

RECOLLECTIONS OF EARLY DAYS IN FRANKLIN COUNTY, INDIANA

By Harriet Newell Morgan Filer



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I was born February 21, 1844 in a log cabin situated in Bath township, Franklin county, Indiana. This cabin was located on a tract of land owned by Samuel Davis, one of the pioneers of that community. My father, Samuel Morgan, was in the employ of Mr. Davis. I was one of three children born of a second marriage of both my parents and was christened, as the name appears in the old family Bible, Harriett Newell. My mother, Sarah Coombs Van Meter Morgan, was born and reared in the state of New Jersey. She was the 8th child of a family of 9 born to Jacob and Elizabeth DuBois Coombs. Her mother died when she was nine years old and she was "bound", as the custom was then, to a widow named Brewster, where she was ill treated and overworked, but where she remained until she was about sixteen, when her uncle, George Coombs, rescued her, forfeiting the dowery which was to come to her had she remained until she was eighteen years of age.

My maternal grandmother was Holland Dutch and came to New Jersey in a sailing vessel with a company, two of whom were Jacob Coombs and his sister, Sarah. This Sarah Coombs was my mother's aunt after whom my mother was named. Sarah Coombs, the aunt, afterward married John Krom and became my husband's grandmother.

My mother married Thomas Van Meter when she was twenty years of age and they prospered during the first years of their married life. Seven children were born to them, six sons and a daughter, Elizabeth, who died at the age of nine months and just before they migrated to Indiana. About the year 1826 or 1828 a small company of relatives and friends left New Jersey for Indiana and settled in Franklin and Union counties. A goodly portion of them settled in the southwestern part of Union county. Others had preceded these immigrants from the same state and together they formed a settlement called "the New Jersey settlement"; and even today, while none of them and perhaps none of their immediate descendants are living there, it is still known as "Jersey". This was the company with which my mother and her children came to Indiana.

These migrations of the early times from the states in the east to the states in the west, as the central portion of the country was then called, form an interesting chapter in our national history; so, just a few words here of these migrations as I have heard my mother tell it. My mother's husband, Thomas Van Meter, and his brother, William, had come on to Indiana some time before to select a location. When the time came a company was made up and the train consisted of three two-horse wagons, covered, after the manner of the now famous "prairie schooner" of later days. They traveled during the daytime and made just such progress as they well could the conditions of the roads and weather considered, then stopped at night and made camp in any place that was convenient. They did their own cooking and when the supplies ran out with which they started, they secured them on the way. I have often heard my mother speak of how she enjoyed the six weeks of that journey, for it was a continued camping party and in a pleasant season. There was some monotony, to be sure, but even the children enjoyed it for it was novel to them. When they grew weary of their place in the wagon, they would get out and run along beside the wagons or scamper about until they were ready to ride



again. The company provided no tents but the women of the party slept in the wagons and the men under the wagons on the ground. This long way from Salem county New Jersey and these many weeks only illustrate the changes from the slow ways of then and the rapid ways of now; for, only a few years ago a grandson of mine and a party of his boy friends made practically the same distance from east to west in one day of travel by motor.

My father, in spite of poverty, and the poor educational advantages of his day, had secured a good education; that is he accumulated more than the usual amount of knowledge for those of the rural districts. He was a lover of books; a great reader; and had the best memory of anyone I have ever known. So many times I have wished he had left me the heritage of that wonderful memory. It is from him that I get my love of books and tendency toward literature. My father was a hard worker and did well all kinds of manual labor that was in demand in his time. He cut cord wood, rove clapboards, which were used as the roofing of most buildings then, bottomed chairs with elm bark and all kinds of farm work and found plenty to do.

But, along with the many good qualities, he possessed one that worked ruin and was the cause of all our poverty; that was the love of drink. Whiskey in those days was as free as water. But, oh, how different in results! One gave life, the other death. Water given by the Creator, refreshed and cleansed and caused the user to look up to the One who gave it. The other brought degradation, poverty and vice. My father was not a constant drinker, but periodically he gave way to the longing, would leave home and be gone for a week or more leaving my mother to do the best she could with the family.

