

Lookout Mountain, as before described, slopes gradually to the South for many miles until it becomes a mere ridge. The enemy had succeeded in bringing up a seventy five pound gun and the work we had been watching them do was in preparation of them mounting this weapon. They placed it just above Pulpit Rock and felt that at this elevation they would be out of range of our guns but could still do great damage to our army. Meanwhile, our men had not been idle but had succeeded in placing our best rifle cannon around Moccasin Point and other places of advantage and all were trained on the spot where the gun was being mounted. These were days of great suspense and conjecture. Were we to be blown to pieces without a chance for defense? Could our guns reach that point nearly two thousand feet high at an angle of about forty-five degrees? Finally the news leaked through the lines that all was ready and the first act of the drama would soon be performed. And it was not long before the master of ceremonies, in a voice that echoed and re-echoed from mountain to mountain and from hill to hill, sent the message high overhead, screeching and yelling for "Yanks" to surrender. There was no reply except by a fusillade of shots from the guns we had trained for the purpose. After a short interval another shot came much lower but still too high for execution. All the while our guns kept a steady roar with seeming good effect. Finally another shot from their gun, with better aim, came crashing through the unoccupied part of a hospital on Cameron Hill, only a few rods from our quarters, but the shell did not explode. Whether from the guns own recoil from being depressed at such an angle or whether from a shot from some of our guns, I do not know, but at any rate the gun was dismantled and from the fact that it was never again remounted the experiment must have been a failure and proves the fact that you can shoot up hill better than down. One of our gunners told me that our guns could carry up to that point with ease and that it was just like shooting squirrels out of a tree. So ended the first act, rather pleasing to us, but not so pleasant and highly disappointing to the higher-ups in the galleries and on the stage.

What was to be the next act? Should they attempt to compel a surrender by force of arms in a general engagement their losses would be equal if not greater than ours, for the attacking parties always suffer most when their enemies are entrenched in breastworks. The only other way they could destroy us was the slower process of starvation that is if they could hold us there that long. From later developments it seemed their faith in being able to hold us was sufficient for them to adopt the latter course and by a consultation with some of the high officials of the Confederacy, the seal was affixed. The same reporter to the National Tribune has this to say on this point: *"Jeff Davis looked down upon this scene, where half famished Union soldiers were holding their lines of entrenchments while his own soldiers on the top of Lookout Mountain and Missionary Ridge were within easy communication of their supplies and looked forward with confidence to the capture of the entire Army of the Cumberland."*

From the very first, after being pushed back into this position, the difficult problem of bringing supplies for this great army grew. The only way of bringing them was through the narrow gap in Waldens Ridge and that was being guarded by Rebel Sharpshooters and Scouts who continually harassed our wagon trains from Bridgeport. So it became necessary to conserve our commissary stores in every way possible. We had already been put on quarter rations which was beginning to tell on our physical energies and each

day we had an increased appetite which could not be satisfied. Each morning, one-fourth of a ration, all of which was never too much, was issued to us and was greedily devoured. We had no thought of dividing it into meals through the day as that would be impossible once we had in our possession a little food. So the long days and weeks passed in almost silent thought for we found that the quieter we kept ourselves the less severe were the effects of hunger. Very little happened to break the monotony of those long and wearysome days until one day General Rosecrans received a dispatch from General Grant asking how long he could hold Chattanooga. His answer was "UNTIL WE STARVE." A little later we were aroused by heavy firing by both musketry and artillery, denoting a fierce attack was being made West of Look-out Mountain at Wauhatchie, indicating that our friends from outside were taking notice our predicament and were trying to give some relief.

One afternoon the Captain handed me an order to report to Brigade Headquarters immediately. Wondering what it could mean, for I could see no use of the guards, I concluded it must be they wanted some explanation concerning my work on reports or other matters of importance I had assisted in while there with the guards. So fixing myself up in a manner as presentable as possible, having little to fix and nothing to fix that with, it soon was accomplished. We could usually keep our shoes looking fairly respectable by having them well greased with tallow or bacon grease, but these delicious articles were too great a luxury at this time to keep on hand. So, regardless of looks I was soon off to know the worst.

On arriving I was permitted to enter the General's tent and found him at his desk and after giving him the salute he remarked that I had been quite prompt in answering his call and no doubt would be surprised to learn of the reason for it. "The battle at Wauhatchie, the other night" he began, "has driven away the forces which have been guarding the road from here to Bridgeport, making it fairly safe for a company on foot to pass through, so we are sending some parties back to Wisconsin and other points on recruiting service and you have been recommended to represent the 10th. Wisconsin regiment." "How is it," he asked, "would you like to go?" When the evil forebodings that had been dogging us so long, and had been realized so many times by sufferings far greater than our minds had conceived, and fearing the worst in this interview which had so suddenly turned to the unspeakable joy of returning home, I could hardly find words to reply. But the kindly old General with a smile came to my rescue by explaining my duties and giving me the privilege of selecting any point in Wisconsin for my headquarters, so long as it was on a railroad line. He also explained that a Corporal and a private would accompany me to assist in conducting a recruiting station for it must be kept open at all times and I would be required to be absent occasionally to visit other points. After a few words in a general way describing my duties he wished me a successful trip and told me to report in the morning at 7:30, when all blanks and other necessary instructions would be given me.

Imagine if you can, the difference in the state of mind and the length of my steps in returning to my quarters that afternoon from that which had characterized my movements in reporting to "headquarters immediately" a short hour before. For now, in this state of bubbling jubilation the gnawing hunger that had occupied my attention so long had subsided in a measure and the only thing that kept me to earth was the possibility that so many things could

happen before "seven-thirty tomorrow morning" to upset our plans and a morbid fear of being intercepted on the way by Rebel cavalry, which infested that rough country over which we must pass on foot before reaching the line of safety at Bridgeport, thirty miles away. But faith and prayers were as ever sufficient to allay our fears and bring us through. Although in our condition had it been any other object for which we were striving than "Home Sweet Home" I believe our efforts would have failed to take us through some of the almost impassible places we encountered. The route can best be described by quoting the following item from history describing General Grant's passage over the same road a few days earlier:

GRANT HURRIES TO CHATTANOOGA

"Disabled as he was from his accident Grant hurries on by rail and boat as fast as possible and arriving at Bridgeport was helped on a horse and started on a 36 mile ride over a terrible road over the mountains to Chattanooga. No pen can describe the melancholy ruin of that ride. At almost every step were dead horses, the mud was so deep in places that six mules could not draw an empty wagon through it. Everywhere there was sorrowful wreck and ruin. At several places Grant's horse could not get through and Grant had to be taken from his horse and carried over the gap, while his horse was worked through by a path. He arrived at nightfall on the river opposite Chattanooga."

We finally reached Bridgeport in safety though much fatigued and crossed the bridge over the Tennessee River that we had captured from the enemy and saved from destruction about a year before on our first advance over this country in 1862. After greedily devouring the first meal we had eaten for nearly two months, we took a night's rest and the first North bound train for good old Wisconsin. It was needless to write home of my coming for no doubt my arrival would precede that of a letter so my sudden appearance on afternoon was about as surprising to them as the notice of my journey was to me. And the welcoming received at home and from friends of the neighborhood can be imagined easier than described.

