BIG GREEN
by Ella Jane (Williams) Green 1936
Transcribed by Douglas Williams 1936
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Introduction

The following pages were transcribed from photocopies of a book written by Ella Jane Green in 1936. The photocopies were obtained from Marge Womach, of Harrington, Washington, through the Harrington City Library. Marge also provided copies of a partial transcription of the book, which included the preface.

Originally this book, entitled "Big Geen", was 75 type written pages, with editorial remarks written in pencil. These editorial remarks were taken into consideration during the transcription. All editorial changes are included in this transcription, with major editorial changes to the manuscript being referenced by footnotes. Other minor editorial changes like spelling, grammar and sentence constructions are not noted. Most misspellings and grammatical errors contained in the original manuscript are preserved in this transcription.

Ella Jane Green is my 1st cousin 3 times removed, through her first cousin Melville Williams, the son of her uncle Jeremiah, or Uncle Doc as Ella calls him. Ella begins her life story by mentioning her grandfather, Isaac Burson Williams. Isaac was born in Bucks County, PA around 1794. He comes from a long line of Williams who have been in this land for hundreds of years. Ella's great great great grandfather, Jeremiah, was born in Boston in 1683 to Joseph and Lydia Williams.

At the end of this book are provided a couple of resources. First, you will find the obituaries of John and Ella Green. In addition, I have provided a partial descendant report for Joseph and Lydia Williams of Boston.

May you enjoy this reading as much as I have!

Preface

This little sketch of my life is written for, and dedicated to, my great grandchildren, Marilyn Louise and Ward Carlyle Garret, in Wenatchee, WA, "The Apple Capitol of the World"; Ella Jane Fenton, my little namesake, who lives on a beautiful orchard tract on the banks of the Columbia River; William Henry Green and his cousin, Keith Rodderick Green in Spokane; Carol May Hannum, in Portland, OR, and her cousin, William Carl Hannum, in Seattle; and Janine Lea Engstrom, in Washington, D. C.

To them I am "Big Geen", a name given me by Marilyn, the oldest of the fourth generation. It is a diminutive of "Big Grandma Green", the big referring to age and not to size!

My greatest joy in life is being near them, and watching their childish minds develop.

Ella Jane Green (nee Williams) (Mrs. John F. Green)

(Nov. 26, 1936)

Chapter I

My grandfather, Isaac B. Williams, was born in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, in a stone house on the Delaware River. (I had the pleasure of visiting this house one hundred and ten years later.) He was a Quaker, though a very liberal one, and he refused to be married in Quaker meeting because he would not have the banns published two months in advance, and have them debated about, considered, and approved or otherwise, as the case might be. As he refused to apologize, as Grandmother did, he was dropped from the membership. Grandfather always used the Quaker language and it seemed perfectly natural for us children to say "thee" and "thou" in addressing him.

My father was born in the same house. I do not remember either of my grandmothers nor my own mother. When very young my father taught school. Later he traveled and lectured on electricity; and on telegraphy when it was quite new, demonstrating by stringing up wires and sending messages from one corner of the room to another. For years he was agent for Vick's Nursery, in New York, traveling over may states and taking orders for fruit trees and shrubbery. This he combined with farming.

I was born in Jay County, Indiana, in 1853[1] in a log house that must have resembled Abraham Lincoln's birthplace. Before my father married the second time, my brother Oliver, three years my senior, and I lived for a short time with our great uncle and aunt, Abel and Margaret Lester, and though I was a very small child, between three and four years old, the memory of that house stands out vividly, and it still seems to me that it was the most beautiful place I ever saw; a log house – or rather two log houses connected – with an attic above. One big room served as a living room, dining room and kitchen, and bedroom. A huge fire-place was in one end and two high-posted beds in the other, with a large bureau between. The beds had canopies with white curtains, and valances trimmed with hand-made lace. Beds were so high that we had to use bed steps to climb into them. Of course this left a great deal of storage space underneath, where boxes of clothing and low trunks were kept; these trunks were made of cow-hide with the hair left on the outside.

[1] "in 1853" added.

The floors were wide planks of white oak and they were scoured with sand until they were white and spotless; several braided rugs were scattered over them. The walls were the white-washed logs. The other room was the "parlor", though it also contained two canopied beds; and how I admired the big Grandfather's clock! It had an embossed glass door, and was regulated by heavy weights.

I cannot remember if all of the cooking was done in the fire-place, though there were cranes and kettles in it.

I heartily disliked Uncle Abel because he enjoyed teasing me, and would mimic me when I talked about “I’se cats” and said “I love a v e y-body”, and when I cried he chased me around with a vessel to catch the tears! Neither did I like an orphan grandson who lived with them. One Sunday morning when I was dressed up in white he took me riding in the wheel-barrow and dumped me into a mud hole, for which I never forgave him! However I was very fond of Aunt Margaret. She was a very large, good-natured woman, and she let me do many little things to help her, much to my delight. One thing was to help twist the wicks for wax candles. She would stand in one corner of the room, I in the opposite, twisting, then doubling the wick; then she would dip this in hot bees’ wax, of her own make, cooling and re-dipping till it was as big around as my little finger, and probably ten feet long. This she would coil, layer upon layer, till it was about three inches in diameter and three or four inches high; then she would turn the last end up an inch or so to be lighted. As it burned down it had to be turned up a little higher, but it would last a long time.

The house was in a clearing in the woods and surrounded by hickory, walnut, and white oak trees, and it was a great delight to me to watch the hickory bark burn in the fire-place, it sparkled so and made the house so light. The trees shed their bark and it peeled off in long thin strips.

Oliver attended Liber College, a boarding school a few miles distant, which had a preparatory department for children, and my joy was complete when he was home for holidays, though he spent most of his time in the barn making corn-stalk fiddles and horse-hair bows. The little tunes he played on them were sweet music to me!

From Aunt Margaret’s we went to live with Grandfather Williams at his home on Bear Creek, where he lived with his youngest son and his wife, my Uncle Charlie and Aunt Mandy. We got our mail at the Bear Creek Post Office and I can remember the foot log on which we had to cross to reach it – it was a tree trunk felled across the creek, the top hewn flat. I still have letters in my possession with the Bear Creek post-mark.

We also visited quite often at the home of Great Uncle Jeremiah about seven miles away on the Limberlost, on mire from the Westchester store that Gene Stratton Porter has often mentioned in her books. We drove through swamps on narrow corduroy roads; these were made of logs split through the middle, and laid side by side with the flat side down; and we didn’t have rubber tires nor shock absorbers either! But we thought it was great fun to go bumpety-bumpety over them.

The Limberlost was heavily timbered, with thick underbrush and ferns; and many were the spooky stories that were told of robbers hiding there. They may have bee only legendary but they sent the creeps up and down my spine!

Grandfather Williams owned another farm on the Loblolly – usually spoken of as “The Lob”, where the quicksands, or sinking holes, of the Limberlost were located. This farm he rented to his oldest son, Jeremiah, who was always known to us as “Uncle Doc”. He was a country doctor and practiced all over the neighborhood, going horseback and carrying his pill bags across his saddle.

When I was a little past five my father married Nancy Jane Stephens, a dress-maker, who lived with her widowed sister Elizabeth Loomis. “Aunt Lib” taught school to support her four young sons, and she was my first teacher. Her youngest son, Ralph, was about my age and we were great pals. We always said we were going to be married, so some of our elders held a broom stick for us, and hand in hand, we jumped over it, and thought the deed was done! “Jumping the boom stick” was a common expression for getting married.

My new mother bough me a long-legged doll with a saw-dust body and an expressionless china head that never would stay on. It was the only doll I ever owned, but it did not appeal to me, probably because I was too much of a tom-boy to stay in the house and play with dolls.

Soon after my father’s marriage we moved to Ohio. He had purchased the former home of my step-mother, the old Stephen’s farm, five miles from Dayton, in the Mad River Valley. There was a large old house, the original part being a two-story log house, with an attic; later a frame addition had been built on the back. It was situated on a gentle slope which dipped abruptly to the lowlands in front. Beyond that ran the swift waters of the Mad River, its banks bordered with over-spreading trees. On the sloping hill back of the house, the grain fields reach to a level woodland.

The original log house had two big rooms down stairs, and two up stairs, with a fire-place on each floor. Above them was an attic which was a treasure house of old discarded furniture, spinning wheels and reels, and mysterious looking trunks and chests. When I asked my father about the contents of the chests he told me the story of Geneva, who in playful mood hid herself in an old chest in the attic on her wedding night, and a spring lock fastened her down forever. Thereafter I had no curiosity for I was afraid the chests might conceal a skeleton!

The newer part of the house consisted of a kitchen and a bed room, and back of them was a shed, or “lean-to”, which was used as a summer kitchen. In the winter it was used as a store room and I well remember the apple pies that were placed on tables there to freeze, then stacked, one on top of another, several deep, and stored in the cupboards for future use. Twenty or more were made at one baking. They were delicious and I would like to have one now! And I wouldn’t mind having a twisted cruller; I can’t remember when the big earthen jar wasn’t full!

In summer the barn was my delight, with its big threshing floor, hay mows, corn cribs and stables. When we needed flour my father would cover the threshing floor with sheaves of wheat, and use horses to tramp it out. I often got to ride the horses as they went round and round. After the straw was thrown out, the wheat was shoveled up, run through a fanning mill, and then taken to a grist mill to be ground, the miller taking a toll – or a certain per cent of the wheat – for his pay. Sometimes the wheat was threshed with a flail. The wheat was cut with a cradle at first but later my father bought a McCormick reaper, of which he was very proud.

I used to watch them husk the corn when it was piled high on the threshing floor in the fall; it was the food for the horses, cows, and chickens, the surplus being sold to the nearby distilleries. A paper mill near us bought our straw. There was a market for everything in those days.

The remnant of an old orchard was on the place. A large cherry tree was so near the house that I could pick the luscious cherries from the attic window. There was also a Rambo apple tree in the yard, and my mouth still waters at the thought of those apples. At the upper end of the garden, over-shadowing the spring, was a Talpehockin apple tree, the biggest apple tree I ever saw, and its sheltering branches, with blue grass underneath, made a grand place to play. Between it and the house was a grape arbor which hung full of purple grapes in the late summer. The spring furnished the water supply for the house. It was piped down and there was a continuous stream through a fountain pump at the back door, the water running on down through the milk house. Once after a heavy rain the pipe got stopped with mud. My father went to the river, caught a craw fish and put it in the pump backwards. It worked its way back to the spring and opened up the pipe! Around the back door, pump and milk house were flag stones. At the front door was a large stone step with flag stones leading to the gate. The yard was covered with the natural blue grass.

My father always raised a garden and was very proud of his "white Meshanick" and "Blue Meshanick" potatoes. Tese he buried in separate hills in the garden, heaping them into a pyramid on clean straw, and then covering them over with straw. Over that he put a thick layer of dirt heavy enough to prevent freezing. A little ventilator of twisted straw was put in the top to keep them from sweating. Apples, turnips and beets were cared for in the same way, while cabbage was pulled up by the root, placed upside down and covered generously with soil, with the root sticking out. Freezing did not hurt it if left til the frost came out. We always kept on hand a big supply of nuts; black walnuts, butter nuts, small hickory nuts, and the large shell-barks. Corn was boiled on the cob and then sliced down and dried. Pumpkin was also dried, by cutting around and around in spirals in slices about an inch wide, slipped over a pole and suspended from the roof in the loft. Cucumbers were salted down in kegs, then taken out and soaked when needed; they were pickled in the brass kettle to keep them green and crisp. What fruit we could not dry was preserved in the brass kettle and put away for company. Cellars were rare and the art of canning was unknown.

One of our industries every fall was making apple butter. The Rambo apples were used for this. The neighbors were invited in the night before for an apple peeling. They told jokes, ate apples and drank cider as they worked. The next morning two big copper kettles were placed over fires in the back yard, filled with cider, boiled down a half, then filled in with apples. My father would stand and stir all day with a long wooden stirrer till it was thick, dark and smooth.

I also remember the few medicines that father always kept on hands for emergencies: Smith's Tonic Syrup, for ague; Trask's Magnetic Ointment, for croup; Godfry's Cordial, for the baby; McClean's Liver Pills (not the sugar-coated variety), and the inevitable Castor Oil, which he always administered in hot coffee.