In relating incidents, which manner of narration shall make up this rambling and rather useless history, I will relate one thing that keeps vivid in my memory which happened while we still lived in the house of my birth. This, of course, I have gathered mostly from my mother. The house stood at the top of a small hill, as most houses did in those days owing to the fact that the land then, and especially in that section of our county, was wet; drainage by tiling had not yet been accomplished; and there was scarcely a cabin builded that was not set, for this reason, on some elevation. A path led down from the house toward a rail fence which formed the boundary of our yard. One led also to a spring, and forked off from the other path. From this fence a lane ran to the nearest neighbor, a Mr. Smith DuBois. One day Oscar and Lizzie, the neighbor's children, had been over to our house and my mother gave my older brother and me permission to go over and play with them for an hour. We ran together down a path toward the fence and my younger brother, Frank, then about 18 months or 2 years old, ran after us crying because he could not catch up, and blinded by tears, took the wrong path and ran right into the spring. We children on seeing this, began to scramble down from the fence to go to the rescue; but mother had also seen him and his plight and ran ahead of us and rescued him; but not before he had had a complete submersion. My own submersion, which happened at the same place, and much in the same manner came, of course, before that of my younger brother and comes to me from my mother's report. I must have been very young then; a mere baby. My half-brother (Mother's son by her first marriage) who was then ill with consumption, that old fashioned, long drawn out disease of the lungs, was living with us and was very fond of me, perhaps because I was little and the only girl in the family. He reminded mother, on this occasion, that she had better look after the baby, as he hadn't heard me for some time. Mother looked out and saw the water splashing in the spring and ran as fast as she could and dragged me out. I was totally submerged and almost fatally; she carried me to the house head down. I was unconscious and both of them worked over me for a long time before I showed signs of life.



From the home where we children were baptized in the spring, we moved to a tenant house owned by Samuel Murphy, a little less than half a mile north of the first home. After about a year we moved again to the John Dare place in the same neighborhood; and after another year we went to the John DuBois farm, still in the same vicinity where father was employed. This Mr. DuBois was a distant relative on my mother's side. Then, in another year, for moves were frequent with farm tenants; in 1851 when I was seven years old we removed to a cottage or cabin as they were more appropriately called, for they were all built of logs. It was situated on

a farm owned by Recompense Murphy, son of Samuel Murphy previously mentioned. This farm was located some three miles west by south of our former neighborhood. Here my father worked again as a hired laborer and we remained here until I was 12 or 13 years old. This cabin was situated between two high hills which were heavily wooded and a stream coursing its way between, but not without somewhat of a level valley between the hills. Looking upon this home with the eyes of the world it was a very poor home; but to me it seemed a paradise, and I always think of it as my valley home. It was here I spent the happiest days of my life. Memory goes back through the years and brings to me the scenes of that valley, and of those days, and they seem, like life itself, a mixture of the happiest and the saddest. We never wearied, my brothers and I, of wading the stream, finding deep holes under the roots of trees in which to fish and in which the boys sometimes went swimming. In the thick woods on either side we found the wild flowers, the wild grape, pawpaws, mayapples, ginseng and nuts and played among the birds and squirrels. What more could childhood need to make it happy? Not only in the summers and delightful autumns, but in winter we were merry sliding, skating and playing in the snow.

