MARGARET FOGLESONG BALL LLOYD

Adventures on False Bottom Creek, 1940–1948

One Girl's Story

Editor's note: Margaret ("Maggie") Estelle Fogelsong was born in Los Angeles, California, in 1933 to Fred and Allene Furois Fogelsong. Her parents had grown up near each other on small farms along False Bottom Creek just north of the Black Hills in Lawrence County, South Dakota. Following their marriage in 1932, with the Great Depression in full force, they moved west in search of new opportunities. In 1942, when Maggie was six and her brother Henry ("Butch") was a toddler, the family returned home to rent a farm, known locally as the Todd Place. There, Maggie and her brother grew up "surrounded by grandparents, uncles, cousins, and horses, attending a one-room schoolhouse, and imagining what the Germans and Japanese would do if they invaded South Dakota."

Some sixty years later, Maggie set her adventures down on paper for her sons John Ball and Andy Ball and their children. Filled with vivid detail, her memoir gives a child's-eye view of the freedoms, fears, and discoveries that came with growing up in rural western South Dakota in the 1940s. Presented here are nine chapters from her original fourteen-chapter memoir entitled "My Story," which now resides in the State Archives Collection of the South Dakota State Historical Society in Pierre. The excerpt presented here has been lightly edited for style and readability. Any omissions of more than a sentence are indicated with ellipses.

City Mouse

When I was very young, we lived at 2424 Hancock Street in Los Angeles. Mama wrote the address in ink on a bit of adhesive tape and stuck it to the inside of a locket for me to wear in case I ever got lost. My locket looked like a little book with a blue enameled cover decorated by a tiny rose. Now, all these years later, I still have it.

We had a one-bedroom house. My bed, a Murphy bed, folded up into a sort of closet in the front room during the day, and all my toys were kept in that closet too. Lovely red velvet curtains separated the living room from the dining room. They could be pulled shut if, for example, there was a surprise birthday cake on the dining room table.

Hancock Street was a wonderful place to live. My best friend was Pat Adams, who lived down on the corner. Pat had a brother, Johnny, who sometimes came up to play with me, and two older sisters, Lois and Jeanette. Jeanette seemed like my own older sister. My friend Joanne and her sister Elaine lived next door, and if I climbed up on the fence near our clothesline I could see right into their side porch. Sometimes, if it was raining, their mother gave us crackers and grape jelly there. Joyce, with beautiful red curly hair, lived across the street but, of course, we couldn't play with Joyce too often because none of us were allowed to cross the street by ourselves.

We played jacks and we jumped rope and we roller-skated. Our roller skates were the kind that clamped onto our shoes and were tightened up with a skate key. We skated uphill on Hancock Street as far as the corner (once, when I had skated there by myself, I saw a little girl across the street twirling around in what must have been her first-communion dress—the most beautiful dress I had ever seen), and then we skated, as fast as the wind, back down to the corner where Pat lived. We played games like Statues, too, and Captain, May I? Once, Pat and I pushed our dolls in their buggies all the way around the block. We had made orange juice out of watercolor paints for their bottles, but we drank it ourselves. It's a wonder we didn't get lead poisoning!

My brother, Butch, was born while we were living on Hancock Street when I was five; he wasn't much fun to play with right away. When he got older, Mama put his highchair next to the dining room table. Even though Butch didn't have to, I was supposed to clean up my plate at mealtimes. This was awfully hard to do, especially when we had spinach or peas. I eventually figured out that if I dawdled long enough, Mama and Daddy would go to the kitchen to do dishes. As soon as the swinging door closed, I threw my spinach underneath Butch's highchair near all the food he had dropped by himself. It was lucky for me that he couldn't talk.

We lived in a real neighborhood (maybe you would have to go to Europe to find these kinds of neighborhoods now) with a greengrocer's store just a block or so away. The greengrocer had a special refrigerated box for pop with a bottle opener on the side and a container just below to catch the bottle caps. One day I put some of those bottle caps into my pocket. When Mama found out, she went back with me to the grocer's to return the caps and apologize for stealing them. Although the grocer was very nice to me and said I could have all I wanted, Mama wouldn't let me take any.

We had a movie theater nearby too. I remember seeing *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*, and a movie with Shirley Temple in it and one with Alice Faye—the one with the song about Alexander's Ragtime Band. Mama and Daddy sang and whistled that song as we walked home that summer evening. Dad died at home in Belle Fourche, South Dakota, one summer evening many, many years later. We were sitting around his bed, and Mom's next-door neighbors were sitting on their

Maggie, wearing the white dress at far right, appears here with neighborhood friends at one of her birthday parties.

Maggie and her mother, Allene Furois Fogelsong, pose on the side porch of their house in Los Angeles.

back porch in the dark listening to a tape of old-time songs. "Alexander's Ragtime Band" came floating softly in through the open window.

Betty was the girl I admired most at my school, Green Gate School, and I also had friends who were boys. Jimmy and Eddie both invited me to their birthday parties. In first grade we sat around tables to do our work sheets. One day the work sheet instruction was to draw a picture illustrating each of several different words. One word was "tree." Jeanne, the girl next to me, drew a picture of a house instead, so I drew a house like hers even though I knew I was supposed to draw a tree. I can't remember exactly what Mrs. Hall, our teacher, said to me but I know I never looked at anyone's paper after that except once, in college, and then I didn't change my answer.

After school, I sometimes listened to *Jack Armstrong, the All-American Boy* on the radio. In one episode, Jack saved himself and his friends from bloodthirsty natives by drawing a magic circle around them all with his green magic ring. Mama let me send for one; it cost a nickel or a dime and a Wheaties box top. I loved my ring, but I lost it in the sandbox at school after just one day. I was devastated.

When I was six, I worried a good deal about being put in jail. Mama had told me that only bad people were put in jail but, unfortunately, I seemed to be bad quite a lot of the time. Stealing bottle caps and copying Jeanne's paper were just a few examples.

Such was my life when I was six and about to be jolted into a new world, one without any playmates (except, of course, for my brother Butch, who was really too young to count), a world without sidewalks to skate on, or movie theaters, or electric lights, or even a bathroom in the house.

My New World

In the spring of 1942, when I was seven, Fred and Nita Doody offered Mom and Dad the rental of a farm called the Todd Place in South Dakota. I don't know exactly why Mama and Daddy decided to leave Los Angeles; maybe because Japan had just bombed Pearl Harbor and we were having bomb drills in school, or maybe because they wanted to go back to where they had been raised, or maybe for some other reason.

The Todd Place still lies along False Bottom Creek north of Saint Onge and south of Belle Fourche. Then, the two-story house, which had once been painted yellow, had a wood cookstove in the kitchen and a Benjamin Franklin stove in the front room for heat.[1] The Benjamin Franklin was just the right distance from the wall for kids to dress there during freezing winter mornings.

The water pump was right outside the kitchen door under a huge old cottonwood tree with lots of big, thick roots running every which way. The double-hole outhouse was a little farther along. One hole was smaller and just the right size for kids. Mama and I could have a nice chat when using the outhouse together.

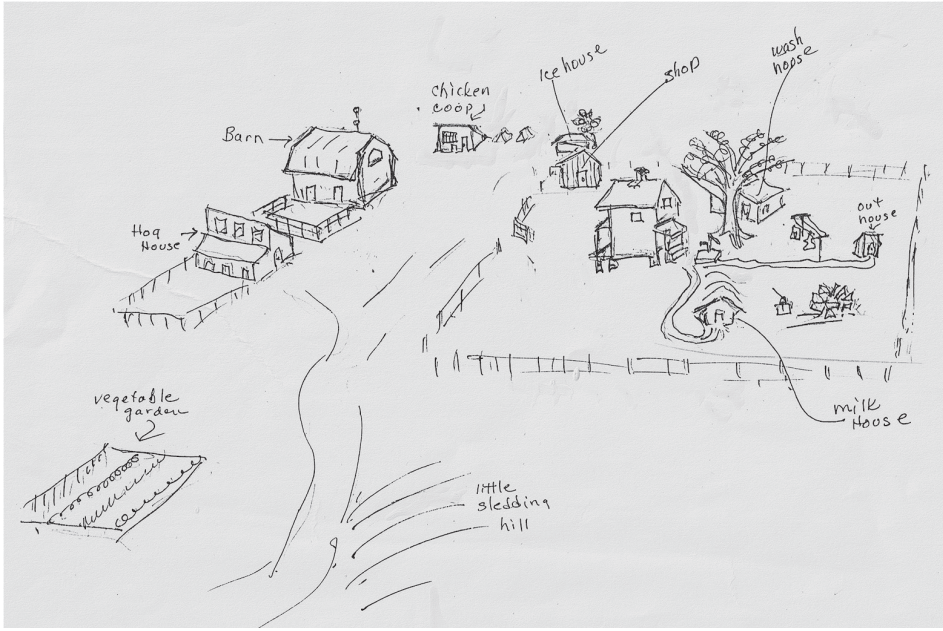
The other buildings surrounding the farmyard included a pigsty, barn, henhouse, toolshed, icehouse, milk house, and an old abandoned house used both as a wash house and for grain storage and, occasionally, as an unauthorized sanctuary for a family of skunks.

