MY HUNDRED YEARS
IN ILLINOIS
1876 – 1976

An Autobiography by Fred Otis Grissom

For some reason, unknown to me, I have been asked so many times, both verbally and by letter, to write the history of my life, that I have become interested and will endeavor to tell the story of my existence to the best of my memory and ability.

My arrival in this wonderful country of ours was no different than the arrival of the reader, so far as I know. My parents, John William Grissom, a native of Ohio, and later Indiana, and Maria Jane Parrill, were united in marriage at the home of the bride on December 15, 1867, by a Justice-of-the-Peace named Charley Harbor. The bride was the oldest child, by a second marriage, of her father, Silas Parrill, who settled in Meacham Township in 1840 about seven miles east of Kinmundy. On this land, that he purchased from the Government, he erected a log house in which the wedding took place. This same land is still in a Parrill name.

In the spring of 1867, my father took the advice of Horace Greeley, or someone else, and migrated from Kokomo, Indiana, to Meacham township and located (renting) what was known as the Stone House Farm, about three or four miles east of Farina. During the spring he became acquainted with Maria Jane and their courtship ended in a happy marriage. Before coming to Illinois my father served two one-year enlistments in the 1861-1865 war. After the close of the war he engaged in school teaching, but decided that was not the job for him. He wanted to be a farmer, consequently his move west.

After a couple of years of marriage, a son, Charles Floyd, arrived. During an epidemic of whooping cough he died about the age of five. Some months after his departure, Doctor Blackburn, of Farina, called the log house on the farm in Section 7, which father had purchased. When Doctor Blackburn left, he had also left me! This was on March 9, 1876. I was weighed in at nearly eight pounds and was quite a healthy kid. I caused my parents plenty of trouble as I think I was quite an investigator, wanting to know the contents of all that I could handle. I got plenty of 'fannings' and there was seldom any dust in the seat of my pants. I remember on one occasion, when I was five, Father was putting a new roof on the log house and had the shingles in the front yard. At that time, Clara Worley, my father's niece, lived with us, her mother having died. Clara and I had some trouble. I guess I had used some language to her that I had heard someone else use. My mother heard me, and called to me to come to her. Instead of going to her, I went the opposite way. She took after me, and I got out in the road and headed north at full speed. I got almost a quarter of a mile before she caught me. In taking me back, we went through the yard. Mother picked up a couple of the new shingles. She 'shingled' me about every three or four steps, and I was yelling all the time: "Pa don't want them shingles split!" But nonetheless the shingles were "split."

One year, when we lived in the old log house on the farm in Meacham township, my father had a man working on the farm 'by the month'. Quite early in the spring, the hired man become afflicted with the chills, or 'ague', which was quite stylish in those days. He was chilling every day and was unable to do the work. He spent the time just loafing in the house. One particular morning my mother had pancakes for breakfast and the sick managed to dispose of eight, skillet-sized, with plenty of butter and sugar syrup. At the end of consuming the eighth one he remarked to my mother: "I'll tell you, Mrs. Grissom! If I was well I could 'Smolick' them!" In reply my mother said: "Bob! I think you have done mighty well for a sick man!" I guess the conversation ended at this point.

When we lived on the farm where I was born, we had some very close neighbors. The Watsons were the closest and they had a boy, Thurman, just a few months older than I. We had lots of fun playing horse with sticks and string for harness. We could keep the Watson lawn mowed a great deal of the time pulling the grass for our herd of horses. Those were sure happy

days in our young lives. Mr. Watson always had a yoke of oxen and did his heavy work with these patient beasts. I remember their names were Buck and Jerry. He would often drive them to town if he had a heavy load. Thurman had another boy friend - John Jackson. John's mother had passed away and he and his father lived alone. One day John was at the Watsons for dinner when they had stuffed sausage. That kind of sausage was new to John and he took close watch to see how Thurman handled his sausage. After close watch, John remarked, "Thurman, do you eat the guts?" "Sure!" Thurman replied. "It's good!" John then followed suit.

In the fall of 1881 my father traded the farm for a lumber yard in Farina, located where now stands the Reitz Poultry House. It was a two story building and we moved to the second story. We took my dog, Bill, to town. The first night upstairs, and after supper, my mother was shaking the table cloth out the back door and left the door open. Old Bill walked out the door and landed on the ground unhurt.

My father did not like the lumber business. Guess he got too many splinters in his fingers! He sold the business and erected a two-story frame building on the lot about where the State Bank now stands. The second story is where we lived. On the west of this building was another two-story building, with the Maxon and Burdick Drug Store on the first floor. The upper story was occupied by the Farina Masonic Lodge. A Mr. Taylor was janitor of the lodge. One day he was up there doing his work and I climbed the stairs and went in the lodge room where he was. He talked to me and went over to a closet and opened the door. He took out a shining sword and took after me. I was just a kid, about ten years old, but I think I made about four steps on the jump down the stairs. He sure gave me a scare. I have always been afraid of a Masonic Lodge room since then!

In his new building my father put in a line of furniture and undertaking. Thomas Arrington had charge of the undertaking. We had not been in this place long 'till a tramp was killed on the railroad. The body was picked up in a basket, brought in, and left in the coffin department for an inquest. The folks had no trouble keeping me indoors while that corpse was in the house.

After some years in the furniture business, father sold it and put in a stock of groceries. The grocery business was prosperous. He handled Altamont flour and sold a sideboard wagon load every week, delivered by a man named Peter Doorman. I have been told that Altamont still has some Doormans. One time Pete was there and was coming again the next day with another load and he took me home with him to stay all night. They were nice German folks and had some kids about my size and age.

In the upstairs home over the store is where my brother Louis Earl was born February 1888. I well remember that not many cigars were left in stock after the arrival of my baby brother. I was twelve at that time. My father was a heavy smoker. Some times when my mother would call him for dinner he would be smoking a cigar. He would park it on the scales and go to eat. I got to looking after it for him. I kept it burning, trying to save matches for him! I recall we lived over the store for about five years when my father traded the store and building for a farm near St. James making the trade with George Pontious.

In living in a small town a growing boy is almost compelled to create his own excitement. One thing that is interesting to me was to be around the Illinois Central freight house of an evening on the arrival of the Local Freight. The freight crew, a jolly bunch, would have fun in unloading the freight. At that time sugar was shipped to merchants in three hundred pound barrels. Some of the freight crew could carry a barrel from the car, across the switch-track, to the freight house platform. The extra-strong brakeman would back up to the car door

and stoop over, facing the freight house platform. The man in the car would let the barrel down on his shoulders. He would reach for the head of the barrel and hold it over his shoulders and carry it to the platform. Not all the railroad men could manage it, but a few could. One man, Fred J. Nirider, who was employed at the depot, could do the stunt. Later he was a resident of Kinmundy in the drug business.

The Illinois Central then used steam locomotives that were not much larger than the steam engines used by the farmers to thresh their grain. In my time I have seen a few Illinois Central locomotives that were fired by cord-wood. The smokestacks were almost as large as beer barrels. Water for the engine was pumped, by horse-power, from a deep well, nearly eight feet in diameter, north of the depot. A young fellow by the name of "Chokey" Irish would start the old horse going round and round. Then he'd go across the street to the drug store and loaf. When he was out-of-sight, some kid would yell, "whoa!" The animal "whoa'ed!" until Irish reappeared on the scene.

One could go down several feet into the big well. Pieces of rail were laid across the diameter and heavy oak lumber fixed into a platform at about three locations down in the well, connected by a ladder. Many times us kids have been in that big well, sometimes hiding there in our games. It was sure fun in those days!

While still living over the store, I played on the street with the other boys at night. We had one game called "Blanky." One side would go hide and one boy would remain and stay one block away from the opposite side. It was his job to join his side that hid out. Many nights I have been with the side that would hide under the Seventh Day Baptist Church. There was a hole in the foundation on the west side where we could get under the church. I was allowed to play 'till 9 o'clock when the store closed. Dad would whistle so that I could hear him blocks away. That whistle meant "Come home!" He would place a couple of fingers in his mouth and blow. I never could master it. While he had the grocery I got the habit of eating candy and still have the habit. Some habits are might hard to break and I guess that was one for me.

In the grocery store-farm trade my father got a team of nice bay mares. A few months later one of them had a colt, and for some reason, the mother furnished no nourishment for her baby. At that time we kept a family cow, and with the help of my mother, we took the feeding of the youngster as my father had given it to me. He did not realize at that time that he was putting me in the trading business. Mother and I soon had the colt drinking cow milk and it made a very nice colt in a few months. I wanted a horse that I could ride, so I traded the colt for a branded Texas pony with a broken ear. I did not like this pony and traded it for a cow. We already had one cow and dad said for me to trade mine off. I traded her for a gold watch, and, believe it or not, I still have that watch. That last trade put me out of the trading business.

In my school years I was always ready for school to start in September. Our home was nearly a quarter of a mile from the school house and I had to go home for dinner, regardless of rain, snow, or zero weather. We had no school buses to haul the kids a block or two at that time. I always had plenty of fun at school and always had time to be a part of the mischief. Of course a lot of things were done where the offender could not be located. But I imagine that those same pranks are still in existence. As for playing "hookey" I was guilty for only one half-day. On that occasion a boy by the name of Clyde Garland was in the crowd and he chewed a fine cut tobacco. That afternoon I took my first chew. No, it did not make me sick, but I did not follow the chewing habit. I've done some smoking, using corn silk, mullin, grape vine, rattan, buggy whips, and almost anything that would make smoke, including coffee grounds. No smoking was allowed on the school grounds. Those of us who were smokers would go a block away to a

blacksmith shop and smoke during recess. Along about that time I began to think some of the school girls were quite pretty. I finally got the courage to ask one of them for a date. I enjoyed helping her home with her books. She needed no help, but I wanted to be useful. One of my teachers was J.H. Irish, the father of the FARINA NEWS editor. He could walk over the school room and never make a sound. The first thing one knew, he had you by the nape of the neck and you didn't even know he was near. He could lift a boy out of his seat with one hand holding him by the neck. Later years I worked with him in the FARINA NEWS office and I reminded him of that stunt. He laughed.

Those days every farmer had a big sled and many brought their children to school in the sled in the winter. A man lived south of town on what in later years was called the Fred Hewitt Place. He had good horses and they were well cared for, and as the saying goes, 'they felt their oats.' He had quite a long sled with stakes along the ends he used in hauling fodder for his cattle. When the snow was on the ground he would haul the children to school on the sled. A bunch of us kids used to wait for him in the Carlton-Maxfield Barber shop and he would come along with his kids. As they rounded the corner, we would grab the stakes and swing on the sled and ride to school. The old gentleman was quite competent with pranks. One morning he took his hand-saw and sawed the stakes almost in two, leaving just enough wood to hold them. Soon he came by with his team in a good trot. Out we all went, and grabbed for a stake. Of course it broke off and sent us and over end in the middle of the street and the old gentleman had a good laugh. The next morning we waited for him, and rode to school. Those days every kid (boy) has a sled with about twenty feet of rope on it. We would hook on the sleds of farmers and ride, maybe a mile into the country, hoping to catch another coming to town. When there was no other, we had to walk, and pull our own sleds. Those cold winter days we had skating parties at the flour mill pond, and could skate north on that little creek to near the Jim Green farm and south, through the D.T. Shaeffer land across the county line road to the Jackaway farm, owned in later years by Eugene Ford. This place was hilly and we could have fun coasting down hill. On this mill-pond, we kids played what was called "Shinney" the game that is now called "Hockey". We all had a hoop-pole swiped at Charley Barbee's Cooper Shop and tin can. One ended a game with sure enough sore shins! It could be that this present "Hockey" game originated from "Shinney" on the old mill pond.

From high school, I never did graduate. I finished the final course of study with the exception of Botany. My dad said that I did not have to take it if I did not want to do so. That is one mistake he made. I remember the first graduating class, and I think it was composed of three – Oscar Wells, Arnold Davis, and Clara Green. I believe I am right, but it has been some time ago. One summer Professor J.B. Abbott and Professor Charles T. Wade held a Summer Normal and my folks signed me on, I think to keep me off the street. It was a good school and I made good grades. It was composed of pupils from Farina, Iola, Kinmundy, Oskaloosa, and Clay County – about fifty in number. Among those from Kinmundy whom I remember were Mamie Songer, Josie McBryde, Jessie Fox, Anna Craig, and Etta Marshall. There may have been others whom I've forgotten. Professor Abbott was, at one time, Marion County School Superintendent. After leaving Farina his family moved to Indiana. He was a wonderful teacher and would have us boys at his house at night and would give us the names of the stars. He had a son, Alonzo, about my age. When I was in high school, I worked out by the month during summer vacation. The first season, I worked for F.M. Vincent who had a meat market and a forty-acre farm north of Farina. On four mornings in the week I peddled meat. Two mornings I was in Iola and two in LaClede. I was supposed to be in those towns by seven o'clock. I had to get up at five o'clock,

walk a block and feed my team and then go home and get breakfast. Then I would hitch the team to a buggy, go to the market, load the buggy, and drive to the other towns to sell my stock. I would get home before noon, get dinner and harness another team and go to the forty acres to do cultivating. On every Sunday it was planned for a slaughtering in the afternoon. Often I would be late for my Sunday night date because of it. For all this I received $20.00 per month and boarded at home. The next summer I worked on the Shaeffer farm, now owned mostly by Oliver Brown. There I received $16.00 a month and my board, and lived only a couple of blocks from home. The next year at the close of school I entered the FARINA NEWS office as the "Printer's Devil". My starting pay on this job was $3.00 per week and I boarded at home. So, in my early working life, because I boarded at home so much, I am still indebted to my parents. That is one board bill that never will be paid as it is now outlawed!

(Now that I have the "Devil's" job in the NEWS office, I shall return to some of my boyhood pranks, some good, some, the opposite.)

After the erection of the first German Church in Farina, "Uncle" Henry Sporleder organized a Sunday School class of us American boys. School was held on Sunday afternoon. The school was getting along fine 'till the bumble bee season came on. Then the attendance was almost nil. At that time the Farina Cemetery was covered with the original wild bluestem grass and the place was infested with bumble bees. Sunday afternoons we kids would walk out there and fight the bees. A couple of jugs of water were taken along. We would find a bee nest of the big, yellow breed and we'd stir them up, set the jug beside the nest and the bees would come out, fly around a couple of times, and then down the jug they would go. The other kind the smaller black variety, did not get jugged, but would put up a fight. Our prepared paddles were then put in operation. Did we ever get stung? Sure, we did, and I have been stung many times. Possibly that is the reason I never have been afflicted with rheumatism as I have always heard that bee stings would cure it. Many Sunday afternoons we would walk out to the Jacob Gosad farm and ride his young horses. He lived alone and was always glad to see us kids. A kid would get dumped occasionally, but he would get up, shake off the dust, and climb on again. Never did we have any broken bones from riding and getting dumped.

As a boy I always attended Sunday School. I divided my Sunday School attendance between the Methodist and the Presbyterian Churches. Where I would go depended on where my girlfriend at the time was attending. I had two different teachers at the Methodist Church, the Rev. S.B. Bascom, later my father-in-law, and Charles Maxfield. At the other church my teacher was J.A. Demonbrun. He lived in the country and often he would take some of us town kids home with him to spend Sunday with his own two boys. I always tried to attend regularly about a month before Christmas.

My parents were quite regular in attending church service of an evening. In church affiliation, my father was brought up a Campbellite, as it was called in those days. My mother was a "full-blood" Methodist. I have always considered that this cross would make me a "half-breed". Anyway, on Sunday night, I attended service with my parents 'till after I had reached the long pants stage. At that time the Christmas tree was a great attraction and Santa was a very busy man. I remember folks would bring rocking chairs, ovenware, clothing, and most everything else and hang on the tree. But I never did see any shot guns or rifles on the tree. Those were happy days and full of expectancy, sometimes for something that never happened.

