

TABLE OF CONTENTS

My Story

List of antique family photos

Antique Photos

Land Grant for Homestead

Property deed of Transfer

Excerpts from Newspapers

A Page from Harney County History by Mrs. Curry

Family Photos and Photos of Harney County Picnic

Letter from Elsie Regarding Biddles

Key to Biddles Photo

Biddle Photo

Biddle History

John Wyckoff's Obituary

Wyckoff Ancestral House

Wyckoff and Biddle Genealogy

My Memories

My first memory is of living on a hundred and fifty acre farm about a mile northeast of Halsey, Oregon. Teddy Roosevelt was President and women could not vote. I was about four years old. My parents had moved from Oklahoma to Oregon when I was not quite a year old. My father was Napoleon Price Biddle, but his friends called him Poly. Born in ~~Iowa~~^{Illinois} on August 10, 1869, he was tall and quiet, friendly but stern. My mother, Margaret Bell Wyckoff, was born in Kansas in 1872⁴. She was called Meg and later on was called Aunt Meg.

My mother's health was not good in Oklahoma so the doctor had advised my father to take her to the northwest country. I think she had asthma. My father had gone ahead to make the arrangements and my mother and we three children went by train later. At that time I was ten months old. My sister, Carolyn Catherine, was not quite four years and my brother, Emmett Steve, not quite six years. We were four days and nights on the train from Oklahoma to Portland, Oregon, where my father met us.

Our Wyckoff relatives had moved from Oklahoma to Oregon the year before. For a few months we stayed with them near Sweet Home, Oregon, then we moved to the farm near Halsey.

The farm where we lived in was rented and the house was small – only five rooms -- but it was new and the furniture as nice as any of the other houses around. We heated and cooked with wood that we bought and our light was from coal oil (kerosene) lamps. My mother was happy there

My father was a good farmer and grew good crops of mostly wheat, oats and barley. When he was binding the grain, I would go to the field and follow along back of the binder and have to watch the bundles of grain fall to the ground. Later when my father put the bundles in stacks, I would try to lift a bundle and help him. He also raised hogs and did his own butchering and smoking.

My brother and sister went to the school in Halsey. It was about a mile, they walked, but by going across the fields they could shorten the distance. I used to wish that I could go to school with them.

On Saturday we would go across a field to the North's orchard and eat green apples; and I loved to pick the green gooseberries from mother's garden. My mother always grew a large garden with a variety of vegetables – potatoes, cabbage, cucumbers, carrots, green beans, onions, beets, tomatoes, winter squash, parsnips, turnips, and rutabagas. We stored winter vegetables in a root cellar and my mother made pickles in a ten-gallon crock. The only fruit she grew were gooseberries and currants that she turned into jelly. We had milk cows and

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chickens on the farm and I never have I eaten fried chicken that tasted as good as what my mother cooked.

Now and then Mother and I would walk along the road for a mile to the North's house. I loved to go to the North's and every time I would always ask for cake. I'm sure my mother was very embarrassed. So one day after we returned home she baked a cake and told me to eat all that I wanted and I never did again ask for cake at the North's. Years later one of the North men came and stayed at my husband's and my house in eastern Oregon.

One summer my maternal grandmother and my mother's sister, Gertrude (18), came from Oklahoma to visit us. They stayed for several weeks. I didn't like grandma. She was a very dignified and stern lady and didn't have much time for us children, although she was only in her forties (42) at that time. She said my brother was the meanest kid she'd ever seen.

I can remember very vividly the way she dressed, always in black, dark blue or brown, in long full skirts gathered at the waist, long sleeves and high neck and her hair combed into a large bun on the back of her head. All women at that time wore long, full dresses and long hair. It was many years late before women began to cut their hair. Grandma passed away and had been dead six weeks before my mother found out. I didn't understand why she cried.

My father was a restless man and for him the other side of the hill always had greener pastures. Years before when the government had opened up the Cherokee Strip for homesteading, my father had been in that race to stake out land. He had been out ahead of the race to see what parcel he wanted. All kind of people and vehicles were in that race. There were wagons and buggies and people on foot. Dad was on horseback and was able to get out ahead and stake his claim.

In the summer before my sixth birthday he decided to make a change. In the Harney Valley of eastern Oregon, the government had opened up a lot of land to be taken as homesteads. My folks went by stagecoach in mid-August of 1906, a journey of about 250 miles, to Burns, Oregon, which was the county seat of Harney County. My father located and filed on a hundred and sixty acre tract of sagebrush land on the east side of Harney Valley and about thirty miles from Burns.

