

PREFACE

This is by no means a documented history of our families but rather a book of memories. It is not a record of bloodlines but rather notes on cherished memories and some of the events that shaped our lives and to some extent the lives of our children. It has been a time of remembering - Trials, triumphs, joy, laughter, sorrow, tears. Most of all it has been a precious journey - a time to remember - be thankful - and go on.

Life is not to be lived in the past but in the challenge of each new day. The stability and prospective with which we meet those challenges rest on the foundation from which we operate. We thank God that the foundation for our families was set firmly on the Word of God.

Mary Elizabeth Atkinson - Klein
Therese Alice Atkinson - Bury
John Melvin Bury.



R. W. Atkinson family taken in front of their home in England -- Back row left to right - Charles, Richard, Percy. Front row Mary (my grandmother), Arthur and Ralph (my grandfather). Charles and Percy were ready to leave for World War I. James (my father) was living in the U S A and Herbert took the picture.



The house where my father was raised. Steve and Fay found the place when they visited in England and took the picture. Steve is standing in the foreground.

R.W. ATKINSON

(Information via Aunt Helen, wife of youngest son, Percy) - Compiled by
Thera Alice Atkinson Bury

R.W. Atkinson (my grandfather) was the son of a London doctor. He was married to Mary Walker. He worked as an editor for a London paper. He was also a tutor and a constable during World War 1. When his father died the will provided for a monthly check for R.W. R.W. was buried at Hempstead, England.

The last years of Mary Walker Atkinson's life was spent in New York with her daughter, Mary. She is buried in Philem, N.Y.

Mary was a nurse during World War 1. She was married once but never talked about it. She visited my parents and us in the late 1940s when our oldest boys were small. She drove out from Chicago with Uncle Percy and Aunt Helen.

The children in the R.W. Atkinson family were:

- Arthur (oldest. wife May - no children - lived in N.Y. state
- Herbert- married twice - 2 boys by first wife - Lived Oak Park, Ill.
- James - Wife Lula - 2 girls - farmed in northeastern South Dakota.
- Richard - Wife Nancy - no children - remained in England
- Charles - Wife Gladys - Lived in Australia - No children
- Percy - wife Helen - lived in Chicago, Ill. - no children
- Mary - no family - lived in New Rochelle, N.Y.

Arthur, Bert (Herbert) and James came to America when Dad was 17. Bert and Arthur went back to England for a time. James who was working in Canada at the time was unable to go. His brothers did not inform him soon enough for him to make arrangements. They also abandoned his trunk with his personal belongings, pictures etc. that he had brought from home. He was never able to trace it.

Both Charles and Percy were in World War 1 and were wounded. Charles was shot in the heel and Percy in the leg. The latter crawled a long way after dark to find help. He got blood poisoning. He had a stiff leg always as a result.

Mary was cremated following her death and was buried at Scardale, N.Y.

When Perc wanted to come to U.S. they asked if Bert would sponsor him. Bert wrote to James to ask if he would sponsor him. Bert wrote to his mother saying that James wouldn't. Dad never received such a request and always wondered why he was cut off from the family. ****(see foot note)

Bert got Percy to cosign a note for a friend of Bert's. The fellow defaulted, Bert defaulted and Perc got stuck with the loan.

When Grandma Atkinson died Perc wouldn't even call Bert. At that time Aunt Helen didn't know James existed. She wrote to my Mother, Lula, and then invited James to come for a visit. Eventually he and Perc became very close. I could never understand why Bert lied to his parents about my father.

(Footnote by Mary Atkinson Klein. The reunion between Bert and Perc and Dad came after some length of correspondence between Mother and Aunt Helen. They were dealing with two stubborn Englishmen. The incident as related to me by Mother is slightly different. Rather than sponsorship it involved a recommendation for a job in Chicago shortly after Perc's arrival in the U.S.A.

Sometime before that Bert had come to S.D. to visit Dad. I was 5 or 6 years old and Therese 3 or 4. While here (a period of 6 weeks as I recall) he met a number of people including my Mother's brother-in-law, Will W. Knott. He was a mortician and furniture dealer in Bristol.

When Perc needed a recommendation and knew no non relative to list, Bert gave him Uncle Will's name. There had been some time passed since Bert's visit and as Uncle Will told it, it did not register with him that this was Dad's brother. He wrote across the application that he did not know the man. When Perc did not get the job Dad took the rap or was handed it by his family. R.W. made an ultimatum that Dad's name should never be spoken again. After a number of unanswered letters to England by my Mother, Grandma A. finally related what had happened. When the mystery was solved at our end and conveyed to England, Grandma wrote that she desired no mention be made of it again.

Our Dad never saw his parents again from the time he left home and sailed for a new land. Yes, sailed on an ocean steamer - no air flights in those days! He told of being homesick and seasick. He was only 17.)

A sad postscript adds that while Dad was making arrangements, after quite some years, to go to New York state to be reunited with his mother he received word that she had passed away.



