

Richard S. Cobia

*An Autobiography*



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An Autobiography  
by  
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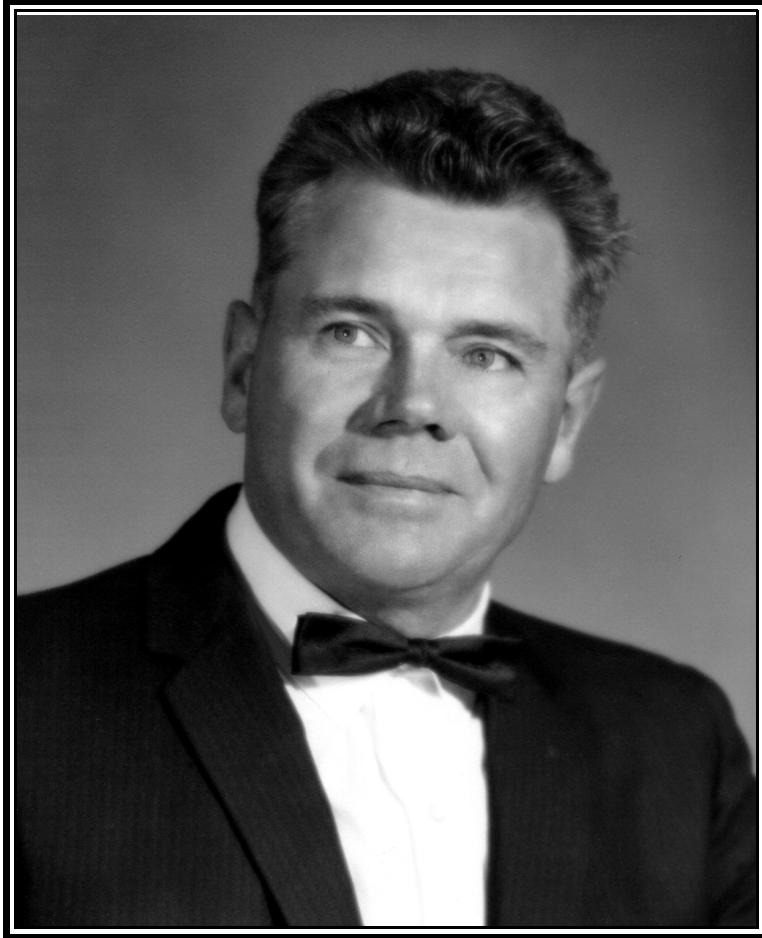
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Richard S. Cobia 1973



## South Carolina

1909

I was the youngest of a family of eleven, seven girls and four boys. The oldest being a brother of eighteen. I was born November 23, 1909, near Davis Station, South Carolina. My parents were Benjamin Cobia and Mary Florence Shorter Cobia. I was but a few days old when my mother passed away. She knew that she was going to die. She called the children all together and gave them instructions to take care of each other and how to conduct themselves. She also said stay together and whatever you do take care of my baby.

A year and two months later my father passed away. My oldest sister Verda says she was holding me in her arms as father was leaving on that fateful trip to town with a load of cotton to the gin. Dad gave me a pat and waved bye-bye and I waved back at him. He was on the way home in front of our cousins when he had a stroke. My oldest brother, Benny, was with him at the time. Benny, ran to the house and got help and they came over and took him into the house where he died several hours later. So that left eleven children with the oldest one, Benny who was nineteen.

There were many opportunities for us to be adopted out. People came from all over the country when they read about it in the newspapers and tried to adopt us. But Benny wouldn't let us go. He wanted us to stay together like our mother had said. He was appointed guardian of the family. He became the chief judge of the whole group of us and, of course, laid out certain rules that we had to follow. He saw that we followed these rules. He was very strict with us and wouldn't tolerate any disobedience, or too much nonsense and he kept us very

busy. That seemed to be one of his main ideas - to see that we were busy.

Not much later Verda married R.M. Tucker and took me with her. She was down on the Santee River near what they call the Duffey School. I stayed maybe two years or so then Benny took me back with the family as Verda seemed to be without food enough for herself. Her husband was not much of a provider.

My first recollection was at the old home place. I was standing on the front porch looking out over the corn field and I could see heat waves rising. Our little farm was about fifty five acres. The main cash crop was cotton and tobacco. Enough corn was grown for the mules; for cornmeal, cornbread, and grits for the table. We also grew sugar cane for syrup and brown sugar. A little wheat for flour. We had hogs and chickens for meat and eggs; and a cow for milk.

Benny was a good administrator and farmer. He applied fertilizers and used modern methods so we prospered. Also his credit was good at the banks. Two or three years later Bennie rented out the little farm and moved to a plantation (about 200 acres) with a large home near Manning, South Carolina. It was called the Burgess place as it was owned by a man named Burgess. We had about four negro families living on the farm. Some of them share cropped for us and the others worked for us. It was here that I began to remember about what happened. I guess I was about four or five years old.

The older sisters were very efficient house keepers. Wholesome meals were on time; washing, ironing kept up and the

clothes kept put away. Those sisters were: Ada (Carlisle), Hattie (Welch), Georgia (Hancock), Clorece (Staton), Myrtie Lila (Powell), and Lyda (Anderson). The four brothers in order of age were: Bennie, Joel, Jimmie, and me.

I remember in the fall we'd butcher about eight hogs. The smoke house was always full of cured and smoked ham, bacon, sausage, and we had a plenty supply of head cheese. We had a large chicken coop full of huge chickens, which the girls cared for. Also a large cellar full of sweet potatoes. You might say we were living a life of plenty. Benny owned a new model T Ford. We had a lot of mules and a little black horse for riding.

My parents joined the L.D.S. Church in 1894, so the whole family grew up exposed to its teachings and were all baptized. I was baptized on November 25, 1917 in the pond on our farm.

We always had Mormon Missionaries at our place, seemed like. I remember we had as high as five missionaries there. The girls always gladly waited on them: washing, ironing, and meals. In those days they traveled without purse or script. I admired these missionaries very highly. I was always anxious to go listen to them at the cottage meetings so I would go with them where ever they went when I could. I seemed to be gaining, more or less, a testimony at a very early age in my life.

When I became eight years old, a time that I looked forward to, I was baptized by Elder E. J. Larsen from Arizona and confirmed by an Elder Wilde. That was on the 25th of November in the fall of the year 1917. The leaves were all over the pond. The swimming hole where we used to go swimming "down on the Branch", they called it. It was quite chilly, but I didn't

notice it at all. People have often asked me when I gained a testimony. Of course, I have always remembered that I gained about as strong a testimony at this time as I ever had in my life because I felt a newness of life and felt very strongly that the gospel was true.

I tried to adhere to these principles through out my life. At least I had the spirit, although the flesh was weak to do what was right, to say my prayers. I was conscientious about this religion. In fact, years later when I wasn't near where there was a church or anything I always said my prayers before going to bed at night.

I've learned one thing in life that as long as one is humble, prayerful, and keeps the commandments that his testimony will remain strong. In fact, it varies in proportion to the degree that you do keep the commandments. One's testimony is strong when he does and then doubts creep into his mind when he doesn't.

School was not compulsory in those days, but Benny had a conviction that education was one of the most important things that children should be exposed to and take advantage of. We went to various schools around the area. One we went to was named Oak Grove which was about a mile away. After that we drove the old grey mule and buggy to school four miles to Manning.

## **1918**

About every Saturday night we'd all pile in the Model T and drive to Manning to the silent movies. We would watch Buck Jones gallop real fast to save the heroine from the railroad tracks just as the trains ran past. It was November 11 at the close of World War I. I guess it was 1918. We could hear the fire engine outside going up

and down the streets. Pretty quick the teacher says, "School is out. We are going downtown and celebrate the end of the war." So we all marched down town and met at the courthouse square. They sang patriotic songs and had patriotic speeches. They said it was the war to end all wars. When we went back to get our mule the fire engine had scared her. The old gray mule had torn loose, busted the buggy all up and ran away (home), so we had to walk home. From that I can always remember when the war ended.

It was July 1918 that our oldest brother, Benny got married. Of course some of the sisters had married previously to this, but when he got married more of them scattered to the four winds. As soon as they were old enough they went out and got jobs other places because it was kind of hard for that many women to live in the same house. Some of the time it was at Sumter which was twenty miles away. Some of them went up to Greenville (Hattie was one of those). Eventually most of them went up there to Greenville after they left the old farmstead in the South.

Once in a while Benny would get in the old model-T and we would take a trip up to Greenville. Those were always very exciting to us. We called it about 200 miles then, but I don't think it is near that far now the way the roads are.

Bennie's wife was Christine Allbrooks. Her father had made her work out in the fields all the time, so she didn't know the first thing about housework. That didn't seem to bother her because she thought she had married a rich man.

When my sisters all left for the cities Christine had negro women do her work. For pay she gave them meat from the smoke house, chickens from the coop and sweet

potatoes from the cellar. What she didn't give them they helped themselves to when no one was around. So it wasn't too long before there was nothing left to give. Then Bennie started bringing cases of canned soup and other store groceries. In those days that was considered a very expensive way to live. She would buy expensive boxes of chocolates, clothes etc. They started having bitter disagreements. Bennie would take off for a week or two. Soon the whole project went to pot.

I was kind of shifted from one sister to another. I Lived in Alculue, a few miles north of Manning with sister Clorece and Gene Staton one season. One thing I do want to make especially clear. Gene and Clorece treated me with the utmost kindness. I'll always remember that. Not once do I remember being scolded. Gene was working at the sawmill. I was about seven years old. On his way home from work I would run to meet him. He always had a little sack of candy to share. He was a very nice guy.

Then north to Greenville, where Clorece moved to. Eugene worked in the cotton mill and I went to the Cotton Mill School. Right after having measles I happened to get caught in some April showers and caught Pneumonia. I lay unconscious for over a week. I almost died, but Clorece nursed me back to health.

About this time Myrtie was working as head cashier at Gilmer's Department Store in Greenville and making pretty good money. When I got well she decided to take me with her on the train over to Woodbury, Georgia, where our oldest sister, Ada lived. This was a trip that I have always remembered, too, and enjoyed very much.

There were a lot of small incidents that happened during this trip that I should tell I guess. One of them was that at that tender

age I was very scared of strange places and strange people and everything. We were in the depot in Atlanta waiting to change trains to go to Woodbury. Myrtie went to the ladies room to powder up and the like. She was gone a long, long time and I became very worried. I was scared, awfully scared. She was gone, it seemed to me like an hour, and I thought something had happened to her. Finally she came back and I was surely relieved to see her because I didn't know what I was going to do.

I can remember that Ada's husband, George, liked to tease very much. He knew the thing I hated most in life was castor oil. It would make me deathly sick to just smell it. He got some in a spoon and started in after me. I ran around the house and he came a running looking for me. I ducked into the out house. He didn't see me go in there, but I knew his little boy, Dorsey had seen me. I was watching.

As soon as I saw George coming I climbed up into the overhead of the door in the out house with one foot on each side right, up at the top. He came in and opened the door and looked in there and I wasn't there. The little boy said "Well, I sawed 'em go in there. I sawed 'em."

I stayed there for a couple hours till George forgot all about his endeavor. Little things like that make an imprint on a child's mind, and I just always remembered that. I stayed up there a long time - until all the problems blew away.

## 1921

When I was eleven years old I went to stay with my sister, Hattie and husband, John Welch, who lived right by the church on #1 Hoyt Street in Greenville, South Carolina. There's where I really learned to work. It was while here that John decided to

buy a horse, wagon and buggy. He told me I was to pay for it by hauling logs from the mountains and selling it.

I was quite anxious anyway to see that pretty horse and have that wagon and pretty buggy to ride in. My job was to go fifteen miles up in the hills and buy cord wood in four or eight foot lengths and haul it down to the place and use an ax, cut it up into fine kindling and peddle it downtown. People used coal for cooking and heating. There was always a good market for kindling. Usually down where they called it Cripple Creek.

We called it nigger town then. I guess you wouldn't say that these days you'd call it negro town or what ever. There was always sale for this kindling because people built their fires with kindling and then used coal to burn and heat and cook with in those days. We were making pretty good with this.

One evening I was late trying to sell wood downtown. After dark a feed truck came along and smashed into the back-end of my wagon. I landed on the ground out of breath and passed out for a short time. The wagon was torn up and so were the harnesses of the horse and the like. But, anyway, it sent me to the hospital for a couple of days and then I came home to recuperate. John and Hattie used the settlement from the accident to pay for the horse, wagon and buggy.

When I went back to work, it was such a shock to my system that I couldn't bear to see a car coming up from behind, especially at night. It would just drive me clear out of my mind. When I would be coming back with a load of wood from the hills and get caught after dark and would see the lights of a car coming a long ways off I'd drive in the bar pit and stand over behind a tree and hold

the lines in my hand. It was that bad. It took me years, and years to get over that.

During this time I was going to school at City View School. A brand new school. It was just built in fact. I seemed to pick out kids that were tough and I thought I was tough too. I'd rather have fun than to study my lessons.

Three of us boys would take our lunches first thing, in the morning and we'd put them in a hollow tree up in the woods. We'd come out there at noon, cut a whole bunch of willows, eat our lunch and tell big high tales. We thought we were Robin Hoods.

Then at 2:00 with our arms full of willows for the teacher to whip us we'd go walking into the schoolroom. Our teacher, Ruth Hart would see us walk in the door with these whips. She would have to turn her head away and laugh. She still gave us all a good lickin'. We loved to be whipped by such a very pretty teacher. We knew she couldn't hurt us much. I was no angel by a long stretch of the imagination.

Once they were blasting stumps north of the school yard. Instead of being in line like the rest of the class I was watching the niggers (that's what they were called then.) bore the holes and place the dynamite. They did not use much caution about blowing up the stumps while the children were outside. When they lit the fuse I ran. But, a piece of stump fell and hit a girl on the head in my class lineup and killed her instantly. We could see her brains oozing out. The whole school, about three hundred students marched about three miles to her funeral. The stump could maybe have hit me, had I been in the line where I belonged.

### 1923

Shortly after this I went back to the southern part of the state where Benny was.

I helped him on the farm and went to school there. The school was called Duffy School. George Alsbrooks, Christine's nephew about my age, and I became close friends.

One day in the winter George and I went out to have our lunch. We couldn't find a place to sit down so we picked up an old feed trough. It just fit between two trees that were large at the bottom. It settled down just right to sit on and put your feet on the ground.

That was quite an interesting thing because I went back there forty five years later and that trough was still between those trees. It had never been moved and the two trees at the time we put them there were about I suppose about eight or ten inches in diameter. At the time I saw them forty five years later they were huge trees and there was but, very little space to sit on.

It was during this time two missionaries came to our place. Elder Buece from Utah and Elder Rolfson from Raymond, Alberta, Canada. By meeting with many missionaries from the west, at an early age I was imbued with an irresistible desire to go west. Elder Bazel Rolfson and I became very much attached to each other and kept in touch with each other the rest of our lives. This had a great deal to do with the future course of my life.

At this point I'd like to make a note. Over fifty years later in my travels I made a special effort to go visit some of these missionaries. When as a youth I last saw each as young, vibrant, and very active. They were now old, stooped, very grey and bald.

It was a very strange indescribable experience. Much like what happened many years ago: Two young scientists, close friends were part of a group attempting to reach the top of Mount Everest. Nearing the



top one friend slipped, fell straight down a thousand feet landing in a deep glacier crevasse. He was buried in the ice. The surviving friend being a physicist, computed the height, distance and speed of the very slow movement of the glacier. He thus determined that exactly 52 years later his friend should be seen at the end of the glacier. He kept the promise made to himself to be there. Sure enough he could see his friend in the clear ice; perfectly preserved, twenty three years of age, but the survivor was old, grey and stooped. It made one wonder which one was the survivor.

## 1924

Brother Joel and wife Carmen came down two hundred miles from Greenville, South Carolina to visit us. I rode back up with them. Joel was an auto painter so I spent the winter working with him in the auto paint shop. I didn't go to school that winter. I didn't have to, and I didn't want to, so I didn't. We were living on a small rented farm in the country.

During Prohibition Joel had decided to set up a moonshine still. He did this by digging a cellar under the barn floor with a hidden trap door. It was a large enough area for a vat, steamer, wooden barrels, and an old ford copper radiator for condenser. This radiator sat down in a barrel with cold water running through. We had a negro, Jack Lewis who did most of the digging and other hard work. He used wood fire under the steamer. The smoke went out through a large buried pipe that came out of the ground about twenty yards away up through a pile of burning brush. Everything was well concealed.

One time the steamer went dry. The mash was burned and the moonshine came out the color of black coffee. Joel was very

enterprising. His customers were in the negro area called "Cripple Creek". After each regular sale he'd say "Hey, I got some special stuff here. Its black. Do you want to try it?" He sold every bit of that burnt stuff. Next time around they asked him if he had any "Mo of dat black stuff. Man, dat sho wuz good."

During all this time Joel ran his own car painting business where he put in regular eight to ten hour days. The rest of the time he spent moonlighting, or I should say moonshining.

Joel was an especially fine person to get along with. Unassuming, dry wit. The kind of person everyone liked. I think he'd have done well in the movies, as he was a very handsome strong man, a good actor and impersonator.

My Grandmother, Mary Ada Davis, born 1843 was twenty-two years old when the Civil War ended. She died in 1929 at 86. She married Charley Shorter against her parents wishes because Charley drank.

She lived with us when I was a youngster and used to tell me stores about her losing two brothers and her father in the Civil War and that they were buried in Richmond, Virginia. Her family were well-to-do plantation owners. After the Civil War when their slaves were told they were free and they would have to leave, the slaves cried and begged to please permit them to remain. If they left they would starve.

General Sherman's Army had killed their livestock, burned huge barns filled with corn and fodder. They left behind them a land of desolation. They even boasted a crow flying where they had passed through would have to pack his lunch. All this talk about General Grant being benevolent to the conquered South was a lot of hogwash.

The victorious North sent a bunch of

scalawags called "Carpetbaggers" down South to set up a provisional government. They seized all the cotton that Sherman didn't burn and reduced a country already destitute to a state of impoverishment.

They placed negroes in office who could neither read nor write. People had no money to pay taxes. Southern currency was outlawed. They were supposed to work it out on road repair. Grandfather, Charlie Shorter, refused. He was sent notice to appear in court. He appeared, and there sat a negro Justice of the Peace with feet on the desk, reared back in chair, cigar in mouth and pen in hand. Grandfather took one good look, walked over, knocked him over backward with a hard right, picked up the chair, slammed it down on him and walked out. No one ever saw that negro again. He left for parts unknown.

Charlie Shorter was known as a tough, fun, loving character who drank. Once his wife asked him to bring home a bolt of cloth from town. After one too many drinks, he climbed on his horse. The bolt of cloth slipped, fell to the ground with Charlie holding only the loose end. He just spurred his horse to a gallop back and forth on main street whooping and hollering with that long streamer of cloth waving in the breeze.

When he finally stopped to roll up his cloth, two police walked up and arrested him for disturbing the peace. With one policeman on each side, they escorted Grandfather Shorter down towards the jail. One of the police was twirling the cell key on one finger. Charlie asked if he could try his luck at twirling. They humored him. He was still twirling as they opened the cell door. Charlie quickly shoved them both in the cell and slammed the door, locking the police in the cell. He went later that evening and handed the keys to the town clerk with:

"Go let your police out of jail."

## 1925

The following June Joel decided to go to Utah. Jimmy, Lyda, and T.C. (Tom Powell), my brother-in-law, were also going to go in on this trip. My sister who was Tom Powell's wife, Myrtie, had just gone west and T.C. was going to follow. Joel bought a Buick. It was a 1923 Buick in very good condition. All the others paid the travel expenses.

I wanted to go with them, but my brother, Joel, thought I'd better go back down south and help Benny. I protested the best I could that I sure didn't want to do that. I wanted to go west with them. Finally Jimmy, the other brother, just older than I am, spoke up and said, "Well, let him go. I'll pay his way." He'd been working in the cotton mills and saving up his money and was "pretty well fixed" as we said for those times. So they decided to let me go. We all piled into this 1923 Buick. It was two years old but, was in very good shape and we headed for Utah.

Now in those days there were no highways, there were just, you might say, by-ways. They were dirt roads. When you would come to a city there would be some gravel and cement for maybe 50 miles on each side of the city, Like Louisville, Ky. and Indianapolis, Indiana. But, otherwise the roads were just dirt roads. When it rained the mud and the ruts were deep and many times we all had to get out and push, including the driver. When you were in ruts you didn't need to worry about steering it. The only problem was moving ahead. When it was dry like when we went through Kansas it was very dusty in an open car. We'd be the same color as the soil in a few minutes. It rained a lot on the first part

of our journey up through Kentucky and Indiana and then the later part up through Kansas and on west it was dry. We changed drivers and traveled day and night.

Tempers would get short when we'd get hungry. Every time it would get time to eat we'd get snapping at each other. It got to be a joke that every time someone would get cranky, Joel would say, "well it sounds like it must be time to eat." So we kinda let that be the gauge, for time to eat. We would just go along happily and as soon as someone said something out of the way we'd start eating.

During the days the sun would come out hot. It was in June. It would be real hot, why the cold patches would melt off the inner tubes. We'd have flats. They'd make a noise "tessss". We had many flats. in those days we had 80 pounds of pressure in the tires and cold patches on the inner-tubes. We had to take off the tire, take out the tube with tire tools, patch, replace the tube and pump it up by hand on the spot. We arrived in Salt Lake about June 26 after passing through North Carolina, Tennessee, Kentucky, Indiana, Illinois, Missouri, Kansas, Colorado and Utah.

What we ate mostly was sardines and crackers because they were easier to eat in the car, also cheese and crackers and things like that. Maybe a little soda pop on the way.

When we got up through Colorado, I remember going past Leadville. It was cold and we could see snow. It was hard to imagine seeing snow in June. But, there we were. I had never seen mountains like that in my life. This was really an experience to take this trip west and go over through the Rocky Mountains.

The men let their whiskers grow until we got near Salt Lake then they all shaved

and we all cleaned up and were very presentable when we went into Salt Lake. The trip took eight days and nights to go approximately three thousand miles.



"When it rained the mud and the ruts were deep . . ." On the way west through Kentucky and Tennessee. 1925



Richard next to the trough he and George Alsbrooks put there as youth. 1996



Old abandoned City View grade school, Greenville S.C. where Richard attended the third grade. The back yard is where stump blast occurred that killed a young girl.



Cobia Family *circa* 1902

Back l-r: Mary F., Ada, Georgia (high chair), Bennie, Verda

Front l-r: Joel, Clorece, Hattie, Benjamin



Mary A. Davis



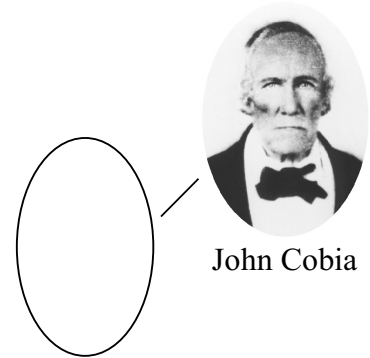
Charles B. Shorter



Mary Shorter



Richard S. Cobia



John Cobia

James N. Cobia



Benjamin Cobia



Orphaned Cobia family *circa* 1914  
 Back l-r: Georgia, Bennie, Ada, Clorece, Hattie  
 Center: Joel  
 Front l-r: Lila, Jimmie, Lyda, Richard



Richard Seth (age 5) with  
 sister Myrtie and children  
 of share croppers



Bazel Rolfson 1921  
 Missionary that influenced  
 Richard to go to Canada



Richard S. Cobia  
 abt 12 years  
 taken in Greenville, SC



Richard 1921  
 at the home of sister Ada in  
 Raleigh, GA

minutes of the Cobia's Sunday School  
 Held at the school house Sept 4<sup>th</sup>  
 Supt. Beny Cobia presiding.  
 Officers & Teachers roll called showing  
 6 Pres. School opened at 10-30.  
 Singing "Redeemer of Israel," P. 6;  
 Pray by Supt. Beny Cobia singing  
 "High on the mountain top".  
 Minutes were read and approved. Ten  
 minutes concert singing "How  
 greater is wisdom," Kindergarten  
 Dept. had one regular teacher pupils  
 males 1 Females 4 Sub. Faith & Review  
 Primary dept. had one regular  
 teacher, pupils males 2 Females 4  
 Sub. Review. Second Intermediate  
 Dept. had one regular teacher pupils  
 males 4 Females. Sub Review.  
 Total members Pres. 14 Concert  
 work on memory Jesus. Closed by  
 singing Lord dismiss us with thy  
 Blessing. Benediction by Asst W.N. Cobia  
 minutes Sec. Charley Cobia

Minutes of the Cobia Sunday School September 4, 1904

"My parents joined the L.D.S. Church in 1894, so the whole family grew up  
 exposed to its teachings" Supt. Beny (Benjamin) Cobia would have been  
 Richard's father, Asst. W.N. (William Nicholas) Cobia his uncle and Charly  
 his cousin (William's son)



## Utah

As soon as we got to Salt Lake I stayed with Clorece. She and Gene Staton were already there.

In the fall I started the sixth grade in Salt Lake at Madison School on State Street about 26th South. My teacher was Thelma Garff, a very fine teacher. We always opened with prayer in the morning. I was still a little rascal and I fell in with two toughies.

The school owned the ball grounds but, it extended about a block away. Three of us were out there playing baseball, quite a ways from the school when the bell rang. The kids all just dropped everything and away they ran to go into school.

I said to these other two kids, as they started to go, "Oh what's the hurry?" and they said "Oh there isn't any hurry." So we just took our time and went just slowly walking in there. When we got to our room everyone was seated and just as quite as could be and were studying and we pushed the door open and walked in.

The teacher said "Well boys what's the matter?" I says "Oh, nothing at all." She said "You're late." I said "Yep, we're late." She said, "Well don't you boys come back to school again until you bring me an excuse." I said, "well I guess I won't be coming back, because I don't have an excuse." She said, "from your parents." And I said, "I didn't have any parents so I guess I wouldn't be coming back." She said, "Well your guardian or who ever it is." I said, "Well I am staying with my sister and knowing my sister; since I don't have an excuse she wouldn't give me one. So I guess I just won't be coming back."

She didn't know hardly what to do then. I wanted her to march me up in front there and give me a good licking in front of the class. That's where I got my kicks of having honor was being able to take those lickin's without any fuss. But, she didn't do that. She said, "well these other two boys will have to bring me excuses. I'll let Richard off this time. But no more."

I was really set back on my heels, and very disappointed. The teacher didn't give us a good thrashing. Besides that I felt guilty about getting the other two boys in trouble. This all left me in a quandary as to what my next move would be. I didn't attend school much in South Carolina as it was not compulsory. Here I was in the 6th grade and 15 years old. I registered in school as twelve since I was small for my age. My grades were always very poor for the simple reason I didn't apply myself.

I decided to try an entirely different strategy. Behave myself, buckle down and study hard. It worked. I was soon at the head of my class in every subject. Miss Garff started giving me special assignments and responsibilities she wouldn't trust others with. To put it all in a nutshell she changed me completely in the opposite direction I was headed. At that time in Utah every morning they began class with prayer. The students each taking turns giving the prayer.

Once the class was given a written test. I asked the kid in front of me the date. He turned around and whispered it to me. The teacher saw him, and asked him to hand in his paper to her for a grade of zero as he knew better than communicate with others during a written test. As soon as he returned to his seat I walked up and handed her my



paper and asked her to please return his paper as it was my fault for asking him for the date of the month. she gave us both back our papers.

That winter 1925-26 Clorece's husband, Gene lost his job at the smelter. He got congestion of the lungs from sulphur gases at the smelter. He was home sick for a while. When he went to go back to work they'd given his job to someone else. That's the way they did in those days. You didn't have sick leave. You didn't have anything. You just were lucky if you had a job!

