CATHARINE EMMA WIGGINS,
PUPIL AND TEACHER IN
NORTHWEST KANSAS, 1888-1895

Edited by KENNETH WIGGINS PORTER

I. INTRODUCTION

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The author was born in Page county, southwest Iowa, the daughter of James W Wiggins, a Union veteran, and Catharine Ann McCollum, with whom in 1885 she came to Graham county, Kansas. Her father died the following year, leaving his widow, a 12-year-old daughter, and a 16-year-old son, to cope with the hardships of homesteading life; an 18-year-old son was working in a pharmacy in Iowa. The present article begins with the author’s departure from the homestead for several years of study in small-town schools, interspersed with school teaching. When the author writes “now” she means the time of composition, ca. 1945.

In order to reduce the manuscript to more manageable proportions the editor has eliminated the complete or partial texts of songs which are readily available in print, and has also removed—also without specific notice—a few unessential comments.
II. THE REMINISCENCES

LENORA

IN AUGUST, 1888, mother and I left the homestead which we had been "holding down" for over three years and moved to Lenora, a town of four or five hundred inhabitants. There were at least three general stores—Barbeau's, Nettleton's, and The Boston Store; a drugstore owned by Mr. Dunbar; a furniture store, bank, blacksmith shop, hotel, billiard hall, and a railroad—the Rock Island [Missouri Pacific]. There were two churches, the M[ethodist] E[piscopal] and the Congregationalist. We usually attended the former, partly because it was only about a block from home, and partly because Iowa friends, the Gatlins, were members. The churches were both frame buildings and would each hold about two or three hundred. The M. E.'s had pews and the Congregationalists ordinary chairs. Each had an organ and a choir. I recall the name of only one preacher, Mr. Woodward of the M. E.'s, and that only because his daughter Hessie and I were good friends. However, it was in the Congregational church that I learned the hymn, "The Feast of Belshazzar."

Mother had seen to it that our house was supplied with new rag-carpets for the sitting room and spare bed-room; we had put up cheesecloth curtains at the windows and stained the woodwork with asphaltum, a thin dark substitute for paint. The furniture was the same that we had brought from Iowa three years before, with the addition, during the winter, of a small very sweet-toned organ, for which mother paid $20. She may have bought it with money from carpet-weaving or we may have had a little left after building our house, since about this time we sold a small rental-property in Coin owned jointly with my oldest brother. He had saved very carefully from his earnings since a small boy—herding sheep, selling books and household articles, working on farms, and trading around, until he finally

1. Lenora is in southwestern Norton county, on the North fork of the Solomon river.
3. The Wiggins family's Iowa furniture is described in The Journal of American Folklore, Menasha, Wis., v. 53, pp. 97-98.
4. David Lincoln Wiggins (1867-1945), at this time clerking in a pharmacy in Coin, Iowa.

was able to buy a young colt which grew into a beautiful iron-gray and sold for $150 which he invested in this property. The organ was bought from people named Estep, who were raising money to defend their son in a murder-case. He had shot and killed a man in a card game over a stake of twenty five cents. They lost the case and the boy was sentenced to twenty years. The man he killed is buried in the Lenora cemetery and his tombstone bears the information of when and by whom he was murdered.

Our closest neighbors were the family of Mr. Mooney, president of the bank, who were very friendly and obliging. We had to carry all our water from their pump, because when we tried to drive a well on our lot the auger couldn't penetrate the shale. We had brought a cow from the claim and she made this inconvenience of access to water rather annoying. We finally sold her. Other close neighbors were the Gatlins. They were from Coin and came to Kansas shortly after us. Mr. Gatlin was the carpenter who built our house, on exactly the
same plan as his own. The oldest daughter, Libbie, taught in the Lenora school, and from her I took some music lessons on the organ and learned a number of songs. Among them were “Dublin Bay;” 5 “My Father Was a Spanish Merchant” or “No, Sir, No, Sir;” 6 “In days of old when knights were bold” 7 and “The Ship that Never Returned.” 8

Another song was Longfellow’s “I Stood on the Bridge at Midnight.” 9 There were fifteen verses, but surely none could ever have sung them all!

“Down in the Deep Deep Sea” 10 was a song of which I recall only that line.

My parents had always been determined that I should have school advantages and mother was still resolved on this, despite the little progress I had made in our moving from place to place. The move to Lenora was no exception. The teacher was a miserable excuse. He spent nearly as much time between 9 a. m. and 4 p. m. in the billiard hall as in the school room. There was, of course, no semblance of order. One of the favorite pastimes was to pepper one another with water from bottles which had been brought to the school to clean slates. A hollow quill inserted through the cork turned the bottle into an excellent sprinkler. So again, so far as learning from books was concerned, the move to Lenora was a failure.

There was, however, a brighter side. I did get to meet and associate with people of my own age. Outside of school my surroundings were not so drab as formerly. There was considerable snow that winter and I spent many evenings on the rather steep and long hill between the school house and the business district. Also that winter a blind girl, Eva Webb, came to Lenora to give music lessons. Through her efforts a literary society was organized, which met in the homes of the members. Readings, recitations, and instrumental music made up the programs. This gave her music pupils a chance to perform in public and helped all connected with it. There were probably a dozen in the group. Among the songs sung in the literary society was the still-popular “Clementine.” 11

A song I learned from the blind girl began:

Adam was de fust man,  
Cainie was anudder;  
Cainie was a bad man,  
Cainie killed his brudder. 12

Another interesting diversion in the fall of 1888 was the presidential election. Cleveland was running for re-election, on the Democratic ticket, against Benjamin Harrison. The great issue was the tariff. There were torch-light processions and many rallies, both outdoors and in the hall over Nettleton’s store. A rally without a quartette singing clever songs would be potatoes without salt. The most popular were:

We’ve laid aside the sword and gun,  
The knapsack and canteen,  
And now fight at the ballot box  
With paper white and clean.  
The names that we have written there  
For loyal hearts will do,  
And we’ll elect them, never fear—  
We gray-haired boys in blue. 13

And:

The Cannon Ball goes ‘round the bend—  
Good-bye, old Grover, good-bye—  
It’s loaded down with Harrison men—  
Good-bye, old Grover, good-bye!

11. “It is possible that the . . . popular Clementine was . . . written in 1883, but the origin of this thoroughly American favorite is a bit on the cloudy side. It is generally credited to Percy Montross, which may have been a fictitious name. . . .”—Spaeth, Popular Music, p. 227. “My Darling Clementine” can be found in numerous collections of American popular songs.

12. “Creation Song,” otherwise known as “Walk in the Parlor” or “History of the World,” is a minstrel song popular in the 1840’s and 1850’s and said to have been first published in 1847. For texts, see John Harrington Cox, Folk-Songs of the South (Cambridge, Mass., 1925), pp. 501-502, and Philip E. Jordan and Lillian Kessler, Songs of Yesterday (Garden City, N. Y., 1941), pp. 241-243.

13. “We’ve laid aside the sword and gun” was, of course, intended to identify the Republican party with the cause of the Union during the Civil War and to make a special appeal to the Union veterans—the “gray-haired boys in blue”—who had fought for its preservation a quarter century earlier.
Bye, Grover, bye-oh!
What makes you sigh so?
Bye, Grover, bye-oh!
Good-bye, old Grover, good-bye! 14

And also:
We'll send them up the Old Salt River,
Four years to stay,
And we'll give them a red bandanna
To wipe their tears away. 15

These were all Republican songs. It was quite the thing for the girls to wear caps bearing the names of their favorites. Always with the minority, my own cap bore the name of Belva Lockwood, 16 the women's suffrage candidate, for my mother was in her way a political pioneer and a firm believer in votes for women.

In August, 1888, my oldest brother, David Lincoln (variously known as Lincoln, Link, Davie, and, eventually, D. L.) had come out to Kansas via covered wagon with Ed and Lon Vawter, two Coin boys; the latter came only for a trip, but my brother was making a permanent change. He had been clerking in the drugstore of Loy and Berryhill, but the wages were too low, so he decided on the Kansas venture. It was on this trip that he really learned the tobacco habit, having first picked it up from Bill Fisher, a neighbor of ours on the Iowa farm. Mother found some in his pocket and was horrified. In Kansas he tried to get work in a drugstore, but could find nothing, so he went to Hill City, Graham County, passed the teacher's examination, and was elected to teach in a soddy just north of our homestead. He had taught about a month when Mr. McGill came up from Hill City and offered him a job in his drugstore there. He assured him that he could make more in the store than by teaching, and insisted that they together ask the school board for a release. This they obtained, and Miss Minerva Coleman, a second cousin, on our mother's mother's side, the daughter of Sara Brown Coleman, was engaged to finish the term. The little matter that she had no certificate didn't stand in the way. Anything went then. So D. L. received the school checks and sent them on to her, also making out the year's report from her data, thirty miles from the school. He remained in Hill City until the spring of '89, when Mr. McGill put him in charge of a branch in Morland. Since he had to live at the hotel, we decided it would be a financial advantage if we should move to Morland, which we did in the summer.

MORLAND OR FREMONT

Morland was smaller than Lenora, with a population of 150 to 200, but was a good trade center. It rejoiced in three names: Kalula, the railroad station; Fremont, the town site; and Morland, the post office. 17 There were four general stores: Cole & Kenney (from Kentucky); Stober's (the proprietors were familiarly known as Uncle George and Aunt Appie); Goff's—which also sold patent medicines; and Snyder Horton's; two hotels: the K. house, run by D. C. Kay, and the Smith hotel; Covalt's, hardware and implements; a barbershop owned by Sammy Deeholt, a hunchback; a livery stable; two drug stores, one of little worth; and a bank, the president of which was Grover Walker.