When my little half-sister lib was just old enough to toddle she spied a bottle of Godfry's Cordial on the table, got hold of it and drank it all! There surely was some commotion – no one knew what to do. A horse-back rider was dispatched post haste for Dr. Hoover; as soon as he arrived he turned a galvanic battery on her and aroused her temporarily. I do not know what else he did – I was a very small child – but it seems to me we did nothing but carry her around in the open air for three weeks, and torture her to keep her awake, until she finally recovered.

Chapter II

We had a very good school about a mile from our home, and usually took a short cut through the woods to reach it. In the spring I would fill my pockets with the young sassafras roots to nibble on during school. This was a very beautiful piece of woodland, with many dog-wood and button-wood trees mixed through it. The pawpaw blossoms were very pretty, and the fruit was edible but rather tasteless. The songs of the red birds and mocking birds, the calls of the whip-poor-wills and Bob Whites, and the cooing of the doves could be heard, while the bushy-tailed gray squirrels scrambled up the trees.

We had such interesting surroundings I might have had a very happy childhood had it not been for the stern demands made upon me and the severe punishments administered unjustly by Nancy Jane, my step-mother.

Three more children were added to our home, Lib, Charlie, and Nan. Nan was a pretty little blue-eyed girl with a sweet disposition and I was very fond of her. She called me her “Pitty Lel”, and would fight if she thought I was being mistreated. The two older children were cross youngsters, and when they were babies it was one of my duties to sit in the darkened room and rock the cradle for two hours at a time while the baby slept. If it wakened too soon the fault was mine. Then and there I resolved never to have a cradle in my house, and I never did!

Once I had on a pretty buff calico dress, low-necked and short-sleeved. I liked it though it was made form the best parts of one of Nancy Jane’s old ones. When a tear appeared in it she asked me how it happened. I said “I don’t know” – I did not know it was torn. She replied “You do know, and if you don’t tell me I shall punish you.” I stuck to it that I did not know. I was marched to a darkened room and plunked down on the floor in a corner to stay until I would tell; after an half hour had elapsed I was called out, but when I still insisted that I didn’t know I was sent back. After the third trial I decided to try lying, so the next time, with shamed face and hanging head I said “I tore it climbing the fence.” “There,” she said, “I knew I could make you tell me the truth!” Instead she spent half of a day teaching me to lie, and art I practiced often thereafter when I found I could escape punishment in that way.

While playing in the barn one day I found a hen on a nest. I was anxious to know if she was setting but could not quite reach her – besides I was a little afraid anyway! I looked around and found an old broom with which I shoved her off of the nest. She was hatching and some of the chickens fell out. I could not reach to put them back, so I went to the house and told Nancy Jane. While she was gone I began to wonder what I had done with the broom. I knew I had done wring in scaring the hen and was terribly frightened for fear it would be found out. I dropped on my knees, clasped my hands, and rolled my eyes heavenward. “Dear God,” I pleaded, “don’t let her see that broom!” She did not see it, and I was in a quandary to know if she just overlooked it or if God had removed it!

Often at night I was sent to bed with the promise of a good whipping in the morning; I never knew what the provocation was, but the dread of it filled my waking hours, and I never failed to get it. My father never knew this and I dared not tell him.

Nancy Jane was a very superstitious woman and she applied a sinister meaning to every little happening, filling our childish minds with ghost stories and weird tales. I have abhorred superstition ever since. All of my life it has been hard for me to overcome the fears that were instilled in me in those early days.

When not in school, I had my regular duties. One was to scour the steel-bladed knives and forks after every meal. These had to be taken out behind the smoke house and scoured with ashes, then washed, wiped and laid in the sun to be sure they were thoroughly dry. The pans and pewter plates had to be scoured on Saturday. I hated the pewter because I could not make it shine. I picked up chips to keep the smudge burning in the smoke house while the hams, bacon, and stuffed sausage were being cured. Every day I carried two buckets of water to pour in the ash hopper to leach the ashes for lye to make our soft soap. All of our coffee was bought green, and I had to sit by the oven and stir it in a flat pan until it was parched and golden brown. In the fall I strung apples, after they were peeled and quartered, to be festooned around in every convenient place to dry. Of course there were always dishes to be washed and carpet rags to be sown.

Perhaps the flies were not so troublesome in those days as they are now for it was possible to live without screens; in fact I doubt if screens had ever been heard of. We used fly brushes to keep the flies from the table while eating. These were made from the tail feathers of the peacock, or newspaper cut into ribbons and fastened on to long sticks. When we had company it was my job to sway the brush back and forth over the table in perfect rhythm, and woe to me if I tickled someone's nose, or dipped the brush in the gravy! I got fidgety when I saw the last piece of chicken vanish from the platter, but I had long before had my lesson in self-control. When there were guests the children always had to wait and take their chances on what was left. Once when I saw the last piece of chicken disappearing I cried out, "Please don't eat all of the chicken, I haven't had my dinner yet!" Everybody laughed and seemed to think it a huge joke. Nobody but me and my step-mother knew why it never happened again. That was another rule that went into my own home in later years; if there was not room for my children at the company table there was a nice little table set at the side for them, and they got the first helping of chicken!

In spite of all of Nancy Jane's unkindness, there were many happy days, and even she could be nice to me at times. Once she took me with her to Dayton to visit Nancy Shaw, a wealthy aunt for whom she was named. With horse and buggy we drove five miles, both dressed in our best. She donned her black silk mantilla and new poke bonnet with its soft rushing and pink rose buds about her face. I though she looked beautiful. She was short and plump, very fair, with flaxen hair and deep blue eyes. Aunt Nancy was a widow and lived with her daughter, Nellie Richardson, and her husband. They were prosperous dry-goods merchants, and I was amazed at the elegance of their home. Floors were covered with softest carpets; the furniture upholstered, and the windows draped in richest coloring. We were taken to Aunt Nancy's room to remove our wraps, and I shall never forget the bedstead! The foot was very low, but the head reached half way to the high ceiling and was almost solid plate glass mirror. Mirrors and pictures were everywhere.

The dining table was a glitter of crystal and silver, and so many things I had never seen before. I wondered how I could eat, and tried to be very proper! I did not pour my coffee in my saucer to cool, nor eat with my knife, and though my appetite was not quite appeased I did not disgrace myself.

We spent a very enjoyable day. On the way home we found a horse-shoe in the road and I had to get out and get it for good luck; its charm seemed to work for Nancy Jane's disposition showed improvement for many days!

Oliver and I spent many happy hours at Aunt Margaret Strohm's; she was another aunt of our step-mother, and she had a very beautiful home not far from us. Aunt Margaret was very tall with light hair which she wore in two heavy braids coiled about her head. I have seen her when it was brushed out and the tips just touched the floor. Her negro maid combed it for her.

I always remembered a story Aunt Margaret told me about one of her little girls who envied the curly locks of a negro playmate; they got the scissors, hit out and sheared both heads then tried to trade by sticking the hair on with molasses.

The Strohm children were very nice, and though they were older than we, they told us stories, and taught us little school plays and games, which we never forgot, but practiced in later years with our own children.

Sometimes I was permitted to visit my Grandfather Boyd for a few days at a time. He lived in Piqua (Pickway), Clarke Co., Ohio. After grandmother died he married a widow with two little boys. My mother's eldest brother Jo was married and lived in Dayton, and was engaged in the fruit tree industry with my father. While the two of them were making a trip South on a Mississippi River boat, the boat caught fire and Uncle Jo was struck by a falling beam and knocked in the river and drowned.

My mother's brother Will, and two sisters Geneva and Laura were only home part of the time after Grandfather's second marriage. I liked them very much, and grandmother was very good to me. Since my legs were too short to reach the treadle unless I stood up, I did not get very far, but I learned all about the process.

I remember the old fashioned garden, with its broad walk the full length, bordering on either side with hardy perennials; among them the colorful blue larkspar, and fragrant pinks. No doubt this had all been originally planted by my own grandmother. Tomorrow is Mother's Day and it makes me feel sad to think I never knew the love of mother or grandmother. I was told that my mother was fair, with blue eyes and wavy red hair, and that she could sing like a nightingale. Why was I not gifted with a singing voice!

I know nothing of Grandmother Boyd except that she was a Lindsay, a descendant of the Earls of Balcarras, of Scotland. Grandfather Boyd was tall and rather slender, wore chin whiskers and had a stern and forbidding manner. Grandfather Williams was quite the opposite. He was a portly man, well over six feet tall, and weighed around two hundred and twenty-five pounds. He was

always smooth shaven and had a jovial expression. He used to take me on his knee and tell me stories or sing sons. One of my favorite sons went something like this:

Young Roger of the Mill
On morning very soon
Put on his best apparel
And he a wooing went
To Buxom bonny Nell;
Says he "dear lasss, will you marry me,
I love you wondrous well,
I love you monstrous well"

Grandfather died when I was sixteen. I have in my possession the original love letter he wrote to Martha White when he proposed to her in 1817. We never had a picture of Grandmother Martha. Father said she never would have one taken because she felt that it would be breaking the commandment, "Make unto thyself no graven image."

Chapter III

War clouds were in the air at the time we moved to Ohio, and the call to arms came soon afterward. My father was a strong abolitionist, though being a Quaker he was greatly opposed to the war.[2] The Southerners were spoken of as "rebels", "secesh", or "butternuts". Of course the school children were just as excited as their elders, and some of the boys sawed butternuts in cross sections, polished them and made very attractive looking badges. Some of the girls wore them, but they never got to pin one on me!

There were many big political rallies and I was always eager to go no matter which side they were for.

The Red River Turnpike, a beautiful highway wide enough for four carriages abreast, had been built – by convict labor – and ran through our farm. We could see the big parades, a mile long, coming down this pike, and could hear them singing their war songs.

Bitter feeling was rife throughout the country and families were often divided by differing opinions. My step-mother had two uncles living in the neighborhood, each with a fine big home and a big family, but so opposed to each other politically that they were not on speaking terms. We remained neutral and were friendly with both families. The girls from one of them invited me to go with them to a big rally; I was to be down by the gate at the pike to wait for the parade. my step-mother worried because there was no starch in my pantalettes – she liked for me to be a credit to her when I appeared in public; however I no doubt rolled them up as soon as I was out of sight I always did when I went to school!

Brough (Bruff) and Valandingham were running for governor of the state and I can still

hear their campaign songs as the parade approached;

"Hurrah for Brough,
Hurrah for Brough,
Hurrah for Johnny Brough."

[2] Original sentence: "All Quakers were greatly opposed to war, so naturally my father, being of Quaker descent was a strong abolitionist."

My father took the Cincinnati Daily Gazette and we used to gather around him every evening as he read the war news aloud by the light of the home-made candles. These candles were made of lard, hardened with aqua fortis – a formula of my father's – and they lasted longer and gave better light than the tallow candles. The candle snugger was always near by – a quant scissor-like tool to keep the wicks trimmed and burning bright.

One day my father went to Dayton and saw one of the new coal-oil lamps. He bravely marched home with one, and a gallon of coal oil. He filled the lamp and put it in the far end of the room, while we trembling watched him light it from the kitchen door, then tiptoed around carefully for fear a jar might cause an explosion!

In 1864 Abraham Lincoln was re-elected president, and a cartoon in Harper's Weekly stands out in my memory – a picture of Lincoln the full length of the column, and underneath the words, "Long Abraham a little longer."

The slaves had been freed and people were moving into Southern states, buying the cheaper land. Grandfather, Uncle Doc and Uncle Charlie had moved from Indiana to Missouri, and were writing to us about the wonderful opportunities there. Father was discouraged after the new "broad gauge" railroad had cut his harm in two. He sold it at $75.00 an acre and bought a plantation in Missouri at $14.00 an acre, and we moved there in the spring of 1865. The place we bought belonged to Mr. Guest, a very fine Southern gentleman. The following night after my father had made him an offer, Capt. Ross of the militia decided he needed another horse, and he simply sent a man to Mr. Guest's stables and took the best one. The next morning Mr. Guest sent for my father, told him the story of this, and other repeated indignities, and said that he would accept his offer as he could no longer live there in peace. Then and there I became a Southern sympathizer.

