

# Ed Garee's Stories

by C.E. Garee

*At his daughters' request Ed began writing this autobiography in 1964*

*Note: In 2002 I transcribed Ed's handwritten autobiography and in 2010 created a name index for it. –Kay Bauman, Ed's great grandson's wife ([kayzie31@gmail.com](mailto:kayzie31@gmail.com))*

My Grandfather Garee lived near “The Old Red Schoolhouse” in western Pennsylvania. On his farm was an outcropping of coal in a vein so thick that, in mining it from the hillside, they could take in a horse or mule to haul out the cart loads of coal. He signed as security for a neighbor for a large amount. When, on his death bed, the neighbor called him in and told him not to worry about the money that it was provided for. This proved untrue, and it took grand dad’s farm to pay the debt.

Not long after that, the family, including a son, and two daughters, moved to Northern Ohio, near Diamond and Ravenna where my Father was born in 1846 and a daughter later. The oldest daughter, I never saw. She, Susan, married a man named William Force and they lived their lifetime and raised a family there. About the 1930’s I was privileged to see the old house they grew up in and to visit several of the remaining kindred. Some of them lived quite near the big dam that had backed water over hundreds of acres of the land where my Father had hunted many times with his favorite coon dog “Old Toss”, a bulldog.

Uncle John served 3 years in the Union army, and because he was a good penman he was retained in Washington for some time afterward to help “muster out” the armed forces. He was in the Ford Theatre when President Lincoln was killed: heard the shot and saw Booth fall on the stage as he escaped.

Not long after that the families moved to Saline County Mo. Shortly after their arrival there they were visited by an organized community committee that came to ask if they had provender and means to winter and start a crop out. They very thankfully answered yes, and ever afterward remembered that as a wonderful welcome.

At the time of this move, the two brothers paid \$28.<sup>00</sup> for a double barrel shotgun, one barrel 12 ga., one 11 ga. It was the gun with which I learned to hunt, was a good one and the only such gun I ever owned until after we moved to Noble in 1896, and traded Dr. Murphy a pony for a near-new Baker 10 ga. breech loader. We still have the older gun, but ammunition for it disappeared from the market years ago.

Uncle John and his wife were never very satisfied in Missouri so they went back to Ohio and raised their family in the old neighborhood. I do not know how long the “western” branch of the family remained in Missouri, but later they were pioneering in Butler County Kansas. Grandfather and the two daughters operating a farm and my Father out going it alone. He worked at two trades: he was a cheese maker and a broom maker. He raised a little crop of broom corn, bought a little more and worked it all up into brooms, then started out with wagon and team, wholesaling them in the nearby towns. He had disposed of one big load and returned to El Dorado just in time to see the building burn down with the balance of his season’s work. I remember, after I was grown up, seeing a letter his Father had written to him, after the fire, telling him to “buck up”, don’t be discouraged, “you have it in you to come again and get another start.”

Not long after that he met my Mother, the oldest daughter of the Hamilton’s, an Indiana family that had settled about 6 miles south of Whitewater. When they went on horseback to be married (spring of 1872) the preacher lived in a dugout. Not wanting to be married in the dugout, they stepped outside and had it said on horseback in the open prairie. A little later, the younger sister, Jennie, married a Canadian William Wiggins and the two couples settled near each other in Greenwood county which joins Butler on the east. The middle sister, my Aunt Rhoda, divided her time between the two homes except that she had filed on a claim adjoining my Father’s and she had to live on it enough to be able to “prove up” when the proper time came. She was engaged to marry a young man who was operating a frontier freighting line until he could accumulate enough so they could make a home on her claim. He was evidently killed by the Bender family who operated a road house a county or two south east of where they lived. So many of their customers disappeared that people finally caught on and a posse of officers and settlers started out to “get” them. They evidently got wind of it and started to leave for the Indian Territory, but they were too

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slow. My Father later talked with 2 members of the posse. Their stories of the chase tallied to a dot up to the point of overtaking. Neither would say a word about what or how, but the story was over.

## **Happenings of my very early childhood**

My memory is quite vivid along this line. Some of the things are more clearly remembered than some more recent events. Others have been told to me so well that I may just think I remember them.

From all accounts, I must have been a rather irascible kid and a little hard to get along with. Here's one bad habit. Any time something went wrong and made me mad I would fall down, take some very awkward position and begin to yell "I'm broke, I'm broke!" One day I got "broke" too near the spring. Dad was just passing with 2 big buckets of water. He downed one of them on me and waited a few seconds: it hadn't done any good, so he emptied the other on me and returned to the spring for another load. As he approached me and set one bucket down I peeped up at him and said "Are you a going to drownd me?" As the story goes I was pretty well "broke" of the "broke" habit.

Our home in Kansas was near one of the "cattle trails", over which thousands of Texas cattle were driven to Northern markets or to skipping points (I saw the first passenger train come into Eureka; flat cars with railing, about 1877). Some of the driven cattle would become footsore and lame. Drovers would sell these to settlers at very low prices. With a few days rest they were "good as new". Some of these were wild, others well domesticated and gentle.

One evening I was watching the milking operation, a big long horn Texas cow picked me up on the tip of her horn swung me around at the troublesome flies and dropped me back where I had been standing. Not a scratch or bruise, didn't even tear my shirt, but they say it made me pretty mad to be done that way by a cow.

My mother taught me to fish when I was 4 years old, if not earlier. We lived in Greenwood County, Kansas near the headquarters of Tadpole Creek, in fact the surplus flow from the spring that furnished us water meandered off down through the pasture and found its way into the creek. It was only a short walk down to where small, deep holes abounded in catchable native fish. We went to them often and usually the results were highly satisfactory.

