

CHAPTER 9

It was a year of much fluctuation in spirits; in spite of the gloomy outlook in the weather conditions, there was rejoicing over the fact that the outside world would be brought still closer with the changing of the railroad tracks from a narrow gauge to standard gauge. Flowing gas wells were attracting manufacturing companies to Indiana in search of cheap fuel; and a few homes in Fort Wayne, Marion, Kokomo, Portland and other surrounding towns were being lighted by gas.

One evening after laying aside the Bluffton Chronicle, Sam challenged Jim to a few games of checkers. They had a habit of doing their best thinking while studying the plays, besides, Sam was currently on the low end of the scoring, and needed a chance to prove that Pap was still the champion checker player.

“What do you think of that gas and oil situation, son?” he asked at the first exchange of ‘jumps.’

“I don’t know, but I wish I had about a thousand acres now to do some testing.”

“I’m thinking of selling the farm and moving closer to town. There’s a lot of excitement about the Trenton rock gas, but I don’t believe it will reach this far North.”

Jim thought carefully before replying, “I don’t see why you want to sell now. You know they’re finding petroleum in some of those wells.”

“Yes, but the drillers don’t want to bother with that now. Sara and I are getting older. The store has furnished us a good living – I guess it’ll continue to satisfy our wants. I’d like to build her a house close to town.”

Sam got to his first king and slipped in behind two of Jim’s red men, thus being assured of getting one more of his opponent’s checkers. Jim winced and said, “I ought to know better than to leave that kind of play open to you. By the way, do you have any particular property in mind?”

Mr. Croasdale would sell me 50 acres for the same price he paid A. J. Johnson when they moved to Kansas.”

“Fair enough,” Jim commented. They had been discussing Delaware County, where the oil was being developed when found. And there were rumors about an oil company forming in Wells County. Only a few days after this they heard of a big well in Terre Haute, which shot a solid stream of oil 4 ½ inches in diameter 40 to 50 feet in 22 minutes. Even though this happened more than a hundred miles away, the enthusiasm was contagious. Every farmer began to want a well drilled on his land; in a short time 8,000 acres in the county were leased by the Northern Indiana Oil Company.

John Mounsey did not live to see the oil boom. Two sons and a son-in-law were named as executors in his will. Forty acres, a cow, chickens and two hogs, plus 100 bushels of wheat were set aside for the widow; the balance of his assets were to be distributed equally among his heirs. Eliza encouraged her daughter, Mary Ann, and son-in-law Breck Osborn to move into the Mounsey homestead with her. By this time they were the proud parents of a fair sized family; in addition to the baby Rollin, they had John, Mae and Pearl. So they purchased the other children’s shares and once again Breck was living in the house where he had been a boarder.

The little town of Montpelier seemed to be the center of the oil excitement. For about 15 miles or more in all directions, wells were steadily flowing, pushing the total output for the State toward the million barrels mark. By now the gas supply was waning and it became clear that it would fail. But towns changed overnight. A wild abandonment of the more quiet ways characterized the towns where strangers flocked to get in on the ground floor. A test well in Chester Township revealed such an abundance of oil as was never dreamed of. Prices soared and the farmers for miles around made it their practice to market butter and eggs where they could receive the most for their money. Mt. Zion was drawing some of Sam’s trade away because of the excitement that prevailed, and the higher prices. Many wells were now producing 40 to 60 barrels of oil a day and it appeared that the field might even reach the city of Bluffton.

News of the oil discoveries kept the Bell Telephone Company busy. The plant was enlarged and new wires replaced old ones, but Liberty Center, only eight miles away, was not connected with the new communication system because no one had organized a local company.

The ambitious John Wesley Rinear was preparing his campaign for the office of state senator on the Democratic ticket. Sam and Jim were keenly interested in the national Republican administration, but they did not aspire to any political office.

Sam had no trouble finding a buyer for his farm, and now at the age of 57, he bought 54 acres one-half mile East of the center of town, and decided to enlarge into the lumber business also. William Baumgartner was hired to build a modest house on the new location. He was told to work out the details with Sara, who kept the size down to a small square with just enough room for three tiny bedrooms to the side and back of the kitchen and a sitting room. The trend of construction was now toward ornate dwellings with large porches and much decoration to show the prosperous times, but Sara was interested mainly in a good fireplace, where she continued to do much of the family cooking. It was a move that interested her far more than she expected for there were many aspects of the new house that would lighten her chores. With great anticipation she watched the progress of the contractor and began sorting and packing – making ready for the move. She was also watching the romance of her Uriah, and was not in the least surprised when he told her that he was going to have a house built in town.

It all started a few months prior when Jim took a sled for some wood Southeast of town. The teacher at the Masterson schoolhouse had just taken her children out to recess. She waved to her former schoolmaster and he stopped the horses. “Could it be possible this tall, dark-complexioned woman was Eli and Emma Smith’s daughter?” he asked himself. “The little girl I whipped for chewing gum in class?” It was! Evidently Sabina held no grudge against him. Her smile completely disarmed the serious bachelor. He asked her if she would go for a sleigh ride that evening and she accepted. Since that first evening together, they had been in each other’s company often.

Several quilts were already finished and stacked in a corner for the great day when he would take a wife, but Sara began still another and had it mostly finished by the time moving day rolled around.

In the Smith household fingers were steadily weaving and stitching. A shopping trip was made to Bluffton for just the right kind of material for the wedding dress, and at the end of each day of teaching, Sabina joined her

mother in making painstaking stitches. They had selected a very fine purple wool, called Henrietta goods. Tiny seams were stitched close together in the waist; each seam was trimmed in white plush and a stay was inserted to make it stiff. The basque was platted about six inches down and was lined, then bound with more white plush. Then they made a full-skirted plush coat and finally, a small hat of the same purple wool also trimmed with the white.

'Biny' as JU called her, adored her small sister, Jenny. But she endured the younger brothers' heckling. Nevertheless Charles and Herb helped gather rags which were being woven into carpets. Finally the house was completed and furnished with their own furniture. Sabina's dishes were carefully placed on the cupboard shelves.

It was a cloudy Saturday afternoon the 16th of January, 1892 when guests began to gather at the Smith home. Just before the Rev. Winans pronounced Jim and Sabina man and wife, the sun suddenly shone in, and the 19 year old Sabina knew that her marriage was right.

The oil boom continued at a terrific pace, some farms producing 100 barrels a day, but another type of excitement also broke upon the community – typhoid fever!

When Sam's 19 year old son became ill with the dreaded typhoid, they were confident he would recover in a short time, but, though Sara kept a careful watch over him, Samuel Moses grew steadily worse and became delirious. It soon became apparent that he would not recover.

The men who gathered around the pot-bellied stove subdued their voices in appreciation for the worry which Sam was carrying; in many ways they tried to display a sympathetic attitude toward him. They fell to discussing the remaining swamps and the need for purer drinking water. They were behind the movement toward draining the Lost Lakes region in the Southern part of the county by digging a big ditch around the swamp. But the proposal of dredging Rockcreek appealed most to Sam. That creek which had figured in so many of his life long memories would be a real help to the farmers if it were deeper and could carry off more water. Typhoid must be stopped, perhaps this would be one of the best ways.

A Confederate veteran, Sam Lowdermilk, who had recently moved into the vicinity showed a very warm comradeship toward his grocer. He was getting

a good initiation into the discussion of Indiana politics for by this time Grover Cleveland occupied the White House for the second time and many events of national importance were taking place. Opinions were freely expressed both for and against the new President and the low tariff that was allowed to become law.

But it was the epidemics which must be brought under control. Last year two grown children in the Tarr family died with diphtheria. Sam and Sara were stunned at the death of Samuel Moses. It was their third burial recently, both Mr. and Mrs. Foust having been placed in the Batson Cemetery near Warren. Sara showed strain of the suffering they had experienced, and Sam showed more compassion for her moods.

Anna "Nancy" Schafer Foust died 24 September 1888 at age 84.

Jonathan Foust died 30 March 1890 at age 87.

Samuel Jackson (Jr.) died 22 October 1894 at age 19.

He sold his share of the tile mill and generally began to withdraw from the workaday world. Even the romances developing in his own household held very little interest for him. The two older girls, Anne and Rose, had long ago married the Voor brothers and moved away, now Ida had a suitor from the West, Dow Grove, and he was impatient to return to Wyoming. Amos, who had now reached the age of maturity, saw more and more of his Jenny Russell, but Sam didn't joke with the young folks or have much to say to them. Finally, only Charles Wesley was left at home. Although only 17 years old, he longed to join the land rush, and before long he, too, went West.

Anna Jackson Voor moved to Jackson Twp, Wells County.

Rose Jackson Voor moved to Salamonie, Bluffton, and later, Fort Wayne.

Ida E. Jackson married Lorenzo Dow Grove. The Grove family was from Indiana and had lived locally for some time. Ida and her husband stayed in the Wells County area, where their 3 children were born. Sometime between 1910 and 1920 when they did move to Casper, Wyoming. Ida apparently died between 1921 and 1930. The widower, Lorenzo Dow Grove, along with some of his children, lived in Indiana (Fort Wayne) again by 1930.

Charles Wesley Jackson lived in Indiana until after 1904. His first two children were born in Indiana before he and Maud moved to Robinson, IL.