I have spoken of the mixture of happiness and sadness; and strange to say, it was here in my happy valley home I had also my first and great sorrow. In this changing world even children cannot always be happy. During the time we lived here another half-brother, William A. VanMeter, the third son of my mother by her first marriage, who had always lived with us except when he worked out among the farmers, came under the spell of that same dread disease which took my other half-brother, consumption. For a long time he had been unable to do any difficult work; but he made patchwork quilts, and mother would sell them among the farmer's wives; he also plaited straw for hats, mother sewed and shaped them, these, too, were sold in the neighborhood and many of them were worn in the fields in the summer. It was in this way he earned money to secure medicine and little comforts he needed. Will was then a young man and a christian, the most real of any I ever knew. He also took a great interest in me and not only made a pet of me but taught me to piece quilts and to plait straw. He often talked to me about sacred things, and next to my mother he helped me most, and I loved him and have mourned him all the years; for even yet, after nearly 80 years, my eyes grow dim when I think of him. He was 21 years of age when he went away and I was in my 11th year; and I recall well many details of that death and funeral; and as this narrative is concerned with the difference between those more primitive times and now, I will tell of his death and funeral:

As I remember he had failed gradually for some time prior to his going and one afternoon in early autumn my father sent for our near neighbor and landlord, Recompense Murphy, a good old saint of God, and he came and spent the night. Oh, I remember so well the events of that evening! It was cool and there was a fire in the fireplace. Mr. Murphy and my father sang - and the singing of this song always recalls that scene:

"How firm a foundation, Ye saints of the Lord,
Is laid for your faith in His excellent word "



Then they kneeled in prayer, my mother kneeled at the bedside of her dying boy and I kneeled beside her; and, as the prayer proceeded Will laid his hand gently on my head and smoothing my hair softly murmured, "O, my little girl. I wish I could take you with me." Mr. Murphy prayed earnestly for the soul that was soon to meet his God and I could hear Will in a low voice ardently praying also. Soon after this Mother took me to bed and, childlike, I was soon comforted by sleep. In the morning when I awoke I looked around and saw that Will's bed was gone, and lying there on what was called "the cooling board" was the form of my beloved

brother with a sheet spread over him. His face was not covered and upon each eye was one of the large copper cents then in use. The sight of these coppers on his eyes somehow struck terror into me and I screamed loudly "Take them off! Take them off!", and my father did take them off and gently covered the face.

Sometime later in the day another good friend and neighbor whom we all affectionately called "Aunt Beccy" Fry, another sainted soul came and made the shroud. Shrouds were invariably used then as the burial dress, instead of the suits and dresses of today; just as the shroud replaced the "winding sheet" of earlier times. Someone had been to the store and bought the material, which was a stiff white cambric, or paper muslin. The garment was cut on straight lines like a sack, with straight sleeves sewed into the arm-holes; then after it was put on the body, a strip of the material was tied about the wrists, which gave the appearance of a kind of ruffle which came down well over the hands. When a hem was needed, the material was turned up and pressed with the finger.

The burial casket was then always called a "coffin" and differed from the modern casket mainly in shape, being narrow at the head, more narrow at the feet, but widening at the elbows; the idea, I suspect, being to follow the outline of a prone body. These coffins were as primitive as the rest of the appointments. Somewhat earlier they were often made by a carpenter, or, by a neighbor who had the skill and the lumber; then I have known them to be purchased and trimmed at home; for, even in their sorrows people had to depend more on themselves and each other than upon the hired help of the present time.

The day of Will's funeral the neighbors came to the home; the coffin was carried out and placed in a spring wagon; for, it was unusual then for a hearse to be used in the country and by the poor. Mr. Murphy took the family in his carriage and the small procession moved out and proceeded to what is still called "Old Bath" church and cemetery, which formerly was the Presbyterian church and cemetery of that "Jersey Settlement" and in which graveyard many of those pioneers found their last resting place; and there, after a service in the church where Mother and her son long held their membership, the body of my beloved brother was lowered into the grave that had been made for him in a row of graves that contained the mortal remains of his father and four brothers.