1. Named for Benjamin Franklin, who invented it in 1741, the Franklin stove resembles a metal fireplace and has baffles at the back to aid in the conduction of heat. "Franklin stove," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Franklin_stove, accessed 28 June 2019.

The window of my room upstairs (upstairs was an attic with low, sloping ceilings) looked toward the barn. I spent lots of time looking out my window at the chickens scratching here and there, wondering how I had been lucky enough not to have been born a chicken. In my new world, chickens outnumbered humans so greatly that the probability of being born human seemed awfully low. I remember that my bedspread was a pretty blue chenille with pink and yellow flowers on it.

The next farmhouse downstream along False Bottom Creek (toward Belle Fourche) belonged to Mama's mother and father, Stella and Fred Furois, whom we called "Grandma and Grandaddy-down." The next farmhouse up False Bottom Creek but on the other side of it belonged to Daddy's mother, Ollie Foglesong, or "Grandma-up." Bob and Henry, two of Daddy's brothers, lived there too. Todd School was across the railroad tracks and up the hill from Grandma-up's house.

Todd School was a wonderful one-room school that Mama had gone



The author drew this sketch of the Todd Place showing the placement of the house and outbuildings.

to when she was a girl. It had a huge old coal-burning furnace. The coal shed was close to the school and convenient for playing Red Rover. The barn was a little farther away. Everybody who came to school, except me and a few other walkers, rode horseback. The girls had their own outhouse, and so did the boys. When I was in first grade, twenty-four pupils were enrolled in all of the eight grades. My classmates were Evelyn and Thelma.

Thelma had a fit one day, and the teacher put something between her teeth, and I had to run down to Grandma-up's to tell her to call Thelma's mother because, of course, Todd School didn't have a telephone. We and Grandma-up, Grandma-down, Thelma's family, and Carl Ryther's family were all on the same telephone line. All our telephones were the old-fashioned kind with a handle to crank to make them ring. Our ring was two longs and three shorts. Everyone on the line could hear the rings and could listen in to any conversation if they wanted to. If Mama wanted to talk to someone not on our line, she had to call Central (two longs), who was Mrs. Quillen in Saint Onge, to get connected.

The first week or so after I came to Todd School in the spring of my first grade year, I was very shy, and I pretended I didn't want to go out to play at recess. Everybody played baseball (or maybe it was softball) at Todd School but no one had at Green Gate School in Los Angeles, at least not in the first grade. One day, an eighth grader, Carl Ryther, who was captain of one of the baseball teams, said he needed me for the outfield on his team and showed me where to stand and what to do. He was such a kind boy. He later became a missionary in China. I realize now that the pitchers were very kind to us little kids, too, because we got hits all the time.

We had quite a succession of teachers at Todd School. Teachers had to either live at the school, which had a tiny bedroom and kitchen attached, or board with a family nearby or drive all the way from town. Most teachers "lived-in," but it must have been terribly lonely after we kids had left in the afternoon without a television, or radio, or newspaper, or telephone, or anybody to run next door to visit.

We had one man teacher, but he was soon drafted for World War II. Mrs. Rademacher was with us for several years. She wore an apron to

class each day and had Katherine and me do her breakfast dishes (she usually had oatmeal) during our arithmetic lesson.

Mrs. Henderson was next. She was very sarcastic to us all until Mama wrote a note excusing my absence and signed it Allene Foglesong. Allene was such an unusual name that Mrs. Henderson realized she and Mama had been friends in high school in Belle Fourche. As a result, I immediately became teacher's pet and was hated by all the kids until she finally quit.

My eighth-grade teacher was Martha Garman. Martha had finished high school and six weeks of teachers college, and she brought her little sister, Alice, and her still-littler brother, Henry, to live with her at school. Everybody loved Martha, including Uncle Henry, but that's another story.

During all these years, the number of kids at Todd School was decreasing. When I was in eighth grade there were only eight of us left, and I was all alone in my grade. Eventually Todd School closed, and the building was moved to Saint Onge.

One-Room School

All our teachers taught according to the direction of the *Course of Study*, a big, thick green book sent out by the State Department of Education. The *Course of Study* described what should be taught in each grade and subject during each six-week period. For example, second-graders might be supposed to learn about short division in math and about the pilgrims in social studies. Of course, the *Course of Study* gave a lot more detail, telling exactly what it was that we should learn in each subject. All our teachers kept the volume upright between two bookends on their desk, and any of us could go read it if we wanted. If you were to read our *Course of Study* now, you would find it very out of date, I'm afraid, especially in science. I'm pretty sure I remember reading that there were approximately five thousand stars in the sky! At the end of each six-week period, the superintendent of schools, Mrs. Laura Bentz, brought out tests (which not even our teacher had seen) to see if we had learned enough about each subject.

Each six weeks we had to memorize a poem that was right for our grade level. I can still recite Rosetti's "Who Has Seen the Wind?" from

The Todd School overlooked the scenic False Bottom Creek valley.

the first grade and parts of Noyes's "The Highwayman" from the eighth and lots of others from the grades in between. "The Highwayman" was the most romantic poem you could ever imagine: "The moon was a ghostly galleon tossed upon cloudy seas. . . . The highwayman came riding up to the old inn door" and there, waiting for him at the window was "the landlord's black-eyed daughter, Bess . . . plaiting a dark red love-knot into her long black hair."

We also studied a famous picture every six weeks and learned about the artist. I learned all about Gainsborough's *The Blue Boy* and Millet's *The Gleaners* and my all-time favorite, Martin's *Harp of the Winds*, and lots of others. We didn't learn about the French Impressionists, though I can't imagine why. We also did sculptures using bath-size bars of Ivory soap. I made a cow once that really wasn't bad at all.

Our textbooks were all interesting—some of them had lovely pictures—although some of them were quite old. We wrote our names on the front pages of our books, adding our names to the names of kids

who had used the same book in earlier years. One time I found Mama's name in a book, so that book had been in Todd School for at least twenty-two years!

Sometimes the teacher sent us all to the chalkboard and gave us each a different math problem to work out or a different word to spell. One time I was struggling to spell "geography" while standing next to an eighth grader. The eighth grader whispered to me, "George Elsen's old grandmother rode a pig home yesterday." Do you get it? This was the first mnemonic device I ever encountered.

Because all the grades were in one room, the teachers could let us study with the kids in grades above our own if we had already finished our own assignment. If I didn't have anything to do at all, I read *Compton's Encyclopedia*. Todd School had the entire set, and every book from A to XYZ was amazingly interesting.

In this view taken inside Todd School, Maggie, a seventh-grader, is at far right and her brother Butch is at front, far left. The door at right leads to the teacher's apartment.

Each country school in the county had a chapter of the Young Citizens League (YCL). The club met one Friday afternoon each month; we elected officers and used some version of *Robert's Rules of Order* to conduct our meetings. Our parents took turns providing refreshments. One Valentine's Day it was Mama's turn, and she brought apple pie with pink whipped cream on top (we couldn't have ice cream because we had no refrigerator to keep it cold). That night I came down with a terrible case of the stomach flu, and, to this day, the thought of pink whipped cream makes me queasy.

When I was in the sixth grade, our county superintendent chose me to be one of three delegates to go to the state YCL meeting in Pierre, the state capital. The other two delegates, both from other country schools, were Mary Tiegen, who was in the eighth grade and seemed very grown up, and Charles Swanson, who was a sixth grader like me. (Just four years later, Charles and I were both in the trombone section of the Lead High School band. I never, ever could have imagined such a thing when I was in sixth grade.) Mama gave me a Toni home permanent just before our trip, but it didn't make me as beautiful as I had hoped; my hair became so curly I could hardly comb it. I don't remember much about our trip. It was a long one, though, because it took one day for Mrs. Bentz to drive us there and one day to drive back, plus all the meeting days in between. I have a picture of all us delegates standing on the steps of the South Dakota capitol.

In addition to a Christmas program, Todd School put on a Halloween program in the fall to raise money. One time we had a circus with goofy acts followed by a carnival. For the circus, I was a tightrope walker. We had set up two sawhorses on either side of the stage with a rope tied between them. Someone helped me up on top of one sawhorse in my crepe-paper costume with parasol, and there I prepared, fearfully, to cross. As my foot went out for the first step, a couple of older kids rested a plank on top of the sawhorses and underneath the rope. Then I teetered my way across to the other side, pretending to be in danger of falling with every step.