Lucius Alperan Dudley
(my grandfather)



Elizabeth Wagener Dudley
(my grandmother)

Mr. and Mrs. L.A. Dudley

Lucius Alperin Dudley was born at Belmont, Franklin County, New York in 1853. He was of English descent. His father, Loren, was killed near Perryville, Kentucky in 1862 during the Civil War. The family moved to Evansville, Wisconsin in the spring of 1853. In 1863 they moved to Eyota, Olmstead County, Minnesota.

Elizabeth Angeline Wagoner was born at Canton, Pennsylvania in 1854. She, with her family, migrated to what is now the city of Rochester. Her father took up a homestead in what is now a prominent part of the city. The home was established where the Zumbro Hotel eventually was built. The home was surrounded by standing timber. They had come overland by way of Council Bluffs, Iowa. One of the sons quite some years later served Rochester as mayor and also as postmaster. The Wagoners ethnic background was German and French.

When Elizabeth was growing up the family lived across the alley from the Mayo family and had Will and Charlie as playmates. Their father was a pioneer doctor. He performed the first medically recorded oophorectomy (removal of an ovary) on Mrs Jacob Wagoner, Elizabeth's mother. (see footnote)

There are no family records to show how Lucius and Elizabeth met but both were teachers. The oldest daughter Grace Estelle was born in Rochester in 1876. The couple taught in a number of small towns in the Rochester area and Howard and Oscar was born at Grand Meadow.

The Dudleys, with two other families, decided in 1883 to go to Dakota Territory. They all settled in Clark County. The Dudleys lived in Clark for some time then Lucius filed for a pre-emption in Clark County. (see footnote) A sod shanty was put up and Elizabeth with the two children, Howard and Grace, lived there as required by the terms of the "claim". Lucius went back to Minnesota to teach at Mazeppa. It was a lonely time for the claim holders. They were used to being surrounded by people in small towns or in the city. The following is from a history of Grace Dudley Knott and compiled by Lula Dudley Atinson. "When the weather became mild we used to visit some of the neighbors. - - - My father would come back from Mazeppa in the summer to live on the claim. He also filed on a homestead a mile north of what is now Crocker. At that time there was not even a railroad there. For sometime we moved back and forth - Mazeppa during the school term and back to the claim in the summer. Mother usually taught a summer school within a driving distance. At that time the rural schools were usually held in the summer to escape the long cold winters and the distances that the pupils must go.

Toward the last years of holding down the claim my father taught at Butler. We lived there at the time of the famous blizzard of 1888. - - Some of the memories in Butler were old fashioned singing schools and spelling bees. - - Another diversion was going to each others houses and someone would play

the violin accompanied by someone on the organ. What fun we had dancing."

The teachers moved about and lived periods in Garden City, Bristol, Butler and South Shore, South Dakota. They also taught at Ft. Sheridan, Illinois and in Amboy, Chandler, Woodstock, Paynesville and other small communities in southern Minnesota.

Lucius taught in Bristol in 1888-89 and it was here that Roland Oscar was born. The next year was to Webster where Lula Lucinda was born in 1891. Here Grace graduated from high school in Webster's second graduating class. Howard worked in the printing office thus beginning a life time association with the publishing business.

Elizabeth taught in a number of rural schools in Day County. She told of recesses spent in twisting hay to burn in the space heater of the one room schoolhouse. Both teacher and pupils participated in the task. One of the pupils in this school was Wayne Shervey's great grandmother, Cecilia Jensen-Hanson.

Another land claim was filed west of the Missouri River in S.D. Elizabeth lived there alone for at least one year I know. (1910-11) It was a time of incredible loneliness. Once a month a young man who was also proving up in a claim would stop by on his way to Firesteel for supplies. He would bring her what she needed on the return trip. Since he was walking both ways, I'm sure their "lists" were meager. I believe the abode was the typical sod shanty as that material was available and only required some labor. I have no idea what she used for fuel that long winter. That area of Dakota is desolation. Nothing to see for miles on end. The only sounds she heard was the ever present wind. It's sound varied only as it carried rain, snow or burning heat. No electricity, radio or TV. only baying coyotes and howling wolves through the long nights. Many did not "sit" out the five year requirement of the Homestead Act under those circumstances.

Lucius was plagued with a mental illness which eventually institutionalized him permanently. Because of his unpredictable behavior the two younger children were often placed in homes of friends and relatives. He died in St. Peter, MN in the early 1920's.

Elizabeth died at age 73. She was bent and frail. Life had taken its toll on her physically and emotionally. She spent her last years in the homes of her children and was with daughter Grace at the time of her death. Both are buried in the Bristol Cemetery.

FOOTNOTE: Correction to the above narrative concerning the oophorectomy of Mrs. Jacob Waggoner (Wagoner). It was not the first recorded but according to "The Brothers Mayo" by Helen Clapsattle, pages 77-79 it was the second successful such operation in Minnesota. That means only the second one in which the patient survived! It took place in January 1881.

Mr. Wagonner was a blacksmith and was enlisted to forge some of the instruments for the surgery. Among them some clamps shaped from the teeth of an old mowing machine.

In all probability the surgery was performed in the Waggoner home on the kitchen table. There were no aseptic and equipped operating rooms in Rochester at that time.

