, because Charlie Zimmerman and Mildred had been the means of getting Edna and I together, I asked them to be there.

The rest of the morning, and on into the afternoon, I walked around in a trance.

Up at the Mountain Home, Edna, after putting down the phone, had calmly gone back to her place at the table, and had sat down. On her left was Johnny Kennedy.

1279.

After a few moments she leaned over to him.

"John," she whispered. "Are you a good friend of mine?"

He looked at her, startled.

"Of course I am," he replied.

"Then, I wish you would do something for me without letting anyone else know," she continued. In a minute or two, I am going to leave, to go to my bedroom. There I will pack some things in a suitcase, and will set it outside my window on the grass."

He looked at her as if she had completely lost her mind.

"Then, after I come back here to the table, I wish you would slip out, get the suitcase, and take it up the hill to the railroad station and leave it there for me," she continued firmly.

Everything went smoothly. A few minutes before the train was due, she went to her bedroom, dressed in a nice suit, and slipped out unnoticed.

1280.

A few minutes before the train arrived in Douglas, I walked into the hotel and washed up. I had Vera Saul Trumper and her husband, Otis, all ready to get Edna at the depot, and they had furthermore told me they would get a fast Stutz which could outdistance any car in the country, and would race us away to Casper afterwards.

I walked downstairs to the lobby, and there, standing by the desk was young Hawley, Edna's fiancée. He had had to stay in town the night before on business.

We stood and talked. The country needed rain terribly. Times were bad, I told him, and a man was taking a big chance getting married these days. He agreed.

As the conversation went on and on, I heard the train whistling its way into town, and a minute later, out the front window we saw Edna driving past with Vera and Otis. Hawley jerked to attention.

"There's Edna," he said excitedly .

1281.

She's supposed to be up at the Mountain Home. I wonder what she's doing here."

"Oh, just down for a visit, probably," I replied calmly. "You know how girls are these days."

So, after a few more minutes of conversation, I left him and walked casually up the street to the church.

I entered, to see a handfull of friends sitting in the pews. The minister had two boy acolytes, the altar candles were lighted, and an organist was playing soft music.

The ceremony was over quickly. Edna stood bravely beside me. Her "I do, was calm and unafraid. When I took her into my arms after the last words of the simple service, both of us were ready for whatever the future held for us. Nothing could part us from that time onward, we knew.

Quickly, we were whisked outside to where the Stutz waited with its motor purring. We jumped in, the gears meshed,

1282.

and suddenly we were dashing down the street, and out of town on the west road that led to Casper.

I heard a shout behind us as we went through the business section, and I heard later that Hawley saw us, and that twenty-five cars chased us, but we were too far ahead, and going away fast.

Bewildered, Edna and I clung together in the back seat. It had all happened so suddenly. After seven long years, we were together at last. All we did was hold each other close, knowing that the deluge would hit us tomorrow, and caring little about it.

After we had gone about twenty miles of the fifty-two to Casper, Edna smiled knowingly, and reached into her purse.

"I know you haven't any money," she laughed. "Here's a check for \$250, all the money I saved from my teaching school. Take it."

1283.

We drove into Casper. It was a strange town to us. We took a room at the nearest hotel, the West, then went out for dinner with the Trumbers.

Edna and I were still so stunned that we ate little, and Vera and Otis left us quickly. Edna and I went up to our room, and sat on the bed close in each other's arms for hours before we went to bed.

Most of the night, we lay close and talked and talked and planned and planned. About midnight, someone threw a cat over the transom into our room, and a makeshift band from Richter's music store downstairs played a ribald wedding song for us.

That first wedding night was not by any means the sweetest one we ever were to know in our lives. So many young people start their marriages calmly, with an assured future. We had everything against us, and we knew it. But we were absolutely unafraid. We resolved to drive down to the Mountain Home ranch next morning, and face her family.

1284.

So, after breakfast, I wired my father and mother, and Stella, that I had been married, then a friend drove us down to Parkerton. There, Edna got out of the car, and told me to wait.

"This is something I must face alone," she said, and walked bravely to the door and entered.

I sat in the car feeling like a coward at not being beside her, and thinking of the lack of reason in the entire situation.

Neither of our families would agree with us, I knew. Our natures were as far apart as the poles. We apparently had no future together. Older people would say that we brought nothing to each other, and, had I known it I would have been very angry to know that all our friends were betting in Douglas that our marriage could not possibly last longer than three months.

Then the ranchhouse door opened, and

1285.

Edna came out with her mother.

"But, he is the sweetest man in the world," I heard my wife say. "You dont know how good and sweet he is."

But, her mother was crying bitterly into her apron, and Edna motioned me to drive away a little way up the road.

In a few minutes she walked up and climbed in, shaking her head. It had been the first time in her life that she had not done exactly as her mother had ordered. She could not understand herself, and I thought to myself that she would never have been married to anyone if she had not done it exactly this way.

Her father had not been home, being away at a distant sheep camp, or there might very well have been trouble. For Ed Smith was a fiery Irishman with a violent temper. The situation might well have caused him to run for his guns.

We drove on into Glenrock, six miles to the east, where Edna's brother, George,

1286.

and his wife gave us a bed for the night.

Next day, Edna decided to stay with George, and go out to see her Mother again. I drove on down to Douglas, picked up the mattresses, and went back to the Mill. I knew that Dad would be up from Denver any minute.

When he arrived, I was surprised at his attitude. Although he was grave and disappointed, he evidently felt that my marriage ended any future arguments between us, and that he and mother would put up with a bad situation as well as was possible.

"What you have done is a grave mistake, my son," he told me. "However, what is done, is done, and you must plan now what you are going to do with your future. You have two to figure [figure] for now."

I agreed, as he reached into his coat pocket to bring out a wallet.

"So, your mother and I are making you a wedding present of \$500," he

1287.

continued. "We have further decided that we will fix up the cabin for you both, and will raise your salary to \$100 a month and all your living expenses. Write a letter to your wife and tell her to come up as soon as possible to join you, for the longer she stays at home, the less chance there will be of her coming back to you."

For the first time in many years, I felt a great love for Dad. He was doing his best to smooth the way for us when we needed help the most. I wrote the letter, picturing the "beautiful, four-room cabin," in glorious terms, and urging Edna to hurry up to me. She arrived three days later.

I fear that I [my] letter had colored the wonders of the cabin too heavily. To her, the cabin lacked much, and after a week of trying to start living in the crude manner necessary, she left again for the Mountain Home to pick up some "woman things" that she needed to make the cabin a home.

1288.

"Dont let her stay more than a couple of days or she will never come back," Dad warned, but I smiled with complete confidence. I knew my Eddie.

A week later, a big freight wagon drove up the road from below, piled with furniture and bedding and linens and all the things that a woman knows are necessary. Edna sat on the seat beside the driver, grinning her quiet welcome, and with her white fox-terrier, Beans, in her arms.

We unloaded, and the cabin became a cozy nest after her hands had arranged everything.

She told me that her family was more reconciled now, and that they would do everything possible to make us happy.

From that time onward we were very happy together. It was not too easy for Edna to learn to live in a rough cabin without smooth floors, to cook with an old wood range, and to wash by hand. I helped all I could, but my work kept me

1289.

busy all through the days.

One day during a pouring rain, she did the washing, carrying the wet clothes out to hang them on a line back of the cabin. I had told her not to hang them on the "piazza," or front porch, as it destroyed the looks of the place. I could never see that the rough-slab cabin was anything but beautiful.

As she came back from the clothes-line, the rain from the eaves dripped down the back of her neck, when the back door stuck.

"I wish I was out of this mess," she gasped, not knowing I was around. But I thrilled at the courage of her.

Some nights the wolves howled around the cabin from back about fifty feet from the cabin.

If you have never heard a wild wolf howl, let me tell you that the sound raises the back hair and sends shivers through you from some instinctive primitive fear.

1290.

I knew the cabin to be strong and tightly locked, but I still prowled the rooms in the darkness with gun in hand whenever their dread shrieks rang through the night.

But, within a few weeks, Edna and I were living as though we had been married for years. It was surprising how quickly we adjusted to each other and to our surroundings.

Things went well at the mill and out in the timber. Logs were coming in smoothly from the woods; the mill was sawing regularly, and fresh, fragrant lumber was being trucked down the road daily.

With the first frost, however, we knew we must get in our winter supplies. We would be snowed in at the mill for seven months, from October to May or June, and we must have a big supply of food to get us through.

Nationally, there was a terrible

1291.

shortage of potatoes that year. It was practically impossible to get any. I was lucky.

Father had started a store, a commissary at Careyhurst, and I went down to buy our supply for the winter. On the day I got there, a freight-car stood on the siding, filled

with sacks of potatoes, and I bought ten sacks at \$12 a sack. Then I contracted with a freighter to load up and bring to the cabin all the groceries.

He got everything, and started for the mill, but five miles down the valley from us he ran into a terrible blizzard which forced him to unharness his horses from the wagon and come in to save his life and those of his animals. Every thing in the big freight wagon was frozen.

Ten days later, we made our way back to the wagon, and pulled it in to the cabin. I had piled sawdust under the cabin floor, to keep everything warm, and we buried the frozen potatoes there, to take them out later when needed.

1292.

Winter set in early that fall, but we were cozy and well stocked with food. I sawed and chopped a huge amount of fire wood, piling it neatly against the east wall of the cabin.

We now had the cabin fixed so that it did not present such a crude appearance.

Its dimensions were twenty feet by thirty, with two bedrooms on the east end, a large living room in the center, and the kitchen on the west. A porch, or "Piazza" as I called it, stretched across the front.

Shortly after the first snow, one of the timber workers came to me to report that Morton had run a flock of his sheep over into our timber to feed, from his range in the Funnel on the north edge of the Laramie Plains.

I rode over, and found this to be true. So, I searched out the herder and informed him that the sheep would have to be moved off our land, and that any found in our timber in the future would be exterminated.

1293.

A few days after I issued this ultimatum, [ultimatum] I was eating noon lunch in the cabin when I heard the clatter of approaching horses on the road outside.

Young Jack Morton had the reputation of pushing people around if they got in his way, and I was expecting him to come around and make trouble.

I therefore picked up my 30.30 and walked out onto the porch. As I leaned on the rail, I could see a little group of six riders coming up the road, cowboys armed with pistols and rifles, with Jack Morton leading them.

They rode up, to line up in front of me. I looked down at them and nodded a greeting.

"Hello, Jack," I said. "Are you out for a pleasure trip, or have you got something on your mind?"

Morton glanced at the men beside him, and leaned forward in his saddle. "I understand you ran my sheep out

1294.

of the timber, and told him you'd get rid of any sheep you found straying," he said.

"That's right, Jack," I replied easily. "And, just to save argument, let me tell you the rest. Our land extends to the edge of the Funnel. You know perfectly well where our line runs, and you also are fully aware that you have no right to run sheep on our side."

"Now, listen here - --," he began.

"No, I'm not listening to anything," I continued. "You're going to do the listening. I told your herder, and I'll tell you now, that if a single head of sheep, or a dozen, or a hundred, come over that line on to our property. I'll shoot them down where they are and let them lay. Now, what are you going to do about it?"

I leaned on the rail looking down into his eyes as he glared. The cowboys moved uneasily, and the air was full of tension.

But Jack was not used to facing the

1295.

facts of life. His father, John, had built up the ranch, and he had never known the hardships which would make him face up to trouble. He had not fought in any wars.

So, he looked away, blustered a little, and rode back down the road with his cavalcade which he had hoped would be very awesome. I never had any difficulty with the Morton outfit after that.

Snows began to pile up the drifts in late October. Log cutting in the timber left longer and longer stumps until, by Christmas time we were cutting trees on top of the snow level that left twelve-foot stumps which would be cut in the spring for twelve-foot lumber.

Worrying that we might run out of firewood in the cabin, I sawed and chopped feverishly at every dead tree around.

Once, I cut down a big one about fifty feet from the porch, and had Edna watch from the door. For, the snow was so deep that if the tree had fallen sideways

1296.

I could not have moved out of the way in time to escape injury.

December came, and by then we had no communication with the outside world. Drifts sometimes twenty feet deep clogged the roads, and heaped in the timber.

Christmas came and went. Edna and I spent that day reading aloud to each other, with a big, hot, Christmas dinner in the evening.

January and February came and went. Logs piled up outside the mill shed, and finished lumber sat in orderly rows that reached far out into the drifts.

But, before the month of February had ended, Edna and I recognized that we would have to get out to civilization as soon as possible. She realized that she was going to have a baby, and my "war legs" were giving out under me.

First, in France, the Army doctors had told me I would not walk again, and I had fooled them. Then, after I got home

[Note on back of this page says: "Left mill March 1920"]

1297.

they had told me that I never could perform rough work on my feet again, and that I would have to do office work, or some job where I wouldn't have to work on my feet.

Now, ploughing through the deep drifts, jumping around on the carriage in the mill, and lifting heavy logs and planks, I found my legs were swelling and paining me increasingly. It was only a question of time before I would not be able to walk.

In early March, Eddie and I could see from the top of a high ridge back of the cabin that the foothills and prairies far to the north of us were bare again. Spring was beginning to clear the lowlands.

We waited for a proper time, and decided about the middle of the month to make a try for it.

Pick Shippen would hitch up a team to a wagon box with runners underneath, and a pair of riding horses for us to lead behind. We would go as far as we could in the wagon, then transfer to the

1298.

riding horses, with Pick riding one of the team. Then, when the horses could go no farther, Edna and I would start out on foot with our suitcases, keeping to the bare ridges until we got to a ranch.

For, Edna was becoming very sick, and she definitely must reach help.

We followed our plans exactly. Pick drove his team, with Edna and I on the seat, going through the drifts for about three miles before the horses floundered in too deep snow. Then, Pick unharnessed one horse and mounted him, while Edna and I mounted the two we had led.

Holding on to our suitcases, we rode some more dangerous and difficult miles before we reached the bare ridges. Then we got off, and gave our reins to Pick who rode on back.

Eddie and I stumbled on down over the rocks for a long, long way before we saw a group of cabins before us. We hurried over, to hammer on the door of the largest.

1299.

It opened, and the welcoming warmth flowed out to us. It was the Grant ranch, and they took us in gladly, and put us to bed beneath warm blankets.

Another blizzard set in that night, but Edna and I did not care by then, for the Grants assured us that as soon as the weather cleared we could go to town with the mail stage that came up to the Boxelder postoffice [post office]daily.

When we climbed into the light wagon that was used for carrying the mail from Glenrock to the ranch boxes. Edna and I sighed with relief, for now we felt our troubles were over.

But, they weren't. When we turned onto the east and west road leading into Glenrock from the east, our driver misjudged the end of the bridge. The wagon hit the abutment, tearing the horses loose. The wagon upset. I was knocked unconscious, and the horses went tearing up the hill into Glenrock with broken harness flying.

1300.

Well, the Glenrock people came rushing to us, and we were moved out to the Mountain Home ranch in a few minutes, where we were put to bed safely. Edna had not been hurt a bit.

So ended our experience at the mill, ending with a terrible trip out which I have minimized here.

Edna was very sick for a week, and I waited until she had recovered before I took the train for Denver, leaving her with her parents until I found something else to do.

Mr. and Mrs. Smith made me feel at home at the ranch, but they were not too happy. Only their great love for Edna made them accept me at all, of course.

In Denver, I took the spare room at my parents' apartment where they lived now, on Vine. I wasted little time with them, as I wanted to discover what the Veterans Administration could figure out for me.

1301.

In downtown Denver, at the VA office, I found sympathetic attention from all sides. After all, they said, I was a service -connected patient who was trying to make a life for myself in spite of my disabilities. This temporary set-back would not stop me. My efforts, they said, had proved to them that I was entitled to their maximum assistance.

After a week of medical examinations, I was finally called to the office of H. Allen Nye, the head of the VA in Denver, who had me sit down and discuss my future plans. He was very friendly, and offered all possible assistance.

"First of all, Mr. David," he told me, "We have looked over your folder and have examined your condition. The Board now recommends that we offer you a full four years of training at any college or university in the United States."

That offer was magnificent. I thanked him very much, asked him for details,

1302.

and went home to ponder my decision.

For now, I knew, I must decide the future lives of Eddie, the coming child, and myself. What I did from that moment onward would mean all the difference between happiness and hardship for all the rest of our lives. It was to be the greatest and most important decision of my entire life.

First of all, what was my special gift, with which I would find the happiest life? There was no question there. I was a born writer, a journalist or author.

Following that line of reasoning, where would I go to learn writing, and the modern techniques with which to bolster my natural gift? On inquiring, I found the best place to study would be the School of Journalism at the University of Missouri. It was the finest institution for that kind of study in the United States.

Fine. How much would the VA pay me for expenses while I attended Missouri?

1303.

\$157.50 a month, I was told. This was not much to live on, especially with the expenses of a baby considered. Yet, we could make it, if we lived in cheap apartments.

Then, after four years in Missouri, what would happen? I visualized my start at cub wages working for some little newspapers, living in dirty, crummy rooms, working day and night for little money for years before I would be offered better opportunities.

Furthermore, I felt a sense of guilt, somehow, at what I had done to the Smith family. Edna and her mother were inseparable. They idolized each other. Edna and her mother would be miserable with us away down in Missouri for four years, and then more probably, depending on where I found a job.

All right, then. Supposing that I tossed aside this opportunity to use my best talents. What else could I do?

[Note: on the back of the above page - In pencil is written Accounting Course.]

1304.

Well, I had done some bookkeeping. I had taken a year of ICS, International Correspondence School, studying bookkeeping. I had been a bookkeeper for Craffy Broom, and for Giles and Endner.

Perhaps I could take a course in accountancy closer to Wyoming, a shorter course, and find work in my home State where Edna could be near her mother.

I talked it over with Mr. Nye. After checking all angles. He informed me that the VA would send me to Barnes Business Schools for a few months, then to the Modern School of Business for the rudiments of accountancy, then on to the Denver University School of Commerce for my diploma. The special course for war veterans from now to when I would receive my diploma would take two years.

Without a backward glance at my lost opportunity for a literary career, I chose the accountancy course, and signed up to start immediately.

1305.

Now, stop right here, reader, before you judge me for my decision. To understand it requires a complete knowledge of my outlook, and what made up the ME with which I lived.

Up to this time, I had known no real love, except that which Edna had for me. I needed a home, and peace, which I had never had. I had no desire for a large amount of money, or for fame.

I knew in my heart that I could become an outstanding writer, if I chose to be. At Ridley, I had proved this in competition. In the Army, I had written some very fair bits. I might become a great journalist if I chose that path.

But, somehow, when weighed in the balance, those things did not count for much when considered beside love, and home, and a contented life with Edna. Her future happiness was all I wanted to live for, and, to my way of thinking, I made the proper decision.

1306.

Edna came down within a week after I started at Barnes Business School. I had found an apartment on Washington Street, for a few days, then we went out together and found what we wanted at 1280 Grant St., across the street from the famous old Tabor home, where "Baby Doe" lived.

This was an old residence of Senator Somebody-or-other, a famous man of the older days. Now it was a two-story frame structure which was much in need of repairs outside but roomy within.