The Rudolph Smith Woods, four miles east of town, was a great spot to spend Sunday afternoon. One could swim, fish, hunt, and spend a nice afternoon. Often some church would have a Baptizing out there and that would put aside some plans of the boys. But usually after

that service the fish would do a better job of taking the bait. Smith's woods had many May parties of both boys and girls. Many times the May Day parties would be held in Dismal Woods near LaCleade. On one occasion the girls slipped away and went wading and found a dead man floating in Dismal Creek. That man's discovery stopped the wading by the girls and after that they would not leave camp.

When my brother, Louis Earl, was born, I was twelve years old and I always had the idea that he should obey my orders. However many times he had ideas of his own and did not hesitate to put them into practice after he got a few years added to his birth. My mother had no girls, so I was pressed into service to help her in the family work. Often I was quite a help, especially after the arrival of Louis Earl. In the family wash I supplied the man-power to keep the wringer in operation. When the ironing was to be done, mother was very liberal and would assign me the diapers, the hankies, napkins and other flat pieces. I've never tackled a shirt or dress. Also I was assigned the job of caring for the little brother part-time. He had a horseless carriage and in the attention I would give him, I would wheel him up on the Illinois Central Freight House platform and turn the carriage loose to run down the wagon platform from which it would often roll out into the street about a hundred feet and never turn over. That was a lot of fun and the baby seemed to enjoy it. But it suddenly stopped when a tattler went to the store and told my dad. All I received from him was orders for the future. Consequently I had to do more walking and pushing.

I well remember my first pair of long pants. I was due a new suit for Easter and my father took me to Centralia and there got me my first long pants suit. I remember it was purchased in a store by the name of The London Clothing Company. The clerk in the store was a Farina man by the name of E.W. Titzell, our near neighbor. He would go to Centralia on Monday morning, and come home on Saturday nights. Mr. Titzell was a fine man and a Civil War Veteran. In later years he clerked in the Richardson Clothing Store in Farina.

In those days about all a boy could get to do to earn a little money was to pick strawberries and to help in the spring in planting the new berry patches. That work brought fifty cents a day and the boy worked harder than the man with the spade who got a dollar and a half a day. The man could stand straight and the boy was all bent over, his head lower than his middle. (I was tempted in writing "Middle" to say another word, but my nerve failed!) At one time the boys got a break. The opera house burned and we kids got work cleaning brick at fifty cents per day, working ten hours. On the job I ruined my dad's hatchet, chopping mortar off the brick. We kids got the brick in shape for the erection of the new building, the one that torn down a few years ago on what was called "the Gant corner".

There was a man in town who was might good to us kids. He owned some lots west of the Seventh Day Baptist Church and he would plant these lots to watermelons. Wanting to be helpful, we kids would help him harvest his crop. The girls were also in on that job. We were careful and did not injure the vines, just picking enough to feed the crowd. The lots were fenced with barbed wire and many mothers had patching jobs on pants that failed to clear the fence - I speak of the boys, of course. We would take our melons four or five blocks, eat them and then throw the rinds in Sam Weale's yard, thinking he could feed them to his chickens. Sam did not like the donation and said some bad words about those who pulled the stunt but he did not know whom to blame. We boys never told him and the girls were good to keep the secret.

At the age of twelve, Lillian Parrill's family moved to Farina, from Iuka, where she was born. Her father, Peter Parrill, was a carpenter and went to Farina where he could get more work at his trade. The first day that Lillian started to the Farina School, I accompanied her and

introduced her to the kids, as she was my cousin. I spent many evenings in their home playing different games. The older sisters, Annie and Elizabeth, were still at home. They were trying to teach Lillian and me how to play cards. Their father caught us playing and he ordered me home, saying that I was teaching his girls how to play cards. That was one time he was mistaken. The older girls were trying to teach us kids. As I remember I was at their house the next evening, again. When I was about eight or nine, my mother drove to Iuka to visit. That was my first time, that I remember, to see Lillian. That night, I remember, mother and I slept at the home of Frank and Cora Parrill as the beds in the home of Uncle Peter Parrill and Aunt Nancy were filled with the large family. Uncle Peter was a half-brother of mother, he being a first marriage child. Mother was the oldest of my grandfather's second marriage.

Later, when I was married to Lillian, we did a great deal of visiting, what with her having five married sisters. Emma Smith, the oldest, lived on a farm near Iuka and we often went to see her, her husband, Daniel, having passed away some years before Lillian and I were married. Elizabeth and Annie were twins, Elizabeth being the wife of Dr. William Bogie, of Vincennes, Indiana. We often visited the Bogies and they would come to Kinmundy. Annie was the wife of Edward Richardson and they resided in Hammond, Louisiana, and we managed to visit them most every year. Ed was president of the Hammond State Bank. That leaves Minnie, wife of Byron Siple, deceased, and Jennie, wife of Edward Hohlt, deceased. After their younger sister, Lillian, married me and made her home in Kinmundy, the two bought property here and were visited about every day. Lillian was the youngest of the Peter Parrill family and was the last of the family to pass away. An unusual thing happened with the six Parrill sisters. Four of the six passed away in the Grissom home - all but Lillian, being widows at the time. They were a lively set of sisters and enjoyed life and their families. I really think they all like me as a brother-in-law and also as a cousin. The one who was always "on my side" was Minnie, but I had no quarrel with any of them and they were nice to me, and I enjoyed them, never having a sister of my own.

In the four years that I was employed in the FARINA NEWS office, I met with many problems that gave me considerable experience in matters that were new to me, a boy just out of school. 1896 was a campaign year and a Republican was elected President, defeating William Jennings Bryan, the well known Silver Tongued Orator. After the campaign was over and things were back to near normal, my boss, C.R. Davis, decided to make a bid for the Farina Post Office. Mr. Davis was a very poor penman and at that time I could write a very legible hand. The boss appointed me his private secretary. That appointment gave me access to all his political mail and I would answer it at his dictation, in longhand. Typewriters were very scarce. At that time John R. Tanner, of Louisville, was governor of Illinois and the governor was a personal friend of Mr. Davis, both being former Louisville residents. Two or three others were after the post office, but from what I could read in letters, I knew my boss had the inside track. At that time the governor was a power in Republican politics. With Governor Tanner backing him, to my way of thinking, Mr. Davis was occupying the driver's seat. When the appointment was made, it was Davis. In his appointment it gave me more responsibility in the NEWS office. He was a good boss and we had no trouble in any way.

At about that time Farina would have a visitor about twice every year. He came to town by train. The first thing he would do on arrival was to make for the newspaper office and just about take charge of the front office and the exchange newspapers. The real name of this visitor was J.N. Free, and he had been a very noted Criminal Lawyer in New York City. His traveling name was "The Immortal J.N." The first time he visited the NEWS office, I did not know what

to think or what to do. He just talked in a manner that was unknown to me and would always wind up by saying: "Forty years ago it would have killed us all!" Then he would take a bunch of newspapers and depart. He would go to the hotel and register, get a meal or two, ask about his bill and depart. Mr. Carroll, the hotel man, told him that his bill was so-and-so and would tell Mr. Free that he would donate half of it. J.N. said that he allowed no man to be more liberal than he was, and that he would donate the other half. J.N. would go into the barber shop, lay a dime on the shelf with the tools and get into the chair for a shave. He would visit the high school and make a talk, always quitting with the words: "Forty years ago it would have killed us all!" He carried a pocket full of railroad passes and would flag the fast Illinois Central trains when he wanted to leave town and they would always stop and he would get aboard. J.N. had been a Railroad Criminal Lawyer in New York and had defended a man in a suit that went to the higher court and he had gotten the man acquitted. Some months later the man confessed and pled guilty and was sent to prison. This confession, after the decision of the first trial, caused his attorney, J.N. Free, to have his mind go bad and he was in the mental condition as stated. He was known to have been one of the noted lawyers in the east and had been employed by the railroads. In his visits he was perfectly harmless and his coming to Farina was expected about twice a year.

The year the World's Fair was held in Chicago, the Annual Grand Army Encampment was also held in Indianapolis. After the close of school that year, my father had a talk with me. He mentioned those two events and said he would take me to the one of my choice. In the meantime my mother also had a private talk with me, knowing what my father had said. She suggested that I choose Indianapolis as she thought my father favored that city since he could see many of his army comrades and many old Indiana friends. So, after the consultation, Indianapolis was chosen and there we went. It was certainly a great event in my young life, seeing the crowd, seeing and hearing the wonderful bands, and all the parades. In this visit I had the opportunity to see Johnny Worley, my father's nephew, for the first time and also had a visit with two of my father's uncles. It was a grand experience for me and my father was much pleased, meeting so many folks that he had known in former years.

In my growing up days, at near sixteen, there were dances being held in the Switzer Opera House each week. I well remember the story told about a German young man introducing a young lady to his boy friend. The introduction went in about this manner: "Melia, this is Lon. Lon, this is Melia. Melia, Lon is a hell of a nice feller!" After this introduction the couple went dancing. At one of these dances, some Meacham young fellows decided they would take charge and a big fight took place. The result was that the intruders were kicked downstairs by Wes Wehe, Gus Schwabe, and some others. The second attempt was never made. Often young folks would visit the dance after the meeting of the Epworth League at the Methodist Church. On one occasion, two League attendants decided they would stop at the dance on the way home. Time arrived for the girls to be home, and the mothers, knowing that the dance was in progress decided to go to the Opera House. During the dancing program, into the opera house walked Mrs. D.T. Shaeffer and Mrs. S.B. Bascom, looking for Nellie and Jennie. The girls saw their mothers coming up the stairs and they hid behind the door. When their mothers entered the hall, the girls slipped downstairs and ran all the way home. When the mothers arrived home, their daughters were supposed to be sound asleep. I don't think the mothers ever knew the girls were in the hall upon their arrival. I am sure the girls never told them. Many visitors attended these dances to see the waltzing of Mr. and Mrs. Percy Balke. It was really wonderful to watch them, they were so graceful on the dance floor. As for myself, I never was on the dance floor as I always thought my feet were so large that I might step on the corns of some good-looking girl. But I always

enjoyed watching the good dancers.

When I was a lad in my early teens, I enjoyed going to the country to visit. At the home of my uncles I could ride horses and have fun with the kids. One summer, Uncle Andy, had me come to his place and help with the hay crop. He had cut the hay and shocked it. It was my job to ride the horse and with a long rope attached to the horse, drag these hay shocks to the stack, a man being in the field to attach the rope to the shock. It was sure hot weather and in the riding of this big, fat horse, my saddle was a burlap sack. A good portion of the day the "saddle" was not in use and the seat of my pants were wet (from sweat!) and the horseback ride was not enjoyed to any great extent. All the pay I was receiving was to get to ride the horse. While there I slept upstairs by myself and about ten o'clock I could hear Bill Switzer, a near neighbor, calling his cows to do the evening milking. The Creator made those days too short for Bill. In the upstairs I could hear the old Seth Thomas clock ticking downstairs and it had a tendency to keep me awake, anyway keeping me scared. I had two other Parrill uncles where I would like to go, one being Uncle Abe.

Uncle Abe owned a beautiful bay mare and for my pleasure he would take her out of the barn in the barn lot and with a long rope tied to her bridle would have her go round and round in a circle. He would do something with the rope and Vic would stand on her hind legs. That was equal to a Barnum and Bailey circus performance to me. Uncle Abe would then let me ride Vic down the road for a ways. On such an occasion, I would not have traded places with Richard Nixon. Another uncle, Uncle Jep, was always good to me about riding his horses and always enjoyed having me visit him on the farm. He was never too busy to have me bother him about something of no importance save to me. As I look back over those boyhood days, I am sure that teenage boys today have no such amusements since the farmers have no horses.

I never could understand why anyone would dislike a horse. Most of my life I have been associated with a horse or with horses. My father nearly always had one or more horses. After I got away from home and had a home of my own, I had a horse and buggy. In my career, I think I have owned a dozen "buggy" horses. I usually had a horse and a dog. I always enjoyed going to my Grandfather Parrill's farm home since he always had two horses after he quit farming. The stock had to be watered at a spring several hundred feet west of the barn and I would ride them one at a time to water. My grandmother always had a supply of cookies when I arrived. When I went home the cookie stock was about exhausted. One day my grandmother said "We have too many cats. After dinner you take a couple of them and drown them in the pond." The pond was about a half-quarter east of the house. She put them in a box and tied the lid. I went to the pond, loosed the lid, and one at a time, threw the cats in the pond. Both cats beat me back to the house!

My Uncle John Parrill was not as playful as my other Parrill uncles. I was not as his house much excepting for the blackberry season. Then my mother had me in charge and I assisted her in the blackberry picking. I will confess that I never enjoyed the job. However, mother always canned many quarts and Blackberry was my favorite jelly. After I was married one L.C. Rohrbough and I went blackberrying for many years.

Marion Bascom was a half-brother of Jennie, the son of his father's first marriage. He was living at home when I was keeping company with Jennie, but he did not, to my knowledge, object to me. One night I had been to their house and went home through town and heard a fight down an alley. I stopped to listen to the quarrel. Charley Shaeffer came along and he stopped to listen. We hid in a ditch in some high grass. Marion came along returning to his home. We stopped him and told him what was taking place down the alley. "You kids go on home", he

said. "If you don't, you'll get in trouble and will have to go to court as witnesses if you stay here." He was right. The next day arrests were made, and the two of us boys had to make two trips to Vandalia as witnesses. One guy in the fight came out on the street drunk. Charley and I took him home, where his wife cussed us and accused us of getting her husband drunk.

Marion told many funny happenings in his life, but he never told a story in which he was not personally connected. In his late teens, his father was appointed Methodist minister at Vera. After moving there, Marion got a job clerking in the Jennett General Store. He slept in the store at night. One night after supper, two fellows came in the store and one of them said: "Marion! While we were coming down the street a few minutes ago, John and me made a bet. How about getting the oysters now and wait to see who loses the bet before we pay you?" (The country store had a table in the back. Customers could be served cove oysters and cheese and crackers for lunches.) Marion got the oysters ready and the men enjoyed them. He got curious, and asked, "What was the bet?" John replied: "Jim bet me that when the Methodist Church steeple fell, it would fall to the north. I bet him that it would fall to the south!" Marion told the story fifty years later in Farina and said the church steeple was still standing. Someone asked him, "Who paid for the oysters?" "I did, of course", he replied. While he lived in Vera, the amusement for young people was not plentiful. Many Sunday afternoons, the young couples would walk to the Okaw and throw rocks in the river. One Sunday afternoon, as Marion told it, a bunch was enroute to the river and came to a ditch which contained water. They ran and jumped over the ditch for fun. When Marin's girl took her turn in the jumping, she slipped and fell. Marion helped her up and remarked, "You sure showed your agility!" She replied, with embarrassment, "Oh! Did I?" (She did not know the definition of "Agility"!) I could relate many more "Marion stories!"

After coming home from the Spanish-American War, Marion boarded with Jennie and me here in Kinmundy. He was employed by Charles Neavill, painting. He became a member of the Okaw Fishing Gang and went many times on weekends with the bunch. On one occasion he was fishing by himself. A bunch from Pana, men and women, were camped not far from our camp. The mosquitos were thick, and Marion was sitting under some willows. Along came a boat with a man and woman in it. The woman had one leg hanging out of the boat. She saw Marion peering out from under the willows and said, "It's a dandy, isn't it, young man?" Marion wound his line around the pole and came to camp where he told us of the incident. On that trip he had borrowed a twenty-two rifle from Charley Stevens, which he left in the printing office as he came home. That night, Kinmundy had a big fire and the EXPRESS office was in the fire and Marion lost the borrowed rifle and had to pay the owner for it. At that time our home was where Ruth Rohrbough now lives. We were awakened by Bill Ross telling us the town was on fire. Jennie had gone to Farina that day to help her mother and was staying all night. I dressed in a hurry, after waking Marion, and went to the fire. I saved a small amount of THE EXPRESS equipment, but lost all the books containing a few hundred dollars on accounts. When the office was about all burned, Marion came to the fire. I asked him what he had been doing. He told me that he had put on his Sunday suit, but had put on the pants with the "behind part in front" and he thought he would never get them off! He asked if I had saved the Stevens rifle. I had to tell him that I had not, and that I didn't know where it was in the office.