One time we went my mother caught nothing but a small turtle while I got 3 bullhead cats, one a dandy, one middle size and the other about as little as we ever kept. Dad was away that day, so Mom cleaned the 3 and planned a nice dinner for the two of us.

A near neighbor had a grand-dad or old uncle living with them, most too old for much work, but a good hand to keep up with the neighborhood visiting. Just as the feast was being spread, in stepped Mr. Hoddington. Of course, Mother asked him to eat with us. Before he was fully settled in the chair, he forked over and put the big one on his plate.

Of course I was heart broken, but I doubt if the old codger knew what he had done to me. How I ever kept from raising the "rough house", nobody knows. Maybe it was an early lesson for me. A fellow is likely, in a lifetime, to have some "downs" along with the "ups".

We moved from the claim when I where I was born in Greenwood Co. Kansas to a little farm in Vernon Co. Mo. in the spring of 1879, just before I was 6 years old. That fall, I enrolled at "Center" school about a mile away. My first teacher was Ona Swartz, a fine young lady and an excellent teacher. We all loved her and did well under her tutelage. My next was an elderly man named Logsden. He was a crusty old codger that nobody liked. Once he caught me and another 7-year old in some little infringement of his strict rules and threw a big switch, near a yard long, at us and told us to carry it up to his desk. As we turned to go, he hit us one lick each with it across the shoulders. Most everybody, my parents included, thought that was a cowardly, mean way to handle the affair, but we lived over it.

We moved to El Dorado Springs early in 1882 when the town was 7 or 8 months old, and I was about 8½ years old. We left there something over 14 years later, so I practically grew up there and have

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many memories of early happenings in the town. The Cruce Brothers owned the land around the spring. As the wonderful healing properties of it's water became better known, the town grew rather rapidly and the two of them (cousins of our Oklahoma Ex. Gov. Cruce) soon established, Cruce Bros. Bank, later incorporated as Cruce Banking Co., and some later as First National Bank. Having heavy interests in the growing town, they very naturally wanted to have a hand in the management of town affairs. With many people this was O.K. while others resented it. Two of my good friends, Dick Morris and Wes Goodwin operated a 4 page weekly newspaper. Some question in town management came up for discussion. Editor Dick came out stating his side as he saw it. Cruces asked them to change and endorse their view of it. Dick refused. The bank promptly foreclosed their mortgage on his little shop and plant. For some time Dick had been adding to a small savings account at the Bank of El Dorado Springs. He may or may not have had some backing from them, but he jumped on the hack over to the R.R. and in a few hours was in Kansas City where he bought a complete printing outfit, rushed it home and came out just one day late with Vol. I, number 1 of the El Dorado Free Press, a two page newspaper which soon grew large, and appeared weekly for years.

When I was about 9 or 10 years old a scourge of diphtheria became rife in our town of El Dorado Springs. The doctors were doing their best but nearly every case was fatal. Finally, a young or middle aged Doctor Wells, with a full beard reaching nearly to his belt got a new treatment for it. This consisted largely of a rather severe swabbing of the throat to remove the lumps which interfered with breathing. He had his first two patients definitely on the mend when the thing struck my school friend and me. Laura Griffith was a cantankerous little girl and her parents did not have the fortitude to hold her and have the swabbing properly done so her life was soon over. I was really the third survivor.

Modern science has done a lot in 80 years. That was good beginning.

When I was an early teenager, I went fishing with two grown ups: young me, Jim Dawson, son of a local doctor and Sid Dyer, editor of the local newspaper. The only way they would have been interested in going out with a "kid" was that I could have my dad's wagon and team for a 4 or 5 mile drive out to Little Clear Creek. I fished a little away from them: when we met for lunch Sid, having a shot gun along, had 2 teal ducks and Jim had a bass around a pound and a half. They were in high. I was in the dumps. I had hung a big bass and he got away. When I told them I had hung a fish twice as big as Jim's, and that he got the line around a brush and got away they made fun of me: said I was excited, etc.

I went back up to the end of the hole, sat behind a bush and never crawled out till I had two like the one that got away and two like Jim's. They got no more. The wonder is that he got the one, for the water was clear as a spring. They tried all the way home to buy some of my fish I wouldn't listen to them. If they had not made me mad, I probably would have divided with them. I am not mad now.

## School

We moved to El Dorado Springs near the north west corner of Cedar Co. in the spring of 1882 when the town was 7 months old.

For a while I attended subscription schools, \$1.<sup>00</sup> per month. A little later went to organized district school in any available building, a term or two each in Wheeler Hall, down town, and the "Old Flat" church in the south east corner of town. In 1886, the 8 room house was built in the scattered woods at the north edge of town. Eight grades and high school, the best on in the county. I attended school there and finished the courses, but dropped out before they had a graduating class.

In that time, I had 3 excellent teachers Mrs. S. B. Woods, an elderly southern lady of culture, Ira E. Barber, later an attorney, and G.M. Liston, later a doctor. The old building was later named Liston School in honor of him and a widowed sister-in-law Mrs. S. C. Liston who taught for several years in the primary grades.

While in Mr. Liston's school, our math class, teacher and all, got "hung up" for 2 days on a tough problem. I cannot quote it, but it ran something like this with a little more detail:

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“A farmer estimated he had enough provender to supply 13 cattle thru the winter. When he had fed 40 days, cattle plague broke out and killed R (?) cattle daily for 3 days. Long winter compelled him to feed 5 days longer than expected when the feed was exhausted. How long would the provender have lasted had no deaths occurred?”

The third morning I announced a solution, so did Prof. Liston and asked me to give mine first. Believe me, I had an attentive class. As I finished, he said mine was better in one little detail and did not offer his. By the way, years after that as the family and I returned from a visit to El Dorado Springs we drove by a Kansas town and visited with Dr. Liston an hour or two. He mentioned the cattle feeding problem.

