

wagon to Flatwillow. He raised grain and had a few cattle. He bought some adjoining land, part of which was the land of his brother-in-law, Fred Todd. They had one more daughter at Flatwillow, Henrietta Jane (1913).

Lillis Todd Hawkins died at Flatwillow in 1924 and was buried there. Henry rented the homestead, after his wife died, to his son-in-law, William Johnke. In 1926 he took an extended trip with his daughter Henrietta to Minnesota visiting relatives, then south to New Mexico and on to California, ending in Lewiston, Idaho. He was a lawns keeper for many years. During World War II he worked in a defense plant in Avon, Idaho, and Tipton, California. He stayed in California doing yard work until he lost his vision. He died in 1963 and is buried in Ontario, California.

Martha Ethel Hawkins married William De Haven of Flatwillow in 1925, and they had two children: William Henry (1925) and Lillis (1926).

Evelena Hawkins married William Johnke of Flatwillow in 1920. They had ten children: Phyllis (1921), Farrel (1922), Evelyn (1924), Shirley (1925), Rozella (1930), Dale (1932), Jeanine (1933), Corrine (1933), Gwen (1936) and Richard (1940). (See also JOHNKE)

Henrietta Jane Hawkins attended grade school at Flatwillow and graduated from high school in Lewiston, Idaho. She got a bachelor's degree in education and started teaching school in 1925. She married Robert Platt Nelson and lived on a farm where they raised three children: James Platt (1938), Patricia Jane (1941), and Robert Todd (1942). After the children were raised, they lived in Butte, Montana. They moved to Orofino, Idaho, where they retired.

After the Bill Johnkes left the homestead and went to Fairfield, Montana, the place was leased to various people through the years, and finally sold to John Hughes.

HAYS, Robert Porter (Sec 13-12-26) Robert Porter Hays was born in 1882 in Milners Corner, Indiana. He came to Montana in 1912 and homesteaded at Hells Hollow, south of the town of Flatwillow. He lived there until 1932, at which time he purchased the Herman Bott place on Flatwillow Creek (Sec 13-13-26), where he lived until his death in 1941.

Porter Hays was a highly respected member of the community and was one of the first county commissioners of Petroleum County. He held the position for ten years.

Porter was never married. He had two brothers, J. W. Hays and Paul Hays, however. Paul Hays, the son of Porter's brother John, was born in 1897 in Greenfield, Indiana. Paul came to the Flatwillow area in 1915, and made his home with Porter. He served in World War I and after his discharge, returned to Flatwillow. In World War II he served in the Seabees. He never married and is buried in Flatwillow Cemetery. Porter Hays is also buried there.

HEGARTY, James (Sec 13-13-25) James Hegarty was a personable, well-liked bachelor whom many remember as being active in school and community affairs. His



James Hegarty and a not-so-friendly rattlesnake

homestead was very near the site of Yellow Water Dam, and when the CCCs began work on the project in the mid-1930s, he was hired as a foreman. Previously, he had been appointed assessor for the Yellow Water-Flatwillow area. When the CCC camp was dismantled and moved to Lewistown, Jim continued in his supervisory position and moved to Lewistown.

In 1945 Jim visited Winnett on his way to Indiana. He had been working at Hanford, Washington, during World War II, in defense work.

HEUSCHKEL, Julius Max (Musselshell Co.) (Sec 12-11-26) Julius Heuschkel, son of Julius Max Heuschkel, started in 1978 to gather information and recruit help in his endeavor to identify the graves in the Wallview-Richardson Cemetery. He has published a booklet each year on his progress, and these booklets are on file at the Winnett library. The following paragraphs are excerpts from his first publication "Flatwillow Bench Homestead."

"Julius Max Heuschkel was born in the city of Leipzig, Germany, in 1863. In 1884 he migrated alone to the United States . . . Our mother, Emma Weil, was born on an O'Fallon county farm near Shiloh, Illinois, in 1872. There were four children in our family: Viola (1904), Theodore (1906), Julius (1908) and Ruby (1910).

"On March 1, 1910, a trio of Illinois men, including father and Emil and Ernest Zimmerman, departed from St. Louis, via rail to Roundup, Montana, to explore the possibility of homesteading there. The river and running-water creek land areas had already been taken over by earlier settlers and larger ranch owners. All the local waterholes and non-flowing, wet-weather creeks had also been taken. Accordingly, our father 'located' on a 160-acre plot of 'benchland.'

"There was no time in which to hand build a house before cold weather set in. So dad constructed a dugout.

The excavation was completed in a few days, using a two-mule team, hand-held, trip-dump type scoop-scraper. One end of the dugout was for family occupancy, and the further end, with their private entrance door, was for livestock. This is one example of partial solar heating in Montana. Almost no heat was lost through the walls and the roof was oriented for southern exposure. Any sunshine was absorbed by the black roof. In the winter when heat was needed there was little sunshine. The cold winds just slid over the top. We were to build two more houses in our ten-year stay.

"We provided emergency overnight shelter, lodging, and food for a lost shepherd during a howling blizzard. The following spring, to show his gratitude, he brought dad two healthy orphaned lambs. These we raised as family pets. But at threshing time dad proceeded to butcher one of them to have meat for the crew. The remaining lamb came running and baaing into the house seeking protection. It was a pathetic sight and experience. None of we children would eat the cooked lamb. It almost started a family revolution. Life on the prairies was cruel at times.

"The typical homestead shack is depicted, in vivid detail, as the flimsy tar paper shack type of construction. There were some such houses, in our neighborhood, without even tar paper. Once, when coming home from a Roundup winter trip. Dad stopped at a similar house to visit, get a cup of coffee, and to warm himself — he thought. Upon entering the only door he was startled to see the lone occupant, fully dressed and wearing a heavy overcoat, sitting on a chair that was placed on top of the cast iron cook stove!

