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Glen A. Smith

[Lady mumbling in the background]

This is a brief sketch of the early life of Glen A. Smith. I was born in 1879 at Hume, Missouri, which is some sixty miles south of Kansas City. My parents immigrated from Illinois right after the Civil War and are of Holland descent. I was born on a farm and my father farmed until I was about fourteen years of age. In my early boyhood, I did practically everything that was to be done on the ranch and raised turkeys and pigs to find money to start my education. But at the age of fourteen my mother developed cancer and it took the earnings of myself and my brother to see that the family was properly taken care of. Therefore, much of my early education was thwarted. However, at the age of fourteen, I went back to Fredricksburg, Illinois, to live with a brother of my father's who was comfortably fixed and who promised that if I came and took care of him during the rest of his days that he would will me all of his property. This seemed to be a pretty good deal for me. I had the opportunity of going to a local school and doing farm work for him. But, for some reason or another, he and I were not able to get along very well and I became very dissatisfied with the situation and decided to try and go to war. The Spanish-American War was at its height, and I ran away and went to St. Louis, Missouri, to register and try and get into the Army. While I was not old enough, I was large for my age and it was pretty easy to convince the recruiting officer that I was eighteen years old. But before I was able to register, a police officer tapped me on the shoulder and wanted to know if my name was Glen Smith. I told him yes and he said he wanted to talk to me, so he took me off to one side and told me that my father had raised objections and notified the authorities that I wasn't old enough and that he thought the best thing for me to do would be to go back to my uncle's.

This I readily consented to and went back, but shortly after this, my older brother, who was ten years older than I was, went down to Oklahoma, which was a new territory having been opened up for settlement only a year or two before. This area was known as the Strip, and it was the last time that a race was staged for settlers to settle on the land. I decided that was a good place for me to go to so one day I boarded a train and went to Ponca City, Oklahoma, which at that time was only a wide place in the road with a general store, a print shop, blacksmith shop and a restaurant with a few rooms attached. I met my brother there who had become acquainted with several farmers and had worked on several ranches. I went to work for a rancher for ten dollars a month and my board. I gathered corn for a month or two and then I was assigned the job of hauling firewood from the Indian Reservation across the Arkansas River. I had a team of four horses and the farmer for whom I worked had his brother go along with another team and we made several trips hauling hardwood,

generally white oak. But his brother was such a poor help that I decided I'd rather be by myself than to have to do most of the work. So I asked him not to send his brother along with me on this particular trip. I got my wagon loaded with some pretty good sized oak logs by the use of a cable and a team to skid the logs onto the wagon. And being a very rainy, cold day, I never once thought that the horses would be thirsty. But when I drove into the Arkansas River, which was about three feet deep and a hundred yards across, the leaders immediately stuck their heads into the water and began to drink and it was necessary to stop the team. By the time the wheelers were ready to drink, the leaders had their fill and were anxious to go because the water was pretty chilly with a little skim of ice floating in it. So, when the wheelers raised their heads the first time, I started the team, but the wheelers immediately stuck their heads into the water and the leaders jumped and broke the double-trees, jerked me to the end of the tongue and ran away and put on quite a show, running all over the sandbar, tearing the harness up and so forth. I was stuck in the middle of the river with a four horse load with only two horses to pull it and the wagon was generally [gradually] trickling down into the quicksand. So in order to make sure that I got out of there at all, I loosened the chain and rolled four or five logs off to lighten the load and was able to pull out with the wheelers. It took me some time to gather up the pieces of harness, and get the leaders together and led them home. That was my last trip hauling logs across the river, which suited me very well.

Shortly after this, I made the acquaintance of a man who owned a ranch on the Blackwell River some thirty or forty miles north of Blackwell, Oklahoma, and made arrangements to look after a bunch of cattle on his ranch during that fall and winter. I was to ride the fence lines and keep them up and see that no cattle got away, and see that the cattle had water. There was plenty of grazing available therefore no feeding was necessary. It was not a hard job, but a rather lonesome one because I was all by myself and the nearest neighbor was some Indians that lived across the river from the ranch. There was one young fellow who was about my age that used come over and visit me. I did my own cooking and kept a cow and made butter and occasionally I gave this young Indian a jug of buttermilk. We became quite friendly.

One evening I noticed a big campfire on the ridge above the river on the opposite side, and heard a lot of beating of drums and so forth, so I decided to investigate and see what was going on. I therefore saddled up my saddle horse and rode down to the river and crossed over, tied my horse in a gulch, and sneaked up to see what was all the powwow about. I found that they had built quite a stockade of blankets and tarps and a circle of logs around the outer edge, with a fire in the middle and were having quite an Indian dance. But, being a little shy as to what would happen to me if they found me, I did not venture too close. Finally a bunch of dogs began to bark and raise cain, and I ran down to my horse. I was about to mount him and pull out when a

couple of Indians ran in and grabbed me. I was pretty well frightened for I didn't know whether they were going to cook me up for supper or what. But, at any rate, they took me back up to the camp and set me down between two old Indians that wouldn't talk and not even run, but they insisted that I sit there and keep quiet. Well, along about eleven or twelve o'clock, this young friend of mine came in and I motioned for him to come over to me. He came over and I asked him what they were holding me for. He said he didn't know, he just came. He said he'd find out, so he went over and talked with some Indians and he came back and told me that they thought that I was trying to steal some of their horses. Well, I told him to tell them that I didn't want any of the horses, all I wanted to do was to go back over to my own little bailiwick. Well, after considerable discussion why they finally permitted me to leave, but sent an escort with me to make sure that I crossed the river. And boy, was I glad to get back. I'd read a great many stories about what the Indians had done to early settlers and I was certainly scared.