At an earlier date, the town school board, of which my Father was a member, employed as head of our school a man named Sexton. They soon learned they had made a mistake, for he was not much good. When we reached the last problem in fractions in our old Rays arithmetic, the whole class, teachers and all, hung up for a couple of days. The class was 11:30-12. He got on a high horse and said that problem would be solved next day before anybody went to dinner. He was mad!!! I got my orders to hurry home if were dismissed on time, and if I did not show up by 12:10 Dad and at least one other board member would be on their way over to see what it was all about. Luck saved us: somebody solved the problem and that story was over.

## District School Teaching

In August 1887, T. B. Cooper and wife, two of her sisters, four other grown ups girls, the elderly Mr. S. B. Woods and myself camped in a big tent at the county seat, 20 miles away and attended the 4 weeks Cedar County Teachers' Institute. At the close, I took the examination along with about 80 candidates in the 10 subjects required and handed in my papers. The examining board consisted of the County School Commissioner and two who had been teachers for the 4 weeks term. When my case came up, one spoke up “His grades are good, and he has passed well.” Another said “There is no age limit in the requirements” the other said “Nobody would hire the lad even if he applied for a school job, which he will not do.” So they issued me a third grade teachers certificate 3 weeks before I was 14 years old. Can anybody beat it?

I continued for several years to attend the county Teachers Institute for the four weeks of August. In 1888 I got a second grade certificate good for two years and including exams in 4 or 5 high school subjects added to the ten elementary ones required for third grades. The following August, I was one of five in the county (2 of them my former teachers) to get first grader's good for three years. My teaching work did not begin until 1896 about 3 weeks before I was 18, at the “Harscrabble” school near Jerico in the south west part of the county (four months @ \$30.) About this time the school law was changed a little. First grade certificates were made good in any county in the state. I got one of the three issued in our county that year.

In the fall of '92, I was able to find a vacancy at a little better pay (4 months @ \$36) at “Red Hill” in the east side of the county. Not a desk in the house. Seats were made of saw-mill slabs of various lengths, each with 4 leg stakes driven into holes hoveled in the corner side and sawed off to provide proper height for large and small students. Three or four larger boys bought lumber and made for themselves a long desk. All around the wall for back-rest: I had a chair and a small stand table for a desk.

My term was to be out on Friday before Christmas. The Saturday before that, I had ridden my pony about 10 miles to Cane-Hill (Post Office, Doctor, Blacksmith, 3 stores, with Schoolhouse about half a mile out). Their teacher had been elected to a county office and was leaving them at mid-term. They were quite glad to see me and I finished out the term for them. Then they elected me for the following year: 6 mos. @ \$40. That was the best and most enjoyed of all my school experience. Theirs was a fine class of young people that should have been in junior high. Also primary and intermediates; most of

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them from good families and it was well above the average. There was one exception. I had some trouble with two unruly kids about in their early teens, and next day their dad came in to straighten me out. For a burly to come, lick the teacher and break up the school was not unheard of. I met him at the door, invited him in and treated him decently and he left, not quite as mad as when he came in. We had in school, Earnest Becknell, 22 years old, paying \$1.<sup>00</sup> a month tuition and classed with children half his age, trying to pick up a little of what he missed as a lad. All the time our "belligerent" was "telling us off" Earnest sat about a yard behind him with a stick of stove wood between his knees for what he was afraid might happen. Several of the youngsters saw the stick of wood and knew what it was for, but I had not caught on till I was told.

Soon after the end of that term, I got a letter from the president of the board of "Center" school, adjoining Cane-Hill. He told me they had "implored" me to teach their school the next year and asked me if I would take it. I did and had a good and very interesting term. By fall the school board had re-organized. The new president sent me a boy 8 years old (had been to school) and his sister who lacked, a week or two of six. This little girl was so timid that she would cry every time I spoke to or even near her, so I very carefully avoided her for a few days. After she became a little more accustomed to surroundings I got her so she would stand at my knee for a few lessons. Soon she became a regular in the primary class, and by spring she could read and spell better than her brother. He was a slow learner and she was a quick one.

That was the last of my district school teaching. Once in the meantime, I had taken on a spring term about 10 miles from home. It was planned for a 3 months term but the board would give me only a one month contract. At the end of the month we went right along without further arrangement. At the end of the second month, there was just beginning a short summer term at the Miller Normal and Business College half a mile from home. I had had some contact with Prof. Miller and his excellent wife and knew them to be exceptional teachers so I resigned and enrolled. The board claimed I didn't do them right. I answered that the mistake had been theirs. Had I been under a 3-month contract I sure would have stayed with it. The fact that the girl I afterward married, was enrolling at the same time - well - I - I -

## Rattlesnakes?

Yes, I have met them. When I was about 4 years old I stepped on a little one not 10 feet from the kitchen door. Before my mother took time to kill the snake she bound up my foot in a poultice of salt and soda, moistened, and which she renewed every few minutes for a while. It never got sore nor made me sick.

Several things about it I remember very clearly: 1- The big stick of pole wood she got at the wood pile to kill the snake; 2- Dad and a neighbor had started to town on horse back, were not out of sight. Mom probably could have called them back, but did not; 3- What that first poultice looked like when she took it off in a very short time, discolored by the blood and, venom ugly!

I was lucky in two ways: The snake was small, little if any more than 18 inches long: with my foot on his middle he got only a twisted strike at me and only one fang broke the skin on the side of my heel, so I got much less of the venom than I might have had.