Now we have had a view of the funerals of that day, what of the weddings? The farmhouse in which we lived on the John Dare place, previously spoken of, was in a nameless hamlet, which afterward became a village with it's store, blacksmith shop, shoe shop, saw mill and church; and in one of the houses of the seven or eight comprising the hamlet lived a widow with twin daughters, Charity and Margaret. The day came when Charity was wedded to a Mr. Dare and my mother attended. It was the custom then for the wedding to take place and a wedding dinner to be served that day at the home of the bride; and on the following day a banquet was served at the home of the parents of the groom, which was called the "infare" dinner. On the day



following the wedding mentioned the bridal party was to pass our house on the way to the groom's father's. Like any child, I was on our front fence to see them pass. There were five couples besides the bride and groom. They came horseback, the ladies on side saddles, with long flowing riding skirts. They rode two and two, and, in view of the nature of the occasion, and the fact that we never saw anything in the nature of a parade, it made quite an impression on my child mind. One week later my half-brother, John Van Meter, married the other twin in the family mentioned; and this completes my story of weddings in my youthful days. I will only add that I have never yet known why those twin girls, married within a week of each other, did not have a double wedding; for women, you know, young or old, are curious.

I must now go back to the time of the home in the valley where my half-brother died. As I stated, we moved there in 1851, between my 6th and 7th year and I started that fall to the old pioneer log school house in the "Farm Hill District", Fairfield township, Franklin county. Of course, I had attended school for short periods where we had lived; but my real school life began here. This was a large district and yet there were not many pupils. My brothers and I walked up a long, steep hill, then across a ten acre meadow then along a path and through a wood; fully one and one-half or two miles to the school. I wonder if I can give you a picture of that old building as I see it in my memory?

It was a large room built of round logs notched at the ends and built up, as those who are old enough to have seen a rail pen built up. The space between the logs was filled with small pieces of stone and daubed with mud. The fireplace was large for it was easy to get fuel as the house stood in the edge of a forest on the land of Hunter Burk, Sr., I believe. There was one door situated on the south side of the building and one small window on either side of the house. The furniture was large, cumbersome desks, which were all of wood and enough material in each to make four modern desks. The seats were logs sawed in halves and placed flat side up; holes bored in the round side and two legs put in each end. No danger of the seats breaking down! A row of these seats were placed along the wall on the north side and partly across the end farthest from the fireplace. The desks were in front of the seats and here the older pupils sat, two at a desk. Seats such as I have described were placed in front of the desks for the smaller children. There were one or two desks, also, on each side of the fireplace. The children's wraps were hung on pegs driven into the logs. Higher up on the wall were two large pegs where at least one of the teachers I remember, kept some half dozen switches; and he did not fail to use them, either. Oh, how we did fear and dislike that teacher! To illustrate his method, one afternoon just as the spelling class was called to the floor, one boy stuck his seatmate with a pin and, of course, the boy jumped and shouted "ouch", then there was a laugh. The teacher ordered the lad out on the floor at once and reached for one of the switches. The lad did not obey. The teacher then pulled him out, right over the other boy, and gave him a severe thrashing. He did not stop striking the boy until the switch gave out. The chastized boy then staggered back into his seat, and laying his head on his arms, sobbed bitterly. All this time the other members of the class stood in a row in the middle of the room in awed silence. The teacher then ordered the crying lad to come take his place in the class; but the boy only sobbed on. Then he was told to come out or he would give him another whipping and reached for another switch; when the boy's older brother unable to stand it any longer and who was about 18 years of age (for they went to the country schools then sometimes until they were of age) who had witnessed it from his place in the class, stepped out and said to the teacher "If you touch that boy again, I'll give you the damnest whipping you ever had. You had no right to whip him in the first place; it was the other boy you should have whipped". "Well", said the teacher, "why didn't you tell me so?" "It was your place to find out before you whipped" said the



brother. The teacher put up his switch and no more came of it. I scarcely knew this boy, Charles Filer, then; but nine years later he became my husband; and the boy chastized was his brother, Aaron.