There was a one-room school house with a seating capacity of perhaps sixty, badly crowded, taught by Miss Mary Wills, who boarded at our house part of the time. There were a few very unruly youngsters, chief of whom was Frank Langley, son of the M. E. minister, known for miles around as Uncle Jack. Frank had to be dealt with very severely to keep him within any bounds whatsoever. On one occasion Uncle Jack walked back to school with his son, admonishing him and telling him that he must forgive and love his teacher, who had whipped him; to which Frank replied, "Father, I can forgive her, but I can't love her." Uncle Jack, on their arrival at the school-house, talked very calmly to the teacher and departed with the remark, "Well, if you have to kill him, pick up the pieces to that we can have a funeral."

The people of Fremont were very friendly and we were soon acquainted. Those were the days when people really "went calling." Our stay in Fremont on this occasion was, however, very brief, D. L. being transferred again to Hill.

14. Sung to the tune of "Good-bye, My Lover, Good-bye!"
15. "The Old Salt River" was a stream, briny with tears, up which defeated political candidates were traditionally said to row. The tune of this song was appropriately slow and melancholy. I have never been able to find in print the words or music of any of these campaign songs.
16. Belva Ann Bennett Lockwood (1830-1917) was a teacher and lawyer, the "first woman ever admitted to practice before the Supreme Court of the United States." She engaged in "life-long struggle for women's rights" and also lectured on behalf of "temperance, peace, and arbitration." She twice ran for the presidency, in 1884 and 1888, on the ticket of the National Equal Rights Party of the Pacific Coast.—Dictionary of American Biography.
HILL CITY

HILL CITY, a town of 1200 to 1500 population, the county seat of Graham County, was indeed "set upon a hill." The railroad, the Lincoln branch of the Union Pacific, was a mile from town and down-grade all the way. Here, it is said, originated the oft-repeated story of the traveling man who, upon alighting from the train, said to a small boy, "Why do they have the depot so far from town?", to which the boy replied, "So it would be near the tracks, I suppose." Hill City had become the county-seat only after a county-seat fight with Millbrook, on the south side of the river; then, after Hill City's victory, there was a fight within the town over which side, the north or the south, should be the "town," and where the post office should be located. There must have been some rather wealthy men who had faith in the town, for there were several blocks in the business section, everything very new. The largest stores on the South Side were Mitchell's and Poston's. On the North Side was the Pomeroy Block, with the Pomeroy Hotel, the Pomeroy Store, and the legal firm of Harwi & Pruett. There was also the Hill Block. Each side had the usual stores and shops, but although I was in Hill City for nine months and attended four normal institutes there I had so little trading to do that I never learned very much about the business section.

In Hill City I met Miss Nora Scott, a near neighbor, now Mrs. Bert Wills of Los Angeles, who was then a teacher. The Graham County Normal Institute was about to begin and on her insistence I enrolled—the month's tuition was only a dollar—and with Miss Scott's help and interest I enjoyed the month. Among our close neighbors was a family of Negroses, and the daughter, about my age, came to call. She was the first Negro I could remember having spoken to in all my life. Our conversation was principally about the organ, she remarking that she "just played chords." Her call was duly returned, my mother accompanying me, as otherwise I should probably have been too backward to go. I was soon to become somewhat acquainted with Negroses, for there were two Negro sisters, named Betty and Anna, in the Hill City school, and Betty sat just across the aisle. I was wearing my hair pulled back very tightly, and one day, with a broad smile, she remarked, "Honey, you look just like a peeled onion." There was a town a few miles east of Hill City, named Nicodemus, the population of which was entirely Negro.

School opened about the first of September; I bought books and entered the first really good school I had known since the spring of 1885 when my last year in the Coin school had ended—four years of school practically lifted out of my life and with which I have never "caught up." It was here for the first time that I

18. Ibid., pp. 331-332.
studied history, physiology, and advanced geography; I was still in Ray’s “third part” arithmetic. We had an excellent teacher, Miss Mary Mecham, qualified, friendly, and conscientious.

On Sept. 9, 1889, however, D. L. bought the Fremont drugstore for $2,000, making a $25 down-payment, and mortgaging the store and mother’s Lenora property for the balance; he paid 18 per cent interest on the mortgage and 2 per cent a month on overdrafts. Since the City of Fremont was a government town-site he did not have title to the lots until “proved up” on them. The title was contested, but he finally won out at the hearing in Oberlin. In the meantime, mother went with him to Fremont, to keep house for him, leaving me to attend school in Hill City, my first experience of being away from home.

I first boarded at a home quite above anything to which I had been accustomed—a good stone house, well furnished, and each meal a feast. However I could not endure to stay there. The lady of the house was a devout Catholic and nightly called upstairs to know if her daughters had said their prayers; she didn’t know how the younger sister tickled the feet of the older while engaged in this pious exercise. But that wasn’t what perturbed me. It was that her husband, a quite elderly and feeble man, who was, or rather had been, a Presbyterian, was accustomed to ask a mock blessing before each meal—pausing after each few words to laugh and make some funny remark. I was afraid to look up, for I was sure that eventually the walls would fall down upon me. So I made some excuse, or lie, and found room and board at a very humble home where I was none too comfortable. Mr. S. took inflammatory rheumatism during the winter and, since the sitting room was also the dining room and bed room, I went rather early to my heated room, wrapped myself in the bed clothes, and studied. Our menu was bread and fried potatoes for breakfast, fried potatoes and bread for dinner, and for the evening meal a combination of the two. Potatoes were 15 cents per bushel. There was no coffee or other hot drink except occasionally sassafras tea. Friends in the country brought milk once in a while. But Mrs. S. could bake the best of bread, I never tired of the potatoes, and no one could have been a neater housekeeper. I was, however, always glad indeed when the weekend came when I was to go home and eat mother’s good meals. Board and room per week was $2 at each of these places.

There was no depot at Fremont—just a platform—and consequently no way to tell whether or not the train for Hill City, due at 4 a.m., would be on time. D. L. always went with me to the train and sometimes we had to wait for hours in cold, snow, or rain. A bus, however, always met the train at Hill City.

There was very little social life in the Hill City school, but that made no difference to me, for I had to study hard and late to accomplish what I had started out to do. During school hours I tried to have my lessons so well under control that I could listen to the more advanced classes recite, and I picked up a good bit in this way.

The subjects, their content, and the methods of teaching in the Hill City school did not differ materially from those in other schools which I later attended. Each “reading lesson” was preceded by a list of words and their definitions, which words we were to be able to spell and define. Each pupil was required to read a paragraph aloud, with little assistance or correction from the teacher. A spelling lesson consisted of from ten to twenty words, which were pronounced by the teacher and written down by the pupils. Then the papers were exchanged and the pupils graded one another’s work. Grammar was principally devoted to diagramming and parsing sentences. The definition of grammatical terms was also stressed. Sentences with blanks were submitted to us and we were required to fill in the proper form of the omitted words, usually verbs. I recall, while attending the Hoxie school, diagramming the preamble to the Constitution. The definitions of the parts of speech were at my tongue’s end at any hour of the day or night.

In physiology we were required to name and locate all the bones of the body, and also about twenty muscles; to trace a bite of bread through all its processes—prehension, mastication, deglutition, digestion, absorption; to trace the blood from capillary to capillary. We never, of course, performed an experiment. In geography we learned to define the various formations of land and water—cape, sea, etc. We memorized the states and capitals of the United States, and the countries of other continents, with their capitals, together with the
principal industries of each state or country. There was a good deal of map drawing. In arithmetic we worked out the problems on the blackboard and then, pointer in hand, explained them, step by step, to the class.

History, however, was a "mess." No information from outside of the text-book was brought in by either teacher or pupil. Great stress was laid on battles, the opposing generals, and the number of killed and wounded. I still think of history as a crazy patchwork. I am sure that it possesses a coherence and a logical sequence of events, but as taught to me it was meaningless.

After recess on Friday there were usually spelling and ciphering matches, captains choosing sides for each event. We wrote the multiplication tables, added, subtracted, multiplied, and divided, and there were no short simple problems. Then, too, there were literary exercises which must have been of a voluntary nature, since I can't recall taking part. Will Carleton's poems were popular—"Betsy and I are out," "Over the hills to the poorhouse," and one about the schoolboard visiting school. On one occasion a staving big girl recited a poem in which she reiterated positively, conclusively, and rather belligerently: "Lips that touch liquor shall never touch mine." 22

TEACHING: THE SMITH SCHOOL NEAR FREMONT

IN APRIL, 1890, at the age of sixteen, I took the teacher's examination and secured a third-grade certificate; and as soon as my school closed I taught my first term of two months, May and June, at the Smith school about nine miles north of Fremont, at $20 per month. I boarded at home and for about two weeks rode to school horseback, on a side-saddle and wearing a long riding-skirt. The horse, for which I paid 25 cents per day, was a frightfully rough trotter, so I drove him to a cart for the rest of the time. I had ten pupils ranging from chart-class through the fifth

20. Will Carleton (1845-1912) was the author of several volumes of sentimental poems, mostly about rural life.

reader. Some brought new books and some those their fathers and mothers had used; this meant many classes. The schoolhouse was a soddy, about fourteen feet square, with half windows, dirt floor, and no plastering, but with factory-made desks. The school wasn't very interesting to me and I doubt that the children considered it very profitable. Fear was still dogging me, and the night before school opened I slept very little for wondering what I would do if, when I rang the bell, the children would not come into the school house! And that was another trouble that never happened.

