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"As I Remember It"

By James Edgar Myers Sr.

I've been told that I was born on Sept 13th, 1913, here in Cleburne, in the east part of town. I was the fourth child of Henry & Alberta Myers. Preceding me were C.D., Eunice and Verna. George lived only about 2 years. My parents were living near Walnut Springs, Tex, when she became ill with a stomach disorder and couldn't eat anything. My mother said she had been playing on the porch with making mud pies the day before she became ill. They left the mud pies on the porch after her death. They were still there when they moved. She was buried in Walnut Springs.

I was a super-star when I was born weighing over 13 lbs. My mother probably thought she was going to have triplets. This should have discouraged her from having any more children but it didn't, as she later had Ralph, Ruth, Pauline and Rudolph.

The first things I remember was when we were living on North Robinson St. next to my Aunt Etta. She lived near the west gates of the Santa Fe Shops. I remember watching large numbers of men going past on their way to work each day. I also remember that there were some loose boards on the fence in our back yard between our house and Aunt Etta's. I probably made them a lot looser so I could crawl over into her yard. I enjoyed using her bath room as they had an indoor toilet, which I dearly loved to flush about a dozen times a day. The roaring sound of the water scared me, but I couldn't resist doing it.

We moved to Hubbard, Tex about this time. I was probably four or five years of age. I do not remember how we moved down there, probably by wagon as we did not own a car until about 1927. During the world war I guess the price of cotton was about 50¢ a lb, which was about four times the normal price. My father quit his job in the shops and decided to start farming and get rich off raising cotton. I don't think the venture was too successful so only about three years and moved back to Cleburne in 1922.

I remember that we lived near a railroad crossing and the trains came by our house several times each day and night. The engineer always blew the whistle for the crossing. We would wave at them everytime he passed.

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I loved to ride in a wagon to town to buy supplies and I would always end up at the drug store where he bought me a double dip ice cream cone and himself a large mug of Rootbeer. I also enjoyed going to the hardware store as it had a deep well thru the floor of a back room. We would draw up a bucket full of cold water and get a drink. I liked to take a peek down at the well and see the reflection of light on the water.

We moved to another farm that had a huge cotton field west of the house. My grandparents (Harler) lived at the other end of the long rows of cotton. Ralph and I would slip off and go visit grandmother Harler every chance we got. She usually had some popcorn, cookies or cake waiting for us.

One day Eunice and I were playing in the cotton wagon. My father kept some matches under the wagon to light his cigarette with. He always carried a chunk of "Brown Mule" chewing tobacco and a sack of "Bull Durham" smoking tobacco in his pocket. He always rolled his own cigarettes and there weren't very many ready-rolled kind available back in those days.

As I was saying, we were playing in the wagon full of cotton and decided to see if cotton would burn. We struck a match and soon the whole wagon was ablaze in a few minutes. Luckily my father and C.D. were picking cotton nearby and came and put the fire out in the wagon but you can easily guess he got out still afire with his hands. I don't remember who struck the match, but that was the last time we ever struck a match in a wagon of cotton.

It was at this farm that I almost died with pneumonia. I remember feeling very bad for several days before I mentioned it to my mother. She felt my head and said I had a high fever. She put me to bed and gave me some medicine but I became worse and they called the doctor. They put ice packs on me to reduce the fever & I became unconscious and while this way I remember seeing a large brick building with lots of big wheels & pulleys and motors turning round and round. I remembered this for many years. After we had moved back to Cleburne a few years later my father took me to the water dept. to pay the water bill. To my surprise I was looking at the exact duplicate of the things I had seen when unconscious. My father must have taken me there when I was a very small child and it had left the image imprinted on my brain.

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Ralph and I slept in a room where the front door was located. One night I woke up and saw a man staring thru the front door at us. I promptly covered up my head for a long period of time. When I finally peeped from under the cover, the man was gone.

I also remember one day a small airplane ran out of gas and landed in our pasture. My father took me to see it and I was real excited. My father said the Allies were using planes like this to drop bombs on the Germans and also fought the German planes with machine guns in the air. My father told us the Germans had developed a long range gun that could destroy cities over thirty miles away. He told me they had test tanks that could run over trees and buildings, so I always worried about them coming to America and destroying all our cities.

One day we went to town and there was an Army band there playing music and recruiting men for the Army. I couldn't resist getting close enough to look at the huge horn one of them was playing. One of the players reached down and grabbed my cap and put it down into his horn. After teasing me awhile, he returned it.