Marion was a good brother-in-law and was good to me always. He was a wonderfully pleasant man to have in the home. He certainly loved his sister and that made his presence more agreeable. Finally he decided to go to housekeeping. He rented a room over the First National Bank, and resided there until his health failed. Then he went to the government Soldiers' Home

in Danville, where he died. Burial was in Farina where he owned a lot beside the grave of his wife, buried many years before. They were living in Chicago when she died. Her maiden name was Grace Carroll, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. R.N. Carroll, the Farina Hotel people. Marion never considered a second marriage.

In the early 1900's the Pittinger Opera House in Centralia would have many good attractions and many Kinmundy people would attend, since the Illinois Central passenger trains at that time had a favorable schedule. One train would leave Kinmundy at five o'clock p.m., and be home around eleven o'clock p.m. after one had seen a good show. I well remember the night that "The Merry Widow" was there. Almost a coach-full of our home folks attended. The performance was a little lengthy, but the train was delayed 'till the show was over so that we would all get home. In this show, Emmit Pricket, a Kinmundy young man, sang the leading part, and that accounted for such a large attendance from his home town.

On another occasion some of us Kinmundy people were down there, and on the return trip, when the train was pulling out of Odin, a lady passenger in our coach was taken with a fit. The ladies near her all ran to the other end of the coach, badly scared. (At that time I was quite familiar with such cases as one of my good friends was so afflicted and I had been with him many times under such circumstances.) I got up from my seat and went to the lady in front of me a few seats and took charge. I asked a nearby woman to open the sick lady's suitcase and see if she could find a towel. She found one. I asked her to go to the water cooler and wet part of the towel. I loosened the neck of the afflicted lady's dress and put the cold wet towel across her forehead, straightened her around in the seat. By then, she was sleeping. I went back to my seat and could hear the ladies in the rear of the coach making such remarks as, "It was a good thing a doctor was on the train.", and "That doctor seemed to know just what to do!" Another said, "That will be one case where he will collect no fee!" About that time we were in Kinmundy, and the patient was left in charge of the conductor.

In those days it was the custom for people to go to the Okaw River in the fall to gather hickory nuts. Those big river nuts were plentiful and seemed to be free, as everybody helped himself. On one occasion when a few of us married folks took a day off to go nutting, we were doing fine 'till Jennie and Pearl Sexton Fisher crawled under a barbed-wire fence where there were a bunch of cattle. In the herd was a male of the species. He saw a red sweater worn by one of the intruders, gave a loud bawl, and chased the two nut hunters. They ran for the fence and got there ahead of the bull. They dropped to the ground and rolled under the fence, unhurt by 500 percent scared! Guess they had ample cause to be scared. The nuts in the cow pasture were left for the next nutting party. (At that time a Pana company owned a large number of the acres in the river bottom and allowed no nut hunters. They kept a man or two on horseback to keep the people out of their timber. No doubt the nuts were wasted.)

I think there is a time in everyone's life that he sees or hears something which, in later years, he would like to forget. I had that experience. In the late fall I was going to town one night after supper. When I got near the Illinois Central tracks I saw a man with a lantern running toward the depot. When he came to me he called out, "We have just killed a man up near the coal house!" He kept on running and went over to the barber shop. He was the brakeman on the standing freight train. Like a kid, I ran up in the dark and found the man. He was alive, or half-alive! He had been cut in two at the belt line, the lower portion of his body was lying between the rails and the upper portion of his body on the outside of the rail, his head lower than the part near the rail. He was conscious and asked who I was. I asked who he was and he said, "Dick Anglin." He told me he had been across the track to Buck Quick's place to sell the wild game he

had killed that day. Soon a crowd was there. He was carried home, not far away, and to the surprise of everyone, he lived a couple of days and was conscious all the time. He told his family that in crawling over the standing train, that it started up with a jerk, and he fell across the track with the foregoing result. This is one incident in my life that I should like to forget.

In my young life the Fourth of July was the one big day, in my opinion. When there was no celebration in the Doctor Davis Grove, a mile north of Farina, it was the custom of the youngsters to take the ten o'clock passenger train to Edgewood. There we would spend the day 'till the five o'clock southbound was due. We would ride it to Kinmundy and see the fireworks and everything else they had to offer. If we were lucky, we boys would date one of Kinmundy's good-looking girls and we would be entertained 'till the ten o'clock northbound was due. We returned to Farina in good condition and always felt that we had been wonderfully entertained on the day of all days. If we were lucky and the berry-picking had been good, and we had been able to save two or three dollars for the Fourth, we were just 'sitting on top of the world!' In the winter this country was visited with more snows than we see these days. Sleighing in a big sled with the bottom of the wagon bed covered with straw or hay and plenty of blankets for warmth - that was real sport, and especially if we were fortunate enough to manage an upset in a snow bank! We would get out, turn the wagon right side up, and then load up and start again, possibly turning over again before arriving at home. Those were real days for amusement and luckily no one was ever hurt, aside from a frosted ear. We were always dressed for the occasion. Going to LaClede to the "Sanctified Protracted Meetings" was also a sport to us kids those days. The worshippers would get happy, shout, jump over seats - to all of us, a real circus! However we always behaved ourselves and were never called-down for our behavior. Such customs have made changes in the past eighty-five years.

Farina usually had a very good baseball team, playing not only at home, but visiting other towns to play. I remember on one occasion Farina had a game at Altamont. On the return trip home, by horse-drawn vehicle, we broke down about eight miles north of town. We parked in a farm house 'till someone rode a horse to town and had another rig sent out to convey the crowd to town. While we waited in the farm home, the owner entertained us with his fiddle. He did not play the violin, just fiddled. We had a good time waiting, and got home in time to go to bed. With all the cars in operation presently, I doubt if the growing generation would now enjoy such events. Guess my generation had to be easily satisfied! The kids played football quite often, but it was a different game from the way it is played at this time. More kicking was done those days. It would appear that the kicking done these days is against the government and especially against city officials.

As a boy I remember that Mr. and Mrs. Greenman had a contract with a firm in St. Louis whereby white shirts were shipped to them in Farina for completion. This gave work to several Farina ladies as it was all hand work. Just what composed this finishing work I never knew. The shirts were all alike, collarless, with bosoms, and were worn as dress shirts with celluloid collars. I think it was a wholesale firm that gave the Greenmans this contract.

In those days Farina was a strawberry town. Among the big growers I will mention Ed Whitford, Dick Farthing, Dave Walters, Sellie Howell, Johnny Dunham and dozens of growers with lesser acreage. The picking was a big question at that time and many growers depended mostly on the hobo visitors. There were hobos that came to Farina year after year and picked for the same growers. Many of these men were so well acquainted with the merchants that they could get credit at the stores before picking began. In my father's grocery many of them got credit for a week or two in this manner. I do not think he ever lost an account by crediting these

men. Some growers had an extra building where they would live with free rent. Many pickers would come from Clay County, rent a house to live in, or live in a tent. It was no unusual thing for eight or ten cars (freight cars) to be loaded every day. The picking price was two cents per quart. Many pickers could pick a hundred quarts a day. I remember one Sunday that George Taylor picked two hundred quarts, but he never left the patch and had a boy hired to carry the berries to the shed. There was one man who came year after year. He would pick standing, never getting on his knees. During the berry season there was plenty of gambling. The headquarters was on the north edge of town on the Illinois Central right-of-way, under a bunch of maple trees. It was reported that a lot of money changed hands, and a part of it was changed by others than berry pickers. Some folks just like to gamble.

October 31st was a busy day, especially the night, for the kids. The gang that I belonged to did not destroy any property, but did do dozens of pranks. One year we got a man's buggy, dismantled it, carried the parts to the roof of Shaeffer's one-story grain office on Main Street, and on this flat roof, we put the vehicle back together and left it there. Many folks could find their cows or horses, but in another part of town. The old flour mill was where a lot of the livestock was left. Changing buggy wheels was one job that was quite popular. We put the hind wheels in place of the front wheels. But no damage was done to the buggy.

The night of May First was quite a busy time with the kids hanging May baskets. On May First night a bunch of us were out celebrating. At one house where a pretty girl lived, I was hanging a basket my mother had made for the occasion. The door was not completely closed. When I was concentrating on hanging the basket, another kid pushed me and I landed in the middle of the floor of the room where the family was sitting. They had no trouble finding out who was the guilty one who had hung the basket! In those days many men hunted wild game for market. Dunham's Pond was a great place for wild geese and ducks. Hunters were after jack snipe, plover, prairie chicken, rabbits, and other game. The rabbits were snipped in burlap bags. Jack snipe brought big money. They were hard to kill.

I imagine that few people have seen a one-man bank robbery! Three Farina boys, of whom I was one, saw such the year of the first Chicago World's Fair. Our observation of the event was about ten o'clock at night.

Several months before the robbery took place, Farina had a man and wife from New York locate in town. In a short time the man became prominent in business circles and in church work. The couple were Seventh Day Baptists, and he was the Sunday School superintendent, a choir leader, and in general what we used to call a "Big Worker". He opened a private bank in the business district of the town. Apparently he did quite a local business. He was called "Banker Maxson" and that name is not to be confused with the town druggist, Charley Maxon - the names are spelled differently.

During the Chicago Fair, it was well advertised that "Banker Maxson" was to visit the Fair on a certain date. There of us met on the Gant corner every night about 9:45 p.m. We loafed a few minutes, and then walked over to the Illinois Central Depot and met the 10:10 p.m. passenger train. On this particular night, we were on schedule. We saw a man coming towards the downtown from the west. He came to what is now the Western Store corner, crossed over south, turned east and stopped at the bank. He unlocked the door and went inside. In a few minutes he came out and walked to the depot. We followed, since he was "on our schedule" to meet the train. He bought a ticket to Chicago. In a few minutes, the train came in, and he was on the train enroute to Chicago – or some other place as it turned out. The following morning when Mr. Titsworth, his bank clerk, opened the bank, there was no money, except a little small

change. The beloved "Banker Maxson" had taken the contents of his bank and had left for the World Fair. Later that morning several men discussed the matter. They decided that a three-man committee should be sent to Chicago to search for Mr. Maxson. The search was in vain – no "Banker Maxson" was found. He had left his wife in an almost penniless condition. He had a nice new house under construction which was not yet enclosed. Deacon Clark, the lumberyard man, took over the house with a lumberman's men and completed it and occupied it. In a short time, Maxson's mother arrived from New York, paid depositors fifty cents on the dollar as long as her money lasted. Then she returned home accompanied by the banker's wife, who was a very lovely lady and was highly respected by the Farina people. Thus was the story of Banker Maxson's bank. Even back in those days dishonest people could be found without a Search Warrant.

I remember one dry year the city dads bought (or made) a street sprinkler since the dust in the streets was inches thick. One doubting Thomas remarked that it would take four horses to pull that sprinkler in muddy weather.

One evening about dark, a freight train southbound stopped in Farina and three of us kids crawled in an empty box car and were headed for Kinmundy, knowing that the freight would stop there to get water. The trip to Kinmundy was made without any trouble. We loafed in town 'till time for the ten o'clock passenger train north. The train was on time. When it started we jumped on behind the engine tender. The conductor saw us and pulled the bell cord. The train stopped near the coal mine. We were discharged from our perch. When the train started up again, we caught the coaches and entered, with the conductor hot after us. As we went thru the train we saw several Farina folks. The conductor caught us at the rear coach and demanded cash for our ride, since we had no tickets. The far was seventeen cents, but with no ticket it was ten cents extra. One boy told the conductor he had a brother that was a freight train conductor. The conductor told this boy that his brother would be ashamed of his trying to steal a ride.

Those days most all the boys of any size had the "flipping train" habit. One night one boy had bad luck and got a foot under the train's wheel and lost three of his toes. For a few days that put a scare in the boys but it was soon forgotten. (If you notice I wrote "the boys" not "us boys". Before this accident my dad had broke me of the habit of "flipping trains" and had also cured me of the desire to "jump trains". He used a method in habit-breaking of "applied psychology!" I can still remember the method!)

There was one sport that we could look for most every summer. It was the arrival of a carload of wild Texas ponies. The custom was to park them in the Illinois Central stock pen north of the depot. The pen fence was quite high. It had a flat board for the top about four inches wide. That made for a good ring-side seat for the circus which followed. The ponies would be sold at auction, then caught, and haltered and turned over to the purchaser. When they were first caught is when the circus started! These Texas boys knew just how to handle them, and many of the ponies were ridden for the buyer. You can see many pictures of "Bronco busting" but here in the old days one could see the real thing. Many of these ponies turned out to be useful horses and could stand summer heat better than the native horses. A great number of the Texas ponies were used in the Livery Barns. A carload of ponies always meant a "bushel and a peck" of fun for us all. Often we would miss a meal, when we were being entertained with the free circus.

At one time Farina had two hardware stores. Now they have none. At the same time Kinmundy had three, but now it has only one. At that period Kinmundy had two livery barns. Now it doesn't even have a horse and buggy. However it has some fine saddle horses. I owned

and kept a horse and buggy two years after I bought my first car. Now I would prefer the horse and buggy to the car. With the horse you can drive by the filling stations without always needing to be supplied with this much-talked-of energy!

At a certain time in his life, a kid thinks he is pretty smart and often he thinks he is tough. In school, about this period, we had a fine and pleasant young lady as our teacher. My pals and I should have been drowned! We were so unruly that she would cry. She would tell us that she prayed for us the night before. She would beg for order, but no order transpired. She finally resigned and went home near Iola. The school board hired a man from Collinsville by the name of John Galligar. The first morning he appeared he made a brief lecture. He told us that he had been employed to teach our room and that he expected to do it. He said, "If any of you boys think that I am not going to do just that, start something and a decision will be made as to who is going to run this room!" We all decided he meant business and we surrendered! From what I have heard I do not think that boys have greatly improved in past years as to school rooms and their order.

There was one man in town that I hated. I was "flipping trains" and this fellow went to the store and gave the news to dad. The guy caused me to get one of the "super-tannings" of my life! He is now dead, but I despised him 'till his departure and did not shed a tear after him! In my manhood years he tried to be good to me and wanted to talk to me on occasion, but I would walk away and leave him. Guess one should not hold a grudge, but it is often hard to get rid of one, and for me, that was one time. In my school days I have always liked my teachers and respected them, save the aforementioned lady. I liked her but could not resist taking advantage of her.

On lady teacher I had, (among the first) who took me home with her one night with the consent of my parents. She lived a couple of miles in the country. There were no boys in her family, but four or five girls. I played with the girls after supper for some time. When bed time came I was put in bed with a couple of girls my age, with me in the middle. At that time I was not of the watermelon-swiping-age! In later years I was in classes in school with the younger girl. I never did have the nerve to mention my visit to their country home when her sister was the teacher.

I recall that one term when I was in an upper grade, the principal was a Kinmundy lady by the name of Sadie Schermerhorn. She was only there one year. On the last day of school the teachers would always give us a treat. Guess they were so glad to get away from the bunch that they thought a treat was due. The treat should have been the other way, but the kids most always gave the teacher something before singing, "God Be With You Till We Meet Again." Really, I used to sing in school, but out of school my voice failed or something else happened. Parties those days were quite numerous and "playing postoffice" was popular. At school we used to play, "Drop the Handkerchief", but I did not enjoy that so much since I was too timid to kiss the girls. In "playing postoffice" the audience was not so large.

When I finally got into High School a lot of that foolishness had to stop. It was a three-year course and I always made passing grades, but often had some work on the night shift. My three high school teachers were Professor Abbott, Professor Miller, and Professor Golden. All were fine teachers and were given the respect they deserved. Sometimes some student would get out of line and had to be punished. I well remember one day the teacher punished a boy by making him sit on the floor and he then tied him around the neck to a leg of the teacher's desk. The next morning the boy's Irish mother was a visitor at school and there was a lot of conversation wasted! The lady finally left after saying her say. I think the teacher was glad to

see her leave. In high school we had singing every morning and Miss Clara Green usually led the singing. Those days at school we would also have ciphering matches, spelling bees and oral arithmetic. Believe it or not I still have a prize that I won in spelling while in the grades. No prize could be won these days even if the words were taken from the grades!

