THE MEMOIRS

OF

CHARLES H. WAITE

WRITTEN IN MY EIGHTY-FOURTH YEAR

1953

I, Charles H. Waite, am the son of Chester K. Waite and Miranda M. Waite and was born April 15, 1869 in Whately, Franklin County, Massachusetts, on a small farm. I had one sister that was about twelve years older than I. She, naturally, would order me around.

Whately is the only town in the United States by that name, and is located on the Connecticut River about eight miles north of Northampton, twenty-six miles north of Springfield, and ten miles south of Greenfield.

I do not remember the first one or two years of my life, but suppose I did the same as all other young farmers, milk and spread manure.

About the first thing I can remember was when I must have been two or three years old, we had a hard wind in the winter time and it blew off part of the haybarn roof. When it got warm enough, the neighbors came and put it back on. I just remember my mother setting the table for dinner in the sitting-room. Why, instead of the dining room, I do not know, unless it was larger.

About the next thing I can remember was that my father and mother were going to Northampton to do some shopping. With a horse and buggy it was about a day's work. They left me in charge of my sister and as she had a chum across the street of about her age, she forgot about me. I started off on my own hook and was going down what we called Lane Hill, when I met one of the neighbors. He stopped his horse and said, "Hello,

Charlie! Where are you going?" I said, "To Northampton to find my mother and father." He got out of the buggy, and I started to run. Of course, he caught me and took me home to my sister and I did not get a chance to run off again.

Then, when I was about six years old, my father went to Philadelphia to see the World's Fair. He enjoyed it so much he came home and got my mother and my sister as well as some of the neighbors and went again. They parked me out with one of the neighbors. I slept with two sisters that were a little older than I. I found out they knew more than I did.

The farms in those days were comparatively small and did not have the machinery they do now. The farmers raised their own fruit and vegetables.

They did not have any furnaces in their cellars. There it was usually cool and damp and the things would keep into the spring. Also, they would put down their own pork and beef, cut it up, try out the lard, make sausages, smoke hams and shoulders. They made no bacon, but tried out the lard and squeezed the lean pieces to make delicious scraps, which we never see now. They would cut up the beef also, and I can remember my mother having great chunks up to dry for dried beef.

They had something for a cash or money crop and in our case it was tobacco, which we raised in the summer. In the winter after the leaves had been pulled off the stalk, they were taken into a warm room or shop and sorted into grades. The leaves were tied into hands, or bundles,

and packed into wooden boxes to sweat before using. When I was eight, my chum, and afterward my brother-in-law, and I were in the shop one day. We rolled up some of the green tobacco and got into one of the boxes. We lighted them up, not thinking the smoke would give us away. One of the men turned around and saw the smoke and nudged my father. Father turned around but did not say anything. I suppose he thought he would wait for consequences. Well, the consequences came. I have not tried to smoke since, although I worked in the stuff for almost fifty years afterward. It did not cure my brother-in-law, for he smoked until he died.

Sometime before I was ten years old, my sister went away to school. She went to Wilbraham Academy. It was a coed school and the scholars all boarded there. She was awarded a ten dollar prize for reciting "The Curfew Shall Not Ring Tonight". She told me one of the boys that attended said they served awful butter there. This boy got up one day in the dining room and said, "This is the best Vermont butter and costs ten cents a pound". The House Mother called him down and told him to leave the dining room and not to come back until he apologized. He went away for two or three days and when he came back, the House Mother asked him if he was ready to apologize. He sais "Yes". He got up and said that the Mother wished him to correct the statement he made the other day. She says, "It isn't the best Vermont butter and it didn't cost ten cents a pound."

I remember one day about the first

of April while she was there, I received a letter, which was not common for me and it was addressed to "Master Charles Waite". Imagine my surprise and disgust when I opened it and it read "April Fool".

The Town had no graded schools. There were small district schools in six parts of the town. They were called North Center, North-east, South-east, North-west, and South-west.

The farthest away any child had to go was about a mile. We took our dinner pail and walked through the snow and mud. The teacher received the enormous salary of six or eight dollars a week. If she boarded she usually paid two dollars or two and a half, Monday through Friday or three dollars for a full week.

One of my first teachers was my sister. I don't remember what I did but she punished me by making me sit on the stove. There was no fire in it. She said she did not want to show any partiality. I did not see the point.

My sister would have boy friends. They called evenings and I remember one night I opened the parlor door and said, "My goodness, if many more fellows come, they will have to put their horses in the cow stables."

I attended that school until I was twelve and I never went to school summers after that. There were no laws regarding a certain number of days you had to attend school during a year. My father had developed rheumatism and was not able to do much work. I did about as much work as a man, excepting some of the hardest

as mowing with a scythe and pitching hay.