One Sunday morning soon after we moved, a girl friend and I were in the woods peeling slippery elm bark to chew, when an excited rider came by and told us that Lincoln had been assassinated. The news cast a terrible gloom over our household, but to many Missourians it was a cause for rejoicing, the war had made them so bitter.

Our home in Missouri was a big frame house, surrounded by empty negro cabins. My father soon cleared these away, planted shade trees and orchard, and changed the aspect of the place.

That summer I attended the Center Prairie school, a mile and a half from home, and taught by a queer old maid, Sarah Pearson, who always expected us to greet he with a "Good Morning AT you"!

The school house was built of logs, and most of the chinking had been knocked out. The benches were made of puncheon – wide logs split in two, flat side up; they were propped up on peg legs, and had no backs. We laid our books beside us. A wide board to serve as a desk was placed along one side of the room, with a long bench in front. We went there to write in our copy books. Water for school use was carried from a spring and the twenty-five pupils drank from a common tin dipper! After the better school I had gone to in Ohio this seemed very crude. Several of the pupils of Center Prairie School have been life-long friends; some moved West and I often see them, while I have kept in touch with others through occasional greetings.

One thing that impressed me was the difference in the customs and mannerisms of the people. The Southern dialect sounded odd with its "you alls", "we alls", "right smart", "I done done it", or "I done fetched it". The girls all wore slat sun bonnets to save their complexions, but most of them went bare-footed.

The same school building was used on Sunday for church and we often went there to hear "Uncle Eli Penny" preach a hard-shell Baptist sermon. This Penny was grandfather of the well-known J.C. Penny, of the chain store fame.

The war ended in May and the Reconstruction period was a very unsettled, troublesome time. Many of the people had been slave owners and their fortunes were gone when the slaves were freed. The militia, or home guards, committed a great many depredations, and continued to do so after the war was over. If they wanted a horse they went to the home of a Southern family and took it, or took it out of a plow team in the field. Likewise they helped themselves to guns, ammunition, or food. Since people who had owned slaves had never learned to do the ordinary tasks of life, it was very hard for them to adjust themselves to the new conditions. Besides, the slave states were far behind the free states in the use of modern methods and machinery. However, the Southerners had the fighting spirit and soon overcame their difficulties, though the bitter feeling persisted for generations.

The negroes, too, were almost helpless. They had been deprived of their homes and lived on what little they could earn, or by petty thievery.

Dolly was our washwoman for years. She was a strong buxom woman, and I still have a vision of her walking from the spring with a pail of water in each hand and another balanced on her head. We often found things missing after wash day. I remember one time especially when my pretty new plaid gingham dress was gone; we searched in vain, but later found it where the pigs had rooted it out of the wood pile. She had evidently hidden it expecting to get it on her way home, but had no chance to retrieve it. Dolly had five children, with as many fathers, but she was especially fond of Susie because, she proudly boasted, "Her father was a lawyer!"

Many of the negro women had families, but no husbands, and they settled in the villages where they could get work or steal.

Many of the better-class negro families acquired small tracts of land and established respectable homes. They took the names of their former owners, and reflected their characteristics. Few of them could read or write as they had not been permitted to go to school. After the war they were

not allowed to go to the public schools with white children, but separate school houses were built for them.

Food was scarce and high. For several years we used rye coffee, and mainly used corn meal for bread, but in spite of the food shortage[3] we always found something to make pie of! Calico, twenty-seven inches wide, went to fifty cents a yard, so a calico dress was something! It took about ten yards to make a dress, as there were five or six breadths in the skirt, which was made straight and long and gathered in to an "infant" waist. When they began to wear out at the bottom, they were ripped from the belt and turned upside down, the faded streaks from the gathers ornamenting the lower part! The slat sun bonnets were often made from the same material. We must always have two sun bonnets, one for every day and one for Sunday. However I always had a hat. I remember one especially that my father selected and brought home for me – a rough straw with a band of ribbon, and a card of small pearl buttons, backed with shiny silver paper, tacked on for an ornament! I wore it uncomplainingly, though it certainly hurt my pride.

My stockings were all factory made, and I felt very inferior because the other girls were knitting their own. So I got a black girl to teach me to knit. Our stocking were knee length, and help up with elastic garters, which were fastened with fancy buckles. Our pantalettes came well over our knees, and petticoats and dresses were nearly shoe-top length. Our shoes were made of calf skin and usually had copper toes. Soles were attached with wooden pegs, which often caused discomfort until we got them smoothed off inside. And how they did squeak when they were new! We never had rubbers nor overshoes, but our shoes were always kept greased with mutton tallow and lamp black to make them waterproof. When they got muddy we always found a scraper attached to every door-step. When our feet were measured for new shoes we stood with heel against the wall while a pen knife was stuck in the floor in front of the big toe. The length was measured with a stick, which was taken to the store and tried in the new shoe.[4] If it fit loosely the shoe was supposed to be the proper size. Both shoes were the same – neither

[3] "in spite of the food shortage" added.
[4] "which was taken to the store and tried in the new shoe" added.

rights nor lefts. If we needed shoe strings father got out his strip of leather and cut us new ones. Sometimes we had "Congress Gaiters" for best. In winter our wraps consisted of shawls and hoods.

The next year after we moved to Missouri I went to the village of Kingston[5] to a better school – that is, the school house was better! Most of the teachers merely listened to us recite then said "Take the next lesson". I remember only one teacher who made us tell WHY we did things, and really taught us to think. Three years later a school house was built near us, my father having donated the site for it. It was named "The Jo Williams School house" in his honor. It was an easy walk through the fields when the weather was good, but often in the winter after a heavy snow fall my father would hitch the ox team, "Buck and Berry", to a big sled and take all of the children living near us.

When I was about fourteen a sad event took place in our home, which left me very lonely as my brother and I had always been very close to each other. During a period when my father was

away from home for several weeks, Nancy Jane got angry and undertook to punish Oliver; she came at him with a rope thinking she could thresh him. He grabbed her hands, took the rope from her and pushed her down in a chair, then put on his coat and hat and walked out of the house, and it was three years before we saw or heard from him again. When father came home he was told that Oliver had run away, but he was never told why!

Oliver told me afterward that he found work not very far from home with a family that had just lost a son near his age. They were very kind to him, and six months later, when he was offered work with a Government caravan, they begged him to stay and make his home with them. But he had the spirit of adventure, and a fondness for horses, and he left to take a job as night herder on the trip across the plains. The boss was a cruel taskmaster and on one occasion he flogged a boy and left him on the plains to die of starvation or be killed by the Indians; but Oliver made two trips and had no trouble. Then he worked one winter on the railroad; he stood within a few feet of President Grand at

[5] "of Kingston" added.

Ogden when he drove the golden spike that completed the first continental railroad, connecting the Union and Central Pacific, in May, 1869.

I was very happy when Oliver returned, though he never lived at home again. I continued my studies at the Jo Williams School and was very ambitious for a higher education. My plans were all made to go to Kidder College in an adjoining county, but I was disappointed. I got a certificate to teach, but never used it, as Cupid intervened and I got married instead.

Chapter IV

"The Green Farm" was just across the road from our place. About the time the war began Mr. William Green received a bullet that was intended for another man, and was killed, leaving his widow with five small children, John, the eldest, being ten. They were Southern people, though they did not believe in slavery. They had a very hard struggle trying to make a living off of the farm, so they finally rented it and went back to their former home in Kentucky for a few years. When they returned to their home in Missouri we children all went to school together and John and I became very good friends.

There were very few buggies in the country. Transportation was by farm wagon, or horse-back. I had my own pony, side-saddle and a riding skirt that hung nearly to the ground when I was mounted. John and I went to dances, parties and church on horseback. We had our own horses, but it was not uncommon to see a young man bring his lady love behind him on the same horse! The dances were small affairs in private homes, usually opened with the Virginia Reel followed by cotillions. At other parties we played games – forfeits, charades, etc., or had nut-cracking, corn-popping, or taffy-pulling. We had many jolly sleighing parties, with the bells jingling merrily through the crisp wintry air.

John and I were very young when we decided to get married, but he had assumed responsibility from childhood. He had been the mainstay of his family for so many years he did not dream of deserting his post, and his wife would have to take her place in his mother's household. This I knew was not going to be easy to do, but I considered carefully and made two solemn vows to myself; one was that I would never quarrel with my mother-in-law, no matter what the provocation – and I never did. The other was that I would never shirk a duty, and I believe I can truthfully say that I have lived up to this resolution.

We chose Christmas Day (1871) for our wedding – and it happened to be a very cold one, with sub-zero temperature. Nancy Jane insisted upon giving us a big wedding, much against my wishes. She had, a short time before, given a very elaborate wedding for her sister, and felt that she would be criticized if she did not do as much for me! So all of our friends and neighbors were invited in. I hade made all of my own trousseau. My wedding dress was a dove-colored alpaca, made with an over-skirt, and a big bow in the back over my bustle. It had flowing sleeves with lace under-sleeves, and a lace collar; and I can say with pride that it was a perfect fit, though we had no patters in those days. My stepmother was a good seamstress and had taught me to cut by measurement. Sewing machines had been in use only a few years. We did not possess one, but I rented one for a few weeks. I had made a new quilted petticoat, close fitting, to wear under my hoops, and a white muslin skirt to wear over them. My brown curls hung down my back, and I did not wear a hat nor veil. Emma Meckling was my bride's maid; she was pretty, plump, and blond, and wore a gown of light blue delaine. John Colvin was best man; he and John both wore black, and we all wore white gloves. John had new boots made for the occasion, and I remember that they hurt his feet!

The Baptist ceremony, performed by the Rev. Frank Wadley, was long and binding, with no "obeys" left out! We had no music, and there were no flowers. The only gifts we received were a cow and calf from my father and a feather bed from my step-mother.

After the big Christmas dinner the guests departed, but we stayed until the next day, when we went to the Green home across the road to the "Infare". This was a dinner and reception given by the groom's family on the day following the wedding. Every bride had to have an infare dress, as well as a wedding dress. Mine was plum-colored cashmere, the over-skirt trimmed with silk fringe.

This was my future home, with John's mother, brothers Jo and Sam, and ten-year-old sister Sallie. (One little boy, Alpha, had died in Kentucky.) Happily for me, on the following day, Mother Green was called to the bed-side of her mother, and was with her almost constantly for three months. It gave me time to get adjusted to my new environment, and practice my household arts without being under her watchful eye.

The house had two large rooms down-stairs, and one where the boys slept, up-stairs. We cooked, ate and slept in the same room. At one end was a big cheerful fireplace, with its cranes and kettles; the small cook stove was in an alcove at the side. By the fireplace hung the inevitable bootjack, as all of the men wore boots at that time, and it was next to impossible to remove them without a bootjack. The other room was the "spare" room, and it was opened only for the preacher, or other notable guests.

The bed ticks were filled with shredded corn shucks, placed on bed slats, and big feather beds put on top. The blankets and coverlids had been woven and spun by Mother Green. She had many quilts, pieced or appliquéd, and quilted, which she had made herself. John and Sallie each had a beautiful quilt which their Grandmother Green had made for them while they were in Kentucky. John's is still in my possession, as gorgeous as ever after seventy-five years.

Mother Green spun and dyed the wool and wove the jeans for the boys' pants, then made them by hand. I remember an entire suit of coat, vest, and pants that she made for Sam when he went off to school; this was blue, instead of the usual "butternut", and a little finer quality. her work dresses were "linsey-wolsey", which she had spun and woven, in checks of linen and wool. The boys' shirts were made by hand, the every-day ones being of "hickory" a very strong material of blue and white weave. Mother Green also knitted all of their sox and mittens, and even gathered rye straw, braided it, and made their broad-brimmed hats. I soon became quite proficient at this. Mother Green was a very devout Missionary Baptist. This was a different atmosphere for me as I had come from a home with very liberal views. I had attended many of the protracted meetings because the young people all went and enjoyed singing; but to Mother Green they were a very serious matter. She always entertained the preachers and at such times we had family prayers when we knelt in front of our chairs and prayed for our soul's salvation.

Once when there was a revival we had an Indian preacher as our guest for a week – Tallamasameko, a big copper-colored Seminole from the Everglades of Florida. He occupied the spare room, was fed on "yellow-legged" chicken, and received the best of every thing at our command. Had he been a negro preacher, though just as sincere, he would not have been seated at the table with the white folks, but probably would have had a small individual table set for him at the side.

