

Life's Golden Gleanings



RUBY STOVER

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By
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Dedication

I affectionately dedicate this little volume to my son Robert, his wife Margaret, and my grandchildren Michael, Pamela, Donna, and Robert, Jr.

Preface

For a number of years I have wanted to write down some of the experiences of my childhood and how God has answered prayer in marvelous ways in our family. My only motive is to give honor to God and to encourage the reader to have a simple child-like faith in God.

I first started writing my life story for my children and grandchildren. Then others heard about it and wanted it published in the “Beautiful Way” paper. My desire is that all children will know that God is real; He is able to do anything. He can help us when we are in trouble, when we are sick, when we are in temptation, when all about us is dark, when we have no money, and when we have pressing obligations. He can always make a way when there seems to be no way. Bless His holy Name! But best of all, He can save our souls, bring peace and joy where there was sorrow and sadness, and supply our every need from day to day, by faith in Him.

My desire, dear reader, is that you be inspired to a greater faith in the living God.

There has been much writing of books and testimonies to encourage faith. I only add this to witness of His great love and tender mercy in my life. Many more experiences could be added, but we feel this is sufficient. We can sing with the poet: “What a mighty God we serve!”

We send this forth with a prayer that His name be glorified. All honor is due unto Him. Let us magnify His great Name together.

Year of 1973

Ruby E. Stover

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Chapter 1

God's Love for You

Dear children: Since winter is here, and the days are short and the evenings long; you cannot be outside like in the summer. We have desired to have some talks with you concerning the plan of God and some of the good things He has done for us down through the years. So lay aside your books and homework, put up your toys, sit down, and be very quiet; for we are in the presence of God, our heavenly Father. Though we do not see Him with these eyes, we know He is present; for He tells us in His word that “the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good.” Pro. 15:3.

“Grandmother, tell us a story about when you were a little girl,” said Sue.

“Tell us about your trip across the plains in the covered wagon,” exclaimed David.

We may do that a little later, children; but tonight let us talk about God's love for you. He has been so good to all of us through another day, spared our lives, and kept us from harm and danger. He has blessed us with health and strength. God has helped you with your lessons at school. He has provided us with food to eat, good warm beds to sleep in, and even watches over us while we are asleep. Yes, our blessings are more than we can number; but the best of all,

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He gave Himself for you and me that we may be able to live right in this world and then go to heaven when we die and forever be with the dear Lord.

“Many things have changed since you were a little girl, haven’t they, Grandmother? You did not ride in cars then like we do today. But you rode in wagons, buggies, and on horseback. Please tell us about it!”

Yes, many things have changed, my dear; but some things will never change, and one of them is God’s love for you.

“Does He love us when we are naughty, too?” asked little Marie.

Yes, dear, God loves boys and girls then, too; but He is grieved when you are naughty. He wants you to be good always, that is His plan. He knows that if you are good boys and girls; you are more sure to be good men and women. That is why He said, “Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it.” Proverbs 22:6. When you know someone loves you very much, you desire to please them. Now children, God loves you and desires your love in return. He knew you would need someone to teach and guide you to do this, so He gave you Fathers and Mothers, and He wants you to love them and respect them. He tells us in Ephesians 6:1, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord for this is right.” “Honor thy Father and Mother; which is the first commandment with promise.” Again in Colossians 3:20, it says, “Children obey your parents in all things, for this is well-pleasing to the Lord.” So you see, one of the first things to prove to God that you love Him is to do what He says to do, and that is to love, honor and obey your parents. You cannot love God whom you have not seen, unless you love and honor your parents whom you have seen. Proverbs 1:8 says, “My son, hear the instruction of thy Father, and

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forsake not the law of thy Mother.” In obeying your parents, you are obeying God. God has a plan in His word (the Bible) to guide us from our childhood to the end of our lives; and if we will follow it, we can live with Him in heaven when we die. God knew the devil would do all he could to keep us from going to heaven, but He loved us so much He gave His only Son to make a way that we might overcome the devil instead of doing evil. I read about a little girl who was happy all the time, and someone asked her what her secret was, and she said, “Jesus lives in my heart; and when the devil comes around, I just tell him to wait a minute and I’ll call Jesus, for He lives here, and he immediately runs away.” That is resisting the devil. Never let him into your house, (your heart).

“Grandmother, I know the verse that tells about it. It is St. John 3:16. ‘For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’ ” Marie said.

Don’t ever forget how He loved you and the great price He paid that you and I may gain heaven. Do you know how God gave His son to the world?

“Oh, yes,” said Sue and David at once: “He let the wicked soldiers kill Him. They hung Him on the cruel cross and drove big nails in His hands and feet. It was awful.”

Yes, children, it was awful suffering, more than we can imagine; but He loved us.

“They put some long thorns on His head, too; and the blood ran down His face,” said Marie tearfully. Oh, “Grandmother, why did he let them do it?”

My dear, because He loved you and me and all the world. He could not let people into heaven with sin in their hearts, so a sacrifice

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had to be made to atone for sin. The scripture says in Hebrew 9:22, “Without shedding of blood is no remission,” or forgiveness of sin. It was an awful price, an awful sacrifice; but there was no other way. God’s love for us made Him willing to give His Son, and Jesus loved His Father so much that He was willing to fulfil His plan that we might be saved.

When people build a home, they expect to dwell or live in it. When God created man, He expected to live in his heart and keep him pure and free from sin; so when he died, he could live with Him in heaven. So children, when the devil tempts you to do wrong, remember how God loves you and wants to dwell in your heart. Resist the devil, and Jesus will help you to do right. It’s getting late now. I see little Milton is already asleep, and you must get to bed. Be sure and say your prayers. Tomorrow evening I will talk to you about how I learned to pray. Goodnight, children.

“Goodnight, Grandmother, we enjoyed the lesson tonight,” said the children.

Chapter 2

How I Learned to Pray

Good evening, children. I told you last time I would tell you how I learned to pray. I wonder if you really know what prayer is?

“Oh, sure, it is talking to God,” Sue said.

Yes, dear, that is true. We pray to our heavenly Father just like we would tell our dearest friend our needs. It isn’t just saying words or reciting a poem, but earnestly telling Him our needs and thanking Him for all of His many blessings to us every day, and His tender mercy to us when we are in unconscious sleep. Oh, how we love and adore Him and want to live for Him! It is wonderful to know He listens to our prayers and is able to answer. Remember, God is able to do all things. We must believe that. That is faith!

I learned to pray when I was very young, for I had a praying mother. We had family worship at our home. The word was read morning and night, and we bowed in prayer together. I was taught that Jesus was my dearest friend, and He loved me and wanted me to be good and love Him. Mother was never too busy to teach and instruct me in the ways of truth and right, praying with me many times during the day. When we would get hurt, she taught us to take our troubles to Jesus, and He would answer our prayer. She also taught us that when we did wrong, Jesus was grieved; and we

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would have to go to Him and tell Him we were sorry, repent of the wrong, and He would forgive us. I well remember one time when I disobeyed and had to suffer. Mother had taught us that if we disobeyed God's word we would have to suffer for it. And I found that to be true. She had been drying fruit and had some peaches on the roof of the shed. She told us to not go up the ladder, as we might fall. She went up every day, saw about them, and at times gave me one to eat. But I had a desire to go up, too; and the devil assured me I would not fall. One evening, after she had gone in the house, I started up the ladder. I went very carefully and reached the top. I reached over, took a peach, and took a bite. Oh! Oh! Oh! What do you think had happened? I had bit into a yellow jacket, and it had stung me in the mouth. I don't know yet how I got down from there without falling, but I screamed for help. I wanted Mother really badly then. It was hurting so badly that I could hardly tell what had happened. I knew I had done wrong and told Mother I was sorry. She told me I must tell Jesus I had done wrong and tell Him I was sorry I had disobeyed. Then we would ask Him to stop the hurting, which we did. This was one lesson I long remembered. It does not pay to disobey the Lord.

Mother prayed often in secret. Many times I would find her in prayer, and I would kneel down by her side and wait for her. Many times she called my name in prayer, asking God to keep his hand over me and to help me to grow up to be a godly woman. How I thank God for my precious Mother and the example she set before me. Anything we needed, we prayed about it. If we were sick, we prayed; and God healed. He supplied our every need in many miraculous ways because we prayed and trusted Him. Nothing was too small or great to tell Jesus about. And so I learned to pray. I have found Him a true friend and a present help in time of need all

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down through the years of my life. He has never failed, and I know He never will.

So, children, have faith in God; don't forget to pray; and trust Him for all your needs. He will answer your prayers while you are young as well as when you are old, if you will do the right.

Chapter 3

My Parent's New Life

“Grandmother, do tell us some more of when you were a little girl,” David said.

Yes, I did promise to tell some of the experiences of my childhood. I hardly know where to begin, but I think I should tell you some about my parents. They are your great-grandparents. They were good, honest, hardworking people; and my earliest memories begin with them.

My father, Robert Milton Trimble, was born Dec. 7, 1866, near Houston, Missouri. My Grandfather Trimble, as well as my Great-grandfather and several generations back, were from Kentucky. In the early days, three brothers came to America from Germany. First settling in Virginia, they later pushed on west to Kentucky.

There was much hardship and suffering in those frontier days. The pioneers had a spirit of adventure and a determination to conquer the wilds; and with much hard labor, they hewed out homes and farms from the forests that surrounded them. They had quite a part in settling the state, and Trimble County is named for them. In the early 1800's, my Grandfather left there when a young boy and came west to Missouri. Later he married and established a home near Houston where my father was born. My father seemed to inherit

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some of this pioneer spirit, being never afraid of hard work and loving to travel and see new country. When a young man, he mounted his horse one day and headed west to the Indian Territory, which is now Oklahoma. He didn't stay there long, but went on over into Texas, where he worked on cattle ranches until 1895. He then came back to the Indian Territory.

Mother, Ida Pearlee (Warden) Trimble, was born at McKinney, Texas, May 20, 1878. About 1892, her parents moved to the Indian Territory also.

Many people were moving into the Territory those days, as the Government was buying up the land from the Indians; and there were good opportunities for settlers. Wherever a community was established, there would be a schoolhouse built. This was the center of all activities in the community. They had pie suppers, box suppers, programs of all kinds, political speeches, singings, and Union S.S. and church services. That meant that no matter what church name people belonged to; they laid that aside and came together and had services. In the summer they would build brush arbors and have big gatherings from all the country around. For people didn't have many places to go in those days. They were also more religiously inclined. Most everyone went to church.

"What is a brush arbor, Grandmother?" asked Marie.

Well, they put big poles in the ground and across the top. They would cut green live limbs from trees and pile them on top so it would make a shade.

"My! That must have looked funny, and what if it rained?" laughed the children.

Well, I am sure it did sometimes, but you would be surprised how well it stood the weather for a time. Anyway, the people

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enjoyed these meetings and a place to meet together and sing. Singings were very popular then, and both my parents loved to sing and took a great interest in them. It was at one of those meetings that my parents met for the first time. The young people didn't have the conveniences of today, such as cars to go in; but they had just as good a time as they do today. They rode horses or went in buggies. I remember them telling of many laughable experiences on horseback in their courting days.

They were married on March 13, 1898, at Velma, Oklahoma Indian Territory.

Papa had rented a farm the year before and had raised one crop on it. But it had no house, so he had built a one room cabin and batched there all year. Just before they were married, he wanted it spick and span (clean) for his bride. So he decided the best thing to do was to take the floor up, board by board, and turn it over. Which he did. Mother thought it was so nice and clean. She bragged to him about what a wonderful housekeeper he was! I remember how he would laugh and tell us how, later on, she found out about it. I think a neighbor had helped him, and he told Mother about it. But they were as happy as young couples are today with lovely homes and good cars.

In January of 1899, a baby girl was born to bless their home. But this little life was brief, and in April she took pneumonia. In a short time, she passed away, leaving them heartbroken. Home was not the same now, and they began to want to move, as it was so lonesome there. Mother would go to the field and walk around and around with Father as he plowed the fields. How they wished they could move to a new location, but the crops were planted, and there was nothing to do but wait until it could be harvested. They lived about ten miles from Mother's parents; and in those days, that was

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a long distance, so she didn't get to see them very often. Mother was the oldest of the children and missed her brothers and sisters. Sometimes they would bring one of the youngest home with them to stay a week or so as she was so lonely. So the summer passed, and the fall came. The crops were ready to gather in.

Many opportunities were before the young of that day to get a home for themselves. There was much talk of land being opened up for homesteading. The big run of 1889 was over, but land had not been taken yet in the Western part of the Territory. So plans began to form in their minds of going West to find a home. It seemed like a long way from her family, which was hard for her; but their young hearts were eager to have a home to call their own, and Grandfather talked of coming later if they found it a good country.

When the crops were all gathered and sold, they were ready to start. Two or three neighbor families had decided the same way, and all would go along together. They loaded all their earthly possessions in wagons and started West to stake out a homestead. This was in the fall of 1899. Their team was one horse and a white mule. Father's saddle horse, Star, which he would not part with, was led behind the wagon. They took a pig, a few chickens, a plow, seed corn, and a few carpenter tools he had, besides their household dishes, bedding and clothes, etc.

It would not seem very far today. In a good car, it could be driven in a few hours; but then it took days—nearly a week. They all camped out at night, making campfires, cooking their meals, sleeping on the ground under the stars. But they were happy on their new adventure. After arriving in Roger Mills county, they made camp; and the men folks began to look around for a good location. After some days, all had found a place not far from each other. Each had 160 acres of land. All the Government required was to live on it

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and make a home. It was a good opportunity for anyone to get a home. Father's place had a creek on it. This was near the little village of Texmo. (It is not there today. It was about ten miles southwest of Leedy.) The men soon had a little house or dug-out ready to live in. They would help each other until they were all finished. They were very humble abodes, but all were the same, so no one felt cast down about it.

"Why did they call it a dugout, Grandmother?"

Well, it was dug out of the ground. They would dig down in the ground about four feet, then build above the ground about the same, sometimes with poles or lumber. They covered it over and then cut squares of sod from the earth and covered it thick all over the top. It took a real hard rain to leak through. There was a small window on each side, and Father built a little fireplace in the back out of native rock. There was only one room in which they cooked, ate, and slept. It was warm and cozy, and they were as happy as could be to know they had a home of their own at last.

There were many hardships ahead, but they faced them with courage because they were building a home. The coyotes were thick and soon had killed most of their chickens. The pig also disappeared; it either ran away, or the coyotes ate it. It would look very discouraging to the young folks today, but many of our pioneers braved many adversities to settle the country we know today.

There were lots of Indians in the country around with a big settlement of them at Hammond, a town not many miles away. They were peaceable by this time, although Mother was afraid, as it was nothing unusual to see them stroll through the country. The men had long hair like the women and wore blankets around their bodies. They didn't act very friendly, but they never caused trouble. They lived in tepees instead of dugouts like the white people. There was

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a great number at this reservation at Hammond, but an epidemic of measles got among them, and the poor things did not know how to care for themselves. When they were hot with fever, they would go down to the Washita River and cool themselves; this caused many to die. They thought the "Good Spirit" was against this place, so they moved the village down the river a few miles.

As winter came on, provisions were scarce because the settlers had no crops to depend on. It was with real thanksgiving that they set a trap and caught quail which were as plentiful as rabbits. Although they got tired of quail and rabbit before spring, they never lacked for something to eat. The neighbors were helpful to each other and shared their meager supply with some who were sick and not able to hunt for themselves. They truly loved their neighbors as their own selves. Though their earthly possessions were few and they had little money, they were contented to sit by their own fireside. Papa played the old violin, and they sang as the winds howled outside. Sometimes the snow covered the little house completely, but they were warm and comfortable inside. Thus passed the winter of 1899-1900 on the homestead.

Spring brought new hope as the prairie began to turn green, and farmers began to plow, turning the sod into fields to plant. All were busy from daylight to dark. The neighbors helped each other when needed. They worked with a new-found zeal, as this was their own land; and this gave them strength to face the adversities they met. When the crops were in the ground, they began to build barns and sheds to care for their crops when harvested.

Several miles away on government land, there were cedars growing. They gave permission for the settlers to cut posts for fences. The men went together with several teams and wagons and were gone several days cutting posts. First they fenced in a garden

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and lot around the cattle sheds, as there were no fences at all. The cattle ran everywhere, eating and destroying crops unless they were watched carefully. The children in the family had the job of watching the cattle. If there were no children, the women had to do this. Mama had to be out in the yard much of the time, as down in the dugout she couldn't see over the fields. It was lonely at times the neighbors were a long way apart.

The mail didn't come often because there was no way to get it, except by going to the Post Office at Texmo. The neighbors were good to help; and if one went, they would get the mail for others near them.

One day Papa had to go to Texmo to the blacksmith shop; so of course, he would get the mail. When he returned, Mama rushed out to meet him and to see if she had a letter, as it had been some time since she heard from Grandma. She thought he acted strange and tried to avoid her questions, but she thought he was trying to tease her. To her surprise, he turned, took her in his arms, and in tears told her the sad news that her dear mother had passed away. Oh, what a shock it was! She almost fainted and felt that she could not live. She was already so homesick and had lived from week to week expecting to hear from home, and now to think that there was no hope of seeing her dear mother again in this life was almost more than she could bear. It was some time before she could read the letter from Grandpa and the younger sisters and brothers, which told of how they had returned from the funeral all heart-broken and confused without a mother. How she longed to go to them, but it seemed impossible under all the circumstances. The pioneer life was one of sacrifices and hardships. She did not know how to take her burdens to the Lord, because she had always been taught that a woman should not pray out loud, and she felt her heart would burst. It seemed her grief

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was more than she could bear. One day she thought she was dying, she could hardly get her breath; and in desperation, she cried out, "Dear God help me!" She said the most wonderful, soothing feeling came over her, and was such a comfort to her grieving heart that she knew it was from God. That gave her the knowledge that God could and would help those who call upon Him.

The summer was long and lonely, but time and much labor helped to heal her aching heart. This was the year 1900. When harvest time came, they were rewarded for their labors. When the crops were all in. Papa took his carpenter tools and began to help the neighbors put up buildings. He made enough money to do some improving on the homeplace and to buy a milk cow, some pigs, more chickens, also fences to keep the coyotes from getting them.

By now, they had a dog they called "Danie". He was a shepherd dog, and he would chase the coyotes away, and then they would chase him back to the house. They were very bold, and the young dog was a little afraid of them.

Sand plums were plentiful and could be canned or made into jelly. There was also wild goose berries and currants. Vegetables were dried and stored in the cellar. So the second winter found them in much better circumstances than the first. Each year they improved things as they were able. With much hard toil, they were finally able to call it "home".

The community was alive with activity. The schoolhouse was the center of all activities such as church services, literaries, debates, and pie-suppers. They held singings every week or two for entertainment during the winter. They were diligent to attend the Union Sunday School. Papa and Mama took an active part in all the activities of the community, especially the literaries, which were their delight. Papa was quite an active debator, also.

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On June the 4th, 1902, a blue-eyed baby girl was born. They told me I was a duplicate of my sister who had been taken from them so quickly. Their hearts were happy again, and they felt their joy was complete.

