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CARRIE EMMA JENNINGS REILLY

March 8, 1866 - March 30, 1951

February 18, 1940--

Some of my children have asked me to write the history of the family as far back as I can remember, so I will begin:

THE REILLY FAMILY

James Reilly was born in Northern Ireland. He came to Canada with his family at the age of seventeen years. He taught school there, and was on the Board of Education. His mother's name was Rachel Shellady. Shellady

He married Elizabeth (Betsy) Brown. The Browns came from Scotland. Betsy was born shortly after the family moved to Canada. Grandmother Brown's name was Elizabeth Mercer.

Both families settled in Medcalf Metcalfe Township of Middlesex County, Ontario, Canada.

The Reilly family came to Nebraska from Strathroy, Canada in 1870, settled in Pawnee City, and later homesteaded on a place near Kirwin, Kansas. James was killed when he went back to Canada to settle Grandma Brown's estate. Upon arriving in Strathroy, he started out on foot to his mother's home, and was found dead on the railroad tracks.

Grandma Reilly lived in Pawnee City for nine years; then moved to Ludell in Rawlins Country, State of Kansas in 1880. Bill Reilly and Dan Yeager had gone to Kansas the year before and helped to start the oldest Atwood. Bill was the first country clerk elected after the county was organized in 1881. He and Jack Belford had a furniture store, and Dan Yeager, who had lived with the Reillys for many years, was a blacksmith.

James and Betsy had ten children -Richard (Dick), Elizabeth, William, David, John (Jack), Barbara, Jennie, Isaac, James and Josephine.

Dick married Bertha Bensley in 1887 and died while his three sons were still in their earlier years. Dave married Phoebe Small and their children are Elsie, George, Barbara, Rex and Edgar. Will married Janie Belford and they had no children. Ike married Hester Pough and had Jesse, Billy, Josephine and Eileen. Jennie married Jim Mourning and had three sons, Elmer, Patsy and Fred. Josephine married Clell Alley on November 10, 1885 and they had six children, Jim, Grace (Lila), Don, Lance, Larry and Gay. Jack married Carrie Emma Jennings on February 2, 1883--they had nine children -

Arthur Harvey - born February 12, 1884, married Mertie Woofter in 1919.
Jennie Ada - born October 25, 1885, married Charles Ross in 1904.
Bonnie Elizabeth - born October 2, 1887, married Dick Osmon in 1906.
Josephine May - born August 17, 1890, married Luther Steele in 1914.
Ona Verl - born January 27, 1893, married Emmit Thomas in 1920.
John Elmer - born May 25, 1895, married May Miller in 1916.
Edna Blanche - born July 10, 1899, married Rube Woods in 1916.
Joseph Archibald - born November 27, 1902, married Mavis McCord in 1929.
Winifred Merle - born January 14, 1905, married Hershel Adams in 1923.

THE JENNINGS FAMILY

William Warden Jennings was born in London, England on May 8, 1809. He married Elizabeth Mott. My father, William Warden, born October 24, 1835 and George were born in London, then Harry and Amelia were born in New York City, where Elizabeth died. Later, Grandfather married Julia McDonald and raised four other children. As long as I can remember, they lived in Elkport, Iowa.

Mother's father, John S. Lewis, was born in Kentucky. He came to Clayton County, Iowa when the Turkey River was still full of Indians.

My grandmother, Clarissa Wiltse, was the only girl in a family of eight. She was born in Canada. She married my grandfather in 1843 and had four children. My mother, Mary Ann, was born September 8, 1847. When she was still small, Grandmother divorced Grandfather and Mother went to live with Grandfather.

Grandmother later married James Abernathy and they had four more children - Hannah, Esrom, Esther and Viola. I was born in their home near Rockton, Illinois on March 8, 1866.

Grandfather married soon after the divorce to a girl by the name of Cynthia Amsden and they had eight children. Grandmother Cynthia died two months before my mother in July of 1910.

I cannot remember my real grandmother, but she could not be nicer than Cynthia! She never scolded when we were noisy. The house was ours! Grandfather would play games with us. It was a wonderful place to visit. The big brick house had six fireplaces, big shady porches upstairs and down, with a big oak tree we could climb into from the upper porch. The front part of the upstairs was one big room, which was used as a dance hall, with a fireplace at each end.

MY GRANDPARENTS

Clarissa Wiltse was sixteen when she married John S. Lewis, who was twenty-one at the time. They settled in Turkey Timber on Turkey River in a one-room cabin. The nearest white family was her people, who lived eight miles away. They were married at the same time her brother, Leonard and Jane were married.

Aunt Jane Wiltse and Mother have told me all I know about my grandmother, as I do not remember her; but she was always a wonderful person in my memory.

One time, the Indians had killed a white man near Elkport. The white settlers from far and near went after this band of Indians. Uncle Leonard brought Aunt Jane and baby George down to stay with Clarissa and her baby. They woke up about daylight and found the floor covered with sleeping Indians. It was so cold, they had come in without waking the women - to keep warm. One of the Indians also awakened. He said, "Indians no hurt good white woman", then they went outside and waited for them to give them something to eat.

Grandfather went to California during the Gold Rush in 1849 and he came back rich. He started a distillery in Elkport, but never ran it himself. He had a sawmill, got a patent on a seeder, churn, harrow and barbed wire. The barbed wire was not a success, for all of the barbs were on one strand of wire; hence when the tar wore off, the barbs went all together between the posts. He enlisted in the Mexican War, but was too old for the Civil War. He went to the Gold Rush in the Black Hills in '78, but found nothing there. When his estate was settled after his death in 1889, there was very little left. At one time, he was one of the richest men in the county.