The Barr family were the owners, and they treated us royally from the first. Any suggestion we made for our greater comfort brought immediate results.

Our room was the big living room in the front of the house on the ground floor, with a small kitchen and bath at the rear. The furnishings were scarred and old, but Edna kept everything tidy and clean.

Every morning, I walked down to school, north on Grant, west to the Civic Center, and

1307.

down Sixteenth Street to the business section where Barnes' was located.

Barnes' Business School was situated on the entire second floor of a business building. It was run by Mr. and Mrs. Barnes and Mr. Barnes' brother. A competent [competent] staff of men and women taught bookkeeping to young men and women in several large classrooms from nine o'clock in the morning until late at night. Mr. Merry taught higher math; Mr. Tower, penmanship.

Everyone, from Mr. and Mrs. Barnes down, maintained an atmosphere of amiability with all of us. Soon, we felt a sincere love for the institution and for those who ran it.

There were 1300 veterans who were taking training that year at DU, Modern School of Business, Barnes, and the Opportunity School. So many problems developed that the vets decided to hold a mass meeting and elect officers to represent them with their problems with the VA.

1308.

At this meeting, I was voted in as President of the Veteran Students of Denver, and felt it to be an honor.

From that time onward, I was in daily conferences with H. Allen Nye of the VA, reconciling grievances, and overcoming problems. I had access to all the VA files, and never did we have any outstanding differences.

Most of the overseas men were joining the Veterans of Foreign Wars at that time, so I went in to Post #1 that summer. After I got in, however, I found the Spanish-American War veterans monopolized all the official positions and refused to give the World War I veterans a chance. So, a group of us began to make plans for a new Post for us younger men.

Nationally and internationally, the year of 1920 was very interesting.

Following the Treaty of Versailles, the League of Nations was started. But, the United States rejected the opportunity.

1309.

to cooperate with it, and it was to be 1946 before the USA became a full partner.

That was the year that 4,265,000 Victory medals were distributed to all the World War Veterans.

Warren G. Harding was elected President of the U.S., with Calvin Coolidge as his Vice-President.

There was a great baseball scandal that year, resulting in the first "Czar" of the game being appointed, a crotchety old judge of absolute integrity, Judge Landis.

Work was started on the Holland Tunnel in New York City, and KDKA's radio station put out the first nightly programs over the air in history.

That was the year that the Volstead Act was passed in Congress, prohibiting the manufacture and sale of liquor, and doing away with the "speak-easies." This Act was doomed from the first, as the public refused to cooperate.

1310.

The result was chaos. Officials of government were bribed. Racketeers, bootleggers and gangsters ran rampant. Murders and corruption were a daily affair in the larger cities. Even the sheriffs and local police in the smaller communities were affected.

That fall, Ben Stapleton, the Denver Postmaster, ran for Mayor. Some way, I got into it on his side, and he was swept into office by a landslide.

At his Victory dinner following his election, he sat at the head table with his wife on his right hand, while Edna and I sat on his left. He offered me any job I wanted in Denver, but as I have told you, I wanted to get Edna to some place close to her mother.

I worked hard at my studies, and made fast progress. Much of my past studies and experience came back to me, and I advanced rapidly. After four months, I graduated from Barnes and started at the Modern School of Business for elementary accountancy.

1311.

The Modern was up on Broadway, near Thirteenth, on the second floor. It was filled with veterans almost entirely, while Barnes had had girls as well as veterans in training.

I sat with one veteran for several weeks in class before he told me about himself. I had noticed he had an artificial hand on his left arm.

One day we were talking about our overseas experiences for the first time, then he said, "I suppose you've noticed that I lost my hand?"

I nodded. He looked a little embarrassed [embarrassed] while he thought of something, then he reached into his breast pocket and pulled out a narrow plush case, and passed it over to me.

"This is how I got it," he said quietly, red of face.

I opened the case and beheld the Congressional Medal of Honor, with the citation reading of his heroism at the front.

1312.

In addition, he had about every medal that the French and the British could give him. I had been sitting beside one of the great heroes of World War I for weeks, without knowing who he was.

That is the way I always found the veterans to be. Those who had gone overseas, and had given the most of themselves said very little of their experiences. Others who never got to the front, or who never even went across the water, bragged and brayed for all the world to hear about their services in the War. It was entirely a defense complex.

Through the summer, Edna and I prepared for the coming of our first baby, which should arrive around the first part of October.

I had all the \$500 wedding present that father had given me in the bank still. That would pay most of the costs.

I made a reservation for her at Mercy Hospital where Sisters were nurses,

1313.

and had the services of the finest doctor in Denver for her all the time.

I hoped the baby would be a girl, for I had no family name to carry on, with is the principal reason that most men want boys. If it was a girl, we would name her Catherine, for that was a heritage of her mother's Norwegian family, of Mohrs.

For many generations the first daughter had always been named Catherine. Edna's middle name was Catherine, as was her aunt in Norway, and so forth.

On the first day of October, Edna's mother came down to Denver to be with us. The first few days of the month seemed endless.

On the afternoon of the 7th, Edna began to have pains. She had been walking endlessly for weeks, and we went out to the park for awhile. One spasm hit, and she reached for me impulsively, crushing a handful of new cigars which I had in my breast pocket to hand out to the boys.

1314.

That evening, everything was normal, so the three of us went to see "What's Your Hurry," at the Ogden Theatre, starring Wally Reid. Right in the middle of the picture, she began to have pains, and we rushed her to the hospital in a Taxi.

However, nothing happened through the night, and we merely waited in the halls and reception rooms through the long, black hours.

We had become very well acquainted with the hospital staff, and rules in those days were not as strict as they are now in the hospitals.

About nine o'clock Edna began her labor pains in earnest, and she was wheeled into the delivery room. I went along, as did her Mother. The doctor put an apron on me, and told me how to give the anesthetic. When the baby's head showed, I touched it softly, to be able to say that I was the first.

For, you must understand what tremendous importance my children would be to me. I knew

1315.

of no blood relations of mine in the world. I had no kin. This child would be the only one that I knew who was related to me in blood. I would be fanatically devoted to my own. I feared when I thought of it of what I might do to any man who had a hand on them.

So the "bouncing, baby girl," was born, and Edna was all right, thank God. I was a father, and very proud of it. Now I must get a home for my growing family, and protect them for all of my life.

Edna was walking in three days, which was the new way of handling new mothers. We were astonished, for the past generation had always had to stay in bed for ten days.

Soon, she was busy walking the new baby-carriage around the block, and taking care of the fat little mite.

Father and mother came down to see us a few weeks later, the first time they had visited us since we first moved in. The apartment was not classy enough for them.

1316.

On Armistice Day, November 11th, I marched with the VFW Post in the annual Parade, being in charge of the first section directly behind the Color Guard.

This guard was composed of ex-Marines, with M.Y. Chapman in command. They marched stiffly, and presented quite a sight. The Marines always took their marching seriously.

Now, one of the rules of marching in Military formation is that no person or vehicle must ever be allowed to pass between a marching column of soldiers and its Color Guard.

We marched up Sixteenth Street in all our glory, then turned south toward the Civic Center.

A streetcar had been waiting very impatiently on the corner on West Colfax. There was a little distance behind the Color Guard as we passed in front of this streetcar, and the motorman thought this would be an excellent moment to dash by, between the Color Guard and the column.

1317.

With a clang of his bell, he started forward. He was half way across when all Hell broke loose.

Marines were swarming on his [him] from all sides, smashing in the windows around him with gun butts, and yelling at him to stop and back up.

Passengers shrieked as they ran out the doors. The car backed up, and the parade was resumed.

That fall, Sir Oliver Lodge came to Denver to give a speech on his ideas of the spiritual world. I paid five dollars for a front seat to hear him in the Auditorium.

For, since I got back from the War, I had somehow lost something. I seemed to be undecided in my thoughts of religion. True, I sang in St. Marks' choir, in fact I was a member of Hall's choir, which was rated the best west of the Mississippi River that year. We had been given the honor of singing at the opening of the Civic Center, where we sang "Fling Wide the

1318.

Gates."But, still, I was floundering spiritually.

Sir Oliver Lodge expounded the theory that we live in a world of two types, the physical and the spiritual. He said that he believed that everything physical had its exact counterpart in the spiritual and in the same position.

For instance, we see the physical furniture in our living rooms, but each chair and table is duplicated in the spiritual world, and in the exact position that we see it. Spiritual forms of departed loved ones roam around and live with us using our furniture and utensils as they are duplicated in the spiritual world. I was not convinced.

Later, a much - advertised medium arrived in Denver from Kansas City. She stated that she could go into a trance and tell anything of the past, present or future. I went to see her.

She was a gray-haired old girl, with

1319.

a young girl dressed as a nurse to help her.

The medium lay down and went into a trance before she began to ask questions.

"You are married," she told me.

"Yes," I answered.

"You have a child," she continued.

"Now, wait a minute. I'll tell you her name."

I cleared my own mind as she spoke, imagining that I was looking up into a cloudless sky. She made three attempts and could not come up with the name "Catherine."

Then, I thought of the name, "Grace", in lights over a theatre, and immediately the medium spoke the name Grace.

From that time until the end of the seance I made her say exactly what I had in my mind. It was entirely a case of mental telepathy.

Fortune tellers and palmists proved themselves to be equally unproductive.

But, I had one instance which was very wierd, [weird] and which never had been explained satisfactorily.

1320.

There was a married couple living in Denver by the name of Purcel, fine people. One night we went over to see them, and found that the husband, Jimmy, was out of town, so we sat ad chatted with the wife. The subject of spiritualism came up.

"Do you know," she told us, "I have a peculiar gift. I can put a page of blank paper in front of me, and take a pencil in my hand and go into a trance. Anyone can ask me questions, and I will start writing the answers. Some of them are the most senseless things, but I dont know what I'm writing."

"That's very interesting," I replied. "Come on. Do it for us."

"Well, Jimmy doesn't like me to do this," she said. "But I'll do it this time."

So, we started. She put her head on her left hand, leaned on the table, and went to sleep apparently, with her eyes close.

I asked several questions, but the answers that she wrote did not make sense.

1321.

Finally I said, "Give me one answer to prove that this isn't a lot of foolishness."

She wrote, "Have you ever read 'Held to Answer?'"

The seance closed then. We sat discussing the last answer for some time. What did it mean? Was there a book with the title "Held to Answer?" Or, was it some fiendish joke to reply that my question was "Hell to answer?"

Anyhow, next day I went in to Kendrick-Bellamy and found Jack. I told him that I wanted him to find a book with the title "Held to Answer." He could find no record of such a book in any of the big volumes in the book department.

"All right, Jack," I said, finally. "Search for it all over the world through your connections. No matter what the expense or how long it takes, I want that book."

He agreed and I went home.

1322.

Many weeks went by before he called me.

"Bob," he said. "I want you to come down right away. I have your book."

When I got there, he took me back behind the shelves and pointed to a thin paper-wrapped package. I opened it to reveal a booklet of probably thirty pages, with a highly-colored lithograph cover about twelve inches by eighteen. It looked like one of the children's books. The title "Held to Answer" was printed with flowery letters.

I opened the cover, and found a typed sheet resting there. I picked it up to read it.

"This book, "Held to Answer" has been found in an obscure little bookstore in Central England," it read. "This book was printed in 1846 in a shorthand, all knowledge of which has long since been forgotten."

I riffled through the leaves. Sure

1323.

enough, every one was filled with some hieroglyphics which were not understandable.

I paid \$16 for the book, and took it home. What could this mean? I asked myself what possible answer could this be to my questions. Could it mean that the questions that I would ask of the spiritual world were so involved that I would never understand them?

Finally, I gave up the problem, and put the book on the living room closet shelf under several sheets of music, with a little sugar-bowl full of nickles and dimes that Edna had put away for change.

A week later, Edna and I went downtown with the baby, after locking the apartment door behind us.

On our return, we found the door open. We looked around to find if anything was missing. Nothing was, until I searched the closet shelf. The book "Held to Answer" was gone. Not a cent had been taken from the sugar - bowl. Not a thing in the whole apartment had been taken except that book.

1324.

That incident was never explained, and it was to nag my curiosity for the remainder of my life.

Another peculiar incident occurred that year. You will recall that when I was in France, during the Battle of Chateau Thierry, I kicked up a little tin box in the grass back of our position in the Ville aux Bois woods. Inside was a long letter of a boy to his mother, telling of things which made me think he might live in Denver.

Now, I came across it again, and, thinking he might have been killed and that his mother might appreciate having this letter, I went down to the Denver Post and told them about it.

They featured it on their front page. The next morning, the mother walked in, a Mrs. Donaldson, and proved to be the one for whom the letter was intended.

She was given the letter. But, the interesting coincidence about the whole

1325.

thing was that the back door of her home faced the back door across the alley of my father's and mother's apartment.

When the Christmas season arrived, Edna, the baby and I took the train for Parkerton, and spent the holidays at the Mountain Home ranch with the Smiths.

While my own family had stayed aloof from us after the initial gestures of good will at the mill, the Smiths were genuine in their acceptance of the situation, and made

me feel right at home. Edna enjoyed herself very much before we went back to Denver, and the studies.

At the Modern School of Business, we veterans were allowed to take several side courses if we so chose.

One of the teachers was urging us to take Salesmanship, but I refused.

"Why dont you take it, David?" he asked. "It might do you a lot of good."

"Because I can sell anything any time without trouble," I replied.

1326.

He didn't believe it, and we made a bit [bet] on it.

"You name me anything you want sold, and I'll sell it within twenty-four hours," I told him. "Within reason, of course."

He chose to have me sell a gravestone. Next morning, I looked in the Obituary column of the city newspapers for names of bereaved families, then I went to the office of a monument works and got their folders.

The first family that I contacted bought the gravestone immediately, and I won my bet. I believe gravestones would be the easiest merchandise to sell at any time, for the salesman has a list ready to call on daily.

The year of 1921 came, the year of the peak of Rudolph Valentino's greatest success in the motion pictures; the year of the first stage show as well as the first religious service on radio, as well as the first World Series broadcasts.

1327.

In that year of 1921, the Treaty of Peace was signed with Germany, officially ending World War I, and the "Tomb of the Unknown Soldier" was dedicated.

More on the crazy fringe, that year also marked the beginning of the "crooning" type of singing, and the rise of the Ku Klux Klan.

The Klan was probably the most un-American institution that the nation has ever known. Anti-Catholic, anti-negro, it wormed its way into all Protestant clubs, lodges, and organizations, setting groups against group, and by intimidation and spectacular demonstrations upset the normal tranquillity [tranquility] of the country.

The Denver Klan was headed by a Dr. Locke, and was very powerful in city government. They paraded in sheets, with pillow-cases on their heads, and burned fiery crosses on hilltops, to frighten those whom they opposed.

I was contacted repeatedly, and

1328.

refused to have any part of them. Many of my friends began to shun me.

But, my little Eddie, after her years at St. Mary's in Omaha, was very pro-Catholic, and I was inclined that way, myself, remembering the help the nuns had been in our correspondence while she was going to the Convent to school.

Edna was busy through that year with her housework, and the baby. I plunged into my studies, and joined the Writers' Club, and work in the VFW.

I felt very flattered when the Writers' Club asked me to join with them, for they were a very select group.

The members were composed entirely of Courtney Riley Cooper, Robert Ames Bennett, William McLeod Raine, Jean McNeal, Hattie Horner Louthan, Dr. Gower and his wife, and myself. All of them were producing writers for the best publications in the nation.

We met in Dr. Gower's studio every Thursday afternoon, next to the Trinity

1329.

Methodist Church on Broadway, to read selections from our writings. Our first rule was that there must be absolutely no flattery. We tore each other's efforts to pieces savagely, and put them together again constructively. I gained a great deal from those Thursday afternoons.

Early in the summer, I graduated to the Denver University School of Commerce, in another upstairs group of classrooms downtown. I was told that with my progress and grades I would get my diploma within a year, and could then find a permanent job as an accountant. Life would then begin for me, with high hopes for a home and a peaceful, happy life with Eddie and the children.

Also, early that summer, several hundred of us members of Post #1, V.F.W. banded together and applied for a Charter for a new Post. We were successful, and took the name of Francis Brown Lowry Post, #501, in memory of an overseas pilot in the

1330.

Air Force who had been shot down over the German lines.

Later, they brought his body home in a hermetically [hermetically] sealed casket for burial in Denver. The funeral was a big affair, and I was one of the pall - bearers.

He was buried from St. Mark's. The cortege led up East Colfax to the cemetery, and planes flew low over the trees to strew roses ahead of the caisson and on the procession.

Later, I was to hear a very tragic story about this incident.

The Lowry family was prominent in Denver. In fact, Lowry field was named after the dead son, Francis Brown.

On the arrival of the casket in Denver, the family prevailed on the undertaker to allow them to see the remains. The Lowries were in such a mental state, that it was decided to open the hermetically sealed casket, and flash a strong light inside.

1331.

The story went that when the family viewed the remains inside, the mother went violently insane, and that Mr. Lowry failed from that moment until he faded away entirely.

I plunged into the activities of starting the new Post. First, we had to make some money. Carlos Richardson, Gus Hartung, Gus Onour, Nat Golden, Ted Symon, and the rest of us decided to put on a big spectacle which would bring us in some thousands at one time.

Gus had been National Commander at one time, and he knew Bob Woodside and the other heads of the VFW in Washington. He arranged with them to get a World War I film titled "Powder River" which we could show at the Auditorium for three days and nights.

It was a film taken by a German submarine commander of the sinking of Allied shipping on the high seas. It had been captured after the defeat of the Germans.

1332. a

Denver crowded to see the film, filling the Auditorium day and night. We sold tickets in advance, offering a solid gold VFW ring to the one who sold the most.

I got the ring. I went to each of the big stores and talked the heads into buying blocks of tickets for their employees. Five of the other boys pooled their sales in an effort to beat me, but I was still far ahead when the sale was over.

I learned then a great lesson that I was to practice the remainder of my life. Don't waste time trying to sell to the clerks and "little people." Go to the top, and you'll get things done in a big way.

We had one little trouble. Word came to us the second day of the showing, that a group of negroes were going to force their way in to sit on the main floor. As it had been, colored people had sat upstairs in the front seats of the balcony, but there are always malcontents in every group.

Knowing that some negroes carry knives when they expect trouble, we vets

1332. b

prepared for it. Most of the colored people deplored violence, and some of them told us the names of those who would cause trouble. About thirty of us old soldiers therefore were in the lobby of the Auditorium that evening when the difficulties would erupt.

We all had our thick Army overcoats wrapped around our left arms, and mixed with the crowd which was waiting to go in.

When the group of malcontents arrived, someone pointed them out to us. They stood in a group, quietly waiting for the doors to open, and slowly pushing through the crowd toward the left door.

We vets unobtrusively pushed forward, too, surrounding them with our left arms pressed against them in a solid ring.

When the doors opened, and the crowd moved forward, we vets pushed side ways to the steps which led up to the balcony, taking the malcontents with us. We opened a way for them, and they walked

1333.

up the stairs without a protest. We had no further trouble.

We started off well, using the same meeting room as Post #1, but on another night from their's.