My pupils were, in fact, exceedingly friendly and co-operative. One morning, on the way to school, the horse stumbled, and my tin dinner-bucket was thrown out of the cart, the lid coming off and the contents being scattered. On the pupils learning of my mishap that noon they generously divided their lunches with me. The contribution of one small boy was a fried fish, which tasted very good until I had eaten enough of it to discover that the intestinal tract had not been removed, after which I suddenly lost my appetite.

SCHOOL: LENORA

I WAS QUITE aware that I was not qualified to teach, so the next winter, 1890-1891, I, together with Mary and Emma Wills and their small brother, occupied mother's house in Lenora; Emma and I took the most advanced work offered, Mary taught in the primary department, and the brother also attended school. This was another profitable venture, for we had a very fine teacher, Miss Van Cleave. 23 In addition to the usual subjects I also studied bookkeeping, which was then a requirement for a first-grade certificate, learning the use of daybook, journal, and ledger. It was nine months of hard study, a few parties, and a generally congenial time.

In the fall of 1891 Brother Sam, 24 who had been working for Grace & Hyde since 1888, building depots from Norton, Kansas, to Colorado Springs, joined us at Fremont and helped D. L. in the drugstore until the spring of 1892, when he went to Chicago to work again for Grace & Hyde on the University of Chicago buildings, the Fisheries Building at the World's Fair, a large re-feeding sheep-barn on

23. The school situation at Lenora had evidently much improved between 1888 and 1900.
the C. R. I. & P. near Norris, Illinois, and a
large residence at Lake Forest.

TEACHING: THE COVOLT SCHOOL
NEAR FREMONT

HAVING had "experience" I had no diffi-
culty in securing, for the winter of
1891-1892, the Covolt school about two and a
half miles east of Fremont. The term was six
months and the salary $25 per month, about
the usual country-school wage. The school-
house was a "dugout," that is, it was dug back
into a hill so that at the rear only about two feet
of sod was above ground. It faced toward a
deep canyon and the view was not inspiring.
There was the usual dirt floor, unplastered
walls, home-made desks, and medley of books.
The first few days it rained and drizzled and
drizzled and rained. It was in October and
beginning to get cold. Those first days were so
drearly and desolate that, while crying has
always been rather out of my line, I went home
in tears and wanted to quit. I decided I wanted
to learn the drug business, but mother and
D. L. talked me out of that and I continued to
teach. I had about fifteen pupils and on the
whole this school eventually proved more in-
teresting than the first. I still had my inferiority
complex and felt very unsure of myself, but I
must have put up a fairly bold front for neither
then, nor at any time during my total teaching
experience of sixty months, did I ever have any
serious trouble over "order." One of my pupils
in this school was a boy who had been expelled
from the Fremont school. Years later he got
into a quarrel and killed a man, but I never had
a better behaved pupil. His sister, Nancy G.,
and I were quite good friends.

SOCIAL LIFE IN FREMONT

FREMONT was the home of my mother
from September, 1889, to the summer of
1892, and consequently my own home for
much of this time. Social life consisted of
dances, literary society, and evangelistic meet-
ings. The dances were in the homes in the
country, and to make space for "tripping the
light fantastic," the host would move the fur-
niture into some other room or out of doors.
The orchestra would consist of a single fiddle,
and some one would volunteer or be drafted to
"call off." Some of the calls were:

First lady lead out to the right of the ring.
And when you get there remember to swing.
And when you have swung, remember the call:
"Aleman left and promenade all!"

Or:

First gent, lead out
and so on through all four couples. That fin-
ished what was known as a "set."

Perhaps the call was:

First and third couples, forward and back,
First and third couples, forward and pass over.
Swing your partner.
Right hand your partner and grand right and left.
Second and fourth couples, forward and back

and so on as before.

Another call was:

Swing that girl, that pretty little girl,
The girl you love so kindly,
Walk right through and balance too,
And swing the girl behind you.

Aleman left, grand right and left.
Promenade eight when you get straight.

"Aleman" was the partners' clasping hands
at about head level and swinging once around.
To "promenade" was to go 'round the circle
arm in arm with one's partner, all four couples
doing the same. "Grand right and left" was to
go 'round the circle clasping hands with each
boy (or girl) in turn, and swinging. To "bal-
ance" was to stop and make a slight bow to
one's partner. Practically all dances in Fremont
were "square" dances.

Occasionally we went to Skelton26 to a liter-
ary society which would be followed by a
dance. Our means of transportation was a
strawberry-roan mustang pony named Blucher,
hitched to a cart. It's a wonder we didn't freeze
in this topless, sideless, and, except for slats
upon which to put our feet, bottomless con-
voyance. We wrapped our feet in blankets as
best we could and put folds of carpet or com-
forts under them, but the vehicle still lacked
considerable of the warmth of an enclosed
automobile with a heater.

The literary society in Fremont was typical.
The programs consisted of readings, recita-
tions, dialogues or very short plays, quartettes
of either male or mixed voices, instrumental
selections on the little reed organ. Occasionally

26. Skelton was a village on the line between Graham and
Sheridan counties, a little west of Fremont, or Morland. Between
1890 and 1888 its name became Studly. —Rand McNally Business
Atlas (Chicago, 1890), pp. 296, 298; Rand McNally Enlarged
some one would be called on to sing a song for which he was popular. One was “I wish I was single again,” 27 of which the last stanza was:

My wife she died, oh then, my wife she died, oh then,
My wife she died and I laughed till I cried
To think I was single again!

Usually there was a debate, but on nothing very timely or profound, such as “Resolved, That there is more pleasure in pursuit than in possession,” or “That fire is more destructive than water,” or “That a hen and chickens can do more damage in a garden than a pig.” There was always a “newspaper” in which everybody’s private life became public property, most of the material being fictitious and all taken in good humor. The “dates” both old and new certainly came in for their share of publicity. It was in Fremont that I had my first “beau”—the first of very few. He was as bashful as myself. I particularly recall his great mouthful of teeth, so like a horse, and that this young Lochinvar’s fiery steeds were a team of mules.

From my earliest childhood my brothers had teased me every time a boy spoke to me. They did not intend to be mean—just didn’t realize how backward I was and that I badly needed to be pushed forward rather than pulled back. By the time I was old enough to have boys pay me any attention I was “boy-shy” and absolutely tongue-tied. During my years in various towns of Northwest Kansas several quite pleasing boys tried to pay me some attention, but I had by this time persuaded myself that I could have more fun without them, and they seemed a sort of fifth wheel in my happiness. I did “go with” a very few, with whom I happened to feel more at ease than with others, but from the age of seventeen or eighteen until I was nearly twenty-two I do not suppose there were more than twelve or fifteen boys with whom I dated even once, and I went with only two of them for any length of time. Of course later I realized that my backwardness had caused me to miss many good times.

While in Fremont during the summer I took lessons on the organ from Mrs. Cheese Brown at twenty-five cents each. I wasn’t a good pupil. I didn’t like to practise and my left hand had a

27. Most versions of “I Wish I Were Single Again” end differently—see Hubert G. Seezin and Josiah H. Combs, A Syllabus of Kentucky Folk-Songs (Transylvania University Studies in English II, Lexington, 1911), p. 31; Pound, Syllabus, p. 56; John A. and Alan Lomax, American Ballads and Folk Songs (New York, 1934), pp. 158-158 (the most nearly complete text).

way of finding keys that would chord with the music played by my right hand, so I never did learn to read the notes readily in the bass clef. Mrs. Brown had a very lovely voice and sometimes sang when she came to give me lessons. One of the songs was “Mrs. Lofty,” 28 which began:

Mrs. Lofty has her carriage. So have I, so have I.

The gist of the song was that Mrs. Lofty’s carriage was equipped with fine horses and a coachman, but that the singer’s carriage contained a blue-eyed baby and therefore she didn’t envy Mrs. Lofty, who had no children. Another song was a spiritual:

I am climbing Jacob’s ladder [three times],
Dear land of Jubilee.

Some one, in the winter of 1891-1892, had the initiative to find a local cast and put on a play, taken from one of our books, How to Spend Winter Evenings. The title was “The Picture in the Frame.” It was profuse in high-sounding expressions and was a real “mellodrammer.” It was given in the church to a packed house. My brother Sam had a part but I was not invited to be a member of the cast. No wonder—my tongue would have cloven to the roof of my mouth.

Magic lantern shows were another popular form of entertainment then and seemed really wonderful. They were mostly devoted to scenes from the Civil War.

Neither cars, nor golf, nor movies, nor even baseball as a Sunday amusement, were extant in those days, so both saint and sinner went to church. Two denominations, the M. E. and the Presbyterian, used the same building on alternate Sundays, but there was far less of “brethren dwelling together in unity” then than now. There seemed always to be some little thing to jangle about, so small that none of them remain in my memory, but the lack of harmony was evident. The Sunday School was on a union basis. The informality of the meetings may be gauged by a unique election of Sunday School officers. Mr. Jim Stone’s term as superintendent had expired. Some one volun-

28. The music for “Mrs. Lofty and I” was composed in the late 1850’s by Judson Hutchinson, of the famous Singing Hutchisons; the words were by Mrs. Gildersleeve Longstreth, Buffalo, N. Y.

teered the information that we must elect a superintendent, but no one took charge. Then Mrs. C., a rather old, angular, and determined lady, rose to her feet and announced, "I move that Jim Stone be the superintendent of this here Sunday school." Dead silence. "Then Jim Stone is the superintendent." Some one remonstrated, "But the motion hasn't been seconded." "I second the motion," said Mrs. C. Then: "It has been moved and seconded that Jim Stone be the superintendent of this here Sunday School. All in favor say 'A.'" "A!," said Mrs. C., and no one else. All opposed, 'No.'" Dead silence again. "Then," said Mrs. C., "Jim Stone is superintendent of this here Sunday School."