My grandfather Jennings was an only child, his parents having died when he was quite young. He married a servant girl, and was disinherited. When my father was three years old, they moved to New York City, had a grocery store, which burned. My father was badly burned and had a scarred face and crooked arm after that.

Grandmother died when Dad was seventeen. Grandfather married again and moved to Iowa. He was a railroad contractor.

Grandfather was a dressy, proud Englishman and well educated. I think he had dreams of someday getting what rightly belonged to him. He was planning to go to England when he took sick and died in October, 1875.

MEMORIES

I remember when brother Will was born on October 13, 1870. We lived in a new log house.

That Christmas, we looked for Santa Claus. I wanted a doll and was sure I would get one, but Christmas morning, in my stocking was a little sheep on a platform with wheels. Oh, how I hated that sheep! Lib got a doll, it being her third birthday. I never had a doll in all of my childhood days.

I was probably seven years old when the railroad was built up Turkey River to Elkport; three miles from Grandfathers. Their stables, graineries and well were close to the tracks. In those days, we got drinking water at a well, drawn up on a windlass in a big oaken bucket.

I do not know if the workers boarded at Grandfather's, but it was a busy place--so many around. I recall a sick, blind man in the bed upstairs. Grandmother sent me up with a dish of yellow corn meal gruel. It was the first time I had seen any, and I can still remember how good it was. Of course, the blind man did not see me sample i

When Clarissa was about three, she got her feet wet. Mother told me to take her shoes off. It was candle light and we had company. The string was in a hard knot. I took a table fork to untie the knot. She was crying and kicking, and the fork went into my right eye. I did not tell the folks until later when I caught cold in it. They took me to the doctor, but I have not seen a thing with it for over sixty years. I can still remember how it hurt.

In Iowa, the fields were full of stumps, and they could not use corn planters. The corn was planted and covered with a hoe. Dad used the hoe, George and I dropped the seed for the neighbors for fifty cents a day. An Irish family, the O'Leary's lived near us and when everyone had finished planting, she had me drop seed for her. I was there for a day and a half, and got through at noon. I said I was going home; she said "Wait". I did and she brought out a piece of bread and strong butter, a ten-cent green back and a nickel. I don't know why, but I threw the bread and the money in her face and ran. I did not tell, but the next day she came and told Mother what I had done. Mother kept the money for me, but I would not have it, so got a whipping instead.

I remember the Fourth of July, 1876. We had new dresses with the Liberty Bell, crack and all, and imprinted with the numbers "1776" and "1876" all over the cloth. Li and I had dark calico with light bells. Clarissa and Mary had light calico with dark bells. We had a picnic lunch and Dad took the whole family to Elkport for the celebration. It was a big event. There was a Calathumpian parade, with masks and funny costumes, the brass band and all so wonderful!

In Iowa, there was so much of what they called "Speculators' Land" after the railroad came through, and the workers for the railroad built cabins on every forty acres.

It was nearly a wilderness of trees which they cut to sell- the sugar maple in cord-wood to fire the train boilers, and for many other uses such as railroad ties, in piling for bridges, whoop poles, heading blocks and stave bolts for barrels and buckets

I do not think that people looked ahead very far, or that good timber would not have been wasted. When Dad was clearing off his last place, they had log rollings--- where they put big piles of logs together and set fire to them. In less that ten years we were picking up buffalo chips to burn to keep warm in Kansas. The old saying that "Woeful waste makes woeful want" is surely true!

SUGAR MAKING

Shortly after moving to our new home on Wayman Creek, our folks started to make maple sugar. The camp was about forty rods from the house. They built a rock foundation with a smokestack, one end of which was left open to keep a fire. On this, they set a syrup pan of heavy sheet iron. It would hold barrels of sap. They would boil it down until it was a syrup, then put it into a big iron kettle to finish "Sugaring Off", as they called it. Then it was put into cans and pans of all sizes and shapes, the top being bigger than the bottom, making it easier to empty. Then they were set into the snow to harden quickly so that the pans could be used again.

They got the sap from the tree by boring a hole into the tree and driving a spill into the hole. The "spill" was made from a sumac about the size of a broomstick, with one end whittled off to fit the augur hole. They would put two spills close together, so that one bucket would catch the sap from both. A horse would pull a sled with a barrel on it from tree to tree to gather the sap. It kept Mother busy boiling the sap, as that was her part in sugar-making. It was a great time for us children. We also enjoyed sorghum-making in the fall. We had a cane mill to press out the juice.

MAGGIE NEITER

One summer, I worked for a woman with three children. Her name was Maggie Neiter and her husband was away threshing. They had many pens of hogs and pigs. I helped her pull weeds for them. As soon as they were fed in the morning, she would go to town to visit with her friends. We would go down the path to the mill dam at the edge of town. If the mill was running, the water would be too high to get the children over, so she would leave me with the children and go on along by herself. One time, she didn't come back for hours and we all got hungry and cried. When the water went down, the miller's wife took us to her house. She fed the baby and gave the two little boys and me some food. Finally, Maggie came and we went home, for it was time to pull weeds for the hogs again. We finished that task and I told her I had to go home.

Maggie had been a school teacher and belonged to church as well as being of a good family. I told her a lie about having to go home. The next day she came to visit Mother and got my wrongdoings straightened out. Lib went home with her, but she didn't have to pull weeds. I got punished, but I never told Mother how hard I worked, or about being left so long with the children at the mill dam. She had told her story, and being a member of Mother's church, it was all right.

I can remember Maggie Neiter. She was pretty and wore clothes with ruffles and lace on them. I think she was a good woman and thought she was doing right.