I think it was the fall of my 13th or 14th year that I started attending school at Deerfield Academy. I had to get up and help with the barn chores before breakfast, walk a mile to the station, take the nine o'clock train to Deerfield, and walk half a mile to the Academy. The principal was W. Stan Cutting of Brattleboro, Vt. He was a wonderful man and later went to the University of Chicago. He had for one of his teachers, Miss Edith Derby of Springfield. He afterward married her. I think I attended about five terms in the course of two or three years, in the fall and winter months.

Like all other schools, they played baseball and football. I was no good at either, so they let me umpire instead of using a good player.

Two winters there was a private school held in a school room in the Town Hall. One term a retired old maid (she said she taught school in New Orleans) conducted and taught it. I never got much out of it. One winter the town took it over for the older boys of the town and employed a man teacher from Monson. He was not much older than some of the boys. He did not dare say "Boo" and there was a "three ring circus" all the time. I remember one day, one boy took his dinner pail and went to a neighbor's close to the school and filled his pail with milk. Then he went to a store across the street and bought some crackers. About four boys had crackers and milk. They threw the last of the crackers at the teacher.

In 1880, my father was elected Representative from the sixth Franklin County District to the General Court in Boston. He boarded at the Old Quincy House that used to be on the corner of Brattle Street and Brattle Square. During the winter he had the whole family down with him for a week. I used to follow the bell boy around and thought when I got big enough I would be one. At that time ice cream was quite a rarity. As I was very fond of it, I ordered two dishes every noon, which made the waitresses laugh.

The church had a Ladies Sewing Society, and in the winter they met around at different houses. The ladies sewed in the afternoons and the men and children came in the evenings. The old folks would occupy the front rooms and we children would have the kitchen to ourselves. We played games, such as Drop the Handkerchief, Spin the Platter, Clap In and Clap Out, and even Post Office sometimes. I was at that age when I first commenced to notice girls, and especially one that I afterward married.

In the fall of 1886 my father sent me to Child's Business College in Springfield. I had to get up about five in the morning, help with the barn chores, eat my breakfast, and walk a mile to the railroad station to take the 7:15 train. The school hours were from nine to one, and as there was a train that left at one o'clock, I had to leave about five minutes before to catch it. The school occupied the third and fourth floors of the Haynes building, where the Haynes Clothing store was and is now located. The station was on the west side of Main Street on the street level.

The Boston and Albany trains ran right through the center of the station. The N.Y.,N.H. & H. trains came in the south side, and the Connecticut River, now Boston and Maine, came in on the north and west sides. Many a time I had to run down Main Street and see the train as I came into the station just starting. I would spurt through the station and catch on to the last step before it got under way. I would get home about two-thirty, have my dinner and then go to some neighbors and saw wood by hand, to earn spending money. After doing chores at night and after having supper, I would start on my books. At the school every scholar was on his own and could get along as fast as he wanted. I was so anxious to get along that I would work on my books, mostly bookkeeping, which I liked very much, until eleven or twelve o'clock. Well, it paid, for I went through the whole course and got my diploma that winter. I had a chance to go into one of the Springfield banks, probably as floor sweeper, and no doubt I would have become president of the bank long ago. But as I was a good boy and did not want to leave my father in the lurch, I declined the offer and went back to the farm.

The following winter I was taken down with typhoid fever and was very sick for twelve weeks. In those days I never heard of a hospital or a trained nurse. One or two of the neighbors knew a little something about nursing and they came in the day time, and the men neighbors used to come in nights, to watch, as they called it, in those times. The doctor

lived in the house next door and he was in two or three times a day and kept close watch of me. That was the only real sickness I ever had.

I might state at this time that it always seemed queer that he would charge one dollar for coming to our house and if he hitched up his horse and went some eight miles through snow and mud, it was one dollar just the same.

After I got around and realized I could not do much, I wrote to the principal of the school and told him what I had been through. He advised me to come back to school, saying he had added a banking course and if I wanted to come back, it need not cost me anything. I accepted his offer and spent the winter there helping out for which he was generous enough to pay my car fare.

I was always interested in trains, having ridden on them so much to school. The old Connecticut River road had their engines named as well as numbered. I can't recall the right numbers that went with each but these are some of the names. I think they had about twenty locomotives, most of them were named after stations and started with Springfield, Brightwood, Chicopee, Holyoke, Mt. Tom #15, Northampton, Hatfield, Whately #9, Deerfield #8, Greenfield #4, Ashuelot, Brattleboro and Orion, Mulligan #12, North Star, D. L. Harris #13, and Brinsmaid.

Some of the old conductors were Henry Sampson, Heck Davis, Porter Caldwell, Fred Heywood, Owen Sullivan, Fred Wells, Andy Abbott, Deck French, Will Moore, Frank Newton, Charlie Anderson, and Bill Obrey. The latter is still running

for I read in a paper recently where his train struck a truck near Smith's Ferry.

