



**RAISED
ON THE
KNOBS OF KENTUCKY**

**An Autobiography of
Cecil Hubert Porter
1932-2008**

Son of Ernest Porter 1906-1979
Son of Samuel Lafayette Porter 1883-1956
Son of Alexander F. Porter 1855-1928
Son of Andrew J. Porter 1822-1888



For more information about the Descendants of Andrew J. Porter, please visit
<http://www.myfamily.com/group/andrewjacksonporterfamily>

PREFACE

Cecil Porter does an incredible job of describing his life growing up on Porter Creek in the 1930's and 40's. The entire book deals with his childhood memories and experiences. He recounts numerous stories and dealings with his family and neighbors.

Sit back, relax and let Cecil take you back to a simpler time of life, where there were no cell phones, no computers and no video games. It was a time where kids used their imagination.

Thanks to Cecil's family for allowing us to share his incredible autobiography. We have printed 150 copies of "Raised on the Knobs of Kentucky" for the occasion of the Andrew Porter Family Reunion Sept. 10th, 2011, held in Globe, KY.

You will find an index at the back of the book to help you locate certain events or people in his story.

Thanks to those who contributed to this project...

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April 17, 1932, Hoods Creek, Boyd County, Kentucky

There was a boy born today in an old four room farm house. His parents were Clemence Alpha Elliott Porter and Ernest Porter. His mother decided to call him Cecil. As he was growing up he was a lot like Tom Sawyer, seems he was always getting into some kind of mischief. Maybe she should have called him Tom, but she didn't.

Cecil was born in his Grandfather's house. His Grandfather's name was William Elliott, but every one called him Willie. His Grandmother's name was Julie Mae. Willie was his mother's father. He rented the farm house and worked on the farm for a share of the crops. Willie finally got a job at a brick yard in Princess, Kentucky. He moved from the farm to a company owned house at Princess. The company owned a group of houses that they rented to their workers. The company also owned a company store where you could buy almost anything you needed and charge it to your wages. That way your rent, electric, and food got paid for, first before you got your check. It also made sure that you worked all the time, it seemed that you always owed the company for something.

This was very hard work. It was a very hot place to work. They made fire clay bricks and different kinds of tiles. The bricks had to be fired in a kiln to cure them and make them hard. Willie worked at different jobs at the brick yard, Some times he would have to stack the bricks in the kiln, other times he would have to go into the kilns and remove them and take them to the warehouse for storage until they were shipped to the customer. It would be so hot in the kiln that the men who took the bricks out of the kiln would have to wear wooden clogs on their shoes to keep from burning their feet. Some times the wooden clogs would catch fire and have to be dipped in water to put the fire out. They would only stay in the kiln a very short time, and then they would come out and another crew would go into the kiln to work. They would keep rotating the men until the kiln was emptied. This was very exhausting work. Cecil's Grandfather worked for this company until he had a stroke and died.

Cecil's dad worked at a Steel Mill. The steel mill was a very hard place to work also. 1932 Wasn't the best of years to be brought into the world. Things were cheap, but money was hard to come by. If you even had a job you were lucky to work two or three days a week. After a time the boy's father got enough money together, so he moved the family into town. The new place was a small apartment over a two car garage. Cecil was just learning to talk a little, when he went over to his mother's chair, now it's gone. His mother said what's gone? Cecil said, the penny is gone now. His Mother spent the next day or two digging around in the messy diapers searching for the penny, which she found on the second day.

The Easter Rabbit

Cecil had two pet rabbits he got for Easter. When they were about half grown, his father decided they couldn't afford to feed them. So he thought he would slaughter them and have them for Sunday dinner. He knew that Cecil wouldn't eat any of them if he knew that he was eating his pets. He told Cecil that they were going to have fried

chicken for dinner. He ate two pieces of his pet rabbits and didn't know the difference. He found out about it later, how he had been tricked into eating his pets. That's one of the reasons he won't eat chicken to this day.

The Move to Ashland

The next move they made was to a house in Ashland, Ky. on High Street into what Cecil thought was a real house. It had two bed rooms, a kitchen, dinning room and a living room. It had French doors between the dinning room and the living room. The living room had a big fire place. The fire place had a big marble mantle and a marble hearth. There was a nice front yard, with a sidewalk and a set of steps leading down to the street. Cecil would spend hours at a time setting on the steps watching the cars pass by.

He remembers the big fire place because that is where he thought he would cough his self to death. When he had the whooping cough he would lean his head against the marble mantle and cough until his nose would bleed and he couldn't breathe any more, but being a healthy boy in every other way he soon got over it.

Carl Bumps His Head

When Cecil was about four years old his family moved again, This time it was to Crook Street. Cecil had a baby brother by now, so they had to move to a cheaper house. His Mother called him Carl. By the time Carl was learning to walk a little he liked to butt his head against anyone close. One night Cecil was sitting on the floor listening to the radio which was a big cabinet model Philco. Carl would continuously butt his head against Cecil's shoulder. Cecil soon got tired of being disturbed and just moved out of the way. Carl butted his head against the big radio cabinet and knocked himself out. You may not believe this but, Cecil got his behind busted really good just because he moved out of the way. Not too long after that, Carl pulled an iron off the ironing board and it hit him on the head. It made a big knot on his head. When he would get hurt he would hold his breath when he cried, and his Mother would have to pat him on the back and she would blow into his face to make him catch his breath. That would be pretty scary sometimes. But it seemed to work.

The Cellar

There was a cellar under this house, but it wasn't used for anything. There was a big cellar door outside at the end of the back porch. It had a big door that was set on a slant so the rain would run off the door and not go into the cellar. Cecil would sit on this door and watch for the next door neighbor boy to come home from school every day. Cecil liked to go over there because he had a lot of nice toys and games to play with. When Cecil had first moved here he had seen the boy's mother come out on the porch to shake out the throw rugs. Cecil thought that she must be a witch. She always had on black clothes and a big black rag tied on her head. She just looked very spooky to him he would sit on the cellar door and watch her. Then he got to wondering if she lived down in a cellar like this one. One day she called to him , she wanted him to ask his mother if he could come over and play with her little boy. After he went to play with her little boy he decided that she wasn't a witch after all. She just dressed that way when she done

her house work. She was really a nice woman. She would send some cookies over to the boys every time she baked. They liked that very much.

The White Rat

Someone gave Cecil a white rat for a pet. He had a lot of fun with it. It would go up his shirt sleeve and come out his collar and climb up on top of his head. It liked to ride there. Cecil would run all through the house with this rat on his head. He thought that it was funny that the rat liked to ride there. Sometimes he would get the broom and hold it by the handle with the straw part up in the air. The rat would climb the broom handle and go down into the straw to hide. Cecil would put the broom up close to the chandelier and the rat would climb over on it and stay for a while then it would start running around on the chandelier wanting to get down. Cecil would stick the broom over close and it would jump over on it and run down the handle and jump over on Cecil's head.

Cecil's Uncle Russel was staying with them while going to business college in Ashland. He was scared to death of this white rat. Cecil would tease him all the time that he was going to put the rat on him. He would yell really loud and run into the other room and shut the door and beg Cecil to put the rat back into it's cage. After while he would put the rat back into the cage and Russel would come back into the room. The rat must have sensed that Russel was afraid of it, because one day when Russel came home from school the rat happened to be behind the door. Russel always came in and put his books down on the coffee table and headed to the kitchen wanting to have something to eat. When the books hit the table the rat hit Russel's leg. It ran up the inside of his pants leg. It scared Russel and he grabbed for it . He caught the rat about half way up his thigh and squeezed it so hard that it started to squeal really loud, that scared Russel even more. He was yelling for some one to come and help him get his pants off. He couldn't get his belt unbuckled with one hand and he wasn't about to turn the rat loose long enough to do it. Clemence helped him get out of his clothes. Russel threw his pants down and ran into the other room and slammed the door. Everyone was laughing so hard at Russel that they had tears in their eyes. Russel said he didn't think it was funny and that he wasn't going to stay another night in the same house with that rat. He got his things together and moved out that night.

The Move to Porter Creek

Work at The Steel Mill was down to two or three days a week now, so money was really tight. They had to move again. The place was called Porter Creek. Most of the people that lived there were Porters or were related to the Porters.

They were back in the country again. This time it was in with the other Grandfather on the father's side of the family. His name was Samuel L. Porter. Every one called him Sam except the family, they called him Poppy. He was a school teacher and a farmer. Neither one paid very well,so he had to do both to get by. Ernest still stayed in



Sam and Lucy Manning Porter with children, Opal, Vivian, Oscar and Ernest

town so he could work at the steel mill when they needed him.

He would come home on the weekend sometimes, other wise the family was on their own. The old farm house was made in the shape of an "L". The front part was two story. It had two rooms down stairs with a concrete porch going all the way across the front. It had a set of stairs going from the center of the porch up to two rooms up stairs. There was a wooden porch across the front directly over the porch down stairs. The only way you could get to the up stairs rooms was by going out on the lower porch then up the set of stairs. At the top of the stairs was a landing with a door on either side you could go into either room from the landing. There was a door from each room to the up stairs porch. There wasn't any heat in the two rooms up stairs. In the winter it sure got cold up there. There was always four or five flat irons set in front of the fire place. They would stay pretty hot there. So when it was time to get ready for bed every one would get a hot iron wrap it up in a towel and take it up stairs and put it under the covers at the foot of the bed. Then they would put their feet on the iron until the bed got warm and their teeth would quit chattering, enough that they could go to sleep. The bed rooms were not the only rooms to get cold at night. Many mornings they would get up and find that the water was frozen in the water bucket in the kitchen.

There was a long kitchen built off the main living room down stairs forming the "L" shape of the house. There was a back porch running the full length of the "L". The porch had a tin roof over it. There was a tin roof over the front porch too. There was a door from the kitchen to the back porch, also there was a door from the back porch to the back bed room too. There was a door from this back bedroom to the front porch. Then there was a door from the front porch to the main living room. The chimney was built between the living room and the bed room, in the center of the house. There was a fireplace in the bed room and the living room down stairs. There wasn't any doorways between the two main rooms down stairs. The only way to go from one to the other was to go out on the front or back porch, then into the other room.

In the back yard out from the kitchen was the water well. You had to draw the water up from the well by a chain over a well pulley with a bucket attached to the other end. You would draw the water then pour it into another bucket and carry it in to the kitchen. There was a big wood burning stove in the kitchen. It was called a warm morning cook stove. It had a fire box on the left end, in the center over the stove was two cabinets you could use to store pots and pans. You could also use it as a food warmer to keep food warm for a while. Then on the other end was a water tank where you could heat water, to use in the kitchen chores. That big fire box could sure get rid of a lot of stove wood in a years time. There was a table and four chairs with a long bench next to the wall. The bench is where the kids sat to eat their meals. There was a lot of good times spent at that table not only at meal time, but at family time as well. In the other end of the kitchen was a large buffet. The reason that I mention the buffet is, there is a story that goes with it.

Grandpa's Old Red Rooster

Cecil's Grandfather had an old red rooster that he had raised from a baby chick. He was very fond of his red rooster. He happened to be gone one time when Cecil's father came home for the week end. Every one was setting around in the yard on Saturday evening, and some one said, they would like to have chicken and dumplings for supper. Cecil's Dad said, I think I'll kill the old red rooster and have him for supper. So he did. It was just a short time after dark when the chicken and dumplings got done and everyone was just sitting down to eat. When all at once there was a noise back on the buffet. It sounded just like the old red rooster clucking to a bunch of hens. Every body got up and searched and rattled every dish and every thing else on the buffet trying to make the same sound that they all had heard. But no one could find any thing that would repeat the sound. I guess that it was just the ghost of the old red rooster trying to get even with them. Cecil's Grandfather wasn't too happy to find that his old red rooster had succumbed to the cooking pot, when he came home.

Cecil's New Brother Sammy

Cecil has another brother now, his name is Samuel Lee, everyone calls him Sammy. He was always Poppy's pet. He hung on to him all the time. He even took him to school with him sometimes. The kids all liked to play with him so he wasn't too much trouble to him while he was trying to teach the kids their lessons.

Poppy had a big rocking chair in the living room in front of the fire place, and he would rock Sammy and sing to him until he went to sleep. There was a very sad song that he would always sing to Sammy that Cecil still remembers to this day, I guess that he will always remember it for ever. It went like this....

“Oh, don't you remember a long time ago,
when two little children their names I don't know
they wandered away one bright sunny day
and were lost in the woods I've heard people say,
they moaned and they sighed they bitterly cried

poor babes in the woods they lay down and died
and when they were dead the robin so red
carried strawberry leaves and over them spread
and sang them a song the whole day long
poor babes in the woods poor babes in the woods.”

Then he would put him into the bed where he was going to sleep. Sammy always wanted to sleep with him.

Commodities

In the back yard at the end of the kitchen was the smoke house with a cellar built under it. The meat was stored in the smoke house. The fruit and vegetables and the milk was stored in the cellar. Since Cecil's Grandfather was also his school teacher it had it's advantages. The Government always gave out what they called commodities. There would be apples, oranges, cheese, powdered milk, and crackers. There were other things also but he can't remember just what they were. His Grandfather would put them in the cellar and then he would pass them out to the school kids at different times. He wouldn't give them all out at once so they would last until the government sent some more. Cecil and his brothers always had access to them but I don't think they took any more that they were entitled to. If they had their Grandfather would have come down hard on them. He believed in being fair with every thing that he did.

There wasn't any electric yet on Porter Creek. In fact they didn't get electric until Cecil was about fifteen or sixteen years old. They used kerosene lamps and lanterns for their light.

Down the hill about thirty feet was a hen house and chicken roost. Between the chicken house and the cellar was a big fire place made out of big rocks where water could be heated for washing clothes, and taking baths.

Wash Day

On this one wash day, some of the neighbor kids came over to play. They were playing follow the leader. They had been all over the yard doing all kinds of different things. Cecil's mother had done her washing and had taken the empty wash tub off the rock fire place. The fire had died down, and there wasn't anything except the fine powdery wood ashes in the fire place. The kids made their rounds, they came to the fire place and jumped through between the two stacks of rocks. Sammy was at the end of the line, being smaller than the others, when he came to the fire place instead of jumping over he just walked through the ashes. There was still a lot of red hot embers under the white ashes, He left three little foot prints in the hot embers. The bottom of his feet were completely blistered. He couldn't walk on them for a long time. He was lucky they didn't get infected. He might have lost them if they had.

The Out House

The next thing West of the hen house was the wood yard. That's where trees were cut into firewood for the fire place and the cook stove. The next thing West was the out house. It had a two hole seat, I still don't know why because you couldn't use but one at a time, except when the creek was up you could use the other one to watch the water go by.

When the water was up high and muddy it would make you dizzy watching it. It would seem as if the whole out house was moving up stream when you watched it for a long time. This little house was built over the creek for a good reason. When there was a good rain the creek would get high and it would clean everything from under the out house. It worked really well for many years. There were many catalogs read, wished about, torn, wadded up and thrown down this small hole in the seat. There was never enough money to buy toilet paper to wipe with, but there was always an old catalog that could be used. They were free, they even sent them to them by mail. Then they were washed away during the next heavy rain storm.

Hoeing Corn

The house was facing south. In the front of the house and beyond a sloping yard was a narrow strip of land, another fence, then a narrow dirt road, and a hill that was called the Renfro lot. Corn was raised on this hill side.

The three boys were hoeing corn at the top of the Renfro lot up near the top of the field. There was a woods at the top of the field and they were near the woods. There was a big gust of wind that came up the hill and into the woods, about that time there was this long screeching sound coming out of the woods. Carl was up the hill from Cecil, when he looked at Cecil, Cecil said, that sounded just like a ghost. He didn't have time to say any thing else. Carl threw his hoe down over the hill and started running toward the house. When he came to the fence at the bottom of the field he just dived under the fence and slid out into the road, he rolled under the other fence and ran the rest of the way to the house with out looking back. When his mother saw him she said that he was as white as a ghost. What really happened was, there was two dead trees that had fallen into another tree, and when the wind would blow really hard they would move across each other and make this screeching sound. To the West of the house the land sloped downward to the barn lot. There was a haul road to the West down this slope, there was a gap in the fence at the foot of the slope. This haul road went from the wood yard through the barn lot through a gate across a creek and out into the dirt road. Just beyond this point this road butted into another dirt road that ran North and South.

The Old Barn

On the South East corner of this junction was the old Porter School house. Between the haul road and the creek was the barn. It had a cow shed down the North side with a corn crib, feed and harness and tack room at the end of the cow shed. There was a haul way through the entire length of the barn in through big double doors at the East end and out through two big double doors on the West end. On the South side of the haul way there was five horse stalls. There was a loft over the cow shed, aloft over the horse stalls , and another loft about four feet higher down the center of the barn over the haul way. The lofts were used to store the hay for feed during the winter. The barn had a tin roof, so the hay loft was a good place to spend a rainy afternoon when there wasn't any thing else to do. You could lay on the hay and listen to the rain on the tin roof. That could be very relaxing and make you very sleepy.

Across the North South road there was another creek, a narrow strip of level land then there was this very steep and high hill with a rock cliff around it near the top of the hill. There was a lot of walnut trees and a lot of big rocks on this hillside.

Old Porter School Burns

Cecil remembers being awakened one night by a lot of noise and a big commotion going on outside. When he got up and looked outside he could see a lot of big flames and a lot of very bright sparks coming up from behind the barn. His Grandfather was down at the barn trying to get the live stock out of the barn because the old school house was on fire and he was afraid that the heat and the hot sparks would catch the barn on fire and burn them all up. The barn didn't catch fire, but the Porter School house was a total loss.

This was to be Cecil's first year in school. He was only five years old, but since his Grandfather was the teacher he was going to let him start early. Since the school house had burned down the school board had to find another place to have school until they could get a new one built. They rented an old store house. It was only about a quarter of a mile down the road so Cecil could walk to school.