I proceeded immediately to establish a recruiting office at the Tanner house in Kilbourn, now known as the Finch house but then owned and conducted by Captain Tanner. The Captain was a very notable character in the early days and it was through his staunch patriotism that I was supplied with the best accommodations at a reasonable price. By this time the country had been pretty well combed for volunteers for the war had been in progress some two and a half years. But by diligent efforts I succeeded in sending to the front at intervals through the Winter, 84 men, which was apparently satisfactory to headquarters for they left me out until May 3rd when the whole army was beginning the Atlanta Campaign. And after this enjoyable period of six months service so near my home, the thoughts of having to return to the sad and gloomy conditions I had left a few short months before were not such as to inspire the cheerful attitude which I must maintain before the people, especially those whom I had enlisted. But with fresh memories of the happy hours I had spent with my associates during these precious days and the crowning event towards a successful choice of a life partner, when with a different smile from that which greeted me at the old log school house eight years before, Miss Margaret A. Wilber became my acknowledged fiancee. And,

the foundations for the arch to bridge what seemed in boyhood to be an impassible gulf, was laid. So all these happenings with the bright prospects for the future in mind, it left no room for pessimistic thoughts, for surely the hand that had guided and shielded us thus far in this cruel war would not fail us now. So after bidding adieu for another six months we took the first train for the front and in four days we were on the skirmish line near Dalton, Georgia.

On our arrival at the Company we were received very cordially indeed. Some of these demonstrations were quite boisterous. They reported that they had not been treated very well, having been domineered over by officers from other regiments who had no interest in them and many times were not given their proper allowance of the rations. But now they thought things would be different. I was soon notified by Captain Roby, the only commissioned officer to escape from Chickamauga and who was now the commander, that I was appointed First or Orderly Sergeant of the Company and that my appointment would be handed me as soon as we were settled in a camp some place where it could be made out. But that opportunity did not occur until September 9th, at Marietta, Georgia after the battle of Atlanta, when I received it dated back to May 1st. This long delay was caused by our excessive activity all through the summer. We were either on the skirmish line or in the following battles: Resaca, Alatoona, Kenesaw Mountain, Peach Tree Creek, and the final charge and capture of Atlanta.

Many times it seemed that our hope was forlorn as we treaded the rocky and mountainous roads during that Summer, with the blazing Southern sun overhead as we hurried to reinforce some place that was in dire need of assistance, or in performing the risky and unpleasant duty of standing picket before the enemy breastworks. I remember that on one occasion soon after my return to the Company, I went out with a detail of pickets who could not be stationed or relieved only at night without being seen by the enemy. In this case the picket posts had been selected in the woods quite well set with underbrush. They were stationed behind some big trees close to the enemy breastworks and the occupants of this little place of safety were given perfect liberty of action for the next twenty four hours except that they had to be always on the alert to give the alarm should the enemy advance. But when daylight came we soon found it necessary to confine our liberties to standing up straight with our backs to the trees as the bullets swished by or spat against the other side of the tree. They knew we were in those woods somewhere and every little while would call out - "Hal-loo Yank. Where are you? Which tree are you behind?" and soon in an effort to locate our positions and occasionally a ball, fired from a different angle would cut the dirt in front of us, close to our feet and give us warning of the danger in sitting down unless we wanted to catch one in the legs. I had received my mail that evening, the first since leaving home. I had received it just before going out, but not in time to read it. So I waited until morning when I read and re-read the letters until I think I could have repeated them verbatim. This helped to pass the dreary day until midnight when the next relief would be installed.

Meanwhile, I contrasted the difference in conditions under which I found myself that day in this war torn lan' and a few days previous, where all was peace and quiet. This condition of peace and quiet had prevailed all over our country when Southern Chivalry and Hospitality had met Northern progress and sociability on an even plane. They had labored, struggled and fought

together to build and maintain the greatest Nation of the world. But now they were arrayed against each other in mortal combat over a principle which should have been settled through Christian fellowship between Man and Man. Such a spirit as had been taught by the Master in Galilee whereby a difference can be reconciled regardless of race, creed or color and without recourse to the gun and sword. Or as a Christian nation, as we claimed to be, it could have been settled by following the literal import of the Constitution of our free and independent government.

To follow in detail a description of all the battles we fought during that summer would be almost a repetition of the ones I have described before except that the suffering we endured was from the heat and thirst instead of wet and cold as at Stone River and other places. So we pass on to Marietta, Georgia, our time having expired soon after the capture of Atlanta we were assembled here to await transportation home. But the Rebel General Hood, with his whole army, were in our rear and we were placed in the reserve corps until after the battle of Nashville, when we could pass through. Arriving at Milwaukee, we were discharged on November 3rd, 1864, so after three years and nearly two months service I returned to civil life with a consciousness of having done my part in saving the Union and giving the full meaning to the words when we speak of "Free America."

CHAPTER ELEVEN

FROM MILITARY TO CIVIL LIFE AND THE ENJOYMENT OF CITIZENSHIP IN THE UNION WE FOUGHT TO SAVE

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After the joyous reception of the home folks and friends was over, I realized for the first time in life that I was now entirely upon my own resources and the responsibilities seemed great. Parental control had ceased with my enlistment and now that Uncle Sam was through with me not even hard-tack and coffee were available, without a price. Some vocation must be selected and a wrong choice would be disastrous. I could not think of going back to the Academy to finish my education for that would take all the money I had saved and put the little home I had planned far in the distance. Other boys coming out of the army were going across the line into Iowa and Southern Minnesota to take up homesteads, but I knew the perils and hardships of frontier life and thought I would not be in a hurry to make the move before looking around for something to buy on suitable terms nearer home. Then too, I feared that the one whom I expected to have share with me the fortunes and misfortunes of life would hesitate to leave her good home with her father and mother and all the associations of her girlhood for a life on the frontier.

When father and mother heard of my talking of the West, they said - "Why not stay with us." Father said he was unable to do hard work anymore and would like to arrange with some one to take the place in return for their support or to sell it and said further that he and mother had hoped that I could be persuaded to stay. All the rest of the family were settled in their own homes and they thought I would be the proper one to take over the place. Again I declined to give a hasty answer for reasons as before and told them I would consider the matter and let them know soon. I had already promised my sister Julia while she lay on her death bed that I would look after her little daughter Ada, then a child of six years and that I would take her into my own home if I ever possessed one. In regard to this my fiancée had approved and I did not wish to urge further concessions. But I wanted it thoroughly satisfactory and understood by her upon whom the greatest share of the burdens would fall before giving my answer. As for my part, I thought I could see wherein it would be well to accept the proposition. I had bought twenty acres of timberland while in the army which I would be able to utilize as well as help my brother Jerry to buy a tract of land which had more timber than he wanted. This lacked only forty rods of joining the old farm and could be connected by the purchase of a half acre of land for a road. And furthermore I had money enough to settle ourselves and purchase the small outfit it needed to farm in those days, for all work was done by hand. The grain was cut with a cradle, hay was mown with a scythe and raked by hand all plowing was done with walking plows. So the next time I saw Miss Maggie as she was called at home and abroad, I gave her the bundle of propositions from which to select as her choice for a foundation to our destinies. And I also told her that before making her final decision and as an aid to her choosing, she could take her father and mother into our confidence if she wished to, for I thought much of them and their advice would go a long ways with me. The decision was finally made with the unanimous approval of both families and all

relations, that we should take over the old homestead. So accordingly it was appraised and a deed given me in lieu of a bond for the support of father and mother during their lives. Father had sold part of the original one hundred and sixty acres so that only one hundred remained. The farm was appraised at one thousand dollars there being only twenty acres under the plow - ten dollars per acre was the average price for improved land at that time. So, on the 27th. day of September, 1865, I crossed the bridge I had been so long in building and took as a wife the young lady who had laughed at me at church, in the old log school house nine years before.