Then we embarked on a program of starting new Posts in the surrounding communities. I was the Installing Officer who performed most of the final rites, installing Posts in Brighton, Greeley, Fort Collins, Boulder, and several others.

The night that I installed the Boulder Post, I ran into difficulties. The installation ceremony [ceremony] started well, and I was about half way through, when I marched Rice W. Means, from Post #1. He came down the aisle to the platform, and informed me that he had the authority to install this Post.

I stopped the meeting for a few minutes, while I hurried out to phone to Denver for instructions.

The closest phone that I knew of was in the ATO house, so I dashed up there.

1334.

I hadn't been in the house since my early days in Denver, when I had gone over to visit Bob McGraw and Toney Kush, Colorado University's great athletes.

I ran in the front door of the ATO house, and thought I'd run upstairs to tell some of the boys in their rooms of what I was doing.

When I entered Tony's old room, I found girls' lingerie and dresses all over the place. Stockings were hung over the ends of the beds. It looked like a deserted harem.

Then I awakened to the fact that this was mid-summer, and that probably the ATOs rented out their house to summer girl students.

Red-faced, I retreated quickly and went downstairs to the phone. Fortunately, not a girl was in the house, but when I reached the lower hallway, who should come to meet me but the house-mother, who gleefully informed me of what I had already surmised.

1335.

Denver told me that I had the authority, and I returned to the hall and continued with the installation.

Means sat in the back seat, and when the ceremony was over, I relented and invited him to come up to the rostrum and say a few words.

He rose and came down the aisle, a big man, with beefy face. The [He] thanked me, took one of the cigars from his mouth that he always smoked, laid it down on the flag draped over the altar, and commenced his address.

Suddenly, from the rear of the hall, I heard the thump-thump-thump of marching steps. I looked down to observe M.Y. Chapman in all the glory of his Marine uniform striding purposefully toward us.

He mounted the platform with grim face, walked over to the altar, picked up Rice's cigar, raised it high in the air, and hurled it to the floor, crushing it violently with his foot. Then, without a facial expression, he marched back.

1336.

Rice Means was not in the least Perturbed. He went right on with his speech.

Means had been elected U.S. Senator from Colorado during the hey-day of the Ku Klux Klan, which organization overwhelmed Colorado national, state, and local politics for a while. He was a big wind-bag, and his neighbors said they could hear him bawling out his wife for three blocks nearly every day.

That fall of 1921, I was elected Senior Vice-Commander of the Post, with Ted Symon, the Commander. Ehen the voting was over, it was discovered that he and I had exactly the same number of votes for Commander. However, I had given my word to support him for the position that year, if he would back me the next year.

One of the boys asked from the floor is [if] one of us would withdraw in favor of the other. All waited. Then I nodded my head, and Ted was in. I made a firm friend that evening.

1337.

Edna made frequent trips up into Wyoming to visit her mother at the ranch during the year, and at Christmas time we both went up for ten days.

By that time, I had made such good progress in my studies that Denver University had informed me that by February I would be eligible for graduation and for one of the special degrees issued to veteran students.

Shortly after New Years' of 1922, I finished all my required classes, and was able to wait around for graduation and for a job.

I wrote to ex-Governor Brooks in Casper, Wyoming, an old friend of the family , and asked him to watch for a job in accountancy for me, as I did with others. Meanwhile, time hung heavy on my hands.

Here I was, with a sweet, little wife and baby, living in a crummy apartment in Denver on a government GI Bill, ambitious and anxious to get work and a home. All these other activities had been necessary for me to burn up all my extra demand for excitement and interest.

1338.

My time was my own, and I looked around for something to do, perhaps some short job.

Then, through the Writers' Club, I heard that a little motion-picture outfit with a studio out at Overland Park south of Denver, was going to "shoot" a new picture, and that they needed a scenario man to write it.

I had perfect faith in my writing ability, so I went out on the streetcar..

I found the Park to be a large area of trees, with a big, wide, one-storied white building facing the gate. I went in the front door, and was referred to the Director, Otis B. Thayer.

Mr. Thayer was a white-haired man, genial, plump, and very capable. He had known years of making motion-pictures, which industry was still in its infancy.

He explained that his Company, the Art-o-Graf, had selected Colorado for shooting moving pictures because of the clear, clean atmosphere which could not be found in New York or California.

1339.

I told him of my writing ability, and referred him to several writers and publications for verification.

Finally, he said, "I believe you would be an excellent scenario man for us, Mr. David. We are starting on a new picture titled "Out of the Depths," from a book by Robert Ames Bennett. We must get into production two weeks from now.

He glanced down at his desk for a minute before continuing .

"Mr. Bennett wishes to do the scenario work, himself. But, I do not like to have an author work on his own scenarios. I would much prefer to have you. I must figure some way to decide between you."

He got up, to walk the floor with his hands in pockets, strolling back and forth, with his wavy, white hair bristling as he bowed his head in thought.

Finally, he nodded to himself, and sat down facing me.

1340 .

"All right, David," he said. "I'll make a contest out of this. I will have you and Mr. Bennett compete for the job, and the one who wins will be chosen."

"Now, I'll tell you what we'll do. This is Monday. I'll call Mr. Bennett on the phone, and tell him what I am saying to you."

"Tomorrow afternoon, I want the two of you here at the studio at one o'clock. We have just finished a seven reel comedy, but it has no "titles" or "Inserts" anywhere in it."

This meant to me that he had finished seven reels of silent movies without any of the words of conversation or explanation which were inserted so frequently all through the old silent pictures.

"I will take you both out into the projection room then, tomorrow. Tuesday, where the entire comedy will be run through for you, merely to acquaint

1341.

you superficially with the action and the general tone of the picture.

"The,[Then] I will do the same on Wednesday and Thursday. On Friday, I will ask you both to bring along your pencils and paper, to take notes of where the titles and inserts will be placed, and what they must say. On Saturday, I will do the same. Then, over the week-end, I want you to write them all out at home, and bring them out to me a week from today.

"All right , be here tomorrow for the first showing, as well as on Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday."

So, on Tuesday afternoon, I sat in the darkened room with Mr. Thayer and Mr. Bennett, while the silent picture of seven reels was run on the screen in the front of the room.

That night, after I got back to the apartment, I cleared the dining room table, got out my pencil and paper, and

[Note on the back of this page in pencil is written , "Scenario job in Denver."]

1342.

by midnight had written out all the titles and inserts for the entire seven-reel picture. My mind retained every action as clearly as though I were sitting in the little projecting room out at the Art-o-Graf building.

Next morning, I took the papers out to Mr.Thayer, and laid them on his desk. He took them up, bewildered, put on his pince-nez glasses which he carried on a long, black ribbon, and peered at them carefully. He got the comedy script from his desk drawer, and compared.

Finally, he dropped them all on his desk, and faced me.

"Mr. David," he exclaimed. "In all my years, I have never seen anything that would compare with this exhibition of yours. It is the greatest instance of photographic mind of which I have ever heard. You may have the scenario job, of course."

1343.

Incidentally, the seven reel comedy was shown all over the United States later, with my titles and inserts. Mr. Thayer changed one word, in one title, explaining that even that was not very necessary.

So, I went to work for Art-o-Graf, at a salary of \$350 a month, and \$10 an hour for any work I did acting in bit parts. The amount was stupendous in those days, and especially to me, as I was getting my \$157.50 from the government at the same time.

The shooting of the picture took three months. I obtained books on scenario writing from the Denver Public Library, and studied them together with other scenarios that Mr. Thayer had from past productions.

Daily, I sat in a little office beside Mr. Thayer's, often with my face painted with "make-up," for frequent bit parts which would be shot during the day.

[Note: written in pencil - "no page 1344]

1345.

The entire episode was tremendously interesting as well as amusing to me. The two stars, the male lead and female heroine were so arrogant and transparent; the use of "stand-ins" for any parts which required fast action or danger; the tricks which were played to portray events, - - all put me back of the scenes, and ruined future moving picture shows for me for many years.

The story was about a Western area and the building of a dam which broke due to the skullduggery of the penurious villian [villain].

One scene portrayed the heroine in bed. The villian [villain] stole in with a rattlesnake in a gunny sack. He poured the reptile on to the bed. But the hero arrived in the nick of time, and shot the snake just as it was about to stike [sp] its fangs into the carefully powdered arm of the beauty.

The rattlesnake arrived by express from Rattlesnake Pete's, out in Arizona, or somewhere. A stand-in lay in the bed, for the heroine actress always went into hysterics at the sight of a reptile.

1346.

An expert marksman lay on the floor beside me as I stood watching, and he blew the snake's head off when the camera took the close-up. Neither of the leads was there; they were downtown having a drink somewhere.

In one scene, in which I had a part, we had an amusing accident. The dam broke up the canyon, apparently.

This dam was made in miniature, formed by plaster of Paris in a little valley, surrounded by Plaster of Paris mountains. The whole scene was erected on a board about six feet square, and the camera moved up and took it as a close-up.

The dam was made to break very realistically, using a garden hose above.

Below the dam was supposed to be the Superintendent's office, a shack which we built of rough boards, with a door, and a desk across from it. Again, water from a hose was played over the roof, to make it look as though a terrible rain storm was going on outside the door.

1347.

A bit actor was to dash in through the door, to sound the alarm with the statement that the dam had burst up the valley.

We were all in place. The camera began to grind. The door burst open, and the actor, imitating an Italian laborer, came plunging through, shouting, "She burst in the middle. She burst in the middle."

That was all according to the script, but what wasn't was the gravel that had been strewn on the floor for realism.

As he rushed in, shouting, his shoes skidded on the loose gravel, and down he went, sliding across the room, slamming his feet into the desk on the other side.

Of course, this required a re-take, but all you could hear around the studio for a week after that was someone howling. "She boost in the middle."

1348.

The picture finally wound to its conclusion. I completed the titles and inserts for it before Otis B. Thayer came to me and asked that I write a poem as a Foreword for the picture. I thereupon composed what is probably the "corniest" verse of the many I put to paper. This was it.

"Man will fall with fatal weakness
If he trusts his human legs.
He will sink to depths unheard of
'Till he grovels in the dregs.

But, a Power with a Wisdom
That we cannot understand,
Stoops, and lifts him up to Sunshine
With a righteous woman's hands."

I think that poem illustrates better than anything I can say the quality of the silent movies that were put out by Art-o-Graf.

To me, it was a job, for good money, which I needed when I would get my home started. For, I knew that I must have a home, and quickly, by some means, and I even took my final check from Mr. Thayer, and, after giving him my sincere thanks, hurried away to buy some cheap furniture.

1349.

Next day, I walked into the Ward Auction Company, to look the situation over. As I walked down the aisle from the door, I noted that a large crowd was sitting in the front of the room, with an auctioneer standing on a platform in front of them.

He glanced up at me, and stopped his spiel, looking at me with his mouth open in amazement. I noticed the people looked around, too, then glanced back and forth at us. He looked exactly like me.

"Here is my brother coming in," he finally said. I sat down and waited until the auction was over.

His name proved to be Jack Martin, and never in my life have I ever seen any man who resembled me in every detail as did he. We proved it on his employers, on the policeman on the beat, and on members of his family.

So from him I bought the furniture that I felt I would need for a four or five room house, second - hand oak dining room set,

[Note written in pencil on the back of this page " 1922 Standard Oil in Casper"]

1350.

straight - backed chairs, a good double bed and mattress, a couple of old stuffed rockers, and various odd pieces. They threw in an old red mahongany [mahogany] side table with open chairs for dishes.

Things happened fast that spring of 1922 for me. That was the year that King Tutankhamen's tomb was discovered in Egypt; when insulin was first proved to be a great boon to diabetics; when the Irish Free State was started, and, above all, when the Episcopal Church eliminated the word "obey" from its marriage ceremony, three years too late for me.

A telegram arrived from ex-Governor Bryant B. Brooks in Casper, stating that the Standard Oil Company of Indiana had a job of accountant for me at a salary of \$175 a month if I would come immediately.

I wasted no time. Dad said that he would have everything packed and sent to me in Casper, and Edna went along with me, to visit at the ranch until I had found a place for us.

1351.

I arrived in Casper, to find it to be in the throes of a big oil boom. The Salt Creek oil field was producing more petroleum than any other field in the world, and the Standard Refinery, the only one in town, was the largest refinery in the entire world, as well.

The town was growing rapidly from a town to a city, and was already spreading out in all directions. Business buildings were being constructed downtown, and residences were being erected seemingly everywhere.

But, it was called the City of unfinished churches," for almost none of the religious places of worship were completed. Some, in fact, held services in the basements, with temporary roofs stretching over the rough foundations.

Homes were often erected on high foundations, in order that the basement rooms could be rented to obtain the high rentals that were being charged everywhere.

1352.

Local law enforcement was a joke, with gambling, liquor, and prostitution going on openly. Bribery and corruption were flagrant in high offices. Murders and assaults were frequent.

Whereas, David Street, which had been named for my father, had in the past been the red - light district of the little town, with its rows of two-storied houses between Second and Midwest, now the city's tenderloin area was the notorious "Sandbar," below the western edge of the downtown business district.

There, entire streets houses their women, who sat in the windows and beckoned coyly at everyone who passed.

Oil workers from Salt Creek, and from the wild boom towns of Old and New Lavoye, roamed the downtown streets at night, roaring their challenges at all law and order, and demanding whiskey and wild women.

Life in Casper promised to become an interesting experience.

1353.

The first morning that I arrived in Casper, I found a friend who had been in the Battery with me, Dick Nines, who advised me to get a room at the Bachelor's Club on

Park street, where I could get board, meals, and lodging for a proper place. I did so, and stayed there for a month.

The Bachelor's Club was a barn-loke [like] building, with a hall down the center inside, with flimsy partitions on either side, and doors leading into little 6' x 8' rooms containing a bed, dresser, and chair.

No one but the males could obtain lodging there, but the noise was terrific. One could hear every word that was said on either side. I had lived rough in the past, however, so none of it made any difference to me.

I took a cab out to the Standard Refinery office, on the eastern corner of the refinery, east of a row of stacks, and west of Casper.

1354 a.

There I met my future boss, an A.V. Forbes, who was a tall, thin, grim faced man. He, in turn, introduced me to the head of the department in which I would work, a short fattish fellow named Gene Mignolette, a Belgian. I also met Lanouette, and some others.

I was told I would work as an accountant in the Labor Distribution division, whatever that was, and that I would start the next morning.

Although the \$175 salary looked very large in Denver, in fact I had gone all over the city waving Governor Brooks' telegram and received the envious replies of all my friends, I discovered that day that it was the normal starting wage for beginners in the oil industry. It would be sufficient, however, to keep my little family of three very well.

So. I started next morning on my first job in Casper.

I found my office to be in the basement, in one room with several desks and file cases.

1354b.

Four of us worked in this room, Lanouette and another man handling the payrolls, while Gene and I ran Labor Distribution.

From the start, I found there was no accountancy practiced in my Department. Every man on the plant made out a little square form every evening, setting down the number of hours he had performed various jobs during the day.

It was Gene's job and mine, to put down the total time spent by all the men on each job. Any man with a very rudimentary knowledge of simple bookkeeping could have done it. Still, it was a job.

A Mr. Andrus was the Superintendent of the plant. I soon learned from the boys that Gene in reality a Belgian cook, whom Andrus had hired to really put on big banquets and parties, with many Belgian pastries for the guests. His job in the plant office was merely to give him a salary on the Standard payroll.

1355.

Furthermore, they all told me that the turnover on my little job had been frequent. As soon as a man learned the work to a degree that threatened Gene's job, Gene would manage to get him fired. I resolved that this would not happen to me.

This Standard Oil Company of Indiana plant in Casper was the descendant of the old Midwest Oil Company. The mother company had been started in Casper by a group of oil promoters [promoters], some of them with shady reputations, as a straight out swindle.

They had acquired some leases in Salt Creek before much oil had been discovered. They met in a "smoke-filled room" up in the old Midwest Hotel, and planned a big campaign of selling oil stock through "bucket shops" in Denver.

After they had sold quite a large amount of stock, they found they were faced with the necessity for doing some

1356.

drilling, to make a showing for the money they had taken in.

So, they hired some rigs to be set up out in the field, merely as a token gesture to the gullible stockholders.

To their surprise, the first well brought in a "gusher," as did the second and the third. To the amazement of the promoters, they struck oil on all sides, and found they were legitimate businessmen in spite of themselves.

Fortunes were made overnight. The price of the Midwest stock boomed. The old Midwest building was erected, which later was the site of the Wyoming National Bank.

Then, the promoters turned to obtaining more leases in Salt Creek. They were unscrupulous, and used every means to gobble up more and more. The story of the early days of Salt Creek contains incidents of murder, bribery, and falsity of records beyond counting.

1357.

The "Midwest crowd" found one old time cowpuncher named "Missou Hines," who had worked for the CY after Dad's days. He was badly in debt, and fell in with their plans readily.

Missou was used by them to sign any paper they laid before him, or to swear on the stand under oath to any question which would assist the Midwest group to obtain other men's property.

His life was threatened, and he became so detested that he and his wife had to leave town to live hidden away the remainder of their lives at a little hotel on upper Eighteenth Street in Denver. Dad introduced me to them once down there, and told me their story.

Then, the Standard bought out the Midwest crowd, and built the big refinery. Now I was working in its office.

During that first month, I was busy in the evenings looking for a place which Edna and I could rent. I finally

1358.

fount [found] one, a rented floor, furnished, owned by a Mr. Gill, a few doors south of the Albuquerque Apartments. It would cost \$165 a month and utilities. I had a little money left, and it would do until I found something else.

All that seemed to matter now was to get Edna and the baby to Casper. I therefore paid the first month's rent, and phoned Edna to come.

She arrived the next day, and we started housekeeping. The furniture arrived by freight from Denver, and we had to make room for it, too.

Mrs. Smith, Edna's mother, was horrified when she learned what we were paying for the Gill house. The second Sunday after we get settled, we drove down to the ranch, and she sat us down in the sitting room, while she unfolded her plan and that of Dad Smith.

The following week, she said, she was coming up to Casper, to take

1359.

Edna and me out to find a home. She told us that they would advance the down payment, and that we would pay all expenses from that time onward.

Edna and I were overjoyed, but, we exclaimed, how could we ever pay them back?

"We have thought of that, too," she told us. "It seems there is a large area south of this ranch, in the foothills, that the Mountain Home wants to get title to. You can both of you file for homesteads there, on 160 acres each. We will build a fence around both, and put up a house for you, with half of it on each homestead. You have only to live on it for a year, and the government does not expect a veteran and his wife to live on it very much. After you have proved up, the Mountain Home will pay you \$1000 a piece for the land, and you can refund us whatever we pay out for the down payment on your house."

We agreed readily, and Mrs. Smith came up the following week.

1360.

We searched the town over for available houses at moderate prices. Some were too small; some were in poor condition. Finally, we came to one at 1328 South Boxelder Street, on the street farthest west. A Mr. Brammer had just finished building it, and wanted to sell.

It had a front porch, living room, two bedrooms with bathroom between them on the south, a dining room and kitchen. It had a full attic, and three-quarters basement. He asked \$5500 for it, with \$1800 down payment.

