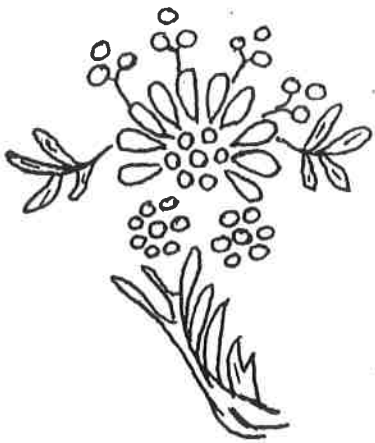


R  
E  
M  
E  
M  
B  
R  
A  
N  
C  
E  
S



BY

GEORGE FAY BIGELOW

As near as I know the first house built in town was built by grandfather Alden and Sumner Kemp near the dam. It was a little shanty built of logs perhaps 10 by 12 feet in size and it was covered with sticks and dirt. The roof had a center piece raised the length of the shanty and then the sticks were laid endways against that to make the slope of the roof. One layer of sticks was laid as close together as they could be and then another layer was put on top in between the bottom layer and then leaves and dirt were ~~###~~ thrown on them to complete the roof. This kind of a roof was all right in dry weather or snow but when it rained or the snow melted it quite often leaked.

Grandfather always wore a stovepipe hat and the door was a little bit low and he would bump the hat against the door every once in a while when he was going in the house. Rather than throw the hat away he wanted to save it so cut a little hole in each side of brim to put a string in so that he could hang it up on the ridgepole of the shanty, and that is where he kept his ammunition. One night it rained and the roof leaked so that the hat got full of water. The hat got soaked so that the top of the hat, or the bottom as it was hanging, fell out and let all the ammunition on the floor. When he got to examining the things he found quite a little water in his powder horn so he set down by the fireplace and got a stick to poke the wet powder out of the horn. The wet powder would stick to the stick so he would put it in the fire to burn the powder off the stick. Once when he put the stick back into the horn there was a little fire on it and it happened to hit some dry powder. That blowed it dry, powderhorn and all. When it exploded he couldn't see but thought he was all afire so run outdoors and headed for the mill race but Kemp stopped him.

He wasn't as badly hurt as he thought he was but he was minus his powderhorn and eyebrows too.

When I came here with my folks in '55 there had been a log house put up for us in what is now the Park. It was located just on the other side of where the cannon now is and if the cannon had been there then with a charge of shot in it it could have blown the house all to pieces. It was the largest house in town at that time and was perhaps 16 or 18 feet square. Most of the houses then were built square and had two doors in them, one on each side opposite each other and then there was usually a window in each of the other sides. Our house however had just one door and the two windows, one of the windows being right side of the door and the other window on the other side of the room from it. There were no openings in the other two sides of the room. Each of the windows were made of 8 x 10 glass and either six or eight glass to the window. In those days every carpenter made his own window frames and then bought the glass to put in them. I don't remember whether they could be opened or not but I know I don't remember of ever having seen them open. We had no mosquito bar to put on them. They were up so high that for some time, until I grew taller, I had to get a box to stand on before I could see out of the windows. When we got to the house all there was in it was the fireplace on the wall <sup>at the</sup> opposite ~~from the door~~ <sup>North End</sup> and a ladder in the corner to go up into the loft. When you got up to the top of the ladder you didn't want to straighten up too quick for if you did you would bump your head. There was no light up in the loft except what came up through the hole where the ladder was and through the chinks between the logs where the chinking had fallen out, until two or three years later when father put a window in one end of the loft.

3.

The ridge of the roof run north and south and the door was on the east side, towards the mill, under the eaves. At first the roof was just a makeshift roof until they got the saw mill to running and then we had plenty of boards to make a good roof. The windows were high enough so that we could slide a bed, table or anything else under them and not be breaking them out. The house was built without a regular foundation, just the bottom logs laid on the ground with perhaps a few stones at the corners to level up the logs. The floor was a puncheon floor, today we might call it a corduroy floor. It was made of logs that were hewed on the two sides and the top, the bottom being left rounding. These hewed logs were small logs and were just set together not being fastened to each other. It wasn't a very smooth floor nor a very tight one, there being a lot of cracks of various sizes in it. I remember one morning when we were eating breakfast a weasel came up through one of the cracks. Father had fried some meat for breakfast and had set the spider up against the chimney. Then the weasel ran up to the spider and stuck his nose in the hot grease, then it whirled around and went through the crack out of sight and is going yet for all I know.