Sometime after 1910 the family moved to Oklahoma. Charles worked in the oil fields of both Illinois and Oklahoma.

Sam was seldom asked to recount his experiences of the Civil War; at times, in fact, he felt pushed out of the main stream of life. His stoop became more noticeable and his eyes seemed to be recessed even deeper. Although the town continued to grow, much of the trade was being carried to booming Mt. Zion.

Then, as if it weren't enough to lose his son to the wilderness fever, trouble again besieged the Jacksons. Anna Voor, now ill and weak returned with her four girls and before long she was laid beside the other departed members of the family. Sadie, Zippie, Ruth and Mable now looked to their grandparents for food and shelter. It brought Sam once again into a competitive spirit and he began to pay a couple cents more per dozen for eggs to get the trade of his former customers. In order to be near the folks and give all the assistance possible, Jim and Sabina sold their little house in town and moved into the woods on the back forty acres. Here their firstborn child arrived, and Sam was delighted with the boy Cecil.

This is Anna's family in the 1900 Federal Census:

IN, Wells Co., Jackson Twp
ED 144 SH 12 Ln 84

John C. Vore	Head	W M	July	1862	37	OH	OH	PA	Oil Laborer
Anna E.	Wife	W F	Aug.	1861	39 6/5	IN	IN	OH	
Carl F.	Son	W M	Aug.	1882	17	IN	OH	IN	
Vincent	Son	W M	Sept.	1884	15	IN	OH	IN	
Sarah J.	Dau	W F	Mar.	1887	13	IN	OH	IN	
Zipora	Dau	W F	Jan.	1890	10	IN	OH	IN	
Mabel E.	Dau	W F	Mar.	1893	7	IN	OH	IN	

As you can see, Anna had given birth to 6 children, five of whom were living in 1900; 3 girls and 2 sons. The records of Mossburg Cemetery tell us that there was a son who died in 1899, possibly less than two years of age, accounting for the 6th child mentioned in the census as deceased (the 6/5 on the line for Anna indicates she gave birth to six children and five were living at the time of the census). A child named Ruth never appears on census with this family.

Mossburg Cemetery listings also tell us that Anna died 20 February 1902. In addition there is a listing for an infant who died the same day. This would indicate Anna died in childbirth, along with her baby. Sadly, there is also a listing for the death of son, Carl F. Vore, for the same year just before Christmas– 22 December 1902. He would have been only 20 yrs. old.

After this disastrous year, Anna's husband, John Charles Voor, moved to Bluffton and remarried by 1904. He fathered two boys with his second wife Amanda.

If some of Anna's children lived with Sam and Sara for a time, they had moved on by 1910, when the census shows us Sam and Sara living alone. However, it does appear that James Uriah ("Jim") stayed nearby and raised his family in Liberty Township. First son, Cecil, was born in 1892, however, 10 years before his Aunt Anna's death.

While holding the little grandson on his lap one day, Sam felt his youthful spirit return. He was thinking about the completion of Bluffton's \$125,000.00 courthouse and the fact that ex-President Harrison would soon appear on the steps there. "Every able bodied man will be there to hear him! Why he and I served in the same battles around the siege of Atlanta. And that's not all. His grandpappy and mine were both in Detroit during the War of 1812. I'm going to hear Benjamin Harrison, do you know that?" he said aloud.



Wells County Courthouse, 1891

<http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~inwells/bio/1887/610-624.html>

BLUFFTON.

The place is beginning to don the style of a city by the erection of fine three-story business blocks, as the Curry, in which are the opera hall, post office, etc.; Tribolet's and McFarren's; the Centennial, built in 1876, and named from its being erected during the centennial year of our national

independence; in it are the Banner printing office, other offices and stores, etc., and the Hale Block. This and McFarren's Block, the two latest, were erected in 1881.

.....There are two building associations in Bluffton,—the Excelsior, organized in 1883, and the Nonpareil, in 1886. Of the first, George F. McFarren is President, and James P. Hale, Secretary. Of the other, J. J. Todd is President, and John B. Welty, Secretary.....

Bluffton Assembly of Knights of Labor, No. 6,282, was organized April 14, 1886, in a rear room of the Centennial Block, with thirty-two charter members; W. P. McMahan, Master Workman; E. B. McDowell, Worthy Foreman, and J. B. Poffenberger, Recording Secretary. Efforts had been previously made, but without success, in 1882 and 1884, to establish an assembly at Bluffton. The difficulties to be encountered were peculiarly embarrassing. J. V. Hiler, of Fort Wayne, State organizer, was the presiding officer on the above occasion. The membership growing, the assembly moved to a larger room in the Deam Block, and afterward to a still better place in the McFarren Block. Present membership, 375, and rapidly increasing.

After the big day of Harrison's appearance, Sam began to participate more freely in the talk around his stove. He was interested in another political figure – the successful candidate for governor of North Dakota, who had been the drummer boy in Sam's 75th regiment.

Benjamin Harrison ended his presidential term in 1893.

The men around the cracker barrel were worried about the great depression that hit most of the nation, but was not felt so keenly in their own vicinity because of the oil boom, and they were concerned about the boldness of the union leaders in declaring railroad strikes. Some were ridiculing Indiana's Eugene Debs for his part in the Pullman Strike, while at the same time admiring his sensitive nature that made him one with all suffering humanity.

The Pullman Strike was in May of 1894.

There were many different reasons attributing to the distress in which the nation found itself, among them were the low tariff. There was a threatened

hoarding of gold, and panic in the stock exchange; England unloaded securities it had held, but in Wells County fortunes were still mad overnight, and hope were crushed or fulfilled with the completion of every well drilled.

The great Chicago fair had men's curiosity aroused and some were preparing to attend; a giant Ferris wheel was making its initial appearance at the Exposition.

The Chicago Worlds fair was in 1893.

"You haven't seen your grand nephew, have you?" Sam said to Sara one day when he was trying to persuade her to accompany him to Bluffton and buy a taffeta dress from her nephew in the clothing business there.

"No, and little Earl is nearly three," she replied. "Oh, Sam, if only you ..." then she caught her tongue, but he had been quick to notice the frown and asked her to continue. "Well, Rachael and I love each other dearly. But you and Jacob just can't lay politics aside long enough for us to have a good visit together. That's why I say 'no' when you ask me to go with you."

Earl Reider McFarren, son of George, was born 15 May 1884. He was later a clothier in Bluffton.

Sara's sister, Rachel Foust McFarren, died 10 October 1872; her husband Jacob McFarren, our great grand uncle, died 17 August 1895.

"I'll try," Sam said, "honest I will. Sometimes at the store I have to shut up when it's not easy, so I can do it for your sake too."

After the purchase of the new taffeta dress Sam promised her, she never again let her clothes look faded or untidy. There were occasional new dresses, always the rustling taffeta, and Sara found a new enjoyment in looking her loveliest. She had straight hair parted in the center, and even though it was almost white, her face did not appear to be old.

Taxes were now \$47.70 each six months, and the ditch assessment of \$130.00 plus interest had to be met. Sam approached Charles Cole about buying part of his land, and sold him eight acres for \$400.00.

Then one day a stranger came boldly up to Sam, asking him if he were a brother of Levi Jackson. Sam studied his face for a long instant and replied in the affirmative. "I'm William," he said and smiled faintly. "Father told me if I ever needed help to go to you."

"You can tell me your troubles later, boy. Let me take you down to meet Sara. She loves boys." But after supper they did not discuss any trouble – the boy looked so tired they put him in bed and postponed the talk for the morrow.

In the privacy of their own bedroom Sam opened the subject of his nephew's mission, "Should we take him in, Mam? I don't know what he is like."

"I don't think he has done anything wrong, he's probably just down on his luck," she replied in a low tone. "Besides, I thought you would do anything for Levi."

"Anything within reason, yes. But if brother Mose is still living, why didn't he go there instead of coming clear up North to us?"

Moses Jackson was living in Dallas, TX, at the turn of the century, and had been in TX since before 1880. He also served in the Civil War, by the way. Moses died in 1909 in Dallas.

Levi died in 1899 in Nebraska. His wife died a couple years before. No record is found in any of the census that Levi had a son named William. He had 6 children, including 4 sons, the youngest, Benjamin Franklin Jackson, was born about 1868.

"Maybe he was curious about the land where his ancestors settled; or maybe it's a personal reason."

"I suppose that's right, he told me at the store that his Pa said he should seek me out if he needed help." They soon fell asleep knowing that the answer would be in his favor, and that they would have the responsibility of one more mouth to feed.

While cooking breakfast the next morning, Sara began to develop a plan in her mind which would be kept a secret until the way seemed clear to fulfill it.

William's interest lay in the drilling of oil wells where he soon found employment and friends. He rented a horse and buggy from the livery stable to take the girls riding on Saturday nights and found many little ways in which he could help Sara to repay for her kindness.

Sara loved the new home and continued adding her own touch to the surroundings. Gooseberries and rhubarb were the first plants she had set out to grow. Now she was ready to transplant some snowball and mock orange bushes that a neighbor had given her. Sam lingered over breakfast and even asked if she had another cup of coffee.

"Yes, but what's the matter, Pap? Aren't you feeling so well this morning?"

"I'm fine, but thought if I stayed around maybe you'd have something for me to do before I go down to the store. It's peaceful here with you."