Chapter 4

A New Found Experience

They were diligent to attend the Union Church services at the schoolhouse. Mother was a Campbellite, and Papa a Missionary Baptist. They were happy in every way till the subject of religion came up, and it usually ended in an argument with both feeling bad and unhappy about it, for on that they could not agree.

Ministers of all faiths came along and had revivals, and the whole community would turn out. In the winter of 1903-1904, a holiness preacher named George Johnson came to the schoolhouse. No one seemed to know him; but since they said he was Holiness, it caused quite an interest. Most people thought this would be amusing as they had heard of the Holy-rollers and how they carried on, so a large crowd came out to see and be entertained. They had heard it was more like a show than church, so were anxious for it to begin. Though it was a bitterly cold night, people filled the house to capacity, they being anxious to see what happened. After the usual song service (which was good in that community), he rose and took the pulpit. He seemed different than the usual run of preachers. He told no jokes or funny stories to begin, but opened his Bible and took his text against sin. He read scripture after scripture against sin. All were amazed, and their hearts were pricked. They felt sure their

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Bibles did not read like his. Their consciences smote them as they realized that this was the state they were living in. They decided they would not go back again; but before the next day was over, they decided to go one more night. This minister had made some bold statements, saying you could live free from sin, and had read it out of the Bible too. One scripture was, “he that committeth sin is of the devil;” I John 3:8. That was a little too much, for they all knew they sinned and were taught that a person could not live above sin. Papa felt sure the preacher had now overstepped himself. He had been taught by many good ministers that “he that sayeth he liveth and sinneth not is a liar, and the truth is not in him.” Now he knew what he would do; he would look it up when they got home and show this preacher he had made a wrong statement.

When they got home, a fire was built; and they sat up late and searched for it. When the fire died out, and it got cold, they went to bed; but decided he would continue to search the next day for it. He knew it must be in there, because he had heard it quoted so much. Next morning it was snowing; so after chores were done, it was easy to stay inside by the fire and spend the day searching for the desired scripture. To their disappointment, he could not find it. They concluded that he had used another translation.

They decided at different times that they would not go anymore; but as the meeting continued from night to night, the compelling force of the Spirit of God caused them to go and listen to the heart-searching word. Scripture after scripture was read and expounded to them of a plan of salvation that saved from all sin and would keep you free and happy with no condemnation in your hearts. How they longed for that experience! Even the songs were like a sermon: “Salvation’s free, glad joy to all of Adam’s fallen race; We’ll tell to all both far and near of saving, keeping grace.” They had never heard

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of anything like this before. Oh, to be free from the guilt of sin would be wonderful indeed! They could never find the scripture they sought for. As they followed the preacher night after night, looking up the scriptures in their own Bible, they were surprised to find so much against sin, and that you must be 'born again' to get to heaven. The song, "Heaven is a Holy place, filled with glory and with grace, sin can never enter there," was a message from God. Conviction was settling deep upon them. They were convinced without a doubt that this was the truth and was what they needed and must have to make it to heaven. But what about their profession? Papa was a leader in the Sunday School, leading the singing, etc. By this time, the community was stirred. Some were convinced this was the truth, and others opposed it strongly. It seemed the community would be divided. It meant something to give it all up and to admit you needed to be saved.

Mother was convinced her profession was worthless, and she needed real salvation. She hardly knew how to go about it because she was taught women should not pray in public. Her heart was so heavy with conviction that she wept as she went about her daily work. Her heart was crying out for deliverance and peace. When she could stand it no longer, she dropped to her knees at home and poured out her heart in repentance, begging God to have mercy on her and save her. Soon joy and peace flooded her soul, and she knew without a doubt that she was born again and was made a new creature. Oh, the joy that filled her soul. She could hardly wait for meeting that night to tell it. Papa soon surrendered also, accepting the truth in its fullness. They were so happy in their new-found experience. Though the weather was cold, they were baptized at the close of the meeting along with several others who had been saved. The ice had to be broken on the pond, but they were happy to follow the Lord all the way.

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One couple who were saved were Charley Bowen and wife. It was not long until the Lord began to use him in leading prayer-meetings, and later he began preaching. The meeting brought a separation in the neighborhood. Some fought holiness and sinless life; while others acknowledged it was the truth, but would not lay down their professions and get a real experience. The people in general respected Brother Bowen as a good man and many came to hear him. They wanted to see if he could really preach, they knowing he had no training. The Lord blessed him in a marvelous way; and through his efforts, the Lord kept those who were saved together.

When the minister, whose name was Brother George Johnson and who lived about twenty-five miles away on a homestead, left, he told them he would be back before long. He came a month or so later and had another meeting. They were anxious to see him and had many questions to ask.

In the spring, he returned again with another, Bro. Willard Cochran; and they held another meeting.

These ministers were poor. They worked hard establishing homes for their families and scattering the truth wherever they found opportunity to do so in the new settlements. Other ministers were being called of God to go forth and sow the seeds of truth also. The truth of this evening light was breaking forth like sparks from a flaming fire and being carried into every corner of the country. No sacrifice was too great. They walked, rode horses, or drove wagons or buggies in all kinds of weather to get the gospel to the people.

Many ministers came our way. In my earliest memories Bro. A.J. Taylor, Bro. George Harmon, Bro. H.W. White, and Bro. John M. Wann, besides the first mentioned, were the ones we saw the most often.

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Meetings were held by these ministers all around the country in schoolhouses. Sometimes the buildings would not hold the crowds. This gospel stirred the people in every community. Some came to fight it, some for curiosity, and some were honest and accepted it readily. Some who opposed strongly were convinced it was the truth, even though they would not yield. God worked in a marvelous way, saving souls, healing bodies, and sanctifying believers. The power of God was so manifest in convicting, people standing outside the building were touched. For instance at the “Windy Hill” schoolhouse, the crowd could not all get inside; and many were standing on the outside looking in the windows and door. One man was so under conviction that he asked to be helped through the window and made his way to the altar and was saved. (This was the father of Brother Ralph Sell who lives at Neosho, Missouri.)

Oh, how the truth was sweeping the country! Those who were being saved sacrificed everything for the Lord, going in wagons and buggies for miles around to meetings. Their love and zeal for the truth led them through many hazardous experiences, but their love for truth and each other was manifest to all the world, proving that they were of God.

God blessed in many miraculous ways. He sent rain for them when everything around was dry and burning up. Also, in answer to prayer. He stopped grasshoppers, boll weevils, storms and hail for His trusting children when other crops around were destroyed. Many sinners, professors, and truth-fighters, though they would not accept the truth, were made to acknowledge that God did bless these saints. By simple faith and trusting in God and His promises, many who were sick unto death were healed and made whole. Though the enemy raged, and many persecuted and said hard things against

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them; they stood true, loving one another, singing and making melody in their hearts, being free and happy in the Lord.

Some of my earliest memories were of riding over the prairies in the wagon or buggy to these meetings in schoolhouses, brush arbors, and tabernacles. Campmeetings were held in the summer in different localities. The one nearest us was in the country between Cheyenne and Strong City, where a chapel was built and regular services held later. The Campmeetings were held under a brush arbor at first, later a tabernacle was used. I well remember going to these meetings. The cooking was done under a brush arbor on wood cook stoves. Some that were close enough brought cows to milk, others brought chickens in coops to be killed as needed. Ice boxes and refrigeration were unknown. All the bread was baked on wood stoves, too. No bakeries were anywhere near. Gardens were planted especially for the meeting; but sometimes droughts came, crops burned up, bugs and grasshoppers came. Their sacrifices were great, but God supplied their needs, and the meetings went on. Comforts were few; but, oh, how God blessed these meetings! The Word was preached clearly and plainly, souls were saved, believers sanctified, bodies healed, and many came out of sectism and took their stand for the truth and the one church of God. Come heat, storm, or hail, they went to meeting; their hearts were in the work; and no sacrifice was too great. Some of the ministers at these meetings who were not mentioned before were Brothers Emry Shipman, A.D. Stansberry, Davidson, Mable (Ashenfelter) Hale, Lena Shofner Matheson, and others. I'm sure I can't remember them all. The singing was heavenly; a gospel message was in every song. Many came for miles to hear it. In almost every community around, some took their stand for the truth. Brother and Sister Britt and family lived a few miles away in another school district, as did many of these dear ones we have known and loved through the years.

Chapter 5

Early Childhood Experiences

In 1903, a new two-room house was built; and the dugout was used now for storage and in case of storms only. Later, in the next year or so, three more rooms were built on. It was a five-room house now.

About the year 1906, Mother's two younger sisters came to make their home with us. Grandmother had passed away a few years before this, leaving five children yet in the home. After many struggles and burdens and shifting about, Grandfather wrote Mother and asked if she wanted to take the two youngest, who were now nine and eleven years of age. I was four then. I can well remember getting ready for this trip to get them. I was so happy to know I would have company. I was the only child in our home at this time. I was so thrilled; I could hardly wait to start. I had never had the privilege of meeting any of my relatives, but I knew it would be wonderful. I don't know how many miles it was, but it took a few days in the wagon. It was new and exciting to me to camp out at night.

We went by Indian villages where they lived in tepees and the men wore long hair like women. One Indian man rode along by our wagon and said a few words to Papa. Then he looked at me and said

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something about the 'Papoose', meaning me. This made me afraid, and I crawled close to Mama. He saw this, threw me a long string of beads, grunted a little smile, and rode off. There were lots of Indians in the country, but they were peaceable.

We arrived at Comanche, where Grandfather lived. It was quite an experience for me. These young aunts and uncles would hardly let me walk, but carried me about. This was my first privilege of seeing one of my grandparents, and I remember how he took me on his knee and told me about the different birds and drew pictures that looked so real. Also he pointed out the stars at night. He loved to hear me sing, but all the songs I knew were the ones we sang at meeting; and he couldn't take that long, for he did not believe in a sinless life; so he would say, "you can run along and play now." Of course I didn't realize this, but Mama would hear it. Dear old Grandfather never did appreciate the truth. He thought Mama had about lost her mind, for he was a Campbellite, and hated to see her leave the teaching he had taught her.

We enjoyed our visit, and after a few days began to get ready to go home. I was so happy when the little trunks were packed for Katherine and Elizabeth who were going with us. I am sure it was hard on poor old Grandfather to see his two little girls leave his home, knowing my parents had accepted a new doctrine and would be sure to teach it to them. But he also knew he could not give them the proper care they needed. Since Mama was the oldest child, she was more able to be a mother to them. After many good-byes, we at last started on our way. It was wonderful for me to have them to play with, and they did many nice things to help me. We soon were like sisters, and they were very near and dear to me.

This trip was made in early summer; and soon after getting home, we began preparing for Campmeeting. The girls were eager

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to go, as this would be their first. After many days of sewing and getting ready, we left early one morning while it was cool. It was about twenty miles, but we were happy, and we sang as we jolted along in the old wagon, for we were going to campmeeting!

What a happy time it was when we arrived. Many dear saints had arrived already, and greetings and shouts of joy could be heard all around. Truly they were a happy people, filled with the praises of God and with love flowing from heart to heart. The prairie was lined with wagons and buggies. Those who had tents were setting them up; others would sleep in their wagons; some women and children stayed in the chapel; and at night after services, some families slept under the tabernacle. The singing was indeed heavenly; nothing sounded so sweet as singing in the spirit, and no musical instruments were needed. Young and old alike caught the inspiration and sang with all their heart.

Many souls were saved in these meetings. The preaching was clear and positive under much power and anointing of the Holy Spirit. The love and unity among them was convincing to the world that they were followers of Jesus.

In the fall, Mama's two brothers, Jim and Henry (teen-aged boys), came and stayed awhile, working around in the community for different farmers, also helping Papa harvest broom corn and cotton. Later they returned to where Grandpa lived, working out for board and room and going to school. They had a hard life out in a cold, unfriendly world and met many hardships. With lack of discipline and the wrong examples set before them, they had learned to smoke early in life. Not having the care and nourishing food that was needed many times, they were not as strong as most young men at their ages.

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I loved my young uncles very much; and when they were in our home, many happy hours were spent together. We all loved to sing; they loved the singing at the meetings too, and were deeply impressed by the meetings and the love of the saints to them. The next summer Uncle Henry came again and stayed while recovering from a broken leg he had gotten while playing baseball. He was full of fun and loved to lay on a cot in the shade of the house and bait mousetraps with watermelon and watch the turkeys and chickens as they jumped and squalled when the trap went off. Yet they came back again and again for the melon. How we laughed and enjoyed this. It was amusing to see how high the old roosters and gobblers could jump.

Elizabeth and I loved to play dolls as all girls do, and had many good times. When Brother Bowen's family came over, we children would all go down by the creek and play meeting. We could all sing the songs we were used to, then we would pray, and one would preach. Sometimes to have a larger congregation, we would take big old rag weeds two or three feet high and dress them up. By turning them upside down they would stand. Sometimes we lined them up by the water and had baptizing. We were just as happy and had just as good times as the children today, although we didn't have the toys of today.

We were about a mile and a half from the schoolhouse; and when Katherine and Elizabeth started to school, I wanted to go with them. I was not old enough; but the teacher said I could come, as she knew I would soon get tired. I didn't want to be away from the girls all day. I was all excited; we packed our lunch pails, and I had a slate and pencil to write on. It seemed a long walk, but I was happy to go. The school was all in one room. Some grades had only one or two pupils, but there were eight grades in all. It was very interesting to

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me. Some classes were reciting most of the time. The teacher let me go to the blackboard and write, too, at times, or draw while the others studied.

I liked the recess time when the teacher and all played games. Then came the noon hour and time to eat. I was hungry, too; and the long walk gave me an appetite. Some brought milk in jars and some in gourds. Water was carried from the spring in a bucket, and a long-handled gourd was a cup to drink from. Quite different from today, isn't it?

Each class stood up to spell. The one who missed a word had to go to the foot of the line. But if you never missed, you could stay at the head of your class day after day. On Friday afternoon, the whole school would line up on each side of the house and have a spelling match. The one who could not be spelled down was the winner. It was all interesting to me, and I liked school; but I was getting tired of getting up so early and going such a long way, so about a couple of weeks was enough for me. During the time I did go, there was one thing I well remember; the teacher pulled my first tooth with a string and a little pocket knife. I was so excited, but the girls said on the way home not to tell Papa and Mama, but wait and see if they would notice it. I agreed; but when it looked to me like they would never notice, I kept grinning and showing my teeth till they had to see. That is like a child, isn't it?

I was always glad for the girls to get home in the evening and would take Danie (the dog) and go to meet them. Then we would go for the cows, strolling over the pasture, picking wild flowers, making wreaths, and pinning leaves together for hats to wear. Happy childhood without a worry or care! We were a happy family.

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We had family worship morning and night where we were taught to have an unshaken faith in God and His precious word, where we learned to pray and worship the Lord. How we do appreciate this early teaching! It gave us a knowledge of right and wrong and a desire to live for God. The dear Lord healed us many times when we were sick, which gave us faith that God can do anything we have need of.

On Thanksgiving Day, November 26, 1908, a baby brother was born in our home. Oh, how happy we were! A baby in the house was something special, as I was six and a half years old now. There were three of us girls; and him being a boy, he didn't lack attention. He was a welcome gift from the Lord. I could hardly stay away from him. When he cried and waved his hands in the air, it was so funny to me, and I laughed and laughed. Oh, how I loved him. On Sunday when he was four days old, mother took very sick and in a short time became very critical. She became so low that we children, even the baby, had to be sent to the neighbors to stay. The Picken's family was our closest neighbors, and we thought much of them. Mrs. Pickens loved us girls so much as she had only boys. The youngest was only two weeks younger than I, and we had been playmates all our lives. Many times, as little boys can, he would climb or jump and do something daring that I was afraid to do, and then he would tease me that I was a girl and just a "fradie cat". I didn't like that very well and couldn't compete with him and his brothers. But now I had a brother, and some day he could grow up and do as he did.

But now a terrible tragedy hung over us. It looked as though our dear mother might be taken away from us. My baby brother cried very much because he was hungry and nothing seemed to agree with him. Mother was very near death. She had sixteen convulsions in twenty-four hours; the least noise would throw her into another one.

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The clock even had to be stopped from ticking. Our trust was in God. Oh, how we prayed! The ministers had been called, and several were there for days before the victory came. Mama felt she was going, and had all of us called to her bedside and told us good-by. I'll never forget this. My little heart was broken. But the ministers had the witness that God was going to raise her up. They held on by faith, and the dear Lord spared her life. Oh, how we thank God for His love and mercy to us in sparing her. She lived over thirty-five years after this. It pays to trust God.

It was some time before she gained her full strength back again. The girls were in school; so I had to help with the baby, which I enjoyed. I had a little red rocking chair which I rocked him in. He grew fast, and soon was about all I could handle. Oh, how we loved him! He was a joy to all. Katherine, being the oldest, had more care of him in general; and he looked to her as a mother.

About a year before this, the new house was finished; and we were enjoying all the room we had needed so long. Soon after the first of the year (1909), Papa made a trip to Elk City for supplies thirty-five miles away; so he had to stay over a couple of days. While he was there walking down the street, someone came up behind him and spoke his name. He turned around and there stood Uncle Jim. We had heard he was sick, but Papa was shocked to see the great change in him. He was so thin and weak that he could hardly stand. He coughed so hard, and it was easy to see he was a sick man. He soon made it known that he wanted to come to our house, and Papa said they would leave in the morning. As they started home the next morning, it was cold; and they had to face the north wind all the way. Uncle Jim was so thinly dressed that he was soon chilled to the bone. Papa had given him his overcoat; and he walked a lot to keep warm, but Uncle Jim was too weak for that. Papa saw it was not wise

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to bring him all the way that day so he left him at one of the saint's homes and returned for him the next day in the buggy with more blankets to cover him well. What a surprise we all had when we saw him. It made us feel badly. He made it known that he wanted to get to our home and get saved. It wasn't long till he was sweetly saved. Oh, how happy he was, and how he rejoiced in the Lord!

He had had a hard life and much exposure when he was sick, and now he needed special care. He loved music and had played the violin for the dances, as that was very popular in those days. He had come out in the cold winter air, taking cold after cold until he came down with pneumonia. From this he never fully recovered and soon developed quick consumption or T.B. He really never had a home since Grandmother died. He was now twenty-two years old and broken in health. Only God was able to make him well. He had been taking medicine and had spent all he had on doctors, but only grew worse. Now he was happily saved and ready to live or die. He often rejoiced and would say 'It doesn't make a bit of difference to me; I would just as soon go as to stay, for I know Jesus has a home prepared for me.' Many saints visited him; and much prayer was offered in his behalf; but Jesus had a better place for him; and in March, he fell asleep in Jesus. I well remember this event. It was the first time death had entered our home in my life.

It wasn't like it is today. There were no funeral homes. Papa and some of the neighbor men bought lumber and made a casket. Some of the women lined it inside with white material and did the best they could to make it nice and neat. Yet it was crude compared to those today.

All this time our dear Uncle Jim lay in silent death in the room. Everything was strange. People walked on tip-toes and spoke in whispers. I will never forget it.