How many women still visit at the clothesline or over the back fence, neglecting to have their husband's and children's lunches on time? To me, they are all "Maggie

RELIGION

There are a few things that stand out from everyday occurances; like Baptizings, Lords Suppers, Footwashings and the Indians trapping in the spring.

My folks were Dunkards. Mother was baptized in Turkey River when the ice was over two feet thick. The next winter, Dad and seven other men, besides four women, were baptized in Wayman Creek near our house. The minister, Benjamin Beakley, stepped off the ice into the water. The ice was about twenty inches thick. He baptized all those people in that icy water. Their clothes were for all like boards - they were frozen that stiff before they got to the house. Believe it or not, not a cold to any of them after all that! Ella Wiltse, Abbie Mather and Alice Pilkerton were at our house that day.

In the summer, they had the Lord's Supper; usually in Hansel's feed barn. The Hansel family came from Virginia the year before the Civil War.

There were long tables, the men sitting on one side, the women on the other. A few chapters were read from the bible, then a prayer. Then sitting, backs to the tabl one man with a pan of water and another with a towel, they washed and dried all the men's feet. On the other side, the women were going through the same ceremony. They then sat at the table, broke bread and sipped wine. Then followed more religious service, with singing and prayer. After that, everyone had all the good beef soup and bread they wanted. All good church members met their brethren with a holy kiss. Thes Love Feasts came once a year and were a big event. The men wore whiskers and their hair long; the women wore funny little bonnets, with no ribbons, flowers or jewelry.

One spring, I went to Grandad's when the Indians were trapping on the river. It was a big event for me. The older ones wore blankets and beaded moccasins and had pretty baskets to sell or trade. I wish I could put on paper how my old Turkey River really was then - the nice white sandbars where they camped, the big trees, their canoes, their wigwams with smoke curling out; and the fifty redskins of all sizes and ages. They stayed about two weeks, and Grandfather's flour and pork barrels were not nearly so full when they left - for he gave them anything they asked for. He never said "no", and he never had an enemy.

When I was twelve, a little boy came to live with the six other little Jennings boys and girls. He was born March 20, 1878. We called him Stephen Leonard. He was my special care until he was a big boy.

OFF TO NEW FIELDS

In the winter of 1879-80, everyone seemed to get restless. First one, and then another, began talking of wonderful "Kansas". In February, Ben Boyers and several neighbors left. In March, Dad sold our place, bought a nice team of horses, new wagon wagon bows and cover and on Saturday, April 17th, we started for the Golden West. The were seven children, besides Dad, Mother and Ring, our dog. It was a sad morning for Mother as she did love her neighbors, but it was a big adventure to us children. Geo Lib and I walked through the woods to Uncle Leonard Wiltse's - they were going to Kan with us. That was the first time I saw Dell Mather (Ella's husband), and little Jess who was six months old. It stormed, so Uncle waited for a week and we went on ahead.

We met so many people going back east from Kansas. They told how dry it was; no rain since October before. We met a young man leading an ox - his little brother and all their belongings on the ox. Their mother had died and they were going back. Als met a woman and little girl on foot, carrying a bundle of belongings, heading east.

Dad got rather uneasy, so he and George worked on the railroad at Fairbury, Nebraska for some time. While there, Dad bought a stove and I baked bread for the fa and for others.

We got to Kirwin, where the Land Office was located on July 3rd. Dad rented a house for us while he and George went on to Rawlins County to locate a homestead. When he came back with the news that the Wiltse family was already there, Mother could hardly wait to get there, so we were soon on our way, arriving in Rawlins County on July 20th, 1880.

About two miles before we got to the county line, we had to cross the old Chisholm Trail, which had been used to trail cattle from Texas north to the Dakotas, Wyoming and Montana for several years. There was a herd of cattle going by, so we waited for a couple of hours for them to pass as there were several thousand head. The trail was a dozen or more paths-about seven feet apart. In some places, the paths were worn deep.

They used the Trail some in the summer of '81 - then it was discontinued, as the settlers on the creeks made it very unpleasant for the Texas cowboys. A few herds came by Ludell in '84, but the county was getting settled; especially along the creeks, so trailing the longhorns through Knasas was soon a thing of the past.

When we got to Uncle Leonard's, John and Eva were at the store owned by I.N. George, who later married Eva.

February 12, 1941--

THE DUGOUT HOME

Dad built a 16 x 18 foot, half-dugout house in the fall of '80, expecting to build more in the spring, but it went on that way from year to year. The back and part of the sides of the house were against the hill, the front was of sod. The door was in the middle of the front, with a window on each side, facing east. The soil was yellow clay. We carried tons of black soil into the house, and with plenty of water to dampen it down and tramping on it, we had a very good floor. Mother had many rag carpets, which were used on the floor, and also as a partition around one of the beds, where we could bathe and change clothing. Privacy was unknown in a tiny homestead home.

The only books in our home were the bible, almanac and a few ragged school books. We had a deck of cards, a homemade checker board and dominoes. The furniture consisted of two homemade beds, each with two straw ticks, feather ticks and pillows, table, benches and stove. My mother was a good housekeeper. There were ten people living in that room. In summer, the girls slept in the covered overjet, which was set on the sideboards of the wagon on the ground. We enjoyed it too, as we could lie awake and laugh and talk, which was not allowed in the house.

PIONEER DAYS

After the house was finished, we built a dugout stable and chicken house, bought a dozen hens and picked up several loads of buffalo chips and wood along the creek.

Then Dad and I left for Crawford County, where he had work husking corn. Mother was heart-broken the morning we left. Now I know how brave she really was to be left in that lonely place with six children and expecting another. It did happen four days later, with Dad so far away. There was not much food or fuel and no means of transportation, as we took the only team.