After these revivals there were many candidates for baptism; we would meet at the nearest creek, the preacher would lead the converts into the water, waist deep, then dip them under backwards, "in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, for the remission of sin", while the congregation sang 'On Jordan's Stormy Banks I Stand". Even in winter weather they were undaunted – they would simply break a hole in the ice. When they began putting baptismals in the newer churches, Mother Green had her doubts about their efficiency. She reluctantly gave her consent to having an organ put in the church, though there was bitter opposition to "worshipping God by machinery". However she drew the line at a fiddle – it was an "instrument of the devil". The Bible was the only book in her home; she classed all books as "novels" and thought they were wicked because they were untrue! The only periodical was our county paper, "The Kingston Sentinel". I had taken a few books of my own, besides my school books, McGuffey's Reader, Ray's Arithmetic, Pineo's Grammar, and the blue-backed Elementary spelling book; but I felt more comfortable when I hid out and read. A limb on a big apple tree in the orchard, was a favorite resort.

Chapter V

Our first son, Robert Livingstone, was born before his father was old enough to vote legally, though he did cast a vote for Horace Greely for President; as he was known to be a family man, no questions concerning his age were asked!

Robert's layette consisted of one little white nainsook dress and one white petticoat, two little gray flannel petticoats, and two calico dresses – or wrappers – one pink the other purple, made from pieces that Mother Green had left from setting quilts together. Other necessary articles were made from any scraps we could find. John came in one day with a safety pin he had picked up on the street; this was a prized possession – only the rich could afford such luxuries! I used common pins – and I never stuck a baby! I remember when it was considered immodest to leave a safety pin in sight!

A year or so later, about the time Horace Greely was advising young me to "Go West", the boys began to get the urge. They were beginning to get discouraged at their lack of prosperity in Missouri and wanted to try their fortunes in a newer country; so they rented the farm, settled the family in Hamilton, a near-by village, and John, Jo, my brother Oliver, and four or five other young men went to California. John and Jo got work on the big ranches of Clay and Heath, in the San Joaquin Valley; and as fast as they got their wages they sent money back for our support. This was sent by express in five, ten, and twenty dollar gold pieces. These coins were a curiosity to us, and Mother Green, being overcome by the glitter, went to the jeweler and had a ten-dollar piece made into a brooch, and two fives into ear rings. Later, when we were sadly in need of money, she had the coins restored.

After about six months John became very homesick. He had not seen his second son, John William, born during his absence. John decided he had had enough of the West, so he left the other boys and returned to his family. But in the mean time I had got the fever and was determined to go West. Mother Green also was anxious to make a change, and the womenfolk prevailed.[6]

The railroad had only been completed a few years before. Passenger rates were high and first class transportation was out of the question for us; however if we could get two carloads of emigrants, these passenger cars would be attached to a through freight at more reasonable rates, and our household goods would be taken on the same train. Missouri had never recovered from the effects of the war. Times were hard and people were anxious to get away. Consequently it was not difficult to fill the coaches, and soon about sixty people were making frantic preparations.

We drove down to Kingston for a final visit with my father. I though I would ask for the coverlid that Grandmother Martha had spun and woven before she was married, with the date, "1818", woven in the corner. She had given this to Oliver, together with a set of silver spoons, made and engraved by her brother, Daniel White, a silversmith, and given her as a wedding present. Oliver was her first grandchild and a great favorite with her. When I saw the coverlid on Nancy Jane's bed my courage failed, but I did help myself to the three remaining spoons.

It was hard to say “Good-bye” to my father, whom I loved so dearly, and who had never spoken and unkind word to me. There was no demonstration, but we both understood. How thankful I was that I had borne my trials in silence and had never carried any tales to make him unhappy! I never saw him again. He died in 1892, and Nancy Jane died two weeks later. I always helped the half sisters and brother over the rough places as long as they lived.

My father gave me seventy-five dollars, the price he got for my pony. We sold the cow for thirty dollars, and my side-saddle ten – half cash, the rest in goose-feathers – and I felt like a capitalist!

[6] “and the womenfolk prevailed” substituted for “and ‘The Female of the Species is Stronger than the Male.’”

We started on our westward journey in March, 1875. There were no sleeping facilities nor dining cars. We had to carry our bedding and an ample supply of food. We had baked light bread, pies, cakes, and ham, and carried dried beef, butter and coffee. There was a small stove at one end of the coach where coffee could be made. There were seven in our immediate party, including Uncle Doc and his son, Melville, and we had to provide for ten days. We could occasionally get a little food at stops along the way. When we reached “The Plains” the settlers met the train with a very attractive looking food, but it tasted abominably. The coaches were so crowded there was not seat room enough to lay our babies down for their naps, and they had to be held in our arms. By using a little ingenuity we managed to convert the seats into double decker beds where we caught a few winks at night. When we happened to stop near a lumber yard the boys filched a few boards that helped. Our clothes were not off for ten days. We all had to do a little washing for the children, and the cars presented a ludicrous appearance from the outside with washing hanging from every window, the windows acting as clothes pins! The weather was nice and there were no accidents nor long delays. Everyone was imbued with the spirit of adventure, and ready to do his share of the entertaining. We sang, recited, told stories and read. We happened to have a fine young doctor aboard, but only one case of illness. A child that developed pneumonia had to be taken from the train at Ogden, but we heard afterwards that she recovered.

We must have been quite a sight when we reached our destination, Merced, California, but the sun was shining, flowers blooming, the fragrance of blossoming fruit trees was in the air, and spring was in our hearts – we had reached the land of promise! We rented a house in town and the boys procured work on the large farm where John had previously been employed.

The valley stretched out on all sides as level as a floor. Wheat farming, the principal industry was done on a big scale. There were no fences – only a furrow marked the dividing line between farms and when summer came thousands of acres of golden grain shimmered under the hot sun. Machinery and methods were quite different from what we were accustomed to. Headers were used, and the wheat was elevated on to header beds, hauled and stacked to await the big steam thresher. Threshing was a business in itself, the operators going from one place to another with a crew of about twenty men, and a cook house on wheels. The big wagons, each with two trailers, and pulled by ten mule teams, hauling the wheat to the warehouse, were a sight to us.

In Missouri the neighbors helped each other in busy seasons, and of course were part of the family. In California[7] the laborers had to furnish their own blankets and sleep in a bunk house or beside a straw stack. They were well fed. A favorite dish new to us was oat meal mush and milk

to start their breakfast. We had served corn meal mush and milk for supper, but had never heard of any other kind of mush, and the idea of serving it for breakfast was amazing!

While our men were all working in the harvest fields, Mother Green took care of my little boys, and I worked in a dress-making shop to help out with the family expenses. I wanted to buy something of my own out of the money my father had given me before it was exhausted;[8] so I invested in a dozen each of Rogers' Bros, "1847" silver tea spoons and table spoons.

John liked home life too well to be content to work long for wages; so he and the other boys rented a little dairy ranch on the San Joaquin River, of a man by the name of Chamberlain, and we lived there for a time. But through Mr. Chamberlain's dishonesty, the boys lost all they put in it. The family moved back to Merced and John went father North to Colusa County and got work on a ranch, while the other boys found employment father south, in Tulare Co. John met some old friends in Colusa County and through their influence secured a better situation on one of Col. Hager's ranches, operated by Watt Perdue. This was on the Sacramento River and had a small house where the family could be together again.

[7] "In California" added.
[8] "before it was exhausted" added.

We had a two-month-old baby, Maud Elizabeth. All three children had the whooping cough, but as soon as possible we made the move, going by rail to Sacramento, and taking the steamboat from there to Grimes' Landing the next day. This was quite a pleasure trip for us. On the boat a strange coincidence took place. I made the acquaintance of an attractive young matron who introduced herself as Mrs. Sam Crowder. I told her I had a cousin of the same name, in Chillicothe, Missouri, and discovered that he was her husband and was on the boat. He had visited us back home but I had not seen him for years. We had a very enjoyable day together, but we never saw nor heard from them afterwards.

We paid the freight on our small store of household goods, and had twenty-five cents left in the family pocket-book; when we arrived at the little house on the river! I filled straw ticks and we made palettes on the floor until John had time, evenings and Sundays, to make beadsteads. I sewed burlap grain bags together and carpeted the floor, with a padding of straw underneath; then I made a braided rug to go on top; every time I could get hold of a little more material I braided and sewed on an extra round until it grew to large proportions. We nailed up a little frame, put on a straw tick, upholstered it with green calico, threw a pillow upon it and called it a sofa. Shelves on the wall with a curtain around them, served as a linen closet. Our kitchen table was a home-made affair, but we had four raw-hide-bottom chairs that we had brought with us, which would be valuable as antiques now. We had plenty of dishes and bedding. This was the first home my little family had had to themselves and it was a happy one even though it had its shortcomings. The boys had built a little house in Grimes' Landing for Mother Green where she could send Sallie to school; and though we had always lived together amicably it seemed nice to be alone.

We got our supplies from the trading boats that plied up and down the river, "The Neponsett" and "The Sutter City", on alternate weeks. They carried dry goods, notions, groceries, and shelf

hardware, and bought everything the farmers had to offer. They day the boat came was a gala day! Once I bought a four-and-a-half yard remnant of calico, about ten o'clock in the morning, made myself a dress by hand, and had it on when my husband came home to supper. The skirt had only three straight widths – I would have made four had there been goods enough; they were gathered in to a belt on an "infant" waist, with long sleeves.

One day a neighbor, Mrs. Simmons, with her two children and a young friend, a sixteen-year-old girl, came to visit us. The boat had not come in and our supplies were very low. The Simmons' potato patch was near. I went out and got a generous mess. There was a tablespoonful of butter and a little milk to season them. I fried bacon, made plenty of gravy, and we had bread and coffee. This I served without apology – inwardly quite amused. Some twenty-five years later, when we were in a very nice home on a Washington farm, we employed a cook through a Spokane agency – a middle-aged woman; and I was surprised to discover later that she was the same sixteen-year-old girl! We had a big laugh over it and she told me that she and Mrs. Simmons had felt so sorry for me that day because we were so poor! The funny part of it was that I never felt poor! I had my husband, three healthy children, a comfortable home, and never missed a meal! And I would not have changed places with anybody!

When harvest time came Mr. Pardue had an opportunity to get a stationery threshing machine before we were through heading; he put on an extra header to rush the job through, and for about three days I cooked for a crew of twenty-nine men. It took some engineering! Mr. Pardue brought in a big supply of groceries every morning, and the wash boiler filled with meat and vegetables, cooked on top of the stove, while the oven was kept continually full of bread and pies.

One of the greatest drawbacks was the insect pests; fleas, mosquitoes and ants were troublesome, and for a season the black gnats were almost unbearable. They were almost too small to be seen with the naked eye, but swarms of them would appear as clouds. At times the men would have to unhitch and come in from the fields, their eyes almost swollen shut.

The Sacramento River was treacherous and when the water was up to the top of the levee it was eight feet higher than the ground floor of our house. One night during high water we patrolled the river all night, I carrying the lantern while John packed gopher holes. Meanwhile the children peacefully slept in the house alone! The next morning the levee broke below us, flooding the basin but making us safe. It was a flat country and the water spread for miles, irrigating a vast area.

We had made the acquaintance of a young physician of Colusa, Dr. Luke Robinson, whose family owned a ranch on Sycamore Slough, in what was known as the "Mormon[9] Basin". He persuaded John to take charge of it and farm it for half of the crop; so that was our next move. The ranch was well stocked with work horses and farm implements. This was in the flooded district and we raised an enormous crop that year.

We lived here on the Sycamore Slough for several years, and continued in partnership with Dr. Robinson. When we needed financial assistance, Mr. W.P. Harrington, President of the Colusa County Bank, was always ready to aid us. These two men, and Jacob Furth, a Merchant of

Colusa, became life-long friends of my husband, and the four were associated in business in late years.