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When preparations were complete, it was decided to make the trip to the saint's chapel at Strong City for the funeral as the saints had a cemetery there too. The weather being warm and the chapel twenty miles away, it was decided to make the trip at night. The spring hack was filled with a thick layer of straw, then a feather-bed placed on that and the casket set on that to make it ride as easily as possible. All that tender, loving care could do, was done to make his last journey as easy as possible. All this was hard on Mama, as she was still weak.

Two or three families of saints, with their wagons fixed with straw and bedding so the women and children could rest, went along also. The men drove the wagons. It was a strange and sad journey for me as the funeral train moved through the night over the prairie. The stars shone so brightly. It was dawn when the chapel was reached, and some rested on the benches till morning.

In the morning, others began arriving for the funeral. A large crowd gathered, and the funeral began. This was the first I had ever attended. It made a lasting impression on me. He was laid to rest in the little cemetery. It is a sacred spot to me yet, as other dear saints await the final resurrection there. How we missed him when we returned home. But we wept not as those who had no hope, for we never had a doubt of his being with Jesus in Paradise. My thoughts were more on heaven now, as I desired to go there, and wanted to see my little sister and Uncle Jim.

Chapter 6

Our Different Moves

Mama's health was still frail, and Papa began to feel a change or move would be good for her. Brother and Sister Halburg had moved to Oregon and were writing to us of this wonderful country. Brother Bowen was also talking of going. After much talking, praying, and pondering about what was best to do; it was decided both families would have an auction sale. Sell all the stock, tools, and household goods, and go to Oregon. The farm was not sold, but rented.

What an exciting time, especially for us children! I could not comprehend what moving really meant, as I was born and had lived on this spot and had never been farther than Elk City, Oklahoma, which was thirty-five miles away.

They said we would go by train. I had never been on one and could not imagine how it would be; but like all children, I was anxious to go. But when the cows, horses, calves, pigs, chickens and everything we had loved so much began to be sold and led or carried to wagons to be hauled away, it seemed different. I wanted to keep my little red rocking chair and cried when I had to part with it. Also our good, old, faithful shepherd dog, "Danie", who was older than I and was my constant playmate all my life, had to be left. This was

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hard to do. We left him with the people that rented the place, but he seemed sad and confused.

When all was ready, a neighbor took Brother Bowen's family and all of us with our trunks and baggage to Elk City, where we spent the night and took the train the next morning. We had a big lunch basket. I carried my big china doll, "Emily", that I could not part with. Everyone carried something. We were quite a troop to see. There were six of our family and seven of Brother Bowen's family. I am sure we would cause much laughter today as I can remember some of how we looked.

We children had never been on a train before, so it was very interesting for awhile; but six days and nights was a long time for us to be confined in such close quarters. Sometimes we would go with Papa from one coach to another, but never could see what was pulling us, and that was a puzzle to me. Nora Bowen and I were about the same age, and we sat and played together much of the time. Sometimes we walked up and down the aisles, talking to people who would question us as to where we were from, where we were going, and if we were all relation to each other, etc. We were just like one big family. Cleora and Osa Bowen were about the ages of Katherine and Elizabeth.

We enjoyed looking out the windows at the scenery. We were passing through big mountains which we had never seen anything like before. They told us we were in the Great Rocky Mountains. There was snow on some in the distance even though it was May. Then we crossed the desert of Arizona where there was nothing to see but sage brush and cacti for miles and miles. Then we crossed another range of mountains, and suddenly we were in a valley of orchards and orange groves that we thought we would see only in pictures, but here we were. We didn't stop here, but continued on

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north through more mountains and tunnel after tunnel. It was so dark they had to turn the lights on. Then we rolled across a level valley and into San Francisco. Here we had the first view of the great bay where our train was broken up and rolled onto a large ferry to cross it. We had heard of the ocean; and of course, it looked like an ocean to us.

While in San Francisco, we had to wait several hours in the Grand Central Depot. This was different from the train, as people were coming and going all the time. Like all children, Nora and I walked around together looking at everything we could see. We found a little box an inch or two square with two little white tablets inside. We had never seen anything like it, but supposed it was candy and was nice and clean so we each took one and began to chew. At once we found it so bitter and spit them out, but couldn't get rid of the awful taste. We then told our mothers who scolded us and told us to wash our mouths out good for that was medicine of some kind. I never forgot this experience as that was my first knowledge of medicine.

When on the train again, we rolled on north over a long barren plain, but could see mountains in the distance. As we got nearer we could see snow on one especially, which was Mt. Shasta. We were soon in high mountains and the tallest timber we had ever seen. At Weed, California, we had to change trains and walk some distance to another depot. We were quite a sight to behold I am sure, as we had been on the train for several days and nights. There were thirteen of us, and each one of us had something to carry. No wonder the people stared and laughed.

Weed is in a narrow canyon with trees and tall mountains over us. There was a river running by the tracks.

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Soon we were on the train again, and the remainder of the trip was not so long as we arrived at Ashland, Oregon. There, Brother Halburg met us; how glad we were to see them again. We went to where they lived in a timber camp. There they cut the large trees for the saw mill. This was surely interesting. We put up a tent and lived here about three weeks when Papa decided he did not want to do this kind of work; he would rather farm. We went on up to Brownsville. Brother and Sister Bowen and family had gone on ahead of us. We soon found a house to rent on a farm. Oh, how beautiful and green everything was as it was spring. Wild flowers were everywhere, and the lovely fir timber and wild strawberries were like a carpet in bloom.

It was just a few days till my seventh birthday (June 4th), and we picked enough strawberries for a short cake. This was something new and wonderful to us as we had never had much fresh fruit before. We had never been used to much besides sand plums, goose berries, currants, and peaches. As summer came with all the wonderful fruit, we felt we had surely reached the promised land. We had never tasted anything like the wonderful cherries before, also berries of all kinds, besides prunes, pears, and apples. How we enjoyed them all. Mama canned and dried fruit of all kinds for winter. How we loved this new country!

We went to the campmeeting at Woodburn. This was in the summer of 1909. It was such a lovely grounds with large fir trees. What a wonderful gathering there was of the dear saints! It was more than I had ever seen at one meeting. Here we met Brother Johnnie Green, who was the pastor at Woodburn. Also we met many other ministers, and I still remember that meeting very plainly.

While we were up that way, we found a farm to rent near Aumsville. By fall we were located there where there was a good

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congregation of saints. Brother U.G. Clark and Brother Everton were the ministers there. Soon after we settled there, Brother H.W. White and family arrived from Oklahoma. Oh, how happy we were to see them! It was like having some of the family from back home. They were soon settled near Salem and lived the rest of their lives in that vicinity.

Papa began to plow and get ready to plant fall grain. It also began to rain. After a few days, it seemed to clear up again so farming could continue; but to our surprise, it did not stop. The farmers around went right on working in the rain, plowing and planting. They didn't seem to mind at all. Papa grew so depressed and blue and felt he couldn't take the rainy, cloudy weather. He got down sick with colds and began to talk of going where the sun would shine again. He could see that here he would have to work out in the drizzling rain most of the time from October to May.

He had written for some literature from Texas. It came, showing wonderful crops and saying that the sun shined almost every day of the year. That sounded very good to him. But dear Mama and we girls felt so badly to think of moving again and to think of leaving all the good canned and dried fruit. We hated to leave the dear saints, too, for we didn't know of any, where he wanted to go in Texas. This was a hard trial on dear Mama. But she was a praying Mother, and God gave her grace to do His will under all circumstances. After many tears and prayers, her consecration was made; and she told us it was now in God's hands. We loved Oregon very much, but loved God better. It was not long until preparations were made for another sale.

A few days before Christmas found us sold out and ready to take the train for south Texas, which meant several days and nights of long, weary journeying again. When we stood by the railroad

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tracks in the early morning hours, a light snow was on the ground. Some of the dear saints went with us to help us on and waved a lantern to get the train to stop for us.

It was hard to leave everyone here, not knowing if we would ever meet any of them again. We had to part with the Bowen and White families that we had loved so long and were going to a place where we knew no one. But God kept his hand over us. Soon we were rolling along over the same tracks which we came to Oregon on. Now our family was going alone, and I missed Nora so much.

One thing that saddened my heart on this trip was that, "Emily", my doll, was broken. I was walking in the aisle with it in my arms when her china head struck the metal end of a seat and burst open. How I did cry, as I had had it for a long time. My uncle had given it to me and I loved him very much. We saved the body and later got a new head, but it never was as pretty to me.

From California, we went a different way through El Paso and on south in Texas. We arrived at Riviera, Texas, just at Christmas time, but it was warm and sunny. We had received literature with pictures of orange trees growing, but instead we found a little village of mostly all Mexican people. There were some new settlers. The land was being sold in small acreages, and could be irrigated to raise good crops. It was warm; and with irrigation, the land would raise almost anything. The only oranges we saw were a few grown down the middle of the street for advertisement, as they were selling lots to new-comers all the time. We bought lots also and began clearing the cactus and mesquite brush so we could build.

We also took the Gospel Trumpet paper; and, as the Lord had it planned, found a family of saints not far from us. They had little services, and a minister came once a month to preach. This was Brother O.B. Wilson, Sr. That was our first meeting with Brother

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and Sister Wilson, Sr. When he couldn't come. Sister Mattie Wilson (also a minister) came for the appointment. She always brought her baby, Ostis, who was just a year old. He is the Brother Ostis Wilson we know today. My little brother is just a few days older; and many times, Mama and I would hold the two babies while Sister Wilson preached.

There were a few saints not far away who also came for meeting. One whom I especially remember was Brother W.W. Titley who had just lost his wife not long before that time. His little boy, Victor, looked so pitiful without a mother. Brother Titley wrote number 379 in our songbook, "Some Blessed Day." I have often thought he must have written it in memory of his dear wife. He was so grieved that he left Texas and went to the Gospel Trumpet home not long after we went there.

Our new house was built, and Papa went to work on the railroad section crew, and we girls started to school. We did not stay here long, but moved up to Woodsboro near the Wilsons in the summer. How dear Mama hated to move again! Many times she begged Papa to move back to the homestead in Oklahoma, but he kept thinking he would find something better. We lived in the little town and ran a restaurant.

I remember that we were here on the 4th of July. This little town was built around a square block with a park in the square. All the stores faced the park. We were on one side of the square, and the Post Office was on the other side from us. People walked across the park anyway they wanted, and often Elizabeth and I were sent to the Post Office on an errand. On the 4th, there was quite a lot of noise, celebration, and drinking. In one store across the block, there was a fight. A man was stabbed and ran out into the street screaming and bleeding. The man who did it was arrested; and since there was no

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jail in this small place, he was chained by the feet to a post in the park. This was exciting to us; but we were afraid, as we could see him sitting there with his hat pulled down over his eyes. I don't remember how long he stayed there, but it was over a day or two, and the sun was so hot. Next day Mama sent Elizabeth and me to the Post Office, but we sure didn't go through the park. They laughed at us for being afraid of someone chained to a post. But again Papa began talking of moving, as this was not really his line of business and was only temporary.

Brother and Sister George E. Boles, who were Sister Mattie Wilson's parents, had been to the campmeeting at Gorman. They were with the Wilsons for some time, and we enjoyed being with them. Times were hard, as this had been a very dry year, and the farmers' crops were almost a failure. The restaurant business also was poor. In the fall of 1910, we went to the Assembly Meeting at Gorman. There we found a large congregation of precious people of God. Sister Mattie Wilson also came to this meeting.

Brother Bob McKinney was the pastor at Gorman. We found a hearty welcome so it was not hard to settle there. We lived in town for awhile; but as Papa had heard from a man wanting to buy the homestead, he made a trip up there and sold it.

When he returned on the train, we went to meet him. What do you think met us? Out of the baggage car jumped Danie our dog. He knew us and jumped, whined, and was as glad to see us as we were to see him. It seemed he could almost talk. Papa said that when he saw him, he didn't have the heart to leave him again.

Papa now bought a farm a few miles from town and soon bought teams and tools to farm again. Brother and Sister Forest and the Hendricks family were our neighbors. Also Brother Hand, a minister and his family, lived near. At the assembly meeting, many ministers

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came; Brothers George and W.T. Seaton, J.D. Ferrill, Brother Fowler, and others. As in all the meetings, the singing was heavenly, and the preaching was with the power of the Holy Spirit. It was about this time that I sought the Lord for pardon and found peace to my soul I had been taught to pray all my life, but this was the first time I really felt conviction to be saved. Oh, what a joy came with the knowledge that Jesus had come into my heart.

There were many children saved those days, and they had special meetings for us. A minister would preach to us in simple language so we could understand the truths in the Word of God, that we might be educated in the doctrines of the New Testament. I have always been thankful for this and appreciate the interest they took in us. It has meant much in my life. I remember they taught us not to use slang or by-words. One minister who said never to say, "I bet", said that he once asked someone who said it, how much would he bet? They said, "Oh, no! I wouldn't bet anything!" And he said, "You said you would; so what have you told?"

Chapter 7

School and Other Happenings

We girls started to school. We had to walk one and a half miles a day each way. It was a two-room school with four grades in each room. Katherine and Elizabeth were in the upper room, and I was in the lower grade room. Mr. Cox was their teacher, and Miss Emma (I don't recall the last name) was mine. There was a little girl in my room who had three brothers in the upper room. Some of them were almost grown, or so it seemed to me. She, being the only girl and much younger, was very badly spoiled and didn't do very well in school. She was often very sassy to the teacher. The day I remember so well was when she would not obey the teacher. It was near the end of the day; and when the bell rang, our teacher locked the door and told us all to keep our seats. She asked this girl to come to her desk, but she refused to do so. The teacher took a switch she kept handy and walked to her seat, pulled her to her feet, and gave her a lick or two. We were scared and several started crying. I had never seen anything like this. The upper grades had been let out and were running down the steps when she began to scream. About this time, the older pupils were looking in the windows. Her brothers saw she was getting a whipping; and up went the window, and these boys came in, grabbed the teacher, broke up the switch, pushed her to the blackboard, and held her there. One unlocked the door and told

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his sister to run, which she did; and they followed. Mr. Cox, the other teacher, tried to stop them, but could not. We were then dismissed and were glad to get out. This was the only time in all my school years to experience anything like this. This was sad, as we were always taught to be obedient at school as at home. To see the result of spoiled children in no discipline or respect for authority was pitiful. I have thought of her many times and wondered what kind of woman she has made. How thankful I am for the careful teaching I had in my youth! I am sorry for children who do not have early teaching of God and his requirements of us. No wonder the word says. "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old he will not depart from it." Proverbs 22:6.

As I have said before, my family loved to sing. Papa had taught us the notes and how to read them. So we girls began to take music lessons from a neighbor. She was a maiden lady named Lizzie Jay. One outstanding thing about her was that she was blind, but she could really play and was a good teacher. One incident I well remember was when Lizzie was at our house one afternoon. One of us would walk home with her, a quarter of a mile away. This day I was told to go with her. Now Papa had finished digging a cistern at the end of the porch, and a large pile of dirt was still there. We would take a short cut across the yard to the gate by jumping on this dirt with no trouble at all. Lizzie was quite active, and I forgot she couldn't see. So I took her by the hand and jumped. The poor thing fell screaming, and was so excited and frightened, not knowing what had happened. Fortunately, she was not hurt as the dirt was soft; but I was sorry and did all I could to beg her pardon. Then we all had a good laugh, including her. But don't think I wasn't laughed at and reminded of this many times after that.

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Spring came and the fields were plowed and planted with hopes of a good crop. It was a dry spring, but all hoped for rain. The crops came up, but did not grow well. Clouds would come and float around, but no rain came. Things began to suffer as the heat of summer came on. Corn which was knee-high began to turn yellow, then brown, and then to rattle like fodder. Everything was burning up. Pastures dried up with no feed for the cattle. They ate what they could, even the leaves on the trees. The poor quality of feed caused the animals to get sick, and many died. It was a serious outlook, as farmers everywhere were suffering. By June, it was seen there would be no crops this year; and the two years before had been poor. The drought was felt everywhere. We had a few cows, one team of horses, and a good span of mules. Not being there the year before, we only had what feed we bought; and it was high-priced and poor quality. Wells were going dry, and we had to haul water from a creek where it was so low it stood in holes, and the cattle drank from the same. Only the mercy of God kept the people from typhoid and other sicknesses. It was a hard time, and the future looked dark.

One morning Papa came in and said our best milk cow was sick and couldn't get up. This was sad news, as this was our living, almost. We had trusted the Lord all my life and prayed about any need we had. Now this was something new. The word says "What-so-ever ye desire"; and it was our desire that our cow be made well, as we needed her badly. In our morning worship, we prayed earnestly for this need. Later in the day, dear Sister Hendricks came over. Mama told her about our cow, and they walked out to the barn to see her. There she lay stretched out with fever and panting for breath, her nose dry and hot. From all appearances, she would not live long.

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They talked it over and felt they could agree together for God to have mercy for this need, as in Matt. 18:19, "that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." So they felt they had a promise for this need. They bowed down, laid their hands on our cow, and prayed to the dear Lord in heaven to have mercy on us and to spare our cow. They had faith he would do it; and, Thank God, he did. Our cow was soon up, and able to eat and drink, and was well. How we rejoiced and gave God thanks for His mercy to us! Truly we can sing with Sister Hendricks, who wrote the good old song in our songbooks, "There is not a Friend like Jesus in the trying scenes of life." It has been proved over and over in our life. She was a precious sister and a woman of prayer and had faith in God's word. I appreciate the memory of her.

At the next prayer meeting, Mama testified how the Lord had mercy on us and healed our cow. Some smiled, and some said they didn't think we should pray for cattle as the promise was not for them as they had no faith. So it raised some discussion. After meeting, Brother McKenny, the pastor, told Mama it might be best not to tell this any more in public. But we still gave God the glory for how he had been so mindful of us, and we knew He alone had made her well. It was just another miracle, and cattle all around were sick and dying.

It continued to be hot and dry. In answer to prayer, Papa had gotten a job on the section crew. I don't know how we could have made it without this, as we didn't have anything to go on from the year before, and there would be nothing this year. But we knew the God in heaven had not forsaken us.

One afternoon, we saw a man in a buggy coming down the road, the dust flying. He seemed to be in a hurry; and as he came nearer,

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we saw it was Brother McKenny. He tied the horse up and came in and soon made known his mission. First he apologized to Mama for reproving her testimony concerning our cow being healed, and said, "I have come to ask you to pray for my cow. I have had the veterinary to come, but he can do nothing for her, and I want you to pray for her." Times were so hard, and Brother McKinney had a large family, and this cow was so necessary for their living. This touched Mother's heart, and we all bowed on the porch and cried to God to remember this Brother in his distress and grant mercy by healing his cow. He left much encouraged; and on Sunday, when we went to meeting. Brother McKinney testified to the healing of his cow also. So the Lord was taking note of the suffering of His children. The weather was getting hotter each day; it was truly a serious drought.