Historical note about the Waggoner name: I was told that the first of that name from Germany constructed wagons, made wheels, etc. That's how you got the name. Jacob, the waggoner.



Nicholas Bury family. William
(John's father) is third from the left
in the back row.



Fred A. Strissel (Lydia's father
and John's grandfather)



John Melvin Bury



Four generations
Fred Strissel, Lydia Strissel Bury,
Gladys Strike and Lillian Strike
Gitz.



William and Lydia
Wedding picture



William Bury family - left to
right back row Ethel, Helen, and
E. Peter - middle row John, Lydia, and
William, Gladys - front Eunice (Baby)
Amanda,
Dolores,
Mable



The home place about 1935
Highway # 12 was in the process
of being built Gravel for the
road was from the home place.



Lydia and William
50th wedding anniversary.

John Bury Family History

My Grandfather, Nicholas Bury, came to America from Switzerland at an early age to Illinois. He served in the Union Army with four of his brothers. He was standing guard near Washington D.C. when he noticed the flags at half mast, he asked an officer why and he was told Lincoln had been shot the night before.

He married Mary Bleik and they moved to New Ulm, Minnesota. After several years, grasshoppers had taken their crops, and a tornado took their house, leaving the family Bible and the clock on the cellar door. This was around the year 1881. Grandpa was outside in the storm and the wind had blown him into a gully where he laid through the storm. Then they moved to near Bristol, South Dakota and took a homestead. They traveled from New Ulm by covered wagon with their eight children and the livestock, moving to the farm where Lester Bury lives. They had four more children, two had died in infancy. Eleven grew up and married and had families, many in this area. Mary died when I was very young. Nickolas spent some of his later years in our home but shortly before he died, he moved to Green Bay, Wisconsin and lived with Uncle John, the Methodist minister who had retired to Green Bay after finishing ministry at Tolstoy, South Dakota, where his children lived.

My dad , William Nicholas, bought the place we live on at the age pf twenty for ⁴2,000.

It had a small house. and a small barn on the place.

He built the present house in the early 1900's, and also the barn. My Grandpa Strissel, my mother's father, built the grainery in the yard in the mid 1920's. Our first car was a 1923 Model T touring car. We paid around 250 dollars for the car.

My first memories are at about age 4. The First World War was on. The troop trains filled with water in Bristol. When we heard them come, we would go out through mother's flower garden, get flowers, and throw⁶ them in the train windows. Another early memory at age 5, was when Henry Kurts, the young preacher here, took my brother and me in his Model T Ford up to Guelph, North Dakota, where we stayed overnight with the Hauser family.

My first year of school was in Bristol as there was trouble in our district , and my dad paid tuition and we all went to Bristol, where Thera's cousin, Irene Knott Jones, was my first teacher. The next seven years were spent in country school- east of the Gustofson place- where we had all eight classes in one room, taught by one teacher. We had as many as 26 kids one year. We had to sit three in a two seat desk. No wonder my early education was stunted as I flunked agriculture. I went to Bristol high school after which I spent the summer peddling McCannon products in the west half of Day county, and helping my dad farm. The winter of 1936-1937, Thera and I spent in Minneapolis in Bible school after which I returned and helped dad farm.

We bought our first tractor the year after we married-1941. It was a John Deere B. after 3 of our horses had been hit by a train and killed. We farmed together for some years and in 1952; at the time of mother's death, we bought the place from dad-paying each of my sisters and brother equal amounts for 5 years. Dad died in 1953, in July, one year after mother.

I didn't know my grandmother on my mother's side, or where she was buried. She died after having a large family. Her name was Hannah. My grandfather remarried, and had the second family. I only remember a few from the first family. He lived near Ortonville, Minnesota. Also in the Butler area where he ran a butcher shop. He also spent some years on a farm south of Groton. He spent his last years with us. He died here at the house. He used to help my mother in the garden. I remember how he liked clabbered milk for lunch on a hot day. He is buried in Butler cemetery beside his twin daughters that died at birth. I do not know where my Grandma Strissel is buried.



Lula and James Arbeness
Wedding picture



Lula and James
50th wedding picture



Thera and Mary
Lula and James



Mary and Thera

Mr. and Mrs James W. Atkinson

My parents never talked about their courtship or how they met but they decided to get married on Christmas Day 1911. It was Christmas break for the School teacher and probably the easiest time for a farm hand to be gone. The bride wanted her mother to be at the wedding naturally. The hitch was that Grandma Dudley was "proving up" on a claim out west of the Missouri river. So-- the bridal couple packed their bags, boarded the west bound M & St.L, (Milwaukee & St. Louis) to Firesteel. Firesteel boasted a combined store, postoffice and train stop. Someone took them plus an itinerant preacher out to the claim and back by horse and buggy or more likely a sleigh. Details of the wedding are lacking. The bride's mother had managed to get the ingredients for a Christmas fruit cake and she had hand pieced a quilt from some of her clothing and put it together with a blanket. This my mother treasured for years.

