

not make a move to get a new boarding place but just planned to stay in the school house until the end of the term. I slept on the floor with just my winter coat for a mattress. I used sterno heaters to heat the foods that I ate. Sometimes I babysat for the Tannahill children while their folks were in Grand Forks shopping. Sometimes it was six or later before they came to take the kids home.

I visited at the Tannahills some times. Mrs. Tannahill always had an enormous supper for us. Little did I know that Jean Tannahill would later become my sister in law by marriage.

Jean was a good student and even in the third grade I took her to the spelling bee in Thompson. I walked over to Tannahills that Saturday morning and John Tannahill, the father, let me use his car to drive to Thompson with Jean. She did not win but had the distinction of spelling against 7th and 8th graders. I recall she wasn't the first one to be "spelled down" so that was some consolation.

The Tannahill well was the source of good drinking water as it is today. they did not have a pump as John could dip water faster than any hand pump that they could install. Now and then we would come from Bennetts for drinking water.

It was extremely dry and Bennetts had trouble getting enough water for the stock. Many a night Jack would hitch up a team to the water wagon and travel more than two miles to Joe Huard's to get a tank of water. Joe and Mrs. Bennett were brother and sister. When we had the January thaw we would go out to the slough holes to get water to fill up the cistern which was usually about dry by that time. Many times I would come home early from school, hitch up a team to the water wagon and go on out in the field to the nearest water hole and pump the tank full of water before supper. This was a double action pump and took a pair of hefty arms to fill the tank. I think it held three to four hundred gallons of water. Usually we got the cistern full again before winter set in.

I dressed for winter travel when I went back and forth to school. Often I would leave my school clothes at school and change after I got there. When the temperatures got down below zero and the northwest wind was blowing it was a long and cold journey. I don't think we ever called school on account of storms until the last spring I taught there which was 1937.

Weekends I would try to get to Grand Forks. sometimes I walked to a little flag station at Merrifield and boarded the 8:30 a.m. train for the trip. I would come back on the mail train at 10:30 p.m. on Sunday nights. It was about 2 1/2 miles to Bennetts and quite an experience at night.

One time I was scared very much by the appearance of a man walking on the road beside the track. I usually walked on the track as it was easier. This man walked at the same speed I did. I stopped and he stopped. I ran and he ran. I was becoming more scared every minute when I suddenly discovered that the moon was casting my shadow on the road and it was my shadow that I was afraid of.

This reminds me of the poems that we learned in school. Maybe some will remember the poem MY SHADOW by Robert Louis Stevenson. That would be one that could be used with the above encounter.

We learned a lot of poems and in a moment of weakness I told the school group that I would make a nice typewritten copy of every poem that they memorized. Little did I know that the enthusiasm, especially of the Tannahill tribe, would keep me up all hours of the night typing and retyping poem after poem. I think that Jean told me some time ago that she still has that collection of poems that she learned and I typed for her way back then.

As I said before I was uniquely fired from this job but still I didn't realize that the depths of the depression were upon us and jobs were more scarce than ever. I came home and thought that school boards would beat a path to my door. They did not and when school started in the fall I was out of a job.

I did manage to get some harvest work but most of the winter I just stayed home and existed. Josie was the only one working. The family existed on Dad's meager pension and we seemed to get along OK. In the spring I worked at cutting potatoes but nothing much. I finally got a lead on a job about 50 miles from Grafton and went out to apply for it. I got the job, \$45 a month for eight months. The school building was the same kind as we had in Allendale so I was acquainted with the set up. I boarded at the clerks home.

Most of the families in this neighborhood were Bohemian and they talked the language all the time. A couple of the first graders did not know how to talk English and I did not know what to do. However, with the help of other students and the Sears catalog we did manage to get some knowledge into their heads. Of course it was expected that they would be promoted to the second grade. I did that even though they were ill prepared.

About that time radios became more common and I noticed that the people would talk more English because of the radio. This helped the parents as well as the students.

The family I stayed with had a boy who was just beginning school. They were English speaking and the mother had been a teacher. I used to laugh at myself watching how they trained him. When he did wrong they would spend much time explaining to him why he shouldn't have done the wrong. I often felt that a good spanking would have solved the problems quickly.