According to an article in the *Oregonian* on August 3, 2003, Harney County, which is the largest county in the state, covers more than 10,000 square miles. There are approximately 7,600 people living there with something over 3,000 of them living in Burns, which is the largest town in the county. All this information was as of the 2000 census. Burns was named for the Scottish poet, Robert Burns.

Soon after they returned home, my parents had a big sale and sold everything except what could be loaded onto the wagons. They kept six horses but all the rest of the stock was sold. I remember that Mother was very sad and cried as she had loved her home and had been happy there.

All of her life my mother was a very cheerful and happy person. She never complained and always said she had so much to be thankful for. Even during the years when she was alone after my father passed away she stayed the same. My father died a fairly young man only fifty-nine and my mother lived to be almost eighty-one.

After the sale the wagons were loaded and we were on our way to a new life. Of course, to us children it was a big adventure. My mother drove one team of horses and pulled one wagon and my father drove four horses and pulled two wagons. At that time there was only a narrow dirt road across the Cascade Mountains. We went through Sweet Home, Oregon. One night we camped near Clear Lake and my mother and we children walked down to the lake, and it was so clear we could see the trees way down in the water. It was like a mystery to us. Years later we drove by there on the new highway.

As we drove nearer to the top of the mountains, it began to rain and how it did rain. The road became so muddy that my father had to unhitch the team that mother was driving and leave that wagon beside the road. He hooked all the

horses on to his wagons and we drove on into Sisters, Oregon arriving tired and cold after dark. There were camp buildings for travelers, three sides and a roof but no front. It was still raining very hard. My father built a campfire out front and my mother cooked us something to eat. She tried to fry bacon and due to the rain it boiled instead of frying. When we were ready to eat she discovered that all the utensils were in the wagon that had been left beside the road down the mountain. So my father whittled spoons out of wood and we enjoyed our meal and it did taste good: bacon, brown beans, canned fruit and biscuits.

The next morning with the sun was shining brightly, my father took four horses and went back to get the other wagon. It was mid afternoon when he returned.

The next morning early we were on our way to the next stop at Prineville, Oregon. That night we heard the first coyote. My sister and I were already in bed in one of the wagons when we heard the most awful blood-curdling howl. We were really scared so Mother came and hung her apron over the opening in the canvas wagon cover. We were happy to know that monsters wouldn't get by now.

After days crossing the sagebrush desert we arrived at Burns, Oregon, and there we settled for the winter. My father rented a very small house, only one very large room. He built bunk beds along one wall for us children and at night we climbed a ladder to get into bed.

It was there I was enrolled in my first school and that I fell in love for the first time. His name was Ed Goodman and the house we lived in belonged to his mom and dad. I was desperately in love. I was six and he was seven and he looked down on me, as he was so much older. Years later his father became sheriff of Harney County and Ed was one of his deputies.

It was a nice and happy winter for us children. I really liked my teacher and loved the reading, writing and arithmetic. We had to be at school by 9:00 o'clock and it was downhill along a rocky path. School got out at 3:30. We only went to school about six months of the year in those days.

On the hill back of where we lived there was a Piyute Indian encampment. They were very friendly and on Saturday a group of children used to go out to visit them or we would go on the hill near their camp and build a campfire and sit around it. We were never afraid of them.

I remember well one old Indian that we children liked so well. Everyone knew him and called him Old Tatsin and years later when I went to Burns to go to High School I used to see him wrapped in his blanket sitting on the street. No one ever knew how old he was. If we spoke to him he would just grunt.

It was while we lived in Burns, that a rabid dog foaming at the mouth chased my mother. She ran into the house and got the .22 handgun and shot him.

When spring came and the snow began to melt, my father took a team and wagon with supplies and went the thirty miles to the homestead and began to build a house. In May when school was out we moved to the homestead.

Father had cleared enough sagebrush away to make room for the house, a barn and corrals for the stock, and a small hen house. No homestead was without chickens and a hen house. The house was one big room with a ladder to the two rooms above. I shared a room with my sister and my brother had the other. It was a happy carefree time for us children and some of my happiest memories are of those times.

My father had drilled a well only eight feet to water and all we would need. There was a windmill to pump water for the garden but we had a hand pump to water the stock. Range cattle came in for water. One day my folks went away and I was supposed to pump water. I took off and when I came back the cattle were bawling and I had to go down in the dust and pump water.