After the circus, people bought tickets to go to the carnival sideshows. My job there was to tell fortunes. I wore a longish, reddish dress with quantities of bead necklaces from Grandma-down's flapper

days around my neck.[2] We had made up the fortunes ahead of time and written them on little scraps of paper. I gazed into the crystal ball (probably a fishbowl) and fished out a fortune for my client from underneath the table.

After the carnival we had a box social. Each woman and girl brought a lunch for two people, packed in a cardboard box decorated for Halloween. No one could tell who made which lunch. The lunches were auctioned off, and whoever bought a lunch ate it with whoever made it. Daddy and Grandaddy always bid the lunches up so Todd School would get more money. Sometimes they didn't stop bidding quite soon enough, so, naturally, they ended up with more than one lunch apiece to eat and more than one person to eat with. Eating with somebody who was not in my family always seemed embarrassing to me, so I ate fast. One year my cousin Donnie happened to be visiting at Halloween, and I told him what my lunch looked like so we could eat together. That was cheating, I'm afraid.

We made presents for our folks at Christmastime and for our mothers on Mother's Day. School was out by the time Father's Day came around. I remember making a Mother's Day vase for dried flowers from an old vinyl record that had been softened in hot water, cut in two, folded into a triangle, and then painted with little pink flowers. One year, when I was older, I composed a Mother's Day poem that ended with the words "How could I ever love another quite so much as I love Mother?" Mama framed it and kept it on her wall until she went into the nursing home when she was very old. I have it now. . . .

To and From School

Every morning before school, Mama made a lunch for me and packed it into my lunch pail. I usually had hot soup or cocoa, sandwiches, an apple, and something sweet. Then, off I would go, crossing False Bot-

2. "Flappers," or free-spirited women who dared to bob both their hair and their hemlines, symbolized the 1920s. The decade was a time of great social change, thanks to the Nineteenth Amendment that gave women the right to vote, the greater participation of women in the workforce, affordable cars that increased mobility, movies that brought the outside world closer, and other factors. Emily Spivak, "The History of the Flapper, Part 1: A Call for Freedom," https://www.smithsonianmag.com/arts-culture/the-history-of-the-flapper-part-1-a-call-for-freedom-11957978/, accessed 28 June 2019.

tom on a two-by-four-inch board that Daddy had laid across the creek as a bridge for me. My next stop was Grandma-up's, just to stick my head through the kitchen doorway to say hello. Grandma and Bob and Henry were usually eating breakfast. Then I walked on up the hill to Todd School. Everybody else, except Thelma, Louise, and Hazel Redmond, rode horseback to school. They kept their ponies in the barn and went out at lunchtime to feed them. I wanted to ride to school, too, but Mama and Daddy said we lived so close that I could easily walk. It didn't seem all that close to me.

When school was over in the afternoon, I walked with the Redmond girls as far as our mailbox and then turned off to go to Grandma-up's. Sometimes Skipper, Grandma's old black-and-white sheepdog, came out to meet me.

Grandma almost always had homemade bread ready. She'd spread homemade butter on it and warm it up in the oven. Her homemade butter was always a lot darker yellow than ours, and I thought it was too strong. Sometimes she had vegetable soup simmering on the stove, and then she gave me a bowl of that.

Afterwards we played Chinese checkers. The winner is the one who gets all her marbles to the other side of the board first. When I was little, Grandma always won. One day I was tired of losing, so I made some extra moves when I thought she wasn't looking. Afterwards, I said to her, "Grandma, this is the first time I ever won," and she said, "Yes, Peter, but I think you cheated." I never cheated again.

I should probably explain about my nickname here. Mama and Daddy called me Pete or Peetie or, sometimes, Peter-eater. That was because their good friend in Los Angeles called me Sweetie Pie and then Peetie Pie and then, later, just Peetie. Grandma-up usually called me Peter. Once, Daddy totally humiliated me by riding horseback up to Todd School to see if I had made it there safely (the one and only day I didn't stop at Grandma-up's in the morning) and asking if Pedro was there. At school everybody called me Margaret; nobody had known I had a boy's nickname. . . .

When Grandma-up was a young woman named Olida Sanford, she homesteaded by herself out near Beulah, Wyoming. After a while she became worried about Indians, so she left the homestead and went to

Maggie visited the house of Olida Sanford, or Grandma-up, each day on her way to school. Pictured here are her Uncle Bob and Alice Basset.

Lead, South Dakota, to be a seamstress. In those days, sewing was done by hand. Once a year, a rich family would hire a seamstress to come live with them and make all the clothing and household linens the family would need for the next year. One of the families that hired Olida was the Foglesong family, and so she met Walter, the son of the family. In due course, they were engaged to be married. It must have been fun for Grandma to sew a wedding dress for herself for a change, instead of sewing for someone else.

Then a terrible influenza epidemic came to Lead, and many people died because the illness so often turned into pneumonia.[3] Grandma

3. A worldwide pandemic of Spanish influenza in 1918–1919 compounded the tragedy of World War I and killed approximately 675,000 Americans in 1918 alone. Lawrence County had the highest mortality rate in South Dakota in 1918, with 145 deaths.

caught the flu and had such a high fever she was often delirious. As soon as she recovered, she went out to nurse others who were sick. She told me that one day, dead tired, she came back from nursing, opened a drawer in her dresser and saw her wedding gown. She had forgotten all about getting married.

I think you can tell from these anecdotes that Grandma was a self-reliant and independent woman. After she and Walter moved to the farm on False Bottom Creek, they had six children. Can you imagine just doing the wash for six babies without electricity or running water or disposable diapers?

Sometimes False Bottom flooded while I was at school and I couldn't walk home. Then I just stayed at Grandma-up's. It always felt just a little strange to me to be overnight at someone else's house. It was fun to be with Henry, though. He teased and roughhoused with all us cousins. Sometimes he got a little too rough, though, and once I got even with him in a way that scared me badly. Someone had left a little toy airplane at Grandma-up's; it was a wind-up toy that scooted along the floor, and all its gears showed. I wound up that airplane and put it in Uncle Henry's hair. Judging from the terrible howls he made, it must have hurt dreadfully.

Martha Garman, my eighth-grade teacher, was beautiful and extremely nice and fun to be around. One day a Piper Cub airplane landed in the field just across the road and down the hill from school. We all ran to the window to watch. The pilot walked up to Todd School and knocked on the door. I think he asked to use the telephone but, of course, the school didn't have one. Looking back on it now I believe he must have known Martha and had come just to say "hello," because the telephone line clearly went to Grandma-up's.

Henry fell in love with Martha, I think, but Grandma-up wasn't having any of that. I don't know what went on, as Mama and Daddy didn't tell me, but the next thing I knew, Henry tried to enlist in the Merchant Marine. They wouldn't take him, though. Later on, he had other girlfriends, but Grandma got rid of them all. One time, one of Henry's

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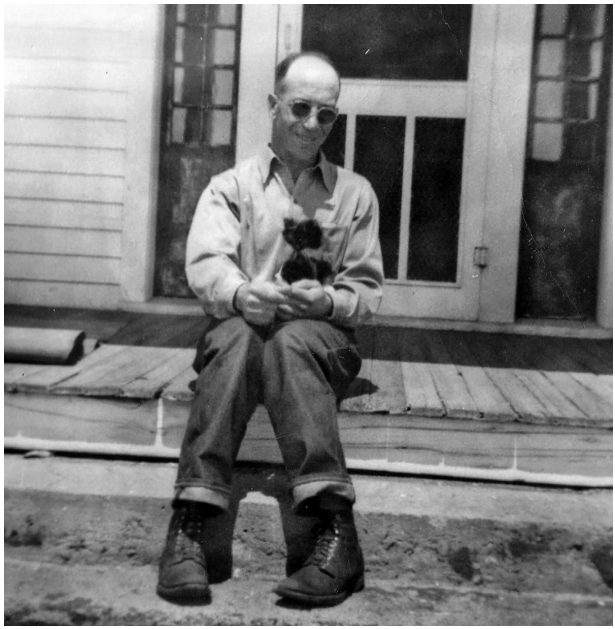
"1918 Spanish Flu Pandemic in South Dakota Remembered," https://history.sd.gov/archives/1918spanishflu.aspx, accessed 28 June 2019; "South Dakota Deaths by County," https://history.sd.gov/archives/docs/Statistics.pdf, accessed 28 June 2019.



Uncle Henry poses with a new puppy on the front steps of Grandma-up's house.

girlfriends was visiting, and when Grandma happened to walk from the kitchen into the front room, she found the girlfriend sitting on Henry's lap in the old leather rocking chair. Grandma referred to her as "the Floozie from Belle Fourche." Mama and Daddy invited this girlfriend and Henry to our house on New Year's Day for breakfast, and we had fried chicken and apple pie. Everybody always said it was too bad Henry never got married because he would have been such a good father. . . .