Under the floor there was a little cellar, perhaps I had better say just a hole in the ground, about six or eight feet square and six or seven feet deep. About all it was good for was to keep a few potatoes and vegetables in during the winter. To get into it you had to go through a trap door in the floor, <sup>it had no hinges but was just a cover set in the opening</sup> about two feet square and down a ladder. One night there was a dance in the house and a couple was waltzing and happened to come over the cellarway and the cover came off and both went down into the cellar. I guess they went down for something to eat for when they came back up each one had a turnip, or a potato, and was eating it.

There was no furniture in the house so we had to make all our own. Most of it was made out of the rough boards that was sawed in the mill. The table frame and legs was made out of 2x4's with the boards placed on top. The chairs were made like stools, that is a board with some legs underneath. Most of them were without backs but maybe one or two were made with 2x4's extending above the seat of the stool and then a board nailed across ~~the~~ <sup>for a</sup> back. # Now the bed was made with four posts the same as any bed and then there was a 2x4 that went clear around both sides and the end and fastened to the uprights, then they started in with about a  $\frac{3}{4}$  auger and they went perhaps 2 or 3 inches apart, the holes were, clear around the sides and the end. Then they would take a rope, about a half inch size, and start at one end of a side. They would make a good big ### knot in the end of the rope so that it wouldn't pull through the hole where they started and then they would run it through the hole on the opposite side of the bed frame, then along the side of the frame to the first hole, <sup>they come to</sup> then across the bed to the opposite hole, then along the frame to the next hole, across the bed to the opposite hole and worked that way until they got clear around, going across the bed and then they would start on the ends and do the same thing. After they got it all strung then they would have to stretch the rope to tighten it. The way they usuall did the stretching was for one fellow to get hold of the rope, put his foot against the frame, pull as hard as he could and then another fellow would have a plug ready to pound into the hole to hold the rope where it was, then they would go to the opposite side of the bed and repeat the process, then go back to the first side and stretch it there, taking the plug out of the first hole and putting it in the hole where they had just stretched the rope. They would work this way until they got clear around, both sides and ends

5. Then after the bed had been used a while the ropes would stretch and you would have to go over it again the same way. This was called a "cord bed" because the springs were cords. On this they would throw a tick filled with hay, level it out, throw a blanket on top and the bed was ready. This must be where they got the expression "to hit the hay." The bedstead had one board at the foot and about two boards at the head.

The bed that my sister and myself had was just a box filled full of hay, with blankets on top. This was called a trundle bed. When we slept in it at night it was out in the middle of the floor but during the day time it was pushed under the big bed out of the way.

As I remember it that is all the furniture we had at that time but later we got more and better furniture.

When we came out we weren't able to bring all of our goods with us but had to leave some at Dunleath, now East Dubuque, where the railroad ended. Later that fall our goods came out by team and then we had more things to do with.

Our old fireplace had an iron across the front of it so that we could hang pots and kettles on it by hooks. Father got a dutch oven, which is just an iron kettle on legs with a tight cover to keep the ashes out of the food being cooked in it. That is where we cooked our bread and everything else was cooked in the kettles and frying pans over the open fire. To cook in the dutch oven live coals were raked out of the fire, the oven put on the coals and then more coals put on top of the oven and then if you weren't careful you would burn everything up in the oven.

The fireplace was made by cutting a hole in the side of the wall ~~#####~~ about four feet high and about as wide.

The entire fireplace and chimney was made on the outside of the

6. house. Here where we had plenty of stones to use the bottom part up to about five or six feet was made of the stones and above that it was made of ### small logs, or poles the same as the house was made and then plastered on the inside with clay so that the fire wouldn't set the wood on fire. The smaller poles were used because they would hold the clay plaster better. Then there were flat stones put out in front of the fireplace, which was called the hearth, so that if the wood sparked it wouldn't set the floor on fire. Then we could rake the coals out on the hearth over which we could do our cooking.