"My, how you're changing! Do you really want to help me a bit?" she teased, then added quickly, "I'd like to have a few holes dug along the West end of the garden plot."

"More flowers?"

"Yes, Mrs. Croasdale knows how I like them and she gave me some sprouts."

"You like it here, don't you, Mam?" he said. "Friends close by and all that."

"Sure do. Widow Dunaway and I have many peaceful moments after the work is done." Reference was to the family of children in the woods across the road whose mother brought them back from the West where her husband died.

"Smoking your pipes, I suppose?"

"Ssh, Sam, not so loud. Has anybody been talking to you about my pipe? I didn't think the others knew it."

"Nobody ever mentioned it to me; don't get aroused! Now I'll go spade up a little ground, and you make a list of things I should bring from the store."

At the store that day an unusual amount of sociable conversation took place. Eli Smith came after a plug of tobacco, but mostly to discuss the mutual grandsons, Cecil and Clayton, and their childish pranks.

William Heckman and Robert Croasdale talked about the gold rush in the Klondike region of Canada. William's first wife and child died, and he had recently married the widow Lydia (Croasdale) Mendenhall; her little daughter Elsie was a delight to her stepfather.

Then Mr. Croasdale ventured a remark about the development of a U. S. Navy. He said his wife, who came from a family of schoolteachers, had been reading about the importance of sea power in the destiny of a nation. "We're behind the building of great ships," he declared.

William and Eli's mother, Catherine, had been so very glad when her husband Sam Heckman, returned from the California gold rush and she tried to discourage her sons from getting the fever for the Canadian gold.

More kegs were brought out from behind the counters, until there was very little space left for the ladies who entered with their market baskets on one arm and perhaps holding a child with the other hand. Occasionally some gallant male would 'beg pardon' and stand up to let the customers have access to the counter space.

Then a kind looking man of small stature appeared at the side door, as if looking for someone in particular. "Come in, Elias," called Sam, "we haven't seen you in quite a while."

And Eli Smith extended his hand to his brother-in-law. "You have a better look in your eyes, I'm glad to see it." Mr. Rinear accepted the handshake and declared that he did, in fact, feel much better.

Just last year he had lost his lovely daughter in another typhoid fever epidemic, and like Sam, was several months before he could again take an interest in the regular discussion of politics and national affairs. But when the drive for contribution to Nebraska's draught-stricken people was begun, and he was asked to solicit funds, it gave him the impetus to overcome grief. Ever since then, he had felt very close emotionally to all the Nebraska people, and this particular day a note of rejoicing was detected in his tone of voice.

“You know that Senator, William Jennings Bryan, from Nebraska is really taking the country by storm.”

“Some think he’ll be our next president,” ventured Eli.

And Elias answered, “Do you know that he’s going to appear in Bluffton the third week of October? I can hardly wait to hear him.”

“I’ll be there too,” said Eli immediately, his keen gray eyes bright with interest in the youthful orator.

But Sam spoke up, “Just a minute there, County Commissioner, it’s the Republican’s turn to elect the man for the White House. Haven’t you noticed that for the last twenty years we’ve been alternating in Indiana – first Democrat, then Republican. It’s too bad if you have a good man running, but it’s the wrong year.”

“Now, Sam, look here. You’re going to cross the ticket some time, it might as well be this election. Mr. Bryan says we can have just as good a government as we desire, and he’s the man to lead us. Read his “Cross of Gold” speech and decide for yourself.”

Heckman then added a bit more spice to the talk and asked Elias Rinear how it happened that his respected father was such a staunch Republican, but all his sons turned out to be Democrats.

“This silver plank in the Democratic platform is just one example, neighbor, and there are lots more.”

“Your brother John certainly mad several Republicans cross lines,” added Eli, the pale farmer with finely chiseled features. We’re glad he’s down in Indianapolis representing us in the Senate.”

“Yes, he won by a large majority, but I’m as ambitious as he is. Nevertheless I’m going to give all I have to getting out the vote for Senator Bryan.”

Another old settler joined the circle. He was Jacob First, who held the reputation of being the only early settler who retained ownership of his original ground.

I supposed you went with your daughter and John Wesley to Indianapolis, Jake,” Mr. Croasdale said.

“No, I’d rather stay and take care of the house here. Won’t be in anybody’s way then,” he said slowly and deliberately.

Perry Mounsey, son of the Little Englishman, entered with a very erect bearing. The beard on his plump, well shaped face was trimmed neatly and he intended to stay only long enough to inquire whether someone knew the whereabouts of the new high school teacher, but the discussion of oil was thrown into the air, and somebody said, “Tell us about that fancy new house you’re building, Mr. Mounsey. Do you own all the wells around Keystone?”

“Only two,” Perry answered, “and as for the house – well, our family is growing, we need lots of room.” Then he continued. “Have you gentlemen heard that Indiana is expected to pass the four million mark this year? Just think of it, over four million barrels of oil!”

“I guess we’re making the southern part of the State sit up and take notice,” said Commissioner Rinear. “And when they see Bluffton’s paved streets they’re really goin’ to be green with envy.”

“Our wives think that’s about the best improvement in several decades,” declared Heckman leaning far forward on his keg of salted fish. “Do you know how far they will extend the asphalt?”

“We plan about four miles. \$160,000.00 that’s enough to spend now, isn’t it?”

“Yes, I guess so.”

Somebody asked about the other members of John Mounsey’s family and Perry explained that most of them had settled nearby. Thomas was in Mt. Zion and Bruce was preaching at South Liberty Christian Church. Elijah’s widow had married John Godfrey. Mary Ann, the only girl of the younger family, was much in demand whenever sickness visited the neighborhood or a new birth was imminent.

When Mounsey walked out, John Funk, the robust druggist, stepped in to leave his wife's grocery list.

"This looks like Pennsylvania day," he said. "Let's see, Eli, you were born in Westmoreland Co. where my father came from, weren't you? And Mr. First, there must be a good reason why so many of you left that historical section for this new State."

"My father-in-law was born there too," Sam added. "Just a generation after the many Indian raids which were so treacherous about this time of year."

Jacob First, who had held every office in the township except assessor, then said, "if you could see the rocky ground we had to till, you'd now why we left. Those who wrote back telling about the richness of the soil and the climate here would invite us to come, but not urge it. Every family had to be responsible for its own decision."

"Our children won't know how good they do have it, will they?" said John Funk. "Now with our graded high school, we're really going modern."

"I understand Keystone is getting a full 12 year school too," said another. "Soon all the little villages in the county will be doing the same."

Someone asked Sam why they never see his brother, Hiram, around the store. But Sam couldn't give a good reason. "We just don't see things alike," he said. "But he has a might sweet little girl – Cora."

Before the group broke up they talked about the Hawaiian Islands away out in the Pacific Ocean. Some thought the United States should annex them, while others declared emphatically, it was enough just to recognize the new republic.

They also discussed two Hoosier citizens who were gaining fame – one as a poet and the other as a champion of the railroad workers. Someone had a copy of James Whitcomb Riley's "When the Frost is on the Punkin" and told how he had been called for six encores at the New York National Arts Club when he appeared as Mr. Nye's guest. And another observer commented upon the poet's invitation to the White House, extended by Mrs. Grover Cleveland.

Sam said, “How do you like his lines about Gene Debs holding his warm heart out in his two hands?”

“Now there’s a man for you,” said another. “He’s no more of a revolutionist than I am – he just wants to see the underdog get fair treatment.” Some agreed with him, adding that the sympathy strikes would NOT have turned into riots had not the Chicago hoodlums been deputized; others saw the picture from a different viewpoint and expressed their hope that he would never be successful. Under the leadership of Samuel Gompers, the American Federation of Labor was making important changes in the status of the workingman’s daily life, and the recent Haymarket Riot showed what far reaching circumstances could arise from the presence of a few radicals in any group.

Likewise, the conversation of a peaceful group of neighbors sitting around the stove of a country store could very easily turn into heated arguments unless a levelheaded observer would change the topic of conversation. A happier subject at this time was the World’s Fair in Chicago, celebrating the 400th anniversary of the landing of Columbus. The electric lights and the beauty of the buildings continued to delight the great crowds that gathered, thus this event also came in for its fair share of the talk in surrounding villages.

As Sam predicted, it was the Republicans who elected the President the following election. William McKinley had the support of conservatives in the East and defeated the popular Mr. Bryan.

Sara enlarged upon her plans for Sam’s vacation; when the time was right, she told him about her savings. By the time he got around to making the trip to the West, a great protest had been waged because the United States battleship MAINE was sunk in the Havana harbor. There were some, who like President McKinley tried to keep the peace, but the pressure was too strong and once again the nation was at war! The Spanish-American War soldiers had one of the world’s most famous marches, The Stars and Stripes Forever, composed for them at sea by John Phillip Sousa.

During her husband’s absence, Sara entertained and cared for her four motherless granddaughters: Sadie, Zipora, Mabel, and Ruth Voor. She also became better acquainted with Mary Ann Osborn.

It was at JU's hardware store one day that the two ladies fell into conversation. Mary Ann had walked the distance of three miles to buy, among other things, a cut glass dish for the center of her sideboard, and she was inclined to rest awhile before walking back. In the few years since her marriage to Breck, six children had been born to her, and she loved to talk about them. Her ready smile and red hair still kept her youthful looking. They talked of the oil wells. Six or seven had been drilled on the Osborn farm with two producing in the vicinity of 100 barrels a day, and they discussed the amazing progress of the countryside in appearance.