My father and mother soon cultivated some ground and planted a garden. Mother loved flowers, especially sweet peas. I still love them. We pumped water with a hand pump to irrigate the garden. Father cleared a few acres of land and planted wheat and oats. Those were happy years for us children, but

hard years for my father and mother. Our house was only one large room, my father and mother built a lean-to on one side with a board floor and boarded half the sides up and roofed it over with canvas and curtained it off into sleeping rooms.

Mother sewed a lot on an old treadle Singer sewing machine. When I was first married, she bought me my first machine for eight dollars.

My father worked away from home a lot. Mostly it was seasonal work. He had to make enough money to support his family. My mother grew a garden and milked several cows and sold the cream. She also made soap. We all learned to milk. At eight years old I was a good milker and there was a cow, Old Rosie, that I especially loved. My sister didn't like the outside work so she helped with the housework and I didn't like housework, but every night after supper my sister and I did the dishes. She washed and I dried. One evening I slipped out and hid in the cellar so I wouldn't have to help with the dishes. It was a very dark night and I was really afraid of the dark, but no one came to look for me. I had to go in and how I hated to, but no one said a word and my behavior was never mentioned.

I used to see many freight teams and the largest was a twenty-mule team.

During our first years in Harney Valley the only means of transportation going out

of the valley was the stagecoach, with stage stations every so many miles where they changed horses.

When I was about ten, my mother went away to help a sick neighbor. My sister was away also working for a neighbor and I was the cook. My folks hated to cook so I cooked potatoes and made biscuits (my very first) and my father said they were the best biscuits he had ever eaten, but they were very hard and tough.

I loved my father. In the years while I was growing up, I was his shadow and my father took me with him whenever he could. At times he drove a freight team from Harney Valley to Vale and Ontario, Oregon, a distance of a hundred and fifty miles, four horses and two wagons. Father didn't talk a lot. I slept on top of the wagon while he drove.

Going out the wagons were loaded with wool. There were a number of big sheep ranches about sixty miles south of where we lived. At Vale and Ontario he loaded the wagons with supplies for the grocery stores and barrels of whiskey for the saloons. Every small town had a saloon and sometimes when the cowboys came to town they would ride their horses right into the saloon.

On one trip to Ontario my father took me with him. We were more than two weeks on the trip. How I loved camping out at night. The campsites were all

near water and we cooked over a campfire. I was up about daylight to go with my father out to find the horses. At night he would put hobbles on the front feet of the horses and turn them loose to find feed. There was always plenty of wild grass. One of the horses had a bell on a strap around the neck so they were always easy to find, although sometimes they would be a mile or two away.

The coyotes howling at night didn't bother me. There were a lot of coyotes in Harney Valley. At Vale, Oregon, my father took me to a restaurant to eat. I was all eyes and how I did enjoy that food. I can still remember what we ate for breakfast – bacon, eggs, and hot biscuits. I was eleven years old and it was my first time to eat in a restaurant. One older man was eating some fresh raspberries and I must have been watching him and looking very wishful, as he had a big bowl sent over to us – my first raspberries.

After a year on the homestead, my folks and the neighbor men organized a school district and I started my second year at school. The school was an old vacant house. Our teacher's name was Miss Middleton. She seemed old to me maybe because she was in her early thirties and was considered to be an old maid. She was a very good teacher and we all liked her – all seven of us. She lived in part of the house.

The winters in Harney Valley were very severe, deep snow and temperatures many times dropped into twenty and sometimes thirty below zero. Our school

only ran for seven months a year. It was three and three fourths miles from where we lived. We walked to school and sometimes my brother walked ahead to break a trail through the snow for my sister and me. When the weather was too bad, my father would take us to school in the sled. My brother put runners under one of the wagon beds for winter travel. People now don't know what a hard time is.

Our nearest neighbors, the Dillons, lived two or three miles away. They were an older couple and I used to go and visit them and sometimes stay over night. Mrs. Dillon baked the best cake and served it warm -- vanilla with no icing. Mr. Dillon played cards with me for hours at a time. Everybody had a parlor in those days and they had a gramophone in their parlor. The records were round cylinders and I loved that music.

A few years later when I was riding a horse to school, the Dillons would hang a white cloth on a pole if they wanted me to come by. Every day I watched for that white flag. They lived next to the hills and about half a mile from the main road. Sometimes they would just be lonesome and sometimes they would have a little gift for me, mostly some cookies or maybe a piece of cake.