It was not customary at that date, especially in the West, for the bride and bride-groom to steal away for a long wedding tour immediately after the ceremonies were over. They would remain for the feasting, congratulations and general good time which lasted the balance of the evening. This would be followed by an affair at the bride-groom's house the next afternoon and evening when much the same program was carried out. Then after a special entertainment by a charivari party which generally occurred on this evening, including a few exhibitions of frightful appearances by the hobgoblins, the knot was supposed to be securely tied.

Our rooms had been previous arranged so we were soon settled very comfortably with two families under the same roof and contrary to results occurring in many other cases of this kind, there was never a complaint or any un-friendly feeling towards each other during the fourteen years we lived in this manner. When mother died father lived with us his remaining three years. Ada came immediately to live with us according to my promise to her mother and our little family of three were cozily fixed for the winter and I busied myself getting up wood and hauling wild hay to market which was one of the principal revenues of the farm. Meanwhile I made plans for the future.

The twenty acres of land under the plow were not enough to produce a living for the two families so I had to work other land on shares until I could get more broken up. Breaking was very strenuous work for the prairie fires had not run over the country for many years and the brush had become very thick and large making it very hard to clear. For the purpose of breaking, I bought a heavy yoke of oxen and in the early spring hired a good husky woodsman, handy with the axe and used to handling oxen, and after hustling through with the seeding we had until harvest time to grub and break. By going with the neighbors we organized a breaking team of five to seven oxen which could pull a twenty four inch plow through roots and grubs four inches deep with ease. Wild strawberries were very plentiful in the nooks and corners around the field and many times we would watch with impatient eagerness for the sun to reach the noon mark, thinking of the big strawberry shortcake we were to have for dinner, such as only Maggie could make, and in response to our tired and aching limbs we could readily sympathize with the Hoosier poet, James Whitcomb Riley, when he said:

*"Tell you what I like the best
Long about knee deep in June
'bout the time strawberries melt
On the vine, some afternoon
Like to j'es git out and rest
And not work at nothin else."*

But visions of the home I had planned to make in this pretty little valley which now was mostly waste - but by clearing and ditching could be made very productive - had so stimulated my ambition and desire to see the improvements go forward that no days were too long for us to apply our willing hands to the task.

Each year added a perceptible gain and after fourteen years, with frugal economy, we had reached a point where with a few touches here and there, such as laying a few tile so that every acre would be utilized, the farm began to take on the form of the picture I had had in my mind. Meanwhile we had purchased back what land that had been sold from the original one hundred and sixty acres and built the new house to suit our tastes. But to do all of these things it was necessary to find some occupation for the winter months to increase the revenue. When nothing better was in sight teaming was the most popular work, hauling supplies from the Southern farming districts to the Northern lumber camps. One winter, while the railroads were using wood instead of coal for fuel, I secured the contract to bank a thousand cords of four foot oak wood besides their tracks at Kilbourn. Several other winters, I obtained appointments in the legislature at Madison as an enrolling clerk, at a good salary.

CHAPTER TWELVE

A THREE YEAR PARTNERSHIP IN GENERAL MERCHANDISING WITH MY BROTHER-IN-LAW,
B.S. WILBER, AT PACKWAUKEE, WISCONSIN

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In the Spring of 1879, while harrowing in the field, I saw Ben Wilber coming out and wondered what his errand could be so I stopped the team at the nearest point to await his arrival. His store and house, with nearly everything they contained, had been burned only a few weeks before and I concluded he wanted to see me about some of his affairs for I had not thought of his real purpose. After seating himself on the harrow he began: "Well Rhone" he said, "I have come over to see you on a purely business proposition. As you know, I lost nearly everything I had in the fire and the insurance will not cover half of it. I have decided that it will not be possible to start up again in Big Spring, but have found a new building in Packwaukee. This building is 24 x 60 feet, with a full basement and full sized hall overhead besides a large storeroom and for some unknown reason it can be bought for much less than cost. It is in the center of a good farming district, ten miles from Westfield, ten miles to Oxford and twenty miles from Portage, and there is no other store in the place. Now I have come to see if I can persuade you to go halves with me in starting a general store at that point. You can make more money than you can at farming and very much easier." I thought for a moment. I had noticed that the assiduous grind of toil was beginning to tell on Mamma, as we began calling her now. The burden of cares by having so many workmen around in addition to the care of her two children was hard, although I had never heard her complain. So taking a portion of the sympathy for myself, I said to Ben, "It's so near noon we'll go over to dinner and talk it over with Maggie and see what she thinks about it." Very much as I had expected she was quite pleased with the idea of trying some other kind of business. The farm was now on a paying basis and would be attractive to a good tenant and a change might be beneficial in many ways, if not we would still have the home. So the arrangements were made and the company of "Wilber & Landt" began a general merchandise business in Packwaukee in the early spring of 1879. Mother had just died after living with us fourteen years. She was apparently in good health as usual at night but was found dead in bed the next morning while on a visit to my sister Mary at Oxford, where she had gone a day or two before.

During the life of every company, corporation or business enterprise, there generally develops some outstanding feature worthy of notice and the results from our Packwaukee venture was no exception. So I will relate the following incident as being one of those and in addition to show the progress that has been made in the farming communities during the last forty-five years. There were no creameries or cheese factories and no sale for any quantity of butter except in the winter to the logging camps of the northern woods. The year before we went into business, all the merchants of the surrounding towns had bought the farmer's butter at a shilling a pound and packed it away in jars for the winter trade. But, as it sometimes happens, no snow fell until almost spring, consequently no logging was done and every

merchant who bought butter had to sell it for grease. This year not one of them would buy a pound of butter at any price. We agreed on a policy of taking what little the farmers might bring at 7¢ per pound in exchange for goods only. Not expecting to receive any great amount, for our funds would not warrant a large investment for so long a time, but merely to advertise and to show people that we had as full a stock of goods at as good a price as any of the rest of the merchants. It developed that we did not have to spend any money to advertise. The merchants of the other towns did that for us by telling their customers that our stay would be short at the prices we were selling and besides taking butter in exchange. So very naturally everybody wanted some of those bargains while they lasted and our trade was heavy. We had a long trough built in the basement with partitions dividing it into compartments holding about a hundred pounds each and in this we deposited the butter as received, being careful to grade exactly as to color. When one compartment was full it would be all reworked with a hand butter worker, packed in jars and set away for the winter. For a while it seemed that the prophesies of our competitors might come true. There was a large volume of goods arriving, some going on the books, as that was the custom to give credit to responsible men until after harvest, and more of it going for butter. Even though a large portion of our trade was cash it was not sufficient to keep up our stock without more credits. One day Mr. D. G. Freman, traveling salesman for Bradley and Metcalf of Milwaukee, from whom we had bought all of our stock, came into the store soliciting another order. We told him the size of the order would depend much upon the date of payment. If payment was expected before harvest the order would have to be pretty small. As I was bookkeeper I gave him our financial standing then took him into the basement and showed him the tons of butter we had on hand for the logging camps and called his attention to the neatness of the packages, etc. "Well," he said, "Your credit is good, how much do you want?" Then he filled an order of three thousand dollars for our fall trade. Other firms were equally willing to extend any credit we needed.