Just after the turn of the century, my father and I prospected one of the southwestern land openings by wagon and team as thousands of others were doing. Driving slowly across a prairie dog town to observe the antics of the little fellows, we heard the loud, clear warning of a rattler. I picked up the shot gun and stepped out of the wagon. Believe me, that, even in that sparsely grassed area, I looked carefully before every step. Soon we located him 2 or 3 feet down a dog hole. I turned the muzzle down the hole and blazed away. We took off a stay-chain and let the hook end down the hole. The snake soon entangled himself on the hook and we pulled him out. He was near 5 feet long and all of 3 inches thick in the middle.

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One more. Some 10 years later, I found a small rattler in the barn lot, but I was too late: the mules had already taken good care of him.

I would like to join the "White Fang Club" at the time of the Okeene Rattlesnake Hunt, but up to now have not been able to get the address of the secretary. Will try again next spring. (Aug. '64)

## My Town Fireman Experience

I grew up in the town of El Dorado Springs, Mo. moved to that town when I was less than a year old and I was 8 past. When I was some 17 or 18, with parental consent, I joined the town volunteer fire company. The town had no water system, so we had what was called a "side pumper". Pulled by hand to the scene of the fires if we could get our suction hose into a shallow well or cistern we could put out a small fire quickly, or at least keep it from spreading to other buildings: a pretty good small outfit.

All the other towns around us had 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration. We never did. We always waited until July 19 - 20, the anniversary of the town founding and had 2 or 3 days of it. People came by hundreds and by thousands from miles around, many of them to camp a night or two or even longer. It soon became the largest event of the kind in that part of the world.

One "twentieth" the Central Committee asked the Fire Company to take charge of and operate the fireworks display. We agreed. A while before night, we were approached by a young man who told us his father operated a fireworks factory. He represented himself to us as rather an expert in the line and offered his help for the evening. We were glad to have him. One part of our display consisted of a mortar or gun about 30 inches high that shot straight up to a considerable height, a bomb, near the size of a croquet ball, which exploded and dropped an immense shower of sparks to fall slowly as a real bouquet of fire - beautiful!!

The young man lit the fuse on one of the bombs and dropped it into the mortar. The fuse burned a little slowly and - yes, our expert looked in to see if it was still burning. It was. He fell rather away then toward me, but not more than 2 or 3 steps from me. Two others and I kept firing Roman candles to hold the crowd while others quickly made a stretcher to carry him and the fireworks display was over. We carried him just a block to his hotel room, 2 doctors with us where they cleaned him up a little and took a few stitches, and a couple of us stayed with him till morning. The bomb was big enough that the bones of his cheek, nose and forehead saved his eyes. I never saw him again, but heard later that he made a good recovery.

Early in the century we organized a volunteer fire company in Noble, and because I had some "experience" they made me chief. However, I did not retain that job long. We found it better to have a chief who lived nearer to where our equipment was housed.

We have had some pretty bad fires in Noble. On the east side of the street, where the service station now is, was one of the oldest buildings in town. It was a brick store with a lodge hall on the second floor. Joining it on the north was a 3 front stone building with lumber partitions dividing off the 3 owners. It was comparatively new. Fire broke out in the old brick. By the time people got there, nothing could be done for it, as it was about gutted. I got on top of the 3 in 1. It was not in danger. The south wall of it was good. The only way for fire to reach it was to burn out of the big store to the light lumber porch, then burn back into the corner of the newer building. With 2 boys to carry water I could easily have stopped it there. Nobody would bring me one bucket full. They were too busy carrying out things, so I promptly went down the ladder. I went across the street to where Deputy P.M. Miss Wise had just reached the office. I helped her get the mail and equipment bunched together for a quick carry out if it became necessary, then I got one of the thrills of a lifetime. In pulling a drawer out of a thread case, she spied the half inch corner of a paper sticking out from under a false bottom of the drawer. It was the "advice" of a "20.00 money order that had been missing for 2 or 3 days, and she was just on the verge of having to make it up from her salary. Was she happy!!

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Then I got on top of the porch of Arthur Wagners butcher shop and stood guard that sparks and cinders did not bring the fire across the street. Some boys carried me a little water: One of them thought I was getting pretty hot and dashed a part of one bucket on me.

Arthur was a good citizen. He was the son-in-law of Granny Martin one of the most loved elderly matrons in town. Next day he wanted to pay me for protecting his roof. I said no: I don't fight fire for pay. He insisted: I still refused. So he stepped up to his block, and with knife and cleaver chunked off a nice family size roast, wrapped a paper around it and said "Take that home and tell your wife to cook it for you". That's what happened to the roast.

Along about that time a couple of Chickasaw boys who thought they were a little wild would come across the river, run their horses through the street, yell a time or two and a few shots from their pistols and take off for home. Arthur remarked one day the Town Council ought to appoint a marshal to put a stop to such foolishness. At the very next meeting, the council appointed him town marshal. That was a good joke, and many a hearty laugh was had about it.

Not too long after that, the boys came to town, started up the street on a gallop and let out a yell or two. It so happened that in front of Arthur's shop, tied to the rack, was a little saddle mare, not his, but he knew her to be a good one. So he mounted her, took after one of the boys, chased him a block or so, caught him, jerked him off his horse, landed on top of him, held him till help came. That was the end of the rowdyism, also the end of the big joke.

For about 17 years Charley Hough operated a service station on the east side of the street opposite the bank. He kept opened till bed time and always allowed us to have an orderly pitch game in the office after supper. One night, one of the fellows spied a fire blazing up in the glass front store across the street. Somebody grabbed the phone and called the Norman fire department which made a quick run, but they were not needed because some of our fellows had forced the door and had the small fire already out. Presently the Norman fire chief asked me to go in the building with him. We found a partly burned pile of box-top kindling and two similar piles well covered with kerosene under other counters. These 2 had not been touched off. So far as I know, there was no criminal action started: at least I was never called in to court to tell what I had seen.