When we got to Crawford County, we had a letter waiting, telling of the new baby, Newton. The folks at home were having a bad time. There was no school, so Mother and the seven children were housed up in that one-room house. There was very little food for the two cows, so they went dry. Fuel was scarce and the snow was deep. In January, the snow drifts were so deep that Mr. George could get no one to drive to Oberlin for supplies. Mother was low on everything; had no salt at all. After the storm, George started to Oberlin - twenty miles away. He got there quickly, as the snow and drifts were frozen. He slept in the livery stable, got what groceries he could carry, and

started home. It warmed up and the snow would not carry his weight, so he had to plow through the drifts. A blizzard began and it was long after dark before he got home. How Mother worried! There was not a house on the twenty mile trip until he got nearly home.

Dad and I got home the last of April. How glad we were to see them all! Newt was six months old and afraid of us.

THE INDIAN SCARE

One day in the early fall of 1882, we were washing clothes and baking bread and had just finished dinner when Ida Boyer Heggenburger, then a girl of twelve, came over the hill bare-footed and swinging her sun bonnet to tell us that the Indians were coming. John Wiltse came on horseback from the other direction to tell us the same, and to get to the creek as soon as we could. We left the bread in the oven, the wash boiler on the stove, took all the food handy, a couple sacks of clothes and bedding, two sacks of flour and started out leading our two cows and calves. This was September 12, 1882. We camped at Lorenz Demmers, a half-mile east of where Herndon now stands. There were dozens of families there, some with wagons, some on foot. Many like us had put the over jet and cover on their wagons. The next day, all went down the creek to Jim Jones' place, where already a large crowd had gathered.

During the five days we were camped there, provisions got low. Mr. Jones butchered a two-year old heifer and passed it out to all - there were about two hundred people present.

The men dug a fort on a high place not far from the buildings. The wagons were placed in a circle, so we could see in all directions. They stationed guards outside the area. Bedlam broke out just at sundown. The Indians came down the old cattle trail all right and the cane shocks near the trail looked like Indians too. We had been looking that way for days and had never noticed them. They camped on the creek a mile or so above us and after dark, some of the guards got up enough courage to go investigate. They turned out to be two white families - Asel and Abner Chessmore, their wagons, horses and cattle. We all went home the next morning. There were crowds camped at Ludell, Atwood, Cerness and other places.

Bob Jones was born the night we were camped at Demmers, and my brother Grove was born September 25th.

JACK AND I ARE MARRIED

In October, I went to Atwood to work in the hotel. I worked there until February. Jack and I were married February 2, 1883, about a week before Dad got home from Crawford County, where he was shucking corn. Dad had a poor opinion of cowboys and I knew he would not give his consent as I was not eighteen and that was a long time to wait when in love. That was fifty-eight years ago and I have never regretted it!

We were married at home by Samuel Boyer, Justice of the Peace. No one was there but the family. Mother had a lovely supper and the next morning we went to Ludell to Jack's mother's home. Grandma, Jose, Jim and Jennie were there. It was two weeks before Elmer was born. Elmer was a pretty baby - we all spoiled him.

Jack bought a pre-emption for $200. There was a two-room sod house, a stable and a well on the place. It was a big day for me when we moved into our own home. I think I was the happiest girl in the world. Jack did not go on the range that summer. He did some hauling from the railroad and some farming with Grandma's team. We did not raise much crop. It was a dry season.

OUR FIRST BABY

Arthur Abbott was proving up on some land on February 9th. Jack went with him to Oberlin as a witness. When they got back on Sunday, it had begun to snow. By ten o'clock the next morning, when Jack went for Mrs. Bouda and Mrs. Chessmore, he had to dig a tunnel through the snow drift in front of the door.

Mr. Arthur Harvey was born about 2:00 p.m. in the afternoon on February 12, 1884.

When Jack's cowboy friends heard about the new baby, they gathered in the drug-store and named the boy. He was to be named for one of them. They took a vote. Arthur Abbot got the most votes, Harvey Dunlap the next; so they named him Arthur Harvey. They bought presents of pens, pencils, writing paper, baby caps, shoes, stockings, combs, brushes, pink calico, light calico, soothing syrup, quarts of whiskey and ten yards of all-wool flannel - Mr. Jim Greason's gift.

When they were ready to make the trip down, they had Dr. E. D. York come with them.

On one of the bottles of whiskey, was this:

"Arthur Harvey, when you get bigger,
Rope a bull and pull a trigger,
When you take your morning tap -
Don't forget to treat your Pap."

MY NEIGHBORS - MRS. HAVEL

After we were married, a Bohemian lady, Mrs. Havel, lived across the road from our place. She did not like the Reillys. She would turn her horses loose and they were ruining our corn, so I left word at the store for her to keep her stock out. Jack had gone on the range that summer, so I thought I would go up to talk to her. Johnny said that I had better go soon, for she had ordered some shells for her gun. Right then, I decided to go. Jose was with me. We decided to take a revolver that Clell Alley had left at Grandma's. Jose strapped the gun on and I put a belt, with hunting knife, on.

When we got near the house, I knocked on the door; she asked me in. I said, "No, I just came to tell you to keep the horses out of our field." The fight (of words) was on. She reached up and got her gun and came toward me snapping it in my face. It was a good thing for me she did not have shells, for I think she would have used them. She said something to Chrystina, who ran to the barn for a pitchfork. We did not run, but made quick time across the road, then I asked her to come over. Just to prove to her I could shoot, I foolishly wasted two of Clell's shells. Dick heard the shots. He said she could have us arrested.

The next day she went into Atwood. Jose and I were so worried that the sheriff would come for us. When a day went by and he did not come, we were feeling pretty good. I was busy in the house, Jose was digging potatoes for dinner, when she rushed into the house, crying, "Here comes the sheriff!" It turned out to be Jim Greason, with the sheriff's rig. He came to get Jose to work for them.