Old Sandy Marshall was the real estate salesman who brought us together. The old liar swore we were connected up to the city sewer, and a lot of other things. We bought the place, and moved out of Gill's after one month of living in that high-priced place.

Edna and I were thrilled. At last, we had our home, and a good job. Our future seemed assured.

1361.

I had bought the home on Boxelder principally because it was but four blocks south of the refinery, and I expected to work for the Standard of Indiana for the rest of my life.

But, I began to learn some of the "facts of life" soon after I began the work.

First of all, veterans, especially the volunteers were intensely disliked by those who had not joined up for service. Perhaps it was a psychological feeling of guilt; perhaps it was jealousy; perhaps it was lots of things. But, the fact was that those of us who had seen service were not accepted by those others.

At that time, out of approximately 1250 employees, I was the only veteran.

Furthermore, I found the office workers to be an entirely different "breed of cats" than I had mingled with in the past. Whereas, the outdoor man who had a disagreement with another made the fact known. and slugged it out toe

1362.

to toe, the office man connived, or talked behind one's back, or went to the boss with stories. Understand, none of this happened to me as yet, but I knew that eventually it would.

I soon found the key to advancement in the oil industry to be one at that time of family influence and of "boot-licking." Some of the bowing and scraping going on by underlings for the benefit of their superiors was so apparent that it was sickening.

One day, Colonel Siebert, the head of Standard, came to Casper to inspect the plant. Every man in the office except me went out to join with the still workers, to line the sidewalk leading from the plant to the office, and bow low on each side when he passed.

Notwithstanding all this, I had resolved to stay with my job in spite of everything.

Edna and I moved into the new home with happy anticipation. We got the

1363.

furniture from Gill's. uncrated it, and distributed it through the rooms. With a few old pictures on the walls, we felt that everything looked very home like.

True, electric light cords swung from the center of the ceilings of the rooms in all directions, for we had no floor lamps or outlets in the walls.

The sofa under the front windows was made of packing cases, with a big Indian rug thrown over it. We had a coal range, and a coal furnace.

But, in spite of all, we had our first home together, and we could not see the flaws.

You must remember that in 1922, only the wealthy had radios, there were no Hoover carpet sweepers, no electric mixers, no perculators, no toasters as we know them, few gas or electric ranges. We had [?] hand washing machines, and little transportation.

1364.

I got Bob Carey to let me have eighteen loads of black soil from the banks of Garden Creek on the CY, and these I spread over the gumbo that covered my lot 9, Block 157.

Everytime it rained, water rushed down the street from the south, and across my lot and backyard in a torrent. Across the street, was a deep ravine. The Larson - Jourgensen Apartments were being built up on the corner of Boxelder and 14th, the dirt from the basement being used to fill in that gulley so that a row of houses could be built there.

That summer in my spare time, I built a sidewalk from my front steps to the street of packing case boards, and put in a fence completely around my lot, wire around the back, and picket fence in front.

I also dug up the front ground in front of the house, and planted grass.

Dad Smith brought up twenty little cottonwood trees from along the Platte down by the Mountain Home. They were

1365.

about five feet high, and the thickness of my thumb.

He brought them up in the morning, and laid them on the front lawn, with a wet gunnysack over the roots. Some boys came by later from school, picked up two and ran down the street switching each other with them. Edna ran out and got them, and I planted them all that night.

It seemed impossible to believe that they would eventually grow up to the thickness of my body, and that the branches would meet above the roof of the house.

Friends of the family came calling as soon as we were settled. Members of the richest and the best paid their respects. Mrs. Joseph M. Carey came up when she was in town. The Brooks and the Nicolaysens, and all the rest sat on our poor packing - case sofa.

We little beginners thanked them for coming, but we knew we would not return the calls, for we would never be able to entertain as they did.

1366.

With all the work getting the home started, Edna and I enjoyed our evenings, as well.

As Casper had begun to build out from the center, the need for transportation grew until a small bus service started.

The first busses were made of large boxes painted green and bolted on to the chassis of old worn-out cars. The seats were on each side from front to rear, and the price to travel one way was 25 cents.

These little flimsy busses never seemed able to meet any set schedule, so those who wished to use them often waited for an hour for them on the corner.

Edna and I went to dances at the Masonic Lodge, and to picture shows occasionally.

Before we left Denver, I had carried the baby, Catherine, into the old Tabor Grand Theatre where the picture, "Out of the Depths " was showing. I wanted her to be able to say all her life that the

1367.

first picture show she ever attended had been to see one that her father had scenarioized, [scenario zed] and in which he had been an actor.

So now I kept repeating the fact, and neither Edna nor Catherine seemed to be impressed a bit.

From my childhood, I refused to accept monotony or obscurity. Life had to have vitality. Things had to be moving. I was never able to sit down and wait for things to happen. I made them happen.

So, although my heart and life centered in my home and my loved ones, I plunged into activities downtown that gave my outlook interest.

I had already taken my first Degree in Ashlar Lodge #10 at the Masonic Temple in Douglas, back in 1912. I now applied to the Casper Lodge to allow me to get my next two Degrees. The Douglas Lodge requested Casper to give me the work.

1368.

One rainy night during the summer, I was walking up Center street on my way home when I saw two veteran friends across the street in front of the Rex Theatre. I hailed them, and crossed over.

"Hi, fellows," I greeted them, I was just thinking. All this town was for veterans is the American Legion. What do you think of starting a Veterans of Foreign Wars Post here?"

Perkheiser and Denny Murphy nodded their heads, and immediately we began to plan. I would go over right away to the newspaper to put in an advertisement stating that all overseas veterans who were interested should meet the following Tuesday in the Court House which sat in the middle of Second Street between "A" and "B".

I put in three ads, and the next Tuesday night there were thirty-five veterans at the meeting. They signed up an application, and we sent it in to Lowry Post to handle for us.

1369.

The American Legion offered full cooperation, then, when we gave them some publicity to hand out, they stole it all.

Finally, after all necessary formalities had been gone through, I received the authority to install the Post, and did so on October 22nd. I installed Perkheiser as the first Commander.

Most of the boys wanted me to be the Commander, but I felt that as I had been the one to start it, it would not have looked right for me to take the office.

We started meeting at the Cooks and Waiters' Hall on West Yellowstone. We soon had a membership of 350, but we had no money.

Finally, I thought of the moving picture, "Powder River" which had financed our starting the Lowry Post, and I sent for it. We showed it for three days at the Rialto Theatre, and made a lot of money. Then, I named our new Post after it, and it was known from that time on as the Powder River Post #991.

1370.

Immediately, the Ku Klux Klan began to try to take the Post over. It openly recruited members from the Post. Many of our boys were Catholics, and the Post began to break into two factions.

I drove down to Douglas to see the State's Grand Kleagle, big, fat, George Dickson, who had for many years been Dad's Manager in the Florence, and who now ran a little hardware [hardware] store of his own.

George probably looked big and forbidding in his white sheet and pillow case when he stood up at Klan meetings, but he was a trembling, white-faced mess when I got through with him.

I backed him into a corner, and told him what would happen to him if he didn't keep his Klan out of the VFW, and he promised to do so. Then, after I returned to Casper, he did nothing. I found few, if any, of them to be at all trustworthy.

1371.

My old "war legs" began to hurt me again that fall. The constant shovelling [shoveling] at home, starting a lawn and vegetable garden were breaking them down again. I was having sleepless nights.

I was having quite a lot of fun that summer with a man named E. Richard Shipp, who wrote a lot of mediocre poetry for the local newspaper, and for anything else which would publish them. Some of his friends were even trying to have him appointed "Poet Laureate" of Wyoming.

Some of his poems were frankly of a propoganda [propaganda] type, and I began to answer in the papers, using the nom-de-plume of my telephone number "919". Soon he and most of the town were trying to discover who this 919 was, and they never did.

Two outstanding attributes of mine I discovered that summer. First, I was not able to hunt. Since I had participated in the killing of the German boy at Chateau Thierry, I could not stand to have a rifle in my hands.

1372.

Although I had always been a crack shot, and had loved hunting, I was never able to fire a gin [gun] the remainder of my life.

Secondly, Edna and I charged our groceries at the old Midwest Commissary next to the tracks on West Yellowstone. At the end of the first month, when we got our grocery bill we found it to be so large that we had trouble with it.

We learned then that phoning in grocery orders, and charging them, was so inducive [inducing] to over-buying, that we never charged a grocery bill again in our lives.

Edna and I were happy with our life now. Both of us slaved at keeping it neat and clean with what we had.

And now we had an added reason, for another baby was to arrive close to the first of the year. If it were a boy, it would be named for me. If it was a girl, we decided to name her for her two grandmothers, Mary and Henrietta.

1373.

My application for taking my degrees in the Casper Lodge seemed to be getting nowhere. The Douglas Lodge asked Casper to get moving, but nothing happened.

Finally, one day I asked a good friend of mine who was high in the Lodge, to find out what was wrong. He told me to see him next day, after a meeting of the Casper Lodge that night.

Next morning, I went to his office, and he was beet faced with anger.

"Bob", he thundered. "I've never heard of such actions in all my years of Masonry. I advise you to take your two degrees in Douglas, and afterwards, when you

are a member of the Blue Lodge, you demand an explanation on the floor of the Casper Lodge."

So, I did this, driving to Douglas and getting my degrees. Then I demanded an explanation, and got it.

It seems that a member of the Casper Lodge was an old fellow named

1374.

George Stilphen, a wool buyer who owned and lived at the corner of Sixth and Center where the Bluebird Grocery black [?] was.

He was a stout, sloppy old fellow, who smoked his pipe with his teeth out most of the time.

He did a great deal of business with Dad Smith, who was a 32-degree consistory Mason, buying the Mountain Home clip each year, which paid him a handsome percentage.

Regularly, he made it a point to drive into the ranch on Sunday noons, when Mother Smith had her wonderful dinners that were noted all over central Wyoming. She was a prominent member of the Eastern Star.

Well, Stilphen, who professed to be such a close friend of the family, and who "sponged" off them every Sunday, was getting up in the Casper Lodge and was blocking my taking my degrees. He was declaring that Edna had gone to a Catholic convent, and that therefore I should not become a full Mason.

1375.

Dad Smith would have kicked him off the ranch if he had ever known about George Stilphen's actions. I never told, though I wondered sometimes if I was doing right by keeping quiet.

Then, in the late fall, catastrophe hit. I lost my job.

I had reached the point by then in the office, where I handled all the time slips by myself, adding them, and putting the amounts in the proper columns, while Gene Mignolette sat at his desk and read magazines. I really didn't mind, however, but it reminded me that others before me had been fired when such a situation developed.

One afternoon, work was slack, and the four of us were sitting back talking idly. It seems that Gene had been in the country for about six years, and had never taken out his citizenship papers, nor had he made any effort to file an application.

[Note: Written in pencil on back of this page the following "Fired from Standard."]

1376.

"Why haven't you taken out your citizenship papers, Gene?" Jim Lanouette asked him.

"Because it isn't worth \$25 to be a citizen of the United States," Mignollette replied, and I saw red.

Quitting time came a few minutes later, with bad feeling all around. Outside the gate, I asked him the question again, and on receiving the same reply I gave him the beating of his life.

The fight was observed evidently from the office. I was called back in, and though the fight had occurred off the Standard property, and after work hours, I was fired immediately.

That night at home was the most terrible I ever had known. Here I was, with my first home, disabled to a large degree, with a wife and baby, and another coming, and I had no job. Perhaps I was a failure. Perhaps I could never hold a job. Edna held me in her arms and tried to comfort me.

[Note: Written in pencil are the following words: 1922 Texas Co. refinery.]

1377.

Next morning, at six o'clock, the phone rang and woke me up. I answered.

"Is this Bob David?" a deep voice inquired.

"Yes, it is," I replied.

"Well, Mr. David, this is the Chief Engineer for the Texas Company. We are starting today to build a refinery east of Casper, and we need a cost accountant. Can you do that work?"

"I certainly can," I replied. "I graduated in that work."

"Fine," he said. "We would like to have you report at seven o'clock, if you can."

"I'll be there," I answered, and ran for my clothes.

So, I did not lose a minute of time. The job paid \$25 a month less than the Standard, but on the first of the year I was raised to \$200.

I might get ahead of myself here to say that seventeen years later, in 1939,

1378.

A.V. Forbes sought me out, with some papers in his hand.

"Bob, we have looked over the records," he told me. "And, we find that you shouldn't have been discharged. So, if you wish to sign these Resignation papers, your record will be clear with the Standard Oil Company of Indiana."

I am afraid I told him where the Standard could go, and how little I cared if my record was lily white with that Company or not. I remembered far too well that terrible night.

From the first, the work at the Texas Company was very interesting. All the executives were from Texas, many of them well qualified, some of them were only relations of important stockholders.

Capen was the Superintendent, and Guy Shefstead, the Assistant Super. Badger was office Manager. Charlie Miskell was the Head of the Watchmen.

1379.

For, there had to be Watchmen to guard continually against sabatage [sabotage] and destruction. The I.W.W., International Workers of the World, was prowling the labor picture, terrorizing and plundering.

In efforts to recruit any malcontents among the Texas workers, they used every means to get their propoganda [propaganda] into the plant. Later, when new stills were installed, Charlie found I.W.W. literature hidden within every still when it came through the railroad gates.

Sam Hunt was head of the accountancy department. He was a fine man and knew his work well. I learned a lot under Sam.

We worked first in an office building, the first ediface [edifice] put up. The site for the plant was on the eastern edge of Evansville, three miles east of Casper. The ground was scraped clear of sagebrush, and stakes were set for a line of stills and their subsidiary units.

1380.

The office workers were a jolly lot, not attempting to be dignified as they had at the Standard. Even those with rich stockholder fathers worked as hard as the rest, and proved themselves to be fine young men. We had one whose name was Dodge. I think it was, a direct relation to the automobile family.

The stills which were to be erected were known as the Holmes - Manly Vertical Stills, steel boilers standing upright in their frames of steel and covered with galvanized iron sheeting.

The Holmes brothers were the inventors of these stills. One of them lived in Casper as the owner of the Holmes Hardware Company. They became very wealthy, of course, and Guy Shefstead married one of the Holmes daughters. That is why he was an Assistant Superintendent, for he had few other attributes of value. A fattish, arrogant, big man, he swaggered around the plant, and had few friends.

1381.

Each of the big jobs was given an official number, such as 518 for the first Continuous stills; 520 for the boiler house; 526 for the 500 pound, and 577 for the 700 pound to the square inch stills.

It was my job to distribute the costs of labor and material to the proper job, as well as figure the percentage of other costs to be assigned to each. For instance, the salaries and expenses of the office had to be pro-rated over the different parts of the work.

For several weeks, no hospital, or infirmary, was built at the plant site. As the stills rose from their foundations scaffolding had to be used by the workers who put up the steel framework high in the air. Frequently, in spite of all safety precautions, the precarious foot boards which swung high in the air with ropes tied to each end broke, and the workmen were badly injured, sometimes killed.

1382.

So many times workers were carried into the office, to be laid groaning on a desk, while waiting for the ambulance, the doctor, the priest or minister, to arrive from town.

Many times, broken bones could be seen protruding from arms, legs, or body. Frequently, the last rites of the Church were administered by a Catholic priest, in the midst of clattering typewriters, and the smashing noises of adding machines.

Everyone continued working as usual, with no display of emotion. Here and there I could see a flickering sideways glance from a clerk, but many a man died alone on a hard, oak desk.

By the end of the year, progress could be seen on all sides. The "tank farm" of huge oil storage tanks was going up rapidly across the river to the north. The "firing line" of stills was rising from its cement foundations.

1383.

The year of 1923 came, one which was to prove to be a period of hard work and little recreation.

At that time "player pianos," which ran by rapidly pushing foot - pedals up and down, became the rage. Rolls of paper with designs of perforations up and down and across them, fitted into slots in front of the player, to play such favorites as "Yes, we have no bananas."

Everyone seemed to be playing the American game "Mah-jongg." Aimee McPherson opened her Angelus Temple in Los Angeles, conducting her popular religious services from a background of personal immorality.

Turkey became a Republic that year, and Time Magazine began its publication.

In politics, Charles E. Winter was elected to Congress from Wyoming, serving until 1929. William B. Ross, was elected Governor of the State, to serve until his premature death in October, 1924..

The Teapot Dome scandals were revealed.

1384.

in Washington. President Warren Harding had been put in office principally by a group of conniving scoundrels, who then proceeded to steal everything they could lay their hands on.

Politicians in the highest offices in the land, bought and sold oil leases with the unscrupulous heads of certain oil companies. Fortunes were passed back and forth in "little black bags."

All these happenings occurred under the nose of the genial journalist who enjoyed his liquor, his friends, and his parties, President Warren G. Harding.

Finally, the scandal broke into the papers. Oil magnates fled the country, to spend the remainder of their lives abroad, with their names scorned.

Politicians resigned, or were hauled into court and obliged to relate the full accounts of their flagrant acts while they were supposed to be protectors of the public interests.

1385.

Warren Harding died suddenly on August 2nd, while on a fishing trip. The public never did learn the facts of exactly how he passed on.

Rumors spread that he had committed suicide when he discovered the perfidy of his friends. Some whispered that he had been fed poison by those same pals.

However, Harding's administration was representative of the times. For, wildness and lack of responsibility were to be found in public and private lives throughout the country.

The best that could be said of Warren Harding was that he was a very gullible man, easily hoodwinked by his crooked friends, who finally woke to what had been perpetrated, and who killed himself with shame, knowing he would be blamed by future historians.

The head of the Interior Department, being crooked, leased government oil land in the Teapot Dome area of Salt Creek to

1386.

oil executives, who paid off their politician friends with huge amounts of currency, transported in black bags.

These leases were confiscated when the true facts were revealed.

Vice-President Calvin Coolidge succeeded Harding on August 3rd. Coolidge proved to be exactly the opposite of Harding being a tight little New Englander who was very strict in morals, and chary of words .

It was also at this time that women began to work in large numbers.

Up to that time, every generation including my own had felt that a married woman working was a public admission that the husband was unable to support her.

Now, in 1923, girls entered the labor market, in many instances taking jobs that married men needed for the support of their families.

From that time, juvenile delinquency and crimes of teen-agers ounted [mounted]. Children were raised by baby-sitters, after which

1387.

the parents expected the school teachers to teach their sons and daughters the discipline that they themselves should have taught.

On January 27th, our second daughter was born, and was given the name of Mary Henrietta, in honor of both grandmothers.

Mary was born in our front bedroom, in a big old-fashioned bed, an heirloom with a box mattress. Dr. Barger was our physician, and I hired a Mrs. Shipstead to be the nurse. She was wonderful.

Everything went well. This time, however, my toughness was fast disappearing, and I cried like a baby.

That spring, I received a letter from Kirkland, one of the instructors at Ridley fourteen years before.

He told me he was in Australia, that he had become very sick in the British Army, and now he was in need of some money, and would I send him some.

Many of the friends of my youth were

1388.

acting peculiarly in those days, so I was not surprised at anything. In Denver, two members of the "Wyoming crowd," Charlie Guernsey and Mrs. Van Tassell, were carrying on a fervid love affair, although their advanced years had long since rendered them ineffective. The mates of both had died many years before.