Owen Sullivan was a dry old fellow and he would not let anyone get anything on him. One morning, starting out of Springfield on his first round collecting tickets, a man said to him, "Mike, how far is it to Holyoke?" Sullivan said to him, "How did you know my name is Mike?" "Oh, I guessed it." "Well, guess how far it is to Holyoke," he replied. I could tell a lot more such incidents. They say you learn a lot by travelling. I learned something on my short travels.

This was the winter of the Great Blizzard of 1888. Several mornings our train would have only two cars and two engines starting from Greenfield, ten miles above. I remember one morning, after we had a big snowstorm, the Montreal Express which was called the "Owl Train" as it travelled all night, went down ahead of us. When we reached Smith's Ferry, Porter Caldwell, the conductor, had a telegram to go to Holyoke on the "up" track as the express was stuck in the snow banks down in the narrows. The train was stuck on a curve near the bank of the river and a gang of men were shoveling it out. The wind was blowing and the snow was flying. Not expecting a train on that track, they were caught and four men were killed. They were put on the train and taken to Holyoke. The rest got on the train and would not work any more.

After the Big Blizzard we did not go away from the house for two or three days but the sun was so high it melted the snow away pretty fast.

My mother used to take the North Center school teacher to board and in the winter when the travelling was bad, I was elected to drive her back and forth in a sleigh or buggy. It wasn't such a bad job in cold weather.

I have learned since the old horse and buggy or sleigh had an advantage over an automobile, for you could drive a horse with one hand. I wonder my girl didn't get jealous. If she hadn't been a peach she would have.

A few years later, after the town had two graded schools, the scholars were brought into them. The old brick building at the North Center was taken down and moved to West Springfield and put up in Storrowtown at the Eastern States Exposition grounds, where it now stands. Every year I visit it and tell the visitors that I used to go to school in it.

I used to pump the organ in the church, and there was a buzzer next to where I sat, so the organist could wake me up after I had been out late Saturday night. I received the large salary of five dollars a year. The organist was also my Sunday School teacher. She had the class give answers to Biblical questions. One Sunday she asked who had an iron bedstead. I gave the answer "Brigham Young". She didn't ask me any more. The church had prayer meeting Sunday nights and the Christian Endeavor Society on Friday nights. The boys all went so to go home with the girls. My girl lived about two miles away and it was quite a walk up and back on Sunday in the late afternoon. I would go up to see

her as she worked for her uncle during the week. He lived a mile or more away in another direction. In the summer and fall we would walk across the lots and through the pastures to her uncle's. I found out she was a good cook, and after staying as late as I dared to, walked home across the lots. There were no electric lights on the dark nights, but I knew the way.

In the winter time I took a horse and sleigh and coming home I would wind my handkerchief around the sleigh bells fastened to the shafts of the sleigh so they would not ring. I have often taken my shoes off before going upstairs of my home.

I don't think I have mentioned my girl's name. It was Bertha Root and she was as nice as her name. We had been practically engaged and engaged for several years.

In the spring of 1891 we decided it was no benefit to wait any longer before getting married. My father had rooms arranged for us. We were all to eat and live together. We were married in December 1891 and we lived very happily together.

Since leaving school we had increased our business, employing more help, raising more tobacco and keeping more cows. In February, 1893, we had a son, Howard R. He is married and has a daughter. She is married and has two girls, my great grandchildren. My son lives on my old farm.

In the fall of 1893 we went to the World's Fair in Chicago for two weeks. It took us about half the time to go and come

because the railroads cut rates. We went as far south as Washington and took the Baltimore and Ohio from there. Coming back we came on the Lehigh Valley to South Bethlehem, Pa. It was a wonderful fair for that time or any other. Electricity was just coming in and they had some wonderful displays.

I was pushed into town offices and was Chairman of School Committee six years and Chairman of the Board of Assessors for nine years. The former office I did not care for, but the latter I enjoyed. That is where my business training was helpful.

When I was on the School Board, I was working in my shop one day and Montville Crafts came in and said, "Mr. Waite, can I have the janitorship of the North Center school?" I said that I guessed he could. The position was to build a wood fire every morning and sweep out the room every day. It carried a salary of not over five dollars a term.

I was also pushed into church offices. At one time I counted eight different jobs from Clerk and Treasurer, Parish Committee, Trustee, Sunday School Superintendent, and President of Christian Endeavor. I don't think it was because the timber was so good but because it was scarce.

In the winter of 1897 we were to do some redecorating and were moving out the furniture previous to the work being done. My little son, Howard, four years old, and the minister's boy who lived across the street and about

the same age, were following us around. The minister's boy was too slow for Howard, and he said, "Hurry up, you old damn fool." I don't think he learned such language from me.

In the spring of 1897 my wife was taken sick and after all we could do for her, she died. I think she was too good for this world.

Believe me, I had a heck of a time for the next four years. My father was getting more crippled all the time. I had to wash, shave, and dress him, but he still had an interest in things. I would lift him into a buggy so he could go to church. He walked with crutches. My mother, too, was getting old. We had a girl to help out with the housework. I had the farm to look after and work. Also, as I have mentioned, I was on the School Board and the Board of Assessors which took some of my time.