We had many dances in the town hall about a mile from the school boarding place. These dances were Bohemian style and we danced to the wee hours of the morning. Bohemian sausage was the family food for lunch. Everybody danced from the little ones to the old ones. There was some drinking going on and sometimes some of the fellows had too much and had to be taken care of by others. I don't know what they did but the family usually took care of the erring sons.

I tried several ideas in school and how successful they were I will never know. First I thought that the only way to get good English talking from the students in general was to have programs and we certainly did: Thanksgiving Day, Christmas Day, Easter. So we were studying and memorizing our parts almost all of the time.

As this was an eight month school there was no school in January so I came on home. Took a branch line train at Whitman and traveled eastward. It was a cold day and it was cold in the train. We had to sit on the south side of the car with all the clothes we had available even though the stove at the end of the car was red hot. We finally made it to the junction with another railroad and I hired a fellow to take my baggage across town to wait for the other train. Finally I got home. When I returned the last of January I had an unexpected lift. Bert Campbell, a cousin, came from Minto just about the time I was to leave for the train and he said he would take me to Minto for an overnight at their home and drive me to Ardoch the next morning to take the train back to Whitman. That was fine as it would save train fare and hotel fare in Ardoch. I was short of money as usual. We got started on the train but a blizzard came up and the train stopped at a junction and then decided that they could go no further west but could go north. I decided to go to Lankin and stay overnight and then take my chances on getting out to the school on time. This was Saturday. We finally got to Lankin and I got a bed at a private home. I then contacted the mail carrier who said he could take me halfway to my boarding place in his rig. I went to Mass and then we started off. We got to the halfway point and after an afternoon of games etc. these folks took me to my boarding place. I got there and then after unpacking I went over to the school to start the fire to thaw it out a little after it had been frozen for over a month. My landlord was a little bit disgruntled as he had gone to Whitman for me

the day before but as I have said the train did not make the route so he had to come home without me.

School started again. I don't recall much of the following days. I do know that the County superintendent came out and was glad to see that I used a plan book. There was no regulation on using a plan book in Walsh County. We had a picture taken with the superintendent but I feel that this is one picture that was lost somewhere.

They had a county spelling bee and an eighth grade girl won the local contest and the older brother and sister offered to drive to Grafton for the contest. She lost out in the first round. We had supper at home and then came back to the school.

About that time I thought of trying to get the job again for the next year. I had tramped around the entire district during the winter and visited with all the families. I wanted to go to the March meeting which was really hiring time. The clerk who was my landlord told me that I could not go unless I had permission. I did have the permission of the president so he took me along without an agreeable attitude. The school board mulled around over various matters. I made my presentation but had no definite answer.

Later I tramped the fields to contact board members and stopped them in their spring work. This gave the horses a rest while I talked to the fellows. No committal so I felt discouraged.

When I got back to my boarding place after the final visit, I had a letter from the clerk of the Allendale school saying that the board wanted me to come back there to teach in the fall. Apparently John Tannahill was impressed by me and had insisted that I be rehired. Needless to say I just forgot about the school I was in.

I finished the term and gave the children a little picnic in a wooded area about a mile from school. My brother Frank borrowed a pickup truck from a neighbor and came out with the ice cream. All this was paid for by me out of the \$45 a month I was getting. I had also been expected to pay for paper clips, etc., and also to provide candies and oranges at the Christmas program. I paid \$15 a month for board and room so I finished out the season with little money left over.

The folks were still living in their home by the river [103 Wakeman Ave in Grafton] so I spent the summer at home. Later on in the summer I went down to look over the school and seek a boarding place. I got part of a room with the Walter Huards who lived a mile and a half from school. There were two double beds in the room. The hired man used

one and I used the other. It was upstairs and cold in the winter. No luxurious living like I had had at the Bennett's. Saturday night was bath night and we heated water in a wash boiler in the kitchen and we men took baths. The "chick sale" was out in back and we did not linger out there meditating. ↖ (TOILET)

I played my first Bridge there and I think I learned as much as I know now. One time I accidentally got high score at a party and the best bridge player in the area told me "you cheated". It wasn't so as I did not keep score or really have any knowledge about score keeping.