Across the slough were the tule lands, which were under water almost every year, when the Sacramento River over-flowed its banks, but the Mormon Basin was flooded only when the high levees protecting the banks of the Sycamore broke. This happened once more while we lived there. We knew the river was rapidly rising, and when we saw the water rolling over the tule like a mighty ocean, John hastily gathered a crew of twelve men, and with teams and shovels they worked desperately most of the night to prevent the levee from breaking where it would wash away our buildings and livestock. I gave the men a big supper at midnight. Before daylight the levee gave way about a mile above us between the house and the barn on a neighboring ranch; and though the water cut a deep ravine and washed out big sycamore trees like driftwood, the buildings were left intact. The water spread out over the basin and came so near our house we were frightened, and

[9] "Mormon" added.

the children and I were taken four miles in a rowboat. However the water receded without doing much damage, and we always had a big crop after a flood.

The levees were broad and flat on top, making a favorite thoroughfare for tramps. The warm California climate was inviting, so they were numerous. Although I never turned one away hungry, it was quite a problem to feed them all; besides, there was considerable labor agitation and it was dangerous to anger them.

During the busiest seasons we employed Chinese cooks. The young boys were very easily trained, efficient and good natured. The older ones were more set in their ways, and spoke very poor English. They were extremely superstitious and afraid of anything bordering on the supernatural. Once when I was playing "Tall Woman" to amuse the children – and looked the part with my sun bonnet and shawl mounted on the broom – the Chinese cook saw me and was coming at me with the butcher knife, when I hastily removed my disguise!

One year, when nearing the end of harvest, John put a Chinaman who had been working about the place, in the field to help him stack. The crew rose in rebellion, and told him to discharge the Chinaman or they would quit. He said, "Very well, come in and get your checks"; and he immediately went to Grimes' Landing and hired a Chinese crew to finish the harvest. The cook fed the family in the dining room and the crew on the porch, giving them native dishes. He said "Melican food makey Chinaman sick at de bell."

A queer character who traveled up and down the levees and surrounding country was "Old Sam Tinker", a harmless lunatic who made and mended tin ware and had made for most of my kitchen utensils. There was a legend about his being thwarted in love in his young days. His fiancée became infatuated with another man, and together they took Sam out for a boat ride and pushed him into the river, but instead of drowning he managed to swim ashore. He saved his life but lost his reason! He carried a tin pail about the size of a present day knitting box, containing a hammer, horse shoe, tin shears and soldering iron. he wore a flat cap over his long unkempt hair, and a three cornered shawl about his shoulders fastened with a piece of wire. He slept in the open

with his can for a pillow. He never accepted money for his work but would ask his patrons to buy shirt, overalls, or shoes for him. I used to stand and watch him turn the edges over his horse-shoe and manipulate his iron until I became quite proficient myself, and put the lesson to good use in later years. I learned to use muriatic acid when soldering my copper boiler, and resin when soldering tin. I could make a "Tinker's Dam" when the hole was too big to fill with solder, by placing a little dough underneath. One day when my dash churn sprang a leak I proceeded to put a new bottom in it, and was quite proud of my job. Our cooking utensils and milk pans were nearly all tin, and our fruit was all put up in tin cans, the lids held down with sealing wax.

Jo had married and was living in Tulare. Sallie was married from our home on the Sycamore Slough to Ed Peart, a fine young man from Nova Scotia, who was in the mercantile business in College City about Seven miles away. Sam went into business with Ed; and after spending a year visiting old haunts in Kentucky and Missouri, Mother Green made her home with Sallie.

Two more little girls had been added to our household. When Ora Elda was a baby we had a Chinese cook, Louie, who was very fond of her, and liked to carry her around in the yard and play with her. Her first childish prattle was a ludicrous mixture of Chinese and English. Our little fair-haired Ethel Grace was the youngest member of the family.

Chapter VI

John was troubled with asthma in California and his doctor recommended a higher altitude. Washington Territory was being much talked of at that time. The Northern Pacific Railway had been completed, and the company had received a bonus from the Government of every other section of land within a certain distance of the right of way. This they were offering to the settlers at attractive prices; besides, homesteads, preemptions and timber cultures were available from the Government. John had worked on one of the big ranches of Miller and Lux on the San Joaquin River, and was interested in their activities in cattle raising. It had always been his ambition to own a stock ranch, and the possibility of doing so loomed before him. In the fall of 1883 he and two other men, Charles Bethel, who came from Missouri on the same emigrant train, and John Tierney, a neighbor started out to drive to Washington Territory. They were to camp along the way, so I prepared food for the trip. I mixed a sack of flour with the proper proportions of leavening, salt and shortening, ready to mix and bake in their reflector before the camp fire. Our family has always used this formula and kept the prepared biscuit flour on hand, but I was not foresighted enough to commercialize it.

With John's hack and Mr. Tierney's team of young bay horses, known as "Bud" and "Blossom", they drove one thousand miles through wilderness and over mountainous roads, where they encountered panthers and large droves of wild antelope. They came through the John Day country in Eastern Oregon, where Miller and Lux ran seventy-five thousand head of cattle. They were made welcome at the cowboy camps, and provided with fresh meat to replenish their "grub box".

After thirty days they arrived in the "Big Bend", a large area in a bend of the Columbia River. John explored the country, selected a site which he thought well adapted to his purpose, and

bought a quarter section of land as a nucleus of his dreamed-of stock ranch. It was surrounded by a wide range covered with bunch grass and an abundance of water. Nearby was a string of lakes fed by springs and connected by running streams.

Charlie filed a claim on a pre-emption and also on a timber culture adjoining. John bought Bud and Blossom, turned the hack and team over to Charlie, "grub-staked" him and left him in charge. Then he returned to California by train.

Charlie began building for his future. He built a dug-out in the side of the hill, boarded up in front, with a door and a window. It had a thatched roof. He dug a well, did some fencing and cultivating and planted trees. The following year he sent to Missouri for the sweetheart he had left behind. She came, he met her in Cheney where they married, and they lived for a year in the dug-out. I often think of that courageous little bride facing such a bleak and hazardous future. Charlie has long since passed on, but she still carries on in Harrington, a real pioneer of the great Northwest.

When John came back the following year, they hauled lumber thirty-five miles, from Ewing's mill on the Columbia River, and built a house on our land, where Bethels lived more comfortably, though water for house use had to be hauled in barrels from the old well.

John made several trips and always came back improved in health. In the fall of 1887, we, with our two sons and three small daughters, moved to Washington Territory. We came by train but had to take a four-horse stage over the rough mountain road between Ashland and Grant's Pass, where there was no rail connection. We rented a house in Sprague the first winter and stayed there to send the children to school. The first discouraging sight that met my eyes was the quarantine signs – there was an epidemic of scarlet fever! My eldest son had had it, and the other children soon contracted it but had it lightly.

It was a very cold winter, with a heavy blanket of snow, which was a curiosity and delight to our children, who had never seen snow, except a few flurries.

A few days after we got settled in Sprague, my husband and I came to Spokane Falls to attend the Fair, which was then in progress. Corbin Park now occupies the site of the original fair grounds, and it seemed a long way out as there were very few buildings on the North side of the river. There were no electric street cars in Spokane Falls at that time, and the first horse car line had just been established. We stopped at the Windsor Hotel, on the river bank, and the falls were the main attraction for me.

The following spring we moved to the "Lake Creek Ranch", thirty-five miles from Sprague, the nearest railroad point. The trip seemed interminable. We were in a big wagon with all of our household goods. We left Sprague at a very early hour and when we stopped to eat our lunch at Crab Creek, I asked if we were half way, only to be told that we had come just eight miles! It was after dark when we reached the ranch and only the dog to greet us! (Mr. and Mrs. Bethel and little daughter had moved onto a homestead a few miles away.) I could understand how my husband might have stumbled onto this place the first time, but how we found it the second time

must always remain a mystery! There were few settlers, no fences, and all of the hills looked alike to me!

The prospect wasn't pleasing – not a habitation insight, not a tree; nothing but hills covered with bunch grass and sage brush; it was dry and hot and dusty. Beyond the ranch a gray expanse of hills, hollows, and rocks stretched three miles to the creek and lakes, where perpendicular walls looked as though they had been chiseled out of rock by hand, in big square blocks. Through a break in the walls loomed an immense rock in the shape of a gigantic coffee pot, which gave the name to the largest of the lakes and to a spring that gushed forth a six-inch stream. Coffee Pot Lake was about a mile wide, three miles long, and an unfathomed depth.

I felt rather blue at first; then I thought we were at least safe from floods. We would not have to plow and sow the year around but would have a respite in the winter time while the ground was frozen, when we could relax and read. And best of all, my husband would be free from the terrible coughing and wheezing that were making it impossible for him to live in California any longer.

We had water at the house now, for John had had a well drilled while we lived in Sprague. They had to go to a depth of one hundred and eight-five feet, but the water was pure, clear and cold, and has never failed us in forty-eight years. It had to be pumped by hand, with two people swinging on to the pump handle, until we installed a wind mill the following year.

The house originally consisted of two rooms down-stairs, and two up-stairs; later a shed kitchen had been added. It was just a shell – rough foot boards standing upright, with batting, or narrow boards, nailed over the cracks on the outside. I managed to get a little wall paper, and muslin for lining, and once, when John was away for two or three days, the children and I tore out a partition, making a fairly good-sized room out of two cubby holes, and papered the walls. John liked the result, but I had learned very early in life to do things first and ask for permission afterward!

I had a new rag carpet for the floor, which I had made in California; a layer of straw underneath protected it from the rough board floor and added warmth. I couldn't afford enough wall paper for the kitchen, but I stripped all of the cracks with muslin, and papered it with newspapers, and "Youth's Companions". Our papers at that time were folded in four and left uncut; consequently half of the printing was upside down, very much to the disgust of my daughter Maud, who read every work on the wall that was within reach.

John had acquired more land and had gradually been accumulating some stock. We had four milk cows, and some pigs to fatten for our winter's meat. We had eight hens, and by fall I had one hundred and fifty chickens.

Our nearest neighbors – where there was a family – were three miles distant; some bachelor camps were near.

In the fall a young man from Chicago, Mr. A.L. Smalley, took up a homestead about a mile from us, put up a one-room cabin, and started to "batch". But after a short time lonesomeness got the

better of him and he came to us begging to be allowed to do something to earn his board. Since he had taught school we employed him to teach our children. We were not in a school district, and it was seven miles to the nearest school. He was with us two years and the children advanced rapidly under his instruction. The third winter we were there we employed a woman teacher, Mrs. Peck, who came and boarded with us.

That first winter there were six months that I did not see another woman, our only visitors being the cowboys that often dropped in. We were sometimes six weeks without mail, the post office being sixteen miles away. When we did get it there would be a gunny sack full, and what a feast it was!

As our first Christmas on the ranch approached, how to celebrate was a problem. No evergreen nor tinsel for decoration; no Christmas tree, nor any kind of a tree within miles

– not even a chimney for Santa to scramble down to fill the stockings; no neighbors to invite in. There was very little money to buy gifts, and any way the nearest store was thirty-five miles away! My only resort was the rag bag. With scissors, needle and thread, and knitting needles, we got busy. On Christmas eve we made taffy with molasses and brown sugar – the old-fashioned kind that has to be pulled; popped corn and made balls; played games – "I Spy", "Beast, Bird or Fish", "Pussy Wants a Corner", and had a gay evening. When we awoke the next morning the ground was covered with a fleecy blanket of snow, hiding the unsightly places, and making nymphs and fairies of the clumps of sagebrush. The night before, our breakfast table had been spread, and carefully covered. When we removed the cloth, behold, there were wall pockets for various purposes, fashioned out of velvet-covered cardboard; mended dolls in gay attire, with elaborate wardrobes that could be put on or off at will; warm mittens for the boys and men-fold, and little red stockings for the baby. And Maud, with her tiny fingers, had knitted a scarf for her father.

For breakfast we had ham and eggs, hot biscuits and coffee, with cream too thick to pour. We had health, a wealth of vigor, and were happy. Who says "There is no Santa Claus?"

We didn't lack for music. Mr. Smalley had a violin, and entertained us with old-time dance music. Much to the delight of the boys he allowed them to practice on it, and many fearful, screeching sounds they made, but they soon managed "Pop goes the Weasel" and "The Irish Washwoman". The weird howls of the coyotes, too, broke the solemn stillness of the nights! They were terrifying at first but we soon got used to them.