They had two sons; Jerry and Jim that I thought were really men of the world. About that time they were about eighteen and twenty-one. I danced my first dance with the younger one. I was about twelve at that time. The younger son

had a beautiful voice and he would sometimes sing while he was dancing. I can still remember one of the songs he sang –“After the Ball”.

After the ball was over,
After the break of dawn,
After the dancers are leaving,
After the stars are gone,
Many a heart is aching,
If you could read them all
Many a heart that is breaking
After the ball.

My mother didn't care to dance but my father loved to so once in a while we would go to a dance. It was my father who taught me to dance. The public dances were held in the schoolhouse and music was mostly accordion and mouth harp. Sometimes we went to Harriman about eight miles away, to a dance hall above a country store.

Also, I used to ride to Harriman for supplies like coffee, tea, sugar and salt. Father brought in supplies to hold us over the winter.

Many years later my husband and I went to see this man. He ran a business in Burns, Oregon. We also saw his mother, but the father was in a mental institution.

After a few years of school in the old house, my father and the other men bought a one-room building and moved it onto some land donated by a neighbor. It was nearer to where we lived – only three miles. By now I was riding a horse to school and my brother and sister were in high school in Burns. Then I finished grade school and graduated from that little country school. I was thirteen years old -- happy years.

When I was eight years old my brother had bought me a little white pony and how I loved her. Her name was Daisy. We went many miles together. When my father was home with all the horses, he turned them out on the range at night. Many times in the very early morning before the sun came up I would fetch Daisy from the barn and we would go out to find the horses. Sometimes they would be quite a distance away so one always wore a bell to make them easier to find. I was also my job to go after the milk cows of a morning and sometimes they would be two to three miles away. There were no fences in those days just open range.

There was a sorrel horse we called "Old Charlie" and he just would not hurry. I would want to go fast, but if I got too close to him he would stop and kick with both feet. One morning he kicked me on the knee.

Sometimes Daisy would be a little ornery, she wouldn't let me catch her in the field unless I had some grain in a bag then she would come and one time she bucked me off. We were way out in the sage. I was very surprised but I climbed up on a pile of sagebrush to remount. I think maybe she saw something. Dear little Daisy, several years later my brother sold her. I was broken hearted and so mad I wouldn't speak to him for days. I must have been eleven or twelve at the time.

My brother drove a team of horses on what was called a jerk line. The main horse was Maude and she controlled the team. You jerked her line once to go left and twice to go right. There were three horses besides Maude – Prince and boy and another whose name I forget.

A neighbor bought Daisy for his two little boys to ride, and a couple of years later we saw Daisy out on the range and she had a new cute little baby colt with her.

Later my brother bought me a much larger horse to ride. Her name was Rosie and she was very uncomfortable to ride – what they call a rough rider because she had such a bony back – but I loved her. We didn't have saddles and I

always rode bareback. After I left home to go to high school in Burns my brother sold her.

Also I was a dog and cat lover. When people had an extra cat or dog would drop them off near neighbors several miles away. All these animals ended up with me. At one time I had five dogs and fourteen cats and was so mad one day when my mother gave a little cat away. Then one time I missed two found dogs was mad at my brother for days because I found out he had shot them. It was strange that my poor father and mother to put up with all those animals.

My brother, Emmett, left home when he was about 15 and went to work on a cattle ranch, called the White Horse Ranch. I think that my father was awfully hard on him. ^(SON ROBERT TWO) He was married ~~three~~ times. His first wife Pearl lives in Astoria. They divorced and he married Carol. Later he married Edna Spofford. They had three sons – Arthur, Bob (still alive in Pendleton) and Walter. The second sons, Walter and Arthur both died. My bother passed away in 1970 at the age of 75.

My sister was in the third year of high school at Burns and she found a place where I could work for my board and room and go to school. They were an older couple in their late forties and very nice, but after four months she decided that she didn't want me around. It was too much problem and I really wasn't very much help to her. So she found me a family to stay with who had three small

boys; the father and mother both worked and needed someone to be there when the boys came home from school and I cooked the evening meal.

By this time I had been fourteen for a few months. At the first place, I was only thirteen and one of my most vivid memories of the first home was that every Saturday an Indian woman came by to do the family washing. She did it with the old round metal tubs, heated the water on the stove and scrubbed the clothes on a washboard.

With my first meal at this home I was introduced to Jell-O. I didn't know what it was but I loved it and still do after all the years. I never had peanut butter until after I was married.

The little boys at the other home were very good and I stayed there until school was out in May. Their name was Reed and they were very nice people.