Miss Mattie Carlyle was one of my teachers at that time. We all had a copy book since penmanship was on the study list. In that department I never won any gold medals. I finally got to where I could write my name and it was readable. In high school we would have debates and some of them would get quite warm, but never was any blood shed. The ciphering matches were always on the blackboard. In the spelling matches there would be two sides. The contest involved a "spell down" when the one who missed a word would sit down. The contest continued until only one pupil would be left, and that side was the winner. It was a lot of fun and we kids all enjoyed these contests and I believe they were good for us.

At recess time our favorite game was baseball. It might be "dare base" in summer and warm weather. In winter, after a snow, it was "fox and geese". At that time in my life, a big snow was a welcome visitor. Now at ninety-nine years it is a nuisance.

After my school days, as I have previously said, I made a deal with Mr. C.R. Davis and joined forces with the FARINA NEWS. I think that was 1894. During this time the NEWS and THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS were fighting with printer's ink. The mean things that were said about the people and towns, respectively, I should hesitate to put in words. Dick Lawson was the EXPRESS editor. Both editors were Republican so their mudslinging never involved party politics. However, nearly every other subject was touched. THE EXPRESS was "gunning" for a Farina citizen, a Mr. D.T. Shaeffer, the grain and hay dealer. I remember that Lawson said of Shaeffer that "There is a man in Farina by the name of 'Thin' Shaeffer who is about as thin as a wafer. But when Kinmundy struck coal he crawled into his hole and that was the last of 'Thin' Shaeffer." The reply was in the FARINA NEWS in the July 4th issue. Shaeffer had a wagon in the parade which had sideboards higher than a man's head. It was loaded with corn, and painted on its side was, "Farina's coal mine, six foot vein, and no water in the hole!" The wagon was pulled by a fine four-horse team. THE NEWS gave full coverage to this parade entry.

The newspaper fight between Kinmundy and Farina lasted until I got ownership of the KINMUNDY EXPRESS in 1898 and my brother bought the FARINA NEWS. Immediately we put an end to the two-town controversy. At one time it was even unsafe for young people of one town to visit the neighboring town. On many occasions a visiting horse-drawn rig from the other town was peppered with brick bats. This happened in both towns. The papers even stirred up the older people so that they hated each other. Now conditions are different and the two towns respect each other and are happy in this mutual respect – as it should be. The Grissom boys deserve a vote of thanks for calming the angry people.

As I look over what I have written, I find that I am about to write myself out of Farina and into Kinmundy but I am not yet ready to go. It is going to be a task to leave the old home town and the pretty girls. In speaking of girls there was one with whom I had never had a date. I admit that one was wanted, but my shyness never allowed me to ask for one. But during the political campaign of 1896 I got a golden opportunity to speak to her about attending a political debate in LaClede. It was on a Saturday, soon after dinner. Guess just having had my dinner gave me the strength to say what I had been wanting to say. Our Farina home was about three blocks east of the Illinois Central crossing, north of the depot. Between our house and town lived the M.A. Glick family. It so happened on this Saturday that Miss Jennie Bascom was spending the day with the Glick family. On my return to work after dinner, Jennie happened to

be walking around the yard, possibly looking for four leaf clover, but not for me. I passed close by the fence, quite near her, I spoke to her and stopped. My nerve got into action, and I told her about the political debate that night in LaClede and asked her if she would like to go. She hesitated, and probably looked me over, but then she said that she would like to go. My father kept a horse at that time, and I got permission to use the horse and buggy after I got home from work that night. I knocked the mud off the wheels as good as I could. I brushed out the interior and brushed "Bill" our family buggy horse. It would be Bill's first time to attend a political debate, and also the first time for the occupants of the buggy. After getting the rig ready for service, I got myself ready. I dressed in my best after shaving and bathing. I wanted to smell good, so I swiped a dash of my mother's perfume.

Jennie and I started to the debate in good time. We found good seats (one seat) on arrival at the school house. While we waited for the program to begin we used the time to get better acquainted. I lost a small percentage of my shyness. We listened to the debate between a Mr. Zinn, of Farina, and a Mr. Sprouse, of LaClede. I can't tell you the result as I was doing some debating in my own mind, but it was not of a political nature. On the way home Bill was in no hurry and the two of us had ample time to talk and deepen our acquaintance. In fast we got along so well that I got a date for the following Sunday night. That date was a date to go to church, as her father was a Methodist minister. As he saw it, the children should be in church on Sunday evening as well as on Sunday morning. My taking Jennie to church caused some of the good sisters to crane their necks. I do not remember much of the sermon as we spent most of the time reading song titles in the song book on the seat. We continued to date 'till January 19th, 1899 when we were married. After that date we had just one date, a pleasant and happy one, lasting 'till February 2nd, 1940 when she passed away after a lingering illness with the dread disease, 'Cancer'.

After our marriage on Thursday evening, we spent two days in St. Louis with another couple, the other bride being a Farina girl by the name of Della Leatherman. She was married to William Grubb, of Kentucky. After our visit with them, for the two days in St. Louis, we never saw them again. During Jennie's illness, she was in the hospital in Lexington, Kentucky, for surgery. The surgeon was Dr. Fred Rankin, a son-in-law of Dr. Mayo, of Rochester, Minnesota. Dr. Rankin was connected with the Mayo Clinic for ten years before locating in Lexington. In the Lexington Hospital she had surgery five times. During those weeks and months I made thirty trips on weekends to visit her.

When Jennie and I first came to Kinmundy we lived in Squier's Hotel 'till April first when we accumulated a wheelbarrow load of household goods. We left the hotel and commenced housekeeping over what was for many years, the Mahan and Motch Grocery. At that time the first floor was occupied by the Wall and Herrick Store and was operated by Mrs. Allie Herrick. On Monday evening, after we arrived on Monday morning, the Kinmundy Brass Band gave us a musical welcome which we appreciated very much. In recalling some of the band members I call to mind George and Roy Snelling, W.W. Neil, Charles Fenster, the Vallow brothers, and I am sorry that I cannot remember more of the two dozen or more. At that time Kinmundy had a fine band and it was called on for many out-of-town occasions. When we were living over the Wall and Herrick Store, our neighbors on the north were the George Fenster family who had a restaurant on the first floor. On the south lived Mr. and Mrs. Will Reynolds and the first floor was occupied by Uncle Sam and his stamp business. It was a short time 'till Jennie was a member of the Methodist choir. She remained a member so long as her health permitted. It is estimated that she sang for over five hundred funerals during her singing days.

And she never received one cent in pay for her service. She was always glad to assist whether or not she knew the departed. On one occasion I remember J.H. Nelms, the undertaker, called and asked her to assist in a funeral that afternoon to be held in the deceased's home. J.H. cautioned her when there not to sit in a chair, not to lean against the wall, since the house was infested with bed bugs.

That evening when I came home from work, I was not met in the usual way, and Jennie was not in sight. Upon investigation I found her in the bath tub (with no water) with her wearing apparel in her lap. She was going over every seam looking for any 'live stock" she might have collected at that funeral. She was lucky and found none, much to her pleasure. Her father, the Reverend S.B. Bascom, preached hundreds of funerals from Bluff City to Union church in Meacham township without ever receiving a penny. I personally know when he was living on a farm six miles south of Kinmundy and the roads were almost impassable, he was called to preach a funeral at Four Mile Prairie, near Vandalia, and it took him three days to make the trip, during which he had to pay for his meals and lodging. I guess one could call that "Free Enterprise". Those times have changed with our progress.

Mrs. Allie Porter Dennis, who became a good friend of Jennie, was employed in the M.A. Songer Dry Goods Store, in the millinery department. She got Jennie a job with Miss Songer, also in the millinery department. The pay was one dollar a day for ten hours a day. She was taught to trim hats. On some occasions Miss Songer had Jennie go with her to St. Louis to buy millinery supplies. Her work with Miss Songer was pleasant and she enjoyed it. Many things happened that caused a good laugh between the three ladies. Miss Mollie was always good to help. Charles Rohrbough worked for her for many years before going into business for himself.

While I was keeping company with Jennie, there was one subject on which we could not agree after we had decided that we wanted to have a partnership for life. The subject was discussed many times in several months before a decision was made. Jennie insisted that I should get the permission of her father for us to marry. She said that without his permission there would be no wedding. One beautiful Sunday afternoon I was at her home. About five o'clock her father started toward town for a committee meeting at the church before the hour of service. As he left, Jennie said, "Now! Now is the time to ask Father. Catch up with him, and while you two are alone, you can ask him!"

Obediently, and like a good boy, I hurried after her father and said, "Mr. Bascom, what do you think about Jennie and me getting married?" He said, "What!" I repeated my question. In replying he asked, "What does her ma say?" I told him that she seemed to be favorable. Then he said, "If it is all right with her it is all right with me."

I can assure you that that was a load off my mind! Getting the favorable reply was good news which I hastened to share with Jennie. I'm sure that she knew all the time that's the answer I would get.

When Edward W. Doolen was supervisor of Kinmundy township, he appointed me to the Grand Jury. Since I had never had any experience of that kind, it frightened me. Upon convening the jury, C.H. Holt, County Judge, appointed me foreman of the jury and that added a hundred percent more fright. However after we jurymen became acquainted the fright began to disappear and we got along fine and completed the work in much less time than the former juries. I lost the friendship of one man in the serving. One day in the presence of some men, I remarked that I had never served on a jury, and that I did not make the remark fishing for the job. Ed Doolen was in the crowd, and decided that he would give me a surprise. He sure did!

In attending three funerals of my friends I met with the same experience three times. Dr.

Bryan, of Xenia, was accidentally killed while riding a bus to a meeting in Wisconsin. I attended his funeral in Xenia. After the funeral I was approached by his daughter who remarked to me, "Mr. Grissom, you have lost one of your best friends." A few months later Al Kelley, of Iuka, passed away. After the funeral Florence, his wife, said to me, "Fred, you have lost one of your best friends." This same year Edward W. Doolen, of Kinmundy, passed away, and following the funeral, Mrs. Doolen, the wife, said to me, "Mr. Grissom, you have lost one of your best friends." I feel that this is a rather unusual coincidence and one which will not be forgotten.

In the month of March, when I was on crutches and trying to recover in my Texas winter home, I received three long distance calls from Kinmundy soliciting me to become a candidate for Mayor in the coming April city election. Considering the matter I decided to comply. It was with the understanding that the preliminary work should be done before I returned home. Getting home the latter end of March I found all arrangements had been completed and I was running for Mayor of the City of Kinmundy. In the campaign I asked no one to vote for me, and I received every vote but two. I decided it was best not to campaign and thus I made no promises. At the end of the four-year term the same men insisted that I try it again, and being somewhat weak in some respects, I accepted. On this second try I received all of the votes but thirty-five. I had, in my first term, displeased some of the voters. I found that if an elected officer does his duty he is sure to displease some people.

I served the people in the eight years to the best of my ability and one can do no more. I appreciated the six aldermen and they were, on all occasions, loyal to the Mayor.

When I located in Kinmundy, and bought THE EXPRESS, some of the older men in business seemed to take me under their wings and helped me in every way. I will just mention a few: Captain Rohrbough, Mayor L.C. Matthews, John W. Wilson, L.R. Davis, J.P. Whitson, J.W. Tull, Jacob Nelson, A.M. Allen and others. THE EXPRESS burned twice during my ownership and still survived. After the second fire, Mr. Matthews came to me and said, "We are going to raise some money for you and help you get back in business." I told him, with my thanks, I appreciated their good intentions but did not want them to do it. I told him I would get back in business and that all I wanted was their business and good will. During my ownership of THE EXPRESS I attended most of the City Council meetings and after the meetings on Monday night, the minutes were published in THE EXPRESS on Thursday without expense to the City. Many local papers are doing the same thing today. I was about the first one to advocate electric lights in the city and the Council got interested in the matter. They visited three or four neighboring towns that had recently installed the electric systems. On every visit the councilmen invited THE EXPRESS to be one of the crowd and the invitation was accepted on every visit. I remember one trip was made to Newton and we were gone two days. I considered it an honor to be invited to go with the men that had charge of the city. Finally electric lights were installed and since the installation have been greatly improved. Improvements can still be made.

In those days Kinmundy had two (and part of the time, three) saloons and was in debt a great portion of the time. The streets inherited many drunks and the cop stopped many fights. Finally the township voted "dry" and still remains "dry". Before we could have saloons now, a special election would have to be held. If held today, the present condition would not be changed.

Back at the time when the saloons were in operation, the streets were almost impossible in winter. When I first came to Kinmundy, we had five medical doctors and one dentist. The doctors charged a dollar for an office call. All of them had horses and buggies which they used for the country practice. The charge for country trips depended upon the distance. None of the

doctors were "on relief" and a couple or three had plenty of money when they retired. Kinmundy afforded a bank, owned by Harvey Gray, a farmer, and Mr. T.W. Haymond. One Thomas Bagott was the bookkeeper. Tom wore box-toed boots all the time and one could hear him coming for two blocks. Kinmundy then had three blacksmiths, and they were busy most of the time. It was not unusual for THE EXPRESS to carry two full page advertisements and often three full page advertisements. This was all hand work, as we had no type-setting machine. I assure you that it required some night work by the boss. After graduating from school, Pearl Sexton joined THE EXPRESS and remained sixteen years 'till she and Hube Fisher decided to join hands. Miss Evelyn Killie was the supply help, and did not want full-time work because of her health. The paper was printed on a Washington hand press 'till after the first fire, and then on a small cylinder press. The job press was run by foot pedal. That was good leg exercise. In 1914 I was appointed postmaster and keeping two places was too much for me. The paper was sold to Gus A. Spitze, the high school superintendent. Sorry to say that he died owing me seven hundred dollars with interest. Possibly he will settle the debt when we meet again. As the postmaster, I was under the impression that the government wanted the postmaster to give the patrons service. With that in mind, I got up and met the five a.m. train and wheeled the mail over before the hour for the messenger. At seven o'clock I had the window opened before the arrival of the clerk. The salary at that time was $1500 a year and the clerk got $50 per month. The closing hour was 7:30 p.m. and on Sunday the window was open 'till nine a.m. On Sunday night a mail had to be made up and taken to the depot for the ten o'clock train. I did that myself as I had no regular hour for getting it ready. The job at that time was one hundred percent political. After serving nine years, George Bargh bumped me under a new Republican administration. After ten years, I bumped him under a new Democratic administration. During this term the office was put under civil service and I passed the examination and was re-appointed. When I retired from the office at the age of seventy-two I had two more civil service years due me, but I guess I got lazy for I was tired of the job. I wanted to fish, but up to date I have not been fishing. Too busy, I guess. I want to say, now, that Kinmundy people have always been good to me and I have tried to be an asset rather than a liability to the city. It has always been my method to be on the improvement side and likewise to be against what I considered a detriment to the town. In the building of the Kinmundy-Louisville road I feel that I played a leading part in that improvement. In service the city as Mayor for eight years I am willing to admit that I did some things that were good for Kinmundy. In the purchase of the Illinois Central Lake I tried to be of help in making the deal. In the installation of the sewage system, the Bond Company was determined to have obligation bonds and place a debt on our people that could cause them a hardship. I told the Bonding Company that it has Revenue bonds or no bonds and for them to take it or leave it. Revenue bonds were accepted after a few months. Now if the revenue will not retire the bonds the real estate cannot be held for the debt. After the death of my wife on February 2, 1940, I kept my home and had my meals at different places. The last was at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Buz. Arnold. The eating there was a pleasure after eating at a restaurant. The Arnolds were certainly fine folks and made one feel at home. The oil boom was on here at that time and the Carter Oil Company had Alonzo Church of Oklahoma City, as their attorney located here. Lonnie was a fine fellow and roomed with me. We got our own breakfast but ate out for dinner and supper.