Incidentally, both families had towns in Wyoming named after them.

The Ku Klux Klan were still after me to join them. Even the man who ran the meat market where I traded, on the corner of Beech and East Fifth kept talking to me. His name was Cole, and I liked him, but I couldn't appreciate his Klan.

Finally, one day, he said, "Bob, there's a national organizer coming to town next week, and he's going to give us a talk about the Klan and what it stands for. I have two tickets, and I would appreciate it as a favor if you would take them and go to the address, bringing a friend.

1389.

He finally prevailed on me to go. I got Dick Copsey, the husband of Mary Blaine, one of Edna's best friends. He was a big fellow, too, and he agreed to accompany me.

The meeting was held upstairs in the Oddfellow Hall at East Second and Wolcott. We walked up the stairs to a locked door, where we knocked.

A deputy-Sheriff named Thomas opened it, took our tickets, and told us to take seats in front of the hall in the center.

The Hall was crowded. None of them were wearing their sheets and masks, so I looked around me as I walked down the aisle with Dick, noting each one with great interest.

They were all trouble-makers, frustrated old men, or just plain ignorant men. Anybody could make an inflammatory speech and arouse them to a high pitch of unthinking violence.

1390.

Dick and I sat down in front, with about twenty others who evidently were guests.

Some of the local dignitaries walked out onto the stage one by one to give remarks. Then, the main speaker came on and began to harangue.

It was a very disagreeable exhibition of cheap rabble-rousing. Dick and I were restive as time went on, but we gritted our teeth and stayed.

"I hear some men saying that they believe the niggers have souls," he shouted, hammering the pedistal [pedestal] before him. "I say to those people," he said, "If you are willing to invite a negro into your home, and will let him rape your daughter on your living room sofa, then I'll believe you're sincere."

That was all Dick and I could stand. We nudged each other, got up and walked up the aisle, looking every Kluxer in the eye as we passed.

1391.

At the back of the Hall, Thomas came to meet us.

"You can't leave," he told us. "The door's locked, and we won't let anybody out until the meeting's over. You go back and sit down."

So, Dick and I walked back. The next speaker was Dr. Johnson, a local doctor who made most of his living by performing abortions, and selling dope.

He was head of the Casper Klan, too, which proves their calibre. He spoke about the Klan for a few minutes, looking straight at me as he did so.

Finally, Dick and I were thoroughly finished. We rose together, to walk up the aisle with long, purposeful strides. Thomas came to meet us.

"I told you ---," he began.

"We heard you," Dick replied. "But, we're going out, just the same. Let's see you try to stop us."

Shouldering him aside, we went

1392.

to the door, turned the key, and went down the steps to the street.

Next day, I made it a point to see Cole.

"That was a devil of a way to handle guests," I told him. "What do you mean by not letting visitors leave when they want to?"

"It was all for your own protection, Bob," he replied. "Do you know the Catholics had rented a vacant store across the street from the Hall, and were taking down the names of everyone who came and went to the meeting. We had the police clear the streets for two blocks before we disbanded.

I laughed. "Oh, brother, you fellows make me tired," I replied. "Don't you know the Catholics are making monkeys out of you? They aren't half as concerned over you as you think. You can't hurt them a bit."

The following week, I had all the

1393.

Catholics in the Post for a secret meeting up at my house, to plan how best to keep the Klan out of our organization. There were so many of them, that most had to sit on the floor.

Transportation in to Casper from the Texas plant was by truck. We office men were loaded into one, standing up in a group in the back like a bunch of cattle going to the packinghouse.

In town we got off, and get the little green city busses to our homes. Every evening, there was a delegation of Klansmen waiting for me when I got off at my corner. One of the big organizers for the outfit lived across the street from me next to the apartment house.

One afternoon, he stood talking to me, and he took out a little silver whistle from his pocket.

"See this, David?" he said. "Do you know that if I were to blow this whistle fifty members of the Klan would be here inside of five minutes?"

1394.

I believed him. That was how strong they were. But, I didn't believe in their ideas at all.

That fall the rains set in early. Frequent violent thunderstorms and cloudbursts made much of the country a quagmire.

One rainy day, work in the office was quite slow. Two salesmen for Johns-Manville Insulating were in, trying to sell a big order to the bosses. One of the salesmen came to my desk and got into a conversation.

He was a fine young man. He showed me pictures of his little family, and was happy about taking the night Burlington to Denver after supper.

That evening, a terrific cloudburst hit east of Casper. The Burlington passenger pulled out on time, with its long line of Pullman cars filled.

When the train got to the bridge over a ravine at Lockett, water from the north was streaming in a flood underneath. The little creek over which the bridge

1395.

passed was known locally as Cole Creek, though it usually was nothing but a dry gulch. It was seven miles west of Glenrock, and nineteen miles east of Casper.

Spangler, the engineer, slowed down his locomotive at the west end of the bridge, and started across it gingerly. Everything seemed to be solid, although the rushing, muddy water below was sucking away at the underpinning.

The engine crossed, as did the tender, when he felt a great tug and a pull from the rear. He glanced back, to see the entire bridge sink under the Pullmans, and down under the water.

Frantically, he pushed his lever forward to full steam ahead, but the strain from behind pulled the huge locomotive back and back. The fireman jumped, but Spangler stayed with his engine.

With the huge wheels whirling forward on the rails until sparks spurted, the locomotive moved backward to the edge of the abutment [abutment,] then toppled in and was covered by the flood.

1396.

The two rear Pullmans remained on the rails on the west edge, held fast by the automatic brakes when the others broke loose. One Pullman in front of them remained vertical, with the lower half beneath the waters. Two others were under the flood.

Many acts of heroism occurred that night. In the vertical Pullman, the sleeper passengers in the berths at the top knotted blankets and sheets to aid those below. Using the ends of the berths as rungs of a ladder, they swung down to assist women, children and men to climb to safety in the darkness.

In the Pullmans that were under water, the rushing waters immediately broke the windows and swept the occupants out and away down the stream to its juncture with the Platte, and out into that roaring stream.

One mother with her baby was so swept away. In the early morning, she

1397.

was discovered by a sheepherder far down the river, lying with her baby wrapped in a Pullman blanket on the shore.

He brought them to dry land, carried them to his sheep wagon, and brought them back to life again.

But, many lost their lives, among them Spangler, the engineer, and my old friend Goff, the conductor of my childhood days on the C & S out of Wheatland.

The bodies of many were washed ashore next day, but those of the Johns-Manville salesmen were never found, as were those of a large unknown number of others.

We heard about it in Casper, and many rushed down. Orin Theige and I drove down in his Model T Ford, and out onto the sands of Cole Creek which now were wet, and which had been hidden but a few hours before by the raging torrent.

Water was still lapping halfway up the windows of the Pullmans in the river.

1398.

Through the broken window of one we could see that one passenger had been going to the toilet when the catastrophe occurred. We could see him sitting upright on the toilet seat, white and drowned.

Next day, an old unused wire fence across the Platte below the Mountain Home disclosed fifteen bodies piled together in the sands of the receding river. Many others were found on the banks the next few days.

A very popular Douglas businessman had been lost in the wreck. He wore a steel brace on his back, and the citizens of the town knew they could identify him if they could find his body.

They, therefore had long iron bars made twelve feet long, sharpened at one end, with a handle on the other.

Twenty Douglas citizens drove up to the scene of the wreck, and formed a long line from high on one bank to the other. Some had hip boots with which to

1399.

[Insert Mark by the author appears here, but nothing appears to show wording that would continue to fit with the last page.]

down the creek and along the Platte, both of which were now but a trickle of water. The others formed their ends of the line on either bank, all with the long steel poles in hand.

Then, all together, they began to walk down Cole creek, keeping a straight line, and pushing their spikes deep down into the wet sand every few feet. Then, they would draw the points back out, and smell them, knowing they could detect the smell of rotting flesh in this manner.

They found the man, all right, as well as the bodies of several others.

Several days later, I walked up from the ranch one Sunday, along the south bank of the Platte through the meadows. Much debris from the wreck littered the sands high up, boxes and satchels and trunks which had been washed away.

One trunk I opened. It evidently had been owned by a Sporting goods salesman, for

1400.

it contained baseballs and bats, golfing equipment, and uniforms.

A little farther on, I saw a human form in blue uniform pants draped face down over a pile of driftwood. I went closer and found it to be the drowned body of a Pullman porter, colored, and with his hair all over one ear.

The aftermath of catastrophes are often more gruesome than are the events themselves.

Mother Smith was visiting in Norway with relatives at the time. She read of this tragedy that had happened within a mile of her home in one of the Norwegian papers.

Winter set in early, and then came the year of 1924.

This was the year that all American Indians were given citizenship. Woodrow Wilson died of a broken heart following the rejection of his idea for a League of Nations to bring peace to the entire world.

1401.

Samuel Gompers, President of the American Federation of Labor also died in that year. William Green succeeded him.

The Teapot Dome scandals continued. The head of the Veterans' Bureau in Washington was indicted for defrauding the government of \$250. It seemed fitting that George Gershwin wrote his great song, "The Rhapsody in Blue," in the same year.

In politics, Calvin Coolidge was elected President of the United States, with Charles C. Dawes, his Vice - President. In Wyoming, Frank Lucas became Acting-Governor, until Nellie Tayloe Ross was elected Governor, the first woman Governor in history, to succeed her husband who had died in office.

1924 was to be a very interesting year for me in many fields.

Although I had been elected the Commander of the VFW Post for that year, the Klan had infiltrated into the

1402.

organization to such a degree that it was unworkable. After putting Perkheiser in is [as] the first Commander, I found that he had joined them. Then, I put in Orin Theige as the second Commander, as he was interested in the progress of the Post and not the Klan. Then, I had finally taken over the Commandership in final efforts to stop them.

The previous year, I had been the Quartermaster. We had had a Quartermaster named Bob Groves, a chiropractor, who was a member of the Klan. I figured he was getting away with our Post money, but we had no way of getting into the books for an audit until someone else was elected to his Post, and ousted him.

I ran, and was elected. Groves quit town during the night following the election. I audited the books, to discover that he had stolen more than \$1600 of our Powder River money.

We never were able to trace him,

1403.

and he was blacklisted by the VFW after that by the National, and in the VFW Magazine.

So, I became Commander, but I soon found that the meetings were developing into a lot of fighting. So, one night, I notified them that I was through. I applied and obtained, a Membership at Large, and withdrew from the Post.

The National Commander thereupon appointed me National Aide - de - Camp, the first National officer ever appointed from Wyoming.

The Volstead Act, prohibiting the manufacture and sale of any sort of wines or liquors, was proving still to be the greatest single factor for undermining law and order in our history.

Personally, I did not believe in it, although I had given up all drinking when I married Edna.

However, I felt the law to be wrong, knowing that nobody can legislate morals.

1404.

When I was called for jury duty, I informed the Judge that I could not honestly vote for conviction of a bootlegger, much as I hated such persons. As a result, I was never called for such duty the following forty years.

However, I made a lot of wine for my own consumption in my basement. The reason for my making it was psychological, really. I never drank any more, but I felt, as did everyone else, that I had certain rights.

Mother Smith had a recipe for port wine which she had brought over from Norway. One cup up oranges and various other fruits, to mix them with black figs, sugar, and water.

This produced a "black fig" wine, which turned into a white port after two or three months, but I never was able to keep any that long.

I made all sorts of the stuff in the basement. The crocks were bubbling

1405.

with the brew all the time. Grape, fig, every kind of wine was produced and bottled. It was all fine stuff.

I discovered something interesting about choke-cherry wine, too. Choke-cherries, in case you live in the East and dont [don't] know, grow wild along the creeks of the West. They are small cherries that grow on bushes, and when black and ripe they are delicious.

However, their pits contain fusel oil, which can cause blindness to the imbiber. So, when mixing the mash with a heavy instrument, I had to be careful not to smash the pits and release the very dangerous oil. Even a few broken pits caused eye trouble.

The stuff was so good, and had such a reputation among my friends, that the minister of my local church, Phil Edwards, came over to the house on Saturday, asking for some bottles of my grape wine to use at Communion next morning.

1406.

But, it was Dad who ran me out of most of my port wine. He loved it.

He made frequent trips to Casper, with two empty suitcases which he filled with my port wine, to take back to Denver. He told me he served it when he had friends in, and that everyone was wild about it.

Finally, I filled several gallon water bottles with the port, sealed them up, and hid them around the basement up under the floor joists. Then, I promptly forgot where I put them, and some of them were never found.

The big bootlegger in the Casper area was Dave Davidson. His whiskey was shipped all over the country in trucks, and the Denver buyers liked his product especially because of its fine taste.

Federal agents raided one of his stills out in the sandhills one day, and discovered a pile of old worn-out rubber boots just inside the still-house door.

It was evident that he threw in a

1407.

certain number of these rubber boots to produce the distinctive taste.

The stills of the local bootleggers were usually out in the country, in old deserted shacks, or broken-down ranches, or sometimes in isolated gulches with a roof of galvanized iron. Trucks going and coming took different routes every time so that no regular trail would guide the federal agents in.

The finished liquor was hauled in to town, and sold through distributors, many of whom brought it right to your door.

I became acquainted with one of these who had rented a house not far from my house. She was a woman named "Cole Eight Grace," as she drove a car of that make and number of cylinders.

I asked her to take me around on one of her nightly trips one time, and she did.

She filled up the entire trunk of her big car with bottles of the booze, and

1408.

we drove up one alley after another delivering the stuff to regular customers.

Many of them were friends of mine. We would rive [drive] softly up an alley in the best part of town, and stop back of a garage. Grace would get out, find a bottle in the trunk, and take it over to the garage door, which opened about a foot.

A hand came out with the money, Grace reached out the bottle. They exchanged, and Grace walked back, while the garage door closed. Nobody saw anybody, so no one could testify in court about anything later.

I did a lot of things "for the kicks" in those days, having a writer's eye for news and interest. I knew most of the Federal Agents, and most of the bootleggers. All knew that I would not divulge any information to anyone.

Many of the poorer people could not afford to buy the liquor, and they took to drinking Sterno, a canned heat made of

1409.

alcohol, and some sort of ingredient which made it jell. Sterno was manufactured for burning in little alcohol stoves and under chafing dishes. You merely pried the lid off, and lit it with an ordinary match. It gave off a hot flame which smelled strongly of alcohol.

But, during Prohibition, the stores which sold Sterno had to take extra precautions with their supply on the counters, for much Sterno was stolen. When sold, no customer could buy more than two cans of the stuff.

Then "canned heat addicts" developed in the shacks and poorer homes of the city. Sterno blinded many who drank too much of it.

They tried to boil off the jelly component in order to drink the alcohol, but evidently they were not too successful. For the jelly produced blindness.

One night, I went around with Joe Bordeaux, a night patrolman, in his police prowl car.

1410.

"I want to show you something, Bob," he said, as we drove up to a line a little one-room shacks on the west side of the Sandbar.

He shot his bright lights on the door of one shack. We got out and walked forward. He knocked on the door.

After several knocks, a feeble voice called out, "What do you want?"

"Open u p. It's the police," Joe roared.

A fumbling noise sounded inside, then the door opened, and two old derelicts stood there swaying, dressed only in old tattered overalls.

The bright lights from the car were shining directly into their open eyes, but they didn't even aquint [squint]. They were completely blind from Sterno drinking.

Several teen-agers became deathly sick from trying to make a beverage by draining anti-freeze out of auto radiators and mixing it with milk.

1411.

Robberies occurred every day, perpetrated by men who needed money for liquor. The entire nation was in the midst of a crime wave. Great gangs roamed the streets of the cities, shooting, stealing, and intimidating the public.

Every community of any size in the Rocky Mountain area experienced at least one bank robbery. It was evident that Casper would have one at any time.

What we needed was stronger law enforcement in our city, by some group which was untouched by the bootleggers. I, therefore, conceived of the idea of forming such a group, to be known as the Casper Vigilantes. I selected a list of strong, honest, fighting men from among the World War I veterans. I weeded out the names of those with any weaknesses, and chose thirty-five who had proper judgment.

Every one of the thirty-five agreed to serve, and to fight for enforcement of

1412.

all laws dealing with violent crime, robberies, murders, and such. Then, I went to George Jarvis, a tough, old fellow who had been a Chief of Police, and got him to head the organization.

We were deputized by the County, secretly. The Secret Service came in to town every Thursday night, to meet with us in a certain big room, where they taught us wrestling, legal procedures, tactics, even what guns to buy.

Diagonally across from each of the two banks, the Casper National, and the Wyoming National, there were business blocks with flat roofs, and raised, brick, elevators around the edges.

On the top of the Townsend Building across from the Casper National, and over Klines, across from the Wyoming National, we installed gun cases filled with weapons that were constantly loaded and ready.

At every exit from Casper there

1413.

already were filling stations. Beside each, we soon had big, heavy, portable barricades, standing ready at all times to be thrown across the street to block any getaway cars.

The Mountain States Power Company arranged with us for giving out a special series of whistles when the need arose, which would arouse the Vigilantes to immediate action all over town.

Then, each Vigilante was assigned his post, and his duties. Doctors, dentists, lawyers, clerks of all kinds, were always ready day or night for action.

In the event of a bank robbery, for instance, someone would phone the Light company, the whistle would sound every Vigilante would drop what he was doing, to rush to his station.

Some would climb the steps in the Townsend Building and Klines, to emerge from the trapdoor, rush to the gun cases, and throw himself down, ready, behind the protection of the brick walls.

1414.

Others would run to the barricades, to push them into the streets, get their guns from the stations, and stand ready. A certain number were to surround and attack the robbers. Everything would work like clockwork.

Soon, I began hearing from sources in the underworld that "big shots" of the criminal world in other areas were arriving in Casper to "look things over," and that on being informed that there were Vigilantes roaming the streets, unknown, armed, and ready, they promptly left town.

For two and a half years, the Casper Vigilantes were in existence and never pulled a gun. They were used for many special assignments, and arrested many people, but always the newspapers recorded that the local sheriff's deputies or the police had accomplished the arrests. The community as a whole never knew they had such a group among them.

As I said, we took frequent special

1415.

assignments for the police. Some of them were of such interest that I will record them here.

The Secret Service was on the trail of some "hot" furs that were in the Casper area somewhere. One of their agents, posing as a buyer, had been approached by one of the thieves, and an appointment had been made between them to meet at the Virginia Bar back of the Gladstone.

On that evening, I drove one of the Secret Service cars filled with agents. Others were parked on all streets adjacent to the meeting place, as they did not know in which direction the thief would drive when he took the agent to see the furs.

The boys directed me to park on the south side of the Gladstone, where the Cheyenne bus normally parked when it was in town.

I did so, and we sat in the car watching the bar door down the street.

Suddenly, a loud honking sounded

1416.

out on the street. The bus was wanting to pull in. It was very impatient.

"What shall I do?" I asked the agents.

"Stay right where you are," was the reply. "We must keep the bar doorway in view, and they'll be coming out any minute."

The bus did some more honking. Then, an important-acting fellow came up to the car door and swung it open.