## Bridges

We existed along for a while, built one bridge in Logan Co. at a fair profit (before we moved) and finally got the big bridge at Noble done in August of 1898. It was a promotion affair. We had sold about enough shares in it to buy the material, and did most of the work ourselves, two men and four mules, with the help of a few sturdy fellows who had subscribed a share or two on the "work it out" basis. At the conclusion, we owned a controlling interest in the \$7,000.<sup>00</sup> structure for the near three years till the Canadian cut a new channel and left it proudly spanning a sand bar and a mudhole. Tolls from the bridge always paid some, but never as much as we had hoped. The town wanted us to turn the river back under the bridge, but we knew better, so they bought us out at a low price and tried it. After their failure, they went down river a quarter mile and built a beautiful leg bridge, using most of the material from the old one. As they were starting to paint it, came the largest rise of all time (1904) - two miles wide from the first of the Noble hill. It took every vestige of the new bridge and all of ours except the end that was anchored into the rocky hillside. That ended the bridge efforts for Noble. As the town workers removed all the usable material from the remaining part of the old one, a couple of my old friends brought me one of the 270<sup>#</sup> tower caps, and laid it in my front yard as a keepsake. It still lies there.

## Red Dress

Shortly after the turn of the century my Father and I were operating a newly established nursery. A. H. Symcox, an ancestor of the present operators of the City National Bank, lived just south of Norman. About 1904, Mr. Symcox traded me a pure bred Duroc Jersey sow pig for \$10.<sup>00</sup> worth of fruit trees. We

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named and registered her "Red Dress". She proved to be a good one and was the beginning of a considerable herd of Durocs which we operated for a number of years as a side issue to the nursery business. We added a few animals from time to time always from the top blood lines of the breed and in Sept. 1907 I drove into the show ring "Red Ranger" the first Grand Champion Duroc Jersey boar of the Oklahoma State Fair, of which Dad and I were charter members. We continued to exhibit Duroc hogs, honey and other products at the fair for a few years, always with a fair share of winnings. In the fall of 1909, brought home a case of hog cholera, but that gives rise to another story.

In the State Fair of Sept. 1908, I drove in the "summer up" for Grand Champion Duroc boar. We had won 1<sup>st</sup> in the 6 mos. to 1 yr. class. A Tattarax hog in the 12 to 18 mo. or the 18 to 24 mo. class, took 1<sup>st</sup> in that class here, and the judge asked his owner and me to drive out to show for champion. Tattarax had been Champion of the Kansas State Fair just before coming here. He looked back and forth between us several times before giving the purple to Tattarax. The Kansas hog had a slight fault in the way he stood on his front feet and I saw the judge checking that I thought I was going to win, but he evidently saw some fault in my hog that he considered worse: I never learned what.

One entry was sired by our Gold Tip Notcher, a sow of Tip Top Notcher, Worlds Champion, and his claim was Proud Perfection, our daughter of Perfection Chief, champion of the Chicago Worlds Fair. So, you see we were about as near the top as the average breeder could hope to get.

We kept our state champion Red Ranger and used him till he was 10 years old and sold him to a neighbor who used him more years that I know about, and there my story ends.

An Indiana farmer Robert Ridgeway, by means of accident and observation, solved the hog cholera problem some years ahead of the scientific fellows. Early in the century, he had a scourge of cholera that took most all of his hogs. By some means, 2 of his brood sows recovered. As soon as he had "cleaned up" he restocked his farm and later had another round of cholera. At this time, he noticed that his 2 sows, each with a litter of pigs, all lived with the sick and dying hogs and never missed a feed or turned a hair. Here is the whole story. His 2 sows were immune. Their pigs were born immune and remained so as long as they took only the mother's milk. As they begin to eat away from her, they begin to lose that immunity slowly, but because they were running with sick hogs, eating greedily and still nursing, they took cholera, but in such a light form that nobody knew it and that's the secret. They became immune for life.

Mr. Ridgeway published and copyrighted a pamphlet setting up all these facts. Soon after the State Fair of 1909 when we brought home a case of cholera which took most of our pigs but from which we were able to save most of our older herd. I paid \$10.<sup>00</sup> for one of the Ridgeway books and a "farm right" to use it. His method was crude. We had to bury a cholera carcass to keep the virus till we needed it again, or drive to a sick herd and get one. I have done both ways.

The survivors of our State Fair herd made an excellent foundation and we began breeding Durocs in earnest. I think we made the first catalogue sale of guaranteed cholera immunes in the state.

When our litters were about 6 weeks old and eating greedily, we would put the raw virus in their slop and see that all ate some. By watching closely I could see a very slight bowel reaction that I never would have seen except that I was looking for it after 6 to 9 days.

About this time science stepped in and did a much better job of it. A serum was developed that gave temporary immunity and if the raw virus was also injected the immunity became permanent.

I had a lot of fun buying the virus alone from the serum plants. "You will kill all your pigs if you give them virus without serum." However they never refused to sell me for 35¢, enough virus to kill all the hogs in the township. The serum was much more expensive.

I lost out on it once for a very definite season. After we had sold out the herd I had kept one immune sow for personal use. When her pigs were just right, I gave her pigs the virus. Within 4 or 5 days she developed the worse case of milk fever I ever saw. Her udder puffed up, tight as a toy balloon, and by the time for the pigs to react to their cholera exposure, she was totally dried up; not a drop of milk to protect

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the pigs. They all died. Had I seen it in time, it is possible that heavy injections of the serum would have saved them. It was then on the market and easily available.

All the happened around 50 years or more ago. I am quite sure that modern veterinary science has practically eradicated hog cholera, or at least has it so well under control that no up to date breeder has cause to fear a serious loss from it.