The Presbyterian minister, Mr. Atkinson, lived in Hill City and came to Fremont on alternate Sundays. The distance was about twelve miles and since he was rather frail he always stayed over night on Sunday and some times came down on Saturday night. He made our house his home on these occasions and was a delightful guest. None of us belonged to either church, mother remaining a staunch United Presbyterian, but Mr. Atkinson was never interested in her uniting with the Presbyterians. I taught Sunday school and sang in both choirs. Among the hymns of my choir-singing days in Fremont were "None of Self and All of Thee" 31 and the stirring "Only an Armour Bearer." 30

I helped to direct one very satisfactory Children's Day program. The main event was a cantata and we really whipped it into shape, carrying out the program as printed, including a voluntary, even if it did have to be played on a little reed-organ. Mrs. Brown was the organist and had charge of all the music. The church was beautifully decorated with wild flowers: yucca, or soap-weed (so-called from the fact that the Indians used the root for soap), a plant with a sword-like leaf and the flowers growing in spikes as much as a yard high, with a cream-colored blossom like a lily and a perfume like a tube-rose; "mallows," a purplish-red flower resembling a wild rose; sensitive plant, with a composite purple head, the leaves of which would close when touched; beautiful white and yellow thistles; and, of course, sunflowers. The minister's daughter accompanied him that morning and was more than surprised by the performance as well as by the decorations. On another occasion I trained the children in a Christmas cantata, "The Trial of Santa Claus."

The Presbyterian meetings, always quiet, reserved, conventional, were not so interesting as the Methodist, which were rather unpredictable. Uncle Jack Langley, as he was familiarly called, was the preacher—tall, well over six feet, large, rawboned, bald-headed, with a red, smooth face and prominent veins on temple and forehead. He literally "gave little thought to his raiment." Coat, vest, and collar were often thrown aside as he warmed up to his message. During a sermon he could run the full gamut of emotion—crack a joke, tell a funny story, and the next moment pound on the pulpit with his big fist or with tears running down his cheeks exhort his hearers to better living. He was a Mason, and was often heard to say, "I'd go to the length of my cable-tow any time anywhere to help my brother." Dancing, card-playing, and drinking were the trio of iniquities and were accounted to be about on the same level. Dancing or card playing was the besetting sin of some of the church members and they had to be re-converted during each revival. Uncle Jack was particularly severe on card-playing, though he used to confess, with what seemed a twinkle and a sly smile, that there was a time when he thought he knew more about cards than the fellow who put the spots on them. I loved to go to dances, and certainly much preferred dancing to kissing-games, which were considered o.k. or at least not denounced from the pulpit. I drew the line sharply, however, against playing cards; I had a feeling that they proceeded directly from Hades and that the Devil himself was their inventor. "Authors," checkers, and later dominoes were played in our home, but cards, never! My mother didn't approve of dancing, either, but she never said much, if anything, about it to her children. We knew that she had danced herself as a girl in Pennsylvania, and she often told us that there never was a Wigg
gins or an Armstrong who couldn't dance or play the fiddle or both. She realized, too, that there was little or no other amusement. If I stayed out too late I would jokingly remind her of the time in Pennsylvania when she stayed out until 4 A.M. I had gotten this information from hearing her and father talking over old times during our long winter evenings in Iowa. I never exceeded mother's hours and, indeed, danced as late as 4 A.M. only once. I was usually at home by 12 midnight at the latest, which in these days is only the shank of the evening.

How those of us who sang in the choir ever managed to keep straight faces on some occasions I don't know. Maybe we didn't. One Sunday, after the sermon, the collection was taken up in hats, as was the custom. One of the collectors was Uncle Andy Reed, who, after the contents of the impromptu collection-basket had been turned out beside the pulpit, most nonchalantly put on his hat and started back up the aisle. Uncle Jack, without a smile, announced, "Uncle Andy will take off his hat, we'll have the doxology, and be dismissed with the benediction." What went on in the choir itself was often funny enough, as when once we were singing "The Ninety and Nine" and the tenor, in full voice, proclaimed: "Out in the dessert [sic] he heard its cry / Sick and helpless and ready to die."

The preaching service in the evening was usually preceded by a "testimony" meeting. The testimonies, often interspersed with tears, consisted of a confession of sin in general or particular, with a promise to refrain in the future, and the request: "Pray for me that I may be faithful." The testimony of John W., who drank a good deal, was usually "I know what it is to be on the mountain high and in the valley low. Pray for me that I may some day reach the heavenly shores," to which Uncle Jack would respond encouragingly, "You'll git there, Johnny!" Another man, with a houseful of children and almost too lazy to bring the food to his own mouth, took pleasure in telling the congregation that he relied on the promise, "Trust in the Lord and do right; so shalt thou dwell in the land and verily thou shalt be fed." His family was "on the county." Some of the women took it upon themselves to go to his home and expostulate with the wife and mother concerning the numerous and frequent additions to the family, to which she replied, "It is the Lord's will." One of the women, reporting the visit, snorted, "If I was that woman I'd see if it was the Lord's will!"

In those days they had the mourners' bench at which new converts knelt. At revival services there was plenty of excitement, "Amens" and "Hallelujahs" from the congregation, as Uncle Jack, in tears and with outstretched arms, pled for the sinners to come forward. One night some of the young men got together and decided to go forward, partly as a lark and partly to please Uncle Jack. After they knelt he asked them to pray the Lord's Prayer, but since it was familiar to only part of them, considerable prompting passed up and down the line amid much suppressed merriment.

Converts joined on six months' probation, after fulfilling which they were baptized by whatever method they preferred. For those who desired immersion, a date was set when the weather was likely to be suitable. One such event took place on a very warm day after a big rain which had filled the buffalo wallows. A particularly large and deep wallow, about a mile north of town, was the baptismal font. The water was pretty turbid, but one by one the applicants, each clothed in a white robe of some sort, as was also the minister, walked in and were baptized. Immediately after the ceremony a large dog plunged in and swam gallantly across. "The rite ended with prayer, and singing "Shall we gather at the river?" and "Pull for the shore" was another hymn which was popular on such occasions."

32. The mother of Mrs. Wiggins' late husband was Lena Ann Armstrong. Mrs. Wiggins herself was a McCollum, and that family, and her mother's people, the Browns, seem to have been a stricter, sterner lot.
34. When John Stuart Curry's painting, "Baptism in Kansas," portraying a young woman about to be immersed in a watering tank, was exhibited at the Century of Progress in Chicago, 1933-1934, it aroused a good deal of criticism from super-sensitive Kansans who felt that it portrayed the state as unladyly crude and primitive. The wife of a Methodist minister, an excellent woman from Eastern Kansas, denounced the painting before a woman's club, declaring that no one in Kansas had ever been baptized in a watering tank! The author of these reminiscences charitably restrained from remarking that she had seen more than one baptism—under Methodist auspices, too—performed not even in a watering tank but in a muddy buffalo wallow.
36. This hymn, originally known as "The Lifeboat," by Philip Bliss, was first published in The Song Tree (1872) — Julian, Hymnology, pp. 1, 150. See also, footnote 31. Hardly an appropriate hymn, under the circumstances, however!
Some time after we left Fremont, Uncle Jack
was taken very ill, but finally recovered. After
this his temper was quite mollified. He said he
had seen Heaven opened and would have liked
to have gone on in, but “the Lord wanted me to
stay with Jane and the boys a little while
longer.” He said that what he saw during this
illness was something about which man
should not speak, and whatever he saw was
never revealed. While we were in Hoxie he
“supplied” the M. E. pulpit for a few Sundays,
and it was really good to see him again.

HILL CITY: TEACHERS’ NORMAL INSTITUTE

I ATTENDED Teachers’ Normal Institute
in Hill City during four Augusts, 1889-
1899. The first August I was at home, and the
second year I stayed at Mr. Garnett’s, but the
third and fourth years I was at “Pap” Connor’s
hotel. Several of us girls had our rooms there
and quite a number of other teachers were
there for meals. Board and room were $3 a
week and the food was excellent. We studied
hard, but also had a lot of fun. After the noon
meal a crowd would gather in the hotel “par-
lor” and we would sing and sing—hymns ga-
lore in chorus, after which various persons
would contribute ballads. The popular hymns
were “Weary gleaner, whence comest thou?,”
“Dark is the night and cold the wind is
blowing,” “When the roll is called up
yonder,” “Where is my wandering boy tonight?,”
“Pull for the shore,” “Let the lower lights be
burning,” and “I will sing of
my Redeemer” —all from Gospel Hymns.

During these years temperance songs were
popular. Of one I recall only, “Let whiskey
alone, for it grieves mother so! / O Tommy,
dear Tommy, don’t go!” A few lines of “The
Drunkard’s Child” are “We were so happy
till father drank rum, / It was then all our trials
and troubles begun. / Down on this cold stone
I now lay my head. / Father’s a drunkard and
mother is dead.” The refrain of another was:
“Father, dear father, come home with me
now. / The clock in the steeple strikes nine (ten,
eleven, twelve, one, and so on).” The greatest
favorite, however, was “Where is my Wandering
Boy Tonight?”