Along towards spring, I made the acquaintance of a widow lady who owned a homestead, but who had disposed of it and wanted to send her team—a very nice team of Arabian horses—and a Jersey milk cow, and her two boys—one ten and one twelve years old—back to her folks in Coldwater, Kansas. I made arrangements to drive these boys and a team and haul the cow back to her father and mother's home in Coldwater, Kansas. Shortly after arriving there I went to work on a cow ranch riding the fences and wells and generally looking after a bunch of stock. Shortly after I went to work, the owner had bought 5,000 head of Texas cattle called "dogies" to be delivered at Amarillo, Texas. And six of us fellows went down to receive them and bring them back to Coldwater, Kansas. This trip took about three weeks, and being the youngest one in the outfit, I had a great many pranks played on me, and I was given all the dirty rides that there was. For instance, I was supposed to bring up the rear end which was what they called the "drags" and after 5,000 dogies had gone over the prairie, it was almost a dust-bed and one would almost choke for the amount of dust that he had in his nostrils and throat. It was a grand experience and I enjoyed it all, although the days were long and the nights were short. After we arrived at the ranch, it was decided by the owner that he would try and feed several hundred head and fatten them for the market. Therefore, they were separated from the rest of the herd and were fed corn and roughage. The man that was doing the feeding wanted to go to Witchita and visit his family at Christmas time. So, I agreed to do his feeding in addition to the work of riding fence lines and looking after the general run of cattle. One day I was walking between the cribs of corn and a big blue steer took after me. I had a scoop shovel in my hand and I threw it into his face and ran for the fence. The fence consisted of six boards on the bottom and six wires on the top. The fence was about five and a half to six feet high. The old cook who was standing on the back porch and could see what was going on said that I ran and grabbed the top of a post and went over without touching a thing. I know

one thing—that steer was not very far behind me and I was surely getting out of the country.

One of the unpleasant parts of the job was that there were quite a number of bog holes on the range and some of these old steers that were pretty poor would wade off into these bog holes trying to get a drink when there was plenty of water in the tank maybe 200 feet away. They would get mired down and I would have to tie a rope onto them and drag them out. Sometimes they weren't able to get up themselves so I would help them up and then the steer would twirl around quickly to hook me and fall down again. I would help them up again and then they'd chase me to my horse. I used to get so disgusted with the things I wanted to shoot them and leave them in the hole, but that wasn't a paying proposition, so it was always up to me to drag them out and try and save them if I could.

The pleasant part of this job, however, was that they were feeding kafir corn to these steers and there was a lot of seed that went through the cattle and some of that had shaken off on the ground and there were thousands of mallard ducks that came in there to feed at night. I kept the cook in mallard ducks by tying my saddle horse back of one of the wagons that was hauling feed out to the cattle and with a double-barreled shotgun right out there just at daybreak, and these ducks were so full that they were slow getting off the ground and I used to bring in fifteen or twenty big fat mallards nearly every morning for the cook to cook for the crew, there being about ten men at this ranch. In the fall of 1897, my mother had died some three weeks before and I was not able to learn of it until she had been buried for two or three weeks because of lack of communications and failure of letters to reach me. I decided to go home for the holiday. I therefore went home and stayed there during the winter. The older brother of mine was there, also. We spent a good deal of time that winter getting up enough wood for my father because he was getting along in years.

One occasion, after cutting down a big pecan tree, my brother was up on a log trimming off limbs and his axe caught a limb as he started to cut a big limb off, deflected his axe and he cut off four toes on his right foot. I had just put on a nice, clean shirt that morning and I immediately tore it to pieces, put his toes back in place, wrapped his foot up, put a tourniquet on to stop the blood, took him to town about four miles. After telling the doctor what I did, he said he didn't believe he'd touch it for two or three days, and when he did, he found that all the toes except the one next to the little toe had healed back properly. The rest were in good shape, but the one toe he had to take off. But he thought that I had done a very good first-aid job. That was my first experience in first-aid, however. But in time my brother's foot healed and as far as could be determined, with no ill effects.

As a boy, I always seemed to have a desire to have a little money of my own which I worked for and living on a farm in a

farming district, I had the opportunity to work for neighbors on several occasions and earned a little money that way. I recall one summer I earned quite a little money hoeing corn, riding a bull rake in haying time, and the same during the wheat harvest and my father, when I got home, borrowed five or six dollars off me and when it came time to pay me back, he gave me a little old runt pig to square out for the four dollars that I loaned him. I was very much displeased with the plan, but there wasn't much that I could do about it, and my mother said, "Well, never mind, Glen. We'll just bring that little old runt pig up here in the orchard back of the old smoke house and we'll have lots of milk and we can pull weeds for it." And I fixed up a little pan and we fed it plenty of milk and weeds and I used to soak corn and get it soft so he could eat it and it grew very rapidly. So, by the next spring I had a litter of pigs of my own - about ten of them. And my father had told me that I could have a certain patch of ground that had been logged off from hardwood but had grown back up to sprout so bad that it couldn't be cultivated. But I worked Saturdays and Sundays and every chance I got to clean off those sprouts and I got five acres of it ready and put in corn so in the fall I had plenty of corn to feed these pigs. I remember selling them at the stock barn for four and a half cents a pound. They were weighing about 200 pounds apiece. Well, in those days, that was a pretty good little chunk of money for a boy. So I bought a bunch of turkey eggs and hatched out about fifty. By Christmas time I had another bunch of money coming in. I think I sold those turkeys for two dollars and a half apiece. They'd probably weigh around sixteen or eighteen pounds. They were very nice, fat turkeys. So that was my first experience in being a farmer.

Glen and his brother, Hart, who was ten years his senior, would go relic hunting. One summer when I was about thirteen or fourteen years old after our crops were laid by on the ranch, we decided to go out into Kansas to the harvest fields. We went down to Fort Scott, Kansas, in the southeast corner of the state and there we met up with quite a few fellows coming back from the harvest fields, saying that there were about ten men for every job. So, we decided then that we would give up the harvest deal and go relic hunting knowing that southeast Kansas and southwest Missouri and Arkansas was quite an Indian country in the early days. It appeared to be an area in which we would have pretty good success in collecting Indian relics. This turned out to be about the richest field that either one of us had ever got into. Many of the fields that had been plowed lately and had had a shower on were ideal places to hunt Indian relics because the arrows and other implements of Indian lore had been turned up and then the shower had washed them clean and they were easy to find. We used to come in with our pockets bulging with arrowheads and other implements of Indian makings. I recall that for a while, we did our own cooking and we invented, I think, the first nested camp outfit. We took a big tomato can and inside that tomato can we had a smaller corn can and inside the corn can we had a smaller can, probably a milk can. We had baling wire bales. We could put this nested outfit in our coat sleeve and by folding

our coat inside out we could carry this nested outfit without anybody knowing that we had such a camp outfit along. It was surprising how many things you could cook in those three little implements - these little cook dishes. We used to build a fire along the creek and forage for corn and tomatoes and potatoes and so forth, and sometimes we got up early in the morning and milked some rancher's cow for our milk and we lived very cheaply that way and really had a good time as a matter of fact.