Porter School



Porter school was only a one room school. It had all eight grades in one room. There were only about twenty or thirty kids in school at any one time, If they were all present at the same time which didn't happen very often. When there was work to be done on the farms the older kids were kept at home to help get the work done if they were to survive at all every one had to do his share of the work. Education came after every thing else was done. That was the reason that a lot of the pupils were not kids any more, they were young adults before they got out of school. That sure made it hard on the teacher, because these pupils didn't take to disciplining very well. Some times they would get so out of hand that the teacher would just have to send them home early. But most of the time when that happened they wouldn't go home, they would just go down the road a short way and wait for school to be out making fun about the whole thing . Then they would

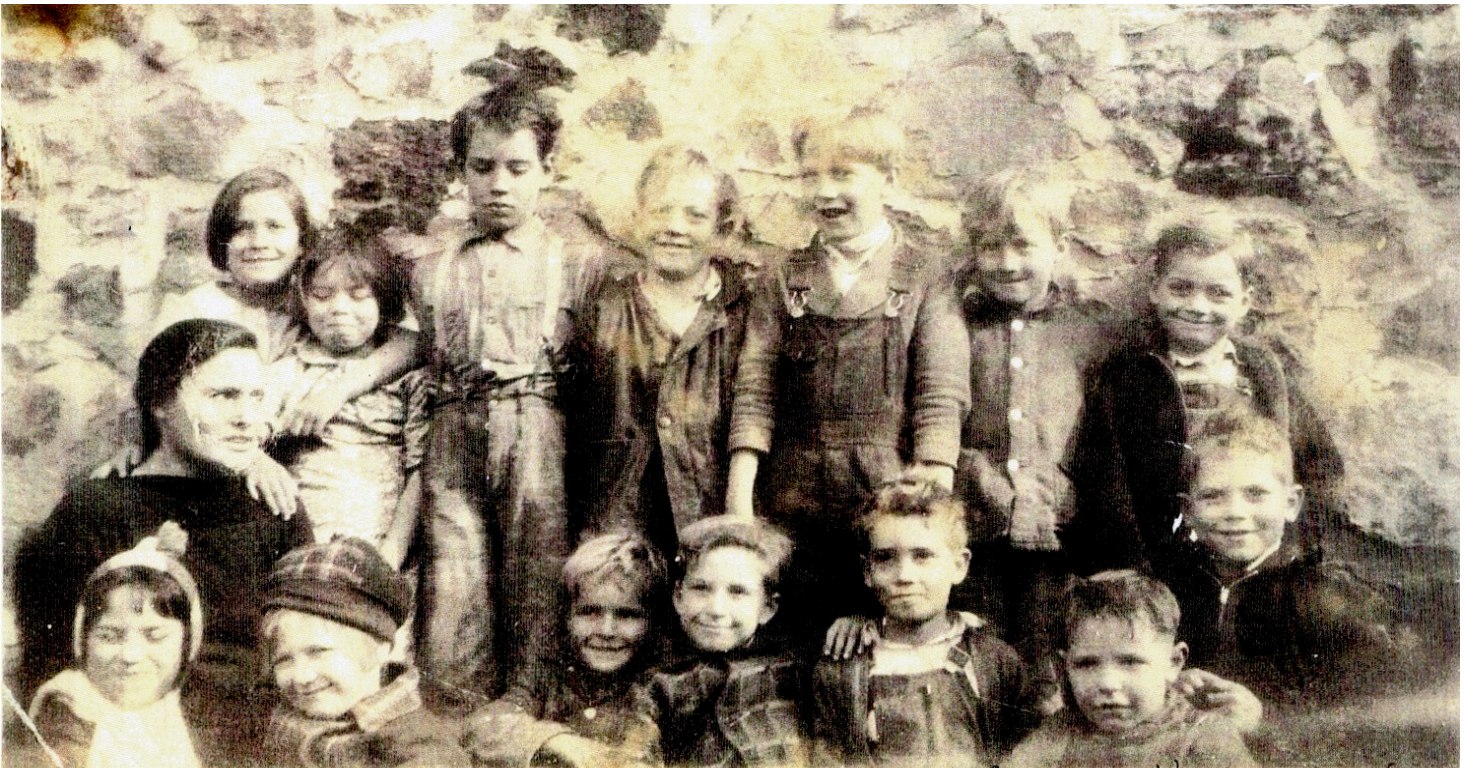
go home with the rest of the kids. They knew that if they went home early they would just have to go to work on the farm because there was always something to be done there.

The County had a meeting with the people of the Porter school district about a new building. It was agreed that the county would furnish the money to buy the materials but the local people would have to do the work to build the new school house. Well the people didn't want to have to go through this very often, so they agreed to build it out of rock. Since Cecil's Uncle Herman (Porter) owned the rocky hill side in front of the site, and being the canny person he was, when it came to him getting something for nothing, said he would donate all the rock they needed to build a rock school house. All they had to do was to go up on the hill and start the rocks rolling down the hill. They would roll all the way to the bottom of the hill. Then they could go along with a wagon and load up the rocks and haul them to the building site. They got the rocks they needed for the building, and Herman got his field cleared of the rocks, free.

They built a rectangle building about forty by sixty, running East to West. The ceiling was very high, about sixteen feet. There was a set of five steps up to a small landing held up by two corner post. The sides were open. The front door was facing West in the North West corner, facing the North South road. The door opened to a short hall way with another door at the other end to the main room. It was made this way to help keep out the cold air in

the winter. There was a coat room on the same end of the building. It was a long room with a door on each end of the room open to the main room. On the other end of the room there was a door that went into a room that was used store the supply of coal for the wintermonths. There was a big pot bellied stove in the center of the main room for the building heat. On the South side of the building at the East corner was an exit door to the outside. It could be used in case of fire or for fresh air in the warm weather. This door was also used to go to the out house that was out behind the school house. There were two small windows up high close to the ceiling in the South wall. There was big ten foot high windows covering the entire North wall for light. The only lighting for the entire building came in through these windows. On stormy days it could get pretty dark inside the room.

The floor was made of white pine tongue and grooved lumber that was oiled down with linseed oil to preserve the wood and to help keep down the dust. The building had a tin roof, and it could make you sleepy when it got dark and stormy, with the sound of the rain on the tin roof. There was a black board that covered the length of the south wall. There was another black board that covered the length of the east wall. On the days that were too cold or too wet for the kids to play outside the kids would play games inside at recess and at lunchtime. They would move the desk over to the side of the room to make room for the games they wanted to play. They would play blind man's bluff, ring around the rosy, red rover, or fruit basket turn



Porter School

L-R Back Clarice Stamper, Evelyn Caudill, Bertha Roe (d/o Buelah, d/o Reece Porter, s/o Wint, s/o Alex, s/o Andrew J. Porter), Ray Conn, Charles Clay, Lyman Conn, Harlis Caudill, Verl Thomas (s/o Erma, d/o Wint Porter, s/o Alex, s/o AJP).
L-R Front Pearl Porter (d/o Reese, s/o Wint, s/o Alex, s/o AJP), Odell Manning, Harold Caudill, Cecil Porter (s/o Ernest, s/o Sam, s/o Alex, s/o AJP), Ed Conn, Beecher Roe (s/o Buelah, d/o Reece Porter, s/o Wint, s/o Alex, s/o AJP), Rolland Mabry (s/o Laura, d/o Charlie Porter, s/o Alex, s/o AJP)

over or any thing to pass the time or have fun. When they could play outside they would play tag, fox and hound, jump rope or play ball. If it snowed they would sleigh ride. They would have home made sleds, usually made by some of the older boys. It was usually a competitive thing to see who could make a sled that would go faster, make the longest run, or the longest jump when they went over a steep bluff.

Cecil was in the third grade he got his first job that paid him for doing some work. After school was over for the day he would move all the desks to one side of the school room and sweep the floor. After he was done sweeping he would move all the desk back into position, he would dust off the desk and seats and make sure all the seats were in the up position. He would then gather all the erasers in a bucket put all the chalk in the



chalk box. He would take the erasers outside to a big rock and beat the erasers on the rock to clean them. He would then put them all in the trough at the bottom of the blackboards. After he was done he would lock both doors and go home. In the winter when they needed to have heat in the school building he would go to the school house about an hour before school time and build a fire in the big pot bellied stove. He got paid ten cents a day for sweeping the school house. When he built a fire he got an extra fifteen cents for that. He had to cut his own kindling to build a fire with. In the winter he would make one dollar and twenty five cents a week, for sweeping and building a fire every day. He thought that was a lot of money then.

Fishing Fever

Every Spring, the boys would get fishing fever. They didn't have any store bought fishing gear. When they got the fever and got the chance to go fishing they would get in their mother's sewing basket. They would take some straight pins and some #50 thread, to use for their hooks and fishing line. Then they would get an old tin can off the trash pile to use for their bait can. They would dig some worms out behind the chicken house with a mattock and they were ready to go fishing. Usually they would go down the road about half a mile or so then they would go to the creek to see if they could see any fish. On the way they would cut a pole to fish with. Most of the time they would find a long Sycamore sprout along the road and cut it for a pole, They never had any trouble finding something for a pole. When they got to the creek they would bend a straight pin to make a hook and tie on a length of thread to

the hook and to the end of the pole, Bait the hook with worms and have some fun. The hooks didn't have any barbs on them but they didn't care there wasn't anything big to catch any way. When they got a bite they would jerk it out of the water and over their heads onto the creek bank. Some times they would catch some nice blue gills and some sun fish. But most of the time it would be a shiner or a cat fish. They always talked about the one that got away any way.

Evening Entertainment

The family would sit around the fire at night. Some times popping popcorn, or putting potatoes in the hot embers in the fire place and covering them up with hot ashes, then some times they would play checkers or fox and goose while the potatoes baked in the ashes. They were very good with a little butter and salt. Sometimes their Grandfather would read them a book. Other times he might tell them some ghost tales. After some of the ghost tales they would be afraid to go out on the porch and up the dark stairs to go to bed. Some times they would get started up the stairs and he would be close behind them then he would holler out, watch out for old raw head and bloody bones. They would run the rest of the way up the stairs jump into the bed and cover up their heads with the covers and be afraid to uncover them for a long time.

Usually on school nights every one went to bed pretty early. They always had to get up early, to go to the barn feed the stock and milk before breakfast. Then as soon as breakfast was over they would have to go to school. But on Saturday night, they would get to stay up pretty late and listen to the radio. The radio ran on a six volt car battery. They had a Delco D. C. generator to keep the batteries charged. It was Cecil's job on Saturday afternoon to make sure that the batteries were charged. They always listened to the news at six o'clock in the evening, and the Grand Ole Opry on Saturday night.

Church

The family always went to Sunday school and Church on Sunday. That was most of their social life on the farm. They could meet most of their neighbors and find out what was going on in the country side around them. Social gossip after church. They always walked to Sunday school on Sunday. It was about one and a half miles mostly up hill going. So it was good exercise in the fresh air and it made them feel good doing it too. It was alone a dirt road. You could see wild life along the way. You might see rabbits, squirrels, quail, chipmunks, and a verity of wild birds. It was an enjoyable walk. The boys always had fun doing it.

Skunk Oil

The boys always had to help to raise the crops. Hoeing and keeping the weeds out of the crops. They were on top of the hill hoeing corn one day. Carl said, "Gee would you look at that", as he looked down over the hill, into another field that had been plowed but hadn't been disked yet. So it was sort of wavy from one plowed furrow to the next, just as they looked, what they saw looked like a long black and white woolly worm. It looked like it was ten to twelve feet long. It was going up and down over the plowed ground. That was enough for the boys they didn't know what it was

but they were nosy enough that they had to find out what kind of an animal or what ever this could be. All three threw down their hoes and ran off down the hill as fast as they could go. Their Grandfather was yelling for them to stop and listen to him or they were going to be sorry. But they kept going as if they hadn't heard him.

When they got to this giant monstrous woolly worm, they found out what he was trying to tell them. This big black and white woolly worm turned out to be a mother skunk with seven babies trailing after her over the plowed ground. Giving the appearance of a big worm. They caught three of the baby skunks, but not before the mother skunk gave them a lesson about skunk oil. It won't rub off and the smell is awful. The boys took them home and put them in the old rabbit cage. Then their mother made them strip off their clothes and take a bath in a washing tub, that was filled with canned tomatoes. That was the only way to get rid of the smell. Then they had to wash their clothes in the same tub of tomatoes. Their Grandfather came home by then. He said that they couldn't keep the baby skunks, because they couldn't find enough bugs and grubs to feed them and they would starve to death. He made them take them back to where they had found them and turn them loose. The mother skunk must have found them because they were gone when the boys went back by the next day.

Grandma Lucy Porter and Uncle Oscar

I guess that I haven't mentioned Grandma Porter yet. Her name was Lucy B. Cecil can remember hearing about the time she was trying to get his Uncle Oscar off the roof of the house and he would just make fun of her because he thought that she couldn't get to him on the roof. He was running and jumping up and down on the tin roof making a lot of noise. She kept yelling for him to stop and come down, but he didn't come down until she got so mad that she went in the house. Then she came back out with the old shot gun. She pointed it at him and pulled the trigger. Oscar didn't take time to come down the ladder. He just ran right off the end of the roof. He knew that if he hadn't she would have hit him the next shot.

Then there was the time that Oscar was out running around on a week end night with a bunch of guys and gals they were having a party of a sort. Well Oscar had raised himself some chickens. It was about one o'clock in the morning and the gang started to get hungry. They decided that they would go get one of his chickens and cook it and eat it up on the hill above the house, just an old fashioned cook out. Oscar went sneaking into the hen house to steal one of his own chickens. He made too much noise and the chickens started to squawking and making a lot of noise. Then Grandma Porter woke up, grabbed the old shot gun, went out on the back porch. When she seen someone come out of the hen house she pulled the trigger. She had shot Oscar in the seat of the pants. He never slowed down, he just kept running to get out of range of that old shot gun. Later that night he came in and woke Clemence up and had her to pick the pellets out of his rear end with eyebrow tweezers. He had ten or twelve shot in his rear end.

Grandma Porter would get tired of being on the farm and she would want to stay in the city. So that's what she done,

after the family was raised. She would stay with some elderly people and help take care of them. So she could be in town. My Grandfather wouldn't leave the farm. He would rather have the farm than live in the city. So he stayed on the farm and she stayed in town.

The Move to Princess, Kentucky

She decided to come home for a while. When she did Clemence said, she wouldn't be able to live in the same house as her mother in law. They moved again. This time to Princess, Kentucky. They moved into one of the houses that belonged to the brick yard company. Cecil went to school there for about a year or so. He was in the fourth grade then. It was about a mile to the school, down a gravel road. The school was upon the side of a hill. They had graded off enough room for a two room school house and a volley ball court. When the ball went out of bounds it would go all the way down the hill. There was a big woods behind the school house. The kids had a lot of fun playing in the woods at recess.

There was some silver maples in their yard. They were nice big pretty trees. The only trouble with them was that they would keep sprouting from the roots and coming up all over the yard. Cecil had to keep cutting them down. He got his mother's butcher knife out and was hacking them off close to the ground. He don't know what happened but a big piece broke out of the blade it just about ruined the knife. His mother gave him a good spanking for breaking her knife.

They done a lot of mining around here, and there was a big slate dump not too far away from where they lived. The kids used to play on it all the time. It was always on fire. It would be burning way down deep, but the heat would come to the surface of the pile. It was always hot enough that snow wouldn't stay on it in the winter time. It would melt as soon as it hit the ground. The kids didn't know it at the time, but they found out later that big holes would burn out under the surface and some times there would just be a thin crust on top. It's a wonder they didn't break through the crust and burn up. The kids spent a lot of time on these old dumps, not knowing the danger they were in.

There was a coal tipple where they would load railroad cars with coal. The railroad would drop off the empty coal cars on the siding. They would shove the empty cars way up the grade above the tipple then they would let them down one at a time as they loaded them. The boys learned how to uncouple them and how to release the air brakes. Then they would ride them down the grade and through the tipple at night after every one had gone home after work. They would ride them down one at a time until all the cars were down past the tipple. When the workers came to work the next morning there wouldn't be any empty cars to load. They would have to call the train crew back to push the empties back up the hill again. The boys didn't do this every day but they would do it ever so often. They never did get caught. Chances are the workers wouldn't have told on them any way. They always got a break while waiting for the train crew to push the cars

back into position again. The workers thought that it was funny, that these cars could get through the tipples empty.

There wasn't a lot of traffic then like there is now, but the boys would make real small sling shots and sit along the edge of the road in the gravel. When cars would go by, they would very slyly shoot very small gravel at the hub caps. They didn't hit them very often, but sometimes they did. Then they would run and hide before the drivers could turn around and come back to catch them. They didn't really hurt anything, but they were annoying.

Toller's Farm

In 1940 Grandpa Elliott moved to another farm on straight creek. It was called Tollers farm. It was a big level farm with a big creek running all across the back of it between the farm and a main highway. There was a big high swinging bridge across the creek. The kids had a lot of fun going back and forth across this swinging bridge. They would make it swing back and forth and bounce up and down. It had two cables running along each side to hold on to, to keep from falling off. There was a store at the end of the bridge. They also sold beer and wine there. They had a pool table, and two pin ball machines. Every time the boys would get a few nickels they would sneak off and go to the store to play the pin ball machines. You could win free games. Some times they could play for a long time for a few nickels. One time Cecil went there, and he got lucky and won a lot of free games. If you left the machine the owner would run the free games off and you would have to start over again. So he stayed there too long playing the machine. His Father missed them. He went all the way to the store to see if they were there, and he found them there playing the machines. He jerked them out and started them on the path toward home. On the way he cut a big switch and whipped them all the way home. The boys never went back there when he was at the farm any more.

While visiting their Grandfather at Tollers farm they were playing up on the hill above the house. There was Cecil his brothers and his aunts and uncles, they were playing cowboys and Indians. Their Grandmother called them to come to dinner. They were about half way down the hill. Carl was behind everyone else. When Aunt Mary looked back up the hill she saw something white moving through the grass. She let out a big scream and started running down the hill toward the house. She was yelling that she had seen a ghost. It scared Carl so bad that he almost ran his self to death trying to catch up with every one, but, they had a good head start and he couldn't catch up. He was as white as a ghost when he got back to the house.

They raised a lot of cattle on this farm. It was fenced with an electric fence. The kids would try to hold on to the fence while it shocked them. It would make your arm jerk every time the current would pulsate. They got to wondering what would happen if they peed on it. After a while Carl was convinced to try it. He started peeing on the fence and it started to shocking him so that he couldn't stop. Cecil had to push him away from the fence so that he could stop peeing.

Grandpa Elliott used to put all the calves in this big long shed in the barn at night. After he would leave the boys would sneak into the barn and ride the calves all over the shed. There were so many crammed into the shed together that you couldn't hardly fall off. Sometimes they did and the calves would almost smash them before they could get out of the way. Some times it would be so hot in the barn it's a wonder the calves didn't die from heat exhaustion the way they rode them so much.

They also raised hemp for the Government on the farm. The boys didn't know it but they were exposed to a lot of loco weed. The Government man would come to the farm when it was time to harvest the hemp. He would stay until the hemp was cut and processed. Then he would burn every thing that was left over that they didn't ship off the farm in a locked and sealed truck. The kids didn't know that it was marijuana. They didn't even know that it would give you a high if you smoked it. Fact is they didn't even know what a high was. Wasn't they lucky to be so dumb?

Back To Porter Creek and Tending Sheep

They moved back to Porter Creek again. Grandma Porter had gone back to town again, and Poppy needed someone to help him on the farm. They were all glad to get back on the farm. They liked to stay there with their Grandfather, and go to school there.

One Friday after school, Cecil rode Poppy's old grey mare out on Mauk Ridge to visit with some of the boys he went to school with. He was going to spend the weekend with them. He was going to come home Sunday evening. The boys lived on a farm on top of this long ridge. Their house sat just above the road and the barn was on the other side of the road. They raised sheep on this farm. The boys had to help raise them. Some of the boys belonged to F.F.A. and they would always show some of their sheep at the County fair. Cecil wanted to see how they took care of them. He would go with them to the barn to feed and water them and to see that they were all penned up at night. The boys had planned to take some of the sheep to a new pasture Saturday morning and Cecil was going to go along with them.