After a few months the Carter folks had leased about forty-five thousand acres for oil and minerals and the boss, Alfred Thompson, moved to Mattoon. Mr. Church remained in Kinmundy and opened a law office. Everything went well for a time 'till he was offered a

partnership with an aged lawyer in Mattoon and he moved there. He is still there enjoying a good practice and he has now taken a young man as a partner.

In the late summer of 1940, Miss Lillian Parrill, of Denton, Texas, came to Farina for a visit. She had charge of the vocal music department of North Texas State Teachers College (now North Texas State University), in Denton. Upon her return to begin the fall and winter term at the college we got to exchanging ideas on paper. Lillian was preparing to retire the coming July after twenty-five years on the job. In our correspondence things were becoming a little serious and thoughts were quite plentiful that she might locate in Kinmundy after retirement. In July 1941 she retired and we were married on July 17th in the Episcopal Church in Denton. The church was not crowded with invited friends, as her sister, Mrs. Jane Holht, Mary Anderson, and the minister, were the audience. Of course I was there. We did our courtship by mail and I considered her my "mail order" wife. In the eighteen months I was single I visited her once in Denton for the day. I told the post office folks I was going down in the Missouri Ozarks for a few days. In Denton her sister and Mary Anderson, only, knew of the plans. After the ceremony Mary told the college president what had happened. He had the surprise of his life! Out to the car he came and many other teachers following. Her marriage was a big surprise to all the Denton folks.

On our arriving in Kinmundy three days after the wedding, there was another big surprise to the citizens. Before my first wife passed away she told me many times she wanted me to marry again, but to wait a year and not to marry two women whom she had mentioned. Following her request I waited eighteen months and admit that I made an excellent choice. Lillian had always been active in public affairs and continued to be so after coming to Kinmundy. Her thirty-one years here were spent for the good of the city and especially for the good of the young people. She loved young folks and had spent her life working with them. She and Mrs. Dick Broom were loafing in my hardware store one Saturday night and decided they would start a project and organize a Woman's Club. That they did, with the help of others and the Club is still in existence and doing good to the community.

Lillian also organized a kid choir composed of children, thirty in number, aged eight to twelve. In Lillian's training of her Kid Choir, she usually had an interesting incident to tell about when she came home from rehearsal. There were always some boyish pranks surfacing to stir the calm waters! There was one boy who always had a pocketful of nails, screws, bolts or anything else that would make a racket. Lillian almost acquired enough hardware from this boy's pockets to start a hardware store. He is now one of the faculty members in Southern Illinois University, and Kinmundy people are justly proud of his accomplishments. On another day one boy was absent. Lillian knew he was there, for she had seen him. She inquired from another boy about his whereabouts and she was informed that he was sitting out on the sunny side of the Gym reading the "Upper Room" magazine that he had found. She sent out a select committee to bring him to practice. On another practice occasion, one boy was absent and she asked about him. Another boy told her that he was out in the sun drying out his pants. Another boy told her that they were down in the basement restroom and that David had "pee'd on him, but not on purpose, but that he had pee'd crooked!" So in the kid choir experience there was never a dull moment. Now some of those children are grandparents. They all still remember their music teacher and still love her. Many of them, when in Kinmundy, still call on me since Lillian's passing. I always enjoy them and feel honored that they come.

After Lillian came to live with me in Kinmundy in July, 1941, she gave a few vocal lessons. Especially, she had one twelve-year-old, Barbara, now Mrs. James Alexander. Barbara

developed into a grand vocalist and now uses her voice in church and clubs. Lillian always considered Barbara "her" girl and was proud of her singing. One other of her students who has made a wonderful record as a vocalist was Mrs. Linda Edwards, wife of the Reverend Robert Edwards, the Methodist minister. When she took Mrs. Edwards as a student, Linda was trying to sing alto. Lillian immediately put her to singing soprano and she is now considered one of the best sopranos, to be classed as a "professional" in ability. Lillian was always proud of the job she did with those two ladies. She always talked of giving me lessons, but decided that her life was entirely too short to start the job. In her not doing so it was decided that no musical talent has been sacrificed! I always agreed with that estimate one hundred percent!

Lillian's choir of children have programs at many of the neighboring towns – Centralia, Salem, Louisville, Farina, Olney, Altamont, Flora, and possibly others. This choir of children was invited to furnish the music for the Women's Club State Convention in Chicago. Arrangements were made with the Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroad to put on an extra coach on their early morning train to Chicago. With the assistance of many of the mothers, the choir went to Chicago and put on their program. The CHICAGO TRIBUNE, the CHICAGO DAILY NEWS, and other papers sure gave them a wonderful write-up. The children were asked to take a lunch for the noon meal before they reached Chicago, but most of them had their lunch eaten before they got to St. Elmo! In Chicago, they were met at the depot by a bus and were taken through the city to the Convention Hall singing and attracting the attention of hundreds and being loudly applauded enroute. Lillie told me that the bus driver sang with the kids and was enjoying the change of passengers. Now many of these children are fathers and mothers and possibly some are grandparents. Lillian certainly loved her kid choir and I think her enjoyment lengthened her life. Upon arrival in Kinmundy she was soon united with the Methodist Church and Choir where she supplied several special numbers for the services. Mrs. Robert Edwards, wife of the minister, and the (now) Mrs. James Alexander, were her two "star" pupils for vocal lessons. She was proud of them both in their singing.

During Lillian's membership in the Womans Club she (with some assistance) bought and gave to the Club one hundred ten dogwood trees which the club sold for $1.00 each (white) and ten pink ones which they sold for $1.50. Many of them still live and bloom in our town. During the one Hundredth Birthday of Kinmundy Lillian served on several committees and for the Sunday Church Program was the chairman and arranged the program. She failed in health for several months and passed away June 10, 1973, at 11:45 p.m. at our home. In nine days after her passing she would have been ninety-seven years of age. The funeral service was held in the Methodist Church, Rev. Robert Edwards conducting the service, assisted by the Rev. Leo Mabry. Mrs. Edwards sang a solo for the service. The interment was in Evergreen Cemetery.

Since the passing of Lillian I have continued to live in the homestead. Mrs. Jessie Sharban is my housekeeper, and July first, of next year, it will be six years that she had assisted the Grissoms. She lives at her home, coming about eight-thirty in the morning and going home around two o'clock in the afternoon. Often she comes a few minutes late as "Old Blue", her aged auto, wants to take a vacation. But to date, we have had no 'scraps'. She is wonderful to Yours Truly. "Threatens" me sometimes.

Since Lillian's passing I have had what I call a very lonely life in some respects. I have a lot of company, have many correspondents, and have many phone calls. I also have some very good neighbors. People are good to me, possibly better than I deserve. In fact, Kinmundy folks have always been good to me and to mine. In living with Kinmundy folks I have endeavored to deserve their friendship and respect. I harbor no ill will against any soul living and wish all good

health and much happiness. Kinmundy is a good town. Let's keep it that way.

Lillian and Yours Truly were married at 10 a.m. (on July 17th, 1941 as previously mentioned) and soon after the ceremony motored to Dallas where we were given a wedding dinner by a cousin of Mary Anderson. Miss Anderson and Mrs. Hohlt were also dinner guests. Soon after the dinner we departed, enroute to Kinmundy, while the two ladies previously mentioned returned to Denton. After spending a couple of days touring the Ozarks, we arrived in Kinmundy and were prepared to give my friends and neighbors a surprise. It really was a surprise when I arrived with my bride. After a few days of adjustment, and getting used to the big brick house, Lillian unpacked her wearing apparel, shook out the wrinkles from being in suitcases and spread it all out on beds, chairs, etc., in an upstairs bedroom. Within a few days one of the summer thunderstorms occurred, with an abundance of lightning – and April storm running late into July. The south chimney was struck by lightning and the chimney "stop" was knocked out in the room. Lillian's attire was covered with black soot – really the dresses and other things were completely covered. The rug on the floor was so completely covered that the Insurance Adjuster (on the job soon after) said that the rug cleaning would cost more than the worth of the rug, consequently he paid for the rug. In the adjustment in paying for the cleaning of her wearing apparel, the Adjuster allowed Lillian fifteen dollars. That amount was none to high after the cleaning bill was paid. Lillian did not think much of her "natural" reception to Kinmundy, but after the ordeal was over she could laugh about it. Our marriage was July seventeenth, and the annual Parrill Reunion was on the second Sunday in August. On this occasion the Reunion was held at Union Church in Meacham township. In making the trip we used both cars. (Lillian had brought her Pontiac from Denton.) She took the two Parrill sisters in her car, the Misses Eva and Ella Parrill. In my car I took my parents from Farina. Upon the arrival of the new bride and groom we were given a very acceptable reception and Uncle Andy Parrill made the remark that he could not see that our marriage had done anything for the Parrill family. (Both Lillian and I were members of the Parrill family, being cousins.) After the dinner hour we had a big rain. The mud roads were slick, the ditches were full of water, and before Lillian had got very far from the church her car slipped in the ditch and she had had to have help in getting out. The car had been accustomed to the Texas waterfall which just happened there on holidays and the Governor's birthday! However we all got home after the big Reunion Dinner and the enjoyable visit with a large crowd of relatives. I recall that the Parrill Reunion was a big day in my mother's life. For myself, I usually attended to please her. I would have enjoyed fishing more. These reunions are still being held but the attendance has dwindled – folks are too busy. This reunion in former years would have seventy-five or more in attendance, out of late, there are often less than thirty. The older ones are about all gone, and the younger generation has other attractions.

The present Kinmundy-Alma High School building was built by the good judgment and management of one Edwin Wormley, who was the Secretary of the Kinmundy School Board. For several years, in making up the tax program for the school he inserted a building fund item. No building was being done, but after several years of operation of this building fund the district had almost enough funds at interest to erect the present building. With the Wormley operation the district got a new high school building with very little additional tax levy. Even though I had no children to educate, I took pride in giving my little assistance to the forming of the present school district. One opposing citizen threatened me, saying that he was going to report me to the Post Office Department as I was postmaster at the time. If he carried out his threat I never heard about it and did not lose my job. As I have said before in this historical article, I always wanted

to be on the improvement side of any question. At this time our school system is the pride of all.

In reading the foregoing historical sketch it would be easy to imagine that the writer spent the majority of his life in Farina. That was not the case. About seventeen years were spent in Farina, five (the first five) in Meacham township, and the remaining seventy-seven have been spent in the city of Kinmundy. In my coming to Kinmundy in 1898 and purchasing THE EXPRESS from the owners, Sapp and Wooley, the paper has made many changes in operation. Sapp and Wooley had THE EXPRESS solely for advertising purposes, and were also the Land and Immigration Agents for this territory for the Frisco Railroad Company with headquarters in St. Louis. The railroad company was interested in getting farmers to migrate to the Southwest and buy land. A great amount of this land belonged to the railroad company as it was customary for the United States government to give land grants to get the railroads to build lines in the underdeveloped territories. In the year 1905 the Frisco ran a special train from St. Louis to the Southwest, especially for their various land agents. The agents were permitted to invite their newspaper men as guests on the trip. Well, Sapp and Wooley invited me and I accepted. Mr. Wooley made the trip also. The special train was made-up entirely of Pullman cars. We occupied these cars for nine days and nights. The trip was free, and we were charged only one dollar a day for the Pullman service. The train had nearly two hundred aboard.

In a majority of the stops we made, the entire crowd was entertained and fed by the city's Chamber of Commerce. I remember that at Vinita, Indian Territory, we were given a wild game dinner. On this occasion we were supposed to pay, but when I stopped at the cashier's window the lady said, "Mr. Grissom, there is no charge for you." She told me that a Mr. Thomas Steen, the traveling representative for the Fred Harvey houses on the Frisco, had looked over the register and had found the names of Wooley and Grissom and had marked their bill "Paid". Mr. Steen was a former Marion County boy. His father at one time held a county office. He had a sister, Mrs. Mattie Killie, residing in Kinmundy. Mr. Steen was riding the train but we did not see him.

At night our train was put on a siding and remained there 'till morning when we would leave for a stop in the next town. The stops and meals were prearranged before we left St. Louis. It would be impossible for me to name all the stops. I do recall that Brady, Texas, was one where arrangements had been made for a Badger fight. Dr. Rice of Vandalia, was chosen to "pull" the badger. (At that time Brady was the end of the Frisco Railroad and the car shops were there.)

When we arrived in Houston, Texas, we spent the night. Some of the fellows from Casey who were on the trip decided to have a good time, left the train and went to town. About five o'clock the next morning the Frisco Railroad vice-president came to our car and called for Judge Connelley of Casey and Fred Grissom of Kinmundy. He ordered us to meet him on the platform outside on the front of our car. We dressed in a hurry and met the vice-president. He told us that one of the Casey boys had been arrested and was in jail. He had a taxi waiting, and had made arrangements with the mayor of Houston to receive us at his home. On arriving at the mayor's home, he told us that the young "sprout" from Casey had committed a "penitentiary act" with a negro at the point of a gun. At first the mayor said he could do nothing about it, and that the boy would be compelled to stand trial. My friend from Casey, being an attorney, convinced the mayor that the lad should be let off, since we would be out of town in three hours when our train left at eight o'clock a.m. The Judge insisted that the mayor accept a cash fine and turn the boy loose. The Mayor agreed and assessed a fine at two hundred dollars. We thanked him and returned to the train where we made our report to the Frisco vice-president. He gave the word to

the Casey crowd and the two hundred was raised among them and in about a half-hour the boy was returned in the "cage-wagon". The remainder of the trip the culprit was very docile!

Our train went from Houston to Galveston. At this city they had suffered a tornado a few years before and the Galveston Sea Wall was under construction. It was quite a sight to see this project and to see the sand from the Gulf of Mexico being pumped in behind the wall to raise the level of the buildings. Here we were put on a big barge and were pulled by a tug out into the Gulf where we spent a couple of hours riding in the salt water. It was a pleasant voyage even if one did have to stand.

From Galveston we went into Arkansas and visited several towns, Rogers among them. At that town the Welch Grape Juice folks had purchased a large amount of land and was planting it to grapes. I am told that the grapejuice industry has made Rogers into quite a large town. At one town in Arkansas we were shown the mineral exhibit which the state had displayed at the Chicago World's Fair a few years before. It is claimed that Arkansas has the largest number of different minerals than any state in the union. At one place we visited a saw mill and saw them sawing rock that was an imitation of onyx. It was being sawed under water. The imitation is hard to distinguish from the real article. While there I filled a pocket with some of the broken pieces on the ground. This was a wonderful trip for this country boy and I have always had a good feeling for the Frisco Railroad.

In those days the Songer Flour Mill was a going institution and employed several people. Mr. George White was the miller, Frank Hadden was the engineer, McKinley Pruett was the driver of the delivery wagon. Many German farmers of the (at that time) St. Paul neighborhood marketed their wheat at the Songer Mill. Leslie deWerff of Farina informs me that as a small his father had him haul wheat to this mill. It was an enterprise that caused many folks to trade in Kinmundy who would have gone elsewhere. The Songer mill family were good friends of the two Kinmundy Grissoms and continued so for many years. In my publishing THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS it kept an independent political position, and accepted advertising from both political parties. All liquor advertisements were refused. At that time Captain Rohrbough was State Secretary of the Royal Templars, an insurance organization in Chicago. He turned all the company job printing to me. That work sure helped to buy the bacon. Mr. Rohrbough was one of my good friends and was the cause of my getting a nice amount of business, especially when he was president of the First National Bank and secretary of the Kinmundy Building and Loan Association, which institution he was responsible for founding. He was a good old gentleman and was a Kinmundy booster. Right now, today, we could use a half dozen like he was at that time.