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While in Hubbard, aunt Zet and her son Harold visited us. His father was an Irishman and in charge of railroad gangs and carried a blue steele. Harold was a chip off the old block, he could say words I had never heard before.

My Uncle Bob and Bess visited us several times while we were there & I always remembered Bob because he was always joking and laughing and he loved buttermilk and hot pepper. Aunt Bess was always sickly and had many operations during her life time.

My Uncle George and Aunt Pearl had also moved to Hubbard and also my Uncle J.B. Harlen.

My grandfather, George Washington Harlen, was not real tall but rather stocky, with a mustache (if my memory is correct). I remember one day he brought a huge sweet potato by our house to show us. It was a giant size, must have weighed at least ten or fifteen pounds. He caught me outside playing in a cold March wind right after I had recovered from pneumonia. He preached me and my mother a sermon that day.

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to read the second grade book by listening to the second graders recite their lesson each day. Reading was always an enjoyable pastime from then on. I always enjoyed receiving a new Reader. After this Dad & I read thousands of books from the Library during my teen age years.

Eunice told me of the school in Cleburne that she and C.D. had attended before moving to Hubbard. I was eager to hear about the cafeteria where you could buy cold drinks, ice cream and hamburgers for dinner and began to wish we would move back to Cleburne.

In 1922 my father was offered his job in the Santa Fe Shops back and he accepted it as he was going into debt instead of getting rich off of cotton as he had expected. The war had ended in 1918 and cotton prices began to plunge back to less than ten cents a pound.

My father came back to Cleburne and worked about a month before we moved so he would have money to rent a house and pay for moving back to Cleburne. I remember that my mother and Ralph, Ruby, Pauline and I came back on the old T.P. & B.V. (Trinity and Brazos Valley) passenger train. The old building back of the Santa Fe Station was their station. The engine ran off the tracks about three blocks south of the station and everyone got out and walked the balance of the way.

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I started to school while we were living at this place. The school must have been two or three miles away. It was a large wooden building with two large rooms. There were about ten rows of

seats in each room. Our room had the first thru the fourth grades with the higher grades in the other room. There was only one teacher in each room. There was a huge pot-bellied stove in each room that burned wood during the winter months.

Rote that books were passed out to each grade on the first day of school, and I was mistakenly given a second grade book. I was too timid to tell the teacher, so when my time came to read I refused, as I didn't have the right book. The teacher put up with it for a few days, then wrote my parents a note. That night he picked up our old-fashion type phone and pretended to call the police. He told the police to come take me to jail the next night as I refused to read the next day. I still refused to read as I still had the wrong book. The teacher picked up a paddle and decided she could persuade me to read fast. After about three licks I told her I had the wrong book. She gave me a first grade book and I read about ten pages to her very rapidly. I had also learned to

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A — While in Hubbard my father suffered a mild heart attack. The doctor there gave him some tablets to put under his tongue when he felt a pain coming on. I never heard them mention having any more problem with his heart after coming back to Cleburne.

Ralph and I enjoyed going to a sorghum field (small variety of sugar cane used for cow feed and making sorghum syrup), and chewing the sweet sap from the cane stalks. One day Ralph decided to go alone. Late in the afternoon we missed him and searched all over the place for him. I happen to think of the sorghum patch. We went there and found him sound asleep with a stick of sorghum in his hand.

I also remember the night when Ralph and Pauline were born. My father sent us all to our room and told not to come out all night. I wasn't old enough to know what was about to happen. I heard my father and another talking for a long time (it was the doctor). Some time during the night I heard a baby crying. The next morning I had a new baby sister. It happened about the same way when Pauline was born about two years later.

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He was a Baptist Preacher as well as a farmer. He would preach on Sunday nights and some others hold Revivals during Summer time. We would all take lanterns and go in wagons to the School House. They would hang the lanterns in trees, etc for light. We would sing and then he would really preach to us. He had a loud voice and preached the old fashion "Fire and Brimstone" messages. He died when he was only about 65 years of age. He died suddenly, probably from a heart attack or stroke.

My mother went to the funeral but as the rest of us were in school, we stayed home. When we returned to Cleburne we moved into a small house on North Border Street, a few blocks from Irving School. Rip Ownbey and his new bride lived next door to us. We remained friends with the Ownbey family ever since. Some of them are still my customers.