Now came my first experience as a traveling salesman. On taking an invoice of our stock we found that we had on hand over eleven tons of butter and it could hardly be expected that we would receive orders for that amount, so it became necessary to go out and find the customers. When the ground had become frozen sufficiently to admit the passage of teams going into the woods, I took my grip and started for the lumber camps along the Wisconsin River. I went along the Wisconsin Central Railroad and its branches, now called the Soo. One of the first things for a traveling man to learn, as I soon found out, is to learn something about the town to which he is going before he buys his ticket, for all towns look alike on the map. Soon after I started out there came a heavy snow storm which made it very difficult to get around. I bought a ticket for Knowlton, as it was then called. I arrived there a little after sundown and as I stepped from the train I noticed that I was the only passenger getting off and that the train started up immediately. I could see no town and concluded that it must be on the other side but when the last coach passed there was revealed nothing but dense woods. On looking the other way again I could see the roofs of a few houses some distance away with only a few tracks leading towards them. On investigation I found them to be a saw mill and a few houses for the employees but not a soul around. Apparently they had moved out to their camps. So I wallowed back to the railroad with my grip for companion started up the tack for Mosinee, eight miles

distant with my usual thought for consolation - it could have been worse. I was thankful I was equal to the emergency and that the only pecuniary loss would fall on the landlord in having to furnish an extra allowance for a very hungry man that evening for supper. This was the only mishap while on that important trip. The trip was very successful for as we had hoped, plenty of snow came, the demand for lumber was great and all the camps were running full force thus giving me the opportunity to dispose of all of our stock of butter for 15¢ per pound. This bit of good fortune with the liberal collections made since harvest permitted us to cancel our indebtedness and start the New Year with a clean slate and in addition we had a business which thrived throughout the season.

In the first part of the next year we were unexpectedly called to mourn the loss of my father, who, by accident slipped on some ice, breaking his hip in a manner which baffled the skill of the physicians to give him relief. After a short illness he died on the 7th day of January, 1881. At his death he gave witness that his last moments on earth were his happiest, and that he died as he had lived, strong in the Christian faith and ready to meet his God. As we stood around his bed expecting every breath to be his last he raised his hand and said, "I hear the music." Then in another instant the hand fell limp at his side and he was gone. It was as if the doors of Heaven were opened to him before the vital spark had left the body and by radio he had heard the melodies of the angelic choir. Heretofore glimpses into the future world have been called hallucinations by the unbelievers, but in the light of present day developments, whereby the forces of nature are utilized in such modern devices as electric power, wireless telegraphy, the talking machine and the most wonderful of all - the radio - is it any more wonderful that the ears of the righteous should be attuned to the waves radiating from the Celestial Kingdom than that we should be able to hear and enjoy voices from foreign lands.

After a couple of years of the steady, indoor work of running the store, I began to feel that the confinement did not agree with me. I lost my appetite entirely and all I could do availed nothing. For this unfortunate condition I was sorry, for I liked the work very much and we were doing a nice business but good health was of more value than any other consideration so I began to make preparations to move back to the farm. I knew that Henry Wilber was anxious to take an interest in the business so I began correspondence with him which terminated in the sale of my whole half interest in the store. This sale was to take effect the next spring when the three year lease of the farm would be out. In making this change it was not like giving up a position or business without knowing where to go. We were going home, and aside from the inconvenience of moving were glad to go back to the home we had labored so long to make. But the three years had made quite a change in the family. Father and Mother were no longer with us. Ada, had married a very worthy young man, Mr. Robert E. Bain, and settled on a farm near Portage which he had just purchased. Then to our family was added two baby twins, Ernest and Elma, born in Packwaukee, December 11, 1880, thus making a family of six around one table.

CHAPTER THIRTEEN

SHIPPING SUPPLIES TO THE NEW SETTLERS IN SOUTH DAKOTA

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As in all countries where a continuous crop of small grains are raised without any fertilizing or crop rotation being practised there comes a time when the land will not raise as much as it once did. So it was in our section, where for over thirty years the one crop system had been in effect and farming became an unprofitable business to those who wished to continue that system. So a "boom" came on for South Dakota, where the land was new and the favorite line of farming could be practiced. Aberdeen was the terminus of the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul road at that time and was naturally overrun with emigrants. Some were unloading their goods wherever space could be found beside the tracks, others were hauling them out to their claims and until they could make some improvements and produce what they needed there was a great demand for supplies of all kinds. So when the work at home was not so pressing but what the hired man and the boys could handle it, I followed the shipping business for two or three years and furnished these settlers with the things they needed. This again was another new venture to me and from what source was I to look for those extraordinary things to happen to my advantage or disadvantage as those referred to in the Packwaukee venture. Or would it be possible for me to conduct this little business smoothly and without important events transpiring either way. But no such luck, even this little temporary employment had its peculiar faculty for engendering trouble in many ways and one of those events would have caused me a heavy loss if it had not been for the fact that I had been raised on the farm.

It was my custom when out with a load of supplies, to contract for another before leaving for home. And this time I contracted with a butcher to deliver a car of fat sheep on my next trip. There were none to be had in my neighborhood but by consulting with the stock buyers I found that I could get some at Lyndon, ten miles west of Kilbourn. So I took the train one morning and went over and arranged with the hotel man, who told me he knew the country and also was acquainted with the sheep men, to drive me around to buy up the car of sheep. I also gave him to understand that he was to get me back in time for the evening train for Kilbourn as I had important business to attend to the next day at home. He proved his knowledge of the country and where the sheep men lived alright and we had good success in finding an excellent grade of fat sheep. We started for home quite early in the afternoon but I soon noticed he was in no particular hurry, and feeling a bit uneasy about making the train, I expressed my fear of being late, but he assured me that we had plenty of time. Several times I suggested a faster gait but I could see plainly he was very little interested in getting me there on time. Finally as we neared the town we heard the whistle blow. Then with a great pretense of anxiety to reach there first, he whipped up his horses into a run but the train pulled out just as we were at the edge of town. I said but little as he took up the time in trying to excuse himself, although I could see no other reason for the apparent delay than a petty hotel bill, for he thought that if I missed the train I would be obliged to stay over night.

We drove direct to the hotel and after supper I settled my bill, including his services for the day, and went over to the depot to see if I could catch some freight or extra for Kilbourn. Finding none I took a cross country sprint by way of Billings Ferry, sixteen miles from home and arrived there at eleven o'clock. So I was home in the morning to meet my other obligations and while this mild exercise was not as pleasant as riding in a coach, it proved that my running gears were still in commission and that I was not wholly dependent upon railroads or other than my own means of conveyance. But if this had of been all the trouble I encountered with this car of sheep it would not have been worthy of notice, but more was to come.

On the day appointed for the delivery of the sheep, they all arrived and in fine condition. The sheep were loaded in a car I had arranged for and we began our long journey. In those days, railroads were not so efficiently managed as they are now and it took a much longer time to transport stock. Then there were few if any laws regulating railroad traffic and it seemed as though the train dispatcher and the conductor could suit their own convenience in the handling of trains. Consequently I was not permitted to unload and rest the sheep at St. Paul, as I had expected, and after a long wait in the yards the train was finally made up for Aberdeen. I rode in a caboose and at every stop would go over to the car to see how the sheep were standing the trip. Everything went well until we reached Montevideo when I found several of them were down and the other treading upon them. I mentioned it to the conductor but got no satisfaction and at every stop would find more of them down. Finally at Milbank there were so many down and so many other in such bad condition from being trampled on that I tried to find the conductor that he might see their plight, but the train was ready to move so I had to wait until he came back to the caboose. I then made another appeal for the car to be set out explaining that if they had to continue to Aberdeen without a chance to rest and dry off they would be almost a total loss. "Why man" he said, "there isn't a change. There isn't a yard where they can be unloaded between here and Aberdeen. There used to be one at Summit", he continued, "but that has all benn taken away, except for a few planks of the old runway. But it will be right out on the open prairie" he went on "though if you insist we'll set you out there and the next train tomorrow night can pick you up." "Well, set me out" I replied, "the sheep will be a total loss if I continue, for before we reach Aberdeen they will all be down and what are not dead will not be salable, so I will take my chances of finding some way to improve their condition." So when they reached Summit, which was the next stop, they set the car out and there I was at midnight, on the bleak and lonesome prairie with only the sheep for company and the stars overhead to temper the darkness. I knew the habits of sheep well and knew that they would not separate and ramble about like other animals when turned loose. The only thing I feared was that they would be frightened by dogs or wolves or from some other cause. But I determined to unload them in some way and let them rest and fill up on the fresh buffalo grass which was there in abundance. Then if I could not load them again I could drive them the balance of the way, seventy-five miles, into Aberdeen and by taking time so as not to worry or frighten them I could get them through in good condition. So I hunted around and found three planks which was left of the old cattle chute with which I arranged a runway and let them all out on the prairie. As soon as their flurry of excitement from being put out of the car was over, they soon huddled together and laid down not far away and I kept their vigil as did the shepherds of old when watching their flocks by night. My only fear was that wolves might attack them but none appeared.