The children in this school in those days were as they are in these days just as full of fun and mischief as children always have been, and played many pranks. It was the custom then, and maybe still is, in the schools to hold up the hand to attract the attention of the teacher; and the request usually was that they might leave the room. Some of the bolder ones in this school used to get permission to go out, then go around to the window and look in and make faces at the pupils to make them laugh. One day I asked to go out and went and climbed up to the window and looked in; I thought I would make them laugh, too; but the teacher

saw me; and when I came in I was made to sit between two of the boys for a time as punishment. It was punishment to me then but I suspect a few years later it would not have been so serious to me; but, I never tried looking in again during school hours. I continued going to this school until about the year 1858, when a new building was erected about a half mile north of the site of the log school; the term of school was lengthened and more efficient teachers employed. The new building was a frame structure and much superior to the old one in every way. I went to school in this house two winters or, until 1860. B.F. Townsen was the teacher the first year and was to have been the second, but he sickened and died and a substitute filled out his time. This teacher who died helped me greatly and encouraged my ambition to become a teacher. But, how often do our youthful dreams come true? During the winter of 1860 there were two things happened and one in the winter following which had much to do with shaping the trend of my after life. First and most important, during a revival meeting held in the "Old Franklin" United Brethren Church under the leadership of Rev. B.F. Morgan I, with many other of my friends and schoolmates, gave my heart and allegiance to Jesus, my saviour; second, during that meeting Mr. Filer began walking home with me from church, which ended in courtship and marriage. Then, on account of the start of the Civil War, my school days ended, which ended all my dreams of a wider usefulness through schools and literature. But, even now, I have my daydreams! What would life otherwise denied be without them? Now, in my old age, widowed and living alone, most of the time I dream of the past and think of how good God has been to me after all; of my children and my grandchildren.

When I was some 12 or 13 years old, or, about the year 1856, we moved from the home in the valley to a place over the west hill about a mile or more to what we always called "the corner house"; so called, no doubt, because it stood in a corner where the road turned south leading from a road running east and west. This was our home for a few years; while living here, the principal event of historic interest was the birth of the Republican Party. I recall very well a few incidents in this connection: my father, born and reared in Kentucky, had always been a Democrat but became a convert now to the new party and was a very ardent advocate and local leader. Mother had always held with the old "Whigs", but also took the new party in sentiment, which was the only way open to women then. This new Republican Party selected that year as their standard bearer John C. Fremont, "the pathfinder", as against James Buchanan, the Democrat leading the other major party. My father was a very enthusiastic member, and with others of his faith, thought they would raise a pole and fling "Old Glory" to the breeze that all might know that these were very ardent Republicans residing hereabout. So, they made ready the pole, purchased a flag; had a fiery speaker come from the county seat to tell the people how they should vote. The pole was raised, the flag flung to the breeze; the great speech made, but, alas, the next morning the pole was gone - sawed off close to the ground; and, so far as I know, no one of the new party ever knew where it went. This did not dampen their ardor, however; for they planned a great day



at Brookville the following Saturday. There was to be an all day mass meeting with a great torch light procession at night. A farm wagon was secured and trimmed with flags and bunting and all of the Republican girls were rounded up, from 12 to 20, until the wagon was filled. All the girls wore white dresses with blue sashes from the left shoulder to the right side, with the words "Fremont And Freedom" in white letters on them; The girls also carried little American flags. How we did wave them and shout "Fremont And Freedom" whenever we passed a Democratic house. A cedar wreath completed the uniforms of the young women. Two young men rode along with us as escorts or marshalls and how proud they looked with their sashes and plumed hats! These young men guided us over the seven miles to the county seat. Ours was not the only wagon so arranged nor was ours the only grand escort, for there were many from all parts of the county. The torch light parade was great and very impressive; especially in the eyes of the young girls. The men and boys

who marched so, were always uniformed in some special way; usually in those earlier days with oilcloth capes of some selected color and caps with peaks in front trimmed in red, white and blue, or maybe two colors and an emblem or two and a display of brass buttons. A procession of several hundred men in such uniforms and carrying lighted torches was a grand sight when watched from a distance at night. But, to the end story, in November Buchanan, the Democratic nominee, was elected and this new party did not seem so grand. But it did not die - far from it - in 1860 there was another campaign and another candidate on the Republican ticket; none other than the grand old "Abe" now the revered and loved martyr president of Civil War fame.