One of the solos was sung by a girl who was
quite smitten with one of the young men in the
company. Part of it went:

But oh, as I see you, day after day,
I feel and I know that you’re drifting away,

44. By C. T. Lockwood; first published in 1867.—See Philip D.
Jordan and Lillian Kessler, Songs of Yesterday (Garden City, N. Y.,

45. The author has probably telescoped two temperance songs,
“The Drunkard’s Child,” words and music by Mrs. E. A. Parkhurst,
copyrighted, 1870, and “Father’s a Drunkard and Mother Is Dead,”
words by “Stella (of Washington)” and music by Mrs. Park-
hurst.—Jordan and Kessler, Songs, pp. 166-174. See, also, Pound,
Syllabus, p. 55.

46. By Henry Clay Work (1832-1894), published 1894. For text,
see Sigmund Spaeth, Read ’em and Weep (Garden City, N. Y.,
1920), pp. 64-66; Heart Songs, pp. 209-211.

47. Probably the “temperance parody.” —See footnote 40.
Drifting away, yes, drifting apart,  
Snapping the cords that are bound round my heart,  
Severing ties which forever should be  
Strong ties of love between you and me.  

I believe, however, that she finally "got her man."  

Another was a still more plaintive lament,  
"The Little Rosewood Casket."  

Another gem began:  
It was whispered one morning in Heaven  
How the little white angel, May,  
Stood ever beside the portal,  
Sorrowing all the day.  

It seems that Heaven was well enough in its way but May wanted her mother.  

Another popular song was "The Picture That is Turned toward the Wall."  

During the Institute, entertainments, lectures, etc., would furnish amusement and some instruction one or two nights a week and also gave opportunity for getting a beau. The term "dates" was then unknown. I don't recall having any "company" and it caused me no concern. I was never jealous of a girl of my own age, with her teacher-father, sat not far from me one night. I thought: "If only my father could be sitting with me!"  

Among those who had rooms in the hotel and were frequent visitors were Mary and Emma Wills, Nellie and Oakie Robinson, Kate Allen, Charles Emmons, Cercy Purcell, Ola Clark, who later became county superintendent, Alva Bear, Parna Moyer, Bert Smith, Bob Garnett, Howard Tillotson, and John Dawson, now Chief Justice of the Kansas Supreme Court.  

He was regarded as a paragon of intellect, for did he not receive the highest grade given in the county examination in arithmetic?—99 per cent, his only mistake having been the omission of a decimal point! He was also the composer of a rhyme about the Revolutionary War, which began, and ended:  

First Lexington in '75 and also Bunker Hill,  
And Ticonderoga taken by Allen's mighty will.  
In '76 did Washington the folks of Boston please,  
And at Moultre we dared to meet the Mistress of the Seas.  

Long Island and New Jersey may tell of a reverse,  
But long our deeds at Trenton may well be told in verse.  

Paul Jones whipped the navy, the Serapis was his gain.  

The British signed the treaty in 1783;  
Glory Hallelujah! America was free!  

MORE ABOUT SOCIAL LIFE IN NORTHWEST KANSAS  

Drought and consequently no crops, or, when there was rain, crops with low prices, caused much suffering in western Kansas during this period. The long dry spells resulted in such songs as "Kansas Land," a parody on the hymn, "Beulah Land," with the lines:  

I look away across the plain  
And wonder if 'twill ever rain.  

In the winter of 1891-1892 a carload of flour and small sacks of salt were shipped to Fremont for the relief of the poor. The local paper, the Fremont Press, was edited by Billy Hill, who lacked even a common-school education, whose office probably did not contain a dictionary of any kind, and whose spelling was consequently a source of amusement; sometimes when he asked for information his informant would purposely give him the wrong spelling. When this car-load of flour and salt was distributed the Fremont paper took the
trouble of publishing a page of the names of persons receiving aid, and the amount; thus: Mr. A. B. Blank, 1 sk flour 1 sk salt. It was during this winter that corn got so low, 15 cents a bushel on the cob, that, since it made an excellent fire and was much cheaper than coal, mother, like many others, used it for fuel—great long ears of high-grade yellow corn!

We ourselves were fairly prosperous, owing to the success of my brother’s drug-store—which did not, however, serve toasted sandwiches and salads, but was primarily a pharmacy, though he did keep tobacco and candy and later put in a soda-fountain. He also kept really good jewelry; a gold ring, set with rubies and pearls, and a gold necklace, which he gave me about fifty years ago are still unvarnished. Mother and I had lived as cheaply as possible up to the winter of 1889-1890, when we began to live with and keep house for D. L., after which mother always “set a good table.” Our staples were pork and beef, especially the latter, either fried, or boiled with vegetables. We had “store-canned” tomatoes and corn, and mother canned peaches and apples and made apple and peach butter, also grape butter and jelly. She didn’t bake a cake very often, but frequently prepared pies—dried-peach, dried-apple, and lemon. It was a plain, unimaginative, but satisfying menu. We occasionally made ice-cream, by putting the ingredients into a two-quart tin bucket, covered with a lid, setting this bucket into a larger one, filling the space between with salt and ice, and then whisking, whisking, whisking the smaller bucket by the hand until the contents were frozen. During the process the lid had to be removed several times in order to scrape down the mixture which had frozen onto the sides. There were regular freezers at that time, but not at our house.

My clothing also improved during this period, as our finances became more stable and as I began to make money by teaching. When I first moved to Lenora in 1888, for “every day” I wore blue calico with a small print or stripe, the skirt “made full”—no gores—of four widths of about twenty-seven inches each, gathered to fit a plain, high-necked, long-sleeved waist which buttoned down the back. I also had two “good” dresses, each consisting of a four-gored skirt, and a very short-skirted basque fastened in front with buttons, the neck and sleeves finished with a band and cuffs of velvet. Each dress had an overskirt. One of these dresses was a wine-colored, half-wool serge, trimmed with wine velvet, the other a blue, half-wool, herring-bone weave, trimmed with embossed velvet. I wore a small bustle—hoops belonged to my mother’s generation—and about three ruffled petticoats. The dresses cleared the floor by about an inch.

In 1889 I had a white summer dress of “all-over” embroidery; the skirt was full and the embroidery skirt-length, with scallops at the bottom. The waist, of matching design, was high-necked, with long tight sleeves. I felt very dressed up in this costume. While going to school in Hill City in the winter of 1889-1890 I wore another henna, half-wool, herringbone dress but without an overskirt. The coat, which I ordered from Emory, Bond & Thayer, a Kansas City firm still in existence, was called a reefer, which the dictionary defines as a “rough jacket,” but which in this case was a close-fitting half wool, about half-length, trimmed in front and around the neck and sleeves with about four inches of fur, well-lined and comfortable. The winter I attended school in Lenora with the Wills girls, 1890-1891, black sateen was very popular and large leg-of-mutton sleeves were the thing. I had a dress of this type with a good deal of shirring on the waist and double-box pleats decorating the bottom of the skirt.

The winter we came to Hoxie (1892) I sported an all-wool, dark-green, broadcloth, with long sleeves of puffed silk plush above the elbows and broadcloth below, trimmed with silver braid. The skirt just touched the floor when I walked and I consequently went along daintily grasping the skirt and holding it out of the dirt of our unsidewalked streets. After I began teaching in Hoxie, and had more money of my own, I bought all-wool material and was able to dress pretty much as I wished. For Christmas, 1892, my brother Sam sent me a gold watch with a short chain, worn in a pocket well up on the waist with the chain fastened into a buttonhole.

I did very little sewing, making only my everyday and second-best dresses, with mother’s assistance; I never did learn to sew by hand, hemstitch, or make decent buttonholes. My “best” dresses were made by local dressmakers.
My shoes were of the high, buttoned, low-heeled type and, as was the fashion, I wore as winter head-covering not a hat but a "fascinator"—a crocheted head-scarf—or sometimes a crocheted hood, which in either case I made myself. The only summer hat I recall was a very wide-brimmed straw hat, faced with white bobbinet and with white bobbinet trimming around the crown.

The only dinner party I attended in Fremont was given by Mr. and Mrs. Cole and was memorable as being the first time I had ever seen a meal served in courses. I presume I rated the invitation through my brother D. L., who accompanied me. The first course was a cream-colored liquid in tall glasses. I took a couple of spoonfuls of it, and was distressed and embarrassed because it was so distasteful that I simply couldn’t drink it. I noted that D. L. was much amused, and on the way home he teased me plenty about my drinking whiskey, and I discovered I had been making an attempt to consume a whiskey egg-nog.” He considered this very funny, since alcohol in every form was anathema to me.

Hoxie

Since leaving our home in Lenora we had been great ones to move about, and from the spring of 1889 to the summer of 1892 we lived in at least five different houses in Fremont and Hill City: Horton’s, Woodrow’s, Cole’s, Davis’, and Fogal’s. In June, 1892, D. L. bought out the stock of drugs owned by Ed Adkins at Fremont, combined them with his own stock, and moved to Hoxie, the county seat of Sheridan County. In late August mother and I moved to Hoxie, and into what was known as the Towler house, which turned out to be infested with bedbugs. Copious applications of alcohol and corrosive sublimate over a period of two weeks were finally effective in killing off the last of the "redskins." Hoxie remained our home for three years. It was another village of four or five hundred, a good business point with a trade radius of some twenty miles. There was one good general store (Beers’), two or three grocery stores, a hardware store, a furniture store, three attorney’s offices, two of them located in the same block, which was therefore known as "The Catch’em and Skin’em Block," two weekly newspapers, The Hoxie Sentinel, edited by Frank McIvor, Republican, and The Hoxie Palladidum, Democrat, edited by John Vedder. The hall over Beers’ store was the social center for dances, and here also were held many political meetings.