"The old-style, one-room schoolhouses had some real advantages. Everybody, grades one to eight, recited in front of everybody else. The young thus learned both from their own efforts and from listening to the older ones. In turn, the older ones could always be reviewed by the younger. Lack of reading matter, of any quality level, was one of our problems. I was probably not the only one who had read every book at home, at school, and in the neighborhood, including the Sears-Roebuck catalogues. It was surprising how much a young boy could learn from those catalogues. We read *The Wonder Books of Knowledge* and *Atlas of the World* again and again, from cover to cover."

HILL, John For several years, John Hill worked for B. F. Lepper on the Lepper Ranch on Flatwillow Creek. He later operated the ranch, raising sheep and growing alfalfa seed until the place was sold by the Lepper estate to R.B. Fraser. (See also HILL - Musselshell River)

HILL, Otto (Sec 32-12-26) (Land to Willman-Kingery-Willis-FLB-Clement-Iverson) The Hills had two children: Ruth (1911) and Otto Lee (1916). In 1915-16 they ran a post office named Fermus, which was on the line between Musselshell County and Fergus County. The name was comprised of the first three letters of each county's name. The post office only operated for about a year.

HOLLAND, James (Sec 11, 12-12-25) (Land to Pet Co)

HOLLOWELL, Jesse (Sec 30-12-26) (Land to Blodgett Loan-Florida Ranch-Clement-Iverson) Jess and Nora Hollowell had two children who attended Wallview School: Hazel (1913) and Jessie (1914).

HOPPE, Gust (Sec 30-12-27) (Land to Pet Co-USA) Gust Hoppe married Elsie Hass and three children appear in the Wallview School census: Inez (1914), Fredrick (1916) and Wilma (1917). They lived in the Howard Coulee area.

HOPPER, Ruth (Sec 33-12-26) (Land to Townsley-FLB-Clement-Iverson) Ruth Hopper was a bachelor-girl homesteader. All bachelor men and women built their claim shacks with only one room, so they were very crowded. One time two bachelor girls decided to go for a buggy ride on a moonlit night. They harnessed the horse, hitched up to the buggy, locked the house and went for a nice moonlight ride. This didn't turn out too well, as the horse got frightened and ran away. They were thrown from the buggy and bruised up some. They walked home, then discovered that they had lost the key to the door. The only window they could get through was high from the ground, presenting them with great difficulty getting back into the house.

HOSE, Emma (Sec 28-13-25) (Land to Wierschke)

HOVEN, Peter (Sec 24-12-27) (Land to Anderson-USA) (See also HOVEN — Kelley)

HUGHES, John (Sec 30-13-25) John W. Hughes and wife, Lottie I. Shields, homesteaded in western Petroleum County. Most of the Hughes land was in Fergus County, however. In 1956 John purchased the old Tom Berkin place from R. M. Melby but, because of litigation, did not get possession until 1959.

In 1959 John J. Hughes ("Jack," son of John W.) and his wife, Shirley Smith Hughes, moved into the Melby place with their infant sons — John R. (1957) and James W. (1959). They lived on the ranch until John W. retired in 1965. They then moved to the upper "home" place in Fergus County. In 1962 Jack and Shirley had twins, Jason and Julia. One more daughter, Joyce, was added in 1967.

For several years the Hughes hired managers for the Melby place. Some of these were: Les and Carol Lewis, Gary and Diana Walker, Lowell Lucas, and Mike and Patti Vlastelic.

In 1977 their son John R. Hughes took over the Flatwillow property. He married Deb Ackerly in 1978, and they have two girls: Brandi Jo (1982) and Danna Jo (1986).

Homesteads in Petroleum County now owned by Hughes: W. Anderson, Berkin, Ritch, Carlson, Coggshall, Dailey, Enright, Fry, Hallen, Halverstead, Kepford, Lambert, McEneaney, Palmer, Petek, Ritch, Rutherford, Wilkinson, Wright, Wynhoff, Zimmer, Chandler, Darnell, Hansen, Klezka, Kohen, Markland, Torvund, Youderian, Merkel, Weslyn, Wynhoff, Brown, Dean, Todd, W. Johnke, Hus, Haugen, Otrin, Edwards, Duggan, Franzen, Gummere, Hansen, Hawkins, Janusek, Johnson, and

McAllister. They also have grazing rights on BLM land and Montana State leases.

HUMBLE, James C. (Sec 25-13-25) Charlie and Ellie Humble lived west of the Ben Rostad place on the hill, on the road to Yellow Water. They moved to Kelso, Washington. Their place sold to the Wells Dickey Co., who lost it to the bank. It is now grazing district land.

HUME AND YACKLEY There is an area on the western edge of Petroleum County which was homesteaded by the Carmichaels, the Tottens, the Herndons, and several others. These people, though living in what would become Petroleum County, were much more a part of the Battrick and Grassrange community than Winnett or Flatwillow. They received mail at Battrick and the children went to the Carmichael School (just east of the Fergus-Petroleum County line) and/or the Battrick School in Fergus County.

Pauline Hume Butler lived in the area between 1913 and 1917. Her mother died when she was born, and she was raised by her mother's twin sister, Minnie (Mrs. Frank) Yackley and her Grandmother Hume. The following are excerpts from her memories of homestead days:

"We had a little house on a flat space with a large garden . . . I remember a watermelon patch. I spent a lot of time with my little female dog named Bummie, running around the prairie looking down prairie dog holes. Once I fell in a cactus and had to have it pulled out of my leg with pliers. I carry the scar today. The family was concerned about my getting bit by a rattlesnake as they were all around in the rocks and in the holes in the ground. I remember we had some rattles that came off a rattlesnake.

"We had a herd of sheep and a big ram that was mean. I remember the shearing of the sheep. This ram had big horns and was very dangerous to a person of my size. I was very much afraid of him. An instance that happened was when our family got together for a Sunday dinner when I went out of the house to play and the ram started after me. I didn't see him. My cousin, Lorena Hume, took a club and hit him over the head. Then, Uncle Bird took a hammer and hit him so hard that he almost knocked his brains out. Anyway, I was saved from being gored by the ram's horns.