Church was at Thompson several miles away and we always went when the weather was right. Walter's parents lived in Thompson and we usually stayed there for dinner before coming home. Little Keith was still under three and at that time cloth diapers were used so there was a constant washing and drying of diapers.

As usual I spent a lot of weekends in Grand Forks. Sometimes I would stay with the Collettes and sometimes at the hotel and one time I stayed over night in the club rooms of the Knights of Columbus. Walked to Merrifield to catch the train. The walk was over 2 1/2 miles so it was sometimes very cold but I had to go. Dances, etc. But I was still a "loner". The dance was old time and cost 75 cents. Sometimes it was hard to raise the money. Then at 12 the west side [Grand Forks] dance closed we would go over to the east side [East Grand Forks] to the Eagles where their dance continued until 1 or later. Afterwards we would gather in a restaurant in Grand Forks for an enormous feed, steaks and everything.

School proceeded normally with some unusual events some of which were pleasant and others that were not so pleasant. I recall trying to convince the students to say the word FEBRUARY correctly. They would always forget the "BREW" syllable so I decided we would have a program with February days as the theme. Seems sort of ridiculous the emphasis I placed on the correct pronunciation as now both pronunciations are acceptable.

A fly in the ointment was when I had a stubborn little fellow in school. He was the youngest of a large family and I suppose as it happens in big families the last one is pampered. I spanked him and the mother was very upset. She even went to the county superintendent to complain about my treatment of Mathew. We got it straightened out but it left bad relations.

About that time I decided I wanted a bicycle so I got a bicycle man in Grand Forks to put one together for me. Not

a new one but he had a shop with lots of parts and he got it ready for me.

The routine was quite established. We taught school in the winter and in the summer we returned to Valley City for a summer session. Sometimes it seemed that we had no earthly reason to come back to school but we did. The circle of friends and acquaintances grew, changed and lessened. That is the way of life.

I lived three quarters in the Foster House, the first one I lived in. The two summer sessions I lived in the third floor with difference people. I can recall the Cink brothers, and Miles Stanton and another fellow from near Valley City. Wonder if they are still living? The winter quarter I had a small single room on the second floor. For some reason or other I was not a member of the group even though we were speaking. They were the regulars. They went to school during the school year and continued on toward a degree. Here I was getting an education piecemeal so I wasn't in the group, only part of it. We did learn later that the owner of the house was a "rum runner" who would make periodic trips to Canada to buy liquor for the fellows in and around Valley City. Eventually he got caught. don't remember if it was when I was there or not.

I lived in four other places. Two on the avenue facing the dormitories and one place quite a distance away. Also a place directly across from the Foster house. This is somewhat mixed up but I think it is correct now. The one directly across from the dorm was rented by the cook. We ate at the dormitory that summer. The one across from the college was a unique situation. We had three in our room. One of the fellows worked nights at a restaurant down town and John Jonkman and I had the bed at night and he had it during the day. We also had two young Mormon missionaries who lived in the other room. They had services down in the living room every week. We did not attend these services. We were friendly as we could be.

The place I lived in that was farthest away was the only place where I was the single roomer. I had my bike that summer and used it for transportation to and from school. I usually parked in the area between the main building and the model school. I was the only person in school who had a bike and only one other man, a shoemaker, was the only other adult in town who had a bike which he used to ride back and forth to work.

School and other activities progressed in the usual way. I did not go out much. did not date much and built no lasting friendships. I was still looking for the right girl and I did find her.

An unusual event came during one of the summer sessions. We were promoting a dance in the big gym and the fellows got together and got me to be the "fall" guy. We were going to have a chapel as the general meetings were called. There was to be an English woman who was going to give a lecture. The fellows asked me if I would ride a bicycle up and down the aisles firing off the starters pistol. I did that and it scared the English woman so that she ran off the stage and they had a hard time to convince her that this was only a prank. I suppose she thought that the cowboys and Indians were at it again. I don't think I was reprimanded by the higher authorities but I think the stunt served its purpose to publicize the dance that was going to be held that evening in the gym.