## Lucky Shots

When we moved to Oklahoma in 1896, small game was plentiful almost anywhere. There was very little law to regulate hunting and such a thing as a bag limit was unheard of. You simply shot all you wanted if you could find it.

We had a team of mules that did not mind our shooting from the wagon. they were used to it. Late one afternoon my Father and I decided to get some quails. so we hitched up, drove to the north east corner of Noble, then a mile north, a mile west, one south and back east into the north west corner of town. In that drive, 7 was my lucky number. I shot 3 times, getting 7 each time. We all pitched in and got the 21 quails cleaned before dark.

I built our first home in the S.W. corner of Block 12. Had part of the block planted to orchard trees, and a hop pasture with a small pond in the N. E. corner. I was out that way one day with my gun, a bunch of quails ran into the path ahead of me and lined out down the path. The distance was just right: I stooped low and fired down the line. I picked up 12, and had seen one fall from the remnant of the flock a block or so away. My bird dog was away, so I did not go to look for it. I had enough and besides 13 would have been terribly unlucky.

Another time, I slipped up the dam of my own pond, fired into a big bunch of "butter ducks", I missed as they rose, pumped in the third shell and got one. Picked up 10 ducks and saw one fall, way across the pasture on the adjoining farm. 10 ducks at a shot.

In 1904, the Canadian showed us "the biggest ever" - two miles wide at Noble. Receding, it left many lakes, some deep, some shallow, mostly small but a few larger. Many of them were left well stocked with fish but all together made a wonderful way-station for the myriad of waterfowl on their twice a year travels north and south and it seemed like a lot wintered here. Ralph Ellinger and I were hunting at one of them when it was frozen over solid, but too thin to walk on. The ducks were simply crazy. If we stood up in our blind they came in just about the same. Some would alight on the ice and slide half the length of the lake. We shot some as the slid by us. When we ran out of shells, we had only a duck or two. At home, I had a small home-made float boat. We went and got it, took a big club, broke the ice, pushed the boat around and picked up either 15 or 17 ducks, I forget which. Some duck shoot!

Harrison Everett and I were hunting in the same locality with double guns. We sneaked up on some ducks in a smaller lake, took a shot each on the water, got one each as they rose, reloaded one barrel each and got one each before they got away. That was skill!!! Everett was an especially good shot. I was always proud of the fact that in that one instance I was able to do as well as he did.

In the summer of 1902 or 1903, a Mr. Whitehead, J. A. Shriver, E. L. Sheets, and Frank Casey organized the Farmer's Store Company at Noble, Capital stocks \$10,000. Dry goods, groceries, hardware, lumber - most anything. In just under 60 days, beside the cash business they had done the total \$10,000 was on their books, credited, mostly to farmers, secured by crop and livestock mortgages. I owed them over \$600.<sup>00</sup> on open account, having built my first office and packing shed that burned about 50 years later. Their credit was good: they were still doing business.

But back to the original story: Mr. Whitehead had equipped a nice little boat with an outboard motor, about the first such seen in these parts. I was one of a little party spending with it, a week end at one of the new lakes. We were catching some fish and having a lot of fun when LO!!! - the propeller picked up a trotline. That line was wound and twisted into a knot half as big as a nail keg and took a lot of work wit

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knife and screw driver to get it off in something like a hundred pieces. The fine little machine was not damaged a bit.

## Squirrel Hunting

I was a rather successful squirrel hunter. Unless when hunting with a trained dog, I never walked much but would find a likely place in the timber, sit down and let the squirrels hunt me. They usually did. Years ago, I used to cross the Canadian and hunt on or near the Johnson-Graham Ranch. Gray and fox squirrels were both plentiful there. Later the grays disappeared from this section. Later my hunting was largely confined to the big cottonwoods along the lightly timbered branches east of Noble. Once, daughter Stella and I headed for a familiar spot about 2 miles out. Just before we got there we passed 2 or 3 horsebackers with about the most hounds I ever saw at one time. We had located under a pair of big cottonwoods, and here they came. The woods around us simply filled with hound dogs. I remarked to her "Our hunting is over till this mess clears". About then I hear a little bark-scratching, looked up, fired 3 quick shots and 4 bushy tails fell. We never knew which shot got 2, but there they were. Another time Grandson Wayne and I planned to go hunting after school so I met him at the school house at 4 o'clock and we drove to a big tree not too far from the site of the hound dog story. That tree suddenly "came alive" with the bushytails. I quickly shot 5 and Wayne saw another run into a hole. That was enough we drove home. He stuck his head in at the kitchen door and to his Grandmother said "Grandpa and I want to go squirrel hunting." She said "Wait a minute, I want to fix you a sandwich." He pushed the door open and dropped, the 5 squirrels at his Grandmother's feet. I do not remember if he still got the sandwich - he probably did.

Went hunting once with my son-in-law Harry Dean (now departed). I sat on a stump near the middle of a small grove and shot 8 bushytails while he hunted it over and never saw a live one. Another proof that my plan is the way to get them.

## Nobilites

When Ralph Ellinger came to Noble just after the turn of the century to establish the bank he lived at the home of C. F. Wantland. In fact, after he married, he and his wife lived with this fine elderly couple for some time even after their first son was born. They soon learned that Charles was not a normal, robust child and needed a lot of care. Mrs. Ellinger's parents lived in Oklahoma City. Making week-end visits up there they found a night woman who could take care of the sick baby better than any of them, so they brought her to Noble a few times. Somehow a rumor got started that "they" were going to run that "nigger" out of town.

Ellinger was sleeping on a pallet at an upper window, his pump gun beside him, and the gate clicked. Night clad, Mr. Wantland, holding a double barrel gun with one hammer broken, beat him to the door. A dog had clicked the gate.

Nothing ever came of the rumor. It may have been only idle talk at the beginning.