Mary Ann asked, "Did your nephew tell you that he ate at our house last week? Ma thinks he is a very likeable young man."

"Yes, he said he liked the atmosphere in your home. William has fit into our family just like one of us," Sara replied.

But it was that very evening that word was brought to Sara about the tragic accident that ended his life. A pipe hit him with such force that he did not regain consciousness. She longed for Sam, even though she knew that he would not have been able to do anything. Sorrow had come upon them so many times in her lifetime; each time she made herself keep as cheerful as possible for the sake of the living, but now without Sam she let the pain cut and churn inside her. It would be like this, she reasoned, for every one who was left alone to face the end of life without the helpmate. That very thought brought the tears that were so near the surface. During the children's bedtime hour she had been calm and brave, but now she was weak and lonely. Perhaps there were many things she could have done to help to the boy; maybe he needed a counselor. No one, but God, would ever know.

That night she carelessly left a wet garment drying by the fire, something which she had never done before in all of her years in homemaking. About midnight the smell of the scorching floor brought her into full consciousness. She knew the flames were licking at the door. Before opening her bedroom door, she wakened the girls and told the oldest one to run quickly to Uriah! Opening the window, she placed each one through it safely, then grabbed the quilt from her bed and began to fight the flames. They were not high, but would have spread fast within the next few minutes. At sight of the smoldering chair, her nerve gave away. When JU came upon her squatted on the floor, he was perplexed as to the reason. All signs of the fire were gone, except in the well controlled fireplace; the house was not

dense with smoke, but there was his mother quivering as if everything had been lost.

“Come, Mam, are you all right?” he asked tenderly.

“It’s only that my carelessness could have cause these children to die in their beds,” she cried between long gasps of breath. “I was calm enough until I saw the chair and remembered that I left a nightgown drying there. What has happened to my reasoning, son?”

He picked her up and placed her on the couch, “It isn’t likely to happen again and nothing is wrong in your mind. Now, would you like to come to our house for the rest of the night?”

“No, goodness me. You’ve had enough excitement; I hope this hasn’t harmed Biny’s condition. Sent the girls back. Thank you for coming so quickly.”

“You know how I love you,” he said. Soon he was back with the youngsters and helped to get them settled. When he was sure that they were breathing regularly, he and his mother had a prayer together and whispered “goodnight.”

The jingle of the telephone lines recently installed brought everybody else to his telephone too, with remarks like, “I wonder what is wrong at the Jamison household,” or “Harry, see if that’s the news about Jennie’s baby.” The Liberty Center telephone exchange had been organized mainly by farmers, and the manager, Mr. Brown, had the exchange board installed in an extra room of his home.

Sam returned from the West pleased with the train ride and his visit, but absolutely content to stay at home the rest of his days. “You’re more precious to me, every year,” he told Sarah. “I never want to leave you again.” He had received cordial treatment from his brother, but he soon found that the two of them looked at life differently, and had little in common except their parentage.

A new grandchild, Ethel, had been born during his absence, bringing JU and Sabina’s total to three children. But all was not well in JU’s household, for an epidemic of dysentery was going through the town. Both preachers were

conducting the last services for many as two to four children each day. Cecil and Clayton had thus far escaped the terrible disorder, but the baby Ethel was very weak and almost lifeless. Business at the hardware was neglected and every night JU walked the floor and prayed. Doctor Garrett was doing everything he could, but they could not seem to stop the further inroads of the disease.

Ethel was born 12 December 1897.

Then the oldest child grew ill with a fever and leg ach, he was not thought to be in serious trouble, for he did not have the dysentery symptoms. His mother brought his meals and tried to keep him cheered up, but he could not walk.

Eventually, however he was able to return to school on crutches, only to come home again with mumps. It was not until Cecil had over-exerted himself many years afterward, that he learned the disease that had manifested little outward harm, had really done serious damage to his heart.

When the baby began to improve and JU could again concentrate on his business, he sought contacts with fence companies, taking the dealership for one firm, and in other ways modernizing the hardware and lumber business. But the making of money was not his only goal. One day when he discovered that he had overcharged a customer two cents, he walked two miles that evening to repay the man.

Sabina had her own particular problems, the kind in which her husband could not fully share. She discovered that she was to become a mother again, and in July another baby boy was placed into her arms this one they named Charles Spurgeon.

Charles Spurgeon Jackson was born 18 July 1900.

News of McKinley's assassination coincided with the drawing up of Sam's will. He was not ill, only taking the right step toward insuring peace after he was gone. Taking John Funk with him as a witness, he appeared before H. J. Johnson, current Justice of the Peace, and began to write: "In the name of the Benevolent Father of all, I Samuel J. Jackson..." and he named James U. as executor.

JU's interests were many; people sought his advice as frequently as they purchased his goods. One day William H. Day, the Mossburg grandson who had visited in Sam's store and who had received from him the flytrap which had so fascinated him as a boy, came to talk to JU about his house plans. John Buckner's daughter, Minnie, had consented to marry him, and he wanted to surprise her with a new house, as the other young men of the town were doing. JU showed him the dressed lumber he had for sale, which was \$13.00 per thousand feet, but in his deliberate honest manner he said, "William, native timber is cheaper and better than any I have here."

"That's an unusual remark for a merchant to make," replied the surprised youth. "Mr. Jackson, you're actually advising me not to buy your product."

"Well, some people want the imported lumber, you know, and I have it to sell them. But when you come asking me what to use for your house, I can only give you my truthful opinion."

JU and Sabina, or Biny as people referred to her, began to talk about building a house of their own for their growing family, and they discussed the proper site. "Not too close to the business district," she said, "still not too far from the school building." There's a good sized property just south of the railroad tracks. It would give me enough space to build a shed for my lumber," JU mused.

"Why don't you inquire whether the owner would sell it, and his price?" Biny suggested. She seemed taller than ever since losing about twenty pounds.

The thought of a home built to their own choosing with inside plumbing and perhaps a second story airing porch, a basement for keeping butter and eggs and milk cool, and an attic for keepsakes, a spacious dining room and an extra living room – all of this brought a youthful look of expectancy to her eyes once again. It was one of Sabina's happiest periods of her life. She rode into Bluffton whenever the opportunity came, mostly to visit with her sister Jenny, who had married Ode Hughs. But also she liked to inspect the furniture and carpets, curtains and china, silverware and utensils on display in the modern shops there. But, in the midst of her happiness, sadness crept into her life, as it often does just when things seem to be going the best.

Eli Smith, now 73, fell victim to paralysis and within a few weeks grew rapidly worse. Biny drove the horse out to her mother's every day to help as

much as she could, but her father died. Charles was called home from Kendallville by telephone. Herbert was close by to help in every way possible. The new Pastor Smith of the Baptist Church preached Eli's funeral that 9th day of November, 1905.

Only three miles away, at the South Liberty Christian Church, another service was conducted. Eliza Merriman Mounsey, the Little Englishman's widow, died at the home of Mary Ann and Breck. Her obituary notice gave credit to the daughter and son-in-law who had moved into the home place to care for the aged mother, but Mary Ann knew that she, herself, had been on the receiving end more times than giving. How could she have taken care of her family through all their experiences without the assistance of her devout mother? She recalled those two weeks during which she had not removed her clothing to sleep because of the constant demands of sick children. She would really miss that extra pair of hands at the Sunday dinners when the house is full of company. She recalled that day when they all dressed in their best and rode in the wagon to the photographer. No time could be appropriate for her mother's death – not indeed. But now, when baby Zella was fretful and the older daughter wanted to get married, and her husband needed her help, where would she find the constant word of encouragement she had received from her mother?

Mary Ann opened the Bible and asked God to give her the grace to endure this separation. "I would not deprive her of the joy of meeting You, dear Lord, for she had been preparing for this and looking forward to heaven. The time she rode horseback 14 miles to put her letter in the Yankee Town Baptist Church, before the Liberty Center congregation was organized, that should be one of the things I recall now. She did that to have a church home, and now she had crossed over the bridge between life and death to be eternally at home with you. But Lord, you know our needs. These eight children You have given us have many needs. Breck is having such a difficult time breaking up the dry clods of earth.

Her brother just older than herself then rode in on horseback and brought his own cheerless spirit to be comforted. "Mary Ann, you're the one we'll come to now for help. Even though we're all grown up and married, we have heavy problems and it'll be just natural like to come here to you."

"Why Bruce, you're the one I look up to – you're the minister in the family."

“So I am, but preachers have great burdens, sister, I tried to tell you in that letter a while back to Ma. Ever since I’ve been called to that brick church South of here, I’ve been so full of indignation! People have everything they need now. They don’t seem to have any need of prayer meetings. Their church is bigger and finer than anything our fathers would have dreamed of, yet it’s a desperate case of spiritual leprosy.”

“I thought you gave them an hour and twenty minute sermon about that,” Mary Ann interrupted.

Catching her attempt at humor, the tall, thin Bruce then said, “Well, the medicine I’m giving them will neither kill or cure.”