Chapter 8

Covered Wagon Trip

Papa had been saying for some weeks that it looked as if we would have to get out of there before we lost everything. Now he was talking of a plan to move west. We had gone through California going to Oregon and also coming to Texas. Since we had been to Oregon, Mama's sister, Aunt Alpha, had moved there; and we received letters from them telling of the good crops, luscious fruits, and wonderful climate. It all sounded wonderful indeed, but here we were hundreds of miles away with very little money. It would be hard to sell anything; no one wanted more stock as they could hardly feed what they had, and many were starving. We had no crops to sell for there were none. How could we think of moving? But Papa had been working and planning in his mind and had fully decided to move. He and Mama talked it all over before we girls knew about it. He told her, 'We have a good span of mules and the other team of horses. I will fix two wagons with sideboards and build overjets, or wider wagon beds so we can have a bed in each and storage space underneath. A large cupboard will be on the back of one wagon with shelves for dishes; the door will let down for a table; and on the back of the other, there will be a platform with a large barrel on it for water.' Then they told us about it, and it was a matter of prayer for some time. Papa felt this was the thing to do, so he began in earnest

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to get things ready. The longer we waited, the more critical the situation became. Mama was still praying. The saints were praying, too; as they knew it was serious to start out on such a long trip in the heat with the teams not strong or well-fed, and we not knowing what was before us. The drought was so serious that we could all perish unless God was in it. At last it was submitted into God's hands, and all felt better about it.

Preparations began in earnest. When the bedsprings were placed and the mattresses were on, the packing began. Things were sorted over, and just the most necessary things were taken. It was hard to discard many things we cherished. Decisions had to be made which caused us girls many tears. Trunks of dishes, bedding, books, and clothing were packed under the beds, then provisions of food; for Papa knew there would be long distances where we could not get anything to eat. Also, we had to take some feed for the teams. At least one sack of feed and a bale of hay were on the side of each wagon.

A brother had decided to buy the farm and the livestock that were left at a very low price. When all was ready, the day was set to leave. It was a sad day, for we hated to leave the dear saints. Many tears were shed, especially by dear Mama. It meant something to start out for hundreds of miles in wagons and with very little money, not knowing what was before us. Of course as a child, it was hard for me to think of all that; and like most children, I was eager to go.

Papa had counted the money carefully to be able to make it. Our largest expense would be feed for the teams and ourselves. One concern was that one of the horses, Dilcie, had the heaves (something like Asthma in people). It was caused from the poor quality of hay she was eating. This would make traveling hard for it, and only God knew if it would be able to make it. The dear saints

promised to pray for us, and we had faith in God who would never fail us.

The weather was so hot and dry; but just after the 4th of July (I don't know the day of the week), we were ready to start. Of course I was eager and excited for the trip ahead. At last Papa decided we would have to leave our good old dog, Danie, again. This was hard to take as he was so troubled and seemed to know we were leaving. He would follow us back and forth from the wagon to the house and whine. We loved him so much. I was now nine years old, and he was two years older than I, so Papa felt he would not live to make the trip because he would have to walk most of the way. We were loaded so heavily anyway. I'm sure it was the best, but we girls and little brother had to shed tears. As we were ready to leave, they had to tie him up; and he howled so pitifully as we drove away. We later heard he grieved himself to death before too long, but I have never forgotten our faithful Danie.

As we rolled out of the yard early that sultry morning, it was a strange feeling to be leaving our home for a far-away land. We did not know how long it would take us, or what we would encounter along the way. My childish mind could not think of hardships or anything that would not be pleasant. We were poor; but we had been taught to have faith in God, so as a child I had no worry and was happy. We were soon rolling along over the country road with the dust flying. Soon the sun was beating down upon us, and we had nothing for shade but the wagon sheet over our heads. But like all children we played and had the old guitar and sang and played as we rolled along. At noon we stopped by a big cottonwood tree and ate our lunch. It was a good rest for the teams. There were no paved roads as we know them today, but dry dusty country roads. By noon, we found that the dust had settled on everything. This was not so

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pleasant, but we hoped we would find better roads that were not so sandy.

Soon we were rolling along again. Papa and Mama drove the mules and were in the lead. We girls drove the other team and followed. The mules walked faster, and sometimes we would get quite a ways behind. Then Papa would stop his wagon and let us catch up. The first day was not so bad, and we enjoyed camping out at night and sleeping under the stars. We had a dutch oven to bake all our bread in, as there were no bakeries to buy from. When supper was over and things were put away for the night, we sang some, read a lesson out of the Bible, had prayer, and went to bed. The wind was blowing some; but it was hot all night; and we were crowded in the wagons, as we three girls had to sleep in one bed. But like children, we slept. Papa called us when it was hardly light to get up as we must get on the road while it was not so hot. He had a fire ready to cook breakfast. Soon it was ready, and we had worship and were ready to go.

We all felt fresh. There were a few clouds floating around; and it was a little cooler, which we were thankful for. But they soon disappeared, and it was hot again, but we played and read books and enjoyed ourselves. I was nine years old in June; Katherine was 16 in March; Elizabeth was 14 in March; little brother Franklin was over two and would be three in November. He was beginning to carry a tune, and we enjoyed his baby talk and us teaching him little songs and verses. We were a happy family. Some times we changed around, and Mama would ride with us girls. We read books and especially the Bible story books: "Beautiful Stories From the Good Old Book", and "Favorite Stories From The New Testament", written by Isabel C. Byrum. These books were very much loved and in most of the saint's homes.

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We made about thirty miles a day if all went well. Some times the ruts in the road were deep and caused the wagon to pull so hard that we did not make that many miles because the horse had to rest more often. We camped for the night early so we could feed the teams and get our supper before dark. We usually had one wagon on each side of the campfire so we girls would not be afraid. Sometimes we could hear the coyotes so close that we wished we were in a house again. But Papa assured us that they would not hurt us; and we had asked the Lord to protect us, so we went to sleep. The stars shone so brightly, and Papa would often point out the north star and tell us what direction we had been traveling. We soon fell asleep under the starry heavens and knew nothing more till Papa would call, "Time to get up."

This was the routine from day to day. After a few days, it began to get tiresome with the weather so hot. Oh, how I longed for a good cool drink! But the barrel of water was hot and dashed and jolted over the rough road until it was almost foamy. It wet our lips and throats, but never satisfied our thirst. The children of today cannot imagine how it truly was. Today they travel along at great speeds over smooth highways, stop and get a cool drink of pop and ice-cream. We jolted over rough or sandy roads. Sometimes the dust was so bad. There was grit or sand on everything. It would get on our beds, in the cupboards, and on the dishes. At times the water was so scarce that we could not wash the dishes. We had to just wipe them out until we could get more water. This same thing went on and on from day to day. The poor horses were so tired, weak, and hot that they would be in a lather of sweat. Poor old Dilcie with the heaves was so pitiful. The heat and dust were hard on her. One day we had to stop early as she could hardly go. We felt so sorry for her but we didn't know what we would do if she gave out completely. Mama walked around to where she was trying to eat and stroked and

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petted her. Her heart was so touched that she laid her hand on her; and looking up to God in heaven, she wept and asked God to have mercy on this poor animal and to relieve her of this condition. Believe it or not, God heard prayer; and from that day on, she was better and soon over it completely. Oh, how can people doubt God and his power to help us in all kinds of needs? He had mercy on the dumb animal as well as on us. Bless his dear name for ever and ever!

God answered prayer many, many times on this trip in such marvelous ways. Another time, Popcorn, the other horse, took very sick. Water was so scarce; and he, being so hot, took the cramps or colic. Papa had to stop and take the harness off him. He rolled and groaned and finally stretched out stiff. His eyes rolled back as if he was dying. It was serious; as we knew if he died, we would have to leave one of the wagons. We were here most of the day. Again we bowed in prayer, and God heard and came to our rescue. Papa got up in the night to see about him; and by morning, he was much better, and we were able to travel again.

Papa started singing, "It is truly wonderful what the Lord has done . . . Glory to His Name!" It was truly wonderful, and we did praise Him through the day. Sometimes we would see a windmill in the distance, and it looked so good. There was usually a watering trough with cattle lying around it in the shade of one or two trees. We always stopped and watered the teams, unless they were close together, which wasn't very often. Sometimes we went several days without seeing one. Some of them were dried up, too. And at times, there was no wind to turn them. At Abilene, the water tasted so badly that it made some of us sick. They said it was alkali, and we could hardly drink it, but it was water, and we had no choice. When we got to Sweetwater, Texas, it was some better. I guess that is why they call it by that name. It is much different from the country

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around; for as we went on West, it got bad again. It was such arid, barren country. In normal times, this was good cattle country; but drought was here too; and there were no pastures to speak of. There were very few wells, and the ponds were dry holes. At each town we came to, Papa checked the supplies we had and restocked, as he knew we would soon be far from much civilization. We seldom met anyone traveling in those days, but once in awhile we did meet some headed the way we were from. As was the custom, each would stop, exchange greetings, and tell any news they had. All had a sad story to tell, as the drought was in all directions. Some felt we were foolish to go west, as where they had been it was bad. Papa felt the same for them, and he knew he didn't want to go back. We girls listened and had a big question in our minds if we would make it or perish on the desert. We often said among ourselves that we wished we were home. But Mama would tell us that God's big eyes were looking down, and that He knew just where we were and would care for us.

Along in this part of the country, we came to the railroad. The main road across the country followed it. It was very different from the highway of today, but was along the same route. It was then a very obscure wagon road and was not traveled much. It was used mostly for a cow trail. It was some company to see the trains every day. We amused ourselves by counting the long freight trains. The engineer and brakeman always waved at us. For many days, that was the only other humans we saw. Sometimes we could tell it was the same ones again. I am sure they wondered where we were going and if we would make it. It was so desolate that we could hardly find enough sticks and brush for wood to cook our meals. As soon as we would camp, it was our job to gather something to cook with. Sometimes we would find cast off ties along the track. That would make a wonderful fire. But most times we picked up cow chips and a few dead twigs. Often we twisted dead grass to get the fire started.

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We had no maps to follow, but people had told Papa the railroad would lead us to El Paso, so we never got very far from it.

The need of water was critical. The thing I remember most was longing for a good, cool drink of water. We would go to the water barrel, and it was so warm, almost hot, and jostled or shaken until it was foamy. How would you children like to have that as your only chance of a drink for days at a time? Yet the Lord was good to us. Much of the time, we followed the railroad and would see a water tank a long way ahead. This was always appreciated. How good it was to get under the tank in the shade for awhile. I don't remember coming to one that didn't leak or trickle some water, and this felt so good on us. Here we could drink, wash our faces, hands and feet, water the horses, and feel quite refreshed. Sometimes we camped over night and washed our clothes. It was the same when we saw a windmill. We would not pass a water supply without refilling our barrel, if needed. Sometimes we camped a day or so to let the teams rest, and how we did enjoy the rest also!

We also saw lots of lizards of different kinds which ran fast and would frighten us. They always ran for shade in the grass or weeds as it was so hot.

Sometimes we got cactus thorns in our feet and hands while gathering wood. Oh, how it would hurt; and many times, we would cry and wish we were back home. Mama always had something encouraging to say which would help us forget our troubles.

One evening just before sundown, the front team stopped suddenly and acted frightened and strange. Just then Papa saw something in the road and realized it was a large rattlesnake which was coiled and ready to strike. It refused to move; but raised its head and began to shake its rattles, which made quite a noise. Papa took the shotgun, stood upon the dashboard of the wagon, shot over the

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mules' heads, and killed it. He blew its head about off, but it continued to wiggle and rattle for some time before it died. I believe it had eleven rattles on it. Papa cut them off, and we had them for several years. It was the largest one we had seen on the trip and made us more careful than ever of the danger of snakes, as their color blended so well with the ground. We felt so helpless as we had no place to go, but had to stay in the wagon; and we were getting so tired of that. We had to make camp and look for firewood, but we were careful and watchful that we didn't step on one. The dear Lord protected us, and we are thankful.

One day clouds began to float around; this was much more pleasant traveling as it was cooler. It continued this way for a day or two, and we could see it was raining in the distance. When it began to come nearer, the lightning flashed; and we could hear the thunder rolling. It continued several hours, coming nearer and nearer. The wind began to rise. Papa stopped the wagons, as he saw it was very close now. He tied the wagon sheets down tightly. Everything seemed terrible to think of because of no house to get into. We girls got up in bed and covered our heads, but we could hear the big drops of rain coming down. The wind rocked the wagons. Papa took the teams loose from the wagons and turned them loose. Oh, what a storm it was! It began to hail, breaking holes in the canvas, which let the rain in. Papa told us to get under the wagons quickly, as the hail was terrible. We were all crying and praying; but, thank the Lord, it didn't last long and passed on over the prairie. But, oh, everything was wet! The wagon sheets were torn, and our beds were wet. It was much cooler, and we felt chilled.

We camped and got a fire as soon as we could to dry things out for the night. It was now in the afternoon. When the fire was started, we took a quilt by the four corners and held it over the fire to dry it

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out. The wood was wet, too, so this was a slow process; but it was all we could do. It was still cloudy, but the rain was over. By night we had things dried out enough to sleep on. Of course, there was some dampness yet in them. By morning, some of us had taken cold; and I had a toothache. Oh, how it hurt! As we started out that morning, I could hardly stand the jolting of the wagon. It made it hurt worse. Mama had also taken cold and had neuralgia pains in her head, so we walked. Clouds were rolling in the distance, and it looked very much like rain again. How we dreaded it now. As the heavens grew darker, and the winds began to blow; we cried to God for mercy. He separated the clouds, and they began to roll each way, and the sun shone through. What a mighty God we serve! It continued to be cool, which helped a lot; but we had taken cold and felt so badly that we were glad when the time came to camp for the night. The Lord had healed my toothache; and I slept well; but by morning, poor Mama was very sick. She didn't rest well that night. The next morning we started early as the cooler weather made it much better on the teams. Dear Mama kept suffering all day, so we camped early and gathered wood for a good fire. She was so sick that she could not help with the supper, but kept walking back and forth in such pain. We were far from a town and had nothing for shelter but the sky above, and we needed the Lord to help us out again. We had had prayer more than once, but she continued to suffer. We girls started supper. Mama walked away some distance and bowed down on the desert, weeping and calling on God for mercy. We could hear her pleading with God for help. Thank God, he heard and answered. He took all the pain away, and she came back rejoicing. Another blessing from God! She lived over thirty years after that and never had neuralgia again. It pays to trust God.

We stayed in this camp another day to let the teams rest, and we finished drying some things that were still damp. We enjoyed it, too,

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not having to travel; and there were some small trees or bushes that made some shade; and we enjoyed playing around them. I don't remember how long we had been on the road then, but Papa said it would be weeks yet. It was getting hot again. It was now August; and you know how hot and dry it is in August most everywhere, and especially on the desert. Those were days I have never forgotten. We were so weary of traveling. Yet there were times we enjoyed life like children. We sang, played the guitar, had guessing games, counted the cars on the trains that passed, and read books, especially the Bible, and Bible story books. We had a few school books also, and I learned to read on this trip more than all the school I had gone to. Little brother was beginning to talk more now and to pick up the tunes of the songs we sang; and of course, we loved to hear him. Sometimes he rode in the front wagon with Papa and Mama, but most of the time he rode in the wagon with us girls where he could play. We could sing and play as loud as we wanted to, as there was no one to disturb. Once in awhile we met other travelers, but they were few. Of course, there were no automobiles then; and we had never seen one yet. At different times, we could see the clouds rolling; and it raining in the distance with flashes of lightning; but the Lord kept it from raining on us. How we did appreciate that, for it made it cooler. One day about mid-afternoon, we saw a wagon in the distance coming our way. As it came up to us (as was the custom), we all stopped and began to visit. It was a man and woman alone. They began telling us how it had been raining ahead of us. We were nearing the Pecos River Bottom and would have to travel several miles up this bottom to get to a bridge where we could cross, and they had heard there was a twenty foot rise coming down the river from all the rain they had, and they had rushed to get on this side before it came. They advised Papa not to go on, as it would be dangerous; and we might be caught in a serious flood, as there was

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no other way to cross the river. As we listened to their talk, we were sure Papa would not think of going on as it sounded very dangerous.

Soon the strangers passed on, and Mama asked Papa what we would do. After a few moments silence, he said we would go on, as our feed was getting low for the teams; and the nearest village was on the other side of the river. The village must have been 10 or 15 miles away. After some discussion, he felt it was needful; and by driving late, he thought we could make it. With the rain being so far away, he felt it would take longer for the water to get to us; and if it came and we waited, it might hold us back several days before we could cross; and our provisions would not last. So we rolled on west; the clouds in the distance looked dark, and lightning flashed every few minutes. We girls were afraid. Mama came and rode in our wagon. She pointed out to us that the Lord who had helped us at other times would help us again if we looked faithfully to Him. So we did pray and call on God to make a way and to protect us once more. I am glad to say he did, and we made it safely across the river, and no flood came that we knew of.

The weather cleared up, and it began to get hot again. It was so dry on the desert; a rain didn't last long, and it was soon hard to tell there had been any. The wagons rattled more and more. The spokes were so dry and loose, they were getting dangerous. The rims were slipping so badly, that if a wheel broke, we would be in trouble; yet we had to push on, for we couldn't stay in that desolate place. One afternoon we saw a windmill, so we stopped for the night. Papa took sacks and dipped them in water and laid them on top of the wheels so the water would soak in as it dropped down over the spokes. As it dried, he did it over and over; and by morning, the wheels had tightened up a lot. We began to pull out of the more sandy country and onto a high plateau. A little more grass was there, but you could

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also tell that the team was pulling more. The animals were getting so worn and thin that it made it harder for them, as the load seemed heavier. We could not travel as many miles a day now. It seemed so level that it was hard to believe we were gradually going up grade. Day after day, we made but little progress. The teams were so tired that we now stopped at noon and camped to let them rest awhile and drove later in the evening. Day after day the upgrade was so hard on the teams.

Finally we came in sight of a small town—Sierra Blanca, Texas. The teams were so tired, and we had stopped for noon as usual. Soon we were all busy getting our dinner while the teams rested; but all at once, Elizabeth fell to the ground; and it looked like she was dying, or near so. Oh, what a shock! We were so scared and gathered around, crying and praying God to undertake for her. She had shown no sign of being sick before; and what the cause was, we did not know. She was in this condition for some time, just a slight pulse beating. When she began to revive, she was so weak she could not talk or hardly move. We laid her on a quilt in the shade of the wagon, thanking God she had regained consciousness. Later, after the meal was over, Papa walked into the little town and found out we were in high altitude; so he decided that that was the reason for her illness. They told him we were climbing the slope of the Rockies. This route was to cross just the southern tip of this mountain range. But it would be days yet before we would be in lower altitude, and we would have to take it easy for the teams as well as ourselves. Progress was very slow, but God helped us through, and we had no more real trouble on that line. It wasn't long till we came down into the Rio Grande Valley where green fields could be seen. But the sand was much deeper than we had been in for some time. Remember; there were no graded roads of any kind, just a country road everywhere.