As the bridal party headed back to Firesteel a blizzard hit the prairie country with great force. Jim lost his new derby in the 40-50 mph wind. At one point the party was halted as they met headon with a herd of Texas long-horns going south with the wind at their backs. At Firesteel there was food and warmth but little else. The honeymoon waned a bit as the weeks wore on. One week- - Two weeks then finally six weeks later the tracks were cleared and the wind tamed down so that a train was finally going to head east! The newlyweds had read everything in the building several times. Dad had made a checkerboard from a piece of cardboard. He purchased red and green gumdrops for playing pieces. It was years before either cared to play checkers again.

I believe the first home was in Butler where Dad worked at the elevator and the lumberyard. While here their first child Naomi was born. She was a "blue" baby and died shortly after birth.

I'm not sure of the sequence of the next two moves but will just relate what I remember being told about each.

Jim got work with the Great Northern Railroad which necessitated a move to Willmar, MN. He worked in the round house. Here engines were put on a turntable so they could head out in the opposite direction). His job was to enter the steam chamber inspect and repair leaks etc.. He related the claustrophobia he experienced the first time he entered a boiler. The entrance hole looked so very small that he immediately exited. He soon got used to it. The duration of the job was relatively brief (probably about 3 years) as he developed a severe case of inflammatory rheumatism. The condition was brought on, at least in part, to working in the warm and steamy boilers and then coming out into the extreme cold winter air. He spent something like six weeks mostly in bed. It must have been rough for them. Mary Elizabeth was born in Willmar on August fifteenth 1916.

Prior to or just after the time in Willmar the family lived a short distance southwest from Bristol on a farm owned by the local physician, Doctor B.A.Adams. Adams raised exotic animals and fowl as I recall. Part of the deal was that Jim drive for Adams during the winter months. Doctors did house calls in those days. From time to time Dad related some of the experiences of that winter. Once they took off in a blizzard and after passing the stockyards northwest of town several times decided to go home. Dad also served as "ambulance" driver when it was necessary to transfer someone to the Webster hospital.

Another move was to the Dick Davidson ranch south of Andover. He served as hersman. He took care of the cattle, barns and fences. Mother was cook, laundress and housekeeper. It was hard work and lonely for her as she was used to living in town. Thera Alice was born during this time, March 12, 1919.

About 1921 Jim and Lula decided to try farming on their own and moved to what was known as the Seefeld place. (Later the Alex Benson farm). This was about five miles west of Butler. They never purchased a farm but lived on several in the Butler - Lily area. (Herman Herr, Surmeier, Paul Duerre).

It was while on the Duerre farm that Dad underwent a gastric resection in Rochester, MN. Charles Mayo III was his surgeon. He had about two thirds of his stomach removed. It was non-cancerous but had the potential. He had suffered many years from a peptic ulcer. He retired from farming the fall of 1947 and had an auction of machinery and livestock. He a short time with daughter, Mary, in Eureka, S.D. as the family felt this was too much trauma for him. He was physically weak and I'm sure that having all that he had worked so hard for being dispersed was indeed difficult.

They purchased a large square house on the west edge of Bristol from John Denholm's grandparents. They did some remodeling and had a comfortable home. They rented out the upstairs for light housekeeping to high school girls. No bussing at that time. Dad was never completely happy here as his heart was on the farm and he spent as much time as possible out at Thera's.

After several years they moved about a mile east of town to what we called the Tom Peckham farm which John Bury was leasing. After John's mother died, John, Thera and three boys moved to the Will Bury house and our parents moved into the house across the lawn. These are what I refer to as the golden years and Thera will write of that in another segment. Let it suffice for me to say that we were indeed blessed to have loving, caring grandparents during the growing up years of our children. Their Christian witness in their lives, words and deeds left lasting impressions on all of them. It has been a joy to hear each of them express at some time their affection, respect and appreciation for Grandma and Grandpa Atkinson. Blessed be their memory. It was a time of generational bonding that served us all well.

- M.E.K.-

Dad suffered a moderate stroke and several minor ones in his later years and finally succumbed to a major one on August 13, 1966. He had spent several days in the Day County Hospital.

Mother was diagnosed with diabetes after Dad's death. She lived the last few years with Thera and spent the winter months with Barney and I. She suffered a heart attack in late March 1973 and after several weeks hospitalization suffered a fatal attack on February 17.

Both are buried in the cemetery in Bristol, South Dakota.



First picture of me - Mary and
my Cousin Dorothy Knott



Courting days



Me emptying the
dishwater - we lived in
the small house at that time



Irene and John
Wedding picture

Thera Alice (Atkinson) Bury

I began my life in the hospital in Bristol, South Dakota. My parents were living on a farm southwest of Bristol and the weather and roads were not good. Their transportation was horse and buggy, or as the case was in March with a lot of snow on the ground, it was horses and a sleigh. My father took my mother to Bristol a couple weeks before my expected birth, to stay with mother's sister, Mrs. Grace Knott. That way she would be near the doctor and avoid an emergency trip to town thru the deep snow of 1919. I made my appearance on March 12. Apparently I was a healthy baby. I have no idea what I looked like as there was never a picture taken of me till I was about 4 years old. Times were very hard and World War I was on and my parents couldn't afford the luxury of a camera. They seldom went anywhere as there was a terrible flu epidemic and many people died from it so mother and dad avoided taking us anywhere where we might catch the flu. The first picture of me was taken when I was 4 or 5. It was taken by my cousin on the day of my Grandfather Dudley's funeral.