Cousin Donnie

My cousin Donnie stayed with Grandma-up most summers. He was two years older than I, and he was my best friend from the summer I was seven all the way through World War II and a little beyond. I wore denim overalls and a straw hat to be just like Donnie. Either I walked the half mile or so up to Grandma-up's to play, or he walked down to the Todd Place. We had many wonderful adventures together.

Uncle Henry used to set up competitions between us, like who could eat the most ears of corn (Donnie could eat more than twelve of those little midget corn ears that ripen first) or who could eat the

most pancakes. Donnie was always victorious in these contests, but I distinctly remember beating him by at least six inches in a footrace from the barn to Grandma-up's back door. For the most part, though, Donnie and I found our own adventures.

False Bottom Creek was marvelous for kids. We used to fish in it for hours with bamboo poles and worms. We mostly caught chubs, which we threw out, and suckers and bullheads, which we ate. Mama always fried up our catch for breakfast the next day; those fish were incredibly tasty. We swam in False Bottom too.

We had a couple of different swimming holes, shallow ones when we were little and deeper ones as we got taller. I learned to dog paddle there that first summer. When we finished swimming, we always had bloodsuckers stuck to our feet. One time I decided not to bother to pick them off before I put on my socks. That night, when I shook out my socks, I found the poor things all shriveled up and dead. Having bloodsuckers on our feet never bothered us at all, but I think I might be a little squeamish about it today.

One time, Donnie and I found a huge box elder tree lying along the creek bank at Grandma-up's. Maybe it had washed down with that spring's flood. We figured that if we had a dugout canoe, like the Indians used, we could float downstream, and once we had floated right on past Grandma-down's everything we saw would be new. Why, we might reach Redwater Creek and then, perhaps, the Belle Fourche River. I'm not sure if we thought we would get as far as the Missouri River, but I do know that I, at least, visualized our future adventures as being rather similar to Thoreau's trip down the Merrimack River, although, of course, I hadn't heard of Thoreau or the Merrimack back then.[4] We started working on that canoe with Donnie's jackknife. After a while we went to the house and got a hatchet and an axe. After a number of hot, sultry days of full-time work we had made only the slightest of impressions on that log. We eventually gave up, but there were other things to do.

4. Henry David Thoreau chronicled a boat trip through Massachusetts and New Hampshire with his brother in *A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers*, published in 1849. "A Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/A_Week_on_the_Concord_and_Merrimack_Rivers, accessed 28 June 2019.

Our next adventure occurred at the Todd Place just where False Bottom curved gently around a low-lying area. There, four or five substantial piles of rocks were slowly being grown over by all sorts of unpleasant weeds. Donnie and I could think of no explanation for these piles of rocks except one: surely, we must be looking at an Indian burial ground!

Everyone knew that pottery and spears and maybe gold and all sorts of other wonderful stuff was to be found in Indian burial grounds. So, on still another hot, sultry day, we got a shovel from Daddy and started digging and heaving those rocks out of the way. I don't know how many days we excavated, but we were very sorry to have to give up the idea of finding buried treasure. I hope the adults in our lives weren't too busy and harassed to be entertained by all our struggles.

False Bottom Creek had carved out a cutbank quite close to Grandma-up's. (In fact, after Grandma-up and Bob and Henry had died and the farm was sold, almost all of the furniture, dishes, pictures, and things from the house were thrown over that bank because no one wanted them. Now I realize how lovely some of those old things were and how many memories they contained.) The cutbank was mostly sand, and if you stood at the bottom of it you were in a secluded place with the creek running right in front of your feet. Donnie and I decided we needed a cave of our own there, a nice, roomy clubhouse running maybe six feet or so into the bank.

Because of the sand, the digging was pretty easy. We dug out a couple of feet or more of our cave, enough so we could just scrunch into it together, before we realized that it was altogether too damp and full of mosquitoes for anyone to want to sit there for more than a minute. We gave the whole project up. I think this adventure must have been our most dangerous one, given the possibility of the bank collapsing, although we didn't realize it at the time. Apparently, we hadn't bothered to tell any adults what we were up to.

As we grew a little older, Donnie and I became increasingly obsessed with the war. I can remember lying in bed at night terrified of what life would be like if the Germans occupied South Dakota and came to the Todd Place. Large squadrons of bombers flew from the air base at Rapid City right over all of us on False Bottom Creek. Donnie and I

Maggie still lived in Los Angeles when she posed with her cousin Donnie for this photograph taken while her family vacationed back home.

used to practice shutting our eyes and picking out the individual engine noises to guess the number of airplanes overhead. Many a time we would count up to seventeen or eighteen and be right. I really don't know how we did it. We used to play "war" a lot.

An old two-seater car had been abandoned along the creek bank in Grandma-up's pasture not far from the house. It was all rusty and falling apart but still possessed a steering wheel and a satisfactory number of dials and toggle switches as well as an array of pedals of one sort or another. It made a perfect bomber or, sometimes, a fighter plane. Donnie was the pilot and I was the copilot (that's the way things were done in those days). We would look to our right over the edge of the creek bank and see the Yellow River or, sometimes, the Yangtze.[5] We dropped

5. Beginning in 1937, the Japanese occupied portions of China during the Second Sino-Japanese War, which formed part of the Pacific Theatre of World War II. The Yel-

many a bomb on many an important Japanese installation along those rivers, and we were in many a dogfight with Japanese Zeros. Our guns went uhuhuhuhuhuhuhuhuhuh as our plane hurtled down toward the enemy and then up again into the protection of the clouds. We were always heroic and triumphant although frequently badly outnumbered.

One summer Donnie and I were sitting beside our well under the cottonwood tree talking, as usual, about the war. A bentonite plant, a few miles beyond Belle Fourche, was said to be stepping up production. We didn't know exactly what bentonite was used for, but we figured that it must be critical to the war effort in some way. If bentonite was important to the war, German spies might be planning to blow up our plant. We idly wondered where these spies would be headquartered. They could be anywhere within, say, a twenty-mile radius of the plant—perhaps even here, on the Todd Place. We thought back about certain signs we had observed (a stray piece of hay falling from the haymow for no reason or the suggestion of a footprint in the oat bin) that might mean spies were using our barn—probably sleeping in our haymow. All the time we knew that we were really just pretending, but it still seemed to us just remotely possible that our pretense might not be too far from the truth.

That whole summer we tried to spy on the spies. On stormy days we listened to the creaking and rattling of the barn. We spent hours devising traps that would let us know whether the spies were still there. A piece of straw balanced on the rung of the haymow ladder one day was gone the next. Occasionally we thought we heard voices. An iron bar protruding from the apex of the haymow and pointing toward the west pasture seemed to be shielding a gun barrel.

It was my job to bring our two milk cows in from the west pasture to the barn for milking every evening. Donnie had to be back at

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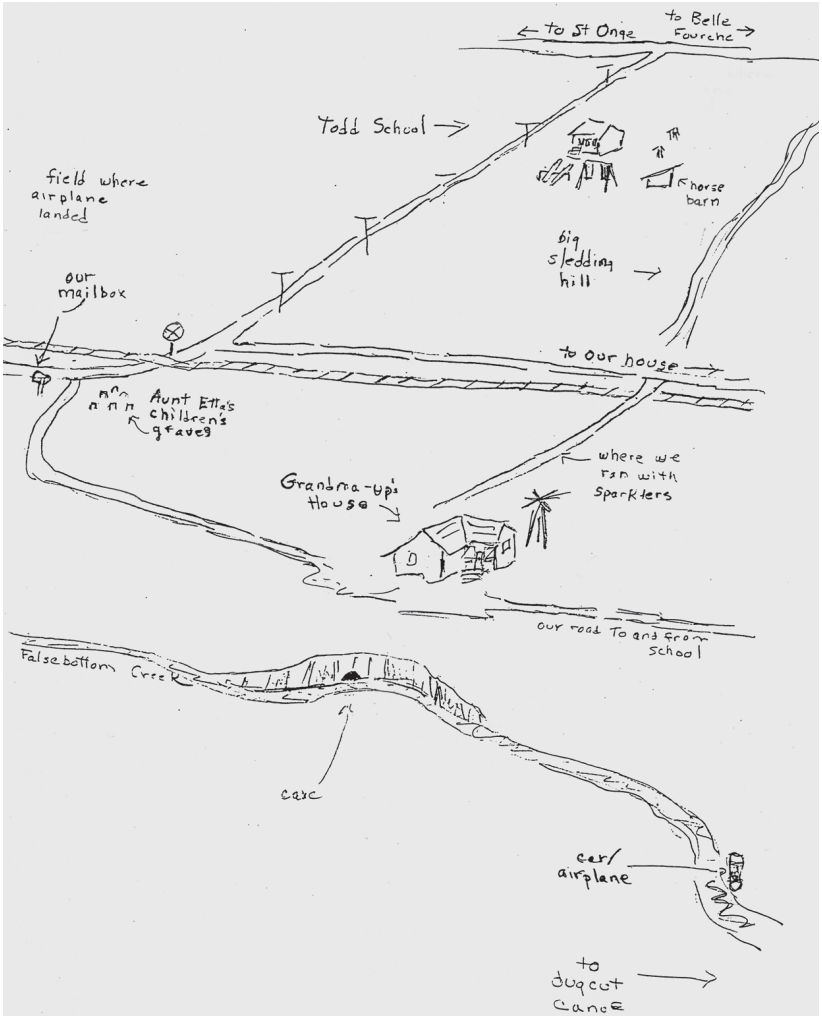
low and Yangtze rivers were strategic waterways that both sides sought to control. "Second Sino-Japanese War," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Second_Sino-Japanese_War, accessed 28 June 2019. China forms part of the setting for the story of another western South Dakotan, Donald G. Smith of Belle Fourche, who captained one of the bombers that participated in the Doolittle Raid on Tokyo, Japan, in the spring of 1942. His experiences following the crash landing of his crew's plane in China are chronicled in Paul Higbee, *The First Strike: Doolittle Raider Don Smith*, forthcoming from the South Dakota Historical Society Press.