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As we came to El Paso, we were able to get some vegetables and better feed for the teams, which helped much. Soon we were climbing again toward Las Cruces, then Deming, Lordsburg. It seemed we were weeks on this high plateau, but I really don't know how long it took us to get to Benson. From there it seemed to go down some. One thing we noticed; we had much better brush, greasewood, mesquite, and sage brush to burn; and a good fire made of desert wood gives food a good flavor. We pushed on, as money was getting low and there was a long way to go yet. Oh, we were so weary; it was so hot; and we were getting so sunburned; our faces and hands were so chapped and dry.

The hot desert wind blew sand in everything. Grit was in our food, the beds, in everything. In places it was so deep in the road that the wagon wheels went down, and the teams couldn't pull out. We would have to get out and walk and dig about the wheels so they could pull out. Many times we got stuck and had to shovel out. It was very desolate country indeed with no water; and at one time, we ran out completely. Oh, it was serious! We were all so thirsty, and the poor teams were almost staggering with weakness. It was gradually coming down to lower country; and they were not pulling so hard, which helped; but we had to stop often and let them rest. We walked a lot, too, to make it lighter on them. We prayed that God would help us to find water.

At last, late in the afternoon, we saw a little smoke on ahead. It was a section crew camp on the railroad. Papa said maybe we could get water there. Sure enough, they had a few cars on a siding to live in and a water tank. But at first, they didn't want to let us have any as it had to be hauled so far; but after seeing our condition of both teams and our family of six, they let us have some, charging ten cents a head for the teams and I don't remember what for us. They

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also let us have some to put in the barrel, but we knew it was in answer to prayer. We never were quite that thirsty again on the remainder of the trip, but had to use water very sparingly most of the time.

At last we came to Tucson, Arizona. It was a small town then, and most all of the people seemed to be Mexicans. We camped outside of town and some came by on horses, and others walked by, looking us over and talking to each other in their own language. Papa spoke to them; but they didn't seem to understand English; and of course, we couldn't speak their language either. We felt fearful in a strange place and with strange people, too, just camping in wagons. So we prayed as usual, asking God's protection as we lay down to sleep. We truly thank Him for His tender care over us.

The sun comes up really early on the desert and is hot in a short while. So we had to get going early. This was either late in August or the first part of September, and it was so hot. But early morning on the desert has a charm all its own. Some of the cactus has the most beautiful blooms you can imagine, and the mountains in the distance look blue or purple, which give such color to the desert. I still love the sunrise and sunset on the desert.

Sometimes we could make such little progress in the heat of day. We would rest if we came to mesquite big enough to make shade and would drive at night if the moon was up. If you have never seen a moonlit night on the desert, you have missed something. I love it. It is almost as light as day, so lovely; and God seems so near.

Some days later, we saw large buildings in the distance. As we came nearer, we could see there were high walls all around and a tower every so far apart on the wall. Papa told us this was a penitentiary (large jail) where they kept bad people. We saw guards on this wall walking with guns. They were watching the men on the

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inside. I was glad to get out of the sight of this as I felt afraid. But Papa told us they could not get out to hurt us. This was at Florence, Arizona.

On and on across the desert, we could hardly endure much more it seemed. The teams were getting so poor, and we were about sick from the heat. But Papa found out at a village that it was only a few more days' travel to Phoenix. That sounded good to all of us. Papa said if we could make it there, we would about be out of money and have to stop and try to get work. This helped us to take courage and to endure a few more days. Finally one day, we could see a town in the far distance; it must be Phoenix. Our supplies were indeed about gone; we were really in need.

We camped in sight of town, and here again we began to see so many Mexican people. What would we do if none could understand English? Next day, we came to the Salt River Valley. Here were green fields and lovely fields of alfalfa, as they irrigate from big canals of water. Oh, how thankful we were that God had blessed us to make it here.

We camped at the edge of town. Papa started out next morning to look for work. After hours of looking, he only came back tired and weary; and he had found nothing. He said, "I don't know what to do; we can't go on any farther; our money is gone; we must have something; yet everywhere I went, they had no need of helpers."

This put a serious feeling over us all; even though my childish mind couldn't take it all in, for I did not carry the heavy burdens my dear parents had on their shoulders. Yet I realized it was serious. That night we cooked and ate about our last provisions, then gathered around the campfire, read some of the word of God, and bowed and prayed, pouring out our hearts to our heavenly Father, telling Him about our needs. We had trusted Him, and He had never

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failed us so far, and we were going to look to Him to help us now. Prayer being over, we lay down to sleep; and I know the eye that never sleeps or slumbers looked down on that camp; and I'm sure began to plan something for us.

Next morning Papa said, "I saw a bridge gang working down the road. I'm going down there to see if I can get a job of some kind. If there is nothing there, I don't know what to do or where to go." (Phoenix was not nearly the city it is today.) As soon as he walked away, Mama said, "Come on, girls; let's pray and ask God to help and give Papa a job." We got up in the wagon, and there were praying and calling on God when we heard someone whistling happily, coming closer and closer. It was Papa coming after his tools. They had given him work as a carpenter with this bridge crew. Oh, how happy we all were, and how we sang and gave praise to God for answering prayer! "We have proven Him true, what he says he will do, he never has failed us yet." It wasn't long until we were able to rent a house and move into it. How wonderful it was! It seemed so long since we had had a floor to walk on. I shall never forget it.

Chapter 9

From Phoenix to California

One thing happened at this time that I well remember. A real estate man took us to see this house for rent. While the adults were looking around talking, little brother and I were out in the yard looking, and found a tree full of little plums, (so we thought). We were so hungry for fruit; and a lot had fallen on the ground; so we picked up one each and bit into them; when, oh, what a bitter taste! It was awful, and we began to spit and try to get the taste out of our mouth. We ran to Mama, who was afraid we had found something poisonous; and she began to ask where we had found them. The real estate man had a good laugh and told us they were olives. He said they had to be cured before they were fit to eat; but after being cured they were very good. That satisfied us, but I decided; no olives for me, cured or not. Of course, later on, I learned to like them cured, but I never forgot my first experience.

This house was on Polk St., just where it runs into Grand Ave., near Five Points. Houses were scattered then. It was like country out Grand Ave. to the Fairgrounds at Six Points. Phoenix was nothing like it is today, but it was a very large city to me. Streetcars ran out Grand Ave. to the Fairgrounds. All this was of interest to us. Papa rented pasture for the teams. He soon got a buggy, and we would

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drive Popcorn where we needed to go. But one time a street car came too near him, and he ran away with Mama and another lady and tore up the buggy pretty badly, and they narrowly escaped a serious accident. So Papa decided to sell him; he was getting old anyway. I started to school in a short time, as it was now September; and I had missed some already. This was my first experience in a city school, and I was very timid before so many pupils. But I soon began to enjoy it. It was only about three blocks away, so I came home for lunch. My little brother was now almost three years old and cried because he could not go with me. He soon learned to watch for me and would run to meet me when I came home.

We were readers of the Gospel Trumpet, so soon found there were a few saints in Phoenix. We were happy to be in services again. They had no minister, but they did have Sunday School and prayer meetings. Here we met Sister Rider, who had lived there for many years, also Brother and Sister Oliver and family, also Brother and Sister Robert Keran and family, and his sister Ruth. (Who later married Anderson Brown, son of Willis M. Brown.) Also, there is where we first met Sister Gertie Radcliff and daughter, Jennie; and some others.

We heard from Aunt Alpha, who lived in Whittier, California, where we had started to. She wasn't very well and wanted Elizabeth to come on and stay with her and help with the children. So we put Elizabeth on the train, and she left us. Oh, how we missed her! She and I were such pals. The Hendricks family we left in Gorman, Texas, were writing and wanting to move here now and soon did come. How happy we were to see them again!

It was getting cooler now, as it was the fall of the year; and the oranges were getting ripe. How wonderful to eat an orange off the tree; something we had never experienced before. Papa now had a

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good job at the packing house, and he could bring us plenty of good oranges. This was wonderful to us, and we enjoyed them so much. We had never before had all we wanted anytime we wanted them. How we enjoyed it here! So we spent the winter of 1911 and the first three months of 1912 in Phoenix.

As Spring came, we began to talk of going on to California where we had started. I hated to leave school, but Papa knew there was much desert ahead of us, and he wanted to make it before the heat of summer. So in April we started on West. It was different in some ways. We had sold old Popcorn and one wagon and had a two-seated buggy, called a "hack", with the back seat removed and a bed for Katherine and me, and covered with a canvas sheet like the wagon. This was a much lighter rig, but plenty for one horse. Katherine and I were to drive this and follow the team of mules that Papa and Mama drove.

One bright morning, we drove west out of Phoenix. Just a few miles, and we were on the dry, hot desert again. It was spring and hot. Not a blade of green grass was there—just dry sand everywhere. It seemed impossible that in such a few hours there could be such a difference from the green fields and groves around Phoenix. By noon it was hot, and we well remembered the long trip of a few short months before and really dreaded it now. But Papa told us it would not be nearly so long as before. We tried to be cheerful, as we would get to see Elizabeth again and our Aunt and cousins. When we had traveled a week, and it was so desolate, and nothing but hot sand was everywhere; I cried and wished we were back in Phoenix. But Mama told me I should not be like the children of Israel, who murmured and complained; and God was displeased with them. This was God's country; and if we wanted his blessing, we must not complain about what He had created. I felt better about it then and

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tried to be happy. It was so sandy the wagon would get stuck. We had to dig and shovel to get it out again. Yet there was desert in every direction. We could see some mountains in the far distance, blue and bare with no timber.

One evening we camped as usual near the railroad and made a fire. We cooked the evening meal and were just ready to eat when a man walked up out of the bushes. He spoke and enquired where we were from, where we were going, etc. Papa told him, as was the custom, and asked him to eat, which he did. He kept watching the mules grazing near by. Papa always hobbled them at night so they couldn't wander too far away. He asked many other questions, such as their weight, how old they were, etc. Finally, as it grew dark, he said he must go, as he had a camp on down the railroad, and his pal would be waiting for him. He had seen our campfire and thought he would come and chat awhile. He was soon lost in the darkness. In a few minutes. Papa told us that he didn't like the looks and actions of that man, and that we were to put up the camp things and to put sand on the fire while he got the teams up and hooked up; and we would drive on awhile. "I don't feel so safe here, and I heard there was a village a few miles ahead. The teams will be rested some, and we can make it that far." All this was strange to us, and I was frightened. We had not met anything just like that before.

Soon we had everything ready; and while Papa took care of the teams, we bowed in prayer and once again asked God for protection, for rest for the poor animals, and to not let the wagons squeak and rattle as they did most of the time. They usually made a noise on the quiet night air. And I tell you of a truth, that when we started, they rolled along like on rubber tires. Another answer to prayer! The moon was just coming up; and of course, we kept watch to see if anyone was following. Katherine and I tried to keep the buggy up

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close to the wagon so we would not be far behind. At times we could imagine seeing shadows moving in the brush. But the Lord kept us safely. I believe Papa said we drove about four miles, when we came to another section camp on the railroad. A number of men were there; so we didn't feel afraid, and camped there for the night. The next day or so, some men in a little town said to Papa, 'You have a nice span of mules there; it's a wonder the horse thieves roaming the country haven't got them, as they have been all around lately.' So we felt it was the mercy of God that had cared for us again.

At last we came to the Colorado River at Blythe, and would soon be in California. But, oh, there was this big muddy river to cross; and there was no bridge, just a ferry anchored to a cable. It looked so scary, but there was no other way; and we had to cross it. The spring's rains made the river high, almost out of its banks. We made it safely by God's help.

So this was California? Some way, in my childish mind, I had thought that when we got to California we would see oranges, flowers, and trees. But here it was desert, just like we had crossed for days and days. At last, we saw a body of water right in the desert that looked like a lake. The sign said "Salton Sea". There was not a living sprig of even sage brush near it. But we could see trees not too far ahead, and that was a sign of water. There we found a spring of cool water, deep like a well, with grass and shade all around. Such a contrast was hard to understand. Just some of God's wonders.

Palm Springs (now such a large resort) was a small village. We had come to the foot of the mountains now, and they were so tall. We had to go around the foot of them through the Coachella Valley, and how the wind did blow! When we came to Banning, we saw the first fruit orchards; and at this time they were all in bloom. A lovely sight indeed! Then we came to Beaumont, where there were more

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orchards, and Redlands, where the orange orchards began. They were loaded with oranges and blossoms at the same time. It was a most wonderful sight, and the fragrance filled the air. What is sweeter than the fragrance of orange blossoms? Also, roses were in full bloom. The fences around the orchards were lined with climbing roses. There was a light rain falling, which made the air heavy with sweetness. Surely we had never seen anything so lovely and breath-taking. It was easy to forget all the hardships we had been through to be in this land.

A light rain was falling for the next day or so, but it felt good after the dry desert. Everything glistened with the lingering drops—a beautiful sight indeed; and one I don't believe I will ever forget. We arrived at Whittier and went to Aunt Alpha's. We were so happy to see them all, especially our dear Elizabeth again. Aunt Alpha lived in an orange orchard and a yard full of flowers.

So our trip to California was ended. We felt we never wanted to leave this beautiful place. We had all the fruit we could eat and some we had never heard of such as; loquats, tangerines, blood oranges, guavas, etc. This surely seemed like the land of Canaan to us. I don't remember the date we arrived in Whittier, but it was near the last of April, 1912, thus ending the long journey from Gorman, Texas, to Whittier, California. I hope I never forget the mercy of God we experienced on this trip, the many lessons learned, and the faith established in my heart as a child of the love and power God which was manifested to us by Him who is able to do all things.

Dear boys and girls, by relating these experiences, I hope it will cause you to have a greater faith in God. My only desire is to glorify His name, and to never fail to thank Him for His many blessings to me.

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We soon sold the mules and wagon and made a down- payment on a home at 414 South Newlin Ave. How happy we were to be settled in a home again!

Here we found a good congregation, and Brother E.M. Zinn was pastor. Here we again met Brother George E. Bolds whom we had known in Texas. Sister Bolds had passed away some time before; and he soon married Sister Miller from Long Beach, California. They were a dear old couple; I have been in their home many times.

Brother George Johnson moved to Whittier from Oklahoma not long after we did. A very sad thing happened some time after. Their son, James, who was about 16 years old, was out duck hunting on the river with another school boy; and while going through the brush, the other boy was in the lead. He had the gun on his shoulder; it caught on a limb; and as he grabbed for it, it went off and shot James through the heart, killing him instantly. It was an awful shock, and so sad. He was in my room at school, also we had known him in Oklahoma when we were small children. This was hard on the family.

We loved the schools here. Whittier was a Quaker town and had no pool halls, theaters or beer parlors of any kind. Most of our teachers were Quaker, and always opened school with saying the Lord's prayer or reading some scripture and singing. They were very good teachers and set good moral examples before the pupils. Many of the streets were named for Quaker forefathers; such as Penn, Greenleaf, Comstock, Philadelphia, etc. We enjoyed Whittier very much. It was such a clean town and just a good place to live. We had a large Sunday School here, and many of them were in my class in school. About a year or so after we came there, Brother A.J. Taylor and family moved there from Washington. They had left Oklahoma after we did, and had been living in Washington until now. They

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bought a home just a couple of blocks from us on Milton Ave., and we became very close friends. It was no wonder; for not more than a year or so later, Claude married Katherine; and three years later on, Royal married Elizabeth. The three Taylor girls and I were about like sisters (so it seemed to me), for I loved them dearly; and I never had a sister of my own. Today, when we get to see each other, it is like seeing some of the family. We had many happy times there. Sister Sarah Wallace was our Sunday School teacher (a class of girls), and many were the happy times we had together. It wasn't long till we made a trip to see the Pacific Ocean which was not more than 25 miles away. It was quite a sight to behold and was interesting. The next day at home, little brother was out in the yard; and coming in, he said real seriously, "Mama, I know God made the ocean, but who dug the hole?"

It wasn't long till campmeeting time. It was held near Pasadena in a big park. What a large gathering of saints! I remember many of the ministers there: Brother and Sister J.W. Byers, Brother Swinburn, Brothers Gorden, Pike, Fred Bruffet, C.E. Orr, J.W. Youngblood, Charles Walker, Lorain McClain, George E. Bolds, Anderson Brown, David L. Walker, George W. Johnson, and E.M. Zinn. Also Sisters Jennie C. Ratty, Emma Holden, Mildred Dent, and Sister Lyde, and others whom I'm sure I have forgotten. This is where I met Sister Georgia V. (Morton) Zinn. She worked with the children and was a good teacher. Many were the good lessons she taught us. I knew her for over 58 years and loved her very dearly. She has gone to her reward now, and I thank God for the privilege of knowing her.

Sister Annie McKinney, one of the dear old sisters who was in Whittier at that time, is still living. She is now in the Sunset Guest Home on the campgrounds at Pacoima, California. She is a sister of

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the late Brother E.M. Zinn. She is (to my knowledge) the last one of the elder saints who was living at Whittier when we arrived in 1912. So many have passed on to their reward.

Memory carries me back to many happy days in school and to meetings with the families of the McKinneys', the Zinns', the Kuns', the Bowmans', the Taylors', the Pitts', and others.

At one time, Brother C.E. Orr lived on the corner of Penn Street. His daughter, Berdie, also went to school with us. Many things have happened through the years; some were happy and some sad.

In the fall of 1913, a new chapel was built on the corner of Penn and Whittier Ave. This chapel was used for a place of worship for about fifty years, after which it was sold; and the money used on the Pacoima Campgrounds.

Many precious and outstanding meetings were held there. Some, I shall never forget.

In April of 1913, before the new chapel was built, Brother Willis M. Brown came; and I well remember the meeting he had that is mentioned on page 39 in "How I Got Faith". I witnessed the blind woman being healed. It was wonderful. She shouted up and down the aisles; and when Brother Brown held up his watch and asked her what time it was, she could tell at once. There were many prayed for at this meeting. One thing I remember, was that before he prayed for them, he would ask each one if they believed God was going to do the work and if when he said, "Amen", they would get up, etc. If they would say, "I hope so." or hesitated, he would say, "We will first pray for your faith." That made this lasting impression on me: we must have faith to get the benefits of healing. God makes provision for little children or those who may be unconscious, but if we have a clear mind we must have faith in God to receive the

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blessing we desire. Many were prayed for; yet some were healed, some were not. It was according to their faith. Sister Warner (Brother D.S. Warner's widow) was at that meeting. For some reason she could not exercise faith for her blind eyes again. She had been healed for several years, but later lost her sight again. She was a dear old saint. She had been in our home for days at a time, and I used to walk with her after school for her to get some exercise and to visit other homes. She took an interest in children, and I remember many things she taught me—especially some songs.

Not long after this, Elizabeth was healed of a very serious sick spell. She was now sixteen years of age.

One Sunday afternoon, the young people had gathered at our house; and some started playing jumping rope. Elizabeth was always active and loved to play and was very good at jumping rope. She seemed to be the winner that day and jumped the most of all. Late that afternoon, all had left for home and we all took a nap or rested before the evening service time. When Elizabeth was called to get ready for meeting, she did not respond and could not be awakened. Soon we were alarmed, as something was wrong. She began to groan and went into convulsions. She had a high fever and became unconscious. We called the ministers and saints. Several came and soon saw she was in a very serious condition.