Needless to say, I never bothered Mrs. Havel again. Weeks later, when Jack was home, she came to the door and wanted me to go with her to get damages from some wild horse hunters who had a camp near. I told her that Jack would take care of it. That is the last trouble I ever had with Mrs. Havel.

(Note--I have written this as some of my grandsons are always wanting me to tell of my "shooting scrape". Here it is - Tommy and Bobs).

HOMESTEADING

The year 1884 was the best year Kansas ever had. People were coming in and the county was settling up. Grandma had good business in her hotel.

The town of Ludell grew from a store and post office to be quite a little city--had a newspaper, several stores, bank, another hotel, skating rink, livery stable and drugstore - all within a few months. Everyone was thinking of getting more land. We paid out on our relinquishment and took up a homestead three miles south of Ludell.

Jennie was born on October 25, 1885. Two weeks later, Jose and Clell Alley were married.

It was one of the coldest and snowiest winters I ever saw. It began to snow on New Year's Day and lasted for days. A cattleman by the name of Bird (Bird City was named for him), had cattle distributed among farmers. When the snow went off, over a hundred head of cattle were found dead in one draw. Others were scatted over miles.

My sister, Lib and Joe Harrold were married February 7, 1886, and moved onto their place near Grandma's.

On Easter Sunday, we had a terrible blizzard. I took the shucks out of the bed ticks to feed the cows and Jack carried plum bushes over half a mile for the fire, besides which we burned corn to keep warm.

THE PRAIRIE FIRE

A few days after Jack had started to Sherman County to plant timber on our timber claim, I wondered why the sky was so smoky, when Marybelle came, saying that a prairie fire was coming from the south. I got the chickens in the hen house, turned the cows loose and filled pails and kettles with water. We did not have long to wait until the fire came.

Anyone who has seen a prairie fire knows what I mean. The first head fire came straight down the draw - a side fire would start, then it too would come. The second fire burned by the house, even burned the long grass in the sod of the house. We had everything well-dampened down, so all we lost was a couple of hens setting down in the rocks. Joe and Lib lost a set of new harness, some corn and lumber.

This was the second fire, when I had the cows lariated out. The first time, I was at Grandma's. Someone rode up and said a fire was coming from the north. I left Arthur with her and ran against the wind and smoke the half mile home. When I got there, Jessie, the cow, was already loose, so I started back, but could not make it--the smoke was too thick. I just stood there yelling and a man hauling water heard me and picked me up. It isn't the damage only that a prairie fire does - it is the scare that goes along with it.

GRANDMA REILLY

In August, both baby Jennie and I were very sick. We both got better and on the second of October, 1887, little Bonnie Bessie was born.

Grandma Reilly paid out on her pre-emption around Thanksgiving and moved to her house in town. We were glad, for Jack was uneasy about her when she was alone. Many times, if he heard her dog, Tip, bark, he would get up and walk the half mile over the hill to see if she was all right.

Grandma and Brother George were with us over Christmas. That is when we named the baby. George wanted her named "Bessie". Grandma was holding her and singing - -

"And Bonnie Bessie down the lane, will be a woman then". I decided it would be Bonnie Elizabeth, Bessie for short.

Grandma took sick the first of September. Jack was away - helping survey roads. I went over to her place and stayed with her. She was not sick long - four days in all She passed away on the 4th of September, 1888. I sent for the family. Dick was at hom Jose and Clell came. (Two months later, Grace was born). Jack and Jennie got there Monday night. Dave arrived while we were at the church. Ike and Jim got home after the funeral. How we all missed Grandma Reilly! She was a mother to the whole countryside!

MOVING ON

It was a long, lonesome fall and winter after Grandma's death. Jack wanted to sell and go to Oklahoma where Jim lived. We sold the homestead and the timber claim and bought a team named Fred and Joe; also bought a set of harness and wagon. We went to visit Jose and Clell on the Divide before starting out and while there, decided to rent Granlee's place, where Jim Reeves now lives. We planted corn and cane.

After harvesting our crop, we sold our cattle and were once again ready to start for Oklahoma. We went to Dad's to get Clarissa, who was going with us. Instead of going on to Oklahoma; when we got to Norton County, Dave persuaded Jack to farm there the next year. We worked hard, had ninety acres of nice corn, feed and garden, but did not even have one roasting ear. When we saw the corn burning up and I was sick and homesick - we started back to Rawlins County. We left everything but our clothes, bedding and about a hundred chickens. We'd only gone a short distance when we found thirty of the chickens smothered. When we got to Lenora, we sold the rest. That night when we camped, we hear a chicken cheep. It was one that we'd missed, so Jennie had it for a pet.

When we were coming across from Lenora to Oberlin, we met a family - a mother and five children walking east, each carrying a bundle, the children eating raw corn. They were the only ones we saw that year. When we got to Dad's, things were even worse than in Norton County. Jose was born four weeks later, on Sunday, August 17th. She was my smallest baby - only six pounds!

No crops, no work and no money - Jack, Will and George decided to go east to look for work. They left when Jose was four days old. When they got home the 20th of December, all the money Jack had been able to save was twenty dollars. But long before they got home, I had decided to do my bit. The first time I went out to work was on All Saint's Day, November 1, 1890. I did a big washing for Eva George - some work, and lots of fallen pride! I made fifty cents and I felt really that I would never be the same again.