The city school put me back into the first grade when we returned to Cleburne as they didn't think much of country schools. My first grade teacher was an old lady, Andrews. She was really strict but I made my excellent grades as I had already had the first grade. Brother Richard Hall started to school the same year I did, we were in the first three

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grade together. He had the I.Q. of a 13 year old child and never did pass the third grade. From then on he would stay in each grade two years and then get promoted to the next grade. He never did get to Junior School. Everyone liked him and we watched his progress over the years. He is a member of my Sunday School Class and is getting very old and feeble at this time.

I became acquainted with the Altman family and also Douglas Wilbanks while in Irving school. Jack and Douglas are still good customers.

We moved to a larger home on Erie St about 1924. It was across the street from the Brinkley house. We lived there about a year. The only tornado that I've been in, came one morning about eleven A.M. It had been dark and humid all morning. My mother was out hanging out clothes when she heard the storm coming from the southwest. The wind was howling and the clouds were so low they looked like they were on the ground. The center of the tornado must have been over on Huron St. as it blew the roof off of Mr. John Butler's house. It just missed our house and wound up in the pasture east of our house. Our chicken house and lot of houses were all blown away. We found dead chickens clear down to the Railroad Tracks

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The wind jerked a bucket of clothes pins out of my mother's hand and we found clothes pins scattered clear to the railroad. We never found the bucket.

While living here someone died and Ralph and I slipped off and went up into the pasture opposite the house while they were bringing the corpse out of the house in a casket. We could see the porch and the dead man coming out of the front to catch us for hiding in the grass.

We moved into that house about a year later. The house we lived in burned a short time after we moved. Everyone suspected arson but the owner said "Ac" Sparks from the Santa Fe Train, blew into the yard, set it afire. The trains used coal and wood and very often grass fires would be started in the dry grass during the summer months.

While living in this home, the boy friend of the girl living in the house south of us, made her a crystal Radio set. They would let us come over and listen to the Jazz and music in the earphone Radio. I always wanted one after that but it was about 1930 before my father ordered a cabinet model from the Spiegel Co. in Chicago. I would sit by the set and turn the volume up and down the

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keep the program from fading out entirely, in a few minutes it would come on so loud it was necessary to turn the volume control down. It was about ten years later before radios came out with automatic volume control.

We had several favorite programs back in those days. The Two Black Crows, Amos and Andy and Sasafras were the two best comedy acts.

We moved from this house to the one we call the Brinkley House across the street from the water tower. It was while living here that I got the reputation as a “story teller.” I always had a vivid imagination, and read lots of books such as “Buck Rogers”, Tarzan, Bomba, all kinds of science fiction books. I created two characters called “Fatty & Skinny”. Every Saturday and Sunday all the kids of the neighborhood would gather at our house and bring me nickels, dimes, soda cake, cookies, Cold Drinks etc to listen to me make up all sorts of adventure for “Fatty & Skinny”. I learned quickly to always end the story at a critical stage like the old continued stories at the movies, where we sometimes went on Saturday afternoon. We went to the old Rex Theatre, most admission was only five cents. Popcorn from the nickel

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It was while living here that Charles Petty and some of the other students of Irving school got me interested in going to Sunday School and Church. I went for several years. My Sunday School Teacher was a Mrs. Fields that lived on Huron St. My story telling started while we moved down to the home my father bought in 1929 at 302 Erie St. Ralph and I watched the house being built and neither of us were expected to live in an almost new house. The crash of 1929 came a few months after my father bought this house and he had a very difficult time making the payments during the depression years. He ended up paying only the interest each month for a number of years. Children were less than 20.02 per month. Hundreds of homes were brought down by owners during these times in order to collect the insurance rather than lose the houses because of non-payment.

It was at the Brinkley house that Eunice and Claude were married. It was also here that my father bought his first car, a T model Ford. He would take it down in the pasture near the Railroad and practice for hours on Saturday and Sundays for several weeks before he felt safe to drive it into traffic.

Ralph and I co-acted in one day while...

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He were working and drove it across the front yard. We didn't know it could skid like a mule something and many people had their arms broken trying to crank it up.

Ralph would do almost anything I asked him to. Anytime I wanted some money for candy or polly pop (what we called the flavored powder we could make cold drinks with. It came in small round packages and cost five cents a package.) If my mother didn't give him the money, she would start crying and both ended up getting some money or a whipping. (We got plenty of them.)