"Get out of here," he ordered. "What's the matter with you? Haven't you got your ears? Now, get out of here or go to jail. Hurry up!"

He was red-faced with anger. Then, the agent sitting beside me leaned over and shoved a little black folder under his nose, and told him quietly that the car was there on official business. His bus would have to park as best he could.

The important boy wilted, apologized, and hurried away.

Five minutes later, one of the boys

1417.

whispered, "There they come!" Two men in business suits sauntered to a car, and drove away down the hill to David, up that street to West Second, and west toward the Standard refinery.

It was then I learned the technique of "leap-frogging" cars, when a criminal was under surveillance. One car after another drove behind the criminal's car, then turned a corner while another took its place, or one dropped back to let another get ahead.

They led us out north to the old Airport. Opposite it, they turned straight east on a dirt road that led a couple of hundred yards to a white house.

They had no sooner got out and had gone in when all the cars raced in. The boys caught them red-handed, and recovered a large quantity of stolen furs.

The "Filipino problem" was plaguing the police at that time. It seems that the bell hops in the hotels had built up

1418.

trade in finding young girls for the travelling salesmen. These girls were usually from poor homes, and they slipped up and down the fire escapes to the hotel rooms every night.

We obtained the names of Soreano, the head Filipino, and about thirty of the others who were in the traffic.

I was always the spokesman for the Vigilantes. Everybody knew I was one, but none of the others was very often discovered. So, it was my job to go to the rooms of the offending Filipinos, to knock on their doors during the nights, and inform them that they had twenty-four hours to get out of town.

They left fast, usually at daybreak the following morning. Four of them left so fast in one day that they turned over out by the Texas refinery.

Sorreano [Soreano] went to Cheyenne, where he was head bell boy at the Plains Hotel

1419.

for many years.

Whenever I walked into the lobby of the Plains he would come sliding up to me to ask, "Mista Davee, can I come back to Casper now?"

And, I always answered gravely, "Yes, Sorreano, you can go back to Casper if you'll be a good boy."

He never went back. Perhaps he was afraid of being kicked out again.

This being the spokesman for the Vigilantes led me into several precarious situations. Probably the one with the greatest possibilities was the time of the Harvey Perkins murder.

Perkins was one of the hangers-on around the underworld, and he was found murdered sitting in his car out at Alcova one morning. He had really been beaten to death by a deputy in the county jail the night before, and had been transported out there to be found.

I notified Dave Davidson that I

1420.

wanted to talk to every bootlegger in Natrona County some time during the following week. He sent me word of the night, the place, and the time.

I walked into the large hall at the designated time. The lookout unlocked the door, and I entered.

The place was packed with the bums. Dave sat at a table in front, with two of his lieutenants. I walked across the floor to stand in front of him. Then, after nodding to him, I turned to face them all.

"I have been sent here tonight by the Vigilantes to tell you that we have no interest in your killing each other off. But, we want you to know that if you molest or trouble in any way, any child, woman, or legitimate businessman of Casper, we'll take immediate action," I declared in a loud voice. All of them looked at me stonily. Several moved uneasily.

1421.

I turned around and looked at Dave. He nodded agreement, and I walked back out in dead silence.

Whew! That was a bad one. But, from that time until the bootleg days were over, not a proper person was ever molested in Casper.

Probably, the Vigilantes were the only group in the County who stood up bravely against the bootleggers, and the murderers, and the crooks in those days. Even the city and county officials had long since wilted.

I recall that one morning I had reason to call on the U.S. Commissioner M.P. Wheeler at his office. He was a big, white haired man of absolute integrity. He was not there when I arrived, so I sat waiting for him.

When he came in, his face was white with anger. He took off his hat and coat, then hung them on the rack before he turned to me.

1422.

"Bob". his words [words] seemed to burst out in fury. "I have never been so insulted in my life. Do you know what Sheriff Houseley [Housley] just did to me?"

"No, M.P., I don't," I replied. "Tell me."

"Well," he continued. "I've got a certain bootlegger in his County jail. Houseley [Housley] phoned yesterday and asked that I come to his office this morning at eight. As U.S. Commissioner, I am supposed to cooperate with the local officials."

He paused for breath. He was very angry.

"So, I went over a few minutes ago," he said. "I walked into the Sheriff's office. Houseley [Housley] was sitting at his desk. When I walked forward, he leaned back drawing his middle drawer open with him. Inside it, I could see it to be filled to the top with bundles of bills of high denomination.

"He looked up at me and said,

1423.

"Mr. Wheeler, this money is all yours if you will release the prisoner that you are holding in my jail."

I mention this to show the pressure that was exerted on every man of integrity. M.P. Wheeler never took a dishonest dollar in his life, but the criminals constantly tried, believing that "all men have their price." That is an often repeated statement that is sincerely believed by the underworld, but it does not prove to be a fact in most cases. It is time for the younger generations to learn that, and stop being contemptuous of honest people.

That summer, I planted the entire back yard in vegetables, and raised a wonderful garden of peas, carrots, turnips, lettuce, beans, and about everything else. I worked hard in my home and yard, but still seemed to have time for interesting things that happened.

I was having a hard time keeping

1424.

ahead of my bills, for I discovered that Sandy Marshall had lied to me about a number of things when I bought the house.

For one thing, he told me I was connected with the city sewer. That summer I found I was connected with a cesspool in the backyard, and that there was a second over by the garage.

The way I found out about this was almost tragic. Mother Smith had bought us a new Model T Ford, so that we would drive down to the ranch on weekends, she said. It was one of those affairs with a high black box sitting on top of the wheels, but we loved it and were much appreciative.

However, one day we drove into the backyard after a heavy rain. Suddenly, the earth around us caved in, and we started to disappear, rear end first, into a big hole.

I pulled Edna and the kids out, and discovered we had broken through into a cesspool. It took Mr. Jansen with his

1425.

team of horses, to get the car out.

Both cesspools had to be filled in, and new sewer pipes laid around them to the city sewer in the alley.

Furthermore, taxes of \$1500 had not been paid, which we gullible amateurs had not known enough about to check on. So, I was having a hard time "getting by."

Yet, we were the happiest family in town. We were much in love, and very close. I bought beyond my means frequently to see that they had the best.

Then came a letter from the ATO fraternity at the University of Wyoming in Laramie. It was from a Major Daly, who had been made an honorary member of the group.

You will recall that when I went that one year to Wyoming University, the fraternity boys had laid some undated notes in front of all us freshmen, asking us to sign them.

"Some day, when you are a success,"

1426.

they told us, "You can pay these to help us with a building of our own. Don't worry about them. They are just a matter of form. Pay whenever you are able."

This Major Daly informed me that the fraternity needed money with which to build a new fraternity house, and would I please take up these notes of mine made in 1914?

Well, I couldn't pay anything, of course, and I wrote and told him so. I said that some day when I had some money, I would try to help them out, but right then I was just getting started with my new home, and was in debt.

Within a month after my answer, a lawyer called me up, to tell me that the fraternity had placed the notes in his hands for collection, stating that my letter proved that I owed the money.

When I told him the facts, he said, "Just forget it, Bob. I didn't know what it was all about. I'll send them back to Daly tonight by mail."

1427.

The notes were returned to Casper time after time, to lawyer after lawyer, always getting them back when the facts became known.

Finally, they were sent to the Casper Credit Exchange for recovery. So, when they notified me that they would go into court to sue for payment, I went down to a lawyer friend, Fred Layman, who happened also to be an ATO. He was so outraged that he took my case for no charge.

When the whole thing got into court, Layman moved to throw it out on the grounds of "no consideration," and the judge did so.

It seems that a note is not collectable if it is a free gift, or if no services or money has been given loaned or exchanged as a reason for the note. In other words, no "consideration" has passed between the maker of the note, or the person or persons for whom the note is made.

1428.

I was very angry with the ATO fraternity afterwards because of this nonsense. I had made the notes in good faith, and they definitely took advantage of the fact.

Later, in the years when I had a little money, I refused to contribute even a thin dime to their need for buildings. If they had done things properly about the notes, they would have received several times more in money, eventually.

Work at the Texas progressed. The stills were rapidly approaching completion by spring. The boys around the office were congenial, and everyone enjoyed the work.

Tom Troth was married that summer. Tom was a dumb member of some wealthy family in Texas, I was told, and his mental obtuseness was apparent to all of us. But, he married Tom Jessen's daughter.

Led by Ed Zoble, a clerk in the warehouse, several of the boys made plans for a chivari [shivaree]. They planned to steal up around the Jessen home after the ceremony.

1429.

then kidnap the newlyweds, chain them in a chair in the back of a truck, and run them all over town for public amusement until long after their train had left, the train on which they had reservations for starting their honeymoon.

It didn't seem right, so I made some plans of my own. I schemed with the police whereby I would lay on a porch across the street from Jessen's, and the minute I saw Zoble and his friends crowd around the house, I would call the police, who would come up immediately and jail the bunch.

That was exactly what happened. I lay at [on] the porch behind some vines. When I saw the conspirators come out of the shadows across the street, I slipped into the house and phoned the police.

Within a few moments, they came swooping up, surrounding Zoble and his friends, and carting them off in a patrol wagon.

1430.

At the police station, the whole lot were put in cells until long after the train left with Tom and his bride.

Zoble said, "I never was so humiliated in my life."

He quite forgot the humiliation he was expecting to wreak on the newly wed couple.

That summer, I was down at the SO ranch for the weekend, visiting Bob Carey one time, when he said, "Robert, there are a lot of old letters in the attic that have laid there since the 1880's. I'm going to have everything cleared out and burned next week, and as several letters were addressed to your father, I thought you'd like to go up and get them."

I spent the afternoon, sorting out the old letters of the early cattle days. Almost every ranch and business of any large size in Wyoming had their letterhead among the pile.

1431.

There were business matters discussed: roundup plans; shipments; old Bills of Lading; letters asking for work; letters from Invaders; and, above all, 265 letters from Bob Divine, the CY ranch foreman to my Dad, telling him all about range conditions, roundups, and rustling, naming names and places.

It was a terrific historical find. The Careys were not at all interested, so I took everything home, sorted them, and started an historical collection.

That summer, too, Edna and I were invited to go to various ranch dances. We accepted gladly, for the Casper people who attended were most of them prominent and good company.

Out on the ranches, dances were held frequently on Saturday nights. Some of us in town would hear about them, and phone the others. We would drive out in a group, dance awhile, and come home.

This all was harmless, and everyone

1432.

had a grand time at first, but then things occurred that changed the picture. The Casper bunch began to drink heavily on these parties and dances. They began to have drunken scenes with the cowboys and their girls, and coming back to town they finally demanded that everyone "switch" couples. This meant that every husband was supposed to drive back with somebody else's wife.

Edna and I refused to drink or to switch. We were entirely out of step, of course, and we were surprised that they even phoned us to go along after the drinking developed.

Finally, a dance at Powder River ended the nonsense. We all drove out in our cars, and began to dance with the wives of the crowd properly.

Then, one of the Casper bunch got too many drinks, and he danced around the hall swinging his feet in the air until he purposely kicked a ranch girl in the seat.

1433.

That did it. The cowboys rolled up their sleeves and started for the Casper drunks. I knew most of them on both sides, and I rushed in between them, promising to get the Casper bunch out and on the road.

A massacre was averted. We all went out to our cars. Most of them had to have their drinks from their bottles before they could start.

Edna and I had to haul a husband and another man's wife back to town. They lay around on the back seat, kissing and "lolly-goggling" around all the way in. Edna and I were very sick of the whole bunch of them when we finally reached home that night.

We refused to go the next time we were called, and I heard later that the bunch broke apart and stopped going to dances.

I cannot close the memories of that year of 1924 without mentioning what was

1434.

than a terrible financial catastrophe. I lost a \$20 bill at Christmas time.

Edna had told me the story of when she was a little girl on a poor, shabby ranch north of Shawnee, her father had driven into town, twenty miles away, through a blizzard to get some food and some pitiful little toys for the children.

Somewhere along the road, he had lost a \$5 bill in the wind. He spent most of the day searching in the drifting snow among the sagebrush along the road, trying to find the money, and without success.

Every generation can relate its story of a financial tragedy, and the smaller amounts seem to be the most pitiful.

I went to the Electric Light company to pay my bill a week before Christmas. Somehow, in the high wind, I lost a \$20 bill somewhere. It was our Christmas money.

1435.

I searched vainly all afternoon along the Northwestern tracks, around each clump of sagebrush, behind every pile of rubbish, and under warehouse platforms.

Then I had to go home and tell Edna, which was the worst part.

We advertised in the paper, and searched again, but we never found it. It was just another of Life's little tragedies.

1925 dawned, and it was to prove to be a very important year to me.

That was the year that Ford roadsters sold for \$260 apiece, and that Florida real estate boomed.

General Billy Mitchell was courtmartialled [court-martialed] because he publicly criticized the War Department for not starting a big Air Force which, he said, would eventually revolutionize [revolutionize] warfare.

William Jennings Bryan died that year, and Nellie Tayloe Ross was elected Governor Wyoming, the first woman in

1436.

history to attain that position.

That winter, it became increasingly apparent that I was going to have to undergo another operation on my legs. The Veterans Administration ordered me to report to Fitzsimons General Hospital in Denver for surgery.

I was close to a nervous breakdown, when the family took me to the train. The doctor had impressed on me that I "was to avoid all excitement of any kind," and I was very calm and level-headed.

When they helped me into the Pullman car, I found my berth to be not made up yet, so I sat with two other men waiting for the porter to make my bed after the train started.

The train started. I took out a newspaper to read, but the conductor came up the aisle from the rear, and asked for our tickets.

As I handed mine up to him, a drunk pushed his way up from behind,

1437.

thrusting a piece of paper under the conductor's nose.

"Here. Take this ticket," he demanded in a woozy voice.

The conductor pushed him aside.

"Just take your time, mister," he said. "I'm waiting on this gentleman at the moment."

The drunk grumbled, and stumbled back down the aisle.

A moment later, the porter came to where we were sitting, with white sheets under his arm, and informing us that he would now make up our bed.

The train was rumbling out of the eastern limits of Casper by then. I took my paper, and went back to the men's lavatory, where I sat down next to the window.

A long seat reached from the window to the far wall, and there was a single seat by the door.

The long seat was filled with

1438.

men hidden behind their newspapers. I took out mine, and began to read.

I had scarcely read a paragraph before the drunk fell through the curtain in the doorway, and onto the single seat. He sat there slouched down, gazing ahead moodily.

The Pullman conductor entered then, with his hands filled with his book, pencil and paper.

"Tickets!" he called. "Has everyone given me his ticket?"

The drunk pulled the paper out of his inside pocket and handed it up to the official who scanned it closely, before handing it back.

"I'm sorry, sir," he said. "This is not a ticket. You are a Federal Prohibition agent, I believe, and this is merely a government form which authorized you to purchase a ticket at any ticket office that you contact. The next one is at Douglas. You take this

1439.

order to the ticket agent there, and he will fix you up with a ticket for Denver."

As the conductor strode out, the drunk issued a grunt of irritation, then threw the paper down on the floor.

I glanced around the room. All the men were busily reading their papers. I continued to "avoid all excitement," but I watched to see what would happen.

A few seconds later, the Pullman porter entered, glanced around to see that everything was tidy, then noticed the paper on the floor. He picked it up.

"Does this belong to any of you gentlemen?" he asked. Nobody said anything, and he disappeared through the green curtain to find the conductor. The drunk sat staring straight ahead. I continued to "avoid all excitement [excitement]."

Shortly after that, in came the train conductor, a short, husky man with a gold tooth and a tough look about him. He went straight to the drunk, with the paper in his hand.

1440.

As he addressed the drunk, the passengers began to drop their newspaper, fold them, and leave hurriedly. They thought there might be trouble, but I stayed, not believing there would be any trouble.

"Now, listen here, bud," the conductor said to the drunk. "You've been told that this is not a ticket. It is merely an order for a ticket. You're going to have to get off at Douglas, present this at the window in the depot, and get yourself a ticket. I'll help you off. It won't be much trouble."

The drunken Prohibition agent jumped to his feet, and pushed forward, reaching into the inner breast under his coat as he did. Out came his hand in an instant swinging a gun. "I'll show you who I am," he began, then the conductor got him, pushing him backward until the drunk sprawled on his back, half on half off

1441.

his seat. His gun was still in his hand waving toward me as the conductor held tight to his wrist above it.

I jumped across the room, landed on the gun hand, wrested it from the drunk's grasp, shoved it in the back of my trousers, and walked out.

Reaching my berth, I leaned in, taking out the gun, and putting it under my pillow.

A woman's voice came to me from behind, across the aisle, saying, "Robert, what on earth are you doing with that gun?"

It was Julia Carey. She had got on at Careyhurst, and was on her way to Cheyenne. I sat with her until we reached Douglas, telling her of the experience.

When the train stopped at Douglas, I got off with the passengers, and stood beside the cars on the platform, watching for what would happen.

Pretty soon, here came a group of men, the conductors, the porter, and the

1442.

sheriff pushing the drunk along. When they passed me, the Prohibition agent stopped and reached out his hand to me.

"Pass it over," he growled. "Give it back, buddy. That's Federal property, you know."

It was, and I gave the gun to the Sheriff.

After the train started again, I was kept busy most of the night signing affidavits [affidavits] exonerating the Burlington Railroad and the Pullman Company from any blame for what had happened.

An agent for the railroad happened to be on the train that night, riding in a compartment. He took me in there, set up his typewriter, and went to work on me. I was glad to oblige.

The Prohibition Agent's name was Byron Furey. I was to meet him later, when he explained that he had been on a case, and had imbibed too much of the evidence. He also felt very friendly.

1443.

toward me, for I had not put myself out to give him any trouble after I got to Denver. He promised me a fine silver-plated gun, but he never got around to it.

On arrival of the train in the Denver Union Station, I found the platform to be crowded with Secret Service men when I got off. I knew some of them, and laughed understandingly.

"He isn't on the train, boys," I told them. "He's in jail in Douglas."

"He can't be," they argued. "He's due in court at ten o'clock as a witness on a big case."

Later, Godfrey, the Denver head of the Secret Service came out to Fitzsimmons to talk to me when I came out of the operation. He wanted to know what charges I was going to prefer.

I laughed and told him I thought it was just another interesting incident.

"Well, it could be serious for us," he told me. "With Mrs. Carey there, and all."

1444.

"She never saw it," I assured him. "I told her all she knows about it, and she wasn't in any danger."

I made a good friend of Godfrey in that deal. He left, telling me to contact him any time I got into any trouble, but, of course, I never had to.

I took a taxi out to Fitzsimmons General Hospital, far out east of Denver. I registered in, and was told to undress in a certain ward, and fold my clothes into my suitcase. It would be given back to me when I was discharged.

But, when I undressed up in the Ward, one of the patients taught me my first lesson. I hung my clothes in a closet, put some heavy magazines in my suitcase, and turned that in. So, I had my clothes available, in case I wanted to go downtown.

The only trouble was that the closet was filled with cockroaches. I never saw so many as were in the Hospital washrooms always.

1445.

The day after I signed in, I discovered that Holtz of the Battery was also an inmate of Fitzsimmons. Then, next day I was told he had committed suicide.