After breakfast the next morning they went to the barn and saddled their horses. Cecil didn't know he was going to be going on this ride when he left home and he had ridden the old grey mare bare back. He thought that he would just ride bare back on this ride too. He didn't think that they would be going too far, so he didn't think he would need a saddle anyway.

They turned the sheep out of the pens and started them out alone the road. After about half a mile out the road they opened a gap in the fence and drove the sheep into this big field. After they were all inside the field they closed the gap and started the sheep down the hill toward the hollow. The hill was pretty steep and it was a long way to the bottom. If you have ever ridden a horse down a hill bare back you know how hard that it is to keep from sliding up on the horse's collar bone it gets very uncomfortable trying to ride this way.

They get the sheep down in the small narrow creek and they drive them for about two or three miles. They come to

this big wide field that has a lot of tall grass and a good size hole of water for the sheep. The boys have brought a big lunch with them so they sit down on this big rock to have lunch. As they were eating their lunch they were talking about one thing then another. One of the boys said that he had heard they had some nice cowboy boots at Sandy Hook and he would like to ride on over there and get him a pair before they sold all of them. He said it wasn't too far on down the hollow to Sandy Hook. He wanted Cecil and the others to go with him.

As soon as they had finished eating they all started on down the hollow toward Sandy Hook. It was a nice ride down between the cliffs, you had to look straight up to see the sky. After a while the hollow began to widen out and then they came to a big bridge and a black top road. After they reached the road it was still a couple more miles to town. They found the store that had the cowboy boots. He bought himself a pair and they started on the return trip.

Cecil's rump is starting to get pretty sore by now riding bareback on a long trip isn't all fun. By the time they get back to the field the sheep are in, it's time to round them up and start them back up the hollow toward home. Now it's all up hill and Cecil is having trouble. He keeps sliding off the rump of the old grey mare now. It's close to dark by the time they get to the barn. After supper they all go straight to bed it's been a very long day. After breakfast Cecil said that he thought he had better start for home. He said that he was going to have to walk home because he was too sore to ride the old grey mare home. It took him a long time to get home.

He got two big boils on his rump. He hurt so bad that he couldn't hardly stand and he couldn't sit down. He had to stand to eat for a long time. He had to have a poultice on each cheek to draw the boils to a head. They were very painful. When at last they came to a head and busted relieving the pressure the pain started to go away. It was a long time before he tried to ride again. He also decided he didn't want to tend sheep. They are too much trouble to take care of.

Uncle Tom & Aunt Nell Manning

One Saturday evening the family went to visit Uncle Tom and Aunt Nell Manning. Uncle Tom was Grandma Porter's brother. They lived on Greenbriar Creek. They had a big two story house that set back from the road with a very large front yard. They had a big high hedge in front and on both sides of the yard. They always kept the yard mowed short and neat, also their house was always painted nice and white all the time. They had a very nice place. Their family liked to meet there on Saturday and Sunday. They would have a good get together. Some of the family would sit around on the big front porch talking and watching the others play croquet. Aunt Nell always served a good dinner so she always had lots of company come to visit and stay for dinner. Our family was having such a good time that darkness slipped up on them. They decided to stay the night. They sat around for a while after supper. Then they played cards for a while, they liked to play a card game called "Authors." It was late in the night when they all went to bed. The kids were very tired from playing

hard and staying up late. They still had a hard time going to sleep in this big room in a strange bed. They would be almost asleep when they would hear something making a noise in the walls or over the ceiling. It probably was only mice or a rat but it sounded like a ghost to them. They would cover their heads and hope they wouldn't see any thing scary. They go to sleep at last.

Duck Eggs

Aunt Nell wakes them, calling that breakfast is ready and on the table and the eggs are getting cold. If you don't get up and get down here to eat in five minutes the cook is going to throw it all out to the hogs. Every one comes tumbling down the stairs trying to be the first one to the wash basin. When the kids sit down at the table they see the biggest eggs that they have ever seen. They want to know what kind of chickens lay eggs that big. Uncle Tom says that they are tame duck eggs. The kids said that they would like to have some ducks if they would lay eggs that big. Aunt Nell said, she would give them some eggs and that they could slip them in under a setting hen and that they would hatch in about thirty days. The kids said that there was a hen that just started to set on some eggs and that they would switch the eggs in the nest.

That is what they did when they got home the old hen didn't notice the difference. In about thirty days there was about eight of the eggs hatched. As soon as they were big enough to get around good, the kids turned them out of the pen. It sure looked funny to see these little yellow ducks following this old black and white hen. Every thing was going well until the old hen went down into the barn lot. There was a small creek that ran by the barn when the old hen found a place to get the ducks across she goes across and gets them to follow her. That is until they see the water. Instead of them going across they just head down stream. The old mother hen was squawking and making a lot of noise trying to get them out of the water. She thought they were going to drown. She just had to get used to that, because every time they got near the water they didn't want to get out. It wasn't long until one of the ducks was missing. The kids thought that a hawk had got it. They started to watching for a hawk to try for another one. But nothing happened. They sort of forgot about it.

One day they were coming home from the store and the chickens were all making a big fuss. They ran to the back yard just in time to see this crow walk over to the few ducks that were left, grab one in it's beak and fly off with it. When they counted what was left they didn't have but three ducks left. They put them in a pen so the crows couldn't get to them. That crow had carried off four of their ducks that afternoon while they were gone to the store.

They raised the three ducks almost like pets. When they were about half grown they would follow the boys every where they went. It would be three boys then three ducks all in a row. The only trouble they had out of them was when it rained the creek would get high the ducks would get in the water and head down stream. Some times they

would be as far as a half mile down the creek before they would find them.

Fried Chicken

Cecil's mother had read some where about a new breed of chickens called Silver Lace Wyandotte. This wasn't really a new breed of chickens, they were just new to her. They were supposed to be very good egg producers, also they were big chickens that were good in the frying pan and the stew pot. She decided to order a hundred of them from the hatchery. She thought if they were as good, as the ad said, they were, she would start raising them for herself. The mail man delivered them and they were in pretty good shape, considering how far they had traveled to get there. As they grew up to frying size there were more roosters than pullets. The frying pan got busy and they started to have chicken for supper two or three times a week, until there wasn't but two roosters left. She wanted to keep them, so she could raise her own if the hens were as good at laying eggs as the roosters had been in the frying pan. It turned out, they were. She liked them very much.

What she didn't like, was one of the roosters was starting to get pretty aggressive. Every time she would go out in the yard to do something the old rooster would start acting up. He would ruffle his feathers up, stick his neck out with his head down close to the ground and start to make a run for her and try to flog her. She started carrying a stick with her and after hitting at him two or three times, he would still act up, but he would keep his distance from her. She would have to go to the out house and when she would come back out, the old rooster would be waiting for her just to turn her head, so he could attack her. Sometimes she would forget about him and he would hit her from behind and skin her legs up some.

She always let the cow in the front yard sometimes to help keep the grass down, there wasn't even a mower on the place. Sometimes the weeds would get up enough that they would have to be cut with a scythe. Most of the time, cattle took care of the mowing. This one evening, the old cow was just out from the front porch under the apple tree when it was time to milk. Clemence thought she would sit under the apple tree on a stool and milk the cow there rather than drive the cow to the barn. She got her stool and started to milk, she was almost done, when the old rooster, got into the act. He had slipped up behind her and then he hit her in the back from behind. He knocked her off the stool, and almost under the cow. The cow got scared, jumped and stuck her foot in the milk bucket, then she kicked the bucket over the hill, milk was flying everywhere. The cow finished knocking Clemence on over the hill. She wasn't really hurt very bad, but she could have been. She looked a mess, with the milk and dirt on her clothes and in her hair. She was also crying, because she had spilled the milk. The old rooster had, had his day though. Needless to say that was his last day. He ended up in the cooking pot, that very night.

Wallpaper

The old farm house had been wallpapered one layer on top of another so many times that it had got so heavy that it had started to come loose from the wall in a lot of

places. When ever the wind would blow outside the wallpaper would move in and out and it looked like the house was breathing.

In the winter time it felt that way too. It was just a boxed house and there were a lot of big cracks where the old lumber had shrunk with aging. The walls were all covered with a thin cardboard that was held in place on the wall with over size headed nails and a lot of it had pulled loose and was moving along with the wall paper. In some places the wallpaper had built up to where it must have been over a quarter of an inch thick. Clemence decided it was time to strip all the old wallpaper and redo the cardboard under it so it would have something to hang on to when she put up the new paper. She wanted to get the job done before cold weather set in for the winter.

They started tearing the old wall paper off, it would come down in big thick chunks. There was all kinds of paper on the walls, there were newspaper, catalog paper, wallpaper almost any kind of paper you could think of used to cover the walls. They would carry it out and pile it up behind the hen house. They thought they would burn it later in the outside fire place when they needed to have a fire there. They tried to stuff old rags in all the cracks in the walls that they could to help keep out the cold air in the winter. Then they put up new cardboard on the walls. It came in big rolls about three feet wide. They would roll off the length they needed, cut it off with a knife and nail it to the wall to make a smooth surface to paste the new wallpaper to. The job was going just fine. The inside of the house was starting to look really good. They were proud of the job they were doing.

They had raised this little pig that had been a runt. They had petted and pampered it until it had grown to be a very big hog. It was almost like a pet. It wanted to follow them every chance it got. Sometimes it would follow them to the cellar that was under the smoke house. You had to go in a narrow space between the walls of the entrance way. When you turned to come back out the pet hog would be in the way and he was getting so big he couldn't turn around in this narrow space. They would have to make him back out and that wasn't very easy to do. They were planning to slaughter him this winter. Clemence went to the cellar one morning and there was the hog in the entrance way to the cellar. She couldn't get him to move out of the way. He was dead. They couldn't figure out what had happened to him. They finally discovered that he had been eating the old wall paper they had taken off the walls of the farm house. Some of the paper on the walls had been put up with wall paper paste that had arsenic mixed in it to keep the mice from eating the paper it also kept them from having pork to eat that winter.

Horse Surgery

One night about ten o'clock everyone was sitting in the living room, thinking they should be getting ready for bed. Poppy said he heard a strange noise. He went and opened the front door. Every one heard the noise then it was a gasping coughing sound. It was coming from the barn lot. Poppy grabbed his hat and lantern then headed for the barn lot. When he got down there he found one of the horses

could hardly breathe. It sounded like it was choking on something. He had one of the boys hold the lantern up high while he tried to hold the horse's mouth open trying to see what it had in its throat. He couldn't see anything. Then he saw this big knot or lump on its neck. Whatever it was the horse had in its throat would have to come out. The horse was getting so weak it was already down on its front knees and it couldn't get up. Poppy got out his pocket knife and cut a slit in its throat over the lump. He had to cut into its wind pipe when he did, this big ball of grass popped out. Somehow the horse had sucked this big ball of grass down into its wind pipe. Before he did anything else he had one of the boys run into the barn and get some rope and then he tied the horse's legs together so it couldn't get up, if it got its strength back before he got its throat sewed back together.

He went to the house to find something to sew its neck up with. He came back with a big carpet needle, one of the curved kind. He had a pair of needle nose pliers, clean cloth, some kind of black salve, some heavy thread that had been treated with bees wax. This was the same thread that he always used to sew up the seams of his shoes when they would bust out at the seams. He had to tie the horse's head down to the big wooden sled so that it couldn't move while he was working on it. He sewed up its wind pipe, then wiped some of the black salve in and around the cut he had made. Then he sewed up its neck. He put a lot more of the salve on the horse's neck and bandaged it up with the clean cloth. By now the horse was rolling its eyes around and struggling to get up. He then tied a wide band of cloth around the horse's head covering its eyes so it couldn't see. Then he untied its head from the sled. He tied a single rope around the horse's feet using a slip knot, then he undid the main rope he had the horse tied with the first time. He got back as far as the rope would reach then he pulled the slip knot loose.

The horse just laid there real still for a while it didn't know that it was loose yet. After while it got up on its feet. Poppy started talking to it and got close enough to ease the band from its eyes. It just stood there as if nothing had happened. Poppy got a halter on it and tied a rope between two trees. He tied the horse to the middle of the rope with just enough slack so it could get down to eat and drink out of a big tub. He said he had to do this to keep the horse from rubbing his neck on something tearing the stitches out before they healed up. He should have been a veterinarian because the horse got well.

Christmas

About the middle of November every year the kids always spent a lot of time looking at the catalogs, adding to their wish list. They always wished for a lot of things. They looked at all the toys over and over. They looked at the clothes always thinking that just maybe this Christmas they might get something new to wear. They always tried to be extra good this time of year just in case Santa Clause might be checking his list. They wanted to be sure they were on the good side of the list. They were always told that if you wasn't good, the only thing you would get for Christmas would be a lump of coal in your stocking.

Usually a few days before Christmas they would go to the woods looking for a tree for Christmas. They would spend a lot of time looking for just the right shape and size tree. When they found one they liked they would cut it down and drag it to the house. They would make a stand for it and stand it in the corner of the living room. They would cover the stand with a white sheet and some cotton batten to make it look like snow. They would start decorating the tree. They would pop popcorn then use a needle and thread to string long strands of popcorn to drape around the tree. Their Mother would always make popcorn balls out of molasses and popcorn. They would have little candy canes, glass ornaments, roping and tinsel, angel hair, a big star made of cardboard and covered with tinfoil for the top of the tree. They used all kinds of things to make it look pretty.

On Christmas Eve they would find the longest stocking that they could find to hang from the mantel over the fireplace. They were hung in between the Christmas cards that the family had received and hung on the mantel. The kids would sit by the fire place and hope it would snow for Christmas. They would be up early Christmas morning. They could hardly wait to find out what they had received for Christmas. It's still a mystery how they did it, but there was always something nice for each one under the tree. There would always be an orange or an apple stuffed into the toe of the stocking hanging on the mantel, along with small pieces of candy, mixed nuts, a small toy of some kind and sometimes there would be a banana sticking out the top. They would each get some thing to wear. Sometimes it might be a sweater, dress, blouse or a shirt that their Mother had made by hand. Each thing would have that personal touch and love made into it, a Mother's love. They never got any costly toys, but what they did get were very dear to them. The family was always close, come Christmas time.

World War II

That winter Japan had bombed Pearl Harbor, the beginning of World War II. That next summer Poppy took full advantage of the boy's anger at the Japs. They would be working in the field hoeing corn and a formation of B-24's would fly over. They would stop work to watch them because they hadn't seen or heard anything like that before the war. Poppy would say O. K. now let's cut these Japs down and win the war. He was calling the weeds Japs to get the boys worked up, and it worked. They would work their heads off trying to win the war. The boys helped kill thousands and thousands of the Japs there on that hill side, with a hoe.

Their Dad had gone to Michigan and went to work for the Ford Bomber Plant in Ypsilanti, Mich. The plant was called the Willow Run Bomber Plant. They were building B-17's and B-24's there for the Government. The next spring they moved up there, to Swansee Street, Ypsilanti Mich. When they left Kentucky it was warm, they had already changed into their spring clothes. When they got off the train in Detroit, there was a big snow, and the wind was blowing so hard the snow was coming straight across instead of down. You couldn't see where you were going.

They finally got on a bus to go to the village where Uncle Oscar lived. His wife was Aunt Ethel. It was called the Willow Run Village. It was a Government housing project. They built it for the workers at the bomber plant. When they got there they knew the street name and address, what they didn't know was that the street was made like a snake, it curved back and forth crossing the street the bus was on about twelve times. Naturally they got off the bus at the first crossing, and started to looking for the address of Oscar's house. Their clothes were not heavy enough for this kind of weather. They were about to freeze to death. They finally knocked on someone's door to see if they could come inside to get warm. They took them in and explained how this street kept crossing the main street and how to get where they wanted to go. It didn't take long after they learned they should stay on the main street until they got to the loop that they wanted. This was a government housing project and all the houses looked alike. They all had the same garbage cans and the coal bins all looked alike. The houses were all painted the same color. You had to be very careful or you would go in someone else's house. This happened to them a few times.

School wasn't out up here yet, like it was in Kentucky. Cecil had to start back to school again in the same grade he had just finished. Cecil sure didn't like that one bit. He hated going to school there. The kids were all snobbish, and the teachers didn't care if you learned anything or not. He did learn how to play soft ball. He had never seen a hard ball like a softball or a baseball. The only balls that he had played with in Kentucky, was what they had made out of rags and twine they had got from unraveling feed sacks. They would wad up some rags and then wrap the twine around and around as tight as they could until they had a ball as big as they wanted to play with. They would take a large carpet needle and sew in the loose ends to hold it all together. That was the kind of balls they played with in the country. They had a hard time learning how to catch a hard ball without breaking their fingers. Cecil could hit the ball well and run fast so he got on the team and learned how to play.

Even the ground was different there than it was in Kentucky. The soil was colored a dark grey or black and it was very sandy. The land was almost level as far as you could see. In the evening when the sun went down below the horizon it would be dark in a short time. There was very little twilight. It was hard to adjust to that. It was very cold and windy in the winter, but it was very hot in the summer. In the winter the wind would blow the sand around so much that it was like being in a sand blaster. You would feel as if your skin was being peeled off. In the summer the boys would try to go barefooted and the sand would get so hot it would blister their feet. If that wasn't enough to make you keep your shoes on the sand spurs would.

They didn't have a car so they would have to either ride the bus or walk to the store or any where else they wanted to go for that matter. There was a group of different stores about a mile from where they lived. There was a Kroger, A. & P. , drug store, hardware, and department store all

together there in one group of buildings. This could have been the start of the shopping malls. The first time they went to the grocery store they went with their Mother to help carry the grocery bags. On the way back they decided to take a short cut across an open field. It was very cold and the wind was blowing very hard. It was hard to walk against the wind. When they got about half way across this open field there was this small stream of water they had to cross. They found a place where it wasn't too far to jump across the stream. The boys jumped across all right. When their Mother jumped she jumped far enough to miss the water, but the wind caught her and threw her off balance and she started backing up, tripped and fell back into the stream on her rear end. She got soaking wet to the skin. The sack of groceries busted open and scattered all over in the creek. By the time they gathered them all up and hurried on home their mother was almost frozen to death. After they got home and warmed back up they had a lot of fun re-enacting her fall in the creek. She was very embarrassed, but she knew it was all in fun and the boys didn't mean any harm. She laughed with them.

New Sister Nancy and Back To Porter Creek Again

The boys got a baby sister while they lived in Michigan. Her name was Nancy. It didn't take long for her to get spoiled her being the only girl in the family. It seems that she always got what she wanted.

None of the family was very happy to be living in Michigan. So it wasn't long until they were moving back to the farm on Porter Creek again. They liked living there better than any where else. Cecil took on the job of cutting stove wood out of a truck load of slabs from the saw mill. While the slabs were on the truck it didn't look like it would take long to cut them to stove wood length and then split them into stove wood. His Cousin Reese Porter told him that he would give him fifteen dollars to do the job. Cecil thought that would be enough and said he would cut and split the slabs. When the slabs were thrown off the truck it looked like there was twice as big a pile on the ground as when they were on the truck. Cecil was already having second thoughts about the job. He had to use a one man crosscut saw to saw the slabs into eighteen inch lengths. Then he would have to use a double bitted axe to split the pieces into stove wood. The pieces had to be small enough to fit in the fire box of the cook stove. It took him about two weeks to get the job done. Some of the pieces had to be split with a wedge and sledge hammer, because of the knots in them.