By the time school was out, I was getting used to being away from home. It was rough at first. I was only thirteen and had never been away from home. I went home for the Christmas holidays, and then didn't get home again until school was out. My parents used to come into Burns occasionally but it was a long thirty-mile drive for my father with a team and wagon. It takes all day for a horse to walk thirty miles.

I missed the good times at home. We used to have neighborhood parties. Everyone would come for miles with teams and wagons or in the winter with sleds and some on horseback. Everyone took a lot of food. There was always chicken either fried in bacon grease or with dumplings. Sometimes there was homemade sausage, and vegetables were usually carrots, beans, kraut and potatoes. We also had pies and cakes. Sometime mother made potato soup and she also made her own crackers. What a time. About midnight we would eat, then go back to game playing. The older people joined in and sometimes we would stay all night and eat breakfast before we went home. In winter my father would put hay in the bottom of the sled, then blankets over that, and we wrapped up in blankets. I used to feel sorry for him after the parties as he had to stay awake to drive and the rest of us went to sleep.

In summer we had picnics. One neighbor, a bachelor named Joe Rector, lived two and a half miles away. He owned a huge cattle ranch and had a lot of cattle. His house was built right at the foot of the hills and a tumbling mountain stream came down the canyon and ran between the house and the barn, which were a distance apart. He had a lot of trees and grass around his house and we had many lovely picnics there. He also had a lot of apple trees and used to send us fruit by his hired hand whose name was Brad Mass. One time he sent us over a fresh quarter of beef. He was the first man to buy a Ford car in 1908. Later another neighbor bought a car.

When I was about eight that neighbor, by the name of Miller, lost his wife who left a baby girl only a few hours old. He also had five other children so my mother took the baby and cared for her for six months. Mr. Miller then sold his ranch and cattle. It was also a big cattle ranch. He moved his family into Burns. It almost broke my mother's heart to give the baby up, and only saw her a few times when Dorothy was older.

In the west and south of the valley were many big cattle ranches, some of them thousands of acres owned by big companies. In the winter the cattle were fed and cared for at the home ranch but in the spring they were driven to the mountains and turned onto what they called summer range. The drive to the summer range was only a mile from our house and many times I have seen herds of cattle strung out for more than two miles. All of the buckaroos wore six-shooters, mainly so if a horse would step in a hole and break a leg they would have to be shot, and sometimes to kill rattlesnakes. There were a lot of rattlesnakes in the mountains that surrounded Harney Valley.

One spring there were so many pretty wild flowers; I went away up on the mountains about a mile east of our house to pick flowers. The tall flowers were just thick everywhere, and when I reached down to break off some flowers I heard a rattle. I looked down and there was a huge rattlesnake coiled right at my feet. I ran all the way home. God was looking out for me that day. I never did tell mother.

Harney valley was over run with jackrabbits -- thousands of them. During the winter months when the snow was deep rabbits moved into anywhere that hay was stacked and they would eat a full stack of hay. I have seen a haystack covered with rabbits. When the snow was soft during the winter months, jackrabbit drives were organized and people came for miles to take part. Everyone would bring a lunch. A large corral was built of woven wire out in the sagebrush and open area with no fences, except for those built to make the wings a quarter mile out from the corral.

The people went away out and formed a circle starting from each end of the wings. Then they began to work in toward the corral -- some afoot, some on horseback, some in wagons or buggies -- making a lot of noise yelling, banging on pans, blowing horns. When they closed in on the corral it would be full of rabbits. One rabbit drive we took part in they corralled and killed five thousand rabbits. The county paid two cents for each pair of ears.

There were also a lot of coyotes and they were very destructive. They killed sheep and many young calves. Men trapped the coyotes, skinned them and stretched and dried the furs. The furs were sold to buyers in Burns. It was the only town of any size for miles around.

The summer went by and I was back in Burns for the second year of high school. This year I was staying with an older couple and I loved her. She was a big woman. Their name was Sutton and he was principal of the grade school. She was a piano and vocal teacher and she gathered a group of four girls and gave us vocal lessons, and I sang for many years almost every waking moment I was singing. When at home and I would go to visit a neighbor and tarry too long and dark would come on the way home, my mother said she could hear me coming a mile away singing. I caught flu in Montana when I lived there later. It ruined my voice and I can't sing anymore.

Mrs. Sutton also played the organ for the movie theater – silent movies and she took me to a movie once a week. How I loved that. She also gave me piano lessons and did beautiful sewing. My parents paid for the material and she made me some very pretty dresses. They were full-skirted dresses and came to about mid-calf I always cooked the evening meal. She planned the meals but if she didn't tell me how to cook the potatoes, I always fried them. She called the potatoes "Biddle Special" – my maiden name.