Our first broom was also a homemade affair. To make it they would take a piece of hickory, or sometimes ash, about as big around as your arm and as long as you would want it. To make the brush part they would start at one end and splinter it up about eight or ten inches. They would do this by cutting the splinter about as wide as your finger, sometimes wider and sometimes narrower, cutting them around the stick. When they had some cut they would bend them back along the rest of the stick and tie them there while they cut some more splinters and tying them back. When they had about as many cut as they wanted for the brush of the broom they would either cut the core from which they had been cutting the splinters out or else sharpen it so that it wouldn't bother and then they would bend the splinters back down the way they were first and then tie a string around them to hold them together for the brush. Then they would shave the rest of the stick down for the handle. They would last pretty good but if they got too dry they would throw them in a tub of water to let them soak up and then they would last longer.

When we landed here from the East our clothes were all eastern made but a little later when the Hoosiers from Indiana came they brought their sheep with them and we had homespun for a while

7. About all the clothes I wore was a shirt and pants, no underclothes, and what we called a dutch vest, buttoned clear up to the chin, and a coat and boots. No boy in those days would wear a shoe, shoes were for girls. In summer all I wore was the shirt and pants and the pants were rolled up to my knees.

My sister wore a shirt and a ~~walk~~<sup>skirt</sup> and a dress that went over them and pantalettes. The pantalettes were made from a strip of cloth that would reach from about the ankles to below the knee. To put them on she would wrap them around her legs and then take a string and wrap around them to tie them on. Generally the bottom of them was scalloped to make them look nice although the everyday ones were plain. If the weather got hot she would take them off. These were made to show below the dress for the scallop work was made to be shown. The skirt would come down to within two or three inches of the ankles. She wore homeknit wool stockings summer and winter. They were short too. Out here drawers for girls weren't known until later so that if the wind blew their skirts up there wasn't much protection. A few years later some young ladies from the East came here to live and they had hoop skirts, which were made of wire frames to hold the skirts out. My sister and some other young girls wanted to imitate them and since there were plenty of grape vines around here they tried to make some by sewing the grape vines around on the inside of their skirts. They couldn't control them for when they would sit down the front of the skirt would fly up and when they went to put that down the back end would fly up and it wasn't a howling success except for the spectators.

As the old saying is we had for food hog and hominy, being pork, corn meal and corn bread mostly. Out back of the cabin father would put in a garden and raise vegetables, mostly turnips, potatoes, cabbages and some other garden truck.  $\frac{1}{2}$  for a few years our apples were all turnips for we would eat the turnips just as you do apples.



We have wild fruits here, wild crabapple, grapes, blackberries, raspberries, strawberries, plums, choke cherries, and some others. These were all free for the gathering. The little crabapples needed a great deal of salaratus to sweeten them up and the choke cherries were awfully puckeris little devils, The rest of them were pretty good. On Potter's breaking, which is the 40 acres now owned by Mrs. Merrill just south of the Ralph Peters place, was where we got our best strawberries. He had broke this land up and then let it go back, letting it all grow up to weeds and strawberries. The women and young ones were all over the country here picking strawberries when they were in season.

In those days there were a lot of rattle snakes through the country but not a soul got bit that I know of. They were always on the look out for them. There were two kings around here, those in the timber were called "Massaugers". ~~THOSE~~ They were smaller than the prairie rattler. A dutchman described a rattlesnake like this, "He's red all over with black spots on and he runs through the grass and sings with his tail." It is a song that will make everyone stand up and take notice. The prairie rattlers were larger and were probably 18 inches or so long. One day I was coming in from hunting and just the other side of Kemp's place one came into the path ahead of me and I shot it. It was a big one about three feet long. We had a pig pen down by the side of the river and one Sunday father had taken a scrub and washed up for Sunday. He picked a pail of swill to go down to feed the pigs, he was barefooted, and all at once he let out a yell and jumped sideways. He had stepped on a live rattle snake that lay there all curled up in the sun sleeping. He soon got away with the snake with a stone. A picnic party from here went to Wall Lake and took me with them to shoot chickens for them and when we got there, it was

late in the afternoon, they sent me down to the log cabin to buy some milk for them. And just as I got th the cabin door a boy came out with a pan of oats to feed a jack that was tied in the weeds. I says to him, can I buy some milk here? And I knww the minute he spoke that he was acquainted with me. He turned around and hollered, "Ma" and she says what do you want. He says, "Here is another damn fool that wants to buy milk." I got my milk and went back.