After the Civil War and the death of President Lincoln, everything swung back, as far as possible to the old days; but, alas, there were many missing faces and empty chairs, for there were many who did not return from the war. But, God was good to me again and my father, after three enlistments and long service, my two brothers and my intended husband all returned and entered, like other things, into normal civil life.

When I was between five and six years old and we lived on the Samuel Murphy place, an incident occurred that was never effaced from my memory. It also illustrates the dire influence of the taste for liquor upon my father, and upon his household. My father had been working steadily for some time and saved some money; and he began begging my mother to accompany him on a visit to two half-brothers of his. One of these half-brothers lived on the Indiana side of the Ohio River and the other on the Kentucky side, some six or seven miles below Cincinnati. My mother, knowing his weakness, was long in deciding, but finally yielded; and early one morning in Mr. Murphy's carriage we started for Uncle Tom Clayton's. It was a long day's drive in early autumn and we enjoyed it. Upon reaching Uncle Thomas' we found him ill with inflammatory rheumatism and helpless; but they were glad to see us and we stayed with them over night. In the morning Mr. Murphy returned home and some time during the day a brother of Aunt Sally took us to Uncle Jim's on the other side of the river. He drove a wagon with all on board onto a flat boat and we were rowed over; which was very wonderful to my older brother and me for we had never dreamed such a thing could be done. Uncle Jim lived in the little town of Hebron, Kentucky and had a blacksmith shop. There my father met one of Uncle Jim's neighbors, who took him home with him and treated him to a drink, and when he returned to Uncles', my mother knew that what she feared had happened, she saw and she knew all; and her only thought now was to get back home. The next morning, then, we went down to the river and were rowed across on a skiff. The morning was cool and frosty and my father took us into a shop of some kind to wait for a boat, in which we had planned to go as far as Brookville. Father did not return and Mother finally left the shop and went to the towpath along which we walked toward Uncle Tom's, arriving there near sundown, where we passed the night. We left again the next morning and Uncle Tom gave Mother a dollar and told her to go to the canal and watch



for a canal boat, to board the first one going up and to give the captain the dollar. He told her also, that if she did not get a boat, to come back. But Mother did not heed this, but kept on up the towpath carrying my little brother, my older brother and I taking turns carrying the bundle which contained our belongings. All that day we tramped; and as it began to become twilight Mother began to make inquiries about a stopping place for the night. But people seemed suspicious of a woman tramping the towpath with three little children. Some had sickness, some had no room; some never took in strangers. Looking back now, I do not blame them, for, I suspect, I would have done the same. At last, weary and discouraged Mother said "I'll ask once more at the house just ahead and if they will not take us in, we will go over there to the woods and lie down under that beech tree until morning". But God was good to us and merciful, for the man at that house listened to Mother's story closely, then questioned her, asking if she knew of a certain man in her neighborhood. She told him that she knew the man and that he lived near Mr. Murphy for whom her husband worked; and when

she mentioned Samuel Murphy, he stopped her and said "That man is my brother and I have visited there and met Mr. Murphy; and I believe your story, you and your children are welcome here over the night". So, we were soon washed and dressed in clean clothes from the bundle and seated at the supper table with that family; and, I suspect, did ample justice to the supper, as we had eaten nothing since early morning.