Many prayers were offered, but it was three or four days before she was completely healed so that the convulsions quit. The neighbors were stirred; and some threats were made; but we trusted God; and he raised her up, for which we were thankful. Many, many times he healed in our family in answer to prayer and faith in God. He never failed.

About 1915, Mama's youngest brother, Uncle Henry, came to California. He was now a young married man with a wife and baby

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boy, but his health was gone. It could be plainly seen that he was going down with T.B. just like dear Uncle Jim did a few years before. He thought a change of climate would help him; and for a short time, he did seem to be some better and tried to work, but was soon not able. I was so sad. He attended meeting some and enjoyed the singing, but was not much interested in the truths taught.

After a few months, they went down to Imperial Valley in the lowest part of the State where the climate is dry and hot. My Grandfather Warden (Mama's father) had come out also and was helping Uncle Henry. But he gradually grew weaker and became bedfast most of the time.

In the fall of 1916, we rented our home out and went to Imperial Valley also, as carpenter work was plentiful at El Centro, and we could also be near to help with Uncle Henry. Katherine and family were already living there as the war was on in Europe, and no one knew how soon we would be involved. The young men thought of getting on the farm which would keep them from being called at that time. Also, the Taylor family moved to the farm at Brawley, California. We later moved a few miles farther to Calexico, right on the border of California and Mexico. The border divides the town. We were also having trouble with Mexico, and an Army camp was near us with soldiers everywhere. We could hear the bugles from both the United States and the Mexican camps night and morning.

While here, we bought our first car, a Model-T Ford. We had some exciting experiences at first, as Papa had never driven one before and had but very little instruction on driving. Mama would not go with us at first, but brother and I were not afraid. (We didn't know enough to realize the danger). Papa rode his bicycle to work; and after work hours, he would take the car out and practice driving.

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There was a big open field near us which had been in cotton the year before, but was not plowed yet. The ridges were quite visible; but it was a safe place to be off the road; so here, we would drive around and around. You can imagine how rough it was. Sometimes we would hit the top. It was a touring car, and the top was

fastened to the corners of the windshield with big hooks. I rode in the front with Papa and had orders to turn the key off if I saw we were in a tight place; brother was in the back. So once as we were bouncing along, the hooks came loose from the windshield; and the top folded back over us. Brother was screaming that we are “upside down”, and I turned the key off. No one was hurt, and then we had a good laugh.

Papa thought he had enough practice now to take a trip. On Sunday, we decided to go to Holtville to see Uncle Henry again. Mama was persuaded to go, but she sat in back so she could hold the door slightly open and get out quickly if needful. Papa didn't know this.

There were very few cars then, so we didn't have traffic problems. The highways then were washboard gravel roads and quite rough in places. Farmers with wagons were quite frequent on the roads. On the left side of the road was the big canal, as all the farms were irrigated. This made deep and high banks on the sides.

All went well until we came up behind a wagon with a big hayrack load of hay. You couldn't see the driver, as he was up at the front. Papa made a quick turn to the left to go around him; and Mama didn't expect that, so her door flew open (car doors then opened toward the back) and caught on the hay rack, giving us and the hay rack quite a jolt. My brother then was eight years old. His job was to blow the horn, as it was fastened on the outside of the car on the left of the driver, with a plunger you pushed back and forth. It truly

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made a blast that was frightening. Like all boys, he loved to do that. Papa told him to blow the horn when passing anyone; so about the time we hit the wagon, the horn began blasting away; and all was in confusion. Papa lost control of the car, and we were headed up the bank of the canal when I turned off the key. The driver of the hayrack had stopped. He was standing up to see what had happened down below. He called to see if anyone was hurt; but no damage was done, except that the car door was sprung and wouldn't close.

Papa was very unhappy about that, but fixed it with wire until later. We were all frightened; and I think a little wiser after this experience. The rest of the trip was made very well, and we returned safely. We had many other experiences, but this is enough.

Uncle Henry continued to grow worse; and in the early spring of 1917, he passed away. It was sad; he left a wife and baby boy two years old. Little George lived to be about 21 years of age, and he too passed away.

Chapter 10

My Marriage

World War I was getting worse, and there was much talk of getting to the farms. Papa had often talked of Missouri where he had lived as a boy. So it didn't take him long to decide to move again. Brother Taylor and family were interested too. But they had a crop to harvest, so they couldn't get away then.

Katherine and Claude lived near, and Elizabeth was working not far away, since she had left the "Herald of Truth" printshop when it moved to Carthage, Missouri.

When school was out, we came back to Whittier, disposed of household goods, (the house was rented), and made ready to go East; but this time in the Model-T instead of covered wagons.

Brother W.H. Shoot and family had been in California for the winter and were ready to return to Colorado to their homestead near Branson. He had bought a car (a Studebaker); and Brother Edgar Britt, who had a wife and a baby, was to drive for him and his three boys. Sister Shoot and the younger ones went on the train. We were all to travel together. We travel the same highway today, highway 66; but it was just a gravel road then. We all had a lot of car trouble experiences, such as flat tires, brake bands, etc. Finally, at Holbrook, Arizona, Brother Shoot's car would go no farther; and they sold it

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for what he could get for it; and they all took the train. We continued the trip and arrived at Branson, Colorado, on June 3. (The day before my 15th birthday) We stayed around Branson a few weeks, attending meetings. Here we met Brother and Sister Helm, also the families of Uncle Grant Wilson, Walter Busch, Sam Wilson, Cale Floyds, and others. This was a barren country, and Papa didn't like it very well.

The Floyds had come here from Anthony, Kansas. So had Brother and Sister Helm. So the Floyds decided to go with us as far as Anthony for a visit as we went on East. We found a nice group of saints at Anthony. In a few days, we went on and arrived at Carthage, Missouri. Here we found a large congregation, and the "Herald of Truth" publishing work was there. This is where I first met Sister Katherine (Gubser) Key and many others.

Brother Henry Woolman was the pastor at that time. We looked around here for a place, but did not find just what Papa wanted, so went on to Neosho. There was also a nice congregation there.

Papa had a sister (Aunt Ellen) just over in Arkansas at Bentonville, so we visited them and soon found a place there. So once again we were on a farm, which location Papa had always liked. But there were no saints near, which we were sorry about. When we were settled, we began to get letters from California; and they were wanting to know all about the country. In October, Elizabeth and Royal were married; and now they wanted to come to Arkansas and farm. So about Christmas they arrived. Brother Taylor and family and another son, Foy Taylor, and his family also came. How happy we were to see them! I was especially happy to have the three girls for company. It wasn't long till we began services in the schoolhouse, as Brother Taylor was a minister. We had very good

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interest and attendance, as there was no other church around, and people had no place to go for several miles.

Brother L.L. Porter and wife lived at Gravette, and he also came and preached sometimes. Here is where I first met Edith (Alford) Torrance who also lived at Gravette. She now lives at Columbia, Missouri. But the next fall, a very sad thing happened. Our dear Elizabeth passed away, leaving a baby boy two days old. The baby lived two weeks and also passed away and was laid by her side. This was an awful blow to us all, and especially her young husband. It was hard to understand why the Lord had permitted it. But we know He is too wise to make a mistake, and too holy to do any wrong.

Then two years later in June, Brother Taylor was taken suddenly with pneumonia and just lived a few days. This was so hard to understand and was a real blow to the work of God. We were planning a campmeeting, but it had to be cancelled. Sister Taylor and family moved back to California later that fall.

We only had Sunday School at the schoolhouse now, and not regularly, as other groups were coming in and taking it over.

But in the winter of 1921, Brother John Wilson and another minister came and held a two weeks meeting which was well attended. They were from Guthrie, Oklahoma. They told us of a young minister from California that had come to the campmeeting at Oklahoma City that summer; his name was Ira Stover. Did we know him when we lived in California? Yes, we knew the Stover family and remembered seeing him at campmeeting. But it was hard to realize he was now grown up and preaching. Mama had corresponded with his sister (Sadie) for a long time.

The next summer, one day at noon, we heard some one call, "Hello, is anyone home?" There stood Brother John Wilson and a

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young man in the yard. Who do you suppose it was? The young preacher, Ira Stover, (smile) Brother Wilson had told us the winter before that he would like to come back in the summer and have another meeting.

Soon arrangements were made to have it in a big apple-packing shed, on the highway. The men went to the sawmill and got lumber for seats. They cut blocks of logs and put the lumber across and soon had it seated. The place was filled night after night. Some came in cars, buggies, or horseback. Others walked, and the crowds paid good attention and helped with the singing. The meeting was going well when Brother Wilson got a letter that he was needed at home and had to leave.

This was hard on a young minister to be left alone with all the preaching, but the Lord knew the need and helped in a special way. There was a lot of good singers in the community. We had lots of singings, and that helped. What saints there were, helped in every way they could; and the Lord blessed the meeting. At the close of the meeting, seven people were baptized, myself included. I was saved in the winter before, but had had no opportunity to be baptized until now.

As it just happened, several of us walked into the water together; and I was the first one to be baptized. Some time later he told me I was the first person he had ever baptized, and to think it was his future wife! I didn't know it then, of course; but we have had many happy days together.

Mama and I went to the campmeeting at Oklahoma City later that summer. Here we met so many dear saints and many young people. Oh, how nice it would be to live where we could attend meetings all the time.

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That fall, we did decide to make a move, and moved to Guthrie in October, 1922. I soon began work in the Pioneer Cotton Mill, where the Furniture Co. is now.

The young minister was in and out of Guthrie in meetings here and there and as far away as Illinois; but when around, he would be at the Cotton Mill at quitting time and would come home with me. He had no car, so we walked. Young people today would think that was a poor way (and it was, according to things today), but we were happy. Many young folks did not have cars those days. But we had good times. We spent hours around the old organ singing. All my folks loved to sing, and Ira's bass voice just completed the chorus.

Mother Winn, (as many knew her) because of her love for the young people, gave much good advice to all. One time she was speaking to a group of us girls and said something like this, 'Some of you may be called to be minister's wives.' (I knew she did not know I had already given my heart to a young minister). Then she proceeded to give some counsel that I have always appreciated and cherish in my heart today. She was a minister's wife and had experienced many things that could be of help to others. I have been very thankful for that many times.

In the fall of 1923, we moved into Oklahoma City. There I worked a few weeks in a Candy Kitchen, dipping chocolates.

On Sunday, December 9th, 1923, we were married. I had a home wedding because my father wanted it that way. About twenty guests were there, including the minister and his wife.

The hour was 10:00 o'clock in the morning; and following the ceremony, we all went to church. We arrived at intermission between Sunday School and preaching. It was a happy day; the saints showered us with many warm congratulations and best wishes

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for a life of happiness together and a life of usefulness in the work of the Lord. We were asked to step forward; and at the altar, the ministers gathered and laid hands on us, praying God's blessing to rest upon us all the days of our life; and we dedicated our lives anew to his service. We have appreciated that down through the years together and have felt the influence of those prayers. We can truly say our life has been blessed together. God has been good to us, has blessed us in many, many ways, has answered prayer and healed us many times, and made ways where there was no way except the divine hand of God came to our aid. Our life has been happy; we have had some sorrows and trials along the way; but our love for God and each other is deeper and sweeter as the years go by.

Our honeymoon trip was by train to California to see Ira's family. He had been away three and one-half years. They were all so homesick to see him and meet the new bride. I had known the Stover family slightly, and they had seen me as a little girl, but we had never really become acquainted. So this was quite an experience for me. It was a happy homecoming, and all gave me a hearty welcome in the family. Ira had five sisters and one brother; with the brothers-in-law, sister-in-law, nieces, and nephews, there was quite a gathering. Father Stover was a dear father to us all and always so happy when we were all together. The Stovers all loved to sing, and we have had many good times together through the years.

They have all been so good to me. Although I was happy, after a few weeks, I began to get a little homesick, as I had never been so far from my parents and brother before. I would think of the hundreds of miles between us; and it was hard to not be lonely at times, especially when I was alone. We were staying in Father Stover's home at the time, and his two widowed daughters and two nephews and niece were there also. But they worked, and the

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children were in school during the days, so just Father Stover and I alone were there during the days.

It seemed so long between letters from home. One incident I well remember. It had been longer than usual to get a letter, and I could imagine all kinds of things happening. When the mail carrier came, I ran out to see if I had a letter. Sure enough, there was one; but at a flash, I saw it was in Papa's handwriting which was very unusual, as he didn't write much. I took the mail in the house and sat down at the dining room table to read it, my heart heavy. As I read, the tears began to fall, as Mama had been very sick.

Now the amusing part of this was: Father Stover was quite deaf; but when he saw my tears, he was so concerned that he asked if I had bad news. I opened my mouth to try to tell him, but a flood of tears came so quickly. He couldn't understand, and I couldn't seem to tell him. Did you ever try to talk to a deaf person and cry too? If you have, you will know what I mean.

He was full of sympathy, but turned and left the room. In a few minutes, here came Edith (she lived next door); he had gone for help. By that time I had had my cry out, and it was soon all explained. We have laughed over that experience many times; but at the time, it was serious to me.

We stayed in California about fifteen months before returning to Oklahoma City. The saints kept writing, wanting Ira to come there and help in the work. So in March, 1925, we returned and took up our first pastorate, where we had many experiences new to us. Some were quite difficult, others pleasant. One thing that brought pleasure through the years was the saving of Sister Minnie Madden in our home.

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We had a cottage prayer meeting in our home, inviting the neighbors around. She was a new neighbor and had only lived across the street from us a short while. She could hear the singing and asked if these were private meetings. We assured her they were not and that she was welcome. The first time she came, she was sweetly saved and was true to God the remainder of her life, which was many years. She had had many trials in her life, and I remember her saying that that was the first time she was ever on her knees to pray. Oh, how happy she was now! She was the mother of two children then; and later, six more sons were added to the family. She was the mother of Brothers David, Richard (Dickie), and Johnnie Madden that you know today. Because of her godly life and teaching to her children, these have carried the gospel to the lost. I feel her reward will be great in heaven. She was faithful to death; her prayers were for her dear children. I have often thought if she could only know that two of these sons became ministers, she would feel well rewarded for all the labor, toil, and care bestowed upon her family.

In December, 1926, we received a telegram. Father Stover was very low and wanted us to come. We left at once by train, and were by his side ten days before the Lord took him. This was a great loss to the family, as he had been a dear father. They had lost their Mother in March, 1906, when the children were young. Ira was the youngest, being five and a half years old at that time. So their father had the great responsibility of seven children without a mother. A short time after the mother's death, Ira received an injury on the spine from a larger boy on a sled, which threw him into a state of nervous prostration. He was almost helpless, could not walk without falling, or feed and dress himself. This was a grief to his father, as he knew his motherless child needed help in a special way. He did not know the precious privilege of trusting God to heal, so he consulted the doctors and gave all the medicine recommended; but

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Ira grew no better. He had done all he knew to do, yet he had an afflicted child.

Two Swedish sisters, real saints of God, passed by from day to day; and seeing his pitiful condition, they asked his father if they could pray for him. He gladly gave consent; and when prayer was offered, he was healed instantly. This opened his eyes to the miraculous healing power of God; and led them to the true church of God, where he was saved from all sin after being a professor for years. The older children followed, and God began to bless this motherless home. They found the saints such a comfort. This was in Greeley, Colorado, in the summer of 1906.

The first campmeeting they attended was quite an experience for them all. They had never witnessed anything like it before. The love that was manifested among the saints was outstanding. Here was where they first met Sister Faith Stewart, who was such a help and comfort to these motherless girls and boys. She with other dear saints took the whole family under their wings, so to speak, and made them welcome. This won their hearts, as they had never seen a people like this before. I have heard them many times relate this experience, and how they appreciated finding the truth and the dear saints.

We didn't feel led to return to Oklahoma again at this time, and other arrangements were made, and we stayed in California. The Lord blessed us in many ways; and at many times, his power was manifested in answer to prayer. We had many experiences along the way. Many precious lessons we have learned in trusting him. He has never failed us.

Chapter 11

Our Children and Healings

In April, 1927, we adopted a baby girl that needed a home. She was such a little darling, and how we loved her! But Jesus loved her better; and in August, after a few days of illness, he took her to be with Him. It was hard to give her up, but we must say the will of the Lord be done.

Two years later in March, 1929, the Lord gave us a little son of our own. Oh, how happy we were! For a few days, it looked like we might not get to keep him; but the dear Lord miraculously spared him to us in answer to prayer. We dedicated him to the Lord and prayed for wisdom to raise him to serve the Lord. The Lord blessed him, and he was such a joy to our hearts.

When he was nine months old, by chance I met one of those doctors; and he could hardly believe his eyes. He shook his head and said he couldn't understand it, as he was such a healthy active baby. It was truly a miracle!

As he grew, we taught him to pray and have faith in God. Many times the Lord answered prayer for his little minor injuries, bumps and falls; so he learned to have faith and believed God could do anything. We prayed about everything needed.

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In the fall of 1930, the depression was on; and times were hard; work was scarce; people everywhere were in need. The Lord helped us to move to Oregon. We arrived there in October, 1930.

In many wonderful ways, the Lord blessed us through those depression years. Those old enough to remember those times could tell many experiences that the younger ones today could hardly believe possible.

But we can say truly that the Lord blessed us in many miraculous ways. We were never hungry, as we could raise vegetables of all kinds and had plenty of fruit. We had very little money, but God made a way when it was needed. It always pays to trust in God for everything. He has promised to be a present help in time of need. We have proved this true over and over. He has never failed. We always trusted Him when in need of any kind.

One time when our little boy was four years old, we were living at Brownsville, Oregon, on the farm. It was hard to get hay cut and put up without getting rain on it. We had one field of such nice hay; and at breakfast, Ira said, "This is a nice day, and I plan to cut hay and trust we can get all in without rain." So when we prayed, we asked the Lord to please favor us with good weather. All day he cut hay, and the sun shined. The next day was also nice, but the third day clouds were floating around. He said that if the Lord would give us another good day, we could get it hauled into the barn. So again we prayed, as it was getting more cloudy all the time. He went to the field, and I went about my housework. In a little while, Bobby came running in saying, "Mama, it's sprinkling; let's pray." So I stopped my work, and we bowed in prayer. He prayed earnestly for God not to let it rain. In a few minutes, he ran out in the yard, calling back, "It's stopped; Mama, it's stopped!" He played out in the yard with his cousin; but if he felt a drop of rain, here he came; and no matter

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what I was doing, he would say, "Come on, Mama; we must pray." Each time we did, he would return outside and say, "It's quit." All day this continued and each time it never rained. By working late, the hay was all hauled in without it raining on it. That night it began to rain, and rained off and on for several days. But our hay was nice and dry in the barn by the mercy of God and the faith of our child. Much of our neighbors' hay was lost or badly damaged. We praise God for His goodness. Many other things He did for us in answer to simple child-like faith in God.

During the depression, the people were very poor and having a hard struggle. Those who trusted the doctors were in a pitiful condition, as they had no money to pay the doctors who would not come to help them.

When we were living at Mill City, Oregon, a small lumber mill town, the mill closed down. The men were out of work and had much poverty and hard times. The only doctor in town moved away. The nearest one was in Stayton, 20 miles away; and he would not come unless they had the money to pay him.