But, finally, we got into a very nice little home. An old couple lived there whose children had all been married off and gone away. And we asked permission to hunt Indian relics on their place and they readily gave us this permission. Then we asked whether or not we could get her to get us a dinner at noon and she said, "Why, yes, I think you could." She referred to her husband and said, "John do you think we could feed these boys for dinner?" and John said, "Well, that's up to you, Mary." Mary decided that she could take care of us, so about noon we got back there and Lordy, I never sat down to a banquet where we had so much to eat-fried chicken galore and hot biscuits and mashed potatoes and gravy and a lot of preserves of one type or another, canned peaches with a very thick cream for them and plenty of milk and-really, a real banquet. So we proposed to her that we would like to stay there for a week and were wondering what she would charge us for a week's board. Well, she referred it to her husband again. "John," she said, "could we take care of these boys for a week?" John said, "Well, that's up to you, Mary." Mary said, "Well, if you boys can put up with what we have to eat, why, we'd be very glad to take care of you." And I inquired as to how much board and room would be a week and she again asked her husband, John, as to what she should charge, and he said, "Oh, I don't know, Mary. You make up your mind and it will be all right." Mary said, "Well, do you think a dollar and a half a week would be too much?" Well, of course, a dollar and a half in those days was a dollar and a half, but it doesn't seem possible in this day and age that anybody could feed a person a week for a dollar and a half, besides giving them a lovely room with clean bedding and everything. But they had a wonderful garden and cows and lots of milk and chickens. We lived very highly there for-as a matter of fact, we stayed there two weeks, and we made quite a collection. I think we had better than two hundred pounds of arrowheads and other implements of Indian makings before we left there. I do remember one instance-one day, we got quite a long ways away from the ranch and had taken our lunch with us that day. We came to a very noted spring down in that country-flowed out of the side of a hill - I would say a stream four feet wide and eight or ten inches deep. Very cold, lovely water. We were sitting beside this stream eating our lunch and a little boy came down with a bucket to get a bucket of water and he stopped and talked to us and he told us that there was a cave up on the bench above us three or four hundred feet and there were a lot of varmints in it. And we went up and found a hole going down into the ground on about a forty-five degree slope and we asked him if he wouldn't go and get us a lantern, so we gave him a quarter and he went to the house and got a lantern and came back, and we went

down and explored this cave for a couple of hours. There was quite a lot of interesting territory in there--stalactites and stalagmites and so forth, but when we came out, there were about twenty people gathered around there from the neighborhood. They had learned that two men had gone into this cave and they thought that the varmints had eaten them up. But we were very well pleased with our journey through the cave and we told them all we knew about it because we didn't see any varmints. I don't think there were any varmints in the cave, just rumors around that that was the case.

I title the next little episode as the Smith brothers' polyopticon show. One fall when my brother and I were down in Oklahoma and most of the fall work was done on the ranches, it seemed very difficult to find a job, so we pooled our little cash and bought a polyopticon and a bunch of slides and decided to go on the road with this little show. We got out a few handbills and started out from Ponca City to some of the smaller towns in southern Kansas and put on about eight or ten shows. I remember very distinctly that one of the first slides we showed was the American flag. I had a guitar at that time I could chord on pretty well, and I led the audience in singing "America." I had several other times in the show when I sang a little ditty of some sort, with my brother operating the machine and giving the little lecture on the various things. One thing I remember in particular was--we had about a dozen slides on the ordinary housefly and he gave a very interesting talk (at least we thought it was) on the ordinary housefly. Well, we were just barely paying expenses and we got out to Garden City, Kansas, and we thought we were going to do pretty good there, but it turned out that there was a dance that night in town and we only had about twenty-five people that came to our little old show. Well, we didn't have any more than enough to pay for our hotel bill when we paid for our hall and other expenses, so we left our polyopticon outfit with the hotel man as security for payment of the hotel bill, and we went back to Ponca City and rustled around for a job.

We finally made connection with a man who had a contract to clear some land on the east side of the Arkansas River about eight or ten miles from Ponca City and he offered us--I think it was seventy-five cents a cord to cut the wood that was on the land and it turned out that we had to furnish our own bedding and our own axe and saw. And it also turned out that in cutting this wood that he expected us to dig around the base of the tree and cut the roots off down below the plow line. He would then hitch the team on to the tree and pull it over. It was largely hardwood--oak and walnut and hickory. And by working about twelve hours a day we could manage to cut about two cords or two and a half cords between the two of us. Well, at the end of two weeks, we had just about paid for our axes and three or four slogans that we had bought and it looked rather discouraging to me, and furthermore, we had to sleep in an old wagon box that had been used as a moving wagon with bows and a tarp over the top of it, and that wasn't too comfortable, either. The grub that we



got from this fellow at about seventy cents a day, as I recall it, wasn't any too good. I told my brother on Christmas morn, "I'm through with this outfit. I'm just willing you my axe and my blankets." And he said, "Well, where are you gonna go?" And I said, "Well, I don't know where I'm gonna go, but I'm not gonna stay here and work as hard as we have and not make any more than we have made." So he couldn't talk me out of not going. I told him that I could go out and bum from door to door and get just as good grub and probably get a job now and then and earn a little money and do better than we were doing there. Well, he tried to get me to stay, but I decided that I was going, so he went with me down to the Arkansas River, where I was going to wade across to the highway that went into Ponca City. There was a bridge about eight miles down the river, but I thought it would be easier to wade across the Arkansas River than to walk clear down there to that bridge and back again. So, I took off all my clothes and put my shoes back on to protect my feet against the rocks, and I waded across. There were places where the water was almost to my armpits and there was a little ice running in the river too, so it was really a chilly wade. But when I got on the other side and shook down and got my clothes on, I got plenty warm and got out on the road walking towards Ponca City. A couple of fellows came along on horseback and one of them asked me where I was going and I told them that I was going to Ponca City and he said, "Well, get on behind me. We're gonna ride in there." So, I got on behind him on the saddle horse and he bucked around a little bit, but we stayed with him and finally we reached Ponca City. Along about noontime I went to a little old restaurant there and got a bowl of soup and a glass of milk, I think it cost me about fifteen cents.