In the fall of 1898 my father had a fall in getting out of the buggy and he never recovered. We kept on the same, my mother gradually failed and in the spring of 1900, after a short illness, she died, leaving me and my seven year old boy alone. I had a good girl to keep house for me. She had been with us off and on since before Bertha died. She was a very nice Irish girl, but not too strong. I favored her with the work as much as I could. She finally gave out and I had another one for awhile. I did not care for her too much and I decided to get mine and my man's meals out. My boy was being taken care of by his Great Aunt that lived near us, so he went back and forth between houses.

In February, 1901, I married Ella Wells. She was a first cousin of my first wife and was from and had lived in Whately until a few years before, after which the family moved to Springfield.

After we were married, I got my family together again and began living in a normal way. About that time, I was elected Selectman on the Town Board for two years. It was at a time when two very important issues came up. I was in the center of the town and so was in the middle of both issues. I was glad when the term was over.

I might mention that the nights before the 4th of July, the boys would celebrate, bringing everything loose out into the street and ringing the church bell. I remember one time the janitor was going into the church to try and stop the boys and got a pail of cold water thrown all over him. One thing they never forgot to do was to bring out the out-of-door toilet, which was located back of the Town Hall, out onto the Common. It was the duty of the Selectmen to get it back again.

In the fall of 1901 six of us went to Buffalo to the Pan American Exposition. After trying to keep together for two days, we gave up and each couple went its own way in the day time and would get together again at night. No need saying we enjoyed the Exposition.

Along about this time my father's brother, my uncle, who lived in an adjoining town, died leaving most of his property, which was considerable for that

time, to my sister and myself. He had a country store in a block which he owned with a Savings Bank of which he was president. We later sold the real estate and the Bank was enlarged and used most of the main part of the block. My father was one of the trustees of the Bank, and after he died I was elected in his place, which office I resigned later on after moving away from that locality and thought I would be only "dead wood".

In May, 1903, we had a baby girl. We named her Helen, after some discussion. In about a year and a half we had a son and named him Kenneth. He never was well and died in two or three months.

The dairy business did not prove very profitable, not much in it but hard work. I decided to sell my cows and consequently I did not need much hay so I sold off a large part of my grass land. I paid more attention to tobacco.

Along about this time, my only sister, who had married Charles Marsh and lived in North Hatfield, died after a short illness. Her husband died a year or two later of a broken heart. This made about ten relatives that had died in about the same number of years. It made me pretty short of relatives.

In about 1908 I was beginning to get tired of farming as I had not made too much for some time. My wife, having lived in the city, wanted to get back to it. I thought I had about enough to live on, which I found out afterwards, when things began to go up, that I didn't. My son was

attending a Commercial School and he said, "Dad, don't get rid of the farm. I don't want to be tied up in an office." Well, I bought a house in Springfield and kept the farm. We moved most of the furniture the following fall to the new home, but left enough furniture so we could go back and forth in the summer. I cut out most of the farming for a while until my son was able to come in and help. We would close up the city house in the summer and return in the late fall and winter.

As we had planned to go to the city in the fall, we thought we would like to take a trip to California before. We left on February 17, 1909 after having purchased our tickets, which we found out later we were wise in doing, as they were first class, good for nine months, on any train and stopovers as long as wanted inside of the nine months. We discovered that it was going to cost us only two dollars more on each ticket to go by way of New Orleans and straight back than to go and come both ways straight. Never having seen New Orleans, we decided we never could see it any cheaper. Our daughter, Helen, six years old, went with us. Our first stop was in Washington for two or three days. Then, having sleeper reservations, we left for New Orleans over the Southern R.R. We did not realize or know when we started, but we landed just before Mardi Gras began. We walked the streets about all day trying to find a room. We had about decided to get on a train and go when luck or no luck overtook us. A lady offered us a bed in her front room for the magnificent price, in those days, of three dollars a night. I could have sworn there was no

mattress on the bed, just a sheet over the slats. Well, we lived and enjoyed the parades very much. When we were ready to leave, we had not considered we might have trouble in getting berths on the Sunset Limited. This was a through train from New Orleans to San Francisco by the way of the Southern Pacific, which if you continued on that road, as we did later on, would land you in Ogden, Utah. Well, we didn't get on or continue on. The only way we could get out of the city was to take a day coach train and we landed in Houston, Texas about midnight. We got off and went to a hotel near the station and started out again the next morning. We reached San Antonio that night. Sometime the third day out from New Orleans, we got off the train at Redlands, about 80 miles east of Los Angeles. We liked the place very much - going up Smiley Heights, visiting the orange groves and packing houses, which were new to us then. We saw the way they irrigated their land with water, coming for miles in open ditches from the high mountains where it is stored, from the snow and rains they have up there.