The cowboys were always welcome visitors. They were a friendly and gentlemanly lot, and very picturesque, with their sombreros (broad-brimmed felt hats) and chapararos, commonly known as "shaps", a trouser-like garment made of leather and fur; gauntlet gloves, spurs, and red bandanas loosely knotted about their necks; cartridge belts, revolvers, and lariats (home-made rawhide ropes.)

The cowboys were sometimes called "Sourdoughs", getting the name from their famous bread made in camps. The sourdough jar was always in evidence, usually brimming over with the

foamy, pungent “starter”. Will learned to make the delicious sourdough biscuits, but I was never quite able to master the technique.

There were quite a few stock men scattered over the country, and their stock ranged for miles over the wide open spaces – as far as the “Moses” and Grand Coulees. Each one had his coterie of cowboys, generally spoken of as his “outfit”, which looked after the herds, rounded them up spring and fall, branded the young stock, sorted out cattle for beef, and horses that were the right age to be broken to harness or saddle, and turned the rest out to roam at their own sweet will for another six months. Most of the horses on the range at that time were wild cayuses, Indian name for ponies.

My boys were young but soon got to be expert horsemen and helped their father look after our stock. They grew familiar with the range, and in later years sometimes rode in the big roundups.

Will tells of a hazardous trip he once made when buying cattle. He was headed for the Grand Coulee, and when he discovered a trail down the precipitous wall, he thought he would take it and cut off a few miles. After he began the descent on horseback there was no turning back. The trail become more perilous as it wound around on narrow ledges and over shale. When he finally reached his destination safely, he was to that he was the first man to ride down that CATTLE trail! This was about eight miles from Coulee Dam, where the walls rise to a height of twelve hundred feet.

We saw many Indians, but they were friendly and had no terrors for us. The boys made friends with them and were quite proud of themselves when they could add a few Indian words to their vocabularies, or display some Indian-made buckskin gloves. The Indians came through the country every fall to gather camas roots, which they dried and powdered to make bread.

The boys were good marksmen and brought in an abundance of wild birds – sage hens, prairie chickens, ducks and geese. There were few restrictions, and some of the birds are practically extinct now.

We did not plan to farm extensively but must raise seed and feed. We lacked a seed-sower, and John sowed broadcast, hand over hand, from a tub of seed on a box in the back of the wagon, while I drove back and forth across the plowed field, keeping in line by sighting two objects ahead. The boys followed with four-horse harrows. We managed the harvest with the aid of one outside helper, the girls and I taking turns driving one of the header wagons; one boy loaded, another stacked.

In the spring a task that we all shared in was poisoning the little ground squirrels. They were very numerous and if left unmolested would have destroyed the crop completely. Each of us was provided with a little bucket of poisoned wheat. We marched in parallel lines across the fields, placing a spoonful at each squirrel hole. It took repeated efforts until July, when the survivors hibernated until the following spring.

We raised practically all of our living. We had our own meats – pork, beef, and chickens; and we had a wonderful garden. There were patches in the soil where the wool grass grew; it was a small

grass above the ground, but the roots ran down several feet and twined together like wool, making it very hard to plow; but when cultivated the wool-grass land[10] was very fertile, and it produced the finest potatoes I ever saw.

We bought dried fruit, but fresh fruit was impossible to get, and we missed it sorely, especially after coming from a country where it was so plentiful. While down at the lake one day, the boys discovered some wild currants. The next morning they started out, each with a three-gallon bucket, walked three miles to the lake and filled them; they came trudging in at noon, proud of their achievement. We ate our fill, and all did justice to some luscious currant pies, before we discovered that every single one contained a worm! The boys were so disappointed and one said, "Mother, WHY did you look at them so closely?" I almost regretted that I had thrown them away!

In the fall we made a new venture – we bought twenty-three hundred head of sheep, which brought us more had work and grief than profit. It took the entire family, including the school teacher to herd them. There were not many tasks on the ranch that I did not do; however I never plowed nor raked hay, and I always refused to split wood! But I surely could qualify as a first-class sheep-herder! I had knit my little daughter a pair of stockings while I followed seven hundred head of feeble-minded sheep over the hills in December! They say sheep-herders usually go crazy, but they would not if they knew how to knit! After two years we sold our flock; we were not much richer, but considerably wiser.

[10] "the wool-grass land" substituted for "it".

Chapter VII

In the fall of 1890 we added the "Timm Ranch" to our possessions. It was twenty miles east of us, and seven miles south of Harrington, in "Lord's Valley", a fertile valley several miles long, through which ran a little stream fed by springs. The ranch consisted of eight hundred and sixty acres of good farm land, and was well stocked with cattle, horses, and farm implements – in fact the personal property was worth the entire purchase price. The German who had owned it was anxious to move to into the Palouse country.

The buildings were unique. The house was a large room, built of logs, and roofed with shakes; it had a frame "lean to" on the back, which we furnished with two beds and a trundle bed. Nearby was another log cabin where the boys and the farm hands slept. Ethel, my four-year-old daughter, dubbed it "The Hoodlum House", a name that stuck to it forever after.

The barn, which was in front of the house, was built of logs, with a log shed on the side. A log granary was near by. Where all of these logs came from is a mystery, as there was no timber near. They must have been hauled for miles.

These buildings were all enclosed with a "stake and rider" rail fence, with bars in place of a gate, near the stables. These bars were smooth poles; if we were walking we crawled through; if

horseback we let them down at one end; but if we had a wagon we had to take them down and lay them aside.

A well of good water, with its “Old Oaken Bucket” was behind the house. The door yard was packed down dry and hard, and was kept swept clean. In the side of the hill near by were two dugouts for chicken houses.

One evening when the girls and I were alone I went out rather late to gather the eggs. As I entered the door I saw an animal glaring at me. A bear which had been driven out of the forest by fires had been seen in the valley that day; so of course that was the first thing I thought of. I rushed back to the house and got the gun, rested it on the top rail of the fence, and shot through the open door. I didn’t investigate until the next day, and all I found was a trail of blood leading over the hill. The boys called the gun “Betsy”. I never knew whether “Betsy and I Killed a Bear” or not, but it was the first and last time I ever fired a gun!

We had four nice milk cows which the girls and I milked. Old “Feddie” was so gentle that even Ethel tried to milk her. When carrying in the milk we had to watch out for the fighting rooster, which would jump on our shoulders and peck at our heads! He would attack any body and was an awful nuisance, but the boys thought he was so much fun that they refused to let us part with him.

We had plenty of nice milk and butter but no very good place to keep it until I put my ingenuity to work! I had a water-tight box made, with a tight lid, and had it placed in a larger box with a six-inch space between, which was packed tightly with hay. The inner box was kept partly filled with fresh water in which the pails of milk, butter, and other perishable foods were placed. They kept perfectly cool and fresh, even though the box stood in the sun near the well.

After the “Cooler” was so successful, and the hay proved to be such a good nonconductor, I conceived the idea of using a similar plan for a fireless cooker. We made another box with two asbestos-lined wells in which the big kettles fitted snugly, and packed had tightly around them, with hay cushions on top under the lid. When food was brought to the boiling point on the rand and then placed in the cooker it retained the same temperature for hours, cooking thoroughly.

When my husband saw me making it he said “Humph! Any fool would know that wouldn’t work!” But after it proved to be such a success he insisted on taking every one that came to see OUR fireless cooker! When we wanted to spend Sunday fishing in Crab Creek we left a hot meal in the cooker for the men.

We gypsied back and forth, farming both places, sometimes the children doing the cooking at one place while I presided over the kitchen at the other. (My boys, as well as my girls, had been taught to cook while very young.) It was an all-day trip in a big wagon usually drawn by our faithful team, Bud and Blossom. These horses were half brothers and were certainly loyal to each other, always working together, and running side by side when loose in the pasture. More than once they guided John safely home when he was overtaken by darkness or lost in a fog. Bud was broken to the saddle. Once we were expecting a visit from John’s cousin, James Cowgill, who was quite a prominent man in Missouri, being state treasurer, and later Mayor of Kansas City.

John wrote him to come to Sprague and take the Lord's Valley stage to the Timm Ranch; that he would leave a saddle horse there for him to ride to the Lake Creek Ranch. He told him to head the horse west and give him the rein, and he could be quite sure of reaching his destination. But old Bud remembered something John had forgotten! When John had ridden him over to the Timm Ranch he had gone several miles out of his way to collect a bill, and Bud traversed the same circuitous route with our puzzled guest, bringing him safely but giving him an unnecessarily long ride.

Lord's Valley boasted an older civilization, some of its earlier settlers having been there ten years or more! Before the Northern Pacific Railroad was built they had to drive some one hundred and twenty-five miles to Walla Walla for their Supplies. This part of the country was more thickly settled and we found some very nice neighbors, besides having the advantage of a school. The schoolhouse, a mile from the ranch, was a one-room frame building, presided over by a single teacher, who was his own janitor, besides teaching all grades to from twenty to thirty children, ranging in age from six to eighteen years.

One of the outstanding teachers was F. V. Yeager, who later was County Superintendent of Spokane Co. I heard him make the remark one day that a school teacher should be bigger than his schoolhouse, and he certainly was. He fostered a spirit of friendliness among the patrons, and kept the district lively with spelling bees, singing school, and other forms of entertainment.

When the terrible epidemic of "la Grippe" swept the country in the spring of 1892, Mr. Yeager was one of the very few who escaped. School had to be closed and he with our neighbor, Mr. Allen, went from house to house to care for the sick and feed the stock. Our family and hired men were all down at once, and neither doctors nor nurses were available. I never knew another epidemic so sudden and severe until the dreadful influenza of 1918.

We entertained many distinguished visitors in the little old log cabin on the Timm Ranch; among them C. S. Laumeister, who was sheriff of San Francisco, as well as being a big miller and grain buyer there. His wife and two children were with him. Other visitors were Dr. Belton, E. W. Jones, Jos. Boedefeld, and Mr. Brooks, of Colusa, California. Guests were given one bedroom, and when they inquired where we slept we laughingly told them that we had good beds and were perfectly comfortable. We did not explain that we slept in the "Hoodlum House" and sent the boys to the hay loft! Most of these people had come to buy cheap land for speculation; John looked after it and sold it for them later.

In the summer of 1892 we were visited by three of our California friends and form business associates. Jacob Firth, who had moved to Seattle in 1883 and had become prominently identified with the early development of that city, organizing the Puget Sound National Bank there. Dr. Luke Robinson, who had moved to San Francisco and become a famous surgeon there. And W. P. Harrington, banker of Colusa, California, the man for whom the town of Harrington was named. These three men had contracted for several sections of railroad land here in 1882. They had bought stock and machinery and had left a man in charge, who was doing some experimental farming quite successfully. Their ranch, known as "The California Ranch", was in Lord's Valley three miles North of us, and four miles from Harrington. They came to John with a proposal to pool interests and form a corporation for the purpose of farming and raising live

stock, and after much deep discussion and consideration, “The California Land and Stock Co.” was born. The papers were drawn up on the home-made kitchen table in the log cabin. Jacob Furth was elected president; W. P. Harrington, vice president; Luke Robinson, secretary; and John F. Green, manager. We were to build a new house on the California Ranch and make that our headquarters.

We had a good crop on the Timm Ranch that year, and when Ed Ramm came by with a combined harvester we hired him to harvest it. This was the first Holt harvester in our part of the country.

That fall we ordered lumber from Merryweather and Sexton of Spokane, and as we hauled our grain to the newly completed Great Northern Railroad in Harrington, we hauled back the lumber for our house. We selected a building site in a pleasant cove overlooking the valley and built a small building, later used for smoke house and store rooms, where we lived for two months, and where I cooked – at a great disadvantage – for farm hands and carpenters.

We built a twelve-room frame house, with rock foundation. John Vaughn and sons, of Spokane, cousins of my husband, were the carpenters, and I was the architect.

We moved into the house in December though it was not completed until the following spring. This was a mansion when compared to other houses in the neighborhood. It was lathed and plastered, with a hard white finish. Against my wishes, John insisted on wainscoting in sitting room, dining room and kitchen! Plastered houses he had known either had wainscoting or a chair rail for the men to lean their chairs back against. Besides he was quite sure the children would knock off the plaster!