Clyde M. Holliday came to Noble from Agra in the fall of 1904, to help out at the bank in the cotton rush for 3 weeks. My wife agreed to board him the 3 weeks. He practically never left. After a year or two, he married and brought his wife here. Except for a couple of years spent farther west, their home has been Noble, Washington or Norman ever since.

While he was in the bank here we had what has been called "The Bankers Panic". Nobody understood all about it. All local banks had a rule that nobody could draw out over \$5.<sup>00</sup> a day. Business went on about as usual everybody wrote checks. A nurseryman at Tecumseh wrote a stanza of poetry about "Oh! The checks, the beautiful checks".

While Clyde was in the bank here, I thought I needed eight or ten dollars, so I stepped confidently up to his window but \$5.<sup>00</sup> and a smile was all I could get.

That rule evidently meant me too.

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Not too long after I came to Noble, two of my friends, Harrison Everett and Jim Shriver opened a hardware store a few doors north of the present Post Office. At that time, there was so much hunting that they somewhat specialized in guns and ammunition even to the point of putting a complete shell loading outfit in a front window. As their business prospered a little, they each ordered for his own use an Ithica hammerless double barrel, 12 ga. shot gun (\$22.<sup>00</sup> wholesale) **SOME GUN!!!**

Shooting matches at the stock-yards at west edge of town were almost daily occurrences in pretty weather. Stories of how much better “patterns” the two Ithicas made than any and all other guns tried, were told and retold at the store. One day I remarked to Jim that I was beginning to see the real need of going to the stock yards with them some day. This pleased him very much and he mentioned it to me several times until finally, we went. I took my 10 ga. Baker. Jim ignored the fact that my gun shot ¼ oz more pellets than his. We shot at long range at a target made from ½ size of a newspaper. Two shots each with bird-shot (#8) resulted in 4 patterns so near alike that we called it a “draw”. Then Jim suggested we try it with coarser shot. Now any experienced gunner should know the results of a test of a 12 ga. full choke gun against a 10 ga. “modified” choke with heavier shot. Yes, in a trial of #4 shot I put twice as many in the paper as he did. Then with a load of very coarse (B.B. size) his gun put 3 or 4 in the paper while mine put so many holes in the big paper that we did not take time to count them. That shooting match was never mentioned to me again!!

Later, the fellows made up a trap shooting club here. A saucer shaped “clay pigeon” was thrown from a little machine. As the quick part of the flight was over and the “pigeon” started to fall, my long range gun would break one of them. I broke 6: the machine broke the 7<sup>th</sup> into half a dozen pieces and “rattled” me. It was no trouble for me to miss the other 3. Along with club dues pigeons and ammunition, I decided it was a little too expensive for me and I decided to save my ammunition for wild game, and that my last and only.

The shooting stories on folio 16 bring to mind another worth telling. About that time all our gunpowder was the old fashioned black kind, exploded by a spark of fire and the modern “nitro” powder was being introduced. Nitro powder requires a heavy shock to explode it, and shells loaded with it are equipped with a different type of cap on “primer” which produces the necessary shock. Our friends in the hardware store had not learned this, so when they got in a small supply for trial, they loaded a few of the old time shells with it just to show us a “new one”. They did. At the next “Stock Yards Session”, Jim took his turn to fire at the target. At the pull of his trigger his old time primer set fire to his nitro powder. As the powder slowly burned and expanded into smoke and gas, this ounce of shot was pushed out of his gun and fell to the ground not over 6 feet away. You could have caught it in a basket.

They got a supply of the more powerfully capped shells, and the result was different. The new powder proved to be much better and the old fashioned black powder has practically disappeared from the market.

Bob Hobbs was an old time friend of mine that lived on a farm 3 or 4 miles south of Noble, near the river. He was a good citizen and a good sport. He liked to play jokes on his friends and tell tales. If somebody told a story first, he could usually come back with a better one. I will admit that sometimes he may have exaggerated a little. He used to grow and sell yellow meat watermelons of extra high quality. He saw somebody saving some of the seed, and said he did not have to plant the seed that on his sandy river land the roots live over and come up next year. The story was told that he brought in a large woody root of a perennial stinging nettle and persuaded somebody to plant it in the garden. However, I do not vouch for the story.

Bob was an expert rifle shot. If he could get somebody to toss up a quarter or half dollar he would usually hit with a .22 bullet from his automatic rifle. If he was lucky to hit it the first shot it might knock the coin so far it could not be found. Then he would laugh. For a while he was a game ranger and wolf trapper and caught a number of coyotes. It has been said that sometime a wolf will gnaw off part of a

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foot, or his mates will do it for him. Sometimes Bob would fasten his traps to a stump or bush but would use a chunk or piece of board as an anchor. This would make a clear trail in the sand and Bob would follow with a gun. One time he missed a trap, so he followed the trail. soon the wolf jumped out of a bunch of big grass for another try at running, but was too far away for a good shot. A little way ahead was a "duck blind". The wolf made for it, best he could. When he broke into it, the two duck hunter did not need to be told to get out. They were too excited to take a shot at the animal, so Bob had to follow it a little further for a shot.

He told another story. As he was approaching two hunters in a blind, he saw one hunter throw his gun into the shallow water of the river. As he checked for their license, one of them had his all O.K. but the other had none. "He was just along". As Bob left them, he hid in a brush patch not too far away and watched the hunter wade in for his gun which he was unable to find. Whether he returned later and found it Bob never knew.

At an early date, I saw very plainly the work of beaver on stumps near where the South Canadian hits the Phillips hill south west of Noble so I know the following is easily possible. The story is, that a law abiding citizen showed Bob a beaver pelt and asked what it was. Due to the fact that it was so evident there was no intention to violate the law, Bob allowed him to destroy the pelt and never reported it.