"We had a lot of get-togethers. One time, I remember visiting Aunt Bess and Uncle Walt Carmichael. They had three boys and one girl.

"I remember the corn bread and corn meal mush — that is why I don't like corn meal now. We lived on it. There was a big heating stove in the house and a cook stove in the kitchen. In the winter it got so cold — about 40 degrees below — and you could turn your back to the stove and burn it and see your breath.

"I remember visiting my aunt and uncle, Minnie and Frank Yackley. They lived on land near where my grandma owned her land. It was walking distance. Their house was a log cabin with rocks all around up close to the small windows. Inside, I can remember it had a dirt floor, and

the beds were way up in the air.

"I believe we lived there for about four years before we turned our land over to the Myers. I don't think we could pay for the taxes. Grandmother bought a brand new Ford with side curtains. The night before we left, Gramma put my hair up with rags so it was curly. Neither Gramma or I slept a wink that night. Next morning when we left, we loaded our suitcases, Uncle Lew, Will Bird, Gramma, and myself in the new Ford and started out for Poulouse County on our way to Washington.

"This is about all I can remember. Only after I came to Washington, for many a night I'd dream about flying over our home in Montana in the air. I would look down and see the whole place. Before I'd fall, I'd wake up. These days in the 1980s, I fly over it in a jet airplane!"

HUS, Helge (Sec 5-12-26 and Sec 33-13-26) Helge Hus came from Norway with his cousins, Tom Reisater and John Berven, in 1898. They each took claims on Pike Creek and went into the sheep business as partners. Helge sold to John and Tom in about 1908 and returned to Norway.



Andrew and Helen Iverson

IVERSON, Andrew Andrew Iverson, son of Tom and Annette Iverson of Dovetail, was born in Lewistown, Montana. Helen Wagar, daughter of Edwin and Nellie Wagar, was born in 1908. She came from Missoula, Montana, in 1927 to Dovetail as the teacher of the Dovetail School.

Andrew and Helen were married in 1929 and were blessed with five children: Louise (1930), Mrs. Don Baldrige; David (1932); Thomas (1938); Edwin (1947); and John (1950).

The following is taken from an interview with Helen:

"Following our marriage we lived with Andrew's folks for a while, then moved to Missoula and lived for several years in that area. In 1941 Andrew came back to help his parents for the summer. While here he went to Flatwillow

to help his cousin, Ole Olson, hay. Ole had a lease on the Clement Ranch and was not going to renew it, so Andrew decided to take up the lease. Thomas, David and I came over the first of December. Louise had chicken pox and measles so she stayed with the Wagars until the first of the year.

"We brought over two horses and four or five milk cows. Elmer Bauer trucked our sheep from Dovetail. We lived in a log house that had been the cookhouse. I believe it was built in the 1880s.

"There was an icehouse, a smokehouse and a kind of a shed which had a straw roof put over woven wire. There were three houses: a house that some of the Clements had lived in just east of the cookhouse; the Clement Sr. house; a small log house that sat between the old cookhouse and the Clement Sr. house. This little house had been the first voting place of that area. Jim Charters, a sheep buyer, told us that that was the first place he voted. He voted there in 1882 while the state was still a territory.

"We bought the place in 1946. It contained 4200 acres of deeded land. Mr. Clement had bought three sections over in the Delphia country that had springs on them, and he controlled the water. Since he owned the water, he would move his sheep onto the section and graze all around it until the grass was used up — then move on to the next section he owned, etc.

"When the grazing act was put in, Mr. Clement didn't put in for any grazing rights. Andrew did a lot of work to get grazing and finally did get grazing over north of Winnett. We bought a couple thousand acres over there and he got grazing for three thousand acres worth. The sections to the east we sold to Goffena.

"We ran 1200 sheep on the place north of Winnett. The coyotes were so bad that we had to have a herder over there. Even with the herder, we lost lambs. In the summer of 1972, we took 1400 lambs over there and brought 800 back — 600 lost. Andrew said we couldn't do that anymore, so we sold the sheep and bought cattle to run on the district. We kept that land until 1977. By then Andrew was so sick he was unable to carry on the work of the place anymore, and Edwin was taking over. Edwin didn't want a lot of cattle, so he sold the land north of Winnett to Earl Brady.

"When we first lived here we used to put up ice. We would have it in the icehouse. We carried the water up from the creek for everything until we got electricity in 1948. In 1951 Andrew built a new house. He used the old Clement house and built onto it and around it and made a new house. Then he put water into it, piped from a well I had dowsed near the creek. In 1959 that house burned to the ground, and we moved back into the log house for three years while he built another new house. In 1962 we moved into the new house; it burned in 1985. In 1964 we bought the Bowen Ranch, known locally as the Shaw Ranch, from the heirs of Richard E. Bowen.

"There was no school in the area when we came, so I

taught the children at home the first year. In the summer of 1942, the Monsmas, Koetitzes and we got a school moved in and started the Lone Prairie School again with Mrs. Koetitz as teacher.

"In 1945 my parents, Nellie and Edwin Wagar, moved out to the ranch with us. They worked for us, doing what they could to help. They celebrated their fiftieth wedding anniversary in 1953, and a few weeks later my father died. Mother continued to live with us until, at the age of 90, she died in 1975."

Louise Iverson (1930) had a degree in education. In 1954 she married Don Baldrige. They have four children: Nadine (1956), Ruth (1958), Evelyn (1963), and Timothy (1965). Don is an agronomist and works for the Montana State University.

Thomas Iverson, son of Andrew and Helen, was born in 1938. He married Diana Doris Douglas in 1960. They have three children: Paul Douglas (1961), Philip Andrew (1963) and Mark David (1968). They are presently in Kenya, Africa, where Thomas is teaching mathematics in a college.

Edwin Iverson (1947), son of Andrew and Helen, was married to Paula Smith in 1968. They have two children: Isaac Keene (1973) and Nancy Louise (1976). They are teaching in Mullan, Idaho.