The house was painted white with green trimmings and red roof, and had a white picket fence around the yard. We drilled a well on the hill above the house, installed a wind-mill and put in a cement reservoir; so we had hot and cold water in the house, and for the first time in our lives, we had a bath room!

We had water to irrigate a blue grass lawn and shade trees – also something new for farmers! We planted a large orchard which thrived without irrigation or spraying, and in due time produced many varieties of delicious fruit.

That fall John was elected State Representative from Lincoln Co. and spent the midwinter months in Olympia, leaving, like other politicians, the responsibility for the home to his family, while he worked for the good of his country! However he got very lonesome and sent for me to come over and spend a couple of weeks with him. I enjoyed the vacation and got a little glimpse of the inside workings of the legislature. Robert went with his father to attend school, and Will was our mainstay at home.

Early in January a letter arrived from my brother Oliver in California, saying that he, with his wife and four children, were moving to Washington, and asking us to meet him at Sprague. We had a man called “Shorty” – probably because he was very tall – who had been with us for several months and seem quite trustworthy. I sent him, with a big wagon and Bud and Blossom,

to convey the guests to the ranch. He drew all of his wages because he wanted to buy some clothes. I gave him twenty dollars to do some marketing for the ranch. He met Oliver, told him a pitiful story about getting a message from his sick father and having to go at once. He told him that he had money coming to him on the ranch, and borrowed another twenty dollars. After turning the wagon and team over to my brother and starting him out on the right road, he went to the store and bought a suit of clothes on our credit, and that was the last we ever saw or heard of Shorty! The faithful team brought Oliver's family safely to the ranch, eighteen miles over icy roads, and in bitterly cold weather. After making us a visit they were put in charge of the Timm Ranch, and lived in the old log cabin for about two years.

It was a very severe winter. Two men "batching" at Lake Creek, and looking after stock there; but Will and Oliver thought they had better drive over and see how they were fairing. They started out in the bob sled and were overtaken on the way by a blinding snow storm. About the time they were beginning to feel hopelessly lost they came to the fence, and by following it they soon saw the glimmer of the light at the house. They arrived just in time, for the storm lasted three days, burying some of the cattle in drifts and all hands had to work desperately to save them.

The first summer was a strenuous one. We had heavy crops on the three ranches. We sent the old harvester to Lake Creek as they farm land there was not so hilly, and ordered one of the newer types of side-hill harvesters, that were swung in such a way as to level themselves on our steep hills, thereby making a great saving in grain.

Seven of these harvesters were ordered by our farmers and came in on shipment from Stockton, California, with a big placard on each side of the train reading "THE HARRINGTON WHEAT BELT".

When we took over the ranch it was well stocked with horses and mules. Some had been shipped from California; and twenty-two head of big mules, which were the pride of the ranch, had been purchased in the Kansas City, Missouri, market at a cost there of $356.00 a span, including harness.

Thirty-two head of horses and mules, strung out six abreast, with two trained leaders, hitched to one of these big machines, were quite a sight, and attracted visitors from far and near. The leaders wore bells, and were handled with one line, known as a "jerk line". Our son Will was the driver, and Oliver tended separator. Five men were all that were required to cut, thresh, and sack the grain at one operation. Thirty to forty acres were harvested in a day.

One week after our harvester started it burned up in the field while the men were at dinner. We never know whether the fire started from a "hot box" or was incendiary. The

I.W.W. was creating a lot of disturbance, and there was a great deal of unrest and bitter feeling toward the new machines. Before the embers were dead, another machine was on its way from Stockton, Cal., a telegram reaching the Holt Harvester Co. in time to change the billing on one already loaded to be shipped to Sacramento, for the State Fair. One week of time and two thousand dollars were lost.

There were many breakages of parts, which made it necessary to have extras available. Walla Walla was the nearest source of supply. The Holt Co. suggested that we handle them on the ranch. A shipment was consigned to us, and kept in a store room near the house, and I sold them for ten years. The business grew as the number of harvesters in the country increased, and I became so familiar with the parts I could have built a harvester!

I was glad when the Harrington Hardware Co. took it over. Later a foundry and harvester factory was built in Harrington.

Chapter VIII

The California Land and Stock Co. ran up against a good many snags the first few years of its existence. The first harvest was delayed by the burning of the harvester, then by early fall rains. We even ran the harvester when there was six inches of snow on the ground in a vain attempt to save the grain, but one hundred and sixty acres of grain were left standing. The last wheat cut was damaged by rain and frost and we got a very low price for it. The depression that overtook us in 1893 made financing a problem. Mr. Furth had made arrangements for us to draw on the Puget Sound National Bank, but it was forced to withdraw the accommodation. John had won the friendship and trust of a local banker who tided us over.

When Mr. Schulze, the Northern Pacific Land Agent, at Portland, committed suicide, it was discovered that he had misappropriated funds, and the payments which had been made by Furth, Harrington, and Robinson, on fifteen sections of land, had not been credited on the contracts, and they had been cancelled, leaving the land subject to re-sale. They had three sections under cultivation, having broken the heavy wool-grass sod at a big expense. Besides, the fencing and the new building would have been lost. They were discouraged and wanted to quit but we had too much at stake to give up so easily. John went to Portland to confer with the Northern Pacific Land Co. and succeeded in getting new contracts at a lower figure than the original purchase price, and the California Land and Stock Co. assumed the indebtedness. There was a real struggle ahead of us, but we had strong faith in our country's future, which was not misplaced. We had good soil and plenty of moisture, and raised some good crops; and though the price of wheat was very low, labor was cheap and other expenses comparatively light, and we managed to keep afloat. There was a demand for horses and milk cows, and we were making a little profit from our stock-raising. Smaller farmers were mortgaging their farms, and many were losing them. Those that were able to hold on until 1897 were in luck, as that was the year that Leiter cornered the wheat market, and wheat went up to $2.10 a bushel. The country had produced a bumper crop, and a period of prosperity ensued. In the course of time we cleared up all indebtedness, bought several more sections of land, and later paid substantial dividends to the stock holders. We raised and sold some very fine stock – big mules, Clydesdale horses, and Shorthorn cattle. Gradually we put more land under cultivation, and continued to improve the ranch. About 1900 we installed a telephone, the first farmers' line in that part of the country, and quite an innovation. One of our Arkansas neighbors was surprised when he was the wire – he said he always supposed telephone wire was hollow!

One of my hardest struggles was with the accounts[11]. John kept an accurate day book, but I tried to work out a satisfactory system of book-keeping[12] and without previous training it was not easy; besides there were scores of letters and leases to be written out by longhand. After Maud took a business course in Spokane, and we bought a typewriter, I was relieved of that irksome task.

Our large house and big crew of men necessitated employing domestic help, and there were many amusing incidents in connection therewith.

Once when I was in need of help I sent John to interview a woman who had been highly recommended – for her ability, not for her beauty! After his eight-mile ride he took one look at her, and stammeringly asked her if she had seen any stray horses in the vicinity!

Another time we advertised in the Spokane Spokesman-Review, and got a reply from an Irish girl who read the paper in the Boston Public Library. After some correspondence we sent for her. I went to the depot to meet her in my new rubber-tired buggy. When I got a look at her I realized how John had felt! I let her walk past me into the depot and paced up and down the platform before I could screw up my courage to go and speak to her. She was stoop-shouldered almost to the point of deformity, and a growth of hair on her upper lip and chin gave here a grotesque appearance. However she proved to be a treasure and was with us for five years. What she lacked in beauty she made up in Irish wit, and beneath the surface was a heart of gold. When she left us to see a little more of

[11] "accounts" substituted for "book-keeping". [12] "of book-keeping" added.

the West she had one thousand dollars saved. She had been very frugal, and had kept her savings invested at ten per cent interest.

For several years we had a chore man – Adam, for short – who was quite a character. He was a middle-aged Englishman and a good worker, but about once a year his craving for liquor overcame him and he went on a protracted spree. When sober he was silent and taciturn, but the drink loosened his tongue, and he would make soap-box speeches on the street in Harrington, becoming very oratorical. I never hear any of them but was told of one where he took me for his subject. It went something like this; "Mrs. Green is a mother to the whole world. She ties up our sore fingers, poultices our boils, bandages our sprained ankles, and sees that we are well fed and taken care of; and she takes care of all of the neighbors when they are sick. I TELL YOU SHE IS A MOTHER TO THE WHOLE WORLD!" We tried to discharge him, but when he was broke he would come sneaking back in the night, taking his old place and doing his work faithfully until the next time. He was with us until he died.[13]

I certainly did a lot of nursing. Trained nurses were not to be had and neighbors had to help each other; besides we had several epidemics on the ranch. We had cases of scarlet fever, diphtheria, and typhoid in the house, and one case of scarlet fever and one of smallpox among the men. I managed to keep them so closely quarantined there were no outbreaks, and there were no cases lost. I had had some very good practical lesions when Uncle Doc lived with us in California.

Mother Green spent the last ten years of her life with us, and for seven years she was on crutches, due to a broken hip. We were very glad to be able to give her a comfortable home and make her last years happy.

Our home became quite a social center as we ere fond of having young people about us. We always made it a point to celebrate all anniversaries and holidays with family gatherings and appropriate decorations, and I was never happier than when roasting a

[13] "He was with us until he died." added.

little pig or a couple of fat turkeys. It was a scene of two weddings, when Ora was married to William C. Hannum, and the following year Ethel was married to Ward Jesseph. The boys had been married previously, and all of them established homes of their own near by. In the course of time the precious grandchildren were coming along to take their places in the family gatherings.

One of our annual festivities was the picnic held each June by the Pioneer and Historical Society of Lincoln and Adams counties, at their grounds on Crab creek about twelve miles south of us. This was a three-day affair, and we spent many days in preparation, baking bread, cakes and cookies; boiling ham and dressing chickens ready to be fried on our camp stove. We went to the grounds the day before, taking a big wagon to haul our supplies. About six families made up our party. We selected a site in the grove and set up our tents in an oval, leaving room in the center for our camp stove and long table, which seated about twenty-four. Mr. and Mrs. Bethel, who were part of our crowd, always took their big refrigerator and a supply of ice, so we were able to keep our butter, cream and meats fresh. Other groups clubbed together similarly until we were quite a city, of about five hundred tents and as many as two thousand inhabitants. There were seats and a speaker's stand, and a program was given each morning, consisting of music and speaking. We put up a special tent for speakers, and entertained many noted personages – governors, United States senators, Congressmen and judges. The afternoons were given over to sports, horse races and ball games; and the evenings were merry with music and dancing in the big pavilion. Besides there was a carnival with its merry-go-round and other concessions. When an automobile was almost a curiosity a photographer with a White Steamer reaped quite a harvest by taking post-card pictures with his subjects posed in the car. After automobiles became common property the camping was spoiled and there was never the same sociability. The picnic is still an annual celebration, but for one day only.

Though there was a great deal of hard work, life was never humdrum. Many of our winters were spent in Spokane, or in travel. We made several visits to California; we went to a live stock show in Chicago; in 1904 we visited the World's Fair in St. Louis, continuing on to New York. John was a delegate to the Democratic National Convention at Baltimore in 1912, and that fall, he, Maud, and I started on a trip around the United States. We ate our Christmas dinner at Jo Green's at Lindsay, California. From there we took the Southern route, making short stops[14] at El Paso, New Orleans, Pensacola, Montgomery, and Atlanta, reaching Washington D.C. Feb. 1st where we stayed a month visiting historic places and spending many hours in the galleries of the Senate and House listening to speeches. After attending President Wilson's inauguration, we spent a few days in New York before returning home.

While we were at Jo Green's his daughter Mabel gave us a ride in their new Ford. Maud and I had been begging for a car, but not until after John saw how easily Mabel handled one, did he give his consent; after we reached home, in the spring of 1913 we became the proud possessors

of a “Model T”. Maud did all of the driving and was the admiration and envy of all of the women in the neighborhood, as women chauffeurs were a curiosity. We could be seen most any time ankle deep in dust or mud cranking it, or mending a tire. On one occasion when we were stuck at the foot of a steep hill, a kind farmer took “Dolly” from his team and hitched her to the Ford, and she snaked us up that hill in no time! In spite of mishaps we derived a great deal of pleasure from it and John found it great convenience to have us always ready to run errands for the ranch.