While Cecil was taking a break he had seen an old bicycle out behind the shed he was working by. It was laying there in four or five pieces. It looked like someone had been working on it and just quit without finishing the job. Any way when Reese paid him for his work, Cecil asked if he would sell him that old bicycle behind the shed. If he would how much did he want for it? Reese said he would let him have it for eight dollars if he would take it home right away. Cecil said he would, but he would have to make two or three trips to do it. Reese said that would be all right. He gave Cecil seven

dollars and kept the eight for the bicycle. Cecil carried it home piece by piece.

When his Grandfather saw the bicycle he wanted to know where it had come from. When Cecil told him, he got pretty mad. He said that Reese had cheated him on the job that he had just finished. Then he had cheated him again selling him the bicycle for twice what it was worth. That made Cecil feel sort of bad, but he started to put the old bicycle together any way. He had never had a bicycle before so it meant more to him than it did to his Grandpa. After he got it all together and the boys started to ride it Poppy seen how much fun they were having, he told Cecil that he was sorry he had said what he had, and that he was just mad that Reese had taken advantage of him.

War Games

The boys had their own version of war games, instead of using paint balls they played war with corn cobs, crab apples, acorns and snow balls depending what was in season. They would soak the corn cobs over night in the creek, they would hold a lot of water. The water would make them heavy so that you could throw them harder. When you got hit by one it would hurt a lot. They would get you wet too. You didn't have to stop playing when you got hit. You could play as long as you could stand the pain, then you could call it quits if you wanted to.

They would some times use a throwing stick for throwing crab apples. They would cut a slender switch about two or three feet long and sharpen the small end, stick it into a crab apple and sling it with a quick snap of the wrist or an over arm swing. After some practice they would get pretty accurate with this device. They could throw an apple a long distance. In the fall of the year they would go to the woods and gather a lot of acorns and they would hide them in a lot of different places this would be their ammo dumps. Then when they didn't have anything better to do they would play some war games. In the winter it would be snow balls if they had any snow. They would build their forts and the battle would begin. They always had a lot of fun playing war games.

The Water Hole

There was this small hole of water down by the barn. It was caused by the water pouring over a ledge of rock in the creek bed for a long time digging out a hole. In the summer time the kids would build a dam across the creek below the water hole. Some times they would get about two feet of water in the hole. It might get to be about six or seven feet wide by ten feet long. They didn't know how to swim but they tried to learn how. They played in this water hole every chance they had during the summer. They had a lot of fun there.

There was a larger water hole up the road a short distance. It was where the water came through a big concrete culvert under the road. They would dam it up there sometimes. It made a longer and some what deeper hole of water. They would try to dive off the edge of the concrete where the water spilled over into the hole. It was so shallow they would scrape their stomachs on the bottom sometimes. Sometimes they would scrape the hide off

enough to make it bleed. But, believe it or not they did learn to swim in these shallow water holes.

There was a big swimming hole down on Gooden Creek, that's where the kids went that could swim. One time Poppy said he was going to take them to Gooden Hole swimming, if they would promise to stay out of the deep water, because he didn't think that they could have learned how to swim in the shallow creek down by the barn. He couldn't believe it when they striped their clothes off and ran out on this big rock and dived in.



This water was about eight to ten feet deep here. After this, every time they had to walk to the store in the summer time they would stop by the big swimming hole on Gooden Creek. They always went swimming in the nude there, it was in an out of the way place and every one else did too.

This one day they went in swimming and they had been in for quite a while and they were starting to get cold. They were getting ready to get out. These teen age girls came up the road and they had heard them in the creek. They came over and climbed up on the big rock that stuck out over the water hole and sat down to watch them in swimming. They knew that the boys were in the nude and that they wouldn't get out while they were sitting there. They wanted to see how long they could make them stay in the water. It worked for a little while, but the boys were already cold and ready to get out when the girls got there. They told the girls that they were coming out, when they counted to ten and they did, The girls knew that they would so they turned and ran back to the road. But, they grabbed the boy's clothes on the way and scattered them all the way to the road.

Tobacco

It seems that all the young adults around there used tobacco in one form or another. So it was just natural that the boys wanted to fit in and be part of the gang. They started out by trying to smoke a weed called field blossom. They really didn't know what it's real name was. They striped the leaves and let them dry, then rolled the leaves into cigarettes, using brown paper from grocery bags. They thought they were really doing something big, acting like the other big boys. Grandpa caught them and really came down hard on them for trying to learn how to smoke. He said it would stunt their growth, make them hard

headed and that they were just plain dumb for doing it. They didn't listen it just made them want to do it more.

One day Cecil found a hen's nest with a lot of eggs in it, he gathered them and added a few more with them and went to the store. He bought a sack of buffalo tobacco and some matches, with the money he got from selling the eggs to the storekeeper. As soon as he was out of sight of the store he rolled up a real cigarette and lit up. It wasn't long until he was so dizzy that he could hardly stand up. He sat down on a big rock by the side of the road waiting for his head to clear. That is about the time he got so sick that he didn't think he would ever be able to make it home. When he got home he stopped at the barn and hid the tobacco and matches under a big rock at the corner of the barn. He waited a long time before he tried to smoke again, but he did and he had better luck this time. He thought he was something else now he could smoke a real cigarette with out getting sick. He even made a corn cob pipe to smoke his buffalo in.

Cecil and his brothers were hoeing corn that summer, and they were almost done for the day. Cecil sat down to rest and to light up his old corn cob pipe. His brothers sat down too. As they sat there he asked them if they wanted to try his pipe out. Carl tried it and said that he liked smoking. His brother Sammy wasn't convinced so easy. Cecil decided he would have to bribe him to try it or he might tell on him for smoking and his Grandpa would likely tan his hide good for him. He told Sam that if he would smoke a pipe full of tobacco that he would finish hoeing the rest of the corn and that Sammy wouldn't have to do any thing else for the rest of the day. He said he would do it . By the time he had finished the pipe he was so dizzy that he couldn't stand up. He laid down on the ground and threw up all over the place. He got scared and started to go to the house. Cecil knew that if Sam made it to the house before getting over this he would be in a lot of trouble, so he had to stop him from going. Cecil tried to hold him to keep him from going. They wrestled all over the hillside tearing up a lot of the corn. He got so mad Cecil thought he was going to have to hurt him bad to keep him there until he felt better. After awhile he began to calm down. Cecil swore that he wouldn't do that again.

The Slingshot

The boys always had a slingshot around their neck and a pocket full of round rocks for ammo. They were pretty good shots with them too. They always made their own slingshots. They would find a good shaped fork in a tree, cut it and whittle it to the shape they wanted. They cut out strips of rubber from an old inner tube, and a piece of leather from an old shoe and made their own slingshots. You can see that even then they believed in recycling, they had to if they wanted to have anything. They had to make what they had out of any thing they could find. They were happy though because they didn't know there was any other way, to do any thing.

When Cecil didn't have anything to do around the farm, work that is. He would take his slingshot and go off into the woods to see if he could find something to shoot at. He would pretend that different spots on the rocks or trees

were different kinds of animals. He would shoot at them to see if he could hit them. One day late in the evening he was coming out of the woods. As he passed by a large rock there was a lot of vines and briars under the edge of this rock. He's thinking to himself, now if there was a rabbit setting in that patch of briars he would shoot it like this. He pulled back the slingshot and let it go at the patch of briars. Suddenly out of this thicket bounced a big gray rabbit. It was jumping up and down acting crazy. It started to going around in a circle not getting anywhere. Cecil ran up and caught it. He had shot it in the eye and it couldn't see where it was going, that's why he could catch it. He ran all the way home with it. When he got there he hit it behind the ears on the back of it's neck and broke it's neck. He skinned it and cut it up to be fried for supper. He was very proud of his self for getting a rabbit for supper with a slingshot. When really it was just an accident that he even found it at all. He didn't tell any one that he hadn't even seen it , when he shot it though. He took all the credit that he could get out of it.

Hunting With Dad

Cecil's dad had been promising him that he would take him hunting with him one day, but it seemed that there was always a reason that he couldn't go. This one really cold wintry day his Dad started to go hunting. Cecil begged to go with him, but he came up with a reason that he couldn't go. After he had been gone for a while Cecil got the idea that he would go any way. He went over to their neighbors house and asked if he could borrow their shot gun to go hunting with his dad. They had a gun that took the same size shells that his Dad's gun took. He went back home and found four or five shells and started to follow his Dad. He thought that if he could find him he wouldn't make him go back home, but maybe he would let him go on with him.

It must have taken him two or three hours before he caught up with him. Cecil heard him shoot so he knew where he was. He started running until he got close to where his Dad was. Then he didn't know how he could go about joining up with him with out getting shot. After he got pretty close to his Dad, he got the idea that he would just shoot up in the air so his dad would know that someone was close. His fingers were so numb from the cold that he couldn't cock the gun to shoot it. He had to put the gun down between his knees and use both hands to cock the gun. He shot it up in the air, his dad yelled out did you get it . Cecil yelled back, no but it's coming down your way. Watch for it I'll see if I can scare it toward you. He never did know that Cecil had fired into the air to get his attention. After the excitement was over, he gave Cecil a good yelling at. He expected worse. He let Cecil stay with him the rest of the day. He stayed out in the woods until Cecil thought that he would either freeze or starve to death. It was way after dark by the time they got home. Cecil has been hunting with a gun ever since, and enjoys it very much.

Fork in The Eye

One day Cecil was trying to hide from his brothers, they were always pestering him. Sometimes he just wanted to be alone. He ran into the barn. He had a slingshot with a

fork made out of an old steel riding spur. He had it around his neck as always. He had started to climb up in the wagon bed he had put his foot on the wagon wheel hub. The wheel hub was tapered and it also had some grease on it. He had just straightened up ready to climb over the top of the wheel when his foot slipped off the hub and as he fell the slingshot fork hit on top of the wheel and his eye came down on the end of the fork. He hit the ground with the fork stuck in his eye. It was so numb that he didn't know how bad he was hurt. When he got to where he could see out of the other eye he could see blood all over his hand where he had rubbed his eye. All he could see out of the injured eye was just the color red. He ran to the house crying he thought that he had blinded his self, but he didn't want to give up his slingshot. He knew that if he told the truth the way this had happened they would take his slingshot and he wouldn't ever get it back again. He told them that he had fallen down in the oat field and that he had stuck a stubble in his eye. They took him to the doctor, he looked at it put some drops in it and told them to make Cecil wear dark glasses for a while until he could stand the light in it and that it should be all right in a short time. He was right about it, although it has always been weaker than the other eye ever since. But he would not tell any one that he had hurt it any other way.

Pet Squirrels

The boys were always finding wild animals and were bringing them home to try to raise them. One time they had found two baby grey squirrels and brought them home. They didn't even have their eyes open yet. Every one thought that they would starve and then die. Cecil got a little dolls bottle and filled it up with milk that his Mother had weakened with water and started trying to feed them. After a day or two they finally started to nurse the bottles they grew up real fast. They would let them run loose in the house. They had them for a year or more when they started to gnawing on things in the house. They would find places they had gnawed here and there. Nothing that would hurt anything. Until one day Grandpa started to turn on the radio. There was only two metal stubs sticking up in the air with a lot of shavings scattered all around. Grandpa read the riot act to the boys and made them take the squirrels out in the woods and turn them loose. They stayed around for a long time and then they quit seeing them. They didn't know what happened to them They were a lot of fun to raise, but they sure can chew things up in a hurry.

Pet Rabbits

One time they had two tame rabbits. They were New Zealand Reds. They were very large rabbits. They also had a big tom cat that stayed in the house most of the time. Sometimes they would put the cat out and bring the rabbits in and let them run around in the kitchen, while they played with them. Every one always said, you had better watch out for the tom cat and not let him in while the rabbits were in the house. This one day the tom cat made it in the kitchen door before the boys could do any thing about it. Well they thought that it would be the last of the

rabbits before they could get the tom cat out. The cat spotted the rabbits under the bench behind the kitchen table. He made a big run for the rabbits. The boys thought that would be the end of their rabbits. But the rabbit rolled over on his back and when the cat hit him he wasn't anything but long legs and sharp toe nails. You should have seen the cat fur fly off that cat. The cat couldn't turn the rabbit loose quick enough. Some one opened the kitchen door and the cat went out the door a lot faster than it had come in. You didn't have to worry about the cat coming back in the house when the rabbits were loose in the house any more.

Aunt Opal Everman

Cecil's dad had a sister named Opal. She was married to Venice. They lived in the city. They would come to visit pretty often. They would always bring something good to eat when they came to visit. In the summer time they would bring water melon, and sometimes they would bring the ingredients to make home made ice cream. They would bring the ice cream mixer, ice and salt. The mixer had a big long handle that had to be turned to make the ice cream. Aunt Opal would pour in all the ingredients into the center container and put the lid on. Then Uncle Venice would pack ice around the container, and put some salt on top of it to make it melt faster. When the ice melts fast it makes the container get colder. You have to keep stirring the mix by turning the handle on the mixer so the cold is transferred to the contents in the container. When you first start it is easy to turn the handle, as the mixture starts to freeze it keeps getting harder to turn the handle. When you can't turn it any more you know that it is frozen and ready to eat. Making ice cream was work, but it was fun to make too, also it was very good eating too.

Aunt Opal and Uncle Venice was always good to the kids. They were always bringing them something. The kids always liked to see them come to visit. Since Aunt Opal's kids were raised in the city they didn't get the same exercise that the boys did being raised on the farm. Cecil and his brothers were always running all over the hills either working or playing so they had a lot of get up and go. As soon as they came to visit the kids would take off to the hills to run and play. The only time they would stop would be just long enough to eat. By the time it was time for them to go home they would be worn out from all the extra activity. They would pull some of their city pranks on the country boys, and the country boys would try to get even with them with some of their own pranks.

One time the boys had found this yellow jackets nest in the ground. There was this tiny hole in the ground and the yellow jackets were busy going in and out of it. When their cousins came to visit they planed to have some more fun. They took them out to the nest and showed it to them and then they said they were going to whip them out of their nest. They cut some brush with a lot of leaves on it and each one of the kids took one then they gathered around the hole then they said that on the count of three they would start to beat the ground with the brush killing the yellow jackets as they came out of the hole in the ground. On the count of three they started. Once you start

to do it you can't quit until they are all killed, else you will be stung all over. They did pretty well with this one. Each kid only got three or four stings each. That's not bad for the first time.

Another thing they would do was to find a hornet's nest. Then get back a short distance and throw rocks at the nest trying to tear it down with out getting stung. It's a mystery how they do it but it seems that they can back track the rocks after you throw a few you might hear one buzz by your head. If you are not hid very well they will hit you right between the eyes. When they hit you they sting you at the same time. The force will almost knock you down. The boys would do this just for past time, they thought it was fun.

In the winter during hunting season, Uncle Venice would bring two or three of his hunting buddies that he worked with and they would go quail hunting on the farm. They would always bring their bird dogs to hunt with and their liquor to drink with them. Some times they would get pretty high on it. They would hunt all day then at night they would sit around drinking, playing cards and telling big tales and having fun. They would hide their bottles in the cellar. Naturally, the kids knew where they were. While they were busy doing something or the other the kids would sneak in the cellar and get a taste of their liquor. It would burn their mouths and they couldn't understand how anyone could like to drink something like that.

This one time that they came and there was a big snow that night. They went hunting the next day. They must have been drinking heavy that day because they ran out of whiskey that night. They kept wanting to go to the liquor store, but Grandpa kept telling them how bad it was out. How hard it was snowing and that they couldn't get the car to the main highway, but they were determined to go anyway. The kids got the idea they could keep them from going. Somewhere they had heard if you stick a raw potato up on the exhaust pipe of a car it wouldn't start. That is what they did. They slipped out side and down to the barn lot . Then they slapped this big raw potato on to the exhaust pipe of their car, and sneaked back in to the house. After while they got ready to go warm up the car and get ready to go to the liquor store. When they tried to start the car it wouldn't start. Venice just kept pumping the gas pedal and hitting the starter. All at once the car backfires. When it does there is this big explosion and a big ball of fire rolls out the end of the exhaust pipe. All that raw gas that he had been pumping into the engine exploded and blew the complete exhaust system off the car. Any way it worked. The noise sobered them up some and they decided to forget about going anyway. The boys got up really early the next morning and gathered up all of that potato they could find. They never did know why the exhaust system blew off the car.

Fireworks

They always tried to have some fireworks for New Year's Eve. They would shoot them on the front porch. It was made of concrete and it would make them sound a lot louder on it than when you set them off on the ground, the grass would muffle the sound, but that concrete porch

would make them ring. One year their dad got some dynamite from some where. He took it up on the hill in front of the house and put it on top of a very big rock. He got it all ready to shoot on New Years eve. At twelve o'clock that night he set it off. It rattled the windows in the neighbor's house almost a mile away. That was the loudest noise they had ever heard. All the neighbors were talking about the explosion they had heard, but none knew what it was. Someone knew but they never told anyone that they knew.

When the boys couldn't get fireworks to shoot they would shoot carbide. They would get a clabber girl baking powder can, punch a small hole in the bottom of the can. Then put two or three pieces of carbide in the can add a few drops of water to the can, slap on the lid shake the can and lay it down on the ground. Wait until you could see the steam coming out of the hole in the bottom of the can, strike a match and stick it to the hole in the bottom of the can. The gas that had built up in the can would explode and blow the lid off the can making a loud noise. They did this all the time for fun.

Creative Fishing

Being country boys as they were, they learned to make use of every thing that they learned. They learned how they could shoot carbide in a glass sealing jar or canning jar. They were always on the look out for a hole of water that had eating size fish in it. When they found one they would take a pint jar and put enough wet sand in it to make it sink . Then they would put in a hand full of carbide, put the lid on fast, shake it up and throw it into the water hole. Wait for it to sink and explode. The concussion would kill the fish, and they would pick them up down on the riffle. Fresh fish for supper.

Then in the fall of the year they would gather all the black walnuts they could find. They would take off the outer hull and spread them out to dry. They would store them in a dry place to be used through the winter. The outside hulls they would put in a coffee sack take them down to the big fishing hole. They would wade out in the water above the hole and swish the bag of walnut hulls up and down in the water. The oils out of the walnut hulls would stun the fish and they would float out on the riffle and they would just pick out the ones that they wanted. Fish for supper again.

Uncle Everett Porter

Sometimes on Saturday night Grandpa would take the boys with him to visit his Brother. They would sit around and telltales, or play checker games. Poppy had a small white short haired dog that would always go along with them. Her name was Snowball she would always run ahead of them and hunt around beside the road until they would catch up and pass her up. When they got ahead of her she would run past and start this all over again, until they got to their Uncle's house. Their Uncle's name was Evert. On this one night in the winter it was very cold out, when they left the house. Snowball stayed behind the cook stove where it was warm , and they went without her. They stayed until after midnight before they started home. They were walking up the limestone gravel road, about half way

home when Snowball went running right by them. You could hear her feet hitting the gravel road. Poppy said, well I guess Snowball decided to follow us after all. They never thought much more about it until they got home. Poppy ask Clemence if she had let Snowball out after they had left. She said, that Snowball had been asleep behind the cook stove and hadn't been out all night. But they were very sure that Snowball had been with them that night, it couldn't have been any other dog or thing, or could it?