Just as the present sewer system for Noble was about finished, Charley Hobough, Wes Spencer and I took over as Town Council. The supply of the big concrete pipe proved to be some 400 or 500 feet short of the needs and the money was all spent. Charley went to see the people who had it for sale. He told them our needs and the condition of our treasury, and that the 3 of us recently elected for 2 years, would personally see that they got the money but could not say when. We bought that little pipe on these terms 10¢ per foot less than the previous council had bought miles of it with money in the bank to pay for it. Had we been asked a little more per foot than they had paid we would not have been surprised.

Want to make a guess?

Years ago, I was approached by a member of the Norman City Council with this proposition: - He wanted a price on 200 shade trees for the City park at a price to the City and a 10¢ lower price to him. I did not sell the trees, and, do not know if they were sold on that kind of a deal.

Joe Peters is in charge of the crew that takes care of the grounds at O.U. He works with "Bob" Rucker, head of the Landscape Department. A short drive over the grounds will show you how well they get the job done.

Some time ago the Board of Regents decided to buy a new pressure type dump truck for hauling trash. They were offered several kinds and selected 2 for a demonstration and let "Bob" and Joe decide which they liked better. As the demonstration began, one salesman approached Bob and quietly said "I can make it worth while for you to select our truck." Bob looked him in the eye, a second or two and said: "I lost a leg in the war: 'Uncle' pays me a pension. The University pays me a salary for what I do here. I can get along without doing business with such as you." They took the other truck.

(Later I got a chance to tell his story to Dr. Cross who had been a valued friend before he was made president of O.U. - His only remark was "That's old Bob for you.")

When R.F. Ellinger came to Noble in 1902 he and I soon learned one particular thing we had in common: we both liked to fish. At that time Walnut Creek, near Washington and for a few miles above and below was well socked with wide mouth blue cat that apparently up to now has been missed by the scientific fellows and has never been classified, named and put into the books.

I had a light team and hack also a heavier team and light wagon to use if we took a larger crowd and more camping outfit. Not long after he married, he and I went at 4 o'clock Saturday, seined our bait, put out quite a string of bank lines, which we attended pretty regularly until toward midnight when we left

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them well baited and took a few hours of sleep. In the morning our wives borrowed the pharton and black pony of the Wantlands and arrived at our camp about 9 o'clock. We led them to the edge of a high bank at a creek bend and pointed to 5 big strings of fish tied in the edge of the water below. They said it reminded them of the hitch rack in Noble on Saturday afternoon. We had some 40 or 50 cats from 1<sup>#</sup> to 4 or 5 pounds.

## Seat Belts

Personally I have a horror of them and will not use one. However, I drive very little and do not ride very much as a passenger. "Pro-belters" claim that statistics are strongly in favor of belts. I wonder if they are absolutely fair in getting their statistics. For instance, in that accident last week in which the car was pictured flat on its top: all wheels high in the air. All passengers escaped with minor injuries.

That case would not have helped the seat belt statistics very much.

(Miller Fergusson, one of the wildest, near Sand Springs - Apr. 26 4 or more all minor inj. 90 miles estimate.)

## Pecan trees

Not long ago I read a statement about planting pecan trees, made by our Cleveland County Demonstration Agent, Vernon Frye, whom I regard very highly. He said 50% of the planted pecan trees do not live I agree, and know a very definite reason for much of this loss.

Nurserymen do not grow pecan trees to any extent in this section. We ship them in from North Texas or further away. Never in my life have I opened a bale of the trees that had not been perfectly packed: plenty of damp moss, or Exelsion with stout paper and burlap wrapping. The roots are too long to permit standing in the heel yard, so we lay them down at a low angle and cover to a few inches of the tips with soil. Years ago, we had one of the bad ones: days and days of dry, windy weather between winter and spring, and I noted that most of those exposed tips were dry as a pipe stem while any part covered by an inch or more of soil was as fresh and fine as ever. We learned our lesson. We always insisted that the trees be set to the proper depth (usually about a yard) and that soil be banked up around them "about as high as you can make it stand", and leave it there until after growth starts and you can remove it in fine weather. If the tree is more than 2-3 ft. high, it is advisable to wrap the stem to near the top with burlap or paper.

We sold one order of 50 pecan trees the past spring (1964) to a Mr. Goad living east of Norman. Some of them were shipped to him direct from the Texas grower, other picked up from our heel yards. He reported to us in July just passed that he had done everything just as directed and that every tree was alive and growing.

Later we have the suggestion from one of the better pecan nurseries in north Texas, that wrapping the stems completely with foil will prevent this loss of moisture - after planting. Sounds good. May be as good as the soil banking. We have never tried it.

## History of Caddo Maple

(Acer saccharum - Sugar Maple) Hard Maple

About the late twenties I found in some canyons in Caddo County, some acer saccharum (sugar maple) that did not turn brown in August, but held the sap in the leaves so they could turn brilliant red and yellow at the approach of frost. I soon began selling a few of them, but cannot trace any of them now, except one.

About the mid-thirties, Howard Jenson and I spent a Saturday in one of the canyons. Howard was head of the O.U. Landscape Dept. While I was getting small seedlings to plant in the nursery for later sale, he spent the day searching out and digging larger trees to plant on the campus. If you want to see any of the 16 trees resulting from that day's work, drive over the campus on the approach of frost. You will not need to have them pointed out. Every one will show itself.

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Recently, Robert Rucker, head of the Landscape Dept. and his foreman, Joe Peters (now deceased) have planted a lot of them and have grown a small nursery of them near the south edge of the grounds.

I have dubbed it "Caddo Maple" to distinguish it from hard maple from any other source, which up to now, have never failed to brown and lose their beauty in August.

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