After that I got my gun and started out hunting down at the south end of the lake. When I got down ther a flock of ducks came along and I knocked down a couple. They fell out in the water and I took my pants and shoes off to get them. The ducks kept coming in and I didn't stop to put my clothes on, just kept running up and down the lake with just my shirt on. One of the party heard me shooting and came over where I was and all to once he stopped and he says to me, look here. And I did look and there was a rattlesnake all

See page 166 & 167 for some story

9. curled up in the path. I had probably stepped over him a dozen times as he was laying there in the sun. I hadn't disturbed him and he didn't disturb me.

Back of the old cabin father had some corn and garden truck and the prairie chickens got to coming in there and the mill hands made me some traps, boxes, they were probably a foot high with some slats across the top, a regular box about two feet square, This box was set with a figure "4" trap with an ear of corn on the spindle. Whenever a chicken would peck at the corn on the end of the spindle he would knock it loose and down would come the trap over his head. I would stand and look out the back window of our house and whenever I would see one fall then I would go and get the bird. Some days I would get a dozen or fifteen chickes, maybe more and maybe less, and father would cut the breasts out and string them on a cord, sprinkle a little salt on them and then hang them up around the cabin to dry, and gee, when they were dry they were good. That made a dandy place for the flys to roost and if there were any vacant places they called in their neighbors to roost. Some days I wouldn't get any chickens and some days maybe twentyfive. Sometimes a flock of 40 or 50 birds would come in and I wouldn't go out to my traps until they were all full if the chickens were still around them. We dried and hung up all we could.

Somebody lost a creature here in town and father got them to haul it up back of the old log cabin. Then he bored a hole through one of the logs so he could put his gun through it. He had the creature hauled so that it would be in range of the gun through the hole. On moonlight nights he would set there looking out the window and watching that carcass to watch the wolves feeding on the carcass so that he could get a shot at them. He killed several that

10. winter, I don't know how many he killed. Back of where Dr. Robertson lives there was a halfbreed indian that lived there and his fullblooded squaw. He had three or four dogs and every time father would shoot away he would come and all his dogs. He would take the wolf home and skin it and as far as I know father never got anything for it. Father shot one that was pulling on the carcas, all humped up like a puppy pulling on a root, and the ball broke one front leg and the opposite hind leg and away he went up the river and here came the indian and his dogs. The big dogs got him rounded and stopped him and there was a little short legged dog that couldn't keep up, was always behind, and when he gpt there he piled right in to fight the wolf and grabbed it by the jaw where the wolf couldn't get at it and couldn't shake him off either. They killed the wolf and fetched it down to the cabin and the little dog was still hanging onto the wolf. I thought that was a slick dog.

One morning when we were eating breakfast Preacher Plummer, who lived where Will Granzow does now, came in and said he had got one more baby than he expected and hadn't got baby clothes for it and wanted some baby clothes that father had. Father went and got them and gave them to him. And that stuck in my crop for a long time to know how a man could go out and buy babies and get one more than he expected.

The first trap I ever had grandfather Alden gave me. It was one of the old style steel straps with great big jaws, big enough that if a muskrat would step on it it would catch him clear u p around the belly. He set it and said "What are you going to cetch, cetch me." and I did, I sprung it on his coat and away he went with my trap. He gave it back to me the next day and he said, "I don't

11. care what you set your trap for, George, but see that it is secure so that it can't be pulled away." Well, I did, I staked it down so that I don't think a could could have pulled it up. That was an object lesson to me to take care of my traps.

Grandfather went back to Mass. and fetched out some apple cuttings for grafting and he went over in the woods and grafted several wild crabapple trees. That was in the spring and he watched them all summer, most of them grew. One day the next summer he says, "come on, George, and we will go and look at our orchard." We went over to our orchard and some feller had dug up every bloomin' one of them trees that he had grafted. I don't know who got them but the old gent said, "well, George, I hope that whoever got them will do them some good."

I spent a great many days with my grandfather hunting bees through the country. When we could find a bee working on a flower we would catch it in a bee box for "lining" them. The box was probably three or four inches square with a cover that had a piece of glass in it, and a piece of honey in the bottom of the box. When we caught a bee in the box we could watch it through the glass until it got cooled off and started to suck the honey in the bottom of the box. We usually put our hand over the glass to make it dark so that it wouldn't flutter and would cool off quicker. We usually carried a stick about four feet long with us that we could stick in the ground, and it was sharpened at the other end so that it would fit into a little hole in the bee box so that the box would set on the end of the stick. We worked in the timber most of the time and after we caught the bee we would go to an open spot and set the stick up with the box on it, slip the cover off the box and then watch the bee go. He would generally buzz around the box three or four times and then he would make bigger turns a foot or