In those early days of Kinmundy had five doctors, two drug stores, two millinery stores, two good restaurants, a bakery, plenty of dry goods and grocery stores, two livery barns, two hotels, a brick yard, a coal mine, a saw mill, a dentist, a grain and hay dealer, two blacksmith shops, two railroads, two section gangs, three men employed at the Tower (where the Illinois Central and Chicago and Eastern Illinois Railroads cross), one night man at the Illinois Central Railroads cross), one night man at the Illinois Central depot, an opera house, a photographer, two men tailors, a big jewelry store, three hardware stores, several town pumps with tin cups attached and plenty of dogs to keep the pumps primed! In fact it was a good town with THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS to boost it. Many years we would have quite a big circus and we always had a big Fourth of July celebration and often we had a balloon ascension. We had wooden sidewalks, and dirt streets, but no one ever passed away from eating dust. In the Chicago and Eastern Railroad's moving their shops from St. Elmo to Salem, St. Elmo was left "

a dead duck!" In the course of events I bought the ST. ELMO BANNER, the only newspaper and put my brother, Earl, there to operate it. I would go to St. Elmo every Thursday after getting out THE EXPRESS on Wednesday afternoon, and help Earl with THE BANNER. I always took a couple of columns of "junk" from THE EXPRESS and would use it in THE BANNER. After I had made this trip several weeks the railroad conductor on one trip sat down with me and asked my business and why I rode with him every Thursday going and coming. (He had a turn-around at Villa Grove.) He said, "Why do you buy a ticket? Don't you know the conductor has to live?" I didn't take his suggestion for riding for less than the ticket cost, but instead, paying him a cash amount directly, thus cheating the railroad. I kept buying tickets and never did find out whether or not this conductor kept on living. I imagine that he has died by this time!

I finally sold THE BANNER at a little profit and helped my brother in another line of business. The coal mine at that time was employing seventy-five men. Coal sold at $2.50 a ton delivered. The Illinois Central Railroad took most on it. They used it in their passenger train engines and claimed it as the best steam coal in Illinois.

At age 72 I retired from the postoffice. I really wanted to buy another newspaper, but failed to do so. I had made three trips to an Indiana town and had really made a deal, but no money had changed hands. The Indiana owner with whom I was negotiating, was a state Senator by the name of Griffin. His son-in-law, Heavenridge, was editor of the Republican paper and Mr. Griffin had the idea that we two could control the county printing. We came home, Jennie and I, and sold our home to Mr. and Mrs. Maulding. In the shuffle, Jennie fell and broke an arm. The next morning I received a message that Mr. Griffin was found dead in bed. His "old-maid" daughter informed me that the paper was not for sale. There they were – home sold, paper deal canceled, and with a broken arm!

We moved into what is now the Clarenoe Alderson house for the winter. Later we bought the Walter Pruett home, now owned by Arno Miller. The hardware store was for sale by a Mr. Evans, and I made a deal with him and engaged in the hardware business. In the course of time I had a store that was a credit to the town and was a very good business. I sold fifty-six heating stoves and ranges the first year. I also had a deal with the county highway commissioner to sell him all the needed dynamite. After living in the Pruett property I traded it for the brick Rohrbough property where I still live. I believe this trade was about 1926.

When I was in the hardware store the First National Bank installed a burglar alarm. Frank Rogers was bookkeeper and C.R. Alderson was cashier at that time. In his work one day Frank accidentally stepped on the alarm trigger under the counter and the alarm sounded. I was in the store alone and rushed to the front door to see what I could. As I looked up and down the street, every door had from one to two heads sticking out. I went back, got a shot gun and two shells, ran to the back door and fired two shots. Then I hurried to the front door and looked out. There was not a head to been seen! Many folks "went to their reward" without knowing the origin of those two shots. From that time, Frank was more careful about his feet.

While I was in the hardware store, a few of us "boys" had a club house over on the Okaw River. In the fishing season it was a busy place. The key to the house was left in my store. One day, a Tuesday, Charles and Walter Pruett, Lloyd Hammer, and Reverend Martin, of the Methodist Church, got the key and said they would return on Friday evening. I told them that our gang was going over Saturday night after closing hours. Saturday morning Walter returned the key. In a short time Reverend Martin came in the store and asked me if I would look on a big stump south of the club house, when I got over there, and see if I could find his knife which he left there when he cleaned fish. The first thing Sunday morning I looked on the stump and there

was the knife. Our bunch on that occasion was Fred Nirider, George Elder, Earl Huggins, Marion Bascom and myself. Fred Nirider always had to have his Limberger cheese on the camping trips. The minister was a jolly fellow and liked to joke. I took his knife, opened both blades, got some of Fred's cheese and stuffed the knife full, closed the blades, wrapped it in cheese foil and paper. On Monday I delivered it to the preacher. In a couple of days Reverend Martin came to the store and said, "Brother Grissom, you know I was cleaning fish with that knife and it now smells so bad that my wife made me take it out of the house and put it up in the coal house 'till it loses it's smell. I'm sorry to say that Reverend Martin died without knowing the real cause of his knife's smell.

After I purchased THE EXPRESS in the fall of 1896 I made contracts with different railroads for passes. I believe it was in the early part of the New Year, that the Illinois Central, Baltimore and Ohio, Pennsylvania, Chicago and Eastern Illinois and Jacksonville, were asked for "Press Passes". The contract with the Illinois Central was for 3500 miles. The Baltimore and Ohio gave a pad of passes. When one used it, he issued it to himself for the trip. The Pennsylvania pass was issued as was the Illinois Central. The Chicago and Eastern Illinois had a photograph pass and one could ride it every day. The Jacksonville pass was for so many miles in the year. With the Illinois Central Railroad I got passes for Jennie, Pearl Fisher (my helper) and myself.

After we lived at home for a while, and seemed to be getting along very well, we decided that Jennie was to study music in St. Louis at a Music School (whose name I've forgotten.) She made the trip to St. Louis every Thursday for her lesson. That program was followed for many months and extended into the winter. In making the trip, she would bake the Illinois Central five o'clock a.m. train to Odin. There she would get the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad to St. Louis. Her trip home simply reversed the procedure. She got home at ten o'clock at night after a very tiring day. However she considered it worth the time and the trip. Really, she had a wonderful soprano voice and knew how to use it. In her passing, the service was held in the Methodist Church on a Sunday afternoon, conducted by the Reverend W.E. Williams, her pastor. The music was supplied by Mr. and Mrs. W.S. Pruett and Professor Harold Huggins, with Mrs. Pauline Johnson at the piano. The pall bearers were Frank Soll, Ed Stewart, Rollie Watson, and Clyde W. Warren of Salem, members of the Knights of Pythias Lodge, of which her husband was a member. The interment was in Evergreen Cemetery.

After I lived in Kinmundy a few years, the anti-license folks decided they would run me for city clerk. That was my first experience in running for office and not seeking it. The final result of the election was that the entire temperance ticket was elected, except me! The boy that beat me was the son of a big temperance worker. After the election, it was said that some folks thought they were voting for the father, but I always doubted that if it were the case. The way it ended was that the six aldermen were equally divided, three were "wet" and three were "dry". In the tie vote on the liquor question the newly-elected temperance mayor untied the vote by voting "wet". That vote came near to putting him out of business! He finally thought he had to redeem himself in people's eyes by uniting with the church, which he did.

The Marion County Farmer's Institute for many years was quite a big affair and was always held in Salem, the county seat. It dwindled in attendance and was discontinued. Some of us Kinmundy folks decided that we would attempt to revive it and hold the annual meetings in Kinmundy A meeting of many farmers and Kinmundy business men was held, new officers were elected, and the annual meeting was planned for the approaching fall to be held in Kinmundy. The officers elected were A.A. Coffin of Brubaker, president; William Morris,

Kinmundy, vice-president; F.O Grissom, secretary; C.R. Alderson, treasurer. For the ladies' part of the Institute, Mrs. Mamie Songer Brown, Mrs. Fred Songer, and Mrs. G.W. Snelling were selected. The first meeting was held that fall. It was a grand success and reminded one of a county fair on a small scale. The next year it had grown and there were more grain, vegetable and other exhibits, including many head of livestock. There were prizes for nearly everything one could mention, including driving and riding horses. The third year it was so big that Salem became aroused from their sleep and came in with enough votes to take it back to Salem.

The first time that I was ever a delegate to a political convention was in 1912. It was the Congressional convention, held in Newton, Fred Nirider was also a delegate. Marion County had a candidate and the county delegation was instructed to vote for him. The convention had three or four candidates, among them one Dr. M.D. Foster of Olney. Dr. Foster was the leading candidate and many times the Marion County delegation could have nominated him but our candidate refused to release us. Finally, after three days of voting, the convention took a recess for a week. I suppose that in the meantime this Marion County man had been approached by some of the courthouse crowd and advised to release the delegation. After the second meeting Dr. Foster was easily nominated and served three terms, making the district an extra good congressman. He became a very good friend of mine and was responsible for my appointment as Postmaster. He was entertained in my home more than once.

Before our state officers were elected by Primaries, Charles R. Pruett and I were chosen as delegates to the State Convention in Springfield. At that convention Henry Horner was nominated as the candidate for governor to succeed himself. Every Democrat at that convention was walking with a cane, as I bought one for fifty cents. I brought it home, hung it up and for years forgot that I had such a walking-stick. When I got the broken hip in San Antonio, Texas, I was on crutches. When I put them away, I began wearing the cane, purchased at that State Convention.

John French, one of the Kinmundy boys, was a handy man in making fancy things which are generally looked upon as handwork for women. He was employed at the Zimmer Restaurant when I had the hardware store across the street. One time he had several beautiful rugs that he had made and decided to sell. He displayed them in the big plate glass window in front of the restaurant. One morning I caught him in the kitchen at work and I slipped in the restaurant and marked the rugs with some four inch square marking tags. The prices which I put down ranged from ninety-eight cents to a dollar nineteen. Soon a lady came by enroute to the postoffice. She saw the display and picked out three. She called John and told him she would take three. He soon corrected her as to the price. He said, "D___ that Grissom!" Why would he accuse me?

During my residence in Kinmundy it has just so happened that I have lived within a stone's throw of the Methodist Church, which was convenient for the female part of the family. The old wooden church was removed in 1905 and the present brick structure erected. At that period the south and the east of the old church had rows of elm trees. At that time the janitor of the church was a good and aged Frenchman, Phillip Yund, a man whom everyone liked. One evening the city was visited by a severe wind storm and the two rows of elm trees were badly damaged and the church yard was filled with the broken limbs. The next morning, as I went to my work past the church I saw "Uncle Phillip" cleaning up the debris. I remarked, "What did you think last night when it was storming?" He replied, "I thought I had better be finding my Jesus Christ out!" I think the old gentleman was a member of the Lutheran Church in St. Paul or St. Peter. The old wooden church was moved off the lot and for many years served as a hay barn for Harry Miner. At that time Kinmundy had many churches, viz: Presbyterian, Methodist,

Methodist South, Catholic, Church of God, and soon after, the Christian and Baptist Churches. At the present time the number is four, three of the structures having been removed.

On one occasion when I was in the hardware business a farmer friend of mine came in and said that he was soliciting funds to paint their country church. I told him that I would donate a gallon of good white paint to be applied on the job and would make the committee a cut-rate price if they cared to buy their paint from my store. The man replied that they already had their paint, bought from Sears, Roebuck and Company. It was one sale that I lost. However he accepted my gallon of paint.

If you want to get in on a widely-varied type of transaction just get into the retail business. You would be surprised at the method of buying of some folks. If you do go into the retail business, go into it on a cash basis. Do not even give credit to your minister! (This is free advice.)

When one is a postmaster, there are many enjoyable experiences which bring a smile, and other experiences that touch the other pole of emotion. On one occasion I recall a lady bought several stamps during the Christmas card season. She got her stamps, and then came back to the window with a hand full of cards and asked, "Mr. Grissom! Have you got a wetter?" "Yes, Ma'am", I replied. "I mean, I mean - - " she replied and then, in confusion, she hurried out. The cards were mailed the following day. Even in the postoffice, funny things happen.

One year the Illinois Central Railroad had a bunch of Southern negroes here living in box cars. Every one of them came to the postoffice every night. One young fellow, about six foot, four in height, came in on one rainy night, the only colored customer that evening. His name was John Johnson. When he came up to the window, I said, "John, your girl failed to write today." He replied, "It's not my girl, it's my wife." "Why did a kid like you get married?", I asked. He said, "I did not want to get married, but I was married by law (he meant 'common law'.) I've a boy who's two." "How old are you?", I asked. "Past seventeen", was the reply. Postal rules were violated while that bunch was in town. I don't think a blind man could have kept from reading their postal cards sent back home. Many would not have passed inspection.

As I returned by train from a Texas trip, I made a stop at Carthage, Missouri to get acquainted with some Grissom cousins whom I had not seen since I had been six years old. They were children of my father's uncle, Reverend Joseph Grissom. On arriving in Carthage in the early morning, soon after daybreak, I found a restaurant open. I went in and found a young lady in charge of the place. I asked her if there were any Grissoms in Carthage. She replied, " Yes, and you are a Grissom and my name is going to be Grissom!" She told me that her intended's name was Fred Grissom, that he was a baker and that he now lived in California. I said that my name was 'Fred'. After breakfast I asked where Bob Grissom's store was located. She told me that very soon Frank Grissom would come to town and that he would stop across the street to get his paper. (Frank was the City Clerk, and had an office in the city hall building.) Soon I saw Frank coming down the street. I knew him because he was a cripple and used crutches. He came by the restaurant and I stopped him and asked if his name was Grissom, he had no edge over me. He wanted to know where I lived and my name. I admitted to being 'Fred' and that I lived in Illinois. Again we shook hands. "Come on over to the store and see Bob", he said.

When we arrived at the store, Frank called out, "Bob, here is Fred Grissom from Illinois!"

Bob greeted me and invited, "Come. We'll go over to my house and see my wife. My mother lives next door, too."

At Bob's mother's house I was sitting out on the front porch on the bannister, when a lady next door cute out on her porch and said, "Hello, there! Fred Grissom!" I turned to face her. She excused herself and remarked that she thought it was Fred Grissom from California, brother to Bob and Frank. About that time Aunt Lizzie, Bob's mother, appeared and introduced us. The day was spent at Bob's home and I had a great visit, with plenty of good talk. That evening I left for Oklahoma City, where I met Alonzo Church at his parent's home. Next morning at four o'clock, we headed for Kinmundy, arriving home about ten o'clock in a Model T Ford. I had had a little vacation, had seen some relatives, become acquainted with the Church family and was home ready to go to work.

Judge Jennings, of Salem, called me by phone one evening to come to Salem the next morning on the C. & E. I. I did so, and he met me at the courthouse. He told me that he was glad to see me as he had appointed me chairman of the Tax Review Board, and he wanted me to start that day. I thanked him for the honor, but I would be compelled to refuse as I had THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS that depended upon me for its publication. The judge thought someone else could do the newspaper publishing and that I could serve on the board. I told him that there was no one else to do it, and that I was sorry to disappoint him. I thanked him, and returned home on the morning train. I think that that is one job that makes no friends.