I never liked my name since it seemed no one pronounced it correctly. One time I asked my mother why she named me "Thera", and she said I was named after a dear childhood friend of hers, so I tried not to complain about it since it meant a lot to her. My second name also came from someone who meant a lot to her, Cousin Alice Farrar, who took care of her when she was a young girl.

My earliest memories go back to when I was 3 or 4 years old and cut my hand badly on a barbed wire fence. I never forgot it and still have the scars. I have many happy childhood memories. My Grandma Dudley told me once that we were "poor as church mice". I didn't know much about church mice so it didn't bother me a lot. We didn't know we were poor since most of our neighbors were in the same boat.

Mother taught school to help provide a living for us. Dad worked so very hard at the farming with very little return for all his efforts. Before I was old enough to go to school, there were "hired girls" who worked for us and took care of me while mother was teaching. I liked Rose and Ethel, but Mollie was something else. I suppose I wasn't always a good girl and she called me a "little snot" a lot. I wasn't sure what that was but I didn't think it was very good the way she said it.

Mother always found time to read to us and that was often our evening past time- no radio or TV in those days. She was a good cook and I still can smell the great bread, buns, sponge cake, baked beans and other goodies she made us. I have always felt bad after I grew up that I never fulfilled her wish for me to play the piano. I was just too stubborn to practice as she wanted me to and have regretted it many times.

Dad was as good to us as a dad could ever be. He couldn't give us a lot of material things but he gave us himself, in so many ways- he took time to see that we got to go places when we were young and made many things of wood for us to play with.

Our parents did their best to instill in us "the golden rule", a respect for authority and elderly people and a love for God. Mother conducted her own "Sunday school" for us when the weather was bad and we couldn't get to church.

I was blessed with an older sister, Mary, who became my "best friend" and still is.

We attended country school and often walked the two miles home and sometimes we drove a horse and buggy to school. I finished grade school in 6 years as I took grades 3 and 4 together and 7th and 8th together. I was also one of several who took high school in 3 years, graduating at age 15. That was a drawback as the only way I could go to college was to work and no one cared to hire a 15 year old girl. I took a correspondence business course from Omaha business school and also attended one year of Bible College in Minneapolis. I worked as an accountant in the auditors office of Day county in the courthouse for two years. John and I were married in 1940, and I continued my job for the first year of our marriage.

Being a farmers wife and raising six children kept me busy. Along the way I tried to fill responsibilities of Sunday school teacher, 4H leader, cub scout leader, PTA president, choir member, etc...

After the death of John's mother, we moved from the small house that John had built before we were married, to John's parents house. Grandpa Bury lived with us a year before he died. My parents lived in our small house the last years they lived and helped me in so many ways. Their pride and joy were their

grandchildren. They never missed a school or church activity that involved their grandchildren. We never had to want for a baby sitter as they were always ready and happy to be with the kids.

They left all of us a rich heritage of love and caring.

As I write this, the year is 1992, and my age is 73. I am in fair health, but with failing eyesight.

Life has been good and filled with lots of happy times with family and friends. It has also had its sorrows with loss of loved ones so very dear to me.

To my husband & children and grandchildren and sister, my thanks for the full and rich life you have given me.



Aunt Mary Klein



Uncle Barney Klein
James Richard Klein

RAMBLINGS (or as I remember it)

by Mary Atkinson- Klein

Dad - - sketches

He sang tenor in a boys choir in the Episcopal Church and at one time thought he might become a priest of this church. He also gave some thought to being a sailor having grown up not far from the sea. He had an uncle who was a sailor and he told Dad if he were to become one he must learn to smoke. Thus he was introduced to the pipe. He smoked one for many years. I recall when something went wrong (machinery malfunctioning etc.) he would pull out his pipe, fill it, tamp it and light it and then tackle the problem. I never heard him use profanity but sometimes would pound a fist into the opposite palm. Most often he shook his head from side to side and occasionally threw an instrument he was using to the ground. He read his Bible and was well versed especially in the New Testament. He quoted scripture to make a point and we often got better sermons at the breakfast table than we did from the pulpit.

* * * * *

He was close to his mother and was her helper in the house. (I recall how he assisted our mother especially when we were to have dinner guests. He would prepare vegetables, set the table etc.) Dad said they did not exchange birthday or Christmas gifts. These were occasions to do something for someone else. Part of Christmas was sharing with the less fortunate. His mother would prepare baskets of food and he would deliver them on Christmas morning. Fruit cake, plum pudding and roast goose were traditional fare as well as "chestnuts roasting on an open fire". A holiday game was pouring brandy over a plate of raisins or currants and setting it afire. The objective was to see how many you could pull out with your fingers without getting burned. Some fun!!!!

* * * * *

Punishment at school was often getting rapped sharply on the knuckles with a ruler.

Like most boys he was ingenious. He told how he had badly skinned the knuckles of his right hand in a fall. I believe it was while bike riding. Anyway he was unable to write as his fingers were so sore and eventually stiff as they scabbed over. This seemed a good excuse for not doing his assignments. So for some time as his knuckles were trying to heal, he would scrape them on a brick wall on the way to school. This served to prolong the "no write" situation.