We also visited Riverside with the intention of stopping there a day or two, but were disappointed in it and went back to Redlands.

We had friends in Ontario, Ca., near there. We went to call and could not get away for three days. After about a week we left for Los Angeles, visiting Long Beach, Pasadena, and many other shore places.

We took a trolley excursion from Los Angeles to visit a number of beaches.

There was a guide on the car and soon after leaving Los Angeles he said, "When we get down this hill the Pacific Ocean is at the right and off at the left is the Atlantic." We went on and visited many beaches and one in particular was Venice. There were little canals all over the place and you could get in little boats and ride through. We came back on the excursion through Hollywood. We remained in Los Angeles about a week, and then we took the train for San Francisco, which was a day's ride. The hotel we stayed in there was very high and narrow, built of a reinforced concrete. We were given a room in the top story. The buildings all around were in ruins from the earthquake of a year or so before. It looked rather scary and Ella asked to have a room lower down.

One day we took a side trip to Mt. Tamalpais, a narrow gauge railroad wound around the mountain clear to the top. It was called the most crooked railroad in the world. On the way down, about half way, we stopped off at a station, took a side road that led to Muir Woods. The train we were to take consisted of one open car, like an open trolley car, and engine. As we were the only passengers, the one man operator said he would take us in a hand car, but as it was rather cold, being a cloudy, misty day, he said to get into the engine as it would be warmer. That was the first and only time I ever rode in a locomotive. When we arrived at Muir Woods, he showed us the very large trees you read about. You could almost drive a horse and wagon through the bases. They all seemed to be open or rotten inside the base. We were well paid for the trip.

When we were leaving one city for another, we would ask at our hotel for the name of a hotel of about the same class in the city we were going to next. They would check our trunk right through to the next city and hotel, which was very convenient for us.

Our next stop off was to be Salt Lake City where we intended to visit the Mormons a couple of days. They checked us into the Cullen Hotel there. It was about a thirty-six hour trip. We went through the famous snow sheds on the Rocky Mountains. On the trip Helen was very restless and we knew she was sick, but did not know what we could do until we reached Salt Lake City. We crossed the Great Salt Lake and after arriving at our station, we took the conveyance to the Cullen Hotel which we afterward found out was our destination for several days. We were assigned a room and I went immediately to the office and asked the clerk if there was a doctor in the hotel. He said, "Yes, there is one, Dr. So and So. He boards here." I went to him and asked him to come to our room and see my daughter. He came and said that she was coming down with the measles. Well, I asked him what we could do - could we stay there? He said there was no contagious hospital there in the city but they couldn't put you out in the street. "As this is a front room, they probably will want you to move into a back room and will put a sign on the door. However, the law doesn't say whether it is on the inside or the outside. It was on the outside for a day or two and then disappeared. We had a

very comfortable room with bath. We purchased an alcohol lamp and we prepared the food for Helen on that. Ella and I would take turns going out to eat and seeing the city.

After we had been there a day or so, I asked the doctor if there were many Mormons there - that I had not seen any. I had my ideas how they would look. He said about sixty percent were, so I judged I had seem some. One Sunday afternoon I went to a special service in the Mormon Tabernacle.

I used to go to the sulphur bath houses where the hot sulphur water would come in through pipes for miles and would still be very hot. People with rheumatism would like to take those baths.

After about ten days the doctor said it would be safe for us to go on. Then we had our trunk checked to a hotel in Denver. We were very much pleased with our treatment at the hotel and by the doctor. I rather expected they would take advantage of us, but they did not.

We went on the Denver and Rio Grande R.R. through the Royal Gorge on a hanging bridge. One place in the Gorge is so narrow that the river takes all the space and the railroad goes over it on a hanging bridge. We arrived in Denver where we spent two days. We wanted to go up Pikes Peak, but was told the snow was ten feet deep so did not go. We visited the state capitol and were surprised to see no

life there. Everyone seemed to be lounging around and we were told that the legislature met only once in four years and that was the last day. They had been in session all night and were taking a recess.

Our next destination was to Chicago. We checked our baggage and left on the Rock Island railroad to that city where we also spent two days. While there we hunted up an old school mate of mine at Deerfield Academy. He was in his office in the Marshall Field building, where he had charge of the building and offices. He made a date with us to dine at the store restaurant the next day with his wife and children. She also attended Deerfield Academy when I did. His name was Wilfred Boyden and hers was Anna Newhall, both formerly of Conway, Mass. Marshall Field was from Conway, also, where he has given a town library.

We left Chicago on the Wabash R.R. for Niagara Falls, where we spent a short time. The river was pretty well frozen over. Then we left on our last lap for home on the West Shore Railroad via Troy and Greenfield, Mass., arriving April 11th.