When morning came I could see for miles in every direction, it being the highest point of land as indicated by its name Summit, and the nearest place where I could see any sign of life was about half mile away where I could see smoke issuing from a stove pipe projecting through the roof of a shanty. While the sheep were resting I made a reconnoissance of the place and found a coulee in which ran a small stream of water. This coulee was not far away and after the sheep began moving about I drove them down to it and enjoyed the pleasure of seeing them drink their fill. After they had grazed around awhile until they were satisfied they lay down again to rest. I took advantage of this opportunity to visit the shanty in search of possible help. Fortunatley they had a boy of fourteen or fifteen who would be glad of the chance of making a little money, for I still had hopes of loading the sheep again. I hired him for the day and if we failed to load them he was to help drive them into Aberdeen. The thought of reloading these sheep on the open prairie, without a yard or other convenience to compel their entrance into the car, would perhaps have never entered the midns of even the sheep herders of the West, even with a sufficient force to give it a trial. But with these particular sheep I believed it would be different. They had been raised in a wooded country and never had seen a prairie. The weird scenes of the treeless expanse which met their eyes would naturally fill their minds with an apprehensive fear of evil akin to homesickness, and a place which had sheltered them would be a suggestion of home, and welcomed. When we returned, the sheep were still lying down and I left the boy with them while I went over to the car and again put it in order. I had brought a fork and shovel with me expecting to do this work at St. Pual, with this I cleaned the car thoroughly and brought up some old hay which had been discarded from a stack bottom close by. This made fine bedding and after fastening the three planks thoroughly in place for the feat which I believe could be successfully performed.

We kept around with the sheep during the day, giving them their entire liberty, only acting as guards for their safety. It had been a beautiful day, warm and sunny, and the sheep had become thoroughly dry. Then the water and grass they had taken into their stomachs had refreshed them so that they looked like themselves again. They had wandered away from the car a half mile or more so a little after sundown we began urging them towards the car with as little excitement as possible. When they neared the car I was almost suprised at the fulfillment of my own predictions when I heard the leaders begin bleating and saw them running for the car and up the plank as fast as the width of the running boards would permit and in a very short time we had every sheep loaded, and I do not think I ever closed a door with more satisfaction than I did the one of that car that evening. The boy was a little disappointed in not being able to make the trip to Aberdeen but I paid him well for the day and was ready for the midnight train. I reached Aberdeen safely without the loss of a sheep and all in good condition.

At another time, while in this business, I was puzzled to find a way to extricate myself from a net which had been deliverately formed for me by certain parties. One of these parties lived at Ordway, a little town nine miles from Aberdeen, and whom I had employed many times, with his teams, to haul out the supplies to the nearby town. He had been with me so many times that consequently he was well acquainted with all my dealings. At this time, before leaving for home after another car of supplies, my last of the season,

for it was getting late, I had arranged with him to meet me at Aberdeen with his teams as usual and I promised to let him know in advance just when he could expect me. The car was loaded mainly with dressed pork and buckwheat flour and before reaching Aberdeen I sent him a dispatch to meet me with four teams. He was on hand early and we were soon off with our loads to Ordway and Columbia, six miles beyond. These places were on another road running North and South to Redfield, South Dakota. It was arranged that after disposing of the goods and returning from Columbia to Ordway, he was to drive me to Aberdeen that night so I could be on hand in the morning to look after the balance of the supplies. We left part of the loads at Ordway and disposed of the balance in Columbia. On returning to Ordway I met the owner of the teams on the sidewalk and after inquiring of our success he suggested that as he was owing me quite a bill for the goods he had been getting from time to time, we might settle up our accounts before supper and save time. This looked very reasonable to me so I followed him into a saloon close by where we sat down to a card table to figure up our accounts. A few were in the room, some playing cards and the rest were around the bar, and as we came in they all about faced to inspect the new arrivals. Among those in the room, I discovered a tall dark complexioned man, standing at the end of the counter and who had been pointed out to me in Aberdeen as a notorious gambler and blackleg. He had been accused of robbery but never convicted. We finished our settlement, the balance being in my favor some eighty odd dollars. This he paid me and folding it up carefully I pushed it into my vest pocket without exhibiting any other money.

After a little conversation he said that if it didn't make any difference to me he would send one of his men to drive me to Aberdeen as he himself had some other matters to look after which would prevent him from going. "Alright" I replied "It's all the same to me." "Well then," he said, "I'll have the man drive around to the hotel for you after supper. I do not suppose you will make another trip this year?" "No," I replied, "It's getting so late in the season that I don't believe I'll chance being snowed in here all winter." "Well, so long", he said, "Hope to see you in the Spring." "Perhaps", I returned, "So long." Well! I said to myself after these questions. Why did he take me in the saloon to settle: Why had he changed his mind about going to Aberdeen? And, how did things happen to cause that blackleg to be present just at this time? With a mental picture of him and the divers thoughts crowding upon my mind I nearly lost my appetite for supper. But I finally came to the conclusion that it was possible that there was nothing tangible to my suppositions but then I thought perhaps there is and why take chances in going to Aberdeen tonight. I paid for my supper and went out to the barn to tell them and save them the trouble of driving around to the hotel. The big doors were open and his office was at the right and close to the front. As I stepped into the main floor, someone came out of the office and when he saw me he turned quickly and in a low tone, almost a whisper, repeated, "Here he comes, here he comes" and then shut the door. The proprietor soon came out and as he opened the door I happened to stand in a position where I could see that same blackleg sitting by the stove. "Well you have come sooner than I expected" he said "but as soon as the man gets back from his supper he will drive around to the hotel for you." "Very well" I replied, "but the reason I came around here was to save him that trouble. I have had a pretty hard trip today and since eating supper don't feel like taking that ride tonight and if it don't make any difference to you I'll wait until morning."

Of course he could do no other than appear indifferent as to when I went. But I have always thought that the man who dodged back into the room so quickly at sight of me was going for a team to start out ahead of us and no doubt it did make a difference when we went. It was no longer a supposition but a certainty now, that they were after me and they had every means of knowing that I had considerable money about my person and they were intending to get it. I went back to the hotel and changed my mind again. I concluded it made but little difference whether dark or daylight, if I took passage with them I would be their victim. And, would I be safe even in this town over night? There seemed to be a gang of them and who knows but the hotel man may have some interests with them also. So I could see but one way to safety and that by furnishing my own transportation across the prairie to Aberdeen. This I did and I went all that nine miles without stepping a foot in a travelled road until I reached the outskirts of the city.