The next morning the kind man gave Mother a slip of paper and told her to go to the canal, that the boat went through a lock there and would take passengers, and she was to give the captain the slip of paper. We did not know what was in that paper but we learned its import later. We got aboard the boat then and Mother offered the captain the dollar but he did not take it. We left the boat when it arrived at Brookville; and upon leaving Mother again offered her dollar, but it was again refused and he told Mother the man who wrote the note said he was not to take anything from her, so we knew what was in the note. In Brookville we went to the sister's of the uncle we had visited, a Mrs. Gregory, who was a half-sister to my father and lived not far from the canal. There we remained another night. Mother intended to start on the next morning and walk the remaining ten miles to our home, but, Uncle Jim Gregory told her to stay there and rest and he would go up town and see if there might not be some farmer from her neighborhood who had come in with grain for market, or with a grist. And, sure enough, after a while he came back with the good news that a neighbor was in who would be going out about 1:30 in the afternoon and would go right by our door. So, after an early dinner, Uncle went up with us to a grocery store where we were to meet our neighbor and before dark we were set down at our own gate. Once more Mother offered her dollar and once more it was refused, and it served to buy food until Father returned home. And, I must not neglect to relate that later Mother knitted socks, sold them, and returned the dollar to Uncle Tom Clayton. One night, about a week later, my father returned home sober, ashamed and full of remorse; but we all knew that any resolutions he might make would never be able to withstand that terrible thirst whenever it came again. People sometimes have wondered why I hate liquor! I loathe it and hate it from the bottom of my soul! I would like to stamp out every vestige of that vile thing, and send it back to hell where it belongs!

Before I pass on now to a few more historical references, I shall include another personal incident that always remains a memory spot, not so much for what it is in itself as much as what it meant to me then. I hope the value of this is not lost by being disconnected with my account of my valley home, for, it was while living here it took place. The creek that ran near the house was, in normal times, a tame affair, but at other times, of continued rains, and, especially, at the time of the "spring freshet", it became a raging torrent sweeping everything before it. When we first moved there the main stream on one side of the house was all there was



of it, but later for some reason it parted above the house and made a channel on the other side of the house and the two came together again a short distance below; leaving the house on a kind of island. In course of time the channel on the east became almost as large as the channel on the west. At the time of which I am telling it had rained and rained and the water was rising rapidly. My father was away from home, and in the evening Mr. Jonathan Murphy, the son of our landlord, came on horseback to bring some flour, as they had been to the mill; and seeing the situation insisted that we all go to their home until the rain and high water was over. He reminded Mother that there was danger of the water getting into the house and that we might be cut off from safety by the raging waters on all sides. Mother did not want to go as she had remained there during other freshets; but he finally persuaded her. While Mother was getting ready to go Mr. Murphy took my older brother and me across the east channel, one riding in front and the other behind him on his horse. The foot logs were both gone by then. Everything loose was gone. The water was then up to the horse's sides and my bare feet touched the water, short as my legs were. He let us down and hurried back for Mother and Frank;

but when he rode in to bring them across the stream the force of the water was so great that the horse and all were carried a distance downstream; and brother and I ran screaming down the bank, expecting to see them all swept away and drowned; but they landed safely enough, only wet and breathless. We proceeded to the Murphy home, and Mother's delay was accounted for in that she had brought dry clothing, and although we were as wet as wet as proverbial "drowned rats" we were soon dry and comfortable with the Murphys. The next morning it had stopped raining and waiting until 10 o'clock, we went home. We were asked to wait until noon when the same son would take us home, but Mother felt she had been care enough to her good neighbors; so we walked home and waded the creek to get to the house. The water had run down but it had been over the porch and had run under the door into the house and had been over the floors to the depth of several inches.

Now I must bring my rambling narration to a close. I have lived to see the old and slower ways pass and newer and more rapid ones come in. I have seen my father cradle wheat for he cut grain with a harvesting implement that has almost become extinct. The cradle had a sythe-like blade and a series of wooden bars, called fingers, parallelling and curving with the blade at equal distance apart, forming a cradle for the grain. This implement was swung like a sythe, but with more of a swooping and curving up motion, then with a swing back depositing the gathered grain in a swath at the side of the operator. Another worker followed and raked the strewn grain into bundles and bound them by hand into sheaves, using the straw of the cut grain, as a tie or band. Children usually carried the sheaves and put them in piles and another man shocked them. After the flail, grain was threshed with horse power, first by a horse walking up an inclined moving bridge or floor, and instead of traveling, kept the endless floor moving, which in turn operated the machinery. Then came another "horse power"; which was a geared arrangement which was fastened to the ground and turned round and round, the horses being hitched to a pulling beam extending out from it, then a smaller wooded bar in front of the horses to which a leading rein was attached. A man stayed with the team and kept them moving at about the same rate of speed all the time. The first machine I knew about for threshing the grain was known as a "chaff piler"; this was a cruder form of the modern separator. It must be remembered, however, that the modern thresher did not come all at once, but by stages, like the improvement of all machinery. The first thresher or separator was much more crude than the present ones. First, you know, sheaves were bound by hand and one of the men stood beside the "feeder", who put the grain into the machine and cut the bands as the sheaves were pitched to them. Then there came the first self binders which bound the sheaves with wire, and these wires had to be cut before the unthreshed grain could be put through. Then came the twine