As I have already written, we moved to Springfield in the fall of 1909 and would go to the farm in the summer after schools were out. Before and after that I would either commute on the train or drive a car. The first automobile I had was a second-hand 1913 Reo. It was a year old and had been about five thousand miles. The original tires were on it. The first long trip we took was on a Sunday. We went to Pittsfield, about sixty miles away. I think we had four punctures and

blow-outs on that trip. I was ready to sell the car for a nickel.

As I did not have anything to do in the winter, I would either inspect tobacco or collect information for the city directories, for the Price and Lee Co. of New Haven, Conn. After a while we transferred our membership from the Whately Congregational church to the Hope Congregational church of Springfield. Here I held such offices as Deacon for two terms, a member of the Finance Committee, Treasurer of the Brotherhood, and for some years Chairman of the Supper Committee of the Brotherhood. I had to make out the menus, buy the food, and get one of the ladies' groups to put the supper on for us.

In the meantime our daughter was going through school and planning to teach by attending the Westfield Normal School. She has taught twenty-eight years and all but seven in the Springfield schools.

About 1925 I thought my son could manage the farm without me, so I turned it over to him. I think this was the first year we went to Florida. We started after Christmas in our car, which was a Studebaker then. Before we got to New York the snow was a foot or more deep. We stayed over Sunday with my wife's sister in New Jersey. We had snow until we were in Virginia. We did not drive very fast, we couldn't because of the roads. We stopped overnight in Chester, Pa., Washington, D.C., and Richmond, Va. The roads were all dirt roads below Richmond, but they were just starting to make hardened roads. We had to travel a great deal on detours. In Raleigh, N.C. it

started to rain and we stayed there three days as it wasn't safe on the slippery dirt as you might land in the deep ditches beside the roads.

I remember the last day travelling in Georgia, the roads were very bad. We reached Lake City, Florida about four o'clock in the afternoon. We wanted to reach Jacksonville that night, about sixty miles away. We pushed on the gas as we were on a straight brick road, a treat for us. We saw a car ahead and it was standing with a bicycle, as we thought beside it. We didn't slack up, but turned out and went by. Pretty soon the bicycle, which was a motorcycle came up beside of us and the officer motioned us to stop. He asked us if we didn't see the sign back there. We told him no. "Well, it says not to drive over thirty miles an hour, and you were going forty-two", said the officer. "We have no five dollar fines - they are all seventy-five and one hundred." We hardly saw any more State Police while in Florida.

We visited a friend about half way down the East Coast near Cocoa. We went to Palm Beach and Miami where we stayed a few days, and then came back up to the middle of the state and crossed over through Orlando, Lakeland, to St. Petersburg. We remained about a week there.

It was a time of the big boom down there. Most every other door was a real estate office and anyone had a hard time to get rid of the agents. I told them they asked too much for sunshine. I came away without buying any lots under water.

We had planned to be in Washington at the inauguration of Calvin Coolidge. The roads and travelling were so poor we allowed plenty of time to get there. As I remember, we were six days going to Richmond, Va., about one thousand miles. As we were ahead of time, we stayed in Richmond three or four days and left for Washington the day before inauguration. We had a good place to see it. I don't recall anything else of importance on that trip.

After I had finished going up to the farm, I found I was lost without something to do. We commenced to look around for a summer place with land for a good garden. When we found a good location, the house would not suit us and the other way around. Then, we decided we had better get the location and build to suit ourselves. We finally found a piece of land in East Longmeadow that suited us and when we considered the cost of getting water, we thought it would not pay for a cheap camp. We built a five room house with an attic which could be converted into rooms if we wanted. We also built a large two car garage. I drew the plans myself and did a good deal of the work and all of the painting. I set out nearly forty fruit trees, grape vines, strawberries, raspberries, shrubs, and shade trees.

I would go out in the spring and get the garden started and fruit trees sprayed. Then the family came out later. We had about an acre of land and besides the fruit and berries had a large garden. I saw I was going to have a lot more than three people could use. I said to

my wife, "What are we going to do with it all?" She said, "Sell them". I replied, "I can't sell anything." She said she would go into the city with me and sell some strawberries. After going two or three times, I got so I rather liked it and have kept it up for more than twenty-five years. I meet a lot of ladies I enjoy and some I have had for customers ever since I started. When it commenced to get cold in the fall, we would go back to the city for the winter, which would seem long to me.

In 1934 my wife died very suddenly, although she had not been well for some time. This made two good wives I had lost. There were so many flowers at her funeral they had to have an extra conveyance to take them to the cemetery. She died in July when we were living in the country. My daughter and I got along for about a year. She was still teaching school.

My wife had a sister, Etta, that was a widow and was teaching school in New Jersey. I persuaded her to marry me, which she did in a little over a year after Ella died. We went to Brooklyn, N.Y. and were married by Dr. A. G. Walton. He was our pastor in Springfield for three years and attended the funerals of Ella and George, Etta's first husband. Dr. Walton after went to the Thompkins Ave. Congregational Church in Brooklyn.