Ponca City at that time was pretty new. There were only a dozen or fifteen houses in town. As I recall it, there was a newspaper just starting up, a bank, hardware store and a general merchandise store, a blacksmith shop, a barber shop and this little restaurant. Well, this little restaurant had two or three rooms attached, so I arranged for a room for twenty-five cents a night. And the next day I got out looking around for a job. I'd had a little experience in setting type in my old home town of Rich Hill, Missouri. So I stuck the newspaper guy for a job and he gave me a job running a job press. I set up and got out some handbills and one thing or another for some advertisement. I worked about five days there at a dollar and a half a day and paid seventy-five cents a day for my food and lodging.

I jumped the restaurant man about getting some work done. Well, he said, he'd like to get a bunch of corn shucks for to wrap his hot tamales in. He was going to start making hot Tamil's. And he told me he'd pay me, I think it was, a dollar and a half a gunny sack full of husks. I told him I'd go out and see if I couldn't find him some way to get them and so just at the end of the street, not more than five or six blocks from there, was a field of corn that had been cut and shucked. I found out that it belonged to the hardware man that lived there in town and who owned this ranch. And I went in and asked him

for a job of shucking corn and he told me he had two or three men that wasn't doing much, but I explained to him that I wanted to get the husks and that I was willing to shuck the corn for three cents a bushel and haul it in. Finally he agreed that that was very cheap, so he took me on. So I went out and I could shuck about twenty-five bushels a day and get about five or six sacks of shucks. I would wait 'til after dark and I'd go out and carry these sacks of shucks in town and put them in a big shed that this restaurant man showed me that he owned. And after four or five days, he said to me, "Son, how many sacks of shucks have you got out there?" And I said, "Well, I don't know. I think there's about forty-five or fifty sacks." "Oh my God," he said, "I wouldn't need that many." We went out and counted them and there were forty-eight sacks and he said, "Well, there's enough shucks to last me for fifty years, but I agreed to pay a dollar and a half a sack for them, so that's what I owe you." So, he paid me the money for that. Well, I began to think that I was pretty rich.

I had accumulated twenty to twenty-five dollars, so I loafed around for a day or two, but I got acquainted with the cashier in a little bank there and he had just built a new home, and he wanted a cistern dug, and he asked me if I could dig him a cistern. I suppose you know what a cistern is. It's a well that is dug down and is cemented up to hold the rain water off the roof of the house. It's used for either domestic or washing purposes. He took me up and showed me where he wanted the cistern and he marked off the size of it. As I recall, it was twelve feet in diameter and twelve feet deep. Well, I told him I could do it for twenty-five dollars and he said, "Well, that's okay. You go ahead." So I went down and I bought me a shovel and I went there and started in on it and I found out that it was very easy shoveling. It was quite sandy with just enough hardness to it for the walls to stand up, but I could shovel it all the way down. So I threwed this hole out in one day. While I was doing that one of the neighbors came over and he wanted a storm cellar built. So he marked off what he wanted done and it was about equal to the same amount of dirt that was being thrown out of this cistern. So I told him twenty-five dollars and he said okay. So I wrote a letter out to my brother and I told him that I was a big contractor now and that if he could come in, I could give him a job. And, by George, he showed up a couple of days later and I had two or three other cisterns to build and two or three storm cellars, and I gave him two and a half a day to help me out. He being ten years older than I was--and I was only about fifteen years old--it looked kind of funny for me to be the contractor and he my laborer. But, we got quite a lot of fun out of it. I used to order him around, but it never amounted to anything. But we done pretty well with that job anyhow.

Well, when we got all the cellars and cisterns dug that we could contract for, I had the opportunity to drive a team of Arabian horses out to Coldwater, Kansas, and take two boys--one ten and one twelve, and a Jersey milk cow, out to Coldwater for a widow lady who had sold her ranch and was moving back with her

folks. She had lost her husband a few months before. So I started out with these two boys and the milk cow in the wagon—a regular moving wagon with a tarp over the top. We had hay and oats for the cow and the horses. We had a big basket of food to start out with, but that played out about the third day. We had a couple more days that we had to buy food, but we had the milk with us because this Jersey cow was still giving milk. It was quite a chore of loading that old cow up every morning and unloading her at night and finding a livery barn and place to stay and feed our stock. But it was quite an experience for us three boys because I was only about fifteen years old. After I landed out there at her parents place, why they were people that were around sixty years old, I guess, he had a little gristmill and it was run by water power. I recall that he hired me to clean out the canal that carried the water to the gristmill and I worked for him off and on for a week or ten days.

In the meantime he got in touch with a big rancher who lived not far from there who gave me a job husking corn to start with. Later on, when the corn was all gathered, I went with six other cowboys down to Amarillo, Texas, where he was having accumulated a herd of longhorn Texas cattle. We were gone about three weeks on this trip and brought back 5,000 Texas dogies. They were pretty wild and for the first three or four days it was pretty hard riding to keep them together and move them along. But finally they settled down and trailed pretty well. But being the kid of the outfit, I was chucked back in the back end to bring up what they called the "drags". And, as such, I rode in the dust most of the time and at night I could hardly breathe from accumulation of dust and mud in my nose and mouth. But this journey was finally ended, and I kept on working for this man whose name was Pyles and my job was to ride the fences keep them up and see that none of the steers got away and to grease the windmills—about ten or fifteen of them. There were a few bogs in this big pasture where some of these steers would wade out to get water even though there was water in the tank 200 yards from there. They would wade out in the bogs and get mired down and it was necessary for me to throw a rope on them and drag them out. Many of them I had drug out and then they weren't able to get up. They were pretty weak and I would help them get by using their tail, and then they would whirl around right quick, try to hook me and fall down again. Well, after several tries sometimes they'd chase me to my horse. It was very vexing. There were times that I wished I had a gun. I could kill some of them. But this went on for quite some time.