Mrs. Sutton wanted to keep me with her and finish my schooling and semi-adopt me, but my mother and father wouldn't go for that. When I think back to the times, I probably would have gone for I loved that lady. I never did see her again when I went home after school was out.

That year of high school was much more pleasant than the first year. I was accepted a little better and fell in love again. He was a handsome blonde named Ellsworth, and he was a year ahead of me in school, but he never knew that I existed.

That year I also took cooking and sewing and loved my teacher, Miss Holt, a little blonde and very sweet. She taught us many things beside cooking and sewing one of which was never to chew gum in public and to this day I hate to see anyone chewing gum in public. Some of the things we were taught about cooking and sewing I use to this day.

That summer my father and other men organized a high school at Crane, about six miles from our house and a new railroad town. That summer the railroad was built from Ontario, Oregon in to Harney Valley and at the end of the line the town of Crane was begun. In July there was a big celebration and people came from miles around and many camped overnight and everyone that wanted one was given a short ride on the train. We only went about four or five miles.

The town was mostly of tents and there were several cafes. Later a nice hotel was built as well as several stores, a post office and a number of homes. I later worked at the hotel (1915) for several months taking care of the rooms for forty dollars a month, which was a lot of money at that time. Some days I would finish

my work by three and other days not until five or later. I got fired because I thought I could go anytime.

My father built a small one-room house for my sister and I and we settled in. She was teaching three grades at the grade school and I was really enjoying school and having a good time. I was sixteen and it was 1916.

My sister was sick for a few days and they asked me to teach the class. There were thirty-four little ones in first, second and third grade. We got through fine and they were very good children. I'm not sure how much they learned.

It was a fun winter, only a little sadness also as my brother went away to the army along with several of the neighbor boys. My brother came back, but two neighbor boys did not. This was World War I.

So in the spring of my third year of high school, my sister Carolyn was married to ^{Buckland} Jim Bennett, but only for a short time. There was a flue epidemic the next winter and after only eleven months of marriage, at the age of twenty-one, she passed away and the baby that was due to arrive in a few weeks was buried with her mother. This was in February of 1918⁹. My mother, father and I all had the flu and the neighbors came in to care for us. My brother was in the army and couldn't come home.

During the flu epidemic in the small town of Crane, so many people were down with the flu; they called for volunteers for nursing. After I recovered I went to help a neighbor man who had just moved to town and took charge to see that everyone was cared for. One family when I nursed at night, the father and mother were both ill, and one of the boys, also there were several children. The man was very ill but he came through.

Years later in western Oregon, near Portland, I saw the boy that I had helped nurse through the flu. It was at a Harney Valley reunion of people who had at one time lived in Harney Valley. After more than thirty years later, he knew me at once. The reunion was held at Champoeg Park.

That summer my father and I worked in a hay field all summer. It would take some of the big companies weeks to cut and stack the wild hay for winter feed. There were two large lakes at the south and west of Harney Valley. Malheur Lake was twenty-five miles long and wide. In the spring when the snow melted and ran into the lakes, they flooded thousands of acres of wild grassland. In July when the water level dropped, this grass was mowed and stacked for winter-feed. I have seen as many as ten to twelve mowers strung out and mowing around a land so large that they could only make two rounds before noon.

The first year my husband and I were married, he ran a mower and I helped another lady cook for the crew of twenty-six men. After breakfast at six, the men

were in the field before seven. The noon meal was at twelve and the evening meal at six. It was breakfast, dinner and supper. We cooked inside and served outside.

Everything was done with horses, and there were about a hundred head. At night they were turned out to pasture. The men had to take turns of bringing the horses in of a morning. Sometimes they were several miles away. My husband and I did our turns. That was when I worked in the hay fields. We were up at four-thirty and had to have the horses in by six.

Then one summer I raked hay for two months with another lady. The boss had given me a team that was a little new and I let her help me hitch to the rake. She told me if anything happened to jump off and let the team go. I had just gotten to the field when one line came loose and the team was away. I jumped off the back and they ran some distance and hung up in a ditch. The boss just laughed and said we needed a little excitement.

After the third year of high school, I decided to go to Boise Idaho and go to business school. A friend from Crane was working in Boise so we roomed together. After a few weeks she was called home because of a death in the family. I stayed on and worked for a while, then a new friend and I enrolled for business school. We worked at the school for our tuition and worked at St. Luke's Hospital for our board and room. My friend's mother worked there.