It was spring when he came again. She led him out to the small room at the end of the kitchen, which they called the buttery, and set a plate of cookies and a glass of milk before him. All of the children were busy as usual. Rollin hoeing in the garden, Mae with a stick trying to persuade Nellie to “get in here and wash the dishes,” Nettie and Lela filling the wood box behind the big black range, and Pearl was adding the decorative touches to the freshly churned butter.

“You’re welcome to come here anytime, Bruce, all of you are,” said his sister.

It had been a most trying spring because of a waxy condition of the soil. Three horses were required to do the usual work of two. The two weary men came in from the field and tied the team of horses to the fence post. Breck greeted his serious, young brother-in-law, and John went to the pump for a cold drink.

“Do you have my shoes blackened, Nellie?” John asked his thirteen year old sister with the long black curls.

She answered, “You bet, and I know who you’re going to see.”

“You couldn’t” answered the confident, older brother.

“Oh yes, I could. Widow Minnich’s boy told me you’ve been coming to see his Ma.”

“Run along now and help Mae. She needs you.” He reached down to give her a little push in the right direction and added, “You’re always willing to help us men, but it’s the little girls that are supposed to be teaching you housework.” (Perhaps what is meant here is that Nellie was supposed to be learning housework from her older sister, Mae. Nellie Osborn turned 13 yrs old in October 1905.)

“Yes, it’s not fair, either,” muttered the girl, “housework is no fun.” However, she slowly put one foot in front of the other in the direction of the kitchen, and Mae threw away the peach twig she was holding in her hand.

The turn of the century had brought even more promise of progress – a subject open for debate – Henry Ford in Detroit and Mr. Haynes in Kokomo, Indiana had produced horseless carriages. At first, everyone who could, climbed a tree when one of the monsters came rattling down the road. Now two bicyclists in Dayton, Ohio were experimenting at Kitty Hawk, North Carolina with winged machines. Occasionally an automobile, which still seemed a winged thing, would come roaring down a road; if it passed a school, the children would jump up to watch it go by.

For the first time there was an indication of a diminishing supply of oil. Dry and abandoned wells exceeded the number of new wells drilled that year.

Sam Jackson was still very active in the organization of new businesses in the town, and a voluble observer of the political scene. At home, his wife, who was wise in the ways of children, spent much time with another grandchild, Robert Neil Grove.

When he came there needing rest and quiet, she taught him to do the chores, stocked cupboards of smoked ham, and often prepared a snack for him. Together they weeded the garden and watched the birds, picked bouquets of flowers and watched the clouds sail majestically across the sky. When the sky turned gray, they stayed indoors and she read or told stories to him. Sometimes he would fall asleep and then she would quietly go about her household duties, preparing supper for the four healthy schoolgirls, who would be home soon, and for Sam, who would be returning from his daily chat with the men of the village.

This mention of Ida Jackson Grove's son, Robert Neil, born in 1893, confirms that Ida and family remained in Wells County and did not move to Wyoming until probably after 1915.

Politics, depressions, and the prohibition of liquor trade were uppermost in his controversies. Through the persuasion of Governor J. Frank Hanley, the Indiana General Assembly passed a local option liquor law. When a hop and ale tavern opened in Liberty Center, a petition of remonstrance was circulated and enough signatures were obtained to bar saloons from the town. Once again Sam felt he had done his duty as he saw fit.

His son, JU, was also doing what he could do. When the people were suffering along with the rest of the nation in the 1907-08 depression, the hardware owner sent to Chicago for a barrel of salt port and distributed it free of charge.

For the first time in his life, Sam now scratched his voting ticket. A Democrat from Portland, John A. M. Adair, promised he would introduce a bill called for a dollar a day pension to soldiers, if elected as 8th District's Representative. He was elected, and the new Republican President, William Howard Taft, sent an ultimatum to the Congress to the effect that all appointments would be withheld until that bill was passed. William Jennings Bryan, although a very popular leader, had been unsuccessful in his three efforts to become President, as had Eugene Debs, Indiana's labor leader.

Bluffton already boasted of having three banks, and now Liberty Center felt mature enough to establish its own bank. The citizens fell into line behind the movement to organize it. Dr. Frank W. Garrett was chosen president, and a Covington, Kentucky man was selected as cashier. The town welcomed Mr. and Mrs. Ira Yelton by redecorating an empty house for them, and opening their hearts to the young couple from the South. When the Marion and Bluffton traction company began its run through the village, Mrs. Yelton became a familiar customer. It was she who made the trips to Bluffton for currency, always stopping at the grocery for a fresh bit of unwrapped spinach to lay on top of the cash in her shopping bag, and no one attempted to rob her.

In addition to his other activities, J. U. Jackson became a director in the new bank. However, it was his Sunday school class that filled his chest with pride. It was one of the biggest classes in the church, and his young men

were able and ambitions. Teaching them was a joy. Some expected to attend college and strike out in strange new occupations, some were continuing on their father's farms, but none planned on military service. It was inconceivable that a fierce World War would reach into the peaceful homes of America and draw the virile manhood from the home scene

JU and Sabina continued to build their big, frame house South of the railroad tracks, and they looked forward to moving day. Other plans were made and carried through; it was the year of Sam and Sara's golden wedding anniversary. The children gathered for a family dinner to honor their parents, and insisted upon a photograph of the couple.

After the meal, someone rose and asked Sam for his walking stick. Looking it over, the speaker said, "This isn't becoming for a man of your years and prosperity." Then looking over the entire group, he asked, "What shall we do about it?"

The answer came loud and strong, "Throw it away!"

But in its place, a gold-headed cane was brought out of hiding and presented to the bald, stooped, but keen-eyed head of the household.

At the Osborn household, the picture was not this happy. Measles had invaded the home, claiming first the life of the robust Lela, and then Breck – the father. Although the family knew he was not well, they were not aware that death was so near. One day he was sitting in his chair and passed away so suddenly that those in the room did not realize he was dead.

Sam and Sara's 50th wedding anniversary was 29 October 1907.

Lela Osborn died 21 March 1903.

Breck Osborn died 22 November 1907.

After this the smiles on the freckled face of the red haired Mary Ann were few. From now on life was to be much harder for her, raising the remaining children alone and managing an eighty-acre farm. The married daughter, Pearl Burns, came home temporarily, but her husband's work necessitated his being near the oil wells. Soon she and Fred returned to Robinson, Illinois. Breck's mother, Massa Maria Ramseyer, left shortly after the funeral to live with her daughter in Portland. Her sister, Emma Heckman, also a widow, came from Bluffton frequently. Mary Ann occasionally saw

her husband's brother, Frank, the one who had been nicknamed 'Uncle Happy,' but he too moved to Southern Illinois.

Inevitable changes were to follow in the family. Mae took over the household management. The 17-year old Rollin was called upon to do a man's work, along with his older brother, who had been farming for many years. The next younger one, Nellie, left her high school term unfinished because her services were needed at home, but the two younger girls, Nettie and Zella, were able to continue their studies. Each time Mary Ann knelt in prayer beside the new grave at McFarren cemetery, she felt stronger for the tremendous task that lay ahead, although the loneliness and grief that lay heavily on her chest seemed to have been there for eons.

Next it was Hiram Jackson who left his cares behind him at the age of 93.

Hiram Jackson died 4 August 1908. Born 28 September 1917, Hiram was just short of his 91th birthday. These dates are found in the McFarren Cemetery records and in his obituary, despite it's headlines:

THE EVENING NEWS, Bluffton, IN Aug. 4, 1908

"Pioneer Died At Age Of Ninety-three, Hiram Jackson's Death This Morning Due to Stroke of Paralysis,"

At ten o'clock this morning at his home a mile south and a mile east of Liberty Center, Hiram Jackson, one of the earliest of the county's pioneers and perhaps the first white man to make a permanent resident in Liberty township, passed away as the result of a stroke of paralysis with which he was stricken last Friday. He had been more or less subject to the ailment and a light seizure Friday in addition to the heavy infirmities of his ninety-three years made recovery an impossibility and he succumbed to a second attack this morning.

The decedent was a native of Montgomery Co., OH, where he was born in the year 1817, a son of James Jackson and wife. When he was but two years old the family removed to Delaware Co., IN. His boyhood was spent there and it was not until he attained his nineteenth year that the family came to this county. Shortly after they came here he made the acquaintance of Miss Mary Logan and after a friendship and courtship covering two years he and Miss Logan were married just after he attained his majority in 1838.

The young couple immediately took up some land in what was then a wilderness, which is now known as Liberty township and began to make a small clearing. At first there were no other white men within several miles of the place., but as settlers began to settle and the public life of the community began to develop, Hiram Jackson, as one of the foremost of the settlers and earliest resident, took an active part. His career has been connected with the growth of the county very closely for he had grown with the community and it has only been with the encroachment of advancing age that in the last few years his activity along this line had fagged. He was ever held in high respect and esteem by all who knew him and most revered by a wide circle of relatives.

As the fruits of the first marriage there survives Mr. Jackson's six children. They are Mrs. Mary McFadden of OK, J. L Jackson of Wells County, Nancy Ramsey of Ft. Wayne, Hiram Jackson, Jr. of Wells County, George Jackson, residing in the vicinity of Kingsland, and Mrs. Martha Gooding, residing in this county. In 1872, Mrs. Jackson passed away and a few years after the decedent was married a second time, his second bride being Mary Jane Osborn, who with one daughter, Mrs. Cora Gerwig, of Liberty Center, survive him.