binders, and the bands still were cut by hand. Then the self feeder of the present, which cuts its own bands. The same is true as to the way the straw and chaff were taken care of; also the threshed grain. The first "straw carrier" which elevated the straw by means of an endless belt, or carrier, and which could be elevated as the threshing progressed, but which had no lateral motion, then, the revolving stacker and now the blower, when the straw is taken care of with really no help. The same thing is true in regard to artificial light. In the pioneer cabins of our country and within my memory and experience were used the saucer and the toe string, or rag, lard or other grease was placed in a saucer, and the string, as a kind of wick, was laid over the edge of the saucer. This saucer was usually placed upon an upturned bowl or some other object to raise it higher than the table, the string was lighted, and thus was procured a kind of light. Later came the "tallow dip"; when a candle wick was cut twice the length of a candle and hung on a small rod placed between two chairs. Perhaps three of these would be arranged at a time. These wicks were then dipped into melted tallow, and hung back to dry or harden; then they were dipped a second time, and so on until they were the proper size; and this crude candle was used instead of the grease wick. Next came "candle molds". The first one we had

made only three candles at a time. The wicks were put over a stick, the same as with the tallow dip; then put through the molds, which were the shape of candles, with a hole in the pointed end, through the wick was threaded; then melted tallow was pured into the mold and allowed to harden; and when taken out, we had 3 nice, smooth candles. Later we had molds that made 12 candles at a time. Then came the "candlestick" and, "snuffers", and when we had all of these we thought we were really up-to-date.

I have seen the coming of the telegraph; the telephone; the automobile; the flying machine - in fact; I saw and knew the Wright boys when they were little fellows; and knew their mother; and aunt and grandfather. Now the radio, and all the modern uses of electricity. I have seen our country pass through several of its wars, and have lived to see it reunited and loyal and today second to none of the great nations of the world.

My husband passed to his reward in 1918; a baby daughter died in 1872; our oldest daughter went in 1914. I have 11 living grandchildren, and one dead; 22 great grandchildren; and 2 great, great grandchildren. Both my daughters who lived to maturity married ministers; my youngest son is a minister. My oldest son is a member of the Methodist Episcopal Church to which I belong. I believe all of my grandchildren are members of some church; and most of the great grandchildren. All are in some useful occupation or profession; are true, law abiding citizens, and are trying to serve their generations. I, to , have tried to serve my day. I am now old and growing feeble, and await my summons to join the loved ones gone before; but, my life is not unhappy. I have my cross to bear, and a heavy one to me; I am partially blind. I cannot see to read or do the many things I always loved to do; but, God is still good. My children and grandchildren are lovely to the old mother; everyone is kind; so, I sit and dream; living the past over, as old folks do. I listen now to the radio, and by this means I still learn much; and I hear what the old world is doing. I listen to beautiful music, and splendid stories, and can almost feel that I am still a part of it all. Thus, I am not of the world any more, but I can hear the world go by. Some of it does not please me, but I have learned long since to forbear and be charitable. I feel that the next world will please us all, if we have lived rightly; at least I shall know soon. I do know that God, who would make such a beautiful world for us to live in here for so short a time, would not make one less beautiful for us through eternity. So, let us all try to so live that we shall be worthy of ...

[unfortunately, it appears that one or two lines were cropped from the bottom of the page of the photocopy.]