The author's sketch of the area surrounding Grandma-up's house includes the sites of some of her numerous adventures.

Grandma-up's several hours before that. Getting the cows became more and more terrifying for me as the summer wore on. As I left the barn to find them, that gun barrel was aimed right between my shoulder blades.

It wasn't quite so bad coming back with the cows and facing the gun. Nevertheless, it took me only about two seconds to get those cows

from the side door into their stanchions, and I never, ever, looked up to see if a spy was peering down at me through the hay drop. One rainy day Donnie saw a man in a gray suit in the granary. Donnie slammed the door and we ran away. A few days later, as I was leaving the barn after bringing in the cows, I glanced furtively up the ladder into the hay mow and saw a man in a tan suit. He had a round face, and he was looking right down at me. I could see that man as clear as day (and still can). Now I know that he must have been a figment of my imagination, but I wouldn't have believed that then. It is lucky for me that summer was just about over. When Donnie went back to his mom and dad, Todd School started, and winter finally set in. Then, I had other things to think about.

My adventures with Donnie came to an end in the summer he was thirteen and I was eleven. We decided to go swimming, and we changed into our suits, as usual, behind different bushes. Then the terrible thing happened: when I came out, Donnie whistled.

You see, he had just finished being a high school freshman and was grown up now, but I was still just a little kid who thought that things would always stay the same between us. I didn't see Donnie much after that except once in a while at weddings or funerals.

World War II

World War II affected us in many different ways. For one thing, we worried a lot about what would happen if Daddy were drafted. Mama couldn't do the farm work by herself, and we kids were too young to help much. If Daddy were drafted, how would we make enough money to live?

Our mailbox was on the road just down from Todd School, and it was my job to pick up the mail on my way home from school every day. One blizzardy day when the snow was halfway up my shins, I realized, after I got home, that I had dropped a postcard somewhere along the way. Mama and Daddy were afraid it might have been a draft notice. Mama looked and looked for that postcard and finally found it, several days later, blown up against a fence far from the tracks Butch and I made in the snow when we walked to and from school. Thank goodness it turned out to be an advertisement or something unimportant.

Neither Daddy nor Bob nor Henry was ever drafted. I think farmers got put into some sort of a special category.[6]

Many things were in short supply because the troops overseas needed them, and so they were rationed for us at home. Rationing ensured that everybody could get his or her fair share. We had ration cards with stamps in them that we had to turn in whenever we bought certain things. Farmers weren't affected quite as much as other people were, though. Gasoline was rationed, but farmers got a little extra to use for tractors or other equipment. Meat rationing wasn't a problem since we all butchered our own meat anyway (although I'm not sure that was strictly legal). Sugar rationing was our biggest difficulty because we were used to making homemade fudge and things like that, especially in the winter.

One summer day, Daddy noticed a honeybee hive in a tree while he was mowing hay. He cut the tree down, and then we had two big washtubs full of honeycomb that we kept in the milk house. This supply lasted us a long time. Mama knew how to get the honey out of the honeycomb—I think she must have heated it on the stove a little—and she learned how to make desserts with honey instead of sugar. I liked eating the honeycomb best, though. Mama made biscuits, and we put butter on them and then big spoonfuls of honeycomb. You can't imagine how crunchy and wonderful that tasted.

Some things weren't rationed, but they weren't to be had anyway: bananas, for instance. Charlie and Gib Furois ran the general store in Saint Onge. They were related to Mama in some way; second cousins, I think. Usually, Charlie was behind the counter. Customers simply told him what they wanted, and he brought the items to the counter and totaled up the cost on an old metal cash register. Of course, Charlie knew everything that was going on around Saint Onge. The glass can-

6. The Selective Training and Service Act of 1940 created the first peacetime draft in the United States. All men between the ages of twenty-one and thirty-six were required to register with their local draft boards, and draftees were chosen in a national lottery. After the United States entered the war, various amendments expanded the pool. By March 1947, more than ten million men had been inducted into military service. Work in agricultural production was one of the areas in which deferments were allowed. "Selective Training and Service Act of 1940," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Selective_Training_and_Service_Act_of_1940, accessed 28 June 2019.

dy case was right next to the counter; Mama usually bought us Baby Ruth bars. One day while Mama and I were at the store and no one else was there, Charlie surreptitiously reached under the counter and brought out some bananas he had kept for us. Mmmmmmmm, they were good.

World War II music was wonderful. We loved Ginny Simms, and we listened to the hit parade on the radio. Lots of the songs made me want to cry: "You're a Grand Old Flag," "Comin' In on a Wing and a Prayer," for example, or "I'll Be Home for Christmas." I even learned to play the "Marines' Hymn" on the piano.

Todd School did a lot for the war effort. All the kids sold war stamps. People who bought them pasted their stamps in a book, and when they had $18.75 worth of stamps, they could turn their books in for a victory bond that would be worth twenty-five dollars in ten years. We kept track, on the blackboard, of just how many bazookas and machine guns and so forth could have been bought with the stamps we sold; it seemed like quite a lot to us. Of course, it was mostly our parents and our grandparents who did the buying.

We also collected tinfoil (like gum wrappers) and helped with scrap-iron drives. Our job was to notify our parents, who then dragged their scrap iron—things like old worn-out kitchen stoves or field equipment—into one place, and somebody came to collect it in a truck.

After the tide of the war turned and countries were being liberated, we started filling CARE packages at school. We had special boxes, maybe about ten inches long by five inches wide and deep. Each of us took a box home and filled it with items from a list. Some of the items we put in were toothbrushes and toothpaste, combs, paper, and pencils, and we could put in one toy.[7] I made a stuffed elephant out of blue-checked gingham using a pattern Mama ordered from our newspaper. It took me forever to make because I was just learning to use our sewing machine, and I came to love my elephant very much. Our teacher, Miss Rademacher, put all of our filled, but not yet sealed, boxes

7. When organized in 1945, CARE stood for Cooperative for American Remittances to Europe and focused on food relief for those at risk of starvation. Later CARE packages contained items such as those mentioned here. "CARE Package," https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/CARE_Package, accessed 28 June 2019.

on top of the piano the day before they were sent away. I remember sneaking up, when no one was looking, to kiss my elephant goodbye. I think that Miss Rademacher may have seen me, but she didn't say anything.

The day the war ended, Mama's cousin, Leonard Furois, had come to visit Mama. Len was on leave from fighting in Germany and was going to be sent to the Pacific to fight the Japanese when his leave was over. Anyway, the news that the Japanese had surrendered came over our radio, and Len rushed out onto the front porch and cried and cried and pounded his fist on the wall. That was the first time I had ever seen a man cry, and I didn't understand it because I thought he should have been happy.