It was a fun winter and I learned how to roller skate, but was never very good. When growing up in Eastern Oregon, in the winter we had ice-skating parties. Before finishing school, my friend fell in love at 16 and was married. Years later she and her husband came to see my husband and I when we lived in Richfield, Idaho, and I kept in touch with her for years. Her name was Lela Long.

I finished school and worked for a while at the Masonic office in Boise, then decided to go home to Oregon. My father and another man had contracted to stack hay for a big company so I worked all summer in the hay field. My mother and the other men's wives cooked for the crew. All of the camp was of tents.

Arthur Davis was one of the crew. He had gone with his parents to public dances and I had met him there sometime before. He had been gone for three years in the Navy but he wrote to me all the time he was gone. When he got out he came to see me in Boise. That's when I decided to come home. Arthur worked all winter for my father helping feed cattle. The following summer a minister married us on a bridge in Burns, Oregon. That was on June 28, 1921. My mother made my dress but my parents didn't come to our wedding. (They never saw any of their children get married.) My husband was twenty-three, and I was just short of twenty-one.

We lived in a rented house and worked for a big cattle company. Our first son, Harold, was born in Burns on October 7, 1922. We moved to Idaho in the fall across the Snake River from Nyssa, Oregon. Gloria was born there on August 21, 1925. Through the years we had two more children: Betty Jean on October 2, 1929, in Junction City, Oregon, and Dean on April 23, 1932 near Shoshone, Idaho.

My father died of a stroke In April of 1929, when Gloria was four and Mother stayed with me for a while. Sometimes she stayed with my brother near Astoria, Oregon at Swenson. My mother passed away December 23, 1954 at the age of almost eight-one.

The first winter my husband and I were married work was very scarce. Many people were unemployed. My husband had an opportunity to go up into the mountains and cut wood together with another man. So we two couples went to the mountains, camped out in tents and the men cut wood. The snow was two and a half feet to three feet deep, and it was so cold that the men could only work from about ten AM to three PM. One day the man that hauled the wood away came and said the night before it was forty- eight degrees below in the valley. I have seen it forty-two degrees below in southeast Idaho when we lived there.

When Dean was four he had poor health and the doctor advised us to move to Western Oregon. So we sold everything except what we could haul on a trailer, and 1937 was a very poor year to sell anything. When all finished, we left with a thousand dollars, four children and a dog. My mother had come to help us.

In Western Oregon we rented a house in Monmouth and lived there that winter and by January of 1938 we bought a house and ten acres at Dallas, Oregon, and moved there. We lived there for many years and the family all grew up there and married.

Our oldest son Harold went away to World War II. When he came back his wife had met another man. They divorced and she married the other man. Harold was married three times then he married a fourth time to Kay. They stayed in the home place at Dallas until Harold died in 1992 of cancer. He had no children of his own, but he had three fine stepsons all married and I have five step great-grandchildren there. After Harold's death, Kay sold the place and moved to Salem. She died early in November of 2002. I lived in that house in Dallas for thirty-three years and some of our family lived there for about fifty years.

My husband developed heart trouble fairly early in his life so I worked to support the family. All he had was a small Veteran's pension. The first potato plant in the

United States was in Dallas. I worked on a ricer machine. The potatoes were dried and packed five-gallon cans then shipped to Russia. I also worked in canneries in Salem processing peaches and berries and at the prune dryer in Dallas. I also did baby-sitting for \$2.50 an evening.

My mother died in December of 195⁴9. My brother dies in January of 1970.

After the kids were grown we traveled to Oklahoma to visit relatives. We also went to Missouri and to Canada a couple times. Once we went to the Calgary stampede with some friends. This was in the 1960's.

We also spent a winter in Tempe, Arizona, near Phoenix. I especially enjoyed the farm markets on Saturday. We could have fresh vegetables in the winter. We rented a three-bedroom house there for \$15 a month. We thought the climate would help our son, Dean's health.

My husband passed away in April 1965. We had come to Portland from Dallas, Oregon to visit Gloria, and while we were there Arthur had a heart attack at 5:00 PM. He was dead by 10:00 PM. I lived alone on the home place for six years. Harold was with me part of the time. He had a butcher shop and I worked for him. When he was gone I worked the shop by myself. Harold did a lot of traveling with his work as a salesman for a deep Freezer food plan.