John Iverson attended the Lone Prairie School, then high school in Huntley Project and Roundup. He attended Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. He married Patricia Lynn Garrett in 1971. They have three children: Michael Garrett (1974), Andrew John (1976) and Nicole Lynn (1979). John and his father, Andrew, often worked up an act for the community programs at Flatwillow — black face, school humor, pantomimes and other humorous acts.

IVERSON David The following information for the David Iverson family was submitted by David and Ella Iverson: David was born at the family home near Bonner, Montana, in 1932. He graduated from Roundup High School and attended Westmont College in Santa Barbara, California. He got his master's degree in Biblical Literature at Wheaton, Illinois. In 1954 he leased what was originally the O. C. Osborne homestead, known locally as the William Arganbright place (Sec 33-12-25).

David married Ella Marie Dover in 1956 in a garden ceremony at the Doverdale Ranch near Buffalo, Montana. He taught school in Grassrange and Winnett, and in 1963 they were able to purchase the ranch. David was ordained a Baptist minister in 1958 and started ministering in Winnett that same fall. In 1960 he and the congregation built the present Baptist Church. Although the Iversons have a large ranching operation, David and Ella say that their priority in life is the church and church work.

Ella Dover Iverson received her high school education in Buffalo, Montana, and a degree in education from Westmont College at Santa Barbara, California. Her teaching job in Windham, Montana, provided the funds to start furnishing their home — a stove and refrigerator,

and the first sheep. Ella is still teaching music lessons and helping in the ministry. She loves flowers and has a beautiful yard. Most of the plants are started in a small greenhouse that she has on the ranch.

David and Ella have two children: Daniel Wesley (1958) and Janelle Lorena (1965).

Daniel Iverson was born in 1958. He attended school in Flatwillow and Winnett and graduated from Winnett High School. He then went to LeTourneau College in Longview, Texas, where he received a degree in Automotive Technology. In 1978 he married Dixie Ross at Terry, Montana. They moved to the Iverson ranch and bought the house that Edwin Iverson had built. They went into partnership with Daniel's father, David.

Dixie Ross Iverson, daughter of David and Mildred Beason Ross, was born in Terry, Montana, in 1952. She came to Petroleum County in 1974 as an elementary teacher in the Winnett school system. She is also a music teacher. Daniel and Dixie have four children, all born in Lewistown: Delight (1982), David (1983), Daniel (1986) and Drew (1987).

Janelle received her high school education in Winnett, then went to Bryon College in Dayton, Tennessee, where she got a degree in accounting. She is presently employed by U.S.G. Corp. in Empire, Nevada.

JELINEK, John (Sec 15-13-25) (Land to Jelinek-Bartlett) John Jelinek was born in 1880 in Jackson, Minnesota. He married Marie Angeline Vrchota in 1906. She, too, was from Jackson. The couple had two children — George John "Jinks" born in 1908 in Britton, South Dakota, and Margaret Lillian, born in 1910 in Aberdeen, South Dakota.

"Jinks" is well remembered by many people in the Winnett area for the interesting and amusing letters he often submitted to the Winnett Times. His talent for writing has left a wonderful heritage, not only for his family, but for all the people of Petroleum County as well. The following article was submitted shortly before his death in December 1988. Though it is longer than most family histories, it is printed in full because it tells a homestead story which is typical of many but written with unusual sensitivity and humor.

"Sometime during 1915 my father and mother closed out their marriage. To the best of my knowledge they never spoke or wrote to each other again.

"In the fall of 1919, my mother, Marie Jelinek, had accepted work as the housekeeper at the Newbranch Ranch near Ross Fork, Montana. This was a 12 to 14 hours a day job, with no Sundays off.

"My sister 'Peg' and I were with her and attended the Tognetti School. I was at that time 11 years of age, and my sister was two years younger.

"In March of 1920, my mother received a letter from a banker in Grassrange, Montana, wanting to lease her homestead land for oil exploration. The letter came to my mother as an unexpected and bewildering surprise, because she had no homestead land. But wait — unknown



"Peg" Jelinek (1920) sitting on the steps of her mother's homestead house holding their pet lamb, Mary

to my mother, my father, John Jelinek, had filed on a homestead of 160 acres adjoining the Nick Lancelle farm which is only a few miles west of the Yellow Water Dam. At the same time, he filed on a homestead in my mother's name, Marie Jelinek.

"Oil had been discovered in February 1920 about 23 miles north and east of Winnett. By the spring of 1920, the 'oil boom' was in full bloom. Speculators and others with a bit of money were buying leases wherever a geologist indicated that there might be oil.

"The banker in Grassrange, whose name I don't remember, agreed to 'grub stake' my mother to food, fuel, and a place to live, plus a small stipend each month.

"Leaving my sister and me at the Newbranch Ranch, my mother took the train from Lewistown to Grassrange where the banker was to meet her and take her to the homestead.

"Several weeks after her departure to Grassrange, I received a letter from her which contained enough money for my train fare to Grassrange and instructions concerning what to do when I arrived there.

"I got off the train expecting the banker to meet me and take me to the homestead. There was no banker, however, and the cold was numbing. I walked up and down the depot platform a time or two and still no banker. I went into the waiting room of the depot; there was no one there. I was shivery cold, and there was little heat in the waiting room. I felt completely alone and desperate. To this day I remember the tears starting down my cheeks, and I was so cold. It was March the 13th, the kind of March 13th that now and then blasts into Montana from the north with little, if any, warning — the wind blowing a gale and the snow traveling almost parallel to the ground with visibility bordering on zero.

"I didn't know which way to turn nor what to do. About then, the waiting room door opened and the conductor

was framed in the doorway. In a loud voice he intoned, 'All aboard for Winnett.' I rushed past the conductor and climbed back into the train coach where there was a sense of security and where there was heat coming from the pot-bellied stove secured in the corner of the coach.