I recall that after a couple of years in Kinmundy, I had become pretty well acquainted with the business people and many of the residents, including the farmers and fruit growers. At that time Patoka had a weekly newspaper, THE PATOKA JOURNAL, edited by a young Centralia man by the name of James Barnes. The business in Patoka at that time was not prosperous and Barnes decided to move his plant to Kinmundy. He was under the impression that he could put THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS out of business in a short time. But his dream did not come true. The merchants of Kinmundy did not advertise in his paper as it had no circulation and the EXPRESS was well supplied with advertising each week. Barnes kept going some months and decided he wanted to dispose of the JOURNAL plant and return to Centralia. He came to me and wanted to sell to me. I looked the plant over and made him a bid, but he refused to accept it. Business went on as usual for a few weeks, when Barnes came back and wanted me to raise my offer. I again refused, and he accepted my original bid. I borrowed money from the Raymond Bank and paid him. I moved the JOURNAL plant and added it to that of THE EXPRESS. After this deal, I changed the paper from a weekly to a twice-a-week publication. The new name was THE EXPRESS JOURNAL. This combination continued for several months but was not too successful. Merchants could not or would not advertise twice a week. So THE JOURNAL was "put to sleep". THE EXPRESS is still doing business. Sometimes dreams do not end as one think they should. But that is just one of the verses in life's story. While he lived in Kinmundy, Mr. Barnes courted and married one of Kinmundy's beautiful girls, Miss Lotta Hadden, and they were a very happy couple, residing in Centralia for several years. THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS still has some of the type that belonged to THE PATOKA JOURNAL. During the life of THE EXPRESS it had had many owners and I guess they all got rich but the writer. However I did not miss any meals while I owned it. I really enjoyed owning the paper and during my ownership had many kinds of experiences, some good and some the opposite – but that is life! In owning THE EXPRESS, I refused to accept advertising from the drum shops, but I would do their printing. In the newspaper business today many of the small weekly papers accept that sort of advertising.

During the years that I have lived in Kinmundy, I have traded quite a little in real estate. I have owned three different farms, several city lots, one business house and three residences. At

this writing all the real estate I own is my lot in Evergreen Cemetery. For many years before I owned a home, I rented and moved many times. Since owning a home I have also moved several times, but since 1926 I have lived in the same home. One excellent way to clean house is to move to another! However that was not the reason, I assure you for my moves. (In counting the moves, I did not include the times that I moved THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS and one time that I moved the hardware store.) It would seem that moving was a habit, and with many others (habits, that is) I guess moving was the most extensive.

During the first World War, I purchased from Edward W. Doolen the place now owned by Mrs. Cecil Bailey. At that time it contained fifty acres, but since then, a portion of the land has been sold to Sam Lowe. In owning the Doolen place, I moved there twice in two years. I moved out in the spring, moved back in the fall, moved out again in the next spring, but when I moved back the second fall I had sold the farm. We enjoyed the little farm and the good neighbors who lived around it.

I once bought a 167 acre farm in Garden Hill township, Wayne County, but never moved to that place. I kept this farm several years and enjoyed going there and rambling through the white oak timber. During the big demand for white oak for making whiskey barrel staves, I sold some trees for $1400.00 and thought I made a good deal. But when I sold a big walnut tree here in the Kinmundy home place for two hundred dollars, I considered that my best tree deal. I'm certain that I brought the first "gate" trees to Kinmundy. I had two on my home place before I sold it. Of course the trees are still there, and at this writing, they are in full bloom. My best dogwood tree was given me by a good friend, Roy Misselbrook. He also planted it, since he told me that I did not know how to plant a tree. Roy did a good job and it has made a beautiful tree. When I enjoy it I always think of Roy. If Kinmundy ever had a nature lover, it was Roy! On his farm he had many specimens of fowl, of trees, animals etc. To help make Kinmundy a Dogwood town, we presented the Woman's Club with one hundred white dogwood trees three years ago. The club sold them for one dollar each. Many did not survive the hot, dry summer, but I am told that about half are living and beginning to bloom. Many of our neighboring towns, of course, would enjoy cutting down all the shade trees on the street! (Note: the proper name of the Gate Tree is "Golden Rain".)

When I was younger, and had more energy than money, I got the idea that an east-west state highway through Kinmundy would be a fine improvement and a good thing for our people, especially for the farmers and fruit growers. Such a highway would give a direct market road to St. Louis and would save miles. There was, at that time, a highway already coming out of East St. Louis, known as 127-A which ended between Carlyle and Greenville. From 127-A the road could run directly east to the Indianapolis state line where it could have connected with a highway that was already in operation. On this proposed route, the right-of-way was secured from Route 51 at Patoka, to Route 45 at Louisville. East of Louisville, two towns were fighting for the new road, and it developed that neither town got it, and the new proposed road ended on reaching Route 45. On the west end of the proposed new road, two towns west of Patoka got to scrapping and the result was that the new road ended at Patoka on Route 51. The delegation (250 strong) that had a meeting with the State High Commission was the largest delegation ever to appear before the Commission up to that time. Our delegation was prepared to produce facts and figures to prove the need for the road. Before arranging to go to Springfield and appear before the "Big Boys" we had taken a crop census of the counties that the road would have served. The chairman had appointed one or two men in each township in each of the counties to take this crop census. It included everything the farmer produced, from bantam eggs to saw

logs! Let me assure you that this was a big job, and that it was a big job well done, and (quoting the Government in the Postal Department Regulation Manual) "without expense to the department." At the time the chairman was in the newspaper business and the necessary blanks were printed without expense to the new road committee. When we appeared in Springfield, we were opposed by a Farina delegation asking for an extension of Route 185 through Iola to Louisville. That was one occasion when Kinmundy held the winning cards. Before the Springfield meeting ended the chairman of the Farina crowd came to the Kinmundy chairman and proposed for Farina to help Kinmundy get the main line and for the Kinmundy crowd to help Farina get an extension from Route 185 to connect with the new Kinmundy-Louisville road at Oskaloosa. The proposal did not appeal to the Kinmundy folks and at this time Route 185 does not go any farther east. I can assure you that much work was put forth to get this highway. We were fortunate that every state politician living near the proposed route used his influence for the new road. In that political group were State Senators, State Representatives, county officials and the general public living near the proposed road. In the crop census, the territory for two miles on each side of the proposed route was thoroughly canvassed. The results were added together, and the total made an impressive showing, supporting the need for an improved highway. Many night meetings were held in school houses and court houses in the area, but it paid-in-full for part of the route. From the Illinois Central Railroad east to the Marion County-Clay County line, the right-of-way was all donated, save for two land-owners. The chairman of the organization appeared before the County Board of Supervisors with a resolution authorizing the county to assume the payment of any right-of-way that needed to be purchased. The plans before the meeting was for the Kinmundy and Meacham Supervisors to present the resolution and move its adoption. It passed without a vote against it. The state required three copies of the deed to each piece of the right-of way. At that time the chairman of the organization was a Notary Public and he delivered and acknowledged all the deeds save for the two previously mentioned. Now, I hesitate at this time to tell that I, F.O. Grissom, was chairman of this organization. However it is a fact, that I attended every meeting, and made all the arrangements for the Springfield meeting. Meeting with the class of men with whom I worked while doing this job was worth the time and expense which I had. It was a great pleasure to be associated with such fine men. It seems to me that during the years of my life, I have always been associated with good business men, and I have enjoyed the association. With such men, because of their forward-looking ideas and persons, it has been an honor and a pleasure for me to deal.

Another example of the above type of man was Mr. F.K. Stanford, Superintendent of the Illinois Central Railroad. After my auto accident in San Antonio, Texas, and my return home in latter March, I was visited by Mr. Stanford, accompanied by the Superintendent of the Illinois Central's Water Department, both of Champaign, Illinois. They made this special trip with the Superintendent's private motor car, to visit me while I was still using crutches. They spent an hour or more with me in my home. I sure felt honored that they should especially make the trip to visit me. With these gentlemen I had many dealings during my terms as Mayor of Kinmundy. In my time I had many dealings with the Illinois Central Railroad officials and I always found them to be very congenial and worthy of one's acquaintance. I have always found it a pleasure to do business with business people.

During the presidential term of Harry Truman, after his 1948 election, Lillian and I visited Hammond, Louisiana, with Mr. and Mrs. Ed Richardson. Mrs. Richardson was Lillian's sister. Across the street from the Richardson home lived Congressman James Morrison. During this period the White House was being renovated. The Louisiana congressman sent the

Hammond Woman's Club twenty-five of the old bricks from the White House. Mrs. Richardson was the club president and had possession of the bricks. I asked her to give me one, but she refused, saying that they did not belong to her. I told her I was going to appropriate one for my use, and I did so. In the little city park of Kinmundy on Route 37, is a walnut tree that was sent to me by Congressman William Arnold, from George Washington's home at Mt. Vernon. This tree I planted, assisted by E.E. "Peck" Brown. In front of this tree is a concrete block, and on this block is the brick which I took from the Hammond Woman's Club without their knowledge! With the assistance and the donation of a heavy chain anchored on iron posts, by Emmit Gray, the brick and the tree make a historical spot in the little park.

In my life I made one deal that I made with a sad heart. That transaction was the sale of my home which I had occupied since 1926. But realizing that my time was drawing to a close in living in it, I was glad to sell it to someone who would occupy it and make a good neighbor for the property owners living in nearby homes. It was also a good feeling in making this sale, that the new owner and his helpmate were in love with the place and it was their wish to spend their declining years therein. My years of occupancy have been years of pleasure, having a happy home, and two wives that loved their home, loved their church across the street, and appreciated the good neighbors. In buying a home the neighbors are as much of an asset as the property. Since my ownership of the Rohrbough 1877 brick on the corner of Third and Washington Streets, many changes in the interior of the house have occurred. Since the Rohrboughs owned and lived here, the chimneys have been closed, the front door changed and closed, with a window in its stead. The stairs have been changed and a large bay window built. A fireplace and chimney have been added, a furnace has been installed, as have hardwood floors on the first floor rooms. There is now a bath on both floors, both porches have been screened and the old coal house has been torn down. The yard has been improved with many new trees, over eighteen varieties now beautifying the place, plus plenty of beautiful shrubs. When I became owner of this property there was a barn on the southeast corner. I had this barn torn down and a good part of the lumber in its construction was used in the building of a two car garage. The frame-work of this barn was heavy oak and it made a wonderful frame for the garage. The floor for the hay mow in the old barn was made of regular four inch flooring. The siding was twelve-inch soft pine. All of the brick used in this house was made in Kinmundy, I've been told, and the lime for the mortar was burned in or near Omega. After all these years the house was never been tuck-pointed. The church across the street, built in 1905, was had to have that job done. Possibly better material was made years ago, and the manufacturer was not up to the new tricks in vogue today. The house now standing in the north end of the block was built one year before the Rohrbough brick. I have been told it was built by a Mr. Moore, of West Virginia, the father-in-law of Mr. "Captain" Rohrbough. The Elwyn Cheatum's, new owners of the Grissom home, do not get possession for some years, as I am to hold possession the remainder of my life. Just how long that will be will have to be determined later. I am going to stay just as long as my Creator wishes. I could say no longer!

When I first moved to Kinmundy there was a private bank owned by Harvey Gray and Thomas Haymond. It was conducted by Mr. Haymond with Thomas Bagott as book-keeper. Following the death of Mr. Haymond, the First National Bank was organized with Mr. Captain Rohrbough as one of the organizers. This bank has prospered from the first day. It has survived two depressions and is, today, one of the substantial institutions of Marion County, with over five million dollars on deposit. At the time of its organization the business was conducted by two people. Six are now employed. It is locked upon as one of the growing financial institutions

of Marion County. The First National Bank is, at this time, planning a new building with all of the up-to-date facilities, including a drive-in depository. Kinmundy is proud of its bank and the growth it has made. If I should withdraw my little wad from it, the bank would not necessarily have to close! It has most always been my habit to be one of the regular borrowers, but I am glad to report that I was never refused a loan.

In the early 1900's it was customary for farmers to grow a patch of cane to make sorghum molasses to feed the family the coming winter. There were two sorghum mills near Kinmundy and both were busy. Northwest of town, Tom "Tough Eye" Jones operated a mill, and on the east of town was the mill operated by Reubin Crane. After these two mills closed, those who wanted sorghum milled had to haul their can to a mill near Altamont. To my knowledge, this was the last mill in operation in this part of the country. All kids like sorghum and most old folks do too. Mother's hot biscuits, good "real cow" butter and homemade sorghum was not hard to take and was good on every cold morning as well as on warm, sunny days. At that time sorghum retailed at one dollar a gallon at the grocery store. Now the price is too high for one to buy. Taffy candy, made from sorghum, was good eating and sometimes could be used to pull a tooth. These dentist's teeth were not much good in eating of sorghum taffy. Kids in those days would have taffy pullings, popcorn parties, at which they might play "post office" to pass the time on cold winter evenings at different homes. All would have a good time. Now the kids are too busy burning gasoline to enjoy such foolish entertainment. There are lots of ways to be entertained, and it seems that each generation has its own way, and thinks it to be the best.

Well I remember one winter in the early 1900's when the Kinmundy mine ceased operation because of a strike and no coal could be obtained. Some folks did cut wood on what was known as the Whiteman land. Others went out west of town and dug for surface coal. Many folks bought this coal and it would keep one person firing the heater and the other busy carrying out the ashes. It was not much good for heating, but it was surface coal or wood – or no heat. The people were all mighty glad to see spring and sunshine arrive.

During the election campaign of 1916 the National Democratic Nominating Convention was held in St. Louis. The writer had the privilege of attending this convention through the courtesy of Congressman Martin D. Foster, who supplied two tickets and I gave one to my brother, Louis Earl Grissom, of Farina. At the last session the two of us were on hand and heard the Hon. William Jennings Bryan make the nominating speech. It was certainly a wonderful display of oratory. Getting to hear the nominating speech by Mr. Bryan and the acceptance speech by the, then, President of the United States, Woodrow Wilson, certainly repaid one for making the trip to the convention. Just in recent weeks I have read where President Wilson was considered the best educated men that ever has served as President of the United States. He was the first President to appoint a woman to a Cabinet post. He appointed Annette Abbott Adams as Assistant-Attorney General. Several years later, when Franklin D. Roosevelt was elected President, he appointed Mrs. Frances Perkins as Secretary of Labor.

At the time when I was publishing THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS I was the owner of five railroad passes. Mileage books were issued to me on the Illinois Central, Baltimore and Ohio, Pennsylvania and what is now the C.B. & Q. On the C. & E.I., I carried a photograph pass and could ride their trains every day if I desired. Now things are changed and railroad passes are no longer issued. Under present conditions passes would be of no value as the passenger trains are almost ancient history.

During World War I, there lived in Kinmundy a family by the name of Crank. There

were two children in the family. Charles, the oldest did not possess one-hundred per cent mentality. Consequently, he was ordered confined to the Mental Hospital at Anna, Illinois, by the County Court. After some weeks there, he escaped. At that time, a war-time era, a man of draft age had to carry a draft card. In case one had none, and was picked up by an officer, the arresting officer (or the civilian who turned in the one without a draft card) received $50.00 and the 'draft-dodger' was placed in the army. Such was the case of Charles Crank. He was apprehended, and placed in the army at Camp Taylor, Kentucky.

It so happened that Raymond Mahan, one of the training officers at Camp Taylor, found Crank in the ranks. His mother, at Kinmundy, was notified. She and her daughter made the trip to Camp Taylor to visit her son, but Charles claimed no relationship and said he never had seen the women before. The son's reaction caused it to be a sorrowful trip for the mother and sister. A short time later, the son was transferred to a camp in Ohio, and from there to another camp in Pennsylvania, and from there to a Veterans Home in Indiana, at Marion, where he remained for several years. Finally Charles was sent to Downey, Illinois where he remained for the balance of his life. During the first of this period, the government required that the Court appoint a Conservator to manage his business affairs and manage his pension money, which had accumulated to near two hundred dollars. The County Judge appointed F.O. Grissom as Conservator. During the time in this office Charles Crank's pension money had accumulated and, with investments, has increased to over eleven thousand dollars. Also, during these years the Conservator had looked after the widowed mother, paid her debts, bought a cemetery marker, and had helped the aged woman in many ways. After Charles' death, in 1974, and after all bills had been paid, Crank's sister, Edith, received over ten thousand dollars. (Note: After Charles escaped from the State hospital at Anna, Illinois, he was smart enough to change his name. He called himself, Charles Riley.) So ended the life of Charles Crank and the serving of fifty-one years as Conservator of an estate, the longest conservatorship period in the history of Marion County.