The first year we were in Hoxie I attended school and had for my teacher J. J. Johnston, the best instructor of all my school life, bar none. To him I owe an unpayable debt, not only as a teacher but also as a person, for helping me to overcome some of my timidity; and to him belongs the credit for anything of a public nature I may have since been able to do. He never permitted me to remain seated and say "I don’t know." "Get up on your two feet and say so," was his invariable requirement. Then, after I was on my feet, by his skill in questioning he would demonstrate that I knew more than I had been aware, and thus he put some confidence into my soul. He had marvelous patience with anyone who really wanted to learn. I was very slow in arithmetic, and I recall how he once explained a problem three times for me, finally making me understand. He was the only teacher I ever heard, or heard of, who explained why the divisor was inverted in division of fractions: "Because by so doing we reduce the fractions to a common denominator and perform the division at the same time." He had us prove this beyond a peradventure. He showed considerable faith in me one day, when he was called out of town, by putting me in charge of the room of at least forty pupils, hearing all classes. Strange to say, I had no trouble worth mentioning. A couple of youngsters started out being cute, but, aside from these two, the entire room was with me, so the foolishness was of short duration. Of course I had had eight months of teaching experience.

School parties were numerous, one almost every week. We played such games as "Clap in and clap out," "Spin the platter," "Animal, vegetable, or mineral," "Going to Jerusalem," "Fruit-basket upset," "Wink’em," "Proverbs," and and we never tired of charades. When there was room, we sometimes played such dance-games as "Miller Boy," "Skip to My

55. Although Kansas had been “dry” by constitutional amendment ever since 1889, it was evidently quite easy to obtain alcoholic beverages—as Carry A. Nation was to find out.

Lou," and "Weevily (Weasly) Wheat." 57 We didn't play these games very often, since in northwestern Kansas we just plain over-and-aboveboard danced instead of having to dance and call it a game.

"Miller Boy" was played by couples, arm in arm, marching around in a circle, singing:

Happy is the miller-boy who lives by himself;
The wheel goes 'round, he's gaining in his wealth.
One hand in the hopper and the other in the sack;
Ladies step forward and the gents fall back!

Or:

Gents step forward and the ladies fall back.

When one of these commands was given, the couples changed partners as indicated, while one person in the center of the ring, who was "It" tried to obtain a partner for himself. If he succeeded, whoever was left without a partner became "It." There were two possible commands so that there would be a chance for some confusion and a greater opportunity for "It" to get a partner.

"Skip to My Lou" had an infinite number of verses, alternating with the chorus:

Gone again, skip to my Lou! (three times)
Skip to my Lou, my darling!

Some of them were:

Little red wagon and harness, too (three times),
Skip to my Lou, my darling!

Nigger in the woodpile, what'll I do?

My wife's left me, boo-hoo-hoo!

The boys chose partners and the company formed in two lines, boys in one, girls in another, partners facing one another, with a partnerless boy between the lines, thus:

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0 0

When the song began, he would choose any other boy's partner, swing her, put her back in her original position, and take the place of the boy whose partner she had been, whereupon the bereft boy would choose another partner and so on and on and on.

I do not recall how "Weevily Wheat" was played, only the song that went with it:

I don't want none of your weevily wheat,
I don't want none of your barley,
I want the very best you've got
To make a cake for Charley!

Charley is a fine young man,
Charley is a dandy,
Charley likes to kiss the girls
Whenever it comes handy.

There were taffy pulls occasionally; and it was quite the thing for the couples to show up at Epworth League and at church in the evenings.

One experience I had in Hoxie was to participate in a "wake." There was no such thing as embalming, at least in that small town, so I and two friends, Effie Denison and Ed Turner, sat up with a corpse one night and changed the clothes on the face about every hour to delay mortification. Another reason given for this custom was that rats were attracted to a dead body, so that it was necessary for some one to be on hand. However, in this case the corpse was not in the same room with the watchers, and we had no trouble of that nature. I had heard my mother tell some funny stories about "wakes" in Pennsylvania, which were real parties with plenty to eat and drink and the latter not coffee. Anyone who refused to provide such entertainment was regarded as indeed "close." In Hoxie a lunch was provided but there was no other similarity to the social features of the earlier Pennsylvania wakes.

In February, 1893, a cousin, Vina Anderson, from Pennsylvania, who had been visiting her brother in Omaha, made us a surprise visit. It always seemed mother's job to board a teacher and at this time Mrs. Ells, the primary teacher and a divorcée, was with us, but moved across the street to the residence of E. M. Speers in order to make it possible for us to entertain our relative. Vina stayed with us a couple of weeks and, after some coaxing, persuaded mother to return with her to Omaha for a short while and then go on with her back to Pennsylvania. In the fall of 1892 mother had finally been awarded a dependent widow's pension ($12 per month) with back payments amounting to

about $400, and certainly a vacation was coming to her, so I was left to keep house for D. L. and go to school. My chum, Effie Denison, stayed nights with me and we had jolly good times.

One reason why Cousin Vina had come to see us, we eventually discovered, was gossip concerning us which had come to the ears of our Pennsylvania relatives. The report was that we had lost our religion, had, indeed, become "wild." So what was Vina's surprise to meet people who seemed at least civilized; and the next morning (Sunday) we had the usual "blessing" at the table, went to Sunday School and church, where I taught a class and sang in the choir, and in the evening D. L. and I, together with my cousin, went to League, mother coming later to church, and the day concluding with the usual evening worship, conducted by mother.

But that wasn't all. The report was that D. L. had shot a man. This, however, was true—in fact he had shot two men, the first while he was

David Lincoln Wiggins's drugstore in Hoxie which he opened in 1892 had a sign above the door reading "WESTERN ENAMEL STRICTLY PURE MIXED PAINTS." The man in the white shirt is believed to be D. L., Catharine Wiggins Porter's older brother, who worked as a pharmacist in Iowa before moving to western Kansas.

drug-clerk in Coin, Iowa, this being the case about which our cousin had heard. Money had been missed from the cash-drawer once or twice, so D. L. put his bed in the back of the store and armed himself with a little .22 revolver. During the night, hearing someone at the door, he got out of bed and crept under the counter where the money-drawer was. When the thief reached for the drawer, D. L. fired at him, and he departed very hurriedly, leaving some drops of blood to mark his tracks. It was some twenty-five years before D. L. knew whom he had shot—a friend of one of the proprietors who often visited there in the evenings and had of course seen where the money was kept. This thief eventually touched and ruined many lives as a blackmailer, but this was the only occasion when he in any way came into contact with us.

The other shooting occurred in Fremont. Brother D. L. kept finding drugs and medicines missing from a cave at the rear of the store where he kept his surplus stock, and was unable to discover the thief, so he arranged in the cave a shot-gun, so placed that when the door was opened the disturber would receive a charge of bird-shot in his legs. Coming home from a dance one night he happened to look through a hotel window (they had omitted to draw the shades) and saw the local doctor extracting shot from the leg of a well-known citizen of the little town. There was some difference of opinion in the town as to the ethics of setting the gun, but brother went quietly on
his way and in a day or two the excitement was over—as was also the stealing.

And brother Sam had come in for his share of the gossip. The report was that, while he was in Colorado, mother ploed to go out and see him. He was to meet her in Colorado Springs, but failed to do so, and she was left alone in a strange city. The only spark of truth in that story was that Sam had worked in Colorado. Mother had never thought of going out to see him. Where these stories started we hadn't the slightest idea. In the spring of 1893 the eastern relatives finally got to see Sam, since, after finishing his work at Chicago, he went on to Pennsylvania to meet mother and return with her to Hoxie in May. D. L. was needing help in the store, so Sam decided to learn the business and become a pharmacist, and they were together in the store until the fall of 1898.

In May, 1893, I graduated from the Hoxie high school. I attended Normal Institute in August, securing a second-grade certificate, and taught the primary department, or rather the lower grades, of the Hoxie school, the next two years, at $40 per month—the usual wage for that kind of a school. For the first time I had an adequate place in which to teach—plenty of blackboards, maps, charts, and a system of text-books—and I began to like teaching. My grades included the chart-class and the third grade, so there was plenty to do, more than I could do thoroughly. When I got my first check for $40 I was conscience-stricken to think how little I had accomplished, and said as much to D. L. How he laughed! He suggested that I multiply the 40 pupils by the 20 days work, divide the $40 by the result, and then decide whether or not I was cheating.

Professor Johnston was the conductor of one of the County Institutes at Hoxie, and I grew quite baffled as various teachers told how they did this and that and the other in their schools, always keeping every one out of mischief and profitably employed. At recess I went to Mr. Johnston and said, "If that's the way to teach school I'm quitting, for I don't and can't do those things." He replied, "Bless your heart, they don't either!" "Why, then," I said, "do they say those things and discourage us younger teachers?" "Because," said he, in a very forceful stage-whisper, "they like to hear themselves talk." Then, in normal tones, "I know. I was county superintendent for years and I heard teachers in institute say what they did, but when I visited their schools I found no evidence of it. You go right on and do the best you can and don't worry about what anybody says she does."

Some pretty laughable things happened in school during these two years. I recall a couple of notes:

Miss Wiggins. I want that Lula will study physiology and book keeping. Her Mother.

The child couldn't read intelligently in the third reader.

Another:

Dont make Monty study too much since it is hard on his nerves [nerves].