"I took a seat as near to the stove as I could get. The train gave several jerks, and we were on our way to Winnett. All of a sudden, I realized that I didn't have a ticket, and I didn't have any money; the conductor was coming down the aisle. Soon he was standing beside me. He said, 'Ticket, please.' I had some time before been told that without a ticket a person could get 'kicked off.' I explained to the conductor that I had to get to Winnett but that I didn't have enough money for a ticket. A man sitting across the aisle from me said, 'Don't worry, kid, I'll pay for your ticket.'

"As the train clickety-clacked along, it came to me that I did not know why I was going to Winnett and leaving Grassrange behind. It occurred to me that somehow I had not followed the instructions which my mother had written for me in the letter. I took the letter from my pocket. It told me when I arrived in Grassrange, I was to go to the bank (about two blocks from the depot) and tell the banker 'who you are; he will take you to where I am living.' In the letter she wrote that the homestead was about halfway between Flatwillow and Grassrange. I asked the man across the aisle if Flatwillow was very far from Winnett. He said, 'No.'

"The train came to a halt in front of the Winnett depot. I had not been in Winnett since the summer of 1917. That was the year the first official train arrived in town.

"I walked down the steps of the coach and began walking up Broadway Avenue toward Main Street. The wind was blowing the snow into drifts on the sidewalk. The weather was brutal. My light mackinaw, overalls and stocking cap were rather lightweight for such heavy-weight weather. True, I wasn't above the 'Dew Line,' and had I had thermal underwear, down jacket, insulated shoes, mittens, and pants, it would have been a 'piece of cake.' As it was, I was miserable and cold.

"As I walked, I noticed men pounding nails into boards of several buildings under construction. Each construction place had buckets sitting on the ground with a flame (a fire) burning around the rim of the bucket. Several men were warming their hands by a bucket. I later learned that the buckets contained crude oil from the newly discovered wells in the Cat Creek area. I was also told that the nails were warmed a bit before pounding them into the boards. This was to keep the nails from sticking to the fingers of the nail-holding hand because of the intense cold.

"At last I got to Main Street and found my way to the post office. At the time the post office was across the street from the present Petroleum County Courthouse. Tony Rasmussen's General Store adjoined the post office.

"I asked a lady at the post office window if the stage car carrying the mail to Flatwillow had gone yet. She told me

that the road to Flatwillow was 'drifted in' and that Mr. Rhea would not be leaving with the mail until the next morning. I informed her that I needed a ride to Flatwillow. A voice through the window said, 'Be here about nine o'clock in the morning. What's your name?' I told him my name.

"As I was standing looking out of the window at the drifting snow, the reality of my situation came to me. I had no money for food and no money for a bed. I was feeling sorry for myself when a voice said, 'George, what in the world are you doing here?' I turned and there was Marie Afflerbach. I had had her for a teacher several years before. She inquired if I had a place to sleep. I said, 'No.' She told me that the hotels and rooming houses were 'full to the brim' and that men were paying \$3.00 a night to sleep on the floor of hallways and lobbies of several hotels. I am sure that she understood my plight. She put her arm around me and said, 'You come to my house at the other end of main street and have supper. I am sure that I can find a place for you to sleep.'

"After we had eaten supper, a young man showed up and took me to his house. I remember his name was Bert Greenfield — a teacher, I think. After a time another young man made an appearance and we went to bed.

"Around midnight, another man put in an appearance, and I was moved to the foot of the bed where I lay crosswise the rest of the night with three sets of feet as my companions; rather an indelicate situation.

"In the morning the breakfast menu was pancakes and coffee.

"I was at the post office by 9 a.m. The mail truck was a Model T with hard, rubber tires. A log chain was wrapped around the rim of each back wheel by threading the chain through the spokes of the wheel. These served as makeshift tire chains and caused the truck to be very rough riding.

"The cab of the truck had short side doors and side curtains with about half of the isinglass squares missing. Mr. Rhea gave me a blanket to wrap around my legs. The blanket seemed rather thin after an hour down the road bucking snowdrifts. It was slow going and took up a little over two hours to travel about 15 miles. I do remember that we arrived a short time before noon.

"I remember standing in the store and telling the man who ran the store at Flatwillow (where the post office was located) that I was trying to get to where my mother was living near the Rowley Ranch.

"Again, the warm hand of charity and kindness was extended to me. A lady, I suppose that it was Mrs. Redd, (Ed. Mrs. Davis) asked me if I was hungry. I don't remember the food but I do remember the warmth of the kitchen stove. The lady told me not to worry about paying for the food. I had told her that I didn't have any money.

"A while after I had eaten, a man in a knee-length sheepskin coat with the collar turned up high and a scarf tied around his ears, nose, and mouth came stomping into the store. I looked out of the store window and saw

two horses tied to the rail in front of the store.

"He took off his mittens and stuffed them into his coat pocket, took off the scarf and put it on the other pocket of his coat, and then he unbuttoned his coat, took it off, and hung it on the back of a chair. He took off his hat and pounded it gently on his leg to dislodge the snow. He put the hat back on his head and spread his hands wide and held the palms toward the big heating stove that stood in the center of the store. He reached in his pocket and handed Mr. Redd a slip of paper.

"Mr. Redd looked at it and said, 'Oh the Rowley Ranch. This young man is trying to get out that way where his mother is living alone on a homestead. Her name is Jelinek (while eating, I had told Mrs. Redd about my situation). Maybe you could take him out there.' The man said, 'Yea, I can take him. It's right on my way, but he will need more clothes than he has. Hell, he'd freeze to death with what he has on now.'

"After a time, Mrs. Redd had me dressed in a pair of too large overalls turned up at the bottom over the pair I had on, a shirt with the sleeves rolled up over the shirt I had on, an old pair of sox over my overshoes, and a blanket which she had formed into a sort of a cape that went over my head and pinned under my chin with a horse-blanket safety pin. I remember the get-up to this day. The blanket covered my shoulders and arms. She also tied a scarf around my ears, face, and nose.