I disposed of the balance of my supplies in Aberdeen and was well satisfied with the results of the trip. This car of dressed pork and Buckwheat flour was to be my last trip of that year and from succeeding events it proved to be my last for all time.

CHAPTER FOURTEEN

SEVENTEEN YEARS OF POLITICS - COUNTY TREASURER, MEMBER OF ASSEMBLY AND STATE INSTITUTION WORK, INCLUDING THE SUPERINTENDENCY OF THE STATE PUBLIC SCHOOL FOR DEPENDENT AND NEGLECTED CHILDREN AT SPARTA, WISCONSIN

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Politics now began to occupy some of my attention and through the influence of some of my friends my name was favorably considered and I was appointed treasurer of Adams County to fill the vacancy caused by the death of the former treasurer, Mr. Byron Powers. This necessitated my moving to Friendship, Wisconsin, in January 1886 and by successive elections I held the office six years besides the unexpired term of my predecessor. While there I was appointed by Governor Hoard, as a delegate to the Farmers National Congress at Montgomery, Alabama, November 13th-15th, 1889. At the end of my sixth year as County Treasurer, and presumable to clear the way for some aspirant for my place, I was slated for the Legislature to represent in the Assembly, the sixth district, comprising Adams and Marquette Counties.

Usually the two counties had been in harmony, allowing each one to select their own candidate every alternate term and as Marquette County had furnished the last candidate it should have been Adams County's choice this time without discussion. But Marquette County had a measure they wanted championed and believed that no one would give quite the energy or accomplish the result except one who was vitally interested and thoroughly familiar with all phases of the case. This no doubt was true, but our people felt like insisting upon their rights and a great political contest was staged at the convention to nominate an assemblyman. Ten delegates from each county met at Westfield, Marquette County, and began voting at two o'clock one afternoon. They continued throughout the day with no choice being reached, both counties casting ten votes each time. An evening session was held with the same result. On the second day voting continued as usual except that more interest was manifested in lobbying by the Marquette people to effect a compromise in their favor. Finally the second ballot after dinner, on the third day, showed eleven votes for the Marquette man and nine for myself. They had found the price of some delegate. I rose to my feet immediately and expressed myself as being perfectly satisfied with the result and that I owed a grateful appreciation for the loyalty of our delegates in standing by me, longer perhaps than the best interests of the district required. Further I said that it seemed fitting under the circumstances that Marquette County should send the representative and therefore I moved that C.F. Rosky be declared the unanimous choice of the convention, for Member of Assembly.

And, I was really glad to be rid of so great a responsibility which I felt would have been mine had I received the nomination. Furthermore, had we persisted longer and won the contest, no doubt the Democratic nominee from that County would have been elected. But the friendly feeling exhibited on our part left no straws in the way for my nomination for the next term. So in 1894, I was elected by the greatest majority ever given a member from that district, up to that time.

With this estimable success, the political bee began to buzz a little louder and I began to have the desire to find out just how high my aspirations might search for my next attempted achievement. I referred back to the code of principles adopted when a boy to find that every mark I had set for myself so far had been attained and now for the choice as to what I should strive for next. I thought that the management of some State institution would suit me best and having confidence in my ability to handle it properly I began to look into the matter. I took up the Blue Book one day, which describes by a complete history and full page illustrations, all of the State Institutions. I turned to Mrs. Landt and asked her to select the one of which she would like her husband to be the Superintendent. "Why, you are getting crazy", she replied. "Oh! no!" I answered "but on account of the Republican land slide every superintendent will be changed and I think my chances of getting one of them is as good as any." "Yes", she returned, "that is true, but you are not sufficiently schooled in politics for a trial of this kind and this will be your first term in the Legislature and I fear that you will stand a poor show among all those big gun politicians who will be after those places." "That is just where my strength lies," I answered, "I have not been parading around the country making speeches and permitting people to find out just how little I do know." We finally decided on the State School at Sparta. "Now don't breathe a word of this" I told her, "not even to the family and I believe that I will succeed in winning the prize."

The Legislature convened with a large Republican majority and no party rivalry occurred during the session. But there was much speculation as to the appointments and the State Public School for Dependent and Neglected Children at Sparta, had many applicants. One, Dr. Pilcher, a very promising gentleman claimed he had the promise from the Governor of the appointment. Finally just a few days before the close of the session, I was surprised to find the few friends to whom I had mentioned my wishes, were becoming very active in supporting my candidacy for the place and a petition to the Governor urging my appointment was circulated and signed by most of the members of the House. I also, about this time sent to the Governor, Mr. Upham, a formal application by letter. The adjournment was made in a few days without any of the appointments being given out. The State Board of Control who has the general supervision of all the State Institutions and the Governor together would decide on the appointments and mail them to the respective appointees. When I read in a paper while on a visit with our son, A.B. Landt and family in North Dakota, that I was appointed Superintendent of the State Public School for Dependent and Neglected Children at Sparta, Wisconsin, I was less surprised and took it more calmly than I would have thought possible a year or two before, and the fact that this was the very institution we had selected before hand made the appointment the more gratifying and appreciated. Of course I had thought a great deal about getting the appointment and sometimes when I considered the heavy pressure upon the Board of Control and the Governor by so many prominent men who also sought the place, sometimes my faith would waver. But then again, I had had such friendly relations with so many of the representative men of the state that I did not consider the appointment a remote possibility, I received the appointment in the mail a few days later and at the end of our visit lost no time in getting home and making preparations to assume the most important duties of my life.

According to the capricious custom, prevailing at that time, the recipients of these appointments came and went with the political faction or

party in power to which they happened to belong. But the recognition of merit and esteem conveyed by this appointment from the highest officials of the state was highly gratifying and an admirable endorsement of my labors in the Assembly. This was also another evidence of my belief that any position for which we are fitted is attainable if we apply ourselves faithfully to the task of acquiring it. But until now I had not, nor could not consider all the responsibilities, including the hidden ones, which were now confronting me. Had I undertaken more than I could carry through in a successful manner? Surely not! With the same guiding spirit and the same energy I could surely bring the achievement desired. So I began immediately to acquaint myself with the particular duties incumbent upon the manager of the institution also to familiarize every phase of the work and all the time having in mind a few changes which I had discovered necessary, when on a legislative committee on a tour of inspection. I believed these changes necessary for the betterment of conditions as to the health and comfort of the children whom the State expected would receive the best care and attention possible from the ones in whose hand they were intrusted. And that their education and training while growing into manhood and womanhood should be so supervised that they might become influential men and women and a substantial adjunct to good society instead of the undesirable product of the streets and slums of the cities.

We entered upon the duties at the school, July 1st. 1895, being the third parties to fill the position, succeeding Mr. Sanborn, who at a previous date had taken the place of Rev. Dr. Roberts, the first Superintendent. The employees of the institution numbering forty odd persons, included the office force, two traveling agents, general matron, teachers, cottage matrons, cottage girls, dining room girls, coachman, engineer at the heating plant with his assistant, laundress, baker, seamstress, overseer of the large boys, farmer, cook and night watchman. All of these were selected by the Superintendent with the approval of the State Board of Control. And in order to create as little disturbance as possible about the place and considering it good policy to allow all those who were trained in their work to continue with their duties I kept all those who were there. I made it plain to all as soon as possible, that as long as they were loyal to the best interest of the institution and performed their work properly, they need not fear being displaced. I further told them that they could not please me more than by being kind and gentle to the helpless wards in their care. One act of kindness would outweigh a dozen little faults when I estimated the efficiency of an employee. The large girls were called upon to assist the paid employees, when at the same time they were instructed in the general work of housekeeping by the competent employee who was employed for that purpose. Also the large boys under the instruction of an overseer did most of the farm work. By keeping the same bookkeeper, Mr. Arthur Degraff, and the same stenographer, Miss Minnie Irwin, both of whom proved to be very competent persons, I had little difficulty in conducting affairs to the satisfaction of the Board of Control. I also found time to study conditions which to my mind required some revision.