He told of walking daily by a turnip patch on the way to school. He raised rabbits and thought how much they would enjoy some of them. One day he pulled a few and took them home. His father spied them and asked where he had gotten them. Jim had to take them back and apologize to the owner of the garden. She was most gracious and told him to keep them but of course he couldn't. He cited it as a painful but worthy experience.

* * * * *

His father, a one time journalist for the London Times newspaper, ran a "prep" school for boys. Mostly it was boys from wealthy families who weren't making it academically or had behavioral problems.

* * * * *

He loved children and they liked him. He had a way of quieting a discontented child when often the mother couldn't.

He came to our home in Fureka, S.D. at the time of his farm auction when it seemed that retirement was mandatory. One of the daily duties he took on was to take his namesake, James Richard, for an outing. James was about eight months old and loved every minute of it. Pushing the blue convertible buggy, they would "drag main". The old ladies they met would ooh and aah and advise that a baby that young should not be out with his face uncovered.

One of my childhood memories was Dad's singing. Most always he sang while working in the field. On a clear day you could hear him a half mile away. Long after Dad was gone neighbors would remind me of this. It was often an old gospel hymn, sometimes a contemporary tune or old classics like "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" and "Its a long Way to Tipperary".

* * * * *

Dad came to America with brothers Arthur and Herbert. He was only seventeen. He never saw his parents again.



Mother's eighth grade graduation
picture

Lula Lucinda Dudley

Mother (and other)

I believe the childhood years for mother were difficult. Both parents were teachers and they moved often. I gathered from people outside the family that her father was some what eccentric. He had some mental problems which made him hard to live with. He was very intelligent. He was ambidextous. My mother used to tell that when he wrote exam questions on the blackboard for his students, as one hand tired he would change to the other and the writing was the same.

Uncle Howard and Aunt Grace were already out of the home by the time Uncle Roland and mother were born. Mother was 3 years old when her sister got married. Due to her father's mental illness it was necessary to put the two younger children in homes with relatives or friends. When mother was about nine she went to live with her mother's niece Alice Wagoner - Farrar and husband in Alexandria, MN. Mother always referred to her as Cousin Alice. Alice and Ed were childless and wanted to adopt mother but grandma wouldn't allow it. Ed Farrar had a music store and also tune pianos.

I don't know just what circumstances brought her to Aunt Grace's home where she lived for several years. Here she more or less filled the position of a "hired girl". She graduated from the eighth grade in Bristol. At that time there was no high school there so Lula and her mother moved to Aberdeen where she enrolled at NNIS (Northern Normal and Industrial School, now Northern State) where she received her high school and teachers training. She completed the course in 1909 I believe. During these years her mother was cook at the cafeteria of the school. Her first teaching position was in what was known as the Kris Anderson school in Valley Township. She roomed and boarded with the Andersons and they remained friends over the years. That farm is now owned by Wes Jensen. As I recall she had in the neighborhood of about 30 some pupils in all eight grades. She was nineteen and her oldest students, boys, were older than she. Any discipline problems she might have anticipated faded as these young men kept the younger ones in line.

I don't remember hearing under what circumstances our parents met or of their courtship.. We do know the story of their wedding and it is recorded elsewhere in this family saga.

Mother grew up with a number of fears - the weather, strangers and things planned and unplanned were a cause for concern. As children we spent storms of any strength in the basement with just the eerie light of a flickering kersine lamp. I was scared too but more from what I imagined was lurking in the shadows not reached by the feeble rays of light. The basement was always cold and damp and smelled of sprouting potatoes and sometimes sour cream, With no refrigeration cream was held there until the Saturday night trip to town, Mice and salamanders also were attracted to this environment.

I remember hearing the stories of our Dad's fishing experiences when we lived at Willmar. He told of northerns so big and strong that they would pull the boat after the hook was set. One night a threatening storm came up before he arrived home. Mother and the baby (me) were alone. She prepared should we need to make a run for it to the "cellar". Access to the cellar was by a trap in the kitchen floor. (for the younger set, a trap door is an opening cut in a horizontal surface. It had a hinged door which pulled upward leaving a gaping hole. A cellar is an excavation under a house. The walls were probably of stone and the floor was just plain dirt. No cement blocks or poured walls.) Mother carefully opened the trapdoor and leaned it against the front of the sink. As I recall the story, the storm did not become severe and Mother had fallen asleep. An unusual sound aroused her. She moved toward the kitchen just as Dad was making his way up from the cellar with a string of fish. When he

arrived home he came through the kitchen door and walked across the room to deposit his catch in the sink, Mother waited for another storm to break but there was complete silence. Not one word!

* * * * *

As I recall, the year was 1921 or 22. There was a shortage of teachers in Day County. The school board of Valley Township District 148 approached mother to teach that term. She had let her certificate expire and was busy being a wife and mother. However the opportunity to contribute to the family's meager financial status was compelling. She contacted the County Superintendent of Schools and through permission from the State Department of Education she was allowed to teach with the provision she go to summer school the following year and update her certificate. That was the beginning of a twelve or thirteen year stint in that and several other schools nearby. When she finished her career as rural "school marm" she was one of the highest paid teachers in the county. Her take home pay was an even \$100. It made the family solvent and kept machinery running and bought seed for the spring planting.