This was rather singular, having married two sisters and a first cousin. Some said, "What are you going to do next? This is the last one in the family."

As Etta had lived in the city a good deal, she said she would rather live in the country. We finished off some more rooms in the attic of our house and put in a furnace. I sold the city house and we started living in East Longmeadow, a town adjoining Springfield and a very nice town. We spent one or two winters there and then we started going to Florida winters for about three months, January to April. We always drove in a car with the exception of one or two years when gasoline was scarce. During the past five years the trip was getting too hard for us to drive, so we have gone by train. We seemed to like St. Petersburg better than anywhere else there. There is the largest shuffle board club in the world. It is called the St. Petersburg Shuffle Board Club. There are one hundred and seven courts, a large grand stand to watch the tournament games, a large reading room, and four large card rooms for any kind of game. No gambling is allowed at the risk of your membership. It is open every day, except Sundays, from eight a.m. until ten-thirty p.m. at a cost of six dollars per year or fifty cents a day for visitors. They usually have from six to seven thousand members. There are adjoining a Roquet Club, a Lawn Bowling and Chess Clubs. There is a lunch room connected. I can spend five or six hours a day there pleasantly playing shuffle board. There are two other smaller clubs in St. Petersburg. One is called the Sunshine Club and the other Bartlett Park.

There are two old men's ball teams there. One is named the Pels and Gulls or the Half Century Club, which takes in men from fifty to seventy-five years old. They are very good players and scrappers, also, mostly verbally. They play every Monday and Friday at ten-thirty, during the winter, on a short field called South Water Front Park. After they have reached the age of seventy-five, they are promoted to the Three Quarter Century Club or the "Kids & Kubs", which takes in men from seventy-five to ninety. There are two actual players now eighty-five and eighty-six respectively. They play every Tuesday and Saturday morning at ten-thirty. They use the soft ball and they also can put on a good verbal fight with the umpires.

The Pels and Gulls usually play a game Sunday afternoon at two-thirty with a girl team, either from St. Petersburg or Tampa and they draw a large crowd.

The players come from all over -- Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, the middle west and British Columbia. Many of them are retired doctors. If any of them now live in St. Petersburg, they give the native address.

The city also has a large stadium and ball field, which is used by the St. Louis Cardinals for their spring training. Here they practice about three weeks with such other teams as the New York Yankees, the Giants, the

Phillies, the Dodgers, the Washington Senators, the Red Sox, the Braves, the Detroit Tigers, the Cleveland Indians and possibly some others. There is a game every day between two of these teams. The other teams, besides the Cardinals and Yankees, locate in some other nearby city.

St. Petersburg is a great church place, as almost everyone goes to church on Sundays. There are about one hundred different churches, one or more of every denomination you can think of and some besides. Some of the larger ones hold two services every Sunday morning through the winter and you need to go about an hour before to get a seat. It is rather queer how soon some people forget about church when they get back home. We were going to the second service of a church one Sunday morning and they had a rope stretched up and down the center of the front steps so those coming out of the first service could be on one side and those going in to the second service could stay on the other. I overheard a man say, "They have to run a rope to keep them out of church here, but up north they have to run a rope to pull them in."

For the past five years from January to April, my wife and I have stayed a guest house kept by Mr. and Mrs. Frank West. They are perfectly lovely people and about the same ones come every year, so it seems like home to us. I don't know what we would do if we could not go there.

We started back this year on March 29th. We had a bedroom on the Silver Meteor of the Sea Board railroad. It left at 9:40 a.m. and we spent a good part of the day in the observation car in the rear of the eighteen car train. I wrote some letters while in there. We had dinner in one ofthe two dining cars on the train. We stopped only at such places as Clearwater, Tampa and Wildwood, where we met and had attached another section of our train from Miami. This section made the eighteen cars. We reached Jacksonville before dark. On that night we stopped at Savannah and Columbia, S.C., Raleigh, N.C., Petersburg and Richmond, Va. We arrived at Washington at 6:10 a.m. We had planned to stop off there with some friends and they met us at the station. After taking us to their home, serving us a delicious breakfast, and giving us a chance to rest a bit, they took us around to see the cherry blossoms which were right in their prime, as well as magnolias, dogwood and forsythia. With a lunch at his club and visiting other interesting things, we returned to their home in Chevy Chase and were delightfully entertained. We left for home the next morning. After changing cars in New Haven, we reached Springfield in the early evening and were met at the station by Helen. Of course we were glad to see her. We arrived at our home and found everything in proper condition for which we can thank our good neighbors, Mr. and Mrs. Calvin Bullard, Cal and Betty for short. It is Uncle Charles and Aunt Etta with them.

I must not overlook some of the old characters in the town of Whately. There

were three brothers by the name of Elder that were past middle age when I knew them and were all noted for their wit. Two of them I employed some on my farm, not because they were extra capable, for they were past that, but because I liked to hear them talk and hear them joke. Some of them I shall never forget.