"Mrs. Redd filled two seamless sacks about a fourth full of groceries. The man tied the sacks together with a rope. With a sack on each side of the horse, he wrapped the rope around the saddle horn. I was boosted into the saddle by Mr. Redd. My feet did not reach the stirrups, but the sacks helped to wedge me into the saddle and helped to protect me from the wind.

"The horse that I rode had on a halter with a lead rope tied to the saddle horn of the saddle of the horse that the man rode. It was not an easy situation, but the sacks holding me in the saddle seemed to be my salvation. Too, he walked the horses most of the time with only an occasional trot.

"Just before we left the store, I heard someone say, 'It's ten below.' All I can remember about the 12 miles or so trip was how miserably cold I was in spite of the extra clothing. The man was correct. I sure as 'hell' would have frozen without the kindness of Mrs. Redd. The extra clothes saved me.

"Darkness was coming rapidly. The wind had died down and without warning we turned off the road and the horses broke into a trot. I thought that I could see a dim light ahead. Sure enough, in about a minute we were in front of a dimly lit sheepwagon. The man gave a muffled shout and before I realized where I was, my mother was helping me down from the saddle. My mother said, 'Thank you.' Then, with a wave of his hand, the man and his horses were gone into the darkness.

"My mother soon had me in the sheepwagon and helped me to shed the clothes that Mrs. Redd had bundled me into at Flatwillow. The stove was putting out

heat and, in spite of the smallness of the sheepwagon, it was a welcome refuge from the cold and uncertainty that had been my lot for the past two days.

"The sheepwagon could probably, in good faith, be called the granddaddy of the modern-day travel trailer. It was widely used in Montana, Idaho and the southwest during pre-homestead days when cattlemen and sheepmen held sway. It was moved from place to place by a team of horses and in later years by pickup or truck. It was basically a warm-weather residence for the shepherd whose responsibility was the care of a band of sheep on the unfenced government-owned land of the time.

"The sheepwagon was usually a regular wagon box on wheels, about ten feet long and four to six feet wide, with a bowed top covered with canvas. In the front of the sheepwagon was a narrow door (usually a dutch door) and in the back an 18" x 18" window. Attached to the outside of the vehicle, usually, was a small barrel for drinking water. The herder usually got his water for washing, etc. where he watered the sheep each day. Almost always, built on the back of the sheepwagon, there was a large box with a lift lid that could be locked, if necessary; in those days it was seldom necessary. The box was used to store tools, wood, and other such odds and ends.

"The sheepwagon that had been placed by the banker for my mother to live in, had a bed crosswise in the back. A four-lid, wood-burning stove was to the right of the door. To the left of the door was the 'grub box' in which one stored food supplies and sometimes pots and pans and other eating equipment. The lid to the box also served as a bench.

"Under the bed was more storage room. Hooks for hanging clothes were placed in the oak bows that held up the canvas roof. A 'coal oil' kerosene lantern hung from one of the bows in the center of the wagon. There was hardly enough room for one person to turn around in the domicile. With two people, it was truly crowded.

"About a week after I arrived, one of those famous Montana chinooks blew in, and soon the snow had melted and fresh water was in the coulees. A time for washing clothes, airing bedding, and enjoying the sunshine.

"Time passed and with it went April, and we were soon knee-deep into May. There was no school available to attend, but my mother had a stack of books and magazines (where she got them, I don't know), so she and I spent a good share of our waking hours reading. We tried to take a walk every day, but generally the weather cut short our efforts. However, I remember what a thrill it was when the first yellowbells came into bloom. The round cactus began awakening to produce the beautiful flower in its center.

"It was a wonderful time for a twelve-year-old boy who built dams to catch the water from the melting snow, who hid behind a sagebush and piqued the curiosity of the antelope (as Indians once did) by waving a bit of white

cloth or paper to coax the animal closer and closer until the animal would become suspicious and race away.

"Spring in Montana was to me a never ceasing wonder. It was a time of the awakening of the soil, nature stretching and shaking to rid itself of those cold days and weeks when the sun hid itself behind snow clouds and sundogs who told us that more snow and/or cold weather was to be our lot. The horses and cattle looked unkempt in their winter coats. Movement of men and animals was at a minimum. A time of silence when no birds sang, no ducks squawked. The geese had gone south.

"With spring came the song of the meadowlark, ducks with their little ones swimming beside them, colts racing and kicking up their heels, calves drinking milk from their mother's udder, lambs running and then bouncing stiff-legged. Later in life I was to observe that youngsters on the school playground would run and jump and kick up their heels like colts just for the sheer joy (I guess) of being alive in Montana 'now that spring is here.'

"It is a time when the skies turn blue, the grass green, and the mosquitos have not yet hatched. There is a feeling of relief and optimism mingled together, and nature offers promises of a bountiful harvest. Robert Browning, the poet, wrote, 'Oh, to be in England now that April's there.' To paraphrase his writing, we would say, 'Oh to be in Montana now that early June is there.' The poet who wrote, 'What is so rare as a day in June,' must have visited Montana.

"On one of those days in May, two wagonloads of lumber, one behind the other, arrived, and my mother picked a spot on the highest ground where the lumber was unloaded. Several days later two carpenters arrived, and in two more days they had constructed a 10 x 14 foot house with a gabled roof covered with cedar shingles. The door, in one end of the house, opened to the east. A two by two foot window was on each side and at the end of the building. The carpenters sided one side of the building, but they never came back to finish the job. My mother and I worked some during the summer to nail on the rest of the lap siding, but we never did get all of the siding in place.

"After having been confined to the sheepwagon for almost three months, my mother was almost in rapture over our new home. By this time my sister had joined us, and life took on an almost euphoric feeling for the three of us. The smell of the new pine wood used in the construction of our house had a delightful new smell.

"Mother made curtains for the windows and hung several pictures on the walls. We also pounded nails part-way into the bare two-by-fours to serve as hooks on which to hang our clothes, pots and pans, and other equipment. This may not seem like much today, but, at the time, those nails were like pennies from heaven after three months of living out of boxes stuffed under the bed and boxes on boards under the sheepwagon which we kept covered with a tarp.