So ended Scholtz and Holtz. The third member of the obnoxious trio, Lotz, the German cook, showed up in Denver later to chortle that the Secret Service had put him in charge of all the bread baking in western France, after they had checked on him closely.

"If I'd been a traitor to America," he told me, "I could have poisoned half the Yank army, by putting stuff in the bread when it went through my bakeries."

They wasted little time on me after I was all signed up. After less than a week of tests and X-rays, I was operated on.

Two interesting things happened before the operation, however.

When the orderly took my [?] to my

1446.

ward and told me to undress, he also told me to give him \$5 for the radio.

It seems that beside each bed was a "whisker set," which was mostly a black piece of magnetized rock, with a little wire, or "whisker" reaching out from the side to it. To get any one of the three stations in Denver, one moved the "whisker" around over the rock until the program came in over the earphones.

The springs of the bed acted as the aerial, while the water pipes to the radiator served as the ground.

The orderly explained that when I left the hospital, the \$5 would be refunded, and the next patient who took my bed would pay the same sum for the use of the radio.

The other interesting thing was that about the second morning I was in bed when the Surgical Major came in. He strode over to where a Regular Army sergeant from Fort Logan lay in the bed next to mine.

"All right, Sergeant," I heard him

1447.

say. "We have given your situation a lot of thought. We have decided, however, that we will not operate on your goitre.[goiter] It is imbedded around your jugular vein so deeply that there is not one chance in a thousand that any surgeon [surgeon] could cut it out without accidentally cutting into the vein, which would be fatal."

There was silence for a few moments, before the sergeant replied.

"Major," he said. "I've been in the Army, now, for twenty years, - ever since I was a kid. I don't know anything else than Army. I don't know my way around anywhere else. Will you perform the operation?"

"But, understand, sergeant," the Major argued. "There isn't a chance, practically, that any man or doctor could bring you through successfully, the way this goitre [goiter] has grown around your jugular."

"I know, but will YOU perform the operation?" the sergeant persisted.

"Well, if it had to be done, I would

1448.

be the one who would be obliged to do it, I suppose," the Major replied grudgingly.

"All right then. I want it done," the Sergeant stated.

"Very well. You'll go on the table tomorrow morning at ten," the Major growled, then he stamped out.

The sergeant put on his bathrobe and went downstairs to phone his wife. That night, they sat close together, hand in hand down in the lounge. Later, when I left the hospital, the sergeant had had his operation, and was still sitting down there every night with his sweet little wife.

So, one morning a week after I signed in, they wheeled me into the operating room. I breathed in deep; everything went around like a wheel rim that whirled through a black space. Then, I floated out, and the tide laid me softly on a white, peaceful beach.

I opened my eyes. A black-haired

1449.

nurse had her back to me as she arranged flowers on my side-table. I blinked my eyes. It couldn't be!

"Rosie!" I cried out. "I want a tea-bone."

She whirled around, grabbed me and hugged me. It was my old friend, Rosie Hagan, the ward nurse at Langres, who had gone to the Red Cross dance with me, and who had to escape from the MP's through the window while I swung a chair.

Now, she was head nurse of the surgical ward, and I would be taken care of unusually well, I knew.

This time, the doctors had "stripped" my veins, whereas in the operation in France, they had cut them out.

"Stripping" consisted of making cuts at intervals down the veins, then inserting wires through them, and stripping the short lengths out. I had twenny-[twenty] seven cuts, and eighty-seven stitches in that operation.

1450.

Next day, I was moved from the private room when I was out of shock, and was put to bed in the Surgical Ward with about twenty other men.

There I began the long job of recuperating. But I made a record for speedy knitting of the wounds, due to Rosie's help.

Every morning, her orderly came into the ward, whistling as he walked down the aisle nonchalantly with his hands in his pockets. He wheeled in, when he got even with my bed, then stood close to my blankets while he talked to me. His hand reached under the covers, and slipped a small bottle of fine whiskey, with adhesive tape over the cork.

I would crouch down under the cover, open the bottle, and drink the whiskey down fast, before re-corking the bottle, and handing it back. He then would stalk back out the door, whistling as though he never saw a bottle of whiskey before.

1451.

I was told later that I made a record for speedy recovery that time. To me, it was not surprising, for the whiskey made my blood race in my veins, to wash away any infection from my wounds, I believed.

As I told you, Fitzsimmons General Hospital was in Aurora, east of Denver, and was composed of several two-storied barracks which had been converted into hospital wards. These barracks lined one long street, at intervals, and were long, oblong boxes, with windows, and doors at the ends.

In the ward rooms, the beds were set with their heads against the walls, and a long aisle down the center, and doorways at each end.

I had the second bed from the west end, near the door which led into the mental ward [ward] for the insane. Many queer things happened through that door in the dead of the nights.

1452.

One night, I recall, I heard a commotion, then the door opened, and an orderly staggered through, held up on each side by other orderlies.

By the light from the doorway I could see that his head was covered with blood all over, as were his neck and shoulders.

I never learned the ratio of beaten-up orderlies to the number of patients who had to be carried through my ward. Apparently, both sides wielded chairs or anything else in sight, and performed meritorious service with them.

One afternoon, we were all lying around in our hot ward, when we heard some peculiar noises coming from the hall. First, there were sounds of shuffling footsteps, the liquid noises that sounded like "Slurp. Slurp." All of us raised up to see what could sound like that.

Then, six men in blue dungarees came stumbling through the door in a huddle,

1453.

carrying another blue-dressed man who was sitting up and holding his side. Evidently, he had a hole in his stomach, or lung, for every time he breathed, the air sucked in and out in a "blurping" noise.

The [they] sat him down carefully on an empty bed, and waited for the ward doctor to show up. Two guards stood back against the wall, with sharp bayonets ready on the ends of their rifle muzzles.

Later, we discovered what had happened. The guards had several blue clad prisoners out working at Fort Logan. One tried to escape and one of the guards bayoneted [bayoneted] him. They had brought him in to Fitzsimmons for sewing up, as it was the nearest Army hospital.

The day approached when I would get discharged, and could get back to the Texas. As the day approached, however, all of us became more and more concerned about our money.

1454

For, there had been a smiling suave young ex-soldier who had been coming through the wards regularly the last few weeks, borrowing from the patients with the promise that he would pay it all back in full when he got his pay.

One night, some of the visitors from another ward came over to sit around and chat with us.

"We've sent word over to the guy who borrowed all our money, to tell him to get in here and pay us," we told them. "But, he never comes, and none of us can go after him, for we're bed-patients yet, and can't walk."

"You'd better make some arrangements by tomorrow noon," the visitors told us. "He's been paid, and has his transportation on the bus that leaves here at ten in the morning. He's going back home in the east."

We could find nobody who would go after the money for us. We sent him word time and again, but he would not come over.

1455.

Finally, I decided I would go after him early on the following morning. Although my legs were still bandaged from thigh to ankle, and I had not walked since the operation, I felt I could get to him with the help of a couple of crutches.

The visitors made a map showing where the borrower's barracks were, and another which disclosed the exact position of his bed on the second floor. Someone loaned me his crutches, and I left word with one of the badly cut-up patients who never slept at nights to wake me at four o'clock the next morning.

When he hissed at me just at daybreak, I was already half awake. I got out of bed, put on my robe, took up the crutches, and started down the ward.

Step by step, I went down the hall, down the steps, out the door, and out to the sidewalk. It was a beautiful, crisp morning. The east was a mist of salmon and pink before the sunrise

1456.

Up the long sidewalk I crept slowly on the crutches. My bound legs felt tight, but did not hurt.

Finally, I arrived at the designated barracks, went up the steps, through the front door, and up the stairs to the second floor, to stop beside the bed of the sleeping borrower

For, a moment, I stopped and looked down at the peaceful face. Some mother may have loved him, but many years past. I reached down, took him firmly by the front

of his pajamas, and pulled him roughly erect growling savagely, "Pay Day, you So - and So. It's Pay-Day. Shovel out your money, and pay every debt you have in Fitz."

I had a long list of names with the amounts he owed each. He could have knocked me over with a sneeze, but his surprise was absolute. His money belt was under his pillow, and he reached for it without any question.

1457.

One by one I reach [?] off the names and the amount set beside each, and one by one he paid in full. Then, with everyone taken care off, I went back down the stairs on my crutches, leaving him with a thin money-belt that held so little that he could not afford a ticket which would allow him to leave that day.

He had to stay in the hospital for another month until he had another pay check which would pay his way home.

When I got back to the Texas offices, I found that much of the plant was nearing completion. Doubts were being expressed freely that more than half of the office force would be needed beyond New Year's .

Shortly after I got back to my job, I took the boys up to the Mill over a weekend. We went in through the Funnel, and although the road had been washed out in a couple of places, we had little trouble getting there. We had several blow-outs, though, and a couple of trees had fallen across the road..

1458.

By that time, the cabins had been torn down. Ranchers down the valley had driven up, to rip off the slabs from the walls, and take the doors and windows for their own.

We slept out in our tarpaulins in the open. The fishing was good, and all seemed to have a good time.

The toilets had not been molested, but there the boys had trouble. During the previous winter, some porcupines had made their homes on crossbars under the seats. Now, when the boys sat down, they had trouble with the bristles. That is all I can tell you here. You do have imagination, do you not?

Later, when we got back to work, I practically ended any hope I might had had of staying with the Texas, with an encounter I had with Shefstead, the Assistant Superintendent.

I met him out in the plant one day. He engaged me in small talk before he

1459.

remarked," I understand that Mrs. Smith of the Mountain Home ranch at Parkerton is your mother-in-law. Is that true?"

I told him it was.

"Well, I hear she serves very excellent meals on Thanksgivings and Christmases," he continued. "I would like very much to be invited."

So, there I was again. In the Standard, Andrus had made me take Tom Cook, the big shot from Whiting, out hunting and fishing. If I had "played up" to him, I could undoubtedly have had a fine job with the Standard eventually. But, I absolutely refused to "boot lick" for a job, or an advancement.

Therefore, I mumbled to Shefstead that it was up to Mrs. Smith as to whom she wished to invite as guests, then walked away, and said nothing to her about it.

Shefstead, of course, felt cheap at not being accepted, and my job was

1460.

not worth a dime from that time onward.

I felt insecure in my work, and as to my future. Three little bodies and hearts depended on my [me] solely for their food, and housing, and comfort. I was in deathly fear of failing them miserably.

Edna's father and mother now came to us with a proposition calculated to let us pay back some of what we owed them.

South of the Big Muddy field, they told us, was a large amount of land that was good for nothing but grazing for sheep. They offered to help if we would file on two 160-acre homesteads down in the badlands. The Mountain Home would build a homestead shack, half of which would be on Edna's 160, and half on mine. The Company would build the required fence around the 320 acres, and would pay as \$1000 apiece when we had proved up.

At that time, the government was anxious to have young men come to the

1461.

State to settle. These homesteads were offered as an inducement, and most of the normal requirements were dropped for veterans. Nobody cared if the homesteads were lived on or not, as long as the house was built, and the fence completed.

We agreed. The requirements were followed as far as the building and the fence were concerned. But, we didn't stay on the homesteads a night.

One weekend, we decided we'd better drive down and sleep on the homesteads over Saturday night. We drove to the Big Muddy field, and turned south, when we saw a huge rattlesnake in the road ahead of us.

I drove the little Ford over it. When I looked back, the rattler had disappeared, and a terrific buzzing was sounding from under the footboards.

Edna was terrified, so I opened the door, and jumped far out. The reptile fell off into the grass, and I rushed

1462.

around trying to find a rock with which to kill it. But, not one was around.

So, I had to find a long handled shovel in the trunk of the Ford, with which I finally killed the rattler.

I drove on to the homesteads completely unnerved. When we reached the homestead gate and whirled up beside the front porch, we saw lying on the top step one of the biggest rattlesnakes I had ever seen.

We took one look. Then we turned around and went back to Casper. That was the only effort we ever made to be honest about our homesteading.

Eventually, we proved up, and sold the two homesteads for \$2000, and paid the Smiths for the down payment on the house.

Living continued hard for us for a long time after that.

Edna had to have her tonsils out. I got Dr. Barger to come up to the house.

1463.

Edna sat in a chair by the kitchen sink, while Dr. Barger took the tonsils out and threw them in the sink. It saved us a hospital bill, all right but it was a cruel way to have to live.

I mentioned to ex-Governor Brooks one day down at the bank that I thought the time would come some day when poor people could pay in to some sort of governmental health program by which one could be operated on, and the bill could be guaranteed.

Furthermore, I told him, the day will come when men out of jobs will have some sort of an employment office to which they can go and get work free.

"Mr. David, I'm afraid you are a reactionary," he told me gravely. Yet, I was to live to see the day when laws far more drastic than that would be passed.

That summer, Captain White died, and I drove down with Edna to Douglas

1464.

to attend his funeral at the Methodist church, south of Morton's.

We found the church to be packed with his friends, the old timers who had been his neighbors since Territorial days.

Now, I was having a lot of trouble in my private life, trying to find some interesting thing which would relieve the monotony. For now I was through with adventure. I could not pick up and go to Denver, or Washington, or Humptulips, or the Border, or overseas, when things got monotonous.

Now I was a husband and father, working all day in an office where I had begun to fear for my job, and spending the evenings at home, or down at the Masonic Lodge, playing solo with the boys.

The adventures were behind me, and frankly the quiet, monotonous life of a family man was becoming burdensome. I was looking for something interesting to do in my free time.

1465.

I had no reason to believe that Cap White's funeral would be the beginning of a thrilling interest in my life.

The minister got up in his pulpit to give the eulogy. If someone wasn't crying, he would concentrate on that person, talking directly to him. To get my mind away from his words, I began to look around the little white, frame church.

Then I heard his words. "Behold, my friends," he said. "Behond [behold] the passing of a pioneer."

I blinked my eyes, and gazed at the faces around me. True, every one of them was a pioneer. Each had performed his part in the frontier days. Each had left his mark on the prairies and along the trails for the future to follow.

Every one of them had a thrilling story to tell, I thought. What a tremendous fund of information and valuable interest each one could tell a man who would go to them and record their pasts.

1466.

So, in that hour was born the idea of gathering up the memoirs of the Old-Timers, and the records and notes and diaries and letters which in later years were to be known as the David Collections.

Next day, I bought notebooks and pencils, and from that time onward was continuously on the trail of reminiscences, records, letters, and information, until eventually, I would become an authority on Wyoming History.

My oldest account ran back to 1843, and I was not interested in anything after 1895, believing that nothing of great interest happened after that year.

Old men with long hair, the "Long Hairs" they were called, came to dinner at our home, then sat for hours in the living room remembering the old trails and the massacres, and the old characters. With their goatees and long mustaches, they were a breed alone, with the look of faraway places in their eyes.

1467.

There was old Boney Ernest, out at Alcova. I would drive out there and let him talk while I wrote hurriedly in my notebooks. His wife, Aunt Mattie, sat nearby, ready to correct him when he got too far off the road. His green parrot always perched himself on my left shoulder and seemed content if he could take bites now and then out of the lobe of my ear.

Boney was a great frontier scout of the 1860's and 1870's, acquainted with Bill Hickok, Bill Cody, and all the others of his day.

He liked to be known as being a "character." He often did things that were unusual, not because he didn't know any better, but because he knew that people would laugh and record the incidents for a hundred years after he was gone.

As an illustration, shortly before he died, Boney appeared at the Gay Mortuary in Casper one morning, and

1468.

told Lew Gay that he wanted to fit himself for a coffin.

"I'm not goin' to live much longer, Lew," he said. "And , after I'm gone, I'll be a long time dead, so I might as well be sure that I'll be comfortable. I want you to trot out the coffin with the most cozy upholstery and pillows."

He then climbed into four or five of Lew's best coffins, lying down and working his shoulders around among the lace, to make sure that he would not be cramped.

Finding one which fitted him perfectly, Boney paid for it, and had it laid away until he could use it.

Up and down the Platte Valley I went, getting together a collection of words. I wanted no relics. All I wanted were the authentic records, of days and places not alone of Wyoming but of Montana, Colorado, Utah, Idaho, Washington and Oregon. I filled my extra time with them.

¢¢ That was the Christmas that I received several gifts for the children from the Pellefigures in Castillon, France. They sent white, stuffed rabbits, and musical boxes. Beautiful things.

Shortly after this, however, I lost the friendship of the Pellefigures. The United States, after the war was concluded, had loaned France several millions of dollars for her reconstruction. Then, when our government requested the repayment of the loans, France became very indignant, declaring that we somehow owed her the money for France's fighting for democracy.

All the French people seemed to think that all Americans were mercenary, and the Pellefigures stopped writing, even though I wrote trying to make them see that I had nothing to do with governmental policies.

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After another wonderful Christmas at the ranch, the year of 1926 dawned.

1470.

That was the year of increasing careless morals. The "Black Bottom," and the "Charleston" were the dance craze.

At the same time, little events occurred which eventually were to have great national significance.

The U.S. Army created officially the Air Corps. Commander Richard Byrd flew over the North Pole. Talking pictures were introduced, and the National Broadcasting Company was organized in New York City.

In the labor fields, great strides were made. Henry Ford established the eight-hour day, and the five-day week, for the first time in history. The wages for common laborers then was 54¢ per hour.

Of historical interest, also, was the fact that Robert Todd Lincoln, the last surviving son of the great President, died in 1926.

1471.

In Casper, politics and city affairs were as hectic as they were all over the country.

Gilbert Houseley [Housley?] was elected Sheriff. Having been a truck driver for the Standard Oil refinery, he was elected with Standard support, as that group represented the largest single unit which voted together in the entire community.

His first term of office was clean and honorable. I was his best friend, and was with him constantly.

However, when he was to run for his second term, he changed. First of all, he asked me to give false testimony against one of his enemies, which I refused to do. We split up from that moment.

Later, he was to ask me, "Why did you turn against me, Bob? I'd have killed for you." And I believe he would.

Anyhow, he aligned himself with Bert Rowell, who became Mayor of Casper.

1472.

Rowell had a little printing shop. The Mayor's job was to prove to be far more lucrative in those bootlegger days. The police were frankly "on the make." City councilmen openly "collected" from the bootleggers, bars, and cribs on the Sandbar, with policemen beside them.

On the judicial bench, Judge Cromer presided. The triumvirate, then, of the Judge, Sheriff, and Mayor working together, put Casper closely into the domination of the underworld.

Houseley [Housley] was to come out of the Sheriff's job a very wealthy man. Whereas he had been elected at first as a truck driver and without any money, he emerged owning the Ford agency with all its real estate and equipment; the P & R building, later known as the Intermountain; one of the most valuable homes in town; hundreds of pieces of real estate, and buildings, as well as a large ranch in Arizona which was run by one of his past deputies, Austin.

1473.

Mother's Place in North Casper on the Platte River bank was one of the notorious "hot spots" of the community. Gambling was a wide open sport, together with the women who lived there.

Later, it became known as Riverside Club, under Lee Hill, a pock faced gambler. His wife was murdered back of Riverside under mysterious circumstances. Public opinion was to the effect that Hill had shot her himself, but politics being what they were, there was scarcely any investigation.