Until November 15, 1975, one of the last things I have tried to do for Kinmundy was sponsor an Essay Writing Contest in the High School English Department. Twenty members of the class entered the contest and four cash prizes were offered: $10.00, first prize, $7.50, second prize, $5.00, third prize, and $2.50, fourth prize. The subject suggested was "How to Make Kinmundy Grow." It was well-explained by the contestants and in nearly every essay the subject had some different plan. Their writing was all good, and I was so sorry that each did not receive a prize. I felt that such a contest might have the effect of giving the City Council some new ideas about helping our home town take on a new "face lift" and at the same time, help these youngsters develop some ideas to help their home town improve. I am sure this contest, the publishing of four of the essays in THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS, and the stimulation of thinking about our town have been good for us. The contestants are to be complimented upon their written and printed ideas. In the opinion of this writer, what the city of Kinmundy needs is to wear out more tug-straps of the work-harness, and to wear out fewer hold-back straps! There is ample room here to make improvements. Why do we not all get busy on the job? I have always heard that it was much better to wear out than to rust out. As I view it, we are getting pretty rusty.

In closing this life sketch, and in reading it over, I am unable to see where it can be of much interest to anyone, as it is not of much interest to me. I cannot help it that I was born in a log house in Meacham township in Marion County. Neither can I help it that I have survived for nearly one hundred years. One who has lived that long has been around for sufficient time to

have done his country some good. Now I am leaving that last statement to the people with whom I have been associated these many years. If I have accomplished just one act that has been for the good of some person, I feel that my life has been worth living. In living (now) semi alone, I always enjoy having my friends call and pass the time discussing our ideas about matters existing, all the way from Kinmundy, Illinois to Washington, D.C.

* * *

In my glancing over the foregoing pages I have thought of a few other incidents that may be of interest to the reader. In a story of this kind it is difficult to find the stopping place. I will say that if you have enjoyed the reading of it I am pleased. I am always pleased to have the school children visit me. Some time ago I had a class from Salem. Often Kinmundy classes. A few days ago I had three ten-year-olds. I inquired what I could do for them and the leader replied that "we just wanted to talk to you awhile." I sure was "Super" pleased to have those boys.

My first auto was purchased in 1916. In going to the postoffice to work, in the mornings, I passed the garage and had the habit of look-in the window to see if the car was there. One morning, about two weeks after the car was purchased, I looked in the window, but the garage was empty. I still owned THE KINMUNDY EXPRESS at that time. I bought fifty postal cards, printed them, and had my wife address them to the Chief of Police of the towns along the two railroads, the C. and E.I. and the I.C. I also asked her to address one to my old schoolmate, Frank Purtill of Duquoin.

The second evening I received a telegram from Frank saying that he thought he had found my car. Shortly after receiving the wire, I was enroute to Duquoin on the Illinois Central five o'clock passenger train. In Duquoin, I was met by Frank. We went to the office to Charles Fox, the Chief of Police. He had taken possession of the car and had locked it in the garage.

We immediately went to the garage where I had great difficulty in identifying the car. It was mud all over, with beer cans, onion peelings, sardine cans and other junk in the back seat. The two license plates had been changed. The thief had taken another license plate, cut out a figure, bolted it over my plate, over the number nearest to the bolt hole. This had been done over the four holes. The license was so muddy that the change could not be detected. I told Chief Fox that I guessed I could not identify the car. Then I remembered that I had taken out the front seat cushion and had written my name under it. Mr. Fox removed the cushion. There it was - I had written with a lead pencil, "F.O. Grissom, Kinmundy, Illinois."

"It's your car", he remarked.

We returned to the Chief's office. He notified a woman who conducted a saloon where the car had been parked for twenty-four hours. She had reported the car to the police. I had offered a $100 reward. I asked the Chief who should have the reward. Both the Chief and the woman would reported the car claimed it. The woman saloon-keeper invited the Chief to the alley, threatening to whip him! The Chief wisely refused to leave the office! There was much unprintable language on both sides.

"Why not split the reward fifty-fifty?" I asked. The woman agreed, so long as she received sixty dollars to the Chief's forty. Eventually they both agreed to the even split of the reward, and I got my car. In this transaction I learned that some women know how to use language unbecoming a lady. I stayed all night with Frank and drove home the next day in a big rain. I had muddy roads for sixty miles. That trip put me in "storage" for nine days. It was the

first time I was ever sick, other than childhood ailment.

* * *

In early days, Kinmundy had a circus about every year. They were big ones too. The circus grounds were west of the C. & E.I. Depot on some vacant lots. It was quite a sight for one to see the unloading, the erection of the big tent, and the process of getting ready for the invariable parade. On one occasion one of the big elephants went on a stampede and scattered the crowd watching the work being done. My father had come down from Farina and was one of the watchers. The elephant headed his way and he ran and crawled under a barbed-wire fence! Mr. John Rotan, also in the crowd, ran to a tree. He stuttered in his speech. On arriving at the tree he called out, "Cc-co-come boost boys! Cc-cocome boost me! Hur-hur-hurry up!"

When the writer of this story located in Kinmundy, there were post offices at Lester, Omega and Miletus. They were all served from the Kinmundy office. The office at Mt. Liberty, located on what is now the Louisville Road, about four miles east of town, had been discontinued some time before my time in Kinmundy. This office was supplied from the Louisville office and the mail messenger delivered the mail on horseback. My information was that Mt. Liberty also had a grocery at that time. The land for this office was taken from land of the I.T. Dillon farm – the southwest corner. I recall the names of the first three Postmasters in the named offices: Lester, Andy Eagan; Omega, S.G. Copple; and Miletus, Luther Combs. The fourth, Mt. Liberty, was before my time. At this office it has not been over forty years since the government deeded the acre of land back to the Dillon farm, from whence it came. When the Rural Delivery Service was established at the Kinmundy Post Office, the salary of the Carrier was fifty dollars per month. The delivery was mostly made on horseback. Different now!

* * *

In the early 1900's Chautauquas were very popular. Kinmundy had one every year in the little City Park on State Route 37. They were well attended and good programs were produced. A speaker's platform was erected and seats supplied for a few hundred people. A contract was always made a year in advance, and we always knew at that time what the program was going to be. The City of Shelbyville had an annual Chautauqua in the City Park and, especially on Sunday, after autos got plentiful, many people attended. Some rented a cottage and attended for the entire two week program. One Sunday, I remember, the evangelist, Billy Sunday, was the speaker. I assure you he put on a show! At the end of his sermon about all the clothes he had on was his pants, shoes, socks and underwear! He gave the crowd their money's worth!

At that same time my family and I lived over the grocery store, Miss Ella Parrill was staying at our house. The first house to the south was the Tanner Hotel. At this place Miss Gertie Dillon was employed. Our rear stairway was close to the hotel. After supper chores, the two Meacham Township girls would visit back and forth. On one day, while a stock buyer was loading cattle for market, a vicious bull got away. He was running loose in the street. People had all been warned to watch out for the animal.

As I remember it, Ella and I had had some trouble around supper time. That evening it was her turn to visit Gertie. I knew about what time she would come back. I hid under the stairs, and when she about half way up, I "white Bull booed" her! She scampered up the stairs, went in the kitchen and fainted! My mother heard her fall on the floor and went to her aid. She was

revived with the help of wet towels.

When all was back to normal, the "jury" decided that Freddie was responsible for the affair. My father was the "acting judge" and pronounced the verdict. The punishment was a matter between the judge and the accused. That was about the hardest paddling I ever received.

* * *

When I was a kid, strawberry picking was out of my line of business. Other kids were picking nearly a hundred quarts a day. About fifty was my limit. But I did but very little berry-picking. My dad was usually interested in a strawberry patch. I would be assigned the job of hauling the filled cases to the railroad car and to haul back the empties from the sales barn. That job suited me better than picking.

I well remember the first dollar (in one piece) that I ever made. Dad had the store at that time, and kept a horse. Ross Wooley was station agent on the Illinois Central. One winter night he received a death message to be delivered to the German Minister of the Ambuehl German Church near St. Peter. Ross asked my dad if I could deliver the message. Dad told him that it was for me to decide. I was called from upstairs and was told the errand. That dollar looked good to me. The horse was saddled. Mother wrapped me for the trip, 'the gas was turned on' and I began the trip.

When I arrived at the German Church parsonage and rapped at the door, a voice inside called, "Come in!" The old gentleman inside asked me to unwrap and sit down by the fire, which I did. I delivered the message. The elderly couple conversed in German. Finally they told me that it was a relative in Indiana that had died, but it would be impossible for them to attend the funeral. Being warm, I prepared for the return trip. I was ready to go, when the old gentleman remarked, "Boy, I do not want you to make this trip out here for nothing." He opened his purse and handed me a dime. I thanked him and started back towards home. Total earned for the trip $1.10 and a horse back ride!

* * *

Tuesday, December 30, 1975

In the company of J.B. Maxey, Supervisor of Kinmundy Township, Harvey Hanna, Mayor of Kinmundy and Francis Hammer, I made the trip to Louisville, Illinois to confer with Hon. Carroll Baylor, an Attorney, to get information regarding cemeteries. Under an Illinois law they can be taken over by the Township and a small tax levied on real estate to pay for their upkeep. Under the old system of caring for them there is not ample funds available to do the job properly. Every township in Clay county is under Township organization and some of the old and neglected cemeteries are now getting lawn-mower care by contract. Meacham township in Marion County, and Farina in Fayette County, have taken advantage of this new law. Kinmundy Township has five cemeteries and all are in need of care. Evergreen Cemetery has a fund that has been established by perpetual care assessments and donations, but the interest received from these funds is not sufficient to do the job. Two of the five cemeteries in the township receive no care whatsoever and are almost lost in the brush and briars. Under the Township organization, the funds that are now in the name of the Cemetery Association, or Trustees, would remain as they are, the only change being that the interest would belong to the Township. The new plan for

caring for cemeteries is so satisfactory where it is in force that Kinmundy should be making the change. It is likely that, in making this change, that one might be given the care of them all.

In the information received, the committee aforementioned was informed by authorities that Clay County was the only county in this vicinity to have a cemetery that was established by the colony of colored people who, in the late 1800's, had a settlement in the vicinity of the Clay County-Marion County line. These citizens were respected by the whites and were quite progressive. It is not known by this writer why the colony of colored people settled in the community. They were law-abiding citizens and held their annual Camp Meetings. These latter gatherings were also largely attended by their white neighbors.

Several years ago the Illinois Central Railroad had one of the worst passenger train wrecks in the history of the road near midnight in Kinmundy. The company had a regular schedule running two of their southbound trains only ten minutes apart. On this particular night the first scheduled train had orders to take water at Kinmundy. While in this act the following second train was allowed to run the electric signals and ploughed into the standing train and three of the road's officers in the rear special car were instantly killed and many other passengers in different cars were injured, some quite serious. In the rear car carrying the officials one man's body was hanging out the car window. An alarm was immediately sounded and in a few minutes a large crowd had gathered and the three bodies were taken from a splintered car and placed in the depot. The engineer, Johnny Grainey, and his fireman (name forgotten) jumped from the standing engine and only a sprained ankle was received by the fireman. The special car carrying the officials was one of the old fashioned wooden sleepers. The dead were put on another train and removed. The same day a Coroner's jury was secured and a three-day hearing was held in Centralia. Three were selected form Kinmundy, those being Thomas M. Smith, George W. White, and F.O. Grissom. The remaining three were from Centralia. In organizing the jury the following day yours truly was selected Foreman. After the three days of hearing some officials of the road, the jury decided the Dispatcher guilty of not doing his duty by allowing the second train to run the electric signals. The Kinmundy jurymen came home every night during the session. Final action by the Railroad Company: a new schedule made for these two of their fastest passenger trains.

* * *

Some years ago, the Mrs. and Yours Truly spent five or six winters in Blanco, Texas, in the home of Miss Mary Anderson, a retired music teacher in the Denton Texas College. She and Mrs. Grissom entered this college the same year and became acquainted at once and lived together almost the entire time of 25 years until Lillian retired. Mary retired a few years later. Well, the last year we were in her home some acquired friends took us three in their car as their guests to San Antonio to the annual Fat Stock Show and Rodeo. On the midnight start to return home Mr. Dale, the driver, made a mistake and turned on a road that was closed, but the sign had been knocked down. In no time at all, he ran into a mountain of gravel on the road and in the deal I was thrown from the front seat to the floor with the sad result of a broken hip. I was the only one hurt. The next day I woke up in the hospital about noon and asked the colored nurse when I was to be worked on and was informed that the job was over two hours ago. I was afterward told that the broken bones were being held together by four screws and one pin. Guess the hardware is still there for I have never neither removed or had it removed. I'm glad it is no worse as I get along fairly well with the assistance of a cane. Now if you see me walking with a

cane, it is not style, but a necessity.

For seven or eight days while in this hospital I really had a lot of fun, as I was never in any pain. There was a Mexican man about 25 that spent a lot of time in my room. An American boy was also a helper on my floor any one day they were both in my room at the same time and were having an argument. I called, "You kids cut out your argument." The Mexican replied that he wanted to inform me that he was not a kid – he was married and had a boy two years old. I informed him I had no intention of offending him, as up in my country we called one kid till 30 years old. Frank replied, well, if it's that way there, it's all right here. One occasion when a little Mexican nurse was looking after me she asked where I was from. I replied south central Illinois and she should come up there some time. She at once replied that she had been there. Said she, with others, rode standing in the back of a big truck to Arkansas, picked strawberries, then drove on to Centralia and picked some more. I told her I lived north of Centralia about 25 miles, on State Route 37. She replied immediately, "You live that funny town name, when we read that name on sign board before going under railroad, we all had a big laugh at such a funny name." She said they were enroute to Michigan to pick cherries. My stay there was very pleasant if there is such a thing in a hospital.

A FEW CLOSING FOOTNOTES

Years ago two brothers lived here and their trade was sawing wood for the citizens. One day they got into an argument and one said to the other, "Now just be quiet as possible." I suppose argument ended.

O.N. Tyner, the music merchant, never asked for any help when he loaded a piano on his delivery wagon. The job seemed to be of no extra effort for him. He drove a pair of Texas ponies and occasionally they got unruly, but that did not worry Mr. Tyner.

In the summer time when the Kinmundy band was in operation the Saturday night concerts in the band stand attracted hundreds of people. Kinmundy was a better town those days.

Ever since the writer has resided in Kinmundy the town and community have had fox hunters. Years ago the ones that owned the most fox hounds were Melvin Hines, John Wilson, J.A. Baylis, and others. These were busy men but they found time for pleasure, which every man should do. I have often heard it said that all work and no play made Jack a dull boy.

The Wednesday night picture shows held on Madison Street always attracted large crowds and folks had a good time visiting and seeing the show.

In winter putting up stock pond ice off the Haymond and other cattle ponds was quite a chore. There were two concerns in business that put up stock pasture ice for the summer use. That kind of ice today would not be allowed, but no one ever passed away from drinking ice water made from it.

The Bill Reynolds Comedy Company pleased hundreds of Kinmundy folks with their shows. They would travel through the summer months and live at home during the winter. Bill was sure a comedian. He would make one laugh just to look at him. Mrs. (Nell) Reynolds was a good actor and she was well liked by everybody. She was formerly a Mason girl.

One hot summer day the Grissoms with many other Kinmundy citizens drove to Rose Lake (Iuka) to see and hear the hatchet saloon-bar chopper, the famous Carrie Nation. The Rose Lake territory was crowded with people far and near. Mr. L.C. Matthews, of Kinmundy, had the honor to convey the lady from the Neff hotel to the Lake.

When the Kinmundy mine was in operation and Colonel Cabinas was Superintendent he

invited me on a holiday to company to the pit to feed the mules. I thanked him.

Many years ago Kinmundy was visited every winter with a medicine show selling Indian remedies that would cure anything you could mention. They would always start some sort of a contest – "The prettiest girl in town", or "The prettiest baby in Town". Buy a bottle of medicine and get so many votes. I would not be surprised if some families did not still have some of the medicine.

Schneider's Springs, north of town on Route 37 was a very popular place at one time years ago. Fourth of July celebrations and picnics of different kinds were always welcome by Mr. Schneider.

THE END