On Christmas Day, Jack worked at the stone quarry. He went before daylight, took his lunch and got home after dark. He was very glad to get a dollar for the day's work Mrs. George had given me a tomato can full of mince meat - just enough for a pie. I made the pie, some candy, a rag doll for the girls and ravelled an old sock - with whic I made a ball for Arthur. It was a lovely day and I was playing with the children outside. I went in to see about the baby and there was a cat up on the table eating our Christmas Pie! Did I throw him out! I cut out the place he had started on and never said a word about it. I did not eat any pie that night. As I think back, it was one of the nicest Christmases we ever had. It doesn't take a houseful of presents to make happiness at Christmas.

OUR HOME IN HERNDON

In the spring, we bought Uncle Leonard's place - one acre of land, a sod house, chicken house and stable, lying south of the railroad. We were to pay fifty dollars for it when we were able. Uncle was sick and was going to go back to Iowa.

Captain Pettys hired Jack to list corn for him at a dollar a day for himself and team. Before he could go to work, he mortgaged the team for ten dollars and got a book of coupons for groceries. When he was paid for the listing, he paid off the mortgage, and we had used only a part of the grocery coupons.

We both worked at anything we could do and by Christmas, 1891, we had paid for the place, bought another acre of land, built a frame stable, bought a cow and two horses, (Dandy and Flora), a set of harness, a Peter Shutler wagon and had money in the bank. We did not run any kind of bills in those days. I think one is money ahead to pay as he goes.

That spring, Jack planted a few acres of corn on the Schramel place; then got so much work, he was not able to take care of it. After I got my washings done for the week, the children and I would walk up the railroad, with our lunch, to hoe the corn. Jennie and Bessie would play under the shade trees with the baby. Arthur, who was seven, and I would hoe the corn. We raised enough feed for the stock.

Will had gone back to Franklin County, Nebraska that spring. Both he and George married that summer - to sisters. George to Linda and Will to Emma Dimmick.

We moved on our place in 1891 and moved away a few months before Archie was born in November of 1902.

MOTHER

The week before Christmas, Will and his wife came back to live with Dad. Mother had gone to Iowa in March, 1891 to visit her people. They had sent her money for the trip. Mother had never liked Kansas. She took Grove and Lillie. She thought she would get Dad to leave if she stayed away long enough. They stayed in Iowa for nearly a year but still Dad would not leave. She and the two children came back to Nebraska, where Lib lived. She left Grove with Lib, got a job cooking in a hotel in Hastings. Dad went down to visit them in the fall of '92, and had been home only a week when he had word of Lillie's death by typhoid fever. She was seven years and seven months old when she died.

Will and Em did not stay long with Dad. They moved into the Kasten house on the hill, when Dell and Ella Mather moved out. Gertie was born there.

All of the time Mother was away, I did Dad's washing, sewing, baking and - in threshing time, I would go out and cook for him. After Lillie's death, Mother was more determined than ever not to live in Kansas. She stayed in Nebraska until February, 189 almost five years. Dad was appointed postmaster in 1893 and had been in the post offic for two years when she came back to Herndon.

Mother began where she had left off in Herndon - helping the sick, caring for the new babies and working all of the time.

I don't know why I was so stubborn, but I felt that she owed me an apology for leaving the family for so long. I suppose she felt that I should come to her. If we met, we were as strangers. A couple of years later, Dad built on to his store, and they started a hotel. I sewed, baked bread and sent the little girls there like it was home to them, but it was four and a half years after she came back before we were frien

again. Mother came to see me when Edna was born, July 10, 1899. There were no explanations or excuses from either of us. So in my life, there was over eight years that I never talked to my own mother. I am ashamed I was so bull-headed, but like mother, like child!

1892 - 1893

Em and Will came to be with us when Dosia was born on February 12th. Em was very sick. While she was still ill, my little girls and baby Dosia all took scarlet fever. People in those days did not have money for doctor bills, so I took care of the children myself. Bessie was the worst and did not get strong until after she had measles--two years later.

While Will's were with us, Arthur and Joe Pitner were herding cattle along the railraod track. Will told them that if it rained, to go into their house; which was near. It rained, and the boys went into the house. Inside, they found a loaded gun. Arthur picked it up and pointed it at Joe, saying, "Look out, or I'll shoot you", and "Bang" went the gun. No shots hit Joe, but he got his face full of powder. I think he still has scars on his face. I was busy in the house, when Mr. Pitner came running in saying, "Mrs. Reilly, your boy shot my Joe", and ran back home with me right behind him. I expected to find Joe dead, but it was a relief to see him in a chair with the doctor picking powder out of his face.

We had lots of snow that winter. Jack had a sled made after the first snow, and we had many sleigh rides; with bells, too! We would put hay in the back, with blankets, so the children would keep warm and would go out to Grandpa's farm real often.

Grover Cleveland was elected president for the second term in the fall of '92. Dad Jennings was appointed postmaster in the spring of '93 and left the farm for good. He built a building for the post office and later built on to it for a hardware store; and in '98, built a second story and added an addition to the back and started the Herndon Hotel.

Ona was born January 27, 1893. Katie Kirchner worked for me. She was such a nice girl; and was good to the little girls and Arthur.

Uncle Leonard Wiltse died in July, 1893. Rawlins County had good crops in '93, and Herndon was on another boom. The Order of United Workmen started a lodge in Herndon that summer and Jack was one of the charter members. He was a member for nearly twenty-one years before he died. I had often heard that insurance was costly, so after I got his two thousand dollars insurance, I took the trouble to count up what he had paid into the lodge. It mounted up to five hundred eighty six dollars. Many times it was hard to raise the money for his assessments, but he was never behind on payments.

I think Walter Purcell is the only one of the ten charter members living today. (June 1941)

BACK TO THE FARM

Clell and Jose moved back to Rawlins County after living in Colorado for over three years. Clell hauled corn from Herndon up to Uncle Cy Alley's place. He would sometimes bring the family with him and they would stay for a day or two. They now had three children; Jim,Lila(Grace) and Don.