12. ~~two~~ above the box, then he would make two or three more turns, each one higher, and by that time he would be up to the top of the trees. Then he would go straight for his tree. When he came back for more honey he would most always fetch another bee with him and the next time he would fetch maybe three or four and each time he would keep gaining. When they left the box then they would go straight for their tree, no fooling or monkey work about it. Then is when we would get our work in lining them and hunting for their trees. We didn't know where they were but we would take our bait and go quite a ways along that line and then set it out again, always keeping some bees in it. When we let them out of the box if we had gone too far the bees would fly back of us to their tree or if we hadn't gone far enough they would still fly the way they went first. If they ever went back then we knew the tree was between the two bases. We kept doing that until we knew we were close to the tree and then we would start looking for it. Sometimes they would go in a hole way up at the top of the tree in a smaller limb and sometimes they would go in a crack right down at the bottom of the tree. They would never go in a hole with a very big opening. The next thing after we found the tree was to cut it down and get the bees out. ## If they were in a limb we would cut the limb off if it was handy to do it after we cut the tree down for we always tried to get them on the ground first. Sometimes they were in a rotten limb and it would break off when #the tree hit the ground and the little black bees were great fighters, I guess they were some relation to the Japs. If the limb didn't break apart they would usually cut above and below the hole where the bees went in and then split it apart to get at the honey, which they would scrape off the sides of the hole. One time we got darn near a half a washtub full of honey out of one hole, not all of it was good

13. honey for some# of it was travel stained. Then the next tree we cut down we didn't get half a pail full out of it. After the tree was down and we got them all knocked endways and their home broken up we would usually wait until their queen and all of them got settled someplace where they wouldn't bother us before we started to get the honey. When we were breaking up their home they generally made it hot but they didn't bother grandfather or me either, even if they were all fighters. Once when grandfather, Uncle Harry Alden and myself were hunting over near the Southfork We located a swarm of bees in a big black walnut tree right near the ground and I knew it was my job to cut that tree down. We were camped near the tree for the night and while they were getting supper I took my axe and went down to cut the tree and I don't think I hit it more than four or five licks before down it went and right near the end where the bees went in there was a piece of honey sticking to the side about as big as your hand. I grabbed that and started for the camp like the devil was after me and I think most of the bees followed me to the camp.

My grandfather found a swarm of bees up in Brande's timber and he invited a few of his friends up to get them, there must have been two or three women in the picnic, and grandfather was watching the bees clear up in the top of the tree with his head back and his mouth wide open and all to once there was a bee hit him right in the roof of his mouth and he set right down awful quick when that bee hit him without anybody asking him to. One of the women pulled the stinger out of the roof of his mouth. We didn't get much honey but had a good time..

##### Why?# If we had two or three trees to cut down we would take our horse and wagon and blankets and stay over night. After we had our supper we went to bed, which was

14. made of one blanket down on the ground which we lay on and another one over us. I felt a bee crawling up my back. I said, "Grandfather, I wish you would get that bee off my back." and he said, "Look here, George, if that bee is crawling on your back and you hit him he will sting you but if he is crawling on your shirt and hit he won't sting you. Now try it." I knew it wasn't any use to ask him any more. Then I reached around and hit the bee and he stung me right on my back bone and that tickled grandfather and he lay there and laughed. Well, a little later he and I were across the river hunting and all to once he began to kick and thrash around and I didn't know but what he had gone mad or crazy. He said there was something going up his pants leg. I stood there and looked at him and never stirred to help him. I asked, "Are you sure there is something going up your pants leg." "Yes, he said "and it is getting way up here on my back" and he was pulling at his shirt. I stood there and said "Let him come, I ain't afraid of him." I pulled up the hammer on my gun and said "let him come, I ain't afraid of him." About that time a mouse came up his neck out of his shirt collar and he knocked it off with his hands. Then I said, "Grandfather, do you remember the time you got that bee out from under my shirt," He looked at me a minute and said "I guess that makes you and I even." In the meanwhile His little dog killed the mouse and he said that the dog knew more than I did.