Fireball

On another night they went to their Uncle Evert's house. They decided to take a short cut to get there. They went this way quite often. It was through what they called a new ground. That is where you would clear the ground to get it ready to plant crops for the first time in a long time. A lot of trees would have grown up and they would cut a ring around the trunk to kill the tree, so that it wouldn't put out any leaves that would shade the crops. They did this so they wouldn't have to cut the trees at this time, they would do that later on in time. Anyway as they were starting to go into this big field of dead trees there was this big ball of fire that came down out of the sky and landed in front of them. No one knew what this was but, they all saw it land and bounce two or three times before it seemed to go out. They stopped and stared at the spot for awhile. Then they decided to go and find out what it was. They looked all over the place but never could find where this thing landed if it did. They never did find out what it was.

Uncle Everett Porter - Blacksmith and Dentist



Uncle Evert was a blacksmith. He had a blacksmith shop and he used to sharpen tools and plows. He could also weld metal parts together that had broken. He also had a few dental tools. If you had a bad tooth ache he would pull it out for you, that is if you had enough nerve to let him do it. He didn't use any thing to numb the pain. He would just sit you down in this chair. Then he would take this pair of pliers, get a good grip on the bad tooth, give it a twist and

yank it out. Cecil had seen this operation quite a few times. He never had the nerve to have any teeth pulled this way, but then again he didn't charge very much to do it.

Ernest walks from Olive Hill

When they first moved to Porter Creek the only road they had was just in and out of the creek, a truly country road. The nearest blacktop road was about ten miles away in Olive Hill. This was Route Sixty. They called it "The Pike."

One weekend in the spring it had come a big rain. The creek was up high and running out of it's banks. There was water in all the low places. This happened to be the weekend that Ernest started home from town. When he got to Olive Hill he got off the train it was late in the evening, but he had stopped at a market and bought a roll of bologna, a bag of apples, and 100 baby chicks. The chicks were in a good size box that had small round holes cut in it to give them some air. It was almost dark by the time he got started walking up the country road for home. The first five miles he walked on the railroad tracks. He had to walk the next five miles in and out of the creek on a country dirt road.

He was starting to get tired from carrying his awkward load. When he got to the place where the creek was running wild he would have to wade across and climb the bank to get out on the other side of the creek. He was trying to walk in a path through the woods beside the creek. He came to a slanted part of the path. It was very muddy and slick. His feet slipped out from under him and he fell down. He dropped every thing he was carrying and almost every thing went back into the creek. The box he had the baby chicks in had broken open and they were scattered every where. Some of them had fallen into the creek and he could hear them cheeping as they were washed away. He gathered up all of them he could find, and put them back into the box. He found a few apples. But he never found his roll of bologna. By the time he made it home he didn't have but, twenty baby chicks left. They had fallen out of the box here and there all the way home.

WPA Road to Porter Creek

The Government started a project called the W. P. A. It was a project to give the local people a job. So they started to build a limestone gravel road from Olive Hill to Porter Creek and beyond to where Cecil doesn't remember. Poppy got a job for himself and his team of mules. He would run a hand dump scraper. They used this scraper to move dirt and to help build a road bed. It took a long time to build a road this way. They didn't have a lot of motorized equipment to work with. Cecil remembers the first time they got a Dempsy Dumpster truck on this job. It had a big bucket that it could sit down on the ground and leave there to be filled by hand. Then it would bring another bucket sit it down and pick up the full one and take it to where they needed fill dirt and rock. It could dump the bucket automatic where they wanted the fill. This was really some piece of equipment to have on the job.

In order to get the road way up out of the creek they had to do a lot of cutting and filling to go around the hillsides. It isn't very far down to the solid rock in this part of the country. They had to do a lot of drilling holes and blasting with dynamite to cut out a road way. They didn't have air drills to use on this job like they do now . They had to drill the holes by hand to put the dynamite in to blast out the rock. There would be three men working together to drill the holes. They would use a long drill bit and two sledge hammers. One man would squat down and hold the drill bit. While the other two would take turns hitting the drill bit with the sledge hammers. Each time the bit was struck the man holding it would turn the bit a quarter of a turn and then they would hit it again. This procedure would be continued until the hole was deep enough. Then they would put a wooden peg in the hole so it wouldn't get filled up with dirt. Then they would move over about ten or twelve inches and drill another hole. After they had a line of holes across the face of the rock, they would go back and rig the dynamite with blasting caps and wires and tamp it down in the holes. They would tie all these wires together and run them around the hill out of danger of flying debris and fasten the wire to terminals on a box with a plunger on the top. When the plunger was pushed down fast it would send an electrical current through the wires to the blasting cap inserted in the dynamite.

Another crew would load all the rock and dirt into the dumpster bucket to be hauled to where they needed fill. Cecil would volunteer to carry drinking water to the men working on the road just to be able to watch them shoot the dynamite. These men should have received a lot of credit because they built a great road with what they had to work with, which wasn't very much. Mostly every thing was done by hand the hard way. This same roadbed is used today. It's been black topped a long time now.

There was this man named Windy Lewis that was a night watchman on this project. He did a lot of reading on this job. He always had a good supply of books on hand, He would loan them to Cecil to read. He learned to enjoy reading novels this way. He read a lot of westerns too.

Home Made Toys and Games

The kids never had many store bought toys when they were growing up. They had to make most of the things that they played with. They would make a lot of different toys out of corn stalks. They could make water wheels that could be set up in the small creek in front of the house. They could watch them from the front porch. They would try to keep a record on how long they would run before they would stop. They learned how to make dolls out of ears of corn and also hollyhock flowers. They would make small sleds and wagons out of corn stalks. They made sleds and wagons out of wood too. They were big enough to ride on, or to haul in fire wood on. They didn't have many tools to work with, maybe an axe, or hatchet and a cross cut saw. They didn't have a drill motor or bits. If they needed a hole in a piece of wood they would take a poker and heat it in the fire place get it red hot and use it to burn holes where they needed them. They could cut the wheels off of the end of a log and burn a hole in the center of them

for an axle to be inserted into. Then they would use a wooden peg for a pin to go through the axle to hold the wheels on. They made some good strong wagons this way. They would try to find a black gum tree to make the wheels out of , because it wouldn't split very easily and would last a long time. They would ride these wagons down a steep hill in the woods. They would lay out a crooked path between the trees down the hill. The way they steered the wagons was with their feet on the front axles close to the wheels. Some times they would get out of the path and hit a rock or a tree with a wheel. When that happened the axle would swing around catching their feet between the turning wheel and the wagon bed. They were always bare footed so that turning wagon wheel would take all the hide off their ankle bones. They would just cry for a while, grit their teeth and go back to the top of the hill to do it all over again. There's nothing like misery to make you enjoy having fun.

One time they made a merry-go-around. They cut a good sized tree about four feet above the ground. Then they built a big fire heated a poker and burned a hole down in the center of the stump of the tree. They made a wooden peg and drove it into this hole. Next they cut a pole about twenty feet long. Then burned a hole in the center of it and fit it over the wooden peg. Since there were three of them one would get on one end of the pole and one on the other end balancing each other. Then the third one would get close to the tree stump and start pushing the pole around. It wouldn't be long until he would have it going fast enough that the centrifugal force would sling one or the other or both of them off the end of the pole. Then it would be some one else turn to push the pole. They would use fresh cow manure for lubrication on the center post. It worked really well until it got dry. Then they would pour on a little water and go again.

They were always making walking stilts. They made some of them pretty tall, if you fell you could get hurt pretty bad. In the winter time they would cut the heads off nails and drive them into the bottom ends of them. They would leave the nails sticking out about half an inch then they would sharpen the end sticking out. Then they could walk on the frozen creek with them. Cecil had made a pair that he had driven some horse shoe nails in. Some of them had split out the side of the stilts about an inch or so. Any way, one of the boys they went to school with wanted to walk on them and Cecil wouldn't let him. So he decided to take them from Cecil. He shoved him off the stilts. Then he grabbed the end that had the nails sticking out. Cecil decided not to let him take them and gave a big jerk. Cecil pulled the nails through his clinched hands. The nails did a really good job on him. His hands were cut very bad. His big brother seen what happened and decided to get even with Cecil. He pulled out a long blade knife out of his pocket and started after him. Cecil ran into the school house as fast as he could. The teacher wasn't there and he was about to catch Cecil with that knife. There was these double school desks in a row, Cecil jumped through between the desk and the seat. The boy that was chasing him started through between the desk and seat he stepped

on the seat and it folded up and his foot went down into the crack behind the seat. Cecil seen this happen just in time to step on the outside edge of the seat and trap the other boy's foot in the crack. Cecil was holding him there, he couldn't reach Cecil with the knife and he couldn't get away. He kept yelling that he was going to cut Cecil's #### head off. Cecil held him there until the teacher came and took the knife away from him before he turned him loose.

Some times they would go out into the woods and cut a wild grape vine and swing on it for a while then a gang of kids would climb on pulling and jerking it until they could pull it down out of the tree. Then they would cut about twenty or twenty five feet of it and take it to the school house to use it for a jump rope. It would be so heavy it would take two or three kids on each end to turn it. They would take turns running in and jumping the vine like a jump rope. Most of the kids would be barefooted and when they missed the heavy grape vine would jerk their feet from under them making them fall. Also it would take a chunk of skin off their ankles. But oh, what fun they had, making fun of the kids that got knocked down that way.

The Spanking Machine

They would sometimes play a game they invented that was something like follow the leader. The kids would get in a line and then they had to do exactly what the person in front of them did. If they wasn't able to do it, they had to pay a penalty. All the others would line up spread their legs and bend over. In order to pay your fine you would face the head of the line get down on your hands and knees and crawl between the legs of all the others in line. As you were crawling through the line of legs they would be spanking your bottom, they would be trying to squeeze you between their legs so as to get as many licks at your bottom as they could before you got through. This was called the spanking machine.

They were playing this game up in the woods at a place called the clefts. It was near the top of this big hill and there was this ring of big rocks around the top of the hill. Some places were as high as twenty feet straight down. This one kid was in the lead and decided to do a head stand on the edge of this cleft, which he did and got away with it. Needless to say all the rest had to go through the spanking machine. There were lots of sore bottoms at the supper table that night. Any time that kid got to be the leader you could expect to go through the machine.

Ashland Cousins and the Long Trip Home

When Cecil was about twelve years old, he got to go to Ashland Ky. to visit with his cousins. They had a lot of fun together. They went swimming in the city pool. His cousins always had bicycles. They got to ride them on the sidewalks, even in the street some times. Some times they got to ride them to the park. They had some big piles of dirt piled up in the park they would ride the bicycles over these piles of dirt and see how far they could make them jump. It was a lot of fun. Cecil's cousins always had a lot of nice toys to play with. He always liked to go there to visit them.

He had some other cousins that lived in Ashland at the time, he visited with them for a while too. When it was time for him to go home his cousin Jimmy decided to go home with him. They had enough money to ride the Greyhound bus to Olive Hill. Then they would have to walk the rest of the way home. It was about ten miles from Olive Hill to where Cecil lived. Aunt Ethel took them down to the bus station and dropped them off. They would have to wait for an hour or so for the bus. They got tired of waiting and his cousin said, that they could save their money for something else and they could hitch hike to Olive Hill instead of riding the bus. They started to walk out of town. They would catch a ride and go a few miles and then walk for a while before getting another ride. They had been doing this all day and it was getting dark and they weren't near home yet. After it got dark no one would pick them up, they did a lot of walking.

When it was about ten or eleven o'clock they were going in front of this house and they could hear the radio. There was a boxing match going on. They sneaked up on the front porch and listened to the fight while they rested. Joe Louis was fighting someone, Cecil don't know who it was, But Joe Louis won the fight any way. After the fight they started walking again. Finally they came to Grayson Ky. They were getting tired and hungry. They stopped at this little store and got some cheese and crackers with the bus money they had saved. They started walking again.

They came to this Police station and Jimmy said, they should stop there and see if they would let them stay in the jail for the rest of the night. But, they wouldn't let them stay. They said that they hadn't done any thing to be put in jail for. Jimmy said, that they could break a window or something then they would have to put them in jail for the night. They left the station looking for a rock or something to use to break a window with. The Sheriff's car pulled up and stopped. He wanted to know what they were doing out this time of night. They told him they were on their way home and that they were tired and hungry and needed a place to spend the night. He listened to their sob story. Then he wanted to know their names and who their parents were. Then he put them in the car and took them to this rooming house and got them a room for the night. Then he gave them some money to get breakfast with. They thought he had believed the story they had told him. They found out later that he knew their parents and that is why he treated them so well. He also gave them enough money to ride the bus on to Olive Hill. But, when they got up early the next morning they walked to the edge of town and started to hitch hiking again. They got home about dark. They were two tired boys.

Jimmy was going to stay two weeks on the farm. He decided that he needed a hair cut. He wanted Cecil to give him one. Cecil had never cut hair before but, there's always the first time. Jimmy had him to cut it as close with the clippers as he could. It looked so bad that he thought Cecil should just shave his head with a straight razor so that is what he did. His head looked like a cue ball when he got done with him.

Since he got Cecil in trouble for hitch hiking home Cecil thought he should get even with him. He knew, there was this bumble bee's nest in a log over the ladder into the barn loft. Cecil told him they could have some fun playing in the hay, in the loft. Cecil showed him the ladder to use to get to the loft. Cecil went up one on the other side of the barn. When he got to the top of the ladder he started beating on the other end of the log that had the bumble bees nest in it. You know what happened next. The bumble bees started to sting him on the bald cue ball head. Cecil didn't know how many times he got stung but, he thought that he was even with him any way. His eyes swelled together and he had to go to the doctor for the swelling. They had a lot of fun before he had to go home. He looked funny with no hair and two black eyes. Aunt Ethel didn't think that it was very funny though.

Trade Day and the New Car

On the third Monday of the month Olive Hill had what they called trade day. On the West end of town on Route Sixty. The people of the surrounding area could bring what ever they wanted to sell or trade and just set up shop. There wasn't any charge for this area. It was free if you had one item or many different items you were the business man or woman of the day. If you needed anything you could usually find someone that had it for sell or barter. It was another way to get away from the everyday chores and mingle with your distant neighbors. Instead of being a night out it was a day off.

This one day a man had this old T-Model Ford and he was selling chances on. For five dollars you could get six chances on this old car. The man said that the car wouldn't run, and it just needed a little work done on the engine along with a few other things, but that it was worth a dollar of any one's money. There wasn't many people buying the chances on an old car that wouldn't even start. One of the boys Cecil went to school with said they should pool their money and buy six chances on the car. If they happened to win they would have something to fool around with on the weekends. They got five of the neighbor kids to put up one dollar each to buy six tickets on the car. They didn't even think they had a chance of winning. They went on about their business and having fun in the crowd of traders. The man said he was going to have the drawing for the car at four o'clock. You didn't have to be present to win, your name and address was on the tickets. The boys made sure they were there at the drawing. When the ticket number was called, Cecil's cousin had the winning ticket. So that made Cecil the co-owner of a red convertible T-Model Ford automobile. The boys never even thought about winning much less how they were going to get the car home when it wouldn't even start.

One of the boys said that his Uncle had just bought a team of mules, maybe they could get him to pull the car home for them if they could find him before he left for home. The boys scattered out looking for him. When they found him he said that he would pull the car home for them, but each boy would have to give him a days work in return. He said that he would need them to help him set out his tobacco plants. They all agreed to help him when he

was ready to set them just to let them know a day or two ahead of time. They got the car home and they were all excited about it. Now they had something to do in their spare time. Every weekend the boys would meet to work on the car. They would work on it awhile then they would push on it for awhile trying to get it to run. By the time Fall of the year had rolled around and it had started to getting cold outside the boys decided it was time to give up on getting the car to run they decided to junk it. They sold it to the junk man for scrap just to get rid of it. They got their money back that they had paid for their tickets, but they each lost a days work to Uncle Herman for bringing the car home for them.

The Knocking Spirit

Some times on Saturday night some of the neighbors would come to visit. Usually they would sit around the big kitchen table and play cards. They liked to play a game called Authors, or Gin Rummy. Some times they would just sit around the big table and talk of old times or about the neighbors or any thing some one thought of that was interesting. Sooner or later some one would mention the knocking spirit. To them raising the knocking spirit was like some people play with the OUIJA board. A group of people would gather around a table placing their hands on the table palms down. Then they would concentrate on what some one was saying to the spirit. Some one would ask the spirit a question telling it to answer by knocking on the floor with one of the table legs. They would say for it to knock once for no or twice for yes. They would have to spend a long time talking to the spirit before it would do any thing. As long as every one at the table believed that it could answer questions it would work quicker. After it got to answering questions it would answer quicker.

The table they used was a solid oak table that was very heavy and well constructed. It had a big round center post that was about twelve inches through with four curved legs coming out and down from it to the floor. Some times they would have some one to sit under the edge of the table to watch and make sure no one was using their knees to help raise the table and let it fall to make the noise. Cecil has sat under the table a lot. He swears no one helps raise the table.

Every one thinks that it is a bad spirit instead of a good spirit, because it will lie to you. If every one around the table knows that something is true the table will tell the truth. If every one around the table isn't sure of the answer it will lie about it. If someone knows that something has already happened it will tell the truth. If the question is about something to happen in the future chances are it will lie to you about it.

Uncle Wint Porter had fooled with the knocking spirit so much he had got tired of it, he said he wasn't going to raise it any more. It didn't seem to like that one bit. It would knock on the head board of his bed every night so much that he couldn't get any sleep until he would fool with it for a while.

A man by the name of George Eagens would ride an old mule by the house every Sunday morning on the way to

church. This one Saturday night they asked the knocking spirit if it would keep George up all night and not let him get any sleep. It said that it would. All the people just couldn't hardly wait to see George coming up the road on the old mule. They wanted to know if he was able to get any sleep Saturday night. When George came by they yelled for him to stop and get a drink of water so they could find out how he slept. George always thought about what you asked him for a while before he would answer you. But when they asked if he got any sleep last night he was very quick to answer. He said, "You know what happened last night, I went to bed very early and went to sleep, but about ten o'clock all the covers slid off the bed and I got so cold that I woke up. I got the covers back on the bed and tried to go back to sleep. Every time I closed my eyes something would pull the covers off me. I tried to hold on to them, but I couldn't hold them. They would go off in the floor and then slide over into the corner. It seemed like they were doing it all by them selves. I had to get up and build up the fire and put all my clothes back on to get my teeth from chattering. I didn't get any more sleep at all." This was the funniest thing that they had ever heard. They just couldn't help but to laugh while he was telling about it.