A few other saints lived there also, and we had meeting in our homes. People were more humble then, and all seemed more serious-minded and ready to come to services. The house would be full. There was good interest shown. Some were saved; and many called for prayer, as they knew we trusted the Lord for healing; and the Lord did heal them. One neighbor, Mrs. Ford, had been sick for a long time. She had attended our meetings and knew we believed in divine healing. One evening she sent for us to come and pray for her. When we arrived, two other neighbors (who opposed healing) were there. They were telling her the advantages of medicine, how God put it all here for us to use and gave the doctors wisdom to help us, too. We sat and listened and said nothing. Finally Mrs. Ford said,

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“Well, I called these folks to come and pray for me. I have tried everything doctors have given (there were bottles of medicine sitting on the table by her bed) and have only grown worse. I want to get saved.” At that time, the other women stepped back and were soon ready to leave.

Prayer was offered for this dear one, and she gave her heart to the Lord and was sweetly saved. Then she was anointed, and prayer was again offered for her healing, and she was healed almost instantly. It was so precious. Then she said, “My baby girl has a high fever and was sick all night.” We went to the crib, and she had a very high fever. But the Lord touched her also and she soon sat up in her bed and smiled. I do not know what the illness of either one was. But the mother had been sick for months with some kind of lung trouble. The neighbors all knew it.

The next morning, the husband of one of the opposing ladies came by on his way to work to see how she was; and she met him at the door healed. The baby also was up playing.

A few days after she was healed, she broke out with something like boils on her chest. These opened and drained, then healed up completely, with no pain at all. Just God's way to rid her of the poison, it seemed. A number of years later, while at the Jefferson, Oregon, campmeeting, one day a young teenage girl came up to us and asked if we remembered her. Of course we didn't, and she then told us she was Sister Ford's daughter. Her mother said to tell us she was still healed and working all the time, even in the seasonal fruit harvest. Thank God; He is just the same today.

This caused a stir in the neighborhood, and others called for prayer. Another family had never come to the meetings and seemed to have no use for Christianity at all. The man often used vile language and made fun of those who did serve the Lord. He worked

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on the same job with Ira and had laughed and made slighting remarks and jokes at him before the other men. But one evening, as they left the job, he came to Ira and asked if he would come pray for his wife. This was a surprise, but now he was in trouble. He was now humble and desiring help. By the mercy of God, we can testify that God healed this young woman also; and the whole family's attitude was changed.

The Lord blessed in the meetings. We had an Assembly Meeting in our home that winter, and souls were saved. The Stice family were regular attendants. Sister Evalee is now in the Jefferson congregation.

During the years when times were hard with very little money for gas, we sold eggs for 10 cents a dozen to get gas. We would have meetings in homes or a schoolhouse. Roads were rough and mountainous; and many times we had to pray, as the old car couldn't pull the grades. We would work and pray and sometimes have to wait for it to cool off, then try again. One time we had to sit by the road all night as the lights went out. The battery had run down and we were miles from a station. But in all these experiences, He blessed; and we can thank Him that he never failed us. Our faith was tested many times, but He always made a way. We had many experiences during the twelve years we were in Oregon, going over the mountains and valleys in the rain finding isolated folks who were interested in the Lord. We learned to love the people there and have returned as often as we can since we moved away.

I could not begin to record all the answers to prayer through the years, but a few I will mention.

Bobby was a nervous child; and when he started to school they asked us to take him out after four weeks, as he was too nervous to be in the school room with so many other children. This was a

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problem to us, but we took it to the Lord in prayer. Thank God; he healed him; and the next year he started to school and never had any more trouble of that kind through his years of school. We trusted God for his every need, never giving him a dose of medicine of any kind.

The Lord healed Ira of stomach ulcers when he was very bad off. He had not been able to eat solid food without suffering for a long time. He was very weak and thin. But our trust was in God; and when he had been tested enough, he was healed completely. Now for years he has been able to eat almost anything he wants. We give Him all the praise. God in his mercy has often healed us of different afflictions. He has healed me many times as I trusted Him.

One time I was bad with terrible internal suffering. It continued and was very serious for some weeks; but in answer to prayer, he raised me up again and spared me to raise my little boy. He was about eight years old then. My health had been quite frail for most of his life; but after that sick spell, I began to improve and gained in strength and have been much stronger ever since. I feel that if it had not been for his great mercy to me, I would have been in my grave years ago.

At one time, I accidentally got my clothes on fire. I was alone with my three year old niece in the house at the time I could see the flames coming up my back; and I was frightened, as I couldn't get to it to put it out. I was crying, 'God help me!', as I knew of no one to help me. Just then I heard some neighbor girls coming from school. I dashed for the door to go to them, running down the hall. My husband came in from work unexpectedly, saw the situation, and at once threw his coat around me. With his leather gloves he began putting out the flames. I was so beside myself that I hardly knew it was him and tried to run away. But he held me and soon had the fire

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out. My clothes were burned from the hem of my dress to my waist in the back, but God kept me from being burned and spared my life. I feel sure it was just his mercy that sent Ira home from work early. For by running out in the air, it would have spread much faster; and these young girls would, no doubt, have been frightened also and would not have known what to do. How wonderful it is to know we serve a God who is a present help in time of need. He has been so good to me.

Another time, I had broken arches. They were swollen and so painful I could hardly get around. The campmeeting where I had helped with the cooking had just ended. There was a step down on cement floor to the pantry for all supplies. In some way, this threw the arches of my feet out of place. I was almost crippled and suffered much. At night, when in bed, they were better; but when I got up in the morning and put my weight on them, you could hear the bones crack or pop; and oh, such pain! My husband could even hear them. But we were still crippling around going to meetings. One day, in a meeting in Bakersfield, California, Brother Trotter had just finished a message when I had a strong impression if I would be prayed for now, God would heal my feet. The message was not on healing, but my faith was inspired for healing. I told my husband I wanted to be anointed now for my feet. I hobbled up to the altar, and the ministers anointed and prayed for me, and the work was done. I immediately stood up; the pain was gone. I raised on my tip-toes several times—something I had not been able to do for months; there was no pain at all. It was wonderful. I was completely healed. But the next Monday morning, I started washing. At the back door, there were four steps to go down to get to the clothesline. I was feeling fine; but after several trips up and down the steps, a sharp pain went through one of my feet. I recognized the enemy was trying to cheat me out of my healing. For some time, the pains came; but I rebuked them

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and told the devil he could not cheat me out of the healing God had given me. And in a few hours I had complete victory. Thank God; it has never bothered me again!

I believe that Satan cheats us out of the healings God has given many times by the returning symptoms. But God tells us to “resist the devil, and he will flee from you; draw nigh to God, and he will draw nigh to you.”

Chapter 12

Some Joys and Sorrows

In September, 1942, we moved back to California. World War II was now on, and everything was tight. You could hardly get tires or gas, as everything was rationed for the war. But we felt God was in our move. It took quite an effort to move under these conditions. Our tires were not the best; but by putting a boot in one and patching some tubes, we made it. We got along very well until we passed Sacramento, California, when our brakes went out. We tried to get them repaired, but were told they could not repair civilian cars as everything had to be saved for trucks to keep the war supplies going. They said, 'Take it easy, and do the best you can.' So we prayed and trusted the Lord. We were pulling a loaded two-wheel trailer when we started down the grade out of the mountains into the San Fernando Valley. Anyone who knows that highway would say it was foolish to undertake it with no brakes. But we knew nothing else to do. So again we prayed earnestly. It wasn't the Interstate freeways like it is today. And we knew there was a signal light at the foot of the grade. We wanted to turn left on Foot Hill Blvd. We knew if the light was red we couldn't stop, so we asked the Lord to give us a green light and let no car be turning. When we came around the curve some distance away, we could see it was green; and, oh, if the dear Lord would keep it green, we could make it! Traffic was thick,

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but not a car turned; and we used low gear and the emergency brake until the car was smoking; but we made it safely, thank the Lord.

Another time God had answered prayer and kept the light green much longer than usual. We have passed this place many times since then, and we often remind each other of how God opened our red sea for us.

We settled at Pomona. For three and one-half years, we helped back and forth with the Los Angeles Congregation as well as Pomona. Sister Lela Robinson, the pastor in Los Angeles, had a stroke and was not active at this time.

The war was getting more serious, and most everything was rationed. Gas was rationed, and we were allowed just so many stamps per week. The calls were so many that we could not possibly make it on the allotted gas stamps. But again and again the ration board granted more stamps just in answer to prayer. Times were serious, we not knowing what time our coast would be bombed. Great search lights were constantly on display at night, searching the sky for enemy planes. People were now thinking of God and calling for prayer.

The church was filled on Sunday, and sinners were getting saved almost every service. We had some all-night prayer meetings that were outstanding, as the power of God was manifested in saving and healing in a special way.

There was prayer meeting each Tuesday night at Sister Lela Bell's. These were well attended, and great interest shown. Many will remember how God met us there in marvelous ways.

Brother and Sister Sims found the Lord at one of these meetings. Their baby girl was very afflicted with weeping eczema. Doctors had done all they could, but had not helped her. They were

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Catholic, but the priest had not been able to help them. He worked with Brother Hodge every day and told him of their sick child. Brother Hodge invited them to prayer meeting. They came and brought the baby. It was pitiful, but in answer to prayer God healed it. The next prayer meeting they were back and said the God that healed their child was the one they wanted to serve; and both were sweetly saved, taking their stand for the truth. Oh, how they enjoyed the services and freedom in the church of God! They are still living in Los Angeles.

Here is where we first met Sister Hazel Clark and her family. They had just moved there from Oklahoma. One time, she was very ill with pneumonia. They called us to come. By the time we got there, it was night; and the family had got frightened and called the doctor. But he had not arrived. A few saints were there. She was a very sick sister and was seriously ill. While we were all in prayer, the doctor came. Mr. Clark told him we were having prayer at this time; just wait a little while, then he could go in. But he excused himself and said, "That will help more than what I can do," and left, saying he would be back in the morning. He came in the morning and wanted to see the patient. She told him she was the one who had been sick. But the Lord had healed her. He was astonished, and asked if he could examine her lungs. She told him he could, and he said, "You have had bronchial pneumonia all right." He went on to say she should be in bed for a week or so, then take it very carefully. But God had healed her. This was the first part of the week; and the next Sunday, she was in services and testified of her healing. Another time she was healed of a very serious affliction when she was down to death's door. But by the power of God, she was delivered and made whole.

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It's impossible to relate all the wonderful workings of God that come to our mind. What a mighty God we serve!

The Lord was blessing in Pomona also. Brother and Sister J.W. Youngblood were still living, but getting aged. He was a pioneer minister in the early days of the reformation. His mind was still clear even in his 90th year. The Floyds from Anthony, Kansas, were living here also. It was good to see them again.

In 1943, the war was being felt more and more. Many things were rationed, and some articles such as; sugar, meat, shoes, soap, gas, and tires could only be had by stamps. Everyone had to have a ration card to obtain these things. God miraculously gave us enough gas stamps for the gospel work in our area, but not to make long trips.

Dear Mama was in failing health; and, oh, how we wanted to go to her, but could not get gas for the trip to Oregon. Train and bus travel was overcrowded and very difficult; but in May, our dear Ruby (Wishon) Hutchinson (my name sake) was coming down to Pomona to work and was willing to help Mama make the trip. We were so glad to see them, but our hearts were saddened to see how dear Mama had failed in health and was so frail. But we had seen her healed many times, and our hope and confidence was in the dear Lord. Much prayer was offered in her behalf, but she continued to lose ground. The dear Lord never failed to give relief in times of pain and suffering, but more and more it was plain to see He was calling for her. She had been such a precious mother; I could not see how I could do without her. She was only sixty-five, and I knew many others who had lived to a ripe old age. I felt my mother had lived such a godly life, had trusted Him these many years, had witnessed for Him where opportunity came; and surely He would not call for her yet. But our reasoning is not God's wisdom.

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Papa came to be with us also when she grew worse. Then Katherine came to help care for her. Later Aunt Alpha came, and the dear saints were so good to help. Especially dear were Sister Opal Wilson, Sister Laura Conckley, and others. All the loving care that could be given was administered, along with continual prayer. The dear Lord never failed to give relief when suffering, and often she would fall asleep and awake refreshed and say, 'Thank the Lord for a good nap; oh, if Jesus would just let me fall asleep and not awake!' And that is just what she did. As the day was breaking on January 9, 1944, she fell asleep never to wake in this world, but to be with Jesus forevermore.

It was so hard to give her up, but we found the dear Lord present in this time of sorrow. It was something I had never faced before, but the comfort of the Holy Spirit came at the time needed. A few days after she was laid away, I was feeling the loss so keenly; my heart was heavy; and amidst the flowing tears, the Lord spoke, 'I have been good to you. Here you are forty-two years of age; and many little children, who were left orphans very young, never knew the love of a dear mother and had no memory of her godly life and teaching as you have.' This stopped my heavy grief, and I began to thank the Lord for the privilege I had had. My heart was comforted. I still missed her; but I could rejoice to know that she was at rest with Jesus; and I could serve the God she had taught me to serve; and I could go to her.

The Lord continued to bless as we worked back and forth for miles around. Many calls came in for prayer. People were in trouble, and the war was causing hearts to be stirred to seek God. Rationing was very strict; there was no gas to take a trip to a campmeeting out of state. But many who could get gas to move from the coastal area to the eastern states, did so. In June, 1945, Sister LaVern Manuel's

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family, and Brother Merrill and Sister Ruby Williamson with their infant son, Don, had decided to move back to Louisiana. School was just out, and they wanted to get to Hammond in time for the campmeeting. We had never been to Hammond, so they invited us to go along with them as we could not get gas to go. We were glad to get this opportunity, so quickly made plans to go.

The Manuels were driving a car and pulling a trailer which was loaded with furniture. I rode with Reba {their daughter} in the back seat. Ira and Bobby rode with the Williamsons, who were pulling a house trailer. We were all ready to leave Pomona on Friday evening to drive across the desert at night when it would be cooler. All started off well; but at Colton (about 25 miles from Pomona), a tire blew out on the trailer with the furniture. They had a spare, so they put it on. The trailer was loaded too heavily and was stacked very high, and the swaying on the highway was too much for the tires. As I have said before, tires were very hard to get. You had to have a special permit from the Ration Board to get one. Here we were with a long trip ahead of us and trouble right at the start. The men worked every little while, patching, pumping, and fixing, in order to go a few miles farther. It was a very difficult time.

By Saturday afternoon, we had gotten as far as Brawley, California. Here we stopped, and the men hunted from garage to garage for secondhand tires. If you could find some, they could be bought without having a permit from the Ration Board; but they were very hard to get. We were indeed looking to God to help us out. They went to a station, and the man had tires, but he said he could not help us. We would have to wait and see the Ration Board when it opened on Monday. Then it would be up to them if we could get a tire. We were camped that night by a melon packing shed. It was a hot, moonlit night, and we all gathered out back of the shed

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and laid it all before the Lord in earnest prayer. Oh, how we prayed, as we could go no farther without another tire. We felt so sorry for Jim (Sister Manuel's husband), as he was so worried and they were having to spend more than they had planned on; but he knew we were all praying and expecting God to do something for this need. There was not much sleep that night; I am sure each one prayed through the still hours of night. The sun rose early, and we knew it would soon be getting hot.

As soon as it was time for the station to open, Ira suggested to Jim, 'Let's go over and see this man again.' Now this would have been very foolish if we had not been praying and had not known that there was a God in heaven that controls everything and is able to change even government decrees for His trusting children. When they approached the garage, the first thing the man said was, 'What size tire did you need?' Thank the Lord! Another time He had proved his power, and they soon came back with the tire. We had a prayer of thanksgiving and rejoicing for His goodness in answering prayer once more. We were soon on the road again and singing "What a Mighty God We Serve." Oh, how we love to honor His great name!

But the testing time was not over yet. On this long stretch of burning desert between Holtville and Yuma, we had more difficulty with the heavy trailer. Finally we could go no farther, as another tire went down. The pavement was so hot you could hardly stand on it, so naturally it was hard on the tires. There was not a tree or shade of any kind to work in; as the men worked, we prayed. They talked the situation over, for something different had to be done. They began to unload some of the heavy pieces to see if they could shift the load around. It was over forty miles to Yuma, which was the nearest

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town. If they only could get the load to Yuma, they would try and ship part of it. But there we were miles away, what would we do?

It was now after sundown, and there was very little traffic. There was no one to call on for help but God. All was quiet on the desert, but soon we could hear a noise—the hum of a big truck rolling at great speed behind us. We could see it a long distance away and could tell it was empty. It was quickly decided to wave him down and see if he could help some way. Being empty, he was coming at a great speed, and it seemed at first that he was not going to stop at all; but God caused him to apply his brakes. When he came to a stop, he was already past us; but he stepped out of the cab and called and asked what was our trouble. They soon told him. He said he did not haul freight, but he would haul some of the heavy things on to Yuma to the freight depot. How wonderful this was! So they soon had several of the heaviest articles on the truck, and Ira decided to go on with it and stay with it until we got there. The truck driver gave directions where the depot was so we could find it, and they rolled away. It was about dark now; and they still had to patch and pump up a tire, so we were sometime getting ready to go. At last we were on our way again. The trailer pulled much better; but we still had a heavy load, so travel was rather slow. But all rejoiced that God had helped again in answer to prayer. Jim, with tears, gave honor to God for His blessings to us many times on this trip. We arrived in Yuma late that night and found Ira waiting with the things out on the platform, as this was Sunday night and the depot was closed. We slept in the cars and Brother Merrill's house trailer which were parked on the street for the night.

Next morning, as soon as things were open, they had to get lumber and build crates for the shipping. This took a big part of the day. After leaving Yuma, we continued across the desert, driving all

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night as it was cooler. The trip continued slowly, but somewhat better and with less trouble with the tires; and by the mercy and love of God, we arrived at Hammond on Friday afternoon, just a week from when we left home. Oh, how many times the Lord answered prayer on this trip! We had proved once more that it pays to trust in God. Even in wartime, He is there to help His children. I mention these things to show that God is present to help in anytime of need. In the years since then, when with these dear ones, we have often talked of this experience and rejoiced anew at the marvelous way God answered prayer for us.

On arriving at Hammond, we found the campmeeting had begun that day. We enjoyed meeting the dear saints in the South, and have been privileged to be there a number of times since. We came back home by train, which was very crowded. At first we had to stand, but it wasn't long until the Lord arranged seats for us. But many service men stood, and some sat or lay in the aisles part-way. But we arrived home safely.

Chapter 13

Pastoring at Pomona, California

In the spring of 1947, we moved into another home which was divided into a duplex. Sister Nellie Campbell from Kendrick, Idaho, was looking for an apartment; so she came and lived with us for three and one-half years. We learned to love her much and enjoyed having her with us. She was much afflicted when she came (with cancer); and her suffering was great at times; but God's presence was also great; and at many times, she would be touched immediately and would go to service rejoicing. She also traveled with us to meetings as far as New Mexico, Oregon, and Idaho. She was full of courage and witnessed for the Lord everywhere. Her life was one of faith. I was present with her when she witnessed to a doctor of her confidence in God. He wanted to know how long she had had this affliction, and she told him over seven years. He shook his head and said, 'I never heard of that before. Your guardian angel must be with you.' She said, 'He is, and I have no other intention than to trust Him,' which she did to the end. She was a great blessing and encouragement to the saints everywhere that knew her, as she visited the sick and helped the poor and needy.