One of the things that I remember particularly was—they were feeding these cattle a lot of kafir corn which is a good deal like cane. The seed is about the size of cane seed and it has a good deal of leafage and it is very good feed. But there is a lot of this seed that went through the cattle and some scattered out on the ground otherwise. And there were great flocks of mallard ducks that came in. I used to ride out with the feeders early in the morning just about daybreak, tie my horse to the back of the wagon, sit on the rack until we got into

the feed grounds where there were a lot of ducks. When they started to fly off the ground I would open both barrels on them and many a time I would knock down ten or twelve ducks in a double shot. I would take these ducks back to the ranch house and turn them over to the cook. I don't think I ever ate so many ducks in all my life, but they were certainly nice, fat, fine ducks and we had duck about twice a day for weeks on end. Along towards New Years or afterwards they were trying to feed some of these cattle corn and fatten them...

End tape A

Tape B

What I'm about to tell at the present time concerns my trip to Illinois to live with my uncle. He had a very nice place on the edge of a little town of Fredricksburg part of which had been an old rock quarry where the rocks were taken out and made a big flat place and he had about a hundred stands of honeybees. Up on the little bench above the rock quarry was a plum orchard, and these plums sprouted up a lot and there were a lot of young sprouts scattered all around among the trees. When the frost went out they were pretty easily pulled up, so he set me up a job of pulling these sprouts up. I was working pretty close to the edge of the embankment above the old quarry and heaved pretty hard on a big sprout and it gave away quickly and I tumbled over the side and fell down among the bees and knocked two or three stands over. I got out of there pretty fast - ran down through the cherry orchard and onto the back porch with a cloud of bees right after me. I met my uncle on the porch and a cloud of bees swarmed around us. This didn't make very much of a hit with my uncle and he called me a "damn red-headed rake".

There were a number of other instances that took place that he didn't approve of. For instance, the Illinois River was out its banks and backed up into the city. His side of the street however, was about four feet above the other side of the street and all the school kids had to go by in front of his house. I used to go out and swing a gate across the sidewalk and stop a bunch of gals and tell them it was a toll gate-cost them a kiss to get back. That didn't set very well with my uncle either. So I got in pretty bad with him and that's the reason that I decided to pull out and go and enlist in the army in the Spanish-American War.

This section should go with my experience on a stock ranch in western Canada. I liked my job with this outfit and I guess the owner liked me. As a matter of fact he raised my wages from twenty-five dollars a month, which turned out to be bad for his foreman who was only getting twenty-two dollars per month. This eventually caused me to be fired by the foreman. Incidentally, this was the only time I was ever fired in my life. One of the things that brought the jealousy on the part of the foreman to a head was the fact that a horse outfit trailing five or six hundred head of horses to Montana pulled into the ranch one

evening and asked to stay all night. There were about ten men with the outfit and they put one of the young fellows to sleep with me in my room which I had occupied ever since I'd been on the ranch by myself. This turned out to be a bad deal because he was lousy as a pet coon and he left me lousy likewise. But, having never had lice before--the common old greyback--I did not recognize it until I was crawling with them. And this was brought to my attention one night when a neighbor came over and was going to sleep with me and I was scratching to beat the band and he asked me what was the matter with me and I told him that I didn't know. I seemed to have an itch or something. He says, "Boy, let's see what's the matter." So, we lit a light and found out that I was really crawling greybacks. And this was quite a shock to me because I had been taught to keep things clean and sanitary around my own home. After conferring with this neighbor, he advised me to take all of my clothes and boil them as well as all the bedding. This I did, but I incurred the enmity of the foreman by the mere fact that I was a lousy individual. After cleaning up my room and my own clothes and riding about thirty miles to Coldwater, Kansas, and getting some disinfectant, I got things pretty well cleaned up and he told me that he didn't need me any longer and for me to get out. So, he sent one of the other boys with me to Coldwater or the nearest railroad station. We rode in on saddle horses and the other boy took the saddle horse back. It just happened that when I was to take the train out for Witchita, I run into the owner of the ranch who was just coming from Witchita going out to his ranch. And he asked me where I was going and I told him I'd been fired and told him why and he tried to get me to go back, but I was certain that I couldn't get along with his foreman, so I finally stayed around a day or two and got a job on another ranch.

I was told by a young fellow who I'd gotten acquainted with that I wouldn't be staying at this ranch very long because they fed very poorly and expected a man to work from daylight 'til dark. I wasn't afraid of the work, but I did want my food. I found out that the statement was quite true. The lady was one of the poorest cooks that I ever seen. I don't think I had a mouthful of bread for the two and a half months that I was there that wasn't sour. Not only that, the only meat they had was sidepork and that just warmed through. I couldn't stomach that sort of stuff, but since I did the milking and gathered the eggs I drank lots of fresh milk and sucked a lot of fresh eggs. So I kept myself going and one of the reasons that I felt I had to keep going was that my mother was [in] very bad shape with the cancer and I was trying to send home every cent that I could get ahold of.