The spirit got so strong that Grandma made them quit using the kitchen table because they were tearing the legs off of it. They decided to go back on top of the hill and build a special table just to raise the spirit with. There was an old barn back there so they could have a dry place to fool with the spirit. They made this big table out of two by twelves with four by four legs. They put in a lot of cross bracing to help make it strong. On the second night that they raised the spirit someone made it mad and it shoved them back against the wall and pinned them hurting them pretty bad. Then it bounced itself up and down and then into a the wall, tearing itself apart. The one that had made it mad fell over into a horse stall getting out of the way. Every one said that if he hadn't fell into the stall the table might have killed him. Most of them didn't go back on that hill any more. Their big table was completely torn apart. They didn't put it back together any more. They were afraid some one would get hurt if they continued to mess with the knocking spirit.

Working for Uncle Herman Porter

In the summer time, Cecil would work on his Uncle Herman's farm. He would help set tobacco, hoe corn, and cut sprouts out of the hay fields. Some time he would spread fertilize or lime on the grass fields. That was very hard work for him. They would haul the fertilize to the field in a wagon pulled by a team of mules. Then he would carry it in a ten gallon bucket in the bend of his arm and scatter it on the grass. As soon as one bucket was empty he would go to the wagon and refill it again. He would wrap the bucket bail with rags to keep it from cutting into his arm. He sure would be glad to hear the dinner bell ring at supper time. Then he would have to bring in the cows and horses and put them in the barn. The cows had to be milked and fed. The horses had to be fed. Then he could go home for supper. After supper he would have to go to



the field behind the house and bring their livestock in to be milked and fed. By this time it would be after dark, and he would be ready for bed.

Fourth of July Berries

One forth of July the entire family went to pick black berries. They took two or three fifty pound lard cans and some eight pound lard buckets to pick in. On this berry picking trip they picked enough berries to can ten gallon of black berries. That is the most that they ever picked at one time before or since. Their mother worked way into the night to get them stemmed and cleaned, cooked and canned. That was a hot way to spend the Holiday. They got chiggers all over their bodies. They had to rub kerosene and lard all over each other to get rid of them. They sure make you scratch the blood out. Those berries sure tasted good about Christmas though. Some times black berries would be all that they had for breakfast. Their mother always canned a lot of them every year.

Egg Sucking

Cecil was working for his Uncle Herman one fall helping strip tobacco, getting it ready to take to market. There were a lot of people working and they were all telling things that went on around the place. This one cousin was telling about the egg sucking contest that they had one year while stripping tobacco. The hens always were laying eggs in the hay in the barn, so, there was

always a few handy. Any way this one guy said, that he could suck more eggs than any one else there. They started betting that he couldn't. He would just crack the egg and put his mouth over the hole and suck the egg out and swallow it. This went back and forth first one guy then the other. The bets were getting bigger all the time. Herman said, "I'll bet that you can't drink this one down," and handed him one that was out of the shell in a cup. He said, "I'll bet you I can." He grabbed the cup and down went the egg. He said, "I told you I could, now pay me." Herman looked at him sort of funny and said, "You know you are the third one that has tried to keep that egg down and you are the only one that has been able to do it." That is when the egg came back out again. Herman said, "Now you can pay me because you didn't keep it down either."

Working in the Field With Poppy

There is always some kind of work to be done on a farm every day. Poppy always tried to farm alone, with teaching school. In order for him to be able to do this he had to make use of every bit of suitable weather and all the help he could get out of the boys. On the really cold days in the winter time he would take the boys with him and they would take sprouting hoes and go to the fields that he was going to have in grass for hay the next spring. They would have to cut down all the tree sprouts down, below the top of the ground. Then they would be able to use the mowing machine to cut hay without the machine getting hung up on the sprouts and tearing the cycle bar up. Also the hay would be easier to take care of and it would make better feed for the livestock. If the hoe would hit the sprout about one or two inches below the surface of dirt the hoe would cut the sprout off below ground level. If the hoe hit the sprout above the ground the sprout would spring over toward your head usually hitting you on the nose and ears. If you haven't ever been hit in the face on a cold day by a sassafras sprout that has been hit too high with a sprouting hoe you just can't imagine how bad it hurts. When you are working like this and you have cold hands and your eyes are watery from the cold wind, you can expect this to happen three or four times in a days time.

This year Poppy is trying to get started early because he is planing to raise a tobacco crop this year. You have to gather a lot of brush and dead wood together in a long pile where you are going to sow a tobacco bed to raise your tobacco plants. It has to be ready to burn by the last of February to kill all the weed seeds, before you sow the tobacco seed. Then after it has been burned over and sowed then it has to have canvas stretched over it to keep the frost from killing the plants. Raising a tobacco crop is a around the year full time job. Without all the other work to be done on the farm. They have worked off and on all spring and are well into the summer.

They are hoeing corn today and it is very hot and dry and the boys are about worked out. It's about three o'clock in the afternoon and the boys are all sweaty and they want to call it quits for today so they can go swimming. Poppy thinks that is more important to finish the day in the field, One thing leads to another. Cecil gets mad and blows his top. He throws down his hoe and says that he is done for

the day and starts going to the house. By the time he gets there he is over his mad spell and is sorry that he has left Poppy in the field after all the things that he has done for the family. He starts back to the field and he meets Poppy and the boys on the way home. After Poppy had thought about it he decided that the boys did need a break from the work so he came to the house. Then he went to the swimming hole with them. Cecil has always regretted losing his temper with Poppy, and leaving him in the field. He promised himself that he wouldn't ever do that again.

Cecil highly respected his Grandfather, and loved him very much. Cecil always thought he would be very proud of himself if someone would love , respect, and remember him , as much as he did his Grandfather. He thought that would be a great goal to achieve, in a life time.

Wash Water

One day Cecil was working on his old bicycle on one end of the back porch. His Mother had been washing clothes on the other end of the porch. He had been helping her change the water when she needed him to . After she had finished washing she asked him to empty the water for her. He had answered her saying, "In a minute." He had wanted to finish what ever it was he was doing at the time. He had intended to empty the water as soon as he got done. It wasn't long until his dad came by and asked him to empty the wash water. He said, "In just a minute." He still wasn't done, and he didn't think there was any reason to be in a hurry to empty the water. His Dad came back by and said, "Cecil, empty the wash water." By now Cecil was aggravated and with out thinking of the consequence he said, "I ain't going to do it." That was a very bad mistake. His Dad was instantly mad. He pulled off his belt and gave Cecil a very hard whipping for sassing him. Cecil said he would never do that again, but he also said to himself that he would never take a whipping like that again either. He never had to. Thank goodness.

Wash Day

Since they didn't have electric and the old Maytag gasoline washer had worn out years ago, Clemence used a wash board to wash their clothes. They heated the water out side and carried it to the back porch and poured it into a big wash tub. They had to draw the water out of the well by hand. It took a lot of water to wash and rinse the clothes with.

It just happened to be on a wash day that this salesman came to the door. He said that he was selling washing machines. He said that he knew that they didn't have electric yet and that Mrs. Porter still had to wash on a board. He said that he had a machine that was run by hand, and that it was much easier to use than a washboard, also it did a better job than the board. He went on to say that it was much easier on the clothes making them last longer. The machine consisted of a double stand for holding two big wooden tubs one for the hot wash water, the other for the cold rinse water. It had a hand operated wringer in between the two tubs. In the wash tub there was a set of rollers on the bottom set in an arc with a large roller riding in the center of the arc. The small rolls were smooth. The large roller was corrugated with the slots running end to

end of the roll. These rolls were set in bearing like the wringer rolls. The big roll had a big handle that you used to turn the rolls. You had to start the clothes in between the rolls then turn the handle back and forth running the clothes between the spring loaded rollers until you thought they were clean. You would then turn the rolls one direction to take the clothes from the rollers. You would then run them through the wringer rolls into the rinse water.

The sales man demonstrated the washer by taking an old crumpled five dollar bill folded it in between the folds of a towel and ran it back and forth through the rollers for a while then he ran the folded towel through the set of wringer rolls into the rinse water. Then he took the bill out and whished it around in the rinse water and put it through the wringer again. It came out like a new bill. Needless to say he sold her the machine. It worked good for a while, but it was still a lot of hard work to do a wash any way. Her hands were always chafed from being in the water so much. In the winter time it was a very miserable job having her hands in the water then having to hang the clothes on a line outside in the cold. Washing clothes in the country was drudgery any time of year.

The Motorized Bicycle

Cecil had read an article in a magazine about a company that was putting motors on bicycles; also you could buy a conversion kit to do it yourself. There was an old Maytag washing machine in the smoke house that hadn't been used for a long time because the old tub wouldn't hold water it was all rusted out. It had a kick start motor on it. Cecil thought he might be able to get it to run if his Grandfather would let him have it to work on. He was thinking how he could use it on his bicycle. His Grandpa said he could have it because it wasn't good enough for any thing that he could think of. So Cecil started to work taking the motor off the washing machine. After he got it off he took it all apart and cleaned it all up. There was a lot of rust and corrosion that had to be cleaned off. He cleaned the gas tank and also the carburetor was all gummed up. He cleaned the spark plug and put a little oil into the hole to help free the rings on the piston. He put the plug back in and then put new fuel in the tank. After he got all the mechanical things working he was ready to try to get it to run. He fastened the motor down on the edge of the back porch so it wouldn't move around while he was using the kick starter. After he had kicked it over a few times and nothing happened. He asked his Grandfather to look at the motor to see if he could tell him what to do to get it to run. As Poppy was checking the motor he discovered that the rings must have been stuck there wasn't any compression. They would have to take the engine apart again and free the rings. Poppy knew that it was too much of a job for Cecil, so he said he would help him get it running if he could. By working together they finally get it to run.

Now Cecil goes to the Western Auto Store and buys some extra heavy spokes for his bicycle wheels, a pulley for the motor, and a large v-type ring that would fasten to the spokes of the back wheel for the v-belt to ride in. After he got the motor mounted on the frame and the rear wheel

beefed up with heavy spokes he would have to measure to find out what length of v-belt to buy. He spent many hours trying to align the rear wheel with the new spokes and v-belt pulley attached to it. Then after all that time and trouble he never could get a clutch or throttle system worked out. He ended up junking the entire idea. He got a lot of experience out of the project any way.

The Sand Plant Pond

The boys had always heard about this big man made lake that was located about a mile up this hollow from the main road. They had never been there but had been told that there were some very large fish in this lake. This place was called the sand plant pond. A long time ago there had been a processing plant for silica sand. The silica was mined here, processed then shipped to a place in Pennsylvania to be made into glass. After the plant moved they just left this big lake or pond. All the old buildings had either been torn down or had just rotted down from neglect. It's been told that this lake had been stocked with different kinds of fish. One Friday, Cecil and some of the other boys decided to play hooky and go fishing at the sand plant pond. They got off the school bus at Lawton telling the driver that they would walk down to the store and catch him with the other kids on his return trip from Soldier back to Olive Hill. The driver forgot all about them. As soon as he was out of sight they walked back up the road and up the hollow to the pond. Each one had their fishing hooks and fishing line in their pockets. When they got to the pond they started turning over rocks and rotting wood finding fishing worms and bugs to use for bait. They could see these big bass drifting alone near the edge of the water. They tried every thing that they could find for bait but they couldn't get them to bite anything.

They fished for two or three hours then it started to pour the rain. They tried to find shelter under some of the fallen buildings but they soon got soaking wet. It was still pouring the rain when they walked back to the road and as they waited for the school bus to come by to pick them up. The driver never said any thing about them not catching the bus that morning of the return trip. When he saw how wet and miserable they were he thought that, that was punishment enough for missing the bus that morning.

The boys went back to the pond on a weekend some time later. They were going to try to catch some of those big bass. They had plenty of good bait but they still couldn't catch a thing. Some one had left a wooden row boat tied to a tree on the bank. They took the boat for a ride around the lake. There were a lot of minnows and a lot of frogs on the lake. That may have been the reason they couldn't get the fish to bite, they weren't hungry. They thought that they would come back again sometime and try it again. They thought it would be fun to fish from the row boat.

They went back later in the year to try their luck. Someone had busted the row boat down over the top of a fence post and just left it there. The post was sticking through the bottom of the boat. They never did find out why any one would do that. That was a very well taken care of boat. The boys were afraid to go back any more,

afraid that someone might think they had done the boat in. Those big fish are still there.

Catching A Skunk

Cecil always liked to set box traps trying to catch wild rabbits. He would use a piece of apple for bait. When it snowed he would go out in the woods and try to track a rabbit to a hole. He would then set his trap in front of the hole. Sometimes he would catch a rabbit sometimes he wouldn't. This one morning he was checking his trap before going to school. It was still dark outside and he was using a kerosene lantern when he got close he could hear something in the trap while he was looking he saw some white fur sticking through a crack in the box. He knew right away he had caught a skunk. He didn't want it and he knew that he was going to have a hard time getting it out of the trap without getting sprayed. He went around the trap as quietly as he could and sat down on a log while he was trying to figure out how he was going to release the skunk with out it spraying every thing. If it sprayed his trap he wouldn't be able to use it any more. After awhile it got daylight. Then he got the idea that he might be able to use a long stick or a small pole to turn the trap over very slowly. If he could turn it over so the bottom was up the door would fall open then the skunk would go free. He had to do this very quietly and slowly so he didn't scare the skunk. Also he would have to sit very still until it had gone on about it's own business. He found a long pole and then gently eased it over on the box. He was hoping that the weight of the pole and the rough bark on the pole would catch on the corner of the box and roll it over. He got the box turned over after trying a few times. Now all he had to do was just be still until the skunk noticed he was free to go. It wasn't long until he could see the skunk's nose ease out of the box, but it seemed like hours before it really decided to leave the box and the area. It was a big relief when it got out of sight. Then it was on to school instead of to the wash tub full of tomatoes.

Cecil the Salesman

Cecil was always trying to find some way to earn a little money. He had tried selling garden seed, flower seed, and different kinds of greeting cards. He made a small amount of money but nothing great. He saw this ad in a magazine about a line of products called Zano. It sounded like a good product and you could order a sales kit without any money down, that got his attention. He got the O.K. from his mother to order the sales kit and when it arrived he was anxious to get started, But, his mother made him sit down and read all about the products that he was going to try to sell. She told him that the more he knew about what he was selling the easier it would be to sell it. By Saturday he was ready and he got a early start in the morning. There was a great distance between houses here and he wanted to see as many people as he could. He planned on taking up orders for the products as he made his first round of his route. He would pool all the orders into one big order and send it in, that way he would get free items for having a certain quantity of certain products. That way he would start having some products on hand that could be delivered at once. Also on the products that he got free and sold was

clear profit. It wasn't long until he had a good thing going. He saved his money and bought himself a very good used bicycle with a large front basket mounted on the handlebars and a luggage carrier on the back. He was very proud of this bicycle. Now he could travel on a bigger route.

Zano was a very good product and most of the people liked the product, but sometimes they wouldn't have the money to pay for what they ordered when he delivered it to them. That got eating into his profit and Cecil just didn't have the heart to push for them to pay him so he just paid for the products on hand and quit ordering any thing else. His mother ended up using the items that he had left over. She didn't have to go to the store for a long time to buy spices, cake flavoring, polishes, and cleaners. Cecil decided that he wouldn't make a good businessman.

A Trip to Town

One of Cecil's cousins had bought an old car, and had wanted Cecil to go to Olive Hill the next Saturday evening with him and some other boys. These boys were a little older than he was, also they could usually come and go when they wanted to without having to ask anyone. Cecil knew he would have to have permission before he could go. They were going to see a movie and Cecil would need a little more money any way. He asked his mother if he could go with them, and if he could, would she give him a dollar to spend. She told him that he would have to find out where they were going and what time they would be coming back. She told Cecil that he had to be home by ten-thirty . If they were going to be later than that, he couldn't go with them. They told him that they would be home before that. When he told his mother that they would be home on time she said then he could go. If he wasn't home by that time he wouldn't ever go with them again. He told the boys what she had said, and they promised they would make sure that he got home on time. They told him that if they happened to want to be later, they would give him the car keys and he could come home without them.

Sure enough some of the other boys met some girls and when it was time to go home they weren't ready to go. Cecil told them he wanted the car keys so he could go home. The boys knew that he didn't know how to drive and they didn't think that he would try to go with out them. They gave him the car keys thinking that he was just bluffing, and would be waiting for them at the car. Cecil had every intention of going home even if he didn't know how to drive. When he got to the car he had to try to figure out how to start the car and try to remember the position of the gears.

Olive Hill was just a very small town with very little auto traffic at rush hour, and none at this time of night. He just had about three or four blocks in town then it was just gravel road the other ten miles home. He drove out of town in low gear. He was afraid to try to change gears and steer at the same time in town. He just knew that when he would try to change gears it would grind and make a lot of noise and that everyone would notice him not knowing how to drive. He just went very slow concentrating on keeping the car in his lane and missing all the parked cars.

When he got to the country road cut off he started to feeling a little more at ease. He revved it up a little and got up a little speed then he shoved in the clutch and tried to change into second gear. He had to try four or five times before he got it in second without grinding the gears. After a while he thought he would try for high gear. He hadn't even thought about stopping yet. There wasn't anything to stop for unless there would be a train on the crossing when he got there. He would have to make a sharp left turn from the road he was on and down a steep incline to the crossing. He decided that if there was a train he would just continue on the road he was on until he found a place he could turn around. He would turn around and come back to the crossing after the train had passed.

When he got to the crossing it was clear, he made the left turn and went across the crossing. That was a relief to be on the home side of the crossing. This section of road was very narrow the rest of the way home. He is hoping that he doesn't meet any cars until he gets home. At last he makes it to the boy's home that owned the car. He pulled into the yard and turned off the key. He left the key in the car and ran the rest of the way home. He knows that he is late getting home and he's sure his mother will be upset with him. She is waiting up for him but after he tells her what happened to make him late she said that she was just glad that he got home safe. It had taken him over an hour to drive the ten miles home. He made himself a promise that he wouldn't go with those boys any where else. When the boys got back to where they had parked the car and it wasn't there, they got very mad because they knew that they had to walk the ten miles home. It was after daylight when they got home. They never asked Cecil to go any where else with them again.

Aunt Eva

Clemence's sister Eva lived in Millseat, Kentucky. It was on the outskirts of Ashland. The kids always had a lot of fun when they visited with Aunt Eva. She had seven Children of her own, so there was always something going on there in the way of fun. She was a widow woman. Her husband got killed in a coal mine when the youngest girl was just a baby . She raised these seven children all alone.

You could see the smoke stacks of the steel mill from her back porch. There was a creek behind her house that ran by the steel mill and emptied into the Ohio river. To get to the creek from her back yard you had to go down a steep hill. The creek was about fifty or sixty feet lower than her yard. There was a twenty four inch gas line that came from under the ground behind her house and ran down the hill about four feet above the ground it went it went back down below the surface at the bottom of the hill. It was just a smooth pipe all the way from top to bottom. All the kids around there used it as a slide to the bottom of the hill. They would fold a piece of cardboard box across the pipe. Then they would straddle the pipe and slide to the bottom. It made a dandy slide. The kids kept the pipe shiny and bright sliding down the pipe.