Mr. Jackson had been a lifelong member of the Baptist church and throughout his long life his daily conduct was an exemplification of his belief. The funeral services will take place at the home Wednesday afternoon at 1:00 and the interment will occur in the McFarren burying ground.

(Obviously, “Mrs. Mary Ann McFadden of OK” was our great grandmother, Mary Ann McFarren, who lived in Noble Twp, Cleveland County, OK during that period of time.)

Sam retired from the store and passed his 76th birthday. He was still vigorous and found excuses to demand his time in town – at least part of every day. He lived to see the last of the new states admitted to the union, bringing the number of stars in the flag to 48. When the Methodist built their new house of worship, they asked Sam to speak at the dedication. However, he was not a public speaker. “I’ll give you all the information you want,” he said, “but you ask Wesley Rinear to do the speaking – he’d like that better than I would.”

By this time the Voor girls were beginning to grow up rapidly and were courted occasionally. The little grandson, who had been a daily caller,

moved from the area. For over a year his father had wanted to take the family back West, but Sara prevailed upon them to wait until the boy was stronger. She had used a bombardment of ideas to delay her son-in-law, one of her favorite arguments being based on the experience of other impatient youths who had left the Hoosier home only to find that it was the best. "You know what the Gavin boys say about Indiana farmland," she said. "They found nothing to compare with it in Kansas or North Dakota."

"Now, Mam," Dow Grove answered, looking straight at her, nevertheless a bit of merriment peeking out of the corner of his eyes, "You changed my coffee drink habit, but you can't change my mind about the West."

Lorenzo Dow Grove was in his mid to late 40's when the Groves moved to Wyoming. His son, Robert Neal Grove was possibly over 21.

"I'm not trying to make you forget the West – only pleading for a delay," she replied. And Dow Grove had yielded for a year's postponement, and the end of which time the young Robert Nell was again ready to face life's situations. His absence left a vacant spot in the hearts of both of his grandparents, but there were other events happening to keep them both occupied. JU and his family moved into the house and soon thereafter another little granddaughter arrived to capture Sam's heart. He came every day to see little Ruth.

Ruth was born 6 March 1910.

When she was six months old, the county was shocked by the tragic accident on the electric interurban line near the village of Kingsland. A great many light hearted people had crowded into car #233 bound for the Fort Wayne fair, but instead of meeting a Southbound limited on a siding, this packed railway car met it head-on. As the awful news was spread throughout the surrounding area, the roads and streets became blocked with buggies and a few automobiles. All business houses in Bluffton were closed the next day. The whole town was in deep mourning, and 39 graves had to be dug.

At the next presidential election, Taft received only eight electoral votes. Woodrow Wilson was made President as a result of the split in the Republican ranks. Already in Europe the situation was tense. There were many who believed that the United States would not be brought into the

trouble, even though peace was our President and he would not be able to withstand it long.

Another pioneer resident passed off the scene. She was Massa Maria Latamore Osborn Ramseyer, the cobbler's daughter who had been brought to the wilderness at the age of three, and survived two husbands, and who became the mother of fourteen children. Sam felt a little queer. Could it be that he would be the last original resident of the county? He had seen many changes, and expected to see many more. But it was disconcerting to be one of the few survivors of those swamp and disease-infested days when panthers and bears roamed the woods at leisure, and a few Indians still appeared from hiding places. He must not let this weigh on his mind!

Massa Maria died after 1910, when she appeared on census at age 74, with nine of her children still living. However, in the 1920 census, George M. Ramseyer was widowed and living with his daughter, Martha (married name Tester), so he outlived Massa Maria actually.

Sam had lately begun to understand some of the turmoil of his younger days, and even to appreciate that blustering spirit. It may have made him hard to live with, and for that he was sorry. But perhaps it was that very nature which made him appreciate the instruments of freedom his forefathers established for posterity. In his mind he often glimpsed a bridge connecting the twentieth century with that of the colonial days and the name of the bridge was his own. In some peculiar manner he felt that his Grandpa Sam, the Revolutionary soldier, had passed the torch on to him, even though he never saw the man. Those brave soldiers had done their part in giving the United States a noble birth; they spent their lives to give this nation its chance to survive. Now it was up to posterity to continue the dream of those who were courageous enough to defy the King of England.

One morning when he ambled down to the business district, a great commotion was stirring, for it was discovered that the bank had been robbed during the night. Sam saw his grandson slowly making his way toward the hardware store. "How are you feeling this morning, Cecil?" he asked with real concern.

"Oh, good mornin,' Grandpap. Well, I'm going to get rid of these crutches and get a job breakin' on the railroad." The youth with the clean cut face and thick black hair answered rather vehemently.

“Now, what’s eatin’ you on a crisp bright morning like this?”

“It’s just that I’m not making any money clerking in Dad’s store. I’ve got to have some spending money like the other young fellows.”

“Um’um, I recognize the signs,” replied the older man.

“You’re thinking I’ve got a girl, but that’s where you’re wrong. Who’d want a crippled liability like me?”

“There’s a lot of pretty girls around here. I see them riding to school in their buggies, and sometimes dressed up for a trip to Bluffton on the M & B. Why you receive invitations to parties and sleigh rides, etc. don’t you?”

The youth had to admit that he was included in the socials of the younger set, and that he had been among the top graduates of his class.

“Then, cheer up, boy. Life won’t always pass you by. If it’s a job on the railroad you want, go after it.”

Things happened fast after that for Cecil. Lying in bed night after night and hearing the trains go by, close enough to rattle the windows of the house, he fell into the motion of the wheels and determinedly made his own mind say in rhythm, “I will get well and strong, clackity, clack, clack, clack. I will get well and strong.” And he did become a brakeman, working east on the run to Defiance; getting a few hours sleep at the bunkhouse there, and returning on the net train west.

And an invitation to a very special party was extended to him, but he never received it. One day he was helping JU in the hardware when Mary Ann Osborn and her daughter, Nellie, entered. Cecil, who recognized his former classmate with the long black curls, told his father, “I’ll wait on them.” That day the skies were bright for him, and Cecil was wearing his best smile. But the icy reception he received from the young lady froze him almost to the spot, although her mother was gracious and friendly.

The two young people had been friends in the schoolroom, and Nellie was always very pleasant, but now her gray eyes were like steel and her chin was lifted defiantly. Cecil thanked them for the purchase and reminded them to

“call again,” but Nellie only replied tersely, “I didn’t think you were interested.” Then they were gone!

JU saw the droop of his son’s lips and the cloud come into his eyes. He stepped down from the ladder where he had been re-arranging merchandise on the shelves, and walked over to his firstborn, giving him a pat on the back.

“What can be wrong with her, Dad?” The bewildered young man asked.

“I don’t know, but if I cared, I’d go find out,” JU displayed a rare twinkle at the corner of his eyes, but the faint smile on his lips was concealed by his trim, black mustache.

“No, I can be just as cold as she is,” replied the son who had inherited his share of the Jackson temper.

“It’s your business,” JU said, “but you’ve had it rough, son. Maybe you need a little encouragement. I don’t often talk to you about the help you’ve been to both your mother and me, but I think you know we appreciate it.”

“Forget it. I didn’t always do it cheerfully, so I don’t deserve any praise now.”

“Say, that girl’s attitude must have struck you pretty deep. Are you fond of her?”

“I suppose so, but she never accepted any of my offers to take her home from the gatherings.” Then the tenseness began to disappear around his mouth, as he reflected upon the probable reason. “Of course, that was because she wanted that watch so darn bad.”

“What watch?” asked JU as he picked up the invoices and started looking through them.

“Oh, her brother John told her that if she didn’t date before the age of 18, he’d buy her a gold watch.”

“Um – well I’d say that boy really felt the responsibility Breck left to him.” JU started to hand the papers to Cecil to check with the actual merchandise

received, but he stopped. “Why don’t you go home now and see if Biny has something ready to eat? May you’ll feel better and work this thing out in your own mind. If you want to come back and talk about taking a bigger share in the store, I’d like to talk about it.”

“Thanks, Dad, that’s the most encouragement you’ve ever given me.”

“You’re a fine son, and you’d be good in this business,” that’s all JU said, but his heart was full of many more comments he would have liked to say – such as the victory over physical hardships, the ambition and steadiness which he knew his boy possessed. He let hi go, hoping that a warm meal in Biny’s bright kitchen might do more for his embittered disposition than all the words he could utter. To himself, JU muttered something about the oldest child in the family bearing burdened the younger ones never fully realize, and how their love and affection comes in curiously disguised manner. Before a parent realizes it, the eldest one is too grown up to receive the loving attentions he would bestow upon him. “If he will quit the railroad, I’ll make hi my full partner,” JU decided and was glad for the day’s happenings that made him see his son in a new light.

But Cecil did not come back to make plans for any such venture. After playing with his little sister who was just beginning to talk, and enjoying a bit of lunch which his other dished up for him, Cecil determined to ride out to the Osborn farm and learn the reason behind his snubbing.