I especially wanted to make a change in the food department where more vegetables were needed for the children. There was a peculiar malady affecting a large percent of them in the form of ugly sores on the scalp. The scalp had to be shaved and oiled silk with ointment applied all which

presented a very unsightly appearance. Several of the children were so badly affected that they had to be confined in the hospital for special treatment. This evidence and the incident of a little boy being brought to me for punishment for stealing into the garden and eating raw potatoes, convinced me that a change of diet as well as medicine was needed to cure the trouble. Needless to say the boy was not punished and I assured him that thenceforth he would have all the potatoes he wanted to eat, raw or cooked. By investigation I found that the children had been living mostly on bread and meat with a very small allowance of milk and even water was withheld, fearing that too much liquid food would give extra trouble with the bedding, forgetting or being ignorant of the fact that it is the weakly ones which give this trouble and the only way to make them strong is with a full balanced ration including vegetables and milk. We had a good supply of both for we had a herd of thirty-five holstein cows. The system of cooking was on a very large scale and with the great steam kettles nearly a whole beef could be cooked at one time if necessary. There was a plentiful supply of bread always on hand from our own bakery so by eliminating vegetables from the menu the work for the cook was very easy. Before I could get enough vegetables on the table I was forced to discharge the cook. She had been with the institution a long time and, in spite of the fact that she had lots of help, she refused to take the time to prepare vegetables. I enlarged the garden more than three times its former size and planned for another year to grow quantities of vegetables. I also wished to include melons in the garden, something which had not found favor with either of the two former superintendents. I called the farmer into the office one day and outlined to him my plans for extending the size of the garden and explained in minute detail how I wanted him to prepare and fertilize the soil of a piece of ground I had selected for melons. Being curious to know what he thought of the plan, having perceived as I thought a cynical smile on his face, I asked what he thought of the proposition. "Why Mr. Landt," he replied, "Do you suppose you can raise melons here so close to the city? The boys will get every one of them before they are half grown." "Oh! no!" I replied, "there will be enough for them and us too, leave that to me. If the boys are properly treated they won't bother the melons. Mr. Williams, with our boys" I continued, "we will be glad to assist you in every way and we'll await results." So the melons were planted and if ever providence took a hand in human affairs it certainly did in this case. The boys were stimulated into double action in killing weeds, the vines grew to enormous proportions and it seemed that every blossom produced a melon and our promise was made good - to raise enough for all. In addition we shipped a car load to Superintendent Wart, of the Waukeshaw Reform School for Boys. One of the largest specimens of water melons weighed forty pounds.

When I came to the institution, I found that a very rigid discipline was enforced while the children were in their sitting rooms, at school and that they were accustomed to march in military manner when going to chapel every morning or to their meals. I approved of all of this and continued its practise for otherwise with the three hundred children housed as they were there would have been rank confusion. But without some relaxation from this restraint a morose and vicious mind would naturally develop along with the unhappiness of the child. So far, but little had been done to provide outdoor sports which made it hard for the matron to keep the children within their limited space. So I obtained permission to build two pavillions. One for the boys and one for the girls. Close to the pavillions I had a plat of

ground smoothed and levelled and surrounded it with low dykes so that in Winter it could be flooded for skating and in summer used for other purposes. I also added to the grounds more swings, turning bars, slides, etc. thus giving to the children their entire freedom the whole year around, when not school. This relieved the matrons and cottage girls of much anxiety and concern concerning their whereabouts.

After about six months from the time I changed their diet to more vegetables and less meat, with a very liberal supply of milk, the oiled silk patients began to disappear and after a year none were to be seen. And with the disappearance of the disease also went an odor which was very offensive called by the employees "institution smell" which no soap or water would destroy. The origin of this no doubt was from an improper combination of food which diverted the nutritious elements designed to build up and strengthen the body, into disease and decay, which nothing but health can remove. And that health can only be obtained through a full balanced ration with the aid of medicine when necessary. Withholding food causing lack of nourishment, though it may be in a different form of disease. This may happen to attack the weakened system of the patient as was proven by a case which came to my attention while living in Milwaukee after my experience at Sparta.

The chairman of the board of supervisors of Milwaukee County had brought many children to the Sparta school while I was there, until they built an institution of their own copied from ours. One day he came to me and asked if I would accompany him to their institution and see if I could tell him the cause of some trouble they were having with the children. I told him that I did not pose as an authority on diseases but my experience in institution work had taught me a few things and if I could render him any service I would be glad to do so. Accordingly I went over to see what I could find. In their institution they received children from babies to sixteen years of age. When we reached the first ward, all babies, the "institution smell" was very strong. I said nothing about it but he began making apologies saying that they had done everything possible to get rid of this unpleasant odor but so far had not succeeded. "No", I replied, "that does not come from any surface cause but is hidden in these little human bodies and when they are cured that will disappear." We questioned the matron in charge about their manner of feeding and other care of the children to which she answered by giving quite an extended description of their work, stressing the fact that they were very "methodical". "We have strict rules to guide us in everything." From this I considered the intervals between meals were quite too long, and when asked if they fed them whole milk, she replied, "oh! no!" These babies couldn't stand whole milk, we dilute with one half water." We passed through the other buildings, the dining rooms and kitchens and found about the same conditions everywhere. When leaving the grounds I gave him my opinion of the trouble, to which he fully agreed, and I asked if he ever saw a fat baby that had been brought up on rules and water. A few months later he hailed me on the street and said my diagnosis of their trouble at the institution was correct. They had changed the management and were getting along fine.

CIRCUS DAY AT THE STATE SCHOOL

One afternoon a gentleman came into the office and introduced himself as the proprietor of the large circus which was to exhibit in the city on

the following day and asked for the privilege of looking around the institution which he had heard so much about as the place where the State was caring for its dependents instead of their being thrown on the charities of the public. I called the office boy and told him to show the gentleman through the building and grounds and wherever he wished to go. After a prolonged and seemingly minute inspection of the premises he returned to the office expressing many compliments on the well arranged and home-like conditions he found everywhere for the health and enjoyment of the children. He explained that his special interest in the welfare of these little ones came from the memory of his own childhood days being spent in a dreary orphanage, less fortunately supplied with all the comforts of home he found in evidence here. Then he said his visit with the children this afternoon had touched a tender chord of sympathy in his heart that had prompted him if possible to contribute to their happiness by giving them an opportunity to attend the circus, free of charge. This was a very novel proposition. Perhaps nothing like it had occurred before and I hardly knew what to say. But after a moment's thought of how it could be arranged, I thanked him very kindly for his generous offer and told him that if I could secure the cooperation of the matrons and teachers, I would gladly accept this chance of a lifetime to give the children the greatest treat of their lives. I asked him as to the number I should bring. "Bring all you can" he replied, "and let me know in the morning the number to be provided for and I will have their seats reserved for them in a section by themselves."