The summer for the updating of the teaching certificate arrived. What do you do with a two and a half year old and a five year old when Daddy is in the field and Mommy is going to school forty miles away? Well, for six weeks of summer school we were a pampered two! We stayed in the home of a widower, Kris Anderson, and his twin daughters, Rose and Lily. The unique thing about the arrangement was that Mother roomed and boarded with this family the first year she taught AND Lily and Rose along with Marie Jensen - Lundeen (Mrs. Art) were in the first grade.

All the years mother taught after that we had a "hired girl". to do the housework and care for Thera until she became of school age. The "girl" got to go home over the week end. We lost most of them to young swains who came courting.

When Thera and I were old enough to carry our share of the housekeeping chores there was no longer hired help. Those got to be rather hectic weekends as we attempted to telescope laundry, cleaning and baking into Saturday than to church on Sunday when the weather was good. Roads were "unimproved", very few were gravelled. No one had heard of snow plows. As I recall most church attendance was limited to late spring through fall. We did have Sunday School at home during the winter and learned the familiar Bible stories. One summer there was "Union Sunday School" held in the school house.

I had Mother as my teacher grades one through three and again in the sixth. Thera was alone in her class most of the time and as she absorbed everything

that went on in that one room school of eight grades, her teachers saw fit to accelerate her through the elementary system in six years. In those days 7th and 8th graders had to write a state approved examination which was given by other than your own teacher. Thera wrote both tests the same spring passing with honor roll scores on both of them. She with five other girls received permission to earn their high school credits in three years and so we graduated from Bristol High School the same year, 1934. John Melvin Bury was also a member of that class. This was the largest class of all time at BHS. Only four members of the group went to college and two to nusing school. There was no money available and very few jobs. Many left the area seeking work.

It was the dirty thirties. We were dirt poor but we didn't know it. Nearly everyone we knew was in the same situation. In my childish innocence I thought several of our neighbors were rich. Their little girls had two pair of shoes, one for play and another for dress up. They also had more than one "Sunday dress". However those families lost their farms, machinery and livestock. They were forced to relocate and start over. We lost our playmates.

There was no "cash flow". My parents didn't speak of shopping for groceries. We went to town and did the "trading". That's what it was! You traded eggs and homemade butter for groceries. Most often cream and sometimes the eggs were taken to the "cream station" and sold for cash. Saturday night was the time farm families gathered in town to sell or trade produce for their needs. Some times Dad would go in on Wednesday night with a crate of chickens. These were usually culls from the flock which weren't producing their quota of eggs.

The cream was tested for butterfat content. If the percentage was in the acceptable range the price was better. In later years we delivered directly to the Sugar Creek Cremery, one of Bristol's two industries. The other was and is Hansmeier Feed and Seed. As we delivered the cream we picked up the can and check from the previous time. Mother never bought groceries until Dad had picked up the check and calculations were made. If Dad needed a haircut or machinery repairs or whatever it was deducted. Mother than would then appraise her needs list and start slashing as necessary. I always watched this with dismay because it was always the GOOD stuff that got slahed. Many times it was down to bare staples as one must have salt, flour, sugar etc. It was often near midnight when we headed for home after a Saturday night in town. We would try to get intown by 7:30 or 8:00 P.M. so we could park on Main Street. In the busy season we would have to park a block or so away on unlighted streets.

The coveted parking spots on Main were in front of the grocery stores, Bennet Bros. and T.O.Nelson (now about where Goehring Hdwe. stands and the latter on the corner where Pat's Super Valu is) or Knott's Furniture (Andersons Cafe) or Hensler's Drug (next to Bennet Store). These spots afforded the most activity. It was the social event of the week. You could hold a "Kaffee Klutch" in your flivver over a shared bag of popcorn and catchup on the latest skuttlebut. The "klutch" personnel might change several times over the evening as women would leave to do their trading or join another "klutch". The popcorn wagon was just across the street at 5¢ a bag and if the cream check was "fat" you might get an ice cream cone for the same price at the drug store.

One Saturday night Dad had made the trip to town alone. He and Mother had put in a long hard day of harvesting so Mother and the girls stayed home. However the cream had to go in. It was already quite sour and we needed groceries. (The cream was kept in the cellar. There was no refrigeration.) I have mentioned that if you got into town late you had to park in a poorly lighted or dark street. That was Dad's lot that particular night. A thunder storm and heavy rain developed during the evening. Dad knew he would have to put chains on the rear wheels of the Model T Ford if he was to make it over the last four miles of dirt road. The first eight miles were graveled. He walked down the darkened street, opened the rear door of the car and began to pull out the chains which were stored on the floor. (no trunks on the Ts, just a tool box on the fender of some models.) As he pulled the chains seemed to be snagged on something so he gave them a hard jerk. This action evoked a loud curse from the other side of the vehicle and a dark figure hurried away in the near darkness. Someone else evidently had mud roads between Bristol and his destination.