15. Our main game was wild canada geese, cranes, ducks and prairie chickens and quail.

One Sunday I took my gun and went all alone and I didn't have very many cartridges in my pocket and I didn't want any for I was going just a little ways. I wandered up through the timber to the spring, called McPherson's spring at that time, and there I found two fellows, one was a butther and the other was a young fellow. I visited with them a few moments and every now and then I would sees some ducks settle over a cornfield and I said, "Boys, you are going to get some good duck shooting if you will go up to that cornfield." I'll get a drink of water and go back home, getting there by dinner time. One of them said, "Dinner? Look here," and he pulled two or three links of balogna out of his pocket and a bag of crackers. Now he said that here was plenty of good spring water and plenty to eat, now go to it, and I did. Come on and go with us, he said and I said I hadn't but a few shells. Well I went with them and the ducks were coming in, all native ducks and I looked the ground over and made up my mind where I wanted to make a blind. I made my blind out of cornstalks and sat down beside it. While I was sitting there a single canvasback duck came along and I shot at him and made a good, clean miss. I happened to think that I had loaded up three or four shells with No. 4 shot to see how the gun would carry No. 4 shot. At that time I loaded all my own shells. I stepped off what I called a good gun shot and hung my hat on a corn stalk. Then I went back, loaded my gun up with the No. 4 shot and I had 3 No. 4 shells left and I shot all three of them at my hat, then I went down and got my hat and had one shot in my hat. My gun wouldn't shoot No. 4 shot, scattered it all over the country. I set down by the side of my blind and every now and then I would drop a duck, all greenheads, and I shot all my shells away but one.



16. While I was sitting there I saw two Canada Geese coming from way over the prairie, a long ways off. I said here comes two geese and they are coming right over me and just one load. The gander is ahead and the goose behind and if I kill the gander the goose will never come back but if I kill the goose the gander will come back sooner or later. I did, I killed the goose and I set there and watched the old fellow fly away pretty near out of sight, then I ran down to my nearest neighbor, hunter, and I said give me two cartridges, and he said "I can't", "Give me one," I said. Well he gave me one and I went back to my blind and 'twasn't but just a short time before I saw the old fellow, the old gander, coming back. I killed him and then the thought struck me that I was around 3 or 4 miles from home and afoot. I picked up my two Canada Geese and 12 mallard ducks and threwed them in a pile. I bundled them up and got them the best way to handle them and started down towards the road through the cornfield. I got down to Willow Creek, by Jerry Gilger's place, and I had got a drink of water and as I stood there a team drove up. I asked the man if I could ride and he said "Yes." I rode clear home, which I called good luck.

I was boarding at Bingham's in Wright County, handling dogs for Chicago parties. I came on a kind of a rainy spell, raining in the forenoon and I didn't go out. It cleared up a little in the afternoon and I took my gun and the old dog and started for a corn field where I knew there were sandhill cranes feeding. I didn't want to run the young dogs because the grass was wet and the birds were wild. I see a flock of cranes way out on the mowing, probably there was 40 or 50 birds in it and I went way round them and the cornfield too for I knew they was heading for the cornfield and I see where the cranes had beena feeding and the corn was just chuc k full of tumble weeds, great big weeds. I pulled a lot of them and made me a nice bling. I would stand up in it and my head wouldn't

17. come to the top of it then. I cut some corn and laid down to keep me out of the wet, called the old dog in and made him lay down and filled up my pipe and I was ready for business then. Them cranes kept a feeding in, working in, got into the corn and kept feeding towards me, slow, and I didn't know but what they was going to run over me before I could get what I wanted, I didn't want on, I wanted more than one. I wanted to get them in the corn row that I was in so that I could get two, or more than one, and ### two stepped in my row and I said my time has come now. My gun snapped, it didn't go. Then I came awful near shooting the other barrell but the thought struck me I wouldn't. While I was slipping the shell out and putting another one in the third one stepped into the row and I made just a little faint whistle and all three stuck their heads up and then I got them I got the three and then when they raised I got another one, got the fourth one. I tied them up together and throwed them over my shoulder and started back to where I was boarding. When I got out onto the prairie I ~~was~~ saw a team coming my way and I waited until he drove up and I asked him if he ever ate cranes and he said he was very fond of them and I threw two in his wagon. He said, "Oh, my, one is enough, nobody but my wife and myself." Now ~~is~~ said, "If you give me any back talk I will give you another one" and then he laughed. He said, "Say, right down in front of my house is a watermellon patch, anytime you happen that way, help yourself, you killed those cranes in my corn." And the next day I happened along that way and I stopped in the watermellon patch and about the time I stopped I saw a woman come from the house and I didn't know whether to stay or go. She said "Here's a caseknife and you keep it in the patch."