Alma Davis

In April of 1971, I went to Billings, Montana to visit our youngest daughter, Betty Jean and her family, planning to stay for a month or more. I lived there for 16 years. I made many friends, had a nice large apartment, a lovely landlady and her husband and fairly good health. I worked at Arthur Murray Dance Studio as receptionist and helped plan the parties. I took lots of dance lessons until I was 81. I learned South American dances like the cha-cha and the tango.

My foster-daughter invited me to Hawaii. We flew there. I liked it so much I went back ten times—four since I lived here at Providence House. We stayed at the Reef Hotel on the third floor and we could look out on the beach. There were two pools also, one for kids and one for adults. We rented a car and went all over. We also visited all the main islands – Oahu, Maui, Hawaii, Molokai. Some of the visits were with my daughter Gloria and grandchildren Ruddy, Todd and Tanya. Also my son Dean and my other daughter Jeanie and son-in-law Bill.

I have also been to New Orleans, Louisiana twice with my son-in-law (Jeannie's husband) from Louisiana. Also, while I lived in Montana I visited Yellowstone National Park twice. My favorite place was Old Faithful Geyser.

I started painting while I lived in Montana. I met an old lady who gave me free lessons. I have painted 130 pictures. I painted mostly from photos.

I learned to drive when I was 13 years old and I drove for years. After I fell and broke my hip I sold my car.

My daughter, Gloria found this place (Providence House) for me. She had watched the building being built and one day stopped in and inquired. I had never lived close to Gloria before. I was getting older and my rent was going up all the time so I moved in here to Providence House and I've been here since June of 1995.

My daughter, Gloria was married to her husband Don Simonsen at the home of friends who lived on the Sandy River in Oregon, on May 30, 1953. Gloria still lives in Portland, Oregon, but her husband died in September of 2001. There are three children – Donald Rudd (Ruddy), who was my first grandchild, born in Pasadena, California on November 26, 1953; Todd born June 14, 1958 in Portland Oregon, who is married to Joyce Kagley; and Tanya Mae was born January 24, 1964 in Portland, Oregon. Neither Ruddy nor Tanya is married.

My daughter, Jeanie (Betty Jean), married first to Bob Brockway in 1956, and had two sons, Robert Scott born November 30, 1959, in Carmel, California and Phillip Mark, born in Billings, Montana on September 26, 1963. Both are married, Scott to Diana (born September 13, 1959), and Mark to Wasna (January 5, 1960). Mark and Laurie (Mark's first wife) had my first great-grandbaby, and she is

a doll. Her name is Chantae Brockway, born April 9, 1987 in Billings, Montana.

Her brother is Tyler Brockway, born in Billings on March 29, 1989.

Wasna had two girls by a previous marriage – Katie Egeland, born October 20, 1985 and Julie Egeland, born December 8, 1988.

Jeanie and her first husband divorced and she married Bill Lawrence (born February 4, 1942) from Baton Rouge, Louisiana on August 25, 1972. They live in Billings, Montana.

Dean is married to Bethel (June 11, 1930) and they live in Eugene. They have three sons, Brad married to Elaine, Jeff married to Christie, and Jason married to Wendy. Brad and Elaine have a baby boy and Elaine has a son, Michael. Jeff and Christie have Jacob. Jason and Wendy are expecting.

I have a foster daughter and a foster son in Oregon. Elaine and Bob Praegitzer have four children – married and single, and three foster great-grandchildren. They divorced. Later Elaine passed away. Bob married again and she died of a heart attack. Later he remarried Sharon.

While I lived in Montana I went home to Oregon twice a year for the Christmas holiday and for the Fourth of July. We had a family reunion there twice a year and sometimes friends joined us. Our family has been together every Christmas

since Harold's first Christmas and here he is now sixty-five. Harold and Dean missed the Christmas when they were in the service; Harold for three years during World War II, Dean for two years during the Korean War, and their father was in for three years in World War I in the Navy.

I'm the only one of my generation remaining in my family. I have some relatives in Enid, Oklahoma where I visited in 1973. Altogether I have a large family that is wonderful. I feel that I'm a very lucky lady. My children and family are very good to me. As I wrote the first version of my memories, I was preparing to go home for Christmas to celebrate my eighty-seventh Christmas. I still feel that I'm a very fortunate lady.

Now it is 2003, and I'm looking forward to celebrating my one hundred and third birthday. I still look forward to each morning.

Alma Davis

November 16, 1987

Revised summer 2003

My friend, Meg Mac Bean has helped me with this revision of *My Memories*.