A few years later, I found a pen pal in Gdansk, Poland. Her name was Sophie and I still have her letters. Here are some of the things she wrote to me:

> *December 30, 1946:* I received your blouse, which you offered, and I am very grateful for it. I am thirteen years old and I am in the second grade of Secondary School (eight years in school). The awful war destroyed everything, and we are in need of many things. Now we have a help from you, our American friends.
>
> *April 20, 1947:* I would wish to see you some day and come to your farm or town, I have never been on a farm; it would be a lot of fun to be together and talk about everything. But it will be never happen to me. That will be only my dream forever. . . . I am living in harbor Gdansk near the Baltic Sea. In summer I often go with my mother on the shore to gather amber what the waves of the sea throw out.
>
> *December 8, 1947:* In our orphan house [Sophie's mother worked in an orphanage] we are going to have a Christmas tree, the toys we make ourselves from coloured paper. St. Nicholas will bring some gifts; for us it is joy, but for parents it is a great expense.
>
> *February 16, 1948:* Just before the war I used to live in Grodno, but after the war, we had to get out of that part of Poland, because

> Russia took that part for themselves. In Gdansk we had three houses and during the war my father died, and in the war my uncles perished and two of them were exported to Siberia, that is in Russia in the far north. And our whole property is lost, and we are very poor. I don't have any brothers and sisters. My mother is sick for her heart.
>
> *April 25, 1948:* I have received three bags from you and your dear friends and thanks very much for your kindness. . . . I wanted to send you a little present and I went to the post office to ask how much it can weigh, but they told me that from Poland it isn't allowed to send anything to the States. . . . My mother is going to the hospital this week to have an awful operation and I shall be quite alone.
>
> *August 20, 1948:* My mother is two months after the operation, and she is all right now and continues her work in the orphan house. This year I'm going to learn in a school where the sisters of convent are, it is a boarding-school, but it is not far from my home, and I am going to come home often. I wear your dresses, and when I put them on, I always think about you, that far away over the ocean I have a dear friend whom I never saw, but perhaps someday we'll see each other, then we'll talk about everything in details.

This letter was the last one I got from Sophie. I don't remember why we stopped writing; maybe one of us found it too burdensome to write, or maybe the Iron Curtain finally became impenetrable. . . .

"Country" Music

At the turn of the century (from the nineteenth to the twentieth; not the twentieth to the twenty-first, as you might be thinking), Grandma-down's family lived in a lovely, shady town called Spearfish. It was called that because the Indians speared trout in a creek nearby. Grandma-down's father and mother stayed in Spearfish all the rest of their lives. Grandma's father, my great-grandpa, Frank Hemler, came to dinner at our house sometimes after my great-grandma died.

Great-grandpa always poured his coffee into his saucer to drink it. When he was a small boy, he had climbed a tree to watch President

Lincoln give the Gettysburg Address. It was hard for me to imagine that anyone could be that old. Grandma had been the Spearfish Strawberry Queen, so you can imagine how pretty she was.

When Grandma and Grandaddy married, they left Spearfish and went "out-north" to homestead in a sod hut. Out-north there is little but sagebrush and antelope and rattlesnakes, with terrible blizzards in the winters and terrible droughts in the summers. The nearest neighbors are miles and miles away from each other. . . . Hardly anything has changed since Grandma and Granddaddy homesteaded there.

Alfred and Stella Hemler Furois, or Grandma and Grandaddy-down, appear here early in their marriage, possibly at the time they homesteaded.

At the end of their first year out-north, Grandma and Grandaddy took every last cent of their extra money and bought a piano. It came on the train from out east. Grandma said that when it was unloaded, she heard people, their eyes as big as saucers, whispering about how rich they must be to buy a piano. They loaded that piano onto a horse-drawn wagon, and out it went to the sod hut. Grandma played the piano, mostly ragtime music, and Grandaddy played the fiddle and the drums and the bones. Bones are lovely smooth pieces of wood

Like Maggie, her mother, pictured here, crossed False Bottom Creek on a plank "bridge."

about as big as good-sized spareribs. When a good bones player puts them between his (or her) fingers and clicks them together, the sound is just like tap dancing. Grandaddy was a very good bones player.

After a while Grandma and Grandaddy started playing for dances. Most small towns in those days had dance halls. I've never seen the dance halls out-north that Grandma and Grandaddy played in, but I've been in the Saint Onge dance hall many a time. It had a raised stage, mostly used for school Christmas programs, on one side and a rather large high-up balcony-like spot for musicians on another. I remember one Christmas when Mama (alto) and Grace Riley (soprano) stood up there to sing "O Holy Night." According to Uncle Henry, some very raucous dances were also held there. Hats and coats were hung in the cloakroom, and the babies and younger children slept there when they got tired. If this scene sounds familiar, it's probably because you've read *The Virginian* by Owen Wister.

Several years later, Grandma and Grandaddy moved into a log cabin on False Bottom Creek. False Bottom flooded every spring. Mama was a little girl back then and remembers waking up one morning to see six inches of floodwater inside the house and homemade bread wrappers floating around her bed. That may have been the year that a pig from Grandma-up's floated downstream, well over a mile, and took refuge in Grandma-down's root cellar. Imagine her shock when she went in there to get some potatoes! I expect the pig had already eaten a good many of them. Grandma shooed him out and, smart pig that he was, he walked back home to Grandma-up's. Later, but before I was born, the log cabin was replaced with a nice, white-painted clapboard house with lovely hardwood floors.

I remember one night when the Furois relatives gathered at Grandma-down's house. Grandma-down played ragtime music on the piano, Grandaddy played the drums, great-uncle Cliff and Bert took turns playing fiddle, a second-cousin played the trumpet, and everybody else played, with great gusto, Jew's harps, bells, whistles, and any of a number of rattley things that Grandaddy kept in a special box. The kerosene lights made such a soft glow over us all. (Do you know how to play a comb? Take a piece of tissue paper, fold it over the comb, and then hum into it. You'll be surprised what an interesting sound it makes.)

I have an even earlier musical memory, though; it is being taken to an outdoor performance of Gilbert and Sullivan's *The Mikado* in Los Angeles, maybe at the Hollywood Bowl. Daddy's favorite song was "Tit Willow": "On a tree by a willow a little tom-tit sang willow, tit willow, tit willow, and I said to him, 'Dicky-bird, why do you sit singing. . . .'"

We didn't have a piano, at first, on the Todd Place but Grandma-up had one in her barn. Moving the piano into a wagon and hauling it over the rutty road to our house couldn't be done right away, so one summer morning Mama showed me how to make a life-sized piano keyboard from paper. That's when I learned what keys on the piano corresponded to what notes on the staffs. It wasn't much fun to pretend-play the keyboard, though, since I didn't have any idea what the various notes would sound like. When our piano arrived, it was lacking the ivory on many of its keys, so we covered the bare keys with adhesive tape and sprinkled a little bit of talcum powder on top. Mama taught me to play. I don't really know how she managed to do this because I didn't like to practice at all.

Although no one had electricity on False Bottom Creek, we had a battery-operated radio that got a static-y station from Bismarck, North Dakota. Every Saturday afternoon we listened to Milton Cross and the Texaco-sponsored broadcast of the Metropolitan Opera, and we subscribed to *Opera News* too. *Opera News* told us all about the opera that would be broadcast the next week, with pictures of the sets and biographies of the singers. I remember the first time I really paid attention to an opera. Lily Pons was singing Lucia. I lay on the kitchen floor in the sun with the radio above me on a little shelf, and I didn't get up until the opera was over.

The thing I most wanted in the world after that was to be an opera singer. Surprisingly enough, we were able to hear some extremely well-known singers in person. The Homestake Gold Mine brought the Community Concert series to the high school auditorium in the town of Lead. Lead was only forty miles away, but it was up in the Black Hills. There weren't any concerts in the summer, and the road was narrow and steep with many blind curves that were often icy. Getting out of the Todd Place wasn't easy, either; one winter we didn't get the car out for three months. But we went to the concerts whenever we could;

we heard Helen Traubel and Helen Jepson and Ezio Pinza and José Iturbi and many others. I'll never forget the beautiful white beaded dress Helen Jepson wore. It had a lovely long train. She carried it in her hands when she came onstage and then let it fall, swirling, around her feet before she started singing. She forgot the words in the middle of a new piece she was trying out for the first time and had to start all over again. Everybody loved her for being so human as to make a mistake.

At concerts, I always felt clunky and awkward and embarrassed before the lights were turned down because I was a big girl and my red coat was awfully bulky. Even worse, I had to wear rubber overshoes with buckles most of the time. Mama thought I should get the autographs of all the famous people we heard, and I did want them, but I was miserable going backstage where all the dressed up "city girls" seemed to know exactly what to say to the star. I always hung back until finally in desperation, knowing we had to leave, I pushed forward, got my signature and ran away. . . .

I spent a lot of time in those years pretend-singing opera. I made up melodies with lots of trills and embellishments, and I made up foreign-language sounds to go with them. Some summers the cows were kept in the east pasture, which was so far away from the house that I had to ride a horse out to get them. I sang opera all the way out and back and at lots of other times as well. You might be able to imagine how crushed I was after several years of singing to overhear Daddy tell Mama that it was too bad Butch didn't want to be an opera singer as he might have a chance. . . .

Animal Friendships

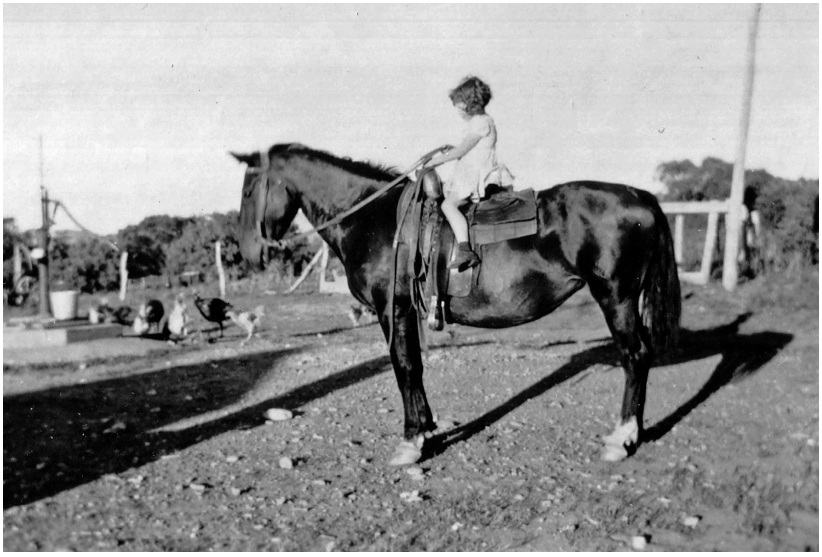
When we moved to the Todd Place, Daddy had to buy horses to pull the plow and harrow and rake and so forth. A few farmers in the area had tractors, but they cost too much money for us to have. Daddy bought Silver and Quimper first. They were buckskins, yellow with black manes and tails. Quimper was short and gentle. Silver was tall, with an agenda all his own. He used to bite Butch whenever he could. Once, I rode him out to the east pasture to bring in the cows and when we were as far away from the house as possible, he stopped, planted all four legs, and refused to move. I had to lead him home a couple of miles

without the cows. Daddy was pretty mad at us both.

Then we bought Bud, a white horse. Bud was skittish; Daddy thought he had probably been mistreated. A little later we got Barney, who was placid like Quimper. At lunchtime, Daddy would take the pair of horses he was working with down to False Bottom to get a big drink. When I was little, he boosted me onto Quimper's back for the ride. I held on to the harness hames for dear life when Quimper bent his neck down to the water so I wouldn't slide into the creek myself. After drinking, the horses had to stay in the corral until they peed. Then they got to go eat oats in the barn, and Daddy got to go eat lunch. The previous owners hadn't trained them to pee outside, so at first it was hours before they got to go into the barn. Gradually they learned the rule, and then they peed the moment they got to the corral. We had the driest barn in False Bottom valley. Behavioral scientists were just beginning to write about the principle of reinforcement that Daddy had been using.

When I was a little older, I got my own horse. Her name was Penny, and she was a bay with a star on her forehead. Penny startled easily. More than once, I landed on the ground after a bird flew up beside her. Luckily, she never ran away but just waited for me to figure out what to do next. Falling off a horse presented a major problem for me because I wasn't allowed to have a saddle with stirrups that made it easy to get on or off. (Mama was afraid I would get my foot caught in the stirrup when I fell off and be dragged to death.) When I was getting on Penny at home, I just had her step over the tongue of the rake or some other piece of machinery with her front feet but not her back feet. Then, standing on the upward-sloping side of the tongue, I was high enough to jump on. If I fell off out in the pasture, I had to find a steep-enough sidehill to do the same thing, and if I couldn't do that, I had to walk home.

When I first got Penny, Mama told me how to teach her to come whenever I called. The first time I wanted to catch her, I walked right up to her, calling her name and rattling a pan of oats with her bridle arranged over the top. Of course, she wanted the oats, but she had to put her nose through the bridle to get to them. I pulled the bridle up and buckled it, and off we went to get the cows. After a few days like that, I started standing farther away when I called her, and I only rat-



Maggie developed her affinity for horses and other animals at an early age.

tled the oats a little bit. Later on, I left the pan in the barn and just gave her a handful of oats if she came when I called. Eventually, even if she was so far away that she couldn't see me at all, she came trotting across the pasture when I called her name. When I was in college, I found out that Mama had taught me to use three behavioral principles: stimulus control, fading, and reinforcement. . . .

One day, Quimper acted like he didn't feel very well so Daddy led him from the pasture into the corral. He stood there with his head down, not eating or drinking anything. After a while, Mama called the veterinarian in Belle Fourche, but he was out with some other sick animals and couldn't come right away. I sat on the fence of the corral watching Quimper. He lay down, and his front leg sort of kicked up and I knew he had died. Mama and I cried.

That was when I learned that if you feel really awful you should read a book; it kind of takes your mind away from what happened and lets you get used to it gradually. That evening, at sunset, I saw a sort of hole in the clouds, and I thought that maybe Quimper's soul was passing through there on its way up to heaven. . . .

Mama and Daddy would never let me have a dog. I don't know why. Mama said it was because we might move to the city and we wouldn't be able to take a dog with us, but they couldn't have been thinking they were about to move to the city for all those years. I thought it was really unfair, especially because Mama had a dog, Paddy, when she was a girl. Mama and Paddy had played together all the time, and Mama said how much they had loved each other. But I had cats, lots of cats, generations of cats. I don't remember the name of our first mama cat or how we got her. She was probably already there when we moved in. Our cats were supposed to catch mice; they weren't allowed into the house. We fed them leftover supper scraps, though, underneath the back porch.

Whenever our mama cat had her kittens, I looked all over to find them. Sometimes their eyes were still closed when I found them. I petted the mama cat and brought her treats, and she never seemed to mind having me there. My favorite litter of kittens (seven, I think) was born in the grain bin in the wash house. Since it was impossible to tell the boys from the girls, I gave them all war-hero names. I remember Halsey, Bradley, MacArthur (yellow and white) and Eisenhower (black and gray), but I can't remember the other names or what they looked like.

Kittens often disappeared on the farm—maybe eaten by coyotes—but Eisenhower lived to be a mama cat herself. Once, when she was grown, she disappeared and Mama said she must be dead, but I looked all over for her. I followed False Bottom almost all the way to Grandma-down's calling her name. There wasn't any trail, so I just went crashing through brush and climbing over fallen trees. Finally, I heard her meow. I carried her all the way home, and she didn't try to get down that entire bumpy walk. I don't know what she was doing so far away from home, but whatever it was she must have gotten lost.

One day Daddy came in at lunchtime from mowing and said that Eisenhower had been crouched down out in the hayfield and had jumped over the mower blade. He was sure the mower had cut off her hind legs. I looked for her, but I couldn't find her anywhere. Then, a couple of days later, when I had just brought the cows into the barn, I heard her meow. There she was, with only the stumps of her hind legs. I ran in to get her something to eat, and then we cuddled for a while

before she curled up to go to sleep. The next day Daddy told me to ride out to the east pasture for something and while I was gone, he shot her. . . .

Alone

Except when I was at school, I was alone an awful lot of the time at the Todd Place. Of course, Butch and I played together some, but the five-year difference in our ages was just too great for us to really be friends.

I think Mama and Daddy might have been lonely too. In California they had had lots of friends, but in South Dakota nobody ever came to visit except relatives. When I was about twelve, Mr. and Mrs. Ryther came with their kids, Billy, Velma, and Robert. (Actually, they had six kids, but Carl, Donald, and Grace had already left home.) I think we kids jumped up and down on my bed upstairs and screamed a lot. Afterwards I said to Mama, "Wasn't that fun?," and she sniffed, "It took six years for them to get here!" I guess Mama thought people should have come calling when we returned from California. Sometime later we returned the Rythers' visit; but that, as far as I remember, was the end of the visiting between our two families.

Grandma and Grandaddy-down didn't have many visitors either. They seemed different from other people to me; now I would describe them as being "classy." They used good grammar, for one thing, and made music, and their house was always extra clean and tidy. At holidays, they had a white tablecloth and crystal goblets on the table and said grace. Mama's side of the family was Catholic. Maybe that caused some of the loneliness, because some people were prejudiced against Catholics back then. A circle was burned on the lawn in front of Mama's dormitory room when she was in teachers college at Spearfish Normal School. That would be about like the Ku Klux Klan burning a cross in an African American's front yard.[8]

As far as I know, except for a few of Henry's girlfriends, Grandma-up

8. The Ku Klux Klan (KKK) may, in fact, have been responsible for this incident. The organization had a reported three thousand members in South Dakota during the 1920s and targeted Catholics in the Black Hills area with cross burnings and other acts of hatred. Jon Lauck, "'You can't mix wheat and potatoes in the same bin': Anti-Catholicism in Early Dakota," *South Dakota History* 38 (Spring 2008): 42.