In April, six of the Reillys had the measles. We were a measley bunch! As soon as I was able to get around, we moved to Dad Jenning's place to farm. In May, there was a hard freeze. The trees on the creek were in leaf. It killed the leaves and they turned brown, but new leaves came out later. That is the only time in my seventy-five years I have ever seen them frozen so late in the spring.

By July, we saw that we were not going to have a crop, so Jack got work at the elevator, working for Henderson Smith; who had moved to Herndon that spring. When the corn was tall enough to cut, Arthur (who was ten) and I cut it with a sled.

In 1894, we first learned of the Russian Thistle. They were very scarce up until that time. There were no crops to talk about that year, so they began to talk of the damage the thistles were doing in other places. They began to hold meetings to decide how to get rid of them. After awhile, they quit talking about the thistle and let them grow; and they have done pretty well ever since. They have saved the life of many cows and horses since then. There was only one thistle on Dad's place at that time - at the foot of the big hill.

AID

No crops in 1894, so that winter the German churches got in aid of clothing and provisions. One of our neighbors had nine overcoats. Most families in Herndon took aid, and some were pretty well off too. I am proud to say that neither the Reilly nor the Jennings families ever took the first thing, although we were invited to come and pick out anything we wanted. I am sure we needed it, but we did not want it. We didn't mind patches, for sometimes our clothes were mostly patches.

When calico material was only five to eight cents a yard, I have taken the backs of two little dresses and made a dress for one of the girls. They looked all right, too. I think they looked as well-dressed as the other little girls in Herndon, and I was proud of them - though I never let on to them! They were not saucy or impudent to anyone; were seen and not heard. If we had company, they did not take the floor and correct their Dad or me - as children do today!

JOHNNY SMOKER

The year of 1895 was a windy, dry spring. All of the farmers were fixing up some sort of irrigation projects - so they could raise gardens. Jack was working on an irrigation ditch for Mr. Hudiburg.

John was born on Saturday night, May 25th. The next two or three days were hot and windy. Wednesday morning was cloudy and chilly and everything was covered with dirt. Our new baby looked like he had been dragged through a plowed field. That night, it began to rain -such a flood of water that soon all of the irrigation projects were gone.

Ona was a cute, little, freckled-faced girl, and was Jose's shadow; they were never apart. Jose was always so serious and both were bashful. Jose always saw that nothing happened to Ona. Ona called herself "Johnny Smoker". When the new baby came, we asked her what she was going to call the baby. She said, "Johnny Smoker"; so John got the name and was a big boy before he was actually called anything but "Johnny Smoker"

After Decoration Day, there was plenty of rain. We had a big crop of spring grain, corn and winter wheat. We had corn planted on Dad Jennings' place. Arthur (only eleven years old) would go out there to plow and cultivate. When food got low, he would put the horses in the pasture and walk across the fields about two and a half miles home, stay overnight, and go back in the morning. Sometimes we would not see him for several days at a time. His dad thought he did a good day's work every day he put in there. Please try to find an eleven year old boy that could do that today! Arthur could always be trusted to do what he was told. In harvest, when Jack would be working away, Arthur would do all of the draying, pay the freight bills and could handle the egg cases and freight. His Grand-Dad Jennings was proud of him. He used to tell us that we put too much on young shoulders.

THE FLOOD

Saturday, September 21st, it began raining in the evening. Arthur had a colt he was weaning and the horses fought it in the stable, so he kept it in the summer kitchen adjoining the house, for the night. He also had a bird dog that he kept there. The dog howled and the colt made a fuss, which woke Arthur. He went to see what was wrong with his pets. When he opened the door, in came a flood of water. The cellar was filled, and it soon filled the house. The children's clothes and shoes were floating around. We moved out through the window and took the children to Pitners. The next morning, Jack rented a two-room house in town. Later, we moved into the old Bright Drugstore.

After sixteen months, we built a frame house on high ground and moved into it before it was plastered. It was 16 x 26; two rooms upstairs and two down. Walter Purcell was the carpenter.

The old soddy was used for a stable that winter and in April, another flood came. Jack and I went down to see if the water was up to the old soddy. It was. I held the lantern while he led the horses and cows out. I thought I would stand on the manure pile by the window. When I jumped over onto the pile of manure, it was floating, so I got a good ducking in not too-clean water.

BROTHER GEORGE

Shortly after the April flood, Brother George took sick, first with a cold, and he had to lay off from his job on the section. About the first of June, he thought the Macon doctors could help him, so he, Lin, and the little boys went back to her folks and he seemed to be better. They came back around the fourth of July and stayed with Mother and Dad. He got so thin that Mother could lift him like a baby. He never complained and seemed cheerful to the end. He died August 2nd, 1896. There never was a better boy than George. Lin left shortly after George's death and lived with her folks. I never saw her again and have seen only one of the boys, Frank, who came to Dosia's wedding in April, 1914. Ona and I attended the wedding.

Here ends the journal as written by Mother--and the following pages were written by Ona.

The years following John's birth were somewhat difficult; with crop failures on Grandpa's farm, Dad running the dray line and trying to farm; usually making a very good living for the family.

On July 10, 1899, Edna Blanche was born and brought a lot of happiness to our home She was a tiny baby,but was a very active child and began walking when she was only seven months old. Dad and Arthur were her protectors and could not have her hurt; so I think she got less punishment than most of the children.

In 1900, Dad sold our home - again planning to go to Oklahoma, but the plans fell through once more. We moved to the Kinchi place and lived there for a year and a half.