Where the creek went under the highway and some railroad tracks through this big concrete viaduct was a good place to catch some big cat fish. The boys decided to

build a flat bottom boat that they could use to get under the viaduct to fish. They went all around the neighbor hood gathering up all the old boards they could find to use to build the boat. They spent a long time getting everything together to work with. They drew up a plan and started to build the boat. When it was finished it was so heavy they could hardly move it around. They all got together and drug it to the edge of the hill and shoved it over the side.

There were a lot of big horse weeds growing on the side of the hill and this boat made a big road through them as it plowed over the hill. They drug it on over to the creek and pushed it in the water. It hardly slowed down the water came spewing up through all the cracks and it sunk down until just three or four inches of the sides were above the water line. They had to pull it back out on the bank and try to plug up all of the holes. That was hard to do with all that water that had collected inside the boat. They went through the neighbor hood again looking for some tar to use for sealing the cracks. They found some tar and some old rags. They built a fire and heated the tar. They tore the old rags into strips and soaked them in the hot tar and wedged them in to the cracks and knot holes. They filled the boat with water and left it to soak for a few days so the wood would swell up and maybe it would float.

After a few days soaking the kids decided to try again to launch the boat. It floated this time. They can't wait to go fishing in it. They made a couple of paddles out of the wood they had left over and go for a ride in the boat. it's pretty heavy to paddle around but it doesn't leak very much a small coffee can would have to be used to bail the water out ever so often, they didn't mind too much. They decided that since the creek wasn't very deep they might be better off to use a pole to push the boat alone instead of trying to paddling it. So that's what they tried . That worked better than the paddles. They would go fishing that afternoon under the viaduct. They had a lot of fun with the old boat that summer. But the next spring when the Ohio river got up high the back water took their old boat out to sea when it receded. They never tried to build another boat.

Strawberry Shortcake

One spring after visiting Aunt Eva, Lyda Mae her oldest daughter came home with them for a visit on the farm. They still had to walk the last five miles home after they got off the train at Lawton. Their Grandfather happened to meet them at the train station. They would all walk home together. When they got to a hollow called Leatherwood, Poppy said they could go up this hollow and when they got the end of it the farm would be just over the big hill. He said it was closer to go this way home. It was a very hot day and every one was very tired and sweaty when they got to the big hill they had to cross. They sat down to rest under this big tree for a while. When they got ready to go the kids didn't want to walk any more, they were worn out. Poppy said that he knew where there were some wild strawberries on up the hill. That got them going again. About half way up the hill Poppy led them over to the old fence row and sure enough there were some wild strawberries and they were ripe. The kids started picking

and eating them. Poppy had on an old white straw hat. He took it off and started to pick the berries and put them in his straw hat. He said they could make a strawberry short cake when they got home. Every one started putting the berries in his hat. They soon had it completely full of berries.

The kids were in a big hurry to get home now and make a cake. They didn't even act tired now. By the time they got home and dumped the berries out of the hat to be stemmed, Poppy's hat had changed from being white to a very soft pink stained by the strawberries juice. He couldn't get it clean again. It was permanently stained pink. Lyda Mae still talks about the wild strawberries, and how good they tasted after that long walk.

Aunt Kate Delivers Bonnie Mae



Herman's mother, Kate was called a granny woman. One night about one or two o'clock in the morning Cecil's mother woke him up and said, he would have to go get Aunt Kate for her. Aunt Kate was a very large woman. Cecil had to harness the team of horses, hook them up to the sled and go get her for his mother. He put a lot of hay on the bottom of the sled for her sit on and to help keep her warm, while she rode home with him. It was in December and there was a big snow on the ground. The next morning the kids had a new baby sister. Her mother , called her Bonnie Mae . She named her after her mother whose name was Julie Mae.

Carl Splitting Wood

Since they had to cut wood for two fire places and the cook stove. It kept them busy every weekend. One Saturday they would go to the woods and cut down the trees and trim the brush off. Cut the trees into logs that would fit on the sled then haul them into the wood yard. The next weekend they would cut them into the length that was needed . Part of them would be for the fire place and part for the cook stove . What was cut for the cook stove had to be split down into pieces that would fit into the fire box on the stove. The wood that was cut for the fire place didn't have to be split. They could roll almost any size into the fire place.

One day Carl was splitting wood for the cook stove. The axe hit on a knot in the wood and glanced off the chop block and buried the blade of the axe into the side of his

foot. They didn't have a car or any fast transportation. Cecil had to run to one of his cousin's house and get his cousin Reese to take Carl to the doctor to have his foot sewed up. It was bleeding very bad. His mother wrapped it up with towels and put a tourniquet on his leg to help stop the bleeding. He was lucky that this happened after they got the road built past the farm so they could get a car to take him to the doctor. If it had happened before they built the road he would have bled to death. We couldn't get it to stop bleeding. Cecil watched while the doctor gave Carl a shot in the foot. Then he took this crooked needle and sewed up his foot. Carl was screaming his head off. The doctor never waited for it to get numb, he just sewed it together any way. I guess that was the best way to stop it from bleeding.

Cecil Starts High School

Cecil finished the eighth grade at Porter school. When it was time for him to start high school the next year he didn't have the money to buy clothes or the books, so he couldn't start to school. His father had been sick and didn't have a job. He got a job driving the school bus from Porter Creek to Soldier, and then back to Olive Hill High School. Cecil got to start to high school six weeks



behind every one else. He got put in a home room with all girls. He was the only boy in the same room with thirty five girls. You would think that he would have had it made, not so. He took a ribbing from all the other guys all long. He had to work hard to catch up with every one else since they had already taken their six weeks tests. He really started out in the hole. He made up all the work and took the first and second six weeks test with the rest of the class. Then it wasn't so hard after that . Oh, he got an "F" in ancient history because he got into a disagreement with the teacher on evolution. After he got that out of his system he did all right.

Trumbo Hill

The family moved to Trumbo Hill about half way between Olive Hill and Morehead for his third year of school. He still went to Olive Hill. He just rode a different bus now. His Dad had found a job in Dayton Ohio with G.M.C. Frigidare Division. He just came home on weekends, maybe twice a month. The kids made a lot of friends there and they had a lot of fun with them.

They were still in the Country and there were a lot of hills all around, and they went exploring all the time. There were a lot of woods and open fields and they had to find out about every thing around them.

The house they moved into on Trumbo Hill was near the Pike. That's what every one called Route Sixty. You turned East toward Soldier, up a gravel hill about one third of the way up the hill there was a lane to the right. This lane was about a hundred and fifty yards long to the house. The house was built on the side of the hill. The lower side of the house was up on piers made of cinder blocks. They were high enough that you could walk under the house on the lower side. It was used to store things under it. They also kept their wood under there that they used for kindling . They used coal for fuel to heat the house, so they had to have kindling to help start the fire with. This was really a two story house but the up stairs wasn't finished yet. There was just two big open rooms up there. There was a set of stairs between the living room and the bed room in the front side of the house that went up about the center of the house. There was the kitchen and dining room and a small bed room in the back side of the house .

After they had lived there for a few months they started hearing these strange noises in the attic. That is what they called the up stairs rooms. Sometimes it would sound like you had smacked your hand against the wall. Other times you could hear these funny rattling sounds. Other times it would sound like glasses tinkling together. The kids started to think that the house was haunted. They would try to find out what was making these sounds, but so far they hadn't been able to.

One night as they were watching television this rattling sound came all the way down the stairs. It was rattle, rattle, and bump, bump, bump down the stairs. They had this curtain hanging over the door way to the stairs. When they opened this curtain and looked up the stairs they saw this grey streak going back up the stairs, also there was this hickory nut laying on the bottom step. They were too scared to go up stairs to see what was up there at the moment. They decided they would wait until morning to try to find out what was up there. The next morning they ventured up the stairs to look around. They soon discovered that flying squirrels had moved in the attic with them. They found quite a store of hickory nuts in a small storage closet. There was some canning jars stored there too. Inside one of them they found a small ball of fur with some baby flying squirrels in it. The squirrels were making all of the strange noises they had been hearing. They decided to leave them alone until they got big enough to leave, then they would block up the entry holes they were using. Another mystery solved.

About half way up to the top of Trumbo hill stood this big oak tree beside the road. Almost every night there would be a few of the kids of the area gathered there under the big oak tree. That was their regular meeting place where they could be together to talk and to plan their next days adventures. On Saturday night the kids from the whole neighbor hood would meet there. They would build a fire to sit around. Sometimes they would roast

marshmallows or hot dogs, tell big tales about what they did all week or what someone else had told them. It was just a friendly get together where they could socialize with each other.

Hitchhiking to the Swimming Hole

After moving to Trumbo hill the boys had to find another swimming hole. The nearest water hole that was big enough to swim in was about six miles down the Pike. The boys didn't have any transportation except their thumbs. They had to hitch hike where ever they wanted to go. It wasn't hard to catch a ride then. There wasn't as much crime going on then as there is now. People weren't afraid to pick you up then like they are now. The boys never even thought about someone picking them up that would cause them any harm. They might hitch hike some where four or five times a week. Almost all teenagers hitch hiked to get where they wanted to go with out thinking about being involved in danger. They wouldn't be able to do that now with out getting in to trouble. Times sure have changed since then.

When they wanted to go fishing or swimming they would walk down to the Pike and stick out their thumb when a car came by. Five times out of ten they would get a ride to where they wanted to go with no questions asked. They would fish for a while then swim for a while. When they got tired they would get back on the Pike and catch a ride toward home. They didn't always get there on the first try. Some times it might take three or four rides to get them home.

On some of the hot days they might be setting on the side of the road waiting on a ride, and decide to chew a little hot tar off the road. They would find a place where it was soft and gummy, scrape up a small lump, plop it in their mouth and chew on it for a while. It helped to keep their teeth clean. It also helped them to pass any round worms that they might have in their intestines. A home remedy that the boys said really works. Some people might tell you that chewing coal tar might make you sick or even kill you, but it didn't hurt the boys any and they enjoyed chewing it.

The Sand Pit Swimming Hole

They found this big abandon sand pit on top of one of these hills. It was completely surrounded by woods and it was full of water. The water was very clear and clean. They didn't know how deep it was, but it looked very pretty and blue when the sun shined on it. They just had to go swimming in it. It looked so inviting and cool. The three brothers were together, so they thought it would be all right to go swimming, since they were not alone. They always watched out for one another. There was this big tree that leaned out over the water. They weren't the first kids to find this swimming hole because there was a one inch steel cable tied to the top of this tree and it was hanging down over the water. It was just right for a swing out over the water and drop into the water hole. They soon got tired of swinging out and dropping into the water one at a time, so they tried it, all three of them together.

They swung out , but the extra weight was just too much for the old cable it came loose where it was tied to the tree.

They went into the water and the old cable coiled around them like a snake and it was taking them to the bottom of the pond. Cecil struggled until he got loose and barely made it to the surface before he ran out of air. He looked around and his brothers were nowhere in sight, he thought they were still trapped in the cable coil. He dove down again trying to find them but he couldn't make it to the bottom or find them. What had happened was they had got loose at different times, had come up for air and not seeing any one had went down again to try to help each other out. They kept passing each other on the way under the water thinking the other two were hung up in the cable and were going to drown. Their old dog named Jack jumped in and grabbed one of them and held on long enough so they were all up at the same time. They were really scared for each other. They were afraid to swim there after that.

The Old Powers Place

On one of their exploration trips they came upon this old house. It was right in the middle of this big woods. There wasn't any road or path near this old house. No one knew how long it had been since any one had been near this old place much less to have lived there. This had been a two story house but the bottom floors had rotted out, just the big logs that had been the floor joist were still there. The up stairs floors were still there but they were so rotten they were afraid to walk on them. The stairs were all rotted down. They had to use some of the old boards to make a crude ladder to use to get to the second floor. They had to be very careful where they stepped so they wouldn't fall through the floor. They found some very old newspapers and old books in this old house. Their cousins were with them and they took some of the things home with them. They may still have some of the things. If they do they may be worth a lot of money by now. They were very old then, and that has been a long time ago. The people called this the old Powers place. They always thought that it was haunted, and they always made sure they left it a long time before dark. They never went near the place at night.

Cecil's Girlfriend

About now Cecil started to thinking about girl friends and stuff like that. He met this one girl he thought was very cute and he started to try to get to know her by being friendly with her brother. After while he got enough nerve to ask for a date. Back then he didn't have any money or much of any thing else. So a date consisted of going up this long hollow to her house and setting on the front porch swing, along with her Mother, Father, two or three cats and dogs ,and her brother, while they would swing and listen to country music on the radio. After four or five weekends spent like that he asked her if she would like for him to take her to Church on Sunday morning. She said she would think about it and let him know after she had thought about it for a while.

So, he continued to go to see her every Saturday night up this long hollow. There was this big old house about half way up the hollow that had been empty for a long time. He got to wondering why no one lived there. He started asking around about it trying to find out why it stayed empty for so long because it was sort of spooky going by it late at

night by his self. He found out that the family that had lived there had been killed by a crazy man that had lived with them for a long time. He had got a shot gun and shot them both and dumped them in the well that was close to the road. Then the old man had hung himself out in the barn. So, that is why that every time Cecil came out of that hollow late at night by himself he would get these goose bumps on his arms and the back of his neck.

On this one stormy night it was lighting and thundering and very dark as he was coming down the hollow. He was starting to feel the goose bumps as he was getting close to the old house. There was this big old oak tree that was leaning out over the road and you had to bend over a little to keep the limbs from hitting you in the face. Just as he was about to go under the tree there was this big white thing that dropped down out of this tree across the road in front of him. It looked like a big white bed sheet. The first thing that went through his mind was that one of his friends that knew that he would be coming out of the hollow about this time of night had gotten in the tree and was trying to scare him. So, brave old Cecil called his name and grabbed at the sheet meaning to jerk him out of the tree. When he wrapped his arms around what he thought was a sheet there wasn't any thing there. All that he caught was a very cold chunk of air. Needless to say all the hair on his head stood straight up on end and he could feel each and every one of them. That was a very shocking feeling. He walked very slowly around the rest of the tree keeping his eyes right on the spot where the sheet had been. He continued to walk backward on down the road for a while. He was too scared to turn around and run. When he got home, the friend that he thought was trying to scare him was there and Cecil's Mother said that he had been there all night waiting for him to come home. To this day Cecil doesn't know what dropped out of that tree that night.

Cecil Takes His Girlfriend to Church

After a week or so Cecil's girl friend said , he could take her to Church. Well the only transportation that he had was a boys bicycle, so he rode it up the hollow and got her on the bar in front of him and rode to church. There were a few hills where they had to get off and walk, but it was fun any way. They got there all right, but the Church was up on this steep hill with a cinder drive way going up to the front door.

When they got ready to leave his girl friend got on in front of him and they started down this drive way. Just when they got ready to go up on the main road, there was this sharp bend in the drive way. As they turned the bicycle leaned over and she got her heel caught in the front spokes of the wheel. After about twenty of the spokes busted out the front wheel collapsed. The front fork drove into the cinders they both went over the handle bars. She hit on her back and rear end and he came down on top of her. They both slid about ten feet on the cinders. It tore her shoe heel off, ruined her dress, tore her panties off, along with a lot of her skin off her rear end. She took it pretty well, until she noticed that he never had a scratch on him any where. He had landed on a good cushion. That is when she got

very mad. The best part of the whole thing was, Cecil never had to come down out of that long, dark spooky hollow by his self again after midnight again. The worst part was that he had to carry the front end of that bicycle all the way home.

Fishing Trip

One day the boys got together with some of their friends and decided to go on a fishing trip. This one friend said his father would take them over to Licking River and drop them off on a Friday evening and he would pick them up again on Monday evening and bring them home. They got their fishing gear together, along with enough food to last for the weekend. There must have been seven or eight boys. This one kid even wanted to take his dog along for protection. He said, he would keep him tied so he wouldn't get into their food or any thing. Every one said it would be all right. Their friend's Father picked them up in a pick up truck and took them to the river. It must have been about twenty or thirty miles way out in the country. This is where Cave Run Lake is today.

Any way they got there and set up camp. They built a big fire ring out of big rocks. Their friend's father helped them to get set up, then he left for home. He said, he would be back after them Monday evening. They told him that they would be ready to go when he got there. They tied their food in a sack and hung it up in a tree to get it off the ground. Then they went to try their luck fishing. They made a trot line, then waded out in the river and tied one end to a tree. On the other bank then they baited the hooks as they waded down the river and over to the other side. When they ran out of line they tied the loose end to a big rock and dropped it to the bottom. They went back up the river and started to fish off the bank with their fishing poles. They caught a few blue gills. Then just before dark they went back to check their trot line and to rebait the hooks. They had caught a few cat fish and two nice size white drum fish. After they ran their trot line they were going to have a fish fry. Every thing was going really good. They were having fun telling big tales and eating their fish. It must have been about eleven or twelve o'clock when they heard this high wailing sound and the old dog started to barking and growling. They got scared thinking it must be a wild cat or worse. So, they decided to turn the dog loose. He took off toward the sound that they had heard. He barked a few times then they didn't hear any thing else, but the old dog didn't come back either. They sat around talking and making fun of each other for getting scared. At last they went to bed.

When they woke up the next morning and started to fix breakfast they found out that the old dog had come back after they had gone to sleep and he had jumped up and pulled down their food out of the sack that they had tied up in the tree. He had ripped the bottom out of the sack and what food he hadn't eaten he had slobbered on it and drug it through the sand and dirt until there wasn't any of it that could be saved. So, now they're on their own until Monday evening. That would be a long time unless they could catch some more fish or find something to eat. Well now it looks like it will be fish baked over an open fire from now

on until Monday night that is if they are lucky enough to catch them.

When it got dark they took a flashlight and started wading along the river bank looking for bull frogs. They each had cut a stick about four feet long. When they spotted a frog with the light, one of them would keep shinning the light in the frogs eyes so that he couldn't see them sneaking up on him. They would then spear him with the stick. None of them had ever eaten frog legs before, much less know how to clean and dress them for cooking. But do you know what ? Any one can cook frog legs and think that they have done a good job of it. That is if you know that you aren't going to get any thing else to eat. They all enjoyed eating frog legs, cat fish and they even tried a fresh water eel that they were lucky enough to catch. They wouldn't ever have gotten fat on what they found to eat, but they had fun doing it. They also, found they could survive if they had to on what they could find to eat out in the wild. When the pickup truck pulled up to the pick up spot they were all packed up and ready to go home to a good home cooked meal. Mothers cook best of all.

Killing Three Crows With One Shot

There was this small store at the top of Trumbo hill above their house. All the kids in the area used to go there in the evening to get together. They just used the store porch as a meeting place to hang out at. They would drink soda pop and eat candy bars or ice cream as they told tales and joked around. The man that owned the store liked for them to come around and for them to buy things, but he didn't like for them to hang around inside the store. He was afraid they would steal something with out paying for it. So, as soon as they would pay for something he would run them out onto the porch where he could keep an eye on them. He had a bad limp when he walked. He said the got hurt in the war. He would follow them out on the porch and sit in a high backed rocking chair and tell about his part in the war, or some other big tale that he made up. Some times he would be fun to listen to. Every time he would tell a story it would always come out different. That's mostly why they liked to listen to him, they never knew how the tale was going to turn out, even if you had heard it a dozen times before.