Once at Bingham's in Wright County jussg after breakfast they was having family worship but they was a little bit long winded

18. and I didn't want to stay, I wanted to clean my gun. While I was cleaning my gun I saw two cranes light in the garden. I slipped in a couple of loads into the gun and crept out. The garden was near the house and when I started I knew they would fly but I walked right along and when they did fly I killed both of them. I went back to the house and went to cleaning my gun and Mr. Bingham came out of the dining room a grinning. He said, "George, you kinda broke up our prayer meeting." That ended the crane deal there.

A crane is a funny bird, that is the sandhills. They make their nest on old rat houses, or bogs, near the water and there will never be but two eggs. They will lay one egg and the minute it is laid they will begin to set. They will sit on that egg about a week, perhaps a little longer, and then lay another one. When the first egg hatches the old rooster crane will take that little fellow and take care of it and then when the other one is hatched the old hen crane will take that but they never let the two young ones get together for if they do they will fight until one kills the other. After they get to be good sized cranes they will all go together then.

The greatest trouble in cooking a crane we had no kettle big enough to put him all in, so we put him in a wash boiler and cooked him that way, or we could cut the meat off the bones and fry them but they were good eating any way.

I had a pet crane once and he use to bother about coming into the shanty for when the door was open he would come in but he put in most of his time along the shore of the river looking for something to eat for he was always hungry. He got to be a good, big crane and when he was in the house his head was way above the table and if there was a piece of bread or jonnycake on the table he would

19. help himself. Father was standing on a chair one day and the door was open and the crane came in and when he went to step off the chair he didn't see the crane and stepped back on <sup>its neck</sup> and killed the crane. And that ended my pet crane.

The geese nested mostly on rat houses and had ten or twelve eggs. Of course they were at home in the water and just as soon as one was hatched he would go into the water and away he would go. The way we used to catch them, would start out and see an old goose feeding way up on the side hill and then we would start and run and the old goose would start and fly back into the pond. Then get on about the line from where she left the ground to where she hit the water and then here would come the little ones and then pick the little ones up as they came along, of course the old goose would be calling them all the time. ##### I wore a jacket with a string tied around the bottom to keep the birds from falling out and when I would catch the young ones I would poke them in there until we got back to the wagon. They were just like the tame goslings and by the time you got three or four in your jacket you would get pretty well fertilized before you got back to the wagon. If you carried them in your hand you would kill them.

The ducks nested all along the river and around the ponds, a way back in the grass. I have found some nests over a half mile from the water, a way back on the side hill. They would generally have from six to ten eggs. There were all kinds around here then, mallards, teal, spikes, canvasbacks, redheads and anything else. When we were hunting we didn't pay much attention to the teal or other small ducks for we didn't want the small ones, we wanted the bigger ones. The country then was all full of ponds and it was a very scares pond that when you went by it there wasn't from one to onehundred ducks on each pond. They had plenty of nesting ground

20. and swimming ground then, for this was their home and they hadn't been driven out by the settlers. One day when I was quite a chunk of a lad I was walking along back of where Dr. Johnson lives and a flock of teal jumped up and I picked up a stone and took a flock shot at them and killed one with the stone.

One day in the bend just below Cat Island Irv. Whitney shot both barrells of his gun at a flock of ducks and killed 18 of them.

Father said one day, I am going to give you and sis a little outing and we put our blankets in the wagon and drove towards Skunk Grove, the last timber on the Skunk River, southeast of Webster City, and now called Rose Grove. He didn't want prairie chickens, he wanted and was after the curlews, the long, sickle-billed curlews. They were better to fry than the chickens were, tenderer. There was no cords in the meat of their legs like there was in the prairie chicken legs. But he killed all we wanted to eat. Sis and I had a good time, came back with our mouths full of prairie gum. The sickle-bills got cleared out before the rest of the wild game did.

There was at one time a great many wild pigeons, I have killed a lot of them over in the timber but they weren't what they called real thick here. They didn't come in the big# flocks that covered the sun like you read about in other places but would be in small flocks of 40 or 50 and they didn't nest here.

When I can shoot my rifle clear, at the pigeons in the sky,  
I'll bid farewell to pork and beans and live on pigeon pie.