"Another amenity that the new house brought was a

privy with a door. Mother had abhorred the set-up at the sheepwagon which consisted of a three-sided shield of lumber which opened away from the road. It was without question a truly crude set-up, especially for a woman. The set-up created no problem for a twelve-year-old boy.

"Soon after moving into our new home, we had another member added to our family. One morning we discovered a band of sheep approaching our land from a southwest direction. My mother suggested that I meet the band and ask for a bum lamb in payment for allowing the sheep to cross our land. I did as she said and the sheepherder gave me a cute lamb that was distinguished by having brown-colored wool on its head. We named her Mary, and she became the joy of our lives that summer.

"For a time we fed her on diluted condensed Carnation milk. She soon was nibbling on the fresh green grasses. Mostly buffalo grass covered the highland on which our house stood. Mary became a true pet. We could call her while she was grazing, and she would come on the dead run and stop at the door by bounding stiff-legged. If the door was open, she would jump into the house. We tried to keep a constant eye on her when she was out grazing for fear that coyotes might try to kill her.

"We kept her in the house at night. She had a special box by the door, a box that I managed to pound together from scraps of wood left by the carpenters. With the coming of daylight seeping in the windows, she would begin to stir, and my mother would get up with her and leave the door open so that she could watch her while she made a pot of coffee.

"My sister and I would continue to sleep for several more hours before we took up the duty of watching Mary while she grazed. Once in a while I would get up for the daylight watch, letting my mother sleep late. Mary usually finished her grazing by ten or eleven o'clock in the morning. She would then spend the rest of the day until about four o'clock in the afternoon resting in the shade of the house.

"In September we gave her to Anton (Halverson) Aasurd, who lived by Petrolia. We never did see her again.

"About the time that we moved into our new home, Sinclair Oil Company (the same Sinclair who was involved with Albert Fall in the Teapot Dome scandal) spudded-in a well across the road from the Nick Lancelle farm buildings. Nick Lancelle was the grandfather of the present owner, Dorothy Bartlett. The building of the derrick and the spudding-in of the well in the search for oil created great excitement for many miles around because of the prospect of opening up a new oil field. The 40 acres that the well was on adjoined my father's homestead. Many of the 'honyockers' had dreams of wealth which never came true.

"I was on hand for the spudding-in ceremony. Several dozen people had gathered around and, while the onlookers cheered, the walking beam of the standard

derrick lifted up the drill bit and let it fall to the ground with a dull thud.

"As I remember the facts, a 20-inch hole was drilled into the ground to the depth of about 20 feet. A piece of 20-inch casing (pipe) was inserted into the ground and given several whacks by weight dropped by the walking beam. The pipe extended about three or four feet above the floor in the drill house. This casing served as a sort of a base for all future drilling.

"I stayed around most of the rest of the day and saw the actual spudding-in of the well — the actual start of the drilling of the hole that was to go down (I don't remember, but it seems to me) something around 1600 feet.

"The drilling of the well brought a new dimension to our life for a time. At the spudding-in I met the son of the cook at the oil well. He was about my age and we became friends. I don't remember his name, but I do remember that we spent much time 'fooling around' together, as our mothers called it. Our mothers became acquainted, and my mother walked from our home, a distance of about three quarters of a mile, to visit and help with the cooking and the dishes.

"After the drilling crew had eaten at noon, the lady cook, her husband and son, plus my mother, sister and I would sit around the table visiting and enjoying the good food that was available. I do remember the wonderful canned pineapple and the jams and jellies that were not a part of our diet at home. Now and then we had some fresh fruit and also, on occasion, fresh vegetables. The fresh fruit especially was almost unknown in our house. We did have an apple now and then as a special treat. It was such a wonderful situation at the cookhouse; it seemed it could not last, and it didn't.

"One day we arrived at the well and men were already starting to tear down the derrick. The drilling was over, and there was no oil showing. The 'wild-catters' were out of money.

"There was a sadness among all of us that the happy visiting and eating together times were over. The lady cook gave my mother some dishes and canned food which we took home. We made one more trip to the well to bid the wonderful people good-bye and to be the recipients of a share of the last of the food. The family was going back to their homestead which was some miles north of the well. We were never to see them again, and their names are lost in time.

"Almost as soon as my mother arrived at the sheep-wagon, Nick and Joe Lancelle, father and son, called on my mother and offered to be of help in any way that they could. I kept in contact with them over the years as long as they lived. I have also kept in contact with Dorothy Bartlett, Joe Lancelle's daughter. In fact, Dorothy now owns my father's homestead and perhaps my mother's also.

"Two young bachelors by the name of Otto and Louie Hazer, who lived about five miles from us toward Flat-

willow, showed up several times with garden lettuce and radishes from their garden. My mother 'oohed and awed' over the fresh produce. But they brought too much lettuce and it seemed to me we had 'wilted lettuce' for weeks.

"Now-a-days when anyone comes to us bearing a gift of garden lettuce, I look at the lettuce with a jaundiced eye. I have a feeling that they, like I, have had enough with one serving, and having planted too much green stuff, hate to throw it away so they try to pass on to someone else their mistake. Like a gift of trout, it isn't a gift of sharing but rather a riddance. Rarely does a trout fisherman eat all of his catch.

"The Hazer boys took me to Flatwillow several times to a Saturday night dance. They, along with the Lancelle family, were kind and considerate folks. I shall always remember their cheerfulness and up-beat attitude. Their cheery 'HELLO' was always wreathed in smiles; great people.

"Another close neighbor was Mathew Riley. Mr. Riley, with his wife and small daughter, lived about a quarter of a mile from our home. What Mr. Riley was doing on that land was a mystery to everyone who knew him for he was totally blind. His wife and daughter were his eyes. I can still (in memory) see his seven- or eight-year-old daughter with her hand in his, walking around outside their tarpapered homestead shack. He hired me to help him build a quarter of a mile of two-wire barbed fence. I don't remember when we started work or when we finished. I do remember he paid me seven dollars and fifty cents for my work. That is all I remember about the Rileys.