I am not sure just which summer it was [that I met Esther] only that it was not the first summer I attended college. I know that I lived in the Foster house and that John Jonkman and Miles Stanton were also living there. John had apparently been dating Lucina and one Sunday afternoon he brought me along to introduce me to Lucina and Esther. Esther and I did some dating during that summer. We did a lot of hiking and I think we managed, over the period of the summer, to walk up and down the ring of hills that surrounded Valley City. I remember that Esther was taking a course called WEEDS and, in our wanderings, she picked up various samples for the class. they were identified and pressed. I remember that later on in my college I took the same course.

I am not sure if we did any corresponding after summer school was over but anyway we lost contact with each other. I remember one time when I was on my way to Bismarck to a state convention I stopped in Jamestown and sent her a postcard from there. In the meantime we went our separate ways.

During the summer of 1936 I decided that I would like to renew my acquaintanceship with Esther and I wrote to her at Berlin. It so happened that she was working in a restaurant in LaMoure and dad Busch brought my letter to her. I must have received an answer and then we had regular correspondence.

In the fall the state teachers convention was to be held in Grand Forks and I invited Esther to come there. It took some maneuvering on her part as the Geneseo teachers were going to continue school and not attend the convention. Anyway she arrived in Grand Forks with another teacher. This was to attend the convention. I had borrowed the Model T from Dad so we saw to it that the teacher friend was on her way and we could be together. It happened that I had coached a series of one act plays and I am not sure but we took the plays to Reynolds where they put the plays on for

the benefit of the church. We had a big steak dinner afterwards.

The fellows in the plays had convinced me that I should bring a bottle of whiskey from Grand Forks as they were "coming down with colds". I naively agreed and they started taking nips and the plays were almost a disaster but they got through them somehow. I as coach was almost beside myself trying to follow the script and doing what prompting was necessary.

I proposed marriage to Esther while she was in the Allendale school house where I had taken her to see my school. She accepted and I was in 7th heaven. I hope she was too. We were old enough to know what we were doing. I was 28 and she 27. The morning after this we went to an early Mass at St. Michael's and I am sure that some of our prayers included a petition that God would watch over us and bless us in our future lives. I am sure that this was so as we have had a beautiful relationship all these years and were blessed with five great children all of whom have very different personalities, have made good, and still are much concerned about our welfare. For this we are truly thankful.

On Sunday morning following the teachers convention Esther and her friend boarded the morning train for their trip back to Geneseo. I brought the car back to dad and we resumed the regular routine of school, etc. The winter was a harsh one and brought some pleasures and also some sorrows.

Christmas time was an opportunity for Esther and I to get together once again. She came by train on Dec. 24 and I flagged the train down at Merrifield. We then took the branch line train to Grafton where dad was waiting to get us and we went home. This was the first time that the folks had seen Esther. She had been without sleep the night before traveling so it took her a little time to rest up. We attended midnight Mass and in the days between Christmas and New Years the folks "showed off" their prospective daughter-in-law to friends and relatives.

Shortly before New Years we started on our trip to Berlin. We went by train. Took the afternoon train to Grand Forks. There we changed trains to go to Fargo arriving there at about 11 p.m. It was bitter cold. Now we had an eight hour wait for the branch line to LaMoure. We walked to the other depot in Fargo which was about a half mile or more. We had planned to sit up in the depot until the morning train but about midnight they cleared everybody out and said that it would open again at 5 a.m. Where to go? We wandered the main street and sometimes stepped into the downstairs lobby of upstairs apartments or offices and somehow worked out the night.

When the depot opened again we were ready to come in and get warm. It was bitter cold. By the time the train was ready to pull out we had thawed out. When we got to LaMoure we had a brunch at the restaurant where Esther had worked the summer before. She got in contact with the folks at the farm and while we were waiting I got a haircut. George and Lucina came after us in the old Dodge. It was cold but we did not get too cold on the way out to the farm.