It wasn’t serious, just a case of injured English pride which was soon mended when the two brought their problems into open discussion. Nellie and her sisters were hoeing in the garden when the horse came down the dusty lane, bearing the rather stiff young man from the village. He nodded a bit distant, but walked straight toward the girl who was wiping the perspiration from under her straw hat. Before they exchanged further comments, Nellie said, “Let’s get a cool drink.” From the pump it seemed only natural to wander into the apple orchard on the other side of the house, and down toward the creek which ran along the lower edge of the orchard. By this time the blackness had melted from the young man’s attitude, and Nellie was feeling more at ease, her first embarrassment at being found so warm and dusty now disappearing quite rapidly. Finally she said, “You really did miss a good time.”

“Good time? Where? When?” Cecil’s astonished look gave the girl the answer she had wanted to believe but which she would not accept until he said it with his own mouth.

“Then you didn’t get my letter?” The relief in her tone of voice and facial expression was so becoming, the impetuous youth grabbed her arm and pulled her close to him.

“If I had, would I have ignored it?” He said, a bit disgusted to think she would believe him capable of such discourtesy. “Now sit down and tell me what we’re talking about.”

So she told him all about the golden wedding anniversary of her uncle and aunt, the couple who had such difficulty planning their wedding during the Civil War.

“Your uncle and aunt were there – the ones who stood up with Uncle Thomas and Aunt Mary 50 years ago. They looked real important and prosperous.”

“I like his white mustache,” Cecil added.

Nellie described the pretty silk dresses the ladies wore, and the proud bearing of most of the company. “I’ve always loved uncle Thomas Mounsey,” she said, “but Aunt Mary frightens us with her scolding.”

The next time Cecil called on Nellie she was dressed in a becoming blue dress recently made over from Mae’s wardrobe. The household was disturbed about the reports of a fine new passenger ship, the Titanic, which hit an iceberg on its maiden voyage. Although a thousand or more people lost their lives, there were survivors due to the many heroic efforts. And in the Osborn household, a great deal of interest was shown because Mary Ann’s aunt was on that ship returning to England to investigate a legacy for the family.

The Titanic left Southhampton, England, bound for New York on April 10, 1912. It sank April 15.

“Why don’t you tell Cecil about the day Great Uncle Thomas arrived here, Ma?” said Nellie, trying hard to keep the conversation steady so that her

brother Rollin would not start teasing her visitor. “Peck” as they were beginning to call him, knew better than to interrupt his Ma when she had the floor.

“There isn’t much to tell. We were sitting on the porch after Sunday dinner. We always had the table loaded down with lots of good things, you know: ham, chicken, potatoes, pickles, preserves, two or three vegetables, cake and pie. Pap grew sleepy naturally, and took a nap, the rest of us went outside to cool off a bit. We had company, always brought one or two families home with us from church.”

“Uncle Edgar (that’s your grandpap’s brother-in-law who used to whipsaw in Pennsylvania) drove up in a spring wagon with a man and woman with him. Now we had heard that some more of his family had started for America, but we didn’t know they had landed. I went inside real quick and woke Pap, telling him “I’ll bet it’s you brother.”

“Well, it was! Just think, they hadn’t seen each other in fifty years. The neighbors all came in, and we had a lot of excitement. I can just see them yet – Uncle Thomas and Pap sitting side by side – they talked clear into the night.”

“Did he settle around here, Mrs. Osborn?” Cecil asked.

“No, that family is living in Chicago. They have a daughter Sally. My, I’ll bet she’s all broke up,” it’s her mother who sailed on the Titanic.

After that Cecil became a regular caller at the Osborn home and the Jesse Lieurance home, for by now Mae had married her suitor – the young grandson of another pioneer resident in the vicinity of the Fousts – across the Huntington County line. Cecil and Nellie often went there to eat and chat with the couple who were settling down to farming and expecting their first child. One evening he brought a silver bracelet with their names etched inside, and a jewel inset. Nellie’s acceptance of it sent him home in high spirits that night. Now he would approach his Dad about the partnership offer.

“But I presumed you weren’t interested,” answered JU when Cecil broached the subject the next morning. “I thought you like railroading.”

“I do – I love it. But Nellie would never marry a railroader – says she’s heard too much about the rough life they lead.”

“Um-um. But there’s something you should realize. In a partnership both partners are responsible. We could go broke.”

“I’m not worried with that triple A rating you have in Dun and Bradstreet.”

“Oh,” said the father a little amused. “But if the elevator should fail, or the bank, it might cause the hardware to suffer severely.” He paused for the words to have time to sink deeply. “Directors of banks are liable up to twice the amount of their investment, you know.”

“I’m willing to take the chances. This town is growing, people like to live here and that’s a good indication. I’m ready to settle down,” declared the youth with maturity indicative of his 21 years.

“Well, then, let’s make it a deal.”

“Thank you, Dad.” Cecil said, pumping his father’s hand. “Now I’m going to propose to the sweetest girl in the world.”

“It was that important, eh?”

“Yes, Dad, it was; and I hope I’ll never fail you.”

“I hope you’ll never fail her either.”

Sam felt jubilant when he heard of the merger for it was the first indication to him that a Jackson business firm would continue through the years. He had been unable to understand why JU’s boys weren’t more interested in establishing some sort of business in the thriving village. He felt so happy about it, in fact, that when John Osborn walked up to him in front of the store and greeted him with a cheery “good morning, Sam,” he pulled the man’s lapel and said, “Say, you’ve got time to sit a spell and talk. Sit down here in the sun and maybe we can find something to trade again.”

“Well, I don’t know. I believe you got the best of me in that pocket knife deal,” answered John. It always gave him a pleasure to razz his Grandpap’s old friend.

“Now you know that was fair and even. I want to know something – do you suppose that purty young sister of yours had anything to do with my grandson going into business with his Dad?”

“It could be. This is the first I’ve heard of it, though.”

Then Sam looked at him quizzically. “Say, aren’t you married yet? You’re going to fool around too long courtin’ that Shadle girl. I knew her Pa and they’re independent.”

“Aren’t we all?” John returned quickly, with a meaningful glance as if to say ‘look whose talking.’ Then he continued softly. “She’s had a great loss and I don’t want to rush her.”

They talked about the high waters throughout the area. Rivers and creeks had begun to overflow their banks in some places, but it had not put a severe cramp in transportation yet. They parted and Sam looked for somebody else to buttonhole for a chat. In this way he kept abreast of the family happenings in his acquaintance.

The next person to pass him was the pretty Kentucky bride who was making a hit in the town.

“Good morning, Mrs. Singleton,” he said. “How are you?”

“Fine, thank you,” she replied in a chanting sort of way. It was her husband who was the current preacher at the Baptist Church. He had asked Sam to change his membership, but the elder Jackson remained adamant regardless of the fact that JU was on the Board of Trustees.

Nearly a year elapsed before the young couple in love approached Rev. T. C. Singleton regarding their marriage plans. Once again it was September, but the warm weather had continued late that fall, and a honeymoon at Lake Webster sounded ideal. Cecil had persuaded a man with an automobile to drive them early on the morning of the 10th; it still remained to be learned whether the minister would be available at an early hour.

“Any hour you say,” the minister replied when questioned about his plans for that day. Thus at 7 AM on the following Thursday a quiet wedding

united the families who had been friends through four generations, and the happy couple was off on its way in a hired auto, driven by the owner.

They had not expected to encounter hills which would be too steep to climb that first day of their married life; however, after crossing the Little Wabash River near Huntington, the car balked at the steep incline, and both young people in their blue serge suits had to get out and push the car up a long, winding hill.

Then they settled back against the cushions only to be aroused soon when the driver ran into a buggy on the road! The occupant was only slightly injured and they secured aid for her.

Europe was already in conflict over the assassination of an archduke, and President Wilson was besieged with pressure to protect the financial interests of the U. S. investors, but the Yellow Banks Hotel on the South shore of one of Indiana's popular Northern lakes was far away from such confusion. The summer was fading rapidly, marked especially by the cool evenings, but during the day the sun shone brightly.

The next July their baby girl was born and the name of Helen Jackson was added to the cradle roll membership of the church, but about the same time another citizen of long standing went to her reward.

It was Cecil's Grandmother Smith, the former Emma Rinear, who had moved into the woods with her parents and grandparents to escape the hog cholera. After Eli's death, she had moved into a little house across from the school.

One day Sabina came to spend the afternoon with her daughter-in-law, and suggested that they move into the vacant house which had been her mother's. "The furniture is not new, but it's clean," she said. Then after a pause, "My dear, I'm so glad your baby is a girl. Men are always having to go to war. If our nation is drawn into this mess, I know I won't be able to keep Charles and Clayton at home. They're eager and aroused; they're reading everything they can get their hands on about the newest fighting weapons."

"Let me make you a cup of tea," Nellie offered. "Maybe it will end before anything happens on this side of the Atlantic."

“Let’s pray that it will,” Sabina answered. “Yes, a cup of tea will taste good. Then I must go home and take my laundry off the line.”

But everyone did not pray for peace. There were many who were thoroughly angered by the sinking of the Lusitania. They hated the Germans and were ready for revenge. The fact that the ship had been warned not to sail into the war zone made no difference in their arguments. Even from some pulpits, more coals were heaped upon the smoldering embers. The old prejudice, which was the cause of many massacres of the whites by the Indians – ‘an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth’ was rearing its ugly head. Military songs were sung everywhere and the Kaiser was the target of many of them. In order to get revenge for the torpedoing of a giant passenger liner, a great many of the people were almost ready to declare an action, which would result in sacrifices from nearly every home in the country. The seas must be kept free from submarines, they declared.