One day--a Sunday, I believe--all of the people on the ranch were gone someplace and I was there alone. There was a wild filly in this bunch of horses that went through the country that had got away and they couldn't locate her, so they just went on without her. I had noticed her out on the prairie a time or two with an old blind mare. I figured that sooner or later she'd have to come into the corral for that was the only water. And,

sure enough, that day the blind horse found her way to the corral and led this wild filly with her. I slipped around and closed the gate. The corral was quite a good sized corral with the fences around ten feet high. This filly was so wild that she tried several times to jump out of the corral, but it was too high for her. She'd fall back into the corral. I was a little afraid of her myself, but I went over to a young neighbor who had a homestead not far from there by the name of Will All. He was quite a horse trainer, and he came over and walked into this corral with a good blacksnake whip. This young filly would run at him with her teeth bared like she's going to eat him up and he'd crack her a good one on the nose with his whip and she'd turn the other way and then he'd whip her there. And in a half an hour, he had her so he could pet her face and within an hour he was riding her without any difficulty. About ten days later, I met him in town one day and asked I him about the filly, and he said, "I want to show you that girl." And he went over to the hitching rack and, sure enough, here she was and he had her all saddled up. He took her right out in the middle of the street and he had her kneel down for him to get on and she knelt down, too, for him to get off, and he'd have her lay down and act as if she was dead. I never could figure out how a man could take a real wild animal and train her so completely as this young chap did. Will All and I became quite friends and even after I left that country (I went to my home in Rich Hill, Missouri.) I got a letter from him one day addressed as follows: "Ode to Rich Hill, Missouri, Take me like a fury, And let me stay, Until Glen Smith says 'good day'."

I had intended, however, to go back to this country and take up a homestead because there was a lot of vacant land in that country that had been homesteaded many years before and the owners had pulled out because of drought conditions and abandoned these ranches and a fellow could get one very cheaply. And in anticipation of going back, I had bought a span of young mules. I left them with a rancher when I went back to Missouri because of—I had expected to come back, but since my mother had died and my father was in pretty bad shape, I decided that it wasn't the proper thing for me to do to go out there and fuss around with an attempt at a ranch in that country. It was at that time that I decided to come to Montana instead where I understood wages were in considerable higher than they were in any part of the south and east.

What I<sup>f</sup>m about to relate now should go with that portion of the manuscript which refers to the bringing up of 5,000 Texas steers to Kansas. Prior to leaving the stock ranch, they had decided to dehorn all of these Texas steers. Of all of the ruddy scenes that one ever saw was the dehorning of 5,000 of these steers. There was one old buckskin steer that got away and we never could get him into the corral with the rest of them. So one day the foreman told me that they'd pay five dollars for anyone that would bring him in. So another chap and I decided that we'd bring him in. So we started out looking for him and found him about five miles away from the corral all by himself

and really on the peck. We tried to drive him, but that seemed to be impossible. So we thought we'd rope him and drag him in, but that looked like impossible. So we took our rope—about fifteen to twenty feet of it—we'd get out in front of him and pop him on the nose with it and he take a run at us and we would get out of his way and he'd follow us for quite a ways and then he'd stop and we'd start him on again popping him on the nose. Finally we got up within about a quarter of mile where they were dehorning these cattle. We roped him and tied him down and went to the ranch and got a stoneboat and loaded him on this stoneboat and took him in. We got five dollars all right, but I'll tell you we earned it! And when we got the horns off of him, why, he was a pretty docile old boy.

What I'm about to relate should go with my previous statement concerning my trip to my old home and my brother and I cutting wood for my father and the cutting off of his toes. Along towards spring my father had about an acre of asparagus. I found out very quickly what a job it was to cut asparagus and prepare it for the market. My two brothers and my sister and my father and I could hardly keep up with the rapidity with which this stuff grew and to get it ready for market. I don't recall what it sold for, but it apparently was pretty cheap. But I got my fill of it and decided that I didn't want to monkey around with a truck garden by any means and when I announced that I was going to join another young fellow in our home town who was coming to Montana, there was quite a wail went up in my family. But I'd thought the thing out pretty carefully and was sure that that's what I wanted to do. So when I got ready about March 1898, to head for Montana, my father took me down to the train and, with tears in his eyes, he bid me good-by saying that I was going so far away that he'd never see his boy again. He didn't realize how the country was shrinking with railroads and airplanes in the future. It wasn't many years until he was out in Montana himself and he could see then why I came to Montana.

This statement should go with the previous statement I made about hunting Indian relics. As I mentioned before, I think that my brother and I originated the first nested camp outfit by the use of a tomato can, a corn can, and a milk can which nestled together. We bummed around the country foraging on gardens and cornfields for our food. I remember one night it was quite rainy looking and we looked for some place to stay. We stopped at several homes and they wouldn't take us in, so we sighted a big barn in the neighborhood and decided we'd sleep in that barn that night. So, after dark, we went to this barn and went up in the hay loft and made us a nice nest in the new, fresh hay. The beautiful moonlight night shown in one end of the barn. My brother woke up and he nudged me and asked me what time it was. I had the only watch. I looked at the watch and got the hands transposed and I said it was four o'clock. And he said, "Well, we'd better be getting out of here before the farmer gets up." Well, I said, "There's an old milk cow down there in the lot and I'd like to have a can of fresh milk." And he said, "Well, I'll go down and get you one." So he went down and followed this old

cow around with a bell on—"ding-dong, ding-dong" for about ten minutes and I thought sure that old farmer would wake up and wonder what was the matter with the old cow running around the yard. But he finally cornered her and got a quart can of milk, came back up where I was and I hadn't even made a move and he wanted to know why I wasn't up and ready to go. And I told him that I'd made a mistake and had the hands transposed and instead of being four o'clock, it was twenty minutes after twelve. He gave me this can of milk, but he said that when he got up again to get me a can of milk at midnight, I'd know it.