My father was a very generous person. He would rent out a grocery list every two weeks when he was paid and this it down to the "Morrison Grocery". It was across the street from "Ball's Grocery Store". The store later burned down.

He would usually buy a basket of fruit, stick of bananas or a large sack of candy for us kids. On one occasion he had them put a five gallon can of Ice Cream delivered to our home. He believed in helping his children in every way possible. Not many us can say he didn't help us all get started in life when Gladys and J.D. married he borrowed enough money on his insurance policy to help us buy a machine and the lot it is on and payoff part

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for shaking it moved from the other side of the Santa Fe Railroad track. We paid him back the money at ten dollars per month. This helped him pay the interest on his home.

All us kids were growing up while living here. C.D. got a job with the Santa Fe and worked on the Section Gang "spiking the rails". He bought a model A Ford and had met Rosa (our Boyd) who lived about twelve miles out on the Johnson County Road. He would go see her several times a week and my mother would sit on the front porch watching for him to come home. When she saw him coming down the street she would go crawl in bed and pretend to be asleep. She did this for all her kids as they grew up into teen aged. I was always told to be home by eleven P.M. and I knew she would have my father out looking for me after that. She was more strict on Ruby and Pauline and had a deadline of about nine P.M. I understand. Their boy friends really caught it if they didn't have the girls home on time.

We were really crowded when all the family was at home. We all had chores to do and my mother would cook several pans of biscuits, large platters of "Grizzle Gravy"

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and some of the largest and most fragrant rolls I ever seen. No one had to be called to the table twice as by the time the food was passed once it was all gone so if you were late you didn't get much to eat.

It was here that I decided to get filled up on banana pudding. I picked cotton after school and on a Saturday in the Summer and Fall and had some spending money. I went to town and bought a new dish pan, three dozen bananas and several boxes of vanilla wafers and told my mother to make a dishpan full of banana pudding. She did and we all ate banana pudding until it was

running out our ears. It got so sick that I didn't want banana pudding again for about ten years. (Sure love it again now)

C.D. married while living here. after he left, my cousin Charlie Stogner (Aunt Ettas son) got a job in the Shops and lived with us for several months.

We had lots of exciting and interesting times while growing up. Ralph and I would rig up all sorts of tricks to scare Ruby and Pauline at night. One time we ran a string clear under the house and tied it to a can full of rocks that we had hid in the bushes under their window

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We slept on the north side of the house and would tell scary tales and pull the string to create a noise under their window. They would come screaming to mom and dad.

Ralph and I would pretend to be Robin and sing cowboy songs and dedicated them to my dad (we started calling him "Pop" after we became teen agers). He seemed to like it. He would call and tell us to turn off the song about eleven o'clock each night.

It was while living here that I decided that I wanted to be the first member to graduate from High School. I walked to Junior High and High School for about eight years. Finally got a bicycle when I was a Junior and used it the last two years. I became one of the fastest walkers around. I could walk to town easily in fifteen minutes by taking extra long strides. I found this practice very beneficial to overcome later when I entered military service. They had a thirty inch step and by then I had been covering about forty two inches. After much will power and plenty of jogging from the other men and the Sergeant finally getting tired down to 36 thirty inches.

It was during these years that I again started back to church. The Peoples Church and church

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talked my father into going to church. Several of the people he worked with were members there. My father was saved a few months later and then he became a faithful and active member. For many years my father encouraged all their children to go also and we were all saved at Chase Ave. Baptist Church. We had a fine bunch of young people there. We had parties and visited each other on Sundays. My mother always had a house full of people on Sundays. We would invite our friends not realizing what it cost to feed people. We had our own cow and chickens, always had a large garden and canned hundreds of jars of vegetables and fruit each year, otherwise we couldn't have made it. I don't recall ever being interested in plants or the garden, after I started to finish High School, I did most of the gardening. I ordered all kinds of seed from catalogues and tried growing them and had great success. My mother was a real flower lover. She always had a yard full of flowers. I can't remember a yard from the days in Hubbard until she got so old and feeble that she could care for them, that she didn't have a yard full of many varieties of flowers. This is probably why all the children loved

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to grow flowers and garden. She would take me to visit greenhouses when we growing up and I always had a desire to have a place like that, to grow interesting plants, & flowers. About two years before I married I built my first small greenhouse in my parent's backyard. My father and I took down his garage. We bought some used glass from the Santa Fe Shops and built a small greenhouse about twelve by twenty feet. After I was married we took it down and built two large ones in Gladys & my back yard. These burnt down when some coal-oil stove exploded about 1947 or 8 and we decided to build the large greenhouse that we have today.