* * * * *

Mother was a very good pianist and loved to play. She started lessons as a child and continued in college. The year she went to summer school to update her teaching certificate she took a class from her former teacher, a Mrs. Graham, just to renew her freindship. She was without a piano the first years of her marriage. It was a period of eight or ten years and she missed it very much. When I was eight or so a man came one day from Williams Piano Co. in Watertown and offered a repossessed piano for as I remember \$750. It was a Kurtzman upright. How my mother wanted that piano! She and Dad discussed it for quite some days and finally the decision was made to purchase it. Mother was teaching for about \$85 a month and much of her check went to pay off farm debts.

I'm reasonably sure they had to take out a loan to purchase the instrument. She gave lessons to the neighbors children for 25¢ per half hour to start with. I think the most she ever received for a lesson was \$1.75 or possibly \$2.00. Thera and I took lessons from her and became so-so players mainly because we weren't committed to practice. Thera however plays beautifully by ear and gives much pleasure to her husband and family members. Following Mother's death I had the piano in my home. In the summer of 1992 it was transferred to Lorna's home where another generation will learn their do, re, mi's.

In the years Barney and I operated Sun Dial Manor, Mother would come each Wednesday to play for afternoon worship service and stay on to play for a couple of hours. She played the golden oldies and favorites from the past. The residents loved it. Whenever she would stop to get out another book someone would call out "Play some more". She always wore her blue and white striped volunteer uniform and cap. It gave her much happiness to "play for the old people" as she termed it. She was 80 plus youn herself!

* * * * *

She was an avid reader as was our Dad and it wore off on Thera and I. One of my cherished memories was Mother reading out loud to us mainly during the winter evenings. There was no radio or television to claim our spare time. There would be one chapter an evening but on Friday evening we would beg for one more She read to us from the classics. I'm reasonably sure we would not have chosen some of them if left on our own. She read "Pickwick Papers", "Ivanhoe", "Last of the Mohicans", "Deer Slayer", "King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table" and others. And we each had our own private book going whenever we got a chance to pick it up. We devoured the Bobbsey Twins series and the Louis M. Alcott books and whatever else we could get our hands on. I remember the busy Saturdays when there were so many tasks to be accomplished Mother would hide our current books until the work was done. I recall doing the dusting and keeping an eye peeled for my current treasure. I never discovered her hiding spot! She knew her girls! If we got our nose in a book the house could have burned. We were out of it!

* * * * *

I have often thought about the transition from "city girl" to "farm girl" for Mother. Not that she had not learned to work hard and in difficult and distasteful situations but nothing prepared her for the idiosyncrisies of chickens, cows and pigs. There were eggs to gather. She carried an old towel in her apron pocket to put over the hens' heads when they were "broody". (preparing for

motherhood). She would then sneak the fresh eggs out from under them. She learned that cows preferred the grass outside the pasture fence and that they also had a great sense of timing. They would know just the right moment to break down the weak spot in the fence. It was usually in the middle of a task that could not easily be abandoned. Examples: 5 minutes to go before pulling the hot water bath canner from the hot spot on the cooking range or perhaps mid way through a diaper change or what have you. And then there were the pigs! Part of the fueling for the cooking range (stove) during the 20's and 30's entailed "picking cobs". When I got old enough, probably 5 or 6, I GOT to help. Just climbing into the pig yard was an act of supreme courage or foolhardiness. The snorting and grunting of these foreboding creatures undermined many a strong heart. First you armed yourself with a stout stick, slipped over the fence with a large pail in hand and hoped you would be undetected by those muddy, grizzly sleeping monsters. But no! One would open up an eye and let out a snort and the horde was on its collective feet ready to charge. And charge they did! Dirty wet snouts on your bare legs, your rear end, in the bucket, pushing, shoving, snorting and squeeling! The stout stick proved inadequate so you fought your way back to the fence and got to the other side. You then scrounged around for something to distract them, namely food. If the season was right you'd find a few ears of corn, throw them as far as you could. While the pigs took the bait you sped through the fence once more acquiring a number of three corner tears in your garments as you did so. Now came the supreme challenge! Fill the pail or pails, get them over the fence and exit before the food supply was exhausted. You won some, you lost some which meant doing a repeat. This job was not on my "most fun list". Besides the commotion and danger zone environment the corn cobs themselves were such abhorant things. They were not the nice red mottled item that you see after corn shelling process or perhaps in a corn cob smoking pipe. These harborers of energy were black, dirty and they smelled! Yes, they smelled like pig! Supposedly they burned better in this state. Sometimes the pig contact had been so recent that the cob was almost muddy. As we grew older and perhaps a bit more fastidious we donned gloves for the daily dozen more or less pails it took for three meals a day plus bread baking etc. The cobs were supplemented by twigs and branches that came from the trees as the wind broke them off. Nearly every farmyard in this rolling plain country had a grove of trees to protect against the winter winds and provide shade for people and animals. Many also boasted lilac bushes and some type of apple occasionally. It gave a message from the past of the pioneers desire for beauty in a harsh environment.