We ran into several days of rainy weather and while the climate was rather warm, it was disagreeable and one evening when we were unable to get any place to stay at any of the ranches, we spied a big, fresh stack of straw and decided to burrow back into this stack for the night. And when we got over there we found a big hole that had already been made in the stack and we investigated and found out that an old sow was in there with a batch of pigs. We chased her out and took over her nest because it was nice and warm in there and had a very comfortable night. [laughter]

A few days later my brother and I was walking down the road and we passed a large peach orchard of probably forty acres or better. At that time there were no refrigerator cars that I knew about and apparently it was difficult to market these peaches because the ground was literally covered with them. You couldn't put your foot down without smashing one. I dropped over the fence to pick up one and here come a big, black dog weighing about 150 pounds and on the real tear. I fanned him off with my coat and heard a voice not far away hollering "get the hell out of here!" I told him to call off his dog and I'd get out and he said, "Well, if you don't move fast," he said, "I'll put you where the dogs won't bite you!" There were thousands of peaches or millions, probably, of them going to waste and I got chased out of the peach orchard with a dog. I was so cockeyed mad that I had a notion to go back and set his house on fire, but I didn't do that and we went on without any peaches. But later on in the day we stopped in at the house where they had three or four peach trees and they invited us to help ourselves. This kind of gives an idea of some of the human beings that lived down in that country at that time.

Later on, when we got back to our home in Rich Hill, Missouri, we went out one day for a hunt for Indian relics and we got about seven or eight miles away and it was pretty late in the evening and we saw a train coming up the track and we rushed over to a little depot and were going to catch the train back to our home, but we searched our pockets and we couldn't find one red cent. So we crawled on the back steps of the old coach, sat way down low thinking the conductor wouldn't see us, but about halfway into town, why the old conductor came out on the platform and hollered, "Tickets!" Neither of us stirred or looked around and he reached over and grabbed our hats and said, "You boys can retrieve these hats at the ticket office in your home town in



Rich Hill, Missouri." Since these hats only cost fifteen cents apiece for the old straw hats we never did retrieve them.

As I look back on the conditions as they existed in southwestern Missouri where I was born and raised, I think it was, at that time, a great place to bring up children for the simple reason there were so many out-of-doors [things] that were of interest to most children. For instance, along every water course—stream of any kind—there was lots of hardwood—walnut, hickory nut, pecan, oaks—and scattered throughout this country was lots of wild fruit. In the spring of the year, we had the May-apple which was a very tasty little fruit that grows on a plant about a foot and a half tall and comes up every spring. Then along came the wild blackberry, wild mulberries, the red and black haw, pawpaws, persimmons; and in the fall of the year were the nut crops such as black walnut, pecan, two kinds of hickory—a large hickory nut and a small cellbark hickory nut—pecans, and hazelnuts. It was our custom in those days to take at least one complete day off and the whole family go down in the woods and gather nuts—black walnuts, hickory nuts, pecans, hazelnuts. Then we would have the wagon box full of nuts for the winter and in the long winter evenings we always had a bunch of these nuts cracked up and we'd use them to entertain ourselves in the evenings. Another thing that I recall that was common in those days was the drying of fruits such as dried apples, pears, peaches and this was quite a job for the children to gather and prepare the fruit for drying. Our family always had a lot of dried fruit on hand. Besides we canned considerable fruit and vegetables such as tomatoes especially.

Another thing that was attractive in that country from the standpoint of a young boy at least, was the game. There were lots of quail, some turkeys, and cottontail rabbits. Cottontail rabbits were quite numerous. I recall one winter that we had about 18" or two feet of fresh, fluffy snow. I took our old pet dog and went off in the edge of one of our fields where there was a slough covered with some tall grass that had been bent over and knocked down by the snow. With a good hickory club, the dog would chase the rabbits out in this deep snow where they couldn't go very fast. Either he or I would catch one and knock them over. And in one forenoon, I killed 105 cottontail rabbits. These rabbits were cleaned of their intestines and boxed up and shipped up to Kansas City, where I got ten cents apiece for them. This money went to buy me the first pair of skates I ever owned and I was the envy of the neighboring boys with my fine pair of skates which I enjoyed immensely. We were fortunate in the fact that a creek that ran close by the schoolhouse made almost a complete loop of about five miles, and at noon us boys that had skates would make this loop during the noon hour and we thought it was great sport. I rather think I would have something to do to let off the steams because when we got back from three quarters of an hour of skating, why we was able to settle down and study pretty well.

Of course in those days we had not the many conveniences and

things to entertain ourselves that a child of today has. But we were able to entertain ourselves pretty well and did a lot of things that today children have no idea of attempting. For instance, when I was about twelve or thirteen years old, I took it into my head that I wanted a pony of my own. Although we had several horses on the ranch, most of them were work horses and so I was anxious to get a pony of my own. So one day we noticed that a sale was to be held two or three miles from our place where a number of livestock were to be sold and my father and I went over thinking maybe we could buy a pony. The only horse that was put up that was within the reach of my pocketbook was a two year old buckskin pony which was lousy as a pet coon and had long hair and a matted tail and mane and looked pretty scrawny. I placed a bid of five dollars on this pony and the auctioneer knocked it off to me right now. I wasn't sure at the time whether I wanted to take the thing home with me or not. It was such a scrubby, ornery-looking little thing that I wasn't very proud of my purchase. But we did take it home and by giving it a treatment of a spray made out of tobacco leaves, we got rid of the lice, and with feeding conditions the pony grew quite rapidly and when it shed off and got some meat on it, it was a nice looking little feller - black mane and tail and rather dappled buckskin. I recall taking him down to our old swimming hole and swimming him around in the pond and he seemed to enjoy it as much as I did. Naturally, I became very attached to him and one winter when I had graduated from our local school, a grade school, I used him to ride about five miles to a little college at Sprague, Missouri. This was quite a trying winter for me because my father had erysipelas and was confined to the bed practically all winter. I was required to milk four cows, feed a bunch of horses, hogs, and get up wood for the day, and ride five miles to school. There was not much time for play in those days, but as I look back upon it I think I really enjoyed it with the exception of one particular night when my father was quite low. The doctor prescribed some medicine that he thought should be gotten to him that night. It turned out that a sleet storm was on and I had to ride five miles to this little town of Sprague to get the prescription filled. By the time I got to the drug store the man was just closing up, but he opened up and I was covered with a sheet of ice, so he took me in and stood me by the fire for some time until I warmed up and then I took the medicine and rode back home, reaching home some time around twelve or one o'clock.