Weldon Ward and I met while we were in Junior High School. It was located where the current South High building is now. We were in class from then on thru High School. Girls were the least of my worries at this time so I did not have the slightest idea that I would marry his sister and we would be brother-in-law in the future. I visited his home several times but don't remember ever seeing his sister, Gladys.

I first noticed Gladys several years later when Weldon and Rev. Goff, the pastor of the

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Chase Ave. Baptist church asked me to come over to Weldon's home and bring a Chinese Gun I had purchased from a local second-hand store. We all played the game together for several hours. I was saved while Rev. Goff was pastor at the Chase Ave. Church. He was a fiery little preacher, & he reminded me of Grandfather Harlen.

Gladys and I became interested in each other and started dating and going to church together. She was going to the old Tabernacle Fundamental Church down the street from the Coca-Cola bottling Co. I would go down there with her one Sunday and we would go to Chase Ave. Baptist Church the next Sunday. I walked many a mile between my home and her home. During the three years we dated before getting married I usually took a short cut thru East Cleburne where the streets were pitch dark except for an occasional street light about every three blocks. We didn't have any street lights on Erie St. both in those days (the late 20's and early thirties).

Red Goff, the pastor of Chase Ave. Church, was seriously injured in a car accident and had to quit preaching. Our church called a young fellow by the name of Mayes Wilkins

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as pastor. He was the one that performed our wedding ceremony. He was as nervous as we were as it was his first married ceremony. He wasn't married at that time.

The wedding was held at 8 P.M. on Tuesday Sept. 22 1936 at the home of Gladys' parents. I took Calladiums and other flowers from my small greenhouse, which I had built in 1934.

Both our families, and our friends from the church were present. Her step grandfather W.J. Ward, and her grandmother were present. I had applied for and got a job a few months before at W.F. Wards Brass Factory in Keene. Weldon was my bestman. After the ceremony the pastor asked everyone to bow their heads for prayer. As I was a little timid, I figured this was a good time to kiss the bride, while no one was looking. So while everyone's heads were bowed I enjoyed several good kisses.

We slept off in "Old Pearly Gate," a Chevrolet car my dad gave me when he won a new 1936 Chevrolet in a contest drawing a few months before.

We went to a house on Huron Street that I had rented for \$10.00 per month (Depression Days prices) and spent our honeymoon there

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About by the time we were married, the owner of the house decided to paint it and put a new roof on it. We didn't have much peace and quiet for several weeks after our marriage. The owner gave us a month free rent because of the disturbance.

About two months later we had the opportunity to buy the house we now live in for Eleven Hundred & Fifty Dollars. It had to be moved from across the over pass. My father borrowed the money on his insurance policy and we paid him back at ten dollars per month. We bought the lot the house is on for \$50.00 and it cost about a hundred dollars to get it moved.

I had to register for the draft in 1940. It was easy to see our country would be involved in World War II. Ralph decided he wanted to be an officer in the army so he volunteered a few months before I was drafted. I received my "Greetings" from the President on August 13th 1942. The number thirteen has come up in my life many times. I went to Dallas and passed the test with flying color even tho I only weighed 139 lbs and was six feet tall. I was told to report to Mineral Wells, the Induction Center for this area. I reported to the Center on Oct 13th 1942.

It was hard to leave all those you loved behind, but I know it must have been harder on them.

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Gladys lived by herself the three years I was away. She and my father kept our small greenhouse business going during the war years, so I would not have to start all over after the war.

I never really had any doubt that I would return. My church, my wife and all my family, I'm certain were praying for me many times each day.

I took dozens of tests in mineral wells and made high scores on them all, my highest score was ninety nine on the "Morse Code test." Harry McPhearson, my best friend, and I had learned the "Morse Code" and sent messages between our homes at night with a blinker light we had made. We were really good at it. This enabled me to make the high score. I was in mineral Wells only

about 12 days as they needed new men to fill the quota on a train load of men headed for the Air Force in Salt Lake City.