"Soon after my working for Mr. Riley, mother suggested that she and I build a fence between her land and that of my father's. She ordered cedar posts and barbed wire to be delivered. Soon she and I (with my sister trying to help) launched the fence-building project.

"It must have been an unusual sight to see a lady in a long dress, with a wide-brimmed hat on her head, working with a twelve-year-old boy, digging post holes and setting posts.

"My mother was a strong woman who worked hard most of her life, and she was the real key to the success of the fence project.

"It may be that the unrolling of the barbed wire was the most difficult part of the work. We unrolled the barbed wire by inserting a broom handle through the center of the roll of wire. Mother and I each carried one end of the broom handle as we struggled through the sagebrush to 'string' the wire. The way we struggled to unroll that wire still clings to my memory. We lifted and pulled and jerked to get the roll of wire through the tall sagebrush that stood in our way. We unrolled a total of one half mile of wire to make the quarter of a mile of 'fence.' I put the word 'fence' in quotes because to call it a fence would be to stretch the imagination a long, long way. Actually, the wire was looped from post to post. We just were not able to stretch the wire to amount to anything. But we did

finish it before it finished us.

"About once a week mother would have us go through a ritual-like program, which for the want of a better term I shall call 'Search and Seize.' My mother and my sister would go outside while I took my clothes off. I would then call and mother would come into the house and, with my hands covering the front of me, she would search the exposed parts of my body for wood ticks. If she found one already attached, she would put a few drops of turpentine on the tick and then pull the tick off. I would then take a look for the spotted fever carriers on the front of me, and destroy those present by pulling them off and putting them in the stove to burn to death. Then, I would go outside and wait while my mother and sister took care of their own 'Search and Seize' activities. This was before the days of tickshots and antibodies.

"One of my most vivid recollections is of the lightning and thunderstorms that came at night. As I recall, we had five or six of them that summer. It seems that they came soon after we had gone to bed. The first indications would be faint rumblings, then dull light coming in the windows, and then Mary stirring in her wooden box. My mother was very apprehensive about the storms. Her sister's husband was killed by lightning in South Dakota. Also, some homesteader (I don't remember his name) had lightning strike the corner of his privy. It ripped the corner of the structure and started a fire. This added to her concern and called for an extra 'Hail Mary' when the lightning came close.

"For some reason I enjoyed the excitement of the storm — the rain, the wind, the lightning — and the thunder I really enjoyed. I had learned somewhere to count between the lightning and the thunder to calculate the distance of the lightning. Our little house with its three single board walls, was almost like a sounding box. It actually intensified the thunder sound. There would be almost blinding flashes of lightning and at the same instant the thunder would crash. The whole building would vibrate. That would call for another Hail Mary, even from me.

"Several times after a severe shaking, I would duck my head under the covers to shut out the sound. After a time I would listen. There would be no sound. I would pop my head out from under the covers, and 'lo and behold' there would be my mother drinking a cup of coffee. The rays of the sun would be strewn on the floor through the open door and Mary would be eating a treat from the table. The sky was a light blue, jeweled with different shapes and sizes of clouds. I would dress and go outside. The air would smell so fresh and clean. God would be in his Heaven and all would be right with the world. 'Oh, what a beautiful morning; oh, what a beautiful day.' 'Then Heaven tries the earth if it be in tune; And over it softly her warm ear lays.' Oh, to be 12 years of age and so much life ahead! Maybe those Hail Marys did some good after all.

"Mary's favorite 'kitchen scrap' was corn bread which

was a rather steady part of our restricted diet. She also liked the 'shepherd bread' that my mother made. Regular baking powder biscuits would be mixed, but instead of rolling out the dough and the cutting round biscuits, she would pour the dough into a square baking pan. After baking, she would cut the bread into squares as one would cut a cake. We considered those squares rather sumptuous eating, especially when covered with Carnation milk gravy or with a mixture of bacon grease and Karo syrup.

"With the seven dollars and fifty cents that I earned working for Mr. Riley, I bought a baseball, a bat, a glove, and a mitt. Yes, all for \$7.50. I bought them in Lewistown. As a belated birthday present, my mother gave me enough money to go by train from Grassrange to Lewistown, stay overnight, buy the baseball equipment, and return to Grassrange. As I recall, the banker who was 'grub staking' my mother took me in a Dodge automobile to and from Grassrange.

"My mother quite often played 'catch' with me. She said several times that she was the best player on her eighth grade team. I thought that she was very good. I am sure that she measured up first-rate with her son at that time in his life. (A THOUGHT: It could have been that the playing of catch launched him on his vague 'career' as a baseball player that ended at 38 years of age when he pitched a complete game of baseball against a Lewistown team and was on the winning side!)

"My mother continued to get financial help from the banker although the oil frenzy in the area of the homestead had diminished somewhat. There always seemed to be a rumor afloat that went something like this, 'Oh, they got oil in the well by Lancelles, but the big oil companies won't let them open up the well.' I made several trips to the well to see for myself if there was any showing of oil.

"About four or five feet of casing rose out of the ground, from which a steady flow of warm water emerged day after day. In other words, it was an artesian well. A person could watch the flow of water and think that there was now and then a trace of oil in the water. It may have been. Rumor helped to keep hopes alive. However, the hopes were not as strong as when my mother moved into the sheepwagon. The story of the Cat Creek oil discovery seemed to be the main catalyst to perpetuate 'oh, there's oil there. They just capped it for the present.' I doubt that hardly any of the early-day settlers went to their grave without believing that 'someday they'll strike oil there.'

"My most vivid picture of the whole homestead venture was when I came within two hands breadth of losing my life. The banker had loaned my mother a twelve gauge double-barrel shotgun for 'protection.' I had shot a jackrabbit with it, but when we skinned it, we found boils in the flesh of the rabbit. My mother had me bury the rabbit. We were not about to eat the meat in spite of having been told that if the meat was boiled for at least an hour,