On November 27, 1902, Joseph Archibald was born. He was a beautiful,quiet little fellow, with big gray eyes and wavy hair.

When school was out in May, 1903, we were on our way. We now had two covered wagons, seven horses, two cows and eight children. Usually there were two, or more children walking and driving the cows. Arthur was working in Alma, Nebraksa, so we went through there to pick him up on the way.

It was a rainy season. One time we camped in a school house for a week. We arrived in Plainville, Kansas at the beginning of harvest. I think the folks had

decided it was a big undertaking to move with such a large family, so they rented a farm - a place owned by Jonas Sandberg. They liked the country and the people; so decided to stay. We lived there for four years.

In June, 1904, Jennie was married to Charlie Ross. On January 14, 1905, Winifred Merle was born. Bess, who was present at her birth, said Dad was as proud and happy as if she were the first instead of the ninth child. She was a big, healthy baby, and the joy of all our hearts. She was named for Winnie Barry, an Irish lady who lived on the adjoining farm. Six months later, Lewis, Jennie's firstborn and the Reilly family's first grandchild was born.

Bessie and Dick Osmon were married in 1906 and moved to Grainfield, where Dick had a homestead.

Grandpa Jennings passed away in the winter of 1906. Mother and the two little ones went back to the funeral. Grandma visited us the next spring in Plainville.

Neither Mother nor Dad were happy away from Rawlins County. In 1907, we were on our way back. This time, we settled southwest of the town of Atwood, on a farm belonging to Mr. Richardson.

How happy we all were to be with our own people again! Uncle Clell and Aunt Jose Alley lived on the Divide, only a few miles away. Their family now consisted of Jim, Grace, Don, Lance, Larry and Gay. What good times we had with them! We were near enough to Herndon for Mother's brothers and sister and Grandma Jennings to come often. Life was good for the Reillys--once again!

After a year, Dad bought the farm. It was a lovely place on the South Beaver; a four-room house, nice big barns and wonderful big trees, for which the children were thankful, since they made such wonderful places to play. Mother always wanted us at home, but we could have our many friends there, so our place was always the social center in the neighborhood. It was an easy matter to gather a crowd for a dance or party and what good times we had!

I think the folks were quite prosperous for a few years. We had nice herds of cattle and horses, raised alfalfa for seed and hay and farmed wheat on the Divide.

Edna, Archie and Winnie grew up on the farm, rode horses like Indians, lassoed and rode the calves, climbed trees and had a good childhood. All of them started to the little school across the road from our place.

Grandma Jennings was with us the last year of her life. Mother took care of her many months before she passed away in 1910.

Dad was not well for a few years, took very ill on Thanksgiving Day and passed away January 19, 1914. How we missed him, his Irish wit, his warm understanding and his loving kindness!

COLORADO

After Dad's death, Mother decided to sell the home place in Rawlins County and take a homestead in Colorado - where Jennie, Jose, Arthur and Ona all had claims. She bought a relinquishment and in the following May, she moved to Colorado.

Colorado was really beautiful at that time. It was all prairie. There were many antelope and rabbits on the plains.

Arickaree was about half-way between Flagler and Akron. A trip to town was an event; we always went in the wagon to bring a load of supplies back. We would start at daybreak and arrive in town late that evening. It was another long day's trip back. Needless to say, it was a hard trip-and one that we didn't care to make over once a year.

Looking back, they were happy, carefree years. We had the Heinzles and Lizzie and Johnny Fassenegger for neighbors. Jennie now had four children and lived near. When Lizzie, Johnny and Richard moved to their place across the road from Mother's, we learned to love them as our own.

Our years on the homestead were pleasant; they farmed wheat in Kansas for several years. Mother always loved to go back to Rawlins County. Bessie and Dick lived in Atwood. Our winters were busy with school, chores and reading and an occasional dance or party. John and May were married in November and Edna and Rube in December, 1916.

Arthur got home from the war in July, 1919. How happy she was to have him safely home! He did not stay long. He went back to Atwood and he and Mertie were married in October.

Archie had grown to be a big, good-looking, hard-working boy. He did all of the farming now. One morning, early, he called Mother to help him. Sam, the stallion, had his foot caught in the grain drill. He was gentle, so instead of putting a halter on him, Mother put her arms around his neck to hold him. When he was freed, he threw his head up and Mother was thrown some distance away. Her back was badly hurt. Dr. Wheeler said she would never walk again, but with her usual courage, she was determined to not be a burden. First on crutches, then a cane and then success! She was always troubled with her back after that, however.

She sent Winnie to Fort Collins to school that fall. The following year, she sold her place and with Archie and Winnie, moved to Fort Collins where the children went to school. She kept boarders during the school term and in the summer, worked at Steads Hotel in Estes Park. Later, she moved to Strasburg with Ona and Emmit, and later to Denver.

In the spring of 1930, she went to Truckee, California, where Archie and Ona lived. While in California, she visited her sister, Clarissa and Lib's family. Later, she took care of an invalid lady in San Francisco for a number of years.

She grew homesick for her family and went back to Colorado. She and Jennie bought the Home Cafe in Strasburg. It was during the dust storms and depression, so they had a hard time. Later, they sold the cafe and she moved to Denver, where she spent the remainder of her life.

On February 8, 1947, she lost her first child, Archie. Then John was taken on November 26, 1949.

Her last years were peaceful and happy - so many of her children were near. She didn't grow old in spirit and had many young friends as well as old. She lived in the house at 267 Galapago Street for fourteen years. That was where she passed away on March 30, 1951; just shortly after her eighty-fifth birthday.

She left sixty-seven living descendants, all of whom knew and loved her and feel that they have lost their best friend and counselor.

THE END