We stopped at The Royal Gorge with the highest bridge in the world and while stopped there we were told that we had been selected to be in the Air Force. This was the best place I would have chosen to be, as it would make me dizzy just to ride a Ferris Wheel at the carnival.

I was supposed to take thirteen weeks of Basic Training in Salt Lake City but fate intervened again. I was there only a few days when I was

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notified to pack my gear as I had been chosen as the final draft on a train load of men going to radio School in South Dakota. They had checked my record and found I had the highest score on the Morse Code test. It meant all the tough training the normally give draftees.

We went to Sioux Falls, South Dakota and I spent the winter months 1943 learning to operate radios and how to send and receive morse code. I was told by the sergeant not to exceed fifteen words per minute or I would immediately be sent overseas. I noticed quite a few men quietly left if they were extremely good at sending and receiving code. My final grade was sixteen words per minute on code. This was an extremely cold winter and we had the night shift from 10 PM to 6 AM. I had a difficult time learning to sleep in the day time and also on how to march over ice and snow, especially since I hadn't received my "Basic Training" in marching. I finally got over these obstacles with a lot of will power and determination.

I graduated on April 13th, 1943 (note another 13) We were sent to a "gunnery school" in Las Vegas or near it. We learned to shoot everything from a air rifle to fifty caliber machine guns. We shot some repeating gun here. I took my first (with standing up in the back seat of

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a small fighter plane with out any safety straps. We had to shoot at a target pulled by another plane about a hundred yards away. Our bullets had been dipped in different colors of paint so when we hit the target it would leave the paint on the target and they could see how many hits we made. We stayed here about four weeks. I passed and was sent to Boise, Idaho to be put on a crew of a "Flying Fortress" as the B-17 Bombers were called.

We had a crew of eleven men, the pilot, co-pilot, navigator, engineer, dot engineer, radio operator, tail/ radio operator, two side gunners, and one tail gunner. The co-pilot was to operate the turret gun on top of the plane. The navigator and Bombardier operated two guns in the nose of the plane and the radio operator had a gun sticking out the top of his cabin. I was assistant radio operator, and I was supposed to get in a ball shaped turret sticking out below the plane but due to my long legs I couldn't get into it. "Thank the Lord." There was little chance of anyone getting out of it in case of a crash. Beside it was an excellent target for fighter planes and flack

from guns shooting from the ground. The side gunners shot from the side of the plane and the tail gunner lay on his stomach and shot from the tail end.

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after leaving Boise Idaho we went to a base at Wendover, Utah. It was about a hundred miles east of Salt Lake City. It was located in the middle of the desert. I learned later that the B-29 crews that were to drop the first atom bomb on Japan, used this as their training base. As it was located in the middle of the desert, there was little chance of anyone finding out what was going on there. We stayed here about a month and then we all flew to Sioux City, Iowa where I spent the longest period of time training as a crew and later being a radio operator Instructor for about eighteen months!

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We spent many days in the plane learning to shoot, bomb, locate targets, identifying all the planes used by the Germans, Japs and the Allies. I had lots of fun shooting at Jack rabbits and prairie chickens with fifty caliber machine guns.

We were stationed later in Kearney, Nebraska, where James Jr. got his beginning. Gladys had come up to Sioux Falls while I was there. She then came to Kearney, Nebraska and later we moved to Sioux City, Iowa and she came and visited me there.

About this time the Germans were shooting down hundreds of B-17 Bombers that were making daily raids over Germany. We were losing so many planes, that the number of crews in training had to be doubled. More instructors were used so the top ten crews finishing with the highest marks were chosen to be instructors. My crew was number two. My pilot was an "Eager Beaver" and anxious to go overseas and bomb the Germans. After reading the paper each day about the heavy losses, I was glad that we didn't get over there. I'm sure that the prayers of the people back home was had much to do with this. I was very fortunate in being promoted very rapidly. I went from a private to a Tech-Sargant in one

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The nearest I came to having to jump from a plane with a parachute was on a cold winter night while flying in Sioux City. We flew a thousand mile trip down to Denver Colorado. As we were returning home that night I called the Sioux City Air Base for landing instructions. I was told ground visibility was zero for hundreds of miles in every direction. We had only enough gas to fly one more hour so I was getting worried. I never had any desire to jump from a plane especially in a blizzard and at night.

We were told to head west toward a Fighter plane Air Base in western western Nebraska. The clouds were moving west and if we could reach the base before the clouds did we could land otherwise we were told to jump from the plane near a town after sending an S.O.S. signal.