Very much as I had expected the matrons and teachers, when advised of this opportunity, were enthusiastically in favor of the plan and volunteered every aid in their power to make the venture a success and I thought afterwards that they got about as much pleasure out of the excellent showing in handling so many children in perfect order, as did the children in the circus. So, next morning I sent the following message, "We are coming three hundred strong". Nothing was spared and everything at our command was used to make this a gala day and one to be long remembered by everyone of the merry throng who participated in it. Every boy and girl was dressed in their best Sunday clothes and if anything was lacking it was furnished for the occasion. After forming in a line, as was our custom in going to chapel, meals or school, the march to the circus was begun. The large boys of Cottage "C" twelve to thirteen years of age, led the way by twos and they were followed by the large girls of cottage "B" of the same age. Then came the boys from cottage "A" and "D", 6 to 11 years, with the baby cottage "E", 4 to 6 years, bringing up the rear. The march was conducted in perfect military order and no soldiers ever performed their part with more loyalty and patriotic zeal than did those Young Americans in going to see the elephants, tigers, monkeys and clowns.

On arriving at the grounds we were conducted to the section in the big tent which had been reserved for us. The large boys climbed to the top seats, the large girls following next as in the order of marching and the little ones took the lower seats. So the whole three hundred were securely placed

Many were the gifts of candy, peanuts and other small presents to the little folks on the lower seats. And there was a general approval of the kindness of the proprietor of the circus in giving these unfortunate waifs such a wonderful treat. There were also many expressions of approval to us of the School who made it possible for the children to attend and many anxiously inquired of me if I expected to get them back without losing some of them. "Surely" said I, "they think too much of their good home to leave it willingly." And as soon as the last performance was over we began proving our assertion by reversing the order of march, that is the smaller ones on the lower seats passed out first, the others following in successive order until all were out of the tent. Then by countermarch we were on our way and reached home in precisely the same order as in the morning, with every one present. Thus ended one of the most eventful days in the history of the school.

CHAPTER FIFTEEN

TRANSFER AND APPOINTMENT OF A GENERAL MATRON

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The duties of the General Matron were so closely allied with those of the Superintendent in many ways that it was of the utmost importance that the two should be in harmony and work together for the best interests of the institution. In our institution, the matron had the habit of withholding information which would be of value to me in maintaining prestige and discipline among the many employees assembled, for by so doing she hoped to advance her standing and influence among them. So by her silence she permitted them to continue in some of the forbidden practices formerly employed with the result that there was much discomfort to the children. However it was not long until I discovered this state of affairs and knew that discord and strife was bound to ensue between us and must result in a final test of authority. However before making any move, I waited for another specific case, and when the Board came around again I laid the matter before them. They readily saw the ill advised policy of appointing an outside general matron in what should be considered a mammoth family, and that it should be presided over by a husband and wife, between whom the championship of authority had already been settled. So as there happened to be a vacancy at another institution, the matron was transferred there and Mrs. Landt was appointed General Matron in her place.

This created quite a change in the attitude of the employees about the institution for I firmly believe that they had hopes of carrying out some of their coveted points. One day a matron asked me if I supposed that I could manage and give the care to these children that I would to those of my own family. I told her that I believed I could, so far as food, clothing and care in the home were concerned but that the only difference would be in a more limited freedom of range in the open air and I told her that if I couldn't do that I was willing to resign in favor of some one who could. It was now evident that I fully intended to carry out the changes I had made and the transfer of the General Matron had convinced them that the Board would stand behind me. Also in the administration of the new general matron they soon found a kind and motherly woman who would sacrifice all her personal comforts to make it pleasant for them as well as for the children. So all settled down to one purpose - to work for the good of the institution - and no further efforts to evade responsibilities were discovered. After I made the needful changes and enforced them upon the heads of the various departments they soon found that the new conditions were not so very irksome and they were even pleased themselves with the noticeable improvement in the children. Things were running along smoothly and I was beginning to enjoy the work very much and I have always considered my four years of labor among those little folks at the school in Sparta as being the very best and most useful part of my life. For I felt I was doing something for the comfort and uplift of humanity as was many times attested by their bright little faces as they would smile their recognition of me when they were passing by in their march to a good wholesome dinner or supper. And often the pitiful contrast they would draw in their childish way between the miserable and

destitute places from which they had been taken and the pleasant and comfortable homes we had secured for them was touching indeed, as the following incident one of the many I could relate, will show:

While still at the school, I visited a town in which we had placed a little girl three to four years of age. She had been placed with a family as a companion to one they had taken from our school before. The gentleman invited me home with him to dinner and after telling me how nicely the girls had fitted into their home, he related this incident: One evening the little girl was sitting on his lap when suddenly she became very quiet, as if in a deep reverie of thought, quite different from her usual playful mood. Finally, she aroused to a wakeful questioning and asked "Papa, can you write?" "Yes, I can write" he replied. "Well" she asked, "why didn't you write for me to tum home before."

The Board of Control were always very responsive to my requests for material or supplies of any kind for the benefit of the school and also willingly approved of any suggestions for the betterment of conditions: So that I might gain a further knowledge of the best methods of handling institutional work, I am sure they were responsible for my being sent with other representatives to the International Convention of Charities and Reforms, which was held in Toronto, Canada. This was not only a very pleasant excursion, giving us a chance to visit the beautiful city of Toronto but the very interesting programs of instructions which followed during the sessions of the convention also gave us an opportunity to exchange ideas concerning different customs and methods employed by others in this kind of work. We received a great number of suggestions which were very valuable and could be used in our own institution. In returning we crossed Lake Ontario to Niagara Falls and stopped for a day to visit this great wonder of the world. We took the boat across Lake Michigan to Milwaukee then by train home feeling well paid for our time in the information gained which was so valuable to us in our work at the school.

CHAPTER SIXTEEN

SUCCESSFUL MANAGEMENT NOTICED BY THE PEOPLE OF THE PRESS

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After a two year administration of the State School a reporter from one of Milwaukee's leading newspapers wrote the following article in regard to conditions at the school and I append it to show the success I had and the satisfaction of the people with my management of the institution.

WELFARE OF CHILDREN

PRE-EMINENT OBJECT AT THE STATE SCHOOL AT SPARTA.

ABOUT 300 GATHERED THERE BETWEEN 3 AND 18 YEARS OF AGE.

Sup't. S.S. Landt and his admirable conduct of the school - Improvements in management during the last two years - The system of placing children in homes for adoption and its proven success.

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Sparta, Wis., Sept. 17. - "If I had my choice of state institutions to manage" said a state officer recently, "one that shelters the dependents of the commonwealth of Wisconsin, I mean, I would select the School for Neglected and Dependent Children at Sparta."

To those who have visited the asylums for the insane, the State prison and the Home for the Feeble-Minded at Chippewa Falls, this conclusion would only be natural with a majority.

And for this reason, in the institution here are gathered nearly 300 children from the ages of less than 3 to the well developed boy and girl of 17 or 18. The age limit of admission is from 3 to 16. Here then is presented the opportunity psychologically and otherwise, of enfolding and developing the mind of the young.

MANY HAPPY CHILDREN

Then there are no bad types of humanity here. No monstrosities nor pitiable creatures from which to turn with feelings of repugnance and regret. But rather a large group or many little groups of apparently contented children. Instead of a feeling of antipathy there is a desire to take the little ones by the hand or to coddle them with a sympathy that flows spontaneously towards these diminutive wards of the great state of Wisconsin.

The legislature in establishing this institution has added immeasurably to the splendid reputation of Wisconsin for its excellent system of caring for the unfortunate within its borders.

A WELL MANAGED FARM

The holdings of the state here include 200 acres of good land under a fine system of cultivation and seven substantial buildings erected on the