But some people, like Henry Ford, were making great efforts to save the peace. Nevertheless, diplomatic relations were broken and the United States was called upon to “Make the World Safe for Democracy.”

Cecil came home one evening with news about Nellie’s relative in Chicago who had been aboard the Lusitania. “Sally Mounsey had cabled that she is O.K.” he said, “Granddad heard that she had been in the water several hours.”

“I wonder why she took the risk of sailing into troubled waters,” commented Nellie thoughtfully, “Still I suppose she thought it was worth the risk if she could identify the person who was thought to be her mother.” Sometime after the Titanic had sunk, a message came from England that a woman believed to be Mrs. Thomas Mounsey was found – and very weak. Sally intended to bring that person home if indeed she were her mother. But she herself never reached England.

Cecil talked of the rolling war drums, and meetings being called to arouse the people’s patriotism, then he said abruptly, “I’d like to try farming, Nellie, if you’re willing. We have a buyer for the store; a nice profit could be realized. It’s hard to turn down.”

“It’s all right with me, you know I’m at home on the farm,” then she added, “Besides, agriculture is very important right now.”

Then, like the generation before them, the husband and wife began to look around for a suitable location. There was a farm for sale one mile South and ¼ mile East of the town, which had a small, old house on it. JU offered to build them a bungalow if they bought the farm, so they completed the deal and moved into the little house while the construction began on the new one.

But every day that dawned brought more disastrous news of explosions and war maneuvering. Charles Evans Hughes was nominated by the Republicans to defeat President Wilson’s bid for a second term, and an Indiana man was again the running mate – on both tickets. But with their slogan “Wilson kept us out of the war the Democrats won one of the closest contests the country had seen. It was a grim nation that witnessed the second inaugural parade, for Germany had declared an ultimatum which many believed was a breach of a former pledge.

Cecil’s brothers wasted no time enlisting for the military service. Even before the actual declaration of war, Clayton enrolled in an aviation school in Texas, and Charles was in uniform at Selfridge Field in Michigan. They had asked Sam’s counsel, and he replied, “I recon boys, if you have a job to do, you’d better do it.”

Older men could subscribe to the Liberty Loan and lend a helping hand where the vacancy of the young men was noticed most, but Sam was restless. “I feel like a fish out of water,” he complained. He read of the speedy building of ships, of the convoy of system worked out by the navy to transport troops more safely, of the terrible battles of Chateau Thierry and Belleau Wood in the spring of 1918; he wrote letters to Charles who had been injured in a plane crash and was hospitalized. It was lonesome around the house. Sara no longer made sauerkraut by the barrel, and they no longer had need of a great amount of butchering. But there were household duties to keep her busy. Sam often walked down to JU’s bug, gray house to amuse and be amused by Ruth, who was now eight years old, but still had her long black curls.

Ruth welcomed her granddad, “It’s lonesome here, too,” she said “with the boys gone. Mother and Dad are always so busy, and Ethel has her high

school crowd. But sometimes Cecil brings little Helen to let me take care of her.”

“My, what a responsible child you’re becoming. A big girl – you’re growing up too fast.” He added the latter part to himself.

Once more a summer was waning; people were discouraged and worried, and worst of all, the biggest portion of the town was sick with influenza. Farmers were utilizing every bit of daylight to harvest the crops, and stretching their physical energy as far as it would go. Nellie was momentarily expecting the birth of their second child, but there was no time to pamper herself.

One morning JU knocked excitedly at his parent’s home with the good news of another grandchild. “Will you take care of Helen?” he said. “Nellie just has to rest – she’s been working too hard cooking for all those threshers. And Biny is sick. I need to help on the house so we can have it ready for them to move into before winter.”

“Farming is big business now,” Sam commented.

“Yes.” Replied JU” and farms are getting prettier every year. Here’s a book maybe you’d like to look through, published by Radford and it shows the designs of modern buildings.”

“Um – your own ad on the cover,” Sam said, “Not a bad idea to keep your name in the public eye.”

“I must go now,” JU said, and to his mother he cautioned, “Watch her close; she’s a mischief. I’ll be after her this evening.” Then putting his hand into his coat pocket, he reached into the paper bag and brought out several white peppermint candies which he gave to the three year old.

Sara remarked that it was very important to keep the soldiers well fed, and Sam mused upon other days. “I can remember some who weren’t so well fed,” he answered.

“Or so well nursed,” she continued. “I’m so happy that Charles is getting along well enough to come home soon.”

They talked further about the war situation. All along the well fortified German line the American Army was fighting hard and making a good showing. Under the leadership of General Pershing, they were 'going over the top,' reaching into trenches for prisoners, and driving the Germans back. But at home the flu epidemic grew more serious, claiming the lives of the prosperous as well as the poor. One of John and Hattie Funk's sons, Charles, left a widow and three small children. It was almost impossible to get aid in the stricken homes. Some who were recuperating ventured out too soon and paid for their acts by poor health the rest of their days. But graves had to be dug, cattle fed and trains, manned.

When the sun reached the Western sky and the porch was warm with its light, Sam said, "I believe I'll go sit in the rocker a spell. By the way, JU didn't say what the name of the little boy is, did he?"

"Yes, it's James," his wife replied. "Why don't you take Helen along and maybe she'll fall asleep?"

Sam took the little girl with the straight black hair to the rocker and said, "So you have a little brother! There'll be another James Jackson to carry on! Now jump up on my lap and we'll talk. I have many important things to tell you."

"I call him Jim Jacker," the child interrupted.

"I used to call him Pa."

"Who?" queried the child.

Sam lifted his head jerkily and said, "Oh, I guess I must have been dreaming. Bless your heart, I mean the first James Jackson – my Pa."

"Why?"

"Because that what we called our dads in those days."

"Let's rock," she said.

"All right, we'll rock. You may not be able to understand what I tell you but I have to talk to somebody about the way this country is growing up. Why,

it's only 142 years since the birth of our nation, and here we are already taking a lead in world affairs.

“There are only a few of us still living, who I call the connecting links. We were brought into Indiana when it was a dense forest and swampy, and wild animals roamed where they pleased. Now look at the county! Gravel roads have replaced the bridal paths, modern drainage has removed the swamps, automobiles go rushing down the roads, and even airplanes fly the skies. We light our homes with electricity, and talk to people miles away over the telephone. Things have changed so much in a very short time. Great factories have replaced the self-employed man. People depend upon each other in this new society.

You children probably will never know the dependency upon God those families eighty years ago experienced. I can still remember how close He seemed to me when I was a little lad fishing in the creek. I think I felt His nearness because my Pa and Ma felt the same way. They couldn't have lived a day without His protection and I sensed that even as a child not much bigger than you.

Maybe our family was more fortunate than some, but they all had about the same experiences in sickness, in shortage of food and having to get along with whatever was at hand, or making substitutes.

I must soon lay down my duties, but this flame must be passed on. People must not grow indifferent to the sacrifices made by the pioneers.”

The little girl lay her head against his chest and began to inhale and exhale at regular intervals. In spite of her sleepiness, he continued talking for here was an audience that did not make excuses to get away.

When JU returned that evening, he saw them both asleep on the porch. Helen woke up at the sound of his footsteps, but his Dad's body was strangely silent. It was warm still he could find no pulse. He went to the telephone and asked operator for Doc Garrett, who said he would come immediately. Then the son took his mother in his long, lean arms and told her that the doctor was coming.

There was not much to be done. “Old age,” the doctor said. “Let's get him in bed and perhaps he will rally from time to time.”

The little girl remembered not one word of the man's long speech, but she caught the torch, and the flame continues to burn. Shortly thereafter, in Europe the impossible was accomplished by the Allies; the Germans were forced to admit defeat. In towns and cities, on the farms, wherever there were people, the crowds went wild with joy, but Sam lay very still – only his lips murmuring pride that Charles and Clayton would be returning soon.

He lingered till February and told Sara, “At last you'll get to vote.” Congress had been called into special session to pass the 19th amendment providing equal suffrage to women. Then the next day he said, “It won't be long, Sara.” His body straightened out in death. Mr. Thoma, the undertaker, had charge of arrangements and the Warren minister preached his sermon. The black limousine carried the Old Vet's body to his lot in the Mossburg Cemetery, but his soul had already gone to meet its Maker and to wait for the arrival of his wife who followed him a few years later.

THE END

Samuel Jehu Jackson 4 January 1834 - 21 February 1919
Sarah Ann Foust Jackson 9 April 1834 – 21 April 1921

Helen Ilo Jackson Schmeling 5 July 1915 – 11 October 2003

MCFARREN/JACKSON/FOUST ANCESTORS KNOWN TO SERVE IN THE **REVOLUTIONARY WAR**

Johannes Adam Foust/Faust

Samuel Jackson (born 1758)

Rev. John McPherrin (born 1757, reportedly served. DAR did not find his name-
but they say this may not mean he didn't serve.)



On July 31, 2000 eastbound Wabash Central #6 pulls a 2-car train for Bluffton past the County Road 300W (old State Road 303) crossing in Liberty Center, Indiana.