God was with us for a few miles from the base we ran out of the clouds and could see the stars shining bright. We landed and the bad weather closed in and we were marooned in for over a week. Finally the weather cleared and we returned to Sioux City Air Base.

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As I said our pilot was an “Eager Beaver” and he looked after his crew and got us the promotions as fast as they were available. All the enlisted men on other crews were Tech-Sergeants something very unusual.

After the war began to wind down in Europe and many of the men that had completed their mission in combat began returning and took over the jobs we had been doing. There were openings in the Air Transport Command for pilots and Radio operators to help transport the men from Europe back home by way of South America.

While in the Air Force I had three very close escapes from death. While in Sioux City, I was scheduled to fly at 7:00 A.M. one morning, while waiting in the briefing room a pure Indian radio operator came to me and asked to take my place that morning as he needed to fly a few extra hours so he could collect his flying pay for that month. He had been overseas and just returned from Italy, He had almost been shot down several times but had always managed to get back to home base.

I agreed with his request and went over to the P.X. (Store and Cafeteria combined) for a cup of coffee. While there I heard the sirens blowing

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and the fire trucks screaming. We ran over to the run way and saw that the plane I should have been on had crashed on take off and everyone was killed.

Another time just after I had returned from a trip home I was informed that I would fly with a different crew from the one I had been flying with. This plane I would have normally been on also crashed in a field a few miles from the Base, killing all the crew.

While in Sioux City I was sent on detached service to the Radar Operations Base at Pocatello, Idaho, to train some crews for overseas duty. After we arrived we found that we would be flying in the B-24's (Flying Box Cars) instead of the B-17's. Several of the operators refused to fly in them as they weren't as safe to fly as the B-17's. I didn't hesitate to fly in them as I figured God could take care of me where ever I was. I have a strong belief that we all have a set time to leave this old world and when that time comes, that is it. While there one of the Radio operators on a crew got air sick everytime he flew so the C.O. asked me to go up with him the next morning and see if I thought he should be grounded or not

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do anymore flying. I agreed so went to bed early as we had to get up at 5 A.M. when we had a morning flight.

I was awakened about 2 A.M. and told to get my gear and report to the airport. When I arrived I was told the Commanding Officer had requested that I go with him on a flight to California to deliver some important papers. We flew down to California and were there only about 30 minutes, as we approached our Beale A.F. Base we saw a huge fire on the side of a nearby mountain. After landing I found out it was the plane I would have been on had I not been sent to California. This again confirmed my belief that God was hearing the prayers of my family and the Church Ave. church members. I was doing some praying also, and never get into a plane without asking God to protect our crew from dangers and accidents.

I was flying over Brazil in August 1945 when I picked up a news report telling of the use of the atom bomb on Japan. We felt sure that it would only be a short time before the war would end and we could return home. In late September 1945 I boarded a plane for Miami Fla. was processed there and sent to San Antonio for lay-over.

I received a 30 day furlough and was receiving my discharge from the Air Force in November

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this ended my military career. I've never been in an airplane since. The fifteen hundred hours I spent in the "Wild Blue Yonder" was enough to last me a life time.

I came home and decided to make the greenhouse and nursery business my life time career. It was slow going for several years and we had two fires which destroyed our greenhouses but God provided us the material to build our large greenhouse.

My father and I put in many a long hour getting it completed before winter arrived. I worked from 12 to 14 hours per day for many years while Gladys had her hands full raising Jane, Glenn, Linda and Gary. Seems like about once every four years we would find a new baby on our doorstep.

We had some enjoyable and interesting years. We always made enough to live on and pay our bills. God provided all our needs but not too much above that. We had good health and that was a great blessing as we spent many dollars on doctors, hospitals and medicine bills for our children. Seem like each one of them had a period in their lives when they were sickly. We always had the money to pay the bills and I always tried to give God at least a tenth of what I made. I found out it really pays off.

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The years have flown rapidly by. I am nearing 71 and Gladys will be sixty eight in October. No one knows what the future holds but I'm sure God has it all planned out and things will go according to His will.

I hope I'm around to read this over twenty years from now, but I might not be here to read it ten minutes from now. Many interesting things will happen in the future which I would enjoy to see but there will always be that threat of a nuclear war which could destroy everything. God knows all the answers and we can find out from Him how things turned out in this old world after we get to the other side where time shall never end.