I always used to try to put new pupils at ease by calling them by the name most familiar to them—not calling a boy Richard, for example, if the name he was called at home was Dick or Dickie. One day, however, in interviewing a little girl, I hit a stone wall, as she couldn't seem to understand me. "What does your mother call you?" I repeated. "Thometimeth," she finally admitted, coyly twisting a strand of hair about a saliva-moistened and otherwise rather dirty finger, "my mamma callth me 'you tweet thing.'"

The county superintendent was visiting one afternoon during the period of oral spelling. I gave out the word "tired," and the pupil omitted the letter "e." One morning three youngsters, aged about six, eight, and ten, came to school for the first time. I didn't know that none of them had ever been in a school-room before, and after some necessary shifting of seats to make room for them, I said, "Mary, you may sit here, Martha, here, and Johnny, here," placing my hand on each desk as I spoke, and then returned to the front of the room. I heard some suppressed giggles and turned to see Mary, Martha, and Johnny doing exactly as I had indicated—each obediently sitting on a desk.

I had an average group of pupils, I presume—some were clean, keen, smart; the members of one family, at least, were, on the other hand, dirty, greasy, unkempt, and stupid-looking; others were merely mediocre. The children from one family were handicapped by disease for which they were in no way responsible, i.e., syphilis. Some are in business in Hoxie today. Several were really successful. A
few went to the bad. In all my teaching experience, which eventually totalled sixty months, I know of one pupil who became a murderer, one, a preacher, two, missionaries, and two, excellent bootleggers.

During my two years of teaching in Hoxie there was comparatively little social life. There was an occasional dance at Beers’ hall, where, for the first time in my experience, there were “round” dances on the program. After two or three sets of square dances there would be a session of “round” dances, schottisches, polkas, and waltzes, usually the last. I never learned the round dances, because D. L. never did much in that line; and, although Sam was very good, I was too awkward and trod on his toes too much for him to have the patience to teach me. Choir practise, Epworth League, church, revival meetings, political speeches, an occasional “open house” at the GAR meetings, about summed up all the other social activities. Uncle Andy Reed was conspicuous at the GAR meetings. On one occasion they were playing charades and the word to be presented was “forefathers;” Uncle Andy was appointed as one of the “four fathers,” but unfortunately he was a bachelor. He was frequently called on to sing a song, of which the refrain was: “If officers did all of this, what did the privates do?” The song was practically devoid of tune, but the words impressed me as being clever, although they did not remain in my memory.

For some reason I had paid little attention to the campaign of 1892, but the state elections of that year were followed by exciting events. The two rival parties, the Republicans and the Populists, had each organized the legislature, but the latter were in control of the hall in which the representatives met. About Feb. 16, 1893, the Republican members and their employees gathered at the Copeland Hotel, marched in a body to the State House, swept aside the guards, broke down the door of the hall, and took possession. It was a bloodless war and lasted only forty-eight hours.

During the fall of 1894, however, I became intensely interested in the campaign then in progress. The meetings were usually held in Beers’ hall, the speaking would begin about 2 p.m. and continue until 6 p.m. or later. Night meetings continued from 7 p.m. until the speakers were through with what they had to say or were tired out. Sometimes I chipped off a few minutes of school-time and hurried to the hall. A seat at that hour was an impossibility and one was lucky to find standing-room. I never grew tired of the speech-making, though, much to my regret, I never heard John J. Ingalls, the Republican, nor the Populist Jerry Simpson, known as “Sockless Jerry.” I heard Mary Elizabeth Lease in her masterful and rather masculine way proclaim the gospel of Populism, urging the farmers to raise less corn and more hell. And then there was little Mrs. Anna Diggs, so refined, smart, aware, convincing, with the same gospel, but so differently presented. I liked them both, though Mrs. Lease, I was later informed, was coming to be looked on as a liability rather than an asset to her party. The Republicans were represented by James A. Troutman, “Farmer” Smith, Tom McNeal, and J. Ralph Burton.

59. A diligent canvass of Civil War and C. A. R. songbooks has not revealed any other verses of this song.

60. See John D. Hicks, The Populist Revolt (Minneapolis, 1931), pp. 274-281, for an account of the election of 1892 in Kansas.

61. See ibid., p. 333, for the campaign of 1894, which was a defeat for Populism in Kansas.

62. John James Ingalls (1833-1900), Kansas Republican “elder statesman” and man of letters, was senator from Kansas, 1873-1891, but was defeated and succeeded by a Populist candidate.

63. Jerry Simpson (1842-1905), a native of New Brunswick, nicknamed “Sockless Jerry” by his political opponents, was probably the most widely known of the Populist leaders.

64. For Mrs. Lease, see the Dictionary of American Biography and Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 159-160.

65. “Next to Mrs. Lease, Mrs. Annie L. Diggs, also of Kansas, was perhaps the best known of the Alliance women. She was a very beautiful one, weighing less than a hundred pounds, but apparently her size never interfered with her ambition to speak and write. Her language was direct and not that of Mrs. Lease, but hardly less vigorous.” The campaign of 1894 began inauspiciously for Kansas Populism with a verbal encounter between Mrs. Lease and Mrs. Diggs—Hicks, Populist Revolt, pp. 165-166.

66. James A. Troutman (1853-1925), native of Indiana who moved to Kansas in 1865, was a lawyer and a prominent temperance worker. In 1892 he was elected to the Kansas legislature and at the time the writer heard him was apparently a candidate for lieutenant governor—Frank Wilson Blackmar, ed., Kansas (Chicago, 1912), v. 3, pt. 1, pp. 718-720.

67. I have been unable to identify the “Farmer” among the numerous Smiths who were active in Kansas politics in the 1890’s. Presumably he was one of the few Republican politicians who was not a lawyer, and assumed the title of “Farmer” in an attempt to counterbalance the Populist appeal to the tillers of the soil.

68. Thomas Allen McNeal (1853-1942) was born in Ohio and moved to Medicine Lodge, Kan., in 1879, where he was admitted to the bar. He was, however, primarily a newspaper man and later a professional writer. At the time of the election of 1894 he had been in his city newspaper in the legislature and a term as mayor of Medicine Lodge. He later became state printer and the author of an entertaining collection of sketches, When Kansas Was Young (New York, 1925)—Blackmar, Kansas, v. 3, pt. 1, pp. 340-341.

69. Joseph Ralph Burton (1850-1933), born in Indiana, was admitted to the bar in 1875 and moved to Abilene, Kan., in 1878. Strikingly handsome and a first-rate orator, but egotistical, he was elected to the legislature in 1882, 1884, and 1886, and in 1896 obtained the passage of an antitrust law which has been credited with being used as a model for the Sherman Anti-Trust Act of 1890; this achievement must have been of considerable benefit to him as a
Catharine Ann McCollum Wiggins, right, mother of Catharine Wiggins Porter, was left a widow on a Kansas homestead in 1886 when Catharine was 12 and her brother, Samuel Telford, lower right, was 16. The oldest of her children, David Lincoln, below, had stayed in Iowa where he worked as a pharmacist when the family moved to Kansas. Later he prospered with his drugstores first in Fremont and later at Hoxie. His brother, Sam, worked with him in the Hoxie store from 1893 to 1898.
all excellent speakers and far too smart for the occasional heckler. One of Burton's stories was supposed to characterize a Populist. “A man, always dissatisfied, always whining, thus addressed his dog. ‘You, you have nothing to do but eat and eat, and then sleep and sleep. But me, I works and works, while you eat and sleep. And when you die, you just die, but me—when I dies, I goes to hell.’ That,” said J. Ralph, “is a Populist.” I attended these meetings principally for the excitement; I always liked an argument. I had no strong convictions as between the two parties and did not take sides particularly, although I understood that the Populists claimed the issue was discrimination against the poorer folk, especially the farmers, by the Republicans.

Evangelistic meetings in Hoxie were of the usual type, described by T. DeWitt Talmage as “bobbing up and down affairs.” I usually attended, without knowing why. The ultimate aim of the meeting seemed to be to get everyone to stand in response to one or another of various appeals by the minister. If anyone didn't rise on the first request, he was a marked man; the call became more and more personal and direct. The usual plan of procedure was this: The sermon ended; the preacher announced a hymn and, during the singing of the first verse, “All Christians are requested to rise”—and how smugly they responded. Then the second verse, and the appeal, “All who would like to be Christians—will you rise?” Then, other verses—as many as necessary—and: “All who would like to lead a better life, will you rise?” “All who desire to reach Heaven when they die, will you rise?”

Republican, anti-Populist, campaigner. Elected to the United States Senate in 1900 he was forced to resign in 1906 because of an indictment which charged him with accepting money from a security company for improper use of his senatorial influence; he was convicted and served five months in a federal penitentiary.

Several years later, after having been a strong opponent of Populism, he became a chief spokesman of the much more radical farmers' organization, the Non-Partisan League, which entered Kansas in 1917. On March 15, 1921, Burton and another League spokesman were prevented by mob action from speaking at Ellinwood, Barton county, and deported from the county, while later in the same day two other League representatives were brutally beaten and tarred. Burton died two years later.—Blackmar, Kansas, v. 3, pt. 2, pp. 819-821; Bruce L. Larson, "Kansas and the Non-Partisan League. The Betrayal to the Affair at Great Bend, 1921," Kansas Historical Quarterly, v. 34 (Spring, 1958), pp. 51-71; esp. facing p. 64 and pp. 67-68.