So it wasn't long until the cupboards were bare, and the coal was gone to cook and heat the house with. I suggested to Clorece she inform the L.D.S. Relief Society of our plight. She said she'd starve first. It was one of the coldest of winters that I could remember there.

The house wasn't even finished. We only had the outside boards. In places you could see light through the cracks. We had to go to bed even in the day time to keep warm. I might also add, in that day there was no unemployment insurance or welfare. I learned what it was to really go hungry. One church party I was to they served cake, and punch. Some of the kids would just take one bite of this cake and throw away the rest. I was ashamed to eat more than one piece. I could have wolfed down two whole cakes and more.

Gene walked the streets looking for work and never could find employment. Finally we were in desperate circumstances. Clorece had some red and green crepe paper. She made some roses with green-wrapped stems. I took them from house to house and sold them. She used that money to buy more crepe paper and started making all different kinds and colors of flowers. Then she started waxing them. Clorece made flowers

and I sold them all that winter. That was the only income we had. Clorece had two little boys. The rent and electricity took most of the money so we lived mostly on bread and butter and hot cocoa to help keep our innards warm the rest of that winter.

Every night after school I'd go out with bare hands full of flowers in sub-zero weather and light clothing. All those homes I went to were well heated with carpet floors. My happiest moments were when they'd ask me to come in. When you're chilled to the bone you really appreciate warm hospitality. I should have said warm housepitality.

That Christmas stands in my mind above all others, because of the hardship. When I returned home from school the last day before Christmas to take flowers out to sell, Clorece told me she was giving me my Christmas gift one day early. It was a pair of canvas gloves to keep my hands warm.

The little gift that I received was appreciated more, I guess, than any I ever did get. Clorece gave it to me the night before Christmas because I needed it so bad. It was a pair of cloth gloves. She said "I couldn't stand to see you go out in this cold with your bare hands when I had these gloves here for your Christmas present. So I'll give them to you now."

## 1926

Spring came and Clorece got a job sewing in a fabric shop, while Gene watched the kids. When school let out for the summer I got a job in an auto paint shop on 5th south state street. I was hired to clean and sand cars to be painted. My salary was a huge \$15.00 per week. They had a bunch of baker trucks to paint.

Later I was given the job of varnishing the interiors with their many shelves. After

a month I asked the guy for a raise, all he did was raise the roof, told me he'd been thinking of laying me off, and a whole bunch of stuff.

The fumes from the varnish were so bad that I'd get dizzy and sick at the stomach. I came out of there so dizzy I couldn't walk, working around there. I was losing weight at the time I should have been gaining weight. I only weighed ninety pounds and I was sixteen years old. I decided to head for the great out-of-doors.

About 2 weeks later I told the boss I was quitting. He raised the roof again said he was just thinking of giving me a raise, and I was becoming more valuable to him all the time. But my mind was made up. I was still yearning to go to Alberta Canada and be with Bazel Rolfson although he probably wasn't home from his mission. Bazel had told me how beautiful it was up there and the swimming holes they had and all the good things and the beautiful mountains. I was never satisfied until I could get to see that country.

I packed my cardboard suitcase and got out on the road and started to hitch-hike to Canada. I was going to go through Pocatello since I had some brothers and sisters there (Joel, Jimmy, and Lyda, and Myrtie). I caught a few rides and got as far north as Logan the first night. The couple that brought me into town said, "Where do you want to get off?" And I said, "At the camp ground." They said, "well if you come to the hotel in the morning you can ride on up to Pocatello with us." I says, "Alright I'll do that."

There was a tourist camp with cabins right by the road. The guy there told me I could sleep in one empty cabin, but if a customer came I'd have to get out. A customer came so I went out and laid under

a pine tree on my overcoat. I just got to sleep good when a thunderstorm came up. Pine trees are very good sources for lightening so I laid under a camp table. The rain started to come through the cracks in the table. I got up and I sat under a pine tree for a while and water began to trickle down that. I could see a camp kitchen a ways off. It had a light and I presumed that it must be open. In the dark, on my way, I stepped in a deep irrigation ditch with water up to my waist. Stumbling through that I struggled over to the kitchen. It was for the campers and they had wood in the stove but, it didn't do me any good. I didn't have any matches. So I just laid down on the bench there. Although it was an open porch, I was still wet and cold and I didn't sleep any that night.

The next morning I found the man and wife in the restaurant having a fancy breakfast. Cantaloupe, bacon and eggs etc. I ordered a bowl of soup. they asked why I ordered soup for breakfast. I answered because they didn't have anything cheaper. We arrived at Pocatello in good time that day. the man I rode with was a retired Naval officer. He advised me to join the Navy. I'd have probably been much better off financially in comfort and in every other way, but I thought I wanted ranch life. If I had it to do over I'm sure I'd very happily join the Navy knowing what I went through later.

There was Jimmy, Lila (Myrtie) and Tom Powell, her husband. Gene Powell and I think Lyda were also there for a while. They were all working out and I was taking care of Lila's little boy, Buster (Tom Powell Jr.), while they worked. I would try and have lunch ready for them at noon and that's all I had to do then. I stayed a little over a month.

It was here that I smoked my first cigar, and I might add my last. I smoked and inhaled it from start to finish clean down to my lips. It was about 9 p.m. Lila walked in said to me “why do you look so green?” About that time I made a dash for the back alley. I was deathly sick. I heaved and I rolled and tumbled and heaved and heaved and wished I could die, but couldn’t.

## Montana

It was the latter part of August when I decided to go north. I took my cardboard suitcase down to a second hand store to look for a pack-sack. I found one that I liked and ask him what he wanted for it. What he wanted with the difference between my suitcase and the pack-sack he said was 75 cents. I said, "Have you got some work I can do for that?" He says, "Yeah, I got some old scrap lumber. A pile in my yard I'd like cut up for kindling, 2x4's, 2x6's and boards and this that and the other, quite a pile of it." He told me where it was. I went over and cut it all up into kindling in about 2 hours.

I came back and I says, "you got anything else to do?" He says, "I'd like to get that kindling chopped up. I'd rather you'd work on that than anything." I says, "I've already finished it." He says, "No you couldn't. You must've gone to the wrong place or something. Let's go out there and take a look." I says, "Alright." So we went out.

I was to the right place alright. But, he said, "I just can't believe it. Here you chopped all this big pile of lumber into kindling and I've had kids your size out here working on this for weeks and they couldn't even put a dent in it. Here you do it all up in a couple of hours. You don't owe me any more." Of course that's when the wages for a kid like me was maybe five or ten cents an hour. He says, "You've done that! If you keep up that lick in life you'll really go places." Well, I did go places but I didn't seem to earn much money on the way. I didn't tell him that I was a professional kindling cutter. After cutting all those logs into kindling for John, scrap lumber was child's play for me.

When I left Pocatello to go North, I didn't tell anyone except Ruby. If I told the rest of them I was going, that I was heading out on my own up in the northern country, I knew they wouldn't let me go. But, I knew Ruby wouldn't bother me. She was Jim's girlfriend and a sister of Joel's wife, Carmen. She was staying there at the same place and she said she wouldn't tell them. I said, "Until after I'm gone, and they get worried about me, you can tell them where I went." And she kept her promise.

The first night from Pocatello I got as far as West Yellowstone, just about dusk and it was getting pretty cold. I saw someone coming. It looked almost like a tramp. I says, "do you know where a fellow could get a place to sleep here tonight?" He says, "Well, (he was a Swede) You can come and stay at our shack if you want. We don't have much, but you can come and stay there."

A shack it was! Made of slabs, dirt floor straw to sleep on. For a stove there was a hole cut in a steel barrel with a pipe going up through the roof, no attic. They had a lassie type friendly dog that kept me company and warm for the night.

They had caught some trout and were boiling it in a large tin can on the barrel stove. They passed me one, but in spite of not having eaten since breakfast I couldn't stomach it. No salt and not very clean. I slipped it to the dog when they weren't looking so that I'd keep my manners. I certainly had no complaints about the accommodations. As far as I was concerned it was a Hilton hotel.

The next morning I caught a ride the first thing out through the park. Then another one up to Livingston, Montana, and from there I caught a ride in a Model-T with Bob Julian.

He had just a young family at that time. He and his wife are both dead of old age now. He lived to be a very old age. I rode with them to Clyde Park, Montana. He turned off there and I got out and walked a ways and a man came along and gave me a ride. He was an insurance agent in a Dodge coupe. We drove on up to Wilsall. It was about dark then. He said, "Well, you can just spend the night here with me in this hotel." I gladly accepted. He saw me saying my prayers and he said, "What religion do you belong to?" I told him "Mormon".

This hotel we stayed in was in Wilsall, Montana. That morning it was raining when we got up and Mr. Brown, the insurance agent, said to me, "You'd better stay with me and ride around out through the country or you'll get wet out on the road." I gladly took his suggestion.

We stopped at various houses and they really put on big dinners, those ranchers. They had mostly wheat and cattle and sheep and the like in that area. They were real good what you might say "Feeders." They had all the best kind of food that you can imagine such as beef, other kinds of meats too as well as pies, cakes, biscuits and gravy, macaroni and cheese. I'd never seen so much food so well cooked in my life. I was so impressed with the area and the people, and how friendly they were that I told Mr. Brown that I wouldn't mind getting a job in this area. He said, "well, I'll get you a job."

As we drove around we came to what was known as the Pepper Ranch. Ralph Pepper was the owner. He was out in the shop working. It was still muddy and wet around there. It would rain a little off and on. Harvest time is what it was. They were binding wheat. Mr. Brown was talking to him out there and I guess he told him I was

looking for work and he came over to take a look at me. I was only five feet tall and weighed ninety pounds. He says, "Well what can you do?" He had kind of a twinkle in his eye. I says, "Well, I can swing an ax." Of course, I knew I was good at cutting wood. Obviously that wasn't the important thing at this particular place. He was looking for someone who could handle horses, milk cows, and pitch bundles into the threshing machine. I says, "I'll be willing to learn, and try." He says, "Well alright."

The ranch was about six thousand feet elevation right at the foot of the Crazy mountains. These mountains were named after the Indian chief Crazy Horse. A very picturesque setting. Sunlight's peak, Conical peak rose up to thirteen thousand feet elevation. Snow could be seen even in July. One of my biggest problems was the extreme cold winters, often reaching 45<sup>0</sup> f below zero. The cool fresh mountain air, the excellent, plentiful supply of food with hard work soon put growth, muscle, and weight on me.

Mr. and Mrs. Pepper accepted, and treated me as one of the family. Mrs. Pepper was a former school teacher and a very splendid woman. They had two fine beautiful daughters, Montana (Montie) the oldest and Emily the youngest with Warren in the middle. In the years to come the peppers home was always my home. They had a lasting influence for good on my life. Montie has especially been a sister, a close friend and the finest girl its possible to meet. She married a wonderful man "Lennie" Gibson. I slept in the Pepper home with their son Warren; not the bunkhouse with the other hired men. Warren was slightly younger than I, but I was smaller weighing 90 lbs with Warren's 145 lbs with a 5 ft 8 inch frame.

I was what ranchers call a “green horn”. I had double disadvantages: small and green. It was very hard holding up my end with Warren. The horses were huge. I could hardly see over the top of them. Warren could throw the harness up over their backs. I had to push the harness up and over. I’d have to stand on the manger to put on the bridle or the collar. I got along and learned to milk some of the cows. I’d never milked a cow before in my life, but it took a lot of time with only one. I now had to milk about seven cows. I did the best I could which was never to my satisfaction and probably not to Peppers’ either.

The harvesting consisted of shocking the grain then hauling it to the threshing machine. What we called shocking the grain was picking it up from the ground and setting it with the heads up. These bunches were shaped like tepees throughout the field. We’d use a team and hay racks to haul the bundles into the threshing machine.

We put in 12 hour days pitching bundles out in the field and caring for the horses. It took about one half hour morning and night each day to take care of our horses. At the beginning and the end, harnessing up and unharnessing, watering the horses, and feeding and taking care of them. Actually we were putting in twelve to fourteen hours a day. We did this seven days a week. The harvesting ran about six weeks. I tell you we were really tired by the time it was over with.

Two young men came there, part of the harvest crew. They came in a new Model T Ford 1926 model roadster, from Pittsburgh, Penn. Their names were Jack Lewis and Walter Demling. Walter Demling was a son of a wealthy manufacturer in Pittsburgh. They were “on their way to Japan and China,” they said. I kinda laughed at them, but they did

actually get over there and wrote to us. They were just adventurers and working their way without parental help.

I received \$15.00 per month in addition to my room and board. When I was driving the team and hauling the bundles I was paid \$30.00 per month (a dollar a day). In the winter while going to school I just worked for board and room. In this manner attending about 6 months out of the year I was able to finish the 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade. I was quite old for my school year because I hadn’t gone to school the way I should have down south so I was way behind.

## **1927**

In the springtime word came over the radio that Charles Lindburgh had flown a small airplane non-stop from New York to Paris.

## **1928**

In that day students from the country schools had to pass the state examinations before one could enter high school in Montana. They were held in Livingston for my area. Many students took several years before passing them.

The day arrived for my exams. It came time to go for lunch and all the kids finished up their papers and out they went. I was still there. I wasn’t finished yet. The teacher says, “Well it’s time to go for lunch, hand in your paper.” I says, “But I’m not through. I don’t like to hand in my paper until I’m through unless you’ll give it back to me.” “No, you’re supposed to be through now and we have to go.” And I said, “I know the answer to most of these questions, but it just takes a little while for me to get them all straightened out and written down the way they should be to get a good grade.” She said, “Well, I’m sorry.”

Just at that time the county superintendent of schools, Miss Elise Mercer, walked in. She said, "What's the trouble?" I said, "The teacher says I have to hand in my paper and if I do I'll fail. But, I know most of these answers here if I could just carry on." She says, "You just take all the time you want and finish your test. We are not going to have students fail just because of a little time here when they've spent eight years getting to this point. And for the lack of a few minutes let them fail."

She motioned to the teacher to go on and have her lunch and she would sit there and wait with me while I finished the paper. That is the way that turned out.

A girl that had hurriedly finished hers and left failed and I passed with high marks. I only spent five months in the eight grade. Of course I was 18 years old. A time one usually graduates from high school.

Mr. Pepper bought a ranch joining his that had a nice home up on the hillside. This new house had running water from a spring above so we had indoor plumbing. We moved from the old log house up to the new ranch. This Pepper Ranch had the house up on the side of the hill and you had a clear view of all the surrounding country. What they call the Crazy Mountain Range was just east of us. We were on the foothills of it, only up on another slope looking towards it. Just a very few miles up there to the mountains. And each morning the sun would rise up over the peaks there. There was one peak called Sunlight Peak, because that's where the sun rose each morning and when it set it shined against it. Then they had another one, Conical Peak. They were the most beautiful mountains. They usually had snow on the tops of them the year round.

The summers were very beautiful and the winters were very, very cold. I was fresh from the south and I didn't know really how to keep warm and I suffered severely from the cold there. I didn't know woolen socks would keep your feet warmer than cotton socks and leather shoes. The same way with leather gloves. I didn't think that woolen mittens would be warmer than leather gloves. I thought that if leather wouldn't keep the cold out of both your hands and feet then nothing would, "cause that was really tough stuff", but eventually I learned. I got so I put newspapers inside of my overshoes and do all these different things and learned how to keep warm in that cold weather. It came in handy for me years later when I went to Alberta, Canada.

In the spring of 1928 I was down below the house, quite a ways building a fence. I was trimming a stake with an ax while kneeling down. Mrs. Pepper from up at the house hollered for me to come to dinner. I looked up at the moment the ax was coming down. It missed the stake and hit me. My knee was bent and very tight there. The ax just split my knee open.

That would have been alright had I taken good care of it, but I was careless and wasn't wise to what infection would do or poisoning. I just let it go. I got infection in it. It so happened that when it really got bad the folks were gone to Billings for three days.

Mr. and Mrs. Pepper were gone and there was only Warren, Emily and myself. None of us knew what to do for it. It swelled up and pained me so severely that I couldn't sleep all night. It got bigger, swelled up and hurt worse and worse. By the time the folks got back it had quit hurting so much, but it was still swelled way up with puss and everything.

They were going to go to the rodeo in Livingston the next day. I'd never been to a rodeo and I wanted to go awfully bad. They said, "Well, we'll take you into see the doctor in Livingston." When we got in there he sat me down in the chair and put my foot in a big basin with my knee up above it. Without any painkiller, he just took a long narrow double blade knife and opened it. He went right down in to that wound and clear down around the bone on each side and squeezed my knee. It looked like they took about a good pint of puss and poison out of my knee. I says, "Well, now can I go to the rodeo." The doctor says, "You're not going anywhere. You'll be lucky if we can save this leg."

He took me upstairs and I laid on a table. He had a man on each leg and arm. Four men to hold me while he took a pair of thin nose pliers to push a tube down in that hole. I thought I would die. He never gave me any pain killers for any of this. I was laying there on my back. Everything was so quiet. I was stretching every muscle to control myself. My neck swelled up and burst a button on my collar. It hit the ceiling. Then I could hear it bouncing around on the floor. Everything was that quiet in there. I was in the hospital two weeks.

An application was made every few hours. First, several towels soaked in real hot salts water were applied. Next they put hot water bags with scalding water over the wet towels. Then the outside was covered with dry towels, making a huge bundle. I was supposed to lay flat on my back and not move the whole time. After about a week I couldn't stand it any longer so I rolled on my side. The tube came out so I had all that pain again when they put it back.

When I got up to leave after two weeks in the hospital, of course, I had to have crutches.

I could hardly walk. I was just as thin as a rail. It took me another two weeks to get started working again and then my knee really bothered me a lot. Just really sharp pains would run up through it when I'd walk on it or work out in the field.

I was several weeks recuperating enough to go back to work. That fall I made arrangements to work for my board at Holders, a lady that taught for a short time at the Pepper School. The Holder ranch was two miles south of Clyde Park. I worked for my board by milking cows, hauling hay, fencing, and doing general chores around. That allowed it so that I could get through high school at Clyde Park. Otherwise I'd never been able to make it. It so happened that I wasn't able to work much that summer on account of my accident.

I really didn't get any money at all because the time that I did work went to my board for the interval I was recuperating. I remember I had fifty cents at Christmas time and they drew names for Christmas gifts for those in my room. You were supposed to spend fifty cents for a Christmas gift and that was the last fifty cents that I had. So I had no more money problems to worry about. I spent Christmas vacation at the Pepper ranch. Warren and I decided to trap on a partnership. We caught a weasel and a coyote. My share was \$5.00 so I was rich again.

Mr. Holder was a large man, a large round face with freckles. A very fine and interesting Texan. I used his de-horners once thinking they were bolt cutters. I wondered why the edge chipped off and I wasn't able to cut the bolt. I soon realized though, the day I was helping hold down the critter while he was trying to dehorn it with the now very, very dull de-horners. He had his pipe in his mouth. The blue smoke rising was not from his pipe,



but from the language he used as he struggled to cut those horns. I remained very silent.

Holders lived about two miles from Clyde Park where I went to school. I walked that distance everyday (morning and afternoon) besides doing the chores. At night I would walk back for basketball practice. I turned out for basketball. Played basketball on the team. I lettered all four years on the team and played the position of forward. While I played basketball we used to play the neighboring towns around and White Hall was one of them.

Chet Huntly, the famed newscaster was going to high school at White Hall and we played their team. I remember him very well. He wasn't an outstanding player as far as that goes and neither were any of the rest of them on that team. They were just mediocre about like our team was and about like I was.

At that particular time they didn't classify the teams according to the size of the school like they do these days; B, A, AA, and AAA, according to the population of school. The little schools played the big ones. I remember a very small town by the name of Chinook, Montana.

While we were in high school that little town would take the state championship every year for several years. I think they only had about five players. Maybe a couple of subs. They were such a small school that everyone of the boys had to play. It was quite revealing to see how it happened. That wasn't the only time that small schools would keep winning this championship. It seems like it never was the big towns like Helena, Bozeman, Billings, Butte, Missoula, or Livingston. It was always the small town. One year we beat Livingston, one of the larger towns in the state, and we beat them two games in a row.

### **My First High School Girlfriend**

I had been at the Holder Ranch a few days, when in drives a classy, new Buick sedan. There was a very beautiful young lady seated in the right rear of the car. She wore a long, sleeved, white sheer blouse with lace around the neck and wrists. Her beauty made my heart jump right up my throat.

I later asked Mrs. Holder who those people were. She informed me they were the Queen family and were close neighbors. That explained it all. They were Queen and the pretty girl was a princess. Her name was Mamie. A few days later we had a high school Freshman get-acquainted party.

I maneuvered myself to sit right next to this beautiful princess. Wouldn't you know it, I became stage-struck. I could not think of a word to say. Finally I blurted out, "It's a nice party isn't it?" She nodded with an approving smile.

I took about two years of courting her to call her my girlfriend. That is, "my very own girlfriend." The rest of the school acknowledged that fact also.

Mamie's Mother did most of the housework. I found many excuses to be over at the Queen Ranch. Early in the morning before school, Mamie milked several cows. then after half hour in the bedroom, she would emerge looking like a fragile porcelain doll. She always took special care of her appearance.

At this time Warren Pepper, one year younger than I, was going with the girl he eventually married. he often would come by, pick Mamie and I up, go for drives in his folk's car. Sometimes we would ride our saddle horses up in the mountains.

When I was working in the summer for Jim Pepper, Warren's uncle, I'd use his truck to go down and see my princess. Queens didn't

mind their daughter being with me because I was a clean-cut young man, no drinking, smoking or carousing around, although I wasn't from around those parts.

When school let out and I had my diploma I headed for Canada to make my fortune and return to marry my high school sweetheart. But the "best laid plans of mice and men" went awry. The Great Depression hit, wiped out all hopes of fortune and marrying my High School Sweetheart.

### **1929 Pocatello Summer**

In May Clore sent me a \$15.00 postal money order. I bought a train ticket to Pocatello for \$2.50. The train stopped at Lima, Montana for lunch. I went to the Post Office to cash my postal money order. They wouldn't cash it. I showed my identification., They said, "No! We don't know who you knocked over the head to take his money order and identification." I only had ten cents in my pocket. In the restaurant, tomatoes was the only thing listed as ten cents. So I ordered sliced tomatoes. She brought them with the ticket. It said, "tomatoes and B&B - 20 cents." I said "what is the meaning of B&B?" She said, "Bread and Butter." I said, "I didn't order bread & butter." She looked at me rather odd and took away the B&B. It was just one more of my many financial embarrassments. There would be many more to come. Nor was it the first or last time I went long periods of time without food.

At Pocatello my brother Jim thought I might find a job at the railroad yards where he worked. I was to tell them I was 21 years of age and be ready with a quick answer of date of birth to match. I applied, and sure enough the boss asked, "How old are you sonny?" I felt perhaps 22 would be a better answer. I followed with answers to his questions of date

of birth. I got the job. The pay 40 cents per hour was an enormous sum for a kid accustomed to making \$15.00 per month. They later promoted me to Freight Car Helper at 55 cents per hour. I joined the National Guards (Cavalry) riding horses. When September came I got an honorable release from the Guards and a leave of absence from the railroad and headed back to high school.

My brother Bennie took me in his model T Ford with his family as far as Gardner, North Yellowstone Park, where I went by train to Livingston and on to Clyde Park. The model T Ford at that time had no fuel pump. The gas tank on the rear of the car with gravity flow made it impossible to climb a steep hill going forward, so the solution was to turn around and to back up the hill.

It also did not have an oil pump. Just a splash system. On a steep hill the uphill bearings sometimes went dry. This happened way up in the mountains. No place to buy new bearing shells for the burnt out ones. Bennie tore the motor down and put bacon rind inside the old shells and made it to Gardner.

The model T had no gear transmission. In the transmission box below the floor boards there were three bands working in oil. One was low. One reverse and the other was the brake. On the left front side just above the floor boards were pedals to match. One for low, one for reverse, the other for brake. If your band for the brake burnt out you could use your reverse or your low pedal. It was a very steep and long down hill road to Gardner. By the time we reached Gardner all three bands were burnt out. The model T Ford was obviously not made for the Rocky Mountains.

I worked for my keep at the Shellhamer ranch four miles east of Clyde Park. That was some real cold rides; riding horse four miles each morning and night to school. Shortly

after Christmas the mother, teenage son, daughter & myself moved to town where they had a large home. We also brought a couple cows to milk. There just wasn't enough work to keep me busy.

George Munding who ran a Speak-easy, gambling and bootleg whiskey joint had a lot of rabbits and other animals at his home. He offered me board and room to look after them. One was a pet raccoon that would climb all over you and search through every pocket for goodies or anything else of interest. Raccoons wash all food before eating it so I had to have a bowl of water for him at all times. Once I gave him a lump of sugar. He swished it back and forth in the water, and it disappeared. He was stunned. He kept looking for that lump pawing the water first one way, then the other. These were the days of Amos'n Andy on the radio. I'd be safe in saying 95% of the people stopped what they were doing to listen to them.

Manager Morris Munding, son of George, played baseball on the town team. I had played two years basketball in High School but no one knew I could play baseball. The players on the high school baseball team kinda hogged the ball and I just gave up in disgust with them.

One day I was sitting on the sideline watching Clyde Park warm up. This was the Clyde Park City team and they traveled all over the state. They were short a player who sent word he wouldn't be there. "Come on Dick. Fill in." Actually I was ten times better at baseball than basketball.

When I played that one game with the town team I hit every time I got up to bat. Not once did the pitcher strike me out. I made a safe hit every time, anywhere from first base to third base. The manager said I had a permanent place on the team.

I was the best at bat because I was never afraid of the ball. My eyes would nail on to the ball as it left the pitchers' hand, and I was ready for it if it came over the plate. My playing position was center field, or left or right field. I was no good playing any other position because one needed perfect ball control to play catch or throw to any of the bases. I certainly couldn't pitch. Short stop was also out of the question. I had no trouble catching long fly balls or grounders and throwing them in from outfield. I think if I'd had the opportunity to really practice and not had to spend all my time working for board I could have been a professional baseball player.



Richard at outing  
1927



Richard 6 July 1927



Richard, Lyda Anderson & her  
boy Douglas  
c. 1929



Richard, & his sisters Lyda and Lila  
Pocatello, ID c. 1929



Pocatello c. 1929



Richard and Everett Hunter with Everett's car c. 1928. They were good friends and went many places together. Montana



Richard, Mamie and Everett c. 1931



High School days c. 1928



Richard and Mamie Queen  
Clyde Park, Montana c. 1931



Clyde Park High School Basketball team 1930  
Richard: left middle row



Ralph Pepper Ranch 1931  
l-r: Irene Walton, Warren Pepper, Mamie Queen, Richard



After gathering up friends from neighboring ranches. Pepper Ranch 1926  
l-r: Don Jones, Warren Pepper, Richard (driver), Emily Pepper, Edith Elholtz, Mildred Jones, Verna Pepper. "My first auto - 1923 model T Ford."



Mr. A. L. Brown c.1928  
 “The kindest most generous man I ever  
 knew.”

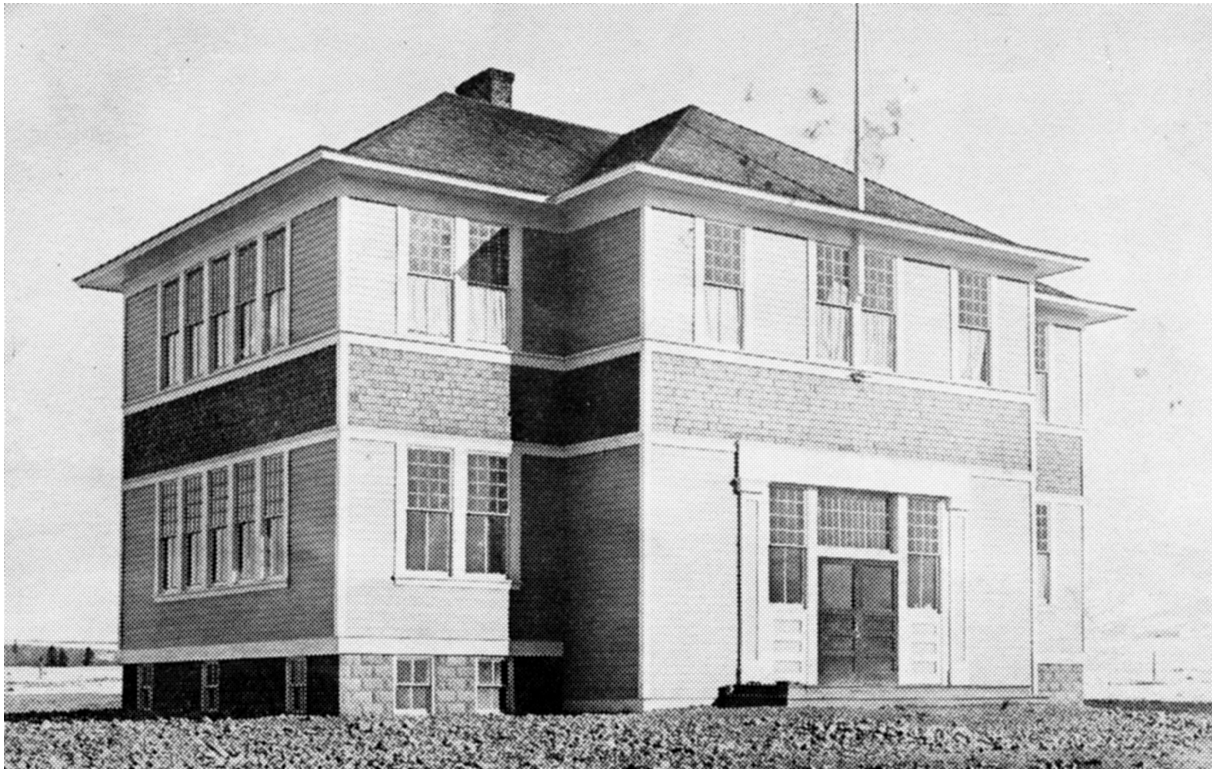


Mr. Ralph Pepper      Mrs. Pepper



At the Queen Ranch 1931  
 l-r: Richard, Myrtle Queen, Chilcote (a friend and school teacher)





Clyde Park High School, built in 1910, where Richard attended and graduated



Graduating class of 1932. Thirteen graduating on Friday the 13<sup>th</sup>. The largest to date!

Front: Thompson, Frederick, Nelson, Queen, Kissinger, Peters, Jeffries

Back: Cobia, Hargrove, Shelhamer, Gibson, DeAtley, Richardson

The class yearbook says: "Richard Cobia, the boy in love, Likes to neck, but gets a shove"  
basketball 1,2,3,4; baseball, 1,2; track 3,4; checker champion





## Canada

1930

15 May School was out for summer. I was down town looking for a ride to Wilsall, towards Porcupine and on to the Pepper Ranch. A man drove up to the gas station in an old car with the top laid back. I asked him for a ride to Wilsall. He said, "OK" and that he was going to White Sulfur Springs, quite a ways further north. Half way to Wilsall I made up my mind this was a good time to head for Alberta, Canada, so I stayed with him to White Sulfur Springs. All I had with me was my coat and mackinaw jacket for warmth. He let me out at White Sulfur Springs. It was about noon, I didn't mind missing lunch.

It was forty miles from there to Neihart, Montana, a little mining town over the other side of the mountain. That was the nearest town. So I started out walking and I walked and walked and walked and nobody came along. I couldn't figure out what in the world was wrong, but I kept going. I got so tired, I'd walk a while and I'd run a while. I ran and I walked for hours and hours.

I got up to the foot of the mountain and a man came along in a pickup and gave me a ride. He turned out to be a forest ranger. I told him, "Man, nobody seems to be coming up this way at all. I haven't had one ride." He says, "Well, there's a good reason. There's about five feet of snow on the road up over the top here. They don't keep this road opened during the winter and they haven't opened it yet." This was in May. That's why I was that far before he gave me a ride.

To turn back at this point would have been disheartening. On up Kings mountain I trudged. By the time I reached the summit it was dark. I was wet up to my waist from

the snow. A short distance down the other side a thunderstorm hit. The lightning made it easier to see the road. I could also see steep rugged canyon walls as it was flashing. It really looked eerie, spooky. The rain soon turned to snow. So there was snow the rest of the way down the foot of the mountain to the little old mining town.

It was midnight when I arrived. I saw two men standing on the boardwalk under a street light talking.

Otherwise the town was deserted. I said to them, "Do you know where I could get a cheap room for the night?" They said, "Yeah, there's a boarding house just right down there." And they says, "Where you going?" I told them that I was going to Great Falls and heading on to Canada. They said, "Well if you're around here tomorrow we'll give you a ride to Great Falls." So I thought that was really good. They said they would leave tomorrow afternoon. They told me that they were there doing Boy Scout work on business.

The board house was an old 1880 Hotel with facade boardwalk and all just like the wild west days. A very old lady with a squeaky voice answered the door. I told her what I wanted. "Yeah," she had a room. I says, "How much?" She said, "fifty cents". When I told her how far I had walked and run, and how long it had been since I had eaten, she said in that squeaky voice, "You must be fagged out. Come and have some hot beef stew." Without doubt that was the best beef stew I ever ate. I was wet all over and had not eaten for sixteen hours. Exhausted from the forty mile journey, I went upstairs and tumbled into bed, into never, never land.

Nine A.M. the next morning, I started to arise. To my astonishment, my legs wouldn't move. They were just paralyzed because of all that walking and running through snow and over mountain. For a short time I was really frightened. There I was away from friends, alone upstairs in an old hotel in a strange town, and I couldn't even get out of bed. Finally the thought came to me to pick one leg up at a time, with my hands, and hang them over the edge of the bed.

Then I might be able to massage them and start moving and swinging them with my hands. It worked! I exercised them a little and rubbed them with my hands.

I slid down with my feet on the floor, hanging on to the bed, moving cautiously till I could take a few steps. Every movement was painful. I made it down stairs and onto the street. Here I was twenty walking like a ninety year old man. I felt very embarrassed, but there was nothing I could do about it. I can remember I had chapped lips. I walked in and got a little Chap Stick, so I'd have something to put on my lips. They were bleeding from cracks.

I made it to Great Falls with the boy scout people and another cheap hotel. The next morning I was hitch hiking north. Out of town a few miles a man in a brand new Studebaker came along. Of course that was a limousine in those days. He said, "Where you going?" I says, "To Canada." He says, "Well get in." We were driving along, he asked me all about myself and the like. I told him I was a Mormon and this, that and the other. He said that he was going up north to see after some of his oil fields. The man was Mr. W. E. Rice of Great Falls. A very wealthy man. He owned the elegant Rainbow Hotel, the Home Oil Refinery in Great Falls, Montana, and several oil fields in northern Montana

from Sunburst to Sweet Grass on the Canadian border.

I rode with him clear to Sweet Grass. He seemed to take a liking to me and said, "Now I'll be back to the hotel here tonight. If you have any trouble crossing the line you let me know." (The Canadian border) So we parted there.

I went to the Canadian office. The immigration officer says, "No you can't go up there. You only have \$6.00 and your beating your way." I says, "No, I'm not beating my way. I don't even ask for a rides. I'm just walking my way." He says, "No I can't let you go with no more money than that." I says, "Well how much more do you think I need?" He says, "I'd say at least \$20.00. Enough to get you out of there." I didn't know what I was going to do because I didn't have \$20.00. I went back to the hotel that night where my friend, Mr. Rice, said he would be. I couldn't find him there at all.

The next morning I went back down to the hotel where they were eating, to have breakfast. There Mr. Rice was, having breakfast. He says, "Come on over and have breakfast with me." I went over. He says, "Well, what's wrong? You couldn't get over the line?" I says, "I didn't have enough money." He says, "How much did you need?" I says \$20.00. So he pulled out a huge roll of bills and peeled off a \$20.00 bill and handed it to me. Never said return it or anything. He bought me my breakfast and everything. He says, "Now listen, when you get up there, write to me (he gave me his address) and tell me how you are getting along. I'd like to hear from you."

I crossed the line into Canada, caught the bus to Cradock and walked the nine miles to Raymond, Alberta where I met the parents of Bazil Rolfson. They welcomed me with open

arms. They had their two daughters, Arilla, 19 and Verl 17 living with them. Bazel lived out on the family farm three miles west. I was finally reunited with my missionary friend, Bazel, after eight years and many letters. He proved to be a true and loyal friend and treated me as an equal, and wanted me wherever he went. At this time he had a wife and four sweet little girls.

Bazel's uncle had the contract to build the Raymond Court House. He gave me a job at forty cents per hour. This was union wages which was big for those days and much better than the dollar a day I'd been accustomed to. I wrote to Mr. Rice and sent him his twenty dollars back and told him how I was getting along. He wrote back thanking me and telling all about his family. He asked me to keep in touch and let him know if at any time he could help me.

I worked about a month pouring concrete. When that was finished my job ended. Then I stayed with Bazel. By this time I was an experienced farm-hand. I'd always be up by 5:00 am every morning, have the cows milked, and be separating the cream by the time others arose. In those days we had a machine called a cream separator. It was turned by hand, and had to be taken apart and washed after each use night and morning.

That fall in Raymond, Bazel said, "Let's buy a threshing machine and go out threshing." I says, "Okey." So that's what we did. Of course his dad had to put up the money and stuff. Anyway they were paying for this thrashing machine and I was there with them. We went out custom threshing wheat, barley and oats for other farmers, making money on the side. When I was ready to leave, Bazel gave me \$200.00 as pay. That was more money than I'd ever had at one time

## **September 1930**

### **Montana to Finish School**

I caught the train and headed back to high school (my junior year) at Clyde Park, Montana. Doc Craven, owner and manager of the Clyde Park Hotel offered me room and board for \$15.00 per month. I paid for six months in advance which was an unwise thing to do. After about four months the food and service became almost non existent.

I finally moved into an apartment in Montana Rooms, upstairs, and shared a kitchen with Ernie the Barber (Ernie Roderick from Fargo, North Dakota). This turned out to be a very convenient arrangement. We did our own cooking. I got this room with cooking facilities for \$7.00 a month. Five dollars for the room and two dollars to share the kitchen with the barber. I was able to get potatoes and a few things to eat. We'd maybe get a soup bone and a smattering of things. We lived pretty good there on very little money.

I might mention that while I was staying at this hotel there was an old, old man, Hank Warren near 90 years old, that was staying there. He was retired on a pension from the army. He had been a scout for General George A. Custer. Custer and his army of about 150 men were completely wiped out in the battle of the Big Horn in Montana by the Indians. I asked him how come he wasn't killed in the massacre. Hank had been a messenger for Custer. He said, "Why I was gone for help. When we got back with the help why the whole Custer's army was wiped out." He was an old fellow that chewed tobacco and spent his time sitting around the stove spitting in the stove. He didn't have too much good to say about the Mormons. All he knew about them, of course, is what he'd heard. He heard that they had men they called

the destroying angels who went about killing people. He heard about the Mountain Meadow Massacre and all these different things. so all he'd heard was the bad about the Mormons.

My girl friend was still Mamie Queen. She was the prettiest girl at school, very feminine, and dainty as a china doll.

When school was out, I went to work for "Uncle" Jimmy Pepper, an older brother of Ralph. He and his wife Sadie treated me as one of the family. He paid me \$5.00 per month more than the going wage. I tried to give good service. I was always up at 4:30 in the morning getting the eight head of horses in. I had them fed groomed, and harnessed before breakfast was ready at 6:00 am. We put up a lot of hay also. He let me work three days running a road grader for the forest Ranger at \$3.00 per day. His daughter Verna asked him to let me go camping with her and a group for three days and he did. He also let me take his truck and go down to Clyde Park to see Mamie and he wouldn't deduct anything from my wages for this.

### **1931**

September. My senior year I boarded with the principal and his wife. A professor, Omar J. Monger, and Gladys who was a grade school teacher and very beautiful. We became excellent friends. They let me stay with them just for doing the dishes and a bit of housework. Doing very little of nothing you might say. That was a very fine arrangement for me. They were kind and generous to me and I still feel grateful to them. He would, when he was sick and off a day or two, turn his classes over to me. He let me teach his class and take care of the job that he had. So the kids in school started calling me "the prof".

During my last two years of high school I wrote Mr. W. E. Rice for a \$40.00 loan two different times. Each time he sent a forty dollar check with a letter telling me how deserving I was. Each summer I earned the money and repaid him.

### **1932**

Generally speaking my grades were above average. Some excellent; History, World Geography, Geometry, Civics and Typing. When I graduated from high school I won a scholarship to any university or college in Montana. I took the scholarship to Montana State University at Bozeman, but I never did use it. I also received the Justin school Medal. It was given to the student for being outstanding in scholarship, loyalty and achievement. There were thirteen of us graduated on Friday, the 13<sup>th</sup>. Lucky?

Mr. A.L. Brown offered to help me financially if I wished to go to the University. I decided to be a farmer and felt a university education wasn't necessary. How wrong I was! Mr. Brown also paid \$80.00 for a gold bridge for my front teeth and for some winter clothes two different times. He was the kindest most generous man I ever knew.

### **Back to Canada**

One of the teachers, Mabel Strank, lived in Great Falls. she said I could have a ride with her to Great Falls. I had my trunk with me this time, and I rode to Great Falls. I set my trunk off at the depot and bought my ticket. I went back down to see Mr. Rice, who lived there in Great Falls. He had me come in and have dinner with them. They had a couple of maids there and real fancy, you know. He took me back to the depot station.

When I got to the Canadian border they set my trunk off to inspect it. Of course I couldn't find the key. It was locked. So they broke the lock and opened the trunk. But, they didn't look inside at all. They just lifted the lid up and shut it back down again, while I was talking to the immigration officer. The immigration officer said, "We can't let you go up there." I says, "Well I came back to the line here after I was up there two years ago," and told them "I wanted to be an settler in Canada and I got permission to do that. I am on record here as being a settler." He says, "Well you jeopardized that when you went back down to school. You can't go back up there." Just then the train whistle blew and it started to pull out. They had set my trunk back on the train. I says, "My trunk's on that train. I've got to go." I ran and jumped on the train after it was moving. The officer just stood there and watched me and nothing more was said about it.

During the period of time that I was gone, Bazel Rolfson had moved up to Glenwood. That's about twenty to twenty five miles north west of Cardston, Alberta. So that was my destination. When I got to Raymond I called up there and Woodruffs answered the telephone. I would have called to Woodruffs anyway. They had the nearest telephone to where Bazel was living. They went down and told him that this young fellow from Montana was down in Raymond and wanted him to come and get him. Bazel drove down and picked me up.

I went up there with him. The depression had hit and Bazel didn't have money to buy fuel, or to put in a crop. I borrowed \$200.00 from W. E. Rice for the project. Bazel fixed up Woodruff's old tractor for the use of it. We planted wheat and barley. The harvesting alone cost almost what the grain was worth.

He had written to me a couple months before and said that he had a neighbor up above the hill there at Glenwood that he wanted me to meet. She was a great-granddaughter of President Wilford Woodruff. He'd sure like me to meet her. Of course at this time I was going with this Mamie Queen, a prominent gal in high school there in Clyde Park. I didn't have any such ideas except doing anything but going to Canada and making my fortune and marrying this girl, the Queen girl.

When we went to church I met this Woodruff girl. I wasn't introduced to her, but I saw her and kinda wanted to meet her. Her name was Rhoda. There was a barn dance to be held there not too long after I got there. I was driving Bazel's truck so I said to her brother, "Let's go to that barn dance." He says, "Alright." I says, "Well bring your sister along and we'll go to this dance." He came, but he didn't bring his sister. So that was a dry run.

As summer went along all the kids decided that they'd take off time, two weeks, and go up to Waterton Lakes National Park. There was no money to be made anywhere or anything so we decided to just have a little fun. All the young people got in wagons and used horses. The depression was on then and you couldn't get a job anywhere and nobody had any money. Bazel had taken the body from his old Reo car, stripped it down and converted it into a rubber tired wagon. They called them Bennett Buggies (B.B.'s) then because they blamed the depression on R. B. Bennett who was Prime Minister of Canada. I took Bazel's B.B. using the team of horses of "Red" Sillito.

On the way up to the lakes, Rhoda was sitting up on the front seat in the middle with

Red (driving his horses) and his sister. She'd been going with Red for some time (she says she wasn't, but Red was going with her). There were many young people in our B.B., laying and sitting on the floor. I was sitting on the floor just behind Rhoda. She kept turning around dropping cookie crumbs down my neck. I figured right then she must be interested. We arrived at the Lakes early enough to make camp and find pasture for the horses.

Next morning after breakfast the kids decided to climb up to Bertha Lake. I just didn't wait for anything. I grabbed Rhoda by the hand and says, "Let's go." She didn't object at all. We hiked up to the lake with the rest of the kids. She and I were together holding hands, going up there together. Red followed right behind us all the way up there and all the way back.

The next day being Sunday we went to our regular church services at the LDS branch at Waterton. That night for 50 cents each I took Rhoda on that huge, beautiful motor launch on Waterton Lake, 20 miles down to the U.S. border and back just in time for the "midnight frolic." They dance till daylight. On the boat ride there was a beautiful full moon, and every body seemed to be in the mood for singing, and Rhoda and I seemed to be in the mood for falling in love.

I was the only young man there that hardly had any money at all. I had the big sum of \$8.00. The other kids only had a few cents. When I went to pay for the dance, I discovered I'd lost my wallet. The gal at the ticket booth said she would spread the word. A young man who had found it on the boat returned it. Most everyone in those days was honest. We had a wonderful time up at the lakes there and had a lot of fun and the like. Rhoda and I became very serious about things.

Up until this time I had held out hopes of marrying Mamie Queen. I had come to Canada to make my fortune so we could have a home. All summer I would write to Mamie every couple days, but I'd only get a letter about once in two or three weeks. I'd ride the horse four miles into Glenwood almost every day in hopes of a letter from Mamie only to ride back empty handed. When I started going with Rhoda, my letters to Mamie stopped almost entirely. That set up shock waves. The letters started coming thick and fast for a little while. I think possibly she might have been going out with others. It might have been a matter of convenience on both ends.

As time went on I took over the farm that Bazel had. The depression and things got so rough that he got discouraged and left.

That fall I went to work for Gilbert Hartley. Rhoda went to work for his wife doing domestic for \$10.00 a month. I drove four head of horses hauling baled hay high up in the mountains to a saw mill. My job was to drive a wagon with four head of horses, two abreast strung out. I'd leave Hartleyville early in the morning and it would be twenty to thirty below zero weather many times. At the foot of the mountain I'd have to transfer my load of hay to a bob sleigh, and hitch onto it then finish the journey up to the mill. The only time I'd get a hot meal was when I was up at the camp or down before I left home. The rest of the time I was eating frozen lunches, made of peanut butter. Then for dessert it was a frozen sandwich of honey. Very seldom was there ever any meat.

My wages were \$1.00 per day to be taken in lumber at \$15.00 per thousand board feet at the mill. In other words fifteen days per thousand feet. I usually put in fourteen to

sixteen hour days. Many nights I would stay up till midnight mending harnesses so I could be ready to go the next day.

The harness was old and rotten. The strain coming down the mountain on those very steep trails with dips and sharp turns with a heavy bob sleigh load of lumber at high speeds would even be hard on a good harness. A "rough-lock" is putting a chain around the front of the sleigh-runner with some slack. Then you let the sled ahead till the slack is out. That causes the chain to dig into the ice and hold back the sleigh. This process was too time consuming so the only thing left to do was let the horses go as fast as they could.

Those were hard times. When I loaded up with the lumber I'd be coming with those four head of horses strung out in a narrow trail and the snow was about five feet deep on the level, but the trail was packed down. In fact where the sleds were, the snow would get into the tracks and build up. On the side it was soft. Occasionally the sled would slide off that trail into the unpacked snow and that would let it down on that particular side, and get near to the edge of the ravine. One day in sub-zero weather I was speeding the mountain around a sharp curve and my load of lumber tipped over, bottom side up, down the bank in five feet of snow. In that deep snow the only thing to do was dig under through the snow; undo the binder and jump real quick to keep from being buried by the lumber as it slid to the bottom of the ravine. I took the bob-sled apart, put it back together up on the trail and then struggled each piece of lumber back up fighting through deep snow, reloading the sled. This happened several times.

The high mountain air was thin (low on oxygen). I had on a sheep lined parka to keep warm and I'd work up a sweat. I was heaving

and puffing in that 40° below zero thin air. When you're puffing, why you don't have a chance to let the air warm up as it goes up your nostrils. You just suck it in real fast and I frosted my lungs. For six months after that I was spitting up pieces of lung that I had frozen. My nose and cheeks were frosted all winter so that fluids were constantly oozing from the sores. My clothes were hanging on me in tatters. I usually had to run along behind the wagon to keep warm. Down on the flats the winds kept the roads bare, forcing me to switch all loads at the foot of the mountains from wagon to sleigh, and from sleigh to wagon going and coming. I slept and shivered out in sub-zero blizzards, making an igloo with bales of hay, eating frozen sandwiches. Some days I'd go without two meals making it almost impossible to keep warm running beside the wagon on an empty stomach.

At times I can remember how hot I got there and thirsty. Down at the bottom of the ravine there was a little stream with five feet of snow over the top. It protected the stream. Well, it was spring water anyway and it was unfrozen. I dug down with my hands, down through five feet of snow and stood on my head and got a drink of that water. Usually I didn't need to carry water along because it was so cold you didn't have any evaporation or any need for water.

At night time you were very, very tired. Even then there wasn't always rest. Coming down the mountains over the dips and down through the hollows why you'd break up your harnesses. It was an old harness and worn out anyway. After I got my horses put away at night and had eaten I'd have to bring the harnesses in and patch them up so that I'd be ready to go the next morning. Very often it was after 12:00 mid-night or later before I'd get to bed, then I'd be out at 5:30 or 6:00 in



the morning getting ready for the haul the next day, feeding the horses and harnessing and getting the load loaded up and everything. It was quite a strenuous life for that amount of money, but times were very, very hard and you'd do anything you could just to earn a nickel or two.

### 1933

Spring began to show faint signs of coming. Rhoda and I planned to get married May 10 and I needed some cash. The first of April I fixed three days supply of grub for myself and the horses and with a wagon set off for the saw mill to get a load of my lumber and try to sell it in Cardston twenty five miles distant.

Of course, I went to the lumber yard to try to sell it. They just laughed at me. They said, "See all that lumber there. Well, we have lumber stacked ten feet high all over the place and haven't sold a stick of that in a month's time. Why, what would we want with your lumber?" I says, "Well I'd sell it to you real cheap." They said, "Well, even if you give it to us we don't need it. We don't want it." So I left quite discouraged and went back over to my load.

Then as I was leaving I spotted Gordon Brewerton. He operated the show houses in Raymond and Cardston. The only man in town I figured had any money. Anyone would spend their last dime to go see a movie and forget their troubles. So I asked him if he wouldn't like to buy that load of lumber.

I says, "I noticed you're building a garage up there at your house. Maybe you could use this lumber." He says, "No, I have enough lumber to finish the garage with." I says, "well I'll sell it to you real cheap." He said, "How much?" I says, "I'll sell you this load

for \$15.00 and there's twelve hundred feet. That's two hundred feet over a thousand feet. I paid \$15.00 a thousand up at the mill and I hauled it thirty miles." He says, "Well, no I can't, I don't really need it. You go try and sell it. Try some more around town. If you can't sell it I'll give you \$10.00 for it."

I think he kinda felt sorry for me. He wasn't the only one. I felt sorry for myself about that time. I said, "No I'm not going to try to sell it around town. You've bought yourself a load of lumber right now. I've had it." He said, "No you try and get all you can out of it. I don't want to take advantage of ya." I said, "You're not. You're helping me out if you take this load of lumber for \$10.00." That's how I got rid of that load of lumber. So it ended up that I was working for about fifty cents a day, considering everything.

I went back up to the mill to get some slab and other scrape lumber I had up there to take back to Hartley where I lived. I sold a load of slabs to an acquaintance in Cardston and he went up with me this time. It rained on us on the way up and turned into a blizzard. This was in April. It really became a hard blizzard and we stopped at what was known as the Beaver School. They had a barn there for horses. Of course, it had cracks two inches wide between the logs and the snow was blowing right through.

We put the horses in and laid down not too far away from them. I thought I was going to get stepped on all night. Anyway I didn't sleep at all because I was wet. I got wet with the rain and snow coming in. I got cold. The snow was blowing in through the cracks over the top and I just didn't sleep a wink all night. It started getting colder and colder and I was cold clear up to my hips. Anyway we went on up to where the saw mill was. I got him his

load of slabs. Slabs that I never did get paid for. I let him have them on time.

Then there was some of my lumber that got stolen. I had it piled out to itself. I had also traded for some lath. I thought I'd build a house and I'd have the lath to have a plastered house with. That got stolen too. All in all I suppose you could say that I worked for about 25 cents a day, just mostly putting in my time. But, that load of lumber, that \$10.00 helped to buy the wedding ring and the marriage license. The marriage license was \$6.00 and the wedding ring cost me about the same.

Bazel Rolfson had already moved away from the farm by this time and I took it over. He moved to Lethbridge and tried his luck at barbering. I had sold a some wiener pigs and got enough to pay off the ring and some other things. I bought a wash tub (used to bathe in also) and a scrubbing board and went to an auction sale and bought some flat irons. (You set those on the stove and heat them and then do your ironing.) I gave a carpenter my mechanical drawing set to build a bed and I built a gate-leg dining table. 3Bought an old cast iron stove and an enamel top kitchen table. Rhoda had a pre-wedding shower. The gifts helped us with the house keeping.

I bought some wall paper from Mr. Tom Shaw. He sold them to me on credit, two dollars for enough wall paper to paper the house with. It was a bunch of surplus he had kicking around the store there in Hartley. He moved away and I never did get that man paid the \$2.00. If I can find his descendants why, I still intend to pay plus a bit of interest because I was one never to not pay my bills. That is one thing during my whole life I have made it a practice and a part of my life to always pay my bills. Usually I'd pay my bills first and if there was anything left, why then

we ate. (Years later I found Tom's grand daughter-in-law and gave her \$20.00 for the \$2.00 debt. She donated it to the Glenwood cemetery fund.)

### **Marriage**

The date of our marriage was May 10, 1933 at the Cardston Temple. On that date Uncle Charlie Hinman, Rhoda's Mother's brother, drove us in his wagon to Cardston a distance of about twenty five miles. They were all together: Uncle Charlie, and mother Woodruff, Vera Drawlinger, a very close friend of Rhoda's and Rhoda and I. It had rained a great deal and so it was deep mud all the way in. It was what they called a light spring wagon that we traveled in.

We went to the temple that day and were sealed in marriage by Rhoda's uncle, Zebulon Jacobs. At this time, President Edward J. Woods was the temple president. And as far as that goes even a prophet to the people in that stake. He was an outstanding man, commonly called the Dean of all Stake Presidents. Uncle Charlie and mother Woodruff went home and we stayed over and went to the temple another day. We stayed at Uncle Zebulon Jacobs and rode out the next day with him in his Model A Ford to Hartley.

We didn't have what you call a honeymoon what ever. We just drove out there and I went right to work on the farm that I had rented. I worked from early in the morning until late at night. We planted a garden. I had no machinery so to speak of. I had an irrigating shovel and made a hoe out of an elevator cup on a threshing machine. I wired it to an old piece of a broom handle, and that was the hoe that I used to hoe the garden with

We lived on very meager food, such as rutabagas and cracked wheat. We had some flour. Flour was not too hard to obtain. You could trade wheat for flour. For greens we'd go pick dandelions and eat dandelion greens and things of this kind. Meat we just didn't seem to get around to get. Although we could have raised it. It seemed that anything like that you had to sell to get a little bit of cash to buy things. Things like overshoes to wear through the winter and a few clothes that you had to have and a little bit of sugar, which we had very little of. Things like that.

You could trade one thing for another and that was the media of exchange in those days. Instead of using money you'd find someone that needed what you had. For instance I'd trade slabs for honey or lumber. I'd trade some hay for a piece of old machinery. You'd find people trading. That was their main occupation when they weren't working, was out looking for someone to trade something to or for what they wanted. The times were very, very depressed, so that was the only way that you could get what you wanted. The men that were the sharpest traders were the ones that prospered. I was a bum trader.

Our friends and neighbors that we had in those days are still near and dear to us. They were the Hartleys, Fullmers, Leavitts, Woodruffs, Loose and widow Laura Smith and Chase and Bea Smith. We usually go back up to Alberta two or more times each summer and renew old acquaintances up there. When they come down this way to Moses Lake they always come in to see us. They don't come down here though, near as often as we go up there for obvious reasons.

That fall after we were married I went to Raymond to work in the harvest and made a little cash to buy the bare necessities of life. That became a regular routine of mine each

fall. I'd go down there and work in the harvest to make some money. I'd work for the Rolfsons the people that I knew so well and they were just like parents to me. Brother and Sister Bent Rolfson, they always would just do anything for me.

In order to have coal for the winter you could go down to the St. Mary's River bottom, dig it out and haul it yourself. Late that fall, after the harvesting and everything was over, I decided to go the forty five miles from Hartley across the Indian Reservation down into the River bottom. I didn't have the equipment to do this with, so I borrowed horses and wagon from Brother Rolfson. I shod the horses, put the shoes on myself, and got them all ready. Four head of horses, two abreast again, and their wagon. They had good equipment. They only lived about ten miles from the St. Mary's River where the coal digging was.

I went down there and Mrs. Rolfson fixed me up a very fine lunch to do me for over three days, bottled fruit, sandwiches and all kinds of goodies, cookies and cakes and things that were really a fine lunch. I went down to the river bottom and loaded up my coal, about three ton of coal. There were two or three others down there getting out coal. After I got my coal loaded it was late in the evening so I spent the night there at the camp site.

I started out early the next morning with these four head of horses. They were cold shoulder. Horses do that a lot of times. Until they get warmed up good they don't pull very well. If they get a little hard pull or something they do what they used to call balk. They'd just stop. You can't get them to go. They just flounder around. They won't dig in and pull hard.

That's what happened to me when I got out in the middle of St. Mary's River. It was

waist deep and running swift and ice was floating down the river, it was that cold. It was in December and there I was stuck right out in the middle of the river among boulders under the water. There was nothing I could do. I was all alone out there.

I got down and changed the lead team to the wheel. Sometimes they'd pull better if you just switched them around. It made the environment a little different. But, it didn't help at all. The winds were blowing my lines above. It was in December but we didn't have any snow on yet. It was one of those, what they call open winters, yet it was cold enough to freeze ice and have it floating down the river.

The wind was blowing above and the water was running below so that with the double trees and the tugs, there was quite a battle switching back and forth. I had to reach down to the bottom of the water so that I got wet all over. It didn't do any good after I changed them so I then changed them back again and that didn't do any good.

About that time an Indian came along with his empty wagon and one team of horses crossing. So I gave him the only fifty cents I had to hook on to me and pull me the rest of the way across the river. When he unhooked I said, "Now watch me till I get up on top of the hill out of the river bottom because I might get stuck going up that steep hill." He says, "Alright." But, he took off on a big run with his team and didn't even look back.

My team just wasn't warmed up yet and I got stuck on the first rise going up the hill. Of course, I had a capacity load anyway. It was really tough pulling it up the hill.

The only thing I could do then was to shovel half of my load off onto the ground and take that half up the hill and shovel it off there at the top of the hill. Then go back down and

shovel that half back on and go up and load up the balance. So it amounted to shoveling all the load off and then shoveling it all back on again. After I once got up the hill it was level the rest of the way.

I just got the load loaded up on top of the hill and got up on the seat and told my horses to "Giddup, let's go" when in the distance there I could see Uncle Charlie Hinman and Rhoda's brother, Vibert coming. Each had four head of horses with empty wagons coming down to get coal. Had I been another hour or so later they could have hooked on to me and pulled me through the river, uphill and saved me all that work and inconvenience.

My clothes were all wet, but with that wind blowing, as cold as it was, they froze right on me. So actually it helped to have them frozen because when they dried it did what you call freeze-dry. They dried on me while I was traveling and I didn't get near so cold. If they had not frozen, the wind would have whistled through and I would have gotten cold. Freezing that way stopped the wind until it was dried as it thawed out and kinda insulated me.

I got about half way across the reservation that day and by night time I stopped and unhooked my horses and fed them and then I'd forgotten and left my lunch down at the camp. All that good lunch that was for my three days travel I'd left behind. I was very, very hungry and nothing to eat. I had feed for the horses there so I fed them.

The wind was still blowing hard all night. I'd lay down on the ground there and I'd get cold and I'd get up and run around. I'd run around and around to warm up. I'd get a little warm then I'd go lay down again. And I did this all night. I didn't get one wink of sleep all night long because of this. I didn't have enough covers to keep me warm anyway and

not having any food to eat made it so I soon became so weak I couldn't run around. It was hard for me to run anymore. I'd get weak awfully fast and it got harder and harder to keep warm. I was sure glad when morning came so I could hitch-up and travel on. It was so dark at night I couldn't see where I was going across the open Indian reservation. You had to just follow a trail.

The next night I got down to what they call the Belly River, to an Indian agency. There were some hay stacks there. What they call prairie wool. It was a fine grass and it made very good sleeping. I crawled in between two stacks, forced my way between two bats of hay, they called them, and I had a wonderful nights sleep. I think about the best nights sleep I ever had because I hadn't gotten any sleep the night before.

The sun was shining the next day when I got up about 8:00. Nearly always, all my life, I've awakened about 4:30 or 5:00 every morning at day break to be up and going. But, this time it didn't happen that way and I didn't feel guilty at all because I hadn't had a wink of sleep the night before. But, I still didn't have anything to eat. I was too proud to go to the agency and beg for food for I had no money. I made it home that third night after dark, almost dead. That was enough coal to do us for the winter if we really used it sparingly.

Dad and mom Rolfson would always help me out anytime they could. Woodruffs never once offered me any assistance. They had Uncle Charley, and Uncle Charley had them and they didn't need me. I could have helped them produce much more hay and grain as I was an experienced irrigator. They could have helped me by permitting me to accompany them on long hauling trips. But one time I kind of got even with the

Woodruffs. The boys were away from home a few days. Their cattle broke into their hay stacks pushing the pole fence down. All around they pulled out a lot of loose hay mixed in with manure with many poles buried below. I spent the whole day there cleaning up the mess and rebuilding the pole fence. Vibert and I later became the closest of friends; and are to this day.

The next several years, with the depression on, were filled with severe hardship of "wear it out, make it do, and do without." We had droughts, year after year, plagues of grass hoppers to devour what little the drought left. The soil was heavy gumbo. It didn't respond well to irrigation, although hay took well to it and I sold hay to cattlemen. I milked a few cows, sold cream, and raised some pigs. We lived one half mile north of Hartley school and Church. The Church was the center of practically all social activities.

### 1934

When Rhoda was nearing delivery time she went in and stayed at Jacobs in Cardston. About two weeks on the 24<sup>th</sup> of February I rode the horse into Cardston to see Rhoda and it was that next morning that David was born. It was quite a thing and outside it was fourteen below zero. Then I rode the horse back out to Hartley in that cold weather. I don't remember how Rhoda got home unless she rode out on the train or Uncle Zeb Jacobs brought her out because that is where she was staying.

David was a very special little fellow. A real healthy, fine looking baby boy. He grew up to be a very conscientious, and scholarly young man. He's exceptionally thoughtful of others, unassuming in spite of his outstanding achievements. He's about as perfect as you

can find. His delightful wife Patricia would tell you the same.

I didn't think we could possibly have another one as special as he was. But, sure enough when Lorna came along she was very special, too in her own little way. She was a very out-going happy little girl. And that's the way it was with all our children. Everyone of them was just really something to behold and watch grow up. They had their own little dispositions, the sweetest kids you ever saw in your life. And I know because I wasn't prejudice a bit.

Frank and Marie Smith who lived down by Waterton River were our closest friends as they were married a few months before we were. In spite of the hardships, we had fun times, playing ball saturday afternoons, visiting friends and relatives Sunday afternoons. Always we had to return by dark, milk the cows feed the pigs and chickens, and take care of the horses. Always chores to do.

I usually went to Raymond to work in the Fall harvest, to make a little money to buy clothing etc. It was for Bazel's parents who were out on their farm. I called them Mom and Dad Rolfson. I ran their threshing outfit, then hauled sugar beets to the beet dump with four head of horses.

One narrow escape I had while hauling beets. Of course with these beets you'd fork them on and that was very hard work, loading up these beet racks by hand. You didn't have the machinery they have today. There was a lot of dirt with these beets. Sometimes there was over a ton of dirt on the return trip. I had the habit of letting the door down and dumping the dirt on the door that let straight out from the beet rack. All I had to do was drop the door and most of the dirt would be unloaded. But, this threw all the weight over on one side of the beet bed. It was on hinges

so that it could tip one way or the other for unloading the beets.

Usually I drove down into the barpit on the way back to keep off the gravel for the benefit of the horses feet. It was four head of horses strung out again as usual. I was sitting up on the front of the top of the rack. Just sitting up on the boards on the edge. I was very nimble and active in that day and I could just perch anywhere like that. I was sitting up there and I swung my horses down into this bar pit. As I did it tipped the one side up higher than the other. With the weight of the dirt it gave the beet rack a flip straight up. Just as it did, of course, I lost my balance and fell right down under the beet rack.

I said "Whoa" as I tumbled head first between the raised beet bed and the wagon. The horses stopped instantly. In that way the dirt on the side board held the beet rack in its upward position allowing me to crawl out. Had the horses taken a little time to stop, the beet rack would have dropped back down and sliced me in two. I crawled out bleeding from my head that hit some bolt heads. I've never had the horses stop that quick before. They were almost in a trot but, the horses stopped dead in their tracks and that's all that saved my life.

Rolfsons went to Utah for the winter. Rhoda and I took care of their place while they were away. David had a lot of colic. We were new at raising kids and it was a worry. This winter I found a job of about two weeks sorting potatoes ten hours per day at ten cents per hour. We used that money to buy our first linoleum for our home at Hartley. We were destitute, but so was everyone else. We had to work and sweat for every little advancement. Rhoda's brother, Vibert and his bride, Retta spent their honeymoon with us in January 1935.

### 1936

I went with Harry Law to Pocatello to see my sister Hattie Welch. She gave me a rubber tired car chassis I brought home for use as a wagon.

Lorna was born on this day, November 22, 1936 at the Cardston hospital. She was a little doll. It's no wonder. Her mother was very beautiful, and still is to this day. Lorna grew up to be a very happy, outgoing sweet little gal. She was a little bundle of sunshine. she has always been very out going and cheerful and made friends where ever she went. Even from the very earliest until the present time for that matter.

### 1937

There was a very old Fordson steel wheel tractor on the place. I bought a good used International Harvester C. truck motor from Walt Loose of Glenwood. He installed it in the old Fordson. It made a fine little tractor, so I stopped farming with horses.

### 1938

I made money the fall of 1938 by running Mr. Hartley's thrashing machine. Using his tractor and thresher to harvest people's grain. I did it by taking half of the proceeds for my labor of the net profits and paying him half for the use of the equipment. I was putting my know-how and work against his equipment for half of the net profit after the gas and oil and repairs had been paid for.

I'd like to say here that Hartley's were very fine friends and neighbors. They contributed a great deal to the community of Hartley, which had a post office at this particular time. In the earlier time when we all came there and later too we all availed ourselves of the use of his workshop. He had a pretty well equipped

workshop with a forge and taps and dies and a grindstone where we sharpened our cycles. There were so many things we were able to use that hardly anyone else in the community had. He made us all feel welcome to use this shop. He was very kind in this regard. Sister Hartley contributed, you might say, to the refinement of the community. She was a lady with high standards and quite well educated. She was the sister of President Hugh B. Brown. They were from a large family, of course. She always seemed like the one who coached the plays and gave the cultural lessons in Relief Society and did all these things that contributed to the refinement of the community.

Having made a little money the fall of 1938 I decided we could afford to buy a 36 Oldsmobile and go to Salt Lake City and spend the winter. We went down there and I got a job in the Western Pontiac paint shop with my brother Joel. We spent an enjoyable winter. Rhoda's cousin was living there, Gladys Jacobs Jones whose husband was Carl. Carl had a home there so they invited us to go live with them. We had an enjoyable time living with the Jones and working out at the paint shop with my brother.

For recreation we used to go up in the canyon skiing. I'd done a bit of skiing in Montana when I spent six years there. Joel had never skied, but he became a ski enthusiast from going up there. At first when he'd get on a pair of skies he'd go just a few feet and he'd fall down. But, he was very persistent and became one of the better skiers up there. In fact he became head of Wasatch Ski Patrol. We saw movies of him skiing and he looks just like a professional going down the mountain side swishing one way and then the other.

In 1944 my brother Joel was killed in a hunting accident. The Weasel he was riding along the edge of a canyon hit a rock on the upper side and rolled it over down the canyon. Joel was a very fine spirit. Very easy to get along with and a lot of fun to be around. He had a very fine sense of humor, dry wit.

I'll jump back to 1938-39. It was during this time that Hitler invaded Austria and things were beginning to stir over in Europe. On our way back north we stopped in at Clearfield to one of Rhoda's cousins, Phyllis. Her mother was with them and we called her Aunt Bell Moses. She was a daughter of Wilford Woodruff. She was very old.

We went back up to Hartley, stopping on our way north visiting all our relatives and friends. Had spent a very fine winter. In March we got back after being gone all winter. When we walked in the house after dark the floor felt like we were walking on carpet. When we lit the lamp the carpet turned out to be about an inch and a half of dust on the floor. It was topsoil blown from the land. It had been a very windy winter. We felt fortunate to have been south out of all the wind and cold.

It was about this time I think that they started to producing rubber tired tractors. I'd done a bit of reading up on that. All the tractors before this had been steel wheels with steel cleats for traction. I decided to buy one. I bought an International W-30 rubber tired tractor. A lot of the neighbors around wagged their heads and said I'd really gone out on a limb now in getting something that was untested and all this. But, it proved out very successful.

It wasn't too many years before all the neighbors that could afford it bought rubber tired tractors. Prior to this most of the people

around were using horses to do their farm work. Very few even had the steel-wheeled tractors. Following this I bought a little six foot combine. They didn't build self propelled ones at this time. I did combining for the neighbors around and, of course, my own too. I made enough with this combine to make the payments on the tractor and the combine and have a little extra money to start building a house with.

#### **1940**

I was chairman of the finance committee for the new Hartley Chapel. I believe it was the winter of 1940-41. Many of the Hartley men-folk went up in the mountains and got out timber to help build the new ward church house. A lot of hard work and ingenuity was involved. I was already experienced in timber work. This helped put me in shape for what was to come later. I was happy to get Bernard Lybbert for a cross-cut saw partner. Our rhythm matched perfectly when we faced each other over a log, each pulling his end of the saw. We both had experience.

#### **1941**

The spring of 1941 I started on my new home, pouring the basement. Remington brothers, contractors poured and finished my basement, their second job. The two brothers did the work themselves. They later became large contractors and Don became a multimillionaire. A very fine benevolent man, he gave away millions to society in the form of the giant Remington, Alberta Carriage museum in Cardston.

I got up to the square and a roof on my house. This made it very hard for Rhoda because we moved out of the old house into a granary so we could use the material out of the old house to put into the new one.



It was kinda like the board of directors for a church. Had a meeting one night and they decided to build a new church so they passed a resolution to that effect. Then they passed another resolution that they would use the material out of the old church to put into the new one. Then they passed a third resolution that they would meet in an old church until the new one was finished.

That is kind of the position we were in. Trying to use the material out of the old house to build a new one and in the meantime living out in the granary. Rhoda of course had two children, David and Lorna. With tiny little tots in hand, she was pregnant with the twins, in fact quite a ways a long. They were born July 21<sup>st</sup>, that year. I got the basement finished and the roof on so that we moved into the basement that fall, at least.

It was Sunday, December 7th of that year, 1941, that Pearl Harbor happened. I happened to be home baby sitting with the twins and Rhoda was at Church with the other two kids. I guess the twins, one of them was not feeling well or something. Usually we just packed them up and walked up to church which was a half mile. We didn't have a car at this time. We'd sold it to help with the building of our house and to get money, saving every way we could. We walked everywhere we went and when we didn't we'd drive the horse. We had this team of horses yet that we could use to travel around with and a rubber tired rig to ride in.

## 1942

The following spring was very rainy and wet. We had a lot of water run into the basement, three to five inches deep. Living downstairs in water was devastating for Rhoda's health. I didn't have much of a way to get the water out. I started digging a ditch

out a way from the basement. But, that took a long time to dig one six feet deep and about two hundred feet long to drain the water to run it out on the level. This was taking so long that finally we decided to move up stairs even though there was only a sub floor.

One of the twins, Ron was standing up in his high chair facing the back with hands clutching the top of the chair, rocking back and forth. It tipped completely over, LeRon's head hitting the water and cement. There was enough water to break his fall so he was uninjured. If it hadn't been for that water it might have been fatal for him so I guess the water had it's good points too. We credit the water with saving his life.

The rain made it so that I had to move lumber from one room to another because you had to have it inside, (the finishing lumber and the gip-rock, rock wall or what ever you want to call it.) You had to have it inside out of all the rain so the only place we had was in other rooms of the house. It was very, very inconvenient to try to live in a house and build it at the same time. All this was very slow as I was doing practically all the work myself.



Richard with two of Bazel Rolfson's children  
l-r: Theda & Belva 1930 Raymond, Alberta



Bazel's parents on ends. "I called them Mom & Dad Rolfson." l-r: Emma, Elma, Sandy & Bent c. 1935



Farming for the Rolfson's on their Wallis 1220 tractor, 1930



Richard and Jim Cobia c. 1936 Hartley farm



Rhoda & Richard Cobia and his sister Hattie, Alberta 1934



Rhoda Woodruff and Richard shortly before marriage  
Cardston, Alberta 1932



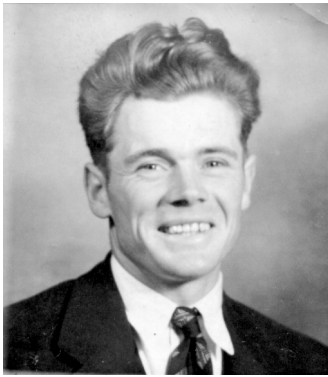
Monte Pepper Gibson (Warren Pepper's sister)  
Richard, & Rhoda Woodruff 1932



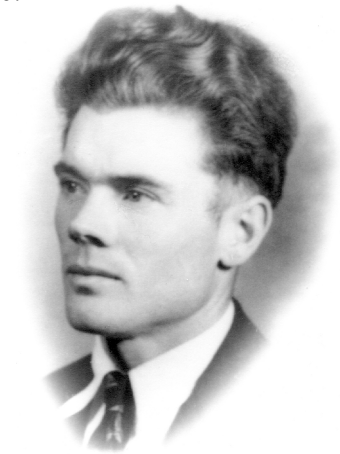
Richard and son David in beautiful field of Hartley wheat c. 1935



Richard & David in front of first house after it was moved down from the field. c. 1934 Hartley home.



1937



1938



Rhoda, David & Richard c. 1935 Raymond



David & Richard c.1937 Hartley farm



Lorna, Rhoda, Richard & David in Raymond spring 1937



Cobia brothers in order of birth  
l-r: Ben, Joel, Jim and Richard  
c. 1938 Pocatello, Idaho



Richard, Ben & Joel Cobia  
c. 1938 Pocatello

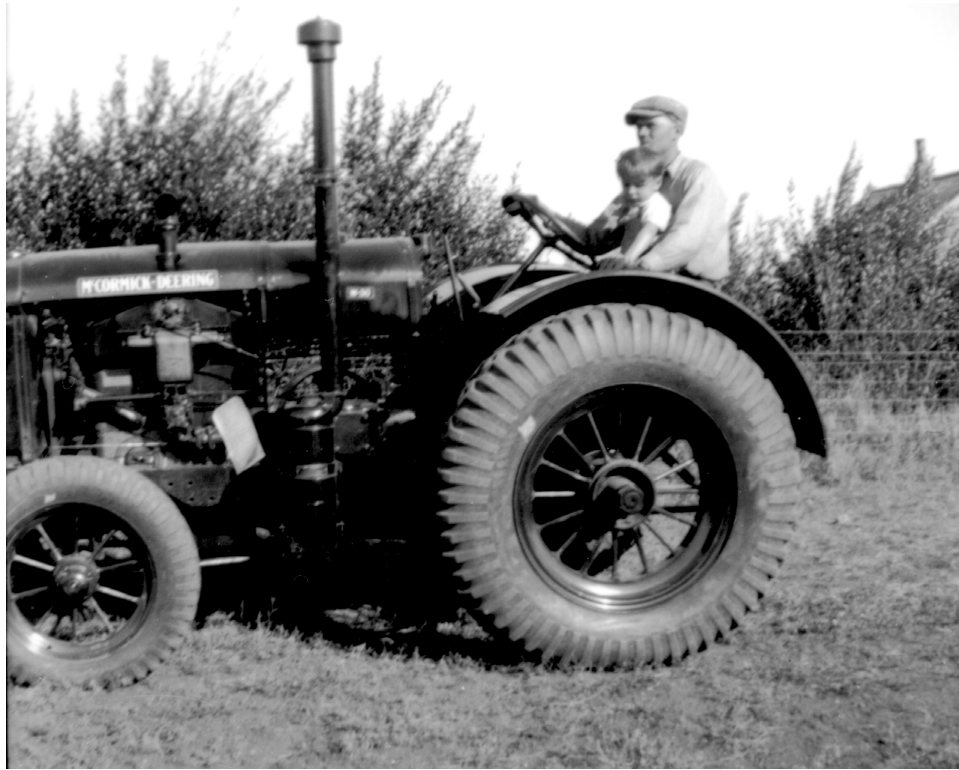


Ben, Jim & Richard Cobia  
c. 1942 Pocatello



b. Jim, Hattie, Verda, & Bennie  
f. Lyda, Lila, Richard & Clorece c. 1942





From steel cleats to rubber. One of the first rubber tire tractors in southern Alberta. The first ones had diamond shaped treads. "A lot of the neighbors wagged their heads and said 'I'd really gone out on a limb' in getting something that was untested." David & Richard Cobia, Hartley farm, 1939 on McCormick Deering W-30 (International).



Richard on steel cleat Wallis - Rolfson farm 1930.



This 1936 Olds was purchased in 1938 to spend the winter in SLC. "It was a very good car for us which we kept till 1941."



David & Lorna Cobia  
Hartley old house 1938



Richard working on the new  
Hartley Chapel 1941



LeRoy Cobia in front of the  
new house in Hartley c. 1942



Rhoda & Richard Cobia with  
the twins 1941, Hartley

## Alaska Highway

1943

I rented out the farm to Mont Helton for one year. I took the twins, and the children and Rhoda in to Cardston to stay with her mother and sister, Norma while I went up and worked on the highway project.

I heard they were paying big bucks on the Alaska highway project: only Americans or U.S.A. citizens could apply. So in the spring of 1943 I decided to go up to Alaska and make some quick money. I wanted to make this money so I could finish our home. This was considered war work. A nine month contract with M.H.K.C.B. as a truck driver at \$1.40 per hour, double what Canadian drivers received. I spent the first three months in Edmonton driving truck then I was transferred to Alaska.

We were made up of an eighteen truck convoy. The foreman took the lead with a pickup and I in a pickup brought up the rear, just kind of picking up the stragglers and pieces. When we arrived at White Horse, Yukon we received word the road was closed off to Fairbanks by landslides. We were told we'd take our trucks on barges down the Yukon River to Circle only ninety miles from Fairbanks. That fell through because the pipe line company canal had priority. After spending eight days at White Horse they sent all of us up to Fairbanks by plane.

I woke up and the sun was way up there; daylight. I thought we had slept in and I looked at my watch and it said 7:00 a.m.. I thought it was about 11 o'clock. I looked over and everybody else was asleep. I didn't get back to sleep again. I went down and looked at the river. The Tanana River, they called it. There were no trucks there for us to drive so they put us to work with pick and shovels working out at the air-base in Fairbanks to prepare foundations for the airport buildings.

The other fellows were kinda playing hooky. We were having quite a little trouble cause they wanted to just drive truck. They didn't want to do that type of work. So rather than be associated with that group they came and asked for volunteers to go up to a river and work in a lumber camp.

I volunteered along with another fellow, Truman Barclay. We decided we wanted to get away. He was from Montana and we had quite a little in common so we went up there to work in the lumber camp. I went to work first in a saw mill. Carrying lumber back from the saw and piling it. We worked twelve hours. We just stopped work long enough to eat lunch. Then we'd go again, putting in twelve hours of this going back and forth carrying this lumber. It was really tedious work. I was glad when we ran out of logs.

All this time I was sending mother Woodruff \$40.00 per month for keep of the family. That would be top wages for a farm worker at that time.

They took the crew and we went up the river seventy miles in two outboard motor boats. The Good Pastor River was the name of it, not Pasture but Pastor, after a preacher I guess. It wasn't a big river. It was very shallow a lot of places with rapids. We very often sheared the pins off the props.

Going up we would stop on the sand banks to have our lunch. You could see big wolf tracks and bear tracks and many kinds of wild animal tracks. You could see the fish swimming in the clear water. We got up there to where the logging crew were. They had a team of horses up there to snake the logs with.

The gnats were real bad. The moss was about six inches thick on the ground. You'd walk on that and sink in up to your shoe tops and the gnats liked to hide in that on a frosty



night. When the sun came out in the morning they came out in swarms and really would chew on you. It was very hard on the horses. We'd wear nets to keep them from eating our faces. But, they'd light on your hands and crawl around your wrists and chew.

We spent about a week snaking logs on the river bank for the drive down to the sawmill which was seventy miles away. It was during this week that I got several pangs of homesickness. I was never so homesick in my life. I wondered whether I'd be able to survive. I just didn't see how I was going to stick it out. I decided I was just going to do it one day at a time. I'll stay today. After about a week it kinda wore off. I was always anxious to get back home but, by taking it a day at a time I was able to go through that week.

At the end of this week we needed more supplies so the foreman asked me to go with him down to Big Delta, which is about eighty miles downstream in the outboard motor boat to get a few supplies. Enough supplies to do us on the drive back down with the logs. We went down and got a few things that we thought would do us. Of course we couldn't carry much in that little outboard motor boat.

On the way back up, we were going up some of these swift rapids and sheared a pin in the prop. Of course that made the boat helpless and we drifted back down under a tree. Then there was another tree leaning out level with the water that the boat hit. We were just about ready to capsize. I was in the front end of the boat.

I grabbed a tree that was leaning over, about three feet out of the water and held on to it. The swift water was almost pulling the boat under the log behind. That way it was swamping the boat, pulling it under and sinking it. I hollered to the foreman to come

up and put the tow rope around the tree and hold it. I couldn't hold it much longer. He did so. That way by taking some slack out of the rope and pulling tight, we were able to straighten the boat back out. This kept it from being swept under the tree and capsizing.

Had we not done this, we would have lost the boat and all our supplies. We were about fifty miles from the nearest outpost. There was nothing but wilderness and wild animals between us and civilization. The little pines about five inches in diameter were too close together to pass between, the moss a foot deep, the river too cold, swift and dangerous to swim. It was a real narrow escape. We put a pin into the prop and we made it on up to camp.

After we arrived at the logging camp we finished decking and rolling the logs in the river ready for the drive. Log-driving was a new experience for me. Sometimes there would be a log jam ten feet high. It was my job to work the log jams. A big pile of logs maybe anywhere from three to fifty logs or more in a pile. One log would go under the other one and lodge and raise the one above it until it pushed logs way up in the air. Maybe the river would be ten or fifteen feet deep below this pile of logs.

My job was to go out onto this pile of logs, with a pike pole (a pole with a steel point and hook in one end) loosen them and get them started down the stream. You keep moving one log at a time into the stream until you find the key log. You pry it loose then run for your life. The whole jam starts tumbling and rolling all at once. In that case you had to jump fast to get back on the shore. Oh, I got myself wet a time or two. Other men were in boats steering the logs, keeping them off gravel bars, keeping them moving. The boat

would take me from one jam to the next. I fell in all over a good many times.

There was an old Norwegian highly experienced in the timber, asked me to take one end of a cross cut saw with him. We were to cut a large tree down in the river to act as a boom to steer the logs past a potential trouble spot. As we started to saw a little while he said in his Norwegian accent, "You have sawed before."

On the sand bars there were tracks of many wild animals, including wolves. You could surely hear them howling in the night. It was exhausting work, but very enjoyable as you always wondered what would happen next. It was an exciting job. It was getting along late in the season now, getting cold, pretty cold nights. Sometimes cold even during the day. The food was scarce and very plain. The last three days of that seventy mile drive all we had was boiled potatoes, not even salt. The mosquitos would eat you up most of the early summer, then the gnats would take over. The gnats were troublesome even after it was freezing hard. As it cooled in the evening they would go into the moss. When it warmed up the next day, they were out in full force.

When we got down to the sawmill, word came there that the trucks had come through. Being a truck driver I went down and saw the truck foreman and got a truck and started hauling gravel. So I switched from driving logs to driving trucks. I must say I like truck driving much better even tho I was glad for the other experience.

It was a real nice truck. A new beautiful red tandem-drive Ford truck. It was a ten speed truck, five speed with two speed rear axle with a heater in it. It was a dump truck, and I had to be careful under electric lines. The bed would raise fifteen feet in the air. So

this was pretty nice to haul huge loads of gravel with.

While I was doing this I became acquainted with the young fellow that was driving the water truck for the camp. He was getting in fourteen hours a day. Of course I was up there to make money. I says, "Man you must make a lot of money on that. It would sure be a good job to have." He says, "Well I don't think so. What good's all that money up here." I says, "Well, I come up here to take some of it back with me. I'll trade you jobs." He says, "Boy I'd jump at that."

His truck was an old rickety truck. An International, and it didn't have very good heat in it, if any at all. It had a loose body and the type where you'd get cold. We got a lot of wind down at Big Delta Camp where we were working building an air-base.

I asked the foreman the next morning if we could trade trucks. He says, "Naw, I don't want to get things mixed up, he knows the route and everything." I says, "Well I could learn the routes in just a half a day." He says, "No." We kinda let it go at that.

I got with the water truck driver and learned the routes anyway. So we just switched without telling the foreman at all. I took his truck and he took mine and we checked in our separate times. I put in for fourteen hours a day and he put in for his ten. Nobody said anything. It was a big camp and a lot of trucks and a lot of work. Nobody paid much attention to anyone else.

So that's the way it went. I was drawing \$1.70 an hour for fourteen hours a day, time and a half for over time and double time for Sunday. I was working seven days a week getting fourteen hours a day. In about the first three days I had straight time, then I was getting time and a half, then I was getting double time for Sunday. This came to about \$900.00 a month which was a fortune for

those days when I had been used to working for about \$1.00 a day. That was more than what the superintendent's salary amounted to.

My job was hauling water to the mess hall where they cooked the food. They used a lot of water and had tanks there. Then to the shower houses. They held a lot of water there for showers. Then I hauled water out to the steam engines.

They were thawing the ground out with these locomotive steam engines they had parked out there. This was getting into the middle of the winter and they had several feet of frost to go through for foundations for the air-base. So they were driving these pipes into the ground and then running steam through them to thaw the ground out, so they could excavate for an air hanger and a complete army airport. They had gasoline heaters inside heavy canvas tents, and were running concrete in sub-zero weather.

I was feeding water to those hungry people, to the bath houses and the cook barracks. I would get my rounds done in about two or three hours. Then I would have two or three hours rest to do what ever I wanted to. I was getting paid for the full time. With the rounds and rests it strung out to fourteen hours a day.

There were about eight hundred men in this camp. We ate in these long barracks. There were no girls in camp at all at this time. One of the men with fine features dressed up as a lady with a dress and painted his face with rouge and had lipstick on and had a lady's hat on and everything. Kinda the look of the sorts that would be appropriate in that area. He came in there while all the men were eating. You should have heard the wolf whistles, the cheers that went up. Some of the men reached over and kissed him on the cheek. He rubbed their bald heads and the like. They were really excited. After it was all over then he identified himself as what he was -- a man!

They all felt quite disappointed. Shortly after this they did ship a bunch of girls in there as waitresses to cheer the men up. Those girls didn't hold their purity very long in that camp of men. I don't think there were any of them that went back innocent girls.

My friend Walter Anderson from Minnesota was sleeping across the aisle from me and in the top bunk. Each night he would wake up two or three times coughing. Each time that he did he would reach over and get a cigarette and smoke during the night. He'd wake up in the morning very tired and say, "Oh man I wish I could get a good night sleep. I'd give anything for a good nights sleep." I says, "Well Walt, I can tell you how you can get a good nights sleep, if you want to do it. But, I don't think you have the will power." He says, "Well what's that?"

I says, "Stop smoking. That smoking causes you to cough and wakes you up. You smoke so heavily and that's the cause of it all. If you quit smoking you'll sleep all night." He says, "Well I'm not a slave to anything. I can quit smoking anytime I want to." I says, "Well that's all you have to do." So he didn't take another cigarette. He quit smoking right then.

I was just amazed. I didn't think that was possible that a man that smoked as heavily as he did (about two or three packs a day) would be able to just quit all at once that way. He was determined, as he said he wasn't a slave to anything. Sure enough he started sleeping soundly all through the night and he'd wake up in the morning and stretch and say, "Oh man what a wonderful sleep that was." Every morning he was just amazed at how well rested he was and how well he felt. He put on just a little weight, but he was a brand new man. He was surely grateful for that idea from me to improve his health like that.

I have had many incidents through out my life of different things that are too numerous to mention, but that was just one example of how beneficial it is to us to follow the Word of Wisdom and keep the commandments. We have nothing to lose whatever and everything to gain in this. It is like putting your money on something, betting on something where you can't lose. You're going to win no matter what. If you put your money and bet your life in this church you have everything to gain and nothing to lose. It's like having your cake and eating it too.

While I was working in Edmonton the Hartley Church was completed and about to be dedicated. I had contributed a great deal of time to its construction. I had served as chairman of the finance committee in Hartley to raise funds to build that church and I had decided to take off work and come home for the dedication. They needed some more money, so I figured out what it would cost me to go. In time lost and railway fare it amounted to sixty dollars so I subdued my wants and sent them the sixty dollars to help pay it off so it could be dedicated instead of going down.

## 1944

Along about the middle of January the days were getting so short there was hardly no daylight at all. It would start getting light about 11:00 a.m. and then about 2:00 p.m. it would start getting dark again. The superintendent of the job was on a monthly salary. I don't know whether he was getting a little jealous of me making that much or what. He cut me down to ten hours a day. He put on two shifts and gave two shifts ten hours a day to take the place of my fourteen hours.

The other fellow that took the other shift instead of doing his job, why he'd take his

girlfriend in the truck up the woods and park for two or three hours. Then the men would run out of water. They'd be all soaped up in the shower and then the water would stop running. They'd be all lathered with nothing to rinse off with.

So the next day I'd get all the complaints because they didn't know but what I was still the water commissioner as they called me. They called me that because I was making so much money that that job couldn't be called a truck driver's job.

The Big Delta air base that we were building in our camp was located ninety miles south of Fairbanks. On weekends the men who were just working, well all of them could work seven days a week if they wanted to, but they'd take off the weekend and that would be all their overtime and double time they had coming. They'd take off the weekend and go into Fairbanks and spend their money on the wine and women. That is a lot of them that did. There were a few of us there to see how much money we could make and take home. I was sending my checks home to be deposited in the bank. I had been sending money to Rhoda's mother for groceries, and gave her sister Norma wages for helping with the kids.

My contract was up in April and they wanted me to stay on. But, I was too anxious to get home. If I was going to farm that year I needed to get home anyway. I had rented my farm out to LaMont Helton, who was just a newly-wed. He'd married Rheba Leavitt.

I checked in all my sleeping bags and equipment that I had there and took the plane home from Fairbanks. It was on an old cargo plane. They had bucket seats there that you could sit on. But, I climbed up on the luggage which was piles of sleeping bags and duffle bags and all these different things and it made

a very comfortable bed. While flying over the Rockies we got caught in an air-pocket and the plane got sucked down about one thousand feet. Anyway I was up against the ceiling for quite some time. As it leveled out I would drop back down on my pile of luggage. The flight ended in Edmonton then I went by train etc. on home.

This was in the spring of 1944. It was a happy reunion with my family when I arrived home. We didn't waste anytime getting back out to the farm and getting settled. I started using the money that I'd brought to improve the home. The first thing I did was to buy a wind charger with a light plant. The wind charger was a tower sixty feet high with a charger up there. It had a twelve foot propeller blade that spun when the wind blew. We usually had plenty of wind to generate the electricity. This was a 32-volt set. I wired the house and bought the electric light bulbs with that voltage. Also washing machine, iron and an electric pump to water the animals. The motors and everything I had was 32-volts. I also built a little brooder to brood chickens out with. We were never out of power and the wind did it all.

The twins were the cutest little guys you ever saw. As time went on they were able to walk. They were about the age of three when I was building a chicken coop out on the north of the house a ways. I had six windows and they all had a lot of glass panes in them. I had these windows stacked up in the chicken coop ready to put in. Brand new windows. The kids found out how much fun it was to walk on that glass and hear it crackle. The twins were just old enough to enjoy that. They pulled each window down off the pile and tromped every pane out of the windows.

As twins they seemed to get into about ten times the amount of mischief that one alone would. It seemed like what one couldn't think of the other one would. Another incidence. We had a prize government bull there we were keeping. They had a plan where you could rent these. The neighbor called up one day and says, "You're twins are down here with the bull. I saw them coming down the road. One had him by the tail and the other had a long stick and they were driving the bull down here." They were just old enough to toddle around good.

Another time we had a lot of chickens there we would raise. I had an electric light plant there and I brooded these chickens out. We raised them up and the roosters we decided to put into fruit jars, canned them as we called it. We killed about fifty chickens one day. The kids saw us doing that. A few days later I heard the chickens making a little noise down around the barn. I didn't pay attention to it. I knew the twins were down there playing around. Pretty quick they came up towards the house, towards the chopping block and one had his ax over his shoulder and the other one had a little kitten coming along behind. They came up to the chopping block. Roy had the kitten and he laid it down on the chopping block and Ron had the ax. He started to raise the ax up and I says, "Hey!" He looked up and I says, "What's you doing." and he says, "Shoppin the kitty." They had seen us chopping the chickens heads off for a few days before. They couldn't catch the chickens down there so they caught the one thing they could, the little kitten. And that's what they were ready to do. They didn't understand what it was all about.

The wind charger tower had a handle at the bottom where you could turn the blades

out of the wind to stop it. But, usually since it didn't have a break on it, it would just run for sometime before it stopped. I never even gave that a thought when I turned it off at the bottom one day to go up there to do something with the motor. I just turned it off and went whizzing up to the top. All at once I could hear something a buzzing and whistling through the air. I looked up and those blades were just whirling around. One more step and my head would have hit right into that blade which would have knocked me off and killed me. Just a few weeks later I read in the paper where a man up at Leavitt only about fifteen miles away had done that very thing. He'd climbed up to the top and got hit with the propeller which knocked him off and killed him. That was just one of the narrow escapes that I've had during my life.



Sign post Alaska Highway  
1943



Alaska Highway 1943. Richard drove truck for a number of months.



Sawmill where Richard worked until the trucks arrived. This was at the confluence of Big Delta and Good Pastor Rivers, 90 miles south of Fairbanks, Alaska



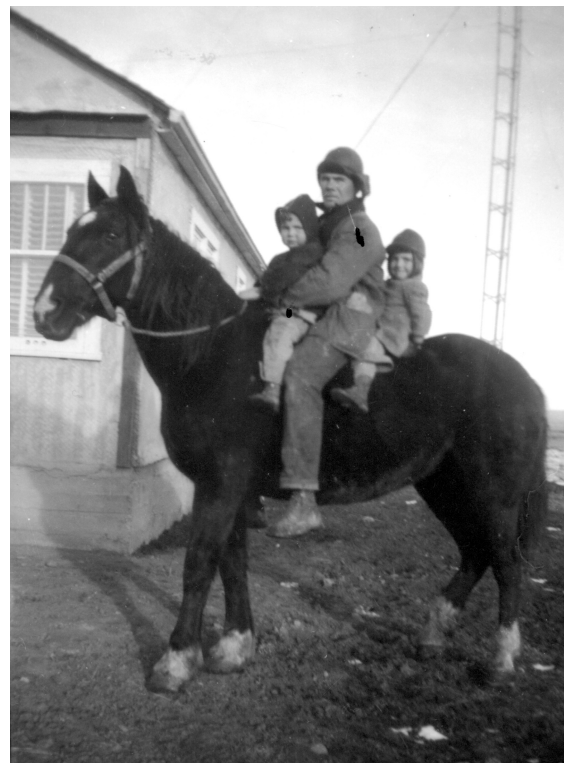
Heavy construction equipment at the Airport Building Site of Big Delta.  
Richard in foreground 1943



Cobia family 1945  
 b: Richard, David, Rhoda  
 f: LeRoy, Lorna, LeRon



David & Lorna Cobia on Hartley farm with  
 baby ducks



LeRoy, Richard, & LeRon Cobia on  
 Old Dime 1944 in front of new Hartley  
 Home. Note 60 ft. tower in background for  
 windcharger.





Warren Pepper & his family while on a visit to the Cobia's in Canada. The Peppers remained good friends throughout life. Richard named one of his children after Warren.



One of the twins milking a cow.



The twins on a sleigh. c 1945

## Moses Lake

1945

I went ahead on our new home, but it was still slow. No power tools in that day. I hired Lester Lybbert who was a friend of ours and a carpenter to come over and help me finish up on the house. We had a lot to do on it yet. He was a real good worker. In fact all those Lybberts were. Bernard Lybbert who married Belle Benion, Rhoda's cousin was a very close friend of mine.

Lester was telling me that his Uncle Jake Lybbert from Moses Lake, Washington had been visiting and telling of the fabulous crops they grew in Moses Lake and the mild climate. Then he told how many tons of potatoes per acre he'd grow and how much you could make on it and it sounded so fantastic.

Bernard had a good car so I said to Lester, "Let's get Bernard and take his car and we pay the expenses to drive down and see this country. I'd like to see it anyway." He says, "Yeah, I'd like to do that too." So I called Bernard up and says, "Bernard, let's go down to Moses Lake and see that country that you've heard about."

He said, "No, I'm very happy here. I just got back from a trip up north. I think this is the only place to live. No, I'm not interested in going." I says, "Well if you change your mind let me know." He says, "Alright, but I won't be changing my mind I don't think."

Well I was surprised about a week later he called up and says, "Well Dick, you ready to go down to Moses Lake." I says, "Yeah." He says, "Well I thought maybe we just might go down and take a look at it." I says, "Well that's what I planned on doing, Bernard. I wasn't going just for the idea of moving. I thought it was interesting enough just to go see."

He and Belle, and Lester and his wife, Delvia, Rhoda and I drove down. It was about November, I think. At that time there was just gravel roads most of the way. Kinda of dusty and rough. On our way we stopped and saw Grand Coulee Dam. What a huge structure that was and how they planned on putting water on the land and the like. Of course this was in 1945 and the water didn't come on the land until about 1952. Some of these farms were irrigated out of the lake and that's the one uncle Jake Lybbert was talking about. A lot of farms around were irrigated out of hand-dug wells. They'd dig a well about fifty feet deep, crib it up as they went down and put in electric turbine pumps. Then they would have all the water they wanted for 80 acres or what ever.

We came down and went around out looking at the farms and how the crops grew. It was raining. We went out and there were carrots in the ground. It was November and raining a bit. Imagine walking out there and pulling carrots out of the ground that time of the year. It was unbelievable and the dirt didn't stick to your feet. Up in Canada if it was wet why when you'd walk out like that you'd get gumbo on your feet and you couldn't lift your feet. Usually up there we'd wear rubber overshoes and then take them off at the door. We'd clean the best of it off the most we could before we came in and then leave our rubbers off at the door. Down here you didn't need to wear rubbers. You'd just walk around on the soil because it didn't stick to your feet. That was the thing that impressed me more than anything.

We weren't here only about one day and Bernard said, "You know Dick, I'm going to move down here." I says, "Oh now wait a

minute, don't be so fast, Bernard. Let's think about this and look it over a little more." We stayed two or three days and looked around and decided on places for sale that we wanted. Not having sold out up there we didn't have the money to pay down on them. Uncle Jake Lybbert introduced us to George Shuster who was quite well to do at this time. He'd just made a lot of money real fast in the potato warehouse business. He ran potatoes out and shipped them back east. He was quite well-heeled. Uncle Jake asked him if he would put up the money to buy these farms till we sold out up north. I thought that was an awfully lot to ask of anyone who had never seen us before, but Uncle Jake was that way. This fellow looked at us and he had a lot of faith in us evidently. He nodded his head and says, "Yeah, I can do that. But I want you to know I don't want those farms."

#### 1946

We went back up home and then came back down in January to see how things were. At that time we went to the Moses Lake church. They were organizing the branch. There were about 18 present and about 38 that would be in the branch of the church. They had been in the Spokane District up till this time in the Northwest States Mission so they transferred us to the Yakama district.

Roulin Killian was branch president, Frank Goodrich his first counselor and Glen Lybbert his second counselor. We were meeting in the old administration building of the housing authority here in Moses Lake. The same area that comprised this little branch of 38 members now at the present time (1977) is two stakes. I would say that the two stakes are close to 5,000 membership. That's quite a growth.

We went home after making arrangements here for some furniture which was on quota and very hard to get. Things like electric ranges and refrigerators and even tractors. It was just after the war, in fact the war hadn't quite ended yet. It was very hard to get any kind of equipment or appliances at all. We put our name down on a list for getting various appliances.

We went back up to Hartley and advertized our household goods and machinery for sale and I got busy and got my place sold. The day for the auction sale came along in February. The day before was one of the windiest days we'd had and the snow had been quite deep and it was blowing huge snow drifts ten feet high. The snow was sailing along at about fifty feet in the air. You couldn't hardly see anything for snow. Bernard called up Jack Newby to see if we should call the sale off. He says, "No it's going to be a good day tomorrow. Don't worry about it." And sure enough the next day the sun was shining and it was a real lovely day. The wind had blown all the snow off the roads and they were clear. We had a real good big crowd there. Our sale went off great.

Bernard and I loaded everything in our trailers and headed for Moses Lake, February 28. We landed here the first of March and stayed at a motel and then moved out to the place. Bernard and his family stayed with us because his house wasn't vacant yet. So it was about two weeks that he and his family were with us. We worked as partners farming. Bernard and I owned practically all our farm machinery together including the truck. He had his land of forty acres and I had eighty acres. I let him in on the north forty of mine so we'd be equal in the machinery. We worked together, first one man's farm then the other, from the time we arrived for about eight

years. We even rented other lands we farmed together. Our children grew up together. We got along very well together. We've been very close friends up in Canada and down here both. When we divided up all the equipment it took less than two hours. It was a fine experience proving it is possible for two people to work together over a long period of time. We're just like brothers. We are still very much concerned about each other's welfare. He lives at Deer Park at the present time (Jan 1977).

About 1949 Bernard and his brother-in-law Russel Brown decided to go into the grade-A-dairy business. They talked me into it also as we were in partnership with most of our farm equipment. I didn't care too much for milking cows, but the three of us each built Sears Roebuck grade A milking parlors with pipe line and refrigerated tanks. I was usually up at 5 am milking cows.

On one Christmas day the twins LeRoy and LeRon went out earlier and had the cows all finished milking by 5 a.m. It took me quite some time to figure out just what happened. It stands to reason I was mighty happy I didn't have to do any chores that morning.

We sold milk to morning Sun Dairy: owned and operated by Orville Wilmot. He got behind in payment for the milk. He gave a hard-luck story. I fell for it. I ended up getting beat out of \$2,000.00. That would amount to about \$20,000.00 of today's money. I could have bought a new car and had \$500.00 left over.

While we were going along we were planning for a new church house to be built in Moses Lake. It took two or three years for us to get enough money to get started. At that time the church only paid 30%. We had to pay 70%. I was serving on the finance committee with Uncle Jake Lybbert in raising funds for this building. I had served as

chairman of the finance committee in Hartley to raise funds to build that church and it was completed while I was up in Edmonton, Alberta.

Brother Jorgensen moved to Moses Lake the same day we did; the first of March 1946, and we became very close friends. We were neighbors and each of us had trucks that we had to have for our farming.

When we were building our first LDS Chapel in Moses Lake it was necessary to transport the cast stone from Portland for the finishing work. I along with several others volunteered to take our farm trucks to do the job. Now I knew the brakes needed some work done on them, but everyone was ready to go and I had been too busy to get this done. I just took off the way it was. It turned out that I had a little brake, but it was on the right front and that was about all the brakes there was. Of course I knew how to drive a truck and handle it pretty well by using the gears without the brake so I felt confident that I would be able to get along with that. We went over to Portland.

Moffett Bridge is a bridge over a deep gorge entering the Columbia River along the old highway between Portland and Hood River, twenty five miles west of Hood River, Oregon. While in Portland waiting to be loaded I remarked to Brother Jorgensen, "I have a feeling of uneasiness like some impending disaster is at hand."

That evening about an hour before sunset, moments before coming to the Moffett Bridge, I thought, "What do I have to worry about, everything is going fine. The sky is beautiful, the world is great. The sun is setting." While this was still on my mind the steering wheel spun loosely in my hands indicating I had lost complete contact with the steering control of my six-ton load of stone.

Traveling at full speed I was approaching the bridge. The truck started to turn to the right. It appeared I would miss the bridge and plunge into the two hundred foot gorge below. There was a six inch cement curb that curved slightly away from the bridge, several feet in length. My right front wheel hit it about an inch and a half from the end. This swerved the truck back onto the bridge. At that instant I found myself facing the traffic on the wrong side of the road.

A huge semi-truck trailer outfit was coming full speed toward me from the other end of the bridge. With my arm out of the window I tried desperately to motion him to stop. He didn't even slow down. But my truck hit the left hand side of the bridge and veered back to the right just as he zoomed past. I then hit the bridge again on the right-hand side, but more sharply than I had before. As the bridge only had a light railing I felt sure I would plunge over the side.

Again I was spared and the truck turned back onto the road speeding in a zig-zag fashion across the bridge. As I left the bridge, the truck which by now had slowed down somewhat, slanted off to the right of the road heading toward some heavy road equipment which was parked there. This was the first time the thought entered my mind to apply the brakes. As I did it cut sharply to the right indicating that I only had brakes on the right front wheel and not too much at that. I ran into a huge stump which was just high enough to sheer off the front under carriage of the truck.

Thinking back it appears that at the moment the steering wheel spun in my hands and I faced what appeared certain death I went into shock. I didn't do any of the things that I would ordinarily do in like circumstances. That is, to apply the brakes or jump. Thus leaving myself completely in the hands of

divine providence. If I had applied the brakes as soon as I lost control I would have missed the curb that sent me onto the bridge because I only had brakes on the right front side. Had I jumped, the big truck would have run over me so it was by doing nothing that my life was saved.

Moments after the truck stopped I climbed out unharmed, except very badly shaken with a severe case of shock. I hailed brother Jorgensen who was coming behind me. We walked back and saw where the right-hand tire had left its imprint on the curb. "Oh my goodness", said Brother Jorgensen, and his face paled at the thought of the near catastrophe as he looked at the deep gorge below. I rode on into Hood River with Brother Jorgensen and he went on home.

I spent the night alone in a hotel. In my shocked condition I didn't sleep at all, but spent the night reliving the horrible experience over and over until morning. I hired a tow-truck to take my truck and load into Hood River. It took two days to put in a new front end. The drag link had come loose from the tie-rod which had caused the disconnection with the steering wheel. I drove home very confidently thinking all was well and delivered my load intact.

A few days later when the boys, David, LeRoy and LeRon were loading hay on the truck out in the field the steering spun again. This time it was caused by a crystallized steering rod. Actually it had been broken for a long time as evidenced by the rusted broken portion. With only a small fraction of the metal in the rod holding it together. It goes without saying we soon traded that GMC truck off for a new International L 160. This is just one of many close calls I had during my life.

Judi (Judith Marie Cobia) was born April 2, 1947 at the hospital in Ephrata. Moses Lake was too small (population 500) to support a hospital. A very beautiful little girl. I was so proud of her. All our daughters, when born were not the usual little red babies, but were like little dolls at birth. Judi was a little fair skin, light haired doll. She grew up to be a very sweet tender hearted, lovable little girl, who didn't receive the time love and attention at a critical time because of LeRon's sickness.

A Scarlet fever followed by Brights Disease, or disintegration of the kidneys. The Doctor (Larsen) didn't give us any hope for LeRon's survival. So during that period our total time, concern and effort was devoted to trying to save LeRon. I pleaded with Dr. Larsen: "Doctor if you know of any other Doctor or specialist, or clinic that might be of help, I'll be happy to pay any amount to save this boys' life." His answer after some deep thought, "That gives me an idea." The next day he started LeRon on blood transfusions. LeRon started improving immediately and continued to do so until he recovered. But his kidneys have since given problems at different times.

Judi later became a princess in our pageant here in Moses Lake. She ran for Miss Moses Lake. she was truly a princess too. She was the most beautiful girl there. So many people came up and told me afterwards that she was the most beautiful girl they'd ever seen. In fact, one of the judges from Tacoma that judged the Miss Washington Contest for years and was in charge of it was one of the judges. He said he was disappointed that she wasn't Miss Moses Lake because she would go places after they got over there. It was all political. He said, "This is the kinda girls we

want over there; like her to run for Miss Washington."

My dear Judi had more than her share of misfortune, bless her sweet heart, but was able to surmount them all with that good husband, Phil Vernon

James Kent Cobia was born December 6, 1948 at the Ephrata hospital. When about two years old he had surgery for hernia in the pelvic region. He was the cutest little kid you can imagine. Even at this tender age, his main interest was John Deere tractors and farm machinery. At the hospital, instead of bringing him little animal picture books, I went down to the John Deere implement dealer and loaded up with picture pamphlets of all their equipment, tractors, plows, combines, manure spreaders, etc. and laid them in his crib. To the great amusement of the nurses, he would spend hours upon hours looking through those pamphlets. Every Christmas thereafter Santa always left him a liberal supply of John Deere tractors and equipment toys. Many times out in the field with me he'd entertain himself pushing a little stick through the soil, saying, "plud! plud! Plud!" the sound of the two cylinder John Deere tractor. Even to this day. That's his first love, farming. He has been interested in tractors and farming ever since. At five years old he would drive the tractor while we loaded hay on the trailer, and at six, would drive truck in the field also while we loaded baled hay. Some of my greatest entertainment was when Jim at age three or four, his mother would take after him with a whip. He would nearly always out run her. He knew if tempers had time to cool the punishment was less. Sometimes we would find him at the Lybberts, more than two miles distant. He later became a star runner and pole vaulter.

Then along came Patti in November 4, 1952, born in our Moses Lake barracks hospital. The same one in which little Jim had his surgery. Of course, Patti was kinda spoiled because she was the last one and I was able to spend more time with her. she kinda got to be Daddy's little girl. Although I thought just as much of Judi and all the rest of the children as I did Patti. It just worked out that way. Another little doll. You might say she and I kind of grew up together. She was another "Daddy's little girl". Anytime I came in to phone, for a drink or whatever I'd pick Patti up, give her a kiss and a squeeze, and if she was wet I'd change her diaper in nothing flat. She relished the way I fried eggs over-easy. When she was about seven she asked if she could have all the eggs she could eat. Before I had time to answer she said, "Oh Dad, let's have a race and see who can eat the most." It was a tie. We both ate an even dozen eggs each. I'm sure I spent more time with Patti than any of the other children.

All our children married very fine companions and we are very proud of our children and their companions also. They're just so much better than I am that there's no comparison. They are all more active in the church and go further in their church work, in their occupations, in their education, and in every way. They are a great improvement over their dad.

Rhoda and I might have done a lot of wrong things in rearing our family, but one right thing we did do was to always take them and be with them at church. So that the church really helped us tremendously in the rearing of our family to see that they grew up in the right direction.

## 1959

I decided I wanted to move out to block "42" to try a different kind of farming. One where I was not tied down all the time. I sold my cows and rented out the Mae Valley farm. A neighbor asked: "What are you going to live on?" My answer "I lived before I had the cows."

I rented a farm, with option to buy, in block 42 east of Moses Lake. It was the Joe Jensen place and had a nice home. I also rented a plot, or I should say I took over a unit from Bernard Lybbert, over along the highway to Spokane. I planted 25 acres of in watermelon and about the same in small white beans. I had a wonderful crop of both melons and beans.

I also had sixty acres of beans on the Joe Jensen place where I lived. I had hired, Rex Rodebach to combine the beans. He barely got started and something broke on the combine. Instead of fixing it right away he just let the combine sit for a couple of weeks while he busied himself doing things on his own farm he felt were more important. I was occupied hauling watermelons to Alberta. It was a very rainy fall in Moses Lake and Alberta. The beans were rained on so much by the time they were harvested they were almost worthless. Had he fixed the combine right up he could have easily finished all my beans before the rains came. I practically lost all my crops.

I had a good neighbor who pulled in with his combine without me asking, harvested the beans and would take no pay. That neighbor was Forest Lybbert, Bishop of our ward.

Also that year the twenty five acres of watermelon I had were the most beautiful you ever saw. They were very large and sweet. Mildew, a fungus caused by the rain and warm weather, made them a total loss. A melon with a tiny brown speck when I loaded

it would be six inches in diameter and mushy to the center when I arrived in Alberta to sell. The cold rains in Alberta also ruined sales. So you can see how easy it is to go broke farming.

I was so discouraged I decided then and there to stop farming. I started looking for a job. I went to the telephone company and asked for a janitors job, but they told me I was too old. I was fifty and never so downcast in my life. My self esteem and depression hit rock bottom. One cannot imagine how despondent a person can get under those circumstances unless one has been through it himself.

### **The Story of our Faithful Dog Rover**

In about 1950 in Mae Valley, I was plowing in the north forty with the John Deer. I happened to look back and was surprised to see a rather large, dark, heavy-haired dog following the plow furrow. He followed behind until I finished and followed me to the house to make himself at home.

At one time our dairy bull had LeRoy down on the ground and would probably have killed him had Rover not grabbed the bull by the heels.

Once we kept Ruel and Betty Bodily's little girl while Betty was ill. Rover was very fond of children. He would wag his tail and go running up to the little girl to be petted, but the little girl apparently had never seen dogs that big. She would scream every time that Rover came near her and we would scold him. Then Rover was missing for several days. We looked everywhere. I finally crawled under the house and called to him. I could hear his tail tapping the ground as he wagged it in friendly response to my calls. The little girl soon went home and we gave Rover an extra amount of love. He had thought no one loved

him any more and had crawled to the far dark corner under the house to die.

Rover could lick any dog in the country. He had a heavy mane like an African, male lion. Our neighbor said his dog had trounced every dog around the country till he came to our place one day. The attacking dog would always grab Rover by the throat. All he'd get was a mouth full of hair. The attacker wouldn't let loose. Rover patiently waited till the attacker's hind leg came near enough. Then he'd grab it and clamp down with such force the dog that started the fight would give a loud yelp and run home.

We had another neighbor who had two huge, vicious dogs that came running out as I was passing with Rover following behind. Rover licked them both the same way. He never started a fight, but was dauntless once attacked.

One hot Sunday in 1960 at the Joe Jensen place we all jumped in the car to go to Church. I didn't realize Rover was asleep in the shade under the car. As I took off I heard Rover give a short yelp. He then ran over and jumped up on the front porch and laid down. I didn't think he was badly hurt. When we arrived home we found him dead exactly in the same position we left him on the porch. He was a dear, beloved member of our family and we all wept at the loss of Rover.

### **1960**

In February of 1960 I was hired by the starch plant, replacing all the bearings? in motors and pumps. Some of them weighing as much as a ton. When the starch production started I was to be one of the shift foreman.

Straining and pulling on those big wrenches all day was very tiring. After I'd worked a month and a half, one night I went



to bed at 8:00 p.m. I was awakened at 9:00 p.m. by the telephone from Uncle Jake Lybbert. I thought surely it was about 4:30 a.m. because Uncle Jake was accustomed to calling people early just to let people know he was an early riser. Thinking how early it was and how tired I was I was really angry. he informed me the Weed District needed a supervisor and wondered if I'd like the job.

In my angry voice I abruptly said, "No! I have all the job I want."

Uncle Jake was chairman of the Board of Directors. Uncle Jake was a fine, reasonable person. He said to think it over.

The next day, back at the job, I was telling the guys the offer I had. I'd be driving a pickup around, talking with farmers. All three of them said, "Cobia if you don't take that job you're crazier than a lunatic. Who'd want to work in this stinking hole with an offer like that." The boss was a sarcastic, ornery, disagreeable person.

I called Uncle Jake (that's what everyone called him) a few nights later and asked if the job was still available.

"Yes and I think you're just the man for the job."

Back on the job, as the boss went by I stopped him and said, "Golden, I'm going to do you a favor."

"What's that?" he queried.

"I'm quitting."

He scoffed at the idea.

"You can't do that."

"Yes, as of this day, I'm giving you two weeks notice."

I told him of my new job and the nature of it. When the last day came he still couldn't accept the fact and was so angry he never spoke to me again, at church or otherwise. He died about six months later. That was the best decision I ever made concerning my future.

In April a lot of things were happening. I sold my farm in Mae Valley, bought 65 acres of land along highway 17, rented Thurn Baker's 2 bedroom cement block house and started building my new brick home on the highway 17 property. I was also breaking in on my new job. I made up my mind this time we were not going to move into our new home until the house was completed and the drapes were hung.

We moved in the forepart of September 1960. The builder was Lamont Helton. He was a very fast builder. He had a helper, Thris Merkley lay the brick. The house was a beautiful blond brick, 1800 square feet double car garage with a refrigerated room at the far end of the garage. That was to replace a basement that Rhoda said she had to have. As it turned out she liked it much better, no more banging up and downstairs.

My first year on the Weed District job I went along pretty well as it had been done in the past, strictly an enforcement system. I found out it was a system that made farmers angry without doing the kind of control I wanted. I firmly believed the weed district job was to control noxious weeds and to do it the easiest and least expensive way.

Canadian Thistle was the Number One noxious weed, 95%. Like most other noxious weeds it was spread by wind and irrigation. The farmers didn't plant those weeds. It wasn't any more his obligation to control it than it was his neighbors who stood to benefit from their eradication. If the farmers prospered the city and the county would too.

I implemented a spray service to the farmers, that is, the Weed District would spray their weeds at cost. If it was a small patch it wouldn't cost the farmer anything. It would cost the Weed District more to spend time

staking it out and mailing the notification than to spray it. Besides you'd make a friend of the farmer and get the job done at the same time.

I never heard one farmer complain about this system. I heard a few complaints from bureaucrats who never farmed. I'm a very conservative person and never believed in doing anything for a person that he could do for himself, but there is reason to all things.

Farmers are very independent people and don't like to be told what they have to do. For instance, a farmer may have hay out in the hot sun burning, and his bailer break down. At the same time his crops need cultivating and the weed man comes by and tells him he has three days to get those weeds sprayed. The farmer has to drop everything, remove the cultivator from the tractor, hook on the sprayer, all for fifteen minutes spraying. It just doesn't make sense. It was much cheaper for the Weed District to do the job, even if it cost a few cents per acre more taxes. The weeds would be controlled in a timely fashion and this eliminated all the hassle and angry feelings. It only added one extra hired man during the summer. It eliminated much paper work from the Weed District Supervisor and no more regulation.

I also contracted the City of Moses Lake and County roads. Previously the city, whose vast swampy land ("wetlands") seemed to harbor as many weeds as all the farmers put together, would have commercial sprayers come in and do the job. The problem was they didn't get the job done. They had firemen who put in the night as firemen and the day for the commercial spraying company. I went down to check on him several times and found him sound asleep each time. The job was not getting done, the weeds were going to seed and I had no direct control. In

order to succeed I needed to control both ends of the situation.

I bought a four-wheel drive three-quarter ton truck with a boom spray and a winch on the front end to pull itself out of real tough situations. I made enough profit to do the farmers for practically nothing.

We had weed control along with happy farmers. The light jobs I did from a hundred gallon tank on my pick-up. I left the city swamps to the big rig. The job got done where it didn't before.

I had men from other weed districts at some of our get-togethers say, "Cobia you're breaking the law." I already knew that, but I had talked to the County Commissioners. They said as we were engaged in weed control, they didn't see a conflict.

The weed law stated, "No weed District shall spend any monies except those monies collected from taxes for that year."

I was good friends with Stew Bledsoe, the State Representative from Ellensburg. (That all happened while I was Farm Bureau President.) They told me to write the law the way I wanted it and they would see that it was passed. I wrote it, "No Weed District shall spend monies except those monies collected from taxes for that year and monies collected from weed work or from any other legal source."

It passed, and I wasn't breaking the law.

I had just revamped what I had lost in the 1955 freeze-out. I was offered and accepted a job as manager of Grant County Weed Control District, No.2. So I had quit farming, sold the farm in Mae Valley, bought 65 acres south of Moses Lake, sub-divided it, built a beautiful brick home and started getting on my feet again financially. I also did engineer work for the Soil Conservation District and in the winter did a lot of ditch bank ground sterilizing.

That 65 acre development is one of the most beautiful subdivisions in the Moses Lake Area. That's because I put on by-laws and covenants, so people had to build nice homes. The new home was the finest our family ever lived in. 1800 square feet with double garage and a refrigerated room, double fireplace with liberal use of beautiful stone from Yellowstone Park. We were in this home fifteen years. Our last three children mostly grew up there.

### 1974

After the children were grown and flown and we were ready to retire, we bought a small home at 1118 Columbia Avenue in Moses Lake, rebuilt the inside, built on refrigerated room along with hundreds of other improvements to make it a very comfortable home.

In January three months before we moved into town, I agreed to sell the brick home to Steve Jorgenson for a certain price. No money down the contract to be consummated in three months. We made the deal binding by a handshake. A month later a man came by and offered me \$4,000.00 more for the house. After I explained to him the place was sold, also the terms he said, "Man are you crazy, no written contract, no money down, no nothing."

"Yes, there was," I replied. "There was a handshake and my word. To me that's as binding as any contract and all the money in the world."

A week later I telephoned Steve and asked if he'd like to make \$2,000.00 real easy. He wanted to know how. When I told him I had a chance to sell the place for \$4,000 more and I'd split it with him 50-50, he said, "No! No! I want that place!"

I said, "O.K. No problem"

Nothing more was said until the time came and we were in the attorney's office. Steve said, "Well Dick, I've decided to give you \$1500.00 more than you asked."

I answered, "No, no Steve, I made a deal and a deal's a deal."

His answer, "You must take it, otherwise I couldn't live with myself."

I told him okay in that case. So that's the way the contract was written, \$1500 more.

About 1960 I had bought a 1904 Reo antique car (a heap of junk) and I restored it. It was a one-cylinder, 8 horse-power motor, chain-drive, with fly-wheel, room for two people in front, with a fold-down seat called the "mother-in-law" seat in the back. We had a lot of fun with it. Every Antique Car Parade we entered we took first prize. Jim, my son, had a lot of fun with it and drove it in some of the parades.

I wanted to buy a half section (320 acres) of land at Ruff. It was a dryland farm. Mrs. Guffin gave me first chance on it a year before if she decided to sell it. She came over to my office one day and said she was ready to sell and I only had a short time to come up with the down payment. I sold the antique car and I gave Rhoda a \$6,000 contract drawing 6 1/2% interest, for \$3000 she had in the bank drawing 4% in a savings account. That way I was able to raise the money. The car sold for \$2,800. Rhoda had received that \$3,000 from her Mother's estate. She knew that all our property was in both our names as community property. But what was hers was hers and what was mine was hers. I signed off as co-owner on that one contract. They paid it all out in a short while so she put the money in her personal account.

All my big land deals would always frighten Rhoda. She'd say, "Oh! We should

have fasted and prayed about it a week or so before making a decision as serious as that.”

I replied, “We’ve fasted once every month and prayed night and morning. Beside that, all my deals come up all at once. I had not time to spare.”

Every land deal I ever made turned out very well.

I wanted the farm for Jim as he always wanted to be a farmer. He was at the University at this time. It would never be a paying farm as long as it was dry. It was not big enough for a full operation unless it had irrigation. I applied for a well permit, one 16-inch diameter 800 foot deep drawing 2,500 gallon per minute, enough to irrigate the 320 acres. It would have made a great farm for Jim. The Department of Water Resources accepted the application, but held up issuing any permit before a survey of ground water supply was made. They weren’t certain if any more permits would be issued. I kept farming the land on weekends. It was like a vacation from my job. I bought a Model R, John Deere diesel tractor with other equipment to match. The tractor had huge tires and lots of power and you could turn on a dime, so to speak. The old Model M-1Hc didn’t have turning ability.

After farming that dry land for about six years, I asked one of the men in the Department of Well Permits what the chances were for my permit coming through. He said, “None.”

I saw no need to hang on to that farm so I sold it to a neighbor dry-land farmer, and if the permit came through the well would be mine to transfer to another farm. He wasn’t interested in the permit anyway. Six months later the permit came through. It had a seven year priority in case the water level dropped. I tried to find another farm in that vicinity, but

to no avail. I ended up selling the permit for \$10,000 to an absentee landowner from Idaho.



Mae Valley home c. 1948

The twins next to the Ford the family came to Moses Lake in.



Good dog Rover



LeRoy & LeRon c. 1948  
For a little sport Richard used to  
put gloves on the twins and have  
them play at boxing.



Mae Valley c. 1947  
Judith & Richard Cobia



The Cobia family c. 1949 on the Moses Lake farm.  
b. LeRon, Jim, Rhoda, Lorna, Richard  
f. dog Rover, Judy & LeRoy



Patti, Richard & Judy  
c. 1953 Moses Lake farm



Moses Lake c. 1950  
 Ron, Roy, Rhoda, Jim, Dick, dog Rover, Lorna & Judy



b: LeRoy, Lorna & LeRon  
 m: Richard, Rhoda & David Cobia  
 f: Judith & James c. 1951





Verda (sister), Richard, and Rhoda on Mae Valley farm c. 1950



Richard and Patti c. 1955  
Dick went salmon fishing on the coast several times in the 50's



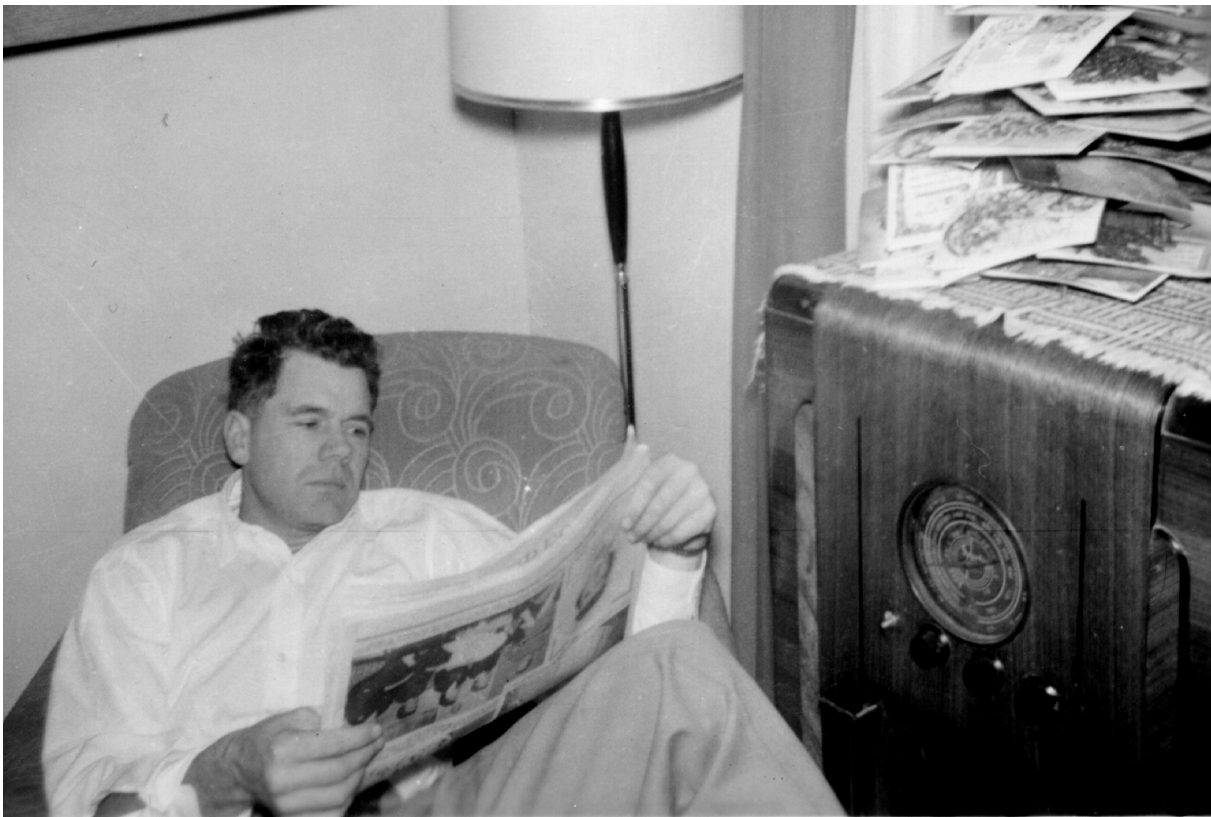
The largest catch.  
Richard, Frank Strode,  
Glen Hansen, Ron & Glen Jr.  
August 1955



Dog Skipper & cat sparing.  
Animals were always a part of family life.



Ron, Roy, and Lorna (David in background) c. 1950  
Watermelons were always a favorite summer treat.



Richard c. Christmas 1955 Reading - a favorite thing to do with any free time. Note the family radio which was the gathering place for such exciting episodes as "The Lone Ranger," "Buster Brown," "Tarzan," and "Moby Dick."

During the 1950's the Cobia's were Cheverolet people as seen from the four photos below.



Richard & Patti c. 1952



Lorna & Patti c. 1953



Richard & Rhoda c. 1955



Richard entering 1957 Chev





Richard ran a grade-A-dairy business for 10 years from 1949 to 1959



A pet cow on the farm



Lorna on pony (Joe) c. 1958



The milk barn with Rhoda and Jim hoeing the garden in the foreground *c.* 1957



Ron and Roy milking cows *c.* 1957



Patti engaging the clutch of one of the John Deere tractors.  
*c.* 1957



Roy making adjustments on the hay rake *c.* 1957



Children of Ben & Mary Cobia at a family reunion in Pocatello, Idaho July 1955  
 b: (oldest to youngest) Bennie, Verda, Ada, Hattie, Georgia  
 f: Clorece, Myrtie, Jimmie, Lyda, & Richard



The Cobias in front of the Mae Valley home Mother's Day 1957  
 b: Ron, Dick, Rhoda, David, Roy  
 f: Jim, Patti, & Judi



Rhoda & Richard  
 May 1957



The Cobias at a Weiner roast in the sand dunes 1957  
Ron, Patti, Rhoda, Judi, Jim, Roy, & Dick



Dick and Ralph Pepper "Dad" 1958



Dick c. 1958  
The hat, typical attire





b: Lorna, LeRoy, LeRon, & Judith - December 1958  
f: James, Rhoda, David, Richard, & Patricia Cobia



Beth, & Jim A. Cobia (Dick's brother), Rhoda & Dick  
at Jim's home. 1958



Cobias at Christmas dinner 1958  
David, Rhoda, Dick, Judi, Patti, Lorna, Jim, Ron, & Roy.



Dick, Rhoda, Judi, Jim & Patti. L.A. Temple 27 Dec 1961



Roy, Dick, & Rhoda Dec 1962  
Richard's Birthplace



b: Ron & Dick  
m: Jim, Rhoda, Judi, & Roy  
f: Patti 17 Feb 1963 in front of home.



horseshoes June 1968



One of spray trucks used by the Weed District.  
Dick's job during the 60s. c. 1963



Rhoda & Dick 1959



Judi, Jim, Dick, Patti & Rhoda on 1904 Reo in front of new brick home. Aug 1963



84 b: Jim, Allyson Pack, Judi; Bert, Jim, Lorna & Lyle Pack; Rhoda, Dick, & Roy Cobia  
f. Ron & Hildred, Patti, LeeAnn(baby), Pat & David Cobia  
22 August 1963





Dick, Rhoda, Ron, Patti & David Cobia - Fargo Sep 1967

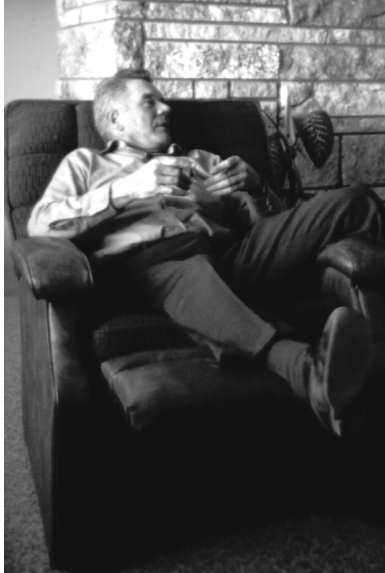


b: Bert & Lorna Pack; Roy, Janice, Christy, Pat, David, Ron, Hildred, & Kathryn Cobia  
 m: Jim & Allyson Pack; LeeAnn & Richard Cobia  
 f: Richard Pack, Kathy on Jim, Susie Pack on Rhoda, Dick, Rhodelle Pack on Patti - 26 Dec 1971

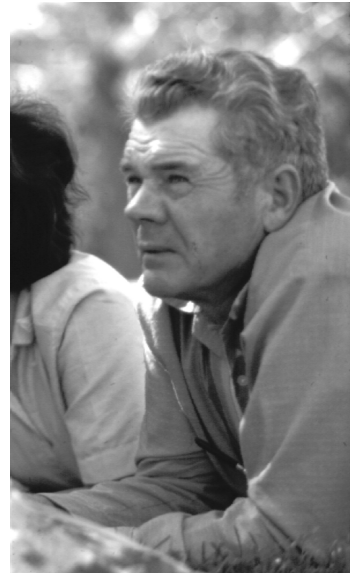




Dec 1971



11 Aug 1971



14 Aug 1971



Making adjustments on combine  
13 Aug 1971



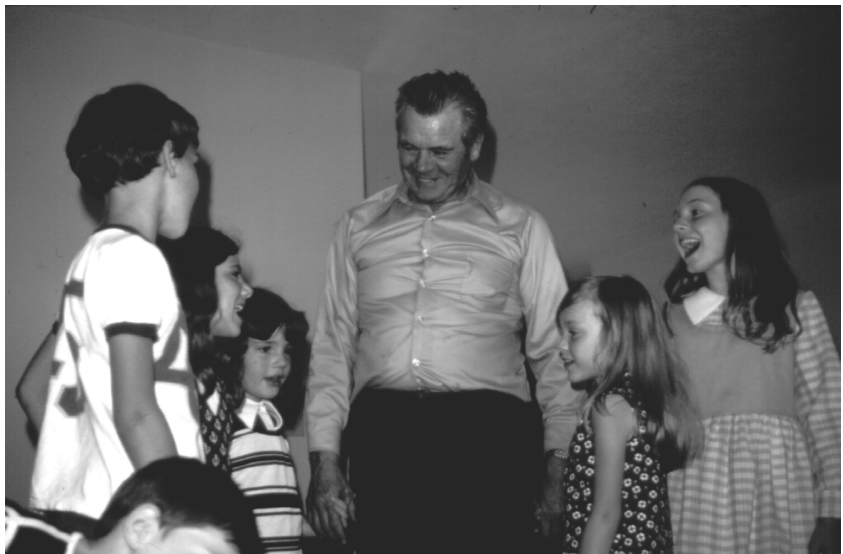
Bernard Lybbert and Dick in Chewella, Washington 1973  
Partners and lifelong friends



b: Rhoda, Patti, Lorna, Judi & Jim  
f: Dick, David, Roy & Ron  
The Cobias 17 May 1973



Dick & Rhoda 7 July 1977



Rick Cobia, Allyson Pack, Tiffani Vernon, Dick, Kathy & LeeAnn Cobia  
"When Grandpa comes" 15 July 1973



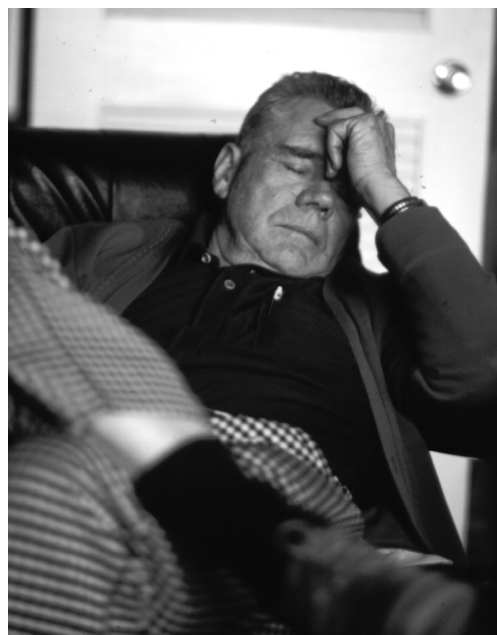
Mt. St. Helens cleanup in Moses Lake, May 1980



The boys gathered in Orem, Utah to watch the 84 Olympics

b: Roy, Jim & Ron

f: David & Dick



18 March 1978

## **Costa Rica**

### **1974**

One day Rhoda and I happened to be invited to a slide show of a development in Costa Rica. It looked like a dreamland in the tropics. About the same temperature and weather as Hawaii, except it wasn't commercialized. The language spoken was Spanish. I bought two lots.

### **1975**

In 1975 I traveled with a caravan of people who all met in Seattle and flew to San Jose, Costa Rica, to look at our property. We stayed at the Grand Hotel in San Jose, traveled by chartered bus out to the Pacific 180 miles to our property. It was January 20, hot and dry. Our headquarters was at a fancy resort, Hotel Diria, with a very large swimming pool. Most of the gang spent their time sitting around the pool under large umbrellas over tables, drinking.

I spent my time swimming and mixing with the native people. While in the dining hall I made friends with the people at the next table. It was a long table with seven people. The two young ladies nearest smiled at me, started speaking English, said they were looking for someone to practice English on. I told them I'd be happy to cooperate. They were formerly the First Family. Their father who had been President of Costa Rica had died. This was his wife, her two daughters, the chauffeur and the maid, plus the First Lady's Aunt. The First Lady, Madam Maria Guardia Calderon, invited me to go with them on a tour the next day.

The next day by Mrs. Calderon's actions I could tell she leaned a bit socialistic. Of course, I am very conservative, as well as a bit timid.

Without making any passes we went down and joined the others. We all piled in the

limousine and were chauffeured over to the home (I should say palace) of Rafael and Gloria Calderon. It covered a half city block, with a courtyard in the center. Gloria took me for a tour of the place. They went to Italy on their honeymoon, and returned with Roman furniture for the home, marble, a lot of lace, etc. etc. One expensive, beautiful bedroom, she said, was built especially for her parents and no one else would be allowed to ever use it. At the far end of the courtyard were the apartments of the maids and other help. It looked the same as the rest of the home from the outside.

All, including Gloria, returned with me in the limousine to my hotel. Then Madam Maria, Alex and Gloria hopped out of the car and gave me big hugs and kisses goodbye. They all had written out their names, addresses and telephone numbers and given me without my asking. I've never experienced such warm hospitality in my life. I felt, "If this is Costa Rica I want more of it."

Alex was killed accidentally two years later, as she darted from between two parked cars and was run over by an oncoming car.

I didn't cultivate the friendship because, I not being in that financial bracket, made me unable to return hospitality to that extent.

### **1976**

I bought a used motor home and a used twenty-two foot cabin cruiser Stancraft boat, went deep sea fishing with it several times out on the Pacific at West Port. One day the trailer came unhitched, broke the safety chain, ran head-on into a big new freight

line truck and totaled out the boat and trailer. Six months later I purchased a new twenty-two foot jet, Starcraft Cabin Cruiser. It wasn't satisfactory, as when at slow trolling, or docking speed, direction control was very difficult.

### 1977

Rhoda and I took the motor home on, what one might call, a trial run in preparation for the trip to Costa Rica, to see if the motor home could take it. This trial run was a three-month trip across the U.S.A., zigzagging, hitting the historical spots as well as relatives and friends. We left Moses Lake the middle of June.

The first stop-off of importance was at our son and wife, LeRoy and Janice, at Omaha, Nebraska. Then South to Austin, Texas, to visit Rhoda's cousin's daughter, Gloria and spouse.

On east to the Civil War battleground, Vicksburg, Mississippi, known in the annals of history as the "Siege of Vicksburg." From there to Panama City, Florida. Then to Savannah Georgia to see my niece, Jeanette and nephew's Dorsey and Felton Carlisle in Harlson Georgia.

We visited and cleaned my parents graves at Ward Hill, a private graveyard where only Wards and Cobias were located. Hughford Ward, a bachelor, was murdered by a man with an ax for \$100 he had. Visited with childhood friends, the Allsbrooks: Ilease, George, and Cole.

We went up along the Outer Islands of North Carolina to Kitty Hawk where the Wright Brothers invented and tested the airplane. Over through Virginia and up to Gettysburg, Pennsylvania Battle Field, back to Washington D.C. and Mount Vernon, George Washington's residence, the White House, etc.

You can tell I'm a history buff by the places visited.

We went to Springfield, Mass., then to Boston to see people I met in Costa Rica. We went from Boston straight north to Palmyra, New York to the Hill Cumorah Mormon Pageant. Then over to Niagara Falls, across into Ontario, Canada, back to Detroit and Bloomfield Hills, Michigan to see daughter, Lorna Pack and hubby, Bert.

Then we went to East Lansing, Michigan to see LeRon and Hildred. While there, Ron gave us a tour of the Planetarium. We traveled on west to Fargo, N.D. where Son, David and wife, Patricia, live. We enjoyed immensely our visits with our families and friends.

Rhoda's and my incompatibility seemed to come to the forefront to the extent that most of our trips together were ruined as far as I was concerned. But that didn't stop the joy and appreciation of being with our children.

### 1977

In the latter part of October we loaded the motor home heavily with foodstuff bottled fruit, honey, hooked the boat trailer with boat onto the back of the motor home. In the boat we had a new motorcycle, tools and other heavy goods and a headed to Costa Rica. We traveled in company with the Roger Barnum family and their smaller, but new motor home. They were headed for Panama which joins Costa Rica on the south. Roger's parents were with them also. The Barnums were very fine people to travel with. It made the trip much more pleasant.

We went down through Las Vegas, Nevada; Phoenix, Arizona and on south into Mexico, Nagales, Hermosillo, Mazatlan, Guardalahara to Mexico City. On the way between Mazatlan and Mexico City there were many high mountains. The roads were so

steep, narrow and winding with no place to pass, slow moving trucks and no place to pull off to the side and stop. Beside that I had an automatic transmission. All together my motor overheated and burned out the spaces on the pistons between the rings, causing oil to get to the spark plugs.

We were entering Mexico City late in the afternoon. I noticed through the side view mirror we were laying down a black smoke screen. We were on a four-lane freeway with no place to pull off. Oil was shooting out the filter onto the hot exhaust pipe. I stopped to pour in another three quarts of oil and went on.

We went off the freeway trying to find a trailer court. We became lost and ended up in a cheap residential area, very narrow streets with high curbs. When I turned corners I had to block up the wheels of the boat trailer to get over the curbs. To top it off the transmission fluid line sprung a leak. At times I couldn't get the motor home in motion. There we were lost in the dark, couldn't speak Spanish, along with all the other problems. What I'd liked to have done was have a heart attack and died right there. However, about that time a man saw our plight and had a hunch we were searching for the tourist park and he motioned where to go. We found the Park at last.

The next day we located the L.D.S. missionaries. They knew a good L.D.S. mechanic. He patched up the leaking lines, and we drove the motor home over to his place (without the boat trailer) and parked in the front of his house right on the street. We lived in the motor home while he worked on the motor. The big problem was parts. he finally found pistons, but no gaskets, so he used the old ones.

We drove back over to the Trailer Park. Since we weren't sure when we'd be going on south, after sad goodbyes, Barnums left for

Panama. We hooked onto the boat trailer and headed north to U.S.A. We had gone about 50 miles when the oil pressure plastic tube came off causing the same smoke screen. I parked on the roadside. I crawled under, removed the fitting leading to the oil gauge, put in a wooden match with the head inside, and replaced the fitting which stopped the leak. The motor started giving trouble. The old gasket was leaking oil into the spark plugs.

I barely had enough power to pull up the hill and into a large service station that had a mechanic on duty. He said we'd have to have new gaskets and the nearest place was U.S.A., a three day bus trip. Rhoda and I climbed on the express bus and headed for Austin, Texas. I had called Gloria's husband and he had the gaskets all ready for us. It's a good feeling being among friends again who spoke English.

The motor was soon repaired and we were on our way. No mountains, just high plains made the going pleasant although I was still under a lot of stress wondering when that motor would go to pot.

Speaking of pot. When we reached U.S. border the customs agents made a thorough search of our motor home for pot. We went to Austin, spent a few days with Gloria and left the boat and trailer with them with permission to use it all they wanted. They are fine young people.

We went on west through Texas, New Mexico and to Hidden Valley, Arizona about 25 miles west of Casa Grande, Arizona where my darling sister Hattie and husband, George, lived. My other sister, Lila, also had a winter home there. I telephoned her. She said she'd be glad to have me there in her Arizona home for the winter. She was living in Paradise, California, at the time. The home was completely furnished. All we had to do was buy groceries. George and Hattie were very

good to us at Hidden Valley. Lila came down and stayed most of the time with us and was very helpful.

We were only there about a week when we drove up to Black Canyon City to see our very dear friends, Montie Pepper Gibson and spouse, Linnie. We were returning to Phoenix to another sister, Verda, and husband, Joe Fry. I could tell on the way down I had a severe bladder problem. It was Friday night after closing hours. No doctors on call. I should have gone to the emergency hospital. But I waited all day Saturday and Sunday.

Monday I went to see a urologist, Dr. Newman. A severe bladder infection. To make a long story short I had that infection for some time. Then it went into my prostrate along with all this my nerves collapsed. I would feel okay then a horrible feeling would come over me to the extent I'd lay there and moan and groan. They'd ask where it hurts.

"No place," I'd answer.

When it would leave I could feel it lifting off me. Then I'd turn on the television. While under one of those spells I couldn't bear the slightest sounds. I couldn't sleep night or day, not over one hour in twenty-four, some nights twenty minutes. I'd keep looking at my watch, a minute seemed like an hour. Valium helped for a while and I'd get up to two hours sleep a night.

I decided to go to my urologist in Spokane, Dr. Higgins. Rhoda and I flew to Spokane. Judi and Phil met us at the airport. They lived at Chewelah, fifty miles north of Spokane. I was soon over all infections, but felt a soreness in the prostrate. We took the plane back to Arizona, picked up the motor home and were soon back in Moses Lake. The soreness in my prostate was much worse. Dr. Higgins had me come to Spokane to Sacred Heart Hospital. He operated and took a brown spot off my prostate.

I want to say this: Rhoda was very kind and thoughtful on that whole trip to Mexico and back. During all my sickness she was very patient and considerate. My gratitude goes out to her and I wish her all the peace, contentment and happiness in the world. I think now she has obtained all the above mentioned.

## 1978

I intended to leave the fore part of November for Costa Rica, but some of our children were coming home for Thanksgiving, so I postponed the trip for a very happy get-together.

I caught what seemed to be a case of the 1918 flu. It left my lungs badly weakened and congested. When I spent the night in New Orleans on my way to Costa Rica my allergy set into a conspiracy with my lungs for a total night of sneezing, coughing up phlegm, eyes and nose running for a sleepless night. After arriving in Costa Rica my allergy continued in unabated fury to the extent I headed home in time to spend Christmas with Judi and Phil in Van Nuys, California.

Earlier my good friend, Dave Sparks, had planned to come to see me in Costa Rica during the winter. I called him from California to tell him I was on the way home. He informed me he had already bought plane tickets for both Don Brown and himself and was planning big on the trip.

I said, "Okay. I'll meet you at the airport in San Francisco."

In Costa Rica we rented a car and traveled all over the country, just having a ball. I was miserable, especially at night. My incessant coughing would disturb their sleep. Usually I'd just get up and walk the streets or lay on a park bench. Dave and Don were sure having fun, like a couple of kids just let out of school.

We went to a Costa Rican style bull fight. I thought it would be a regular Spanish type, where the bull is teased, speared in the shoulders and eventually killed. I think they're gruesome and barbaric.

We were sitting in the grandstand watching about 120 grown young men in the arena shooting off fireworks and playing kick-ball. All at once here comes a wild bull charging out the chute. I yelled, "My gosh! Someone's gonna get killed."

He went galloping right through the center of the crowd, chasing first one man then another. As the bull got near a man, he would fall on his face. The bull would leap over him and take after the next man and so on, till the bull was tired. Men on horses would chase him out, then let a new one in and so on the rest of the evening.

It was hilarious. No one was seriously injured although there were several ambulances standing by. This was in San Jose. We returned home after a week of fun.

### **March 1979**

Rhoda and I packed the old ford with our clothes and tools and headed for Miami. We stopped at Provo. Bazel Rolfson decided to ride with us to North Florida. That way he would have only a short distance to see his daughter in South Carolina. We were fortunate to have his company that distance as we had a lot to talk about, as we had been friends since 1923.

We visited a family who I became friends with in Moses Lake. I'd helped them find a

camp ground. They invited me to see them if ever I went to Florida. Their names were McMillan and they lived right on Highway 75. We had no trouble finding them. they were delighted to see us.

Miami is a huge city and the port where we were going to load the car for Costa Rica was in a rough part of town. There's a lot of paper work for a simple thing like shipping a car to Costa Rica. But as I look back, it was only minutes compared with the paper work at Costa Rica when it was unloaded. It took three days.

We took a plane to San Jose. They said the boat would take eight days so we spent that time in San Jose working on our Pensionado papers. With Pensionado status you get your car and \$11,000 worth of other goods in duty free. We were staying at Hotel Talamanca. We also had a building contractor come up to our room. Rhoda helped us draw up the plans for a three bedroom, two bath with a fifty foot porch. The house was to have a porch with glazed tile floors. It had a place on the back porch for the washer, as the weather is always warm there. The only reason water pipes are underground is so you won't trip over them.

The lot for the house was about three blocks from the beach on the Pacific. The contract called for half the total price to be paid at the signing. The other half paid when the house was completed and accepted. They were to start the middle of April. We moved out to Surfside Estates (that's the name of the development). There were eight hundred lots. Our lot was #P-10.

We rented a room from another family, tourists who rented the house from owners. It was a poor arrangement and we were only there for a short time.

Our house wasn't half done when one day Rhoda said, "I don't want any part of this



country.” She grabbed the next plane out and went home.

I had spoken to Perla, the mayor without portfolio, to rent her fifth wheel trailer as soon as it was available. So I soon moved in. It was quite an elegant trailer for those days, \$175 per month. Perla ran a canteen, restaurant, drinks, made and sold bread, anything to make a nickel.

There were only about 4 homes there at the time, mine made 5. My house was pre-built in San Jose. They did a poor job with the concrete, so I had another 2 1/2 inches of concrete poured over all the floor and sidewalks. Fred Gray did it for me. Then I had him lay the tile. Tile wasn’t included in the original contract. Fred Gray was my next door neighbor on the west. Jim Haufle on the north. In those 800 lots fate had it I was squeezed in between two other houses.

I went to San Jose (180 miles) and bought a complete set of good furniture. Had it delivered in a large moving van. Those residing there all came over and we had a house warming party. It was the best home there, at the time. The other homes were pretty rough-shod. Those other people (2 Canadians, 2 US) were there trying to make money. I was there spending it.

In August Dave Sparks bought Rhoda’s community property share of the lot. He paid her out. She gave in return a quit claim deed. So Dave Sparks paid 1/2 the house and received in return 1/2 interest in the home and lot. He never did get down to use the place.

One couldn’t ask for a better partner than Dave. He trusted me 100%. I in return tried to be honest and fair. I later added many improvements: top-soil, lawn, landscaping, beautiful 30 year white fence, tools, storeroom made of cement blocks and a carport, that I charged Dave for only a small part. When I

sold it, I kept enough extra to pay for part of it. Not all because I used the place for 3 years.

September through November is the heavy rainy season. One night I was caught in a cloud burst. Crossing a low spot in the road the electrical on the car got wet stalling the vehicle. It was extremely dark. I removed my shoes, waded out front, raised the hood, and dried the spark plugs, by touch with a handkerchief. I then removed distributor cap and dried it also. In the process of replacing the cap I was leaning over the side at a disadvantage. While pulling hard on the snap that holds the cap, I got a terrible kink in my back. I hardly made it back in the car seat. I sat there for some time waiting for the pain to ease. A couple of days later the pain really set in. I tried hot packs, cold packs, etc. to no avail, no sleep, just pain.

Bud Wilson had a little plane. He had lived in Alaska and had a home on the beach down the road a ways. He took me in his plane to the hospital in Niucoya about 45 miles.

When I arrived at the hospital there were about 30 people standing in line waiting their turn. I stood in line about 15 minutes. It was steaming hot weather and the pain was killing me.

I tried something. I laid on the floor flat on my back and closed my eyes. The ruse worked. Two orderlies came, picked me up carried me in and tried to give me an electrocardiogram. I had a rough time convincing them it was my back. Considering the language barrier its amazing I didn’t come out of there with a heart transplant.

With socialized free medical I sometimes think people would go in there with a hang-nail. I know for certain they go in for a simple thing like a cold.

The Doctor gave me an intravenous for pain. I had a good nights sleep and felt well enough to go home the next morning. I went to several different desks trying to find out how much I owed them. They just looked at me like I was out of my mind. I just decided to let them worry about it.

As I went out to get in the taxi I fell and my bag went rolling. I didn't realize my leg had started to paralyze. A day later the pain really set in and my right leg went completely paralyzed, and it started creeping down my left leg. I decided it was time to head for the USA.

Next morning as I finished my shower I stepped out to dry, fell against the sink to the floor, shattering the sink in hundreds of pieces. To get around in the house I'd been holding onto a chair, pushing it along on the polished tile floor. As I moved, it set off a horribly loud squeaking, and squawking sound the neighbors could hear.

I got the neighbors to help me into my car and drive me 50 miles to Liberia. Liz picked up my exit visa and telephoned for plane reservations to Miami, Florida. The airline couldn't guarantee reservations any further as it was Thanksgiving. This was Friday. Sunday was the first day a reservation would be available to Miami. They helped me to a front seat by the door on the bus to San Jose, 120 miles. At San Jose the taxi driver just lifted me from the bus door into his cab. At the Hotel Talamanca they carried me to the elevator and then to my room.

Rhoda and I had spent a great deal of time at this hotel. The manager and his wife had become personal friends of mine and did everything they could to help. They told me one of their friends, a lady, was the best Chiropractor in Costa Rica. She only took care of the Presidents and the very rich. They would get her to work on me. I'm sure I made

the mistake of my life not accepting their offer. I explained I had reservations to go, that all my experiences with Chiropractors were negative (which was all very true). They hassled me a wheel chair, which gave me mobility.

I was badly constipated. I attempted an enema. The water ran out as fast as it went in. I was frightened. My bowels and bladder system were both paralyzed. In that shape I didn't dare take a laxative, so I put up with the constipation. I had put on my athletic support. The only trouble with my water was when I coughed or sneezed. I kept the support full of handkerchiefs.

The plane was a PanAm on its maiden or champagne flight. They gave us bacon and eggs, silverware, linen napkins and a bottle of champagne. I took two aspirin and two anacin and drank the whole bottle of champagne all at once. No more pain the rest of the trip.

When we landed in Miami, 11:00 a.m. Sunday there was a gal with a wheel chair to meet me. The airport was crammed with people skittering here and there on their way home after the Thanksgiving weekend.

I wanted to fly to Detroit. Lorna lived at Bloomfield Hills, 25 miles north of Detroit. The PanAm gal pushed me from one airline ticket desk to another. They all said "No seats available to Detroit." The very last one got busy on his computer and said he didn't have one, but Republic had a seat. We had just come from Republic with a negative answer. So we went back and asked again. Same answer. The gal said, "Yes, you do have a seat. Check your computer."

He complied. His answer, "Yes, one seat." It would leave at 8:30 and get to Detroit at 11:00 p.m.

I had a six hour wait. I wheeled to the rest room, emptied my bladder, came to a pay telephone, and called Lorna. Very much

surprised, “Oh Daddy, come up here. We have the best doctors in the world. We’ll meet you at the airport.”

They came and took away my wheel chair for someone else. They didn’t return it for several hours. Such a feeling of helplessness. Desperate is another word for it. They left me on a wooden perch in a corner. It looked like a vase stool, a long distance from any ticket booth. I tried to get the attention of different ones passing to take a message to the ticket agent. They just looked wild-eyed at me and rushed on.

I don’t remember how I got out of that predicament. It just seems a nightmare now, but I remember the plane ride. They landed at every town between Miami and Detroit. Some of them I remember are: Orlando, Florida; Atlanta, Georgia; Nashville, Tennessee; Cincinnati, Ohio. It was supposed to arrive in Detroit 11:00 p.m., but it was midnight. They called it the milk run.

My son-in-law, Bert Pack, wheeled me out to the car, lifted and laid me in the back. At home he carried me in the house.

Next morning they were waiting for me at emergency Hospital. They soon started all kinds of tests, x-rays, CAT scans. They even operated on my back, but not low enough to where the problems was.

I tried to tell them what the problem was, and where it was, but they wouldn’t believe me. They thought it could be one of many different things: polio, some jungle malady, etc. The CAT-scan showed a tumor on a kidney. They felt sure that was it, but it tested negative.

I told them a vertebrae was pressing on a nerve. They would just smile condescendingly and shake their heads side-to-side. Three years later when I was charged by a wild Brahma I got definite proof I was right. It caused the feeling to start returning in

my right foot and leg a little and stopped the cramps I was having every night.

Be that as it may, I laid in the Beaumont Hospital at Royal Oak, Michigan in excruciating pain, indescribable pain. Pain that no drug could ease. They doubled the dosage of morphine and demerol to no avail. All it did was give me hallucinations and nightmares. One night I was sure I was kidnaped, and taken far away.

Everything looked strange in my semi-dark room. I felt around for the buzzer. There it was. I pressed it. The nurse came. Her front teeth protruded like a witch. Sure enough they’ve taken me away. I couldn’t separate reality from the unreal. When I finally got my senses back, I begged my doctor to take away all narcotics and give me two aspirin and two anacin every four hours. That’s what he did night and day. This went on for several months.

When the doctor would come around I’d ask what they knew. He’d shrug his shoulders, shake his head and walk out. Finally he stopped coming. Maybe only once a week. Once Lorna came to see me during the day. I was yowling so with pain. She reached over, hugged me and was crying. I’d have given anything to just die. This had been going on for weeks, just howling with pain. It appeared it might last forever, or the rest of my life.

When a woman has a baby they say the pain is almost unbearable, but they have the knowledge that it won’t last weeks and months. If I could know the pain would cease in two, four or six months there would be something to look forward to. My legs felt just like they were laying in fire and the pain near my tail bone hurt ten times worse.

I had been in the hospital about ten days when Rhoda came in from Moses Lake. We had been estranged for a long while and she

couldn't help but show it. I wouldn't have blamed her if she hadn't come at all. She tried to make the best of it. She and Lorna would come to see me about every night. When they were ready to leave, Lorna would come over, give me a big hug with a kiss on the lips. Rhoda would come over and give me a peck on the forehead, then leave. Later on Rhoda stopped giving me that peck. She'd just stand back, then walk out with Lorna.

Two months later I found out what caused the change. Rhoda and Lorna were in the room while a pretty young nurse rubbed my back, straightened the bedding. As she was leaving she said, "That all for tonight, so goodnight."

I answered in Spanish, "Buenos Noches Mi Amour." The nurse wheeled around and asked, "What does that mean?"

Then I fussed around and mumbled, "I'd better not say. You might get angry."

She kept coaxing.

Finally I said, "It means: 'Good night my love.'"

Her response was, "Oh, I love it! I love it!"

I would say and do most anything to get my mind off the pain. I've always done a lot of kidding and I saw no harm in that. The nurse took it in the right spirit.

## 1980

There were very good nurses and some not so good. About January 10th the nurse said, "You're going to put your clothes on with my help."

So I got dressed and slid into a wheel chair. I wheeled all over the place. Next morning before dressing I slid into the wheel chair, went to bathroom, slid onto a stool, showered, then later shaved. They would take me downstairs for physical therapy. I started by

holding onto bars. Later they would start up the music, then we'd try moving those legs.

Being able to bathe, shave, wait on myself gave my spirits a tremendous boost. It wasn't long before I was using a walker. I still had a great deal of pain, but life had taken on new meaning. I was in a ward with two young men and one man about sixty-five who'd had a slight stroke, a real nice fellow. The stroke had caused a speech impediment. They operated and the poor fellow died. How fragile life is.

I soon left the hospital for Lorna and Bert's. Friends of Bert and Lorna who came to see me were: Ed Jones, President of National Bank of Michigan. They also loaned a bed for me to put in Lorna's 20 foot by 20 foot dining room. A therapist kept coming, helping me recuperate. Bert and Lorna were so considerate and kind to me. Bert was always trying to make things more pleasant for me. Rhoda would do things for me, like massage my cramping hurting feet or legs, things she could to help.

In March Rhoda and I decided to go to Moses Lake now that I was getting around on crutches a bit. I was still having some pain in my legs. I tried using that DMSO, supposedly for horse's limbs, to relieve pain. Don't know that it helped much, but worth a try. I spent a lot of time reading. For exercise I'd do the dishes sitting on a stool.

One day in April I had my left crutch and a history book in the right hand, making my way to the Lazy-Boy chair. The paralyzed toes of my right foot caught in the carpet pile. I went down like a ton of brick. The ambulance came. It was a big truck and was so rough I'd have been much better off in the back of a station wagon. The Moses Lake Hospital said I broke my hip and would have to go to Wenatchee. I said, "Not in that ambulance."

So we called Jim at Quincy to come over for me in his station wagon. That was a smooth ride. Dr. Smith operated the next morning. The pain was negligible, the recovery was speedy. More therapy then home again.

The morning of May 18 I was on my crutches walking over towards my neighbors, Mr. Boyle. One of his sons was out in the yard. I said, "What's that dark cloud moving this way?"

He replied, "Mount Saint Helens exploded".

Huge puffs covered the bottom part of the cloud. It was soon overhead. You could see seagulls and other birds frantically flying ahead of it. A little later there appeared on the eastern horizon the narrow strip of light, making it appear as dawn. The robins started singing their early morning songs. By noon it was the darkest dark you ever saw. Same as darkness in a coal mine miles under. The news stated the dust cloud was 60,000 feet thick. We ended up with about five inches of ash here in Moses Lake, more than any other area. You could gather seven tons on one city lot. Think of billions of tons scattered over hundreds of thousands of square miles.

About August 19 I thought it was time I returned to Costa Rica and see how my house and contents were doing. I landed the 10th and was staying at Hotel Talamanca. I was on crutches. An American had placed an ad in the paper for an experienced maid. On the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> the women came in by the dozens to be interviewed. On the afternoon of the 22nd I walked into the lobby of Hotel Talamanca. There sat a very striking, beautiful girl with a certain dignity about her. I guessed her age at about 26 (wrong) She had fair skin and blue eyes. She had class about her carriage and dress. I figured she must be one of the guests. I sat beside her and engaged her in

conversation, and learned she was indeed looking for work. She had been working for a Jewish lady five years and had been working out as a domestic since she was fifteen. She was now twenty-two.

She said she'd like to work for me. We agreed on salary, but she must give the Jewish lady one month's notice. She had her little two-year-old daughter with her, Helen, English for Elena her mother's name.

Elena seemed very happy with the home and surroundings. She was the most efficient and thorough housekeeper I've ever seen. There was never a particle of dust under the beds, dressers on ledges or anywhere else. The tile floors were always so clean and polished you could eat off them. She always kept a clean house. She kept the carport and car clean, the lawn mowed and watered, trees pruned, my shoes polished and loved to manicure my fingers and toes. The Jewish lady had trained her well. She relished eating and cooking American ways. Variety with her was the spice of life. I soon turned over to her all the responsibilities including the shopping.

## 1981

In January or February 1981 my sons, David and Jim, came to see me with divorce papers and property settlement from Rhoda for me to sign. They stayed a few days, enjoyed the swimming, and the fishing. They especially enjoyed eating the fish they caught. Elena had cleaned and fried them. They seemed impressed with Elena as being a very kind, sweet and charming girl.

In June Rhoda's divorce was granted.

In February 1981 the Surfside Beach Club voted me in as chairman of the board, also manager. The development was in a shambles when I took over. The fences were down. The bridges needed repair and the grass was

twelve feet high. I had seven men working steady to rebuild the fences, built abutments to the bridges and dig drainage ditches. They cut the twelve foot grass from the streets, kept the water pumps going, and the tank clean. I ran into a lot of trouble trying to enforce the by-laws and covenants. Too much selfishness and greediness among a couple of people.

## 1982

December Elena and I were on our way home from Santa Cruz, coming down a hill when I saw a brahma cow on her back in the barpit along the side of the road. I stopped, had Elena check it. She said it was still alive. Having been a cattleman, I knew I could save its life. I looped my tire chains together, fastened one end on the cows horns, the other end to my bumper hitch and pulled her up on the rocky road. Then I removed the chain from her horns, threw it in the trunk and stood beside the front of the car. The cow got on her feet, saw me and charged and hit me like a freight train, and jumped over me. She went a few steps, turned around, came back, stood over me, shaking her horns right over my nose like she intended to grind me in the dirt. Then quickly raised her head and took off into the brush. She had knocked me about twenty feet and I knew my hip was broken.

A car stopped and a man helped Elena carry me and lay me in the back seat of the car. The man drove my car as he was not the driver of the other car. It was a painful ride twelve miles over those rough roads to the black top. We went to the hospital at Liberia. There they x-rayed my hip, found it badly broken and said I'd have to be taken by ambulance to San Jose, 150 miles away. At that time I didn't know the ambulance (Red Cross) was free, so I had my Canadian friend, Harry Moore, (who by this time was at my side) drive my car with us to San Jose.