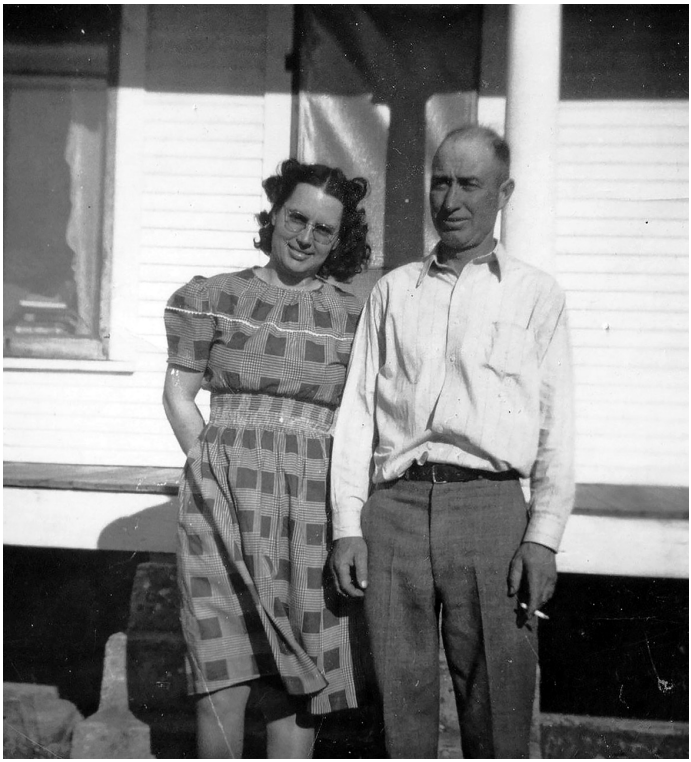
didn't have many visitors either. Grandma-up, Henry, and Bob were more like other people on False Bottom Valley, and so was Daddy. Daddy said "ain't" and "he don't." Mama wouldn't let Butch and me talk that way. I'm afraid that I couldn't understand why a cultured and educated woman like Mama (she had two years of teachers college) had married Daddy. I didn't understand lots of things very well back then, and of course I still don't.

One of the things I didn't understand until later was that Daddy had a life without much opportunity, but he had done his best. I think Daddy graduated from eighth grade but after that at some point during the Great Depression, when he was still very young, he went "on the bum." That meant he was a hobo, riding empty railroad cars to find work. He said that one morning, looking for work in some town in Wyoming, he was so hungry he almost passed out when he smelled a breakfast of bacon and coffee cooking in a cafe. A rancher eating at the cafe hired him, but Daddy couldn't afford to eat anything until he had been paid at the end of the day.

Daddy came back to South Dakota eventually and married Mama. Seven years younger than Daddy, she remembers sitting in the little red child's rocking chair that is in our living room now when Daddy, then about eleven or twelve, I imagine, was visiting Grandma and Grandaddy-down. After they were married Mama and Daddy drove with a couple of friends to Los Angeles, where Daddy got a job working for the city. He wanted to be promoted to surveyor, but he had to pass a calculus examination first. He took correspondence courses from the University of Southern California and passed the exam. Pretty good for someone with only an eighth-grade education!

I had a lot of things to do on the Todd Place, even if I was alone most of the time. For instance, I wanted to see an egg come out of a chicken as she laid it. One summer, one of our hens decided to make a nest just inside our fence behind the wood pile. I spent hours lying in the grass and weeds on the other side of the fence with my face just inches away from this hen. She didn't seem to mind my being there at all, but she never laid an egg while I was there either.

I made little villages with dirt and pebbles underneath the cottonwood tree. Little twigs served as fenceposts and were connected with



Allene and Fred Fogelsong, Maggie's parents, are pictured here sometime after their move to the Todd Place.

string. Sometimes, I made life-sized playhouses out of leftover scrap iron and pieces of wood. It was fun to construct these things, but it never seemed to be much fun to play with them afterwards.

I read a good deal, too, often the same books over and over again since the only way we had to get a book was to buy it through the Sears Roebuck catalog. Maddeningly, Mama limited me to two chapters a day because she thought I would ruin my eyes if I read more. I usually sat in the rocking chair in the front room with my right leg hooked over one arm of the chair and my left leg hooked over the other (not ladylike, but comfortable). It was heaven to read and eat at the same time. I usually ate apples in winter or peaches in summer, leaving the cores and pits in Daddy's ashtray, much to his disgust.

When I was older, I wrote poetry. It is all lost now, along with so many other things. The only poem I remember much about was called "What Can a Girl Do? Nothing." There was one verse about girls not being able to be concert pianists and one about not being able to go to war and lots of other verses I can't remember now. In those days, girls could become wives or nurses or elementary school teachers or secretaries, and that was about all.

In the summer I often visited a huge ponderosa pine that stood on one of the hills out in the east pasture. It was the only pine tree within miles. I wondered, and still do, how a bird came to drop a seed there accidentally so many years ago. Indians could have been living there when that bird flew by. When I walked up to visit the tree, I sometimes found scrapers the Indians had used for scraping the fat off animal skins. When I was there, I would think about life and make necklaces out of pine needles. . . .

I daydreamed a lot, too, and my daydreams were almost as good as reading books. When the Galloping Goose[9] came by on its way to Belle Fourche from Deadwood, I imagined that Princesses Elizabeth and Margaret, who were about my age, might be on it, looking out the window. Perhaps, when they saw me bringing in the cows, they would stop the train so we could be friends. Later, I dreamed that I dressed up as a boy and became a pitcher for the Boston Red Sox. It's true that I didn't have enough power for a very good fast ball, being a girl, but my accuracy in placing the ball in just the right place was amazing! Later on, the catcher fell in love with me. My most elaborate dreams were set during the Civil War (I had probably just read Virginia Carvel). I was a southern girl from a slave-owning family who secretly saved and cared for a wounded northern soldier. Later on, of course, we fell in love.

When I was about eleven or twelve, Mama and Daddy started taking us to basketball games at Belle Fourche High School. I think they

9. The "Galloping Goose" was familiar to many South Dakotans in the 1940s and 1950s. It consisted of a single passenger railcar powered by a built-in engine that transported travelers between towns located on various railroad branch lines. Its electric horn was reported to sound like a goose's honk. "Lind: Galloping Goose was ahead of its time," https://www.inforum.com/entertainment/2932722-lind-galloping-goose-was-ahead-its-time, accessed 2 July 2019.

were trying to show me what high school might be like. (As it turned out I went to high school in Lead instead.) Then I dreamed for the first time about a real person, the captain of the Belle Fourche basketball team. He had short, curly red hair. In my dream, I was captain of the girls' team, a real feat of imagination because I'm sure there was no such thing. Of course, we fell in love.

These dreams became so vivid that I could hardly wait to get out of the house to continue dreaming, uninterrupted. My daydreaming used to bother Butch a good deal, because I wouldn't talk to him on the way to school. Then, one day, it was time for me to go to high school. Mama and Butch and I moved to Lead and came back to the Todd Place only on weekends. But that is another story for another time.

After graduating from Lead High School, Maggie Fogelsong went on to attend McCallister College and Tufts University before returning to South Dakota and earning her B.A. degree from Black Hills State Teachers College. She earned her M.S. and Ph.D. from Washington State University and spent her career as a professor of behavioral psychology at Drake University, the University of Waikato in New Zealand, and Central Washington University. She married Charles Ball of Rapid City in 1954, and the couple had two sons, John and Andy. In 1968, she married Kenneth Lloyd of Pullman, Washington. After retiring in 2006, she moved to Des Moines, Iowa. Her brother Butch earned his B.S. from the South Dakota School of Mines and his M.S. from Purdue University. He went on to have a career in engineering at Dow Corning in Midland, Michigan.

The editors would like to correct errors introduced into two articles in the Spring 2019 issue. On page 10 of Steven J. Bucklin's "Working on the Railroad: A History of the South Dakota Core Rail System," the phrase "Wollman, a caretaker governor, chose not to run in the general election" is inaccurate. In actuality, Harvey Wollman did not run in the 1978 general election because he had been defeated by Roger McKellips in the Democratic primary. On page 33 of "Adventures on False Bottom Creek, 1940–1948: One Girl's Story" by Margaret Fogelsong Ball Lloyd, Lloyd's year of birth should be 1934, and her parents' year of marriage should be 1933.

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On the covers: As a child, Margaret Fogelsong Ball Lloyd (pictured on front with her cousin Donnie Cardinal) spent countless hours exploring the world around her family's farm in western South Dakota. In this issue, she writes of her childhood adventures in the 1940s, which included crossing False Bottom Creek on a makeshift bridge to go to school, just as her mother had done years earlier (back cover).