When we got there everyone was curious as to what Esther had caught. Lucina was the only one who had seen me before. I don't remember just how old Vincent and Art were but they were young boys at the time. *(brothers, about 11 and 8)*

The weather all week was cold and snowy. I remember that Frances Kraft came over with a Model A and Esther bought it for \$100. I did not have that kind of money. Monday Lucina was to go to her school to begin the teaching after Christmas and we took her. George had a time to get the Model A going and the going was tough. We got to her school, started the fire, but no pupils came. Too stormy. anyway we went back to the farm and a few days later we had to get going to our schools. George took us in the bobsled to Grand Rapids where we took the train to LaMoure. We changed trains there. I took the one to Fargo and Esther took the one to Oakes. If the weather had been nice I think Esther would have taken the car to Geneseo but it stayed on the farm until spring.

The winter continued cold and about February 1 I came home from school feeling sick. Had stomachache I thought. Ate no supper and had no breakfast and walked to Merrifield to flag the train to Grand Forks.

When I got there I went to see the doctor and he discovered that I had acute appendicitis and surgery was urgent. I went down to the cream station and saw John Tannahill and told him that I would not be back to school for awhile. I took a taxi to St. Michael's hospital and Sunday morning they operated on me.

My stay in the hospital was 17 days and I convalesced at home in Grafton for another two weeks. I really was not ready to go back to school but the substitute teacher could not stay any longer so I came back to the job. It was not easy with 28 active children but I seemed to manage and gathered strength as spring approached.

In April I had managed to buy an engagement ring and wedding ring at Wards for about \$25 and was anxious to give Esther the engagement ring. We made arrangements to meet in Moorhead so I took the evening train from Grand Forks and got into Moorhead about eleven. Esther was there to meet me

with the Model A and we rode to Geneseo and arrived there at her boarding place. She had made arrangements for me to sleep there and we stayed there until late afternoon Saturday.

SISTERS
of
ESTHER

We then left for the farm and got there late Saturday night. I remember we stopped in Oakes for a Dairy Queen (5 cent size). Early Sunday morning I remember Florence and Mary peeking in to see if I was still sleeping. I was waking up and not too much aware of what was going on. I think that they were away at Christmas time but I am not sure.

After Mass and early dinner we left for our schools. This time we took the Model A with us. We went to Geneseo and I took the car to my school up in Allendale. It was an eventful trip.

Before I got to Wahpeton I had a flat tire and needed a new tire. I had to get a ride into town so we could change the tires on the wheel. Then I rode into town and discovered that I needed another tire before I could take off for the school. Lucky that I had a few dollars to pay for this unexpected expense. The road was not good. they had wide detours on the highway. I got to Hillsboro very tired and stopped for a light lunch. I finally did make it back to the school late at night. It was a full weekend and I was not really fit for school the next day but I managed to carry on reasonably well.

From then on to the end of school we were desperately searching for school jobs for the next year. We must have sent nearly a hundred applications. I was not successful but Esther did get a contract to teach grades in a school up north.

After school was out I went home to Grafton and then later in July I went down to the farm for a few days and Lucina and Esther came back to Grafton with me. We were just visiting and not doing anything special about the planned wedding.

Finally, I remember I was sitting on the front porch at home when Esther came and without many preliminaries said that we should set the date for the wedding. We finally decided on August 9 which was my mother's birthday. Shortly after the girls left for Berlin with the car and the preliminaries for the wedding began. It was required that we have several sets of instructions from the priest.

It so happened that Father Mulloy was our parish priest and I remember biking down to the priest house for these sessions. Father Mulloy later became a bishop of the

Covington KY diocese. He was quite well known for his activities with Catholic Rural Life.

(COUSIN)

(CHILDHOOD FRIEND)

I asked Marvin Campbell to be my best man and also asked Father McDonald to preside over the wedding. I asked him directly but found out that had to ask the parish priest, Father Cormier, to invite Father Ed to perform the wedding ceremony.

A few days before the wedding Esther drove up to Grafton and Dad helped us to fix up the car as a honeymoon car. We took out the front seats and constructed another set with a drop down back that we could use to roll back a mattress for sleeping purposes. We also had a campstove, dishes, folding chairs, table, etc., as we were going to use this on our trip. A couple of days before the wedding we got the marriage license in Grafton and then took off for the farm.