I mentioned to Harry, he should lay in the back seat and have sleep before returning home. It was 12:30 a.m when we arrived at San Jose and Harry had very little sleep the night before coming down from Canada. He started back without any sleep and on the way he went down over the bank and totaled out the car and injured himself only slightly.

The doctors waited one day before they operated. they asked me my preference for a surgeon. I told them I didn't know any doctors, to just use the hospital's doctor. That was another big mistake. He botched up the job gosh-awful! The pain was worse after surgery than it was before. After six painful days in the hospital they let me go home. Their shots for pain didn't help the least bit. I think, instead of a narcotic, they used distilled water, because with my other hip operation in Wenatchee, one pain shot killed the pain immediately and lasted all night.

At home it was still more misery. I kept thinking each day, well tomorrow it will surely start to improve. The pain never abated. There was no way I could lay so it didn't hurt. I was certain something was not right. I couldn't even use crutches, as my right leg was paralyzed still from two years previously when I fixed the car distributor cap. So you might say, I didn't have a leg to stand on. I would sit on a chair with metal-tube legs and I'd slide around, enough to get to the bathroom. Elena would usually help. Then I rented a wheel chair. That felt like buying a new car.

There was one major benefit from the cow hitting me in the back. Previous to this time my right leg was paralyzed, but I would have severe cramps in it every night. Each time I'd have to hop out of bed and stand erect on the floor with bare feet. Following the cow accident I never had one more cramp and the feeling is gradually returning to my foot.

1983

About January 20th, I called the Beach Club Annual Meeting to be held at my place. I had them elect a new chairman and manager as I was incapacitated.

My neighbor, Jim Haufle, had become unbearable. He used marijuana and generally made a nuisance of himself. He was a creep and no one in the neighborhood cared for him. He made it very miserable for everyone.

February and March went by and still no improvement in my hip. I was using a lot of aspirin and anacin to help dull the pain.

One day Elena had an incident with Haufle. Criminal complaints were filed. The result: Haufle was two months trying to get an exit visa to leave the country. Elena had all she could take. "I'm leaving tomorrow," she said. And she did.

I was going to the U.S. I don't know why I waited so long to leave. I should have known better as my other hip healed so rapidly. I was in San Jose planning on going to Seattle, then to Jim and Marilyn's house and use the Wenatchee Valley Clinic. David called me at my hotel in San Jose and asked me to come to his home in Fargo, N.D. (Marilyn was about to have a baby.)

David and Patricia met the plane in Minneapolis. On the way to Fargo, we were caught in a spring blizzard. No serious problem. Blizzard or no blizzard, it was great to be with my loved ones in the good old U.S.A. After a 200 mile trip by car with six hours enjoyable visiting it was past midnight when we arrived home.

David and Pat have a lovely home, but their hospitality was a palace. The love, consideration and help they gave me cannot adequately be described. They gave me a room conveniently located across the hall from the bathroom. They waited on me hand and foot. After four months of agony, I'm

sure my temperament was not the best to deal with as I was still moaning and groaning with pain. My groaning in the night undoubtedly disturbed their sleep at times. By their actions you would have thought I was the ideal patient. They did everything to make me comfortable.

I've been an early riser all my life. Five hours sleep usually did me. Much of the time I'd be in "Grandpa's Chair" when David came out at 6:00 a.m. The wheat he knew I was so fond of was fixed for breakfast. Patricia would enter the room every morning with that beautiful smile. It would light up the room. I'd greet her with "good morning merry sunshine." Kathy, the "Princess" inherited that smile. She seemed to enjoy waiting on me. (LeeAnn was at B.Y.U. at this time.)

The doctor waited another month and a half to operate. Why? I'll never know. Perhaps to prolong the agony or test the patience of those around me. They operated on me June 6, 1983. Always following major surgery, my bladder is ready to burst. I mentioned to the nurse in charge of the recovery room I was badly in need of a catheter. She said, "Okey, after a while."

I asked, "How long is after a while?"

"About two hours," she answered.

I told her I couldn't wait two hours, not even half an hour. That if I was home in this condition I would be rushed to emergency. Here I was in the hospital and couldn't get any help. "I want a catheter and I want it now or someone is going to be in trouble!" I exploded.

Immediately a man came in with the instrument and relieved me. As the nurse walked by and saw how full the receptacle was she said, "My! You **were** badly in need of assistance."

"I told you so."

That nurse must have been ignorant of how kidneys function.

Late that evening they took me upstairs to my room. As the nurse was leaving I started shivering and advised the nurse I was cold.

"I'll get a blanket," said the nurse.

"A blanket is not enough. I need heat."

At that my shivering went into convulsions and I passed out until the next morning.

The nurse's greeting that morning was, "You surely caused a lot of excitement around here last night."

I had been so used to severe pain, I didn't even complain of after surgery pain or require pain shots. Oh, I had a shot once just to relax me to sleep. The thing that caused my passing out was that I had lost half gallon of blood during surgery. They

had blood running into my veins all the next day. They let me out of the hospital June 11.

As soon as I was able to get around on crutches I reported back to the surgeon's office. He returned the metal parts he had removed from my hip when he put in a complete new plastic hip. The little shaft with four sharp points that sticks into the hip blade was too long. It went on through the blade in the ball of the socket. That is what was causing all the pain. the doctor said, "Mr. Cobia, after seeing how those sharp points were digging into the ball of your hip socket, I don't understand how you withstood all the pain you must have endured."

A great deal of the blame was mine for not getting, or trying to get help sooner.

With my crutches to help I flew from Fargo, N.D. over to see Lorna, Bert and family. Then to Omaha, Nebraska to see LeRoy, Janice and family. LeRoy planned to take his family to Disneyland, California so I rode with them as far as Utah where I stayed a while with LeRon and Hildred and visited other friends and relatives around Orem and Provo.

I rode the bus up to Idaho Falls to visit Patti and Greg and family. There we went over to my brother Jims at American Falls, then to Pocatello to visit with my nephew, Tom Powell, Lilas only son. Tom was in the process of moving some things to his new home in Cour-de-lene, Idaho. I hitched a ride up with him. I stayed with Tom a few days, then rode a Greyhound bus to George Washington, where my son, Jim, picked me up.

While there a lady called from Vancouver B.C., Canada and said she wanted to buy my house in Costa Rica. I quoted her a price and she accepted. I met her, Lucy, in Marysville, Washington. Then we returned to Moses Lake in her car. We had Ralph Kenison, my



attorney, close the deal with Dave Sparks who owned the other half of the house in attendance. Dave had never even seen the house or lived in it. There was never a finer man to deal with or to have as a friend than Dave Sparks.

I was to have the people out of the house by September 15, so I had to keep on the move. The bus back to Cour-de-lene where I spent a week with Tom relating my personal history over his video tape. I didn't get too far when Tom took me to the Spokane airport. I bought a ticket to Salt Lake with a change to a tiny plane to Saint George, Utah. On the way from Spokane to Salt Lake, a very unusual incident occurred. I found myself seated beside the same young lady I sat by on the trip from Miami to Minneapolis six months before. It was an old homecoming. She asked, "aren't you the one from Costa Rica?"

As I nodded she threw her arms around me for a big hug and kiss.

My sister, Hattie, met me in St. George. I only spent a very short while at each place. Hattie drove me to Victorville, California where another sister, Georgia lives. After a day there I caught a bus to Los Angeles where son-in-law, Phil, met me and took me to their home in Huntington Beach.

While there a few days I taped a Christmas song and a recitation, "The Stolen Watermelon" for the grandkids to listen to and learn. I was never as smart as my children and grandchildren. It restores my faith in the younger generation.

Phil and Judi saw me off to Costa Rica at the Los Angeles Airport, September 15. When I landed in San Jose I went immediately to Potrero and moved my personal belongings from the house. I rented a trailer house near the beach. All the furniture was included in the sale of the house.

A couple of months later I moved to Santa Cruz and rented a two bedroom apartment for \$45.00 a month. I had to furnish it. I would go swimming every day in the hotel pool, two and a half blocks away. I had a lady clean the house, do the laundry every day, \$45.00 per month, the power bill \$5.00 per month for electric range, fridge, and three fans besides the lights. Gasoline was very high \$2.50 per gallon. I bought a new Toyota just a month before I left in April. Tom Powell visited me in Costa Rica for a month or so, around January 25 to March 30.

## **1984**

### **Saving Two Young Ladies**

**Jan** - While in Costa Rica I was caught in a riptide. A riptide is caused when the tide is at it's height and just on its way out and a hard cross or diagonal wind is blowing which causes a very swift current seaward, so swift it will sweep you off your feet in waist deep water. It will drown the best of swimmers because the wind causes the water to be very choppy so it's impossible to turn on your back and rest.

If there's no wind blowing I could stay out in the ocean all day and float on my back. But a hard wind sweeps the water across your face so you can't breath. I'd heard the best thing to do is swim parallel to the beach. That is what I did, but I was swept a long ways out and was very tired by the time I headed for shore. I felt surely I would never make it. By the time I reached shore I couldn't arise for about a half hour and it took about a week to recover from my exhaustion.

About two years later I was swimming at high tide in front of the Hotel near the beach. On my way out I chatted a minute with two young ladies from San Jose. I had to crawl out on my hands and knees through the dry, deep sand because of my paralyzed legs, then

arose, walked to the outside shower and while washing off the salt water I heard screams from the ocean: “**Ayuda! Ayuda! Ayuda!**” (“Help! Help! Help!” in Spanish).

I ran over near the beach and saw those two young ladies being swept out to sea. To my right were about eight young men and women in their bathing suits. In my paralyzed condition I presumed I couldn’t help. So I motioned to those young people to do something. They looked at me: “Are you crazy. No one goes into a riptide, at least in their right mind.”

I couldn’t let those continued pitiful cries for help go unanswered. In spite of the dangers I well knew, I made up my mind to go. Right at that moment I was a completely changed man. I could feel it through and through. I had the strength of ten men and also had the confidence to go with it.

I ran like an athlete down through that same sand I had to crawl before, leapt in and was soon beside the girls speaking in such a confident voice their hysteria vanished.

I said, “Don’t try to swim, just keep your head above water. I’ll take one of you out and be right back for the other one.”

Of course it was all said in Spanish. I swam like a motor boat without tiring in the least. After I had the second one safely on shore I felt I should be exhausted, but I wasn’t even breathing heavy. It was as though I had done absolutely nothing. I could have repeated that several more times. It was a mystery I’ll never understand.

April 19 my hip was giving a little trouble sometimes when walking, just once in a while. So I decided to have the doctors take a look at it. The air ticket from San Jose to Los Angeles, one stop San Salvador, was \$500. Phil met me at the airport and I had a very fine visit with the family. I also spent a night or so with my niece Evelyn and husband, Joe

Stuart. We had a lot of fun going out dancing at the Senior Citizen’s Dances. The music was superb. Evelyn is Hattie’s oldest daughter and a very special, sweet person. She has always treated me very highly, just like her Mother has. Hattie’s whole family are very outstanding.

Joe and Evelyn took me with them out to San Bernadino, California. Then I got a bus to Victorville, California, where my sister Georgia lives. I was with her four days and that’s where I started getting fat. She’s such a good cook.

I needed a little car to get around in so I bought a used Vega. It seems to be a very good little car. So Vega and I went to Phoenix, Arizona, and visited four of Verda’s children. I shouldn’t call them children as they are about as old as I am. Dorothy, Vernetta “Curly,” Harry and Jim Tucker. All very fine people. Jim drove me up to Black Canyon City Arizona to see Lennie and Montie Gibson from Montana. It was Montie’s father I worked for at age sixteen. They have been loyal friends for 58 years.

Then I drove north to St. George and Hurricane, Utah, to visit Hattie 88, Clorece 84 and Bennie who is 93 years old. Hattie’s home was my headquarters. I went to a couple of dances and we went out to Lake Powell on a houseboat for a day.

I went north to Orem with LeRon and Hildred’s family. Their children are really growing up. I’m afraid Kathryn wouldn’t enjoy being called, “children.” I went to visit Evelyn’s daughter, Judy. Wonderful people, all.

Then on up to Pocatello and Idaho Falls. I surely love the Vega. I couldn’t go anywhere without it. Other times like this I had to depend on others if I wanted to go anywhere. Now Vega does it all for me. I visited one day

and night with Jim and Beth at American Falls. With Tom Powell a couple of days.

Then on up to see Patti and Greg. They have a beautiful, fast growing family which is true of all my sons and daughters. Patti invited Greg's parents, Jack and Joan Smith, over for a pleasant evening, outside bar-be-que and visit.

I pushed on up past west Yellowstone to Livingston where Mamie (Queen) and spouse, Walter Gilbert reside. A lot of reminiscing took place about the "good old days." Then up to Clyde Park to see Ernest Queen. It all brought back old memories. "Ernie and wife, Thelma have always been very close and true friends of mine. He and his boys still reside on and operate the ancestral farm plus several adjoining farms. They laughingly call it "Queen's Town." He and grandsons took me trout fishing on their lake. I caught six trout. From Montana I went up to Alberta and visited the Woodruffs and many of my old time neighbors up there.

May 1984 I have now been in an apartment in Moses Lake two months, mingling with my lifetime friends, especially Jim and Marilyn and children, going to doctors, clinics and in general having a good time. All this time my good friend Dave Sparks has been to see me at least three evenings a week.

## 1986

June - Sometime after midnight I came to on the floor in a puddle of blood. I had bitten my tongue in two. In my fall off the bed I'd knocked the bed lamp unplugged so I was in dark. I'd had a seizure that had ripped the muscles loose from my hips to my shoulders; rib cage included. It was if one had taken pliers and pulled each muscle loose. In the darkness lying on the floor I was able to reach the telephone and dial zero and asked the

operator to call my son, Jim, at Quincy. All I said was "Jim, I'm hurt."

I was in excruciating pain. He was with me in short order. He called the ambulance. They tried to lift me on a stretcher, but it hurt too much. they slid a board under me and strapped me to it. They had to give me demerol shots regular for pain the whole week I was in the hospital. The doctor said he had never known of a seizure that ripped a person like that one. He put me on Dilantin and said for me to see a neurologist.

I went to a clinic in Provo, Utah. The doctor put me in the hospital for extensive tests and examinations. He said my brain waves were colliding. That actually I needed a brain transplant, but they couldn't find a donor. Ha! so he just kept me on dilantin and I am still on it now, two years later. My soreness lasted for six months.

I drove on south to my sister's, Hattie, at Hurricane and Clorece who was ill at St. George. I was with Hattie a month then drove over to see another sister, Georgia Hancock, at Victorville, California, for once month.



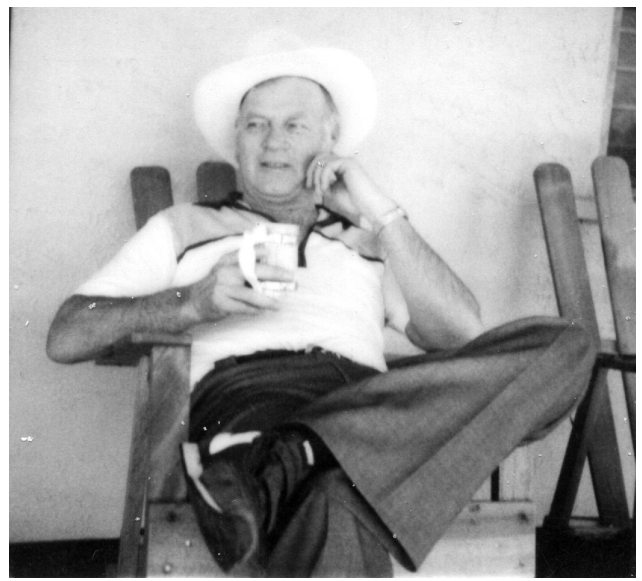
Under a coconut palm



Brahma cows in front of Richard's home like the cow that hit him.



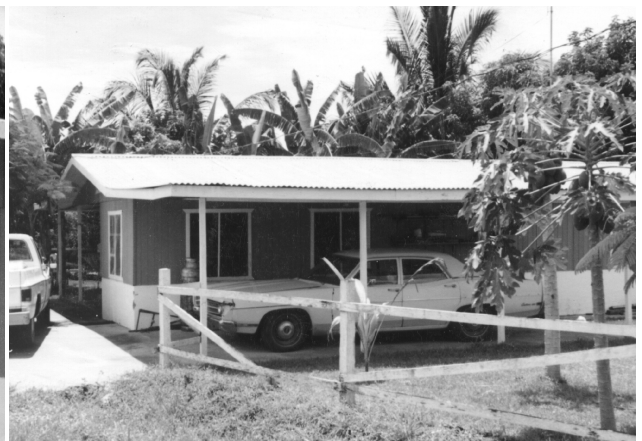
The fishing was great!



Dave Sparks - good friend & partner with the Costa Rica home.



Home in Costa Rica



Costa Rica house had "Porch with glazed tile floors."



## California - 2<sup>nd</sup> Marriage

While speaking with Georgia's daughter, Eleanor, I mentioned that I supposed I'd be going on back to Costa Rica, but I'd rather find a good wife and settle down. Eleanor said, "We'll find you a wife." She had a friend named, Flora, who had a friend named Ruth Wilkinson, an eligible widow. Flora set us up for a dinner date and we took off from there. I went back to Hatties for a month, then returned to Victorville where Ruth and I dated. Within a month we were married on my birthday, November 23, 1986. We were married by a Seventh-Day Adventist Minister in a fancy, new Chinese restaurant owned by Tomy Hom whom Ruth befriended in 1949. He lived with Wilkensons. Ruth taught him English as he was just fresh out of Red China.

Ruth proved to be a prefect wife. She spoils me to death, waiting on me hand and foot plus buy me clothes, clothes and more clothes.

In the spring we went on our honeymoon to New Zealand, Australia and Tahiti. We've done a bit of local travel since. Ruth and I have also traveled to South Africa, saw the follies in Brazil and went on to Costa Rica. In 1990 we went to the British Isles and Scotland for a month. In August of 1991 we cruised down the Mississippi River on the "Mississippi Queen." And in November of 1992 we were in Aruba.

Ruth and I have enjoyed each other in our travels as well as the sights. Our most choice time together is in the twilight and evening when we sit together in the patio or front porch and chat about everything except politics. Not that she disagrees with my point of view. She does one hundred

percent, but its just not a pleasant subject. So we stick with the pleasant. At other times I use her as a sounding board. She's very patient and puts up with a lot of my ranting and raving. She spoils me in about every other way too.



Dick in back yard of California home 1995



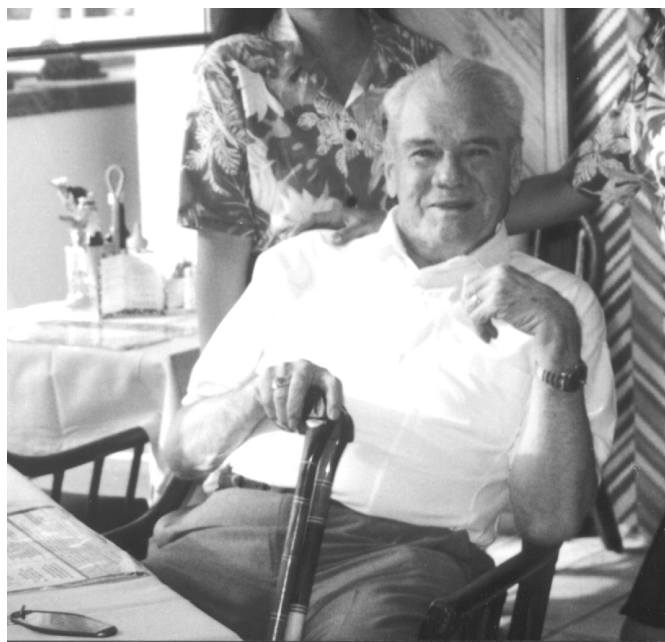
Dick's wedding with Ruth Wilkinson Nov 23, 1986



Mississippi River cruise 1991  
Ruth & Dick Cobia



Ruth's newfound "boyfriends" during trip to  
Johannesburg 1988



Dick - Aruba 1992





Granddaughter's wedding reception. Omaha 1 May 1993  
Ruth & Richard Cobia, Christy (Cobia) & Randy Hollis



Decedents of Ben & Mary Cobia at their grave site.  
LeRoy, Dick, Jim Cobia; Glen Welch July 1992



Cobia Family Reunion in Charleston, S.C.  
LeRoy & Dick Cobia July 1994





Banquet at the national Cobia Family Reunion July 1992 Charleston, S.C.  
James A., Richard (brothers) & LeRoy Cobia



Dick & Jim, the last living Cobia children of Ben & Mary Cobia say farewell to their sister  
Lyda Anderson on 17 Feb 1996  
Lorna C. Pack; Ron, Dick & Jim A. Cobia



Dick, age 85 traveled to Phoenix, AZ and enjoyed watching his granddaughter preform as Christine in  
"Phantom of the Opera" Oct 1994  
Dick, Susan & Keith Facer



Dewey & Garth Lybbert



Kay & Norma Lybbert

Lifelong friends. Children of Bernard Lybbert, Moses Lake farming partner.



Dick & Quinnie 1998



Richard & Ruth Cobia Nov 1998



## Hobbies & Thoughts

My greatest hobby is reading. I especially enjoy history, anything that pertains to what has happened in the past. I just love to read it. I don't just read it. I live it. That way I live hundreds of lives, over thousands of years. I never waste time on fiction. For example, church leaders or church history, ancient history or American history or the battles of the Civil War or the Revolutionary war or World War I and World War II.

I've concentrated on English history, U.S. History and especially western U.S. Whenever I travel in the western states or Canadian western provinces I pick up local historical books. The body is made of what we eat and drink. The mind is formed by what we read and think.

All these histories interest me intensely and it has led to my interest in politics. You might say that I started out as a Democrat up in Canada. I was very young when I was up there and from the news I could get I leaned to the liberal sort. But, when I moved back down to the states in Moses Lake, Washington, I began to see where liberalism was leading the country. It was leading to socialism and to tolerance for all manner of indulgence. Indulgence with criminals and people who wanted to demonstrate and become revolutionaries. The media seemed to begin to sympathize and dignify revolutionaries. They sickened me on that and I have become what they call a right winger conservative.

One of the main things that turned me against the liberals was them playing up Martin Luther King (Martin Lucifer King) so much and dignify him and give him so much credit for things that he did do and didn't do. He preached non-violence, but every where he went he created violence. He told the people it was alright to break the law as long

as they were willing to pay the penalty. You can see where that would lead the country. If you wanted to kill somebody and wanted to go lay in jail for a while for it why that was alright. So that philosophy was nothing but Marxism to me.

We have been steadily going down the road to socialism for the last thirty years. The last couple of presidents have led us further and further down that road. Jimmy Carter is the new president now and he seems to be leaning even more to the left than in the past. We have a socialist house and a democratic-socialist senate and they're afraid to stand up for what is right in foreign affairs. Viet Nam was a bad experience for them. Instead of us going in and winning the war we just fiddled around with it and now they are afraid to get involved in anything because they think it will be another Viet Nam.

They've let Russia furnish equipment and Cuba furnish the men and they've taken over Angola, Africa now. There are already mostly communist governments there, but here we have foreign intervention taking over a little country which is just a jump off place to invade places like Rhodesia and South Africa. I predict that is just what will happen. There will be a blood bath down there unless a miracle happens. Even the black people in Rhodesia and South Africa don't want that kind of government in there. They'd rather have a white regime themselves than to have foreign intervention of these other black leaders because they are dictators of the worst sort. They rule by whim rather than justice.

We as a nation, supposedly a free nation are not supporting freedom through out the world. Instead of going to the aid of these smaller nations that are fighting for their lives like Rhodesia and Africa, why we are helping the terrorists and revolutionaries take over these friendly nations.

Some things I've learned over the years.

1. If anyone asks you to lend them some money, tell them that is what banks are for. If their credit is no good at the bank, its probably no good.

2. Don't accept a post dated check or co-sign another person's note unless you are prepared to take the loss. But there are exceptions to all rules; your family for instance.

3. Establish your credit, honor your word, be to appointments and meetings on time.

4. Don't monopolize the conversation. You learn more listening.

5. One of the best germ killers is soap. If you have a cut or other superficial infection, just put some bar, soft soap under a band-aid. I've never had this fail to do the job. In extreme cases you may have to change it, showers might dissipate the soap.

In politics I have advanced from a liberal in early life to very conservative at age 45 on. I don't understand how a knowledgeable historian in his right mind could conscientiously be a liberal democrat. I believe that government should only do for any individual what they cannot do for themselves. Welfare programs with its attendant curse, food stamps, is the greatest unnecessary expenditure the government has. Welfare breeds more welfare creating a dependence on the government for their total existence. There should be work and training projects for those that accept welfare and no one should get a free ride, unless

incapacitated. Families should try to look after their own.

In my history, as you have noticed, none of my faults are mentioned. Well, I have them, plenty of them, but why should I destroy the myth that I might be a decent person. If I'd described all my faults there wouldn't have been much room left for other things. I'm very imperfect. I've done and said many things in my life I'd give most anything to go back and correct. But that is impossible. My hind sight is very good. In the great beyond if God is just I suppose I'll be among friends. If He isn't just, we are all in trouble. As I've said to many of my friends, "After we get on the other side if you want to find me you'll probably have to look all over hell."

The only legacy I leave is a record of dealing honestly and fairly with my fellow men. Paying my bills, keeping my word above all a fine up-right family who could be set up as an example to the rest of the world.



Richard Cobia  
25 April 1991

My history would not be complete without including the terrible tragedy that befell my family in 1990. I've always referred to it as the Ontario lynching. All of my children except the twins, LeRoy and LeRon participated.

They were caught up in what became known as "The Scam of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century" also known as "The False Memory Syndrome." There are several ways people achieve false memories: hypnosis by hypnotherapists; reading suggestive books, fantasizing, etc. I think and by the therapist using hypnotic drugs, such as Amytal, etc.

Anyway those five children all grownups asked to meet me at the L.D.S. building, then accused me of committing all manner of crimes, sins of the most bizarre; including sodomy, Satanic rituals, etc. Most of them cut all communications with me.

They call it the scam of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century because it never happened before in the history of civilization. It is a way for unprincipled therapists and psychiatrists to make quick easy bucks.

I've seen the TV ads: "Make Big Bucks! Be Your Own Boss; Become a Hypnotherapist!" It's the devils' own tool to destroy families who are the back-bone of churches and the nation.

It convinces young troubled parents they have recovered long repressed memories of child sexual abuse.

I joined an organization named the "False Memory Syndrome Foundation." It was set up to assist the accused. It was in operation two years and already has a membership of 18,000. That means there's probably hundreds of thousands of families affected by this very evil course of events.

It is worse than death for an innocent father who doted on his off-spring to be so falsely accused. I was not guilty of one of those

accusations hurled at me at the Ontario lynching.

Not one of those individuals has ever recanted their accusations or asked for forgiveness. In that case I have to presume they don't want it forgiven. But they will have to be responsible to their God for letting themselves fall into the claws of the evil one. Anything equal to murder as this was is very serious business and should be treated as such. Those individuals treat it very lightly as though it were nothing by going to church, partaking of the sacrament, etc.

It has certainly had its effect on my ever becoming active in the Church again.

I spent forty years trying to rear, clothe, educate, feed, nurture, seminary, missions. Most of that time putting in sixteen hour days and many nights walking the floor with a crying baby that I loved very much and one that I would quickly give my life for. No matter how tired I was after a sixteen hour day there were numberless nights I would get up and fill and warm the bottle of milk maybe three times per night. This was not done grudgingly but lovingly.

No matter how spiteful my children may treat me my love for them remains; it's unconditional. I also feel certain if they knew the truth they would feel sorry and ask for forgiveness.

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