Speaking of the old swimming hole in my boyhood days, this was quite a place for children of the neighborhood to congregate in the summertime for swimming. As I recall it was quite clear water with a hole about three or four hundred yards long and forty or fifty yards wide and ten to twelve feet deep. Many a pleasant time was had at that old swimming hole with the neighboring kids and with my buckskin pony. Later on in the years about 1944, I visited this same swimming hole and because of the clearing off of the timbered lands and the breaking up of all the prairie lands, the hole was pretty much of a bog hole because the soil had been moistened in all sides and it was

slimy, dirty place. It really made my heart sick to look at it.

There was one thing that seemed to me like it was a regular occurrence in those days [and that] was a big rain storm on the Fourth of July. I recall at least three or four different years that when we went to the nearby town or community for a Fourth of July celebration [we would have] a downpour of rain. One particular time it rained very hard and when we started for home I was riding my little buckskin pony and the rest of the family was in a spring wagon. We came to the creek that was almost dry when we went across it in the morning, but was running bank full, so deep and swift that my father was not willing to take any chance of driving a team and wagon into the stream. He suggested that I ride across with my pony and start doing chores. It was just about dusk and I swam my pony across very easily. I got home and, as usual, the old cows had gotten out of the pasture and were down in the cornfield, so I had to hunt them out and since the rain had made the ground very soggy, I pulled off my shoes and waded down through the cornfield and ran the cows out. It was quite dark by the time I got them home and as I was closing one of the gates into the barnyard a flash of lightning lit up the country quite bright and there stood, within ten feet of me, one of the biggest, blackest dogs I ever saw in my life! Because of the fact that at that time there was a scare about mad dogs, I was one scared boy. I yelled and screamed and the next flash of lightning I saw no dog, but I went to the house immediately and got a lantern and was very spooky about anything that moved in the dark for the rest of the evening. The family had to go about six miles around and by the time they got home, I had the milking done and most of the chores done.

I think this story would be incomplete if I did not mention a family by the name of Cope that lived near us. There were two men in their fifties. One of them had been married and had a boy about my age. Their mother was still alive and some eighty-four or five years old at this time and was quite a friend of my mother. So one day Mother and I walked over to visit Mrs. Cope and when we arrived, Mother said to Mrs. Cope, "How are you anyhow?" And she said, "Oh, I'm just fine. The boys are so good to me, especially Johnny." (Johnny was about fifty-two or fifty-three years old.) She said, "Johnny is so good to me. He brings the cow right up here by the door so I can milk." This was quite amusing to me because I'd been milking cows since I was about six or seven years old and I don't remember my mother ever had to milk a cow. But she seemed to think that her son was okay and I suppose that was all right.

Speaking about Fourth of July celebrations, I remember that a day or two after one of these Fourth of July celebrations that my younger brother decided that he was going to set up a lemonade stand just like they had at the Fourth of July celebrations. He fixed up a bunch of boxes and some boards and made himself a little lemonade and he was out there crying just like they did at the Fourth of July, "Ice cold lemonade, made in the shade and stirred by a maid, oh, made with a spade. A nic, a nic, a half a

dime, the twentieth part of a dollar." [laughter] Well, I decided that I wanted to be the bad boy, so I knocked his stand over and raised cain around there and finally he got it all fixed up again and he said, "All right ladies, step right up the things are just as cheap as they was before the fight! They're a nic, a nic, a half of a dime, the twentieth part of a dollar."

One thing I should have mentioned, when I was talking about the wild fruit was the wild grapes that grew in the woods at that time. These grape vines would climb to the top of a large tree and spread clear through the top. After the first frost these grapes were very tasty and while not sweet they had a flavor that was very palatable to us kids. I recall the only way we could harvest the grapes was to cut the tree down and gather them and there were times when we'd get several hundred pounds of grapes from one tree. They made wonderful pies and Mother used to make jelly and jam which was relished by everyone that I knew. I have never run on to anybody from that part of the United States who recalled the wild grapes. But it was very vivid in my mind because several years, at least, we got quite large quantities of them and we enjoyed them very much.

Another thing that was available in those days was wild honey. I recall my uncle who was quite a bee man from Illinois one summer being at our place and we were sitting on the front porch at the house and there were a few honey bees around and he began to watch these bees and he told me that there must be a bee tree some place not far from here. And I asked him why he thought so, and he said, "Well, these bees we see here are laden with honey or honeycomb material. If we can see where they go, we can find a tree." So he kept watching. I couldn't see these bees very far but he seemed to see them for a long distance. Finally one day he said, "I think I can locate a bee tree." So we started out and he went straight away from our place and about a quarter of a mile from our house he said, "Well, we better begin to look for that bee tree." It was not long until we discovered the bee tree. It happened to be a big, red oak about three feet in diameter and I marked this tree and that fall the tree was cut down and it proved to be hollow for about thirty feet from the ground up and there were five washtubs full of honey taken from this tree. We were able to supply the whole neighborhood with honey that winter. We tried to salvage the bees, but we had waited too late and they would not swarm and we never were able to pick out the queen bee and, therefore, the bees were lost so far as we were concerned. But we later learned that there were quite a number of bee trees scattered around the neighborhood and from that time on we had little trouble in having all the honey that we wanted.

We had, as I mentioned before, forty or fifty acres of hardwood on our ranch and it was used largely as a cow pasture. One day, I was riding my pony down through the woods after the cows and I noticed a big, blacksnake laying out on the limb of a tree about ten feet from the ground and his head was hanging down from the limb about two feet. With a whip that I had been

practicing with, I cracked his head a couple of times and he fell off on the ground. I finished killing the snake and tied him on to the lash of the whip, dragged him down to the schoolhouse that was on the edge of our farm and put him on the stiles that went over the yard fence, tucked his head down in one corner of the steps and the next morning, when the kids began to gather for school, they threwed rocks and sticks and pretty nearly covered the stiles. Finally, I went down and opened the gate in the fence around the yard and the snake was there 'til I came to school and I decided he was dead, so we took him and buried him. Nobody ever knew but me how the snake came there. I was afraid to let anybody know---afraid my folks would paddle me pretty seriously. It was an ornery trick.

END SIDE TWO