One time, before coming to Pomona, God miraculously spared her life. During a bad rain storm, a very powerful electric wire fell,

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which put out a transformer and all the lights in the neighborhood. Everything was in darkness, but she could see sparks flying from something across the yard. She walked out to see about it and accidentally ran into this wire, which hit her about the knees. Not knowing what it was, she picked it up over her head, walking under it. As she did this, she said the voice of God spoke and said, 'They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them.' Mark 16:18. Then she realized what she had done. When the electricians came to repair the damage, she asked what would happen if anyone touched the wire. They looked astonished and said, 'No doubt it would burn them to a crisp; at least, it would be instant death.' She showed them where she walked under it, lifting it over her head. They were indeed astonished, shaking their heads in doubt. But we see again where the protecting hand of God was watching over his child. He has promised in Psalms 34:7, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them." Thank the Lord. We have heard her testify to this many times. I feel she would love to have it repeated here to give glory to God for what he had done for her. She loved the Lord and trusted Him fully, and He healed her of many things. She devoted her life to others; and though many times she was in pain herself, she smiled and went about encouraging those she met while never complaining of her suffering. She was a great blessing to our home and to the work in Pomona; we shall always be grateful for having known her.

The Lord healed Sister Virginia (Elwell) Taylor's children many times while we were living there in Pomona. The Lord also healed her many times. We will insert one of her testimonies of how God healed her of what seemed to be bone infection.

"About the 9th of November, 1947, I got a hard knock on my left shin, causing a bone bruise. Apparently there was infection in

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the bone, as there was a running sore. For about two months, I couldn't walk except a little on crutches. Then one morning I was thinking of how God's children were fasting for me, and I knew they did not cry to God in vain. The Lord inspired faith in my heart, and I laid the crutches aside and stepped my weight on the sore limb. Praise God, there was no pain. I had tried times before to walk, as it was quite difficult to do my work; but the pain was so severe and my whole limb so weak that I could not. He not only made me able to walk, but strengthened me also.

“On Easter Sunday afternoon (1948), some of the ministers, including Brother and Sister Stover, and saints came and prayed again for my complete healing. The dear Lord touched me, and the place on my shin has not drained one drop since that Sunday, and it is dried up and disappearing. It had been draining since November, 1947, and getting worse with a bad odor. I thank God for His healing power.” (Divine Physical Healing)

About this time, Sister A. Marie Miles and family moved to Chino (near Pomona) and were added to our congregation. How we appreciated her and her work with the children! She not only taught in the Sunday School, but had a children's class in her garage each week with the children in the neighborhood, which became a great blessing to many. We can look back now and see that this was the beginning of a greater work for God. It was easy to see that she was deepening down in the Lord, and one Sunday morning she went forward and dedicated her life more wholly to God. It wasn't long until she delivered her first message. We appreciated her labors for God; she was a great help to us there and has been through the years until the present time. We will insert her own testimony here of how God healed her of kidney stone attack. It seemed that she would leave us, but God healed her.

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“In November, 1950, one day about three o'clock in the afternoon, I had a pain in my side. At first I didn't pay much attention to it, but it grew worse, and it was nearly time for me to have my Bible Class with the children of the neighborhood. They were coming, and I could not have class unless the Lord helped. I called on the phone for prayer, then had prayer, and went out to have the class; but I had to dismiss them and go to bed. My son came in and called again for prayer. When my husband came home, he was alarmed. He wanted to know if I wanted the doctor, as it might be appendicitis. I said no, that I wanted to trust the Lord, that He could heal me. He called Brother and Sister Stover to come out. Brother Stover was gone, so Sister Stover brought Brother and Sister Sam Wilson out, and they prayed for me. Oh, I suffered until it seemed like death. The pain in my side seemed almost unbearable. One time I lost consciousness, but the Lord was good and gave relief after a couple of hours. They had to leave as there was a revival meeting going on, and I felt that I would be all right. I got worse again for awhile, and my husband said, 'You better not put it off too long; you had better have a doctor.' I said, no; I would be all right. I knew that my God had all power, and it didn't make any difference what the trouble was; He could heal me. The Lord relieved me again as I knew that they were praying for me at meeting. I rested all night, and the next day the Lord removed the soreness from my side. Some other troubles set in the third day, but I kept holding on to the Lord. The saints prayed too. I went to meeting that night. I was quite weak and didn't feel well, but the Lord helped me. I only missed two nights of the meeting.

“On the sixth day after, I was awfully sick, and I passed a large kidney stone with sharp edges. I knew then what my trouble had been. My sister took it to her doctor, and she said I had all the symptoms of kidney stones.” (Divine Physical Healing)

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The Lord was blessing the Pomona congregation. Just before we moved into the duplex we mentioned, we needed some plaster repairing done, so we picked up the phone book and called a man who did this work. We had never met him; but he came and estimated it, saying he would be there the next day, "Lord willing". When he came the next day, Ira said, "You sound like you know the Lord." He began to testify of his experience with the Lord. He was so blessed that he could hardly work; he told of how he was looking for more truth; and of course, we invited him to services. He came and said later that the first time he came, he felt this was home to him. This was Brother Wesley Trimble. Many will remember him for his joyful, happy life. This brother had many trials, but I don't believe anyone could say they ever saw him discouraged. He was an example to all. God had saved him from such a life of sin: for fifty-eight years he had been a drunkard. He was so happy to be free, that he never ceased to praise the Lord. Many have asked if he were any relation to me, since my maiden name was Trimble. None that I know of, although his grandfather came from Kentucky, and so did mine. That's all I know.

About this time, we had quite an interest among the Mexican people. We had set a day of fasting and prayer for the sick at the chapel each week, and many of them came. God worked in a wonderful way. I would like to mention, to the glory of God, a few of the healings the Lord did. One evening at the close of service, an elderly man came, (he could talk very little English). We could understand that his wife was sick, and he wanted us to go to his house and pray for her. By his motions, we could tell it was something about her head, but little did we expect what we found. We took Sister Campbell with us; and as we entered this humble home, we found a dear old lady walking the floor in pain with a lacy scarf over her head. She could speak no English at all; but she

needed no words of explanation, as she raised the scarf and showed us the most pitiful sight I had ever seen. About half of her head was a raw, bloody mass, the hair being all gone from skin cancer. She was in such pain that it touched our hearts, and we all dropped to our knees pleading with God in tears to undertake for this dear one. You could tell as she clasped her hands looking to heaven and called on God for help in her native tongue, that she knew God. Oh, how we all prayed until we felt God was moved in our direction! By faith, we knew that prayer was heard. She had a Spanish Bible; and turning to it, we pointed out some scriptures to encourage her faith. She readily agreed; and we anointed her and prayed again; and thank God, the work was done! They made us to know that she hadn't been able to sleep at nights for months, since she could not be still for pain. But we felt the Lord would prove His power to them and let her rest. She was so blessed that she walked the floor praising God. I never felt more of the power of God manifested than there that day. I shall never forget it. This was on Wednesday and on Sunday she was at service, and oh, what a change! They were so happy; she had slept like a baby, and the raw flesh was healing. It looked so different, and there was no pain now. It was wonderful! It wasn't long until it was completely healed and as smooth as your face. This dear old sister continued to come to service regularly for over four years. She couldn't understand much of the preaching, but would often want to testify; and you could tell she was rejoicing and praising God. When the class in Sunday School said their verses, she would repeat the verse in Psalms 121:1, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence cometh my help." We didn't suppose she could get much out of the preaching; but one Sunday she came to the altar, bowed, and began weeping and praying in her own tongue. One brother who spoke some Spanish asked her what she wanted, and she said, 'More of Jesus.' When she prayed until satisfied, she

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was happy until the end of her life. We enjoyed her in our midst, but one night the Lord called her in a short time to be with Him. She was not ill; they never had time to call for prayer. Her heart just failed. I expect to meet her in heaven.

Her healing was talked of by many of the Mexican people, and others came to the services. Another lady had a tumor, had been examined, and had everything ready for an operation the first of the next week; but on our fast day she came and was prayed for. Her faith took it in; and when she was next examined, they could find no trace of the tumor; so the operation never took place. She attended services while enjoying good health. Thanks be to God! Also, one of the Mexican brothers had worked in a mattress plant up in the San Francisco Bay area until his health had broken. He suffered much with his lungs, breathed hard, was very thin and weak, and had been sick for two or three years. The first day he came, he was greatly touched and encouraged. The next time the Lord healed him completely, and his wife and family were blessed also. He began to gain and was soon the picture of health. Later he returned to Mexico where he had a large cotton ranch. He worked hard for a year; and no doubt, he overworked unwisely and developed a heart condition. They came back to Pomona and the church for prayer. The Lord graciously blessed him, as he was still living for the Lord; but the wisdom of God is not as we see many times; and his health began to fail again. But he was blessed in soul and had such a sweet humble spirit. As he became bedfast, we were with him often; they were such a devoted family and loved this father so dearly. As the end drew nigh, they called us to come again; he was conscious and able to whisper a firm testimony of his peace in God and of being ready to go. His passing was so quiet and peaceful; we were made to say another "saint went marching in."

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In July of 1948, we were getting ready to go to Monark Springs Campmeeting in a few hours, when I received a call from Oregon. Papa had had a stroke and needed us. Our plans were quickly changed, and we started to Oregon. We found him some improved, but not at all well. Mama had been gone over four years; but he would not give consent to come live with us, only a few weeks at a time. He would say that when I can't care for myself any longer, I will. When we arrived, he soon told us he was ready now to dispose of everything and return home with us. He was failing, as we could see, and felt this was the best thing to do. We returned to Pomona in three weeks. He stood the trip very well, but was weak. He gradually gained some strength and was able to attend meeting again and to join in the singing. His voice was clear and quite strong for his age. But along in October, he began to weaken again; and on Monday morning, the 18th, he was stricken again with a major stroke. In a few hours, he could not speak; and on the next Monday, the 25th, he quietly slipped away. Dear Papa was gone. He had been a good father to us, and how we have missed him. He would have been 82 on December 7th. I was so thankful that I had the privilege of caring for him in his declining days. Rest Homes are all right for those who need them, but I still am thankful that I had the privilege to care for my dear parents. They had worked and cared for me when I was a helpless infant, and I feel it is the duty of every child to do all they can for their parents when they are old and helpless. I'm thankful I could do it.

God has been good to me, healing me many times, for which I am thankful. I was seriously afflicted during the years of 1949-50, suffering much. I heard it whispered around from those who knew about it, that I might have cancer. This had, of course, come to my mind many, many times. But I have trusted God all of my life for all of my needs; and I knew He could heal me, no matter what the cause

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of my trouble. My trust was in Him. During this time, our dear son was sent overseas during the Korean trouble. My heart was so heavy; and for two long years, we did not see him. Oh, how the enemy talked and painted a dark picture at times—that I would die and never see him again. At times, it was so hard to resist the devil. I would lift my eyes to a little motto on the wall which reads, “All things are possible to them that believe.” I would cry to God to increase my faith. One night as I was ready for bed, I reached over to the little “Bread of life,” as usual on the night stand, when like a sweet still voice rang in my ears; “this is for you.” I picked up the little card and read this verse, “No good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly.” Psalms 84:11. My faith took hold, and I said, ‘Lord, I see if I walk uprightly, there is nothing you will withhold from me. You can heal me and take care of our dear boy, too.’ Thank God, He did and healed me completely. All glory be to His name! I could tell of other healings in our family, but feel I must bring this to a close. I do want to say that our son, Bob, returned home safely and told us he did much praying while he was over there, and that he had made God some promises. I am glad to say he kept them and gave his heart to God and is living for him today.

He was married to Margaret Olson in 1953. The Lord has blessed them with four precious children. The Lord has been good to let me live to see this day.

Our eldest grandson, Michael Stover, was very sick when he was about ten years old. The Lord healed him in a marvelous way. Today he is twenty years old and is healthy and working every day. We will let his parents tell about how God healed him.

“We feel it is time to tell what God has done for us. We first want to thank the saints everywhere who prayed for us in our time of need. God surely heard and answered prayer. We are writing

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concerning the affliction that was on our little boy, Michael, ten years old. Back in October, Michael began to show signs of limping and being tired. He could hardly go. I talked to his teacher in school, and the teacher said he wasn't doing well. He would sit and stare into space so much of the time and couldn't concentrate on his work. We prayed about what to do, as he was getting so weak. When he would come home from school, he would lie across his bed and cry, as he was so tired. We felt we needed to take him out of school. In order to do that, we had to have a slip from a doctor stating that he wasn't able to be in school. We took him to be examined; and the doctor said he had had brain fever, had a tumor on the brain, and had a central nerve problem. He wanted us to put him right in the hospital to have more tests made. I told the doctor we trusted in God for our healing. He told me we were not being fair to the child by not doing something. I told him that Michael knew nothing but to trust the Lord; but if he wanted us to do something else, we would. He wanted to trust God. We began to search our lives and to see if it was for us. Surely God blessed us and comforted our hearts. Never at any time were we afraid. We only said, 'Let God's will be done.'

"About a week and a half before our California Assembly meeting, he grew much worse. He couldn't walk without dragging his right limb. His whole right side became almost useless to him. It even started affecting his mind. The doctor had called to see if we would change our minds; and when I told him of Michael's condition, he said, 'Well, it's already too late to do anything.' I told him we weren't discouraged, that I knew God was able to heal him, and He would if it was his will to do so.

"We took Michael to the meeting, and God healed him. Praise His precious name! At the same time, my father, Brother I.D. Stover, testified at the Oklahoma Assembly Meeting after an agreement of

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prayer was made, that he had received a witness that Michael was healed. He has grown stronger from that time forward. We knew we would have to take him back to the doctor before we put him in school. I took him back on March 16; and the same doctor that said there was no hope before, now said that he was in perfect health. Oh, we have so much to be thankful for! God has power over all sickness. When the doctor completed a thorough examination of Michael, he said, 'Well, I could have been mistaken about his condition the first time.' I said, 'No, I know God healed him.' He admitted it was possible, but he didn't want to talk about it. He finally said that he could have outgrown it. I just told him, 'Doctor, God is the one who healed him.' Surely people today don't want to give God the glory for what He does.' (Divine Physical Healing)

The Lord healed our son, Bob, of migraine headaches. The following is his testimony which appears in the book, "Divine Physical Healing."

"For a number of years, in fact most of my life, I've been bothered with headaches from time to time; and they were very severe ones. After I was grown, I went to doctors for them; and they told me I had migraine headaches; and that there was no known cure; so I would just have to live with them. But thank the Lord, He can cure all things.

"Then I was saved. Over two years ago I was prayed for at Pacoima and felt the Lord definitely healed me. For a time I had no headaches. After a while I started having a few, but I just held on to the Lord that I was healed. Then this past spring, I had a real siege of them; and I felt pretty blue about it. The devil kept telling me I wasn't healed. One night I was praying; and the Lord just brought some thoughts to me so plainly; and He said, "The devil wants you to admit just once that you are not healed, and then you will have

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lost what has been done for you.” I felt very encouraged and took new faith and just trusted the Lord. Thank His dear name! He surely has blessed me. I have had only one since then, and I’m still looking to the Lord to do the complete work. I have complete faith that He will.” (Year of 1959, Divine Physical Healing)

We have trusted the Lord from a child up, never taking medicine. We taught our son to trust God; and we are thankful, that he had faith in God as a child. He is now raising his family to know that God is able to heal and answer prayer for our every need.

Chapter 14

More Pastoral Work

In 1958, we moved from California to Anthony, Kansas. We enjoyed it there, but our stay was not quite a year when we moved to Guthrie, Oklahoma. We were there nine years, helping in the work. We learned to love the saints there, as we did everywhere we have lived.

But pastoral duties are hard. Many times the responsibilities get too much for the physical body as one gets older. Ira's nerves began to give him trouble, and he had to take a leave of absence in 1965 for over three months. We went to Arizona for a quiet rest, which helped so much. But we saw later that it was not long enough. For awhile, he felt much better; but soon his nerves were almost to the breaking point again. So in May, 1967, he resigned. The Lord was merciful to bring him out again, but it was a hard battle. But thank God, he healed him again and restored his health so he can be in the service of God.

Chapter 15

Golden Wedding Anniversary

Our children had moved to Tulsa, Oklahoma, in 1966. We later moved there to be near them. The Lord has blessed us this far in life. We have loved the work of God; we do not regret the years we have spent in his service, and we appreciate the good we have received from the experiences we have had. In 1 Peter 1:7-8, “That the trial of your faith being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ; Whom having not seen ye love; in whom though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory.”

Through experiences from childhood on up to today, we have been gleaning the gold all along life’s pathway. True, there have been trials, burdens, some sorrows and disappointments; but the joy, peace, happiness, and faith in God have been gleanings of gold that far outweigh all other.

I thank God for my companion. He placed us together to work for him. We have enjoyed these fifty years together. True, we have not accumulated the material things of life, like many our age; but the gold we have gleaned along the way is far greater riches than all earth has to offer. Our God has cared for us in our younger days, and

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we believe he will still care for us as we grow older. How we thank God for giving us these many years together; and can say with the poet, it is, "Sweeter as the years go by."

We came to our Golden Wedding Anniversary, December 9th, 1973. It was on Sunday, as it was fifty years ago. We went to church as usual. Brother Richard Madden, the pastor, gave a nice talk of congratulations and appreciation. We received many best wishes from all the dear ones there. It was announced that there would be a reception given for us by our dear children and the saints on December, 22nd, at Highland Hall in Guthrie, Oklahoma.

The Annual Assembly Meeting was being held at this time. The reception was from 4:30 P.M. to 7 P.M. between services. It was lovely.

We do not feel worthy of all the blessings we received. Several gave short talks, and the young people sang. How we appreciated it all. We received some lovely gifts and a shower of cards from seventeen states. There were so many lovely verses on the cards and messages of love. It was so precious: my heart melts with love and gratitude to each one.

My dear companion gave me such a sweet card. I will share it with you, for this is the sentiment of my heart also.

"To my darling, Ruby, on our 50th Anniversary! You have been a wonderful wife, dear, through these 50 years. God has surely blessed us together. Giving us happiness through all of the good times as well as those not so good.

"But the thing that counted was how good the Lord has been in leaving us to live these 50 years together and not calling either one of us away, leaving the other to go the rest of the way alone, for which I am so thankful, dear. You are so precious to me, dear; and I

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love you with all my heart. I hope and pray he will let us have many more happy years together, as long as he sees fit, or can be a blessing to each other, and to others.

“I love you with all my heart. Your sweetheart and husband. Ira.”

I can truly say he has been a wonderful husband. So, I bring this to a close with a prayer that you, dear reader, young or old, will have a greater faith in God. His word is true, and we have proved it. He will not fail. Let us be faithful to Him.

Ruby E. Stover, Year of 1973

