

breakfast, and there was always time for father to read from the Bible. In later years how much time element interfered with the reading of the Bible and prayer. After the Bible was read, we each knelt by our chair and father prayed. As we grew older, my sister, brothers and I were also asked by father to pray. A beautiful memory to me! My father, the Bible and prayer! I will be writing more of this; but here were the beginnings of a very great influence in my life, never to be forgotten.

Our next move was to Maple Rapids, a small country town without a railroad. So we moved by wagon; farmer's wagons I suppose. It sounds so primitive now, like it was my ancestors coming from the East in covered wagons. We had neither horse or cow in St. Louis, but father must have bought both when we moved to Maple Rapids. There was a sizable barn on the parsonage lot. A loft overhead with hay where we could play; on the ground floor a box stall for Snip, our new horse, a stall for a cow and plenty of room for a carriage and storage room for all the packing boxes and barrels.

My brothers and I and neighbors' children often played in the barn. The boys made a play house of the boxes, even an upstairs and down. Our neighbors' children were Ruth and Percy Groom. Ruth had a real play house, about the size of a chicken house, but Ruth liked to come to my play house because of the different rooms. Lucy Hart lived across the street from Ruth. We also played in their barn. We three girls played mostly in our barn until something would happen to cause a quarrel when they would take their dolls and go home.

Father had a nice vegetable garden here. The boys, Edward and Earl, older than I, helped father. I used to have to string beans and shell peas, our main summer diet.

One fall after all the garden crops were harvested and the weather cold, my brothers and Percy Groom built sort of a combination shack and wigwam of large packing boxes and strips of rag carpet. They made a sort of stove of a Burley Tobacco can, a piece of stovepipe and the cover to the tobacco can, all set up on bricks and a length of down-pipe from eaves trough for a chimney. They burned soft coal in this, picked up from around the school coal bins. One day father said to mother, "watch me smoke out the Indians." Father went out quietly and put a chip on top of the smoke pipe. Soon we all came pouring out -- all the neighborhood kids were inside. Edward and Earl knew father liked to play a joke on us. They discovered the chip and later accused father of putting it there.

More lasting memories crowd my mind of this little town. I believe each member of our family had many "first experiences" here and made lasting friendships. I think of Earl's courage when he broke his wrist, of Edward's boxing experience, of Blanche's first beau and of the little doll Olin cared for so much.