With an automobile and a new fur coat I felt like a plutocrat! The fur coat is another story! I had succeeded, after a lot of argument, in getting a monthly allowance. John belonged to the old school and felt like what was his was mine. While I realized this was true I always believed that a woman should have a stipulated sum of her own, and not have the humiliation of asking for a little spending money. I finally got my way and soon had a little bank account of my own. John and Rob occasionally did a little speculating on the board of trade, and when they got a “hot” tip on the barley market I decided to do a little plunging myself! I didn’t sleep well that night thinking of all of the things I could have done with that money – which I was sure was lost! The next day barley made a big jump and I sold. I was made fun of and called a “quitter”, but I immediately came to

[14] “making short stops” substituted for “laying over”.

Spokane and bought me a black caracul coat with my profit, and they held on until they lost their investment. That was my only gambling experience.

During the World War prices for land increased enormously. Mr. Green’s health had been failing and he decided to sell out and retire from active business. His three associates had all passed away. He got a good offer on the California Ranch in Lord’s Valley, and accepted it in the spring of 1917. We advertised a public auction for April 14th, giving ourselves less than a month to clear out the big house of more than twenty-four years accumulation and get the machinery and work stock in shape to sell.

I was happy to get John away from the hard work and had no regrets, but some of the children shed a few tears, and the eleven grandchildren were heart broken. They had all spent a good deal of time with “Grandpa and Grandma” and we had done everything we could to make our home a happy place for them. The little twigs we had planted in the yard so many years before had become big shade trees, and there were swings in them and play houses under them. There was “Chub”, the gentle pony, for them to ride, and they loved the little colts and calves, as well as all of the feathered kingdom – chickens, turkeys, ducks, guinea fowls, and peacocks; so it was no wonder that they felt that their little world was tumbling about them.

After the sale we came to Spokane and bought a comfortable home, but John lived only a year and a half afterwards. We were left now with only the Lake Creek Ranch, plus a few sections of adjoining pasture land which we had purchased. We had previously sold some scattering sections.

Several years before we had built a good modern house at Lake Creek, and our son Robert, with his family, was living there at the time we moved to Spokane. It was our intention to sell this ranch also, liquidate and dissolve the corporation, but this we were unable to do owing to

changing conditions. Our young men had all gone to the war, and there was a feeling of unrest and uncertainty. There was little demand for land, though there was a market for horses and mules for the army and we sold about a hundred head.

We know that some of them reached France, for Bob Stone, a boy who had worked for us ever since he was in knickers, had run across one there! When he saw it and told his comrades that he knew where that mule was raised, they laughed at him and refuse to believe his story. He told them that if it was the mule he thought it was, he could prove it

– it would have a private brand of a half circle on the inside of the left stifle. He looked and found the brand! Bob told me after he came back that he could have hugged that mule – he was so glad to see something from home.

After Mr. Green's death, Maud was elected manager of the California Land and Stock Co., and held the position for four years, when a protracted illness compelled her to resign, and Will took the management.

We continued to farm under discouraging conditions. Though land values decreased, taxes remained high. The price of farm machinery was prohibitive; for instance we had bought four skeleton wagons a few years before at a cost of $80.00 each; when we had to buy a new wheel for one it cost $95.00. Labor was much higher than it had been before the war, while the price of wheat went down. The climate seemed to have changed and we entered a dry era. We had recurring dust storms and sand blows, causing considerable soil erosion. Farmers had a hard struggle, and most of them mortgaged their places to the full extent of their value.

The last two or three years have shown some improvement; we have had more rain and better prices, and the farmer is coming into his own again. The demand is increasing for both farm lands and live stock.

The first of July, this year – 1936 – we sold the Lake Creek Ranch, with a good crop on it, to Jo and John Kremsteiter, two husky young farmers who will carry on the work we started some fifty years ago. With modern machinery and improved methods, they way should be easier for them than it was for us.

I went down to the big auction sale July 20th. Sandy Keith cried the sale – the same auctioneer we had had at the California Ranch nineteen years before. Nearly five hundred people – men, women, and children – came, and it was quite a picnic! I greeted old neighbors that I had not seen for many years. Men and women that had worked for us when they were young, were there with their sons and daughters who had graduated from college, married, and had children of their own – the farmers of the future! It brought back memories, and was a thrilling day for me.

My family gradually became scattered, and Maud and I were alone in Spokane in a house far too big for our needs. We sold it and moved into a cheerful apartment, where we still have room to entertain our friends. We are members of the Unitarian Society, the Women's Alliance, and several study and social clubs, and keep busy and happy.

The one thing I have never quite been able to get used to, is buying in small quantities and living out of paper bags! On the ranch we had raised our own fruit, canning large supplies for winter; we had a big garden with all sorts of fresh vegetables in season. We raised and cured our own meats, bought sugar and flour by the ton, had our own cream and butter, raised about six hundred chickens and had our own eggs. We mad soap in a fifty gallon kettle over an open fire; this soap was hard and white and much better for laundry and dish-washing than the commercial variety.

We made all of our own clothes, and our sewing machines were not run by electricity! I

always enjoyed my work, and felt with Whittier that:

"Woman in her daily round

of duty walks on Holy ground."

The younger generation will never realize how much is done for them that their grandparents had to do for themselves. Will they be happier or stronger characters with less work, and greater opportunities? Who can tell!

Obituaries John F. Green

Harrington Newspaper, Harrington, WA – Sept 12, 1918 JOHN F. GREEN DIES AT HOME IN SPOKANE -WAS PROMINENT IN EARLY DEVELOPMENT OF COUNTY'S AGRICULTURAL INTERESTS- John F. Green, for 30 years a resident of Lords valley, four miles east of Harrington, died at his home in Spokane Tuesday, September 10, age 67, after a lingering illness lasting several months, the end being expected for some time. Funeral services were held in Spokane today. Deceased leaves a widow, two sons and three daughters: Robert L. of Harrington, William J. of Spokane, Maude E. Green and Mrs. W.C. Hannum of Spokane and Mrs. Ward Jesseph of Edwall.

J.F. Green came to Lincoln county and took a homestead in Lord's valley in the 80's, shortly thereafter being engaged to manage the California Land & Stock company which he continued to manage until his removal to Spokane about a year ago. The California Land & Stock company, in which Mr. Green was interested as a partner as well as manager, owned many sections of land in the Harrington country, buying it in the early days, and the company farmed and raised stock on a large scale. Several years ago it began to sell the land off as Mr. Green wished to retire from active work. At the time he moved to Spokane most of the holdings had been disposed of. Deceased was an untiring worker all his life, a man of great physical endurance and a man whose character and personality was ever a power in the community I which he lived. He had much to do with the early development of Lincoln county in an agricultural way, and at one time represented the county in the state legislature, always taking an active part in politics and was a man whose counsel the democrats of the whole state listened to. Through his business connections, both in and aside from farming, he had an acquaintance throughout the state that few men are permitted to enjoy. With A.G. Mitchum, now of Spokane, and M.F. Adams of

Harrington, he engaged in the banking business in Harrington about 20 years ago, later being interested in banks in Edwall, Sprague, and other points. He gradually withdrew from business activities up until about a year ago when he moved to Spokane, with his wife and daughter to retire, but had been in poor health for several months prior to his death.

Ella Jane Green

Spokesman Review, Spokane, WA -Saturday, March 11, 1944, p. 6 MRS. E. GREEN FUNERAL TODAY Funeral services for Ella Jane Green, who died at her home, S626 Cedar, Thursday morning, will be held today at 1 p.m. from the Hazen & Jaeger funeral home, Dr. John Brogden officiating. Interment will be at Greenwood. She resided in Spokane 27 years, and had lived in the Inland Empire since 1887. Her husband, John F. Green, was a member of the first legislature for the state. In 1936 she published a book, "Big Geen," about her life, for her grandchildren. She was a member of the Unitarian church. Surviving are her daughters, Miss Maud E. Green, at the home; Mrs. W. C. Hannum, Los Angeles; sons, Robert L. Green, William J. Green, both of Spokane; 11 grandchildren and 13 great-grandchildren.

Family of John F Green and Ella Jane Williams John F Green (b. 1851, KY, d. 10 Sept 1918, WA) +Ella Jane Williams (b. 1854, IN, d. 9 Mar 1944, WA)

Robert Livingstone Green (b. 1873, MO, d. 14 Mar 1946, WA)
+Nettie A Gretz (b. 1883, MO, d. 14 Sept 1969, WA)
William John Green (b. 1874, MO, d. 1 Apr 1956, WA)

+Clarabel Townsend (b. 1883, CO, d. 2 Jan 1940, WA) Maud Elizabeth Green (b. 1877, CA, d. 3 Jan 1949, WA) Ora Elda Green (b. 1882 CA, d. 29 May 1969, WA)

+William Cave Hannum (24 Oct 1879, CA, d. 3 Mar 1946, CA)
Ethel Grace Green (b. 1886, CA, d. 24 Oct 1934, WA)
+Ward Jesseph (b. 18 Jun 1883, MI, d. Nov 1964, WA)

Some Descendants of Joseph and Lydia Williams

Joseph WILLIAMS

+ Lydia SOMES b. 1649 d. 1689 Joseph WILLIAMS b. 1670/71 William WILLIAMS b. 1671 Richard WILLIAMS b. 1672/73 Hannah WILLIAMS b. 1674 d. 1675 Daniel WILLIAMS b. 1676 Hannah WILLIAMS b. 1679 Jeremiah WILLIAMS b. 1683 d. 1766

+ Philadelphia MASTERS b. 1684
Joseph WILLIAMS b. 1710
Hannah WILLIAMS b. 1711

+ Mary Newbury HOWLAND b. 1691 d. 1774
Ann WILLIAMS b. 1719

Walter WILLIAMS b. 1720
Benjamin WILLIAMS b. 1722 d. 1809

+ Mercy STEVENSON b. 1719 Frederick WILLIAMS John WILLIAMS b. 1745 Mary WILLIAMS b. 1747 Jeremiah WILLIAMS b. 1749 d. 1834

+ Mary BLACKLEDGE b. 1758 d. 1831 John WILLIAMS b. 1780 d. 1868 Thomas WILLIAMS b. 1781 Benjamin WILLIAMS b. 1782 d. 1859 Susan WILLIAMS b. 1785 William WILLIAMS b. 1785 Samuel WILLIAMS b. 1792 Isaac Burson WILLIAMS b. 1794 d. 1869

+ Martha Shelton WHITE b. 1788 d. 1856 Infant WILLIAMS Clayton N WILLIAMS b. 1821 d. 1844 Jeremiah WILLIAMS b. 1824 d. 1892

+ Rebecca O'

HARA b. 1830 Melville WILLIAMS b. 1856 d. 1920 Lucy Aldin WILLIAMS b. 1858 d. 1907

Joseph WILLIAMS b. 1828 d. 1892

+ Mary E BOYD b. 1832 Oliver G WILLIAMS b. 1850 Ella Jane WILLIAMS b. 1854 d. 1944

+ Nancy J STEPHENS

Elizabeth7 WILLIAMS b. 1860 Charles WILLIAMS b. 1831 d. 1895

+ Amanda E SAMUELS b. 1837 d. 1919 William Thadeus WILLIAMS b. 1856 d. 1856 Jesse Elsworth WILLIAMS b. 1861 d. 1942 John Edgar WILLIAMS b. 1871 d. 1927 Charles B WILLIAMS b. 1881 d. 1911

Margaret WILLIAMS b. 1796 d. 1865

+ Abel LESTER b. 1790 d. 1865

Jeremiah WILLIAMS b. 1798 Margaret Mercy WILLIAMS b. 1751 Lydia WILLIAMS b. 1752 Benjamin WILLIAMS b. 1756 Anne WILLIAMS b. 1758 William WILLIAMS b. 1760 Samuel WILLIAMS b. 1762 Susannah WILLIAMS b. 1765

Mary WILLIAMS b. 1724
Jeremiah WILLIAMS b. 1726
Lydia WILLIAMS b. 1728/29
Martha WILLIAMS b. 1731

Elizabeth WILLIAMS b. 1686 d. 1687
Elizabeth WILLIAMS b. 1688
Mary WILLIAMS b. 1689