Housley stood by in the County jail while his deputy and cousin, Neeley, beat a prisoner, Harvey Perkins, to death. Then they loaded him into a car and left him out by Pathfinder Lake, with his private parts cut off and shoved into his dead mouth, as a sign of what happened to informers to the Federal Investigators.

Housley had forgotten that a prisoner was crouching in another cell in

1474.

the jail, hearing the murder committed, and knowing that if he were discovered he would join Perkins.

The Sandbar had become one of the most notorious districts in the United States. North Ash Street, west First, West A West B, and outlying streets and alleys, were lined with cribs and joints of the foulest nature.

Women of all colors and degree, sat in the windows, or stood in the doors, openly enticing the men who passed in their cars. All of them were at the mercy of the town's politicians. Shakedowns by the law were almost nightly occurrences.

Bootlegging continued to flourish. Antagonisms became violent frequently. One pitched gun battle reached the newspapers, in which the Neighbors brothers were engaged, one of them being fatally wounded at the time.

In my private life, I drove back and forth between the Texas and town in

1475.

the big truck with the others, and interviewed the frontiersmen and pioneers who came to the house in the evenings, with information about the old days.

I was having my troubles now, too. Not alone did I have to pay \$1500 in order to be connected with the City sewer, but the foundation on the west end of my home gave way, and I had to get a contractor to put in new cement underpinning. Old bedsteads, and iron went into it, but it all cost money.

I was getting behind in my funds. My work as a cost accountant at the Texas was becoming less and less, as the plant went into operation. I knew it was only a question of time before I would have to find another job.

With Edna, Catherine, and Mary to care for, and the home to keep, I was now learning the worries and troubles of all young married men. Even when we stopped going to all entertainments, our pay check would not stretch enough to cover the bills.

1476.

I did, however, manage to pay off some of the older bills which had bothered me. You will recall that an officer named Weatherby had thrust a hundred francs into my hand one morning in France when I was AWOL and trying to find my outfit in September of 1918.

I found his address, and wrote to him. He answered immediately, telling me he was a secretary of the YMCA in Minneapolis, and that I was not to pay the debt, but was to buy a little present for the kids with the money. That was very thoughtful of him.

During the summer months, I went down to stay overnight several times at the SO ranch on week ends.

One Sunday, I was up in the attic, searching for old records, when Sarah, Bob Carey's daughter, came up to join me. She was not well, and we had many quiet conversations about her troubles, her hopes, and her frustrations.

1477.

On this Sunday she was particularly low in spirits. I tried to cheer her up.

"But, why shouldn't I be miserable, Cousin Bob" she cried. "What have I got to enjoy in life? Here, come with me, let me show you what goes on all the time."

She took my hand and led me down the attic stairs on on down to the basement, to pause behind a swinging door that led into what used to be the dining room in my childhood days.

"Look in there, Cousin Bob. See for yourself," she urged.

I opened the door a crack. Julia Carey, Sarah's mother, was sitting at a table in the center of the room, with three other graying women, all playing cards, with cigarettes hanging from the corners of their mouths.

The air was gray with smoke. The table was covered with a mixture of empty bottles, ash trays piled to overflowing, piles of money, and cigarette packs. There was scarcely room enough for them to play cards.

1478.

All of them had partly-filled glasses with liquor in them. Empty bottles attested to their having consumed a lot already. All were hazy in their actions.

I drew the door closed with a sniff of contempt.

"See, Cousin Bob?" Sarah whispered from behind. "What kind of a future can I ever expect to find here?"

I murmured agreement, and left for home shortly afterward.

Sarah took the first opportunity she could find to get away from the SO, and the Careys. An older man, a widower with two children, wealthy, with a big home and estate in the East, asked her to marry him, and she did. Wyoming never heard of her any more. She did not live very long after going east. Poor kid!

I was devoting almost every Sunday now to driving Edna and the kids down to Parkerton and the Mountain Home ranch, where Edna could visit for hours with her mother.

1479.

It was proving to be very monotonous for me. Nobody paid any attention to me. I tried taking books down, and sitting in one of the big chairs in the front living room, to read for hours, but that, too, became tiresome.

I then got the idea of making historical notes from books and records, a sort of encyclopedia of Wyoming notes. So, one by one, I got books from the Casper library that included records of the early days of Wyoming, and copied the items into my notebooks.

Sunday after Sunday, I worked at copying these until I had a wonderful collection of items of research for my future historical writings.

In the fall, several of us who had attended the University conceived of the idea of helping young graduates to get started in Casper. Such efforts would require money, and we decided to put on the Wyoming-Montana football game in Casper that fall.

1480.

Fred Layman was Secretary - Treasurer. The University agreed, for that was the year they had to play the game in Montana. Montana agreed, for they would rather play on a neutral field each year.

Casper really got behind us. The lumberyards donated the lumber for bleacher seats, everyone helped us out.

We put up extra seats all along the vacant east side, and on the ends of the old plank stands on the west.

Then, we sent out tickets all over the State, with good center seats distributed to all counties. Tickets sold out quickly. A special train was made up from the Big Horn Basin.

Everything went off smoothly, and more than 6000 saw the game, by far the largest crowd ever to view an entertainment in Casper's history. After all expenses had been paid, we cleared more than \$3000, every cent of which was to be doled out to struggling young boys and girls who needed help to go to the University.

1481.

With such an auspicioua [auspicious] beginning, one would think this effort would become a yearly affair. The University benefited, the young people were helped. But it didn't work out that way. That was the only year we had the game.

It seems that after the game was over, the University boys went downtown and became noisy and rowdyish. They went into the Henning Hotel where they knocked over a valuable vase and broke it. Bill Henning, the owner, demanded that they pay for it or go to jail. They did, and the University was outraged.

To think that their students could not celebrate a victory as they wished, even at the expense of valuable property, was out of all reason. Consequently, the Montana-Wyoming football game was never played in Casper again through those early years.

Delegations from Casper drove by car to Laramie, to explain the benefits

1482.

that the University would derive from the game in Casper, but President Crane refused. The pride of a group of rowdy students had been hurt, and the University refused to bow to discipline.

In November, the axe fell on my job. Capen frankly told me that the office force was being reduced one-half, and that if I wished to continue with the Company I would have to become a stillman out on the plant, working at shift work. The pay would be much more than I was getting as an office worker, but the discomforts would be greater. I accepted the transfer.

I admit frankly that I hated the new work, but it was too late in the year to find another job. I had to take what I could get.

Furthermore, I was afraid of the High-Pressure stills, to some degree. Their history over the country told of several blowing up and killing a lot of stillmen. I never understood mechanical things, and distrusted them.

1483.

Several batteries of stills stood in line, long steel tubes standing vertically in their steel frames, and covered with painted galvanized iron. Beside them, on the ground, were preheaters, condensers, control rooms, and all the ganglia of overhead pipes, and valves and connections necessary to bringing in the cold oil from the big tanks, running it into the stills, bringing it up to the "cracking" point, where the oil not alone boils but becomes a vapor, than on out to the condensers where it becomes several kinds of liquid and wax and lubricating oil, besides the gasoline.

The original idea had been for one man to handle the valves at the base of each still, turning in the cold oil with a big wrench which twisted the wheels, or turning other valves which released the vapors and boiling liquids out from the stills to the condensers, and the cool sprays of water.

1484.

Another man climbed the steps that led up to the top of the stills, high in the air. He continuously inspected every valve and joint and connection up above, to see that nothing leaked under the 500 pound, or 750 pound to the square inch of pressure.

However, this idea of two men to the still had been discontinued, in the face of demands for economy. Now, one man on the ground handled the valves, and climbed the stairs to inspect the stills above, for not alone One but for Two stills.

Each man worked eight hour shifts. The day shift from 7:30 A.M. to 4:30 P.M., was of course the most desired. The swing shift from 4:40 P.M. to 11:30 P.M. was of course the most desired. The swing shift from 4:40 P.M. to 11:30 P.M. was not bad, except that it ruined the evenings.

It was the graveyard shift, from 11:30 to 7:30 A.M. which wrecked the men.

Working through the endless black hours; peering at the gauges, and the little red lines on the indicators; Keeping the eyes open, with the knowledge that

1485.

a moment of dozing might mean that pressure could mount in the still, even to the point of explosion; and the terrible hour at dawn, when the dark slowly fades away to be absorbed by the day, and the eyelids fall in spite of all you can do; those were hard days.

The shift worker on graveyard also finds troubles at home. During the summer months, he must try to find rest during hot, suffocating days, or, if he is so fortunate as to be able to sleep in a basement, every tip-toe step of the children overhead wakes him up.

The seeds of divorce have been sown far too many times during a graveyard shift

However, I stubled through the winter without trouble. The shift foremen were not troublesome. They couldn't be, for we had "too much on them." On New Year's Day, as an example, when I went to work on the swing shift at 4:30, I found.

1486.

that every man on the shift ahead of me, from the foreman down, had been so drunk that not a single record had been kept on the big sheets in the control room, - records of the hourly fluctuations in heat and quality, for each still.

I had to spend most of my shift that night, feverishly putting down figures out of the air, in the required spaces, to cover up for the day shift when Capen or Shefstead would look them over in the morning.

Perhaps, from the outside, the job of stillman looks wonderful. With the still ablaze with lights from top to bottom, the place seems to glow in the darkness. High in the air, the cool night breeze breathes through the steam and you can sit high up and gaze out across the prairie at the mountain and dream of the frontier that this country was but a few short years before tonight.

One caught cold easily when working

1487.

on the stills in the wintertime. The constant change from intense heat around the stills, and out into the zero weather when duties called one to valves out in the darkness, worked constantly to drag us down with pneumonia and TB.

Starting home after a graveyard shift was often a problem, especially when the weather was around zero.

Our cars were parked in the lot up by the gate. We walked slowly from our stills, after our reliefs had taken over, with our coats and dinner - pails in hand, to find our cars frozen in their places.

Getting the motors started was a daily task for many. Soon the lot was a turmoil of men cranking, of breaths rising in clouds, or cars dragging others around in efforts to start the motors.

I rode with a fellow, however, who drove an old Dodge, one of those affairs with high wheels. Under the hood, there

1488.

were little iron funnels fastened to the top of each cylinder. He would get an oil can with a spout, from under the seat, and inform me that it was full of gasoline. Then, after putting two drops of gas in each of the six funnels, he would climb in, I would crank a couple of turns in front, the motor would take hold, and we would be off.

Many were the mornings that we were the first ones started.

Then, spring came. I was having increasing trouble with my eyes by that time, and the doctors in town told me that I was going blind. I wrote to Fitzsimons that I was going in to see them in Denver. The Texas Company told me that if I did leave there would be no place for me when I got back.

So, the morning finally came when I knew that I was through. I was on graveyard, and I saw the day shift coming down the line from the parking lot.

1489.

As was usual, I took my wrench in hand, and walked over to open the valve under the still which released the hot oil to the condenser. As it left the still, new oil would flow in behind it, cold from the big storage tanks on the hill, and passing through the pre-heater which would do as its name implies, pre-heat the cold oil as it passed through by gas jets which played their flames onto the outside of the pipes.

This "turn" that I took with my wrench that morning signalled [signaled] a new phase at the refinery. Before, the gas for heating the pre-heaters had come from big white balls in the plant where gas was stored after being manufactured in the gasometers in the plant.

Now, however, gas lines had been laid from Casper to the Texas plant, and we were to use city gas from then on.

What they had forgotten, however, was that the city gas had laid in the cold

1490.

lines all night in the freezing weather. Some of the gas mist had congealed into pure white gasoline, and was laying in the dips of the line. When I turned on the valve and released the hot vapors and oil from the still, the gas from the city line followed.

The gasoline was pushed out of the low places in the line, and entered the jets on the pre-heater as pure gasoline instead of gas. This strayed all through the oven in an inferno, for the jets were automatic. When cold oil came in pipes through the pre-heater, the gas jets automatically blew out more gas to warm the pipes. When the oil was hot, the gas lowered.

The first thing I knew, there was an explosion behind me from the pre-heater. Bricks and mortar flew around me. I turned off the valve, and looked around. Flames were pouring out of the pre-heater. Fire whistles were blowing. The day shift was coming on the run.

1491.

I walked over to my second still, and opened the valve on it. Again there was an explosion, and bricks and flames were all around me.

I calmly turned off the valve, got my coat and dinner-pail, and walked on up the line to the gate. In the language of the worker, "I had had it."

That night I was on the train for Denver, and Fitzsimons. I was very blue and discouraged. Blindness for a young father was tragic. Nobody could understand it. Perhaps it was a nerve in my spine. Anyhow, Fitz would find it.

I could scarcely see when I arrived in Denver next morning. I had decided to go to Innes-Behney where I had got my glasses in the past, and have them examine my eyes again.

As I walked up Sixteenth Street, I met a couple of the Battery boys, and told them of my trouble. Dick McCusker stuck to me, and would not let me out of

1492.

his sight. He told one of the other fellows something, and went in to Innes-Behney with me, and stayed while I had my examination.

After it was over, they could not give me an immediate report, so I went on out with Dick.

"Come on out to my apartment for dinner," he asked, and I agreed.

When we arrived, I found he lived in a big, luxurious apartment house, and he lived alone in a beautifully furnished suite of rooms, with servants and everything. About a dozen of our closest Battery friends were waiting, for Dick had sent them word.

Well, we had a wonderful duck dinner with all the trimmings. He even had champagne for all of us. They double spiked mine, I think, for I went under the table again, as I had on Armistice Day in St. Dizier. The boys were determined that I would lose my despondancy.

[On the back of page 1492. Written in pencil - 1926 Last Texaco Job.]

1493.

I woke up in bed in a ward in Fitzsimons. All my Battery buddies were perched around me like crows on a limb, grinning like a bunch of apes. I felt fine, and they had done a fine job.

As it all turned out, someone in Casper was crazy. Innes-Behney rushed their finding out to Fitz, and the Army opticians verified that I had no permanent defect in my eyes. They thought I might have had a pinched nerve in my neck which produced apparent loss of sight.

So, I was released in three days. I wired the Texas asking what I would do when I reported to work, and they answered that I had no job with them, so there I was again. However, I was better known in Casper by now, and felt I could find something else soon.

In the meantime, I decided to visit my Dad and mother for a couple of days.

1494.

It just happened that the University of Hawaii was in town at that time, and was to play Denver University in football on Saturday. I got a seat and went.

I found my seat to be near an aisle high up in the stands, and sat down as the game started. The fellows on each side of me had bottles of whiskey which they passed back and forth, and I seemed to have some spill on me every time they reached across. To save my clothes, I began to drink some, and by half time I was a little woozy.

I got up and walked up and down the aisle to get fresh air, then I returned to my seat. After I sat down, I kept my head low and breathed deeply.

Then I happened to look to my left. The man's blue pants leg had a little white stripe running down the outside. I looked at the pants leg on my right. It was the same. I was sitting between two policemen.

I raised up and looked at them closely. Both burst into laughter. They were both Battery boys, now rooky cops.

1495.

They kept me in line the rest of the game, standing around and watching that the fellows gave me no more liquor after they got their seats back.

Denver won with a touchdown in the last ten seconds, and I left the stands escorted by the two policemen. I told them I could find my way home without any assistance, but they wouldn't believe me. They asked my folk's address, and when I gave

it to them, they began to tell me of all the accidents that had happened to people in that area.

So, they piled me into their patrol wagon, and, with the three of us on the front seat and the big bell clanging wildly, we dashed up the quiet, staid, old street to the apartment house where my parents lived.

You might imagine their mortification when the two cops "helped" me out of the "paddy-wagon," and up the steps into the hall. I'll bet every neighbor in the

1496.

block was peeking out of their windows.

So, 1927 was an interesting year not alone to me, but to the world.

For, it was in 1927 that television was demonstrated for the first time between New York City and Washington, D.C. The first regular telephone service between New York and London was inaugurated that summer, with a charge of \$75 for a three-minute call. Columbia Broadcasting Company started that year with sixteen stations.

Charles Lindbergh flew to Paris in the Spirit of St. Louis, the "hot dog frankfurter" with a zipper was invented; and Al Jolson appeared in the first talking moving picture, "The Jazz Singer." Edna and I saw it at the Rialto Theatre.

In the same year, the Holland Tunnel was opened, and the Model A Ford was first sold to the public at a prize of \$385.

In Wyoming, Frank C. Emerson was elected Governor, and the meadowlark was officially chosen to be our State bird.

1497.

When I got back to Casper from Fitzsimons, I started right out looking for a job. At the same time, I went on a few little fishing trips with friends.

One of these I took with Harold Clare, going up to Doc Robbins', on upper Boxelder. From his place we fished all the way up to our old Mill, where some big trout still lay in the pools below the beaver dams.

On the day we were to leave for home, it rained hard after we started to fish, so we went back to our camp. We had already packed up everything before we started to fish, so the car was ready when we got back, but the rain was coming down in torrents, and we were drenched coming through the alfalfa field.

So, when we started for home, we decided to take off our wet clothes. The wind outside was blasting at our flimsy curtains, and we were chilled to the skin anyway, so we took everything off, and

1498.

drove up the road to the gate naked.

When we reached the highway, I stopped the car.

"You'll have to open the gate Harold," I told him.

He reached into the back, got out a blanket, put it around his nakedness, got out and opened the gate. He stood there like an Indian chief as I started ahead. Then a gust of wind came, caught his blanket from underneath, tossed it upward, and flung it away into the alfalfa. Harold stood there naked holding the gate, at attention, when I drove through.

In later years, when Harold made a fortune in real estate, I laughed at him many times for that episode.

That was the summer that I got into trouble with Rev. Phil Edwards of our church. He was a luncheon club member, who drank a great deal, and who liked to be known as a "good fellow" by telling dirty stories, and by being a poor example.

1499.

He had neglected his church work to such a degree that his contributors had fallen away until the entire church was now supported by five families, the Brooks, the Nicolaysen, the Gay, and two others.

Finally, they got tired of it, and told him they would only pay a nominal amount from that time onward. Edwards thereupon notified the rest of us that we would have to double our contributions.

I wrote him that I was not in the habit of supporting "gold-bricks," and that if he would give me normal service, calling at my house once a year, I would double my contribution.

Shortly after writing the letter, I got word from him that he wanted to see me in his church study. I went over.

His words when he greeted me were, "What do you mean by playing around with Mrs.? [name is unreadable.]

The lady happened to be a very good friend of Edna's, and they were mad

[Penciled on back of page 1499. Illinois Pipeline Company 1927.]

1500.

also when they heard about it.

Edwards left shortly afterwards, and lived out his days in California. His bronze plaque rests over his ashes in one step by the St. Mark's Altar. Somehow, I never feel it belongs there.

Then, Frank Cowan, an old friend told me that the Illinois Pipeline Company needed an Oil Distribution Accountant in their Casper office, and we went down to apply. I was accepted at a salary of \$180 a month which was usual and ample for those days. I started right to work.

The office was across "A" street south of the P & R Building, and due east of the old Courthouse in the center of Center Street and "A". It was upstairs, the Ohio Oil Company taking up much of the building.

Richard R. Mullins, known locally as "Moon," was the second in authority under Carl , Pat Hennessey was the Superintendent.