He always tried to raise a garden on the hill behind the store and sell the produce in the store. The crows were always eating his sweet corn before it got big enough to pick and sell. He told Cecil that he would furnish the shells if he would try to kill some of the crows and hang them on the fence to scare the others away. He said that if you killed a crow in a corn field and hung it up in the field where the others could see it, they would gather around early in the morning, preach its funeral and leave that corn field alone. He said he would give Cecil a shot gun shell for each crow that he killed.

The next morning Cecil got up before daylight and went up on the hill to the corn field. He crawled under a pile of brush under this big tree where the look out crow always sat while the others were down in the field eating the corn. He laid down on his back and watched for the crows to fly

into the tree above him. It got daylight, and pretty soon the crows started to come to the big tree. The brush was a good hiding place but, it also made it hard for him to see the crows up in the tree. After a while he spotted three of them setting close together. He got the gun against his shoulder. He was still laying flat on his back. He aimed the gun at the spot between the three crows and pulled the trigger. The old 12 ga. shot gun kicked off his shoulder and smacked him in the face so hard that he had tears in his eyes and he didn't know if he had hit anything or not. He just laid there on the ground trying to get his senses back. He thought he could hear some thing making a noise down over the hill below him.

He crawled out from under the brush and down the hill. There was the three crows laying there. One of them was flopping around trying to fly but both wings were broken and he couldn't get away. He gathered them up and headed for the store house. He couldn't wait, he intended to get three shells for the one that he had shot, also brag about how he had killed three crows with one shot. Mr. Fannin was standing on the porch when he got there. Cecil told him that he had killed three crows and that he wanted his three shells. Mr. Fannin said that he would only give him one shell because that he never heard him shoot but once. One shell was all that he got. Cecil wasn't very happy about the way he paid his debts, but he got even with him later on.

Digging a Well

One of their neighbors asked them if they would try to dig a water well for him down close to where he raised his pigs. He said, that he was tired of having to carry water down there from the house every day. He said, that he would pay them for their work. They asked him to show them where that he wanted the well. He said that they should get a divining rod and try to witch in a water vein. They thought that would be fun. They played around with a forked stick for awhile and decided they had found a good place to dig a well. Their digging tools consisted of a pick, shovel, and a post hole digger. They also had a rope and a ten gallon bucket and a ten foot straight ladder. They didn't work at this job all day long but just when they wanted something to do to pass the time. The first three or four feet was easy digging and they had a lot of fun playing around but, they soon had to start using the bucket and the rope to get the dirt up out of the hole. It seemed that the deeper they dug, the dryer the dirt coming out of the hole. They spent the biggest part of the summer digging off and on, down in this hole.

When they got down about ten feet they hit a small trickle of water. It was a very small vein but they got out of the well as fast as they could thinking that it might get bigger and drown them before they could get out. They didn't have to worry about that, because it took two or three days for it to get about three feet of water in it. Once it reached its highest level it always had enough water in it to water the hogs.

Driving to the Revival

It was in the fall of the year and the weather was very nice but it was starting to get pretty cool at night, There

was a Church Revival going on, on the other side of Soldier Hill. One of the neighbors that lived on the other side of Trumbo Hill had been going to the Revival with her husband, but he had to work on the last night of the Revival and he wouldn't be able to take her to the Church. She didn't know how to drive, but she couldn't stand the thought of missing the last night of the Revival. Her sister lived just up the hill from the Porters and she had been visiting with her. They had been talking about going to Church and how she was going to hate missing the last night of the Revival. She ask her sister if she knew any one that might drive her to Church in her car. Her sister said that Cecil might do it for her, and that she would ask him for her.

She saw Cecil the next day and told him that her sister would like for him to drive her car and take her to the last night of the Revival. She had a daughter about a year younger than he was. She was sort of cute and he was sort of struck on her a little. He thought this might be a way to get to be with her for a while. He said that he would be glad to drive her car for her, but he didn't have a license to drive yet. She said not to worry about it because it would just be on the country road and that no one would be checking way out there. Any way if any thing happened she would take the responsibility. He agreed to drive her then. That night he got dressed up real nice and walked over there pretty early. He wanted her daughter Loretta to know that he was going to drive the car for her Mother. Just maybe she might decide to go to Church with them. Sure enough she got ready to go and when they got in the car she made sure that she got to sit in the middle of the front seat. Her Mother was a little on the heavy side so it crowded Loretta over against Cecil quit a bit. He liked that pretty well.

It was pretty dark by the time they got to the Church house. The Church was on the left side of the road on a hill side. The drive way into the Church yard was angled back up the hill so it was almost impossible to turn into the drive way from the direction they were going. Cecil stopped the car and told Loretta's Mother that he would let her out in front of the Church. Then he would go to the bottom of the hill and turn around and come back and park in the parking lot going the right direction. She said that would be just fine. She got out and he drove down the hill looking for a good place to turn around. They came out in front of the school house at Halderman.

There was a wide spot in the fork of the road so he just pulled over to let the car behind him room to pass before he turned left on to the place he wanted to turn around in. The car just pulled in behind him. It was the Kentucky State Police and the light started to flash making a eerie scene. Cecil got out of the car and walked back to the patrol car. The trooper told him to get in the car. He asked him all kinds of questions after he asked for his license, which he didn't have. He wanted to know where he lived, where he started from, where he was going, where he had been, whose car he was driving, also who was the girl that was in the car with him. Cecil tried to explain every thing to him the best that he could and that the girl's Mother was

at the Church waiting for them to come back to Church. They just came down here to turn around so they would be headed the right direction. The trooper said that he knew the girl's father and that he would be talking to him about this. Then he wrote out a ticket for driving without a drivers license. He said that Cecil would have to go to the court house in Morehead to pay the fine. He also told him that he had better go take the test and get his license before he tried to drive on the highway again. He said that he would follow him back to the Church house to park the car, and that he had better get some one else to drive it back home. Cecil had a hard time trying to explaining Loretta's mother what took so long to go to the foot of the hill to turn around, with out causing a disturbance in the service.

After the service was over he drove them home himself. He was hoping that Loretta's mother would offer to pay his fine, because he didn't know how he was going to. He never had any money. She told him just before he started to go home that she would take care of it for him. That was a big relief for him. He promised himself he would get his drivers license as soon as possible and he did.

The Shotgun

Cecil had been wanting to get himself a shot gun to hunt with. He had been asking around trying to find some one that had one for sell. One of the neighbors said he knew a man that had one that he was wanting to get rid of. He said he would go with him to look at it if he wanted him to. Cecil said he would like to go see it on Saturday afternoon. Come Saturday afternoon they got together and started to go see this man that had the shot gun. They went across Trumbo Hill and turned up the hollow beside Orphie Conn's house. She was a weirdo. You hardly ever seen her, most of the people around there thought that she was a witch or something. She lived by herself and never went anywhere, never had visitors nor visited any one. No one knew how she got her food, because she never went to the store or any where. But when you did see her she didn't look like she was starving or any thing. She always looked healthy in old work clothes and straw hat and with a big bandana around her neck. Some times it was blue other times it was red, but it was always there. She always had a bunch of guineas running around making a lot of noise. Any way they went by her and on across thenext hill or two.

They came to this big house in the head of this hollow. There was dogs, chickens, cats, hogs, and kids running around half naked and looking wild. By the time they got to the yard gate there was this man that came out on the porch with a shot gun in his hand. He waited until they got close. Then he wanted to know what they wanted. They told him they were looking to buy a shot gun from him if he had one for sell. He said that he had a twelve gauge single barrel shot gun for sale. He said that it had full choke and was thirty two inches long, and that it had a home made hickory stock but it didn't have a butt plate, it had got lost somewhere. He said that he wanted twelve dollars for it. If they wanted to buy it from him they should come in on the porch to look at it. He said he would go get

it for them to look at. When he brought it out you could see it was very old but it wasn't rusty or any thing. The stock was very roughly made, but it could be sanded down to look pretty good if you wanted to work on it for a while. The boys offered him ten dollars for it if he wanted to sell it for that. He spit out a big stream of amber onto the yard an said he would let they have it for ten dollars. They paid him and was very glad to be leaving this place. They couldn't hardly wait to get home to try the gun out.

As soon as they got home they got some shells and went out back to shoot the gun. Cecil broke it down and looked through the barrel to see if it was clear. It was so he loaded it and threw some cans over the hill to shoot at. When he pulled the trigger it felt as if he had been kicked on the shoulder by a mule. He had never been kicked so hard by a gun before. The home made stock didn't have a butt plate on it, just the sharp edges of the stock. After seeing how hard it had kicked, Cecil's buddy wouldn't try it. Cecil loaded it again and held it against the house and pulled the trigger. The gun kicked so hard it busted the weather board on the side of the house. Cecil had already decided it was time for him to trade it off to some one for something else. It really didn't matter what he traded for just any thing.

The Boys Visit the Bootlegger

Some times the boys would get together and go up and the pike gathering empty bottles. They would take the empty bottles and sell them to a bootlegger. He would pay them ten cents for each bottle, fifteen cents if they had the lids on them. The boys had gathered up a sack of bottles each and they were taking them to sell. One of the boys said they should buy some moonshine with their money since this was Saturday night. It wasn't hard for them to all agree. They decided they would buy a half a pint each if they had enough bottles. They though they had enough for that.

So when they got there they told the bootlegger what they wanted. He sold each boy a half pint for what bottles they had. He didn't even take time to count them. He just said, "Here, you go now get out and away from here." He sure didn't want any one to know he had sold them the moonshine. As soon as they got out of sight of the house they each had a sip of their spirits. The whiskey was so strong it almost took their breath. They had to wipe the tears out of their eyes before they could see where they were going. Each one of them lied saying that it sure tasted good. They would walk a few hundred yards then one of them would pull their bottle out of their back pocket and take a swig, grit their teeth and try to catch their breath. It wasn't long until they were staggering all over the place.

It's a good thing they didn't have to walk on the pike very far to get home. They went straight to the big oak tree and sat down for a while. They were going to wait on the other boys to come to the big oak tree. They wanted to show off with their moonshine. By the time it got dark and they got a fire going they were pretty well gone themselves. After while some of the other boys showed up and the bottles were passed around. It didn't take long until the whiskey was all gone. By now the boys were glad it was. Cecil said that he was going to go home. He just had

to go down the hill a short way, but he thought that he would never make it. When he got home and the door open his mother met him at the door. She took one look at him, she said, "You're drunk aren't you?" He didn't say anything he just turned into the bed room and fell into the bed. He rolled over on his back then he had to grab onto the sides of the bed to keep from falling out the bed it seemed to be spinning around and tipping up and down from side to side. He just shut his eyes and hung on for dear life. He felt as if he was going to die. For a while he was wishing that he would. He finally passed out.

When he woke up the next day it was late. When he got up every one else was gone some where. He got himself a cup of coffee and went out side and down under the house and sat down on a log nursing a big hang over. He thought his head would burst. He thought how in the world could any one enjoy drinking whiskey every day and wake up every morning feeling like this, He said never again, but he lied again.

Noah Kegley's 1929 A Model Ford

Down on the Pike (Route 60) at the foot of Trumbo Hill, Noah Kegley owned a family grocery store with gas pumps. Cecil liked to spend some time at the store, because Noah had a couple of daughters about his age and he was starting to get interested in girls about now. Noah liked to tell big tales and he liked to go fox hunting with some of the neighbors once or twice a week. So he didn't have too much to do with the running of the store, his wife and his children ran the store. Noah did what running around that had to be done, while they took care of the store.

Anyway, Noah had an old 29 A-Model Ford that he used to haul his fox hounds in when they went hunting. But the old car had about seen it's best days. He decided that he would overhaul the engine and try to keep it running for a few more years. He asked Cecil if he would do the work on the engine. He said he would show him how to do the work and do the running for him that had to be done. Cecil said that he would like to try to overhaul the engine if Noah would show him how to do it. Cecil thought this would be a good way for him to get the chance to spend more time at the store watching the girls as they worked in the store. Noah told Cecil how he wanted the engine taken apart and cleaned. That is what he wanted him to do while he went looking for the special tools they would need to overhaul the engine.

After he had the engine torn apart and cleaned, Noah looked at all the parts trying to decide what all needed to be replaced. While he was running around looking for the parts that he needed, Cecil was sitting around in the store eating candy bars and drinking RC Cola on the house as he watched the girls work. He didn't care if Noah ever found the parts or not. At last, he said that he had all things that they needed to get the job done. So Cecil spent about two weeks reaming and honing the cylinder walls, putting the rings on the pistons and getting everything put back together again. At last it was all back together and ready to try out.

By this time all Cecil's buddies were all gathering around waiting to see what would go wrong. After trying over and over again the engine gives out one big puff of smoke and a big loud noise then nothing else. Cecil ran the battery down trying to get it to start, but without any luck. Cecil was starting to get pretty red faced by now with all his buddies looking on. At last one of the Bailey boys showed up on the scene. He said that he thought the timing gears were put in out of time. So Cecil took the cover off the gears and sure enough they were about one-half turn out of time. He took them off and set them back in time and tightened them up again, replaced the cover and tried to start the engine. It started this time, but it was running rough. He loosened the distributor and turned it back and forth until the engine smoothed out. None of Cecil's buddies was too impressed, and still made fun of him. Even after all the trouble he had trying to get the car to start, Cecil was still proud of himself when he got it going. This was an experience that he wouldn't forget for a long time.

Old Jack

While we still lived on Porter Creek, I got this little pup from our cousin Reese Porter. It wasn't a pure breed dog, but I think that he had a lot of German Shepherd in him. When I brought him home he was a small ball of brown fur. He whined all night keeping everyone awake all night for a few nights. After that he turned out to be a very smart dog. He grew up there on the farm with all the other animals and didn't bother any of them. I would take him hunting every chance that I had, after he was big enough to get through the high weeks. Maybe sometimes before that a few times. He was very smart and he liked to be out in the fields and woods almost as much as I did. He learned very fast how to hunt and how to follow a trail. If you were hunting out in the fields he would hunt for rabbits. If you were in the woods he might tree squirrels. If you were where there were any quail, he would flush them out for you. Then he would hunt for the singles. Everyday we would have to go hunt the cows out in the fields and bring them in to be milked. Sometimes they didn't want to go into the barn and they would hide in the brush and you would have a hard time finding them. But not Old Jack, he would search them out. If they didn't want to come on in he would grab on to their tail and not turn loose until they were well on the way to the barn. Then he would go back to look for more. Our Grandfather didn't like for us to let the dog swing on their tail that way, but it sure saved us a lot of walking and chasing after them.

After we moved to Trumbo Hill, the boys around there liked to go opossum hunting at night. Old Jack would tree just as many if not more that any of their dogs. They didn't like that very much and they were always trying to get their dogs to fight with Jack but that was to their own sorrow, because it seems old Jack would always get the best of them. I remember one winter it had come a big snow so there wasn't any school so I took Jack and went hunting. It was pretty cold out so I was trying to stay in the edge of the woods out of the wind. I was walking along this fence row looking for a rabbit setting under the snow.

I seen this small hole in the snow under some small bushes. I thought it was a rabbit, but I couldn't see it. I took off my coat and spread it out in front of me and just fell on the hole. It wasn't a rabbit like I thought it was. It was a covey of quail I had caught a few of them under my coat. But Old Jack had caught one of them in the air when it got away from me. Both of us together ended up with six quail. That was a very exciting moment for me. There were a lot more stories I could tell about Old Jack, but I won't go into that now.

What I will say is that while I was in the service and in Korea, I think that some of the jealous boys in the neighborhood poisoned my dog. I think I know who it was but I'm not sure that I'm right, but I haven't forgotten about it though.

Cecil to the Hospital

One Saturday night in the spring of 1949, there was a revival at a church at Halderman. A bunch of the boys got together and decided to go over there just to have something to do. They would walk over to Soldier to the railroad and walk up the railroad through the cut in the hill where the old railroad tunnel used to be. That would be a lot easier and quicker way to get there. After they got to church, they sat on the side of the bank beside the church telling big tales and looking at the girls inside the church. They had been there for a while when Cecil started to have these very sharp pains in his stomach. They were getting worse all the time. He told the boys that he thought that he had better try to go on home and get something for the pain, because he could hardly stand it. Roger Fultz and Emerson Hamm said, that they would go on home with him.

They started walking back toward home. About half way through the cut he started being sick and throwing up, then he would get the dry heaves so bad that he would have to sit down on the railroad tracks to rest for a while before he could walk some more. The pain would let up for a while and he would try to walk some more. He was beginning to think that he wasn't going to make it home. By the time he got home the boys had got on each side of him and about half carried him to the house and through the door. His mother put him straight to bed and took his temperature, it was sky high. From the way he was getting sick, and from where the pain was, she said she thought he had appendicitis. She asked Roger and Emerson who they thought she could get to take him to the hospital. Emerson said he thought that Frank Johnson would be the one to ask. He said that he would go and ask him if he would take him. Emerson was back in about twenty minutes. He said that Frank said to get Cecil ready and that he would be there as soon as he could get dressed because he had been in bed.

Frank soon showed up. He backed his car up the lane to the front door and came in to help get Cecil out to the car and they put him in the back seat. Frank had just bought this 1949 Chieftain Pontiac and this was a good chance for him to try it out. When he got down on the Pike and headed for Lexington he tried to keep the pedal on the floor. The tires were screaming on every curve. It was

about eighty miles to Lexington from home. We made the trip in just a little over an hour. That isn't too bad considering the way the roads were at that time. They were narrow, curved, and it was very dark.

They rushed Cecil into the Emergency Room, took a blood count and took him straight to the operating room. When they got him on the operating table, they put this mask over his nose and told him to take a very deep breath. Almost at once the pain stopped. The next thing he remembers is when he is waking up, he sees this very pretty face of this young girl dressed in white. He didn't have any pain so his first thought was that he had died and that she must be an angel. Then he thought her face seemed so familiar, but he couldn't get awake enough to figure it out.

The Doctor said, if it had been a half hour later it would have been too late. The appendix had already burst. I guess that he was very lucky to have had a neighbor with a good new car and wasn't afraid to see what it could do. The next day, Cecil's angel came back in to see him. He knew who she was then. She had been two or three years ahead of him in High School at Olive Hill. She was going to nursing school and had helped in the operating room, and she had recognized him. She came in to see him every day until he went home. He hasn't seen or heard of her since. I think her name was Mildred Phillips but I'm not really sure.

After High School

By the time I got well enough to go back to school it was just six weeks before school was over for the year. I had missed out on the tests before the final six weeks. I didn't think that I would be able to make up all the work that I had missed and get ready for the final test for the year, so I didn't go back to school. I just stayed home. I thought that I might start again the next year, but you know how that goes. It just didn't happen that way.

I ended up going to Ypsilanti, Michigan and worked for Kiser Frazer Motors for a couple of years. From there I went into the service. While in the service, I passed G.E.D. test and got my High School Diploma from Olive Hill High School, Olive Hill, Kentucky. I spent three years in the service, 16 months of that in Korea. After that it's another big story.

I hope you have enjoyed reading this as much as I have in living it.

Nov. 30, 1954

The End For Now



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