One cold morning one of them said that it was so cold he had to hang the thermometer over the well so the mercury could run down.

One of my neighbors said to Austin Elder, "Did you ever give anything to anyone?" He said, "Yes, I gave a poor woman a barrel of flour yesterday." "Who was it?" asked the neighbor. Austin replied, "Ruth." That was his wife.

On another day he was in a lady's house, spinning off some yarn and the lady said, "Austin Elder, I don't believe more than half what you say." "Well, by golly, I don't myself", he replied.

My father pretty nearly ran the church. When we were out of a regular minister, he was on the committee to get a candidate and he and mother would entertain them over Sunday. One Sunday we had a candidate from Yale Divinity School and on Saturday night father took him up to the Post Office to get the evening mail. There were a number of people waiting for the mail to come and father introduced the minister to them. When he came to Austin Elder, the minister said, "Where do you live, Mr. Elder?" Austin replied, "Just around the corner. You can tell it, it is the house that has a mortgage on it."

A nephew of John Elder bought a small horse, "Mustang", of a boy for twenty-five dollars. After keeping it for awhile, he sold it for $15.00. Someone said, after John sold it, "He couldn't make much money that way." He replied, "Not on one - he would have to have a lot of them."

There was another family by the name of Bardwell - a widow and two sons about middle age. They called her Mother Sherman. I suppose that was her husband's first name. The boys would have lots of fun with her - putting tick tacks on her windows and such things. She would get mad and chase them. The sons spent most of their time fishing. Someone asked one of them why he never went anywhere to see something. He answered, "I have been to Northampton, Greenfield, Conway, and up to South Deerfield lots of times." After their mother died, they lived alone with the pig and kept house.

There was a man by the name of Luther Crafts that used to carry the mail to and from the railroad station twice a day. It was about one and one fourth miles and he walked and carried the mail bag whether there was anything in it or not. You can imagine how long we would have to wait for the mail at the Post Office on a stormy night in the winter, especially if the train was late after waiting for the New York train in Springfield. However, it gave them time to spread the gossip and tell the stories, as there were no daily papers.

There were what we called Fresh Air Children who would come up from New York for two weeks during the summer, usually two at a place. Two came to one of our houses and

they arrived before noon. There were called into dinner at noon. I don't suppose they were accustomed to more than one square meal a day, if that. They took advantage of it and filled up. There were surprised to be called in again to eat at night, but they were ready for it and filled up again. When they were getting ready for bed one boy said to the other, "If they call us up at night to eat, wake me up."

There was another family that kept summer boarders during the three months in the summer. They had a family by the name of Hawley from Boston. There was a son named Jack. One day Jack and some of the girl boarders went to the Post Office for the mail. The Post Office was in a General Store where they sold most everything you can think of. Jack looked up and pointed to the top shelf and said, "You must be awful rich here. Look at all your as-sets."

One night, or early morning, the Clary house, a large two family house, caught fire, and as there was no fire department or water protection of any kind, naturally it burned to the ground. The minister lived at the other end of the street and when the fire was almost out he came down the street hollering "Fire, fire!" and ringing a dinner bell. Perhaps he thought he was going to loose his job as the house was next to the church.

The minister lived across the street from us and he used to ride a high wheeled bicycle. One day he started out on it and the front or

large wheel struck something. He took a header right over the wheel. He certainly spread the Gospel in good shape, but I was not near enough to hear what language he used.

Speaking of high wheeled bicycles reminds me of an Irishman by the name of Morris Nolan that lived down the street. He was up to the Tavern one morning, for what purpose I am not supposed to know. A man by the name of Orcutt ran the tavern. While standing on the porch, one of those high wheeled bicycles went by and Morris says to Orcutt, "Mr. Orcutt, can you tell me how the devil does that little wheel keep up with the big one?"

The minister I referred to shortly before married a widow with a boy about three or four years of age. He would straddle a broom stick and gallop up and down the street saying, "Whoa, Giddap", etc. Someone asked him if he was going to be a minister when he grew up and he answered, "No thir, I am going to be a horse jokey". I lost track of him, so I don't know whether he became one or not.

One thing I omitted when I was writing about my second winter at Child's Business School, I would like to add.

There was a boy from Greenfield that attended. His name was John Kennedy and he commuted back and forth the same as I did. As I was supposed to help anyone with their problems in arithmetic and bookkeeping, he called upon me quite often, and I would try to help him out.

Years later he moved to Northampton and went in business there, also politics.

When I was commuting back and forth between Springfield and Whately, I would meet him on the train quite often, and he would sing out, "Hello, Charlie, my old school teacher."

I read his obituary several years ago. It said that he was the only man that ever beat Calvin Coolidge. He beat him out for School Committee for the city of Northampton. He was a Democrat and of course, "Cal" was Republican.

Naturally, I was quite puffed up that I was an "old school teacher" to anyone that could beat "Cal".