70. The writer had apparently lost some of her political patriotism during the six years since, as a girl of about 15 she had flaunted her support of Belva Lockwood. Or, perhaps, she was less under the influence of her mother, whom the latter's younger son, years later, described to the editor as a "Prohibitionist and Populist." 71. Thomas DeWitt Talmage (1832-1902), popular American Presbyterian clergyman.

who have any friends in the Glory World, will you rise?” “All who have any desire to meet any of their friends in Heaven, will you rise?” Such a series of requests didn't leave much of a loophole, but I was too plain stubborn to stand on any proposition whatsoever.

There were the usual new songs drifting around. One of them I used to sing for the benefit of my brother Sam, who was going with a girl named Pearl:

Just one girl, only just one girl!
There are others, I know, but they're not my Pearl.

Sam himself contributed several others, two of a romantic or sentimental nature: “Sweet Marie” and “Over the Garden Wall.” Two others were of a humorous character:

“Oh Fred, tell 'em to stop!”
This was the cry of Maria.
But the more she said “Whoa!”
He said, “Let 'er go!”
And the swing went a little bit higher.

Of the other I recall only the lines:

I don't like—a no cheap man
Who spends his money on the installment plan.

D. L.’s favorite, which he had learned from Frank Brown, a full cousin of mother's, who

72. This revivalistic technique was greatly improved in the course of the next generation. During the editor's years in a central Kansas denominational college (1925-1926) the system was to have the entire congregation rise to sing a hymn, and then induce all its members to come forward by a series of such invitations, after which they returned to their seats and sat down. This made the diminishing number of realinites stand out like the proverbial "sore thumb," subjected them to increasing pressure—since it was generally regarded as improper to sit down unless the revivalist told them to do so—and no doubt materially improved the evangelist's statistics.

73. Author and composer, Lynn Udall; first published, 1898.—Spaeth, Popular Music, p. 292. The writer's memory may, however, have slipped in regard to this song since, if not published until 1896, it could not have been sung in Hoxie, 1893-1896. Probably it was in 1899, when S. T. Wiggins was recuperating from a leg amputation in Sterling, where his mother and sister were then living, that the writer teased him with a rendition of "Just One Girl.

74. Published in 1863, with words by Cy Warman and music by Raymond Moore, and thus of very recent vintage.—Spaeth, Popular Music, pp. 288-289. Words and music in James J. Celler, Famous Songs and Their Stories (New York, 1913), pp. 70-74.

75. Words by Harry Hunter; music by G. D. Fox. In 1890 it was regarded as already an old song.—One Hundred Songs of the Day by Popular Composers (Boston, 1885), p. 10; Heart Songs, pp. 346-347; Randolph, Folk Songs, v. 4, p. 392.

76. Words and music by George Meens; originally published by T. G. Gordon & Son, New York, in a series of "English Ballads."—Spaeth, Read 'em and Weep, who gives this information and the text (pp. 79-80), says the song was a favorite of Tony Pastor (1837-1908), whose heyday was the post-Civil War period. Its appearance in One Hundred Songs of the Day, p. 7, probably dates it approximately. See, also, Douglas Gilbert, America's Vaudeville (New York, 1940), pp. 103-125; and Edward B. Marks, They All Sang (New York, 1930), pp. 49, 251.

77. Written in 1897 by the famous colored vaudeville team of Bert Williams and George Walker;—Marks, They All Sang, p. 237; Gilbert, American Vaudeville, pp. 253-257. If the date of this song is correctly stated, Mrs. Foster must again be in error as to when and where she heard her brother sing it.
had either been a cowboy or had associated with them, was “Lorena,” 78 which began:

It was down upon the old plantation
Where in youth Old Massa bound me as a slave.
There they had a colored girl called Lorena,
And we spented where the wild palmettoes wave.

Another of his songs was of a humorous nature
and went in part:

I started out to travel and I never could go right,
I traveled away for a half a day
And then put up for night.
And what do you think they laid me on?
’Twas nothing but a sheet!
And there my thunderin’ great big feet
Were stickin’ out asleep.79

In the spring of 1895, being now twenty-one,
I took a homestead.80 the SE ¼, Sec. 12, Twp.
10, Range 27, Sheridan Co., Kansas. It was required
that I establish my residence by building a house and staying on the claim over
night at least once every six months. My house
was the minimum for size—10 feet by 10—an
unplastered soddy with a board roof, no floor,
one window, and a home-made door. A
“Topsy” stove stood in one corner, but there
was no flue, the stove-pipe extending through
the roof. The table occupied another corner
and the bed a third. The fourth corner was
unclaimed. D. L. went with me each six
months and it was more of a picnic than any-
thing else. He kept a box of the necessary
cooking-utensils in the back of the store and
was a wonderful chef. One evening, on the way
out, he shot some sort of a bird,81 which he tried
to cook over an alcohol stove, but either the fire
wasn’t hot enough or the bird was of great age,
for it never did become tender. D. L., however,
kept sampling it, so that there was little of it
left for the meal—not that this made any dif-
fERENCE. Once we wrote our menu on the out-
side of the door, where all who ran might read,
with the injunction: “Kansas City papers,
please copy.” One occasion, however, he
couldn’t go with me, since he was attending
the World’s Fair in Paris.82 Neither could Sam,
since he had to stay in the store. So we got a
boy, who lived near my claim, to come into
Hoxie after me, and then we stopped at his
home and picked up his sister. When we
opened the door of the soddy, we beheld on the
bed two large snake-skins, and while the skins
were harmless, there was a chance that the
owners might be near, so we decided to “hold
down the claim” out of doors and sleep in the
buggy, the boy making himself as comfortable
as he could on the ground. I had a crick in my
neck for some days after sleeping with my head
almost caught in the buggy bows. The name of
my farm was The Lord Chesterfield and a very
large and deep buffalo-wallow about a
hundred feet from the soddy was Lake Victo-
ria. I must in those days have been “all out for
Britain.”

The family, including myself, realized that I
must have more than a high-school education
if I were to succeed as a teacher, and the
question was, “What school shall it be?”
Mother had continued a staunch United Pres-
byterian and had kept in touch with that
church through The Midland, a weekly paper.
There we saw advertised a United Presbyterian
school, Cooper Memorial College, at Sterling,
Kansas. Mother so greatly desired to be within
the bounds of her church once more that it was
decided I should attend the summer session
and give it a trial. And so, in June, 1895, I was
on my way to college.

78. This “Lorena,” a pseudo-Negro song, should be distin-
guished from the much more sophisticated and better-known song
of the same title, widely sung during the Civil War, which begins
“The years creep slow by, Lorena.” I have been unable to find
anything about its authorship or date of composition, and the few
texts known to me are to varying degrees either incomplete or
corrupt or both. The Brown-Wiggins version consists of only three
four-stanza stanzas (with the third line missing from the middle one)
and a refrain. The only version I know in print—“Lorena,” Arthur
Palmer Hudson, “Ballads and Songs From Mississippi,” Journal of
American Folklore, v. 30 (April-June, 1928), pp. 156—consists of
four four-line stanzas, one of which is mistakenly used as a chorus.
The Pound syllabus, p. 65, also describes this song and gives a
refrain almost identical with that of the Brown-Wiggins version.
The version known to me which seems most nearly complete and
least corrupt, and which most closely resembles the surviving
portion of the Brown-Wiggins version, is in the manuscript song
collection of the late Mrs. Hugh Hampton of Eugene. Or (born in
Oregon, 1874), now in the University of Oregon Library. Because of
the song’s obscurity and interest I present it below, in an appendix.
However, in my opinion the first four lines of the Brown-Wiggins
version are superior to those of the Hampton version, which also
contains words and lines which are obviously corrupt. The last four
lines of the last stanza, for example, are so awkward as to be
virtually unusable. When other versions, or simply reason, sug-
gest substitutions I have inserted them in brackets.

79. I have been unable to find anything more about this song.
80. See Everett Dick, The sod-House Frontier (New York, 1938),
pp. 118-119, for the homestead regulations of this time.
81. The mention of D. L.’s shooting a bird reminds me of one of
the various incidents about which I have been told but which did
not get into these reminiscences. There was still a herd of five
antelope in the neighborhood, at which, on at least one occasion,
D. L. took a shot with a carbine which he habitually carried in his
buggy, but fortunately without effect.
82. At the time of the Paris Exposition of 1900 the writer was
living and teaching in Sterling, not in Hoxie. Presumably, however,
she somehow managed to get back to her claim at least every six
months, staying at her brother’s home while fulfilling the not very
onerous homestead residence requirements. Of course, she may
have confuted some other occasion when her brother was away
with his absence at the Paris Exposition.
III. APPENDIX

LORENA
(Mrs. Hugh Hampton's version)

Way down upon the old plantation
Where in youth old massa held me as a slave
And they kept a colored girl they called Lorena
And we courted where the wild bananas wave.
The sun [moon] shone bright upon Lorena
As we sat and watched the coon among the corn
And the possum played around the wild bananas
And the old owl hooted like a horn.

Chorus: Oh Lorena, dear Lorena, won't you come
come come again to me? (twice)

Oh for four long years we were courting,
Then we were bound together both as one;
By hard labor our old massa we supported,
Then our pleasures here in life had just begun.

But one day old massa sold Lorena,
And I thought this poor old darkey's heart would break,
For they took her way down in old Virginia
And they left me to mourn for her sake.

Chorus:

For two long years we were parted
But the thought of her was ever in my head,
Till one day old massa read me a letter
And it told me that Lorena she was dead.
Then I knew that Lorena had gone to Heaven
And no more she'd have to wear the white man's chains
For a new and shining robe of white was given
And no more she'd have to bear the darkey's chains [pains].

Chorus: